

Bible Society in Iraq offers a message of hope through drama

Beirut-LEBANON: The Bible Society in Lebanon, in collaboration with Fondation le Grain de Ble, a Lebanon-based partner agency that supervises the *Just for Kids* drama team, decided to establish a part-time Iraqi drama team. In the past, the Lebanese drama team would travel to Iraq every few months to present the Gospel message in drama and music, but the visits have become rarer because of the risks associated with such travels. This local team was established in Baghdad consisting of four young Iraqi men and women from various churches; the team underwent training in Lebanon earlier this summer and has returned to Iraq to put their training into practice. The Iraqi drama team meets and trains at the Bible House in Baghdad regularly, while the Bible Society team organizes their events at various church locations. The first event took place on August 17 at St. Joseph's church in Baghdad, where 175 children and their Sunday school teachers got the opportunity to see the drama team in action. Following the drama presentations, 175 Arabic Book of Hope portions were distributed. Father Albert thanked the two teams for their creative presentation of the Gospel message; so did the children and their teachers.

A second presentation took place the next day at the Syrian Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad, under the auspices of Bishop Matti Shaba. The reaction of the participants was very encouraging, and the team was invited to come again soon. One child screamed out loud: "We want you to come again" while another girl commented that she wanted the drama presentation in audio-visual format so that "I can watch it again and again on the television." The clergy who attended were very impressed by the quality of the message and the creativity of the ideas, and invited the teams to present at different venues.

The start of a new Bible Society activity in Iraq gives hope to the remaining Christians in this devastated country.

