



**FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT
"SUPPORT TO IECI"**

Summary

Participating UN Organisation:

UNAMI/ UNEAD
UNOPS

Cluster:

Cluster 11- Electoral Support

Project No. and Project Title:

G11-08: Support to IECI

Project Location/Region/Province:

18 governorates of Iraq

Reporting Period:

December 2004-February 2005

Report no:

1

Counterpart organisations / implementing partners:

IECI

Project cost:

Project budget - US \$ 54,193,130
Project final cost – US\$ 43,379,629

Abbreviations and acronyms:

IECI- Independent Electoral Commission Iraq
MNFI- Multi-National Forces Iraq
NAC- National Air Cargo

Project Duration:

3 months
(December 2004-February 2005)

I. Purpose

Main objectives and outcomes expected as per approved Project/Programme/project document:

Immediate Objectives:

- To deliver the logistical and administrative assistance packages as outlined below
- Support IECI and UNAMI with the logistical and administrative expertise and support required to make sure that the January 2005 elections in Iraq receive the equipment and materials necessary for the success of the electoral process on time and in the correct locations at the governorate level
- Ensure that the forwarders of the electoral goods collect the goods from the suppliers to an agreed schedule
- If required, to facilitate the delivery of materials to out of country voting locations.



Reference to how the programme/project relates to the UN Assistance Strategy to Iraq and how it aims to support international and national development goals (National Development Strategy) including the Millennium Development Goals and other goals as pertinent:

The project falls under the guidelines for UN involvement in Iraq. As stated in the UN strategy document:

“Recognising the presently evolving and anticipated future circumstances leading eventually to peace and stability in Iraq, the UN system is committed to supporting the effective and efficient organisation and delivery of its humanitarian, rehabilitation, and development assistance and technical cooperation as opportunities and security conditions permit. UN assistance and technical cooperation seek to encourage, strengthen and support Iraqi authorities at all levels to exercise their leadership, managerial, co-ordination and accountability roles effectively and transparently, to empower civil society in the development of participatory processes and social capital, and to promote sound economic growth including the role of the private sector.”¹

The support provided by this project will relate particularly to Paragraph 7a (ii) of UN Resolution 1546 on Iraq (8 June 2004), describing the UNAMI mandate, namely: *“Advise and support the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, as well as the Interim Government of Iraq and the Transitional National Assembly, on the process for holding elections.”*

Main international and national implementing partners involved, their specific roles and responsibilities in project implementation and their interaction with the agency:

Partnerships:

- **UNAMI/EAD:** UNOPS was the implementing partner of UNAMI/EAD.
- **IECI:** The IECI was appointed as independent body, which has been granted the full responsibility and authority to run free elections in Iraq. The institutional model, which has been adopted for the IECI, consists of a Board of Commissioners responsible for the determination of the policies necessary for the smooth implementation of the January 2005 elections in Iraq. Furthermore, the IECI was in charge of overseeing the actual electoral process.
- **National Air Cargo (NAC):** NAC was the main contractual partner for freight forwarding of electoral material to Iraq

¹ A UN Strategy for Iraq, IRFFI Meeting in Abu Dhabi, 28 February 2004, p. 14

II. Resources

Total approved budget and summary of resources available to the programme/project from the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund and non-Trust Fund resources where applicable:

The Support to IECI Support Project is funded entirely by earmarked UNDG Iraq Trust Fund donations.

The amount of US\$ 54,193,130 was transferred to UNOPS upon project commencement.

The total final expenditure was US\$ 43,379,629.

UNOPS was requested by EAD in the Iraq elections debrief in New York to utilise the remaining resources for a Needs Assessment Mission to determine requirements of the IECI in preparation for Phase II of the Electoral Support Project (technical assistance for the upcoming referendum and national elections). UNOPS is currently in the process of setting up an international team to assist and consult the IECI in this process.

Furthermore, remaining resources are utilised for wrap-up of the previous project, such as freight forwarding of IECI property, procured by the UN, to Iraq.

III. Results

An assessment of the extent to which the programme/project component / programme /project is progressing in relation to the outcomes and outputs expected for the year:

The project has been completed as per the outcomes and outputs outlined in the project document.

