



[UNDG Iraq Trust Fund]

ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2009

Submitted by:

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Country and Thematic Area²

Iraq – Education Sector

Programme No: B1 - 31

MDTF Office Atlas No:

Programme Title: Distance Learning Project

Participating Organization(s):

UNESCO

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Education (MOE) – Iraq

Programme Budget (from the Fund):

UNDG ITF:	US\$ 5,605,228
Govt. Input:	US\$ 900,000 (In Kind)
Total :	US\$ 6,505,228

Programme Duration (in months):

Start date³: 31st of July 2007

End date: 31st of July 2010

- *Original end date: 31st of Jan. 2009*
- *Revised end date: 31st of July 2010*

Budget Revisions/Extensions:

Budget Rev. (1): Movement of Funds

Budget Rev. (2): Extension 30 June 2009

Budget Rev. (3): Extension 31 Jan. 2010

*Budget Rev. (4): Movement of funds and
Extension 31 July 2010*

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² E.g. Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Thematic Window for the Millennium Development Goals Fund (MDG-F); etc.

³ The start date is the date of the first transfer of funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent.

I. Purpose

1.1 The main development goal, objectives and outputs of the project are:

Development Goal

- The goal is to increase the participation and involvement of primary and secondary school students in their studies within the context of the deteriorating security situation through distance learning tools designed according to the Iraqi formal school curricula.

Objectives of the programme/project:

- To provide school students with immediate access to class lessons, covering all curricula subjects at all school levels through producing and broadcasting educational TV and radio programmes.

Outputs of the programme project:

- Training 150 educational specialists from MOE, 20 educational specialists from Colleges of Education as well as 80 TV and radio technical specialists on the use of distance learning tools and the design and broadcasting of curricular lessons.
- Producing and broadcasting educational TV and Radio programs covering all subjects to students in Iraq

1.2 The project is relevant to the following benchmarks:

- UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq
- UN Millennium Development Goals
- Joint Needs Assessment
- Iraq National Development Strategy

Since it is fully in line with the National Development Strategy of the Government of Iraq 2006 and conforms closely to the priorities expressed by the Iraqi authorities during the July 2005 Donors Conference, the project directly addresses four outcomes of the education sector matrix:

- Improvement in access and attendance;
- Completion of quality education and enhancement of policy formulation;
- Management and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms objectives;
- Strengthening the national capacities in planning and administration.

This project also directly addresses three MDG outcomes, (i.e. Goals 1, 2 and 3) that relate to poverty reduction, universal primary education, and eliminating gender disparities respectively. The Distance Learning Project is designed to help in the attainment of gender equality and girls' participation, retention and provision of quality education.

II. Resources

Financial Resources:

- During 2009, two budget revisions / extensions were requested and approved as follow:
 - 1- Budget extension requested on May 2009: Extension till 31 January 2010.
 - 2- Budget revision and extension requested on Dec. 2009: Movement of funds between budget lines and extension till 31 July 2010.

Human Resources:

- National Staff:
 - 1- One National Staff NO levels partially co-shared with other projects
 - 2- Eight National Staff GS levels partially co-shared with other projects
- International Staff:
 - 1- One Project Manager based in Amman (full time)

III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

- **Summarize the implementation mechanisms primarily utilized and how they are adapted to achieve maximum impact given the operating context.**

In order to guarantee maximum impact and overcome the deteriorating security conditions, the following issues are taken into consideration:

- 1- Training (capacity building activities):
 - Identify the remaining training needs that were found during previous capacity building activities and during the implementation of the project.
 - Identify the best MOE staff candidates to participate in the remaining training activities – based on CVs and actual experience in the field
 - Identifying top regional and international training institutes with highly qualified trainers and training facilities.
 - Developing comprehensive capacity building specialized workshops that include theoretical and practical components as well as field visits and interviews with top professionals in the field.

- Revising training material of each workshop and develop it according to the needs and abilities of trainees.
- Planning for the execution of the training course on operating the production studio to take place after installation of the production unit.
- Having a UNESCO monitor attend important workshops training to guarantee commitment of trainees and for monitoring and evaluation.

2- Production activities:

- Keeping a copy of all produced material at UNESCO – Iraq Office in Amman.
- Making sure that TV production service provider provide state of the art production facilities located in a safe area.
- Forming a committee that includes a MOE project coordinator, representative from the TV production service provider as well as a UNESCO monitor to provide better coordination.
- Evaluation of produced TV programs and rejecting those of unsatisfactory quality.
- Designing a floor plan for the new production studio area including identifying rehabilitation needs before the completion of installation of the broadcasting studio.
- Contracting for establishing the production unit (TV Studio with Control Room and Editing Suits) before rehabilitation activities to gain time.
- Ensuring that enough spare parts are ordered.

3- Broadcasting activities:

- A one year trial broadcasting to guarantee quality.
- Continuous technical support to the broadcasting and transmission unit.

• **Provide details on the procurement procedures utilized and explain variances in standard procedures.**

All procurement activities in this project are implemented according to UNESCO's standard rules and procedures of competitive bidding. To guarantee quality, speed delivery and avoid security problems, the following procedures were taken:

- 1- Identification of needs and prioritization
- 2- Identification of well reputed suppliers with solid existence in the field to guarantee commitment and continuous technical support.
- 3- Requesting all offers / bids to be presented in US\$ to avoid any sudden deterioration / fluctuation in currency.
- 4- Requesting all offers / bids to be DDU Baghdad to avoid any risks on UNESCO.

- **Provide details on the monitoring system(s) that are being used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the ongoing project.**

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system is being used in cooperation with MOE covering all project activities.

