



THE SUNGLOW TRUST

REALISTIC MIGRATION REDUCTION STRATEGY FOR IRAQ

COMMUNITY PROJECTS
MEETING THE CHALLENGES
OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Jobs - Training - Volunteering





IRAQ - EMIGRATION REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Giving those thinking of leaving new opportunities and employment working to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to the changes.





IRAQ - CLIMATE CHANGE - ANOTHER DRIVER OF MIGRATION

Iraq has been one of the countries hardest hit by climate change with the annual mean temperature increasing by 1-2 degrees Celsius between 1970 and 2004. The United Nations has found Iraq to be the fifth most vulnerable country to climate breakdown, affected by soaring temperatures, insufficient and diminishing rainfall, intensified droughts, water scarcity and flooding as well as increasingly frequent sand and dust storms. Temperatures in the country are increasing up to seven times faster than the global average, while annual rainfall is predicted to decrease by anything from 9% to 25% by 2050.

There have long been pressures particularly on the youth to migrate in the direction of Europe.

The country faces endless crises including high unemployment, political instability and corruption. The advancing climate emergency only serves to compound the difficulties of daily life.

2022 saw a series of dramatic events in the first six months which brought home the reality, and dangers, of climate change to the Iraqi public. Nine dust storms swept through the country in a period of only eight weeks, leading to the closure of government offices and airports, stifling economic activity, and hospitalising thousands of people.

The challenges of climate change in Iraq are real and present, its adverse effect on daily life further incentivises migration, much of it towards Europe.

As negative environmental changes intensify, displacement can only increase exponentially.





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MIGRATION TO EUROPE - FROM IRAQ



EU+ countries received some 966,000 asylum applications in 2022, up by around half from 2021 and the most since the 'refugee crisis' of 2015 - 2016 following the civil war in Syria when numbers reached 1,352,025. Previously the trend had been downwards since historic peaks in the early to mid 2000's.

The month of March 2022 saw asylum applications in the EU+ exceeded 80,000 for the first time. Since then applications have remained at or above this level for 8 of the next 13 months. In April 2023, the EU+ received 75,000 applications for asylum which is below this threshold but still a 24% increase compared to the same month in 2022. Therefore, there continues to be an escalation in the number of asylum seekers presently lodging applications for protection in the EU+.

While the largest numbers of applications came from Syria and Afghanistan figures show that nearly 27,000 applications were lodged by Iraqi nationals in 2022. In April 2023, 54% of all applications from Iraq were lodged in Germany however many make their way to other European countries with a significant number arriving in the UK.



SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE UK - IRAQI NATIONALS

In 2021 the UK was 4th in Europe in terms of the number of first-time asylum applications behind Germany, France and Spain, following an established trend. The annual number of asylum applications to the UK peaked in 2002 at 84,132. After that the number fell sharply to reach a twenty-year low point of 17,916 in 2010. It rose steadily throughout the 2010s, then sharply from 2021 onwards to reach 81,130 applications in 2022, the highest annual number since 2002.

The 81,130 applications made in 2022 related to 99,939 individuals (main applicants and dependents). This is more than twice the number of applications for 2019.

From this Iraqi nationals accounted for 6,295 of the applications.

According to the Iraqi Welfare Association state 'at the end of 2022 more than 12,000 Iraqis were stuck in temporary accommodation for more than six months waiting for a decision of their asylum claims'.

Figures reveal 73% of initial decisions made in the year to March 2023 have been positive with refugee status granted (or some other form of protection). However it should be noted that for Iraqis only 41% are granted any status. Furthermore the overall rate of refusals for this group runs at 45% which is unusually high compared to other nationalities. It could therefore be suggested their claims lack the necessary substance. (Note. These numbers don't take account of decisions being overturned on appeal which in the year preceding March 2023 were successful in 43% of cases – up from 29% in 2012)

Come the middle of 2023 the entire UK asylum system is under enormous pressure.

