

UNDG IRAQ TRUST FUND (ITF) MPTF OFFICE

REPORTING PERIOD: FROM December 2008 TO December 2012

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| <p>Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: Improving the Housing Delivery System in Erbil • Programme Number (if applicable) E4-18 • MPTF Office Project Reference Number: ATLAS No. 66908 | <p>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p> <p><i>Country/Region</i> Iraq/ KRG/ Erbil</p> <p><i>Priority area/ strategic results</i> Shelter/Housing</p> |
| <p>Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme <p>UN-Habitat (lead) & UNDP</p> | <p>Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations <p>Erbil Governorate, Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, KRG Investment Board, Ministry of Culture and Youth, PIN, WEO, KYEO, BFF, Qandil</p> |
| <p>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: 2,987,115 UN-Habitat: \$1,645,547 MPTF /JP Contribution: UNDP : \$1,341,568</p> <p>Agency Contribution UNDP \$100,000</p> <p>Government Contribution \$2,000,000 in-kind</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors)</p> <p>TOTAL: \$5,087,115</p> | <p>Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration (months) 49 months Start Date (dd.mm.yyyy) 9/12/2008</p> <p>Original End Date (dd.mm.yyyy) 8/12/2010 Actual End date (dd.mm.yyyy) 31/12/2012</p> <p>Have agency (ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Expected Financial Closure date: 31/12/2013</p> |
| <p>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</p> <p>Evaluation Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy Evaluation Report - Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p> | <p>Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name: Maha Thabit ○ Title: Project Officer ○ Participating Organization (Lead): UN-Habitat ○ Email address: maha.thabit@unhabitat.org |

FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT FORMAT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In ½ to 1 page, summarize the most important achievements of Programme during the reporting period and key elements from your detailed report below. Highlight in the summary, the elements of the main report that you consider to be the most critical to be included in the MPTF Office Consolidated Annual Report.

The programme comprised of three major pillars:

1. Capacity building
2. Pilot neighborhood upgrading project
3. Disseminating decentralized housing strategy implementation experience for replication and policy/legislative reform.

The project set up a steering committee comprised of housing stakeholders in Erbil and the UN team, headed by the deputy governor.

Achievements under pillar 1.

Capacity and needs assessments study undertaken.

A capacity building plan has been drafted

Training provided for selected staff within housing delivery directorates in Erbil.

Working closely with governorate and other directorates' staff on different aspects of the project has contributed on-the-job to building their capacities and introducing new approaches to housing delivery.

Achievements under pillar 2.

Extensive field study & survey for 2 pilot neighborhoods in Erbil led to preparing a master plan for each neighborhood reflecting the upgrade scheme. The neighborhood with higher levels of deprivation and social problems was selected for implementing the actual physical upgrade. Main achievements:

1. Set up and trained a technical field team comprised of local architects and community workers from each neighborhood.
2. Undertook extensive surveys (physical and social) on the selected neighborhoods.
3. Prepared a master plan for each neighborhood based on physical and social data collected from the field.
4. Continuous consultations with local government counterparts were undertaken for advice on steps forward.
5. 389 houses of 400 families previously living informally on government land have been resettled with secure land tenure and loans for housing construction; housing construction is almost complete.
6. 308 houses, previously living informally on private land have purchased their plots and have titles (secure land tenure).
7. 1388 families with houses below the minimum legal plot size are now able to legalize their properties through special planning conditions established by the governorate.

It should be noted that formalizing land tenure is a critical step towards enabling families to invest in improving the quality of their houses, as they are now free of eviction threat. Land readjustment has achieved space for 2 green parks, 2 schools (primary and secondary), kindergarten, nursery, a health centre, police station, shops and marketplace and 2 new roads, providing better connection to Erbil city and better flow of traffic. Investment from government is expected over the next few years to construct these amenities, and already the KRG is financing UN-Habitat to build a new road within the neighborhood and supporting the costs of a multi-purpose hall built by UNDP. This project directly benefits approx 12,500 people that live in Kurani Ainkawa (including those relocated to the new settlement in Gird Jutyar).

8. Support to the implementation of the master plan, the multi-purpose community center and one of the two parks were designed through community consultations incorporating the preferences, needs and ideas of the community, with a special focus on women and youth.
9. Coordinated activities were implemented in the community which developed social capital, community institution and increased community cohesion. The basis of the neighborhood's community association was established, with 6 of the 8 board members being women, some of whom were illiterate. The community association is capacitated to manage the multi-purpose community center once established.

Achievements under pillar 3.

The lessons learned conference for disseminating practices through governorates in Iraq was a positive exercise attended by 110 participants from 16 Iraqi governorates who shared their experience on slum upgrading practices. Participants expressed their interest in methods used in the Erbil project and opportunities for duplicating some of the approaches in their localities.

I. Purpose

- Provide a brief introduction to the programme/ project (*one paragraph*).

