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[SMART COMMUNITY PROJECT FOR IRAQ]

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The report below includes a summary of achievements realized by the Smart Community Project in Iraq as well as figures on the implementation modalities, impact in the field, obstacles and constraints in addition to the evaluation criteria including relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project.

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Acronyms and Abbreviation

<i>AFPU:</i>	<i>Agro-Food Processing Unit</i>
<i>ESCWA:</i>	<i>Economic and Social Commission for West Asia</i>
<i>CDUs:</i>	<i>Communality Development Units</i>
<i>EA:</i>	<i>Expected Accomplishments</i>
<i>ICDL:</i>	<i>International Computer Driving License</i>
<i>ICT:</i>	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
<i>ILO:</i>	<i>International Labour Organization</i>
<i>IT:</i>	<i>Information Technology</i>
<i>ITF:</i>	<i>Iraq Trust Fund</i>
<i>LOA:</i>	<i>Letter of Agreement</i>
<i>MDG:</i>	<i>Millennium Development Goals</i>
<i>MMPW:</i>	<i>Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works</i>
<i>MTCC:</i>	<i>Multipurpose Technology Community Centre</i>
<i>NGO:</i>	<i>Non-governmental Organization</i>
<i>PSC:</i>	<i>Project Steering Committee</i>
<i>PC:</i>	<i>Personal Computer</i>
<i>SCP:</i>	<i>Smart Community Project</i>
<i>TDP:</i>	<i>Technology Dissemination Program</i>
<i>TOT:</i>	<i>Training of Trainers</i>
<i>CTA:</i>	<i>Central Technical Assistant</i>
<i>NPC:</i>	<i>National Project Coordinator</i>
<i>PSC:</i>	<i>Project Specialized Coordinator</i>

Executive Summary

The Smart Community Project (SCP) was designed and launched by ESCWA in Iraq with the aim of promoting the acquisition and dissemination of integrated modern technology inputs, to generate employment, initiate enterprises and reduce poverty with adequate regard to local socio-economic status, environmental conditions, and development priorities. While the Project initially targeted two rural communities, it has in-built components designed for dissemination throughout Iraq.

The project includes two core components in addition to the Technology Dissemination Programme (TDP) designed and launched to disseminate lessons learned and best practices throughout Iraq. The core components are the Multi-Purpose Technology Community Centers (MTCCs) and the Agro-Food Processing Units (AFPU). Two MTCCs have been established in Altun Kopri and Sayid Dikhil and two dairy processing plants (AFPU) were built and commissioned in Dibs and Sayid Dikhil.

Through the TDP, the following achievements were completed:

- Two Chemistry and Microbiology laboratories for food testing have been established and equipped within Salahaddine and Thi Qar Universities.
- A number of PC-based and interactive training toolkits have been designed and produced to target different topics such as the dairy processing methodologies, the PC-based accountancy and a number of cottage industry activities, with the aim of enhancing local capacities and creating new job opportunities.
- More than 550 trainees have received the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) and language training courses;
- A total of 30 training activities and seminars on Human Development and Literacy have been conducted locally for a total of 1,500 beneficiaries of all genders and ages;
- A total of 200 trainers have been trained to deliver training courses in ICT basics, agro-food and dairy processing, PC-based accountancy, literacy, office management procedures and initiation of micro-enterprises at the community level; three databases have been designed and developed to provide local communities access to the socio-economic information, employment opportunities and technical support through networking.

ESCWA partnered with the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW) on the implementation of the SCP in Iraq. Municipalities at the hosting sites undertook the rehabilitation activities using public funds and in line with ESCWA's instructions with regard to the international standards for food safety.

ESCWA also partnered with Salahaddine and Thi Qar Universities in establishing and supporting the SCP facilities and supervising training and production activities at both MTCCs and AFPU.

ESCWA expanded the partnerships into other local universities with the aim of establishing Community Development Units (CDUs) to support the SCP facilities and disseminate best practices and lessons learned into other localities within Iraq.

I. The Evaluation Objectives

This independent terminal evaluation report has been carried out by the consultant to evaluate the followings:

- (1) Project relevance with regard to priorities and policies of the government of Iraq and ESCWA.
- (2) Project effectiveness in terms of the outputs produced and outcomes achieved as compared to those planned.
- (3) Efficiency of implementation: quantity, quality, cost and timelines of ESCWA and counterpart inputs and activities. Were outputs produced as planned? Were synergies with other initiatives sufficiently exploited?
- (4) Efficiency of the arrangements of ESCWA.
- (5) Effectiveness and impact (assessment of outcomes and impact reaching target groups).
- (6) Long-term sustainability of the support mechanisms results and benefits.

The evaluation will provide the necessary analytical basis and make recommendations to ESCWA for the closure of project and for ensuring its sustainability. This evaluation tries, also, to draw lessons for wider applicability for the replication of the experience gained in this project to other projects in other areas of Iraq.

I.1. Relevance

The objectives of the project and the related outputs are found relevant to ESCWA with regard to its mandates and for the Iraqi Government with regard to its political, social and economic priorities.

Providing skills training to project target beneficiaries as a vehicle to reach the aim of lifting vulnerable households out of vulnerability has proved its relevance through the results obtained regarding local agro-processing materials utilization and local human capacity building. It is acknowledged by the involved NGOs that adoption of training methodologies has increased their member's levels of competence. The relevance of the project components management groups remains to be seen, but through thorough survey and assessment the project has succeeded in selecting TOTs and units conductors and supervisors with dynamic leadership and potentials in general to meet the outcome expectations.

I.2. Efficiency

The project management has shown extreme project implementation efficiency. All inputs have been of high quality and outputs have been produced in accordance with the project document. At the same time the management has been very concerned about project outcome and has taken the necessary and appropriate action along the way based on field monitoring information to maintain project efficiency.

I.3. Effectiveness

The survey conducted by the evaluator proves that the project has reached the target beneficiaries and that the majority of the trainees of the NGOs in Erbil and Nassiria have experienced increased income and improved quality of life from their training and productive activities.

Also for the AFPU, the project has reached the outcome expectation outlined in the project concepts and targeted the activities linked to it in general.

For the MTCC trainees, it is assessed by the evaluation that the probability is high for the majority of them to meet the outcome expectation.

I.4. Impact

- ICT and new technology found commissioned and adapted to local needs.
- Training provided adequate to meet the needs of target.
- Effective management on the control of SCP project has been developed in a way that ensures sustainability.
- A number of jobs have been created, especially for females through the NGOs of Nassiria and Erbil bringing about increases in their incomes.
- Trainings provided by Gelkent NGO-Erbil brought about changes in its members (housewives) lives.

