

Erbil, Iraq, 17 April 2014 – The Ministry of Health of Iraq, at both the federal and Kurdistan regional levels, with the support of the World Health Organization and International Council of Nurses (ICN), celebrated completion of a one-year comprehensive “Leadership and management development programme for nursing, midwifery, and allied health leaders and managers” from all governorates of Iraq.

The celebration was attended by senior officials from the federal and Kurdistan region Ministry of Health, professional unions, directors of hospitals and a total of 41 nursing, midwifery and allied health leaders, and managers representing various Ministry of Health departments at both national and subnational levels from all the 18 governorates of Iraq. Out of 41 graduates, 18 were selected based on specific ICN criteria to participate in a 3-day intensive training of trainers workshop. The 18 trainers, upon successful completion of the training requirements, will be given a certificate by the ICN and they will be entitled as ICN certified trainers for Iraq.

“Nursing leadership and management development has been identified as one of the priority areas in the current biennium (2014–2015) joint programme of work between the Ministry of Health of Iraq and WHO,” said Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative and Head of Mission for Iraq. Dr Hussain added that nursing and midwifery development requires collaborative action by governments and the public and health care providers, including members of the nursing, midwifery and other health professions.

WHO Iraq, in collaboration with the nursing and allied health programme of the WHO Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean and the ICN, embarked on a comprehensive leadership and management development programme for nurses, midwives and allied health workers in early 2013 with the financial support of the European Commission (EC).

Since its inception, this comprehensive leadership for change programme (LFC) has been implemented in more than 60 countries globally and in 9 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. The aim of the programme is to better equip nurses, midwives at senior and middle level in Iraq with necessary knowledge and skills for effective management of health services, as well as to enhance their contribution to national health development. The programme for change will also enable nurses, midwives and allied health workers to carry forward strategic and operational initiatives related to effective health services management which will lead to tangible improvements in the quality of services and will help nurses and midwives to meet the current and emerging critical challenges facing the health sector.

The programme was planned to be implemented in three phases. The first phase took place in Erbil from 21 to 25 April 2013. The second phase took place from 3 to 7 November, 2013. The third phase took place in Erbil from 13 to 17 April 2014 after agreement with the Ministry of Health at central and regional levels.

The programme has been found extremely useful by all participants. The new knowledge and action learning enabled the participants to influence policy and health system developments, lead the change for bringing positive changes in their work settings and be better contributors to health care team.

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