



## SIXTH SIX-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT FOR PROJECT

### REPORT COVER PAGE

***Participating UN Organization:***

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN

***Cluster: A***

Agriculture, Food Security, Environment and Natural Resources Management

***Project No. and Project Title: A5 - 08***

Restoration of veterinary services in Iraq (OSRO/IRQ/406/UDG)

***Report Number:***

6

***Reporting Period:***

1 January to 30 June 2007

***Project Budget:*** US\$10 565 843

***Funds received:*** US\$ 8,758,965

***List Implementing Partners:***

- Ministry of Agriculture

***Project Coverage/Scope:***

National coverage

***Abbreviations and acronyms:***

MoA – Ministry of Agriculture  
AUSAID – Australian Agency for International Development  
BOQ – Bill of Quantities  
FMD – Foot and Mouth Disease  
HPAI – Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza  
TAD – Transboundary Animal Diseases  
USAID-United States Agency for International Development

***Project Duration/Closed Project:***

2 years (and extension under request)



## **I. Purpose**

### *1.1 Main objectives, outcomes and outputs of the project*

The project aims to address problems associated with the breakdown of all branches of the Veterinary Services in Iraq, particularly the serious threats to livestock posed by transboundary animal diseases (TAD), as well as the increased public health concerns arising from the occurrence of zoonotic diseases. The project purpose is therefore to re-establish and strengthen the capacity of the Iraqi Veterinary Service in animal disease control and surveillance, so that TADs and zoonotic diseases are effectively contained. This minimises livestock mortality and economic loss and reduces the hazards to public health. Immediate objectives are:

- to update the professional technical staff in animal disease control and surveillance through training and capacity building;
- to restore and re-equip veterinary infrastructure with particular emphasis on field services, laboratory diagnostic services and the cold chain system;
- to re-establish the national capacity for animal disease surveillance;
- to re-establish the national capacity for quality control and food safety;
- to evolve effective control strategies for transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases.

Expected outcomes are:

- Improved food security through a reduction in the threat of infectious livestock diseases within flocks owned and managed by small-holder producers;
- Trained veterinary and laboratory staff capable of effectively managing disease surveillance and laboratory diagnosis;
- Rebuilt and re-activated veterinary hospitals capable of delivering effective animal health services;
- Effective cold-chain facilities for storage and delivery of vaccines and pharmaceuticals;
- Vaccination and treatment campaigns protecting 12 million small ruminants, 2 million cattle and a substantial commercial and small-holder poultry industry;
- Strategic emergency preparedness plans for controlling and preventing major transboundary animal diseases;
- National control and surveillance programmes for highly prevalent zoonotic diseases;
- Enhanced generation, management and analysis of livestock disease information;
- Strengthened laboratory capability at national and regional levels for disease investigation, diagnosis and surveillance;
- Capacity development in laboratory systems for quality control of veterinary vaccines, drugs and animal food products.

Expected outputs are:



- Sufficient key veterinary and laboratory staff to be sent abroad for refresher training and study tours at veterinary institutions of excellence, focusing on the reorganization of veterinary services, quality control procedures, animal quarantine and food safety, epidemiology and laboratory diagnosis of animal diseases. These staff will train governorate level staff through regional workshops and in-service training;
- Senior core team staff from central and provincial veterinary services to participate in a modular Change Management Training course in Amman. At more or less regular intervals throughout the life of the project, the participants will come to Amman for modules on strategies for major TADs and zoonotic diseases, including the drafting of strategy papers for control of TADs and Standard Operating Procedures for animal disease surveillance, reporting, emergency preparedness and quarantine protocols;
- Regional workshops for governorate staff on disease outbreak investigation and response, disease reporting and surveillance;
- Re-equipping the central and regional diagnostic laboratories;
- Procurement of HPAI equipment for diagnosis, personal protection and disinfection;
- Preparation of framework Programme for HPAI Prevention and Control.
- Procurement of equipment and inputs, as well as the installation of the equipment at intended sites;
- Procurement and installation of cold storage facilities in strategic locations;
- Establishment of an effective Epidemiology Unit within the Veterinary Department, including training and equipment for data processing and analysis;
- Assistance with the design and implementation of animal disease control programmes.

