



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION (WEEO)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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This annual report provides a comprehensive overview of WEO's work at the national level, focusing on the organization's efforts across four key sectors: Livelihood, Humanitarian, Protection, and Advocacy. It underscores our unwavering commitment to advancing equality and justice, promoting women's rights, and ensuring women's active participation in all spheres of social, political, economic, and cultural life. Through these initiatives, WEO strives to foster an environment where women can fully access their rights and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

In 2024, WEO focused on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls (VAW), providing vital support to survivors and advocating for their legal protection. We also worked to strengthen the mechanisms in place to combat VAW by building partnerships with various stakeholders and engaging community and religious leaders in promoting women's rights.

In 2024, WEO successfully implemented 19 projects across 10 governorates in Iraq, impacting over 200,000 beneficiaries, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host community members. A strong emphasis was placed on women and marginalized groups, ensuring they received vital support, including sustainable employment opportunities, vocational training, and protection services. Our initiatives also included awareness campaigns on VAW, capacity-building efforts to strengthen the community network of civil society organizations involved in VAW response, and engagement with police and health professionals to improve their responses to VAW cases.

Furthermore, WEO actively advocated for the implementation and monitoring of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, led campaigns, and facilitated peacebuilding activities. Through these diverse efforts, WEO has made significant strides in advancing equality between men and women and empowering women across Iraq.

