



**2009 Annual (Tenth) Progress Report on Activities Implemented
Under the United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund
(UNDG ITF) of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for
Iraq (IRFFI)**

Education Sector Report

Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office
Bureau of Management
United Nations Development Programme
mdtf.undp.org

1.1 Education

1.1.1 Sector Outcomes and Outputs

Education	
Outcome 1	Enhanced access to all levels of quality education with a particular focus on girls
Output 1.1	Educational facilities rehabilitated, equipped and functional in target areas
Output 1.2	Schools and educational facilities in target areas are equipped to provide quality education for all
Output 1.3	National educational institutions and communities have improved knowledge and awareness of education, health and hygiene related issues
Output 1.4	Students in most vulnerable areas have access to nutritional meals at schools
Outcome 2	Strengthened institutional and human capacity of the education sector to deliver quality education at all levels
Output 2.1	Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) have an improved capacity to develop policies and strategies
Output 2.2	Strengthened educational systems in target areas for improved quality of education services
Output 2.3	MoE and MoHESR staff acquire enhanced knowledge and skill for improved education planning, management and teaching methodologies
Output 2.4	MoE and MoHESR have strengthened capacity to develop educational curricula

1.1.2 Operating Context During Reporting Period

Of all the issues confronting Iraq's students, the decline in access to quality learning has perhaps the most alarming implications for Iraq's future. Although Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) statistics for 2007/2008 indicate a relatively high average national figure for net primary school enrolment (87 percent), it is clear there are pockets of acute vulnerability in the education sector across all governorates. Enrolment rates, though rising, remain insufficient to realize MDG2, MDG3¹ and Education for All (EFA) goals 2 and 5.² However, ensuring access to education for all Iraqi students is only part of the solution. Equally critical are measures to improve the quality of education, particularly to increase the standard of teaching in schools, universities and educational institutes. Presently, the teaching force in Iraq requires substantial upgrading of skills to meet the needs of children. Quality secondary schools are scarce.

Persistent violence and insecurity make parents unwilling to send their students to school. Mass displacement further strains already weak services and systems. In the disputed areas in particular, inadequate access to education for each community (Arab, Turkmen, Kurdish) in their respective mother tongue is a concern.

More than one in six schools have been vandalized, damaged or destroyed.³ While more than 23,000 schools are operating, school buildings total fewer than 17,000.⁴ University buildings including libraries

¹ Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, *National Report on the Status of Human Development in Iraq*, 2008

² EFA Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all; EFA Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015 (EFA Mid-Term Review for the Arab States 2008)

³ Extrapolated from figures in draft National Development Plan (NDP) sectoral committee paper on education

and laboratories as well as teaching centres are severely damaged. Lack of infrastructure and overcrowding lead one in three schools to deliver lessons in two or even three shifts,⁵ and shortages of essential teaching/learning materials are acute in some of the most vulnerable areas. Most educational facilities lack drinkable water, toilets or garbage containers.

Thousands of students with special needs have no access to education, and in spite of progress in support to school communities with high concentration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), many IDP students still face a serious lack of facilities. Nearly nine in ten students under 15 do not attend primary school regularly, mostly because of insecurity or distance from school.⁶ Among those who attend school, only about 40 percent⁷ progress from primary to intermediate level. MoE's Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2007/2008 figures indicate progress to intermediate level (Grade 7–9) of 43.5 percent for male and 37.3 percent for female, followed by progress to secondary level (Grade 10–12) of 28.9 percent male and 25.1 percent female.⁸ Overall, adult literacy is only 65.6 percent,⁹ with wide variations between governorates. In addition, disparities in literacy rates between women and men are as high among younger people as among their elders.¹⁰

Quality is considered to be low in the public technical and vocational schools and institutes, seen in insufficiently skilled teachers and instructors; shortage of teaching aids; dilapidated workshops for practical training; outdated curricula that is not suitable to market needs; few linkages with industry to strengthen the quality of student practice; and lack of an institutional framework to organize, articulate, integrate, regulate and ensure the quality of training interventions and programs. Moreover, a centralized decision-making structure coupled with generally weak management capacity at school level contributes to unnecessary duplication of efforts and ineffective use of limited resources.

