

Gender Review and Analysis of Basic Education in Kurdistan Region

Final Report



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Assessment conducted by **BDO - Jordan**

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Case Study

Who is waiting for whom?

At the end of the school day, many parents in Iraq sit in their cars in front of schools waiting for their children to finish. When the school bell rings, children get into the car and bombard their parents with stories from the day's activities. A different scene was unfolding in Bardarash, a small town in the contested areas between Mosul and Erbil.

A young child has been seen standing in front of the school. He was waiting for his mother to finish her morning class because she attends at the same school. Ziryam (*name changed*) is nine-years-old and in third grade. He is the eldest child in his family, who like many others, was displaced from Mosul and sought safety in the contested areas. He attends school in the afternoon shift of the Bardarash school.

Hozan (*name changed*), is Ziryam's mother, struggling against social pressure and her family situation to attend the school regularly. She has 3 children in total and her husband, a former businessman in Mosul, is unemployed. He stays at home with the children, as he cannot find a job in his field. Hozan attends the ALP classes that help her and other adults, while children learn literacy and arithmetic in the regular morning classes, allowing them to catch up to their peers. Hozan wants to be able to help her children do their homework, and after the completion ALP classes she plans to attend a course in computer skills so she can find a job and generate income for the family. There are hundreds of women and girls in the disputed areas in northern Iraq, who have missed out on education due to conflict and insecurity, lack of transportation and conservative social values. In Bardarash, ALP classes for women and girls have reached 85 female community members aged 9 to 27 years.



Hozan and Ziryam wait outside the school in Bardarash. Ziryam, 9 years, attends grade 3, while his mother attends ALP classes at the

Acknowledgements

This study report has been prepared by the BDO Jordan based in Amman. The report involves the compilation of much existing information that has been gathered from many individual documents and reports reviewed as part of this broader assessment process. Thanks are expressed to authors and contributors of these many documents and, where possible, acknowledgement of original authors and contributors is contained within the body of this evaluation report when direct text has been utilized.

The team leader of this study who is primarily responsible for the compilation and analysis of information contained in this evaluation report is Dr. Qasem Newashi, the lead researcher of the study team of the BDO Network:

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This report could not have been compiled without the generous assistance of many MoE associates:

- *Mrs. Newroz Hawezi*, the Head of Kindergarten Division in MoE, Minister's Consultant for Women Rights Affairs.
- *Dr. Yousof Othman*, Psychology Specialist, MoE.
- *Mr. Iskandar*, Curriculum Department, MoE.

Time devoted by the focal points team to attend meetings, provide feedback, discuss reports and act as hosts has been greatly appreciated.

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The study also involved in its implementation a number of national staff from MoE and schools. Finally, thanks are expressed to Mr. Araz Abdullah, Director of Curriculum Department and the many individuals from MoE who took the time to provide support and information for this review. The time and dedication to the tasks undertaken are very much appreciated.

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List of Acronyms

ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
CFS	Child Friendly Schools Standards
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
IKR	Iraqi Kurdistan Region
HR	Human Resource(s)
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MODM	Ministry of Displacement and Migration
MOED	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MOP	Ministry of Planning
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PTA	Parent Teacher Associations
RPCD	Regional Partnership for Culture and Development
TL	Team Leader
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WP	Work Plan

1. Executive Summary

Within the framework of UN Women mission in Iraq, the current project “Gender Review and Analysis of Ministry of Education (MoE) Policies, Strategies, Curricula and Textbooks” designed to review the education policy documents, curricula and textbooks used in basic education (grades 1 to 9) in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) as well as an analysis of classroom processes to determine the gender sensitivity of the basic education.

The study looked at current Ministry of Education overall policies and strategies and reviewed their gender sensitivity in addition to looking at both the content of curricula and textbooks and present policies and strategies for classroom delivery. The assessment covered the following four main components: 1) Gender mainstreaming in Educational Policies and Strategies; 2) Gender sensitivity of the Curricula and Textbooks; 3) Gender mainstreaming in Classroom Settings; and 4) Gender mainstreaming in Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP).

This study has been conducted using four different assessment tools to gather qualitative data. The study team interviewed the MoE focal points in Erbil, assessed 6 selected primary schools, visited 3 selected ALP schools, analyzed 26 selected textbooks (Annex 3), and finally organized a workshop to discuss the findings with the focal points team.

The key findings of using assessment tools and study activities can be summarized as follows:

Findings Related to Gender mainstreaming in Educational Policies and Strategies

- **The number of girls who completing primary education is less than boys.**
- There was almost no reference to gender in the MoE strategies, plans, and activities. However the education partners implemented psychosocial activities, hoping to establish a general understanding of common vocabulary, goals and best responses to gender issues within psychosocial programming.
- Even though that MoE has been developing a programme for vocational training, MoE would welcome technical expertise/ideas/projects, with special focus on girls related specializations.
- **There are other alternatives for girls who have either dropped out of school or never enrolled, such as the ALP programme. This is of particular concern for those girls who live, or have lived, in areas experiencing great insecurity and very remote areas such as the disputed areas.**

Findings Related to Gender sensitivity of Curricula and Textbooks

- School curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are mostly modern textbooks and well-designed based on the world’s best practices. In fact, the science, math, and languages textbooks are copied from other countries textbooks, such as Sweden.
- **Science, math, and languages textbooks have s been imported to Kurdistan regions without proper modification to reflect the Kurdish culture, for example the names and pictures are still the same foreign and not related to the Kurdish culture.**
- **Science, math, and languages textbooks have been imported to Kurdistan regions because there are no enough experts in Kurdistan who can develop school textbooks for these school learning subjects, the MoE focal stated.**
- UNICEF indicated that they have supported training for the staff in the curriculum department. The number of women employed in the curriculum department are more than men.

- As for humanitarian school subjects such as civic education, languages, and religion, they are all developed by national teams from KRG.
- In general, school curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are free of gender bias, except very small notions.
- Different portrayals and stereotypes of the sexes exist in the school textbook. The man represents the power, intelligence, and decision maker, while the women are passive recipients of the orders, money, and always in need for the man's support.
- Curriculum Reform in KRG during the last three years covered the delivery of new textbooks, such as English Curriculum and Math and Sciences.
- There was a sexual education textbook for girls in the past, while there is a real need for such textbook now but difficult in KRG context, as indicated by the MoE focal points.