Main outcomes:

- Training, coordination and advising of all Iraqi Elections logistics officers and warehouse supervisors;
- Developing of elections logistics support plan, including delivery of about 2,800,000 kgs of electoral material from suppliers on 4 continents to 24 warehouses in Iraq and co-ordination of the delivery and recovery to 5,243 polling sites in Iraq;
- Ensuring accurate delivery of 36,000 polling station kits, 7,000 polling center kits, 90,000 ballot boxes, 45,000,000 ballot papers, 144,000 voting screens;
- Completion of the majority of deliveries in 13 days between January 17th – 29th, 2005
- Coordination of all logistics support from Iraqi ministries, IFES, UN, Multi-National Forces Iraq (MNFI) and contractors.

Main activities undertaken and achievements/ impacts:

Summary:

UNOPS successfully completed providing logistical support to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) for the National Assembly elections in Iraq.

This included flying about 2,800 tons of election material from Austria, Canada, Jordan and China through UAE to 10 airports in Iraq and onward movement to warehouses in all 18 governorates, with the average distance of 70 km from an airfield to a warehouse. A total of approximately 90,000 ballot boxes, 36,000 polling station kits, 7,000 polling center kits, and 500 tons of ballot papers were flown into Iraq over a period of 2 weeks. Despite the heavy rainfalls and difficult weather conditions, the fleet was flying into the country several times per day and the majority of equipment arrived in Iraq by January 22, 2005. All deliveries to the warehouses were completed by UNOPS by January 25, 2005 and the IECI, with the oversight and assistance of UNOPS staff, subsequently transported by the all material to polling stations by January 29, 2005.



In addition, a team of four international logistics advisors to the IECI was established and provided support to writing and implementation of the logistics support plan for the Elections, development of the distribution plan for all provinces in Iraq, training of the local staff in Baghdad as well as in the provinces across the country, coordination and supervision of

Multi-National Forces Iraq (MNFI) in support to the Elections Operations, coordination of security assets for IECI warehouses, convoy support and airport security, supervision of the contractors, setup of communication systems in Governorate Electoral Offices and coordination with the Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Ministry of Interior.

Specific activities undertaken and successfully completed by UNOPS in the course of the project:

- 65 Boeing 747's (or equivalent) utilised to deliver material from China, Austria, and Canada to Sharjah, UAE in 7 days, including 6 flights of the AN 225, the world's largest cargo plane;
- 133 flights flown into Iraq over a period of 12 days (including 23 night flights into Iraqi airfields);
- Organisation of 188 armed convoys (8 trucks + security) to 24 Iraqi warehouses in 4 days;
- Delivery of electoral material to 24 warehouses completed by January 25, 2005;
- Drafting and implementation of the logistics support plan for the Iraq Elections;
- Site visits were conducted to 17 of 18 provinces in Iraq to conduct training and coordination. Dahuk was the only province not visited due to lowest need and lack of time. Visits to provinces were a mix of visits to GEO offices, warehouses or the closest MNFI base dependent on security and need. In total there were around 50 site visits conducted.
- Logistics team supported and assisted capacity-building for the IECI in development of their distribution plan for all provinces in Iraq, including trainings, briefings, workshops, and planning sessions (18 Provincial Logistics Coordinators attended a 1 day workshop in Baghdad on the 28 December; 16 Provincial Logistics Coordinators attended a 1 day workshop in Baghdad on the 10th January).
- Logistics budget for IECI developed;
- Deployment of UNOPS and IECI staff to China, Austria, Canada, UAE and Jordan to coordinate activity;
- Coordination of security assets for IECI warehouses, convoy support and airport security;
- Coordination, tasking and supervision of Multi-National Forces Iraq (MNFI) in support of Elections Operations;
- Supervision and tasking of subcontractors of National Air Cargo;
- Focal point and coordination of
 - all logistics activities in support of elections from IECI governorate offices and warehouses,
 - National Air Cargo,
 - Multi-National Forces,
 - Multi-National Corps,
 - Multi-National Division,
 - Multi-National Brigade,
 - IECI contractors Osprey Asset Management, Skylink, Code Inc. (supplier), Lantrade (supplier),
 - Ministry of Trade,
 - Ministry of Transport,
 - Ministry of Civil Aviation,
 - Ministry of Interior;
- Contracting & assistance in installation and setup of communications in Governorate Electoral Offices;
- UNOPS coordinated the activities of 1,230 warehouse staff performing offload, breakdown, complicated equipment allocation, and redistribution;

