



PROTECT | NURTURE | EMPOWER

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Iraqi Children Foundation intervenes with love and hope in the lives of children who are vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and exploitation by criminals, traffickers, and extremists.

January 2022



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Our Mission

To intervene with love and hope in the lives of Iraqi children who are vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and exploitation by extremists, criminals, and human traffickers.

Our Vision

To ensure all children in Iraq have a voice, and are empowered to reach their full potential.

Our Mission Approach

OUR PHILOSOPHY

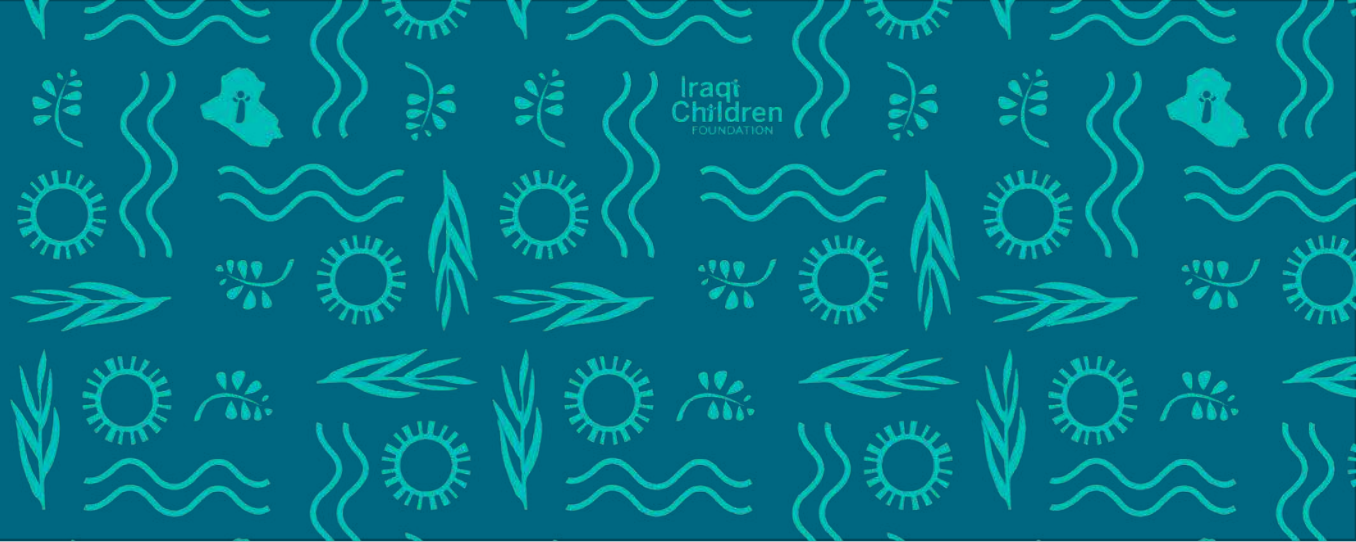
We focus on **sustainability and empowerment** through local capacity building.

HOW WE IMPLEMENT

Our **'hand-up not hand-out'** approach prioritizes partnering with local Iraqi organizations for service delivery. We respect local leadership, build lasting relationships, and invest in training and capacity building.

WHAT THIS ACHIEVES

We **work with our partners** to mobilize resources for education, health, protection and trauma care, and to **give children a voice**.



Our Impact: Highlights of 2021

Despite the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, 2021 was our biggest year ever for programs at ICF. We celebrated five years of our Street Lawyers program and four years of Hope Buses, and we completed our anti-trafficking pilot project. We expanded our reach beyond Baghdad, by refurbishing and reopening a school for Yazidi children in Sinjar, and we operated a center for adolescent girls in Mosul. We also published a new edition of “My Life Book”, and developed a new “School Transitions” program for Hope Bus graduates.

*Please note, names of all children referenced in this report have been changed to for their privacy and protection.

CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF OUR HOPE BUSES & STREET LAWYERS PROGRAMS

In 2021 we hit a major milestone: five years of Hope Buses, Street Lawyers, and social work initiatives! These programs have delivered critical legal protection, education, social services, mental health assistance, and nutrition to thousands of poor and vulnerable orphans, street kids, child laborers, disabled children, and others displaced by years of violence. The Street Lawyers provide essential representation and counsel to vulnerable children caught up in the Iraqi legal system at no cost to them or their families. The Hope Buses provide early childhood education, healthcare, recreational activities and meals in some of the most under-served neighborhoods in Baghdad – also at no cost to the children. ICF has helped thousands of children, including:



Rokaya (13)

Who was a good student on the Hope Bus but whose poor family nearly married her off until social workers intervened.



Husam (13)

Who was beaten by his boss and falsely accused of theft until the Street Lawyers intervened.



Mousa (8)

Whose mother had to work to support the family, leaving him to wander the streets until social workers persuaded the mother to let him go to school.



Layla (3)

Who was used by a woman to beg on the street until Street Lawyers discovered the girl had been kidnapped and sold to the women to make money.



Ali (15)

Whose uncle tricked him with the false promise of a job, and tried to take his kidney to sell to organ traffickers.

BY THE NUMBERS: A SNAPSHOT OF THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF HOPE BUSES & STREET LAWYERS



1,469

children received legal protection and defense from the Street Lawyers



1,189

children were saved from child labor and domestic abuse through the intervention of ICF-funded social workers



500+

children have been nourished mentally, physically and emotionally with tutoring, healthy meals, and psycho-social services on the Hope Buses



1,568

children received key legal documents required for school and benefits from the Street Lawyers

OUR 2021 IMPACT: THE HOPE BUSES

Our eye-catching "Hope Buses" are ordinary, used buses that are converted into colorful, child-friendly classrooms. Each bus has two teachers and a social worker, and serves approximately 50 orphans and street kids with tutoring, nutrition, health care, social services, practical life lessons, community, and fun.

Case study: Zena* is 12 years old. She is one of the most active children on Hope Bus 2, and has lots of creative ideas. Zena decided to help her family, so she planned to start a small project making food at home and selling it to shops. Zena consulted the bus team and they encouraged her and also provided her with some raw materials. Zena, her mother, and her sisters came up with the idea and started the project. They are already achieving some success and the bus team are committed to helping them achieve even more.

OUR 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 105 children attended Hope Bus 1 & 2 in either a full- or part-time capacity.
- More than 20,000 nutritious meals provided to students on the bus.
- Children received new clothes, toys, and play equipment, thanks to our generous donors at Khudairi Group.
- 100% of children on the bus now have their legal documents (supported by our Street Lawyers team), & 90% of children regularly attending the Hope Bus programs are no longer working.



Looking Forward & Expanding Our Impact: A New School Transitions Program

We are excited to announce that we will be commencing a new “School Transitions” program in 2022. This program will help us to sustain the critical gains made in educating, protecting, and nurturing our Hope Bus program graduates, now more than 500 children. Like a farmer who does not leave the seeds he plants to chance, but continues to water and fertilize the field, we too plan to follow up with the children who we’ve educated, fed, and cared for at the Hope Buses, so that their futures are not cut short by the hazards of early marriage, a return to child labor, illness, trafficking, or other dangers that can appear in the years after they leave the cocoon of the Hope Buses.

In consultation with our Iraqi partners, we have identified the following key components of a transitions initiative, which will focus on helping Hope Bus graduates continue their education journey through public school. In brief, these components are:

1. A small, mobile Transitions team to monitor Hope Bus graduates for a minimum of three years.
2. Daily minibus transportation to public school, and enrollment assistance.
3. “Starting School” pack, with stationery, hygiene supplies, school clothes and shoes.
4. An emergency / special needs fund, to meet needs including medical and psychosocial support, clothing, nutrition, and shelter.
5. Hope Bus Family Annual Celebration and check-In.

We look forward to reporting back on the progress of this program, and collecting and analyzing the data generated.

OUR 2021 IMPACT: SOCIAL SERVICES

Social workers on our Street Lawyers team strive to end child labor and get children off the streets. They also work to stop domestic abuse (which has increased during COVID-19), provide medical care, and help get access to psychosocial services for children with mental health issues.



