

Raising Awareness of Rights Issues in Iraq

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IWPR workshop seeks to improve knowledge of rights legislation and related subjects amongst influential groups.

IWPR Iraq is raising awareness of human rights with a new advocacy programme aimed at enabling the media and civil society to press effectively for change.

As part of its Human Rights and Media Links, HRML, programme, IWPR conducted a four-day training course in human rights law and court reporting for a group of 140 journalists, lawyers and politicians in Baghdad and Erbil.

The course, July 11-14, sought to increase participants' knowledge of international and Iraqi human rights provisions; associated legal instruments and protections; and the media's role in monitoring legal processes.

The HRML programme aims to establish a network of lawyers, politicians and journalists to address the difficulties Iraqis faces in comprehending freedom of expression and legal protection.

"The course provided new information on human rights, such as children's rights and the international convention of human rights," journalist Uthman Al-Mukhtar said. "We even got to know that there is a right for the deceased. The course was excellent."

Waleem Zamil, a lawyer and legal trainer from Baghdad, said of the workshop, "We got to know about rights legislation, international conventions, and many new related activities that we didn't know about." He also spoke about the benefits of combining lawyers and journalists at the same event.

Attendees said that this particular aspect helped improve mutual understanding of each other's perspectives on human rights cases as well as contributing to fair and accurate reporting on court cases and proceedings.

"I have learned how to convey the news in a fair and balanced way representing both sides of the debate so people reading can make up their own mind, and the ideas exchange with the journalists added more to my experience," Iman Kareem, a lawyer and freelance journalist from Basra, said.

Journalists were also trained in spotting, conceptualising and pitching stories on human rights abuses to their news desks.

Raji Naseer, a journalist from Najaf working for the Al-Hurra news channel, said he came away from the workshop feeling better equipped to handle legal stories.

"We got to know many new legal terms like the difference between 'violation' and 'breach' of human rights, the legal aspects that a journalist should take care of so as to avoid making mistakes and the interaction between media and law," he said.

"IWPR is doing a great job in serving the upcoming generation of journalists."

Location: [Iraq](#)

Topic: [Human rights](#)

Focus: [Iraq](#)

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