- Coordination of activities of 1,500 Iraqi logistics officers in 534 districts in Iraq;
- Utilisation of 900 trucks per day over a period of 4 days for delivery to 5,243 locations in Iraq;
- Reception of all equipment completed in time for elections at 5,240 out of 5,243 polling centers (3 polling centers were not completed due to security and IECI decisions);
- Recovery of all ballot boxes to warehouses was completed in 3 days and all tally sheets were recovered to the IECI HQ in Baghdad by February 7, 2005.

Critical support was provided in several areas by the Multi-National Forces in Iraq, coordinated by the International logistics advisory team. Depending on security and logistics considerations, this support ranged from substantial logistics and operations support in the areas of Al-Anbar and Mosul to security functions only in safer areas.

Engagement and deployment of required staff

UNOPS, UNAMI/EAD staff worked in close cooperation with IECI throughout the project. These teams acted as controllers and communication agents to the Chief Election Logistics Advisor in UNAMI in Amman.

UNAMI/EAD and IECI staff was deployed to Iraq, Jordan and UAE as well as to electoral material manufacturers' locations in Canada, China and Austria (staff deployed to Europe also included IFES staff).



UNOPS staff was deployed as follows:

Amman, Jordan: - 1 UNOPS Project Officer , 2 UNOPS Support staff

Sharjah, U.A.E.: - 1 UNOPS staff

Baghdad, Iraq: - 1 UNOPS Project Manager/Logistics advisor.

The Project Manager in Baghdad lead a team of 3 international Logistics Advisors, employed by IFES, the UN and OAM respectively.

Contracts:

UNOPS was requested by UNAMI/EAD to support the Election in Iraq by being the contracting party in all arrangements of transportation from suppliers on 3 continents into 24 warehouses in all 18 governorates in Iraq.

The procurement method applied was International Competitive Bidding. Out of the 3 short listed companies, based on the recommendation of the Evaluation Committee and in the close coordination with the IECI, National Air Cargo was selected and subsequently commenced its activities with the contract signed on the 5th of January, 2005.

NAC had been previously operating for the MNF in Iraq, flying up to 1 million kgs in three weeks as evidenced in the replacement of all military rations for the United States Department of Defence. The US DoD having awarded NAC a "best contractor" award two separate years was testimony to their ability to respond to large last minute requirements. Of all bidders, NAC presented the highest capacity to deliver on the ground in Iraq.

The final agreement with NAC was reached early January. Subsequently, the logistics operations hub was moved from Amman to Sharjah, UAE, as Marka airport in Jordan was

not considered to be able to cope with the planned volume of air traffic (3-4 incoming 747 freighters as well as up to 10 IL-76 simultaneously). Sharjah, on the other hand, was the undisputed hub of bulk air shipments into Iraq, with IL-76 as the main airplane utilised.

The contract provided for the following:

- Agreement with forwarding agent regarding collection of goods from suppliers and onward transmission to Iraq;
- Agreements with regional hubs regarding reception, storage and onward transmission of elections items;
- Establishment of effective receipt and forwarding systems at the regional hubs;
- Setting-up of transport and distribution system to Iraq to convey the necessary electoral items to Iraq to the desired locations in country according to an agreed time schedule with the project partners.

NAC Contract delivery

The working relationship with NAC was excellent and once into the project, they sought to be as helpful as possible in all situations.

Moreover, NAC presented a high level of commitment as well as flexibility already prior to going into a contractual agreement, which given the circumstances was extremely important. NAC undertook all necessary arrangement in order to meet the deadlines. These included:

- NAC staff were already in position in Baghdad and Sharjah;
- Financial arrangements were made;
- Transponders purchased;
- Flights booked;
- UN staff were supported in the Sharjah hub;
- Visa arrangements for IECE staff were made;
- Joint planning had been in progress for three weeks.

NAC faced complications due to inconsistent information from MNFI and ministries:

- MNFI approved night flight operations, but failed to get them confirmed by appropriate authorities on the ground, leading to arrest of pilots at one airport and the turn-back of several flights.
- MNFI promised base support in several areas, but hadn't actually confirmed their ability to support on the ground. MNFI and NAC failed to confirm coordination of off-load procedures at Baghdad airport for the first shipments.
- The Ministry of Trade refused access to warehouses until 22nd of January 2005, delaying shipments from airports.

