Country Profile on Disability
Republic of Iraq

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Abbreviations

AICS	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
CBR	Community-based Rehabilitation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
IADO	Iraqi Alliance of Disability
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPD	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WAI	Web Accessibility Initiative
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WGQs	Washington Group Questions

1. Basic Profile

1-1. Basic Indicators[1]

Gross Domestic Product[2] per capita	USD 6,073.6	2024

Expenditures by Sector

Healthcare (% of GDP)	4.29 %	2022
Education (% of GDP)	3.6 %	1989
Social protection (% of GDP)	4.49 %	2020-22

Population

Total population	46,042,015	2024
Male (% of total population)	50.2 %	
Female (% of total population)	49.8 %	
Urban population (% of total population)	69.9 %	
Rural population (% of total population)	30.1 %	
Life expectancy at birth (total)	72.3 years	2023
Male	70.4 years	
Female	74.1 years	

Health

Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population)	14.9 %	2023
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	20.8	2023

Education

Education System[3]		
Primary Education	6 years	
Compulsory education	6 years	
Literacy rate (% of ages 15 and above)	84.1 %	2021
Adult male	90.3 %	
Adult female	77.8 %	

[1] World Bank（https://data.worldbank.org/indicator（Accessed: January 13, 2026））

[2] Hereinafter referred to as "GDP"

[3] Iraq's education system consists of primary level (six years), intermediate level (three years), Preparatory level (three years), and university (four to six years). Children enter school at the age of six. (World Bank (2024) *National Education Strategy for Iraq 2022-2031.)*

School enrolment		
Primary (% gross)[4] (total)	104.4 %	2013
Male	108.9 %	
Female	99.6 %	
Secondary (% gross) (total)	50.6 %	2007
Male	58.1 %	
Female	42.8 %	
Tertiary (% gross) (total)	15.6 %	2005
Male	19.6 %	
Female	11.4 %	

Employment

Unemployment (total)	15.5 %	2024
Male (% of male labour force)	13.3 %	
Female (% of female labour force)	30.4 %	

1-2. Definition of Disability and Indicators on Disability

1-2-1. Definition of Disability[5]

According to Article 2 of Law No. 11 of 2024, the first amendment to Law No. 38 of 2013, the "Law for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs," a person with disability is defined as "a person who has long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that may prevent his or her full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Prior to the amendment, Article 1 of Law No. 38 of 2013 defined disability as "any restriction or lack of a person's ability, resulting from an impairment or dysfunction, to perform an activity or participate in life situations in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being." In its concluding observations addressed to the Government of the Republic of Iraq (hereinafter referred to as "Iraq") in September 2019, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as the "CRPD") pointed out that this definition was based on a medical and charity-based approach and was not consistent with the human rights

[4] UNICEF (2014) *Iraq Country Report on Out-Of-School Children.*

[5] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017) *Initial report submitted by Iraq under article 35 of the Convention, due in 2010.*（hereinafter referred to as "State Party's Report"）、Iraqi Official Gazette (2013) *Law No. 38 of 2013: Care of Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Special Needs Act.*、Ministry of Justice (Iraq) (2024) *Law No. 11 of 2024: First Amendment to the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs No. 38 of 2013*.m and Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2019) *Concluding observations on the initial report of Iraq.*（hereinafter referred to as "Concluding Observation"）

model of disability set out in the CRPD. The new definition introduced by Law No. 11 of 2024 can be understood as an amendment made in response to the Committee's recommendation.

1-2-2. Indicators on Disability[6]

The Central Statistical Organization of the Ministry of Planning of Iraq conducted a large-scale survey on disability, the National Disability Survey 2016, in 2016. Although five governorates were excluded for security reasons, the survey covered 13 governorates and was the most extensive survey of its kind since 1987. The survey used the Short Set of Washington Group Questions (WGQs). An overview of the survey results is presented below.

Table 1 Number of Persons with Disabilities and Disability Prevalence Rate (2016)

Item	Number of Persons with Disabilities	Disability prevalence rate (% of the total population)
Total	1,357,063	5.2 %
Male	776,721	5.9 %
Female	580,342	4.5 %
Urban	1,008,967	5.6 %
Rural	348,096	4.5 %

Source: Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization (2016) *Indicators of the National Disability Survey in Iraq 2016.*

Table 2 Breakdown of Persons with Disabilities by Type of Disability (2016)

Type of disability	Number of persons	Percentage*
Seeing	251,313	18.5 %
Hearing	156,959	11.6 %
Mobility	720,567	53.1 %
Cognition and Understanding	356,283	26.3 %
Communication	115,001	8.5 %
Self-Care	97,962	7.2 %

*Each percentage was calculated using the total number of persons with disabilities (1,357,063) as the denominator. Since some persons have two or more disabilities, the total exceeds 100%.

Source: Prepared by the study team based on the Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization (2016) *Indicators of the National Disability Survey in Iraq 2016.*

[6] Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization (2016) *Indicators of the National Disability Survey in Iraq 2016.,* Iraqi Alliance of Disability (hereinafter referred to as "IADO") (2024) *IRAQ PROGRAM – Positioning paper 2024: The recent disability legislation in Iraq. Handicap International*., and United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (2016) *Report on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Iraq*.

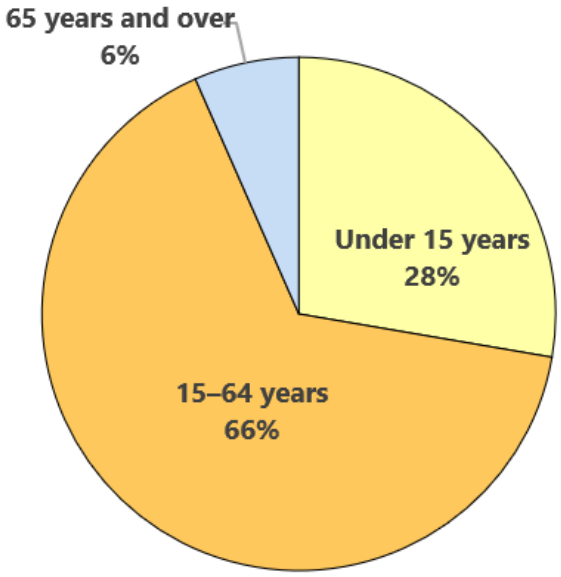


Figure 1 Percentage of Persons with Disabilities by Age Group (2016)

The largest group is the working-age population (ages 15–64), which accounts for 66% of the total. Next is the group "under 15," at 28%, comprising about one-third of the total. Meanwhile, the group "65 and older" accounts for only 6%, the lowest proportion.

Source: Prepared by the study team based on the Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization (2016) *Indicators of the National Disability Survey in Iraq 2016*.

According to Table 1, the number of persons with disabilities in this survey was approximately 1.4 million. However, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has pointed out that, due to the impact of decades of armed conflict, there are thought to be approximately 3 million persons with disabilities in Iraq, and that the official statistics do not fully reflect the actual situation. The Iraqi Alliance of Disability Organizations (hereinafter referred to as "IADO"), an Organization of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as "OPD") in Iraq, also reported in 2024 that the 2016 survey may not have sufficiently captured persons with physical impairments of upper body function or hidden disabilities, indicating concerns regarding the validity of the survey results. According to a medical study on paediatric trauma during the conflict period from 2003 to 2014, children injured by conflict-related violence were reported to be approximately 10 times more likely to acquire disabilities than those injured by other causes[7]. In light of this situation, it is likely that many persons with disabilities, including children, have acquired disabilities as a result of armed conflict, and that existing statistics may not fully capture the actual situation.

In 2024, Iraq conducted its first nationwide census since 1987, covering all 18 governorates. The census included disability-related questions, and as of 2026, key preliminary figures,

[7] Paediatric Injury During Conflict and Prolonged Insecurity in Iraq from 2003–2014(Surgery Journal), retrieved in United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (2016) *Report on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Iraq*.

including the total population and the number of persons with disabilities by region, have been released in sequence. However, the full results related to disability have not yet been published.

2. Administration and Policy on Disability

2-1. Administration on Disability[8]

Iraq is a federal state comprising of areas under the jurisdiction of the federal government and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (hereinafter referred to as "KRI"), an autonomous region with its own legal system and administrative institutions. In accordance with Article 33 of the CRPD, the federal government has designated multiple institutions and ministries as relevant bodies to promote and monitor domestic implementation. In the government report submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2015 (hereinafter referred to as the "State Party's Report"), the Ministry of Human Rights was identified as one of the central institutions. However, the Ministry was abolished as a part of the government reforms of 2015. Since then, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (hereinafter referred to as "MOLSA") has become the central body responsible for implementing disability policy. The Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs[9], established under MOLSA, is regarded as the main institution responsible for serving as the government focal point and coordinating disability-related policies. In addition, implementation is shared among several relevant ministries in sectors such as health, education, and employment.

<Federal Government>

Disability-related institutions

Table 3 Institutions Responsible for Disability-related Matters in the Iraqi Federal Government

No.	Name	Overview
1	MOLSA	・Oversee policies related to welfare services, social protection, vocational training, and employment support for persons with disabilities. ・Coordinate and promote disability-related policies through the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs, established under Law No. 38 of 2013, in cooperation with relevant ministries. ・Formulate disability-related policies in collaboration with civil society organizations, including NGOs. ・Promote the social participation, skills development, and improved living standards of persons with disabilities through Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes and vocational training courses provided by vocational rehabilitation institutions. ・Provide livelihood and independent living support, including vocational training, employment opportunities, monthly allowances for persons with disabilities who have difficulty working,

[8] Based on State Party's Report, Concluding Observation, Ministry of Justice (Iraq) (2024), and IADO（2024）.