In Erbil City the housing delivery system suffers from various shortfalls according to Erbil Housing Strategy. Although land is distributed, lack of housing finance, unaffordable costs of building materials, insufficient private sector involvement in delivery, and poor regulatory capacities constrain efficient housing delivery. Unless urgent measures are taken, there will be a breakdown in urban services coupled with large scale proliferation of slums and illegal land and housing development. UNDP and UN-Habitat implemented a project to improve the housing delivery system in Erbil and respond to some of the above-mentioned challenges within the framework of the Erbil Housing Strategy and in support of the Housing & Shelter Sector Outcome “Improved Delivery Systems for Housing and Shelter.”

- Provide the main objectives and expected outcomes of the programme in relation to the appropriate **Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) and project document (if applicable) or Annual Work Plans (AWPs) over the duration of the project.**

Objectives and expected outcomes

1. Improved Governorate capacity to implement the Erbil Housing Strategy
2. Enhanced slum upgrading and energy efficient housing practices
3. Decentralized housing strategy implementation experience widely disseminated for replication and further policy and legislative reform.

The objectives contribute to:

- *Iraq National Development Strategy and to the Millennium Development Goal 7 Target 7.D (By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers);*
- *Goal 4.4.1.5.2 of the ICI (“Delivering Basic Services – Improve access to housing by 15%)*
- *Pillar 3 of the NDS: (“Improving the quality of Life – Increasing affordable housing units through housing finance facilities”).*
- *2.1.4 UNDAF Priority 4: Increased access to quality essential services: Housing: Securing accommodation for the largest proportion of individuals and families, and increasing the options for the type of housing*

- *UNDAF outcome 4.5 Housing - People in Iraq are provided with access to adequate housing in line with international standards*

II. Assessment of Programme Results

- This section is the **most important in the Report** and particular attention should be given to reporting on results / and changes that have taken place rather than on activities. It has three parts to help capture this information in different ways (i. Narrative section; ii. Indicator based performance assessment; iii. Evaluation & Lessons learned; and iv. A specific story).

i) Narrative reporting on results:

From January to December 2012, respond to the guiding questions, indicated below to provide a narrative summary of the results achieved. The aim here is to tell the story of change that your Programme has achieved over its entire duration. Make reference to the implementation mechanism utilized and key partnerships.

During the duration of the project from December 2008 till December 2012, and in terms of capacity building, close relations were established with the project stakeholders through creating a steering committee comprised of representatives from relevant directorates. At the same time, a “Housing Facilitation Unit” (HFU) was established on the ground within the selected neighborhood for upgrading, which had resulted in the creation of a unique situation since data was gathered from the site by female workers from the community itself, thus enabling them to get a sense of the community needs on different issues. Moreover, the female workers were able to combine the needs to fit possible upgrading schemes and to discuss the issues with the project steering committee (housing stakeholders). Continuous interaction/discussion sessions with local counterparts at all levels through introducing solutions on different issues were similar to on-the-job training/capacity building. This was found to be more effective than formal training. The close contact established with the community through the aforementioned HFU and LFU demonstrated to local authorities the importance of community consultations in any upgrading/neighborhood planning scheme.

Community consultations continued to support the implementation of the neighborhood master plan which paralleled a process of community empowerment. The design of the multi-purpose community center as well as one of the two community parks to be established was completed incorporating the preferences, ideas, and needs of the community with a special focus on women and youth. These consultation processes were accompanied by initiatives to address some of the community’s issues and capitalize on the opportunities, which were designed based on a social baseline study conducted within the community. These initiatives led to establishing the basis of the community’s association with 6 of its 8 board members being women, some of whom were illiterate. The association conducted community-driven events that address community issues and plans to continue holding community events on a monthly basis. In a socially conservative neighborhood, this is quite remarkable.

Partnership with 5 NGOs active in Erbil to implement the initiatives has supported the development of volunteerism and social capital within the community and within the Erbil civil society. Such initiatives included literacy courses and legal and social counseling for women, human rights awareness sessions for women and young boys through showing of documentary films, reactivation of PTA and parents and students-led quick-fixes in the boys’ school and training on organizational management. To quick start visual improvement of the neighborhood, motivate the households to upgrade their homes and raise awareness on the micro-loan opportunities available to them, the neighborhood households’ external walls were painted in coordinated colors selected by the community through self-help means. In parallel, awareness was raised on opportunities to micro-loans for the community.

Through working closely with the housing related directorates, capacity gaps and lack of coordination between them was revealed. The experience of designing the master plan for a relocation site in

coordination with service related directorates was a unique experience in Erbil, as coordination was almost nonexistent till then.

Convincing Erbil governorate to provide infrastructure services to a relocation site before the actual allocation of plots was an achievement that reduced compensation to relocated households as the price of serviced land became higher, which led to saving money for the government.

