



Voters Confidence Enhancement in the electoral process
Provincial councils and districts elections



Fourth report

from 25 March to 10 July 2019

Monitoring electoral education campaigns

Issued by **AL-Noor Universal Foundation (NUF)**

Project Noorakib 2019



Executive summary

AL-Noor Universal Foundation (NUF) persist working within its project (Noorakib) with the support of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), which aims to enhance voter confidence in the electoral process and to ensure the integrity, impartiality and fairness of the electoral process through honest and effective long-term monitoring in eight governorates: Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Najaf, Nineveh and Salah al-Din. Where the Foundation launched three reports for the period from **March 25 to July 10, 2019**. the first reports on voter registration updates, the second report was on presentation the primary voter register and the third report was on minorities and displaced peoples. As part of the project, the Foundation has launched its study on legal framework for provincial council elections and today announces its fourth report on electoral education monitoring.

The importance of provincial councils comes as they are considered the legislative and supervisory body in the provinces that are not regular in the region and responsible for electing the governor and dismissing him and appointing directors of departments in the province and dismissing them and approving the budget for the development of the provinces and determining the general policy , and Authority transfer a number of ministries to them in according to the Irregular Provinces of Territory No. 21 of 2008 and its three amendments (First Amendment Law No. 15 of 2015, Second Amendment No. 19 of 2013 and Third Amendment No. 10 for 2018). which was scheduled to take place a year and a half ago. Where it was scheduled to be held with the house of representative elections on May 12, 2018 and then postponed to December 22, 2018 to set another date on November 16, 2019 and then propose a new date on 20 April 2020.

As the Electoral Commission for elections is continuing the preparations for the provincial elections according to the new proposed date on 20 April 2020 and having opened 906 centers to update the voter register distributed in all provinces of Iraq (except the Kurdistan region, which organizes its local elections according to its own law) and launched a campaign to update the voter register for the period from 25 March to 20 April 2019 and extended until 11 May 2019 to open more space for voters to update their data. The Commission has issued several regulations to regulate this. In addition, the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) presented the preliminary voters' register for the period from 12 to 19 May 2019. In implementation of the legal articles, Article 18: I / II and Article 19 of the Provincial Elections Law No. 12 of 2018. As provided for in Article 4 of the Voter Registration System No. 1 of 2019. It has opened special centers to update the register of displaced voters in the Kurdistan region.

The Iraqi Parliament council is working to make amendments to the (Provincial Elections Law No. 12 of 2018) to hold the next local elections, where the first amendment was made (read the first law proposed by the Iraqi Parliament council and the other is draft for the general Secretariat for the council of Minister project ,it was hoped to be read a second reading in Session No. 32 dated 11 July 2019, but it was postponed due to disagreements on some articles of the law until 20 July 2019.)

One of Important matters referred by the Iraqi Constitution 2005 Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as article 25 of the International Charter of Civil and Political Rights, in addition to other international instruments on human rights, which revolve around the principle that elections belong to the people, and the most prominent (The foundations of the real) democracy, as the citizen has a fundamental right to participate in the government and the management of the public affairs of the country. He is also entitled to elect and to be elected in the periodic elections without discrimination, because peoples' will expressed at the ballot box, is the source of power in democratic governance. That cannot be achieved objectively without an ongoing civic education for elections.

The civic elections education and a true electoral awareness creation among the citizens is very weak, and its only appears in the pre-elections period, even during this period, most of the education is focused on the need to elect political entities and candidates, and disappear the topics of the elections and participate importance, the mechanism of participation except for some programs of Civil society organizations and the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC). Where the voter education is one of the necessary things for voters to be adequately informed about voter registration, voting options and voting procedures, thus providing a real opportunity to exercise the right to vote and to make a conscious choice among electoral contenders. Proper and sustained education encourages a conscious voter participation.

The voter education process on the voter registration process in terms of importance and the need for updates as the only guarantee for participation on the voting day the communication and the media commission is aware of the importance of the electoral process part therefore committed itself to inform voter in all aspects of the electoral process, including the voters date of registration, place and quality, voters lists date review and place. But their efforts do not rise with that importance.

