

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund
Project #: S D2- 33 WHO
Date and Quarter Updated: 14 October 2010, 3rd Quarter (July – September)

Participating UN Organisation: WHO (Lead Agency), **Sector:** Health and Nutrition

Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry:
 MOH (Lead Ministry), COSIT, KRSO

Title	Pilot Assessment of Congenital Birth Defects in Iraq in Six Governorates				
Geographic Location	Six governorates (Baghdad ,Anbar, Basrah, Thi Qar, Sulaymaniyah and Diah)				
Project Cost	US\$ 336,548				
Duration	18 months				
Approval Date (SC)	27 June 2010	Starting Date	02 July 2010	Completion Date	02 Jan 2012
Project Description	<p>Currently, there are no reliable and adequate data on incidence, prevalence and trends of congenital birth defects (CBD) in Iraq. The 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS-3) reported that 20% of children under 5 years of age have some forms of disabilities; some of these cases have been attributed to congenital malformations. There is a need for a comprehensive programme to better understand the distribution, trends and the magnitude of birth defects in Iraq.. Given the funding not being fully available, the programme has been divided into two phases, the first to be implemented with the available UNDG ITF funds. The proposed study in the first phase aims at drawing initial baseline data and understanding the trends of birth defects in the selected governorates in Iraq; analyzing spatial and temporal trends and detect changes in the incidence of birth defects in Iraq and capacity building of MoH laboratory technicians in investigation techniques. The assessment in the second phase will aim at conducting observational and analytical epidemiological and laboratory investigations to understand underlying risk factors; strengthening the disease registry/surveillance for birth defects in Iraq and finally the proposed study will assist in assessing the burden of the problem on Iraqi health care system and communities and in formulating evidence-based recommendations to address the problem.</p>				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

Given the funding not being fully available, the programme has been divided into two phases, the first to be implemented with the available UNDG ITF funds. The proposed study in the first phase aims at:

Drawing initial baseline data from selected districts in 6 governorates and understanding the trends of birth defects in the selected governorates in Iraq;

analyzing spatial and temporal trends and detect changes in the incidence of birth defects in Iraq

Capacity building of MoH national public health TORCH (Toxoplasmosis, Rubella, Cytomegalo and Herpes virus) laboratory and technicians

The second phase will aim at:

conducting observational and analytical epidemiological and laboratory investigations to understand underlying risk factors; strengthening the disease registry/surveillance for birth defects in Iraq and finally the proposed study will assist in assessing the burden of the problem on Iraqi health system, medical services and communities and formulating evidence-based recommendations to address the problem

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement

Outputs	<p>Output 1. MoH is better able to understand the distribution, type, trends and magnitude of birth defects in selected districts of 6 governorates</p> <p>Output 2. MoH (TORCH) laboratory and technicians have improved capacities to conduct tests on risk factors associated to birth defects.</p>
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Activities	<p>Output 1:</p> <p>Consultation and technical meetings (MoH,UN partners and Consultants)</p> <p>Finalize assessment protocols and plan of work</p> <p>Assessment team recruited and operational</p> <p>Technical assistance to PSC</p> <p>Training of Trainers (TOT) and for assessment team personnel</p> <p>Training of data collectors at governorate levels</p> <p>Training on data entry and management</p> <p>Data collection and field work</p> <p>Data entry and management</p> <p>Report writing, printing and dissemination of study results</p> <p>Mid term evaluation</p> <p>Preparation of work plan for phase two</p> <p>Social mobilisation and advocacy activities related to field work</p> <p>Consultation workshop on discussing the results and next steps</p> <p>Final evaluation</p> <p>Output 2:</p> <p>Training of (TORCH) Lab Technicians</p> <p>Provision of Equipment for the Central Lab.</p>
Procurement	NA

Funds Committed (as of 30 Sept 2010)	61,818.00	% of approved	1.18%
Funds disbursed (as of 30 Sept 2010)	51,361.00	% of approved	1.15%
Forecast final date	31 December 2011	Delay (months)	N/A

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results

MoH is better able to understand the distribution, type, trends and magnitude of birth defects in selected districts of 6 governorates)	<p>-Ministry of Health in Iraq in collaboration with World Health Organization organized the first technical consultation meeting on the pilot assessment of Congenital Birth defect in 6 governorates in Iraq, Istanbul, Turkey for the period 26-30 September 2010. The meeting saw the participation of members of the project technical committee from MoH, MoHE, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Science and Technology form Baghdad and Kurdistan region and WHO consultants from the WHO/EMRO,HQ, WHO collaborating centre (CDC Atlanta) and American University of Beirut (AUB), Beirut to discuss the following:</p> <p>To review and update the Ministry of Health draft protocol, data collection tools, study questionnaire and data analysis plan</p> <p>To develop a training requirements and other key elements for the study</p> <p>To design the sampling theme for the study including the sample size ,methodology etc.;</p> <p>To develop the final plan of action with detailed budget outline and timetable for the CBD study.</p> <p>To Review the tools and required resources needed for the implementation of the study.</p>	% of planned	5 %
MoH (TORCH) laboratory and technicians have improved capacities to conduct tests on risk factors associated to birth defects.	The project is in the early implementation phase and implementation of activities is in process.	% of planned	2 %

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

Plan of action for implementation of the CBD study, including selection of governorate districts based on definition of high, moderate and low risk districts and outline for the assessment study tools) has been developed during Istanbul meeting.

Main implementation constrains & challenges (2-3 sentences)

The resources available for the study are not sufficient to implement planned project activities