



**MPTF OFFICE GENERIC FINALPROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE REPORT  
REPORTING PERIOD: FROM 11/2009 TO 03/2012**

<p><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Title: Support to the GoI in Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness</li> <li>Programme Number: 73026</li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number: C9-28</li> </ul>	<p><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p>(if applicable) Country/Region Nationwide</p> <p>Priority area/ strategic results Governance</p>
<p><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Planning, Prime Minister's Advisory Committee (PMAC) and the Partnership Committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: 1,000,000 MPTF /JP Contribution<sup>3</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,000,000 Agency Contribution</li> <li>N/A</li> </ul> <p>Government Contribution N/A</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors) N/A</p> <p><b>TOTAL: 1,000,000</b></p>	<p><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration 28 months Start Date<sup>4</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009</p> <p>Original End Date<sup>5</sup> 2 June 2011 Actual End date<sup>6</sup> 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012</p> <p>Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system?    Yes    No  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Expected Financial Closure date<sup>7</sup>: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013</p>
<p><b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></p> <p>Evaluation Completed  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No    Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p> <p>Evaluation Report - Attached  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No    Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p>	<p><b>Report Submitted By</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name: Richard Cox</li> <li>Title: Programme Advisor</li> <li>Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP</li> <li>Contact information: Richard.cox@undp.org</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The term "programme" is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF/JP Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>4</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](#).

<sup>7</sup> Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report](#).

# **FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The project only partially succeeded in meeting its targets. The main successes were the establishment and launching of the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS); the partial traction that was created behind the Paris Declaration Survey for 2010 and the participation of Iraq at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (South Korea) and the establishment of the national monitoring framework for the Governance chapter of the NDP.

The IDMS is a comprehensive bi-lingual (Arabic/English) web-based application that manages the whole cycle of government and donor-funded development projects in Iraq, inclusive of social and economic as well as environmental projects. The IDMS also serves as a reliable, credible, and invaluable source of information on the distribution of development projects according to sectors, provinces and implementing agencies. It was designed to support and accompany the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2010-2014, which envisages approximately 3000 projects with a total value of US\$100 billion to be implemented over five years. This instrument will not only contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness of all investment projects taking place in Iraq but will also help ensure greater transparency and accountability of all decision making on the allocation of development funds across different thematic and geographic sectors. It will also allow the international community to align its support strategies with Iraq's national priorities.

The support provided by the project to the 2010 Paris Declaration Survey ended up being rather a frustrating exercise with the only advantage that it taught the Government what it meant to do this kind of task and how. The survey (that was to be compiled alongside those of other developing countries and presented at the Busan High Level Forum in December 2011) consists of three main sections: a survey of the UN Agencies; a survey on the donor community; and a Government level survey. Despite the fact that this was meant to be a Government led exercise and despite Iraq co-hosting a regional workshop on the survey at the Dead Sea in December 2010, UNDP Iraq assumed leadership of the entire process. This consisted of coordinating the three stakeholder groups concerned, gathering up and analysing the information and filling out the required survey questionnaire. This information was then sent to the MoP and PMAC for forwarding on to OECD (OECD only accepts submissions directly from Government). The Government received the documentation and a deadline for document submission to OECD was negotiated. However, the GoI did not forward the information to the OECD on time for it to be officially included in the 2010 survey.

### **I. Purpose**

#### **Introduction to the project:**

The “Support to the GoI in Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness” project (hereafter “The Project”) was developed at the request of the Government of Iraq (GoI) in order to adapt and localize the Paris Declaration for Iraq following its endorsement by the GoI on 29 May 2008. The Paris Declaration is an international agreement, initially signed on 2 March 2005 by 90 countries and 26 multilateral organisations, to take far-reaching and measurable actions to reform the delivery and management of aid. The Project sought to maximise the potential of aid in achieving development results in Iraq through the generation of a mutually reinforcing partnership between the GoI, donors and other actors. The Project predominantly provided upstream policy advice and capacity development support to the GoI to enhance the delivery and effectiveness of aid to Iraq structured around each of the five principles of the Paris Declaration. The main project counterparts were the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC) and the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