Results of the election education monitoring process

During the period covered by this report, al-Nour Foundation worked in eight governorates (Anbar, Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Kirkuk, Najaf, Nineveh and Salah al-Din). The organization was able to spread in 45 region between villages and districts within those governorates through monitoring team deployment which consist of (42) members (representing

field supervisors and long-term observers) 170 monitoring forms have been compiled for this purpose to follow up on various electoral education activities carried out directly or indirectly and those who sponsor it, frequent visits have been conducted to the political entities headquarters, Commission offices and voter update registration centers in the targeted provinces and followed up by the websites and social media pages of a large number of interested parties and a number of satellite channels, especially Iraqi satellite channels (being funded by public money) and al-Sabah newspaper where the foundation monitored the following things: -

- 1- **Election education campaigns:** The process of electoral education has not risen up to the required level and does not guarantee an equal access to all voters. This is due to the lack of activities that carried out by the electoral process stakeholders by introducing the participating importance the electoral process, which is the door through the voters' register updating. Iraqi law has not explicitly stressed who is responsible for this and the necessary information to be circulated and disseminated. We see that after the completion of the register voters updating process and according to the latest statistics issued by the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)

Total number of voters in Iraq 2019	Number of registrants Old update Biometric	Percentage registered before 25 / March / 2019	Number of registered for the period from March 25 to 11 May 2019 (Biometric) during the campaign	Percentage of registrants for the period from March 25 to 11 May 2019 (Biometric)	Number of unregistered voters
22,243,595	11,270,552	51%	942,496	9 %	10,030,547

The number of unregistered voters **(10,030,547)**, if the House of Representatives goes into election law legislation (it is a condition of the voter to have updated the biometric and received his updated card) will not be able to participate in the elections. The period from March 25 to May 11, 2019 witnessed that the province of Nineveh, despite difficult circumstances is the highest in registration among the offices of Iraq with **22%**, followed by Diyala **13%**, then Maysan, Muthanna and Kirkuk **10%**, but the following provinces recorded the lowest levels of modernization despite the population of the citizens Baghdad Al-Risafa **3%** Baghdad, Al-Karkh, Najaf and Basrah are only **4%**. It is noteworthy that the total number of registered voters is 12,213,048, a large number of them did not receive their card from the voter registration centers, and those who are not allowed to participate if they do not receive the voter card.

- 2- **Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC):** The Independent High Electoral Commission Law No. 11 of 2007 and its First Amendment No. 21 of 2010 do not require the Commission to be the body responsible for electoral education, but is responsible for establishing the foundations and adopted rules in elections and referendums. However, the Commission was able to carry out a number of events, including four interactive awareness forums in different areas of each province in the presence political entities representatives, civil society, citizens and the media, with several central conferences held in the Baghdad. It launched a major awareness campaign through street and market advertisements and the advertisements broadcast over the social media sites. The UNHCR awareness campaign has directed all segments of society and focused on young people, women and displaced peoples, including those in the Kurdistan region.

- 3- **communication and the media commission** : (which was formed in accordance with order 65 of 2004 and referred to by the Iraqi Constitution 2005 in Article 103 / paragraph I) it is the official body which is a part of its responsibilities to educate voters, Delivering information to them and raise voter and monitor awareness in the campaigns of electoral awareness, A list been issued which includes the rules of elections media coverage on the 2014 and considers it an integral part of the media performance regulations and rules that issued by it, where (Article 4) of the list indicated in detail on voter education at all stages of the electoral process. However, it is noted that the commission has not complied with or imposed on publicly funded media to implement this. Here we hope that the law that is enacted to regulate the work of the Communication and media commission will include it clearly.

- 4- **The funded media by public money:** (which are all the media that are funded by the state budget in Baghdad and all provinces) the Iraqi satellite channel with its branches did not have much interest in the process of electoral education, as well as the daily newspaper Al-Sabah with its accessories. It was limited to a specific number of advertisements and topics.

