Iraq’s Most Vulnerable Children in Crisis: Lost family, lost homes, lost childhoods

ICF’s 2015 Story
Lovingly Dedicated to Children like these…

A 13 year old boy, whose mother had died and father had remarried, was sold by his father for $4 million Iraqi Dinars. Local anti-trafficking lawyers immediately investigated the case and filed a lawsuit against the father. They took the case to court in accordance with Iraq’s Anti-Human Trafficking law and succeeded in securing an arrest warrant for the father and helping the child find placement in a government orphanage.
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

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Giving Iraq’s Orphans and Street Children a Safe Haven for Learning, Nutrition, and More

Thousands of orphans and street children, many displaced by years of war, now live in destitute neighborhoods with inadequate shelter, lack of sanitation, and other necessities.

Too many have experienced trauma from witnessing the death of a parent or been exposed to physical and sexual abuse. Too many work on the streets or in dangerous workplaces to support a widowed mother, young siblings, or other relatives.

In the midst of this hardship, the Iraqi Children Foundation has supported a special safe haven for these children for four years, providing nutrition, learning, emotional support, health care, and more. In 2015:

- 187 desperately poor orphans and street children went to the Center full or part time
- More than 20,000 nutritious meals were served
- 85% of children (8 years old +) who received tutoring demonstrated ability to read and write
- 105 children got health checkups
- 10 children and families were referred to UNICEF's income generating projects so children wouldn’t have to work on the streets
- 42 cases of domestic and workplace violence were addressed
- Children were taught basic vocational skills and life lessons on such issues as how to protect themselves from criminal exploitation
- Gifts of toys and clothes, and fun times with music and dancing, brought smiles and laughter to their faces
ICF & Soccer Salam Partners Provide Humanitarian Aid to Children and Families Fleeing ISIS: One Team, One Dream

The Iraqi Children Foundation and its Soccer Salam partners\(^1\) continued working as a team in 2015 to provide humanitarian aid to children and families fleeing from ISIS.

The five tons of winter aid, airlifted in late 2014, were distributed early in 2015 to nearly 1,000 displaced families. In June, “peace baskets” of food – milk, rice, flour, lentils, chicken, dates, etc. – were distributed to families with approximately 1,000 individuals who had been forced to flee ISIS. Later, a team of courageous young Iraqis undertook a humanitarian mission on behalf of the Soccer Salam coalition to deliver food to children and families in the besieged city of Khalidiya. Going where most others dare not, the young team delivered tons of emergency food aid to more than 500 families. They even took extra sweets for the kids, an indulgence few kids got to enjoy in their perilous situation.

Soccer Salam’s humanitarian aid was also supplemented with its signature soccer balls for children. Even in their darkest hours, these children deserve a chance to play.

\(^1\) Soccer Salam US partners are ICF, Education for Peace in Iraq Center (EPIC), Karadah Project International, and Goals and Dreams. Our partner in Iraq is the Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO).
Trauma Care: Partnering with the Rotary Club of Austin and IHAO to Mend Little Hearts and Minds

The Iraqi Children Foundation (ICF) gratefully acknowledges a special grant from the Rotary Club of Austin to deliver psychosocial care for children traumatized by their flight from ISIS.

Partnering with the Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO), the project provided a special tent at Yousefiyah camp near Baghdad where trained staff provided activities and guidance for children who gathered to share their stories and learn how to deal with emotional trauma. Most of the children and families came from the ISIS-captured city of Ramadi in Anbar.

Among the activities were two books for children: “New Day, New Friends” and the Life Book. The first is a story that uses friendly animals to teach 7 strengths of resilience, like belonging, hope, and compassion. The second is a book that reinforces a child’s sense of belonging, allowing them an opportunity to record their hopes and dreams, their memories of loved ones and their homes. Both are tools included in a trauma care program developed by ICF’s long time partner, The Children’s Village of New York.
Zainab’s New Legs: Running from ISIS into the Arms of Loving Donors

Zainab is a young girl from Mosul who fled with her family when ISIS invaded the city. She not only lost her mother, brother, and an older sister, she also lost both legs.

ICF’s partner in Iraq discovered Zainab’s plight and posted her story. A loving American family, hearing about Zainab’s loss, immediately responded and made a generous donation so Zainab could get brand new prosthetic legs. Their gift was so much more than new legs: it was a gift of love. Now Zainab, who still has her father and two sisters, also has the opportunity to go to school like other girls.

A special thanks to the family who made all this possible!

Brand New Clothes for Vulnerable Children

A special gift from another donor helped 100 children in the town of Mkaisheefa get brand new school outfits.

The clothing brought joy to these children living in a community at risk of violence from ISIS.

Again, ICF thanks the wonderful donor who made these gifts possible!
ICF in Baghdad: Face to Face with Orphans, Street Children, and Kids Displaced by ISIS

ICF Chairman Jonathan Webb and ICF Vice President Mohammed Khudairi led a joint delegation from the Iraqi Children Foundation (ICF) and The Children’s Village of New York (CV) to Baghdad in July to assess ICF-funded projects at the Center for orphans and street children and at IDP (internally displaced persons) camps. The delegation also met with government officials at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and conducted site visits to two government run orphanages.

The visit to the Center included helping staff distribute new clothes to the children, listening to them sing and recite their “ABC’s,” and even joining in a time for dancing.

The delegation also visited two IDP camps where families – including children and babies – suffered in 120 degree F heat. The camps had been the recipients of humanitarian aid mobilized by ICF and its Soccer Salam coalition partners.
Saluting ICF’s Donors and Supporters: Providing Life Changing Help for Iraqi Children

Led by Mohammed Khudairi, ICF’s Vice President for Iraq, the Khudairi Group initiated the first fundraiser for ICF in Dubai in March.

ICF also held its third annual “IN THEIR SHOES” 5K, a springtime run/walk to benefit Iraqi orphans and street children.

Mais Abousy ran the 26.2 mile Chicago Marathon in October, carrying American and Iraqi flags, all to raise awareness and funding for Iraq’s most vulnerable children.

Ali Allawi and his wife Shirin once again took the initiative to mobilize support for suffering Iraqi and Syrian children and families by hosting the “Hope for Humanity” event. And author Andreas Parpas donated proceeds from his new book, “Alexander the Great in Erbil,” to benefit Iraqi children.
Financial Accountability
ICF expenditures in 2015: $124,506
Where did your donor dollars go?

In 2015, ICF received the Gold Guidestar Exchange Seal (at right) for transparency and accountability. Guidestar USA, Inc. (www.guidestar.org) is a premier source of nonprofit information.
IRAQI CHILDREN FOUNDATION 2015

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The 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 children, and those 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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