Un Ponte per (UPP)

Un Ponte per … (UPP) is an Italian NGO which has been present in Iraq since 1991. Initially called Un ponte per Baghdad, since its establishment UPP has worked closely with local civil society organizations in order to promote solidarity initiatives in favor of Iraqi people who suffered from the war. Among its first interventions in the country were emergency projects, health care, educational and cultural programs and other projects that aimed to recover the cultural heritage, support civil society and defend human rights, with a special focus on the protection of detainees. UPP works for peace and solidarity among peoples by facilitating encounters among different cultures, languages, religions and traditions with the idea of promoting a more equal and pacific coexistence.
UPP, with the support of UNHCR, is strengthening the provision of MHPSS and Orientation for the Syrian refugees in Dohuk and Erbil.

During the month of May, UPP provided mental health and psychosocial support services to Syrian women, children and men in Erbil Governorate, namely in Kawargosk, Darashakran, Qushtapa and Basirma through individual and family counseling with the support of clinical teams and social workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kawargosk</th>
<th>Darashakran</th>
<th>Qushtapa</th>
<th>Basirma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultations provided</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females who received MH Consultations</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males who received MH Consultations</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males who received PSS for MH (MH Intervention Pyramid level 2-3)</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females who received PSS for MH (MH Intervention Pyramid level 2-3)</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the month of May 2016 in the Dohuk Governorate, UPP managed to provide during the month of May 2016 psychosocial support to 221 vulnerable Syrian women, children and men through individual and family counselling, including referrals to the available psychological social and medical services operative in the target area, for a total of 498 counselling sessions in Domiz 1, Domiz 2, Gawilan and Acre camps.

Through its team of psychologists, UPP provided family and individual counselling and psychotherapies, as well as support to psychiatric cases.

From 24th to 27th May, 5 social workers received a 4 day induction training by a Mental Health Expert in order to strengthen MHPSS methodology, involving screening tools development, multi-layered intervention and supervision mechanisms, database preparation and management, exploratory feasibility assessment of appropriate collection of outputs and outcomes indicators. UPP clinical psychologist have been supervising the work of the MHPSS team in all Syrian camps in the Governorate, and have provided support to UPP social workers in the organization of the support groups. This has been carried out by focusing on ad hoc topics and techniques in order to improve and strengthen communication on psychological related issues.
UPP social workers have been carrying out family tent-to-tent visits, reaching 51 families in Domiz 1, 63 families in Domiz 2, 86 families in Gawilan and 17 in Akre. UPP MHPSS units received, in the month of May 2016, 153 referrals.

UPP carried out weekly visits to schools in in Domiz 1, Domiz 2, and Akre with the aim of organising Psychosocial Support group activities in 24 classes and in order to discuss with teachers how to better support the students at a psychological level. UPP also reported 78 cases of students who suffer from moderate and severe psychological disorder.

Support Group sessions have been carried out in Domiz 1, Domiz 2, and Akre. 149 women, men, students and teachers have been involved in discussions on psychosocial related issues (i.e. depression, stress, social and relationships problems, anxiety, etc.).

**Mass Communication and Orientation: Strengthening the provision of orientation for IDPs residing in Erbil and Dohuk Governorates**

In the framework of its Mass Communication and Orientation project (Shako Mako? Strengthening the provision of orientation for IDPs residing in Erbil Governorate), UPP, in close collaboration with UNHCR, is implementing a Water Saving Campaign in Harsham, Baharka and Debaga IDPs camp and urban settings. The Water Saving Campaign, which was launched on 15 May, 2016, will last for three months and foresee different stages of implementation, involving the provision of 10 awareness sessions in Debaga, Harsham and Baharka, as well as mass information services. Since the campaign includes a very strong mobilization component, the community in Debaga, Harsham and Baharka will create artistic material on the topic of water saving, which will be presented during an event organised in the month of August 2016.

A fire prevention campaign was carried out from 8th May until the 12th May. UPP launched a whole week dedicated to the fire prevention and safety topic by involving the actors in the camp. Invitation cards containing relevant information regarding the planned activities have been created and disseminated door to door through mass information activities. The material used, created and developed by UPP, consisted of leaflets, stickers and an animated cartoon.

UPP has also been supporting the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) in order to reinforce its capacity in the development and provision of a communication strategy, with the aim of strengthening the information flow between the Ministry and the IDPs on registration procedures.

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1 The Ministry of Surrounding Water has already declared that there will be a major shortage of water due to the lack of fuel meant to be pumped in the national generator.
2 The communication strategy of the Water Saving Campaign has been developed in coordination with Acted, responsible for the provision of mass communication services for refugees.
In the framework of the **Mass Communication project in Duhok**, targeting both IDPs and Refugees in camps and urban areas, with the support of and in coordination with UNHCR, UPP is conducting a number of activities aiming at sharing information on service availability and raising awareness on protection issues.

