

Policy paper on current approaches to integrating civic values and life skills into formal and non-formal education in Iraq

Background

In past decades, Iraq put in place a strong education system, despite evidence of dropout from school, particularly in remote or rural towns, where illiteracy rates ranged from 25 to 35 per cent depending on the region, depending on the statistical sources. However, the education system began to decline owing to several factors, particularly the focus on militarization during the eight years of war with Iran; the economic embargo, which lasted over ten years; and the 2003 war, the destructive aftermath of which caused educational capacities in the country to fall even further behind. More recently, the most significant factors include the disparity between financial allocations on the one hand and the extent of the damage and necessary capacity-building on the other hand, in addition to persistently poor coordination between decision-makers.

In some regions of Iraq, those factors have led to an illiterate family environment and weak educational capacities. In most of the country, there has been a failure to keep abreast of or to convey developments in education. The resulting situation is not conducive to improving education standards for young persons. There is a chasm between the tuition afforded to the young in the early stages of their education and the skills required at the university level or even in practical life. Opportunities for vocational or specialized education are limited, so young persons have few chances to develop interests and skills. In some regions, girls have few educational opportunities. Some parts of the country still lack schools or retain a scant few classrooms in adobe huts, in which three or four instructors teach all the lessons.

The data provided shows that segments of the people as a whole, particularly the young, are adversely affected by the lack of available opportunities to develop their personality and lack of academic and practical training.

For these and other reasons, there is a pressing need to promote all forms of education for Iraqi youth, and, in particular, to strengthen civic values and life skills among 12- to 19-year-olds, who constitute a particularly important age group.

Aims and structure of the paper

This paper has a number of goals. Its ultimate aim is to promote the development of formal and non-formal education in Iraq and, in particular, to strengthen the civic values and life skills of the representatives of educational institutions, educational supervisors, social researchers in schools, teachers, and adolescents. The primary goals of this paper are as follows:

- ✓ Assessing curricula for formal education and training programmes for non-formal education, and how they include or support civic values and life skills.
- ✓ Clarification of the most important legislative and governmental material supporting the promotion of civic values and life skills, as well as those provisions that require amendment.
- ✓ Assessment and observation of the most important government initiatives and other initiatives for the promotion of civic values and life skills among Iraqi youth.
- ✓ Defining stakeholders and immediate beneficiaries; explaining the importance of delegating responsibilities and defining their roles in building civic values and life skills among the youth.

- ✓ Shedding light on the material and training capacities available for formal and non-formal education; seeking to support them in order to achieve the desired objectives.
- ✓ Illustrating the challenges and obstacles facing Iraqi youth face as they seek to acquire civic values and life skills.
- ✓ Creating a violence-free educational environment
- ✓ Strengthening the values of tolerance, gender equality, communication, team spirit and critical thinking

The paper has been divided into chapters in order to provide clarity, draw attention to salient points and facilitate cross-referencing. The sequence of the chapters is not intended to grant a given point priority over another. The language used is simple and clear, and topics are addressed in terms of their relevance to the incorporation of civic values and life skills, while eschewing details and technical questions that would add undue length.

Chapter 1	Adolescents and the need to strengthen civic values and life skills
Chapter 2	The role of existing academic curricula in promoting civic values and life skills
Chapter 3	The impact of applied educational curricula on the teaching of civic values and life skills
Chapter 4	Partners and decision-makers in promoting civic values and life skills
Chapter 5	The role of teachers in promoting the development of civic values and life skills in their students
Chapter 6	The immediate local level at which civic values and life skills are to be promoted
Chapter 7	The role of non-Governmental organizations in promoting civic values and life skills in adolescents
Chapter 8	Current initiatives undertaken to promote civic values and life skills
Chapter 9	Evidence used to support the promotion of civic values and life skills in adolescents
Chapter 10	Existing and potential challenges to the strengthening of values and skills in adolescents
Chapter 11	Proposed mechanism to promote civic values and life skills through education
Chapter 12	Bases and standards for assessing implementation of plans and methods to integrate values and skills into adolescent education
Chapter 13	Annexes
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Chapter 1

Adolescents and the need to strengthen civic values and life skills

- Adolescence: The period lasting from puberty to maturity, spanning the transition from childhood to adulthood and maturity. Many physical, sexual, mental and emotional changes occur during this period.
- **Stages of adolescence:**
Adolescence can be divided into the three following stages:

Early adolescence: ages 12-14, corresponding to the preparatory (intermediate) school years

Middle adolescence: ages 15-17, corresponding to the secondary school years

Late adolescence: ages 18-21, corresponding to the university years

- **Adolescence: a summary**

During adolescence, the human being is consumed by the complicated question: who am I? For this reason, it is necessary to instill in the adolescent social and professional anchors and life and other skills during this stage of physiological and organic growth. However, mental growth can be stunted in early adolescence (12 years of age) by the prevalent incidence of psychological disturbance.

Adolescents also experience a wide range of emotions, as shown by their hypersensitivity, despair, anxiety, depression, rebelliousness, disobedience, and recklessness. Moreover, adolescents are prone to imitating their friends and long to assert themselves, and their circle of social interaction expands.

During middle adolescence, the adolescent has a relatively long attention span; however, as some adolescents tend to daydream, teachers must focus their attention, for instance, by resorting to solving puzzles in the classroom and asking questions about the students' future.

During the secondary school stage, adolescents reach the peak of their mental capacity, but they are also characterized by their inexperience and their lack of knowledge about how to employ the experience they have. The teacher should therefore allow students to gain experience, as they must develop their life philosophy((1)).

- **Impact of wars and terrorism on the psychological and social facets of the adolescent**

Successive wars that have struck Iraq have resulted in a host of psychological and social repercussions specific to the adolescent, and they include:

- ✓ Feelings of withdrawal from society, which have led to complexes in some cases and negative reactions, such as introversion, in others
- ✓ The absence of one or both parents over an extended period of time, which undermines civic and social education in the family
- ✓ Diminished motivation to excel academically and turning of attention to other, more relevant matters, such as those pertaining to everyday life

- ✓ Increased emotional and nervous reactions and tension, along with a compromised ability to express oneself
- ✓ Widening of the gender gap, which can sometimes create a rejection of the rights of the other sex, a phenomenon that stems from the mother taking on the rearing of the children in the absence of the father or in the event of his death. However, as soon as the male adolescent reaches adulthood, he gets the idea that he must assert his masculine independence from any opposing feminine input; in other words, he comes to think that his masculine behaviour, regardless of the extent to which it is actually right, is necessarily the correct course of action, as the one affirmed by the collective. Hence, it seems easiest to reject the rights of the other sex.
- ✓ A tendency among many adolescents to drop out of school out of fear for their lives, a result of direct attempts on their lives or their families', or attempts on the lives of others that may strike them accidentally
- ✓ The fact that many students' families are forced to flee to other locations within Iraq or to leave the country altogether creates feelings of injustice and abandonment, resulting in the erection of psychological barriers between them and their peers.
- ✓ The spread of a culture of force and denial of the other instead of one that promotes dialogue, communication, expression of one's views and acceptance of opposing views

Educational obstacles to promoting civic values and skills in Iraqi adolescents today

- Limited opportunities to obtain specialized formal education, particularly for those aged 15-17
- Lack of extracurricular activities for adolescents in formal education
- Paucity of student activities organized by directorates of education
- Poor or nonexistent connection between the school and society
- Weak relationship between schools and families, and absence of effective joint cooperation
- Increased cost of non-formal education for adolescents in most cases
- Poor or nonexistent stimuli for adolescent character development, largely due to the rise in unemployment
- Inefficacy of curricula offered in terms of character development
- Failure to diversify educational methods to account for differences in educational environments or for disparity in student ability levels
- Adoption of rote memorization in teaching instead of modern methods
- Lack of electives, which would help reinforce students' interests

Chapter 2

The role of existing academic curricula in promoting civic values and life skills

- **Which entity is responsible for putting in place academic curricula?**

Approved academic curricula are considered part of academic curricula in use, so long as the goal remains to promote civic values and skills in adolescents of all three age groups that comprise adolescence (12-19 years of age). Therefore, in this respect we consider four main entities that put in place formal academic curricula, and they are:

- ✓ The Ministry of Education (Federal Iraq): This ministry prepares academic curricula for all stages of education, in addition to supervising the General Directorate for Curricula ((2)). These curricula are implemented by the provinces of Iraq, in particular those targeted by the project (Baghdad – Dhi Qar – Salah ad Din).
- ✓ The Ministry of Education in the Kurdistan region: This ministry puts in place academic curricula in the region, especially the Erbil province, which is targeted at the immediate local level.
- ✓ Observation: Ministry of Education curricula are implemented in public and private schools without internal amendments, and a supervisory body oversees their implementation through school administrations and educational supervisors. So too, curricula are put in place by a commission of university professors in the sciences who have previous experience with academic curricula.
- ✓ The Ministry of Higher Education (Federal Iraq): This ministry approves curricula for various public universities, in particular those universities located in targeted provinces.
- ✓ The Ministry of Higher Education in the Kurdistan region: This ministry approves curricula in the provinces of Kurdistan – Erbil.

Observation: Adoption of curricula for higher education differs from their adoption and implementation by the Ministry of Education in the following ways:

The curricula and vocabulary are first proposed in colleges and universities and eventually reach what are known as the Ministry's diversified sectoral commissions. At that stage, the Ministry approves the curriculum for use in all schools. Implementation of curricula by college professors allows for greater flexibility, as professors can change or add 15 to 20 per cent of its content.

There are many courses that do not have a Ministry-approved curriculum but instead are set according to professors' lectures, particularly the human-rights module, which is taught in the first year in all colleges, universities and institutes.

- **Existing academic curricula that promote civic values and life skills**

With regard to curricula prescribed by the Ministry of Education in Federal Iraq (for students aged 12 to 17 years), their content as it relates to civic values and life skills is as follows:

These curricula focus in particular on civic and social education, sociology, philosophy and psychology. Their terms can be summarized as follows:

Curriculum on civic and social education

This academic curriculum is taught to adolescents aged 12 to 14 years, in the intermediate school phase, and it aims to accomplish a series of goals, including building civic values and specifically the values of civic belonging and human rights. Analysis of the terms and contents of this curriculum reveals the following:

1- Curriculum on citizenship and social education for the lower intermediate grade (12-year-olds)

a) Terms of the programme:

The four-chapter curriculum contains the following set of academic terms:

Chapter 1: Iraqi society – Chapter contents: concept of Iraqi society, elements of Iraqi society, components of Iraqi society, nationalities in Iraqi society, religions in Iraqi society, national unity in Iraqi society, common bonds between Iraqi and Arab societies, questions and activities.