*1.2 Reference to how the programme/project relates to the UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq, UN Millennium Development Goals, Joint Needs Assessment, Iraqi National Development Strategy:*

FAO ensures that project activities are integrated in the overall UN strategy for Iraq, which supports the Iraqi National Development Strategy and contributes to the Millennium Development Goal, designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Enhanced sustainable long-term food production and natural resource management;
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure;
- Strengthened institutional development and capacity building;
- Support to legislation, policy and strategy formulation;
- Enhanced employment and income-generation;
- Enhanced environmental restoration and conservation.

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



The main implementing partners are the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture generally, the Veterinary Department in particular, and the State Veterinary Company. These institutions are directly responsible for all veterinary issues and activities inside Iraq and are close counterparts of this FAO project. The project is directly targeting, supporting and collaborating with both the senior management of these institutions and the veterinary officers in the field. The FAO team works closely with its veterinary counterpart colleagues in implementing the project throughout Iraq.

For implementing and delivering the extensive technical and management training component as well as expert consultations under the project, FAO has sought collaboration with a variety of international expert institutions. These include the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Pennsylvania State University (USA), Freie Universität Berlin (Germany), Curtin University (Australia), Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II (Morocco), Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute (Australia), Veterinary Laboratories Agency (UK).

## **II. Resources**

### ***Financial Resources***

2.1 Original approved budget: US\$ 10 565 843

Total funds provided: US\$ 8 758 965

Total commitments: US\$ 6 940 900

Total disbursement: US\$ 6 814 089

2.2 Project funds have been released only partially and in several instalments, making planning difficult and even leading to a freeze on project activities since at some stage (from mid 2006 until recent) since all funds made available at that time had already been spent or committed. The following chronology gives some more details on this:

- The total approved budget amounts to US\$10.5 million. The first and only direct allocation of US\$5 million was received from UNDG ITF in June 2005. However, at the time FAO was informed that the remaining funds for the C5-08 Restoration of Veterinary Services projects were no more available (08/12/05), the available cash balance had already long been spent, whereas the Avian Influenza outbreak in Iraq required some emergency assistance from the Veterinary project to the Ministry of Agriculture.

- As per UNDG ITF guidance (communication 24/08/05 between Bisrat Aklilu, Executive Coordinator UNDG ITF, and Henri Carsalade, Assistant Director-General Technical Cooperation Department FAO, allowing for full flexibility in project budget management), US\$1.7 million was transferred from the C5-10 Restoration of Livestock Services. Another US\$0.5 million was taken from another project (Community Irrigation) under this temporary transfer arrangement.

- On 24/07/06, a much appreciated US\$1.8 million contribution towards the Veterinary project was received from the Government of Australia through UNDG ITF, which enabled



FAO to return the most of the advance funding taken from the above mentioned Community Irrigation project (US\$0.5 million) and the Livestock project (US\$1.3 million), but not increasing the funds available to the Veterinary project itself.

- On 19/03/07, another contribution was received from the Government of Australia through UNDG ITF for the amount of US\$1.9 million. Of this amount, a last remaining US\$0.4 million was returned to the Livestock project, and US\$1.5 million was added to the Veterinary project accounts. Only with the reception of this last tranche of funds could the project be reactivated again.

Due to this long freeze of the project caused by the non-availability of project funds, an extension of the project is necessary in order to complete all activities as per the project document. Therefore, a project extension cum budget revision is currently under request. FAO is no more requesting for the balance funds of US\$1 806 879 since the total project can be completed by 30/06/2008 by means of the currently received US\$8 758 965

### *2.3 Project expenditures:*

PERSONNEL	\$120,768
CONTRACTS	\$0
TRAINING OF COUNTERPART	\$55,579
TRANSPORT	\$0
SUPPLIES AND COMMODITIES	\$6,649
EQUIPMENT +TRANSPORT	-\$27,978
TRAVEL	\$33,767
SECURITY	\$2,345
MISCELLANEOUS	\$11,205
INDIRECT SUPPORT COST	\$22,504
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$224,839</b>

*2.4 Other funding sources:* None

*2.5 Approved budget revisions:* A budget revision is currently under request.