- 5- **Local governments:** Although the elections concerned provincial councils, local governments did not have an interest in the electoral education process and did not provide clear support to IHEC to achieve this. Their participation was very limited in the events organized by IHEC despite the keenness of the Independent High Electoral Commission on their participation.

- 6- **Local civil society institutions:** The activities of electoral education by NGOs are very poor as the number of events held by some institutions on a voluntary basis was very limited and does not achieve the goal of popular participation in the elections, and has registered a distinguished presence in the events. set up by the Independent High Electoral Commission.
- 7- **Violence during election education campaigns:** No cases of violence were recorded during electoral education processes.
- 8- **Voter Registration Update Centers:** Al-Noor Foundation values the transformation of voter registration update centers into educational sources within the community through the voter registration staff work in update centers, each registration update center will make a page on social networking sites and broadcast advertisements encouraging card update and acquisition, The foundation's team also noted that the voter registration update centers printed the names of the people whose cards appeared and did not receive them by hanging those names near shops, mosques and Hussainiyas as well as registration centers, as well as the value of our institution that some voter registration update centers employees calling Voters the whose card has been shown for the purpose of receiving, via mobile which can be included as electoral awareness events.
- 9- **The website of the Commission:** Al-Noor University foundation values the launch of its website by the Independent High Electoral Commission in a new look, which contains many information on the electoral process, that increases the achievement of elections transparency criterion. However, al-Noor foundation noted that the provided information on the website was not updated and that the Commission did not publish all its decisions on the site periodically and immediately.
- 10- **Transparency of the Independent High Electoral Commission:** The Commission continues to suffer from a significant lack of open information transparency, particularly with regard to the information dissemination on the registration process, daily registration results and statistics by categories, races, numbers of registration centers and numbers Employees, especially mobile teams. The Foundation also noted that the figures issued by the Commission on the number of political entities and observers who followed the process of updating the voter register were not within a standard procedure by the Commission.
- 11- **The Media Committee for Electoral Education:** a committee chaired by the Council Commissioners Rapporteur and comprising all media officials in the Iraqi ministries, works to coordinate between the Commission and all Iraqi state ministries and institutions through the General Secretariat of the Ministers Council of whose

mission is to contribute to raising electoral awareness. Increase the distribution of the electronic card (biometric) and update the voter data.

12- International organizations : International organizations have not supported large-scale education during this period except for limited events such as the National Democratic Institute (NDI) project to support civil society institutions to monitor the electoral process, including education activities Electoral, the IRI , provides technical support to the Independent High Electoral Commission and try to involve civil society institutions with it and the IFES, provide technical support to the Independent High Electoral Commission.

13- Political entities / Although political entities are one of the pillars of the electoral process, we have found that they have little interest in educating their supporters or urging them to review the voter registration update centers to update or receive the voter card, except for some very few entities, most of which represent Minorities.

Recommendation

After analyzing the results of monitoring the electoral education monitoring process during the period that is covered by this report, Al Noor Foundation offers a set of recommendations:

1- We call the Council of Representatives to expedite the communication and media commission legislation to include clearly the process of civic education for the elections in all its stages and on a continuous basis.

2-We call upon the Iraqi Council of Representatives to enact the necessary legislation to determine clearly those who are responsible for electoral education.

3- Communication and media commission shall play its roles in the electoral education process and follow up the implementation of the media coverage rules elections. By requiring public-funded media outlets to conduct electoral education campaigns and not only to raise awareness campaigns within a short period of the polling day, but to focus on candidates and not to give a large space for voter education.

4- We stress the need for all stakeholders' efforts in the electoral process to be accompanied by electoral awareness campaigns.

5- Al-Noor Universal Foundation reminds that the electoral education process is a participatory issue among the stakeholders in the electoral process. Therefore, a national campaign for electoral education should be launched by all stakeholders with the participation of the media departments in all Iraqi ministries

6-Al-Noor Universal foundation believes that it is necessary to think seriously about the needs to put the procedures for the need to fill the voter's card as one of the official requirements without committing the voting process as a right in the Iraqi Constitution 2005.