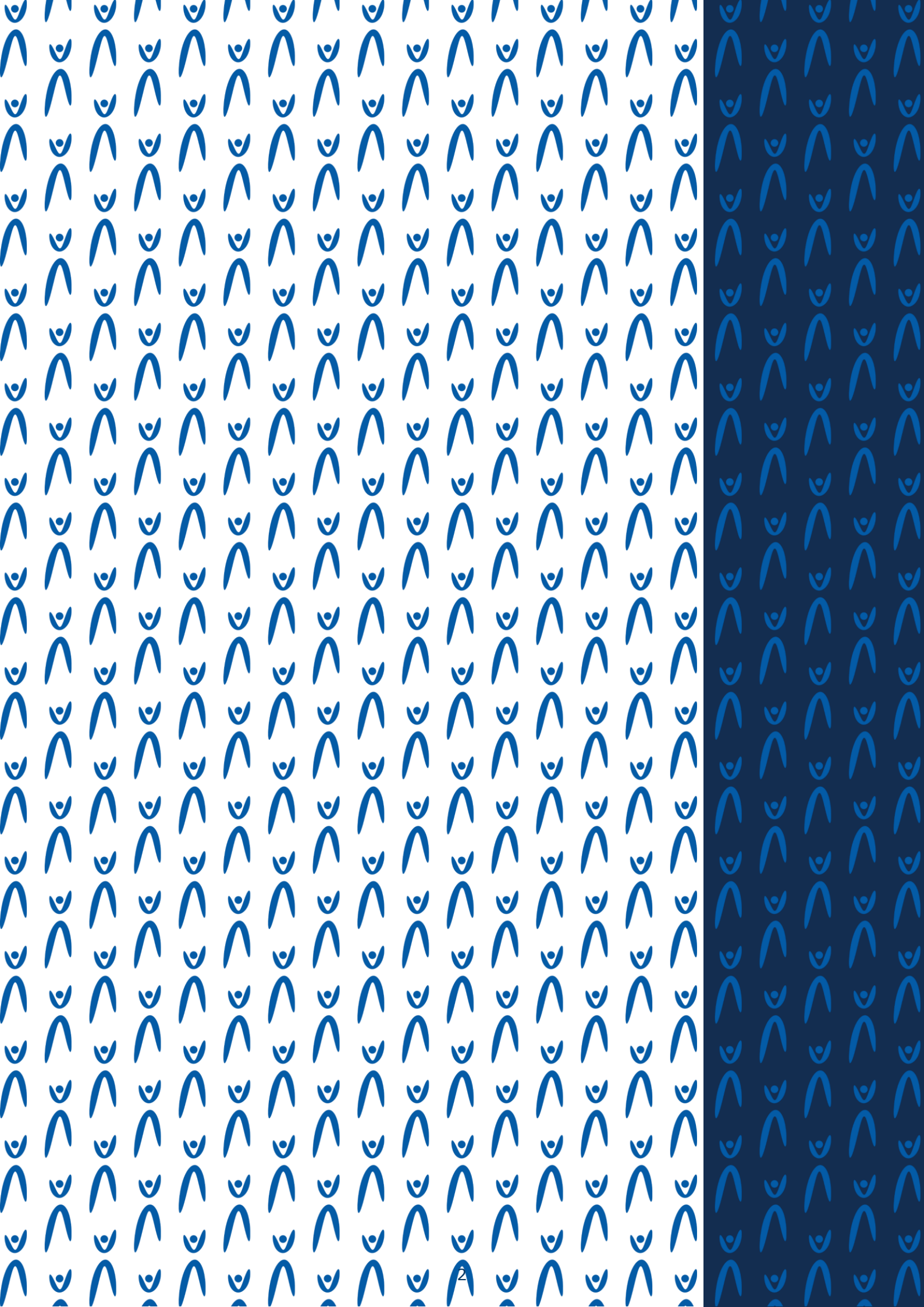


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About WEO

Established in 2004, WEO is a women-led, national non-governmental organization registered in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq devoted to empowering women socially, economically, and politically. At WEO, we work diligently to enhance women's influence, combat all forms of violence against them, and advocate for policy development and reform that supports equality between women and men. WEO is dedicated to delivering its services in the sectors of Protection, Livelihoods, Advocacy, and Humanitarian by offering a comprehensive range of services, including socio-economic and psychological support, access to finance, individual and institutional capacity development, legal assistance, and advocacy for an inclusive approach and meaningful fulfillment of sustainable peace and security.

WEO's Mission

WEO's mission is to empower women and lead a future where women's potential is immeasurable. Together, we build a world where women are catalysts for progress and equality.

WEO's Vision

WEO envisions a peaceful and secure society where equal rights between women and men are distinctly reflected in the laws, policies, and practices.

Message from WEO

As we close another chapter in the journey of WEO, we are both proud and humbled to reflect on the achievements and challenges that shaped 2024. This year has been one of transformation, resilience, and reaffirmed commitment to our mission of empowering women, safeguarding women's rights, and fostering inclusive communities across Iraq.

Despite the complex socio-political and economic landscape, WEO successfully implemented 19 impactful projects across Iraq, reaching over 200,000 beneficiaries, including women, youth, returnees, internally displaced persons, and host community members. Through our multi-sectoral approach, which spans protection, livelihoods, advocacy, and humanitarian, we have supported thousands of women and girls in healing, growing, and leading. Additionally, we played a pivotal role in empowering youth to become active contributors to their communities through skills development,

entrepreneurship, and inclusive civic engagement initiatives. Moreover, we strengthened the voices of civil society, championed the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, and promoted sustainable employment and climate-resilient livelihoods.

However, 2024 was not without its trials. Shrinking civic space, increasing violence against women and girls, economic uncertainty, and political conflicts on both local and regional levels challenged our operations and tested the strength of our teams. Yet, in the face of adversity, we witnessed extraordinary courage, from youth advocating for democracy to women standing up for peace and justice. Their stories are the true heartbeat of WEO. As we look ahead to 2025, we carry forward the lessons of this year with renewed energy, innovation, and a purpose-driven approach. WEO remains steadfast in its mission to empower, protect, and advocate.

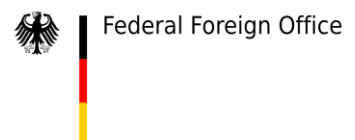
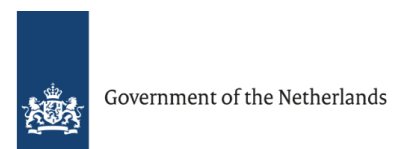
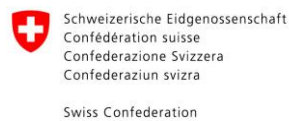
Areas of work

In 2024, WEO worked in 11 governorates across Iraq.