1.1.3 Implementation Constraints and Challenges

Funding shortfalls have hindered the realization of the Education Sector Outcome Team's (EDUSOT) planned goals for 2009, particularly with regard to construction and rehabilitation of school facilities by UN and nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners with the assumption that the Government of Iraq (GoI) will accelerate the infrastructure work. However, construction and rehabilitation of schools is a paramount issue that needs to be prioritized due to the dire need, which cannot be fulfilled in a short period of time. Substantially, the 'land' issue is still an obstacle when constructing new schools to replace the mud schools in areas where EDUSOT has intervened. On the other hand, funding for humanitarian activities in the education sector covered 46 percent of requirements to respond to the most basic educational needs.

Accessibility, insecurity and frequent local curfews are still an issue in some areas, which caused delays in implementation of projects and constrained the presence of international expertise inside the country. Discrepancies in school holidays and vacations were obstacles to implementing training activities.

⁴ Ministry of Education (MoE)

⁵ Extrapolated from MoE 2007/2008 Education Management Information System figures; this problem is greater in intermediate and secondary schools

⁶ World Food Programme (WFP), Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA), 2008

⁷ Central Organization for Statistics (COS) data

⁸ Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS3), 2006

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit (IAU) Women's Day fact sheet

The central function and decision-making role of Ministry of Education (MoE) delayed the smooth implementation at community and Directorate of Education (DoE) levels, where all requests and approvals have to pass through centralized channels. Alterations in priorities of the MoE and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) necessitated the revision of implementation targets and modifications to the number of planned project sites and scope of work. Moreover, weak coordination and communication among ministries and limited information-sharing among directorates due to lack of professional staff at governorate levels are still major constraints for efficient implementation of education programmes.

Although many training workshops and meetings were successfully conducted inside Iraq, capacity-building activities are becoming increasingly expensive, consuming time and human resources for facilitators from Baghdad, UN staff and government officials. Thus, the limited presence of UN staff on the ground has negatively affected the direct dialogue and transfer of knowledge elements of trainings.

