

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund

Project #:C9-25

Date and Quarter Updated: January - March, 1st Quarter 2010

Participating UN Organisation: UNOPS	Sector: Governance
Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry:	Ministry of State for Civil Society Affairs

Title	Iraqi Civil Society Empowerment Project				
Geographic Location	National coverage, with specific activities targeting priority areas to be selected when the process of granting NGOs is initiated.				
Project Cost	4,255,193				
Duration	24 months				
Approval Date (SC)	4 th December 2008	Starting Date	10 th December 2008	Completion Date	10 th December 2010
Project Description	<p>This project builds on UNOPS experience in supporting Iraq’s citizens with the assistance of Iraqi civil society over the past 4 years, be it through capacity-building, grant funding or technical assistance. ICSEP defines <i>empowerment</i> as a process where the Iraqi people, in this instance via civil society, gain greater independence through capacity-building. This project will enable civil society to develop into a stronger and more reliable partner for government and donors in order to better inform, monitor and support processes of democratization, stabilization, development and relief to the benefit of all Iraq’s people. The Project comprises 4 stand-alone modules: 1. Capacity-Building, Awareness-Raising and Networking; 2. Emergency Response and Preparedness; 3. Citizen Participation in Local Governance; & 4. Community-based Peace-building. Special attention will be paid to gender and youth-sensitive programming. ICSEP adopts a two-pronged implementation strategy with certain outcomes pursued nationally while others follow area-based models. ICSEP rests on strong partnerships with our Iraqi partners - governmental (Min. of Civil Society, NAO, NCCMD) & NGOs.</p>				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

The project contributes to the following development goals in the relevant development strategies for Iraq:

Iraqi National Development Strategy (NDS): 7.5.3. (*Emergency Coordination, Preparedness and Response*); 9.1.1. (*National Dialogue and Reconciliation*); 9.4.1 (*‘Engaging with Civil Society’*)

International Compact with Iraq (ICI): Section 3.1.1. (*National Dialogue and Reconciliation*), 3.3.1. (*Establish a comprehensive human rights regime country wide*) and Section 4.2.1 (*‘Engaging with the Civil Society’*)

Sector Team Outcome(s) for the Governance Sector:

Outcome 2: *Strengthening national dialogue and civil society for governance and reconciliation.*

Outcome 3: *Strengthened regulatory framework, institutions and processes of national and local governance.*

Project objectives:

- To establish a liberal legal and administrative framework for Iraqi NGOs, respected both by the authorities and the NGO community itself.
- To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.
- To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.
- To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.
- To spearhead collaborative initiatives to counter conflict trends through civil society with the ultimate aim of protecting human rights and achieving community development.

