

**United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund**  
**Project #:C9-25**  
**Date and Quarter Updated: July - September, 3rd Quarter 2010**

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

<b>Title</b>	Iraqi Civil Society Empowerment Project				
<b>Geographic Location</b>	National coverage, with specific activities targeting priority areas to be selected when the process of granting NGOs is initiated.				
<b>Project Cost</b>	4,255,193				
<b>Duration</b>	24 months				
<b>Approval Date</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2008	<b>Starting Date</b>	09 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2008	<b>Completion Date</b>	31 Dec 2011
<b>Project Description</b>	<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; &amp; 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) &amp; 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**

<b>Outputs</b>	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 information support. 1.3: Higher awareness across civil society, government and public on rights & duties of NGOs. 2.1 Increased Iraqi capacity to provide CB support to civil society organizations in core organizational functions and Human Rights Civic Education. 2.2: Civic Education campaign on Human Rights conducted by empowered NGO network. 3.1: NGO Emergency Preparedness and Response Network (EPRN) established nationwide 3.2: Enhanced coordination of local humanitarian NGOs with humanitarian community (GoI, UN, Int. NGOs) 3.3: Increased under-standing of humanitarian ethics and advocacy role among NGO community.
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	<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>
<b>Activities</b>	<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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 &amp; 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>
<b>Procurement</b>	<p>In the reporting period major procurement items included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Six grant agreements were awarded within the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) coordination grant fund.</li> <li>2. Five grant agreements were awarded within the small peace-building grant fund, three in Kirkuk and two in Baghdad (Peace-building component)</li> </ol>

<b>Funds Committed</b>	\$ 2,605,369	<b>% of approved</b>	61%
<b>Funds Disbursed</b>	\$ 1,733,530	<b>% of approved</b>	41%
<b>Forecast final date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> December 2010	<b>Delay (months)</b>	

<b>Direct Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>% of planned (current status)</b>
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.*

<b>Quantitative achievements against objectives and results</b>			
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 in the Kurdistan Region, in the process of developing a new NGO law: A Roundtable Conference on the Draft KRG NGO Law took place from 23-25 September 2010 in Erbil (40 participants). The Conference was organized jointly by UNOPS and ICNL, and the participants included Representatives from the Kurdistan Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Presidency Council of the Kurdistan Region, and Kurdish and International NGOs, observers representing federal authorities and international community. The conference focussed on improving the text of the Draft NGO Law that is now before the Kurdistan Parliament and has already had a first reading. The outcome of the conference was that the three groups of participants – Parliament, Government and NGOs – reached consensus on a large number of substantial improvements to the draft law. 2. NCCMD started training activities under the component of capacity building of the staff of the NGOs Directorate.	<b>% of planned</b>	60
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.	During this quarter, the implementing NGO focused its efforts towards the organization of the civic education campaign for 10 selected NGOs from the LAONF network covering 8 provinces. The LAONF network web portal was completed. ( <a href="http://www.laonf.net/">http://www.laonf.net/</a> )	<b>% of planned</b>	60
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.	The six NGOs that are implementing the DRR coordination grant fund have implemented most of their activities. 220 events have been completed. Visibility requirements have been followed and 4,166 beneficiaries have been reached. Activities will be completed in the next quarter.	<b>% of planned</b>	75
4. To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.	1. First module Local Governance Assessment in Said Sadiq/Sharoozor in Sulaymania and in Hilla City center in Babyl: - Assessment field work was finalized in early August in both locations; - Report drafting workshop for two team leaders was organised in Amman from 8 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> of August;	<b>% of planned</b>	75