Continuous dialogue with the project steering committee members, (consisting of main players in the housing market in Erbil) succeeded in convincing the governorate of Erbil to support vulnerable households with no collateral in getting housing loans through the Real Estate Bank to support the process of house construction through the self help method.

A final conference which was held to share experiences and lessons learned on slum upgrading initiatives in Iraq proved to be an eye opener for 16 participating Iraqi governorates. The Erbil experience provided a show case in regulating informal settlements, which is a problem that all governorates are suffering from.

- **Outcomes:** Outcomes are the strategic, higher level of change that your Programme is aiming to contribute towards. Provide a summary of progress made by the Programme in relation to **planned outcomes from the Project Document / AWP**s, with reference to the relevant indicator(s) in these documents. Describe if final targets were achieved, or explain any variance in achieved versus planned results. Explain the overall contribution of the programme to the Strategy Planning Framework or other strategic documents as relevant, e.g.: MDGs, National Priorities, UNDAF outcomes, etc . Explain who the main beneficiaries were. Highlight any institutional and/ or behavioral changes amongst beneficiaries at the outcome level.
- **Outputs:** Outputs are the more immediate results that your Programme is responsible for achieving. Report on the key outputs achieved over the duration of the Programme, in relation to **planned outputs from the Project Document / AWP**s, with reference to the relevant indicator(s) in these documents. Describe if final targets were achieved, or explain any variance in achieved versus planned results. If possible, include the number of beneficiaries. Report on how achieved outputs have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes and explain any variance in actual versus planned contributions to the outcomes.
- **Qualitative assessment:** Provide a qualitative assessment of the level of overall achievement of the Programme. Highlight key partnerships and explain how such relationships impacted on the achievement of results. Explain cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on. Has the funding provided by the MPTF/JP to the programme been catalytic in attracting funding or other resources from other donors? If so, please elaborate. For Joint Programmes, highlight how UN coordination has been affected in support of achievement of results.

Outcome 1: Improved Governorate capacity to implement the Erbil Housing Strategy

A capacity assessment study was conducted to determine the functions and roles of housing related ministries and directorates in KRG. This led to designing a capacity development plan for government staff from different levels, to better inform on and accommodate the implementation of the housing strategy that serves the needs of the poor. A number of training sessions was conducted on topics suggested by the capacity development plan. The capacity assessment and training revealed limited interest by government staff to learn/change the modus operandi, in addition to the absence of an overall coordinated plan (at a higher level) for implementing a housing strategy. The assessment undertaken for the performance of housing related directorates and ministries revealed an overlap in mandate and activities, lack of coordination and low productivity.

Indicators for activities achieved: 1) Needs assessment study. 2) A multi-year capacity development plan is completed but was not endorsed. 3) Almost 100% of trainees passed the test 4) 90% of trainees satisfied with the training course.

However, the training activity revealed limited interest by participants to attend, and the actual capacity improvement was realized more through on-the-job. Continuous interaction/discussion sessions with local counterparts at all levels through introducing solutions on different issues and coordination among relevant departments provided experiences of learning-by-doing, which can be replicated within the Erbil Governorate and beyond.

A framework for Public Private Partnerships in the delivery of low-cost housing was developed through a different project. This was introduced under “KRG Housing Strategy” document. This is not yet endorsed but it was submitted to the council of ministers of KRG.

Outcome 2: Enhanced slum upgrading and energy efficient housing practices

As for the selected neighborhood for upgrading, results are:

- Regularized neighbourhood with space for social infrastructure and recreational activities (that will be implemented by the governorate).
- Designs of a park and multi-purpose community center with environmentally friendly features were developed through community consultations, with a special focus on women and youth.
- Tenure security for all residents, which has allowed people to invest in home improvements.
- Good practices demonstrated on:
 - a. Community consultation;
 - b. Eviction/compensation;
 - c. Resolving tenure issues for illegal occupation of private land;
 - d. Introducing coordination between service providing directorates (infrastructure);
 - e. Employing women from the community to facilitate communication with households during data collection, contributed to women empowerment through building their capacities. (story attached);
 - f. Community empowerment as a result of participation in their neighbourhood’s improvement which in turn enables sustainability of community-driven improvement efforts.
- The project has attracted funding from the KRG government to further demonstrate community participation in neighborhood upgrading.
- The close coordination through working with Erbil’s directorates has introduced the importance of community consultations. Decision makers yielded to community preferences regarding selecting the most suitable upgrading schemes.
- The provision of infrastructure to land prior to allocation to end users was a practice encouraged and followed in this project proving to the government the benefits of this approach.

Outcome 3: Decentralized housing strategy implementation experience widely disseminated for replication and further policy and legislative reform.