Chapter 2: The Republic of Iraq, concept of a republican system, types of political systems – monarchy, dictatorship, democracy, the political system in Iraq – legislative, executive, judicial powers, relationship between the three powers, questions and activities.

Chapter 3: Freedom and democracy, concept of freedom, concept of democracy, aims of democracy, historical overview of freedom and democracy in Iraq, the International Bill of Human Rights, rights of women and children, collective leadership as one of the aspects of democracy, impact of democracy on social unity, the Shura in Islam as a model of democracy, questions and activities.

Chapter 4: Savings and rationalization of expenditures, concept of savings, importance of savings at the State level, role of banking and financial institutions in development of savings, role of savings in economic development, rationalization of expenditures at the family level, rationalization of expenditures at the State level, questions and activities.

b) Curriculum assessment

Analysis of the terms and contents of the curriculum reveals the following:

- ✓ While the curriculum is strong in terms of its human-rights-related content, it is worth enquiring into the extent to which teachers are prepared for the intellectual shifts the curriculum deals with.
- ✓ The activities found at the end of the chapters do not motivate the student to develop critical thinking skills.
- ✓ The ideas presented in chapter 4 of the book do not logically follow the three previous ones. If, for instance, it were to address environmental protection in Iraq and the human right to a clean environment, the chapter would be of greater use to the student.

2- Civics and social education curriculum for secondary intermediate school classes (13-year-olds)

a) Curriculum terms

The curriculum contains the following set of academic terms in its four chapters:

Chapter 1: The family and education: concept of the family and role of the family in childrearing, the family as a source of self-confidence for the individual, role of the family in instilling honesty and sincerity, the family and social adjustment, the family and encouraging initiatives and innovation, role of the family in facilitating free and democratic cooperation among its members, role of fathers' councils and teachers in solidifying the bonds between the family and the school, questions and activities

Chapter 2: Work and production: concept of work and production, Islamic and other monotheistic religions' views on work, work and unemployment, role of the student's work at school level, role of student's work at family level, role of the citizen in promoting national industry, role of women in the workforce and their participation in production, questions and activities

Chapter 3: Public services and their importance to social stability: concept of public services, types of public services, administrative services, security services, health services, educational services, municipal services, electricity, drinkable water, transport, telecommunications services, leisure services or public facilities, importance of services to the citizenry, role of the State in improving administrative bodies, questions and activities

Chapter 4: Regional Arab and Islamic educational organizations: creation and types of organizations, aims of the organizations, Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science, Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture (ICESCO), Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), questions and activities.

b) Curriculum assessment

Analysis of curriculum terms and contents reveals the following:

- ✓ The curriculum contains many expressions whose degree of difficulty surpasses the student's abilities.
- ✓ Topics contained in the curriculum, particularly in chapter 1, depict the family but fail to turn the student's attention to his role in the family and in society.
- ✓ The activities and applications at the end of the chapters do not help the students improve their critical thinking abilities.
- ✓ The curriculum unintentionally implants in the student's mind the notion of the sole male role in participation of what it calls "father's councils", though women (such as mothers, elder sisters or grandmothers) also participate and have influence in these councils.
- ✓ The ideas presented in chapter 4 do not follow the first three chapters in clear logical sequence.

3- Civics education curriculum for third year of middle school (14-year-olds)

a) Curriculum terms

The curriculum contains the following set of academic terms in its four chapters:

Chapter 1: The Constitution of Iraq: basic principles, rights and freedoms, civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, federal powers – legislative – executive – judicial, independent bodies, particularities of federal and regional powers, questions and activities.

Chapter 2: Provincial administrative councils and local councils: concept of the local council, characteristics of a member of the local council, local councils in Iraq, goals, composition and mission of the local council, the local council and democracy, the local council – nucleus of the parliamentary councils, questions and activities.

Chapter 3: Civil society organizations: concept, forms, kinds and historical development of civil society organizations, labour organizations – unions, aims of labour unions, most important accomplishments of labour organizations, women’s organizations, student organizations, teachers’ union, relationship between these organizations and schools, role of the organizations in ensuring social stability and enjoyment of freedoms, questions and activities.

Chapter 4: International educational organizations: concept, aims, and role in educational development, UNESCO – its creation, aims and achievements, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – its creation, aims and achievements, role of international educational organizations in educational development in Iraq, questions and activities.

b) Curriculum assessment

Analysis of the terms of the curriculum and reading of its contents reveals the following:

- ✓ The book is devoted solely to civics education, unlike those preceding it.
- ✓ The book contains many terms that require previous study.
- ✓ Chapter 4 was obviously inserted into the textbook’s vocabulary.
- ✓ Like those intermediate-level books preceding it, this textbook contains an excess of photographs of State institutions and services, at the expense of other contents that could have been of greater benefit to the student.

General observations on civics education textbooks

The following observations can be made about all civics education textbooks:

- ✓ The textbooks present models that motivate the student to emulate them and that build values tied to national belonging and faith in it. The books feature images of some national heroes from past historical periods, such as revolutionaries from the 1920 revolution or religious scholars, intellectuals and others who have rendered notable services to the nation. The textbooks also review important historical monuments that impress upon the student the importance and necessity of national belonging.
- ✓ The textbooks present activities that motivate the student to think, create and work with others.

- ✓ The three curricula aim to present component chapters in a logical sequence, which is more beneficial to the student and can serve to gradually increase and develop his knowledge.
- ✓ Curriculum textbooks do not contain material that might motivate students to perform community service.

4- **Sociology (15-year-olds) in the fourth secondary level in letters**

As stated in the introduction to the textbook, the purpose of this curriculum is “to allow students to benefit from the topics presented in it by having an effective impact on their understanding of the essence of society, its institutions, its methods of social control and other matters”.

a) Curriculum terms

The curriculum contains eight chapters. An introductory definition of sociology is provided, and the field’s relationship to other fields is defined. Social institutions and problems are examined, as are methods of social control, social change and Iraqi society.

b) Curriculum assessment

I believe that the most important elements of this curriculum include the following:

-It contains references to rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular in Article 18. ((3))

-It addresses the problems of building the modern state and encouraging citizenship, as well as building democracy and the necessity of establishing a direct relationship between the individual and the State.

-It addresses the most important social problems in society, such as violence, and its manifestation at the family level, in the form of domestic violence.

-It identifies gender discrimination as a social problem.

-It contains rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular in its Articles 25 ((4)), and Article 29, paragraph 2.((5))

-It presents the concept of social tolerance.

-It refers briefly to human rights in the new Constitution of Iraq.

-The curriculum could have shed light on the problem of discrimination against women and its most prevalent societal manifestations in Iraq. Moreover, it could have highlighted the extent to which this problem is related to religion.

-It could have shed light on how respect for diversity of ideas, opinions, religions, and denominations acts as the basis for strong social values.

-It could have made use of constitutional and legal provisions that govern society.

-It could have elicited the student's interest in many topics by developing the idea that, as a citizen, the student is an active part of society with a role in solving societal problems.

Second: Academic curricula related to life skills

It is evident that curricula designed for male students aged 12 to 15 years do not directly teach life skills, despite the dire need for such skills in students undergoing successive physiological and psychological changes. This age group also faces gradual development in academic curricula and various life- and school-related problems. However, curricula designed for girls of the same age category do provide some instruction on life skills, as shall be seen below. In general, both boys and girls aged 16 years who are enrolled for only the study of letters are assigned a curriculum that includes philosophy and psychology, as described below:

1) Philosophy and psychology (for 16-year-olds) – Fifth year of letters (boys and girls) only

It is my belief that this curriculum fundamentally relates to the development of the knowledge base as regards life skills in adolescents, particularly those aged 16 years, both boys and girls, especially since it concerns communication and discussion skills, defending one's views, critical thinking and other skills. The curriculum contains helpful vocabulary in those areas. A brief mention and assessment of the relevant terms follow.

2) Curriculum terms:

The first unit defines and gives a historical overview of philosophy, in addition to explaining its relationship to science and the foundations of existence according to philosophers, Islamic philosophy, and approaches to scientific research, philosophy of beauty, contemporary philosophy. The second unit defines psychology, its schools and branches, the nervous system and its relationship to behaviour, the human personality and its theories, motivations, emotions and their relationship to behaviour, and intelligence.

3) Curriculum assessment

The most important points in this curriculum can be highlighted as follows:

-The curriculum successfully outlines the different kinds of thought: popular thought, scientific thought, and philosophical thought. It also provides general rules that the student can use to identify the kind of thought in question.

-The curriculum successfully sheds light on the human character and on how the student can build his personality and actualize himself.

-The questions and activities in each chapter fail to garner student interest in the topics.

-The style of the textbook is overly complicated and therefore inappropriate for the level of education of the student

-The curriculum can be developed further by adding activities of a more practical nature at the end of the chapter in order to motivate the student and consolidate his life skills.

-Establishing the link between the theoretical aspects found in the curriculum and their practical applications can help the student understand the information and use it in everyday life.

2-Academic curricula for girls (only)

Within formal education, academic curricula that address life skills, curricula on health education and on family education are all aimed at developing the life skills of female adolescents only. Given the importance of those curricula, some of the curricula in place have been selected for illustrative purposes:

a) Health education curriculum

The health education curriculum for teenage girls aged 12 to 17 years is followed in the middle and secondary school grades; however, its content is not tested in the final Baccalaureate exams, which is to say that its primary purpose is to provide female students with life knowledge and develop the practical skills they pick up at present or in the future. The curriculum is taught one hour per week.

Example 1: Health education curriculum, general level four (15-year-olds) for girls – terms: This curriculum contains the following terms: Health education, nursing, foundations of nursing, first aid.

Example 2: Health education curriculum, preparatory level five (16-year-olds) for girls – terms: This curriculum contains the following terms: school health, sexual education, psychological and personal health, public health, preventive health.

Assessment: Review of health education curriculum textbooks raises the following points:

- ✓ These curricula are extremely important because they enable female students to acquire problem-solving skills to help themselves and others with health-related issues at present and in future situations.
- ✓ Among the many achievements of these curricula is their affirmation of the positive side of the student's relationship to society, as the skills acquired will prepare the student to serve society.
- ✓ The most important challenge faced in attempting to successfully administer these curricula is the lack of classrooms and laboratories, as well as the impossibility of ascertaining their practical applications, which makes it difficult to be certain of their ultimate benefit to the student.
- ✓ The questions and activities included at the end of the chapters do not motivate the student to think creatively.
- ✓ I find that it would be useful to include the human rights specifically related to public health, as set forth in international declarations and covenants, in order to supplement the curriculum terms and to thereby produce new results that benefit the student by nurturing their civic values and life skills. The right to public health, to a clean environment, and to integrity could be addressed, as they all tie into the curriculum and teach the students additional values.