I.5. Sustainability

The two main questions are: (1) will the project results/achievements sustain and (2) will the project concepts and activities sustain?

The products produced by the AFPU and the training services provided in MTCC and in the NGO training centers in Erbil and Nassiria along with the training service and laboratory tests carried out by Salahaddine and Thi Qar Universities, are in good demand. The likelihood that the beneficiaries of all of these institutions products and services will sustain and meet the expectations seems very high.

I.6. Recommendations

- 1- In view to the positive outcomes, achievements and effects realized in the context of designing, implementing and operating the concerned Smart Communities, and all relevant activities and facilities thereof, it will be in the interests of Iraq to replicate this project to other communities in the country.
- 2- Encourage and support the local authorities to maintain the AFPUs and the MTCCs.
- 3- In order to avoid possible delays in prospected projects implementation process, there is a need to increase lobbying effort in order to convince and enhance the governmental authorities to ease their bureaucratic procedures.

- 4- A new regulation from the Council of Ministers makes it a requirement to obtain its pre-approval to any deal with any international organization including UN agencies. This started to induce the government agencies and personnel to be reluctant to cooperate easily and fluently with these organizations including ESCWA. So there is a need to a certain action that exempts ESCWA from this condition.
- 5- It is preferable to get (in advance at the beginning) an official letter from the concerned governmental authorities, declaring full exemptions from all administrative approvals that are required for custom clearance and financial transfer.
- 6- Power generators should be provided with the equipment at the beginning.
- 7- More effort should be spent in promoting female participation in MTCC training courses and in AFPU operation and its products distribution. Certain scheme of promotion and cooperation on school level is needed to enhance female motivation towards increasing their participation in information technology skills.
- 8- Aiming at realizing the benefits of the MTCC IT and CT skills gained in the concerned communities, the Municipal Councils have to cooperate with the Ministry of Communications to link the MTCC of Sayid Dikhil and that of Altun kopri, to the web. While ESCWA provided Internet services via satellite to these centers for 18 months, presently, the citizens of the concerned two communities can't communicate from their townships.
- 9- Special scheme of sales promotion has to be done for promoting awareness about consuming the hygienic dairy products compared to ordinary products.
- 10- A regional and local awareness promotion that should be part of the project, emphasizing on women's role and integration to use/control new technologies.
- 11- Replication of this project with all of its components and activities in other parts of Iraq is preferable and needed.
- 12- An immediate action is urgently needed to overcome the problem of THIQAR Quality Control Laboratory emanated from its inconvenient location outside the university campus. That is to re-locate it within the college of Agriculture premises, instead of its present location. The amount of money needed for this purpose is estimated at about \$18000 to be funded by the relevant Iraqi Ministry
- 13- Low rate of women's participation in training courses. Certain scheme of advertisement and cooperation in schools is needed

II. Evaluation of the SCP in Iraq

II.1. Project Background

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) started implementation of the Smart Community Project for Iraq (SCP-Iraq) in 2005 and was to complete by end April 2008. The project was implemented initially in two localities in north and south Iraq with extensions made to several governorates within the technology dissemination program.

The general objective of the SCP-Iraq was to build local and national capacity for creating employment and relieving poverty in Iraq on the basis of modern technology inputs. The technology-based components selected in the pilot projects are directly linked to rural communities' needs and priorities, with direct impact on employment and enterprise creation schemes.

The proposed technology-based pilot facilities are intended to help create models for rural households and entrepreneurs active in agro-food production and processing, for exploiting the opportunities posed by modern technology for income generation and gainful employment. Modern technology inputs stand a greater chance of success in employment creation and poverty reduction when introduced into entrepreneurial activities especially when the needs of women and youth are emphasized with regard to providing employment opportunities within easy reach of their home communities.

The SCP includes core as well as auxiliary facilities designed for integrated operation to achieve the project's objective and build local capacities. The core components are: (a) the Multipurpose Technology Community Centre (MTCC) which aims to provide the local community with access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based services and vocational training; and (b) the Agro-Food Processing Unit (AFPU) which aims to process and market agro-food products utilizing modern hygienic and quality standards thus providing outlets for locally available raw materials. The AFPU is supported by a number of auxiliary facilities to treat input process water, utilize solar heating as well as provide options for wastewater treatment.

II.2. Project Objectives

(a) Development Objective

To build local and national capacity for creating employment and relieving poverty in Iraq on the basis of modern technology inputs.

(b) Immediate Objectives

1. Establishing two functioning smart community facilities in two selected impoverished rural locations in Iraq.
2. Using modern technology-based inputs in:
 - agro-food processing services;
 - water treatment;
 - waste treatment;
3. Providing hardware, software and know-how for implementing:
 - Selected on the job training and for the introduction and gradual community involvement in feasible e-government and e-commerce activities;
 - Enterprise support services; in the selected areas in a manner commensurate with natural resource endowments, surrounding conditions and community needs.

4. Formulation of modalities for extending experience gained in design, planning and implementation to other locations, thereby ensuring wider benefits and providing means for further testing and adapting modern technology inputs.

II.3. Methodology and Assessment Procedures

The evaluation was undertaken on the basis of the Terms of Reference provided by ESCWA. According to these Terms of Reference (ToR) "the purpose of the evaluation is to understand why and the extent to which intended and unintended results were achieved, and their impact on stakeholders". Key objectives of this evaluation are formulated as follows:

- To determine as objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the project, in light of its goals, objectives and expected accomplishments, as expressed in the project document log frame.
- To aim at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the intervention and contributions of ESCWA
- To provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons learned into the decision-making process of ESCWA.

As per the ToR, while the evaluation should "focus on the expected and achieved accomplishments" by using the indicators of achievement of the doc log frame, the evaluation will address the issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and results.

In line with the ToR, the evaluation deals with a series of issues related to project implementation as mentioned above.

For collecting data on the different evaluation topics, the following approaches were used:

- A first step in the evaluation was a desk study of project related documentation including project documents and the project Log Frame. That is besides referring to a number of evaluation reports done on some other SCPs in other Arab countries.
- Field visits and face-to-face interviews were held with staff from the three local communities in Alton Kopri, Dibis and Sayid Dikhil respectively. In addition, interviews were held with relevant partner organizations, beneficiaries and other stakeholders that have participated in the project.