A national conference was organized and held in Erbil 18-20 Dec. 2012 comprising a wide range of stakeholders from 16 governorates (90% of total governorates) including Baghdad in addition to Erbil. Total number of attendees was 109 with 28 female participants. The conference was attended as well by local and international NGOs and UN agencies. The conference attracted local media attention and proved to be a good platform for exchanging lessons learned and raising awareness on contemporary directions in neighborhood improvement schemes that would enhance the lives of inhabitants, in order to replicate throughout Iraq. Reports were produced on the experience of implementing neighborhood upgrading, but were not published. A conference report on lessons learned and best practices, has been prepared.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

Using the **Programme Results Framework from the Project Document / AWP**s - provide details of the achievement of indicators at both the output and outcome level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, clear explanation should be given explaining why.

| | <u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets | Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any) | Source of Verification |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Outcome 1¹ Improved Governorate capacity to implement the Erbil Housing Strategy</p> <p>Indicator: Baseline: NA Planned Target:</p> | | | |
| <p>Output 1.1: Erbil governorate supported to undertake a gender sensitive organizational development and capacity building needs assessment study of Erbil</p> <p>Indicator: Needs assessment study Baseline: NA Planned Target: Needs assessment study available</p> | Done | | Copy of report available |
| <p>Output 1.2: A multi-year Capacity Development Plan (CDP) for institutions in place</p> <p>Indicator: Approved CDP Baseline: NA Planned Target: A multi-year capacity development plan is completed</p> | Done | | Copy of report available |
| <p>Output 1.3/ a Increased knowledge of municipal staff on housing delivery, land management and slum upgrading</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.1/a: % of trainees passing the individual skills evaluation disaggregated by gender). Baseline: NA Planned Target: 110 trainees evaluated as having</p> | <p>Total is 49 out of which 23 were females representing % 47 of the total</p> <p>The number of actual trainees was 49 out of which 48 took the evaluation test and</p> | <p>Limited interest by nominated trainees to join the training.</p> <p>Higher level officials were either not interested to attend or they had busy schedules.</p> | <p>Number of attendees per each training course (attendance sheet).</p> <p>Number of trainees taking the test at the end of the training course.</p> |

¹ Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be **as outlines in the Project Document** so that you report on your **actual achievements against planned targets**. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc.

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| <p>gained at least the minimum qualifications</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.2/a: % of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms relevance and usefulness</p> <p>Baseline: NA</p> <p>Planned Target: 75% of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms relevance and usefulness</p> | <p>passed.</p> <p>90% were satisfied with the quality of training</p> | <p>Some of the trainees’ background and post/position were irrelevant to the type/subject of training provided. The nominations were undertaken by the government directorate without following the training course criteria for selecting trainees. Moreover, the number of nominees was less than what was requested for each course</p> | |
| <p>Output 1.3/b Increased knowledge of municipal Staff on participatory budgeting and management of change</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.1/b: % of trainees passing the individual skills evaluation disaggregated by gender Baseline: NA Planned Target: 40 trainees evaluated as having gained at least the minimum qualifications</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.2/b: % of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms relevance and usefulness Baseline: NA Planned Target: 40 trainees evaluated as having gained at least the minimum qualifications</p> | <p>On-the-job learning through the implementation of pilot neighborhood upgrading projects increased knowledge of relevant local government staff. This was proven to be more effective than training courses which did not attract commitment. In particular, 4 selected staff from different directorates were provided with specific tasks of identifying solutions to bottlenecks in the process of planning and implementing neighborhood plans.</p> <p>Capacity building on participatory budgeting was considered premature and was cancelled.</p> | <p>Due to the experience of training courses provided as explained above, it was considered ineffective to conduct further classroom training courses.</p> | <p>Neighborhood master plans successfully developed, service infrastructure provided to the relocation site of the informal residents and approximately 95% relocation completed.</p> |
| <p>Output 1.4</p> | <p>This output has been cancelled</p> | | |
| <p>Output 1.5: A framework for Public Private Partnerships in the delivery of low-cost housing developed</p> <p>Indicator 1.5.1: A Partnership framework approved by the Erbil governorate council Baseline: Planned Target: Framework for Public Private Partnerships in the delivery of low-cost housing</p> <p>Indicator 1.5.2: Number of PPPs initiated by selected areas Erbil governorate Baseline: NA Planned Target: Framework for Public Private</p> | <p>Done</p> | | <p>The partnership framework is available under a chapter within the KRG Affordable Housing Strategies (chapter titled “Housing Finance Strategies”</p> |