Total project allocation (USD)	1,000,000
Total Disbursement	984,545.59

Main outcome and outputs of the project:

***Outcome:***

The Government of Iraq has institutionalized mechanisms for managing international assistance in line with Paris principles on aid effectiveness

***Outputs:***

1. Ownership of the aid effectiveness agenda in Iraq strengthened through support to core mechanisms and policies
2. Alignment of donors improved with GoI's development policies
3. Enhanced donor harmonisation, transparency and collective effectiveness
4. Results based management systems strengthened
5. Mutual accountability mechanisms improved to access development results

Relevant Strategic (UN) Planning Framework guiding the project.

The relevant strategic frameworks that were relevant to the project at the time of the project design and negotiation were the following:

- ✓ National Development Strategy: Chapter 9.1: Enhanced Donor Coordination Mechanism
- ✓ ICI Benchmarks: Section 6.5: Improved Donor Coordination and Implementation
- ✓ Sector Team Outcome(s): Outcome 4: Strengthened Regulatory frameworks, institutions, and processes of national and local governance
- ✓ Joint Programme/Project Outcome(s): GOI has institutionalised mechanisms for managing international assistance in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

Primary implementing partners and stakeholders including key beneficiaries:

The project was implemented by UNDP but saw a collaboration with UNOPS (using separate project funds but feeding into the activities of this initiative) and with USAID that continues to the present day.

The initial main project counterparts were the Ministry of Planning in both Baghdad and in KRG; the Ministry of Finance and the Prime Minister's Office, through the Prime Minister's Advisory Council. An additional beneficiary that came later in the project's life span was the new Partnership Committee created under the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic and Development Affairs. The creation of this last entity was to bring to a halt any possible progress on the institutional capacity building that the project aspired to undertake as described below.

## II. Assessment of Programme Results

### i) Narrative reporting on results:

- **Outcomes:**

Outcome	Output contribution to the Outcome	Variance
<b>Outcome 1</b>  GoI has institutionalized mechanisms for managing international assistance in line with Paris principles on aid effectiveness	Provided a second round of consultancy support to assist the Ministry of Planning and the new Partnership Committee under the Deputy Prime Minister which included a review of the division of mandates, accompanying aid management structures and work-plans during Q2 2011.	40%
	Launched the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS) system on national television and in front of the national press on 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2011. UNDP, UNOPS and USAID continue to remain on standby to promote that the system is being used by Central and Local Government entities and to trouble shoot if required.	100%
	Coordinated the Paris Declaration Survey in Iraq by collating all information for and from UN Agencies. Additionally, supported the processes of notification to international partners and line Ministries on respective obligations carried out by the Prime Minister's Office.	50%
	Completed the identification and finalisation of indicators for the Governance Chapter of the National Development Plan through a special Governance Committee.	80%

For reasons elaborated below, the project only partially succeeded in meeting its targets. The main successes were the establishment and launching of the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS); the partial traction that was created behind the Paris Declaration Survey for 2010 and the participation of Iraq at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (South Korea) and the establishment of the national monitoring framework for the Governance chapter of the NDP.

The project directly contributed to the formulation of the National Monitoring Framework for the Governance chapter of the National Development Plan. The methodology for this will be used across all the chapters of the new NDP which is expected to be launched by the end of the first quarter of 2013.

The primary beneficiaries of the project were the MoP, (particularly the Directorate General for International Cooperation); the equivalent DG in KRG; the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee (PMAC) and the new Partnership Committee. Also benefitting from the project was the Directorate General for National Centre for Consultancy and Management Development (NCCMD) also inside the Ministry of Planning in Baghdad which is housing the IDMS as well as the IDMS helpdesk.

The other major beneficiary group was the international community at large which was able to download updated reports on 4,000 development projects around Iraq. These reports include information on project financing, the start date, the sector of work, the geographic location of the project, etc. Most importantly, these reports serve to inform the aid and development strategies of the international community for Iraq.

