



## FINAL REPORT

### Summary

**Participating UN Organisation:**

UNESCO

**Cluster:**

Cluster 11 - Support to Electoral Process

**Project No. and Project Title:**

C11-07

Support for fair, safe & professional media election coverage: Election reporting guide and advocacy campaigns

**Project Location/Region/Province:**

Iraq

**Reporting Period:**

1 January 2005 – 29 April 2005

**Report no:**

2

**Counterpart organisations / implementing partners:**

Ministry of Human Rights

UN partners: UNAMI

Other partners: IMPACS, Article 19

INDEX on Censorship (in collaboration with Reuters Foundation); INSI (in collaboration with Institute for War and Peace Reporting)

**Project cost:**

US \$555.000

**Abbreviations and acronyms:**

INSI (International News Safety Institute)

IFJ (International Federation of Journalists)

IMPACS (Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society)

**Project Duration:**

4 months

## I. Purpose

### **Main objectives and outcomes expected as per approved Project/Programme/project document:**

The media are essential to the conduct of democratic elections. A free and fair election is not only about casting a vote in proper conditions, but also about having adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process itself so that voters can make an informed choice. A democratic election with no media freedom would be a contradiction in terms. Furthermore, while some of the activities focused around the 30 January elections, the programme had a defined role in the longer term UN contribution to the electoral process in Iraq and activities also focused on the vital post election period when the outcome of the elections need to be debated.

The media environment will largely determine the role that the media play in an election. And that environment in turn will be decided by a variety of factors. A critical dimension of the media environment is the strength of the traditions of political freedom and respect for freedom of expression. In a country such as Iraq, where years of isolation and complete lack of any freedoms and rights have been the rule, it is exactly these issues that need to be emphasized and both the media professional and other stakeholders concerned need to be made aware about press freedom principles and be provided the opportunity to debate the context within which the media are to function.

Therefore, capacity building and awareness raising about key elements necessary for ensuring fair and transparent election reporting were considered major parts of the media support during the elections in Iraq. Only independent media and professional journalists free to report on the stakeholders and involved in an elections process and the issues at stake can ensure that the public has access to a forum for intense public debate about the choices facing their society.

In Iraq, safety issues are of particular concerns and awareness raising about safety issues for journalists aimed at enabling journalists – who are often targeted - to take relevant precautions during the election period.

By enhancing safe and professional election reporting, and making information available about election procedures and election reporting, the outputs of the project aimed at promoting full, fair and efficient disclosure of information to and by journalists covering the elections and post election period in Iraq.

Hence, the objectives of the three-part project were

- To promote transparency and accountability through advocacy campaigns to encourage full, fair and efficient access to information to and by Iraqi journalists covering the elections
- To raise awareness among civil society and officials on issues related to the elections, such as safety of journalists and democratic principles.
- Furthermore, it sought to enhance professional election reporting through skills training and the production and distribution of an election guide for Iraq. The project also addressed safety issues for journalists and media workers.

**Reference to how the programme/project relates to the UN Assistance Strategy to Iraq and how it aims to support international and national development goals (National Development Strategy) including the Millennium Development Goals and other goals as pertinent:**

The project addressed the needs for information and training to assure a reliable media coverage of the Iraqi elections as well as well-informed voting. The project was developed as part of a programme of UN activities on human rights in Iraq as well as a media development strategy for Iraq.

It sought to support the promotion of gender equality and to empower women (MDG: 3) well as a global partnership for development (MDG: 8). It reflected the Belgrade Declaration on Assistance to Media in Conflict Areas and Countries in Transition as adopted on World Press Freedom Day (3 May 2004) by the UNESCO Conference on Support to Media in Violent Conflict and Countries in Transition.

**Main international and national implementing partners involved their specific roles and responsibilities in project implementation and their interaction with the agency:**

In developing the election reporting project, consultations were undertaken with a number of key organizations active in the field of advocacy for freedom of expression, the role of the media and democracy, media legislation, safety training of journalists and publishing. To ensure timely implementation of the project, these key partners continued co-operation with the UN and with local partners in Iraq.