- ✓ I do not believe that this curriculum possesses a particularly important specificity that restricts its teaching to girls, as the information contained in it does not concern girls alone; moreover, its restriction to girl students could unintentionally suggest the idea of discrimination against women.

b) Family education curriculum

This curriculum is taught to female students aged 12 to 17 years in two intermediate school grades and in secondary school. Its aim is to teach female students life skills. However, the material, which is taught one hour per week, is not included in the final ministerial examinations (Baccalaureate) for middle or secondary school students.

Example 1: Family education curriculum, taught to girls in grade 3 of middle school (14-year-olds) - terms: This curriculum contains the following basic terms: childrearing and family relations, adolescence and adulthood, clothing and sewing, choosing a residence, cooking and nutrition.

Example 2: Family education curriculum, taught to girls in grade 4 of general education (15-year-olds): This curriculum contains the following basic terms: childrearing and family relations, sexual education, prenatal care, clothing and sewing, managing the home, cooking and nutrition.

Example 3: Family education curriculum, taught to girls in preparatory level 5 (16-year-olds) – terms: This curriculum contains the following basic terms: childrearing and family relations, clothing and sewing, managing the home, cooking and nutrition.

Curriculum assessment

Although the family education curriculum is useful for teaching life skills that are relevant to girls either at present or in the future, the following observations can be made:

- ✓ This curriculum is taught in a theoretical manner that lacks tools for applied teaching.
 - ✓ This curriculum can be enriched by incorporating human rights, by including principles or texts that enshrine human rights, such as the rights of the child when childrearing is taught, or the human right to physical and psychological integrity when physical and social growth are taught, and so forth.
- **Academic curricula in Iraqi Kurdistan (Erbil) relating to civic values and life skills**

1 – Curriculum on human rights

Teaching of this material begins at the primary school level, that is to say, in grades 5 and 6 of primary school. It is taught to students in the first level of intermediate school (12-year-olds) or grade 7, as it is called in the region. It is also taught in general grade 4 (15-year-olds), or grade 10, as it is known in the region.

2 – Social sciences

This curriculum contains history, geography, and civics; this means that there is no independent curriculum on civics, as is the case in all other provinces of Iraq. However, this comprehensive curriculum includes the material on civics.

- **General observations on academic curricula:**

The preparatory stage (theoretically speaking) aims to realize educational goals in respect of students' mental growth by enabling them to acquire information, concepts, skills, and ways of thinking and approaching practical applications; to develop academic thinking based on observation and organization; to build concepts, understand connections, and acquire practice in methods of academic thinking to solve academic and life problems they face in society ((6)). However, the following observations can be made about the overall situation of academic curricula in Iraq:

- ✓ The academic level of curricula has dropped, which has created a wide discrepancy between the educational level of secondary school students and the skills they are required to learn in order to be ready to attend university or to manage their lives.
- ✓ The ongoing changes to the curricula (introduced more or less yearly) without advance notice or preparation in the educational field have created confusion in the educational process, and teachers and students have responded poorly to the expectation that they assimilate the changes.
- ✓ There is a clear gap between the changes in the curriculum, on the one hand, and the extent to which teachers and students are prepared for these changes, on the other hand.
- ✓ Teaching of curricula related to the aims of the project is granted less priority by administrators, teachers and students, than that given to other curricula. In addition, secondary school curricula in the sciences do not contain comparable academic curricula. A single hour per week is allocated to the teaching of those curricula, particularly in integrated schools (schools in which a morning and an evening session are taught in a single day, or schools in which three meals are served in some provincial districts). Moreover, the social sciences instructor sometimes prefers to allot the hour per week allocated to civics lessons to a history or geography lesson instead, for instance.

With regard to the Ministry curricula for superior education (for students aged 18-19 and above), the human-rights curriculum is the one that pertains directly to civic values. It is taught, for a period of one hour per week, in the first year at all colleges.

1-Curriculum terms

On the whole, universities provide teachers of human-rights education with general curriculum terms, foregoing provision of a clear and defined curriculum. If there were flexibility in the manner in which these terms are to be presented, and if the instructor had the possibility of adding or amending 15 to 20 per cent of the curriculum, results could vary, as follows:

- a) Iraqi youth might learn different things about human rights depending on where and when they were taught the information, or in which of the different universities and colleges; their knowledge acquisition would therefore remain dependent upon teachers' initiatives.
- b) Institutional disregard for teaching of this subject module, reflected in the allocation of a mere hour to its instruction; reliance on extra teaching staff for its instruction; failure to insist on the necessity of attending lectures on the subject
- c) The use of unqualified teachers to teach the human rights module, resulting in a lack of interest on the part of students

(Observation: The annexes list the most important and widely taught terms contained in the human rights curriculum for 18-19 year olds in universities and institutes).

2- Assessment of teaching of the human-rights curriculum in colleges

- ❖ This curriculum is a secondary school module that is not of concern to university and college administrators.
- ❖ Most of those who undertake its instruction are not legal specialists or specialists in related fields.
- ❖ Most students do not express interest in it because it is not taught in a compelling way.

Chapter Three

The impact of applied educational curricula on the teaching of civic values and life skills

Who plans educational curricula?

The world has witnessed developments in educational theory, in line with the development of philosophical thought, the spread of democracy and the principles of human rights. Educational planning can be defined as a systematic ongoing curriculum that employs social-research methods and educational technologies and draws on public opinion to devise an education that enables the individual to realize his potential and participate effectively in development.

A curriculum can be defined as the knowledge conveyed to the learner under the supervision of the instructor in order to realize previously defined goals.

- **The role of successive wars and terrorism in the failed attempt to integrate education plans**

Successive wars have affected educational planning in the following ways:

- ✓ Difficulty in putting in place integrated strategic plans, only managing to set short-term priorities
- ✓ Due to the insufficiency of schools, the inability of many schools to ensure educational success, and to the destruction of a large number of them, educational planning turned its focus to rebuilding after the material devastation wrought by wars and terrorist attacks. Due to their narrowed focus, the plans could not provide for building the capacity of professionals, or for addressing the challenges faced by students, and so forth.
- ✓ The clear desire of planners after 2003 to remedy the devastation of the past only, without overseeing future development; for instance, there is no focus on changing teaching methods, nor is there planning to incorporate modern educational technologies. Even in the sciences, whose instruction requires special laboratories and classrooms, teaching continues to be done in a theoretical manner, and laboratories are not equipped with modern scientific tools.
- ✓ Many administrators and planners are not open to educational progress because of restricted opportunities for communication with the outside world for extended periods, owing to the previous régime's policy of isolationism.

- **Current approaches taken by the Ministry to implementing missions and addressing specific areas**

At the end of each year the Ministry of Education sends to the directorates of education in Baghdad and all other provinces what is technically known as the yearly plan. Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that the plan sent at the end of 2010, for implementation in 2011, is not a plan in the literal sense but rather an ordering of priorities or a sketch of the salient features of the specific areas that the directorates will be working on throughout the year. Each directorate will then proceed to prepare its yearly programme of work to carry out these missions. Success rates, of course, vary from directorate to directorate and from province to province, as do results. Therefore, the extent to which students benefit from the implementation of these missions will vary as well. This disparity in implementation rates among directorates of education in the provinces will surely disappear as a result of many factors, such as quality of planning, realism in planning, infrastructure, educational needs, human capabilities, the security situation, transparency in implementation, percentage of financial allocations, and so forth.

Differences in name notwithstanding, the plan contains 25 points under the heading “Special missions of the General Directorates of Education”. The points that relate to strengthening civic values and life skills are set forth herein: (Observation: the working paper was included in the annexes submitted with the report)

- 1- Developing the performance of educational and school administrations and following their calendar
- 2- Carrying out educational plans and programmes during service (to be explained below)
- 3- Striking a balance in student admission to vocational education divisions
- 4- Implementing the plan on educational advising (to be explained below)
- 5- Drafting educational research projects and studies to resolve problems plaguing education
- 6- Organizing talks and discussion sessions
- 7- Organizing contests and festivals

It is clear that points 1 and 2 have to do with developing existing skills. Although the directorates of education in the provinces, in essence, conduct training by convening training courses in the training unit and its departments, which are under the jurisdiction of the directorates (as will be explained below), they are open to accepting support from other entities in training their professionals, including civil society organizations and even the headquarters and branches of American embassies.

Point 3 pertains to specialized vocational studies pursued by students after they complete the intermediate phase of their studies with low grades. Vocational studies are primarily in the areas of industry, trade, and agriculture, and the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. In Iraq, vocational study allows students aged 15 to 17 years to develop their skills. It is certain that these programmes lack capacities and have limited practical applications. In every case, the variety of specialized vocational studies in formal education is of the utmost importance. If new fields of knowledge – such as computer studies, foreign languages, Internet, the arts, and so forth – were made available, they would open up good opportunities to adolescents and inspire them to develop new interests, far more than their current studies do.

(Observation: Institutes specializing in the education of youth aged 15 to 17 years used to exist, such as the Walid Centre in Baghdad, which used to train employees for work in military manufacturing units. However, vocational study in these centres came to an end, and they are now under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour.)

Points 6 and 7 concern the development of student skills in letters, sciences and sport, and the provision of genuine opportunities to express themselves; they may also allude to the opportunity to entrench the model teaching method proposed in this paper.

- Current approaches related to the plan on educational guidance

The Ministry of Education and its Directorate on Educational Advising regularly put together a guide on educational advising. A look at the most recent guide, published in 2008 and used by educational advisors – insofar as it relates to the steps currently being taken to promote civic values and life skills in adolescent students (12-19 years of age) – reveals the following:

- The educational adviser's mission entails:
 - ✓ Solving students' problems and earning their trust
 - ✓ Instilling self-confidence in students by encouraging them to participate in scientific and practical activities in and outside school
 - ✓ Instilling moral values and lofty examples to which students can aspire
 - ✓ Observing negative phenomena and erroneous practices among students
 - ✓ Attending to the needs of gifted students and developing their capabilities
- The advisor's guide favours the model method (reference to this model is suggested in this paper because it is an educational method that is easy to apply, out of the existing options). This can be observed in the following:
 - It is the educational adviser's duty to list the names of distinguished students and attempt to single them out on special occasions, celebrations, exhibitions, and so forth.
 - An honour roll featuring the names, photographs, personal information and grades of top students
 - A separate "stars of the week" listing of students who excelled in their school or extracurricular work
- The advisor's guide favours the discovery and development of student preferences (this is also one of the recommendations made in this paper). This can be observed in that it is the advisor's duty to encourage students to form committees or associations with others who share their hobbies or interests, like the stamp collectors' club, the chess club, or others.
- Assessment and conclusions: Despite the importance of the contents of the guide, its application tends toward regulation of organizational and legal questions that govern the educational process. However, I think that it would be useful to highlight the aspects that relate to strengthening students' civic values and life skills and to add duties relating to this task to the advisor's responsibilities.

