



**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)**

Food Security, Agriculture and Food Assistance Sector Report

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

1.1 Food Security, Agriculture and Food Assistance

1.1.1 Sector Outcomes and Outputs

Food Security	
Outcome 1	Improved food security situation of vulnerable groups
Output 1.1	Improved and equitable food provided to vulnerable groups
Output 1.2	Improved nutritional status of vulnerable groups
Outcome 2	Government of Iraq (GOI) has national food assistance and hunger-reduction programmes in place
Output 2.1	Enhanced capacity of GOI food security units to better monitor and report on progress and gaps in food security issues in each governorate
Output 2.2	Strengthened emergency preparedness capacities at national and local levels to respond to food crises in an effective and efficient manner
Output 2.3	Enhanced capacities of GOI staff in supply chain management

Agriculture	
Outcome 1	Enhanced production and productivity in the agricultural sector
Output 1.1	Government of Iraq (GOI) supported in the rehabilitation and operationalization of irrigation infrastructure in selected areas
Output 1.2	Iraqi stakeholders have enhanced capacity to access and apply agricultural technology
Outcome 2	Environment for sustainable employment generation is created in Iraq
Output 2.1	Enhanced capacity for unemployed and other vulnerable groups to access better job opportunities
Output 2.2	Dairy food chains developed
Outcome 3	Environmentally sustainable agricultural policy and natural resources management in place
Output 3.1	GOI has enhanced capacity to develop agricultural policies
Output 3.2	GOI has enhanced capacity to manage natural resources

1.1.2 Operating Context During the Reporting Period

During 2009, the Agriculture and Food Security Sector Outcome Team (AFSSOT) worked to rehabilitate and develop the agricultural sector in Iraq through a comprehensive field-level strategy and programmatic implementation of interventions that targeted all related fields. Food security remains an important focus of this sector. Although the food security situation in Iraq is improving, there remain 930,000 people who are food insecure and an additional 6.4 million at the threshold of food insecurity without the Public Distribution System (PDS). Agricultural development goes hand in hand with targeted food assistance to vulnerable groups to improve the overall food security situation in Iraq.

The agricultural sector in the country requires a wide range of interventions in a variety of sub-sectors including improvement of food security (acquisition, utilization and productivity/output), control of

zoonotic and transboundary diseases, agro-industrial revitalization, marshland and fisheries restoration, food quality and food safety standardization, irrigation systems and water management, livelihood recovery and capacity building for more effective agricultural planning and development. These interventions require a considerable amount of funding to realize the sector's planned goals and objectives.

Despite significant improvements, particularly in Baghdad, security problems continue to pose an obstacle, forcing agencies to manage projects remotely from Amman with the assistance of national coordinators in Iraq and active involvement of counterpart representatives. Agencies in the sector continue to enhance their presence in the country by increasing the number of national and international operators in Baghdad, Erbil, Basrah and other governorates.

The poor security situation in Iraq has resulted in a lack of the technical expertise necessary to maintain agricultural production. Limited availability of technical, capital and human resources on the ground compounds the adverse effects that years of conflict and budgetary neglect have had on core agriculture infrastructure assets. These factors have led to a dramatic deterioration of production and productivity in the agriculture and agro-industrial sector. Food insecurity is also a much larger problem in rural areas of Iraq than urban.

Iraqi dependence on low-cost imported food heavily affects agricultural production by limiting Iraqi producers from participating in local agricultural and food markets. In addition, low levels of rainfall have prompted fears of drought and have negatively affected agricultural output in many areas.

A key challenge to effectively operate in Iraq's complex environment has been the deterioration of various state institutions. Capacity-building of state institutions and line ministries will continue to be a major programmatic focus of AFSSOT interventions over the short to medium term.

1.1.3 Implementation Constraints and Challenges

The tense security situation continues to delay implementation of some projects, as was the case in the installation of the closed recirculation system and pilot cages in Suweira district in Waasit governorate. The supplier is being followed closely to speed up the process as much as possible. Similarly, the security situation in Al-Qadissiya governorate further deteriorated during the reporting period; curfews and restrictions on movement there have prevented the timely unfolding of project activities.

