

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund
Project #:C9-25
Date and Quarter Updated: April - June, 2nd 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:

1. To establish a liberal legal and administrative framework for Iraqi NGOs, respected both by the authorities and the NGO community itself.
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.
4. To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.
5. 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. Canadian Leaders in International Consulting (CLIC) were awarded a contract to provide Technical Assistance for the Citizens Participation grant fund (second module Citizens Participation component) 2. Darat consultancy was awarded a contract to provide Technical Assistance for the Local Governance Assessment (first module Citizens Participation component) 3. Trainers recruited to conduct the Emergency Preparedness and Response component. 4. Request for proposal – Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) coordination grant fund to select six NGOs from the ones that participated in the DRR training. 5. Request for proposal- small peace-building grant fund in Kirkuk and Baghdad (Peace-building component)

Funds Committed	\$ 2,230,062.24	% of approved	52%
Funds Disbursed	\$ 1,123,644.16	% of approved	26%
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.	1. Assistance was provided to Government of Iraq in the process of developing implementing regulations to the NGO law: 2 nd – 4 th of July in Erbil 26 Representatives of the Iraqi Council of Ministers Secretariat, including the NGOs Directorate, several Iraqi Government Ministries, CoR, and Iraqi and International NGOs, participated in roundtable meeting on implementing regulations for the new Iraqi Law on Non-Governmental Organizations. The roundtable was organised in cooperation with International Center for Not-for-profit law.	% of planned	55

	<p>2. Follow up on KRG NGO law continued. Activities focused on ensuring better coordination among various stakeholders (KRG, KP, NGOs) and facilitation of the agreement to work on one draft of the law (not to multiply the drafts) in order to streamline the process. 3. Agreement between UNOPS and NCCMD for implementation of capacity building project for NGO Directorate was signed.</p> <p>4. Selection of companies to provide English language courses and web design services to NGO Directorate was finalized.</p>		
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.	<p>NGO Al Mesalla conducted different activities during the last quarter: i) hired a web developer to improve and update the LAONF network web portal; ii) Al Amal association was contracted as an external evaluator. The following four NGOs were selected and visited by Alamal: Kurdistan Youth Empowerment Org KYEO, Erbil (North of Iraq), Iraqi Al Murtaqa Foundation for Human Development, Baghdad, Freedom of Opinion-Media Org, Kerbala (Center of Iraq) and Women Justice Org, Al Diwanya (South of Iraq).iii) LAONF Network assembly meeting was organized with the participation of 28 members. iv) A training was organized for the selected NGOs that will be conducting the civic education campaign on human rights. Other topics presented were: governance, fundraising, human rights norms and standards, rule of law and training skills. v) First group of NGOs has been selected to start with the first round of the civic education campaign on human rights. Registration issues and strategy are under preparation.</p>	% of planned	50
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.	<p>The second phase of this component started with the launching of a request for proposals (DRR coordination grant fund) in early April. In May the evaluation of 14 received proposals followed and two coordination meetings took place with NCCI, OCHA and DRC. In June the negotiation with the selected 6 NGOs was completed, and on the 1 July grant agreements will be signed and the implementation of the projects in six governorates start.</p>	% of planned	60
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 in Said Sadiq/Sharoozor in Sulaymania and in Hilla City center in BabyI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment Teams and Advisory Committees were formed in the two locations, composed of local stakeholders including authorities, academia, civil society, private bussines; <p>Contractual arrangements with the technical assistance provider (Darat Consulting) were completed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2-day Introductory meeting for local decision makers was organised in Amman in April; - 5-day Methodology drafting workshop for Assessment Team members was organised in 	% of planned	60

	<p>Amman in April (methodology bases on the one used by IDEA);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5-day Assessment training for members of Assessment Teams was organised in Erbil in May; - Assessment field work commenced on 1st of June (to be finished by the end of July). Backstopping and TA provided on continuous basis by Darat Consulting. <p>2. Second module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The implementation of five grants started in April and project activities are ongoing in the Lower South: Missan, Basrah, Muthanna, Thi Qar. Technical assistance was provided from the early stages to improve the implementation strategy of the grantees projects. CLIC consultants (technical assistance provider) were unable to obtain visas for Basra, hence the training scheduled in Basra for May was rescheduled and moved to Erbil and took place from the 23 to 27 June. Besides inviting two participants from each NGO, 9 local authorities from four governorates were invited to participate during the last two days of the trainings. 		
5. To spearhead collaborative initiatives to counter conflict trends through civil society with the ultimate aim of protecting human rights and achieving community development.	<p>The different activities of the grant managed by INSAN NGO were completed as planned and implementation is ongoing. The following activities were completed: i) After the conflict management and protection training for 10 focal points, two conflict assessment reports were issued. ii) a study tour in Lebanon for the 10 focal points was conducted in close coordination with ALEF (Association Libanaise pour l'éducation et la formation). iii) four peace building awareness raising activities were completed targeting community stakeholders (including a football match and a community lunch, . iv) A 4 days training workshop was conducted for 10 IDPN staff to improve their skills in key areas. v) efforts to identify a web designer to set up a web portal of the network were initiated. vi) Jointly with UNOPS prepared the ToR for the small peace-building grants.</p>	% of planned	40