Salient observations on educational curricula in Iraq:

- The standards for building and designing curricula are outdated, particularly those relating to teaching methods and adopting academic curricula, and mere changes from one period to the next do not alter the old educational context.
- Central (Federal) educational curricula are used in all provinces of Iraq (particularly in Baghdad – Salah ad-Din – Dhi Qar). Adoption of curricula, their amendment, and approval of textbooks selected are entrusted to the High Commission on the Development of Curricula and Materials.
- The provision of what is needed for curricula development and the preparation of educational tools and technologies requires a considerable amount of funds, the allocation of which is not approved by the Government alone ((7)).

- There is no integrated educational plan that prepares the student for university or to manage his adult life.

Chapter 4

Partners and decision-makers in the promotion of civic values and life skills

Of the many different entities that have an active impact on the acquisition of knowledge and skills by adolescents in the target age groups, the following bodies are partners in implementing the activities set forth in the project:

- The Ministry of Education of Federal Iraq, as the main entity responsible for management of academic education, is the primary partner. However, this does not mean that other entities in target provinces are not also effective partners able to successfully carry out activities or make recommendations to the Ministry regarding civic values and life skills in the formal education of adolescents. These entities are represented in the directorates of education in the provinces of Baghdad, Dhi Qar and Salah ad-Din.
- The most important organizations under the Ministry of Education of Federal Iraq: ((8))
- ✓ The General Directorate for Curricula: the incorporation of civic values and life skills into educational curricula makes this directorate the entity directly concerned and under whose purview this work naturally falls.
- ✓ The Institute for Educational Training and Development, established in 1984, has branches (departments) in the directorates of education in Baghdad and the provinces. Investigation of its work reveals that it specializes in developing the capabilities of teachers and educational administrators by enrolling them regularly in training courses. As the aim of integrating civic values and life skills is fundamentally linked to the development of teachers' capabilities – the most important of those capabilities being teaching methods – it is imperative that this institute and its component departments in the directorates of education be targeted, especially taking into consideration the following:
 - ❖ The training courses for teachers that the Institute runs are specialized courses in the teacher's subject area. The courses do not include instruction in new teaching methods, and the result is that these courses, which are compulsory, do not include capacity development (Observation: this result was reported in interviews with a number of teachers who have enrolled in these courses on more than one occasion).
 - ❖ Lecturers at the Institute are usually specialists in a given field among those fields taught in schools. Lecturers may be sought from among college professors who have collaborated with the Institute on prior occasions, but they also need to learn about new teaching techniques and methods.
 - ❖ The Institute did not previously seek the assistance of lecturers (as trainers) from among candidates with training capacities in civic values and life skills; therefore, training the Institute's lecturers in these areas is of the utmost importance.
 - ❖ The Institute and its departments throughout the directorates of education have ample access to suitable and safe facilities in which to conduct teacher training. Despite their usefulness, the inadequacy of some of the expository aids should be taken into account.
- ✓ The General Directorate on Cultural Relations: This Directorate maintains the Ministry's relations with the public and other institutions, and it has also participated in initiatives to raise student awareness and correct some student behaviour; for instance, it distributed a CD-ROM that explained the dangers of addiction using comedy. I obtained a copy of this CD-ROM. This Directorate will be an important partner in the media aspects of work to integrate values and skills into education.

- ✓ The General Directorate on Educational Technologies: This Directorate deals with technologies that promote the success of decreed education plans. However, it should be noted that this Directorate has not distributed any teachers' guides in past years, with the exception of a guide for teachers of English that was published and distributed in 2004 with American support. Although teacher-training guides were not drafted and distributed over a long stretch, a close look at teachers' guides from past years reveals that the guides contain practical information in the subject area itself, but not on practical methods of conveying that information. This leaves the teacher with the information but (in most cases) with only a scant few methods of delivering the information. For this reason, I imagine it would be useful to provide a training guide for teachers who will be teaching the academic curricula that contain material on civic values and life skills either directly or via some other curricula.
- **Ministry of Education in the Kurdistan region: This Ministry is considered a partner in the incorporation of values and skills into the education of adolescents in Erbil province. The Ministry directorates most relevant to the achievement of the envisaged goal are:**

The General Directorate of Curricula, Teaching Aids and Publications

The General Directorate of Secondary and Vocational Education

The General Directorate of Educational Planning

The General Directorate of Institutes and Training

The General Directorate of Educational Supervision

- **The Iraqi National Commission on Education, Culture and Sciences**

This Commission's work is set forth in the decree issued in 2008. The Commission is made up of members representing various ministries, and it is presided over by the Minister of Education. Its aim is to strengthen relations between the United Nations Organization (UNESCO), ESCWA, ISESCO and other relevant organizations; it works to define means of cooperation between the Republic of Iraq and other regional and international organizations that deal with intellectual life, education, culture and related matters. ((9))

- **Commission on Education / Council of Representatives (Parliament)**

The elected Iraqi Parliament formed a group of specialized commissions charged with pursuing the work of and proposing legislation to the different ministries. The commissions also coordinate work between each ministry and Parliament. The Commission on Education and the Commission on Higher Education are two of these commissions; therefore, integrating civic values and life skills into education and reforming old legislation still in force that is incompatible in some way with those values and skills requires coordination with the commissions or with their members, in order to transform existing plans into proposed legislation or, at the very least, to take the plans already put in place into legislative deliberations.

- **Commission on Education in all provincial councils targeted (local governments)**

The elected provincial councils (local governments) formed a number of commissions, among them the Commission on Education. These commissions are charged with supporting education in the province centrally assigned to them. Their (unofficial) influence ((10)) on educational planning in each

province must also be recalled, hence the importance of establishing partnerships with the members of these commissions in promoting civic values and life skills in adolescents through education, particularly to ensure their seamless integration into the educational curriculum in each province, unhindered by obstacles, whether formal or informal.

The most important thing to note with respect to the importance of the council in Baghdad province (for instance) is that it takes care of the awareness-raising work for the youth or student demographic. It carried out an awareness-raising campaign in schools and sporting venues on the risks posed to health by doping; an awareness-raising campaign on insurance in schools and universities; a blood donor drive at Baghdad and Nahrain Universities; a study on the realities of academic athletics in Baghdad; football championships and other activities. The council does not hesitate to provide books to facilitate the missions of civil society organizations, in particular those organizations whose work relates to education or schooling.

Provincial directorates of education and provincial councils customarily draw up a shared programme of work on certain areas, the most important of which is the repair and renovation of school buildings.

- **Ministry of Human Rights (Federal Iraq)**

This (executive) ministry was formed after the comprehensive constitutional and political changes that Iraq underwent ((11)). The law pursuant to which the Ministry was established stipulates that the Ministry is responsible for human-rights issues. The Ministry acts as the link between the Iraqi Government and international organizations dealing with human-rights issues. The Ministry is one of the entities that supports attempts to strengthen civic values, in particular those that relate to human rights.

A look at the Ministry's research and study unit shows that there is no specific study or project on the adolescent demographic as such. However, the Ministry organizes most activities targeting this demographic indirectly, with the exception of a project carried out by the Ministry's Department of Prisons. The project entailed raising juvenile (18 years and under) detainees' awareness of human rights.

- **Ministry of Human Rights in the Kurdistan region**

Despite the Ministry's disappearance from the political map of the region, its professionals continue to pursue their work for the time being. In spite of the failure to implement the law on human rights passed by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights a year ago, this Ministry is, in effect, charged with actively integrating civic values, especially the concepts of human rights and civics, into adolescent education in its formal and non-formal variants. In particular, the Ministry continues to receive financial allocations from the regional budget, and it strives to achieve a number of goals, including "the spread of a culture of human rights and raising awareness of human rights in Kurdistan society circles, and working to entrench the concepts of tolerance, social solidarity, values and ideals in civil society" ((12)).

It follows that the law entrusts the Ministry with “cooperating and coordinating within the arena of human rights with the relevant international organizations and entities on the chief violations of human rights committed against the Kurdistan people”. ((13))

- **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Federal Iraq**

The Ministry has many goals it is working to achieve, including those relating to the young, in the following areas: provision of support for the young, exercise of legal guardianship over minors placed in the juvenile prison. For this reason, this Ministry may be a partner through both those functions, and perhaps directly in the second instance.

The Ministry provides support for the young in various ways, including the following: holding specialized courses to develop their capacities, in particular computing courses; providing instruction in a number of trades; and providing material support, in the form of modest loans to launch projects.

- ✓ **Variety of Ministry-run courses for the young**

- Through its Labour and Training Unit, one of its basic entities, the Ministry hosts a variety of courses and non-formal training for youth aged 15 and above, whether unemployed or enrolled in school and on summer vacation. In general, the training focuses on the areas of computer use and maintenance, foundations of electrical engineering and automobile mechanics, welding, carpentry, tailoring, and other trades. The courses introduce the student to the world of work. Most training courses prepare young people to learn a specific trade or craft. A look at course statistics reveals that both male and female students enrol in them, and that the trainings have garnered the support of such organizations as the Organization for International Relief and Development.
- It is also worth noting that the 2011 training plan for the young shall contain a large number of specialized courses, each of which is to last six months. In addition to teaching a trade, the sessions will provide instruction in English language, programming, and other subjects.
- I find that the courses originally planned for 2011 might help promote civic values and life skills among the adolescents targeted, particularly the course content on personality development and life training.

Observation: the Ministry is in the process of implementing an extremely important plan for the reintegration of youth previously active in militias, known as the “Sons of Iraq” programme. I imagine that it is very important to take advantage of these efforts in order to build the civic values and life skills of those young persons.

- ✓ **Legal guardianship of minors**

- Under Iraqi law, the minor is defined as a person above the age of nine and under eighteen who commits a crime or who might be prone to doing so as a result of indigence or homelessness ((14)). The Minor Reform Unit of the General Institution for Social Reform, an entity under the Ministry of Labour, is responsible for managing rehabilitation centres and schools. Schools for the rehabilitation of minors are places where minors can be placed in accordance with judicial decisions in order to acclimate them socially, rehabilitate their behaviour, and equip them with skills and an education. There are three types of schools: the school for the rehabilitation of young children, the school for the rehabilitation of older children, and the school for the

rehabilitation of young adults ((15)). The schools are under the supervision of a council composed of a group of members and chaired by the General Director of the Minor Reform Unity. In these schools, minors are required to enrol in vocational courses. It is necessary for primary and middle schools to be opened within the school for the rehabilitation of young children, in coordination with the Ministry of Education. Similarly, middle and preparatory schools must be opened within the schools for the rehabilitation of older children and young adults, respectively. These schools are to adhere to the regulations and directives of the Ministry of Education, which provides the administrative and educational framework for these schools ((16)). The regulations governing minors provide for the continuation of study through final examinations or enrolment in university and return to society, but under legal guardianship.