For the IDPs component, during the month of May, UPP continued to work on the child birth registration campaign, through family by family visits in Shekhan, Semel, Zakho and Amedi districts, and collecting list of unregistered children to be referred to Harikar NGO. In a minor extent, UPP teams conduct awareness sessions in some schools about the child marriage campaign, as a continuation of last year’s activities. However, regarding this last campaign, coordination is ongoing through SGBV and CP actors, in coordination with UNHCR, DOLSA and BRHA, in order to reinforce the communication strategy and continue the campaign.

UPP teams disseminated also information material about the IDPs call center (posters in public spaces). Regarding the service mapping, UPP updated the services available for IDPs in the urban area of Zakho, Semel, Amedi and Shekhan districts and disseminated the information to the families. At the same time, UPP is coordinating, through the PWG, with UNHCR, DRC, IRC to combine all the available service mappings to a unique template.

For the Refugees component, UPP teams in Zakho, Amedi, Semel and Akre/Bardarash districts are continuing the dissemination of the registration/regularization campaign. The campaign is aimed to raise awareness on the importance of having UNHCR certificates in order to get humanitarian assistance and access to services. In addition to the information dissemination, UPP team is referring families that are having issues with their documents on a case by case basis to UNHCR for prompt intervention.

Lastly, for both components, in the occasion of the international children's day (1st of June), UPP coordinated in all the camps with child protection actors in which we are working (Dawodia, Mam Rashan, Garmawa, Berseve 1, Berseve 2, Bajet Kandala, Sharya camps and Khanke village for IDPs, Domiz 1, Domiz 2, Akre and Gawilan camps, as well as Waar city in the urban area for Refugees) to conduct spot activities to increase awareness on registration campaign for Refugees, child birth registration and child marriage for IDPs. These included recreational activities for children (drawing and painting of pictures related to campaign's material) and distribution of material to mothers and fathers attending the celebrations.

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**Provision of Psychosocial Support and Protection for IDPs children and families residing in camps and non-camps areas in Dohuk Governorate, KR-I.**

In the framework of its project Ahlein II, in the first days of May, UPP has set up three Static Units in Sharya, Bajet Kandala and Shekhan, where Psychosocial Support and Protection
services for IDPs children and families will be provided. In the camp settings, UPP units are located within the CFSs area in the Sharya and Bajet Kandala camps and offer spaces where group activities and counselling are provided for children.

UPP has carried out an initial outreach activity in the camps, in order to identify the children and young people in greatest need.

From 24th to 27th of May 2016, UPP held an induction training for all of the UPP operators in order to train the staff on the different intervention techniques. During the first two days of training, provided by Dr. Karzan Shah - Head of the Mental Health Hospital in Erbil, 12 women and 11 men were trained in order to extend their competencies in structuring and implementing an integrated multi-sectorial, multi-layered, ecological psycho-social service consisting in Resilience Groups. 3 Facilitators from Unicef staff, in charge for supervision of Ahlein in the field, were involved in the training. The second session of training was provided by Ms Lia Pastorelli (Project Manager UPP) and Mr Raed Essa (UPP). Among the issues discussed: Definition of MH and PSS and contextualization; Child Protection principles; Importance of parents/caregivers involvement in PSS interventions; Screening tools administration & data storage and collection: explanation of excel tables used to collect data in IBTISAM 2 and methods of data storage according to CACH standards.

On 31 May – 2 June 2016, 23 UPP psychologists and social workers working in IDP camps and non-camp area of Duhok received training on Resilience Group activities. The training was provided by Dr. Rawish Saari Psychiatry at the Emergency Management Center and Head of addiction department at Erbil psychiatric hospital.

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**Improving Psychosocial Well-Being of IDP and Syrian Refugee School Children Affected by the On-Going Conflict in Iraq and Syria**

The project IBTISAM II targets 13 schools in Ankawa district of Erbil contributes to the improvement of psychosocial well-being of IDP and Syrian refugee primary and secondary school students in the Kurdish Region of Iraq.

During the month of May 2016, UPP, with the support of Caritas Switzerland, has organised a training on EBLIPI (Evidence based Low Intensity Psychological Interventions) implemented by an International Mental Health Expert. The 15 day training was offered to 11 social workers, while a 5 days training addressed 25 school psychologists.

Resilience Group sessions have been implemented in all 13 schools by trained teachers supervised by 11 social workers. The sessions involved around 2000 students aged 6-17 and 300 parents.

Moreover, a stress management training for 11 social workers has been implemented and 8 group counselling sessions for teachers and school psychologists were conducted in schools by psychiatrists from the Erbil Psychiatric Hospital expert on Stress management.
In the framework of the IBTISAM project, UPP renovated one school room in Nahreen school where Psychosocial Support services and interventions are provided.

**Emergency Initiative for Iraqi IDPs and Host Communities in KR-I with a Particular Focus on Women. Integrated Services of Reproductive Health and Psycho-Social Support**

The project Zhyan – Phase II aims at improving the conditions of Iraqi IDPs and host communities in KR-I with particular attention to women, through integrated services of reproductive health and psychosocial support. Four clinics, dedicated to the provision of services for the protection and empowerment of women, offer quality medical services integrated with legal and psychosocial services. A mobile unit has been activated in order to promote awareness campaigns and produce rapid assessment to reach vulnerable patients and disseminate reproductive health practices.

