



# Human Security Survey

## Basra, Iraq — 2019

### Gender Security Dynamics

In **March-April 2019**, PAX and its local partner, the Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society, conducted the third round of the Human Security Survey (HSS) across Basra governorate to get a sense of the experiences of civilian populations on issues regarding protection, conflict and security dynamics, and how they change over time. (See below for more information about the project, and please visit our website for additional reports in this series.)

This report presents a summary of the findings in which the gendered dynamics of insecurity and conflict become specifically apparent, including the different ways in which women and men in Basra experience and perceive security. The results detailed here are drawn from interviews with **357** women and **459** men. Participation of women has increased since PAX first started in 2017, where only **23%** of the respondents were women, and this number increased to **44%**. This has been done through getting more female enumerators to administer the surveys since as per cultural considerations, only females have access to female members of the community.

#### About the Human Security Survey:

The **HUMAN SECURITY SURVEY (HSS)** is a methodology developed by PAX's Protection of Civilians (PoC) department to **collect data and facilitate constructive dialogue about civilians' experiences, perceptions, and expectations in situations of conflict**. The intended purpose is threefold: 1) to increase the understanding of local security dynamics and trends; 2) to enhance the 'claim-making capacity' of civilians to identify their priorities and hold security providers and decision makers accountable; and 3) to inform evidence-based advocacy that enables international stakeholders to design and implement protection activities that reflect local realities. PAX implements all aspects of the HSS in Iraq in close collaboration with its partners on the ground, the **IRAQI AL-AMAL ASSOCIATION** and the **IRAQI AL-FIRDAWS SOCIETY**. The HSS is currently also conducted in Kirkuk and Salahaddin governorates. This is the third year in which the survey is being conducted in Iraq.

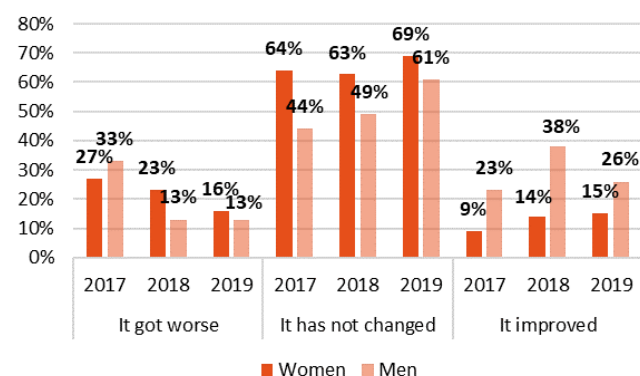
The survey in Basra took place over 3 weeks in **March-April 2019**. **14** enumerators (6 females and 8 males) completed **816** interviews (**44%** female respondents and **56%** male respondents) across all 7 districts in the governorate. Communities, households, and individual respondents were selected to participate through a systematic and approximately random procedure in order to increase the likelihood of generalizability.



The team conducted 816 interviews in Basra

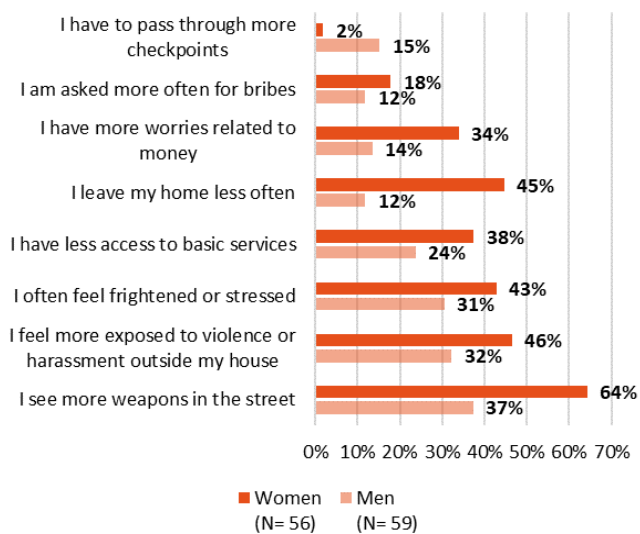
All differences between men and women shown in the report are generally **statistically significant** at a 95% confidence level unless otherwise stated. However, it is likely that some gendered differences may be understated given the sensitivities around such topics in the country. Conservative gender norms in the southern part of the country can make it difficult to discuss issues pertaining to 'family honour'; we therefore anticipate some level of underreporting of certain incidents, particularly sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). PAX is currently testing out new methods to get quantitative data on the incidence of SGBV in a pilot project, the results of which are expected in mid-2020.

#### HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PERSONAL SECURITY SITUATION COMPARED TO LAST YEAR?



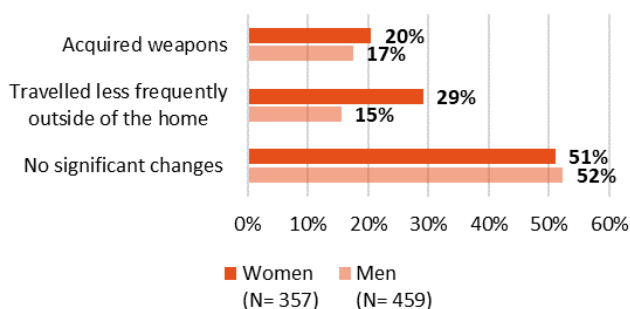
Furthermore, it can be risky to openly express critical opinions on those in power, especially armed actors, thus increasing the potential for positive bias in how respondents reflect upon key security actors or the general security environment.

#### HOW HAS THE WORSENING PERSONAL SECURITY SITUATION IMPACTED YOUR DAILY LIFE?



In 2019, about 3 in 5 people felt that their security situation had not changed in the past year. Of those who answered that their security situation worsened, 64% of women compared to 37% of men reported that they saw more weapons on the street; 45% of women compared to 12% of men reported that they left their homes less often; and 34% of women compared to 14% of men reported that they have more worries related to money. Similarly, since men are the primary breadwinners of the family, 15% of men compared to only 2% of women reported that they have to pass more checkpoints. About half of the respondents did take measures to protect themselves in the face of insecurity; most notably, more female respondents (29%) reported traveling less frequently outside of their houses, compared to male respondents (15%).

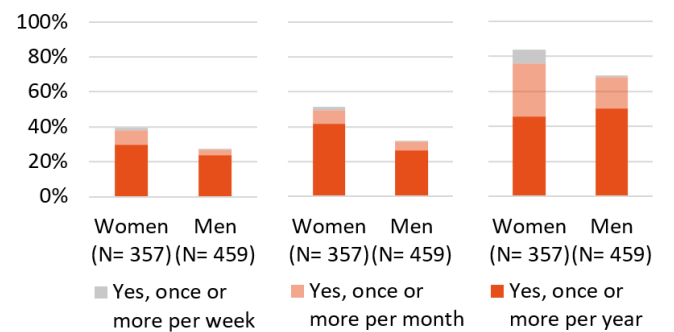
#### HAVE YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD DONE THINGS TO PROTECT YOURSELVES AS A RESULT OF INSECURITY?



While in the previous years no data was collected on this, 27% of male respondents compared to 39% of female respondents stated in 2019 that they had heard of cases of

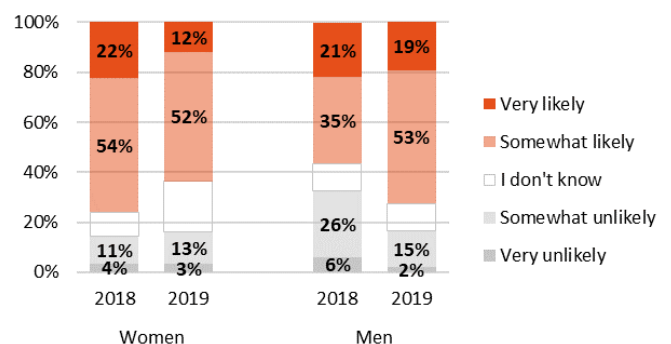
honour killing in their communities. Similar results were observed when asking about forced marriages happening to adult women (over the age of 18 years); 32% of male respondents compared to 51% of female respondents stated that they heard of such instances at least once per year. However when it came to the incidence of forced marriage of girls under the age of 18 years, a vast majority of both female (84%) and male (69%) stated that they heard of such cases at least once per year. Whether the difference in reporting is related to males wanting to protect 'family honour' and don't feel comfortable speaking about such issues especially with other males (as male enumerators interview male respondents as per local cultural norms), or if such issues are usually only discussed among women of the community cannot be determined from the data itself. In upcoming surveys, PAX is planning to hold validation sessions with its enumerators immediately after data collection to understand better these intricacies.

#### WITHIN THE LAST YEAR HAVE YOU HEARD OF CASES OF ... HONOR KILLING? FORCED MARRIAGE? CHILD MARRIAGE?



A vast majority of both female (64%) and male (73%) respondents feel that they are likely to become victims of violence this year, compared to 76% females and 56% males in 2018, showing that males are also feeling more vulnerable from a year ago.

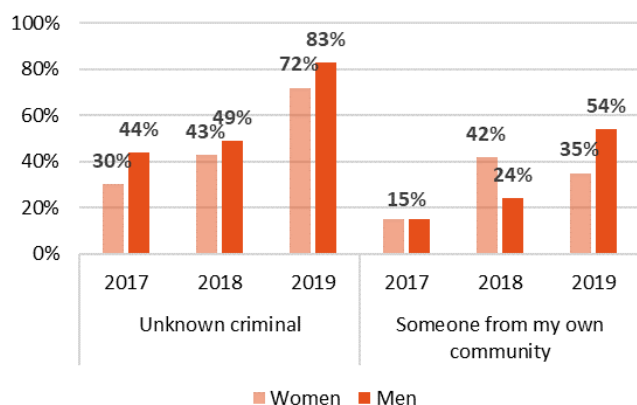
#### IN THE NEXT YEAR, DO YOU EXPECT THAT YOU ARE LIKELY TO BECOME A VICTIM OF VIOLENCE?