Findings Related to Gender Mainstreaming in Classroom Settings

- Teacher Training in KRG was identified by every stakeholder as a major gap.
- School children in KRG carry excellent textbooks, but mostly they do not have qualified teachers to inspire them to learn from these textbooks. Teacher trainers have had little access to modern teaching and methodologies as well as limited access to articles/professional papers in their specialization. So, there is a need to consider Child Friendly Schools Standards (CFS) who emphasized that teachers have to be trained (oriented/guided) on effective learning methodologies, and how to encourage students to attempt self-learning.
- Other findings from the assessment show that the Arabic schools in the city of Erbil do not have enough space to meet the demand due to high influx of Syrian refugee children into Kurdistan Region. Because of this, all of the classes are overcrowded.
- The assessments showed a need for PTAs in all the schools which would contribute in supporting school gender sensitive environment.

Gender Mainstreaming in Accelerated Learning Programme

(Please find the detail findings and recommendations for the ALP programme in KRG in Annex 4).

Based on the analysis of the findings, several recommendations for the government in KRG and recommendations for future programming for UN Women/UNICEF in Iraq are drawn. Recommendations also include proposed activities for achieving gender equity at basic education level, which focused on ensuring that staff in the Ministry of Education in Erbil are trained in gender equality issues and that teachers have training on how to manage classroom processes in a gender sensitive manner. **The recommendations of this report have been discussed and updated based on a UN Women workshop took place in Erbil at Rotana hotel on Monday September 8, 2014. The workshop has been attended by representatives from the MoE in KRG, UNICEF, UNESCO, and World Bank.**

2. Background and Context

UN Women engaged the services of BDO Jordan to perform gender review of Ministry of Education (MoE) Policies, Strategies, Curricula and Textbooks in Iraq. This report included the gender review and analysis of the activities supervised by the MoE in Kurdistan.

The study looked at present Ministry of Education overall policies and strategies from a gender perspective in addition to looking at the gender sensitivity of both content of curricula and textbooks and present policies and strategies for classroom delivery. The review of curricula and textbooks started with the subjects already being reviewed, or have been recently reviewed by the MoE: Natural Science, Social Science and English. But the study included all subjects. Separately and in parallel to the review of curricula, a research study was conducted on the issue of the wide gender gap in Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) enrolment. This study attempted to find out causes of girls' low enrolment in ALP classes, wherever they are offered.

Assessment Objectives

The following objectives have been taken from the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study (Annex 1):

1. To review the present MoE overall policies and strategies to assess their gender sensitivity.
2. To review policies and strategies for basic education in the Kurdistan region and comment on their gender sensitivity.
3. To apply a gender lens to the basic education curricula in use in Iraq and in Iraqi Kurdistan.
4. To identify ways to eliminate discrimination in curricula with a special focus on the content of text books.
5. To propose revisions for improvement of the curricula in Iraq and in Iraqi Kurdistan.
6. To assess the use of the curriculum by the teachers in actual classroom instructions and make recommendations for improving the training of teachers in Iraq and in Iraqi Kurdistan on ensuring delivery is gender neutral.
7. To identify specific reasons for the low female enrolment in ALP and to make recommendations on how this can be addressed.

Support

This project is managed and monitored by UN Women Iraq Office. The project also involved in its implementation the focal point team who represented the MoE (KRG). The roles and responsibilities of the focal points included:

- Contribute to the assessment related meetings and workshops, review, discussion, and approve the technical content and ensure that they are cultural sensitive and free of bias and discrimination.

- Contribute to the planning for field visits and provide necessary support to facilitate the implementation, including providing formal support letters to facilitate movement, such as passing through check points, if necessary.
- Provide all background documents, curriculum, and textbooks.

Limitations

- Although the research team had every intention of sampling in such a way for children, school staff, and parents of all governorates be represented, several factors prevented them from fully achieving this goal. These included:
 - Any question cannot be answered by the MoE focal point unless the study team submits written questions with a concept note to the ministry to get permission from MoE.
 - Some activities delayed because several formal approvals are needed to obtain a copy of school textbooks or to allow the study team visit schools.
 - Because schools were out of session, researchers had to rely on principals to assemble those parents and teachers willing to participate in the study.
- Despite the study's limitations, several clear patterns emerged from our discussions with MoE focal points, school staff, parents and students. These patterns bring us one step closer to answering the questions of the assessment.

3. Methodology

Because there are two separate educational systems in Iraq, one in the central Iraq and one in the Kurdistan region, UN Women has requested to assess each education system separately. Therefore, this report focuses on the Kurdistan region, while another independent report covers the assessment results and recommendations in KRG.

The assessment team has been supported by focal points at the MOE, who are Iraqi experts experienced in developing curricula in the KRG.

The MoE staff received on-the-job assessment training and benefited from the experience of an external expert. The review of policies and procedures, curricula and textbooks based on a systematic analysis that has been agreed on with the MoE.

The study team also carried out a review of access to the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP), through a review of ALP procedures, materials and policies and also through field visits for observation and interviews with students, teachers and community members to ascertain perceptions about the provision of ALP and enrolment patterns.

The assessment has been essentially based on a document review of curricula and textbooks as provided by the MoE. This has been followed by a field visit to include discussions with officials in the MoE and a small sample of schools to look at actual classroom delivery. The essence of

the assessment has been focused on the written materials available and how they are presented and used.

The study looked at current Ministry of Education overall policies and strategies and reviewed their gender sensitivity in addition to looking at both the content of curricula and textbooks and present policies and strategies for classroom delivery.. The assessment covered the following four main components: 1) Gender mainstreaming in Educational Policies and Strategies; 2) Gender sensitivity of Curricula and Textbooks; 3) Gender mainstreaming in Classroom Settings; and 4) Gender mainstreaming in Accelerated Learning Programme.

The field visits covered the following six schools:

1. Al-Zahra secondary School for Girls (Arabic School), Erbil
2. Amang Primary School, Erbil
3. Daban ALP School, Erbil
4. Bardarash Elementary School, Bardarsh town-Bardarsh district
5. Gomil Elementary School for Girls, Kalakchy town-Shekhan district
6. Qasrok elementary School for girls, Qasrok sub-district- Shekhan district

The study team has examined and analyzed the results from the assessment tools (surveys), school visits, and curriculum analysis, and interviews. This task has been carried out through organizing a teleconference on 19 March 2014 with the MoE focal points team in KRG. The specific purpose of this workshop was to:

- Present and discuss the results of the Curriculum Review exercise.
- Examine and analyze the results from the field visits.
- Draw conclusions for each of the assignment study and formulate recommendations.