Our Partners

WEO formed partnerships with numerous donors and relevant stakeholders to implement its projects and continue working towards its vision.



Implemented projects per sector:

1

Livelihood

WEO has consistently worked to support those in need, with a particular focus on empowering women by providing access to self-employment and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Through enhancing skills, knowledge, and access to business development training, as well as income-generation programs, WEO has supported individuals in building a stronger and more sustainable future.







In response to the ongoing need for livelihood opportunities in the Iraqi context, WEO implemented five key projects in 2024. These projects reached over 700 beneficiaries, including IDPs, refugees, returnees, and local community members. WEO provided a range of services designed to promote self-sufficiency, including business start-up grants, job placement, employability skills training, agricultural training, and entrepreneurship support.

These services were implemented across multiple governorates, including Diyala, Salahaddin, Erbil, Baghdad, Anbar, Sulaymaniyah, Halabja, Basrah, Duhok, and Nineveh, directly impacting vulnerable populations by equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to rebuild their lives and achieve financial independence.









The implemented projects under the **Livelihood** sector are:

1.1. Enhancing Sustainable Employment Opportunities for Individuals in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) at risk of pursuing irregular migration

	Project Goal:	To enhance sustainable employment opportunities for vulnerable individuals in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, particularly those at risk of irregular migration.
	Funded By:	CSSF
	In Partnership With:	Tearfund
	Target Area:	Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah
	Beneficiaries:	370 beneficiaries (165 female and 205 male)
	Key Activities:	Skill-building programs, job placement opportunities, business start-up grants, employability training, and roundtable discussions.









1.2. Support to Sustainable Agriculture and Climate-Smart for Vulnerable Families in Iraq

	Project Goal:	To support sustainable agriculture and climate-smart practices for vulnerable.
	Funded By:	AICS
	In Partnership With:	CESVI
	Target Area:	Bardarash, Sumeil, and Zakho Districts of Duhok Governorate
	Beneficiaries:	20 beneficiaries (10 female and 10 male)
	Key Activities:	Establishment of agricultural and livestock income-generating projects, the distribution of agricultural inputs, training in the production of high-nutrient crops and livestock, drought-resistant farming techniques, and food preservation methods.









1.3. Building Economic Stability for Returnees and Vulnerable Groups in KRI and Nineveh

	Project Goal:	To enhance both economic and social stability by offering comprehensive support, including business training, job placement, sustainable employment, and entrepreneurship assistance.
	Funded By:	BMZ
	In Partnership With:	GIZ
	Target Area:	Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Nineveh Governorate
	Beneficiaries:	249 beneficiaries (61 females and 188 males)
	Key Activities:	Business management and employability skills training sessions, job placement opportunities, business start-up grants, family support packages, and business expansion grants.



1.4. Building Economic Stability for Returnees and Vulnerable Groups in Baghdad and Basra

	Project Goal:	To strengthen the local economy and promote social stability by providing comprehensive support, including business training, job placement, sustainable employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship assistance.
	Funded By:	BMZ and SEM
	In Partnership With:	GIZ
	Target Area:	Baghdad and Basra
	Beneficiaries:	98 beneficiaries (34 females and 64 males)
	Key Activities:	Business training, job placement, sustainable employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship assistance.



1.5. Support and Accelerate Women Inclusion (SAWI): Phase II

	Project Goal:	To enhance the inclusion of women in the workforce by building on the regional effort to collect employer data on the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in the MENA region.
	Funded By:	US Department of State
	In Partnership With:	American University of Beirut (AUB)
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	Two employers (Tishk International University and Click Company)
	Key Activities:	Developing a Policy Implementation Framework on Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion.

Implemented projects per sector:

2 Protection

Protection is a fundamental concern in most humanitarian crises and central to any effective humanitarian response. Humanitarian efforts aim to enhance protection by minimizing the risks people face and ensuring full respect for their rights, whether they are affected by disasters or armed conflict. Human rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.

