

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund

Project #: D2- 33 WHO

Date and Quarter Updated: 12 January 2011, 1 Oct- 31 Dec 2010 (4th Quarter)

Participating UN Organisation: WHO	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 Dialah)				
Project Cost	US\$ 336,548				
Duration	18 months				
Approval Date	27 June 2010	Starting Date	2 July 2010	Completion Date	2 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 required funding not being fully available, the programme has been divided into two phases. The first phase is to be implemented with the available UNDG ITF funds. The proposed study during this 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 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

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>
Activities	<p>Output 1:</p> <p>1.1.1 Consultation and technical meetings (MoH,UN partners and Consultants)</p> <p>1.1.2 Finalize assessment protocols and plan of work</p> <p>1.1.3 Assessment team recruited and operational</p> <p>1.1.4 Technical assistance to PSC</p> <p>1.1.5 Training of Trainers (TOT) and for assessment team personnel</p>

	1.1.6 Training of data collectors at governorate levels 1.1.7 Training on data entry and management 1.1.8 Data collection and field work 1.1.9 Data entry and management 1.1.10 Report writing, printing and dissemination of study results 1.1.11 Mid term evaluation 1.1.12 Preparation of work plan for phase two 1.1.13 Social mobilisation and advocacy activities related to field work 1.1.14 Consultation workshop on discussing the results and next steps 1.1.15 Final evaluation <u>Output 2:</u> 2.1.1 Training of TORCH Lab Technicians 2.1.2 Provision of Equipment for the Central Lab.
Procurement	NA

Funds Committed (as of 30 Sept 2010)	65,784.00	% of approved	20%
Funds disbursed (as of 30 Sept 2010)	65,082.00	% of approved	19%
Forecast final date	31 December 2011	Delay (months)	N/A

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned
Men	All men (household heads will directly benefit from the implementation of the CBD survey that will be conducted at household level in 6 governorates (600 household heads).	NA
Women	1500 women (15-49) will directly benefit from CBD survey and the biological testing that will be conducted at household level (600 families in each district (Total HH/14 districts will be 8400).	NA
Children	100 Children under 5 will indirectly benefit from CBD survey and the medical examination.	NA
IDPs	Some of the targeted groups are IDPs.	NA
Others	MoH and other line ministries staff will benefit from many training activities planned under this project.	30%
Indirect beneficiaries	The programme foresees the mobilization of some 50 GoI additional staff within Iraq.	
Employment generation (men/women)	The project will offer opportunities for participants to acquire specific training skills that they will be able to utilize for individual and social development. Supplies will be locally procured which indirectly will create employment opportunities and income generation. Around 200 professionals and similar number of support staff will be involved/supported/ recruited throughout the period of the programme.	100%

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results		% of planned
MoH is better able to understand the distribution, type, trends and magnitude of birth defects in selected districts of 6 governorates)	- Ministry of Health in Iraq in collaboration with World Health Organization organized two steering committee meetings after the technical consultation meeting that was held in Istanbul, Turkey 26-30 September 2010. The meeting discussed the study protocol and the questionnaire design and a consensus was reached that WHO will assign a consultant for 2 weeks to finalize the protocol and draft survey tools. - WHO is coordinating with CEHA to conduct a workshop on Environmental risk assessment	10%
MoH TORCH laboratory and technicians have improved capacities to conduct tests on risk factors associated to birth defects.	- Organization of three fellowships for the three participants from the TORCH lab to participate in a training in Rome on Congenital Birth Defects Surveillance.	5 %

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.
- Identification of short term consultant to finalize the survey protocol and questionnaire
- WHO conducted two technical meetings with Members of the steering committee to agree on financial issues related to the CBD study implementation

Main implementation constrains & challenges (2-3 sentences)

The resources available for the study are not sufficient to implement planned project activities as requested by Ministry of Health to support a Household survey instead of review of records and birth registration and death certificates.