[9] When it was first established in 2013, it was named the Commission for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs. However, through the 2024 legal amendment, Law No. 11 of 2024, the word "Care" was removed and replaced with "Rights."

		and training for family members on appropriate support methods. · Provide livelihood and independent living support, including vocational training, employment opportunities, monthly allowances for persons with disabilities who are unable to work, and training for family members on appropriate support methods. · Promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market by providing employment opportunities in workshops, producer cooperatives, and similar settings, and by developing employment opportunities in other sectors.
2	Ministry of Health	· Operate 21 rehabilitation centres, 19 centres for prosthetics and plastic supports, and hospitals for spinal cord injuries, providing medical and rehabilitation services, including prosthetic limbs, assistive devices, and other necessary appliances. · Provide preventive care and treatment services, including genetic counselling, laboratory testing and analysis for the early detection of disease, and essential immunizations, and establish a monitoring system for the early detection, registration, and follow-up of congenital disabilities. · Conduct disability diagnosis and assessment through competent medical committees and determine the degree of incapacity used to identify the categories of persons with disabilities and special needs covered by support measures under relevant laws and regulations, including allowances and full-time helpers.
3	Ministry of Education	· Establish the Special Education Section within the Directorate-General for Public Education, with four divisions: the Division for Special Needs, the Division for Information, the Division for Diagnostic Psychological Testing and Assessment, and the Division for Gifted and Talented Children, to promote integrated and inclusive education and early diagnosis. · Expand special education classes in mainstream schools, develop curricula for persons with disabilities and special needs, provide essential equipment free of charge to support their education and schooling, and supply qualified teaching and technical personnel.
4	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	· Train specially qualified teaching and technical personnel to work with all categories of persons with disabilities and special needs · Reserve one place in each post-graduate specialization for persons with disabilities and special needs.
5	Ministry of Transport	· Provide safe and secure access to public transport for persons with disabilities and those accompanying them · Require tourism companies to provide easy transport designed specifically for persons with disabilities and special needs, and ensure that persons with disabilities and special needs receive a twice-yearly reduction of 50% on airfares.

6	Ministry of Youth and Sports	・Establish and support sports centres and clubs with the aim of providing opportunities for persons with disabilities and special needs to engage in sports activities, and incorporate sports and recreational programmes and activities into programmes run by institutions, centres, and schools working in the field of disability. ・Promote the participation of athletes with disabilities and special needs in national and international sports events and conferences, including the Paralympic Games.

Source: Prepared by the study team based on the State Party's Report

<Kurdistan Regional Government（KRI）>

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), a separate legal framework on the rights of persons with disabilities is applied, with attention to its consistency with the CRPD. The Council for the Care and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs, established under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) of the Kurdistan Regional Government (hereinafter referred to as "KRG"), plays a central role. The Council includes the Directors-General for Social Welfare and Development in each governorate, enabling policy decision-making and implementation at the local level to be operated in an integrated manner. In addition, local administrations function as implementing bodies, with the relevant directorates in each governorate directly responsible for operating facilities and providing services for persons with disabilities.

<National Coordination Committee>

The Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs was established under Law No. 38 of 2013 and is positioned as the institution responsible for promoting and coordinating domestic implementation under Article 33 of the CRPD. While it has aspects similar to national coordination committees in other countries, in that it coordinates and oversees disability policy, it also functions as an implementing body, including by registering persons with disabilities and issuing disability identification cards, managing allowances for full-time caregivers, and determining application requirements. OPDs and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had criticized the Commission for functioning more as an implementing body than as a coordination mechanism with full independence in policy coordination, monitoring, and oversight, and for the insufficient participation of persons with disabilities in the Commission. In response, the 2024 legal amendment, Law No. 11 of 2024, introduced eight new seats on the Board of Directors for persons with disabilities and persons with special needs, thereby representing an institutional improvement in participation by persons with disabilities. However, the amendment did not separate the Commission's coordination and implementation functions,

and the transition to a purely coordinating body with full independence has not been achieved.

Name	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs
Committee members	・ Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson ・ Representative of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers ・ Representatives of 12 ministries: Finance; Planning; Defence; Trade; Justice; Interior; Education; Health; Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works; Higher Education and Scientific Research; Youth and Sports; and Transport ・ Representatives of five public institutions: the Popular Mobilization Forces (Hashd al-Shaabi); the Federal Public Service Council; the Baghdad Municipality; the KRG; and the High Commission for Human Rights ・ Eight representatives of persons with disabilities and persons with special needs ・ Three physicians specializing in disability or children with disabilities
Roles and implementation status	・ Coordinate policies and legal development: formulate general policies on the rights of persons with disabilities and propose budget plans, draft laws, awareness-raising programmes, and training programmes. ・ Promote employment and work: propose employment and job placement policies for persons with disabilities. ・ Coordinate with and monitor relevant ministries: supervise and monitor implementation requirements for the provision of education, health, rehabilitation, and other services. ・ Perform implementation functions: approve criteria for issuing identification cards to persons with disabilities, manage allowances for full-time caregivers, and provide direct services and benefit administration.

<Independent Institution>

The High Commission for Human Rights, an independent national human rights institution established to protect and promote human rights in Iraq, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of international human rights treaties. It also serves as an independent monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the CRPD.

<Local Government Administration>

Governorates under the federal government's jurisdiction have clear legal obligations under Law No. 11 of 2024 to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities and promote their

inclusion. Governors and governorate administrations are required to implement concrete measures, including allocating budget priority to projects for persons with disabilities, allocating at least 5% of residential land plots to persons with disabilities, establishing dedicated service windows for administrative procedures, and ensuring accessibility. Governorate councils are also responsible for promoting the social integration of persons with disabilities by enacting local regulations. In addition, governorate branches and subcommittees at the district and subdistrict levels have been established under the central Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs and are responsible for implementing and coordinating policies at the local level.

2-2. Laws and Policies on Disability[10]

In Iraq, even before the ratification of the CRPD in 2013, relevant laws had been enacted in the fields of labour, welfare and health, such as the Social Welfare Act of 1980 and the Public Health Act of 1981. Furthermore,the 2005 Constitution established the foundation for guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities. In the federal government, Law No. 38 of 2013, enacted in the same year as Iraq's ratification of the CRPD, and its amendment, Law No. 11 of 2024, constitute the core legal framework in the disability sector. In the KRI, meanwhile, its own Act concerning the rights of persons with disabilities was enacted earlier, in 2011, and its amendment, Act No. 8 of 2021, now serves as the central legal framework in the disability sector.

As different legal systems coexist at the national and regional levels, social security benefit amounts and various exemption measures equivalent to those under federal law may not always be applied in the KRI. These differences between systems are one factor contributing to confusion among persons with disabilities.

Basic law on the rights of persons with disabilities

Title	Iraqi Constitution
Year of enactment	2005
Overview	Article 32 provides that the State is responsible for ensuring the care and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and persons with special needs, and for promoting their integration into society. It also establishes the right to work (article 22), the right to receive medical and health services (article 31), and the right to education (article 34) as rights of all citizens.

[10] Unless otherwise indicated, the information is based on the State Party's Report and IADO (2024).

Title	Law No. 38 of 2013, "Law for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs"
Year of enactment	2013
Overview	Iraq's first comprehensive law on guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities, enacted following Iraq's ratification of the CRPD. It provides for the establishment of employment quotas for persons with disabilities, and sets out the basic framework for social participation and livelihood support for persons with disabilities, including the promotion of inclusive education, the assignment of full-time caregivers for persons with severe disabilities, and the payment of their salaries at State expense.

Title	Law No. 11 of 2014, "Social Protection Act"
Year of enactment	2014
Overview	Establishes a social assistance system, including the provision of social protection allowances, for persons living in poverty and socially vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities, with the aim of improving their standard of living.

Title	Law No. 11 of 2024 (First Amendment to Law No. 38 of 2013, "Law for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs")
Year of enactment	2024
Overview	Amends Law No. 38 of 2013 with the aim of strengthening the framework for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Act includes provisions on employment quotas for persons with disabilities, the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to promote inclusive education, allowances for full-time caregivers of persons with severe disabilities, quotas for persons with disabilities in postgraduate education and exemption from age limits, and the provision of accessibility in buildings and facilities. It also expands various support measures, including exemptions from customs duties and taxes for persons with disabilities and OPDs, and a 50% reduction in air fares for full-time caregivers.

Title	Act No. 22 of 2011, "Act Concerning the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq" (KRI)[11]
Year of enactment	2011
Overview	Establishes a legal framework specific to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) governing the rights and privileges of persons with disabilities and

[11] Kurdistan Parliament–Iraq (2011) *Law No. 22 of 2011 on the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Special Needs in the Kurdistan Region–Iraq.* and SHEYAW (2024*) The Recent Disability Legislation in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).*

	special needs. The Act promotes social integration and guarantees access to healthcare, education, rehabilitation and vocational training, while also providing support measures such as monthly allowances for registered persons with disabilities. It further provides for a 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities in the public sector and introduces measures to promote their employment in the private sector, including a scheme under which the Government covers half of an employee's salary for a period of three months.