7- We stress our recommendations that the Independent High Electoral Commission must abide by its commitments and implement international standards for transparent elections in line with the right to information through the detailed reports publication and statistics on the registration process results in order to facilitate the tracking process. Results by various entities that monitor the updating the voter register process.

8- We reiterate our call to update the data on the Independent High Electoral Commission Website, publish all its decisions on its official website and adopt a measure in line with the principles of open electoral information.

9- The work of the Media Committee for Electoral Education should be expanded to the Iraqi consulates through the participating parties' sub-sections. Expand its work by including representatives of civil society organizations on the Committee.

10- International organizations should contribute to election awareness campaigns with larger events.

About Al Noor Foundation the University and Project Monitor

Al-Noor Universal Foundation (NUF) a non-governmental organization, local, independent, voluntary, moral lyceum in Iraq, founded in Diyala province, June 10, 2003 and works at the national level aimed at building and developing the capabilities of state institutions, civil society institutions, independent bodies and community citizens leaders in the following programs:

- 1- Promote rationalize governance Programs. (Building local governments to adopt a policy of rationalize governance)
- 2- Anti-corruption programmes (Building popular and political will to confront corruption))
- 3- Stability of unstable and liberated areas (safe and sustainable areas)

(Nurakib) project

Nurakib a project is launched by the Al Noor universal Foundation with the support of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in eight governorates: (Anbar, Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Kirkuk, Najaf, Nineveh and Salah al-Din.) It aims to strengthen the role of civil society institutions in the long-term monitoring of the electoral process, which aims at:

1. Analysis of the electoral law framework

Strengthening the civil society capacity to contribute effectively to the legal framework reform process.

2. Long-term monitoring

Enhancing the transparency and integrity of the electoral process through effective supervision of the pre-election process.

3. Monitor the electoral reform process

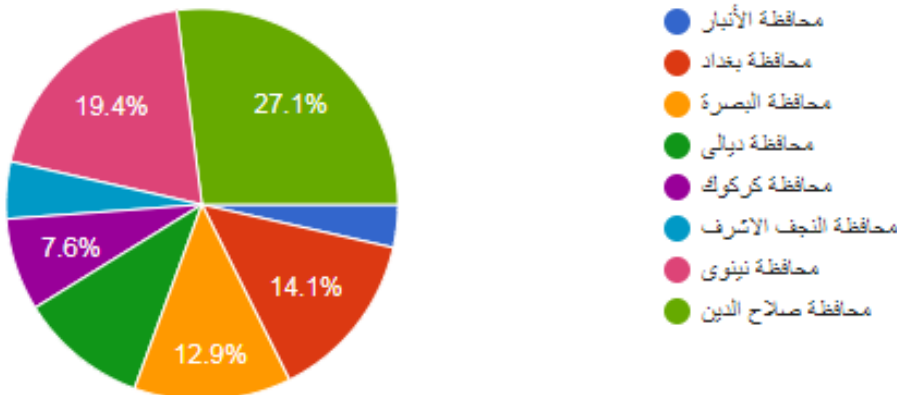
Enhancing public confidence in the electoral process by ensuring commitment to responsible reform.

4. Open elections in the data bar

Building the capacity of civil society to effectively monitor the technological aspects of the electoral process