The backlog of claimants waiting for their initial decision has reached unprecedented levels never seen before.

At the end of March 2023, 172,758 people were waiting for an outcome on their initial claim for asylum, a 57% increase on the number of applications awaiting an initial decision at March 2022 (109,735 people). Of this backlog 75% (128,812) have been awaiting a decision for more than 6 months.

In December 2022, the Prime Minister committed to clearing the 'legacy backlog' (being all asylum applications made before 28 June 2022) by the end of 2023. At the end of March 2023, there were 78,954 such legacy cases waiting for a decision relating to 104,049 persons meaning that the Home Office will need to make nearly 8,700 decisions every month to meet the Prime Minister's commitment.

As of June 2023 figures reveal over 175,000 applicants now waiting for an initial decision with the Home Office providing accommodation for around 109,000 of these applicants.

Of particular concern to both the government of the United Kingdom and much of the public is the rise in small boats crossing the English Channel from France carrying migrants and operated by criminal gangs. According to the Home Office's irregular migration statistics the 3rd largest incoming numbers by nationality from 2018 to March 2023 are Iraqis. This is after Iranians and Albanians. Iraqis represent 14.7% of total numbers for that period. Although the numbers vary over the years and each quarter is different, Iraqis are consistently in the top incoming nationalities.



COSTS TO THE UK GOVERNMENT

The Home Office is responsible for asylum and protection in the UK, including ensuring compliance with the UK's legal commitments. It is responsible for processing claims and supporting people seeking asylum who are destitute

by providing financial support and accommodation until it makes a final decision on their claim.

Claimants are normally dispersed around the UK into residential property sourced from the private rental sector and managed by regional private contractors. However the mounting case backlog coupled with increasing incoming numbers has meant this not only is this full to capacity but additional housing had to be found along with space in 200 hotels to cope with the demand, alongside an unknown number of hostels.

In 2019 the government signed seven regional contracts with private sector companies for asylum accommodation and transport. These contracts have a combined value of more than £4.5 billion over 10 years. However, the cost of providing hotel accommodation to asylum seekers goes well over and above these contracted costs. This additional accommodation is costing the government nearly £1.3 billion per year – over a billion more than the forecast of up to £70 million that was issued by the government in March 2021.

Private sector providers are benefiting over and above their substantial 2019 contracted amounts to place asylum seekers into hotels, at an estimated cost of nearly £4,300 per individual per month.

The huge case backlog in processing claims means the length of time applicants are waiting for a decision extends their time in what should be temporary accommodation driving up the costs ever more and delaying the opportunity to reduce the use of hotels.

The quality of decision-making is often poor, with many claimants relying on the courts to award protection following an appeal of the government's initial decision. The appeals process can be complex and lengthy, with people seeking asylum waiting months for their appeals to be heard further impeding transit through the temporary accommodation, again increasing costs to the government.

Most asylum seekers are not able to fund their legal representation at appeals and rely on public funding which places additional burdens on the Legal Aid budget

When an application does eventually result in 'leave to remain' the applicant is granted the right to work and becomes eligible for state benefits. Many will take time to enter the labour market and will need to rely on benefits, particularly so in the case of families.

ILLEGAL MIGRATION BILL 2023 IMPACT ASSESSMENT (& COSTS) – THE HOME OFFICE

'This bill aims to prevent illegal migration through the creation of a scheme whereby anyone arriving illegally in the UK will not be allowed to stay in the UK but will instead be promptly detained and removed to their country or to a safe third country'

We have extracted some estimates of the key costs involved if implemented:

'Third country costs'. *Payments to the recipient third country of relocated migrants will be made. Part of the cost will be a charge on a 'per individual relocated' basis. This cost is expected to reflect the cost of processing an individual borne by the third country. This 'per individual' cost is estimated as **£105,000** overall optimism over the multi-year lifetime of the scheme.'*

Table 4: Estimated costs incurred to relocate a migrant to a third country (rounded to nearest £ 1,000)

'Per individual' cost to relocate	Cost, £
Third country cost	105,000
Home Office resource cost	18,000
Flight and escorting cost	22,000
Detention cost	7,000
MoJ Cost	1,000
Total	154,000
Optimism Bias	%9
Total Costs	169,000

Needles to say there are cost benefits from overseas processing, this document estimates a 'unit cost saving of £106,000 is found for relocating an individual as a result of asylum cost savings'.