On the IDMS itself, 45 Government officials across eight line Ministries and four Governorates (12 women in total) were trained to varying degrees on the IDMS system, depending on the use they would make of the

tool. Additionally, a full time IDMS help desk and Master Trainer Centre, involving four experts was also established to support all the other GoI entities at central and local level on the use of the IDMS.

In terms of the NDP Governance Chapter National Monitoring Framework, 15 line Ministries and eight representatives from the Governorate level were involved in the workshops that simultaneously trained the participants on monitoring and evaluation, introduced them to international notions of ‘good’ or ‘democratic’ governance and facilitated the identification of Governance strategic objectives and 35 corresponding indicators. This exercise led to the creation of a Governance Committee consisting of 12 senior officials which finally validated the monitoring framework for the Governance Chapter.

- **Outputs:**

<b>Output</b>	<b>Achievements</b>	<b>Variation explained</b>
<b>Output 1:</b> Ownership of the aid effectiveness agenda in Iraq strengthened through support to core mechanisms and policies	<p>Provided a second round of consultancy support to assist the Ministry of Planning and the new Partnership Committee under the Deputy Prime Minister which included a review of the division of mandates, accompanying aid management structures and work-plan.</p> <p>Launched the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS) system on national television and in front of the national press on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011. UNDP, UNOPS and USAID continue to remain on standby to promote that the system is being used by Central and Local Government entities and to trouble shoot if required.</p>	<p>40%</p> <p>The institutional reforms and capacity building of the relevant parts of Government were compromised by the delay in Government formation and by the political tension between the MoP and the new Partnership Committee</p>
<b>Output 2:</b> Alignment of donors improved with GoI's development policies	<p>Ensured that the Ministry of Planning was regularly present at the UN/World Bank led Iraq Partners Forum so as to make information requests and to update the international partners on Iraq's aid coordination agenda.</p>	<p>70%</p> <p>The institutional reforms and capacity building of the relevant parts of Government were compromised by the delay in Government formation and by the political tension between the MoP and the new Partnership Committee</p>
<b>Output 3:</b> Enhanced donor harmonisation, transparency and collective effectiveness	<p>Through the establishment and launching of the IDMS and accompanying institutional reforms in relevant Government counterpart organisations there is now a comprehensive database of information on all investment projects in Iraq which feeds into notions of transparency and effective planning</p>	<p>40%</p> <p>The institutional reforms and capacity building of the relevant parts of Government were compromised by the delay in Government formation and by the political tension between the MoP and the new Partnership Committee</p>
<b>Output 4:</b> Results based management systems strengthened	<p>Completed the identification and finalisation of indicators for the Governance Chapter of the National Development Plan through a special Government Committee.</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>Although this task was completed a new NDP was being worked on before the framework could be used</p>

<b>Output 5:</b> Mutual accountability mechanisms improved to access development results	Coordinated the Paris Declaration Survey for Iraq in 2011 for the data concerning 2010 by collating all information for and from UN Agencies, the donors and the Government itself.	50% The GoI failed to submit the required information – pulled together by UNDP – to the OSCE on time and could not be considered.
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- **Qualitative assessment:**

All the activities that were meant to focus on institutional reforms that would allow Iraq to meet its Paris Declaration targets fell through for the reasons set out in detail in the section above. The project manager highlighted these concerns in writing to senior management, both by email and by viva voce (to the Country Director and to the UN Resident Coordinator) and it was confirmed that UNDP should keep a low profile on putting forward any institutional recommendations until institutional clarity on respective mandates was reached. This clarity was never obtained during the lifespan of the project and as a result no significant institutional impact was made in terms of aid coordination under this project.

