

Baghdad reduced carbon emissions

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Baghdad, Nov 9, 2022 – Climate change, in particular increasing water scarcity, could further threaten Iraq’s fragile social contract under an oil-led growth model that has been a source of economic volatility. According to the new World Bank Group’s Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR), Iraq faces the challenge of moving away from total oil dependence towards a more diversified, private sector-led economy that creates jobs and builds human capital while also building resilience to climate change.

Iraq is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change shocks both in financial and physical terms, including temperature rise and water scarcity. The country is quickly running out of water, and in a business-as-usual scenario, the widening gap between water supply and demand is expected to increase from around 5 billion to 11 billion cubic meters by 2035. Water scarcity and suboptimal water quality can significantly reduce crop yields and affect agri-food systems, threatening food security and adversely impacting GDP.

Iraq’s carbon emissions have more than doubled over the last decade alone. The country has one of the highest levels of carbon intensity (emissions per GDP) compared to its regional and income peers. Almost three quarters of the country’s emissions are attributed to the electricity, oil and gas operations and transport sectors. Decarbonization pathways for the electricity sector can bring significant additional growth and productivity gains.

Despite being one of the largest oil producers in the world and almost doubling its oil production in the past decade, Iraq’s development indices resemble that of low-income countries. Climate change is fueling inequalities and the risk of unrest in a society already eroded by years of conflict and violence.

“Without key structural reforms, Iraq’s pursuit of a resilient, inclusive and diversified growth path will not materialize,” said Jean-Christophe Carret, World Bank Mashreq Country Director. “Delays in implementing these reforms will make it harder for Iraq to cushion the adverse physical and fiscal effects of climate change and to afford its growing investment needs, including in the water and power sectors.”

To address these combined challenges, the Iraq CCDR prioritizes actions in three focus areas: adaptation, with a focus on the water-agriculture-poverty nexus; mitigation, with a focus on decarbonizing Iraq’s energy value chain; and managing the macro-fiscal implications of the transition to a low-carbon economy.

The preparation of the Iraq CCDR adopted a “people centric” approach to reach a deeper understanding of current climate change effects and inform the analysis and policy recommendations. Extensive engagements and consultations were conducted with various stakeholder groups. A CCDR advisory

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group comprised of representatives from the Government of Iraq, the private sector, and academics was also established.

UNDP is developing the five-year project "Promoting Carbon Reduction Through Energy Efficiency (EE) Techniques in Baghdad City", following support from the vertical UNDP fund for Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Government of Iraq (GoI) Ministry of Health of Environment.

Project activities will be developed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and with technical support from international and national experts in the energy efficiency field. Key intervention points will be identified through assessment of baseline legislation and regulatory policies, and best practice for technical solutions in energy efficiency for infrastructure, in order to identify a suitable Theory of Change.

The GEF guidelines ensure that the project document is carefully designed with well identified targets, indicators, and risk mitigation measures. Social and environmental standards will be screened, and the necessary mitigation measures developed, as well as a gender action plan to ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the project.

Strengthened individual and institutional capacity at the national level, including expertise in building codes & standards and technical knowledge in the energy efficiency buildings sector;

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