Title	Act No. 8 of 2021 (First Amendment to Act No. 22 of 2011, "Act Concerning the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq") (KRI)[12]
Year of enactment	2021
Overview	Amends Act No. 22 of 2011 by revising provisions based on the medical model of disability and strengthening its alignment with the CRPD. The Act introduces new measures, including the establishment of special programmes for persons with disabilities within educational programmes, the obligation of private-sector employers to employ a specified number of persons with disabilities according to their capacities, with the Government covering half of their salaries for up to three years, and the recognition of the right of persons with disabilities to obtain a driving licence in accordance with prescribed guidelines.

Other major laws related to the rights of persons with disabilities include the following.

Title	Compulsory Education Act No. 118 of 1976
Year of enactment	1976
Overview	Provides for compulsory education for children between the ages of 6 and 15 and free primary education. Article 9, as amended in 1987, provides for the establishment and expansion of special education classes in mainstream primary schools for children with disabilities, including children with learning difficulties, visual impairments and hearing impairments.

Title	Labour Law No. 37 of 2015
Year of enactment	2015
Overview	Article 8 prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on health status, social status and other grounds, including disability, in all aspects of vocational training, recruitment and conditions of employment, and guarantees equal opportunity and treatment.

[12] SHEYAW (2024)

Title	Pension and Social Security Law for Workers, No. 18 of 2023[13]
Year of enactment	2023
Overview	Replaces Act No. 39 of 1971, which had been in force for approximately 50 years, and entered into force in December 2023. The Act provides for the payment of disability pensions to persons with disabilities who have lost 30% or more of their capacity for work, the payment of lump-sum compensation, and the amount of allowances for full-time caregivers of persons with severe disabilities. Compared with the previous Act, the eligibility requirements for benefits and the scope of compensation for persons with disabilities have been significantly expanded.

Disability Policies

Title	National Disability Inclusion Strategy for Children and Young People 2026-2030[14]
Year of enactment	2026
Overview	A comprehensive national framework jointly developed by MOLSA and the United Nations Children's Fund (hereinafter referred to as "UNICEF") to ensure that children and young people with disabilities can equally enjoy their rights to health, education and social protection. Through improved digital access, the promotion of inclusive education, and the establishment of monitoring mechanisms in cooperation with OPDs, the framework aims to remove structural barriers that prevent their full participation in society.

2-3. Measures on Disability [15]

1) Healthcare

According to the State Party's Report, article 31 of the Constitution and the Public Health Act No. 89 of 1981 guarantee all citizens the right to healthcare services. The Report explains that primary healthcare is provided free of charge throughout Iraq and caters for the specific requirements of persons with disabilities. There are 21 rehabilitation centres, 19 prosthetics and plastic supports centres, and 2 hospitals for spinal cord injuries throughout Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and 3 rehabilitation hospitals are under construction. As evidence of service provision, the Report states that there were 394,962 users of health centres and 21,841 users of prosthetic centres in 2013. The number of medical aids

[13] Ministry of Justice (Iraq) (2023) *Workers' Retirement and Social Security Law No. 18 of 2023. Iraqi Official Gazette No. 4734.*

14 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Iraq. (2025) *Iraq Launches the National Disability Inclusion Strategy for Children and Young People 2026–2030.*https://www.unicef.org/iraq/press-releases/iraq-launches-national-disability-inclusion-strategy-children-and-young-people（Accessed: February 17, 2026）

[15] Unless otherwise indicated, the information is based on the State Party's Report, the Concluding Observations, the Iraqi Official Gazette (2013), and the Ministry of Justice (Iraq) (2024).

and appliances supplied increased from 29,631 in 2012 to 33,232 in 2014. In addition, the number of prostheses supplied in 2014 amounted to 2,229 upper limbs, 205 lower limbs, and 25,326 supports. As a specific initiative in the KRI, autism centres were opened in the three governorates in 2010. In cooperation with the Ministries of Health and Education in the KRI, these centres provide healthcare and rehabilitation services for children.

However, despite the existence of such facilities and records of equipment provision, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in its concluding observations, expressed concern that many persons with disabilities, particularly persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, children with disabilities, persons with disabilities living in rural areas and persons with disabilities who are internally displaced[16], have insufficient access to healthcare services, health facilities and medical equipment. It also identified as issues the fact that information on healthcare is not provided in formats accessible to persons with disabilities, and that medical and paramedical staff are insufficiently trained on the rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, particularly for women and girls with disabilities, physical, financial, and attitudinal barriers exist, including the considerable distances to healthcare centres. As a regional issue, the lack of rehabilitation services in the centre and south of Iraq is particularly pronounced, while in the KRI, despite an increase in the number of persons with disabilities due to conflict-related injuries, medical and other basic services remain severely lacking.

In response to these challenges, the federal government strengthened and clarified its responsibilities regarding healthcare for persons with disabilities through Law No. 11 of 2024. The law provides that the role of the Ministry of Health includes providing preventive and therapeutic services for genetic counselling and early detection, providing medical and psychological rehabilitation, providing primary healthcare for women with disabilities, including during pregnancy and childbirth, providing healthcare services free of charge for persons with disabilities, and covering the costs of treatment inside and outside the country. It should be noted that, although the terminology regarding the provision of primary healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period was clarified, no new gender-related provisions or substantive amendments have been identified.

2) Education

According to the State Party's Report, the Compulsory Education Act No. 118 of 1976 provides that primary education is guaranteed for all children. Law No. 38 of 2013 also

[16] As a result of the fighting against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other factors, there are more than one million internally displaced persons in Iraq. Of these, approximately 100,000 internally displaced persons live in camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) in northern Iraq. https://www.euaa.europa.eu/coi-report-iraq-country-focus, https://www.unhcr.org/iq/internally-displaced-people（Accessed: 26 April 2026）

provides that primary and secondary education of all types shall be ensured for persons with disabilities and special needs, based on their capacities and the availability of programmes in special education, integrated and inclusive education, and parallel education.

Under this legal framework, in the federal government, education for children with disabilities is provided mainly in specialized educational institutions corresponding to the type of disability and in special education classes in mainstream schools, which are overseen by the Special Education Section of the Directorate-General for Public Education of the Ministry of Education. In the 2013/14 school year, there were 1,249 schools with special education classes, attended by approximately 10,000 children with disabilities. In the KRI, education for children with disabilities is reported to be provided in special institutes and institutes for persons with hearing and speech impairments, among others, with 930 students enrolled in the 2014/15 school year. However, a plan is also being implemented to integrate persons with special education needs into schools.

However, according to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) (2018), the school attendance rate of students with disabilities aged 5 to 14 was only 44.4%, substantially lower than the attendance rate of children without disabilities in the same age group (89.3%). In addition, according to the World Bank (2024), as of the 2017/18 school year, mainstream schools with special education classes accounted for only 2% of all schools, and the shortage of educational facilities and equipment remains a major challenge.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted that students with disabilities face barriers in accessing education, including the need to travel long distances, poor transportation, a lack of teachers trained in inclusive education and other relevant areas, and a lack of accessible curricula. It also expressed concern that, under the Compulsory Education Act, many children with disabilities are educated mostly in segregated special education classes, and recommended that prompt measures be taken to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to inclusive, high-quality, and free education.

In response to these challenges, the Iraq Education Strategy (2022–2031) identifies improving educational support for children with disabilities as one of its strategic objectives, including developing disability-friendly infrastructure and providing means of transportation to school, such as school buses. In addition, a conditional cash transfer scheme is being considered for socially marginalized learners, including children with disabilities.

The federal government strengthened its responsibilities regarding the education of persons with disabilities through Law No. 11 of 2024. The law clearly defines the roles of the Ministry of Education, responsible for primary and secondary education, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, responsible for universities and postgraduate

education.

With regard to the Ministry of Education, the law requires the provision of special education, inclusive education, or a combination of both, at all levels from kindergarten to secondary education, according to the abilities of children with disabilities and special needs. It also provides for the free provision of accessible educational materials and learning environments, including Braille, sign language, audio materials, large print and Easy Read versions; the relaxation of age restrictions for enrolment in primary school, allowing admission up to the age of 12; the provision of free enrolment quotas in private schools; the establishment of specialized centres that provide preparatory education according to the type of disability; and the assignment of qualified teaching and educational staff.

With regard to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the law requires the allocation of special admission seats for students with disabilities in postgraduate studies and the exemption of age requirements, the provision of scholarships in private universities, and the establishment of inclusive educational environments through reasonable accommodation and communication methods such as sign language.

3) Gender

According to the State Party's Report, the federal government ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as "CEDAW") in 1986, and Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before the law without discrimination on the basis of sex. The following national strategies have also been developed to advance the status of women and prevent violence:

- National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Iraq 2014–2018: a national strategy aimed at comprehensively promoting gender equality and women's empowerment by advancing women's education, health, economic participation and political participation.
- National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women in Iraq 2013–2017: a strategy for systematically promoting measures centered on the prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence, protection of victims, development of the legal framework and strengthening the response capacity of relevant institutions.
- National Strategy to Develop the Situation of Women in the Kurdistan Region 2013–2019: a strategy for comprehensively promoting education, employment, the legal framework, measures against violence and other initiatives in the KRI, with a view to improving the social and economic status of women and achieving gender equality.
-

The federal government established a sectoral committee in 2009, which has reviewed

legislation with a view to eliminating discrimination against women and made recommendations concerning protection from domestic violence. In addition, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs have conducted awareness-raising and training in all governorates on women's human rights, including those of women with disabilities. The Department of Women's Welfare of MOLSA provides allowances to women without a male provider, women with disabilities and non-working women, and works to build women's capacities, achieve women's empowerment and create employment opportunities. The KRI has established the Higher Committee on Violence against Women.