The IDMS, however is a unique development tool and the full extent of its impact is probably yet to be appreciated. For the first time in the development world, a government can see its own funded projects along with any donor projects in any particular field or sector in one system. The IDMS is a comprehensive bi-lingual (Arabic/English) web-based application that manages the whole cycle of government and donor-funded development projects in Iraq, inclusive of social and economic as well as environmental projects. The IDMS also serves as a reliable, credible, and invaluable source of information on the distribution of development projects according to sectors, provinces and implementing agencies. It was designed to support and accompany the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2010-2014, which envisages approximately 3000 projects with a total value of US\$100 billion to be implemented over five years. This instrument will not only contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness of all investment projects taking place in Iraq but will also help ensure greater transparency and accountability of all decision making on the allocation of development funds across different thematic and geographic sectors. It will also allow the international community to align its support strategies with Iraq’s national priorities.

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The project saw the creation of important partnerships with international partners, namely with USAID and UNOPS. USAID had been working for some time inside the Ministry of Planning, mainly on supporting the drafting of the NDP and on supporting the management and tracking of the capital investment funds for investment projects.

USAID was interested in the technological infrastructure that supported the UNDP implemented Donors Assistance Database (DAD) and how it could be used for the planning, management and monitoring and evaluation of all capital investment fund projects. This led to a very close and ongoing collaboration between UNDP and USAID which resulted in the new Iraq Development Management System (IDMS), described below. The IDMS was built on the technological base of the DAD and had extra modules included.

This collaboration also extended to the NDP. As USAID had been the main partner of the GoI in putting together the actual NDP, it also took the initiative of establishing a national monitoring framework to assist the GoI in monitoring the baselines and progress made against all the chapters of the Plan. In this light, USAID requested UNDP to establish the monitoring framework for the Governance Chapter of the NDP. This was achieved after two workshops and several weeks of internal consultation.

The partnership with UNOPS revolved around the IDMS whereby extra resources for developing the system were channelled from a project under UNOPS' remit. This extra support allowed the completed system to be launched on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011 at a grand ceremony under the auspices of the Prime Minister.

The project reached out to the UNDP Cairo Regional Center and to OECD for extra thematic expertise which culminated in a Regional Workshop on the Paris Declaration Survey. The workshop was held at the Dead Sea in December 2010, involved 26 countries from the EU neighbouring countries (both national and UN based representatives) and was co-hosted by Iraq and Jordan. Collaboration with OECD also allowed Iraq to show case the IDMS at the Busan High Level Conference on Aid Effectiveness (South Korea) in December 2011 and was featured on the Conference's website.

No tangible results can easily be identified when it comes to issues of Gender promotion, environment, human rights etc. However, the disaggregated data that can be obtained from the IDMS provides evidence on whether there is sufficient impetus in these areas from the ongoing investment projects.

## 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.

	<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Indicator Baselines</b>	<b>Planned Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Achieved Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Comments (if any)</b>
<b>Outcome 1: GoI has institutionalized mechanisms for managing international assistance in line with Paris principles on aid effectiveness</b>							
<b>Output 1.1</b> GoI is better able to demonstrate ownership of the aid effectiveness agenda	Indicator 1.1.1 # of participants who attended the Paris Declaration workshop	0	50	0	No workshop was held	n/a	The workshop could not take place as there was no strategy to showcase to the rest of the GoI and the donors due to political issues
	Indicator 1.1.2 # of PD Task Force Quarterly meetings	2	4	5		Minutes of meetings	
	Indicator 1.1.3 % of women in Paris Declaration Task Force	30%	30%	30%		PDTF formulation note	
	Indicator 1.1.4 Aid policy for Iraq drafted	No	Yes	No	No internal GoI agreement on structural and strategic issues	Iraq Aid Policy	Political/institutional obstacles
	Indicator 1.1.5 National Action Plan with aid effectiveness targets identified	No	Yes	Partially	Support provided to National Development Plan but no aid effectiveness targets identified		
	Indicator 1.1.6 A capacity assessment report on aid management with recommendations	No	Yes	Yes		Report	
	Indicator 1.1.7 # of national partners trained on managing aid	0	50	0	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.1.8 # of trainees satisfies with training	0	80%	85%	Training reports		IDMS training only
	Indicator 1.1.9 # of Paris Declaration Task Force meetings with experts	0	3	1	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.1.10 # of regional partnerships	0	1	1		Dead Sea Paris Declaration report	



