

Climate Change Collaboration Between CoP Members



Considered one of the region's most vulnerable countries to climate change, Iraq faces a unique set of interconnected environmental, security, political and economic challenges. The country's vulnerability is compounded by its physical exposure; a strong natural resource dependency and low adaptive capacity due to continued violent conflict, livelihood insecurity, political instability, and state corruption. The current trajectory of increased temperatures, reduced precipitation, water scarcity and salinity, desertification, and the increasing prevalence of sand and dust storms is likely to continue. With this in mind, Mercy Corps and Al-Mortaqa Foundation for Development are joining forces on environmental issues and a solid waste mapping pilot initiative in Baghdad. The initiative would develop an electronic platform that could be used to report on

Adel Ahmed from Al-Mortaqa Foundation for Development, and Yousif Jassim from Mercy Corps and their teams began thinking about addressing this issue together during Search for Common Ground's (Search) 'In-Country Workshop' held in May 2022. The workshop was designed to enable CoP members to exchange information and foster collaboration. During the afternoon session, CoP members pre-selected sector and geographic regions for break-out groups. As both organizations selected the Peacebuilding and Development group, they were tasked with discussing future opportunities for collaboration. During the session, both organizations identified that they were working on climate change mitigation projects. According to Adel Ahmed,

Al-Mortaqa Foundation for Development's project, Monitoring the government implementation of Solid Waste Management, Particularly Plastic Recycling in Baghdad, supports the monitoring and controlling of the government performance in solid waste management, notably plastic recycling. They are doing so through capacity building of the government and community representatives and enhancing collaboration between the two sides. Similarly, Mercy Corps' program, Advocacy Creates Transformational Influence Validating Action for the Environment (ACTIVATE), aims to build the capacity of and facilitate engagement between communities, activists, and government decision-makers to reverse the cumulative effects of neglect around monitoring, planning, and governance of Iraq's national resources, ameliorate the erosion and abuse of Iraqi ecosystems, and address climate change.

Following the workshop, both Yousef and Adel continued their discussions and held an expanded meeting between the two teams to plan their cooperation on the initiative. Mercy Corps has already linked the Al-Mortaqa Foundation for Development with two groups from the ACTIVATE program participants that are also working on solid waste management and on the environment online platform with the Ministry of Environment. This active collaboration is the start of what both organizations hope will be a long-lasting partnership.

"they are working on a platform project to monitor the environment and solid waste management, and we are working on a project to monitor government policies related to waste recycling, we can support Mercy Corps as well as benefit from the platform's information."