This analysis will, where appropriate, disaggregate results by gender, geographic location, and other pertinent criteria. From the analysis, the study team will draw conclusions for each of the three assignment areas, and sub-questions to formulate recommendations.

The recommendations of this report have been discussed and updated based on a UN Women workshop took place in Erbil at Rotana hotel on Monday September 8, 2014. The workshop has been attended by representatives from the MoE in KRG, UNICEF, UNESCO, and World Bank.

Study Components

1. **Gender Mainstreaming in Educational Policies and Strategies.** This component included a review of the present MoE (Erbil) overall policies and strategies to comment on their gender sensitivity. The study team collected data by interviewing ministry staff (focal points) in Erbil using the semi-structured interview tool. Based on these interviews, the team revised interview tools and validated survey questions.
2. **Gender Sensitivity of Curricula and Textbooks.** This component included a review of a sample of the current and the newly designed basic education curricula and textbooks through a desk review to assess their gender neutrality, to ascertain their gender

sensitivity and to suggest changes for improvement if needed. Curriculum framework, objectives, and textbooks reviewed using the Curriculum Review Tool developed in the Inception Phase. 25 textbooks have been selected. The selected textbooks covered all grades (from 1 to 9). In addition, the review covered all school-learning subjects. The analysis team involved subject matter experts: one specialized in Natural Science, Social Science, Math (or Computer Science); English language; and Arabic language.

The main objectives of the school curriculum included:

1. To apply a gender lens to the basic education curricula in use in Iraq
2. To identify ways to eliminate discrimination in curricula and textbooks and propose further revisions for improvement.
3. To assess the use of the curriculum by the teachers in actual classroom instructions and make recommendations for improving the training of teachers.

In order to produce a picture of the current state of gender in school curriculum in Iraq, curriculum framework, objectives, and textbooks were reviewed using the Curriculum Review Tool developed in the Inception Phase. The methodology for the revision of school textbooks included the following key activities:

1. Review the assessment tool for curriculum and textbooks with the MoE focal point in Erbil in order to insure that the content is coherent with the Iraqi culture and the terminologies are clear.
2. All comments have been verified and the final version of the assessment tools developed (Annex 2).
3. **Gender Mainstreaming of Teaching and Learning Methods.** This component included an observation of teaching and learning methods in classroom settings and schools through visits to some schools to witness the curriculum delivery in the classroom. This component included individual interviews with head-teachers in 6 selected schools in KRG, in addition to focus group discussions with teachers and students. The field surveys included classroom observation and school survey.
4. **Gender Mainstreaming in Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP).** This component included a review of the ALP documents, strategy and implementation, and carry out field work to understand implementation, acceptance and perceptions of ALP. The field surveys included classroom observation and school survey of ALP schools.

Assessment Tools

This study has been conducted using four different assessment tools to gather both quantitative and qualitative data needed for policy makers and educators to take appropriate action. These tools include:

1. **MoE Policies and Strategies Review Tool.** A tool to analyze background documents

(policies, strategies, program documents, reports and studies) related to basic education (analysis from a gender perspective).

2. **School Curriculum Review Tool.** A tool to review school curriculum and textbooks to ensure that they are free of gender bias.
3. **Classroom Observation Tool.** A tool for classroom observation (conduct classroom observations from a gender perspective).
4. **ALP Review Tool.** A tool to measure the gender responsiveness of Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) and find out reasons for drop out.

4. Findings

Findings Related to Gender in Educational Policies and Strategies

- Although girls represent almost 47% of the students in the public KRG schools, they make up only 34% of those who finish the primary cycle. Which means that the number of girls who completing primary education is less than boys (see Chart 1).

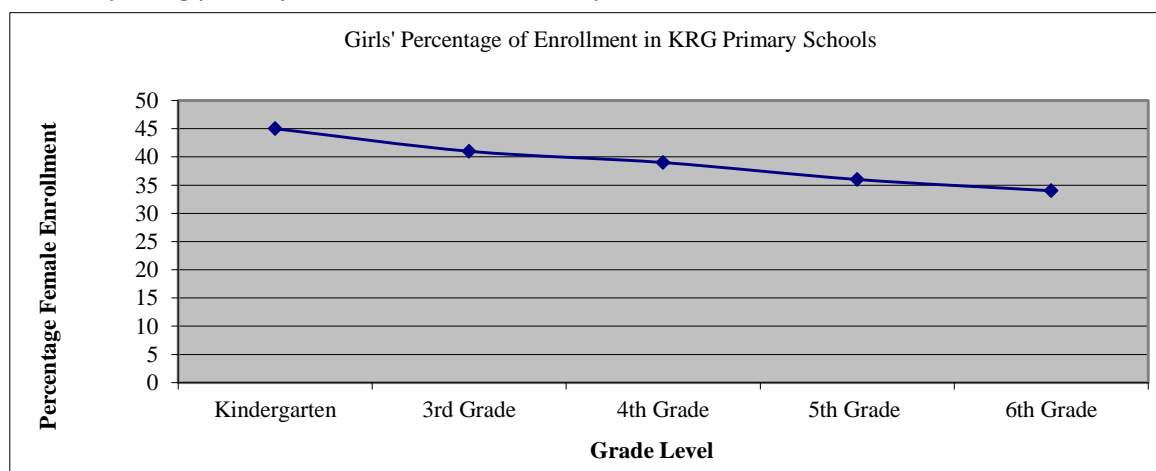


Chart 1: Girls' Enrollment in KRG Schools from Kindergarten to 6th Grade¹

- Approximately 1.2 million students in KRG accounting for ¼ population.
- There was almost no reference to gender in the MoE strategies, plans, and activities. However the education partners implemented psychosocial activities, hoping to establish a general understanding of common vocabulary, goals and best responses to gender issues within psychosocial programming.
- The Minister of Education recognizes that he won't be there forever and wants to leave something behind, that is why MoE has teams working on various policies, and MoE would be very interested in other expertise, secondment to MoE.
- US under Multinational Forces have promised support to Literacy Program, Supplementary Learning Materials (SLM) will be large component, but not yet implemented. General problem of funds not be forwarded to KRG, seems/believes to be an issue of donor money stopping in BGD, additional money not forthcoming to cover IDP children/teachers.

¹ Enrollment figures taken from Iraq Educational Strategy, school system statistics for July 2011.