- The current reality with regard to the education of minors is that the actual context runs counter to the legal framework outlined above. This actual context therefore presents a serious challenge to large swaths of the adolescent population in terms of their acquisition of education and skills. The salient features of that reality are as follows:
 - ✓ Study has effectively ground to a halt for two reasons: poor coordination between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education, and the unstable security situation. The only courses being offered at present are short courses and literacy courses.
 - ✓ It was clear from communication with those in charge that only two primary schools in Baghdad and Mosul are following the curricula approved by the Ministry of Education. Those two schools were opened in the Islahiyya prison itself. The Government has no intention of providing education beyond the primary level.
 - ✓ No schools or instruction are provided in other provinces, where the only educational opportunity offered is in the form of literacy courses held in police precincts.
 - ✓ In each case, girls in prison or in custody are banned from education altogether, whether in Baghdad or elsewhere.
 - ✓ A proposed programme is currently being considered by the relevant entities. This programme would allow adolescent minors to sit exams administered outside the prison and return to custody. However, this proposal (assuming it is implemented) would disqualify sentenced minors for a judicial decision.
 - ✓ After considering all views and the situation itself, I think that the problem is primarily one of Government allocation of funds and of poor coordination between the Ministries of Labour and Education, in addition to the security situation in the case of Baghdad.
- **Ministry of Youth**
- ✓ **Chief divisions and structure of the Ministry**

The Ministry's hierarchy is composed of the Ministry headquarters and numerous youth and sport directorates spread throughout Baghdad and the provinces, in addition to a number of forums active nationwide. The most important directorates at Ministry headquarters are the Directorate of Physical and Athletic Education, the Directorate of Culture, Arts and Youth, the Directorate of Academic

Support, the Directorate of International Relations and Cooperation, the Directorate of Sport Medicine, the Administrative and Financial Unit, and two Deputy Counselors in the Ministry.

✓ **Ministry plans**

The Ministry undertakes plans to support youth of different ages and both genders through the yearly plan it drafts, which is circulated following approval of the Federal budget (Observation: the Ministry's plan for 2010 was circulated on 25 March 2010). The plan is sent to the different directorates under its jurisdiction in Baghdad and the provinces. The plan is varied in its content, aims and activities: athletic, academic, vocational, recreational, and so forth. Although the 2011 plan is not yet available, we have been assured that the plan of educational and sporting activities varies little from year to year, particularly since the Minister for Youth remains the same under the new Ministerial formation. Therefore, it is unlikely that any substantive changes will be made to the planning process, particularly in light of the declarations made by different Government sources on the scarcity of allocations and the minimal increases thereof.

✓ **Ministry activities aimed at both genders**

The Ministry has launched a variety of activities planned for young persons of different ages and both genders under its 2010 plan. It is hoped that these activities will be carried out in similar fashion in 2011 after the regular Federal budget is approved. Some examples follow:

- Athletic activities, such as courses in sports marketing, talks on the relationship between sport and health, athletic championships for novices and youth in July 2010, and a championship featuring heritage games
- Cultural activities include cultural and artistic training courses for popular supervisors; a course on youth leadership skills; a course on the origins of journalistic news writing; and poetry contests.
- Academic activities, such as computer courses, talks on health, and computer maintenance courses
- Academic activities, such as talks on environmental pollution, courses on raising bees for women, and courses on packaging of food products
- Artistic activities, such as courses on sewing and textile design, courses on film and digital photography; an arts exhibition; a course on religious songs; musical celebrations; drawing contests; an arts festival featuring theatre, music, and arts and crafts; courses in theatrical oratory; courses on playwriting; free drawing contests; courses on Islamic calligraphy and ornamentation; training courses in folkloric and traditional crafts; courses in decorative arts, hairdressing and makeup application
- Exploratory activities, such as leading youth visits to martyr's families and provision of support for the families, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour; visits to nursing homes and orphanages, in coordination with the Ministry of Labour; tree-planting campaigns for the young, in cooperation with directorates of agriculture
- Human-rights-related activities, such as lectures on the constitutional rights of young persons

✓ **Ministry activities for women (Gender)**

For the most part, Ministry activities are aimed at youth of both genders, as is made clear by verification of attendance of these activities in the annual plan. However, the Ministry specifically organizes a number of activities for women only, the most important which are listed below:

- 1- Course on environmental pollution
- 2- Course on computer maintenance
- 3- Lecture on early detection of breast cancer
- 4- Course on computer use (PhotoShop)
- 5- Talk on the culture of health
- 6- Course on computer maintenance
- 7- Course on raising bees
- 8- Course on computer use (Corel)
- 9- Course on packaging of food products
- 10- Course on computer use (Word)
- 11- Course on mobile phone maintenance
- 12- Course on computer use (Montage)
- 13- Course on first aid
- 14- Course on computer use (general)

✓ **Assessment of the Ministry's work to promote civic values and life skills**

A review of the examples cited above reveals that non-formal education offered to adolescents by the Ministry can serve as a means of promoting civic values and life skills in them, particularly given the Ministry's capacities. The reasons are listed below:

- The annual plan sent out each year aims to define the guidelines and directives for its implementation, allowing for changes in the cultural, artistic and academic activity contained in it; that is to say, the plan can be developed and amended, and new terms can be added to it.
- The Ministry's capacities to host athletic championships can provide an excellent opportunity to disseminate through media publicity information on the necessity of teaching adolescents civic values and life skills.
- The Ministry's experience with exploratory activities can provide an important opportunity to entrench social and civic values (community hours), especially since important activity of this kind has declined in schools.
- The Ministry, to a certain extent, makes use of networking in the conduct of its activities, particularly with the Ministry of Labour. If full advantage was taken of this networking to

strengthen civic values and life skills, this would present a good opportunity for successful cooperative work and additional assessment.

- The Ministry would do well to build the capacities of its employees who act as trainers, as well as those of others it collaborates with, and to benefit from their experience in so doing.
- The Ministry performs an important academic activity that entails providing students with academic support, most notably its academic comparisons of preparatory students. If we considered that the Ministry cooperates with the Ministry of Education on some activities, it would therefore be possible to profit from the experience of the Ministry of Youth in that area in a manner that promotes civic values and life skills among students, by singling out exemplary students.
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Chapter 5

The role of teachers in promoting civic values and life skills

- **The impact of successive wars and terrorist attacks on teachers**

- ✓ As a result of successive wars and the previous regime's general overtaxing of the State, and due to the strain on their own economic situation, teachers have had to attend to their family affairs instead of focusing on capacity development or communication with the outside world.
- ✓ The deep psychological effects of wars and terrorism on teachers
- ✓ Waning opportunities to remain abreast of advances in pedagogical methods throughout the world

- **Sources of teacher training in Iraq**

- ✓ Graduates of the College of Education, that is to say, holders of Bachelor's degrees in one of the areas of specialization, can receive instruction in a curriculum on teaching methods
- ✓ Teaching methods were not part of the studies of graduates of other specialized colleges, such as the colleges of letters, sciences, languages and others.
- ✓ In most cases, the teacher begins to teach under the supervision of the school administration and that of educational advisors, and the educational advisor can recommend the transfer of a teacher whose performance of administrative duties is subpar.
- ✓ Teachers are enrolled in courses at preparatory and development centres in order to strengthen their capacities. For the most part, educational advisors or university professors give the lectures in these courses, which cover the teacher's area of specialization.

- **Pedagogical methods used in Iraq**

- ✓ Pedagogical methods are defined as a set of measures chosen in advance by the teacher, who uses them to deliver the lesson and, in so doing, realize educational objectives as effectively as possible.

There is a clear difference between pedagogical methods and pedagogical style, in that the teacher's style of implementing a given method sets him apart from other teachers using the same method.

- ✓ **Main widespread pedagogical methods:**

- The method based entirely on student activity, such as the problem-solving method.
- The method based on teacher activity, such as the lecture-based method
- The method that requires a large amount of activities from both teacher and student, even if the teacher is wholly involved, as the method entails dialogue and discussion.
- Other pedagogical methods, such as individual instruction, like programmed teaching, or computer-assisted teaching
- Other methods

- ✓ **Salient features of pedagogical methods employed (especially in Iraq) in the social sciences ((18))**

- The methods used are poor at fostering student creativity.
- Separating the academic subject from the practical reality makes students feel that their studies are useless, thereby undermining their interest and participation in the educational process.
- Students are encouraged to compete for the highest grade instead of cooperating with one another.
- Traditional teaching methods have been the subject of constant criticism; nevertheless, they are skills one learns, either from the institution from which the student graduates or by having them imposed by one's educational advisor during monitoring of one's work in training courses.

Therefore, the manner in which basic teacher training is done must change, as must the training methods during service, so as to help the teacher satisfactorily apply modern training methods by changing the methodology of training courses..

- With regard to the education of girls, it has become evident that the use of traditional pedagogical methods reliant on memorization, dictation, and mechanical review taking up most of the allotted lesson time has resulted in the following:
 - ✓ Short-term retention of information learned
 - ✓ Underdeveloped creative faculties
 - ✓ Hesitation in expressing oneself
 - ✓ Tendency to compete for grades instead of cooperating with fellow students
- ✓ **Pedagogical methods used in Kurdistan**

Pedagogical methods vary from school to school, depending on the number of students in a given school. Typical schools use the group teaching method, which entails splitting students up into five or six groups, taking into consideration the placement of intelligent students in each group. If the school is overcrowded, it employs the standard teaching methods (lecturing, feedback) with a somewhat modified role for the teacher, student participation through questions, and use of the language of dialogue and its academic applications.