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| Partnerships in the delivery of low-cost housing | Done | | |
| Outcome 2 Enhanced slum upgrading and energy efficient housing practices Indicator: Baseline: Planned Target: | | | |
| Output 2.1/a Capacity of Erbil Governorate enhanced to develop and implement slum area improvement designs and frameworks Indicator 2.1.1: #of detailed designs prepared Baseline: NA Planned Target: 10 detailed designs framework approved Implementation framework for slum area improvement in Erbil is available | Four options were proposed. A combination of two was found to be fit Implementation framework for slum area improvement in Erbil is available Study tour conducted to Istanbul to visit two cases of neighborhood upgrading – one successful and one not. | Upon community consultations, upgrading options were limited to providing services to the community. | Implementation framework for slum upgrading. Study tour report. |
| Output 2.1/b Implementation of microfinance strategies and small loan scheme communities in selected areas of Erbil Indicator 2.1.1: Number of houses undergone improvements Number and volume of loans issued Load recovery/ repayment rate Baseline: NA Planned Target: 40 houses improved/ extended with loans 60 % of loan repayment | Change of scope shifted to implementing a service that would benefit the entire community. | Community & counterpart consultations resulted in selecting a scheme that would benefit the entire community instead of a limited number of selected houses. | Quarterly fiches |
| Output 2.2/a Erbil Governorate supported to incorporate energy efficient and environmental friendly construction | Environmentally friendly guidelines and housing plans prepared. | The housing plans were not submitted to the municipality for approval. The steering committee considered that | Report and plan available. |

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| <p>and design features in low-cost housing</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1: Guidelines energy efficient and environmental friendly construction and design features in low-cost housing prepared</p> <p>Number of housing plans in Erbil including energy efficient and environmental friendly construction and design features</p> <p>Baseline: NA</p> <p>Planned Target: Guidelines prepared 5 plans developed and approved</p> | | <p>building special homes for a selected number of families would cause problems among the community residents who expect equal treatment among them all.</p> | |
| <p>Output 2.2/b Erbil Governorate supported for the construction of low-cost energy efficient housing models</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of model houses constructed Number of houses connected to services</p> <p>Baseline: NA</p> <p>Planned Target: 40 houses constructed 40 houses connected to services</p> | <p>Change of scope. The fund for the construction of houses was shifted to community participation in neighborhood improvement and design support to implementation of the neighborhood master plan.</p> | <p>As above.</p> | |
| <p>Output 2.3 An inclusive and integrated pilot neighborhood improvement plan developed</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.1: Approved master plan for Erbil in place # of detailed action plans prepared</p> <p>Baseline: NA</p> <p>Planned Target: Area master plan in place. 10 detailed action plans.</p> | <p>Done</p> <p>Initial approval for the master plan was obtained from higher authorities. Process of approvals is under way</p> <p>The master plan is complete. The plan of action was continuously changing based on reaction of the community to the development scheme</p> | | |
| <p>Outcome 3 Decentralized housing strategy implementation experience widely disseminated for replication and further policy and legislative reform</p> | | | |

| Indicator: Baseline: Planned Target: | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Output 3.1/a Six UN HABITAT published reports on the experience of implementing the Erbil Housing Strategy and plans Indicator 3.1.1: # of published documents # of published policy papers Baseline: NA Planned Target: Six of documents & policy papers | | | |
| Output 3.1/b Two UN-HABITAT conference papers on slum upgrading and capacity building lessons learnt produced Indicator 3.1.1: # of papers prepared on slum upgrading Conference on slum upgrading is held for Iraqi governorates % of Iraqi governorates participating Baseline: NA Planned Target: Two papers prepared on slum area development. At least 80% of Iraqi Governorates participate in the slum upgrading conference. | Done 2 papers prepared on slum upgrading Conference was Done. 90% of Iraqi governorates were present. Done 16 governorates participated in the slum upgrading conference. This is almost 90% of the total number of governorates. | The activity was planned towards the end of the project (end Dec. 2012). The consultant charged with the task is yet to deliver the outputs. | Reports and study papers. Attendance records |

iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

- Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken relating to the programme and how they were used during implementation. Has there been a final project evaluation and what are the key findings? Provide reasons if no programme evaluation have been done yet?

The following studies/assessments have been undertaken:

1. An institutional capacity assessment.
2. A multiyear Capacity Development Plan.
3. Training plan report.
4. Housing finance options for poor households.
5. Guiding the Housing Market/ Attracting Investors to Affordable Housing.
6. ERBIL HOUSING DELIVERY.
7. Housing Facilitation Programme.
8. HOUSING FACILITATION UNIT / GUIDANCE MANUAL.
9. Kurani Ainkawa Urban Settlement Upgrading Project: Main Stakeholders and Community Participation.
10. Kurani Ainkawa social baseline study.
11. Reports on the five gender-considered focus group sessions conducted within the Kurani Ainkawa community on the design of the multi-purpose community hall.

The above reports served as key guidelines to plan activities that respond to outputs. Many of these were tested and subject to modifications upon consultation with counterparts and according to community verification.

The slum upgrading element exhausted most time and effort throughout the project time line and was the focus of the counterpart being one of the main issues that required technical assistance. The constant feedback from the field team indicated changes in the work plan and informed on the required assistance/expertise.

