Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid (MH)

EDUCATION SECTORS PROFILE

Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid (MH) is a non-profit, non-religious and non-political nongovernmental organization (NGO) formed in the aftermath of the 2003 war in Iraq. Mercy Hands is registered in Baghdad with the Federal Government of Iraq, in Kurdistan Iraq with Regional Government of Iraqi Kurdistan, as well as in the state of Georgia, USA. A Board of Directors consisting of five members in the United States and Iraq governs Mercy Hands and assigns the Executive Administration, which is the supreme executive body within the organization. Through a headquarters in Baghdad, a regional office in Erbil, field offices and mobile teams. Overall, Mercy Hands operates in 13 governorates across all regions of Iraq.

**Vision**

Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid is the largest Iraqi national NGO, active since 2005 to save lives, sustain human rights, restore a healthy community and provide dignified assistance to all those affected by the war and ISIL insurgence. Our goal is to contribute to the development of a society where justice prevails, human rights are preserved and people work together to benefit future generations, regardless of their religion, ethnicity and/or political affiliation.

**Our story**

In the aftermath of the 2004 attack on UN Headquarters in Baghdad and the subsequent targeting of international aid workers, many humanitarian organizations began to pull out or reduced their activities in Iraq. This withdrawal created a huge gap in the humanitarian context at a time when humanitarian needs were growing. Mercy Hands responded to the situation mobilizing its limited personnel to respond to the countrywide emergency. With the same determination and vision, Mercy Hands has grown from a small local NGO to a nationwide - currently the largest national NGO in Iraq- that has helped millions of people.

**Terms of Reference**

Mercy Hands’ efforts in the education sector is usually implemented through the Community Development Programs Department; however, during the humanitarian emergency and early recovery phase, Mercy Hands implemented Education projects through Emergency Response and Early Recovery or Protection Department.

**Coordination**

Mercy Hands is registered at the Iraqi Ministry of Education–Directorate of NGOs as an NGO operating in the Education Sector (Letter of Registration is available upon request). We closely and continuously coordinate with the Ministry of Education at different levels. Mercy Hands is an active member of the National Education Cluster in Iraq and its sub-clusters. In addition to participating in the cluster meetings, Mercy Hands shares its experience in education globally. In November 2018, upon a special invitation from UNICEF, Mercy Hands participated in a conference organized by the Global Education Cluster in Geneva regarding "Elevating Education in Emergencies". During the conference, Mercy Hands’ Representative gave an informative presentation regarding Mercy Hands and Unicef work in Iraq, specifically cash for education and mapping of services for vulnerable households.

**The implemented projects by MH within the Education sector:**

1. Human Rights and Democratic Values Civic Education for Displaced Marsh Arabs in Baghdad  
   Funded by: UNDP / Budget : 30,000 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Dec/2005 to Feb/2006
2. Conflict Resolution Program  
   Focusing on the Palestinian Refugees and the Iraqi Community  
   Funded by: OXFAM / Budget : 59,440 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Aug/2006 to Jan/2007
3. Conflict Resolution TOT for Palestinian Refugees  
   Funded by: MCC / Budget : 19,574 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Feb/2006 to May/2006
4. TOT in Conflict Transformation through Mediation and Negotiations  
   Funded by: UNIFEM / Budget : 26,870 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Sep/2006 to Dec/2006
5. Peace Education Curriculum & ICCC Summer School  
   Funded by: MCC / Budget :24,200 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Aug/2007 to Oct/2007
6. Peace Education School for Vulnerable Children  
   Funded by: MCC / Budget : 103,438.20 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Nov/2008 to Jan/2011
7. Prompting Peaceful Co-existence in Al Jihad Neighborhood, Baghdad  
   Funded by: CIDA / Budget : 91,759.96 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Apr/2010
8. Peace Education Program for Children in Al-Jihad Neighborhood  
   Funded by: USIP / Budget : 55,414 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: Nov/2012 to Jul/2013
9. Conducting Sensitization Workshops in Iraqi Provinces  
   Funded by: Revenue watch institute / Budget : 12,000 USD  
   location: Baghdad  
   Duration: May/2012 to Oct/2013
10. Local Area Development, Improving Relevance and Quality Of Technical and Vocational training in Iraq and Distance-Learning Programme

Mercy Hands partnership with UNESCO dates back to September 2010 when it organized a four-day workshop on the importance of literacy, as part of a larger effort to generate public debate/ awareness on the National Literacy Strategy and particularly on the theme of literacy for women empowerment. The workshop was implemented in Baghdad and the total budget was $5,000.00. Following the successful implementation of the workshop, UNESCO asked Mercy Hands to be involved in the evaluation process of three of UNESCO's projects through interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. The data were sent to the Lead Evaluator who analyzed the received data and submitted the final report to UNESCO.