Nevertheless, UN Women[17] has pointed out that women in Iraq have low-income levels and face disadvantages in access to education, employment and adequate housing. It also notes that the impact of conflict on women has been severe, leading not only to displacement and increased insecurity, but also to an increase in the number of widows and female-headed households, which account for approximately 10% of all households.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted the lack of mainstreaming of a gender perspective in disability-specific policies and of a disability perspective in gender-related legislation and policies, and called for these frameworks to be reviewed accordingly. The Committee also pointed out the need to strengthen measures to combat discrimination against women with disabilities, given that they face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination based on factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and geographical location. The Committee expressed concern about violence against persons with disabilities, particularly women and children with disabilities, including gender-based violence, and about the lack of information on the prosecution of perpetrators and on redress mechanisms available to victims. It therefore recommended that effective measures be taken to address these issues.

4) Vocational Training and Employment

According to the State Party's Report, Article 22 of the Constitution guarantees the right to work for all citizens, and the Labour Law also provides for equality of employment opportunities and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination. Under federal Law No. 38 of 2013 provides that MOLSA is responsible for ensuring persons with disabilities have equal opportunities for employment in accordance with their capacities. The Act also requires that 5% of all public-sector jobs be allocated to persons with disabilities[18]. In the mixed sector, enterprises employing between 30 and 60 workers are required to employ at least one person

[17] United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) (n.d.) *UN Women in Iraq.* https://iraq.unwomen.org/en/about-us/un-women-in-iraq（Accessed: February 17, 2026）

[18] While the State Party's Report refers to a 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities under Law No. 38 of 2013, Council of Ministers Decision No. 205 of 2013 explains that the employment obligation for persons with disabilities in the public sector is 3%, indicating a discrepancy in the figures.

with a disability, while enterprises employing more than 60 workers are required to ensure that persons with disabilities account for 3% of their total workforce. In the private sector, employment of persons with disabilities is encouraged. Failure to comply with these obligations is subject to a fine of 500,000 Iraqi dinars (hereinafter referred to as "IQD") (approximately JPY 60,000)[19]. In the KRI, Act No. 22 of 2011 also provides a 5% employment quota in the public sector and establishes a system under which the Government covers half of the salary of persons with disabilities employed in the private sector for up to three months[20].

As part of measures to support employment and improve the livelihoods of persons with disabilities, MOLSA provides loans of up to IQD 3 million (approximately JPY 360,000) through the community-based rehabilitation programme. It also supports the employment of persons with disabilities through vocational training at vocational rehabilitation institutes, employment in workshops and producer associations, and the search for job opportunities in other sectors. Under the supervision of MOLSA, protected workshops for persons with severe disabilities and producers' cooperatives for persons with disabilities who are able to work are also operated, providing transport, employment suited to their capacities, healthcare, recreational activities and other services.

Additionally, MOLSA operates a digital platform to support job-seekers' access to employment opportunities, including persons with disabilities. The platform enables job-seekers to register and provides information on job vacancies and vocational training[21].

Under Law No. 11 of 2024, the employment-related provisions were amended. With regard to the 5% employment obligation for persons with disabilities in the public sector, the scope of the obligation was clarified to cover "ministries, entities not affiliated with ministries, public companies, and their contractors," and to include contract employees and daily workers. In addition, private-sector companies, like mixed-sector companies, are required to employ at least one person with a disability if they have 30 to 60 employees, and to employ persons with disabilities representing 3% of their total workforce if they have more than 60 employees. Investment projects under the National Investment Commission and investment authorities are also required to employ persons with disabilities for 3% of the total number of workers. In addition, preferential measures were introduced for private- and mixed-sector companies that comply with the employment quota, allowing a 1% tax exemption on the annual tax amount for each person with a disability employed, up to a maximum of 3%.

However, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted the absence of

[19] According to the JICA rate for March 2026, 1 IQD is equivalent to JPY 0.120970.
[20] Kurdistan Parliament–Iraq (2011)
[21] MOLSA（https://mihan.dev/Website/About（Accessed: February 17, 2026））

regulations to implement the role of MOLSA set out in Law No. 38 of 2013, the fact that employment quotas have not been effectively fulfilled, and the lack of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities in the workplace in both the public and private sectors. It also recommended strengthening efforts to support entrepreneurship, vocational training and access to loans for persons with disabilities, as well as introducing specific employer incentives to hire persons with disabilities. Human Rights Watch (2024) also pointed out that nationwide statistics on the employment situation of persons with disabilities have not been developed and that monitoring systems remain insufficient; that the employment rate of persons with disabilities in the public sector in the KRI remained at approximately 2% as of 2022; and that fines for employers who failed to comply with the employment quotas stipulated in Law No. 38 of 2013 had not, in practice, been applied[22].

5) Social Security, Social Service for Persons with Disabilities

According to the State Party's Report, article 30 of the Constitution guarantees social and health security to all citizens in the event of older age, sickness, incapacity for work and other circumstances. Law No. 38 of 2013 provides that persons with disabilities are entitled to exemption from taxation on 10% of their income and to a monthly cash benefit proportional to the disability rating.

Under Law No. 38 of 2013 and the Social Protection Law (Law No. 11 of 2014), eligible persons with disabilities receive a monthly cash benefit, namely the social protection allowance. According to an interview with the representative of IADO[23],eligible persons with disabilities receive a monthly cash benefit, namely the social protection allowance. According to an interview with the representative of IADO, social protection benefits mainly target persons living in poverty who meet certain conditions, such as unemployed persons, widows and persons with disabilities. With regard to disability, it is an essential requirement for eligibility that the medical committee of the Ministry of Health determine the person as having an "impairment rate of 75% or higher." The allowance is 120,000 IQD (approximately JPY 15,000) per month for a single person, and for households with a spouse and/or children, up to three dependents, an additional 50,000 IQD (approximately JPY 6,000) is provided for each dependent. According to UNICEF (2023)[24], the amount of social protection benefits varies by household size, and the maximum amount differs by the sex of the head of household. Specifically, it ranges from 100,000 IQD to 225,000 IQD (approximately JPY 12,000

[22] Human Rights Watch (2024) *Iraqis with Disabilities Excluded from Jobs. https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/06/04/iraqis-disabilities-excluded-jobs*

[23] Based on written interviews conducted with Mr. Moaffak Alkhafaji, the representative of IADO, from 24 March to 5 April 2026.

[24] UNICEF (2023) *Sector Financing Review: Social Protection in Iraq.*

to JPY 28,000) for female-headed households, and from 100,000 IQD to 175,000 IQD (approximately JPY 12,000 to JPY 22,000) for male-headed households. Meanwhile, in the KRI, under Law No. 22 of 2011, persons with disabilities recognized as eligible for assistance receive 150,000 IQD per month[25], and at the time of the State Party's Report, a total of 107,655 persons were reported to have received this benefit.

In addition, under the Workers' Pension and Social Security Law, if a worker becomes fully disabled as a result of a work injury, a full work-injury pension is paid, calculated at 80% of the average wage in the last year of employment. Where the remaining disability is equivalent to 30% or more of full disability, a partial work-injury pension is paid according to the disability rate, calculated on the basis of the full work-injury pension. Where the remaining disability is less than 30% of full disability, a lump-sum compensation is paid, calculated by multiplying the disability rate by an amount equal to two years of the full work-injury pension.[26]

Law No. 11 of 2024 explicitly provides that monthly cash benefits for persons with disabilities shall be paid under the Social Protection Law, regardless of age. It also provides that, based on proposals from the relevant authorities, the Council of Ministers may reconsider increasing the amount of benefits, and that where some household members receive other salaries, the entire benefit shall not be suspended, but only the portion corresponding to those household members shall be suspended. The full-time caregiver system was also expanded, including by increasing the allowance for full-time caregivers who are not public employees to 250,000 IQD (approximately JPY 30,000), allowing this allowance to be combined with other social assistance, and allowing payments for caring for more than one person with a disability.

In addition, the State Party's Report notes that persons with disabilities who are determined by the competent medical committee to require continuous assistance are entitled to a full-time personal caregiver at government expense. The Report also states that taxes and customs duties are exempted from the import of individual and collective means of transport for persons with disabilities, and that housing costs for persons with disabilities are reduced by 75% under public housing programmes.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expressed concern about the insufficient level of social protection allocations for persons with disabilities, the reliance on medical certificates for access to such benefits, and delays in issuing the certificates required

[25] According to an interview with the representative of IADO, the amount is approximately 100,000 IQD per month (approximately JPY 12,000), for employed persons such as public employees, and approximately 150,000 IQD per month (approximately JPY 18,000), for unemployed persons.

[26] Ministry of Justice (Iraq) (2023). The State Party's Report states that, under Act No. 39 of 1971, "workers who suffer a work injury and whose incapacity rating is 35% or more are eligible to receive a partial work-injury pension.

for persons with disabilities to receive such allocations. It also noted the significant lack of services to support independent living in the community, the determination of beneficiaries of full-time assistance based on the medical model, and the reportedly lengthy assessment process. In particular, with regard to persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, the Committee pointed out that, in some cases, the full-time assistant is chosen by a guardian, and that it is unclear whether there is a mechanism to ensure that the services are provided and controlled in accordance with the will of the persons with disabilities themselves.