The partners have implemented their activities in accordance with the requirement to co-operate with local and regional counterparts so as to promote Iraqi ownership of the process.

The following partners were contracted with specific responsibilities as outlined below:

1. INSI/IFJ
2. Article 19,
3. INDEX on Censorship,
4. IMPACS

All activities were co-ordinated and the implementing organizations sought to co-ordinate the various components and make good use of their different competences:

1. Election reporting/safety training

The training offered took place both in Iraq (safety training) and in Jordan (election reporting skills training, Amman). Three workshops and a seminar were held in Amman, where two of the workshops addressed journalists, the third one exclusively addressing senior editors, with a total of 57 media workers attending. Training seminars to develop the capacity of Iraqi civil society and media to enhance the safety of journalists and media workers were undertaken in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. The training also offered opportunities to distribute election material, information and general journalism handbooks in Arabic.

2. Election reporting guidelines and briefing notes.

Article 19 wrote election reporting guidelines and 19 briefing notes on issues relating to international law and elections, human rights, freedom of expression, broadcast principles, journalistic principles etc. in times of election.

3a. Awareness raising campaigns and training

A media and public awareness information campaign was carried out mainly through training workshops, events and a seminar aimed at raising the level of debate and dialogue on the media's role,

rights and obligations in times of elections and to promote access to public information. Furthermore, this year's theme of World Press Freedom Day corresponded perfectly with the purpose of the project and thus given the granted extension, the awareness raising campaign was prolonged to also comprise a World Press Freedom Day event in Baghdad. WPF is celebrated not only as a reminder of the importance of press freedom but also serves as an awareness raising event and often also offer opportunities for peers to come together and discuss issues related to their profession. It should be noted that this was the first time that Iraqi journalists could celebrate this event and discuss sensitive issues related to role of the media and journalists in elections and the transition that Iraq is undergoing.

### 3b. Election guide for journalists

The publication of an election binder for journalists including guidelines to principles of professional reporting during elections, journalists' rights, election processes, contacts, reference materials, background documentation and safety information, was finalized, translated into Arabic and disseminated at the training seminars. The content was also made available through a web site set up specifically for the project. The binder will be regularly updated to include information and material about the constitutional work ahead as well as the forthcoming elections at various levels. The new information will be continuously distributed through the web site established during the project and partners undertaking training.

### 4. Arabic language handbook on election reporting

Translation and distribution of election reporting handbooks in Arabic were distributed to participants at training sessions.

## **II. Resources**

### **Total approved budget and summary of resources available to the programme/project from the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund and non-Trust Fund resources where applicable:**

US\$ 555,000 - 100% funded from UNDG TF

Total commitment rate was 100% and the disbursement rate 100%.

### III. Results

**An assessment of the extent to which the programme/project component / programme /project is progressing in relation to the outcomes and outputs expected for the year:**

In the less than two week period from the allocation of funds from the Trust Fund to UNESCO until end of the first reporting period (22- 31 December 2004), the Organization followed up on contacts with key NGOs as possible implementing partners of the various activities.

The topic at hand, time and security constraints made it clear from the very outset that focus had to be placed on both ante – and post- election activities. Indeed, activities to follow-up on the elections had been foreseen at the start of the project.

Four NGOs were chosen based on their specific experience from election reporting capacity building, safety training and publication of journalistic material. The NGOs selected both had previous experience from working in Iraq and other conflict areas, and they serve as solid partners to UNESCO. Due to the tight time schedule, they began planning the actual implementation of their respective assignments even before they had signed contracts. No payments were issued before the end of the first reporting period as contracts were finalized and actual implementation began in January 2005.

The implementation followed the project outline and involved the four NGOs. From 1 January to 31 March 2005, the main bulk of activities had been implemented. In order to reach the outcomes and outputs foreseen, UNESCO requested a one month extension of the project, which was granted by the Steering Committee on xx April 2005

Awareness raising material was prepared and distributed for the World Press Freedom Day (3 May) that in 2005 focuses on good governance and elections. Books and documents on human rights and in particular freedom of expression and access to information were translated and made available on the Internet. 40 Iraqi journalists and media workers participated in the meeting organized in Baghdad.