- MoE conducted in-service methodology teacher training during summer months, initial anxiety of disabled children in classes passed, mainstreaming part of MoE strategy for past 2 years
- Early Childhood Education targeting children 1-5 years old, low number of kindergartens with support of UNICEF but trying to increase (seeking additional support).
- No real psychosocial teacher training to date.
- Even though that MoE has been developing a programme for vocational training, MoE would welcome technical expertise/ideas/projects, with special focus on girls related specializations.

Only One Educational Opportunity for Dropout Girls

- There are other alternatives for girls who have either dropped out of school or never enrolled, such as the ALP programme. This is of particular concern for those girls who live, or have lived, in areas experiencing great insecurity and very remote areas such as the disputed areas.
- Not only does it decrease opportunities to socialize with peers and continue to develop within a structured environment, it increases future vulnerabilities and creates entire sub-groups of children/youth/young adults with limited economic opportunities.

Computer Skills for Girls

There is a keen interest to reach and stay abreast of current technology both within the communities in general and specifically within the education system. It is unclear to what extent the previous sanctions against Iraq had on the education system's ability to provide a minimum level of technology services and support to both students and staff. Continued conflict and a lack of consistent energy in many communities greatly affect the ability to provide computer and IT programs. Government and military offices have a fairly consistent and healthy supply of electricity with the use of generators. Several NGOs are providing targeted services based on the profiles supplied by UNICEF. One provides Microsoft training to women in several locations including Erbil; interestingly, this particular project seems to attract women who are currently employed in fields that have recently required computer skills. In general, there is a great lack of a computer skill-base in ALP schools. With the changing economic and business environments, it is imperative that a foundation be built in KRG providing access to skills development programs.

Gender training under UNIFEM: identified women's NGOs and training provided in proposal development, writing, and provision of grants to implement programs. UNIFEM *has a longer State Department grant for Women's Empowerment*. Trying to focus more on literacy (holding trainings to improve women's literacy), gender, persons with disabilities, computer centers to be turned over to communities/local orgs, internet labs to universities, youth empowerment, some infrastructure that would be identified by communities.

Findings Related to Gender in Curricula and Textbooks

- Curriculum Reform in KRG during the last three years covered the delivery of the following textbooks:
 - New English Curriculum
 - New Math and Sciences
 - Exploring creative development (drama, art, music, etc.)

- Using KRG funds and international expertise in Math and science textbook development
 - Social sciences
- School curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are mostly modern textbooks and well designed based on the world best practices. In fact, the science, math, and languages textbooks are copied from other countries textbooks, such as Sweden.
 - Science, math, and languages textbooks have s been imported to Kurdistan regions without proper modification to fit them to the Kurdish culture, for example the names and pictures are still the same foreign and not related to Kurdish culture.

Curriculum Developers

- Science, math, and languages textbooks have s been imported to Kurdistan regions because there is no enough experts in Kurdistan who can develop school textbooks for these school learning subjects, the MoE focal stated.
- UNICEF indicated that they have supported training for the staff in the curriculum department. Mr. Araz Abdullah² indicated that they have integrated gender related concepts in all school textbooks, and this task has been carried out intentionally according to the MoE strategies that respect gender equality. The number of women employed in the curriculum department are more than men.
- As for humanitarian school subjects such as civic education, languages, and religion, they are all developed by national teams from KRG.
- There was a sexual education textbook for girls in the past, while there is a real need for such textbook now but difficult in KRG context, as indicated by the MoE focal points, Mrs. Newrooz Hawiza.

Textbook Analysis

- Within the framework of this project, 26 selected textbooks taught in Kurdistan region have been reviewed (Annex 3) from a gender sensitive perspective. The selected textbooks covered all grades (from 1 to 9). In addition, the review covered all school-learning subjects. This section outlines the findings of the gender review of school curriculum and textbook in KRG using an analysis tool and interviews with the curriculum developers in the MoE.
- In general, school curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are free of gender bias, except very small notions.
- Different portrayals and stereotypes of the sexes exist in the school textbook. The man represents the power, intelligence, and decision maker, while women are a passive recipients of the orders, money, and always in need for the man's support. In the Human Rights Textbook, Grade 5, Page 31, you can see in a picture a man setting in his office while a women (girl) stands in front of him like a slave while she is informing him a complaint.

² Dr. Araz Abdullah, General Director of Curriculum Department in the MoE, KRG.



KRG, Human Rights, Grade5, Page 31

- Photos or pictures in KRG textbooks includes women more than men. Most of the photos and includes western girls and reflect the western life styles. And body can guess that English, math, or science textbooks are related to KRG.



١ صندوق علكة فيه ٢٥ قطعة زهرية و ٢٠ قطعة زرقاء و ١٥ قطعة خضراء. سحبت أشتي بشكل عشوائي قطعة من الصندوق، ما احتمال ألا تكون هذه القطعة زرقاء؟

٢ لدى هيمن كيس فيه ٦ كرات حمراء و ٣ كرات خضراء و ٤ كرات زرقاء. سحب هيمن كرة من الصندوق دون أن ينظر إليها، ما احتمال أن تكون هذه الكرة حمراء؟

٣ يعدّ توانا السيارات في طريق عودته من المدرسة إلى البيت. من بين ٢٠ سيارة عدّ ١٠ سيارات بيضاء و ٦ حمراء و ٢ زرقاء و ٢ خضراء، ما احتمال أن تكون السيارة التالية

KRG, Mathematics, Grade 8, Page 143

1 Read, listen and say.



KRG, Sunrise 5 Student's Book, Grade 5, Page 96



Science Textbook, Grade &, Page 18

كَيْفَ يَعْمَلُ الْعُلَمَاءُ

العلوم الفيزيائية

تختص العلوم الفيزيائية بدراسة المادة والطاقة والعلاقة بينهما، وهي تنقسم إلى علمين هما: علم الكيمياء وعلم الفيزياء.

علم الكيمياء، علم يختص بدراسة كل أشكال المادة وكيف تتفاعل معاً، من دراسة الكيمياء، يمكنك أن تعرف:

- لماذا تسبب الحموضة في التفاعلات عجيبة الحبر؟
- كيف تتفاعل مختلف المواد عند ظروف معينة، كدرجة الحرارة المرتفعة؟
- كيف يتحد عنصر الكلور والصوديوم لتكوين مركب ملح الطعام؟

عندما نعمل مع بطلان تتفاعل
المخ مع النطف وتكون
النتيجة ما يعين نظرياً.