According to an interview with Sheyaw Organization for Youth and Vulnerable People Development (hereinafter referred to as the "Sheyaw Organization"), a support organization, conducted on 6 April 2026, medical centres responsible for diagnosing disabilities in the three governorates of the KRI (Erbil, Duhok and Sulaymaniyah) were closed in 2023. Since then, persons who have become disabled in the region have been unable to receive a diagnosis and, consequently, have not been able to receive social protection allowances. Furthermore, due to the government's chronic budget shortages, monthly payments have been delayed, and the system has not been properly implemented in practice.

6) Transportation and Urban Development (including accessible urban planning)

According to the State Party's Report, pursuant to Circular No. 38832 of 2011, issued by the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, the requirements of persons with disabilities must be taken into account in building design and project implementation. Such requirements include wheelchair access, conveniently located information desks, dedicated lifts, and an information officer designated to assist persons with disabilities. Pursuant to Circular No. 7306, issued by the same Secretariat on 23 February 2012, information offices in government departments are required to reserve seats for persons with disabilities by displaying stickers showing the International Symbol of Access. They are also required to provide mobility aids and easy access for visitors with disabilities; stationery materials and photocopying facilities; means of communicating from the information office with the department sections they are visiting or of sending for officers to help them attend to their business; and additional adjustments to facilitate the process. In addition, the Secretariat has issued directives to all State institutions to ensure the safety and comfort of older persons and persons with disabilities by providing ramps, corridor handrails, information and directional signs, natural ventilation, skylights and gardens, wheelchairs, toilet facilities adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities, and parking facilities for persons with disabilities.

With regard to mobility, the Ministry of the Interior enables government vehicles used to transport persons with disabilities to move more easily through traffic by permitting them to use the lanes reserved for military vehicles. Law No. 38 of 2013 also provides that the Ministry of

Transport is responsible for ensuring free, safe and secure access to public transport for persons with disabilities and those accompanying them; requiring tourism companies to provide at least one mode of easy transport designed specifically for persons with disabilities; and ensuring that persons with disabilities receive a twice-yearly reduction of 50% on air fares.

With support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other partners, efforts are also being made to promote accessible construction through accessibility audits for the construction and renovation of public facilities such as community centres, schools and health centres, as well as through training for engineers and other technical personnel. In addition, practical standards are being developed through the preparation of a toolkit on accessible construction, which presents national standards in Iraq, examples of bills of quantities, model designs and other relevant materials[27].

Meanwhile, in its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expressed concern that barriers remain for persons with disabilities in accessing public buildings, facilities and transportation, and called for the establishment of complaints procedures and monitoring mechanisms, in addition to the implementation of national legislation and standards. It also highlighted the need to incorporate accessibility requirements and the concept of universal design into legislation, policies and programmes related to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. The Committee identified as an issue the difficulties faced by persons with disabilities in accessing affordable, high-quality mobility aids, equipment and medical devices, and recommended measures to make such devices available at affordable costs or free of charge. In addition, it noted that, in the fields of education, health, justice and elections, factors such as poor transportation, long distances to facilities, and physical barriers at courts and polling stations prevent persons with disabilities from exercising their rights.

In response to these challenges, Law No. 11 of 2024 significantly strengthened and specified the responsibilities of ministries and relevant institutions regarding physical accessibility. For example, it requires the Ministry of Transport to enable persons with disabilities and special needs to use public transportation free of charge and to ensure that tourism operators provide accessible means of transportation. It also requires the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works and the Mayoralty of Baghdad to apply accessibility requirements by renovating existing public institution buildings, installing tactile and visual guidance indicators, such as tactile paving blocks, and removing physical barriers on public roads. Furthermore, it provides that the National Investment Commission and Investment Commissions must not grant design approval, building permits, or occupancy permits for buildings and facilities providing public services unless they comply with

[27] International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2021) *Accessible Construction Toolkit Version 1. and* International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2022) *IOM Iraq Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022–2024.*

accessibility requirements.

7) Information Accessibility

According to the State Party's Report, the Constitution guarantees freedom of postal, telegraphic, telephonic, electronic and other forms of communication and correspondence. Law No. 38 of 2013 also provides that the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice are responsible for providing assistive technologies, including sign language translation, to persons with disabilities, to help them defend their rights or equalize their status with the other party in legal proceedings. The Replies to the List of Issues by the government (2019)[28] report that curricula for persons with visual impairments[29] and Law No. 38 of 2013 have been printed in Braille, and that a Sign Language Division has been established within the Commission for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs to assist persons with hearing impairments in legal proceedings.

However, in its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted that the provision of accessible information remains insufficient. Specifically, it expressed concern that Iraqi sign language is not officially recognized; that vocational training programmes in sign language interpretation are insufficient; that the involvement of persons with disabilities in the teaching of sign language and the certification of sign language interpreters is limited; that information is insufficiently provided in accessible formats, including Easy Read, plain language, captioning, sign language, Braille, audio-description, tactile communication, and augmentative and alternative communication; and that many television programmes and websites are not accessible. The Committee therefore recommended the official recognition of Iraqi sign language, the establishment of a mechanism to certify the quality of sign language interpretation services, the promotion of communication and access to ICT through accessible formats and means, and the improvement of accessibility of television programmes, government websites and online services provided by private entities. It also called for the provision of information in accessible formats in the fields of justice, healthcare and elections.

In response to these challenges, Law No. 11 of 2024 introduced a new definition of "communication and language," explicitly referring to text display, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia, augmentative and alternative communication, plain language, reading aloud, sign language, accessible information and communication technologies, and other means. The law also provides for the provision or availability of means of communication and language in the fields of education, justice and

[28] Reply to List of Issues, CRPD/C/IRQ/Q/1/Add.1

[29] Although it states "Curricula for persons with visual impairments," no specific details are provided.

media. Furthermore, provisions were added requiring all ministries and relevant institutions to ensure sign-language interpretation and Braille support, thereby clarifying and expanding the State's responsibilities regarding information accessibility.

8) Disaster risk management

The Civil Defense Act No. 44 of 2013 provides the legal basis for ensuring the safety, health and protection of citizens from risks, including disasters and crises, in Iraq, and establishes the national framework for emergency and crisis management.

At the time of the submission of the State Party's Report, the Government of Iraq reported that it was strengthening preparedness for and responses to emergencies, crises and disasters through a USAID-supported primary healthcare project. It was also reported that, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, the Government was developing early warning and public alert systems accessible to persons with disabilities. At the time of submitting of the Replies to the List of Issues, the Ministry of the Interior was planning training programmes for persons with disabilities on fire safety procedures and warning systems.

The parallel report submitted by IADO (2018) noted that the Civil Defense Act, related rules and regulations, and Law No. 38 of 2013 contain no reference to accommodations necessary for rescuing persons with disabilities, placing them at greater risk than others in emergencies or disasters. The report also noted cases in which appropriate measures, taking into account the health and physical conditions of persons with disabilities, were not provided during humanitarian crises, such as internal displacement.

In its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expressed concern about the lack of individualized supports for persons with disabilities in Iraq's legal framework on disaster risk reduction and emergency response. It recommended that, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, national legislation, policies and programmes addressing situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies be disability-inclusive, and that continued efforts be made to ensure the accessibility of early warning and public warning systems. It also recommended strengthening services for persons with disabilities who are victims of armed conflict and taking measures to facilitate their safe and voluntary return.

3. International Treaties and International Cooperation

3-1. Status of Implementation Following the Ratification of the CRPD[30]

The Government of Iraq signed the CRPD in January 2012 and ratified it on 20 March 2013. It has not ratified the Optional Protocol. The State party's report was submitted to and received by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 19 August 2015. The Committee issued its List of Issues on 9 October 2018, and the Government of Iraq submitted its Replies to the List of Issues on 8 May 2019. Three parallel reports were submitted by civil society organizations in 2019[31]. The Committee's concluding observations were issued on 24 September 2019.

3-2. Status of Implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty[32]

The Government of Iraq acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty[33] on 23 April 2024. However, a monitoring report issued in February 2026 stated that, following ratification, nationwide reforms had not yet been achieved in the development of domestic legislation and the operation of relevant systems. The current Copyright Law does not contain provisions concerning persons with disabilities. Although disability-related legislation was amended by Law No. 11 of 2024, the amendments appear intended to bring the law closer into line with the CRPD and do not include provisions related to the Marrakesh Treaty. Accordingly, the existence and implementation status of specific systems that should be permitted under the Marrakesh Treaty remain unclear. These include the free conversion and provision by libraries of books and audiobooks into accessible formats, use without checking commercial availability, cross-border sharing of materials, operation without registration or additional record-keeping requirements, and application to persons with diverse disabilities, including dyslexia. All of these items are reported as "Unclear".

3-3. Initiatives on Disability Issues within SDG-related Policies

In relation to SDG-related policies, Iraq's Voluntary National Review (hereinafter referred to as "VNR") 2025 reports the following achievements and challenges contributing to individual SDG targets:

- Goal 4 (Quality Education): Only 8% of schools have infrastructure that meets the needs

[30] https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx（Accessed: February 17, 2026）

[31] The submitting organizations and dates of submission were Iraqi Al-Amal Association and Al-Namaa Center for Human Rights in May 2019, the Iraqi Association of Disability Organizations in July 2019 (*the document was prepared in 2018), and Minority Rights Group International in July 2019.