The nomination of candidates by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) for training abroad took longer than expected (on average three to four months), causing several training sessions to be postponed for administrative and logistics reasons. Moreover, prolonged procedures for obtaining visas and sometimes the denial of visas for trainees travelling outside Iraq caused postponement and as well as cancellation of a number of workshops. This situation is now improving for trainings in Jordan; however, there are still a number of countries where training for Iraqi technicians remains bureaucratically cumbersome.

Unavailability of adequate technical resources in the line ministries continue to constrain implementation of some projects causing considerable delays, as in the case of collection of soil samples from construction sites, which delayed the analysis report. Moreover, delays have been experienced in the construction of ongoing projects, as in the case of the construction of the tissue-culture laboratory.

The lack of proper and consistent electrical supply has consistently caused delays in the installation and the functioning of equipment.

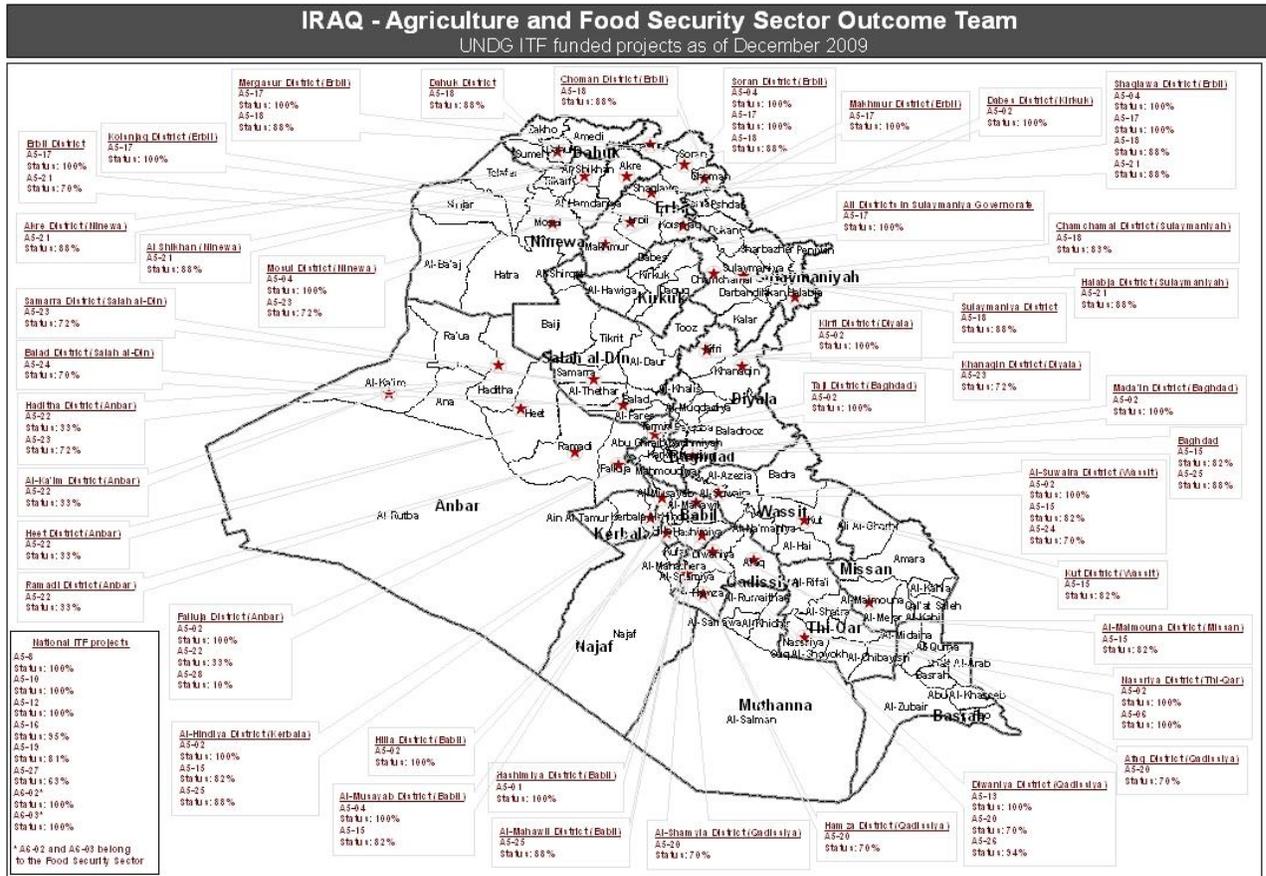
1.1.4 Coverage/Counterparts

AFSSOT works closely with various state and local authorities but mainly the line ministries—namely, the Ministries of Agriculture, Water Resources, Industry and Minerals, Planning and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Trade, Displacement and Migration, and the State Ministry of Marshlands in addition to many state departments under these ministries in all the Iraqi governorates. These ministries are the main recipients of support and are involved in all stages of programme design, planning, implementation, monitoring and close-out.