In September 2011, Mercy Hands celebrated the International Dayfor Literacy by organizing social parties and workshops in Babil and Salah Al Din Governorates.

Funded by: UNESCO   
location: Baghdad  
Duration: Apr/2011 to May/2011- Sept/2011

1. Establishing Community Learning Centers in Iraq for Literacy and Life Skills Program

In 2011, Mercy Hands got involved in UNESCO's global effort to accelerate literacy, called Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), and became a member of a network of international and national NGOs working on LIFE in Iraq. In 2012, in partnership with UNESCO, Mercy Hands conducted four workshops in Baghdad in one day training young people on youth activity and submitted pre & post training evaluations.

Funded by: UNESCO / Budget : 39,995 USD  
location: Baghdad  
Duration: Jun/2012 to May/2013

1. Educate A Child Initiative (EACI)

The aim of the program was to re-enroll 4500 dropped out of schools children and establish an Accelerated Literacy Center. The project was implemented in Baghdad, between February and December2014.

Funded by: UNESCO /Budget: 251,405 USD  
location: Baghdad  
Duration: 1-Feb-2014 to 31-Dec-2014

1. Iraqi Alumni Association Development Program - IAAD  
   Funded by: Mercy Corps / Budget:   
   location: Baghdad, Erbil, Wassit, & Kerbala.  
   Duration: 1-Jan-2016 to 31-Oct-2016
2. Responding to the Child Protection needs of girls and boys in Khaldiya and Habaniya affected the IDPs crisis in the ongoing conflict from Anbar --- PSS Program  
   Provide psychosocial assistance to traumatized children, in Habaniya and Khalidiya camps  
   funded by: UNICEF / Budget: 98,273 USD  
   Location: Anbar  
   Duration: 9-Oct-2016 to 9-Jan-2017  
     
   Project extension from May-2017 to Feb-2018 / Budget : 245,662 USD
3. Providing Mines Risk Education for Children in Schools in Anbar  
   Funded by: UNICEF/ Budget: 50,000 USD  
   Location: Anbar.  
   Duration: Dec -2016 to Jan-2017
4. Out of School Children Initiative

Many children in Iraq drop out of school so that they can work and support their families. The government offers different educational programs for drop-out of school children but these programs are underfunded and are not designed to meet the needs of all, leaving the majority uneducated. Mercy Hands set up a learning center in Karbala city that provided out of school children with catch up classes in convenient times that did not interfere with their other chores. Mercy Hands obtained the approval of the educational authorities in Karbala to allow the beneficiaries to sit for the final exam of primary (elementary) school diploma. A total of 15 children, aged 7 to 17 years benefited from this initiative.

Donor: Mercy Hands

Location: Karbala City, Karbala

Duration: Feb 2017 - Jul 2017

1. Providing Leadership and Life Skills for Adolescents and Youth (PLLAY)  
   Capacity building for adolescent & Youth in Tikrit / Salah El-Din  
   PLLAY Youth Center aimed to provide leadership and life skills for adolescents and youth to reduce the vulnerability of crisis affected adolescents through the development of positive social networks, safe spaces, and increased community engagement.  
   Funded by: Mercy Corps / Budget: 76,114.80 USD  
   Location: Salah-Eldin.  
   Duration 7-Aug-2017 to 30-October-2018  
   Also from May-2018 to Dec.2018 /Budget : 93,476.50 USD  
   and from Jan-2019 to Oct.2019 / Budget :147,000 USD
2. Community Mobilization for School-Based Management (SBM) in Baghdad  
   Awareness sessions on SBM in 95 schools in Baghdad. Establishment of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) which allow principals, head teachers, teachers, parents, and communities to co-participate in managing their schools and decide what to do in order to improve the quality of education. SBM is designed to be a comprehensive program which contributes to moving gradually from the strict centralization to decentralization at the school level and offers an opportunity for local communities to participate in solving local issues, including improving the quality of education for their children.

Funded by: UNICEF / Budget: 37,400 USD  
Location: Baghdad.  
Duration 17-Sep-2017 to 17-Mar-2018