NAC managed to work through these difficulties in order to deliver on the contract.

Additional Contracts

- a. A contract of US\$ 446,065 was awarded to JTSI Inc. to provide IT services, satellite connectivity and networking to Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs)
- b. A contract for security assessment of the warehousing facilities in Sharjah, U.A.E. for the total value of US\$ 7,750 was awarded to Blue Sky Group Foundation
- c. A quality control contract (CHF 1,150) was awarded to Société Générale de Surveillance SA (SGS). SGS performed a 'Final Random Inspection', including quantity, visual packing and marking on 20 samples, assortment

checks, and visual workman checks on the Polling Centre Kit contents which were assembled and packaged in China.

Implementation constraints, lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained from assessments, evaluations and studies that have taken place during the reporting period:

Implementation constraints:

With regard to the overall election programs in Baghdad and Amman, it is clear that the logistics element came into play much too late in the process. This was overcome; however, at a much larger than probably necessary financial cost. It is also clear that much further training/work is required to build up a qualified and independent IECI logistics team for the future operations that are envisaged.

The logistics team faced substantial challenges throughout all stages of preparation for the 30 January elections, and on polling day. These included:

- Late delivery of electoral material from suppliers
- Too little time available for contracting properly, production, supply and delivery
 - Additional delays created by the late certification of political parties further strained the logistics supply chain. It also created additional complications for an already complex warehousing task without strong local capacity to handle it.
- The poor security situation within Iraq resulted in local staff shortages, local truck shortages, planning uncertainty for IECI provincial staff and in several areas changing/resignation of critical staff very late in the process.
- Delays in Iraqi ministry support
- Unreliable shipping of material to polling centers.
- Only 4 international advisors, led by UNOPS to cover the entire country.
 - Despite the conducting as much training as possible in the very short time available, the lack of international logistics/operations staff in the provinces made it difficult to assist the IECI in identifying critical support issues.
- While the freight forwarding operation for the election was very successful, certain problems did surface. This was to a great extent due to the speed at which the contract was put in place, but also due to the specific election-related shipping issues. These issues were not sorted out at either the supply or shipping side. This created problems/confusions at the hub operation that could have been overcome. Quality control issues also came into play.

Lessons learnt/Recommendations

1. A larger and more qualified logistics advisory team be established in Baghdad;
2. More interaction/information flows be established between Baghdad/Amman teams;
3. If Jordan to serve as potential hub/warehousing/free zone area explore alternate sites to Marka e.g. Aqaba;
4. Clear guidelines must be established with government/airfield authorities with regards to the overall role of the UN in this regard and specifically with the rights of

UN staff at the site. This should be done through a high level meeting of the parties;

5. The UN should investigate the establishment of a global freight forwarding contract for the shipping of election materials to avoid certain problems created by short time frames to ship arising in the electoral process;
6. Any contract with freight forwarders should require that full aircraft charters be used to avoid the breakdown of skids and pallets and subsequent problems thus created;
7. Standardization of skids and pallets(size and quality) should be established;
8. Large volumetric election supplies, such as voting screens, should whenever possible be produced in-country or a nearby country to avoid large shipping costs for low-value and non-sensitive materials;
9. Quality control of election materials should be done by an independent professional company/organization during the assembly process.

Key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, impact on results:

Inter-agency collaboration between the UNAMI/UNEAD and UNOPS went smoothly. However, in the future, much earlier planning/assimilation of all partners is required from the outset of the logistical operation.

Communication flows between the IECI and the UN need to be clearly defined. More incorporation of IECI staff in the logistics operation is necessary, in addition to further training to build up a qualified and independent IECI logistics team for future operations

Highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on, e.g. gender disaggregation, policy engagement and participation of the public:

n/a

IV. Future Work Plan

Priority actions planned for the subsequent reporting period to overcome constraints, build on achievements and partnerships, and use the lessons learned during the previous period:

n/a

Indication of major adjustments in the strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs:

n/a

Estimated Budget required (including any major funding shortfalls):

n/a