- 1- In relation to logistics operations, a step by step tracking mechanism is being used, in cooperation with UNESCO contractors, till shipments are delivered safely to the location. Delivery always takes place under the supervision of a UNESCO monitor and reports / receipts are issued accordingly signed by the contractor, MOE representative and UNESCO monitor.
- 2- In relation to rehabilitation activities and installation of equipment, a UNESCO monitor, daily, supervises all activities in coordination with the project technical consultant and provides weekly progress reports. In case of any unsatisfactory performance, the monitor stops the work and contacts the project manager and informs him of the problem to solve it. All reports / receipts are signed by the contractor MOE representative and UNESCO monitor.
- 3- In relation to production activities, all produced TV programs are revised by a committee at the Iraqi MOE educational TV then by the project manager, accordingly, modifications are suggested; re-editing takes place and new modified copies are revised again. Episodes that don't meet the agreed on criteria are rejected.

- **Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.**

All assessments took place in 2007 and 2008 and were documented in earlier progress reports .

IV. Results

- **Provide a summary of Programme progress in relation to planned outcomes and outputs; explain any variance in achieved versus planned outputs during the reporting period.**

All activities related to the original project planned outputs were 100 % completed in 2009; however, some of the new agreed on activities that emerged during implementation and that were requested by MOE and approved through budget revisions are still ongoing. Activities related to:

- 1- Additional capacity building activities are 50% completed -
- 2- Additional production studio and editing suits installation is 20% completed.

- **Report on the key outputs achieved in the reporting period including # and nature of the activities (inputs), % of completion and beneficiaries.**

Progress in key activities in 2009:

- 1- Capacity building activities:

- A 12 days workshop on *“Preparing and Directing Educational TV Programs”* took place in Syria during Nov. 2009. It aimed at building the capacity of 8 MOE educational TV directors and editors on the major activities related to the production of TV educational and youth programs. The activity is 100 % completed.

2- Production activities:

- Production, revision and approval of TV Educational episodes is 100 % completed and they are being broadcasted
- Production of educational TV animated spots for promoting civic values, human rights, agreed on noble social values, gender equality, environment protection...etc is 100% completed and will be used after the formal commencement of the TV channel.
- Floor plan, technical design and renovation activities related to the new TV Production Unit are 100% completed.
- Procurement / contracting a supplier for establishing the new TV Production Unit (studio, control room and editing suits) is 100 % completed
- Shipping and installation of the new TV Production Unit is 20% completed – Goods stored in Amman waiting for the Customs Exemption Letter.

- **Explain, if relevant, delays in programme implementation, the nature of the constraints, actions taken to mitigate future delays and lessons learned in the process.**

Delays took place due to:

- 1- MOE response time; for example, it took MOE 6 months to provide the supplier with the Customs Exemption letter which caused a great delay in establishing the new TV Production Unit as well as a great loss to the supplier. Another example is the delay in handing over the location of the new TV Production Unit to UNESCO for approximately 4 months due to internal differences among different directorates. UNESCO kept pushing MOE to commit to its responsibilities during that period.
- 2- MOE nominations of trainees are usually delayed and, in the beginning, mostly unprofessional in the sense that the wrong people were identified. UNESCO dealt with this situation by requesting the CVs of MOE educational TV staff and coordinating with the director of the Educational TV Station in this regard before requesting the nomination from the minister’s office. This was usually done months before any capacity building activity.
- 3- Security conditions caused a great delay in the production of the educational TV programs since it took place at a different location (Iraqi Media Network Studios - IMN) which is in the red zone and difficult to access, this problem will be solved as soon as the new TV Production Unit is established.

- **List the key partnerships and collaborations, and explain how such relationships impact on the achievement of results.**

- 1- Regarding the production of the educational TV programs, continuous coordination among UNESCO, MOE and IMN speeded the process of evaluation.
 - 2- Regarding the capacity building activities, the good coordination between UNESCO and the director of the Educational TV Station resulted in training the appropriate staff members.
- **Other highlights and cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on.**
 - 1- Security conditions had a negative effect on the progress of the project; however, UNESCO succeeded in overcoming that successfully but with delays.
 - 2- All project capacity building activities considered gender balance. It is always requested by UNESCO to nominate appropriate numbers of female staff to attend any workshop. Training materials are also requested to consider this issue as well as promoting human rights, social noble values, environment protection...etc when applicable.
 - 3- All produced episodes and spots considered gender balance, human rights, social noble values, environment protection...etc during scenario writing and all production phases.

V. Future Work Plan (if applicable)

In order to eliminate setbacks posed by production companies and to develop the abilities of the educational TV station on producing its own TV programs, future plans involve:

- 1- Capacity building activities on *“TV Management and Production / Broadcasting Planning and Coordination”* – 10 days workshop - 2 MOE Educational TV Staff - February 2010
- 2- Capacity building activities on *“Technical support for the new TV Production Unit”* – 15 days on site - 8 MOE Educational TV Technical Staff - April 2010
- 3- Providing the TV library with external TV resources (scientific films, youth programs...etc). 10 days workshop in Amman - 2 MOE Educational TV Staff - March 2010
- 4- Installation of the new TV Production Unit – April 2010
- 5- Formal commencement of the station including a related comprehensive media campaign and a follow up survey – June 2010
- 6- External evaluation and final report – July 2010

VI. Abbreviations and Acronyms

- **List the main abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the report.**
 - 1- MOE: Ministry of Education.
 - 2- EFA: Education for All.
 - 3- MDGs: Millennium Development Goals.
 - 4- NDS: National Development Strategy
 - 5- IMN: Iraqi Media Network