A final conference towards the end of the project on best practices in slum upgrading and lessons learned from the project

- Explain challenges such as delays in programme implementation, and the nature of the constraints such as management arrangements, human resources etc. What actions were taken to mitigate these challenges? How did such challenges and actions impact on the overall achievement of results? Have any of the risks identified during the project design materialized or were there unidentified risks that came up?
 1. The nature of slum upgrading projects with its long implementation duration remains a challenge to convince the local authorities of the importance of capacity building and technical assistance to ensure sustainability of the implementation in comparison to the hard component.
 2. Phased implementation is a long process, but the governorate's plans turned out to be quite ambitious regarding the type of upgrading they wished to implement. Accommodating the governorate's plan within the available funding or the span of the project may remain a challenge.
 3. Introducing change in existing systems and procedures (within government bureaus) in order to improve the housing delivery has always been a complex and challenging task.
 4. Obstacles regarding land ownership are a major hurdle to upgrading illegal and semi-legal settlements. This process of negotiations with private land lords to settle the status of tenants that have illegally occupied their land has been time consuming and suffered delays as landlords have continuously changed their requirements.
 5. Delays were experienced in the neighborhood upgrading process due to the governorate being

- occupied with a more urgent project.
6. Phasing the implementation by the local authorities in line with this project is a challenge that would require close oversight and coordination with the local authorities.
 7. The tense situation in Erbil (early 2011) has caused authorities to postpone the street widening process as they wanted to avoid any disturbance that may increase tension. This caused serious delays in the implementation.
 8. The Governor requested to close the Housing facilitation Unit (HFU) in one of the neighborhoods since the second week of April 2011 until further notice. The situation continued through May, and was resolved by the end of June 2011 after continued meetings and discussions with the governor. This has caused considerable delays to the project.
 9. The HFU office was shut down one more time starting August 2011 (to date) due to a security incident (attack by an armed resident of one of the neighborhoods; mentioned in point # 6 above). This further delayed the progress of work. The delays mentioned above have had a negative effect on the spirit of the field team and the work plan in general.
 10. The Governor's intervention to formalize tenure arrangements on semi-legal occupied private land was delayed for almost a year. Without the formalization, street-widening could not be completed, either, and households would remain without legal tenure documents.
 11. There is very limited interest within ministries to improve/expand their knowledge let alone learn new directions in the field of housing delivery. This has been identified while implementing the first training course. Middle and senior level staff was reluctant to attend the courses that were originally targeting their levels. It is still a challenge trying to create a learning environment within the current system.
 12. Proposals to overcome obstacles hindering the implementation of road widening were rejected by over 90% of households in the community thus resulting in changing the master plan for the neighborhood. This led to halt the project implementation and to raise needs for revising the scope of work. A budget revision was submitted to reflect the change of activities.

The above obstacles and challenges were not foreseen during the design of the project, mostly related to the upgrading process. But as implementation started the counterpart expressed interest to focus on neighborhood upgrading activities such as the physical and social surveys and design of master plan due to lack of data and capacities at government directorates' level. Moreover, the counterpart selected a very complicated neighborhood for upgrading, with issues that represent all problems that may exist collectively across neighborhoods in Erbil city. These problems have been accumulating for over 30 years. Dealing with those issues was a big challenge to the team and the counterpart as well. But it turned out to be a success story at the end.

- Report key lessons learned and best practices that would facilitate future programme design and implementation, including issues related to management arrangements, human resources, resources, etc. Please also include experiences of failure, which often are the richest source of lessons learned.

Lessons learned

- Community participation was a key element to guarantee success of settlement upgrading projects. This was identified by government stakeholders in the final conference at the end of the project.
- Continuous dialogue with the counterpart was a key element of success.
- Small training activities did not have a significant impact on service delivery. On the job capacity building proved to be the best means for enhancing capacities.
- Introducing institutional changes should take place through a comprehensive programme that

- includes the revision of existing practices with the cooperation/support of decision makers.
- The political support and commitment of main counterparts are main elements to ensure success and achievement of results..

iv) A Specific Story (Optional)

- This could be a success or human story. It does not have to be a success story – often the most interesting and useful lessons learned are from experiences that have not worked. The point is to highlight a concrete example with a story that has been important to your Programme.

Gender empowerment:

Faiza Mohammad Ismaeel: a woman empowered by the UN-Habitat Iraq Programme to help her community



At 47, Faiza is a mother of six children - one daughter and five sons. Her only daughter, whom she had at a tender age of 18 is now married and raising her own family. Faiza is still busy with the 5 sons, the last one aged only 10 years. With such a busy family life, one would expect Faiza to be an ordinary housewife contented to raise her children and run her large family as expected in a conservative society. But her involvement with UN-Habitat changed all that, and empowered Faiza in ways she did not expect.