France will have received more than £230 million between 2014 and the end of 2022/23 to deter illegal migrants from using the channel route. If all the promised funds are sent Rwanda will have received £290 Million by end 2023

The government's contracts website reveals that the Home Office wants at least one major partner to help run two large facilities in Kent until at least 2030 - and potentially to 2034. The Home Office has it seems earmarked at least £700m to manage the arrival of migrants on small boats until 2030

What is patently obvious from this untidy assortment of numbers is that the already colossal costs look to be on an upward trajectory with no end in sight – funding schemes in countries of departure – in our case Iraq – can only ever yield dividends.



THE DREAM LIFE?

The Iraqi migrants dream of a new life in the UK generally turns out to be substantially at odds with the real lived experience. Associates, friends and relatives who arrived in earlier times will inevitably have put a spin on their new life when calling home.

Having put so much effort into the expedition and uprooting themselves from the familiar they want to appear successful even when expectations fall far short of the reality. It can be humiliating to admit to all the difficulties, hardship and an uncertain future. So much easier to gloss over all this and maintain the illusion of achievement and life moving forward.

Having raised funds for the journey, made the commitment, arrived and submitted an asylum application turning back and admitting failure is rarely an option. There is generally a great deal of shame associated with giving up and going home empty handed. The complexities of a western asylum application and processing system based on the UN Refugee Convention of 1951 are lost on the families of these migrants. They are simply considered a failure if they return without having gained any settlement status rather than having a flawed case to begin with.

There are plenty of anecdotal accounts of Iraqis being denied settlement in Europe, being deported then turning to suicide rather than face the disgrace of failure.



BACKGROUND

Around 90% of Iraqis that reach the UK will be from the north of Iraq and therefore predominately ethnic Kurds.

It's generally accepted that young single males make up the majority of this migrant population. In Iraq these tend to hail more from rural communities where this group feels less connected to the modern world and see little future in traditional occupations such as farming. The communities they inhabit are likely to be more socially conservative and young men are tempted by the freedoms a new life could offer in Europe without the constraints imposed by family or society.

Travelling through Kurdistan Iraq for example, every sizeable village you pass through it will be perfectly normal to meet families with relatives spread across the European diaspora. Some may have departed Iraq a decade or more earlier but inevitably families will be missing young men that have left recently, some having arrived others still in transit. In some ways this has become a rite of passage and conversations begin early on – even in the school corridors. (Indeed this could offer a crucial venue for educational intervention to dispel the myths that migration to Europe guarantees a prosperous new life.)

In the space of two decades the influx of Iraqi Kurds to the UK has changed not only the ethnic breakdown of every city but even the face of the high street. No urban setting is now complete without the Kurdish barber, car wash and sundry shops. Newcomers will gravitate towards these established communities if indeed their end destination hadn't been set at departure. It has after all become a well worn path. Here they find familiarity, cash work and a place to stay while the long wait begins for their asylum case to be decided.



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SUMMARY

It is difficult to precisely calculate what the UK government will have to spend on each asylum seeker while the application process drags on, needless to say each individual case is different. A number of factors come into play, among them which year they arrive and what point of chaos the system has reached. Clearly the cost of accommodation and support on its own will run into tens of thousands of pounds, but this can be multiplied several times over. If the individual's claim is refused another long and costly appeals process is likely to be launched which will gradually wind its way through the First-tier Tribunal - Immigration and Asylum system. This will lead to potentially a series of hearings commencing months in advance and again taking anything from months to years to conclude.