1.1.4 Coverage and Counterparts

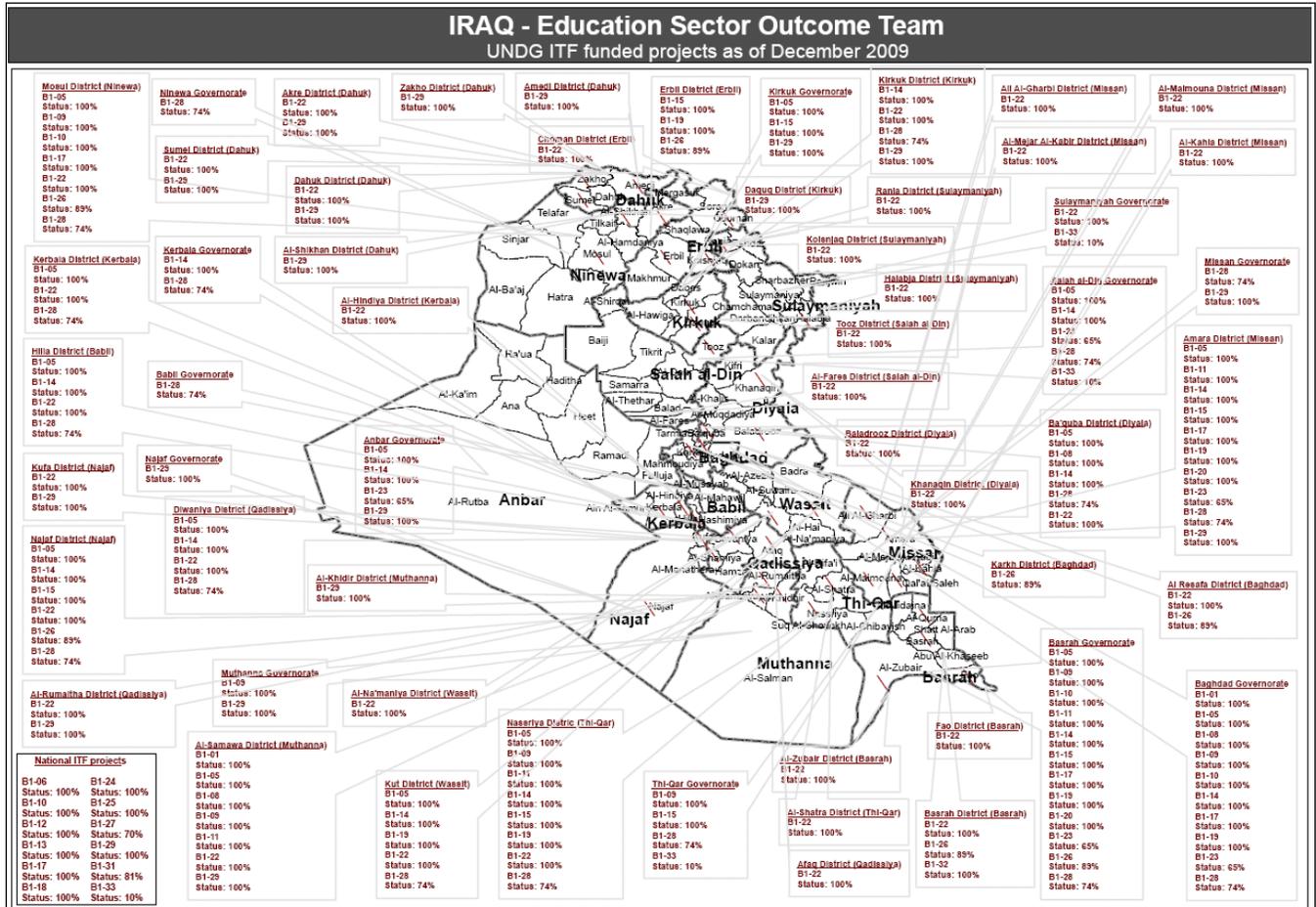
The primary counterparts are the MoE and its Directorates in each of the 18 governorates, as they are the main recipients of support and are involved in all stages of programme design, planning and implementation. Another primary counterpart is the MoHESR. In addition to the Ministries and Directorates of Education (DoE), principals and teachers at schools/institutes were involved in all procedures relating to identification of project locations, finalizing the scope of rehabilitation work, procurement, quality control and progress monitoring. These continuous partnerships helped to ensure transparency and greater sense of responsibility, ownership, commitment and sustainability of projects after their completion.

Other government entities include: Foundation of Technical Education (FTE), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Ministry of Health (MoH), Directorates of Health (DoH), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), technical institutes and university departments. Some projects continued to be implemented in collaboration with international and local NGOs, as well as contractors, to ensure not only optimal cost performance but also the efficient implementation of projects, as they are more aware of the local operating environment and are stakeholders of local development.

The sector's various interventions target all educational levels; kindergarten (early childhood), primary, intermediate, secondary and higher education in addition to adult literacy through non-formal education (NFE) activities. The geographic coverage of projects and activities varied from national to governorate level; in some area-based projects, coverage was even tapered to district or school level. Emphasis was given to remote and rural areas where attendance is low and dropout rates are high, especially for girls.