- Despite what has been cited above, international reports indicate that an attempt has been made in Kurdistan to reform pedagogical methods in the following ways:
 - 1- Strengthening creative thinking in the classroom
 - 2- Attempting to incorporate visual educational aids into teacher training
- ✓ **Challenges faced by teachers in their attempts to change pedagogical methods**
 - Available pedagogical aids and tools
 - Existing conditions, including the paucity of buildings: With regard to the needs of the Ministry of Education, the Directorate of School Buildings estimates a need for 4,000 schools. In Kurdistan the shortage of buildings is a real problem, and there are tens of schools made of adobe still standing, especially in districts located in target provinces such as Dhi Qar.
 - Outside readings assigned to instructors: Teachers in Iraq are not motivated to review and read for many reasons, among them the following: there is no justification for it (or so they believe), there are no libraries in schools (in most cases), and even if there is one, it lacks modern resources; insufficient time for outside reading because they are teaching hundreds of students, among other reasons.
 - Educational and administrative advising: Approaches to advising on pedagogical methods in schools may not be in line with existing advances in said methods and their aim of increasing students' intellectual faculties.
 - Students capabilities and previous habits
 - The high number of students in a single class presents a problem of alarming proportions in Iraqi provinces, where the average number of students per classroom is 50, and in Kurdistan the average ranges from 50 to 60, and in some cases, up to 70 students.
 - Some teachers are unaware of pedagogical methods that were not included in their previous academic training. This presents a problem in Iraq, as there are teachers who graduated from the colleges of letters, sciences, or other colleges that do not provide instruction on pedagogical methods. Further aggravating the problem is the fact that those teachers did not enrol in training courses during their period of service.
- ✓ **Teacher training during service**

During their term of service, teachers enrol in the training centre in their directorate, as mentioned in the paper on missions dispatched to directorates of education this year. However, these courses do not focus on modernization of teaching methods but instead on conveying knowledge in the teacher's subject area. A number of teachers stated that these courses are routine and do not present new information.

Teacher training courses in Kurdistan are taught in a centre designated specifically for training. The centres are part of the General Directorate of Institutes and Training. For the most part, the training addresses knowledge and modernization of pedagogical methods, as well as humane treatment of and respect for students, consideration of their circumstances and their psychological state.

- In the higher education sector, there is a failure to acquaint college professors with pedagogical methods, especially those who teach subjects closely related to civic values and life skills
 - Proposed tools for teacher training
- In that connection, I propose that the following steps be taken:
- ✓ Different types of support should be given to teachers (by the Government), in addition to building their capabilities through training sessions and provision of new resources to improve their performance
 - ✓ Teacher self-evaluation and introduction of the resident advisor system to help the school elevate its teaching standard
 - ✓ School council activity with the participation of managers to exchange information and experience.

Chapter 6

The immediate local level for promoting values and skills among adolescents

The first step in strengthening adolescents' civic values and life skills and in integrating them into formal education in a number of provinces is to obtain information about the most important problems faced by these provinces, so that the problems might be taken into account. However, it is also important to know about problems that do not relate directly to education.

- **Impact of terrorism on education**

Terrorist operations, which began on a large scale after 2005 and which still affect education, in particular on adolescents in the following ways:

- Teachers suffer from weakness of character in their dealings with students in certain parts of Iraq, in particular the two target provinces of Baghdad and Salah ad-Din
- Educational progress has often been halting, leading to a breakdown in education, particularly in the two above mentioned provinces
- The deep sense of fear among those involved, including students, has destabilized the teaching process.

- **The educational environment in the target provinces**

- The gravity of the educational problems affecting each of the two target provinces varies.

The situation in Baghdad province can be summarized as follows:

- There has been an increase in abnormal behaviour among adolescents for many reasons, the most important of which is the security situation, which undermined the administration of some schools in Baghdad and neighbouring areas.
- Teachers have demonstrated weakness of character in their dealings with students (in some regions).
- Educational supervision has been poor and altogether absent in many regions.
- Educational capabilities and needs vary from region to region.
- The province is multi-faith and multi-sectarian

- **The situation in Salah ad-Din province can be summarized as follows**

- The security situation has an impact on education, more or less as it does in Baghdad.
 - The capacities of provincial regions (districts) are deficient in relation to those of the provincial centre
- The general climate in the province is characterized by tribalism, which overshadows religious and sectarian diversity.

- **Observations on the situation in Dhi Qar province**
 - Most districts in the province possess modest infrastructural capacities
 - The general climate in the province is characterized by religious conservatism stemming from inherited traditions and customs
 - Most inhabitants share the same religion and sect
 - A large number of rural villages in the province do not have schools
 - Many schools in provincial districts are built out of adobe
 - Illiteracy rates are high, particularly in rural provincial districts
- **The situation in Erbil province can be summarized as follows:**
 - Infrastructural and educational capacities are good and in constant development as a result of the new education plan recently adopted by the Government and Parliament
 - The general climate in the province is marked by conservatism
 - Most inhabitants are united by ethnic belonging.
 - However, evidence of student truancy and of methods used to rebuke students exists.
 - A spirit of competition, self-confidence, and demand for respect of individual rights is on the rise.
 - Students respect, rather than fear, their instructors.

Disparity in academic curricula in the target provinces

Uniformity can be observed in academic curricula across the three target provinces (Baghdad, Salah ad-Din, Dhi Qar), while curricula in Erbil province are markedly different from the others owing to the latter's institutional independence.

Disparity in security circumstances among target provinces

The provinces of Dhi Qar and Erbil enjoy a calm and stable security situation, whereas that of Baghdad and Salah ad-Din are worrisome.

Chapter 7

The role of non-Governmental organizations in promoting civic values and life skills in adolescents

- **Local non-Governmental organizations (NGOs)**

The influence of NGOs in Iraq has broadened in scope since 2004. NGOs have provided assistance on the part of international organizations, foreign Governments and parties in various programmes that addressed relief, capacity-building and other aspects. Constitutional matters, human-rights and women's rights issues, and electoral questions were dealt with, owing to donor priorities. However, this does not mean that no efforts were made to strengthen student or youth possibilities or to support educational progress, as in the "Promise" project, which provides financial support for successful young persons aged 19 to 21 years, and the project to establish a youth parliament (despite its leadership's assumption of a partisan character). Other projects have been carried out by student unions and associations and other organizations working together to support the young.

However, it is evident that local organizations dealing with issues affecting the young and education continue to have difficulty securing the necessary funds to achieve their goals in terms of building the capabilities of teachers and students, which has forced them to collaborate on programmes whose goals differ from theirs. Therefore, these organizations have been deprived of genuine and effective partnerships with stakeholders in education and with little influence on educational curricula design, and especially on the development of the capabilities of teachers and students alike.

I therefore propose that the local NGOs be integrated into a number of activities in order to achieve certain goals, in addition to strengthening civic values and life skills in adolescents, such as:

- Working to build the capacities of these organizations so that they can continue their work on education
 - Helping to establish partnerships between local organizations and stakeholders as a starting point for similar projects in future
 - Benefiting from the experiences of some organizations in planning and carrying out projects to strengthen civic values and skills in adolescents
- International organizations

A large number of international organizations have carried out a number of projects in Iraq, either directly or through local organizations. The persons targeted hailed from all segments of society; however, those of voting age (18 and over) received the most attention, along with children (12 and under). Despite the insufficient focus on youth or adolescents, those organizations that conducted numerous projects include the following: the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Swedish Olof Palme International Centre (children), Norwegian Church Aid, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (work on the Constitution), America's Development Foundation (ADF) (human-rights work), UNICEF (in particular), UNESCO (to a significant degree), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (teaching human rights in universities), the offices of foreign and Arab embassies, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) (to a significant degree), the American University in Iraq – Suleimani (student summer camps), and others.

Overall, the international organizations mentioned above and others have real experience and practical background in carrying out activities and confronting challenges, experiences that may prove useful in planning and implementation.

Chapter 8

Current initiatives undertaken to promote civic values and life skills

As part of curricula development in line with the political, legal and social developments in Iraq since the fall of the régime in 2003, and in order to open Iraq to the outside world and train educational professionals, particularly in the realm of administrative leadership, the relevant Governmental institutions have attempted to build bridges of cooperation with international organizations and foreign Governments. Some examples of these initiatives follow:

- ✓ The Institute for Training and Educational Development and its training centres in the directorates of education in Baghdad and the provinces have received support from UNESCO in the field of technology and in the relevant subject areas, such as English-language and math instruction.
- ✓ A number of similar or related activities have been conducted to promote civic values and life skills on previous occasions, among them the following:
 - Raising the level of instruction of academic subjects, an initiative overseen by an American organization, and others. This initiative brought together thousands of teachers and educators from various Iraqi provinces. Work began in September 2001, and the aim of the project was to train secondary schoolteacher trainers. Some 830 trainers were prepared to train over 30,000 teachers over the summer vacation ((21)). When a number of teachers who participated in the programme were asked about their experience, it emerged that the programme had centred on developing the teachers' capacities in terms of modern teaching methods, in addition to addressing the manner in which teachers should deal with students, and aspects of knowledge.
 - In that respect, I believe that the trainers (teachers) who were themselves trained in this programme possess training skills that make them good candidates for participation in future training sessions, during which they can be prepared in the initial stage of incorporating civic values and life skills, since they already have basic training skills. Also, if they enrol in any new training session, their likelihood of success will be very high, and we would not have to start from scratch.
- ✓ The Directorate on Curricula (one of the administrative entities within the Ministry of Education), asserts that the Ministry's plan on curricular changes is moving towards completion and is slated to conclude by the end of 2011. The old curricula do not befit the new Iraq, and the introduction of new concepts of civics, human rights and improvement of academic values has become imperative.
- ✓ With regard to the curricula adopted in the Kurdistan region (Erbil province), international reports indicate that the region has planned to bring about comprehensive changes in academic curricula used, in cooperation with international organizations, in particular the UNICEF office in Erbil. The region has begun work on its plans to change social science curricula (department of letters), which will span four years. ((22))

I believe that the move to change curricula in the region dates back to the amendment of the new Ministry of Education decree there, which requires it to change academic curricula, stipulating the following:

"in all stages of education according to the requirements of the era in keeping with Kurdistan educational and developmental policies." ((23))

- ✓ Comprehensive changes will be made to academic curricula in the provinces of the region (including Erbil), in cooperation with the Geoprojects company, perhaps by 2011.
- ✓ The conference on education held from 22 to 24 May 2007 in Erbil, which culminated in changes in the education system in Kurdistan, adopted by the Government and Parliament. Specifically, paragraph 5 sets forth the values that must be instilled in children aged 12 to 15 years, namely:
 - Self-confidence

- Capacity-building and creativity
- Challenge to aspire to lofty human examples
- Faith in the rule of law and love of the nation
- Gender equality
- The system also develops pedagogical methods and ways of discovering and developing student capacities, among other important changes that affect students positively.
- ✓ The regional Ministry of Culture and Youth hosts an annual festival to honour creative youth active in all areas of creative endeavour (sport, art, journalism, gender, model leadership, etc.). The Festival that took place on 23 December 2010 was the third, and the regional Government plans to continue hosting it in coming years.