Case study: Huda (7) is one of the Hope Bus students. Recently, her mother passed away, and Huda became very sad and isolated. The social workers provided special and focused care for Huda, including many sessions providing trauma care. The social workers are helping Huda to express her feelings through art. This picture of the right shows Huda's mother in heaven. Huda says "when I draw my mother I feel she is with me every day".

OUR 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Social workers served 192 children with clothing medical attention, family mediation, and abuse prevention. This number is up from 135 in 2020.
- Social workers assisted young people with finding employment after incarceration, or to support family.
- Social workers assisted children and families in obtaining government benefits.



OUR 2021 IMPACT: BAGHDAD STREET LAWYERS

Our lawyers provide legal protection for children who are targeted by criminals and traffickers, abused by employers, or are facing other risks. They also help children obtain critical legal documents so that they can access benefits and attend school.

Case study: Mohammed (17) was represented by the Street Lawyers after he was accused of theft. The Street Lawyers were successful in getting the charges dropped against Mohammed, as there was a lack of evidence. When Mohammed was released, the social workers followed up with him and helped him find work at an air conditioning repairs shop. During the past year, the social workers returned multiple times to visit Mohammed, and to encourage him to save money. Recently, Mohammed had saved enough money to open a simple workshop of his own. With the support of the social workers, Mohammed bought his own maintenance tools and rented a small place to work in as a workshop. Over the past year, Mohammed has proven that he can be a successful member of society, with a bright future ahead. Without the representation of the Street Lawyers, it is likely that a poor child like Mohammed would have ended up in prison.

OUR 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Legal protection:** 266 legal representation cases have been completed (and an additional 11 are ongoing), for cases including stealing, vagrancy, prostitution, fighting, drugs etc. This is up from 220 completed legal representation cases in 2020.
- **Legal documents:** Street Lawyers helped 281 children obtain legal documents required to enroll in school and access government benefits. This is up from 201 completed filings in 2020.
- **Total completed legal cases: 547**



LAWYERS HELP PARENTS TO ENROL THEIR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL



OUR 2021 IMPACT: ADDRESSING CHILD ORGAN, SEX, AND LABOR TRAFFICKING IN IRAQ

In 2021, we completed our Anti-Trafficking Pilot Project. The program has been extremely effective, and we are pleased to announce the continuation of this project for 2022. This program saw us add a new division to the Street Lawyers team: a specialized team to deal with cases of child trafficking.

In our first year, we published the first Annual Report from this project. Some high level findings from the report include:

- The team received 63 cases in this first year: 74% of the cases related to sex trafficking, and the rest were organ or labor trafficking.
- Girls represented 78% of all victims. Sex trafficking in particular appears to be growing rapidly in Iraq, and we believe has been exacerbated by COVID-19. Powerful people are behind trafficking in Iraq; members of insurgent groups, some members of powerful political parties, militia, and clerics are among the chief perpetrators of abuse against women and children.
- The biggest challenges facing the team on the ground are 1) the lack of knowledge / correct application of anti-trafficking laws in the Iraqi courts, 2) finding safe housing for victims and providing sufficient ongoing support to victims to make sure they are safe in the long term, and 3) COVID-19 impacts on the team's ability to safely provide critical anti-trafficking prevention training for children.
- The long term and indirect benefits of this program cannot be overstated: the team are seeing positive changes in the attitudes of judges and law enforcement, evidenced by the increased correct application of anti-trafficking laws in local courts. The team are also working hard to raise awareness within communities through direct engagement and activities.

Case study: Sara is 14 years old, and worked cleaning windshields in the street. The police arrested her for vagrancy. Our lawyers spoke to Sara and discovered that she was being forced to work on the street by someone who was also forcing her to practice prostitution. During the court hearing, our lawyers explained that Sara is a victim of sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and asked for the charge of vagrancy to be dropped. The judge agreed that this is a trafficking case, and dropped all charges against Sara, and referred her to a homeless state home. An arrest warrant has been issued against the person who had been exploiting Sara.

OUR IMPACT: COVID-19 RESPONSE

Iraq continues to be heavily impacted by COVID-19, and vulnerable children and their families are disproportionately effected. During 2021, emergency food supply packs were distributed to Hope Bus children and their families. On the buses, staff have ensured PPE is worn, social distancing measures are implemented, temperatures are checked, and classes are taken outside where possible. The photos on the left show medical personnel from the Ministry of Health in Baghdad, who visited the Hope Bus children this year to provide medical advice about COVID-19.