Science Textbook, Grade 7, page 15

المجموعة ٢: الفلزات القلوية الأرضية

محتوى المجموعة، فلزات
قابلية التفاعل، شديدة التفاعل، تكلمها أقل تفاعلاً من الفلزات القلوية
خصائص أخرى مشتركة: تونها فضي، كثافتها أكبر من كثافة
الفلزات القلوية.

الفلزات القلوية الأرضية Alkaline earth metals أقل تفاعلاً
من الفلزات القلوية. لعناصر المجموعة هذه ولمركباتها عدة
استخدامات. مثلاً، يمزج فلز المغنيسيوم القلوي الأرضي أحياناً
مع فلزات أخرى، للحصول على مواد قليلة الكثافة، تستخدم في
صنع الطائرات. كما نجد مركبات الكالسيوم في الإسمنت،
الأسود، وفي الجبس، والطباشير، وحتى في أسنانك وعظامك،
كما يظهر في الشكل ٢.

٤	Be	البريليوم
١٢	Mg	المغنيسيوم
٢٠	Ca	الكالسيوم
٢٨	Sr	السترونشيوم
٥٦	Ba	الباريوم
٨٨	Ra	الراديو



الشكل ٢: الكالسيوم، وهو فلز قلوي أرضي،
مكون مهم في مركب يقي أسنانك
وعظامك سليمة.

Science, Grade 7, Page 238



Science, Grade 7, Page 297

- Names and examples in textbooks include females more than men. In Civic Education Textbook, Grade 6, Page 65.



Civic Education, Grade 6, Page 65



Civil Education, Grade 6, Page 6

- Similar to other regions in central Iraq, textbooks in KRG includes some gender stereotypes about occupational and domestic roles are clear in most textbooks.
- The woman can be a nurse or a teacher; this trend can be found in most textbooks. In Social Science Textbook, Grade 4, Page 46 you can see a Kurdish female teacher in front of the classroom greeting the children.



KRG, Social Science, Grade 4, Page 46

- Women cannot be doctors, while all doctors in Iraqi community are men, this shapes the minds of children that professional positions that need high level of skills and recognition are limited for men.



Arabic Language, Grade 3, Page 9



Arabic Language, Grade 3, Page 7 (nursing is a women occupation)

Some content can be observed in the school textbooks in relation to human rights and gender equality, but texts mainly are legal articles that have no meaning to the child's life. On the other hand, Human Rights, Grade 7 encourages child marriage. In page 16, the content of the textbooks indicates that "your age should be at least 15 years old to be eligible for marriage".



Human Rights, Grade 7, Page 16



Mathematics, Grade 8, Page 248

(shows a photo for a boy and a girl swimming, but there is no text clarify the relation between the photo and the learning topic)

- The policeman cannot be a woman in KRG, and therefore school textbook reinforce this trend in the minds of children.



Social Science, Grade 5, Page 83 (the policeman is male)

- School textbooks in KRG show that the women participate with men in public affairs.



KRG, social Science, Grade 6, Page 134 (*Uprest in KRG*)

- School textbooks shows that the woman in KRG participate in election activities



KRG, Social Science, Grade 6, Page 135

Findings Related to Gender in Classroom Settings

Lack of an Appropriate Teacher Training Programs

- Serious lack of teacher training. MoE would welcome any support as long as it goes through proper channels.
- There are no shortage of teachers. In some classrooms there are 2 teachers. One acting as main teacher and the other as an assistant. Teachers are implying no professional standards or recourse if teacher under performs. There is no teacher-teacher support. Change often not accepted by teachers/administration because they don't understand.

Bardarash Elementary School, Bardarash town-Bardarash district (in the contested area)

- The school infrastructure is in need for rehabilitation.
- Overcrowded classrooms.
- Multiple shifts of the school.
- There is significant number of out-of-school children.
- The community and DOE in Bardarash are welcoming Interventions to increase reenrollment for dropout schoolchildren is possible.
- School needs rehabilitation.
- Small number of dropout school children as the village is small.

Gomil Elementary School for Girls, Kalakchy town-Shekhan district (in the contested area)

- The classroom and latrines are in very bad condition.
- Large numbers of dropout school children, particularly girls.
- Teachers and school administration are cooperative and interested in teaching if new remedial or ALP classes are established.

Qasrok elementary School for girls, Qasrok sub-district- Shekhan district (in the contested area)

- The school building is in bad condition.
- Large number of dropout school children in the area.
- Teachers are interested and willing to teach in remedial and/or ALP classes.

Other findings from the assessment show that the Arabic schools in the city of Erbil do not have enough space to meet the demand. Because of this, all of the classes are overcrowded. Transportation to reach Arabic Schools is also an issue, as many families live outside of the city where rent is lower, but cannot afford to send their children to school because of the distance. Finally, parents recognize that advocacy is needed to address Kurdish Language Classes, where parents are concerned that students are being placed in language classes that are too advanced. For example, a high achieving Arab student at Al Zahra School has failed her Kurdish Language class because she was placed in the class of her grade level, G5. Host community students had been learning Kurdish since they started school however Arabic students do not have the language skills, causing them to fall behind in their grades. Similar experiences occur at the other Arabic Schools. Parents expressed willingness for their children to learn Kurdish, but state that there should be beginner classes provided to Arabic students with no Kurdish language background.

Water/Sanitation Facilities

One of the biggest gaps is Water/Sanitation (and, in turn, disease prevention), many schools are dilapidated and have no functioning sanitation facilities. No known data but the number of schools, but most of schools in the disputed areas are in crucial needs for rehabilitation and more classrooms.

PTAs Impact on Women and Children

PTAs comprise of approximately one-third women. This gives women an important voice in the school and brings to lights issues and topics that may not normally be address in an all-male context. Women have brought up the issue of a lack of child-friendly spaces in the school as well as neighborhoods.

The assessments showed a need for PTAs in all the schools which would contribute to supporting school gender sensitive environment. This was echoed by both staff and parents. Parents and school staff expressed a general understanding of PTA roles and responsibilities however hesitation amongst school officials was presented because of fear of too much parental involvement in their work. Both school officials and parents were unsure of how PTAs should be run, as well as how PTA can support school gender sensitive environment.