I believe that the idea of promoting this kind of activity is a good one for many reasons. Doing so strengthens the spirit of creativity of young persons targeted by the project; it helps find young role models that can influence others; and it helps the organizers, the regional Ministry of Culture and Youth, in its effort to adopt a new regulatory system based on increased youth participation.

- ✓ The regional Government convened a cooperation agreement with the French Government on 15 June 2010. The agreement provides for social and cultural cooperation; educational exchange; training of young professionals and building the capabilities of teachers, administrators, and school professionals in order to raise the overall level of education.
- ✓ The Ministry of Human Rights in Federal Iraq and the Department of Prisons hold workshops to raise awareness of the human rights of underage prisoners (18 and under), under the auspices of a programme run by the United Nations World Health Organization.
- ✓ The Ministry of Education in Federal Iraq founded a school for gifted children in Baghdad, as well as a number of schools for above-average students. It also established a commission to nurture gifted Iraqis. This commission uses advanced teaching methods, increasing the number of required lessons and electives and ensuring that teachers are of a high calibre. The Ministry directly supports the development of these schools.

Chapter 9

Evidence used to support the promotion of values and skills in adolescents

There is evidence to support the integration of civic values and life skills in formal and non-formal education in Iraq, including the following:

- ✓ The Iraqi National Commission on Education, Culture and Science, in its Act number 2 of 29 January 2008, amended in 2009 and 2010, mentions the need to strengthen the ties and the work of international organizations working in the areas of education, culture, natural sciences, communications, the humanities and the social sciences.
- ✓ Approaches to educational policy in Iraq look to improve the quality of education and the capacities of educational institutions.
- ✓ Educational policy initiatives in Iraq aim to educate the public on human-rights principles, respect for freedom of thought and of expression, and tolerance and social interaction.
- ✓ Educational administration initiatives aim to consolidate cooperation with regional and international organizations in order to put in place plans to overhaul and develop the education system.

(Observation: UNICEF and UNESCO continue their efforts to increase the capacities of administrators and educators to put in place a strong education policy)

- ✓ Data pertaining specifically to Kurdistan include the following:
 - The broad aim of the Ministry of Education of Kurdistan, contained in relevant legislation, is in line with the integration of civic values and life skills into education. The law states that “the Ministry aims to raise an educated, conscious, patriotic generation engaged in academic thought, satisfied with knowledge and morals, receptive to the gains of cultural progress, aware of human rights and that has faith in the principles of democracy and civic belonging and the duties they entail; able to understand freedom and responsibility at the societal level, and among which educational opportunities to receive an education will be offered to all who desire or need one”((24)).
 - The Kurdistan Ministry of Education Act Number 4 of 1992, amended by Act 15 of 2006, provides for cooperation with international organizations, including UNICEF and other international organizations working on issues relating to education.
- ✓ **Evidence based on current and future strategic Government plans**
 - The contents of paragraphs 29 ((26)), 35 ((27)), 36 ((28)) of the Government programme adopted by the new administration for the next four years will be implemented closely by the relevant Ministries.
 - In implementation of the Government’s new programme, the Ministry of Youth of Federal Iraq, for instance, intends to change the situation of Iraqi youth by:
 1. Founding institutions that work to develop the capacities of the young
 2. Establishing areas in which to engage the young academically
 3. Youth centres that attend to the arts and youth activities
 4. Sending youth to festivals and activities to get them involved with others

Chapter 10

Existing and potential challenges to the strengthening of values and skills in adolescents

The challenges that attempts to integrate values and skills into education face can be summed up in the following points:

- The stability of the security situation in Iraq varies from region to region.
- Poor networking on the part of relevant Government institutions obscures a clear mechanism to distinguish and appoint roles.
- The Iraqi educational system can be described as classically stable, in that it is unable to respond rapidly to developments.
- The influence of religious backgrounds and their calls opposing curricular changes in some cases
- Slow functioning of legislative reform mechanism
- Slow functioning of administrative mechanisms and frameworks
- Minor work dealings with educators can be described as sluggish in terms of response and communication.
- Absence of an integrated education plan that assigns complementary roles to family and school
- Not enough focus is placed on subjects relating to civic values and life skills, particularly at the administrative level in schools, in instruction and examinations

Chapter 11

Proposed mechanism to promote civic values and life skills through education

Insofar as the primary data indicates a resolve to introduce comprehensive changes in curricula that will be effected by the end of 2011, it would be advisable to discuss the integration of civic values and life skills into adolescent education in the context of ongoing reform of educational curricula, rather than limiting discussion to the curricula themselves, which represent only a part of the overall picture. Therefore, I propose that the introduction of values and skills into education be gradual and organized in stages and steps, in line with existing data.

- **Educational reforms**

It would be good to prepare the legislative framework for the integration of civic values and life skills into education through a comprehensive Government plan to bring about education reform, agreed upon by stakeholders, and entailing projects to strengthen adolescents' civic values and life skills, by adhering to the following:

- ✓ Clearly defining the responsibilities of each stakeholder
- ✓ Undertaking study of the package of laws and legislation governing schools and education, and presenting the new legislative frameworks to lay down the groundwork to achieve the ultimate aim or any future training project, particularly as legislation that remains in force to date embodies the principles and values of the old regime, which differ fundamentally from the new civic values.
- ✓ Undertaking education reforms that include changes in teacher-training methodology and in the ways teachers are trained during service, in addition to giving social researchers a more active role in the school and improving the schools' approach to behaviour vis-à-vis students and others (that is to say, attaining the pedagogical model).
- ✓ Adopting an educational curriculum based on the idea of founding specialized institutes that can cater to the variety of interests that students may have, such as computing, languages and other areas, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, in the context of which appropriate mechanisms to admit students can be put in place.
- ✓ Adoption of a mechanism that facilitates communication between the school and society in order to achieve the goals of the project through the work of joint school-family councils, and thus reflecting civic values and life skills in a practical way, such as designating community service hours for adolescents to participate in cooperative activities. In that connection, exploratory activities are of the utmost importance, as they can go further towards achieving the goals of the project.
- ✓ Putting in place a Government programme that motivates adolescents to raise their level of interest and their capacities through preparatory centres and facilities that specialize in all fields, sites to advance and support their abilities. In that respect, I propose that support be given to educational centres in which the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Youth provide youth with craft, cultural and vocational instruction.
- ✓ Festivals, contests, and other such events can be held to nurture and develop capacities in the young and support their endeavours in artistic, academic, athletic and other fields. This can be done through school and extracurricular activity. Considering that this kind of activity is plagued by poor planning and follow-through, hosting them can serve as an opportunity to provide adolescents with active instruction (attaining the educational model for adolescents).

Observation: the new Government curriculum provides a solid anchor for discussion on advanced reforms.

- **Capacity-building**

Given the importance of preparing the necessary response to the process of incorporating values and skills into education, and also owing to the importance of grasping the purposes of the change and the tools for bringing it about, I believe that capacity building should be aimed at a specific and carefully selected segment of society. Then, the skills acquired can be passed on to others, thereby preparing human efforts to achieve the desired goals, taking the following steps:

- ✓ Step 1: A number of direct beneficiaries are trained in the new, advanced, effective methods of teaching civic values and life skills, thus placing the emphasis more on development of training skills than on the amount of knowledge acquired; in other words, starting a group of local trainers. I believe this group would be the one to carry out teacher-training during service (trainers at the Institute for Educational Development and its divisions in the provinces), having attended in past trainings aimed at adolescents and young persons in general.
 - ✓ Step 2: Participants share their experiences with others, including other trainers, thereby allowing people not selected to participate to benefit indirectly.
 - ✓ Step 3: A curriculum that contains information on civic values and life skills is prepared, in conjunction with other partners. Training activities can provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by teachers and their suggestions of proposed curriculum terms. It is even possible to arrive at a real curriculum that approximates the needs of teachers who will be using it in their future work. Agreement can be reached regarding the number of copies to be printed and the method of distribution in target provinces, among other particulars.
 - ✓ Step 4: The educational process should be supplemented by providing the items essential to capacity-building and achieving the desired goals. In that connection, I propose that the school libraries and science labs be improved and their resources upgraded.
 - Proposed training sessions
 - ✓ Training session 1: Adolescents and the specificities of their education
 - ✓ Training session 2: Academic curricula for adolescents
 - ✓ Training session 3: Skills required to teach adolescents
 - ✓ Training session 4: Defining the roles of partners in educating adolescents
 - ✓ Training session 5: Role of civic values and life skills in peaceful coexistence
- The purpose of these sessions is to incorporate civic values and life skills into adolescent

education.

Brief overview: a summary of the idea behind each training session

Modalities: brainstorming/discussion/groups/individual presentations

- ✓ Proposed skill-oriented training sessions
 - a) Mental preparation
 - b) Stimuli variation
 - c) Use of educational aids
 - d) Increasing the motivation to learn
 - e) Clear explanation
 - f) Reinforcement
 - g) Asking questions and taking students' questions

The purpose of these sessions is to strengthen teachers' capacities and promote participatory instruction.

Modalities: brainstorming/discussion/groups/individual presentations

- Spreading a culture of civic values and life skills using the media

Assessments of many publicity campaigns launched by other projects have shown that Iraqi society, from a psychological standpoint, does not respond to the extent desired to such campaigns, but instead reacts adversely to them if overexposed. For this reason, I suggest two kinds of advertising tools:

- ✓ Tool number 1: Eye-catching posters – After they are designed and drafted, these posters can be placed in specific spots in partners’ administrative offices or in educational institutions and other sites, provided that their dissemination is not excessive.
- ✓ Tool number 2: Special brochures for distribution among partners and their units, schools, and schoolteachers in particular. Brochures can contain: *the proposed model for teachers and instruction, *the proposed model for adolescents, * the salient elements of civic values, * the most important behaviours and life skills, and so forth.

Observation: These two tools can reach an unspecified number of beneficiaries and yield new results and assessments.

- ✓ Advertising to promote the programme and its goals during athletic or artistic events organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sport on a yearly basis, which will reach unlimited numbers of people.
- Proposed axes for instilling civic values and life skills in adolescents

Axis 1: Reinforcing education and values in adolescents (civic values: human rights, civic belonging, national identity, gender, critical thinking)

- ✓ Proposed methods of instructing adolescents according to the first axis:
 - Criterion used to distinguish between categories of adolescents:
 - This criterion is determined using psychological and physiological bases that vary from one adolescent to another. Therefore, the manner of teaching adolescents must vary depending on their age, according to the following:
- ❖ Adolescents in the 12-14 year old age bracket (intermediate school level): an imitative teaching method may be used (practical example thereof provided in the annex).