Based on the contracts signed the following results were achieved as per 29 April March 2005:

INSI organized safety training for journalists in Iraq according to plan. The training was carried out in co-operation with IWPR (Institute for War and Peace Reporting). Due to the security situation, the original estimated 75 journalists were reduced to 50 as the journalists from the South could not travel to Sulamanyia in January. In April 2005, INSI sought to organize the training of the 25 journalists from southern Iraq either in Basra or elsewhere, however the security situation neither allowed trainers to go to, nor participants to leave, Basra. The last part of the training therefore did not take place.

IMPACS translated an election reporting hand book into Arabic. The hand book was sent to Amman to be distributed at training of Iraqi journalists. However, the arrival of the first set of books was considerably delayed, consequently being replaced by a second set of books, which was sent to Iraq for distribution.

Article 19 produced specific media policy guidelines and briefing notes for Iraq, which were translated into Arabic and distributed during the training undertaken by INSI in Iraq and through the Internet. The media policy guidelines and briefing notes are included in the elections binder produced by INDEX on Censorship.

INDEX on Censorship produced a clip binder that contains reports on key issues related to the elections, their follow up, the Article 19 media policy guidelines and election briefing notes and a

journalism training course instruction as well as security advice for journalists. INDEX in co-operation with Reuters Foundation trained Iraqi journalists and senior editors in Amman. The clip binder was distributed at the training and more will be continuously updated and distributed to media workers as the binder was expressively designed as a tool to support election reporting, facilitate training and act as a working reference document for journalist covering the elections.

Output	Level of Achievement			Comments
	Fully Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	
Safety training		xxx		Out of 75 estimated participants, 50 were trained in Suleymaniah. Due to strong security constraints, the training envisaged for journalists from Southern Iraq was not possible. .
Clip binder on elections	xxx			The clip binder was produced in English and translated into Arabic and Kurdish. It was distributed at the training and the content was made available on the project-website. The binder content will be updated with information and material on the referendum and the constitutional work in 2005. The content will be made available through the website, for easy access in Iraq.
Website	xxx			The website has been updated; the main challenge was to create a web-page of good quality in Arabic.
Awareness raising and training	xxx			Security issues and journalists being reluctant to leave Iraq for training during the critical election period resulted in delays in finalizing the list of participants. Consequently, some delays in activities were caused due to the fact that the target group did not want to miss a good election story. Training could possibly mean a delay in journalistic activities in Iraq.
Translation and distribution of journalism handbooks in Arabic	xxx			Translation and publication fully achieved, a delay in the arrival of the handbook meant that it was distributed in Iraq in April.
Translation into Arabic of “Freedom of Information: a comparative legal survey”, and	xxx			Translation and placement on the project web-page fully achieved by 3 May 2005.

distribution through the Internet.				
Translation, printing and distribution of the Arabic version of the Belgrade Declaration and other campaign materials.	xxx			Translation and distribution fully achieved by 3 May 2005.
Printing and distribution of Arabic version of "How to file Human Rights Complaints".		xxx		Translation and distribution fully achieved by 3 May 2005.
Translation into Arabic of "Human Rights: Questions and Answers" and distribution through the Internet.		xxx		Translation and placement on the project web-page partially achieved.

**Main activities undertaken and achievements/ impacts:**

The activities foreseen were all undertaken, however due to the security situation and to the current political process, some of the training activities were somewhat delayed.

The main parts of the results were achieved. Taking into account the three-month duration of the project and the context within which it has been implemented, it was however necessary to extend the project with one month, the main purpose being to carry out an external final evaluation (April, 2005).