II.4. Limitations encountered Implementation Works

- Several constraints hampered implementation. They were due in large measure to the security situation in Iraq, throughout the period of advanced SCP planning and implementation. The security situation imposed delays. Iraqi coordinators for example have often faced difficulty in movement within Iraq due to the security situation. Besides, it has not been possible thus far for Beirut Team members to visit the respective project localities, and at the same time the convening of meetings with partners and coordinators outside Iraq has had its burdens and constraints, especially with regard to obtaining relevant visas to

Iraqi and securing the appropriate flights, given the very limited availability of flights.

- The slow bureaucratic procedures to issue the customs clearance for shipped goods and the complexities encountered when transferring funds to the partner universities.
- Inadequate legislation regarding the Municipal Councils in Iraq particularly their inability to own or operate facilities similar to the SCP.
- Excessive delays have been faced with MMPW regarding the LoA with ESCWA on the SCP mainly due to administrative reasons. The overlapping responsibilities regarding the appropriate MMPW department to follow-up on SCP implementation has caused delays in getting several activities finalized.
- It was only in December 2007 that MMPW brought to the attention of the SCP 'Team that the AFPU require the approval of the department of environment.
- In addition to bureaucratic delays faced with partner Universities in Iraq, difficulties have been faced in getting universities to shift focus on community development without recourse to elitist approaches as the main aim of the project was to present the community with a replicable model. Thus, fully-automated and highly sophisticated equipment were refrained from. Batch processing was in need of hand workers and technical support staff was found as better to serve the project's objective and target beneficiaries.
- Considerable difficulties have been encountered at the MTCC in Altun Kopri, due to electricity shortcuts. It took a long time to bring the generator.
- The delays in rehabilitation activities of the two AFPU buildings were obviously due to bureaucracy.

III. Findings

III.1. Out puts

III.1.1. MTCCs in Sayid Dikhil and in Altun Kopri

At the time of the Evaluation the Multipurpose Technology Community Center (MTCC) in Sayid Dikhil and that in Altun Kopri have provided the local community with access to information and communication technology (ICT)-based services and vocational training. Around 310 trainees received training in Sayid Dikhil and around 200 in Altun Kopri during 2007-2008. The trainees included government employees, students of both genders and of different educational levels e.g. elementary, secondary and university level. The government employees who received training were from the two governmental sectors i.e. the civil and military sector.

The training capacity of the two MTCCs in Sayid Dikhil and Altun Kopri can facilitate training up to 700 trainees per year. This is based on the following assumptions:

Working days per year: 250 days.

Average training course duration: 14 days.

Average number of trainees per one training course: 10 trainees. **Hence:**

250 days ÷ 14 days × 10 trainees × 2 training batches per day = 357 trainees/year (rounded to 350 trainees / year, per one training centre).

Some training courses cover just 7 training days while computer training course takes fourteen training days, the English language training course takes half of that period. But, we considered average of 14 days per one course to represent the average duration per course.

The training course subjects cover computer subjects such as : Windows M S Word, MS excel, Office, Power point, Word Processing, English language, Persian language, Arabic Language learning and some other subjects such as Internet communication.

The courses are held on primary, medium and high educational levels.

Here-in the main observations about the two entities of the output of the project:

(a) Sayid Dikhil Multipurpose Technology Community Centre (MTCC)

Location	Sayid Dikhil Township centre, besides Sayid Dikhil Municipality Building
Building Area	150 sq. meters awarded temporarily by the Directorate of Education of the Nahia.
Surrounding Facilities	Access paved road, public electricity lines, public tap water distribution network, land and cell telephone lines, manpower, means of transportation
Interior Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Thirteen personal computers each one includes case, key board, mike, and mouse- Two printers- Two scanners and copying machines- Receiver, Hub and Dish- Power generator of 10 KVA- Other inventories (chairs, tables ... etc.)
Staff and Management Structure	<p>The Executive Management Team included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1- Mr. Hamed Hossain Mlagi: Manager of the centre and trainer.2- Mr. Sadiq Obaid Ridhawi: Manager assistant and trainer.3- Two guards assigned by the Municipality Council <p>Mr. Hamed and his assistant Mr. Sadiq have received intensive training on the subjects of their assignments and duties as IT and</p>

	TC trainers and instructors outside the country by ESCWA.
Seasonality	The year round
Duration of training courses	Normally Ten days up to fifteen days. It depends on the kind of the subject of the course, the level and background of the trainees and other factors.
Beneficiaries and Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government departments; by training their staff members and employees of both genders. - Schools teachers of different teaching levels e.g. elementary, intermediate and secondary in both kinds of gender. - Pupils and student of all schooling levels, e.g. elementary, intermediate, secondary. - Other ordinary citizens.

(b) Altun Kopri Multi-purpose Technology Community Center (MTCC)

Location	Alton Kopri Township center.
Building Area	400 sq. meter site including building area of around 200 sq. meters.
Surrounding Facilities	Electricity public network, access paved road, manpower, tap water network, transportation and communication means.
Interior Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 13 personal computers with accessories - two printers - power generator of 10 KVA in addition to the furniture and inventories.
Seasonality	The year round, but now is stopped, due to government bureaucratic constraints.
Beneficiaries and Stakeholders	Beneficiaries included: schools students (the largest group), government officials, schools teachers, agriculture directorate officials, municipality officials. 10% of the total beneficiaries were females.

III.1.2. AFPUs

AFPUs are the other two main Items among the outputs of the project:

A complete production line for processing white cheese, yogurt and cream is installed in Dibis and another in Sayid Dikhil. Both plants have become ready for commercial production since February 2009.

Designed production capacity is 3 tons of fluid milk intakes per day per plant.

The implementing partners, the projects steering committees and the technical working group thereof reviewed and approved the process and results of assessing the situation of facilities, the design work and construction. The rehabilitation of the buildings of the Agro-food processing Unit in Dibis and that in Sayid Dikhil has been completed since September-October 2007.

Important and costly renovating work has been done to the buildings of MTCC in Altun Kopri and Sayid Dikhil, and the buildings of AFPU units in Dibis and in Sayid Dikhil.

The civil works of the AFPU units were done well with the result that the existing facilities are now being considered suitable for community dairy products production. Experimental production took place in both plants since February 2009.

III.1.3. The Trainings and Meetings

This is the third part of the output of the project. More than 1500 trainees have attended the following training sessions targeting different topics as indicated below:

(a) IT Trainings

- Over 60 training sessions organized at the MTCCs in Altun Kopri and Sayid Dikhil starting June 2006 till present for women, youth, school students and employees;
- Trainings on IT for women- Althathmun women NGO; Nassiryeh.
- Trainings on IT for women- Gilkent women NGO; Erbil.

