

## **Iraq: Nov '07**

Some of the trainees who attended an IWPR workshop say it was the best course they've taken. Nine Iraqi journalists took part in a training session covering local governance reporting, a subject that has featured strongly in IWPR's work this year.

The five-day course included extensive reporting exercises that taught students how to ask critical questions and obtain detailed, accurate information from sources.

The editing exercises helped the students - six of whom were editors - to analyse and restructure stories.

Over the course of the year, IWPR has published a number of special reports on various aspects of local governance, including energy provision, education and health services.

Under Saddam's regime, local authorities existed but had little power. Today, Iraq is grappling with how much authority and autonomy local governments - such as provincial and town councils - should have.

IWPR has organised a series of the training workshops which have not only dealt with the principles of local governance reporting, but also encouraged students to discuss the issue of devolved government.

The participants in this latest seminar felt they had learnt important lessons.

"Frankly and without exaggeration, this is the best course I have ever taken," said a news editor from Muthanna province who had previously attended courses inside and outside of Iraq. "I hope that there will be more advanced courses to build on what we have learned."

Another trainee who has taken part in courses outside Iraq agreed that, "IWPR's course was the best I've had".

Students said the course helped them to clearly and accurately explain information. One trainee said he appreciated learning how to "write news and features in a way that readers can understand the stories".

"I've been working as an editor for a year for an independent Iraqi radio station," said the trainee.

"The training came at a perfect time, because as an Iraqi journalist, I really needed the opportunity to develop my skills."

Students said they would use IWPR's methods in their work, and some planned to introduce other

journalists in their news organisations to the reporting and editing techniques they learned.

The course also included lectures and discussions on problems facing Iraqi journalists, such as the lack of press freedom in the country and ethical and security issues.

This enabled the students, who came from a number of different regions of the country, to share and suggest ways of tackling serious concerns facing journalists in Iraq.

The names of the trainees have been omitted to protect their identity.

**Location:** Iraqi Kurdistan  
Iraq

**Topic:** Project Highlight

**Focus:** Iraq

---

**Source URL:** <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/iraq-nov-07-0>