For WEO, protecting the rights of women and girls, particularly their right to live a life free from violence, is a core focus. This includes increasing protection, promoting reintegration, and raising awareness about the challenges faced by survivors of sexual violence. Combating Child Early and Forced Marriage, recognized as a severe violation of human rights, is also a priority for WEO.







WEO adopts a holistic, survivor-centered approach in its violence against women programming. In 2024, the organization provided comprehensive services, including case management, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), legal consultations, and awareness campaigns, as well as direct cash and in-kind assistance (such as kits with essential items). Additionally, WEO coordinated with community-based structures and local authorities to promote protection from violence and raise awareness about the rights of women and girls.

Throughout 2024, WEO implemented four projects under this sector, reaching approximately 221,306 beneficiaries, the majority of whom were women and girls. These initiatives directly contributed to enhancing the protection and well-being of vulnerable individuals, empowering them to rebuild their lives in the face of adversity.









The implemented projects under the **Protection** sector are:

2.1. Women’s Voice and Leadership - WVL

	Project Goal:	To improve access to protection services and promote equality and justice in Mosul and Talafar, located in the Nineveh governorate
	Funded By:	GAC
	In Partnership With:	Oxfam
	Target Area:	Mosul and Talafar - Nineveh Governorate
	Beneficiaries:	2,313 beneficiaries (2,263 females and 50 males)
	Key Activities:	Psychosocial support (PSS), legal counseling and representation, referrals, and case management.








2.2. Protection and Support for Social Inclusion of Violence Against Women Survivors in Kurdistan Region

	Project Goal:	To enhance the effectiveness and quality of public and community support services in response to violence against women in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.
	Funded By:	AICS
	In Partnership With:	CESVI
	Target Area:	Halabja, Duhok, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah
	Beneficiaries:	53 civil society members (28 female, 25 male)
	Key Activities:	Workshops on case management and psychosocial support, development of pilot advocacy campaigns, support for CSO-led advocacy initiatives during the 16 Days of Activism, launch of the “Break the Silence” social media campaign, and awareness-raising campaigns.









2.3. Flourishing Together

	Project Goal:	To enhance psychosocial well-being, foster the adoption of positive coping mechanisms, and promote environmental development and social cohesion, leading to transformative results within the community.
	Funded By:	Tearfund
	Target Area:	Tel Kaif district - Nineveh Governorate
	Beneficiaries:	3,830 beneficiaries (1,997 female and 1,833 male)
	Key Activities:	Planting of 65 trees and the installation of a water irrigation system, psychosocial support sessions, and awareness sessions.



2.4. Enhancing Safety and Economic Opportunity for IDPs and Returnees

	Project Goal:	To enhance the safety, resilience, and economic self-reliance of conflict-affected populations particularly women and girls.
	Funded By:	PRM
	In Partnership With:	IRC
	Target Area:	Al-Qaim – Anbar Governorate
	Beneficiaries:	889 beneficiaries (814 Female and 75 Male)
	Key Activities:	Psychosocial support, case management, awareness sessions on preventing violence against women, job counseling services, vocational training courses, business training, and small business grants.

Implemented projects per sector:

3

Advocacy







Advocacy is a powerful tool designed to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems, thereby improving the lives of individuals. WEO is committed to advocating for policies and laws that promote equality and protect women's rights.

In the face of armed conflict, many women have been left vulnerable to violence, with sexual violence increasingly used as a weapon of war. The levels of violence and sexual abuse faced by women and girls in conflict zones continue to rise, underscoring the urgent need for action. In response, WEO has been working tirelessly to advocate for the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda and the Iraqi National Action Plan in accordance with UNSCR 1325. These efforts aim to enhance democracy, human rights, and women's equal participation in political and decision-making processes in Iraq.







In 2024, WEO successfully engaged over six thousand stakeholders, including community members, government officials, and representatives from non-governmental organizations, through twelve impactful projects focused on advancing these critical goals. Throughout 2024, WEO implemented 11 projects under this sector, reaching approximately 6,374 beneficiaries.