[32] International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA) (2026) *Marrakesh Treaty Implementation February 2026 Update.*

[33] An international framework that establishes limitations and exceptions under copyright law for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled, enabling the production and exchange of books in accessible formats, such as Braille, audio and digital formats, particularly across borders.

of students with disabilities, including accessible facilities, indicating a lack of physical accessibility.

- Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions): The VNR warns that the lack of reasonable accommodation and disregard for the rights of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, may trigger social tensions and conflict. It also points out the importance of the inclusion and protection of persons with disabilities as a prerequisite for sustainable peace.

In addition, among the disability-related indicators for Iraq published in the United Nations Statistics Division's SDG Indicators Database, publicly available data are limited. The only confirmed indicator is 1.3.1(d), "Proportion of persons with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefits." As of 2022, this proportion was reported at 31.9%.

3-4. Ratification of and Initiatives regarding Other International Treaties related to Disabilities and Development

The status of Iraq's ratification of international treaties related to disability and development is as follows:

- August 1986: CEDAW
- June 1994: Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter referred to as "CRC")

The CEDAW concluding observations (2026) note that women and girls with disabilities face disadvantages arising from both gender and disability, and stress the need to integrate these two perspectives across all policies and systems. In particular, they call for special attention to women with disabilities in rural areas, internally displaced women, and those belonging to minority communities. To promote the political and economic participation of women with disabilities, the observations emphasize introducing temporary special measures, such as quota systems and economic incentives; ensuring accessibility and reasonable accommodation across sectors; addressing data gaps; and securing their participation in policymaking.

The CRC concluding observations (2025) call for adopting a human rights-based approach to children with disabilities and for developing and implementing a comprehensive inclusion strategy that covers legal frameworks, social protection, education, and healthcare. In particular, they highlight the need to improve access to early support and services by introducing disability benefits for children, strengthening data collection, and establishing a disability assessment system that respects dignity. Furthermore, they recommend eliminating prejudice and stigma and creating an environment in which all children with disabilities can learn in mainstream schools.

3-5. International Cooperation on Disability[34]

The Government of Japan[35]

No assistance highly relevant to the disability sector has been implemented under technical cooperation, ODA loan, grant aid, or JICA Partnership Program.

Other development partners

<International organizations>

UNICEF[36]

- In collaboration with MOLSA and the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNICEF supported the development of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy for Children and Young People 2026–2030.
- In cooperation with the European Union (hereinafter referred to as the "EU"), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF implemented a pilot integrated child benefit with education assistance for vulnerable households in Duhok Governorate. Cash transfers of approximately USD 69 were provided quarterly to 1,483 households, supporting school attendance for more than 1,600 children, including children with disabilities.
- In collaboration with universities, UNICEF has developed and introduced disability-inclusive courses with universities for staff, social workers, and frontline workers to enhance disability awareness.
- With funding from the EU, UNICEF is jointly implementing the "Improved Teaching and Learning and Enhanced Educational Management (ITALEEM) program" (2024–2027) with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with the aim of promoting inclusive education. This program strengthens data collection and system design to make social welfare systems more accessible to families, including persons with disabilities.

International Labour Organization: ILO[37]

- In collaboration with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as "AICS"), UNICEF supported the establishment of the Iraqi National Network

[34] Project names are listed exactly as they appear in the original text. However, this does not apply in cases where there is no English name or the English name is unknown.

[35] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2023) *Country Development Cooperation Policy for the Republic of Iraq.*

[36] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) https://www.unicef.org/iraq/social-policy#programme、https://www.unicef.org/iraq/press-releases/iraq-launches-national-disability-inclusion-strategy-children-and-young-people、https://www.unicef.org/iraq/stories/supporting-parents-dream-seeing-their-children-excel-life（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[37] ILO (2025). *Launch of the Iraqi National Network for Employers Interested in Empowering and Employing Persons with Disabilities.* https://www.businessanddisability.org/news-feed/launch-iraqi-national-network-employers-interested-empowering-and-employing-persons（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

for Employers Interested in Empowering and Employing Persons with Disabilities under the Iraqi Federation of Industries. The network provides a platform for collaboration between the government and private sector to promote the employment of persons with disabilities through training on disability-inclusive employment, support for improving workplace accessibility, and the sharing of good practices.

World Health Organization: WHO[38]

- With financial support from other donors, WHO has provided health and rehabilitation services in conflict-affected areas. In 2018, WHO supported the Mosul Prosthetics and Rehabilitation Center to provide specialized medical care and rehabilitation services to more than 450 people who acquired disabilities as a result of conflict. WHO also distributed approximately 40,000 wheelchairs and other assistive devices across northern and western governorates to support the mobility of people affected by bombings and other conflict-related incidents.

United Nations Development Programme：UNDP[39]

- In collaboration with MOLSA and the United States Agency for International Development (hereinafter referred to as "USAID"), UNDP organized Iraq's first National Forum on the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in July 2024. Discussions focused on vocational rehabilitation, economic empowerment, the application of technology in education, and the integration of persons with disabilities into the labour market.

International Organization for Migration：IOM[40][41]

- IOM developed the "Accessible Construction Toolkit," which incorporates universal design principles into the construction and renovation of community and health facilities. The toolkit provides technical guidance to ensure accessibility from the design stage and is accompanied by training for engineers and construction professionals.
- IOM formulated the Iraq Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022–2024 and has promoted disability mainstreaming in humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and returnees, including through improved information accessibility and the provision of reasonable accommodation.

International Committee of the Red Cross: ICRC[42]

[38] United Nations Iraq (2018) *WHO supports access to assistive technologies for people with physical disabilities in Mosul.* https://iraq.un.org/en/170000-who-supports-access-assistive-technologies-people-physical-disabilities-mosul（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[39] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2024) *Empowering all abilities: Iraq's first forum for disability inclusion.* https://www.undp.org/arab-states/stories/empowering-all-abilities-iraqs-first-forum-disability-inclusion（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[40] International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2021)

[41] International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2022) *IOM Iraq Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022-2024.*

[42] International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2022) *Erbil: A new glimpse of hope, ICRC opens the largest Physical*

- In 2022, ICRC opened Iraq's largest physical rehabilitation centre in Erbil. The centre provides up to 6,000 persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, and refugees from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and three neighbouring governorates each year with services including prosthetic and orthotic devices, wheelchairs, mobility aids, livelihood support, vocational training, and psychosocial support.
- ICRC implements a prosthetics and orthotics training programme in collaboration with Erbil Polytechnic University.

<Bilateral Aid>

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit: GIZ[43]

- In cooperation with MOLSA, GIZ is implementing the project "Creating Inclusive Employment Prospects in Iraq" (2023–2027), which focuses on promoting employment and social inclusion for women and persons with disabilities.

In addition, donors such as USAID, the European Union (EU) and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) have provided financial support for disability-related projects implemented by international organizations.

<International NGO>

Humanity & Inclusion（formerly Handicap International）[44]

- Provides rehabilitation, psychosocial support, mobility support, strengthening of health facilities, and the provision of wheelchairs, prostheses and orthoses for conflict-affected persons.
- In cooperation with OPDs, promotes awareness-raising on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, improvement of accessibility, policy recommendations and advocacy activities.
- Implements initiatives in areas such as inclusive education, employment and electoral participation, with the aim of raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting their social participation.

Minority Rights Group International

- Has long been engaged in activities related to the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq, and has conducted research on the situation of the rights of persons

Rehabilitation Centre in Iraq. https://www.icrc.org/en/document/erbil-new-glimpse-hope-icrc-opens-largest-physical-rehabilitation-centre-iraq（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[43] GIZ (2023) *Creating inclusive employment prospects in Iraq*. https://www.giz.de/en/projects/employment-perspectives-refugees-idps-and-host-communities-iraq（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[44] HI (2024) *Country Card IRAQ 2024.*

with disabilities, submitting a parallel report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2019.

British Council[45]

- With EU funding, implemented the "Capacity Building in Primary and Secondary Education" programme (2017–2020), supporting improved access to education for children in vulnerable situations, including children with disabilities, curriculum and system reform, and capacity-building for teachers and administrators.

Save the Children[46]

- Implements activities in Iraq aimed at inclusive education and children's empowerment.
- In 2025, provided training on inclusive education to 23 representatives from the Ministry of Education and relevant institutions.
- Provides environmental education, life skills education and community-based learning activities for children, including children with disabilities.

[45] British Council Iraq (n.d.) EU Schools Program. https://iraq.britishcouncil.org/en/eu-schools-program（Accessed: February 18, 2026）

[46] Save the Children（https://www.facebook.com/savethechildreniraq/（Accessed: February 18, 2026））

4. Disability-related Organizations and Activities

4-1. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities[47]

Name of Organization	Overview of Activities
Iraqi Alliance of Disability (IADO) https://www.facebook.com/iadopress	A coalition that brings together OPDs in Iraq and is one of the leading civil society organizations dedicated to advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities. Through policy advocacy, monitoring the implementation of laws and regulations, and submitting parallel reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it conducts advocacy activities directed at the government. In addition, it is engaged in surveys on the living conditions of persons with disabilities, awareness-raising and capacity-building on rights, and collaboration with international organizations.
National Association for the Blinds Care in Iraq https://www.facebook.com/IRAQ1986iop.nb/	An organization that aims to establish the rights of persons with visual impairments and promote their social participation. As a member of the World Blind Union, it promotes the creation of accessible environments, equality of opportunity, and full inclusion in society.
Rozh Society Organization https://www.facebook.com/komalae.rozh?_rdc=1&_rdr#	An OPD mainly active in Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk Governorates. It implements comprehensive support programs for persons with disabilities, including improvements to living environments, promotion of social participation, and capacity-building, and also has a department specializing in disability sports. It also plays a leading role in disability networks and forums in the region.