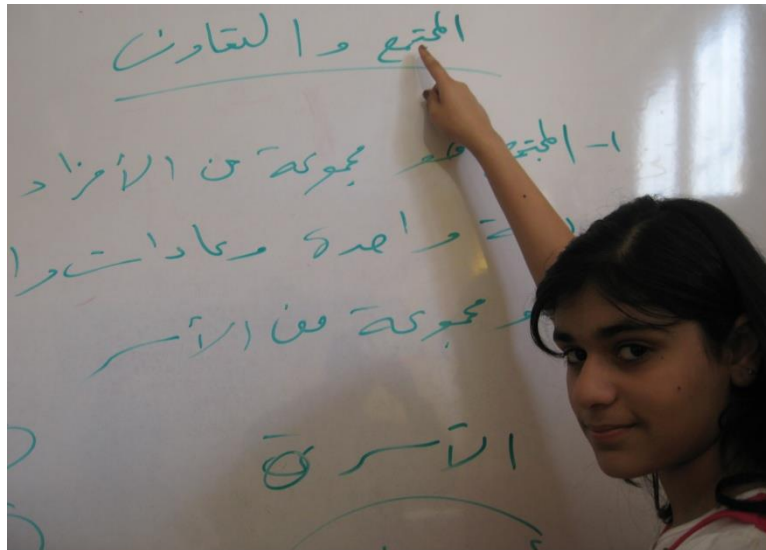
Teacher Training in KRG was identified by every stakeholder as a major gap. School children in KRG carry excellent textbooks, but mostly they do not have qualified teacher to inspire them to learn from these textbooks. Teaching trainers have had little access to modern pedagogy and methodologies as well as limited access to articles/professional papers in their specialization.

Teachers are expected to complete a minimum level of education before entering a classroom, most teachers hold Bachelor degree. There are no standards or expectations for maintaining or increasing skills and the task of providing continued technical support and training to current teachers seems daunting to MoE staff. MoE provided a enormous training programs, but little of the training impact can be transferred to the classroom settings. Providing several days of training with little real and continued support planned. A small number of training opportunities have targeted ALP teachers but has not contributed to a substantial increase in teaching quality or skill-base. The MoE seems to be amenable to assistance from UN agencies such as UNICEF or international organizations such as IRC. Staff of the MoE KRG have suggested that the Minister would welcome technical advisors in subjects and systems where they are weak, including teacher training.

The largest and most comprehensive program to address the needs of out-of-school children is the UNICEF supported Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). The ALP program is remotely monitored MoE and the quality of teaching is unclear. Many of the ALP teachers teach at least one shift in formal school; those met during field trips had not been given adequate orientation to the curriculum and had received no additional training. Students, although seemingly content with the classes, expressed an interest for secondary level classes and a more convenient schedule.

Discussions with parents and children in Chamber School, Sulemanya, Iraq

- 18 children have dropped out of school since arriving, 37 remain in school, 7 years old. There is one 15 years old in 1st grade who had never attended school before but plans on continuing. The 37 are divided into 2 groups, based on age according to parents. Those who dropped out did so for economic reasons, extended illness and an inability to return to same grade, and because they were placed in a lower grade than what they had attended in their home communities.
- Those who do not attend school “do nothing”.
- Of the 8 children speaking (ages ranging from 9-15) all were attending the 1st grade.
- Separate classes (2 hours in length) are held for children from Kalawa camp so they do not have an opportunity to play with other children.
- Children say they like Chamber School because teachers work hard and don't beat them; complained that teachers in Arabic school beat them.
- Children like it in Sulemanya because there are no bombs and it is safe. Of the children, several had lost close family members: Fatima, a 12 year old girl, has been missing her mother and aunt for 5 years after they were kidnapped in Baghdad. A little 4 year old boy had his entire family killed in front of him when he was a baby.



5. Recommendations

This section includes recommendations for the MoE in KRG as the main education stakeholder in KRG, and recommendations for all other partners including UNICEF and UN Women.

Recommendations Related to Gender in Educational Policies and Strategies

Recommendations for the MoE:

MoE policies and programs should explore gender affirmative policies to encourage and assist girls in completing school, and gain appropriate employment in situations compatible with family circumstances. This recommendation can be achieved through the following activities:

1. **Gender Mainstreaming in Educational Policy.** MoE decision makers should be aware of the factors that may affect girls in completing their education. There is a need to build the capacities of the decision makers in the MoE in order to mainstream gender in educational policy and strategies. The MoE decision makers should be trained in order to develop their skills and abilities

for working in gender neutral teams to address issues of gender discrimination or violence that have been observed, reported or suspected. According to the study results, Iraqi MoE officials did not receive a single training on gender equality concerns. So, the proposed capacity building program should take into account gender equality in all educational policy, programs, projects, and organizational procedures thereby contributing to gender balances/equality. In this context, policy makers in the MoE will be able to ensure that educational policies are designed with the knowledge that the Iraqi society is not gender-balanced, favoring one gender over the other, usually women taking the disadvantageous position, and that all the policy components address these gender equality issues. The proposed capacity building program should aim to discuss the basic components of a public policy; raise the various gender issues that need to be considered in the educational policy cycle, as well as explain the steps that need to be taken in order to mainstream gender in education policy and teaching practices.

Summary of Findings:

- The number of girls who completing primary education is less than boys.
- There was almost no reference to gender in the MoE strategies, plans, and activities.
- In relation to vocational training, MoE welcomes technical expertise/ideas/projects, with special focus on girls related specializations.
- ALP programme is of particular concern for those girls who live, or have lived, in areas experiencing great insecurity and very remote areas such as the disputed areas.

The proposed training may consist of, but not limited to the following key components:

- i) The Context of Gender Equality in Education Policy. Participants will become aware of the various international, regional and national commitments that states have entered to promote gender equality.
- ii) The Concept of Public Policy. Participants will explain the multidimensional nature of problems that policy deals with and elaborate on the importance of public policy in solving public problems.
- iii) Making of Public Policy-The Policy Cycle. Participants will be able to explain the different phases in a policy cycle and the challenges in each phase and discuss the gender issues that arise at each stage of the policy cycle.