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

Objective 1: As a result of the Roundtable on implementing regulations for the Iraqi NGO law, the participants agreed on a set of recommendations, which will be used by the Council of Ministers Secretariat in the process of drafting the implementation guidelines. It is a very important step in the process of drafting of the implementing regulations (the process is led by the Iraqi CoMSec), in particular taken the various, and often divergent interests represented by participants of the Roundtable into account. The new Iraqi Law on Non-governmental organizations (law no. 12) entered into force in April 2010. The law still lacks implementing regulations hence cannot be fully put in practice The law regulates some major areas in relations between authorities and NGOs like, for example, establishment and registration of NGOs, level of control of authorities on the work carried out by NGOs etc. It is expected that this event and further assistance rendered to CoMSec in the course of the drafting process will allow for a quicker approval of implementing guidelines, which will follow international best practices and contribute significantly to development of Iraqi civil society and regulation of relations between authorities and civil society. On the KRG side, UNOPS involvement (together with ICNL) helped to streamline the process of work on the KRG NGO law. It was agreed by various parties to

use one draft (as opposed to the seven existing ones) as a base for amendments, comments and negotiations. UNOPS has closely followed the process over past months and together with ICNL, concerned authorities, the Kurdistan Parliament and NGOs agreed on a timeline of work on the NGO law.

Objective 2: Al Mesalla NGO completed the capacity building component for both their staff and the NGO LAONF network. The last training for 30 NGOs took place from the 9-16 May on (ethics, finance, human resources, planning, training skills, and fundraising). The preparations of the civic education campaign such as the strategy to be implemented by the 30 selected NGOs and financial management procedures are ongoing. The subject of the campaign is equal access to education for boys and girls.

Objective 3: Continuous cooperation with OCHA, UNAMI, NCCI, DRC, IFRC and UNOPS remained after the first phase of the component (DRR training) was completed. In April an RFP was launched. In May, 14 out of the 18 participating NGOs submitted a proposal. After a joint pre-selection with the partners, UNOPS worked closely with all the bidding NGOs until six were selected and negotiations completed. At the end of June the procurement process was completed and in July the NGOs will start the implementation of the projects in cooperation with DRC, OCHA and NCCI at the governorate level.

Objective 4: On the first component: the preparatory phase of the Local Governance Assessment allowed to: (i) familiarize its beneficiaries and at the same time actual field implementers (Assessment Teams) with the idea of LGA; (ii) participants, under the guidance of experts, were able to finalize the methodology to be used and were trained on assessment techniques; (iii) local decision makers were introduced with the idea of the assessment and expressed their support; (iv) agencies involved in Local Area Development Programme (present in the two selected locations) were briefed on the activities and it was agreed that the outcomes of the LGA could be used for programming of LADP and other complementary purposes. First part of the field assessment work proceeds as planned and activities enjoy local support.

The second component is under implementation by five NGOs. Each of the selected NGOs followed a different strategy of outreach to their communities through the civic education campaigns. The technical assistance provided (backstopping plus Erbil training) benefited the NGOs as follows: i) raised the understanding of participants about the concepts of citizenship, participation, accountability and challenges, ii) contributed to the creation of a space for dialogue and interaction between civil society and local authorities in Iraq -through reaching a common ground and language amongst the various actors; iii) developed the skills of the participants in citizens participation concepts, community mobilization, networking, advocacy, and coalition building as well as their skills in dealing with media and awareness raising campaigns; and iv) provided participants with the opportunity to link, exchange and learn from each other. At this midterm phase of implementation, NGOs have a better understanding of the citizen participation concepts and the training paved the ground to strengthen cooperation between local authorities and civil society represented by these 5 NGOs.

Objective 5: Through INSAN presence in Al Hurriya and Al Benouk areas, communities have been mobilized by the focal points and through the awareness raising activities communities from different backgrounds have come together to share a common space and find solution for their pressing problems despite the differences.

Main implementation constraints & challenges (2-3 sentences)

- 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 or work closely with selected NGOs to finalize the project proposals. 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.