The claimant may be eligible for ongoing accommodation and support while they await an outcome and will have access to further costly public resources.

When an application does eventually result in 'leave to remain' the claimant is granted the right to work and becomes eligible for state benefits. For those with relevant and transferable qualifications this can mean quick entry into the labour market. Others without skills, which can account for a large section, can find themselves stuck in a rut, unemployed for years subsisting on Jobseekers Allowance and Housing Benefit at ever more cost to the state. And on it goes.

It is very much apparent the moment an Iraqi migrant arrives in the UK and claims asylum costs to the taxpayer start to accrue. The time it takes for the case to be concluded is likely to be measured in years. They become entangled in processes that move at an imperceptible pace. This benefits neither the individual, their families, the UK taxpayer or indeed desperate people who's lives are in immediate danger fleeing war zones.

As mentioned the ultimate cost to the UK Government will vary depending on each individual case but any reliable estimate will have to be in the tens of thousands of pounds. This assumes the migrant is eventually granted status and remains in the UK. If they are refused and exhaust the appeals procedure then a removal process may be set in motion. This too can be appealed with cases again having the potential to last years. Another entire set of costs will again need to be met from public funds.

It makes good sense therefore to intervene early on and target these individuals before they leave Iraq, dispel any notion of the wonderland that awaits and provide tough hard factual information of how easy it is to lose precious years with little to show in return.

Clearly the UK government needs to reduce its huge backlog of asylum cases. (In excess of 175,000 in the 3rd quarter of 2023). However the continuous pressure exerted by ever increasing incoming numbers means the existing accommodation portfolio, already filled to capacity is now overflowing with evermore novel alternatives are being sought.

There are two determining factors that will have any decisive effect – either incoming numbers decrease naturally or by intervention and / or extra caseworkers are hired and trained to bring processing up to a functioning speed.

PROPOSAL



The predicted effects of climate change on Iraq have arrived – they are very real and undeniably present, its adverse effect on daily life contributing towards ever more external migration.

At The SunGlow Trust we address the emergency of climate change along with highly contentious issue of migration to Europe and the United Kingdom with pragmatic solutions that can realistically go some way to tackling both subjects simultaneously.

Our emigration reduction strategy gives a future to those thinking of leaving Iraq by providing employment opportunities in their own country working to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to those changes.

We offer potential migrants employment in their own region working with our organisation or our partners helping to meet the challenges of climate change within Iraq working for both the benefit of the nation and their own communities.

This proposal aims to reduce the numbers of Iraqis seeking to travel to Europe - and onto the UK - by targeting those demographics that are, and have, proven most likely to embark on the journey, educate them on the risks and provide meaningful employment opportunities in meeting the challenges of climate change in their home country.

The dual approach proposed brings together the emergency of climate change – the need to adapt to the changes and mitigate its effects – and combine it with addressing the problematic issue of irregular migration heading towards Europe and the UK.

Aside from our education and employment programmes, we are also teaming up with organisations such as the IOM – International Organisation for Migration, to develop return packages with this ‘add-on’ providing work to encourage those disillusioned Iraqis that have been unsuccessful in the UK to return home. We will support those with undetermined asylum cases that have grown tired waiting or those that have been refused but not been removed and have little hope of gaining any kind of settlement status. Many will be included in the ‘legacy backlog’ of 67,870 (as of June 2023) which the government had aimed to clear by the end of 2023 but is struggling to remain on course.

All the while this backlog of cases persists at such a high level claiming asylum in the UK effectively gives the applicant a ticket to stay in the country for years.

Apart from the smuggling gangs nobody benefits from this situation least of all those fleeing persecution and conflict from countries in the midst of war.

It is clear even a modest level of funding for our proposals will be insignificant against the vast budget the government has to allow and which is increasing way beyond any previous predications. Government spending on asylum in the UK has almost doubled - from £2.12bn in 2021-22 to £3.97bn in 2022-23





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RETURNING HOME REPATRIATING IRAQIS IN THE UK

Amongst the 175,000 total of outstanding applicants currently waiting for an initial decision will be a significant number of Iraqi's who may already be reflecting on their choice of the UK to submit an asylum claim.