AFSSOT interventions target all agricultural and agro-industrial sectors in addition to providing food support to vulnerable groups (including pregnant/lactating women, malnourished children, tuberculosis patients, small-scale farmers, female-headed households, primary school children and internally displaced persons [IDPs]) through the food assistance component of the sector. Geographical coverage varies from nationwide projects to governorate level and some area-based projects.

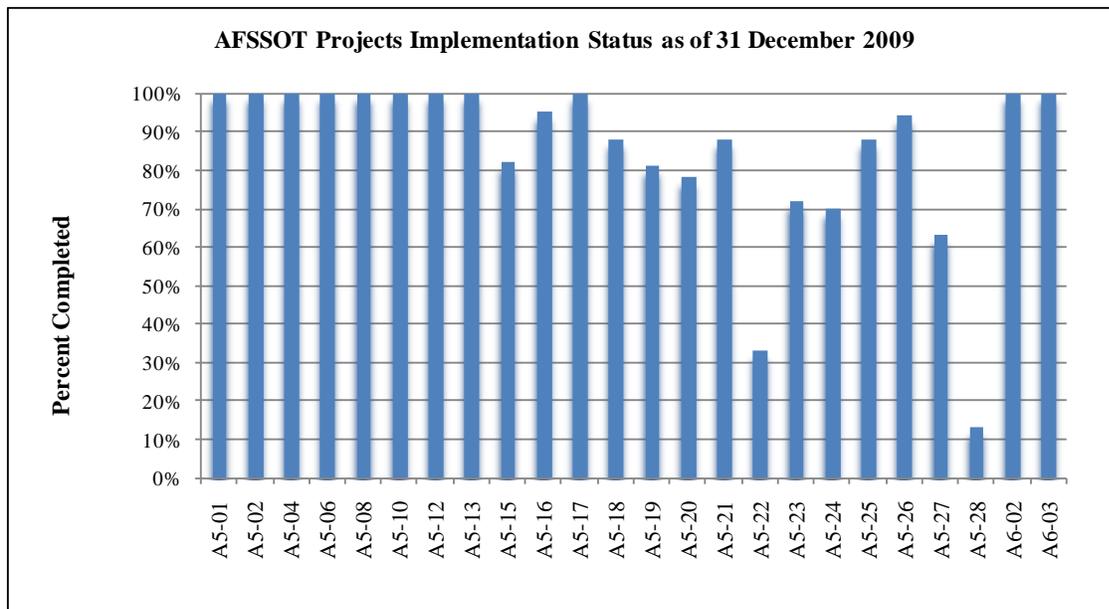
AFSSOT members include: the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), International Relief & Development (IRD) and CHF International.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.–1 District Level Map for Agriculture and Food Security Sector



1.1.5 Results

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1.1.6 Narrative Explanatory Summary of Results

Food Security – Outcome 1: Improved food security situation of vulnerable groups

One strategy to reduce poverty and sustain employment for vulnerable groups is to stimulate the resumption of fish farming in large- and small-scale enterprises through practical demonstrations of applicable fish farming techniques. AFSSOT worked to restore and modernize fish production by completing the installation of a recirculation aquaculture closed system for fish hatchery and culture of carp and local fish in Wassit governorate, as well as installing a Chinese hatchery system for barbus and carp species. Pilot cages were installed in Kut and Hindia dams for new aquaculture in lakes. Moreover, AFSSOT completed construction of Huweze Hatchery in Huweze Marshland, which includes an administration building, earth ponds and hatchery system, and supplied it with laboratory equipment and chemicals.