4-2. Disability Support Organizations

Name of Organization	Overview of Activities
Sheyaw Organization for Youth and Vulnerable People Development https://sheyaw.org/	Established in 2019. The organization works to realize an inclusive society and expand employment opportunities by empowering vulnerable groups, including youth and persons with disabilities. It operates the "Yes We Can Network," a platform of 52 OPDs, with approximately 100,000 persons with disabilities of all disability types participating from across Iraq.
Iraqi Al-Amal Association https://iraqi-alamal.org/	Established in 1992. With a focus on human rights, gender, and peacebuilding, the organization promotes the rights and social inclusion of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. It has established the Al-Namaa Center

[47] IOM (2021), *Directory: Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Iraq*, provides contact information for 60 OPDs across 18 governorates in Iraq. This study introduces only selected organizations.

	for Human Rights as a specialized unit in the field of human rights, through which it conducts various research and advocacy activities, including the submission of reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

5. Barriers and Needs Faced by Persons with Disabilities

As described above, although legal provisions guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities have been developed mainly through Law No. 11 of 2024 and Law No. 8 of 2021 in the KRI, significant challenges remain in their implementation. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has pointed out that, in Iraq, there is a lack of understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities not only among government institutions, but also among institutions and service providers, and that, as a result, the implementation and enforcement of laws are not sufficiently complied with. In many cases, laws have also not been implemented due to the lack of detailed procedures and operational guidelines. In addition to constraints on resources and budget allocations, policy responses and monitoring mechanisms remain insufficient, and law enforcement has therefore remained superficial.

According to interviews with IADO, although various awareness-raising initiatives have been carried out to date, government institutions, parliament and society as a whole still tend to view disability as an object of charity and protection, and the understanding of persons with disabilities as rights holders has not yet sufficiently taken root. As a result, persons with disabilities are positioned as recipients of services, and their opportunities to participate proactively in the planning, implementation and monitoring of systems and services and to be involved in decision-making remain limited. It has therefore been pointed out that the international principle of "Nothing about us without us" has not been fully realized.

Furthermore, persons with disabilities themselves and their families often do not have sufficient understanding of their own rights or of the services available to them, making it difficult for them to exercise their rights or take action to seek their enforcement.

The following section describes the barriers and needs faced by persons with disabilities in each sector, based on the CRPD parallel report[48] and interviews with OPDs and support organizations[49].

5-1. Barriers to and Needs regarding Healthcare Services

The parallel reports identify the following barriers to persons with disabilities accessing healthcare services.

Lack of medical and health institutions and services: In rural and remote areas, there is a shortage of physical therapy centers (A). There are only 12 prosthetics and orthotics centers

[48] This chapter is based on the following parallel reports: (A) IADO (2018), (B) Iraqi Al-Amal Association and Al-Namaa Center for Human Rights (2019), and (C) Minority Rights Group International (2019).

[49] Written interviews were conducted with Mr. Moaffak Alkhafaji, the representative of IADO, from 24 March to 5 April 2026, and an online interview was conducted with Mr. Salar Ahmad, the representative of Sheyaw Organization, on 6 April 2026.

in the country, and there is also a shortage of specialized doctors and technicians (B). Although many of Iraq's minorities affected by the conflict are in urgent need of physical and emotional support, in areas where many minorities reside, there has been little progress in rebuilding infrastructure, including healthcare institutions, and the provision of government services is limited (C). There is a serious lack of appropriate care, rehabilitation and education for autism spectrum disorder (B). Since the medical institutions responsible for determining the degree of disability are concentrated in provincial capitals, access is difficult for persons with disabilities living in rural areas, and administrative delays are severe, with determination taking up to eight months (B).

Insufficient provision of assistive devices: The number of wheelchairs provided is limited, such as in the KRI, where the government distributes only 20 wheelchairs every two years (B). The procedure for obtaining wheelchairs is also complicated, and broken wheelchairs are not replaced by MOLSA (B).

Insufficient accommodation for persons with disabilities in medical and health institutions: Hospitals are not prepared to receive persons with disabilities, and healthcare workers have little experience in communicating with persons with disabilities (A). Due to communication problems, a case occurred in which a medicine completely different from the needs of persons with hearing impairments was prescribed (A). Hospitals and clinics lack special seats and accessible facilities for persons with disabilities (B).

High medical expenses: Even for medical services that are legally supposed to be free of charge, due to administrative delays and other factors, persons with disabilities in practice need to pay high medical expenses (A). The amount of social security benefits received by persons with disabilities makes it difficult for them to continuously pay the high cost of medicines, and due to the insufficient level of medical care in the country, they may have to travel abroad for treatment, which creates a heavy financial burden (C).

Detention and institutionalization of persons with disabilities: Article 495 of the Penal Code still reflects the idea that persons with mental and intellectual disabilities are regarded as a "threat to public safety," and fines or other penalties are imposed on persons who allow such persons to go out onto public roads (A). Convicted persons with mental disabilities may be placed in rooms similar to detention facilities inside hospitals or mental health facilities, where heavy iron doors are installed, chains and handcuffs are used, and electric shock treatment may also be administered (A). In some rural areas, families confine persons with disabilities inside the house, and in some cases tie them to a bed or window with iron chains or shackles; most of these cases involve persons with mental and intellectual disabilities (A).

In addition, according to an interview with the representative of IADO, although health services for pregnant women are provided at maternal and child health centers and other

facilities, there is no support specifically designed for pregnant women with disabilities. Moreover, a continuous follow-up system for children with disabilities from after birth to before school age has not been sufficiently established. In addition, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, hearing aids and other assistive devices are supposed to be provided free of charge through rehabilitation centres, but there are issues with their quality, and distribution has been suspended due to stock shortages. Prosthetics and orthotics are also supposed to be provided free of charge at 12 centers, but production and repair have been suspended for up to six years due to material shortages. Regarding food, basic items such as oil, sugar and rice are provided through the ration system, but this is not sufficient, and there is no support specifically targeting persons with disabilities.

In light of these issues, it is necessary to ensure a stable supply of medical equipment and prosthetics and orthotics through sufficient budget allocation, strengthen the functions of rehabilitation facilities, establish accessible means of transportation, and further establish an effective health insurance system.

5-2. Barriers to and Needs regarding Education

The parallel reports identify the following barriers faced by persons with disabilities accessing education.

Inadequate educational institutions and infrastructure: In schools and universities, physical accessibility is not sufficiently ensured, including stairs, sidewalks, inaccessible toilets and the lack of elevators, which constitute factors preventing students with disabilities from enrolling in school and accessing higher education (A, B and C). In rural areas and suburbs, educational services for children with disabilities are scarcely provided; schools are far away, the quality of buildings is poor, and access to means of transportation is lacking (B). A study in Mosul, Kirkuk and Dohuk found disparities in educational facilities across regions, particularly in Mosul and Kirkuk, where dedicated educational centers for children with disabilities are lacking and educational services for children with hearing and speech impairments are insufficient(C).

Lack of inclusive education: Education for children with disabilities is not provided as inclusive education; rather, it is provided in segregated classrooms within mainstream schools, where even the most basic visual aids are lacking (A).

Shortage of teachers, teaching materials and care: There is a lack of specialized and trained teachers, teaching materials and governmental support, which leads to restrictions on educational opportunities for persons with disabilities (B and C). Schools lack psychological and physical medical care, qualified staff and medical equipment for children with disabilities (B). Since educational institutions that provide education in minority

languages themselves are limited, for children and persons with disabilities belonging to minorities who wish to learn in their own language, the options for accessing and participating in formal educational institutions are severely limited (C).

Educational barriers by type of disability: There are specific and serious barriers depending on the type of disability. The number of special schools for students with visual impairments is extremely limited, and there is no secondary school curriculum (B). In addition, secondary school teachers do not use Braille and make students rely on memorization (B), and there has been a case in which reasonable accommodation, such as a specialized scribe, was not provided in an English examination (A). Students with hearing and speech impairments are also left behind, as there is no curriculum for them to graduate from primary school (B). In addition, persons with hearing impairments are not recognized as having completed primary education because of the simplified curriculum[50], and after graduation, they are forced to proceed to vocational education (A). Children with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder are excluded from regular education, and no one with such disabilities has reached higher education to date (A).

Multiple discrimination and social and institutional barriers: The stigma and stereotypes regarding disability that remain deeply rooted in Iraqi society are a major deterrent to enrolment in educational institutions, and also constitute a cause of withdrawal from school (C). In particular, girls with disabilities lack educational and employment opportunities at all levels (A and B).

Difficulties faced by internally displaced persons and refugees: Schools for children with disabilities in IDP camps are not accredited by the Ministry of Education (B). Children with disabilities among Syrian refugees living in refugee camps are also unable to attend public schools due to the lack of official documents and language barriers, and because there are no inclusive schools inside the camps, their access to education is severely restricted (A).