Case study: Through our continuous follow-up to protect the children of Hope Bus and their families from COVID-19, we have learned that some family members of one of Hope Bus 2 children (Mousa), had been infected with COVID-19. The team informed the government medical teams that carried out the necessary examinations for Mousa's family. It was found that three of Mousa's family members were infected with the virus, and so the medical team guided the family to take the necessary isolation measures for the infected individuals. Our team provided the necessary support for Mousa's family to receive treatment and provided them with masks, sanitizers and food supplies. After 20 days they recovered and are now in good health.



OUR 2021 IMPACT: A NEW SCHOOL IN SINJAR FOR VULNERABLE YAZIDI CHILDREN

In 2021, we partnered with the Austin Rotary Club (TX), and Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO) to rehabilitate an elementary school for Yazidi children in Sinjar, Iraq.

Al Waleed School, abandoned since the ISIS occupation, was in a state of disrepair and in desperate need of rehabilitation before students could return to the classroom. The school is now refurbished and reopened, with 240 children registered, and a plan to increase this number to 400 during 2022.

The school rehabilitation project was designed not only to restore educational opportunity for Yazidi children, but also to provide paid jobs for members of the local community. The world watched the Yazidis flee from ISIS to Mount Sinjar in 2014 and, thereafter, suffer unbearably from torture, killing, and sexual slavery. This school project, along with other initiatives by the international community, seeks to rebuild the home communities and restore hope for the Yazidi people.

The Iraqi Children Foundation recognizes, with heartfelt appreciation, the teamwork of the Austin Rotary Club and the Iraq Health Access Organization in implementing this investment in the future of vulnerable Yazidi children.



BEFORE...



DURING...



AFTER!



OUR 2021 IMPACT: MOSUL “SAFE SPACE” FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

In 2021, ICF funded the operating costs for a “Safe Space” for adolescent girls in Mosul.

This centre provides social and psychosocial support for vulnerable girls, as well as educational support and a sense of belonging. Many girls in this area have previously been displaced and are only now returning to Mosul. There is an increased need for support for girls experiencing negative coping mechanisms, trauma, psychological distress, and gender-based violence.

The centre was donated to the community by International Medical Corps after the termination of their services to the area. UNFPA have also previously worked to provide services in the centre. With our partners, Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO) we decided to put this centre to good use, rather than see it fall into disrepair.

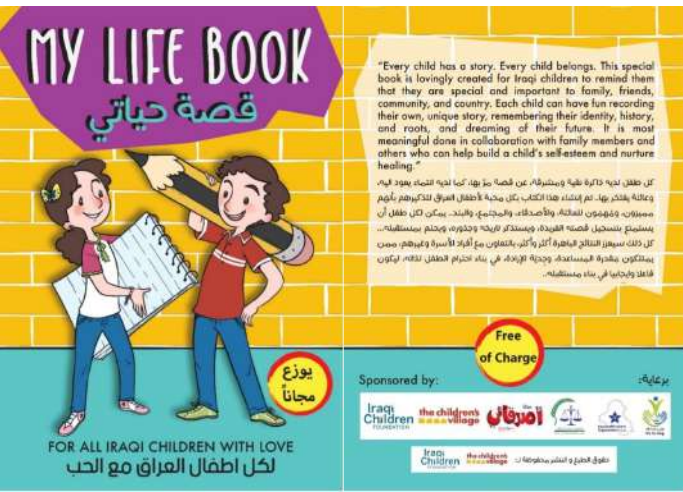
Girls at the centre have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities, including sports, sewing and crafts, reading, and computer literacy. They also have access to social workers, a library, medical care, and computers.



OUR 2021 IMPACT: “MY LIFE BOOK”

In 2021, ICF and its U.S. partner, The Children’s Village, released “My Life Book”, a free gift for Iraqi orphans and vulnerable children. This activity book has been presented to orphans and former street children on our Hope Buses, and also to other children through the Baghdad International Book Fair, at an exhibit sponsored by Asdikae Magazine for children.