(b) Literacy Trainings

- ToT on Literacy techniques for Teachers of Literacy classes and Centers at the ERBIL Directorate for Education.
- Community-based Literacy Trainings, Saiyd Dakhil School.
- Community-based Literacy Trainings, Gilkent Women Centre.
- Community-based Literacy Trainings, Althathmun women NGO-Habobi Centre- Nassiryeh.
- Community-based Literacy Trainings, Directorate of Education of ThiQar- Shamieh Centre.
- Community-based Literacy Trainings, Directorate of Education of ThiQar- Fateh School.
- Community-based Literacy Training, Directorate of Education of ThiQar Baghazi School.

(c) Women Basic Living Skills Awareness Trainings

- Community-based Trainings on Basic Living Skills (BLSP), Erbil Directorate Education and Gilkent Women Centre- Kurdistan.

- Community-based Trainings on Basic Living Skills (BLSP), Gilkent Women Centre- Kurdistan.

(d) Trainings for Employment Generation

- Sewing and Embroidery- Iraqi Women NGO- Batha Centre.
- Sewing and Embroidery- Iraqi Women NGO- Karama Bany Said.
- Sewing and Embroidery- Iraqi Women NGO- Nassiryet El-Beqaa.
- ToT on CBT Accountancy with the University of ThiQar for selected organizations, including NGOs, Women NGOs and selected Training Centers, Nassiryeh, Iraq.
- ToT on Office Management kit with the University of ThiQar for selected NGOs, Women NGOs, selected Training Centers, and municipalities; February 2008, Nassiryeh, Iraq.
- ToT on Office Management with the University of Salahuddine for selected NGOs, Women NGOs, selected Training Centers, and municipalities; Erbil, Iraq.

ToT with the University of Salahuddine for selected organizations on CBT Accountancy, including NGOs, Women NGOs, National Bank of Kurdistan, MTCC Alton Kupri- and selected Training Centers; Erbil, Iraq Multi purpose community canter.

III.2. Achievements Status

MTCC in Sayid Dikhil	Rehabilitation, installation and operations are completely finalized. ICDL and language course continue to be delivered at the center.
MTCC in Altun Kopri	Rehabilitation, installation and operations are completely finalized. ICDL and language course continue to be delivered at the center.
APFU in Sayid Dikhil	Completely rehabilitated and equipped. Commissioning phase has been completed under the supervision of Thi Qar University and Sayid Dikhil Municipality.
APFU in Dibs	Completely rehabilitated and equipped. Commissioning phase has been completed under the supervision of Salahaddine University and Dibs Municipality.
Quality control laboratory for food testing at Salahaddine University	Completely rehabilitated according to the international standards for food testing and is currently operating for testing and training purposes.
Quality control laboratory for food testing at Thi Qar University	Partially achieved and not operating. The equipment items were purchased and commissioned but the lab is not yet functioning. It lacks some important complimentary parts besides its needs to a suitable accommodation (other than its present place) within the college of Agriculture premises.

III.3. Handover Formalities

In an effort to promote public-private partnership, ESCWA cooperated with the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW) to handover the SCP facilities to the local Municipalities. The MMPW shall proceed to lease the SCP facilities to the private sector institutions or the NGOs according to the Iraqi rules and regulations in this context and ensuring the local communities reap the benefits of the project.

IV. The Evaluation Criteria

IV.1. Relevance to the Socio-Economic Context (Relevance)

IV.1.1. AFPUs

The majority of the population in Dibis and Sayid Dikhil are living in rural areas (approximately 60%). These are mainly small farmers. They live in relatively remote villages far from the markets (up to 60% of villages are on the average 50 km away from city centers). While they can produce important quantities of agricultural products amongst which fluid milk, they lack effective accesses to markets. Due to low level of quality preservation and processing, their dairy products are subject to contamination very often. However, the establishment of two small dairy processing units with reasonable processing size of 3 tons milk intake per plant per day seemed to create market outlets for fluid milk produced in the concerned remote areas and help to facilitate income generation for people engaged in the concerned dairy processing and marketing. It maintains hygienic dairy production and consumption. This will be reflected also in less infection. Then more savings in health care expenditures. Then better living conditions. Medical clinics and hospitals at the concerned region are familiar with receiving patients infected by Malta and Typhoid fever that result from unpasteurized dairies consumptions.