This method is based on learning by observation, social learning or imitation ((29)). Specialists consider that one of the means of acquiring experience is through direct or indirect contact with others, and that imitation and inspiration play a crucial role in acquiring skills previously learned by others ((30)). Studies have confirmed that observing social interactions and watching educational films can contribute to adolescent development, especially as regards expression ((31)).

The most important data that supports the aim set forth is the Ministry of Education decree that stipulates that “intermediate education aims to discover and develop the student’s capabilities and preferences and increase their basic knowledge and experience in various areas, in addition to developing a healthy sense of civic belonging in them ((32)).

- ❖ Adolescents in the 15-17 year old age bracket (secondary school level): a teaching method that encourages students to cooperate may be used ((33)) (practical example thereof provided in the annex).

We prefer this pedagogical model to the one that encourages students to compete for the teacher’s esteem instead of promoting a spirit of cooperation and mutual aid, with the aim of exchanging knowledge and encouraging one another.

The most important data supporting the goal set forth is the Ministry of Education decree that stipulates that “preparatory education aims to continue discovering and developing students’

capabilities and preferences, broadening their culture, and enabling them to meet the demands of peaceful civic belonging.”

- With regard to girls’ education, a previous study conducted of girl students in the fifth level of secondary school, letters division, confirmed that adopting a cooperative pedagogical method yielded significantly positive results, among the most important:
 - ✓ Improved thinking abilities and understanding, and added opportunities to be creative and express their abilities, along with satisfaction of their different needs, which contributed to further development of their critical thinking skills
 - ✓ Their problem-solving abilities developed further, as did their skills in decision-making, one of the main intellectual faculties
 - ✓ Their approaches to learning, the curriculum and school have improved, as have their attitudes towards teachers, school, and their subjects.
 - ✓ Positive interaction among them contributed to the growth of their mental capacities and critical thinking.
 - ✓ Fertile ideas and living information stimulated female students to engage in critical thinking by interpreting, forming conclusions and evaluating arguments.
 - ✓ Their love of inquiry, research, and fact checking grew, and students were pushed to clarify what they heard. They also came to enjoy unraveling the mystery of challenging academic reading material, ascertaining the veracity and soundness of the information therein.
 - ✓ Girl students were endowed with the skill of reflective thinking, which leads them to the correct conclusion, enabling them to solve the problems they encounter during study.
 - ✓ The students’ higher cognitive and affective mental processes showed improvement; those processes are the ones used in other psychological processes such as understanding, feeling, imagination, memory, abstraction, generalization, discernment, comparison and establishing proofs.
 - ✓ The students’ capacity to recognize the dimension of a problem and accept the correct proof needed to solve it showed improvement, as did their understanding of the nature of knowledge accessed through inference or logical rules and their ability to learn in this manner.

Another study confirmed the veracity of the results of cooperative teaching, as demonstrated by the second-level students of the Institute for the Preparation of Women Teachers:

- ✓ The use of the cooperative learning method produces increased learning capabilities in girl students.
- ✓ The students feel that they are completing their class work in a collaborative manner and that they, along with their classmates, are responsible for completing their work and achieving their goals, which helps them learn more effectively than the usual methods can.
- ❖ Adolescents in the 19-21 year old age bracket: (first phase of university study) – The brainstorming method can be used in instruction. The method is appropriate for this age group. Moreover, its success has been confirmed in training sessions and in the increased interaction between the trainer and participants.

General observations:

- The methods proposed above can be accommodated within the available material possibilities in the education sector in Iraq.
- The methods proposed are suitable for the high number of students in each class, especially in preparatory and secondary education.
- The main obstacle to adopting this method in university instruction is the number of students.

Axis number 2 concerns adolescent behaviour. (Life skills: communication and discussion skills, espousing and defending one’s views, decision-making, problem-solving, and exercising self-control).

Inasmuch as the life skills that we are attempting to incorporate into adolescent education relate to behaviour, it is necessary to address and fully grasp certain data before proposing a solution.

- ✓ Reasons for the deficiency in good behaviour in adolescents ((37))
 - Mistreatment at the hands of some teachers
 - Lack of genuine supervision in schools
 - Use of corporal punishment
 - Absence of justice
 - Media-related causes
 - Societal causes
 - Psychological causes
 - Cycles of violence resulting from successive wars ((38))
 - Terrorism and the spread of armed violence
 - Weakened role of social workers in the educational process. Their assignment of other roles (for the most part) has led to a number of problems that have grown worse in recent years, imperilling the success of the educational process, as has the dearth of social workers and of training programmes for them.
- ✓ Goals of behaviour modification in adolescents
 - Abandoning negative conduct and replacing it with positive conduct
 - Acquiring a problem-solving method
 - Living in society (coexistence)

(Observation: According to statistics from a previous study, education has a significant influence on behaviour.) ((39))

- ✓ Proposed methods for modifying adolescent behaviour

Just as the methods proposed to teach adolescents civic values varied according to their age, so too must those suggested to modify their behaviour or teach them life skills.

With adolescents in the 12-14 year old age bracket (intermediate school level) the model method for behaviour modification can be used.

With adolescents in the 15-17 year old age bracket (secondary school level) the behavioural contract method can be used.

With adolescents in the 18-19 year old age bracket (beginning of university studies) other methods may be used, including critical thinking and creative thinking.

- The model method ((40))

The model method is a process aimed at teaching the individual how to behave by illustrating the desired behaviour. It is a change in behaviour brought about as a result of observing the conduct of others. It can be described as learning by observation, social learning, imitation, or mutual learning. Specialists affirm that the individual learns by suggestion from the movement, speech, features and experiences of others, especially in those he admires and perceives as a model that must be imitated. ((45))

- ✓ Kinds of models:
 - The living model: The model behaves in the manner that the observer is expected to learn.
 - The symbolic or image model, in which the observer learns through films or stories.
 - The participatory model, in which the observer is encouraged by the model and adopts the correct behaviour on his own.
- ✓ Uses of the model:
 - Correcting many behavioural problems, including aggressiveness and anxiety

- Building social skills
- Helping individuals who suffer from social isolation and struggle with anger issues
- Other situations
- ✓ Factors determining the success of the model method
 - Observer's attentiveness to the model
 - Observer's motivation
 - Observer's ability to imitate the model's behaviour
 - Observer's ability to continue behaving in the desired way once he has learned it.
- ✓ Proposed model for use of the model method: (as mentioned in the annexes)
- Behavioural contract

This educational mechanism is based on an agreement between the school administration or one of the teachers and the student. Under the contract and of his own accord, the student commits to perform a given task or behave in a certain way in exchange for a given reward. This method is appropriate for secondary school students.

- Distinguishing features of the behavioural contract
 - This educational method teaches the adolescent to make decisions and change his behaviour.
 - The adolescent accepts the new behaviour because he agreed to it voluntarily.
 - The new behaviour will be practiced by the adolescent and its integration can be monitored.
 - This educational policy is based on striking a balance between desire and self-denial.
 - The method is well-suited to existing educational possibilities.
- Proposed model of the behavioural contract (as mentioned in the annexes)
- Critical thinking or creative thinking

This method is appropriate for adolescents aged 18 to 19 years (beginning university studies)

Thinking is a skill that the student must be taught and developed in the student in order to enable him to use and apply his knowledge. Teaching a student to think means to teach him, either directly or indirectly, how to use such skills as observation, comparison, classification, application and others, independently of the subject matter.

Nowadays, critical thinking is considered not a mere pedagogical choice but a necessity dictated by the need to develop the adolescent through the pre-university stage.

- Benefits of teaching students how to think:
 - Gives students the self-confidence they need to face life circumstances as they arise
 - Teaching how to think is one of the tools that build life skills
- Challenges faced in teaching students how to think
 - The teacher's control over the range of thought and the time allotted for classroom lessons
 - Failure to use modern technologies

- Failure to accept students' new ideas or questions unrelated to the subject matter
- Teacher's lack of interest in discussing and researching a given issue in the classroom

Chapter 12

Bases and standards for assessing implementation of plans and methods to integrate values and skills into adolescent education

I propose that the following standards be used to help assess the methods of integrating values and skills into adolescent education.

- Assessment mechanisms during proposed activities or training sessions, such as the following:
 - Questionnaires, to be distributed to participants
 - Interviews with participants
 - Assessment of the level of activities from the organizational and other points of view

- Assessment mechanisms after the proposed activities or training sessions have ended, such as:
 - ✓ Assessment of results measured by the development of networking among partners
 - Building or developing networking among partners in the educational process (Ministries, directorates, provinces, organizations and others) is considered value added to the desired goal, as they work, for the most part, in different locations and under different names, and their coordination might be deficient at times. Therefore, networking will strengthen cooperation and provides an opening for work related to the desired goal.
 - Assessing the extent of networking between the organizations expected to participate and decision-makers, or between directorates of education in the four target provinces
 - Assessing the extent of the influence on cooperation between the education sectors in order to achieve complementarity and avoid isolation in most instances.
 - Assessing the increase in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour on ensuring that minors placed in juvenile prisons receive an effective education, so that work towards their rehabilitation and reintegration into society can resume, particularly as cooperation in that area has been stalled or halting at times and continues to be plagued by a lack of integration.
 - Assessing the progress made on cooperation between the education sector in Federal Iraq and its counterpart in Kurdistan, especially since the latter drew up for itself a different education plan that contains positive steps forward that merit adoption by the education system of Federal Iraq. Moreover, unified thinking at the planning and implementation levels across both education sectors in order to incorporate values and skills into education can provide a point of departure for efforts on similar or related programmes, which would add value to the desired goal.

- Assessing results based on measured impact
 - Follow-up on the effects of strategic decisions taken by decision-makers at the executive and legislative levels
 - Follow-up on changes in teacher-training methods and development of teachers' skills during service
 - Follow-up on the extent of changes to academic curricula actually adopted in the context of instruction, either total or partial and whether published or unpublished.
 - Follow-up on the extent of changes wrought in adolescents using the following indicators:
 - ❖ Measurement of the impact on students through the development of activities related to civic values and life skills that they had not participated in previously, such as starting student associations, coming together to collaborate on projects, or doing creative work in the arts and other areas, and other activities, and assessing the impact of the proposed teaching methods on students' future grades and on their participation in community activities.

- Follow-up on the reach of the effects on the target provinces and the remaining ones during the initial stage, in terms of changes to the curricula or teaching methods used, and in other areas.
- The idea of preparing a special curriculum on human rights that incorporates other civic values in order to teach it in colleges in the target provinces (in the first stage of university studies, for students aged 18-19 years) will be the first step in standardizing the curricula for use in all other colleges in Iraq.