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement

Outputs	1.1: Intn’l standards mainstreamed in draft laws and regulations governing NGO sector 1.2. Increased capacity of NGO Assistance Office to register NGOs timely and provide
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	<p>information support.</p> <p>1.3: Higher awareness across civil society, government and public on rights & duties of NGOs.</p> <p>2.1 Increased Iraqi capacity to provide CB support to civil society organizations in core organizational functions and Human Rights Civic Education.</p> <p>2.2: Civic Education campaign on Human Rights conducted by empowered NGO network.</p> <p>3.1: NGO Emergency Preparedness and Response Network (EPRN) established nationwide</p> <p>3.2: Enhanced coordination of local humanitarian NGOs with humanitarian community (GoI, UN, Int. NGOs)</p> <p>3.3: Increased understanding of humanitarian ethics and advocacy role among NGO community.</p> <p>4.1. Increased capacities for evaluating local governance and producing recommendations to improve citizen participation.</p> <p>4.2: Civic Education campaign on citizen participation in local governance conducted by empowered NGO network.</p> <p>4.3: Citizen participation initiatives increase democratic local governance through close collaboration between NGOs and local authorities.</p> <p>4.4: Stronger policy debate for enhancing civil society and citizen participation in local governance.</p> <p>5.1: A cadre of peace-building resource persons able to initiate change in the larger relational patterns within their communities, is set-up in select locations.</p> <p>5.2: Civic Education campaign on community based peace-building and its contribution to national dialogue and reconciliation process conducted by empowered NGO network in Baghdad.</p> <p>5.3: Tension levels amongst the general Iraqi public decreased by peace-building initiatives run by CSOs and community leaders in select areas.</p> <p>5.4: Formerly divided communities are able to plan their future together.</p> <p>5.5: Stronger policy debate on integrated community-based peace-building.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>1.1.1 Provide TA to GoI and KRG Institutions on NGO legislations</p> <p>1.2.1.NAO staff capacity needs assessment</p> <p>1.2.2. Capacity-building of NAO staff</p> <p>1.2.3. IMS support to NAO NGO Database</p> <p>1.3.1 Training program for government officials on civil society / law</p> <p>1.3.2 Educating NGOs on NGO Law</p> <p>2.1.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Sulaymaniyah</p> <p>2.2.1. Support to capacity building of civil society network (HR) by CSSC</p> <p>2.2.2. Network plan and carry out Civic Education Campaign</p> <p>3.1.1. Create and Support EPRN network operations and expansion</p> <p>3.2.1. Set up communication protocols inside EPRN and with 3rd parties.</p> <p>3.2.2. Fast track data collection and early warning by EPRN nodes and compilation of all governorate databases into national DB.</p> <p>3.3.1. Produce media materials raising awareness of CSOs on humanitarian principles and advocacy.</p> <p>3.3.2. Hold governorate-level awareness raising events.</p> <p>4.1.1. Adapt & fine-tune local governance assessment (LGA) methodology.</p> <p>4.1.2. Carry out local governance assessments in 2 locations</p> <p>4.2.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Basrah</p> <p>4.2.2. Support to capacity building of civil society network (citizens participation) by CSSC</p> <p>4.2.3. Network plans and implements Civic Education Campaigns in Citizen Participation</p> <p>4.3.1. Implement citizen participation initiatives in 2 target areas</p> <p>4.3.2. Evaluate impact of initiatives (including baseline) via academic / research centers.</p> <p>4.4.1. Organize Roundtable to debate project outputs and propose policies to increase nation-wide citizen participation.</p> <p>5.1.1. Carry out conflict assessments in 2 select areas Baghdad, Mosul)</p> <p>5.1.2. ToT on Peacebuilding and Awareness-raising for community stakeholders in alternative conflict / dispute resolution mechanisms</p>

	<p>5.2.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Baghdad</p> <p>5.2.2. Support to capacity building of civil society network (peacebuilding) by CSSC</p> <p>5.2.3. Network plans and implements Civic Education Campaigns on Pecebuilding</p> <p>5.3.1. Peacebuilding projects implemented by local CSOs through grant funding</p> <p>5.3.2. Evaluate impact of initiatives.</p> <p>5.4.1. Organize community planning exercises after peace-building projects.</p> <p>5.4.2. Secure support of local authorities and civil society for funding of community plans through regular budget.</p> <p>5.5.1. Organize Roundtable to debate project outputs and propose policies to increase community-based peace-building networks and initiatives, with involvement from GoI and civil society at large.</p>
Procurement (major items)	<p>In the reporting period major procurement items included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request for proposal – Provision of capacity building programme for the NGOs Directorate was addressed to NCCMD. The proposal has been received. 2. Five NGOs were awarded with a grant for the Citizens Participation component and Grant Agreements were signed. 3. Request for proposal - Provision of Technical Assistance for the Citizens Participation grant fund (second module Citizens Participation component). 4. Request for proposal - Provision of Technical Assistance for the Local Governance Assessment (first module Citizens Participation component) 5. Recruitment of trainers for the Emergency Preparedness and Response component. 6. One amendment was signed for the Peace-building grant fund to revise the budget after the implementation of the two initial activities.

Funds Committed	\$ 1,579,874.05	% of approved	37
Funds Disbursed	\$ 554,640.96	% of approved	13
Forecast final date	10 th December 2010	Delay (months)	

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned (current status)
Men		
Women		
Children		
IDPs		
Others	(At the end of the project it is expected that app. 1,300 NGOs and app. 600 GoI officials will have benefited)	
Indirect beneficiaries		
Employment generation (men/women)		

In general the project is to benefit the Iraqi public on a number of levels. The project is to provide certain short-term benefits through its direct activities in addition to long-term benefits obtained through adoption of the NGO law, improved capacity of civil society, and enhanced cooperation with the central, regional and local authorities of Iraq in order to improve the situation of the Iraqi people throughout the country.