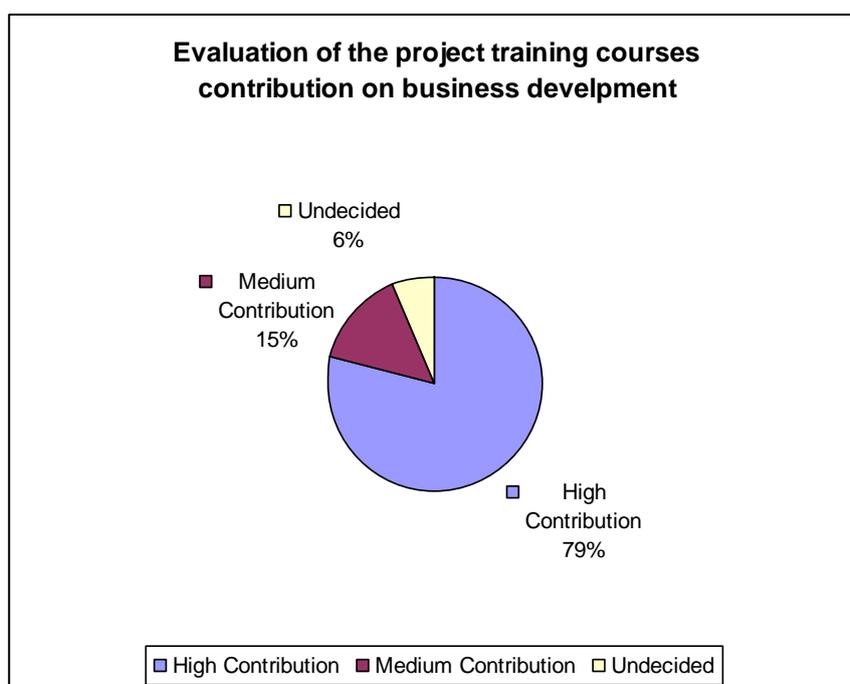
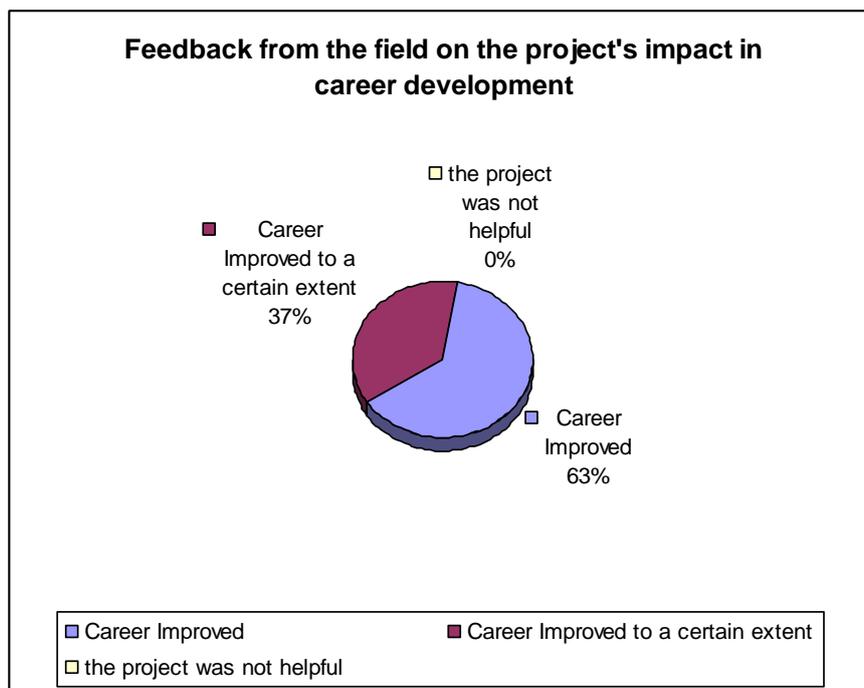
Thus, establishing AFPU projects in Dibis and Sayid Dikhil are now very relevant to the objectives which are mentioned in the Log frame of the project (relieving of poverty on the basis of modern technology inputs). That is, establishing such two modern plants start facilitating for higher rewards from the agro resources available in the region and minimizing the wastes thereof, then facilitate for more savings and incomes as mention earlier.

IV.1.2. MTCCs

More than 95% of the population of Alton Kopri and Sayid Dikhil are far away from the use of the IT and CT equipment. Looking at the increasing number of those who got IT and CT training on the MTCCs of the two towns indicate the relevance of the project output to its set-out objectives. The project promotes the ability and willingness of the concerned two community members to use the products of the IT and CT. This now starts to be one path towards addressing gender imbalance, and starts promoting IT and CT uses and capacity building among the citizens of the concerned impoverished communities.

However, the project with its two MTCCs and two AFPU addresses both the Government of Iraq National Development Strategy and the ESCWA assistance strategy with respect to employment creation, hygienic food production and income improvement in underprivileged areas, local resource utilization and opening up a window to the knowledge society through information and

communication technology. Moreover, the project is found relevant to the achievement of the goals of ESCWA in increasing employment, reducing poverty and readdressing gender imbalance and empowering locals through capacity building. That is right whether in relation to the two MTCCs or the literacy training and skills trainings which took place in different areas and locations in Erbil (Gelkent women centre) and Altun Kupri or in Nassiria (Thi Qar): AL-Tathamun, Shamia, Batha, Albeqa'a.

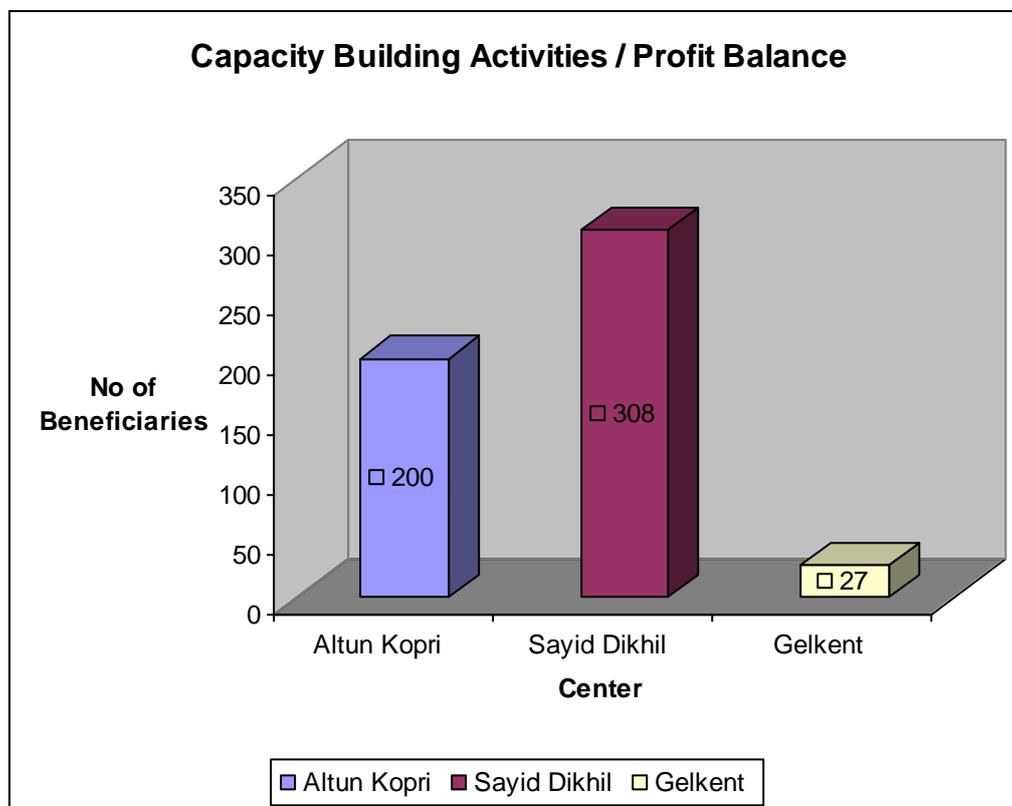


How do beneficiaries assess the relevance of the project for helping them in getting employment, increasing income, upgrading their performance? Sixty three percent of the beneficiaries (to whom this question applied) answered that it definitely had helped and thirty-seven percent said it had helped them to a certain extent. There was not a single one who thought that the project had not helped.

Of those beneficiaries who received training whether in the MTCC in Altun Kopri and Sayid Dikhil or in Gelkent Women Center or Sewing and Embroidery NGOs in Nassiria 79% considered the contribution of the training to their capacity building is high, 15% looked at this as being of rather medium importance, with the rest being undecided.