Food Security – Outcome 2: Government of Iraq has national food assistance and hunger-reduction programmes in place

To strengthen the technical and institutional capacity of Iraqi veterinary services for effective surveillance and control of zoonotic and transboundary diseases to protect livestock and reduce serious threats to human health and safety, AFSSOT selected 400 veterinarians from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), who were divided into three groups (North, Centre and South) and then sub grouped according to four diseases (foot and mouth disease, low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI)/Newcastle Disease (ND), rabies, brucellosis). The veterinarians will be trained to implement a nationwide zoonotic and transboundary disease survey.

Agriculture – Outcome 1: Enhanced production and productivity in the agriculture sector

In support of creating productive employment and improving food security through increased agricultural production and productivity, AFSSOT worked to rehabilitate and modernize the date production system in Iraq and introduce integrated pest management (IPM) to control date palm pests and diseases in respect of local ecosystems. AFSSOT established a world-class date processing line at the Date Processing and Marketing Company in Baghdad. Moreover, a manual covering good agricultural practices (GAP) for date palm production has been prepared by a group of experts from the Date Palm Institute in Iraq.

To increase production and productivity of milk and meat of the dairy herds in Iraq through strengthening rural and institutional technical and management capacities and creating market and employment opportunities along the dairy value chain in both rural and urban areas, the sector has conducted several trainings of MoA staff on dairy development; breeding; milk collection, handling and processing; marketing; and dairy association.

The sector took upon itself to improve the genetic potential of dairy cattle through training and introduction of new technology, namely embryo transfer, which will lead to improved quality and quantity of dairy products. This training is a major milestone in capacity-building in the livestock sector, with a high level of technical training being the first of its kind for Iraq

Agriculture – Outcome 2: Environment for sustainable employment generation is created in Iraq

To promote income-generation activities and expansion of job opportunities, and to provide technical assistance to selected micro- and small-scale enterprises, AFSSOT has trained more than 35 technical and vocational skills trainers in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in a variety of economic and technical fields; trained 14 community development leaders in local economic development theories, strategic planning, participatory appraisal methods and monitoring and evaluation; provided technology transfers and dedicated technical assistance to 12 vocational training providers in northern Iraq; rehabilitated local productive capacity in selected areas of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah through the establishment of 8 high quality/high standard production groups; trained more than 1,360 individuals in a variety of technical and economic fields and provided the most dynamic of the training graduates with more than 830 income-generating/job-creating toolkits. Independent appraisals indicate that nearly 1,700 additional jobs were created as a result of the toolkits. AFSSOT also established two production groups in sewing/tailoring in prisons in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah; rehabilitated Dewaniyah Vocational Training Centre (DVTC) and resourced it with over \$425,000 in training equipment; and trained 30 trainers in Dewaniyah in a variety of technical and economic fields. These trainers will become the core cadre of non-food trainers working at the DVTC. AFSSOT also established a welding demonstration site with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Halabja District, KRG/Iraq; trained approximately 700 youth in a variety of vocational skills areas to assist them in obtaining a job in KRG; and trained approximately 250 youth in a variety of vocational skills areas to assist them in obtaining a job in Al-Qadissiyah governorate.

To strengthen the livelihood recovery process by rehabilitating/revitalizing selected agro-processing enterprises and other assets, AFSSOT has trained over 60 Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) staff in data collection and analysis using hand-held data collection devices, identified 250 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and assessed equipment and associated training needs; this will facilitate the selection of 50–75 units that will be assisted in the Fallujah Industrial Zone. Moreover, AFSSOT completed the identification of beneficiaries and assessment against

the training courses offered, to facilitate the selection of 750 persons who will receive skills training. Also, a techno-economic survey of the Fallujah Industrial Zone to identify local economic drivers that will be strengthened and rehabilitated was completed.

Agriculture – Outcome 3: Environmentally sustainable agriculture policy and natural resources management in place

In its effort to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure in the vegetable seed sector in Iraq, AFSSOT has included individuals from the private sector in training programmes such as skills enhancement and entrepreneurship development to provide further impetus for involvement of the private sector in vegetable seed production and marketing. Iraq's National Seed Policy strongly supports the growth of a national seed sector where the private sector will play a major role in marketing. The government will facilitate the process through enactment of appropriate seed law to provide an enabling environment.