- iv) Gender Based Analysis of Policy with a focus on Education Policy. Participants will be able to understand the basic concepts frequently used in gender literature and practice and explain the importance of a gender perspective in policy formulation.
 - v) Gender Mainstreaming in Education Policy. Participants will be able to articulate the different steps that are taken in gender mainstreaming and discuss the gender issues that need to be addressed in the different components of policy.
2. It is recommended that the Department of School Activities at MoE implement all or some of the following programs:
- *Implement a “Young Scholars’ Program” for Girls in Early Primary Grades.* Girls in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades should have a chance to showcase their schoolwork and participate in academic competitions, which will demonstrate to them that they can succeed in school. Bi-semester exhibitions, contests, and games that would allow female early primary students to demonstrate their academic ability could help young girls feel more confident in an academic atmosphere.
 - *Implement an “It’s Not Too Late” Campaign for Girls 13 and Older Who Are Not Currently Attending.* Since girls most often make their own decisions to leave school, and then feel inadequate when they contemplate returning, they should be the target of some of KRG’s promotional activities. By organizing informal seminars, Young Women’s Social Club activities and presentations by older educated women for out-of-school early adolescents, KRG could spread the message that those who have dropped out from school would be very welcome to return.
 - *Allocate 20-Minute-A-Day campaign for parents.* Many parents do not feel they can inquire about their children’s work because they have not acquired a substantial amount of schooling themselves. Parents and other guardians of KRG female students should be encouraged to spend 20 minutes a day reading or learning about what their daughter studied that day. A system should be designed to award prizes to the daughter-parent pairs who achieve the greatest number of 20-minute sessions in a month.
 - *Implement Daughter-Parent School Days.* Once a month, have a daughter bring one of her parents or guardians to school and have the pair present something to the class during the last period of the day. This could be a story, a song, a way of making handicrafts, a drama, etc. Once the children are dismissed, take 10 minutes for a teacher-parent conference to discuss the girls’ progress in school and discover whether she is getting much reinforcement at home.
 - *Implement Female Education Campaigns in Areas of Extreme Decline in Female Enrollment.* In zones where female enrollment is particularly low or declines particularly rapidly, organize focus groups and student meetings to specify the main reasons for dropout within that zone and brainstorm ways to address them. Experiment in those settings with all-female classes, parent committees to increase female enrollment, and in-school dramas and debates on the theme of female education.
 - *Implement a Scholarship Program For the Most Needy and Academically Capable Girls.* Criteria should be established to select extremely poor and academically superior girls for a living allowance/scholarship. This would enable those who

cannot survive without working full time to attend an KRG school.

3. MoE plans and programs should seek to enroll female participants to ensure that there are sufficient female teachers as role models for girls in schools, especially in areas where girls' enrolment may decline.
4. Teacher should be trained on how to introduce strategies for enabling both boys and girls to participate in school governance.
5. In order to improve a culture of gender sensitive Interactions, MoE activities and programs need to deliver models of good practice by ensuring mixed gender grouping among participants.

Recommendations for Other Partners (including UNICEF and UN Women):

6. It is recommended that MoE, in collaboration with UNICEF, develop a gender friendly school indicators, from which overall school-based analysis provide comprehensive pictures of gender realities in schools and communities.
7. Interviewed parents raised the request for non-mixed schooling at the primary level. When asked about this issue further, PTA members could not state why they wanted this. It is recommended that a small training program should be delivered to the parents or PTA members before PTA members push this issue further, parents should be able to make informed choices. In addressing this, UN Women could organize a training sessions or workshops on gender equality and girls' retention. These sessions should move parents in the PTAs to focus more on improving the education system that is currently in place.
8. *Negative impression of humanitarian organizations:* school staff and parents have expressed concern over the involvement with the UN and international organizations. They are wondering about the goals of these intended initiatives and how they will respect their religious teachings and cultural norms. Also, they stated that a number of organizations had visited the schools to conduct assessments and present projects, with nothing coming to ahead. The schools are worried that this project could do the same. It is recommended that any field visit from international missions should not raise expectations, and if there is an a proved initiative, the organization should mitigate this fear through providing clear, direct plans, objectives and outcomes for the schools and remaining in constant contact with school members and community members.
9. *Greater understanding of MOE operations:* From increased coordination with a variety of actors within the MOE, the study team has learned the processes needed to obtain approvals for activities. They have gained an understanding of the approximate length of time it can take to gain approvals from the MoE. This will feed into any planned initiative, but will also allow for the implementing agencies to provide enough time for these activities in future projects.
10. Further studies are needed to address deeply gender challenges (e.g. continuing poor parental awareness in some communities of the importance of girls' education).

Recommendations Related to Curricula and Textbooks

Recommendations for the MoE:

- 1. The curriculum developers need to understand gender bias and stereotyping in school curriculum. MoE should equip the curriculum developers with the knowledge and skills to detect and eliminate gender bias in school curriculum. This includes the effective use of textbooks, equipment, schedules, materials, as well as interactions with colleagues.**
- 2. Insert Income-Generation Topic in School Curriculum.** In some areas in KRG, many girls need to go directly from school to the market to sell baked bread or candy. If KRG could supply the basic ingredients and cooking space for girls to make these items after school, it would facilitate their commercial activities and increase their willingness to attend.
- 3. MoE needs to develop and implement support strategies to ensure girls progress in the school curriculum.**
- 4. MoE needs to ensure how future career prospects for boys and girls can be incorporated in curriculum plans developing children's life skills.**

Summary of Findings:

- *Most school curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are modern textbooks and well-designed based on the world's best practices.*
- *Science, math, and languages textbooks have been imported to Kurdistan regions without proper modification to reflect the Kurdish culture.*
- *Science, math, and languages textbooks have been imported to Kurdistan regions because*
- *There are no enough curriculum experts in Kurdistan who can develop school textbooks.*
- *School curriculum and textbooks in Kurdistan region are free of gender bias, except very small notions.*
- *Different portrayals and stereotypes of the sexes exist in the school textbook. The man represents the power, intelligence, and decision maker, while the women are passive recipients of the orders.*
- *There was a sexual education textbook for girls in the past, while MoE welcomes the development of such textbook, but it seems difficult in KRG context.*

Recommendations for Other Partners (including UNICEF and UN Women):

- 5. Training Program for Curriculum Developers on How to Apply Gender Lens in Curriculum Development.** Principles of applying Gender Lens in Curriculum Development have been developed by UNESCO. UN agencies can contribute well in building the capacity of the curriculum developer as an urgent requirement for the curriculum developers in the MoE. They are in need for training on general curriculum development skills and on how to apply gender lens in their work.
- 6. Gender Concepts Matrix.** While UN agencies can make use of the world best practices in this field, this will enable MoE Developing of matrix (or what so called gender concept mapping) to help the curriculum developers to include the gender concepts in the school curriculum effectively and in a systematic manner.