The implemented projects under the **Advocacy** sector are:

3.1. Coordination Mechanism for the WPS Agenda in Iraq







	Project Goal:	To establish a robust coordination mechanism among WPS actors at various levels, improving the follow-up and implementation of the WPS agenda across Iraq
	Funded By:	BMZ
	In Partnership With:	GIZ
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	Engagement of 160 actors, including 55 local NGOs and networks, 56 national institutions, and 49 international agencies and organizations.
	Key Activities:	Comprehensive assessment, national coordination meetings, and developing a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in Iraq.

3.2. Strengthening Women's Rights Movements on the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in three fragile contexts

	Project Goal:	To enhance the effectiveness of women's rights movements, particularly those with strategic experience in advancing the WPS agenda during prolonged periods of conflict.
	Funded By:	BMZ
	In Partnership With:	CARE
	Target Area:	Salahaddin and Nineveh governorates
	Beneficiaries:	780 beneficiaries (458 female and 322 male)
	Key Activities:	Workshops on policy development, organizational management, media and visibility, and external relations.









3.3. Advancing Inclusive Peace and Security in the Levant and Yemen – Iraq

	Project Goal:	To strengthen the meaningful and enduring participation of women and youth in advancing inclusive peace and security across Iraq.
	Funded By:	SIDA
	In Partnership With:	Search for Common Ground
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	727 beneficiaries (485 female and 242 male)
	Key Activities:	Thematic capacity-building trainings focusing on the WPS agenda in Iraq, Networking and Approaching Stakeholders, and The Role of Media in Advocating for the WPS agenda.









3.4. Democracy Education for Youth in Iraq

	Project Goal:	To equip both female and male youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to actively participate in rebuilding the democratic process in Iraq.
	Funded By:	Embassy of the Netherlands in Baghdad and UNDP
	In Partnership With:	NIMD
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	51 youth (25 female and 26 male)
	Key Activities:	Workshops on rebuilding democracy in Iraq, understanding democratic processes, principles of institutional organization, rights and freedoms, democratic skills, the decentralized system, distribution of competencies, civil and political rights in Iraq, and political systems.









3.5. Youth and Women-led Community Dialogue for Democracy in Iraq

	Project Goal:	To enhance the participation of youth and women in community activism and promote democratic dialogue toward conflict transformation in the region.
	Funded By:	UNDF
	In Partnership With:	TDH
	Target Area:	Mosul
	Beneficiaries:	788 beneficiaries (408 female, 380 male)
	Key Activities:	Training sessions on peacebuilding, youth engagement, and female-led conflict transformation, and community dialogue sessions.









3.6. Strengthening Feminist CSOs Working on the Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine

	Project Goal:	To empower feminist CSOs and women-led CBOs to promote women's rights, prevent and respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG), and enhance women's role in peacebuilding and decision-making.
	Funded By:	AFD
	In Partnership With:	EFI
	Target Area:	Erbil, Duhok, Baghdad, Anbar, Salahaddin, Nineveh, and Diyala
	Beneficiaries:	1,942 beneficiaries
	Key Activities:	Awareness-raising campaigns, workshops, media campaigns, and coordination meetings to engage community members and support women's political participation and decision-making.








3.7. Call to Action Field Implementation - CAFE

	Project Goal:	To enhance social dynamics and inform effective, inclusive responses, with a focus on increasing accountability to women and girls in emergencies.
	Funded By:	GFFO and CARE International
	In Partnership With:	Baghdad Women Association
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	25 members of women-led organizations
	Key Activities:	Capacity-building training sessions for women-led organizations on crisis intervention, project proposal development, and emergency response.








3.8. Inclusive National Consultation on Women's Views on Preventing Violent Extremis

	Project Goal:	To strengthen the role of women in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) efforts, ensure their active participation in decision-making processes, and enhance the capacity of Iraqi civil society organizations.
	Funded By:	IOM
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	459 beneficiaries (445 female and 14 male)
	Key Activities:	Mapping assessment, training on conducting national consultation sessions, finalizing consultation methodologies, developing key questions on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), developing an advocacy toolkit, and training CSOs on integrating equality into PVE initiatives.