1. Zummar Vocational Training  
   Vocational training on electrical materials, greenhouses, and mechanics for 75 trainees.  
   Funded by: DRC /Budget: 48,655.89 USD  
   Location: Ninawa (Zummar).  
   Duration 15-Oct-2017 to 15-Apr-2018
2. PDM, Case Management, Registration of beneficiaries and awareness sessions in relation to the Child Grant and Cash for Education Projects  
   Implementation ofUNICEF’s program “Cash for Education” in Fallujah by conducting assessments, PDM (post distribution monitoring), and case management. UNICEF provided cash assistance through the e-wallet modality to the beneficiaries. MH team was dispatched to monitor and evaluate the cash distribution process at the designated Zain’s cash distribution points. The team explained to the households the objectives of the program, which consists in encouraging the households not to resort to negative coping mechanism (like withdrawal of kids from school) to address the precarious financial conditions, by supporting them with cash assistance.  
   Funded By : UNICEF / Budget : 43,000 USD  
   location : Erbil, Ninawa / Duration : Sep-2011 to Apr-2018
3. Improving hygiene practice and sanitation services for children in schools and their families in the IDPs, returnees, host and vulnerable communities at high risk of waterborne diseases in Baghdad  
   The project aimed to improve hygiene facilities and practices in 23 schools in Baghdad, with around 5000 students.  
   Funded by: UNICEF / Budget : 240,750 USD  
   Location: Baghdad  
   Duration Oct-2018 to Apr-2019
4. Improving hygiene knowledge and practices in vulnerable communities within Baghdad, Anbar and Salah Al-Din   
   Enhancing hygiene awareness through posters, leaflet and brochures distribution, provision of trainings in schools and restaurants.  
    20 schools in Falluja (Anbar), 20 schools in Tikrit (Salah El-Din), and 40 schools both in Rusafa & Karkh (Baghdad).  
   Funded by: UNICEF. / Budget : 52,485 USD  
   Location: Baghdad  
   Duration Apr2018 to Aug-2018
5. Protection Activities in Tel Ali Youth Centre, CFC Project  
   Protection Center to assist vulnerable children and parents. Psychosocial support provided for 120 Children, case management and referral for 300 children, and awareness raising on PSS for 80 children and youth.  
   Funded by: Mission East/Budget: 69,996 USD  
   Location: Kirkuk (Hawija).  
   Duration 2-Oct-2018 to 31-Dec-2018  
   Project extension from Apr.2019 to July.2019 / Budget 15,000 USD
6. Community Mobilization for School-Based Management (SBM)   
   The project aimed to mobilize the community in taking a more active role in school development while improving the communication between schools and parents. The School Based Management (SBM) team of Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid implemented awareness campaigns to promote healthy hygiene practices, the importance of school, and how to succeed in school. MH in partnership with UNICEF targeted many schools (around 150) throughout the governorates of Anbar and Baghdad.   
   Funded by: UNICEF. /Budget: 155,665 USD  
   Location: Baghdad and Anbar.  
   Duration 2-Sep-2018 to 2-Mar-2019
7. AMAR - Active Community Engagement Centers (ACE Center)  
   The ACE Center provided job-related skills training and IT and English courses to young participants to increase their chances of gaining a sustainable livelihood and support themselves and their families. Psychosocial support and health education classes were also offered to promote healthy living, particularly in contexts where mental health is highly stigmatized and education regarding public health and preventative diseases is limited. The ACE Center in Baghdad organized human development courses through specialized trainers together with the International Youth Foundation (IYF).   
   Funded by: AMAR. / Budget : 1,135,860 USD  
   Location: Baghdad and Sammawa and Basra.  
   Duration 1-Jan-2019 – March-2020
8. Women Training Center  
   The WTC provided economic and social assistance to women in the Al Midaina City community, targeting in particular female heads of households. The Center were tailored to assist widows and families who lost their relatives during the conflict. Mercy Hands in partnership with AMAR U.S., aimed to empower 50 female residents of Al Midaina City in the Al Midaina district within the Basra governorate.  
   Funded by: ExxonMobil and US AMAR  
   Location: Basra.  
   Duration 1-Jul-2019 to 1-Sep-2019
9. Tech For Food (EMPACT)  
   Project in partnership with WFP. This project is a WFP pilot initiative to verify the feasibility of Cash for Training activities as part of the Resilience Programme. The project targets young people from 18 to 35 and aims to increase their employment opportunities through provision of English language and IT courses, plus a daily allowance to enable disadvantaged youth to enroll. MH was chosen to conduct the project in Salah Al-Din governorate and the program resulted in such a success in terms of people who graduated and were subsequently employed in the local and international market that the initiative was repeated and expanded in 2020 to cover Anbar Governorate.  
   Funded by: WFP.  
   Location: Samaraa and Tikrit.  
   Duration: 2019- on going
10. Youth training center /Baghdad PSD project  
    In partnership with GIZ, MH initiated in December 2019 a project aimed at increasing intellectual and manual skills of young people in Baghdad City while providing them with several opportunities to get practical experience through job placements, distribution of toolkits and loans to start their own small businesses. The project intends to increase the beneficiaries’ chances to secure enough theoretical and practical knowledge in different technical fields to overcome unemployment. It delivers TEVT courses and PSS to participants (IDPs, Returnees and local youth).  
    Funded by: GIZ. / Budget: 360,199 EUR  
    Location: Baghdad  
    Duration: Dec 2019- on going