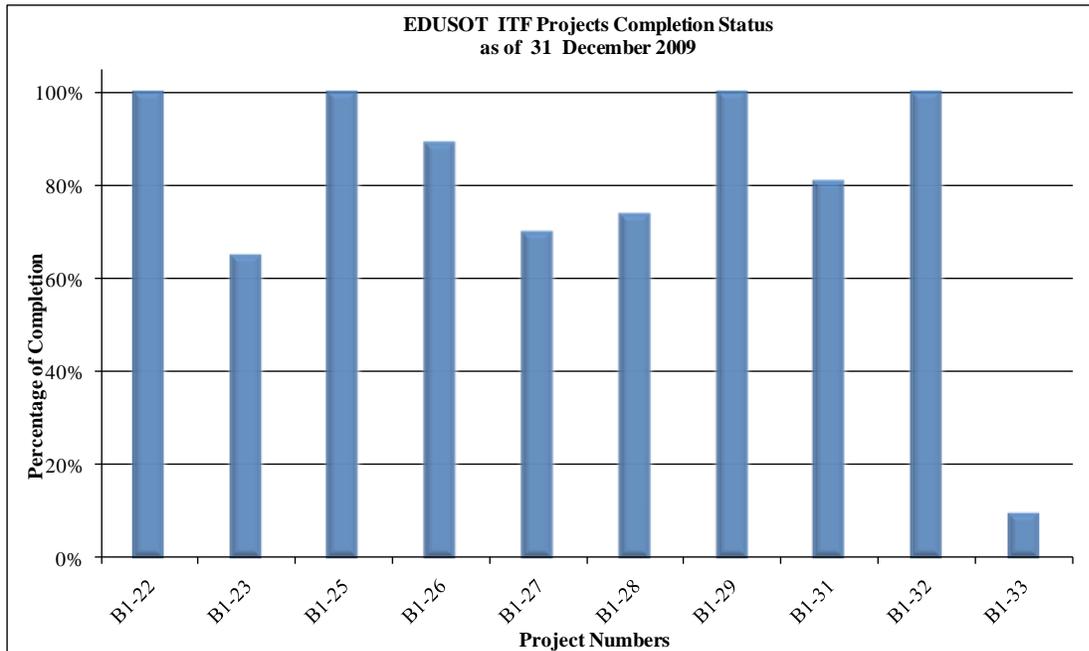
The map illustrates the distribution of member agencies and NGOs across Iraq based on their activities; it also reflects the level of operational action by governorate.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.–1 District Level Map for Education Sector



1.1.5 Results

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.–2 Project Implementation Status for Education Sector



1.1.6 Narrative Explanatory Summary of Results

In order to enhance access to all levels of quality education, the EDUSOT has continued to work on improving school environments to meet minimum child-friendly standards. About 41 schools were comprehensively rehabilitated and water and sanitation facilities in 114 schools were upgraded in 11 governorates benefitting approximately 46,000 students. In selected schools, 30 classrooms were established to reduce overcrowding and ease the pressure on multi-shift schools. Within the E-learning Initiative, 10 school libraries were rehabilitated and equipped with IT equipment and furniture in Baghdad, Erbil, Thi-Qar and Basrah, and 32 mobile computer trolleys were procured for 20 Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) classes and 12 youth centres.

To promote quality non-formal learning for school drop-outs, EDUSOT increased its support to ALP to reach more youth, particularly women in rural areas. The number of ALP students as well as the percentage of female students has steadily increased from the 2007/2008 enrolment of around 17,000 students (30 percent female) to 37,000 students (34 percent female) in 2008/2009. A significant expansion is recorded for 2009, where 50,000 out-of-school students and youths are receiving education at a total of 396 schools (up from 190). Support for capacity building continued with an additional 37 master trainers and 1,673 teachers trained in 2009 in ALP methodology and pedagogy. The concept of life skills has been incorporated into ALP, and new textbooks in Kurdish and Arabic have been printed to reach 136,000 students for the coming years.



© UNICEF/2009: Students learning at an ALP class in Erbil

The latest EMIS report indicates a high repetition rate, with 15.1 percent for boys, and 10.4 percent for girls.¹¹

To strengthen institutional capacity in strategic planning, policy formulation and management of the educational sector, the capacity-building component has been designed to target technical and senior staff at MoE, MoHESR and DoEs to complement and foster current efforts toward development of the National Education Strategy (NES) for Iraq. Capacity-building training has been unified in one comprehensive program that includes seven technical training workshops and on-the-job training in sector diagnosis, education policy strategic framework, programming, target setting, management and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) over a period of one year. In this regard, several meetings were held along with a follow-up workshop in February 2009 to further assess the ministries' training needs. Three training workshops took place in 2009 including one in sector diagnosis facilitated by three consultants from International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) benefiting 26 MoE, MoHESR and DoE staff. Workshops were followed by on-the-job training and follow-up activities inside Iraq.

Mainstreaming education for students with special needs was a priority for the EDUSOT starting in 2009, and work started in supporting the MoE to develop an Iraqi Early Child Development (ECD) framework that meets international standards. Focal staff has been appointed in each ministry and are members of a national committee.