The 'asylum system' and it's associated laws become more complex with every passing month, the intricacies of which will be lost on the majority of arrivals.

The realisation it could take months or years for an outcome will slowly become apparent. If they haven't worked this out for themselves they will soon learn the reality from their own communities. Couple this with emerging news that those entering by irregular means may be ineligible to even submit an application will be sowing seeds of doubt as to the wisdom of their earlier travel plans.

This presents itself as an opportune moment to capitalise on their concerns with the offer of a repatriation package to include cash incentive and employment in one of our schemes tackling climate change.

For every individual or family who agrees to this package a precious vacancy will become available in the asylum accommodation portfolio which in turn will go a little way towards easing the pressures and costs to the government and reduce the backlog.

We have extensive connections throughout the UK Iraqi diaspora. With return and employment packages assembled and in place and supported by sufficient funding we can commence work without delay.



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OUTREACH AND EDUCATION AT HOME IN IRAQ

Our aim is to educate the communities of rural towns and villages through community hubs and schools on the numerous challenges and dangers of migrating to Europe. This can be achieved by organising social media campaigns to bring reality into the conversation, countering the smugglers narrative and sales pitch. Explain through a number of suitable approaches the real hardship most encounter travelling and after arrival. As well as social media campaigns targeting the youth of local communities we will employ returnees from Europe, including those that have failed in their quest for asylum, to share their experiences and educate potential migrants on the hazards, costs and poor outcomes they can expect to face.



DANGERS AND COSTS

The costs of the journey – a price may be agreed with a smuggler but it can be raised at any random point throughout the journey putting the migrant in debt and their family exposed to threats and demands from the smugglers network back in Iraq. An initial down-payment will be made at the outset, a further second payment being due on arrival in Europe. This often means the migrant being indebted to them from the very first day.

'Irregular' migrants - those that haven't arrived by approved routes - are not permitted to work, they are vulnerable to abuse, trafficking and exploitation particularly through modern slavery. This can be the case whether or not an asylum case has been submitted.

There are no guarantees the migrant will arrive safely, the smugglers profit is the only driving factor. Countless news reports describe distressing accounts of death en route. Over 2,000 migrants are recorded as having drowned during 2022 taking the so called 'Eastern Mediterranean' route.

Many have lost their lives in the English Channel over the years during periods only low numbers are recorded crossing. It follows the huge increase in numbers will inevitably result in more frequent fatalities. Those who risk their lives crossing one of the worlds busiest shipping lanes, the English Channel, in flimsy craft face the very real prospect of never reaching the other side alive.

New immigration laws recently passed in the UK mean anyone arriving by small boat or other irregular method is no longer automatically entitled to submit an asylum claim. Instead of being granted Leave to Enter they are liable to be detained and deported to a third country for processing or repatriated to their country of origin with very limited right of appeal. They may be given no opportunity to have their asylum case heard and will be denied the usual support and accommodation. They have likely paid many thousands of dollars, faced a long, difficult and dangerous journey risking their lives and have nothing to show for it but debts and perhaps the humiliation of asking to be repatriated.



THE SMUGGLER IS NOT YOUR FRIEND

It is possible to hire a people smuggler via social media where they regularly advertise their services. Alternatively they might be recommended by a friend or contact and may initially come across as friendly and helpful, but this is a business, the cargo is humans and only their profit really matters to them. Normally migrants will pay half the cost of their journey up front with the balance due on successful arrival or sometimes further part-payments en route. They are vulnerable to the smugglers all the time they are in debt. Routes can be changed without warning adding potential risk and 'fees' can be arbitrarily hiked at any point according to real or perceived security risks.



SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE UK – THE REALITY

Iraqis claiming asylum in the UK can never be sure of the outcome or how many months they will have to wait for their screening interview, which in turn maybe be months or even years ahead of any initial decision. The whole process, can and does, run into years and if the decision is negative many months can be added to the process while the case makes its way through the appeals procedure.