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results			
1. To establish a liberal legal and administrative framework for Iraqi NGOs, respected both by the authorities and the NGO community itself.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNOPS has continued its active involvement in the process of support to the NGO law. 2. The NGO law was passed by the CoR, approved by the Presidency Council and published in official gazette in early April. 3. UNOPS agreed with the Kurdistan Parliament and KRG that work on KRG NGO law will be carried out in 2010. 2. NCCMD has submitted the project proposal for complex capacity building programme 	% of planned	50

	addressed to the NGOs Directorate.		
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.	The NGO Al Mesalla in partnership with Un Ponte Per continued implementation of the project. At the end of the quarter, Mesalla has signed an MoU with LAONF Non Violent group network. LAONF will select from its 65 members, 30 NGOs that will be responsible for the implementation of the Human Rights civic education campaign in all the governorates. In addition, a training for the board of directors of LAONF was organized with 9 NGO representatives with the aim to empower them on core issues such as fundraising, management, communication skills etc.	% of planned	40
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.	<p>1. Regular coordination meetings took place between UNOPS, OCHA, UNAMI, NCCI and DRC to define the approach. A lead consultant was hired to prepare the training content on governorate level emergency coordination, one additional trainer hired and 2 trainers were provided by the partners (NCCI, IFRC). The agenda was developed including disaster risk reduction and coordination mechanisms at the governorate level. The component is divided into two phases.</p> <p>2. During phase I, a DRR and emergency coordination training was organized in Erbil with 60 participants and 20 observers from 6 targeted governorates (28 March to 1 April).</p> <p>3. The second phase will start with the launching of a request for proposals (follow up coordination and awareness raising activities) addressed to NGOs participating in the training.</p>	% of planned	50
4. To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.	<p>1. First module (local governance assessment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introductory training for UNOPS field staff was organised. Field staff follows up on the ground by building up local support to the initiative (in Said Sadiq/Sharoozor in Sulaymania and in Hilla City center in Babyl) and preparing logistics for the intervention. - Training and technical assistance provider was selected, contractual arrangements underway. <p>2. Second module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - five NGOs were selected and a Grant Agreements was signed in four separate governorates of the Lower South: Missan, Basrah, Muthanna, Thi Qar. The full implementation of the grants will start in early April and technical assistance training will be organised in May. 	% of planned	20
5. To spearhead collaborative initiatives to counter conflict trends through civil society with the ultimate aim of protecting human rights and	The NGO Insan started the implementation of their activities in January by setting up the offices in Bagdad and Kirkuk and recruiting the staff. Conflict management training took place in Sulaymania with 10 selected focal points from the targeted communities..	% of planned	30

achieving community development.			
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Qualitative achievements against objectives and results
<p><u>Objective 1:</u> The passing of the Iraqi NGO law is a significant breakthrough following years of continuous work on this bill. The impact of the law is very wide as it will regulate the work of NGOs in the entire country apart from the KRG. The standards for work of NGOs in the country have been increased. This also allows moving to the phase of implementation of the law and setting relevant mechanisms. Previous involvement of UNOPS in the process of work on the NGO law allowed to gain confidence from the side of the GoI and CoR, hence it provides a very good starting point to move to this phase. At the same time, the Kurdistan parliament specifically requested UNOPS to support development of the KRG NGO law. The support was reiterated by the deputy Prime Minister of the KRG. Continuous support to the NGOs Directorate is already resulting in positive change of attitude of the Directorate towards NGOs and civil society. The process will be continued.</p> <p><u>Objective 2.-</u> Al Mesalla NGO has completed the capacity building component for their staff and the NGO network and started the preparation of the civic education campaign with the selected NGO network.</p> <p><u>Objective 3 –</u> Agreement and excellent cooperation was reached between OCHA, UNAMI, NCCI, DRC, IFRC and UNOPS and the first phase of the component, the DRR training, was a success and the start of coordinated efforts at the governorate level. A second phase of the component will start in May.</p>

Main implementation constraints & challenges (2-3 sentences)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Iraqi registration process for local and international NGOs remains a major constraint for the selection of suitable and qualified NGOs for implementation of the grant funds. • Low quality of project proposals and an inability of applicant NGOs to understand requirements (ToR) of request for proposals resulted in the need to re-advertise some of the RFPs. This had negative implications in terms of slowing down the implementation pace of the project. • Given restrictions imposed by security concerns, ensuring proper monitoring of grants is a challenge. However, great efforts are made to weigh up for the limited access to Iraq and to follow up that all activities are properly monitored by UNOPS staff and external hired agents. • Remote management of grants will be a main challenge hence, external monitoring companies will be hired to follow up closely on activities. Ad hoc visits will further be organized, security permitting. • Uncertain political developments (general elections, forming of a new government) negatively affect the process of support to implementation of the NGO law.