Moreover, the EDUSOT continued to support the MoE in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), where inclusive education for students with special needs has been given high priority. A three-week campaign on inclusive education took place to inform communities and families of the right to education for students with special needs, especially for children aged three to eight years. Training of teachers started in KRG schools and a manual on inclusive education was developed to provide information to teachers and parents.

Jointly supported by EDUSOT, the Child Friendly School (CFS) initiative moved to the next step of the soft components. Workshops were held for government officials to develop guidelines for CFS, guide policy formulation and support implementation of the model schools as well as a school-based maintenance strategy. Twenty-one schools in eight governorates have been identified for piloting CFS. Thirteen schools were upgraded through rehabilitation to meet the physical standards of CFS, benefitting 6,030 school children (39 percent girls) and 421 teachers (69 percent female). Water and sanitation facilities were improved in 54 schools serving a total of 35,255 children (47 percent girls) with 1,926 teachers (72 percent female).



© IOM / 2009: Distribution of desks in Ninewa

In partnership with international NGOs, the EDUSOT established and supported parent-teacher associations (PTAs) in 10 schools in Erbil and 13 schools in Basrah. Guidelines for PTAs were developed and 3,435 parents contributed to school-based management activities benefitting 6,870 students and 350 teachers. A partnership with the British Council was finalized and formally launched and will aim to

¹¹ General Education in Iraq 2007–2008; EMIS draft report in October 2009

enhance the learning experience and outcomes of students through the development of a set of standards for teaching and school management in Iraq. National committees, composed of key MoE staff inclusive of professional staff from learning institutions, have been formed and will lead the work.

There is a tremendous need for awareness on health and hygiene among communities. Five awareness campaigns were conducted in Baghdad, Karbala, Misan and Babil in which 165 community leaders and teachers within the school community were oriented on the Health Promoting Schools (HPS) initiative and psychosocial support for students. Three awareness campaigns were conducted in Baghdad and in Local Area Development Plan (LADP) areas in Misan and Suleimaniya on healthy lifestyle and diet benefiting about 140 community leaders, teachers and parents. Additionally, 50 primary schools are promoting health and hygiene messages in all governorates through continuous health education classes, including drawing competitions.

In the 46 schools that are implementing the HPS initiative, health screening was completed at the beginning of 2009 together with assessment of the school health environment. This was followed by data analysis and finalization of the full report on health services within the targeted schools in all governorates. Based on the result of the examination during this study of all students in 148 schools at 8 governorates, students were referred to hospitals, provided with eyeglasses, or recommended for hearing aids. Those with musculoskeletal abnormalities were referred to orthopedic doctors.

Within the same context of school health, more than 400 teachers and school staff were trained on the HPS initiative and detection of visual and hearing defects and musculoskeletal abnormalities. Health facilities in the 46 HPS were supported with psychological and first aid services. Community committees have been established to build public awareness for school health services, and guidelines for health screening have been developed. In an advocacy effort, officials from partner ministries were sensitized on the HPS initiative.

To enhance the quality of education in Iraq, several capacity-building activities were implemented, including: (i) training in planning and management for 65 MoE/MoHESR staff; (ii) training of 290 education staff (156 male, 134 female) on school health and hygiene; (iii) fellowship and sponsorship programmes in Germany, Italy and Kingdom of Bahrain for about 40 professors, academics and students; (iv) training for 325 university educational experts, teachers and instructors (235 male, 90 female) in areas such as training of trainers (ToTs) in teachers' education, Community Learning Centers (CLC), psychosocial support, child protection, development of online learning modules and literacy textbooks, production of quality educational TV episodes, production of e-learning teaching materials, developing a strategy for school maintenance, vocational training and Know About Business (KAB); and (v) about 50 curriculum experts and developers were trained on designing competency-based training curricula.

In supporting the development of education curricula, key activities in 2009 included: (i) drafting, editing and translating a manual on school maintenance; (ii) revising literacy material including Arabic language, mathematics, and general culture; (iii) a back-to-school campaign for 582 schools in which approximately 105,500 students (40 percent girls) and 15,000 teachers received basic school supplies, including 35,500 ALP students and 2,300 ALP teachers, and 47,500 students and 2,600 teachers under the Marshlands Initiative; (iv) 100 copies of KAB student guide were printed and distributed to students in the technical institute/FTE/MoHESR; (v) printing and distribution of 3,100 copies of a teachers' guide on health in schools and distribution of 22,000 brochures and notebooks to students; and (vi) production and broadcast of 624 educational TV episodes.