With respect to income the beneficiaries who already earned income and who received training, were asked whether the training they received through the project had any positive influence on their present income level. 50% argued that there was such influence. The rest said that there was simply no change, even though that the training received was strongly relevant to the requirements of their carriers.

With regard to the relevance of the increased income of individual beneficiaries on the household they live in, the increment ranged between 50 – 75%. In one or two cases the trainees got recruitment opportunities due to the computer skills they got in Altun Kopri’s MTCC, while their competitors, who don’t have same skills lost the opportunity.



Judging the project’s relevance only from the number of individuals who attended the training facilities of the two MTCCs and Gelkent Women Center one has to acknowledge that the relevance is rather above 60% of the training capacity of these three training centers. During 2007 – 2009 there

were (308) persons undertook training in Sayid Dikhil, (200) persons in Altun Kopri and (27) women in Gelkent. It is noteworthy to mention that Gelkent Centre undertakes other women skills upgrading activities.

Judging the project AFPU relevance to rural communities needs, it is found that it is directly linked to these needs and priorities.

IV.2. Efficiency

The project benefited from a qualified project management team composed of International staff based in Beirut and National staff working in the field and based in Erbil in the North and Baghdad and Sayid Dikhil for the South. The management team was supported by specialized external consultants for technical matters.

The major constraint for a more efficient and implementation was the interruptions and delay in the equipment delivery process whether in regard to the AFPU or the MTCC. The first training sessions offered to local members of the communities began one year after the project start in Sayid Dikhil and 18 months in Alton Kopri. The unstable political conditions in Iraq and the 2006 war in Lebanon contributed to the delay. It took one year following the launching of the MTCCs to deliver the generators. Other problems plagued the implementation of the AFPU in Dibis and in Sayid Dikhil: adding to the time consuming complex bureaucratic formalities and procedures the damages inflicted during shipment to some equipment and the replacement of these equipment caused considerable delays to the installation of the dairy facilities. . However, some of the project outputs were delivered at various levels of set targets. But, the identification of the projects sites, the selection and training of trainers, the selection of project units' beneficiaries, and the development of training material were completed without excessive delays. The completion of civil works and rehabilitation for the two buildings of the AFPUs and those of the MTCCs, and the training of trainers didn't experience delays but normal time. On the whole, the efficiency of the project outputs is judged so far as good for the AFPUs establishment period of time, and substantial for training of trainers and same for training of beneficiaries of MTCC.

Gelkent Women Center in Kurdistan, Altathamun Women NGO south, Batha, Karama Bany Said and AL-Beqqa NGOs were efficient in facilitating sewing and embroidery training to relatively big number of households in their areas. Therefore we can evaluate the activities of these centers efficient in human capacity building and the target of the project in this concern is highly met.

The Quality Control laboratory in Salahadine University found efficient in extending its services to many beneficiaries among which the AFPU, and other government departments in addition to training services and conducting the tests needed for research purposes; well equipped and managed by qualified personnel. On the whole, the efficiency of the laboratory is found substantial in extending its services and training to the beneficiaries.

Contrary to Erbil Quality Control Laboratory, the laboratory of the college of Agriculture at Thi Qar University was found (during evaluation period) lacking some important complementary parts. Among these were the so called milko-tester and gearbox. The surroundings of the laboratory building were inconvenient; it was covered with garbage and solid wastes. The food testing lab was initially installed at the agri-consultancy bureau due to the lack of space at the faculty of agriculture. Thus, the University is suggesting having a mobile caravan hosting the food testing lab at the faculty of agriculture. The university is currently reviewing the financial implications pertaining to the relocation of the lab.

In general, the rehabilitated training centers and the AFPU's building seem to be well designed constructed and equipped. It was prudent to employ Iraqi site engineers for oversight and to use local constructors for AFPU's buildings. Thus, costs for design and construction appear to have been reasonable. The university played an important role in implementing the projects. The role of the implementation committee is reflected in the supervision, follow up and advice. The identification of the AFPU's processing lines and the technical specifications thereof were done by SCP Team Experts. There was a continuous collaboration between the rehabilitation committee and ESCWA experts in Beirut exchanging thoughts and advices. This cooperation was a challenge well met. ESCWA provided technical support to achieve the installation of the AFPU according to the international food safety regulations.

Partnerships with the project's line ministry (MMPW), local municipalities and municipal councils of Altun Kopri, Dilbs, Kirkuk and Sayid Dikhil; Salahaddine and Thi Qar University, Educational Directorate of Erbil and that of Thi Qar, selected women and development NGOs and Farmers Union; partnerships with all of these institutions were key to SCP progress. ESCWA has formulated solid partnerships with all of these local actors.

It is noteworthy to emphasize the importance of the community development units (CDU) established at the local universities, namely Salahddine, Thi Qar, Wassit, Al Qadissiya, Mosul and Baghdad universities to support the established SCP facilities and to enhance capacity building and sustainable development activities within different localities in Iraq. These CDUs are to form a nucleus for sustainable development at the universities; this process brought the involvement of the Iraqi universities in the field and community development activities in addition to their academic duties.

Among the outstanding accomplishments of the University of Salahadine were the following training courses it held and sponsored:

Course	Duration/ Days	Number of Trainers
Dairy quality control	10	16
Computerized accountancy	10	12
Secretarial works	10	14
Training of trainers of ICDL	15	15

The training activity included lecturing, guidance with complete visual aids usage, with distributing books and notebooks, stationary, CDs etc.

The objectives of the university in conducting these training workshops were to upgrade local human resource capacity in the concerned fields of training as well as to participate in enabling the local community to bridge the gap that exists between the present low levels of skills and that which is required to sustain its progress.

The new skills provided by the training started doing more to enhance productivity and save time and money more than that of their past levels and kinds of skills. Along with increasing productivity, the new skills also started help to build teams, improve the quality of human ties within the participants'

organizations, and create a greater level of the available resource utilization. The dairy training course started awareness towards access to sufficient, safe and nutritious dairy which meets the people of the community dietary needs and dairy preferences for an active and healthy life. That is, dairy quality control training has orientated the participants to apply modern methodologies in the framework of producing the right quality of dairies. The evaluation which had been carried out after the completion of the quality control workshop revealed a higher degree of awareness in this concern. The trainees became fully aware that quality control activity is an integrated activity starting from detecting the consumer requirements then to set out a production program then incoming material inspections then in-process inspection and control then the end stage sampling inspection. Methods and criteria for laboratory inspections have been well retained and started to find their way within the daily production and the quality control framework.