	created						
<b>Output 1.2</b> GoI has is able to achieve greater alignment with donors on national development strategies – particularly the National Development Plan- institutions and procedures.	Indicator 1.2.1 # of reviews drafted completed with recommendations on effective usage of country led mechanism	0	3	1	No internal GoI agreement on structural and strategic issues	Review reports	Political/institutional obstacles
	Indicator 1.2.2 A contract for technical assistance on development system database is available	No	Yes	Yes		Contract	
	Indicator 1.2.3 Comprehensive review of the DAD for monitoring the PD	0	5	3	3 was sufficient for the purposes of the IDMS		
	Indicator 1.2.4 # of donors 3-5 yr plans shared with GoI	0	3	12	Circulated Country Strategies	Donor country strategies sent to MoP/Partnership Committee for review	
	Indicator 1.2.5 Number of GoI donor meetings for programme alignment	0	6	0	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.2.6 Technical brief on integrating aid into national budgetary framework	No	Yes	No	Political/institutional obstacles		This was to be the focus of a third expert mission that never came off
	Indicator 1.2.7 # of GoI staff trained on integrating aid flows and capital investment funds	0	15	50	IDMS only		
<b>Output 1.3</b> GoI is able to establish mechanisms for enhanced donor harmonisation, transparency and collective effectiveness	Indicator 1.3.1 # of presentations on good practices prepared for the Task Force	0	3	0	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.3.2 # of annual targets for harmonized donor activities identified	0	1	0	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.3.4 Technical brief on aid harmonization in Iraq drafted	No	Yes	Yes			Written by the DG of International Cooperation herself, as a non-paper
	Indicator 1.3.5 Annual aid harmonization plan	0	1	0	Political/institutional obstacles		

<b>Output 1.4</b> GoI is better able to plan, manage, monitor and evaluate development results	Indicator 1.4.1 # of PD task force members and national counterparts trained on the DAD/IDMS	0	10	50	The IDMS became the focus of the project hence the higher number		
	Indicator 1.4.2 Needs assessment of country M&E capacity	No	Yes	Yes	IDMS purposes only		
	Indicator 1.4.3 Number of GoI staff trained on RBM	0	20	50	IDMS and NDP purposes only		
	Indicator 1.4.4 % of trainees satisfied with usefulness and relevance of training	0	80%	?	No feedback received		
	Indicator 1.4.5 Cross ministerial aid mgmt. mechanism established	No	Yes	No	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.4.6 # of analytical reports on aid effectiveness	0	2	0	Political/institutional obstacles		
<b>Output 1.5</b> GoI is able to institutionalize improved mechanisms for mutual accountability of development results	Indicator 1.5.1 An indicative planning and monitoring assessment of GoI	No	Yes	Partial	Expert needed to conduct further missions but blocked by political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.5.2 Planning and reporting systems developed in Gov't institutions	No	Yes	Yes	IDMS and NDP only		
	Indicator 1.5.3 Systematic co-financing mechanism to promote new aid modality	No	Yes	No, parallel funding only			This is an ongoing discussion between UN and the GoI
	Indicator 1.5.4 # of baseline surveys on Iraq's compliance to PD	No	2 reports	No	Political/institutional obstacles		
	Indicator 1.5.5 Follow up PD report conducted in 2011	No	1	1			But not submitted to OECD on time for the Busan conference
	# of regular joint assessments and reviews on compliance with PD produced	0	2	0	Political/institutional obstacles		

### 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 evaluation of the programme have been done yet?*

No evaluation of the project has yet been undertaken. This is perhaps because it is not a priority area for UNDP Iraq and perhaps because it is already known that the institutional reforms foreseen in the project document failed due to external constraints as described below.