*2.6 Project expenditures for the 1 July to 31 December 2007:* US\$800 000

## ***Human Resources***

### *2.7 National staff*

2 FAO national coordinators, in Baghdad (for Centre/South Iraq) and in Erbil (for KRG governorates), are following the project implementation in relation with MoA veterinary department.

### *2.8 International staff*

1 International consultant acting as Chief Technical Advisor for the Project is based in Amman (FAO/Iraq Office relocated in Amman) and other management and administrative



staff are co shared with other UNDG ITF projects.

### **III. Methods of Operating**

#### *3.1 Implementation mechanisms.*

This project is executed by FAO and co-implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. FAO ensures a timely recruitment of project personnel, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, including the National Project Coordinators (NPC) to coordinate project activities from Baghdad and Erbil with MoA counterparts (veterinary services). The International Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) based in Amman is in constant contact with the NPCs and FAO Headquarters. Besides this distant technical as well as operational management, intensive face-to-face meetings in Amman (and occasionally at FAO Headquarters in Rome) with the Ministry of Agriculture interlocutors plus the many training courses and workshops in Amman or overseas, make a good and effective implementation possible though sometimes challenging.

#### *3.2 Procurement procedures*

Already in August 2004, FAO, in a written agreement with its key counterpart ministries, has opted for a strong involvement of the ministries in the procurement process, which includes the following elements and which is being applied to date:

- Identification of inputs or services required undertaken jointly by FAO/Iraqi Line Ministry;
- Preparation of detailed specifications, bill of quantities, drawings, delivery time and destination by FAO/Iraqi Line Ministry and endorsed by the latter;
- List of local potential suppliers provided by Iraqi Line Ministry, to be included by FAO in its invitations to bid;
- Tenders launched by FAO inviting local and international potential suppliers;
- Technical review of the offers received and preparation of recommendation carried out jointly by FAO/Iraqi Line Ministry and endorsed by the latter;
- Purchase Orders or Contracts issued by FAO.

#### *3.3 Monitoring system*

Cornerstone of the monitoring system for this 'remote control' project implementation, are the monthly reports prepared by the CTA on the basis of input from the NPCs in Erbil and Baghdad. Furthermore, intensive e-mail and telephone contact between FAO headquarters, the CTA and the NPCs as well as periodic visits to Amman by the NPC and the counterparts an adequate monitoring of the project implementation.

### **IV. Results**

#### *4.1 Summary of project progress*



As already explained, during the reporting period project activities were basically frozen until mid March 2007 when the second contribution from the Government of Australia was received through the UNDG ITF, which enabled the reactivation of the project and the initiation of remaining project activities. Overall, it can be concluded that particularly the extensive training programme continues to be successful.

#### *4.2 Progress on outcomes*

During the reporting period and following the reactivation of the project in March 2007, the following progress has been made and outcomes realized:

- Change Management Training Module 5 This Module was the fifth and the last of a series of change management training courses organized by FAO for Iraqi veterinary managers. A total of 18 Iraqi veterinarians, from the Veterinary Services central level (Baghdad) and from the border inspection posts from all Iraq's regions attended this workshop in Amman from 12 to 15 February 2007.

This Module was dedicated to the important aspect on import risk analysis and quarantine with particular sessions on:

- Status of priority transboundary animal diseases in Iraq
- International Standards, Conventions and Agreements (OIE animal health code)
- Approaches and principles of import risk analysis for animal and animal products
- Animal quarantine and import requirements
- Evaluation of Veterinary Services using OIE standards.

- Technical Consultation Meeting: Participants in this meeting (February 2007) were FAO experts from Head Quarter, the FAO OIC Iraq in Amman and the Project Manager and Iraq senior officers from the State Veterinary Company. At that time assuming that arrear funds would soon be available to the Veterinary project, proposals for readdressing and refocusing the postponed following activities were discussed and agreed upon as a priority:

- National Brucellosis vaccination campaign
- FMD Control Program in Iraq
- HPAI preparedness and surveillance program
- Establishment of the Animal Health Information System (AHIS)

- Local procurement of technical Publications: Veterinary publications, worth US\$ 12,000. A total of 25 out of 27 latest publications covering many aspects of the veterinary science have now been received and sent to Baghdad.

