

TOWARDS PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNIZATION IN IRAQ

The efforts of Iraq to pass a decentralized law that would improve service delivery across the country have been crowned with success. Law 21, also referred to as «the Law of Governorates not incorporated into a region», has been adopted by the Iraqi Parliament late June 2013, and recently entered into force.



ESCWA and UNDP have provided technical assistance to the Government of Iraq for passing Law 21, considered as a cornerstone and a key legislative blueprint for decentralization and public modernization in Iraq. ESCWA had lent its assistance in this regard as part of its commitment to the UN multiagency programme “Iraq Public Service Modernization (I-PSM)”. I-PSM provides the government of Iraq with strategic directions and guidance for the development of the Senior Executive Services (SES) as part of a broader public service reform initiative. Within the scope of the programme, an Iraqi mission to Canada took place in October 2012, with eighteen Iraqi elected officials and public servants from all levels of government in Iraq spending 10 days to study Canada’s approach to federal-provincial relations and fiscal federalism. Similarly, a study mission consisting of Iraqi Parliamentarians entrusted with the revision of Law 21 was conducted at the offices of the Institute on Governance (IOG) in Ottawa, Canada, from February 25 to March 1, 2013. The mission provided practical assistance to the Iraqi Parliamentary Committee on Regions and Governorates.

ESCWA and UNDP also partnered with IOG to conduct a follow-up assessment mission to Iraq, from 7 to 19 April 2013, to provide the government of Iraq with strategic directions and guidance for the development of SES, a tailor-designed Program to build senior leadership in the public service based on the principles of fairness, transparency, merit and through collective input to serve the public and support the whole-of-government. ESCWA also assisted Iraqi Parliamentarians and implicated stakeholders within the Government of Iraq in finalizing the drafting of Law 21. To that end, the IOG participated in the Parliamentary Committee workshop designed to finalize the drafting of the amendments to Law 21. Furthermore, the IOG met with many stakeholders and discussed the amendments, the essential instruments required for implementation and necessary relationships to ensure its successful passage and its efficient operation.