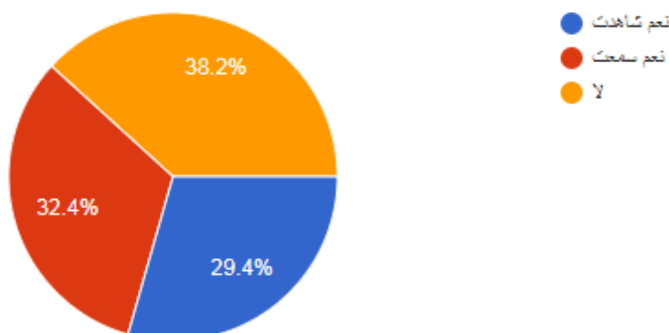
المحافظة

170 ردًا



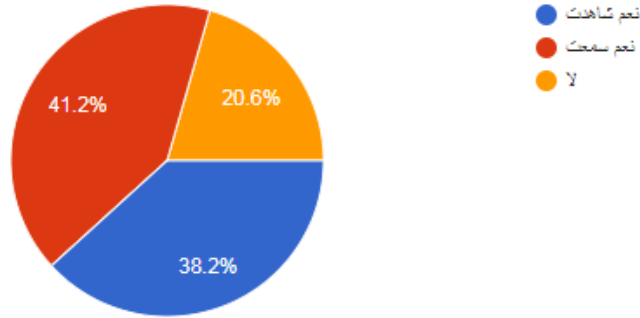
1- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن الحكومة تعلم الناس عن عملية إصدار البطاقات البايومترية؟

170 ردًا



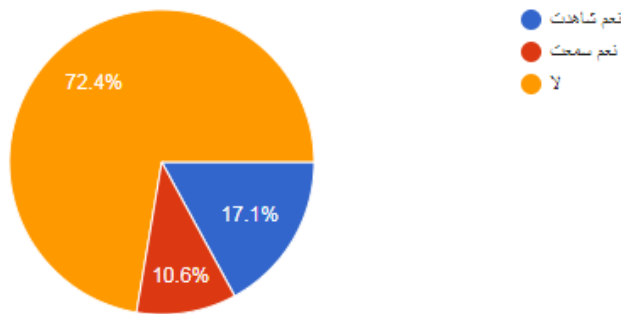
2- هل شاهدت أو سمعت أن المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات تطلع الناس على تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات؟

170 رأياً



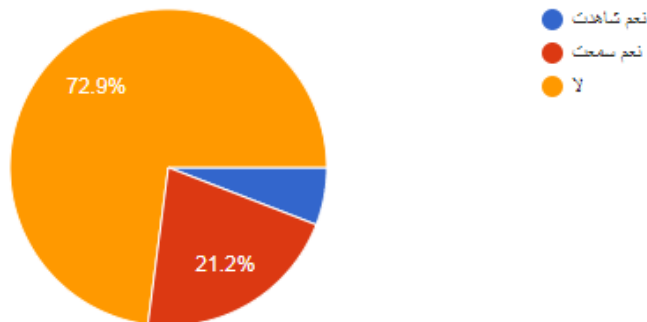
3- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن أي منظمات المجتمع المدني التي ترفع وعي الناس عن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات؟ (اذكر اسم المؤسسة أسفل الاستمارة في حقل الملاحظات)؟

170 رأياً



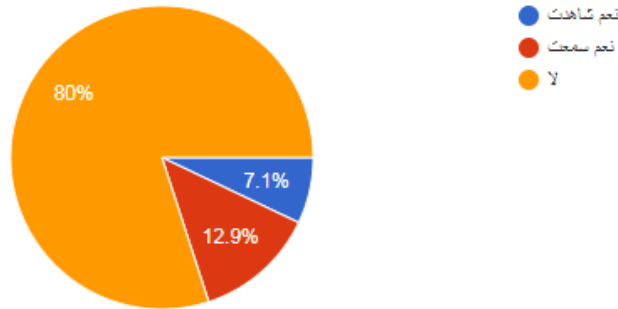
4- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن أي أحزاب سياسية تخبر الناس عن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات؟

170 رأياً



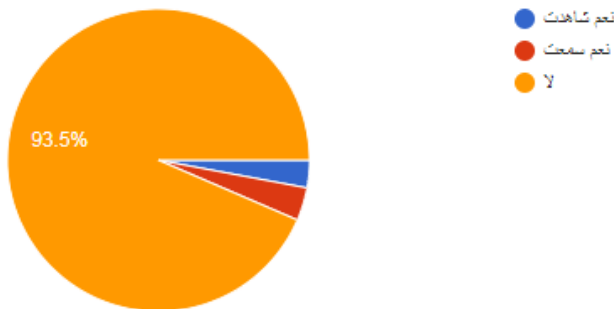
5- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن وسائل الإعلام المحلية في منطقتك تبيث أو تطبع معلومات توعية الناخبين خارج تغطيتها الإخبارية؟ (اذكر اسم المؤسسة أسفل الاستمارة في حقل الملاحظات)