Activities Undertaken	Results/Achievements
Three workshops on safety training for journalists	Before the elections 2/3 of the foreseen participants were trained. Due to security issues, it proved impossible to organize the training of the last 1/3 after the elections.
Election reporting hand book translated into Arabic and distributed	The handbook has been translated and published in Arabic. Despite delays, the handbook has been distributed in Iraq.
Media policy guidelines and briefing notes written, translated, published and disseminated	Media policy guidelines and briefing notes written, translated, published and disseminated at training events and through the Internet.
Election clip binder on elections produced, translated and disseminated.	Election clip binder produced, translated and disseminated. It will be further disseminated in relation to the World Press Freedom Day
Workshops for journalists and senior editors.	Three workshops and a seminar held after the elections, to analyze the elections, democracy and the role of the media. Due to the security situation some participants could not return to Iraq immediately, resulting in UNESCO supporting the additional stay of a few participants in Amman.
Web-site created.	Web-site being created that contains all the content available in the elections binder and other documents in Arabic. One such book is "Access to Information" a comparative legal survey that

	addresses issues relevant to legislative and constitutional processes. The website, in English and Arabic, will be regularly updated with relevant information and material on the upcoming referendum and the constitutional work ahead.
Translation into Arabic and publication mainly on the Internet of publications and material relevant to the topics of the project.	Material translated on Freedom of Expression and Human Rights in general and nearly all placed on the Internet.
Translation into Arabic and publication of materials for the World Press Freedom Day (Iraq and the Middle East)	Material prepared for WPFDD.
Organization of World Press Freedom Day event in Baghdad to further raise awareness on the role of the media in election coverage and pertinent issues related to the specific conditions in Iraq.	Necessary preparations made for WPFDD event to be held on 3 May 2005 in Baghdad.

**Implementation constraints, lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained from assessments, evaluations and studies that have taken place during the reporting period:**

The principle implementation constraints were external to UNESCO – partly determined by the UN’s relationship to Iraq and partly by shortage of time. The project has produced concrete products that should be useful through to the end of the year and probably beyond.

There some structural issues for UNESCO to consider however –

- Its project management arrangement in Amman/Iraq and systemising its reporting.
- The relationship between UNESCO Paris and Amman.
- How to structure and tender for larger projects and ensure the correct division of labour between UNESCO and implementing partners

UNESCO expects that the restrictive conditions for the UN international and national personnel will remain in force for the prolonged period of time, even after the elections. The security situation is unlikely to be improved sufficiently to impact significantly manner the current UN modus operandi of “remote management” and “light footprint”. Having said this, it is clear that participation is facilitated when activities are carried out in Iraq, possibly to the effect that a more equal representation of genders will take place.

With the above analysis in mind, UNESCO intends to continue to employ the “remote management” and “light footprint” strategy, by operating with minimum necessary staff on the ground and relying for the implementation of its projects on international, regional and local partners and contractors. With regard to UNESCO partners, it is necessary that they identify and work with an Iraqi partner or partners for the duration of any future projects. It is to be noted that the remote management, if prolonged, decreases the possibility for quality control and places local staff under increasing pressure from local authorities and local communities, making it more difficult for them to engage in negotiations, make decisions, etc.

Therefore, future activities will be carried out with emphasis on increasing contact with Iraqi national staff by increasing the visit and consultations with all the project staff in Amman, taking every necessary opportunity to bring local partners and government officials to Amman (or elsewhere) for consultations, agreements and exchange of ideas, and lessons learnt exercises. Furthermore, national



staff from both Amman and Iraq will participate in as many activities as possible.

In order to strengthen its engagement in the role of the media in a democratic society, UNESCO, with its partners, will continue to facilitate the Iraqi-led discussions on the role of the media, civil society and officials in furthering democracy, human rights, good governance and the respect for and adherence to the Rule of Law. Taking into account co-operation with OHCHR, UNDP and UNAMI/HRO, UNESCO has undertaken a final external evaluation of the project in April. This evaluation has also addressed coordination and implementation of future projects and activities related to Media and Human Rights. In addition, a meeting was held at the end of March with the Iraqi National Communication and Media Commission to initiate a consultative process on freedom of expression and media policy in Iraq; which should result in proposals for modalities that can feed into the constitutional process.