Regarding educational support to Iraqi students enrolled in formal schools and to others who are either displaced internally or refugees in neighboring countries, the educational TV channel is officially operational; a 12-day workshop on 'Preparing and Directing Educational TV Programs' took place in November 2009. The workshop aimed to build the capacity of eight MoE TV directors and editors on major activities related to the production of educational and youth TV programs. As for production activities, educational episodes are being broadcast. Animated TV spots for promoting civic values, human rights, agreed-on social values,



©UNESCO / 2009: Educational TV broadcasting unit

gender equality and environment protection have been produced and will be used after formal commencement of the TV channel. The floor plan, technical design and renovation of the new TV production unit are complete, and procuring and contracting a supplier for establishing the studio, control room and editing suites is in its final stage.

EDUSOT in partnership with the Foundation of Technical Education (FTE) within MoHESR and the Vocational Education division within MoE has developed a programme to support rehabilitation and modernization of the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector in Iraq. As part of this programme, a media campaign was launched to increase awareness and stimulate interest in TVET among young women and men for better access to employment in the construction sector. The campaign started by broadcasting a 20-minute documentary on TV. Also, a 20-minute advocacy film and five posters were produced to encourage unemployed out-of-school youth to enroll in training courses for construction trades. Fourteen information and communication technology (ICT) and vocational training centers (VTC) were established and equipped with automotive training equipment in Baghdad, Erbil, Basrah, Najaf and Ninewa, and standard equipment for three automotive workshops was delivered to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). An awareness workshop on the KAB Manual was held in Kurdistan for senior officials from MoLSA, MoE and MoHESR.

Regarding use of information and communication technology in education, two 'ICT in education' strategies were submitted by the MoE in Baghdad and Kurdistan, and a contract has been signed with Dar Al-Uloom University to revise the submitted strategies. The revised strategies will be presented and discussed in a workshop with Iraqi officials and experts to prepare the final version. In December 2009, the final versions of two e-learning packages in the Information & Communication Technology Development Centers (ICTDC) were produced by the Iraqi team to cover a part of the 9th and 12th grade curricula. Training workshops were organized during December 2009 for 1,500 MoE staff to prepare them to take the online test for International Computer Drivers Licenses. Moreover, an E-Caravan, which provides mobile access, was constructed and equipped to be delivered in February 2010.

The provision of essential vocational workshop equipment and IT infrastructure to the MoE has allowed the ministry to provide quality TVET. This is in line with the strategy to speed up the process of recovery, reconstruction and revitalization of technical education schools and institutions in Iraq. Hence, the sector's tangible outcomes will be mainly represented by a revised TVET system, curriculum development, and fully equipped technical colleges/institutes and vocational schools, as well as workshops and a network of computer centers for improved quality of teaching and training. Key MoE,

MoHESR and MoLSA staff working in the vocational training programme are building capacity and being exposed to best practices.

1.1.7 Other SOT Major Contributions and Implementing Partners in the Sector

Bilateral funds from the European Commission, Qatari Foundation, Japan Platform, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Netherlands and Greece, along with agencies' core funds, contributed to the effective implementation of vital projects within the education sector. More specifically, bilateral funds substantially contributed to sector outputs of rehabilitating and equipping educational facilities; designing and distributing learning and teaching materials; conducting awareness campaigns in target areas; strengthening institutional and human capacity by supporting the education system to improve the quality of services and training of staff; and supporting the development of education curricula.

While the MoE is the main partner, EDUSOT works with multi-lateral and bilateral education development partners and national and international NGOs, in particular: UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Centre for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UN Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, European Commission, International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP), JEN, International Medical Corps, INTERSOS, People In Need (PIN), Heartland Alliance, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Relief International. New partnerships have been finalized with the British Council, Save the Children–Iraq, and Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA) for the coming year's programme.