Recommendations Related to Gender in Classroom Settings

Recommendations for the MoE:

1. The MoE teacher training programs should introduce its participants to proactive methods of engaging both male and female learners and ensuring gender parity in the classroom.
2. Teachers should be aware and introduced to school-based procedures and documentation that relates to dealing with gender discrimination. At the same time, teachers should possess skills in creating opportunities for children to express their views on school policy on gender equality.
3. **Experiment with Separate Classes for Married Girl Student.** If there are enough students from a certain grade level, providing them separate instruction at their level in addition to pre-natal care information might be a more effective way to assist them in keeping up with school than allowing them to attend classes during regular school hours.
4. MoE needs to develop the teacher education program, which should nurture the creation and sustained development of gender sensitive and gender responsive learning environments.
5. **Improved Learning Environment.** Problems such as overcrowding, derelict buildings and poorly equipped schools and teaching staff have plagued the MoE. It is highly recommended that extra classrooms should be constructed in selected schools to reduce class sizes and improve access to education, which eventually will encourage dropout girls to attend schools. In addition, any initiative should focus on the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities or light rehabilitation of the school building and should include the provision of school furniture such as chairs and tables, and other teaching equipment.
6. **Stationary kits and modern teaching aids.** Stationary kits and modern teaching aids should be delivered schools, ALP classes, specifically in the contested areas. The stationary should be distributed to students and the administration of both the ALP schools and the host schools. ALP schools are hosted in regular schools. To support the host school and community, Stationary kits and modern teaching aids should distributed to the host school as well as the ALP students.

Summary of Findings:

- *Teacher Training in KRG was identified by every stakeholder as the major gap. Children in KRG have excellent textbooks, but mostly they do not have qualified teachers to inspire them to learn from these textbooks.*
- *Teacher trainers have had little access to modern teaching and methodologies as well as limited access to articles/professional papers in their specialization.*
- *Other findings from the assessment show that the Arabic schools in the city of Erbil do not have enough space to meet the demand due to high influx of Syrian refugee children into Kurdistan Region. Because of this, all of the classes are overcrowded.*
- *The assessments showed a need for PTAs in all the schools which would contribute in supporting school gender sensitive environment.*

Recommendations for Other Partners (including UNICEF and UN Women):

7. **Implement a Gender Training Program for all KRG Primary School Teachers.** To improve

young girls' attitudes about their academic capabilities, it is recommended that UN Women/UNICEF implement a gender training program for KRG primary school teachers. Teachers at the early levels of primary school obviously play an important role in reinforcing their female students' academic confidence. KRG trainings have never addressed how a teacher's responses and attitudes convey subtle messages to female students about their right and ability to remain in class. KRG teaching personnel should be trained to avoid gender bias in the classroom, so that the school environment does not underscore young girls' beliefs that females are less intelligent than boys.

8. There is a need to consider Child Friendly Schools Standards (CFS) who emphasized that teachers have to be trained (oriented/guided) on effective learning methodologies, and how to encourage students to attempt self-learning.
9. **Increasing girls' retention and academic performance.** ALP allows students that have been out of formal education catch up to their peers and re-enter school under the customized curriculum. Currently, there are a number of students that wish to access ALP classes but they are not available at an appropriate time that is suitable for their daily working hours or family circumstances. There is a need to increasing girls' retention and academic performance. This can be achieved through the provision of afternoon remedial classes in key subjects. Remedial education program can help girls or married students enrolled in the selected schools who are struggling with certain school subjects such as mathematics, science, and English language. Remedial education will also provide basic literacy, numeracy, vocational and life skills. UN Women could collaborate with the MoE to modify teaching and learning materials for remedial classes.
10. **Selection of intervention Sites.** It is recommended that UNICEF new interventions should focus on providing alternative learning opportunities in areas or schools based on well identified criteria, such as, but not limited to:
 1. Areas where there are most devastated schools.
 2. Crowded schools experiencing lack of classroom spaces that can be expanded with particular emphasis on schools operating in multiple shifts.
 3. Some schools should be from contested areas, and provide access to boys and girls equally.
 4. Schools in areas with a high level of out of school children, in which Accelerated Learning Programs are in demand.

Appendixes

Appendix 1: List of People Interviewed:

- Mrs. Newroz Hawezi, the Head of Kindergarten Division in MoE, Minister's Consultant for Women Rights Affairs.
- Dr. Yousof Othman, Psychology Specialist, MoE.
- Mr. Iskandar, Curriculum Department, MoE.
- Al-Zahra secondary School for Girls (Arabic School), Erbil (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).
- Amang Primary School, Erbil (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).
- Daban ALP School, Erbil (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).
- Bardarash Elementary School, Bardarash town-Bardarash district (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).
- Gomil Elementary School for Girls, Kalakchy town-Shekhan district (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).
- Qasrok elementary School for girls, Qasrok sub-district- Shekhan district (*schoolmaster and selected teachers*).

Appendix 2: List of Reviewed Textbooks:

Grade	Selected Textbooks
1 st Elementary	1. Kurdish language
2 nd Elementary	2. Arabic Language
3 rd Elementary	3. Arabic Language 4. Civic Education 5. Kurdish language
4 th Elementary	6. Social Science 7. Civic Education 8. Kurdish language(reading book) 9. Arabic language
5 th Elementary	10. Social Science 11. Human Right's 12. Sunrise 5 Student's Book 13. Mathematics 14. Kurdish language 15. Civic Education
6 th Elementary	16. Civic Education 17. Social Science 18. Kurdish language
1 st Intermediate	19. Science 20. Human Right's 21. Mathematics 22. Sunrise Student's Book
2 nd Intermediate	23. Mathematics 24. Science 25. Social Science
3 rd Intermediate	26. Social Science

Appendix 3: List of Visited Schools:

7. Al-Zahra secondary School for Girls (Arabic School), Erbil
8. Amang Primary School, Erbil
9. Daban ALP School, Erbil
10. Bardarash Elementary School, Bardarsh town-Bardarsh district
11. Gomil Elementary School for Girls, Kalakchy town-Shekhan district
12. Qasrok elementary School for girls, Qasrok sub-district- Shekhan district

Appendix 4: List of Survey Team:

1. Dr. Qasem Newashi
2. Dr. Mohamed Abdel Hafiz Kubaisi
3. Ms. Jinan M. Muslim
4. Ms. Marwa Khamees
5. Ms. Dina Zeidan
6. Mr. Haytham Satari
7. Mr. Emad Hasen Almasarwa