During the month of May 2016, UPP, in collaboration with the local NGO Al Mesalla, offered Reproductive Health services through its four clinics in Shaqlawa, Ashty, Kasnazan and Khabat and through one Mobile Unit covering Debaga Camp, Baharka Camp, Mamzawa, Tobzawa and Zeytoun City. UPP is participating in the emergency response in Debaga through the mobile unit working twice per week in the camp providing basic reproductive health services, home visits and awareness campaigns.

UPP has also produced and distributed informative brochures on RH services provided by the four clinics.

**A New Social Alliance to Empower Youth of Minorities in North Iraq and KRG**

In the framework of its project ‘Youth spring across ethnicities: a new social alliance to empower youth of minorities in North Iraq and KRG’, UPP is working, in collaboration with the local NGO Al Mesalla, to improve governance for youth empowerment among Iraqi minorities.

During the month of May 2016, UPP has been sponsoring, in collaboration with Al Mesalla, a number of activities in its Youth Centres in Erbil, Dohuk, Zummar, and Sulaymaniyah.

In Dohuk, English courses for beginners have been organised and provided to 20 IDPs, minorities and hosting communities' youths, who attended 15 English lessons. 15 yoga classes have been organised in Kabarto Camp; 15 women and men from different minorities benefitted from the classes and the practice. 14 youths from the Dohuk and Zummar UPP Youth Centers received the third training on Psychological First Aid techniques. UPP, in collaboration with Al Mesalla and ARCI, organised the third training programme on techniques and mediation in
“theatre of oppressed.” The event, which actively involved all the youths working in the Youth Centers (Erbil, Dohuk, Zummar and Sulaymaniyah) and which saw the participation of 40 youths from different minorities, was organised in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate on 25th-28th May.

Sport activities have been carried out in Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah, while in the Erbil Youth Center, a music course has been organised. 20 youths took part in the activity.

**Emergency Initiative for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in KR-I with a Special Focus on Students and Teachers. Training and Non Formal Education Activities**

In the framework of its project ‘Taleem Liljamech’, UPP, in collaboration with the local NGO Al Mesalla and with the support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, started the establishment of the Youth Friendly Space in Arbat Camp. The Youth Friendly Space will offer and promote activities of informal education, such as theatre, music and circus.

**Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative**

The Iraqi Civil Society Initiative (ICSSI) aims at strengthening the Iraqi Social Forum and its campaigns, and protecting human and environmental rights, in order to produce a real impact on public policies. ICSSI is an advocacy initiative meant to facilitate the process of building concrete links of solidarity between international civil society organisations and the growing Iraqi civil society, through practical projects that promote human rights and support the efforts against sectarian divisions, corruption and violence. Since 2009, ICSSI has implemented networked and promoted communications among its members through yearly conferences and a multi-lingual social networking platform.

In the framework of its advocacy campaigns, UPP’s *Save the Tigris Campaign* is being carried out in order to raise awareness and analyse the danger of failure of the Mosul Dam. The Campaign also aims at exploring various possibilities in terms of water management strategies in Iraq for the protection of rivers and populations that live on its shores. The Campaign was relaunched in Baghdad thanks to the Humat Dijla Festival, and saw the participation of over 300 people. The *Shabrazad Campaign* is also ongoing: the campaign on issues related to sexual harassment was launched in KR-I through a number of radio interventions, activities and events, in order to break the silence around the issue of sexual harassment. Thanks to the campaign, important

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3 UPP has also created, with the support of private donations, a basketball court in Arbat Camp.
measures to prevent and punish sexual harassments episodes in Baharka IDPs Camp have been explored and obtained.

In Baghdad UPP and the Iraqi Women Journalists Forum, with the support of the Human Rights program of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Iraq, opened the Shahrazad Services Centre, which aims to protect and empower women human rights defenders in Iraq, with a stronger focus on female journalists and media activists. The services of the center will include providing trainings on the capacity-building and the protection and safety of women human rights defenders, as well as providing legal and social support through opening a legal clinic inside the centre. The centre also aims to create a safe space for meetings to share experiences and discuss how to influence Iraqi laws, and raising social awareness and understanding, in order to provide protection for women human rights defenders in the various fields of work. The centre will also produce tools for social networking that aim to involve young people in the activities to change public opinion toward women who are fighting for the defence of human rights. Although Shahrazad centre's activities will be concentrated in Baghdad, the centre aspires to attract beneficiaries from all over Iraq, with a focus on the provinces that suffer from difficult security situations or the lack of sufficient attention to women human rights defenders.

Sport Against Violence and ICSSI have been working with the Iraqi Social Forum to support Iraqi youth who want to build peace through sports. They held a three-day workshop in Baghdad about using sports as a community tool against violence with the participation of 24 young trainees, boys and girls who really enjoyed the experience, and decided to take action immediately after.

For more information visit: www.iraqicivilsociety.org
With the support of:

- UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency
- Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
- European Union
- Chiesa Cattolica Italiana
- Otto Per Mille: Waldensian Church
- UNICEF: Unite for Children
- CARITAS: Catholic Church in Switzerland
- Fondation Assistance Internationale
- Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Baghdad