	<p>- Report drafting phase commenced immediately after the report drafting workshop.</p> <p>Backstopping has been provided during the entire period of field work and continues in the phase of report drafting.</p> <p>2. Second module Citizens Participation Grant fund:</p> <p>- The implementation of five grants continued. 5,000 people have been reached though the 70 implemented events and printed material distributed. Some NGOs requested and were granted a non cost extension and activities will be completed in the next quarter.</p>		
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 implementing NGO has continued carrying out its activities, however, there has been a delay with the preparations of the civic education campaign. The following activities were completed: i) Impact evaluation of peace building projects. ii) Conducted the PRA process in Kirkuk and Baghdad. iii) Supported the small peace-building grant applicants on the preparation of their proposals. iv) Implemented the 2nd round of training for CSOs. v) Received and reviewed CSO proposals for the civic education campaign, where 26 NGOs gathered in 8 groups.</p> <p>Additionally, five NGOs were selected to implement small peace-building grants, 3 in Kirkuk and 2 in Baghdad. They started their activities in August and will continue for four months.</p>	<b>% of planned</b>	60

#### **Qualitative achievements against objectives and results**

**Objective 1:** As a result of the Roundtable on the draft of the new KRG NGO law, the participants agreed on a set of important recommendations. The recommendations will now be analysed by the Kurdistan Parliament and utilised in drafting an internal Parliament report on the draft law. It is expected that the law can be passed before the end of the year or in early 2011. The event has considerably contributed to the overall process and was highly appreciated by its participants.

**Objective 2:** The preparations of the civic education campaign took more time than expected in order to ensure a good implementation in the two phases foreseen. Clear guidelines for the technical proposals and management and financial implementation procedures were prepared by the leading NGO and distributed to the 10 selected NGOs. At the end of September, 10 MoUs were under signature to start the first round of the Human Rights campaign named "Educate a girl, secure her future". In addition, the web designer has improved and updated the LAONF network web portal.

**Objective 3:** The second phase of the component started in July with the selection of six NGOs that commenced the implementation of their projects. The selected NGOs are located in: Ninewa, Dohuk, Missan, Thiqr, Wassit and Diyala. As a result of their intervention, large mobilization and sensitization of people has been possible though all the activities and all major stakeholders have been involved. The following are examples of activities implemented: awareness and dialogue sessions, meetings and community conferences, workshops and direct meetings with government representatives on local levels, national conferences, courses and trainings and visits to villages in rural areas. Donor visibility guidelines have been adhered to by all NGOs but one which requested and received a special visibility waiver due to security concerns. It is worth mentioning that NGO in Ninewa was the main power behind the creation of the Governorate Emergency Cell in that governorate. The NGO Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) have continued the cooperation at the governorate level and liaising closely with UNOPS.

**Objective 4:** The field work phase of the Local Governance Assessment allowed the collection of data to take place and this is currently used for reports drafting. The assessment teams, composed of representatives of the local groups have presented very high quality work and dedication to the project. UNOPS technical assistance experts have evaluated the quality of the data collected as high.

The second component continues its implementation through the five partner NGOs. The reporting narrative and financial capacities of the NGOs are low which has delayed some of the activities due to the lack of cash from the NGOs. UNOPS has been providing back-stopping to all the NGOs to support them in completing their interim reports, needed to proceed with the second instalment. Three of the NGOs requested a no cost extension to complete the activities and they were granted this. Closer cooperation with local authorities have been reported by the NGOs.

Activities will be completed in the following quarter and the possibility to have a lessons learnt and follow up session is undergoing.

**Objective 5:** The implementing NGO's presence in Al Hurriya and Al Benouk areas has generated confidence and trust from the communities where they are present. The efforts put into the preparation of the civic education campaign will be visible in the next quarter once NGOs are selected and start implementation. As for the the small peacebuilding activities, two NGOs were selected in Baghdad and three in Kirkuk.. Among the activities approved for these NGOs are vocational training courses, campaigns, meetings, workshops, film screenings, restoration activities, lectures, camps, art workshops and exhibitions in the two targeted neighbourhoods. Regular coordination meetings take place between UNOPS, the NGO implementing the large peace-building project and the newly selected NGOs to share experiences and avoid beneficiary overlapping. Slowly it is becoming increasingly visible that communities have found a public space to come together and meet in thanks to the different initiatives supported.

#### **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 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.
- Remote management of grants is also a challenge hence, external monitoring companies are hired along with UNOPS monitoring staff.
- Uncertain political developments (general elections, forming of a new government) negatively affect the process of support to implementation of the NGO law.