Faiza graduated from Erbil Technical Institute. Her involvement with UN-Habitat Iraq Programme started when she joined as member of the local facilitation unit (LFU), a unit made of members from the local community to provide a link between the community and UN Habitat.

Faiza and her team were involved with the enhanced neighbourhood upgrading component of the project in the Kurani-Ainkawa high density suburb of Erbil. When she first joined the LFU, Faiza said that she knew “nothing about the UN, housing strategy, or slum upgrading, apart from living in a dilapidated neighbourhood myself.” “The idea of working with so many highly educated engineers, architects, politicians, most of them men, was intimidating at first. But after Housing Facilitation Unit (HFU) built my technical and social skills, I was able to do my work and help my community.” said a smiling Faiza.

Speaking in Kurdish, Faiza talks effortlessly about the work she does. “I have lived in Kurani-Ainkawa all my life. It is easy for the people to trust me, and give information required about the living conditions in our neighbourhood and how to upgrade it. I have been able to arrange meetings in mosques, community halls and schools. It is rare for a woman to address men in our society, let alone an Imam. But I am able to do it, thanks to empowerment by UN-Habitat.”

Faiza was also trained to use computer software necessary to transform collected data from the field onto spreadsheets and maps.

The whole process is a unique experience not only to Faiza and the team but to Erbil institutes tasked to improve the living conditions in the city.

The community trusts Faiza as she is one of them. Through her, and a number of other women from the society forming the LFU, engineers and architects of the HFU were able to access the community, take actual measurements of streets and houses to reflect it on the existing maps and to set the Master Plan of Kurani-Ainkawa with other colleagues. In the words of Mand Ibrahim Aziz, the consultant on the project and a



professor at the University of Salahaddin in Erbil, “without people like Faiza, the project would not have been accepted by the community, and would not have scored the success it did in upgrading the neighbourhoods of Kurani-Ainkawa. Faiza is a remarkable empowered woman who has made tremendous contribution to the neighbourhood upgrading in a poor neighbourhood of Erbil City possible.”

- In ¼ to ½ a page, provide details on a specific achievement or lesson learned of the Programme. Attachment of supporting documents, including photos with captions, news items etc, is strongly encouraged. The MPTF Office will select stories and photos to feature in the Consolidated Annual Report, the GATEWAY and the MPTF Office Newsletter.

The provision of infrastructure to land prior to allocation to end users was a practice encouraged and followed in this project proving to the government the benefits of this approach.

Main achievements of the programme:

- A new master-plan was developed for the upgraded neighborhood accommodating the needs of inhabitants.
- Regularized neighbourhood with social amenities and technical infrastructure (will be carried on by the governorate of Erbil).
- Designs of a park and multi-purpose community center with environmentally friendly features were developed through community consultations, with a special focus on women and youth.
- Tenure security for all residents that will allow people to invest in home improvements.
- Good practices developed on:
 - Community consultation;
 - Eviction/compensation;
 - Resolving tenure issues for illegal occupation of private land;
 - Introducing coordination between service providing directorates (infrastructure);
 - Employing women from the community to facilitate communication with households for data collection, which contributed to empowering women and building their capacities; (story included)
 - Community empowerment as a result of participation in their neighborhood’s improvement which in turn will enable sustainability of community-driven improvement efforts.
- Loans for house construction were availed for informal residents who were relocated to the new site for house construction. This was strongly supported by the Erbil governorate who acted as a guarantor for the households who had no legal documentation for the newly allotted plot yet.
- An additional fund from KRG has been allocated to support neighbourhood upgrading activities thus entailing reallocation of funds to support the additional activities, and providing more time to implement them. The additional funding reflects KRG’s realization of the strategic relevance of this project and its contribution to the development of Erbil city.

Figure 1 below is the new master-plan that provides for social services and green areas that were missing in the neighborhood as shown in figure 2.

New Master Plan 2013



Figure 1

The original situation of Kurani Ain-Kawa Neighborhood

- Land use is dominantly residential.
- The southern part represents squatters on government land.