3.9. Women and Youth-led Peace and Reconciliation in Iraq (WYPRI)

	Project Goal:	To strengthen equality between men and women and promote inclusive social cohesion within and between diverse communities and identity groups in the Hamdaniyah District of Nineveh governorate.
	Funded By:	Mercy Corps
	Target Area:	Hamdaniya District - Nineveh governorate
	Beneficiaries:	248 beneficiaries (160 female and 88 male)
	Key Activities:	Community outreach and awareness campaigns, training sessions on inclusive decision-making and representation, and community initiatives to support integration between women and youth.








3.10. The Joint Initiative for Strategic Religious Action (JISRA) in Iraq

	Project Goal:	To foster peaceful and just societies where peaceful coexistence is a reality for all.
	Funded By:	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	In Partnership With:	Tearfund
	Target Area:	Tel Kaif and Hamdaniya - Nineveh governorate
	Beneficiaries:	358 beneficiaries (223 female and 135 male)
	Key Activities:	Dialogue Sessions, Training Sessions, Community-based Initiatives, Advocacy Campaigns, and Festivals on Women's Rights Promotion.



3.11. Women in Local Leadership

	Project Goal:	To strengthen the leadership capacity of organizations within the Women Peace Network (WPN) in Iraq
	Funded By:	IRC
	Target Area:	Across Iraq
	Beneficiaries:	21 participants from the Women Peace Network (WPN) in Iraq
	Key Activities:	Workshops on leadership concepts, advocacy planning, and communication skills, as well as self-assessment and network assessments.

Number of Beneficiaries per Sector for 2024



Livelihood

737

Beneficiaries

5

Projects



Protection

221,306

Beneficiaries

4

Projects



Advocacy

6,374

Beneficiaries

11

Projects

Total Number of
Projects

20

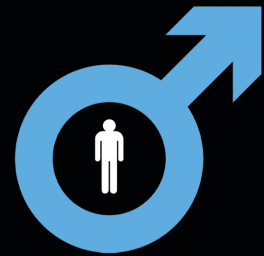
Total Number of
Beneficiaries

228,417

Number of Beneficiaries by Sex for 2024



Female
117,670



Male
110,747

Total Number of
Beneficiaries
228,417

Way Forward: Strategy and Vision for 2025

As we reflect on the progress achieved in 2024, WEO is committed to building on this momentum and expanding the scope and impact of its work in 2025. WEO strategic direction for the coming year will focus on four key priorities: deepening impact, expanding reach, fostering innovation, and strengthening sustainability.

Recognizing the growing socio-economic and climate-related challenges facing communities, WEO will enhance its livelihood programs with a stronger emphasis on climate-smart solutions. New initiatives will prioritize women, returnees, and youth, especially those at risk of forced migration. We will launch innovation labs to support start-ups, scale successful microbusiness models, and pilot environmentally sustainable income-generating activities.

Investing in women's leadership and political participation, WEO remains committed to strengthening the WPS agenda in Iraq. In 2025, we will expand our support to women-led organizations and emerging women leaders to take on influential roles in political and peacebuilding processes. A key focus will be facilitating cross-regional learning exchanges, policy dialogue forums, and coalition-building to amplify women's voices and priorities at both local and national levels.

Moreover, WEO will further scale the Democracy Education and Youth Dialogue initiatives to foster democratic values and active citizenship. By engaging youth from all regions of Iraq, including marginalized areas, WEO will support the creation of youth-led civic platforms, media campaigns for positive social change, and digital peacebuilding strategies to combat online hate speech and extremism.

Lastly, to enhance organizational sustainability and ensure a long-term impact, WEO will focus on diversifying its funding base, strengthening internal systems, and investing in staff development. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEAL) systems will be upgraded to generate real-time evidence for adaptive programming. We will also enhance our partnerships with government entities, international donors, and civil society actors to promote integrated and holistic development responses.



Location

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