The appeals process may not be limited to a single hearing, it can easily run to 2 or 3. If there's the usual backlog in the First Tier Tribunal where these cases are heard this will stretch matters out even further. Three hearings separated by say a 3 month wait for each means the best part of another year wasted before any resolution.

Even when the decision is positive often the grant of 'leave to remain' may be for a limited period as little as 1-3 years. When this expires the process effectively starts again with another prolonged wait of a year or two and if further leave to remain is refused on a technical issue - for example, then the appeals process is set in motion yet again. All this time substantial lawyers fees can accumulate and savings if any will have been eaten up long ago.

For those who never made it this far the situation can be much bleaker.

Its not uncommon to hear Iraqi migrants in their 30's and 40's who made it to the UK in their late teens or early 20's speak with profound regret at having lost a precious part of their early life in exchange for nothing more than a basic understanding of a foreign language.

The early dream of a fantastic new life with money, freedom, flash clothes, cars, and unlimited opportunities long ago faded, now replaced by an arduous, seemingly never ending routine working 7 days a week in a car wash for little cash, sleeping on a friends sofa in some squalid damp and mouldy unlicensed multi let subsisting on lukewarm takeaways.

Even if the individual was lucky enough to be granted Leave to Remain for a period of say 5 years on their initial application the chances of owning a British passport before 7 years has elapsed is slim.

It is this precious document that represents the final culmination of years of waiting and uncertainty, yet its not uncommon for for the entire process to drag on for a decade.

As of mid 2023 the UK has a waiting list of over 175,000 applications – incoming monthly numbers exceed the number of cases being processed meaning this backlog grows ever larger and any newcomer seeking asylum could waste precious time, their life suspended for years.

ALTERNATIVES TO MIGRATION

WORKING TO CONFRONT THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE



EMPLOYMENT

Lack of employment opportunities or unreliable low paid day work are one of the key reasons Iraqi migrants will put forward as their reason for leaving. Our aim is to directly target those considering migrating to Europe and provide worthwhile, long term and productive employment opportunities in new initiatives meeting the challenges of climate change. Engaging a range of skill sets from graduates to labourers we can encourage members of those communities planning to follow others on the well trodden path to Europe in believing a future does exist at home.

Once the youth of those communities are fully occupied in our schemes working to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to the changing environment numbers seeking to leave will start to decline.



TREE PLANTING SCHEMES

Restoring lost forestation and increasing the existing coverage would provide an effective way of capturing and harvesting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as well as stabilizing soil, and decreasing salinization and desertification.

Consideration needs to be given to the areas where this can work effectively, the correct soil type matching the best suited indigenous species. There has to be sufficient ground water to support growth through the early years, using drip irrigation systems will keep usage to a minimum. Alternatively the source could be treated waste water if it can easily be brought to the planting site. These saplings will be needed in large quantities. While there is local production along with imports from Turkey and Iran this could all be produced locally providing multiple employment opportunities.

Large scale nursery propagation would employ large numbers of people or with a little tutoring this could be an excellent opportunity for multiple small scale businesses run by the youth of rural Iraq. Income guaranteed by contract and payment per unit produced would give them confidence to invest their time. Seeds and propagation equipment can be supplied free of charge.

Financial support in the first year could provide the incentive to get these start-ups off the ground. Being able to establish these facilities in their own communities can only help reduce the pressure to migrate.

Other more advanced methods than growing from seed can also be engaged. With tissue culture any part of a plant is viable - the stem, leaf or seeds which can be propagated in quantity over a short time frame free of infection and with a better guarantee of yield. This 'in vitro' propagation process vastly decreases the time it to bring plants to maturity, boosts production numbers and helps minimise disease.

By this method yields can be expected from year one as opposed to propagating saplings from the seed itself. Again nurturing saplings through their early years and planting out can provide employment opportunities into the future while supporting the reduction of GHG emissions.

