



PRESS RELEASE

The Ministries of Planning, Health, and UNFPA begin the Rapid Assessment of COVID-19 impact on reproductive health services in Iraq

10 September 2020; Baghdad, Iraq - The Ministry of Planning and Health in the Federal Government and Kurdistan Regional Government, with the support of UNFPA, began on, 9 September a Rapid Assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on the reproductive health services in Iraq.

The Assessment covers 107 health centres at primary level and ten hospitals at secondary and tertiary levels in Baghdad, Basrah, Erbil, Najaf and Salahuddin governorates and is conducted by 27 physicians and 16 statisticians trained on data collection.

The two-week assessment is conducted under the supervision of the Heads of the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) and the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (KRSO), and the Directors General of the Public Health Departments in the Ministry of Health at the Federal and Regional levels as well as field experts, with the technical and financial assistance from UNFPA.

The Head of CSO, Dr Dhia Awad Khadum, commented on the project saying: "This assessment is vital for the Ministry of Planning and CSO to analyse the impact of COVID-19 on the reproductive health services and the health workers in the field. The assessment will also give the Ministries involved a holistic picture of the needs to ensure the continuity of high-quality services and their continuity.

The Head of KRSO, Mr Serwan Mohammed, emphasised that "the assessment aims at identifying the gaps in the services provided, which were exacerbated because of COVID-19. The results will guide the response to strengthen the technical capacity of sexual reproductive health service providers and enhance the quality of the services".

For her part, UNFPA Representative to Iraq, Dr Rita Columbia, reiterated the Fund's commitment to improving access and quality of the reproductive health services offered to women and girls across the country.

"As health systems across the globe struggle to cope with the COVID-19 response, reproductive health services risk being sidelined. UNFPA will continue to work with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to ensure that this would not be the case in Iraq; UNFPA will continue to provide financial and technical assistance to experts to improve the reproductive health system across the country," she insisted.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, delivers a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

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