The need for a long term investment in Media and Human Rights endeavours in Iraq - with emphasis on building Iraqi capacities with and for Iraqis - has only been confirmed in the present project.

**Key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, impact on results:**

UNESCO has collaborated extensively with key international civil society organizations and NGOs as well as the UN (UNAMI, OHCHR and UNDP) in the planning and implementation of the project. The project fits into the overall human rights strategy of the OHCHR/UNAMI. The implementing NGOs, such as INDEX, Article 19, IMPACS and INSI are closely inter-related, some of them with strong networks in Iraq, this collaboration increases the possibility of impact as a result of each activity.

**Highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on, e.g. gender disaggregation, policy engagement and participation of the public:**

The training offered took place both in Iraq (safety training) and in Jordan (election reporting skills training, Amman). Three workshops and a seminar were held in Amman, two of the workshops addressed journalists, the third one exclusively addressing senior editors, with a total of 57 media workers attending. The workshops were carried out by Index on Censorship in co-operation with Reuters Foundation. The journalists workshops addressed notions of democracy; the role of the media in the recent elections and freedom of expression. Among other activities, exercises to strengthen reporting skills, such as citing correctly sources of information, were carried out. The senior editors workshop focused on the development of an independent media association; working together – e.g. assisting each other in making news available in the whole country - and on how to select transparently journalists for training. The seminar meant that junior journalists and senior editors were given a rare opportunity to discuss among the generations of media workers. It covered wide variety of issues, including:

- a. Transparent, independent and professional reporting of the political process.
- b. The role of the media in the constitutional process; ensuring that freedom of expression and the role of the media are reflected in the process and in future legislation.
- c. Media policy development in Iraq.
- d. Access to information and knowledge.
- e. The need for an Independent Iraqi Press Association or a journalists association.
- f. The idea of a media development fund.
- g. The education and capacity-building of journalists; higher education and research on media in Iraq.
- h. Creating an Iraqi demand for quality, diversity and professional reporting.

Making training and networking opportunities available to women was addressed. Despite the fact that the number of Iraqi women media workers is high, travel in Iraq and to Jordan, as well as the security situation effectively hindered women in attending, as a result only 4 women participated in the training in Amman.

## IV. Future Work Plan

**Priority actions planned for the subsequent reporting period to overcome constraints, build on achievements and partnerships, and use the lessons learned during the previous period:**

Concrete project activities were finalized by 29 April 2005. An external and final evaluation of the entire project was carried out in April 2005. The present report thus builds upon the final evaluation of the project that addressed lessons learned in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to project implementation; achievements, and partnerships.

**Indication of major adjustments in the strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs:**

The election reporting project finalized its concrete activities on 29 April 2005. An adjustment being the extension of the project for the main purpose of carrying out a final evaluation and finalizes the activities related to the awareness raising campaign foreseen in the project document. This extension also made it possible to prepare activities that could be beneficial for the synergy that the globally recognized UN WPFDF offered, which this year focused on good governance and elections.

Designed from the very outset as part of a media development plan for Iraq that contains complementary actions, the project will subsequently be followed by a programme focused on media and human rights, which addresses dialogue on media policy and freedom of expression that should feed into the imminent constitutional work in Iraq.

A multiplier effect is that much of the material produced in the present project will be used at the training and networking exercises foreseen in future activities on media and human rights in Iraq.

**Estimated Budget required (including any major funding shortfalls):**

As the project has ended activities, no further funding is required. The final evaluation required a short extension of the timeframe, which had no budgetary implications as it was foreseen in the original proposal and budget.

Proposal for a Media and Human Rights has been submitted to Cluster 9 (now Cluster 6) for consideration. The Media and Human Rights Programme - which directly follows the present programme - has been revised by the Cluster and was submitted to the Support Group of the Steering Committee on 11 April 2005. A decision was taken to fast track the proposal and the programme is currently awaiting funding pending the official request from the transitional government of Iraq for assistance from the UN in the Iraqi constitutional process.