Following the receipt of the last contribution in March 2007, and anticipating that the request for extension of the project until July 2008 will soon be approved by the Steering Committee, the following activities were accomplished as a start for the above mentioned HPAI and AHIS priorities:



- Preparation of terms of reference for training in Avian Influenza laboratory diagnostic and testing;
- Preparation of terms of reference for training of trainers in designing and implementation of an Animal Health Information System;
- Joint MoA – FAO preparation of a list of equipment and its technical specifications for the support of Avian Influenza disease prevention and control, for which tendering is under progress.
- Preparation of technical specifications of communication equipment for Avian Influenza disease surveillance, including GPS and cellular phones. Tendering under process.
- Preparation of technical specifications for AHIS equipment including computers, printers and software. Procurement under process.
- Contact was made with the International Consultant for the preparation and implementation of the above training of trainers in AHIS.

#### *4.3 Key outputs*

Supply and delivery of the essential equipment, goods and materials has been completed according to schedule. This has improved the operative capacity of the laboratories and field services.

The training and change management Modules have been extremely useful, with trainees showing an evident improvement in knowledge, skill and attitude. This project has especially enhanced the national veterinary services capacity for disease surveillance, diagnosis and control.

#### *4.4 Main constraints*

- Security continues to make the provision of technical assistance directly to the Ministry of Agriculture in Iraq difficult. Actively involving and assisting governorates in the North and in the Centre and South in coordinated on-the-ground training and national disease control activities for Iraq and the region is currently not feasible for the same reason.
- The inability of project management to be on-site and having to manage activities by remote control and through other parties is frustrating.
- The project funds have been released only partially and in several instalments, making planning difficult and even leading to a freeze on project activities at some stage.
- The institutional capacity of the MOA remains weak, so that implementing field programs continues to be difficult. In fact, more and more senior veterinary counterpart staff members are leaving their jobs and/or country. And most important and sadly, the project's prime counterpart interlocutor, the Director General of the Veterinary Department/Iraq Chief Veterinary Officer, was kidnapped together with his bodyguards at the end of the reporting period and never heard of any more. Needless to say that this very much paralyses the Department.
- Longer term activities such as developing an appropriate institutional veterinary structure and animal health policy are likely to take more time than the project duration allows.
- The process of approving and clearing individuals nominated by MOA to ensure their backgrounds and professional history matches training programs and study tours, is slow.



- There are real problems when dealing with Embassies regarding visa processing for overseas training due to the many time consuming requirements.

#### *Lessons learned and actions taken*

- Caution is needed in planning project activities, making financial commitments and raising the expectations of Iraqi counterparts before the necessary funding has actually been received from UNDG ITF.
- The planning of training activities and the nomination of trainees needs to be initiated well in advance.
- Be as creative and ingenuous as possible in implementing, managing and monitoring activities on the ground.

#### *4.5 Key partnerships and collaborations*

The project is implemented with the cooperation of the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture, the veterinary sector in particular. This partnership is essential for identifying needs, finalizing the specifications of inputs, implementing training and distributing inputs.

Furthermore, FAO cooperates closely with the main agencies involved in re-developing veterinary infrastructure and the provision of technical support. These include USAID, AUSAID, OIE and other international community personnel engaged in livestock projects as part of their own civic action programmes.

#### *4.6 Cross cutting issues*

FAO is actively participating in veterinary-human health activities such as the Avian Influenza preparedness programme and closely cooperating with other UN agencies involved in this matter such as WHO.

### **V. Future Work Plan**

- Support to Avian Influenza prevention, preparedness, monitoring and awareness activities, in particular through finalizing procurement and a programme of overseas training courses.
- Operationalizing the plan for a National Animal Health Information and data management system, and assist in implementing it through the delivery of GIS and related equipment and training in its operation.