

# KIRKUK DEBRIS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP REPORT

## May 2019











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#### 1. Introduction

On 27 and 28 March 2019, the Governorate of Kirkuk in collaboration with the University of Kirkuk, and the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), held a Debris Management Workshop at the University of Kirkuk, Iraq.

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together all relevant actors and stakeholders dealing with debris planning, management and implementation with the objective of supporting improved debris management in the Governorate of Kirkuk.

As indicated in the Workshop Concept note (Appendix A), the debris challenges faced by Kirkuk Governorate are different from those in urban centres such as Mosul and Anbar; with damaged houses, municipal buildings and infrastructure being spread out through a largely rural area. Thus, logistics, environmental protection and scheduling of debris works are all aspects that need to factor this specific rural context in debris planning.

#### 2. Objective

The management of debris in the Governorate of Kirkuk is a pressing challenge since the presence of debris on people's properties is hindering their return to rehabilitate and reconstruct their homes. The removal of debris is therefore a prerequisite to the recovery of the conflict affected areas of Kirkuk Governorate.

At the same time, there are opportunities that can be gained from robust and proper debris planning, such as employment generation, cost reduction in subsequent reconstruction works and better environmental management. Consequently, it is critical that those responsible for debris planning are aware of these opportunities.

The primary objective of the debris management workshop was to support local authorities at the district and sub-district level in Kirkuk Governorate to develop debris management plans, which take into account the aforementioned factors as well as bring together key stakeholders that can both contribute to the plan and support its implementation.

The workshop was also a unique event gathering for the first time all relevant parties for the specific purpose of discussing and agreeing on fundamental issues relating to debris management; something that had not happened yet in the Governorate of Kirkuk.

#### 3. Site Visit

Prior to the workshop, a one-day site visit to the heavily damaged villages in Multaqa subdistrict was conducted with the Head of Multaqa sub-district. This provided the workshop facilitators and other participants with a better understanding of the key challenges facing debris removal in typically damaged villages. This included:

- Major hindrance that debris poses for returnees to access their damaged homes (currently not possible due to debris) as well as basic services such as water and electricity;
- Very limited return of displaced persons to the damaged villages with only a handful of people starting to rebuild, driven by individual initiative;
- Sand and gravel for reconstruction purchased from Kirkuk is expensive due to transport costs and high raw materials prices;
- The eagerness of the local authorities to expedite debris removal to help facilitate the return of displaced people; and,
- The government is supporting the rehabilitation of basic services and infrastructure (water, electricity, roads and bridges) in the damaged villages but is not involved in debris removal from households.



Photo 1: Typical damage to homes in villages in rural Kirkuk where an estimated 9,400 homes have been destroyed.



Photo 2: UN Team visiting the destroyed Multaqa village with the head of the sub-district



Photo 3: Very few homeowners are returning to rebuild their houses, largely due to presence of debris hindering access and the lack of basic services (water & electricity).

Key data from the site visit include:

- A total of 131 villages in an area of 65km by 7km are extensively damaged with the majority of the buildings demolished to create a buffer zone between the Kurdish Peshmerga and ISIL during the hostilities;
- A total of 9,400 homes have been demolished and are lying ruin;
- Most of the 20,000 residents of Multaqa sub-district remain displaced since 2014;
- Price for sand gravel as delivered from Kirkuk is \$200/10m<sup>3</sup>; and,
- Price for stones/aggregate as delivered from Kirkuk is \$100 120/10m<sup>3</sup>.

#### 4. Workshop Activities

The workshop was opened by the Governorate of Kirkuk, the University of Kirkuk and UN Environment Programme. In his opening statement, Mr. Rakan Al-Jaburi, acting Governor of Kirkuk, emphasised the need for a forward-looking vision involving all key stakeholders in dealing with Kirkuk's debris file which has so far received limited attention, and yet presents a major obstacle for the return of people displaced by the conflict. Mr. Al-Jaburi also underscored the need for a scientific approach in developing cost-effective debris recovery solutions and avoiding creating problems in the future through improper disposal. The need to remove the debris to help communities heal and overcome the pain of the conflict was also stressed. Welcoming remarks were also made by the President of Kirkuk University, and an overview of the objectives and expectations of the workshop was provided by UNEP.



Photos 4 and 5: The workshop, with more than 170 participants, was opened by the acting Governor of Kirkuk, Mr. Rakan Al-Jaburi (left), and the President of Kirkuk University, Dr. Abbas Taqi (right).

The workshop provided a platform for a broad range of discussions concerning debris management in individual districts, sub-districts as well as the Governorate level. The workshop agenda is available in Appendix C.

Key focus areas in the workshop discussions centred around helping participants shape their respective Debris Management Plans, including:

- Realising optimal recycling of debris, whilst recognising not all debris will be recycled due to lack of resources for recycling operations;
- Recognising the need to dispose of debris in an environmentally sound and safe manner;
- Appreciating that using mechanical equipment and contractors for the debris removal works can be quicker yet more expensive than using largely manual labour to support livelihoods through Cash for Work;
- Attention to health and safety of debris labourers and the public from hazards such as Explosive Remnants of War, unstable buildings and hazardous materials within the debris;
- Potential cost savings to be achieved by recycling the debris with crushers locally in the villages thus reducing transportation of debris to dumpsites and reducing the cost of importing raw materials from quarries; and,
- Leadership and commitment by the Governorate and its districts and sub-districts to manage and implement debris recovery works.



Photos 6 and 7: Researchers from Iraqi universities presenting the findings of their debris management studies including on use of recycled rubble in road construction.



Photo 8: Representative of Kirkuk Governorate presenting an overview of the status of damaged villages in Kirkuk governorate and estimated volumes of debris created.

#### 5. Workshop Outcomes

The workshop was well attended with around 170 persons present in the opening morning session, and around 60-70 persons participating over the remaining two days. A wide array of stakeholders from the Governorate administration, conflict-affected districts and subdistricts, Kirkuk University's various engineering and science faculties, UN agencies and international NGOs as well as local interested parties attended the workshop. Around twenty percent (36 persons) of the participants were women. The participants list is included in Appendix D.

The two-day workshop included the following key elements:

#### Day One

Governor's Address

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