According to interviews with representatives of IADO and Sheyaw Organization, Law No. 11 of 2024 includes provisions to promote inclusive education, but it has not yet been effectively implemented. In practice, special education in segregated settings remains mainstream, with children's enrolment in facilities outside mainstream schools being determined by the disability diagnosis centers. One background factor is that educational institutions that accept children with hearing, visual, and physical impairments are limited to specialized institutions. Additionally, in relation to mainstream schools, accessible public transportation has not been developed, and school facilities have not been made sufficiently

[50] According to an interview with the representative of IADO in March 2026, under cooperation between IADO and the British Council, a very small number of persons with hearing impairments have been able to take the primary school graduation examination, but this remains an exceptional measure.

accessible, leaving access-related challenges in place. In addition, the low level of social acceptance of disability, including bullying and harassment, is also a factor creating a harsh educational environment for children with disabilities.

In light of these issues, comprehensive efforts are required to effectively implement inclusive education, including reviewing the system's operations and improving the physical, social and cultural learning environments in regular schools.

5-3. Barriers to and Needs regarding Employment

The parallel reports point out the following barriers related to the employment of persons with disabilities.

Non-compliance with employment quotas: The employment quotas for persons with disabilities stipulated by law are not sufficiently implemented in practice (B). To secure employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, it is necessary to implement relevant laws and regulations, monitor employment in the private sector, and adopt strategic plans and budgetary measures to create employment opportunities (A and B).

Lack of employment opportunities in the public sector: In public sector recruitment, a medical examination is required, and the absence of physical, mental, sensory or intellectual disabilities is a condition. As a result, persons with disabilities are excluded from public posts (A).

Lack of employment opportunities in the private sector: Employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector is scarce due to stigma, discrimination and physical barriers to accessing workplaces (C), and employers do not prioritize the employment of persons with disabilities (B). It is also reported that discriminatory attitudes regarding the employment of persons with disabilities are reflected in internal regulations and practices, and that oppressive dismissals on the basis of disability are also seen (A).

Difficulties in maintaining employment: Working environments with reasonable accommodation have not been sufficiently established (A). In addition, the employment conditions of persons with disabilities often degrade in nature (B), and persons with disabilities are frequently placed in low-ranking positions (C).

Issues in vocational training: As of 2015, the total number of users of vocational rehabilitation facilities and workshops was only 389, which is extremely small compared with the scale of persons with disabilities in Iraq as a whole and the types of disabilities (A). The content of vocational training is also biased toward limited fields such as sewing, carpentry, electricity, pottery, bamboo work and weaving, and it is necessary to improve vocational training to expand the participation of persons with disabilities in the labor market (A and B).

According to an interview with the representative of IADO, employment opportunities for

persons with disabilities are insufficient in both the public and private sectors. There are also good practices, such as a company that employs around 30 youths with hearing impairments and has maintained their employment under good salary conditions over the past four years. However, in general, even persons with disabilities who have graduated from university face difficulties in finding employment. For this reason, efforts are needed to expand employment, such as granting tax incentives and preferential treatment in bidding and investment to companies that actively work to employ persons with disabilities. In addition, vocational training is insufficient in terms of content that leads to actual vocational practice, and after the completion of training, appropriate referrals to employment are not provided. As a result, trust in vocational training is low even among persons with disabilities.

In light of these issues, in order to promote the employment of persons with disabilities, it is necessary to establish monitoring systems and penalties regarding compliance with disability employment quotas, introduce incentives for good companies, raise awareness throughout society, improve the content of vocational training, and build an integrated support system that supports the transition from training to employment.

5-4. Barriers to and Needs regarding Transportation

The parallel reports point out the following barriers related to the mobility of persons with disabilities.

Lack of accessibility in public facilities and infrastructure: Public facilities, such as government offices, commercial facilities and residential complexes, are not designed with the use of persons with disabilities in mind, and their access is hindered (B). Schools and universities lack sufficient physical accessibility, including stairs, sidewalks, toilets and elevators, which prevents students with disabilities from accessing education (A, B and C).

Lack of public transportation and means of mobility within cities: The design of public roads and transportation does not comply with international standards and does not respond to the needs of persons with disabilities (B). Public transportation for persons with disabilities within cities is not provided (B). Especially in rural areas and minority areas, there is a shortage of means of transportation for persons with disabilities, which constitutes a serious impediment to their access to other services and rights (C).

Administrative regulations on vehicle import and ownership: While persons with disabilities are entitled to duty-free measures when importing vehicles, there are administrative regulations that prohibit the import of seven-seat vehicles and luxury cars. In addition, vehicles imported by using the duty-free measures may not be sold or have their ownership transferred for five years (B).

Mobility difficulties faced by displaced persons and persons in camps: In IDP camps,

facilities and conditions suitable for the mobility needs of persons with disabilities are not always in place, and in severe weather conditions such as flooding, restrictions on mobility become even more serious (C). There is also a lack of suitable sanitation facilities for persons with disabilities and safe spaces for women and girls (C).

Mobility and safety risks caused by mines and explosive remnants: There are large areas in Iraq where mines remain, which constitute a factor hindering safe mobility (B). Budget allocations to relevant institutions, such as demining centers, are insufficient, and this situation also contributes to the increase in the number of persons with disabilities (B).

In an interview with a representative of Sheyaw Organization, it was also noted that the lack of adequate public transportation makes it difficult for persons with disabilities who do not own cars to go out. In addition, in an accessibility check conducted by the organization in Erbil Governorate, one of the three governorates constituting the KRI, 99% of public facilities did not meet accessibility standards. In highly public facilities such as hospitals, schools, government offices and restaurants, some buildings have ramps installed to ensure accessibility. However, there are still obstacles to their use, such as ramps that are too steep or insufficient accommodation within the facilities.

In light of these issues, it is necessary to develop accessibility standards and strengthen their effective implementation.

5-5. Barriers to and Needs regarding Information Access

The parallel reports identify the following barriers to ensuring access to information for persons with disabilities.

Shortage of sign-language interpretation: Although Law No. 38 of 2013 provides for assistive technologies, including sign-language interpretation, in the field of justice, it does not sufficiently specify the requirements for sign-language interpreters or measures to ensure their quality (A). Experienced sign-language interpreters are limited, and there has, in fact been a case in which inappropriate interpretation almost caused disadvantage to a defendant with a hearing impairment (A). Since systems such as sign-language interpretation are not sufficiently established in government institutions, when persons with hearing impairments use hospitals, service providers or judicial institutions, they must request a sign-language interpreter from MOLSA, which creates a burden (A). Sign-language interpretation in television broadcasting is also limited, with sign-language interpretation in official news on Iraq Satellite TV provided for only one hour per day (A), and there is a need to expand sign language interpretation in news programs and other broadcasts (B).

Lack of access to information for persons with visual impairments: While computers with screen readers and devices equipped with Braille and audio technologies are important for

access to information by persons with visual impairments and others, they are not affordable for all persons with disabilities (A).

According to an interview with the representative of Sheyaw Organization, systems to ensure access to information and evacuation arrangements for persons with disabilities in security-related emergencies are currently not sufficiently in place. The organization plans to proceed with situation analysis and preparedness through the "Yes We Can Network," which it operates.

In light of these issues, it is necessary to develop systems and strengthen their effective implementation to ensure information accessibility, including in judicial and administrative procedures and emergency response.

5-6. Barriers and Needs regarding Gender

The parallel reports point out the following barriers related to persons with disabilities and gender.

Intersectional and multiple discrimination: Women and girls with disabilities face multiple forms of discrimination due to the intersection of gender, disability, place of residence, social customs, and situations of conflict and displacement (A, B and C). Women with disabilities belonging to minorities are more vulnerable to gender-based violence and exploitation than women without disabilities, and they face multiple difficulties arising from the intersection of their minority status, disability, being women, and the impact of conflict and displacement (C).

Isolation within the family: Particularly in rural areas and tribal communities, women and girls with disabilities may be regarded as a source of shame for their families and may be hidden within the home or restricted from going out and participating in society (A). In addition, in order to conceal the disability, they may be placed in a situation where they cannot access appropriate treatment, education, rehabilitation or social support (A).

Violence and barriers to access to justice and police: Even when women with disabilities experience violence or abuse, it is difficult for them to report the harm because sign-language interpretation and other reasonable accommodations are not sufficiently provided at police stations and judicial institutions (A). Particularly for women with hearing impairments, the lack of communication support constitutes a factor preventing them from reporting harm and accessing judicial remedies (A).

Lack of access to sexual and reproductive health: Women with disabilities face exclusion and discrimination when accessing sexual and reproductive health and maternal and child health services (A). Negative views toward the pregnancy of women with physical or intellectual impairments exist not only in society at large, but also among professionals such

as obstetricians, counselors, family physicians and community health doctors (A).

Lack of educational and employment opportunities: Women with disabilities lack educational and employment opportunities at all levels, resulting in economic dependence and a lack of awareness of their rights (B).

Insufficient positioning of women with disabilities in policies and national strategies: Women with disabilities do not sufficiently participate in development policies, and the issues of women with disabilities are not treated as a priority in the implementation plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (B). In addition, due to the lack of governmental strategic programs, social support and empowerment for women with disabilities have not sufficiently progressed (B).

According to an interview with the representative of Sheyaw Organization, women with disabilities are approximately three times more likely to experience sexual violence than other women, and such harm also occurs in workplaces and within organizations such as OPDs.

In light of these issues, it is necessary to strengthen protection systems that address intersectional discrimination, in particular, in order to realize a society in which women with disabilities can participate safely.

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