The training of trainers of ICDL had already accomplished its expected and planned expected outcome in the form of qualifying hundreds of trainees in Sayid Dikhil, Altun Kopri and other related areas where the trainees undertake their works.

In relation to electronic accountancy the objective is to enable the concerned participants to upgrade and disseminate all kinds of financial accountancy throughout their respective organizations electronically.

The training started to enable the beneficiaries to conduct their daily accountancy offers in a way that permits real time use of electronic technology. Moreover, this training seems to find its way in the adoption of the concerned technology within the working habits of the participants. For example, the job that might have taken 6 hours in pre- training times can be handled now in minutes and completed effectively with nil error.

In Mosul, the Local Community Development Unit conducted an important training course for the employees, managers and owners working in dairy manufacturing plants in Mosul and some other relevant persons relevant to this kind of manufacturing activity In addition to a number of students of the college of Agriculture. The objective is to build human capacities and enrich awareness about the new progress achieved in dairy processing. The duration of the course was from 27 April to 30 April 2009. It took place at the food and Bio Technology Dept. Local Development Unit, University of Mosul.

Subjects covered by the training session

- Cheese processing
- Fermented dairy processing
- Cream and butter processing
- Ice cream processing

Programme of Activities

- Mode of operation of equipment (lecturing and illustration)
- Cheese processing (lecturing and illustration)
- Fermented dairies (lecturing and illustration)

- Cream and butter extraction (lecturing and illustration)
- Ice cream processing (lecturing and illustration)

The national value to be gained as a result of these training activities will be represented by creating safe and hygienic dairy products and lessening the country's dependence on imports and participate in maintaining the country's dairy self sufficiency and food security.



Promoting Awareness on New Dairy Processing Methods and Technologies

Gelkent-Erbil and other NGOs in Nassiria and Erbil have been efficient in facilitating training to many women and youth. The ratio of females in total number of IT training courses held in Sayid Dikhil and Altun Kopri was meager. It was around 9% - 10% of total trainees. So, the efficiency in this area of activity is considered below average. It is important to mention that the factors that stand behind this low participation of female in Sayid Dikhil and Altun Kopri are the conservative cultural background characterizing the two rural areas which restricts woman commuting between their houses and training centers after office work times.

The project management has shown extreme project implementation efficiency. All inputs have been of high quality and outputs have been produced in accordance to the plans. At the same time the management has been very concerned about project outcome and has taken the necessary and appropriate corrective action at each hurdle along the way based on field monitoring to maintain project efficiency.

IV.3. Effectiveness

In this section we look at the project effectiveness which we understand to be the relationship between the outputs and the objectives. It is addressing the questions to what degree the project was capable of producing the desired effects; to what degree the outputs that have been produced, have also been utilized by the expected beneficiaries/ users; and what factors have hampered a more intensive utilization and a stronger response.

The last field visits which were carried out in late March and early April 2009 suggested that the two AFPU's were not operating even though that the commissioning and start up happened two months before. This was mainly due to the delays and complications in official procedures to handover the

SCP facilities to the MMPW according to the agreement with ESCWA and to further lease the facilities to the private sector or local NGOs and women institutions to operate regularly the facilities according to the Iraqi rules and regulations in this context. Thus, a clarification is required. But the experimental production that had taken place in both dairy plants exposed their potential effectiveness in realizing the objective of the project in all aspects.

It is found that the participants of TOT courses abroad are subsequently functioning as trainers in the MTCC in both of Sayid Dikhil, Alton Kopri, and Gelkent Women Society. This leads to conclude that the trainers trained abroad were used effectively for following benefit of training program so we can say that the right people were chosen for the task.

The evaluator considers that the newly created competence of beneficiaries which gained from the training in Gelkent and in the MTCCs was a relevant output for the empowerment of the target group. The AFPUs were also effective output for satisfying the hygienic and sanitation requirements in dairy products supplied to the concerned communities. The trial operation of the two AFPUs in Sayid Dikhil and Dibbs showed that they can be means for effective utilization for the local fluid milk production, otherwise the livestock holders in the surrounding areas will continue keeping on below average utilization of their fluid milk production, besides lacking the hygienic requirements and the public health negative effects thereof. It is noteworthy to mention the fact that the dairy facilities should be taken and considered as a model for the community members to benefit from the available resources and generate income.

The overall effectiveness in terms of benefits gained from MTCC training, could be increased effectively if the program of the project is (1) linked to an assistance program to help the beneficiaries acquire their own computers and (2) if continuous access of the centers to the web is assured. Both MTCCs were connected to the web, but by the end of the project connection wasn't renewed waiting the handover formalities. The secondary school of Altun Kopri has received six computers recently. This started increasing the effectiveness of the training that already has been received at MTCC by the students and employees of the school.

The project's implementation in both Sayid Dikhil and Altun Kopri has certainly made a good start in reaching its objective of creating IT and CT training opportunity for individual beneficiaries as a result of erecting two MTCC centers in the mentioned districts. But, much remains to be done to consolidate the ongoing effort. Those who had been interviewed believed the training received was of great help.

On the basis of interviews conducted by the evaluator, it is found that 40% were employees undertaking activities requiring the skills acquired in the training, 2% succeeded in establishing their own internet centers (Internet cafe) or got a job with an internet center (café). At the same time the lack to access to the web seems as the major impediment to establish and sustain IT and CT supported activities in these two areas. It is noteworthy to mention that the MTCC of Altun Kopri has stopped working since July 2008. The reason behind this stoppage is a bureaucratic one. The Municipality is reluctant to allow operating the MTCC unless it receives approval of the Ministry of Municipalities. In the meantime the Ministry doesn't give its approval unless it receives the approval of the Council of Ministers and so on. It is the nature of the Iraqi governmental bureaucracy.

An important number of women who received training in Gelkent Center were successful in establishing their individual home-based micro business such as sewing, embroidery and toy making

... At the same time the lack of access to financial support in the form of micro loans combined with start up grants seems the major impediment towards maintaining the achieving greater effectiveness.

A number of women who received training in NGOs in Nasiriya were successful in establishing their individual home based micro business same as those of Gelkent Center members.

With respect to the next higher level of desired effects, i.e. **increased income** it has been mentioned earlier in the section on relevance that there are many of project beneficiaries who are doing well in generating income from activities in the field which they have been trained. Among those beneficiaries are the relatively big number of housewives and girls which got training on sewing and embroidery and other crafts, in Gelkent Women Center Kurdistan and other NGOs centers and schools in the South earning incomes due to the capacity building provided to them through the training courses.

