

Iraq: A Dream of a Safe Future UMCOR Works with Children in Basrah

“Hope does not disappoint us.”—Romans 5:5a, NRSV

Threat of kidnapping.

Gunfire.

Shortage of teachers.

Unexploded ordinance.

Boys and girls in Basrah, Iraq face these problems every day.



Iraqi girls enjoy a school activity.

Photo courtesy of Save the Children

Through educational programs, UMCOR helps Iraqi children and youth cope with their daily life and offers them hope for a safe future.

Innovative Solutions, Safe Environment

Some 480 children and youth are learning how to resolve daily challenges in a program supported by UMCOR and implemented by Save the Children. After identifying concerns, they decide on activities to address the issues. Some examples:

- A group of younger children wrote a play about the dangers of gunfire, landmines, and unexploded weapons they encounter on the way to school.

- A girls' group performed a series of stage and "pretend" television plays to dramatize how girls are forced to leave school. As they acted before an audience of parents and teachers, the girls gained confidence.
- A group of older boys taught their neighborhood something about combating drug use. They made posters for the community. They met with local government and law enforcement officials to underscore their message.



*Iraqi children's art expresses trauma they have suffered.
Drawing courtesy of Save the Children*

New Schools on the Horizon

UMCOR will also assist with rehabilitation of rural schools near Basrah. Some 3,500 children attending the eight primary schools will benefit. The goal will be to provide facilities for roughly equal numbers of girls and boys. Save the Children, an UMCOR partner, is implementing the project. More could be done!

How to Give

Support United Methodist efforts to help alleviate suffering in Iraq through **UMCOR Advance #623225, Iraq Emergency**. Write the # and name of the project on your offering envelope and in the memo line of your check.

- By Offering** For local church and Annual Conference credit, put your gift in the offering plate on Sunday.
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Room 330
New York, NY 10115
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Date: Feb. 2005