When asked who do they expect to be the most likely perpetrators of this violence, a vast majority of both men (83%) and women (72%) in 2019 perceive it to be unknown criminals, which shows a marked increase from 2017 (44% males and 30% females) and 2018 (43% females and 49%

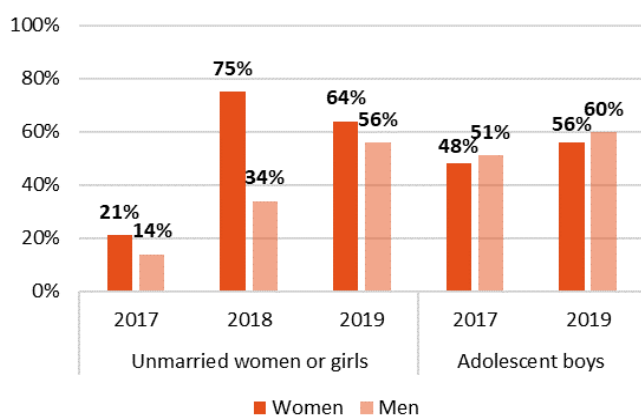
males). However, the percentage of women and men who feel that the perpetrators of this violence will be someone from their own community vary, evident of the differing vulnerabilities these genders have. In 2017, **15%** of men and **15%** of women reported that they expect the perpetrators of violence against them to be someone from within their community, in 2018, **42%** female and **24%** male respondents felt that they could be targeted by someone from their community, whereas these figures in 2019 were **35%** for women and **54%** of men. The marked difference between the female and male responses also needs to be explored further in the next round of surveys.

**WHO DO YOU EXPECT TO BE THE MOST LIKELY PERPETRATOR(S) OF THAT VIOLENCE AGAINST YOU?**



While in 2017, both male (**51%**) and female (**48%**) respondents felt that adolescent men and boys are the most prone to becoming victims of violence in their community, in 2019, female (**64%**) felt that unmarried women or girls are most at risk while male (**60%**) respondents shared that adolescent boys are most at risk, reason being that they are often out of the house. While a majority of the female respondents (**43%**) feel that men, women, girls and boys are equally likely to be exposed to violence in their communities, male respondents (**39%**) felt that girls under 18 years are most likely to be exposed to violence; the male re-

**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE OR GROUPS DO YOU CONSIDER MOST LIKELY TO BE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE IN THIS COMMUNITY?**



spondents felt that the reason for this is because they cannot physically protect themselves, and because females are targeted as a matter of revenge or to restore the family honour. However, up to half of the respondents disagree with the fact that honour killing can be an effective way of restoring a family's honour. Given the incidence of such cases extrapolated from the data above, it is reasonable to assume that cases of honour killing are under-reported as they are seen as acceptable forms of violence.

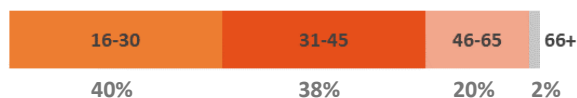
**OUR RESPONDENTS IN BASRA:**

Participation in the HSS is entirely voluntary and data are kept strictly anonymous and confidential. Communities, households, and individuals are approached for the survey through systematic and approximately random procedures, although the sampling and participant selection processes are structured to maximize the likelihood of gender balance and an appropriately diverse representation on the basis of ethnic and religious identity. (Note that our research protocol determines that female enumerators interview women, and male enumerators interview men.) Below is some information about our Basra sample:

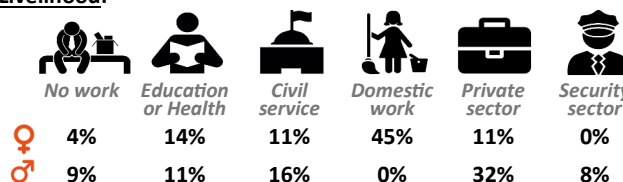
**Gender balance:**



**Age distribution:**



**Livelihood:**



**Ethnic and religious identity:**

Our respondents included **99%** Arabs and **1%** from 6 other ethnic minority groups (Afro-Iraqi, Armenian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Mandaeen, or Syriac). When asked about religious identity, **96%** said Muslim, and **4%** identified as a member of a religious minority group (Christian or Mandaean).

While both male (**55%**) and female (**52%**) respondents expect the security situation in Basra to remain the same, virtually all (**98%** females and **99%** males) of them feel that the most common causes of insecurity in their communities will be as a result of economic, social or religious, and political issues, or a combination of the three, showing the effects that structural issues are having on the residents of the governorate.

The HSS is made possible with the generous support of the **Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. In case of questions, please contact Saba Azeem at azeem@paxforpeace.nl

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