Originally an initiative of child welfare experts at the renown Children’s Village in New York, the activity book is designed with a simple therapeutic goal for children who have experienced trauma and loss: addressing the critical, heart-felt need to belong. By filling out the book and drawing pictures of family and friends, each child is reminded of their identity, history, and roots. They also have an opportunity to dream about the future. The activity book is most meaningfully done in collaboration with family members, social workers, teachers, or others who can help build a child’s self-esteem and nurture healing. This new edition is bilingual and features colorful new illustrations created by staff or Iraq’s Asdikae Magazine for children. In addition to the Iraqi Children Foundation and Children’s Village, this free gift to the children of Iraqi is sponsored by four Iraqi partners: Asdikae Magazine, Justice Gate Organization, Iraq Health Access Organization, and We Do Help.





Saluting ICF's Donors & Supporters

ICF recognizes with gratitude the individuals, foundations, and corporates who stepped up to support vulnerable Iraqi kids in 2021. It is your support that allows us to continue serving this important cause.



OUR “IN THEIR SHOES” 5K GOES GLOBAL!

Our donors and supporters provide life-changing help for Iraqi children. This year, our biggest annual event – the “In Their Shoes 5K” was cancelled due to COVID-19 (for the second time). Following on from the success of our “Road to Baghdad” virtual challenge in 2020, we moved our race online again. Supporters joined us from 73 cities all over the world, from every continent except Antarctica. We had 27 teams, with the largest in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Houston, Washington D.C., Austin, and the Gold Coast in Australia. In the end, we far exceeded our registration and fundraising goals, and raised awareness across the world in most wide-reaching event ever. We thank our incredible supporters who participated and helped us bring attention to the critical needs of vulnerable children in Iraq.



On the same weekend, at a special reception hosted by the Iraqi Embassy in Washington D.C., ABC Journalist Bob Woodruff joined us and cast an inspiring vision for Iraq’s children. Mr. Woodruff shared his experiences as a journalist in Iraq, where he was gravely wounded with traumatic brain injury from an IED. Woodruff recounted his experiences and long recovery, and his desire to one day return to Iraq. In an interview, Woodruff said: “Sometime soon I would like to get a chance to visit Iraq again. The last time I was there was in 2006 when I was badly wounded. This time I would like to witness the remarkable work being done by the Iraqi Children Foundation. I believe that children must be our top priority because they were never part of the fighting or politics that led to war in their country.”



IN THEIR SHOES
Global 5K
SEPTEMBER 18

Thank you to our donors & supporters!

ICF would like to thank all our many supporters who stepped up to help Iraqi kids in 2021. In spite of all the challenges of COVID-19, individual support was higher than ever, allowing ICF to continue and expand this very important work. In particular, ICF thanks all the supporters who held their own fundraisers in 2021, spoke at events, and found creative ways to give. Some special mentions go to:



**THE AZIZ FAMILY:
RAN AN ICF BOOTH AT
A UK IRAQI BAZAAR**



**ALIA & ARC CIRCUS:
SPECIAL EDITION ICF
CHARITY TEES**



**BARBARA & LORAIN COMMUNITY
COLLEGE: SCHOOL BACKPACK
DRIVE FOR HOPE BUS KIDS**



**PHIL: DONATIONS FROM
HIS RESTAURANT, JUMA
KITCHEN**



**MAISOON & WISSAM:
ICF CHRISTMAS CARD
DESIGNS**

Want to do your own fundraiser in 2022?! Reach out to Liz to find out more: liz@iraqichildren.org

Our 2021 ICF Corporate Mentors

ICF recognizes with gratitude the Corporate Mentors who stepped up in 2021 to support Iraq's most vulnerable children. Corporate Mentors provide significant resources to support ICF initiatives for children in Iraq. ICF gratefully recognizes the generosity of one unnamed company, along with the following businesses:



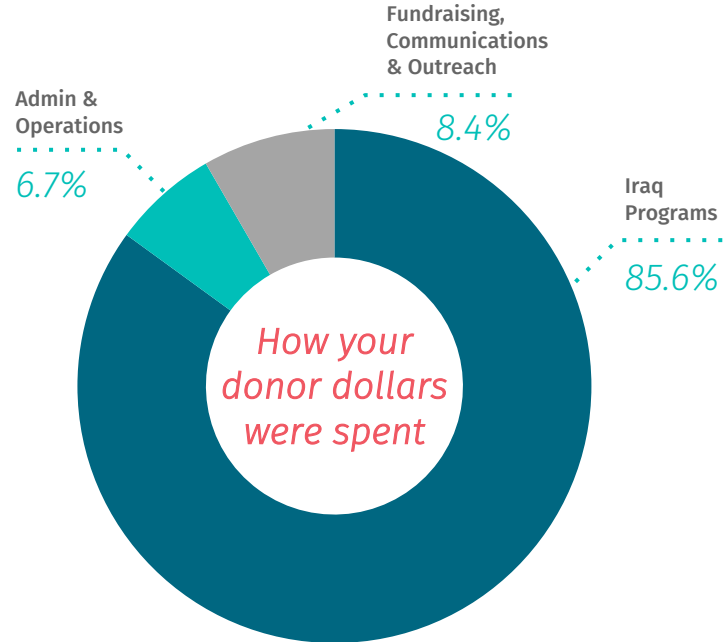


Financials & Leadership

In 2021, Iraqi Children Foundation had its biggest year ever for program spending. Our direct investments in on-the-ground programs in Iraq represented 85.6% of our total donor dollar spending for the year. We continued to face challenges due to COVID-19, including a decline in corporate sponsorship and some individual giving, however we were pleased to meet all our budget obligations for 2021, and to enter 2022 with significant funds in reserve. Most importantly, we are proud that we were able to spend more than ever on our core mission: meaningful interventions in the lives of Iraq's most vulnerable children. The ICF Board of Directors remains committed to responsible stewardship of funds donated, as well as overall leadership of the organization.

Financial Accountability 2021

Iraqi Children Foundation is a registered US-based tax exempt 501(c)(3) charity (EIN 26-1394773). Our audit and full financial statements are available upon request.



Our Leadership - Board of Directors



Grant Felgenhauer

CHAIRMAN

Managing Partner,
Euphrates Advisors



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PRESIDENT

Director, Marketing & PR,
Dworken & Bernstein Co., LPA



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SECRETARY & GENERAL COUNSEL

Retired US Marine Corps Colonel,
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Medical Doctor & President,
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Program Manager, International
Recruitment Specialist



Mohammed Khudairi

DIRECTOR

Managing Partner,
Khudairi Group



Luma Jaffar

DIRECTOR

Managing Principal
Lawrence Group

Our Leadership - Advisors



Samir Sumaida'ie

AMBASSADOR (RET.)

Ambassador of Iraq
to the US 2006 - 2011



Ryan Crocker

AMBASSADOR (RET.)

US Ambassador to Iraq
2007 - 2009



Jeremy Kohomban, Ph.D.

PRESIDENT & CEO

The Children's Village
The Center for Child Welfare Research



Maxwell Quqa

ICF FOUNDER

Former American bi-cultural
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Shameem Rassam

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Ryan K. Bell, CPP

IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN VETERAN

Director of Operations
Jard Inventory & Loss Prevention



Sherizaan Minwalla, Esq.

LAWYER

Expert on Iraq and gender-based
violence/sex trafficking



May Yang Ying
(Sumaida'ie)

BUSINESSWOMAN



ICF IS CREDIBLE & TRUSTWORTHY

- ✔ • We are a registered US-based tax exempt 501(c)(3) charity (EIN 26-1394773)
- ✔ • Our audit and financial statements are available upon request
- ✔ • Our partners in Iraq are well-vetted and have worked with US and international organizations, including the UN
- ✔ • ICF has earned top Platinum rank from GuideStar for commitment to transparency, and is a “Top Ranked” partner on Global Giving
- ✔ • In 2018, ICF received an Arab League award for its work with children and youth
- ✔ • Our Board and Advisors include former US and Iraq Ambassadors, Iraqi-Americans, legal experts and veterans

Thank you for your support!

Iraqi Children Foundation gratefully recognizes the many donors and partners who have given generously of their resources and time to help Iraq's most vulnerable children – the orphans, street kids, and children displaced by violence. You are changing the lives of desperately poor and vulnerable children who have suffered so much. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts on behalf of these children.

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