The potential scale of this could boost an entire agricultural sector supporting research and study for the production of saplings. This would take time to set up and train staff to the required level along with the technical support and funding need but can offer sustainable employment in a sector with increasing demand. In the meantime saplings needed for reforestation are generally in plentiful supply.



WATER MANAGEMENT

Rehabilitation of water channels, clearing and repairing these structures would help support farming communities across wide areas while providing useful employment to countless numbers. Reworking irrigation paths to bring back water flows to depleted farmland gives the local population incentives to stay and work the land rather than move to an uncertain future in the cities or beyond. Improvements to protect from evaporation and leakage can be created by covering channels or installing pipework to send water below surface, protecting the route from losses.

Water harvesting through the construction of small and micro dams can create new job opportunities both for conserving water for agricultural use or to recharge groundwater reserves. These can equally be retained on the surface as a natural oasis with environmental benefits or as a reservoir for green projects such as supporting sapling production.



NATURAL WASTE WATER TREATMENT

With a water crisis overwhelming much of Iraq, steps should be taken to conserve every available drop.

The treatment of waste water in a constructed wetland is a natural way to transform it from a problem to be disposed of into a valuable resource. After a basic process it can then be reused in agriculture or to recharge groundwater reserves. This provides an alternative to the wasteful and contaminating effects of dumping or allowing it to enter rivers and waterways.

A constructed wetland is an artificial wetland to treat sewage, storm water or industrial run-off. These are engineered systems using the natural functions of vegetation, soil and organisms to provide secondary treatment to wastewater (primary treatment being the removal of solid matter). Similar to natural wetlands, constructed wetlands also act as biofilter and can remove a range of pollutants such as organic matter, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus), suspended solids and heavy metals. All types of pathogens (i.e. bacteria, viruses, protozoans and helminths) can be removed to some extent by this process.



Creating artificial wetland natural waste treatment systems, for example green reed beds is not technically challenging and can provide plenty of useful employment opportunities while helping to reduce pollution.

These natural treatment schemes such as planted reed beds and other natural flora can absorb the nutrients in the sewage and use the water to grow plants that will absorb and sequester carbon dioxide.

Polluted waterways have been discovered to contain additional quantities of carbon dioxide and methane both of which are known contributors to global warming. A clear trend is found between water quality and greenhouse gas emissions: the more polluted the sites are, the higher their emissions. Oxygen levels also decline in these circumstances unbalancing the ecosystem and killing off wildlife.

A constructed wetland has proven to be an effective, sustainable, reliable, and economical treatment method for sewage or industrial waste.

These systems can be implemented quickly in villages - where they are ideal, as well as in medium-sized cities with agricultural lands in their vicinity that can immediately benefit from the improved output.

Clearly these natural-treatment schemes are not as efficient as modern sewage-management mechanisms but can serve as an effective interim measure while longer-term sewage management schemes await to be drawn up and implemented.

In rural areas with less infrastructure these can replace or supplement existing efforts.



RESEARCH, DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

Unemployed youth, ideally graduates can be engaged in assisting our research. Inevitably some will hail from the communities we intend to work with. Not only will this provide useful employment but should reveal further valuable insights.

Conducting thorough research is vital at this stage of the organisation's development. While key people behind The SunGlow Trust have a wide breadth of knowledge across the issues we are tackling and the experience to set up our proposed projects - this needs to be backed up with accurate data. Complete assessments and projections are essential to have in place when approaching donors. Statistics need to be harvested and analysed with specific areas aligned to our work targeted with in-depth research.

Information can be extracted from immigration statistics and climate change data, this can include government reports, academic studies, surveys, existing data bases and information held by international and local NGO's. Interviews should be conducted and focus groups established to discuss with community members, experts and stakeholders. The discussion needs to encompass migration in the context of climate change.