170 ردًا



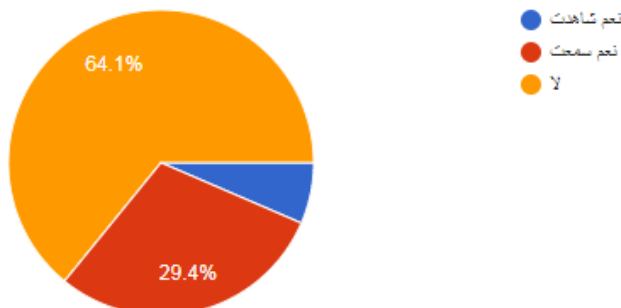
6- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن تعرّض موظفي التوعية في المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات للمضايقة أو رفض الإذن بإجراء توعية للناخبين بشأن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات؟

170 ردًا



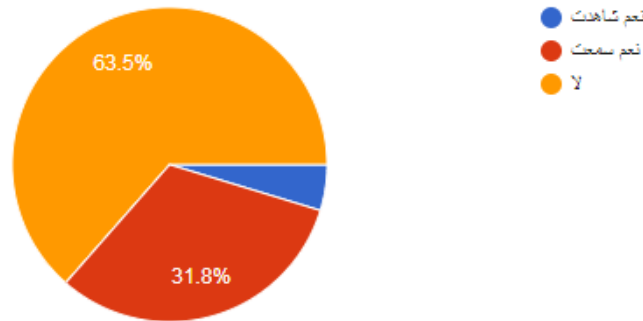
7- هل شاهدت أو سمعت توعية الناخبين بشأن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات التي تستهدف النساء؟

170 ردًا



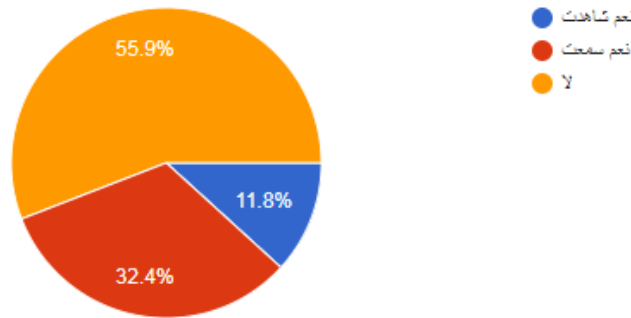
8- هل شاهدت أو سمعت توعية الناخبين على بشأن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات التي تستهدف الأشخاص المهجرين او النازحين ؟

170 ردًا



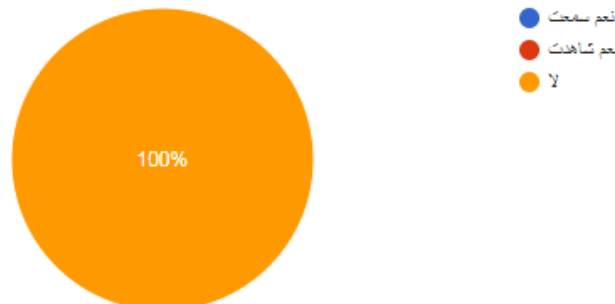
9- هل شاهدت أو سمعت توعية الناخبين بشأن تسجيل الناخبين أو الانتخابات التي تستهدف الشباب؟

170 ردًا



10- هل شاهدت أو سمعت عن مضايقة أو تخويف أو هجمات على مسؤولي الانتخابات في المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات؟ (إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم ، أكمل نموذج الحوادث الحرجة)

170 ردًا



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