Iraq has suffered years of conflict, since 2003 and before. The country is trying to recover from Daesh which committed the most gruesome acts of violence to date.

The conflict in Syria has triggered the world largest humanitarian crisis and 5.6 million had to flee the country. Iraq hosts almost 253,000 registered Syrian refugees on top of the estimated 2.1 million internally displaced persons.

The EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis currently supports 15 projects in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and beyond, benefiting both Syrians and Iraqis.

Sectors covered by the EU Regional Trust Fund (current values):

- WATER & SANITATION: 4,845 Syrians & Iraqis have access to improved water services & infrastructure
- LIVELIHOODS & LOCAL DEVELOPMENT: 7,115 Syrians & Iraqis are benefiting from livelihoods & resilience support
- HIGHER & FURTHER EDUCATION: 982 young women & men have access to higher education or vocational training
- HEALTH SERVICES: 172,719 Syrians and Iraqis have access to medical care & health services
- SOCIAL COHESION: 2,225 Syrians and Iraqis have access to social cohesion services
- PROTECTION: 41,412 Syrians & Iraqis are benefiting from protection services

1-2 Source - UNHCR (last updated: May 2018)
3 EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis - 4th Results Report - June 2019
Iraq has been one of the most contaminated countries in the world in terms of mines and improvised explosive devices for a long time," Fares Zubir Ali, National Technical Field Manager at MAG explains.

In 2015, former member of the Kurdish forces, the Peshmergas, Mamand Ahmed was injured while fighting ISIS in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. As a result, he became disabled and could not work for long periods at a time.

Mamand confesses: "Ever since, I would stay home, bored. This has caused me severe psychological problems. I was ruminating a lot. The days were endless, as I had nothing to do."

The day Mamand's life changed for the better was the day he opened a grocery shop with supplies, thanks to a grant he received from the Trust Fund supported QUDRA project. Not only did the shop uplift Mamand's morale, it enabled him to provide for his family again.

He explains: "Now, despite the pain, I work at the shop every day. It helps relieve some of my pain. When I come back home, I sleep two hours more than I previously did."

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Shirin weighed between 500 and 600 grammes when she was born in late December 2017. "Normally, with such a low weight at birth, they don't survive," says chief nurse Susanna Padrini. "This is a miracle for us, because she has now reached 2 kg. Now, she only needs to grow a little bit and she will then be discharged."

Like other health structures in the region, Duhok Pediatrics Hospital faces dire challenges in providing basic quality services to vulnerable patients. Thanks to the EU Trust fund, Italian NGO AISPO provided equipment and staff training for the hospital’s neonatal intensive care unit.

"We improved the equipment and the number of beds in the ward. Before, it was 18 - now we have 25 beds," explains Padrini. "Last year, in 2017, we had 21,000 deliveries, equivalent to at least 57 deliveries per day, in this ward."

By the end of the project, the paediatric hospital will have increased its capacity to receive more inpatients with more than 50 beds.