Recruits by necessity will be local to the region so ideally placed to involve themselves in local communities and interview potential migrants and indeed those that have attempted the journey unsuccessfully to understand motives and reasons.

Unemployment, corruption, political instability and poor public services are the usual reasons given for taking the perilous journey to Europe. Engaging directly with this 'demographic' and their communities will allow them to voice their dissatisfaction with daily life along and each with their own individual reasons for wanting to leave. This gives these people a voice while helping to broaden our understanding.

Furthermore this exercise will give our research staff an excellent opportunity to test our initiatives on our target clients. Would involvement in our schemes answer enough of their aspirations to remain grounded to their communities and build future in the home country? If further incentives are need we can tailor as required using this valuable feedback.





MINI SOLAR INSTALLATIONS

With high annual levels of uninterrupted sunshine Iraq has a strong potential renewable energy base through solar power. In recognition of this in early 2022 Iraq's Central Bank approved a ID1 trillion (\$680m) fund for renewable energy projects in the country.

Power generation from renewable energy sources would increase Iraq's energy security and reduce the power sector's greenhouse gas emissions, which account for almost half of Iraq's total emissions, due to its high dependence on fossil-fuel-fired power plants and the heavy deployment of polluting diesel generators.

The flat rooftops of Iraqi houses are ideal for small solar panels installations, with or without grid integration, providing a source of free power for households.

Likewise small scale localised systems independent of the grid (or with option to integrate) are a workable option to help address localised demand issues while the national infrastructure improves. They can also be swiftly deployed across rural districts where farmers are struggling with the effects of climate change. Villages don't have the benefit of neighbourhood generators that are common in urban areas. Self-sufficiency in power can supply water pumps for both consumption and irrigation purposes. Refrigerated cold rooms can be constructed to extend the shelf life of fresh produce benefiting market traders and farmers alike and reducing the huge amount of waste that's normally experienced especially during the summer months.

Mini solar stations can be quickly installed providing electricity on demand with only a minimum of back-up battery storage capacity required to meet basic daily needs.

According to the KRG Ministry of Electricity and Planning there are 241 villages in the Kurdistan Region without access to the national power grid. There is no reason why all of these can't take advantage of a solar mini grid. Not only can this improve daily lives in these communities it is also one less reason to migrate to urban centres where resources and employment opportunities are often limited. Or indeed to travel abroad. Our team is experienced at installing domestic systems and is prepared to scale up both size and distribution. We are ready to instruct and train unemployed locals, especially the youth - our target group - how to assemble and install these systems eventually deploying across the region.

Given time and support these teams can be given autonomy to hire and train their own staff, build their own teams to expand the deployment of mini solar systems exponentially.

OUR RECRUITS

With funding in place we will be offering our recruits 6 – 12 month contracts which will provide them a regular income. By contrast most work (other than government jobs) is cash-in-hand unreliable low paid day work. This is always unpredictable and vulnerable to the endless cycle of economic woes the country constantly faces.

Our community spirited schemes will provide both income, a structured life and the opportunity to acquire transferable skills. We look forward to new recruits joining our team developing a sense of belonging and go on to build strong working relationships within their group, grounded in their own communities.

Engaged in community based projects alongside like minded colleagues of similar ages we hope they find fulfilment and purpose coming together in a common cause doing their bit to tackle climate change.

Our employment schemes will bring a regular income to our recruits allowing them a better foundation to build a life in their home country without looking abroad for a solution. In turn our organisation will gain a better understanding what motivates the youth to leave Iraq and the interrelation between advancing climate change and emigration. This will go some way to break the cycle of emigration while helping to mitigate the affects of climate change and adapt to those changes.

THE KEY PEOPLE:

Hemen

Lawyer with 20 years experience working with NGO's in Iraq and Canada (Dual Canadian citizen)

Sakar

10 Year association with nationwide Iraqi NGO. Specialises in construction / solar installations and logistics (Dual British citizen)

Nazim

Electrical engineer, over 20 years working for large national Iraqi NGO. Finance and administration.



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