MTCC effect on gender imbalance both in Sayid Dikhil and in Altun Kopri seems below than the desired effect. The female share percentage in total trainees was only around 9 -12% of total trainees in these two centers despite the fact that those who participated in the workshops reaped high benefits. It is noteworthy to mention that the nature of the society in these rural areas play a role in restricting the female participation and movements, and this is the main factor that stands behind their low percentage of involvement.

The evaluation survey conducted by the evaluator proves that the project has reached the target beneficiaries and it has reached the outcome expectations in all respects effectively (analysis based on the defined set of criteria).

IV.4. Impact

The following table provides an overview of the project outputs and kind of impact measured qualitatively on the following scale: high, substantial, modest, and likely.

Output	Impact
IT Training of Trainers Abroad	High
IT Training Trainees in MTCCs of Sayid Dikhil and Altun Kopri	Substantial
MTCC on Gender Imbalance	Modest
IT Training NGOs of Erbil and Nassiria	Modest
Literary Techniques for Teachers of Literacy Classes- Erbil Directorate of Education	High
Community Based Literacy Trainings in Erbil and Nassiria	Modest
Women Basic Living Skills-Gelkent	High and Substantial
Training for Employment Generation	

- Sewing and Embroidery	High
- Training on IT for women – Gelkent	High
- ToT on CBT and on Management- Thi Qar University	Sustainable
- ToT on CBT and On Office Management – Salahaddine University	Sustainable
AFPU in Sayid Dikhil and Dibis	
- Providing hygienic food	High (experimentally)
- Employment Creation	High (experimentally)
- Processable Resources Utilization	High (experimentally)
- Quality Control Laboratory in Salahaddine University	High
- Quality Control Laboratory in Thi Qar University	Likely

It seems that the training courses contents for the MTCC trainers and that for the AFPU personnel abroad were prepared and delivered in an efficient way. An impressive variety and quantity of training material has been produced. The training materials included books, notebooks, stationary, CDs and visual aids

IV.5. Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the likelihood that the achievements of the project will be maintained over time. If we look at the training centers it appears that they have to rely on a proper budget and management for operation and maintenance. It seems that this can be achieved by following a certain kind of privatization. This possible kind is attained by giving the two MTCCs and the two AFPU to private sector operators by long lease contracts. The local personnel who supervised and conducted the establishment and experimental operation are rather to be more suitable to undertake the responsibility, on this way, in comparison with other sides. This method of long lease basis suites the present governmental orientation and policy which is built on privatization and deregulation principles. That is conditional to certain terms in order to ensure the project outcomes real and effective participation in realizing the project objectives.

To summarize, a number of elements in favor of sustainability are already in place:

- 1- The project enjoys considerable visibility and has been recognized as a success.
- 2- The availability of experienced management staff.
- 3- Convenient locations whether in regard to MTCCs, AFPU, or the other components of the project.
- 4- The likelihood that the operation managements of the MTCCs and AFPUs will sustain and meet the projects expectations is very high.

However, there are still several threats to sustainability such as:

- (1) Lack of personal computers for students use and practice within the schools. Therefore a keen cooperation between ESCWA and the Ministry of Education is needed to meet this challenge. However, the MTCCs were designed to form a model for capacity building activities and to introduce the local communities to some selected modern technologies; the local communities are to imitate the MTCC to enhance capacity building activities. With regard to the cooperation with ESCWA to increase the number of PC at the local schools, agreements with the MTCCs managers could be initiated to deliver training sessions for students at different academic levels.
- (2) Lack of computer ownership among households and individuals of the area. The Municipality council has to play a role in this regard, such as assisting in opening public centers and providing financial assistance for the purchase of PCs
- (3) Narrow scope of activity; that is the concerned areas still far away from effective development projects and economic activity still backward leaving these areas within vicious circle of poverty.
- (4) Lack of Transmitter for public communication service lines center. The Municipal Council in cooperation with the Ministry of Communication can play positive role.
- (5) Within the effort to replicate this project to other areas in Iraq it should be a build up criteria and process of identification and selection of the target communities and beneficiaries. The selection is to comply with the criteria such as vulnerability, family situation (female- headed households, widows, returnees, deprived etc).

Annex I



The MTCC Building in Altun Kopri- After rehabilitation (29, Oct, 2008)

- A sign for efficient implementation here.
- Deserves to be simulated in other impoverished areas.



The MTCC Building in Altun Kopri- After rehabilitation (29, Oct, 2008)

A sign for efficient implementation here but, unfortunately it is closed and idle since May 2008.



The SCP Training Center - Saiyd Dikhil

- Relevant to the set-out objectives.
- Efficient implementation.
- Effective operation.
- Prospected source of sustainability.
- Waiting for hand over and overcoming the bureaucratic constraints.



Quality Control Lab-Salahaddine University

- Relevant to the objectives of the Project.
- An efficient implementation.
- Effective operation.
- With clear and evident impact, in its area of activity.
- An entity deserves to be simulated in other governorates universities.

Annex II



Quality Control Lab/Salahaddine University

Relevant to the set-out objectives.

Efficient, effective, with deep and wide impact in its area of specialization.



Dairy Plant in Sayid Dikhil

Commissioned and started up.

- Waiting for hand over and operation.
- Relevant to the objectives.
- Efficient implementation and erection.
- Efficient plant lay-out.
- Capable steering and supervising team.



Dibis Dairy plant

A modern small dairy plant. A means for maximizing the utilization and value added of the local agro-processing resources.

Presently idle; awaiting inauguration and hand over.

Relevant to the objectives of the project.



College of Agriculture and Marshes where A keen cooperation with ESCWA took place in connection with the AFPU of Sayid Dikhil set-up, and the installation of the quality control lab, besides it's participation in capacity building of the concerned citizens of the region.

<p>Efficient implementation.</p> <p>With likely impact on sanitation and hygienic situation of dairy consumption.</p> <p>Effective plant lay-out.</p> <p>With likely impact on livestock holders of the region.</p> <p>Source of sustainability.</p> <p>Deserves to be simulated in other unprivileged areas of the country.</p>	
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Annex III



This toy is one among many products Gelkent Women Center members and trainees produce and have there impact on their living conditions and incomes . The training courses held here participated in bring about this favorable outcome



The training hall in Gelkent Women Center – Erbil. Effective in its framework, with good impact on living conditions and family affairs of its trainees and participants