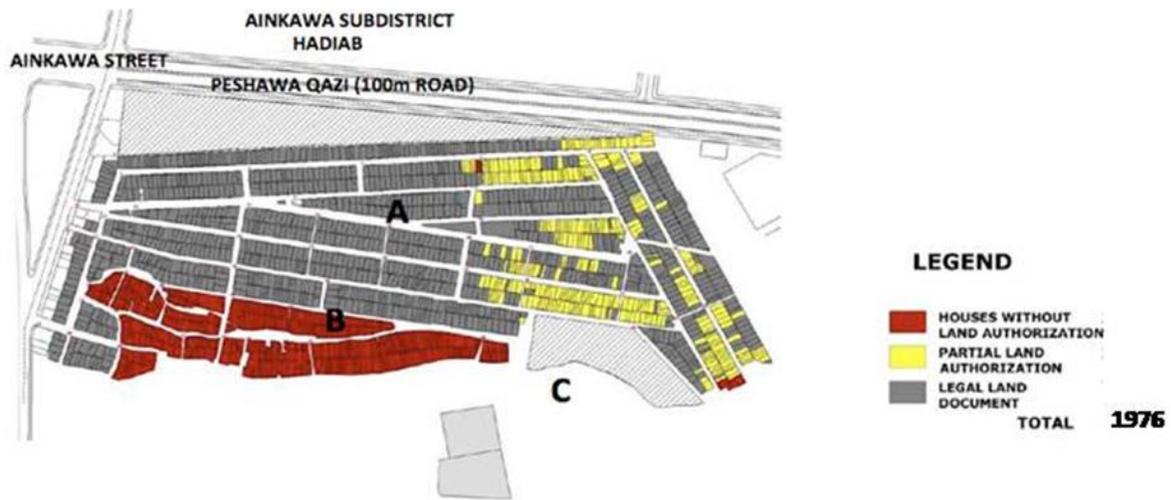


Figure 2

Problem / Challenge faced: Describe the specific problem or challenge faced by the subject of your story (this could be a problem experienced by an individual, community or government).

The challenges faced by the neighbourhood upgrading task can be summarized as follows:

- Poor access to the neighbourhood and within.
- Limited access by car (difficulty in cases of emergency).
- Narrow roads and poor quality of surfacing.
- Variable tenure modalities: legal, partly legal and illegal. There were squatters on public land as well as private land. For those on the private land some households had partly bought shares in the house (30%), while others none.
- Illegal subdivisions of plots.
- Poor structural condition of homes.
- Insecure tenure resulted in the reluctance of residents to invest in home improvements (unsafe & poor structural quality).
- Lack of parking space in the neighbourhood.
- Lack of public space and green areas.
- No presence of municipality services or government facilities (health, education, police station).
- Absence of reliable updated social and physical data & maps on the neighborhood.
- Unsafe and unhealthy environment due to the above mentioned reasons.
- Socially conservative, economically deprived, and tribal neighbourhood residents.
- Relatively low literacy and high school-dropout rates particularly among women and girls.
- Lack of sense of direction and purpose particularly among young boys of the community, which led to social problems involving violence at times.
- Lack of social capital and community cohesion within the neighbourhood and beyond.

All these issues had to be resolved on different levels.

Programme Interventions: How was the problem or challenge addressed through the Programme interventions?

A plan was set in partnership with concerned stakeholders in Erbil as per the following:

1. Formation of a steering committee headed by the deputy governor of Erbil and other stakeholders.
2. Setting a housing facilitation unit based in the field for gathering data. This unit consists of a group of architects and social workers from the community who have been trained and informed on the nature of the upgrading project and tasks required.
3. Coming up with several improvement options that were discussed in depth with stakeholders through the steering committee; and also testing the opinions/acceptance of the community.
4. The process of preparing a master plan started by collecting physical and social data, and then drafting the design according to the agreed option at the time.
5. Dialogue was initiated to resolve tenure issues which took a considerable period of time.
 1. Resolving illegal tenure issues on private land;
 2. Resolving illegal subdivisions on legal property;
 3. Resolving illegal issues of squatters on public land.
6. Ring fencing funds from the Real Estate Bank for the benefit of the relocating households; backstopping support by Governorate.
7. Preparing the relocation site (providing roads and infrastructure services) from government funds.
8. Allocating plots for households (squatters).

9. Informal households move to new site.
10. Clear the area where informal households occupied in preparation of the new development based on the new site plan.
11. Conduct social baseline study to identify the gaps, needs and opportunities within the community.
12. Consult the community in developing the designs for the social facilities (park and community center) to be established in the land cleared of informal occupiers with a special focus on women and youth.
13. Conduct community empowerment initiatives to build social capital, community institution and community cohesion and support sustainability and development of community ownership over the neighborhood improvement initiatives.

Result (if applicable): Describe the observable *change* that occurred so far as a result of the Programme interventions. For example, how did community lives change or how was the government better able to deal with the initial problem?

Please refer to the points listed in the “achievements” paragraph above.

As a result of the security of tenure that was achieved and provided to the inhabitants, people are now investing in house improvement to achieve a better living environment for all.

Land was allocated to the formerly absent educational and health facilities in addition to recreational and commercial facilities, community facilities and safe public spaces where men, women and children can find adequate spaces for outdoor/out of home activities. The design provides the opportunity to harness a healthy urban environment that enables social interaction, development and livelihood opportunities.

Lessons Learned: What did you (and/or other partners) learn from this situation that has helped inform and/or improve Programme (or other) interventions?

Lessons learned are provided under section III