*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?*

This project encountered many constraints and obstacles which hindered its success:

- The project was approved in November 2009. The project manager was hired on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010, just when the Parliamentary elections took place. After those elections, it took nine months for a Government to be formed and a further five months before a new Minister of Planning was nominated. This meant that 14 months passed before strategic discussions were able to take place with the MoP, the main interlocutor for this project. Until then, no senior official within that Ministry felt that he or she had the mandate to make any institutional decisions regarding future structures or mechanisms that would improve aid coordination.
- Shortly after the new Minister of Planning was nominated, the Director General of the International Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry (the GoI focal point for the project) left her position to join the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee (PMAC) leaving a temporary vacuum in the MoP. To complicate matters further, the Prime Minister's Office established a new Partnership Committee under the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Development which would act as the new main interface for the international community. However, this structure was never recognised by the MoP and a turf war between the two entities ensued which meant that any institutional reforms that the project was meant to embark upon would potentially have seen UNDP get dangerously caught up in an internecine struggle within the GoI. Therefore, the institutional review and suggestions made by the international expertise hired by UNDP could not even be circulated for consultation and feedback.

An example of this feud was embarrassingly brought to light by the first meeting of the UNDAF Steering Committee. The meeting was Chaired by the Head of PMAC, representing the Partnership Committee, and co-Chaired by the UN DSRSG. Also present was the Deputy Minister of Planning who proceeded to make a speech whereby he questioned the legal authority of this Partnership Committee to interact in this way with the international community and make decisions on external aid which was clearly under the mandate of the Ministry of Planning.

- By the end of 2010, aid coordination was not longer a top Government priority as petro dollar revenue had risen significantly during that year. Efforts were redirected to focus instead on spending this revenue. Simultaneously, there was a very sharp decline in donor funds to Iraq, which were suddenly dwarfed in comparison by Iraq's own domestic revenues; for which 100 billion USD were allocated to the new 2010-14 National Development Plan. As a result, aid coordination stopped being of any real relevance to the Government and the project found it almost impossible to focus any attention from the GoI on issues surrounding the Paris Declaration.

- A recurrent constraint to the project was having the main counterpart institution, the MoP, located in the Red Zone. Thus making contact with authorities an ongoing challenge. Meeting the new Minister of Planning himself was also a challenge for the Project Manager as he refused to a British citizen being from a Sadrist political bloc (the USAID project team working inside the Ministry was initially met with similar resistance).

*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.*

Some of the challenges that compromised the success of this project could not have been foreseen at the time of project design. They are as follows:

- The time it would take to form a new Government and nominate a new Minister of Planning, an essential pre-requisite to getting approval for making decisions on substantial institutional reforms linked to aid effectiveness and aid coordination and for receiving feedback on the suggestions put forward by UNDP hired expertise;
- The political tendencies of the new Minister of Planning made collaboration between the project manager and the entire Ministry yet more complicated;
- The sudden departure of the long-serving Director General for International Cooperation in the MoP to PMAC. This left an institutional vacuum in the MoP and was the start of institutional blurring between the MoP and the Prime Minister's office, as she continued to claim that despite her move to PMAC she retained the same functions as when she was in the MoP;
- The decision to create a new Partnership Committee which would rival the mandate of the MoP when dealing with the international community; and
- The speed at which the donor community withdrew financial support from Iraq and Iraq's growing petro-dollar reserve. Rendering external aid coordination obsolete for the GoI in a few months time.

Other challenges to the project were identified and reported in the risk log of the project, mainly:

- The ongoing insecurity in the country - rendering access to counterparts difficult;
- Weak government commitment and leadership of the aid effectiveness agenda limits impact and undermines sustainability;
- Remote project management and monitoring;
- Institutional memory loss through staff turnover.

The remote project management was due to space limitations in the UN compound during the lifespan of the project. Access to Red Zone was a more complicated issue to manage than it is today. These constraints were already factored in.

In terms of lessons learned, a clearer and wider political commitment and a clearer understanding of the counterpart's commitments should have been sought at the time of project design. The project was at least able to adapt to the emerging priority of planning, managing and monitoring the capital investment funds which is why most of the project's resources and efforts ended up focusing on this aspect rather than on donor coordination. Otherwise, the project experienced setbacks due to events that could not have been realistically foreseen nor their impact on the project accurately measured.