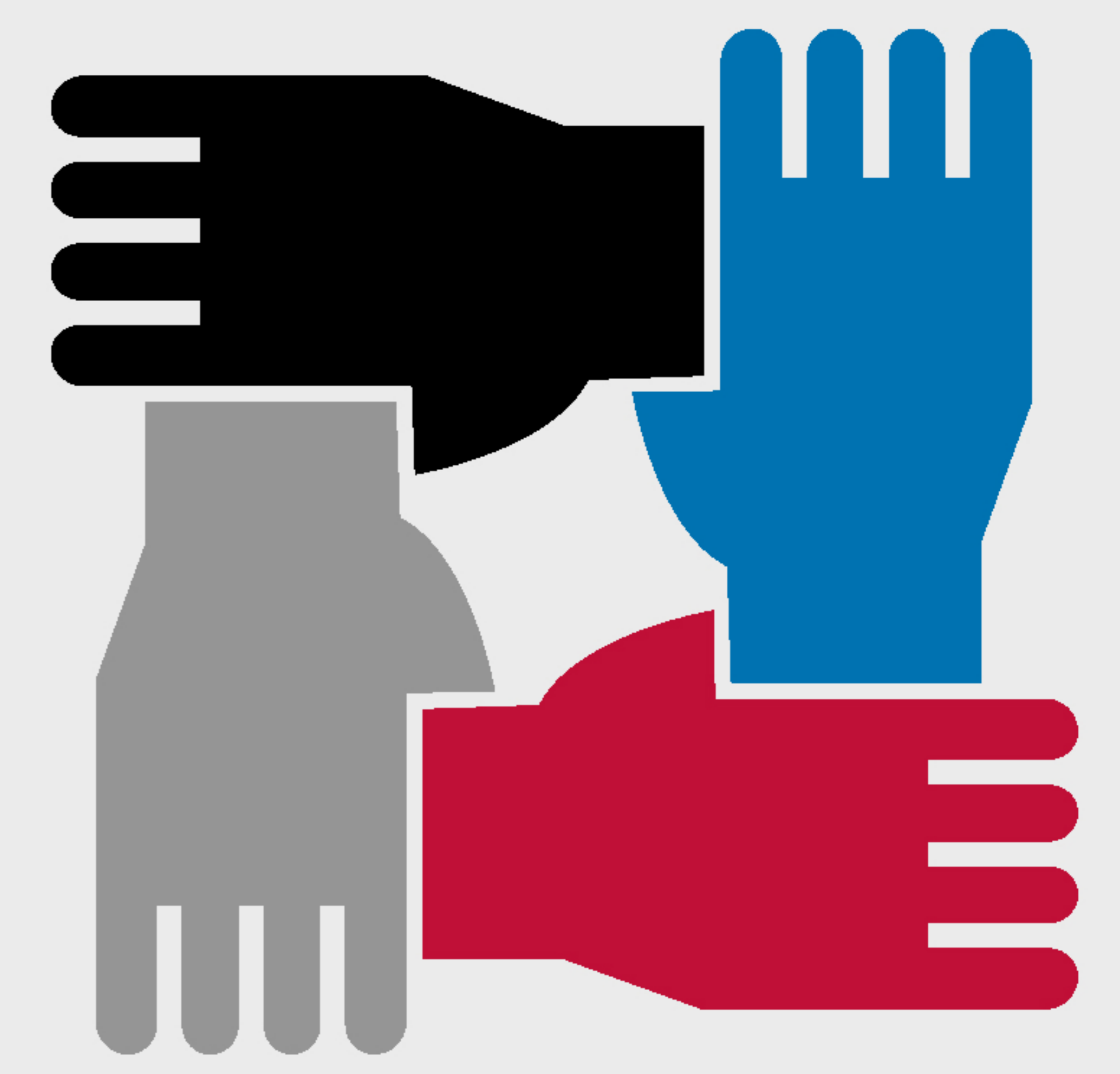


Joining Forces for Reform



Navigating Iraq's reconstruction phase, which emerges after decades of violent conflict and division, is a complex task at best. Most Iraqis have suffered tremendous losses during the confrontation with ISIS, including the passing of loved ones, injuries, and destroyed or damaged property, and require assistance to rebuild their lives.

Tetra Tech (TTDPK) and UN Habitat joined forces to tackle a crucial reconstruction challenge: compensation. Iraq's compensation scheme¹, designed to financially support thousands of civilians whose lives were dislocated by the war, is flawed in its design and implementation.



UN-HABITAT

First, many citizens are not aware that they are eligible for compensation. Those who are must follow a lengthy, complicated and complex administrative process to receive support. They also face discrimination, as some cases are prioritized over others. Finally, compensation frameworks are understaffed and underfunded, leaving survivors vulnerable, dependent, and deeply frustrated. Lubna Ali (TTDPK Country Director), Muslim Qazimi (UN Habitat Program Manager and HLP Sub-cluster Coordinator Coordinator) and their teams began thinking about addressing this issue together during Search's first "Annual Stakeholders Workshop," where DRL-funded organizations convene to exchange information and foster collaboration. "During this meeting," explains Lubna, "our teams started to have a real vision of how we can work together, complement each other, and involve the right stakeholders to tackle compensation challenges."

"I was pleasantly surprised to see Search connecting DRL grantees," said Muslim, "and it was the right move, because it allows us to build on overlapping expertise. Every time we have a workshop, we strengthen our communication with others in this space."

After the workshop, both organizations identified gaps in the compensation scheme, drafted amendments to the compensation law, and built local lawyers' case management capacities together. They submitted an amended law to the Council of Representatives in 2019, who incorporated most of their propositions; the law passed through parliament in February 2020.

Muslim emphasizes this milestone was truly the product of a combined effort: coming together "saves money, time, energy, and improves the quality of services we provide to vulnerable people." "We needed both organizations to get this far," Lubna adds, stating that while TTPK leaned on its extensive in-depth understanding of Iraqi legislative structures and local stakeholders, UN Habitat leveraged its knowledge of international standards and rights.



TETRA TECH

This is only the start of what both organizations hope will be a long-lasting partnership, and an invitation to engage more actors. "I was pleasantly surprised to see Search connecting DRL grantees," said Muslim, "and it was the right move, because it allows us to build on overlapping expertise. Every time we have a workshop, we strengthen our communication with others in this space." While organizations are often driven to compete with one another, Muslim and Lubna reiterate the potential of combined initiatives, and highlight their potential for success.



¹ Based on Law 20, 2009, Law 57 of 2015 and Law 2 of 2020.

