



SIXTH SIX-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT FOR PROJECT

REPORT COVER PAGE

Participating UN Organization:

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN

Cluster:

Agriculture, Food Security, Environment and Natural Resources Management

Project No. and Project Title: A5 - 16

OSRO/IRQ/502/UDG
Rehabilitation and Development of the National Seed Industry in Iraq

Report Number:

3

Reporting Period:

1 January to 30 June 2007

Project Budget:

US\$5 383 460

List Implementing Partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

Project Coverage/Scope:

Iraq - Nationwide coverage for the Strategy and Technical assistance. Physical rehabilitation in North, Centre and South. Training overseas and in the country.

Abbreviations and acronyms:

MoA – Ministry of Agriculture
PSC – Project Steering Committee
SBSTC- State Board for Seed Testing and Certification
SBAR – State Board for Agricultural Research
AGPS – Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Service, FAO

Project Duration/Closed Project:

- 2 years



Report Formatting Instructions: *We kindly ask that you review the instructions below and follow them in the preparation of your report:*

- Do not put the narrative text into boxes as was done in the previous report and do not incorporate boxes, graphs, etc into the narrative report.
- Add additional information including charts, graphs, etc as annexes to the report and clearly reference the annexes using footnotes or endnotes within the body of the narrative
- Number all sections and paragraphs as indicated below
- Format the entire document using the following font: 12point _ Times New Roman & do not use colours.

NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

I. Purpose

1.1 Provide the main objectives, outcomes, outputs of the programme/project

The main objective is to improve food security and nutrition in Iraq through rehabilitation and improvement of the national seed programme thereby promoting the availability and use of high quality seeds of adapted varieties by farmers and provide the foundation of a sustainable seed industry. The performance of the national seed industry is to be enhanced through formulation of a national seed policy, review and up-grade of the seed legislation in place and improvement of the coordination and oversight arrangements. Through the rehabilitation of the damaged infrastructure for variety development and evaluation, variety maintenance, initial seed multiplication and seed quality control, the project aims at increasing the capacity of the national seed industry. In addition to supplying the required equipment, the project aims at providing technical training to improve the capacity of key human resources in the national seed industry.

Expected outputs are:

- a clear and concise national seed policy formulated in a participatory manner and launched by the Ministry of Agriculture to serve as the blueprint for guiding the development of the national seed industry
- a seed legislation in place reviewed and up-graded to make it in line with the new policy objectives;
- a strong and clearly mandated National Seed Board with Government representatives in the executive position and non-voting private sector representatives of seed industry stakeholders in an advisory capacity put in place and functioning;



- full specifications formulated for the laboratory and field equipment and required repairs and reconstruction of buildings;
- essential buildings and infrastructure for the seed programme repaired and reconstructed and procured equipment installed;
- breeders seeds of wheat 0.0750 tonne, barley 0.0250 tonne, corn 0.2 tonne and rice 1 tonne locally produced;
- foundation seeds of wheat 50 tonne, barley 5 tonne, corn 5 tonne and rice 20 tonne produced.
- variety maintenance techniques and procedures for the target crops developed;
- existing database for seed quality control operations improved and strengthened;
- transportation and communication system in SBSTC for field inspection, seed processing plants and other seed quality control operations improved;
- exposure of 24 Iraqi scientists and 2 senior staff of MOA to modern developments regarding improving national seed industry in variety development and evaluation, variety maintenance, seed production and marketing systems and seed quality control;
- in service training conducted for staff involved in various components of the national seed programme.

Main activities are:

- arrange a national seed workshop including representatives of all national seed industry institutions to debate and build consensus on key issues pertinent to the further development of the national seed industry.
- using the outcome of the deliberations in the workshop draft a national seed policy and assist the Ministry of Agriculture to adopt it.
- organize a series of forums and meetings to create awareness regarding the role of the National Seed Policy and sensitise various participants regarding their roles
- recruitment of an international consultant and a national legal consultant with a legal background and experience with seed sector issues
- review of each piece of existing seed legislation
- arrange a seminar for key government officials and seed sector stakeholders to gain their views on necessary changes in the review exercise
- draft a new national seed law for consideration by the Government and national stakeholders
- prepare full terms of reference, structure and mandate of a National Seed Board which reflects the current seed industry situation as well as its future prospects and assist MoA to adopt them
- assist MoA to undertake a process of consultations to select seed industry representatives to serve on the rejuvenated National Seed Board
- carry out an assessment of needs for laboratory and field equipment repairs and



- reconstruction of damaged SBAR and SBSTC buildings
- formulate detailed specifications for equipments and repairs and reconstruction of damaged buildings
- initiate and complete the procurement process for equipment
- install equipments in seed laboratories and research stations
- carry out on-the-job training of selected staff on maintenance of equipments
- carry out the required repairs and reconstruction of buildings
- assist and guide research stations in the production of breeder seed: 0.0750 tonne of wheat, 0.0250 tonne of barley, 0.2 tonne of corn and 1 tonne of maize
- assist in the production of foundation seeds of wheat 50 tonne, barley 5 tonne, corn 5 tonne and rice 20 tonne.
- recruit a suitable international consultant in variety maintenance
- develop required techniques and procedures for variety maintenance
- implement the application of techniques and procedures for variety maintenance
- identify suitable scientists/technicians for training in variety maintenance
- implement a training course for 25 staff on variety maintenance for target cereal crops
- review and carry out improvements in the operation of existing database
- procure and install 10 computers
- organize a training course for 25 SBSTC staff on the use and management of the improved database
- procure and install 5 units of communication system for use by inspectors of SBSTC
- identify suitable out-of-country institutions for placement and training of 24 Iraq scientists/technicians and 2 senior staff
- identify, select and place 24 suitable candidates for fellowships (8 in variety development and evaluation, 6 in seed production and marketing systems and 10 in seed quality control) and 2 senior staff for study tours
- conduct an in-service course on variety development and evaluation for 30 staff
- conduct an in-service course on seed production and marketing systems for 30 staff
- conduct an in-service course on seed quality control for 30 staff

1.2 Explain how the programme/project is relevant to the following benchmarks:

- UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq,
- UN Millennium Development Goals,
- Joint Needs Assessment ,
- Iraqi National Development Strategy

FAO will ensure project activities are integrated into the overall UN strategy for Iraq. This supports the Iraqi National Development Strategy while contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. The project is designed to achieve:



- enhanced and 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.

The project will have a direct contribution to the attainment of the MDGs in Iraq. The Goals that will be focused on are Goal 1 “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” through the raising of the potential for domestic food production and associated job creation and promotion of income-generating activities; Goal 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women” through encouraging women to engage in the project activities.

The project will also indirectly contribute to other Goals (2, 4, 5 and 7) through its capacity building/training interventions and improvement of the food security situation.

1.3 Indicate the main implementing partners, their roles and responsibilities, and their interaction with the Agency

FAO cooperates closely with the main development agencies involved in rehabilitating infrastructure and in providing technical support to the seed sector.

The process of review of the existing seed legislation, formulation of the national seed policy and the strengthening of the National Seed Board will be carried out in a participatory manner involving all stakeholders both in the public and private sectors – through meetings, seminars and workshops. The outcomes of the process will not only enhance ownership by the Iraqi nationals but also will forge closer collaborative linkages among the stakeholders during implementation, thereby ensuring success. There is a likely emergence of private sector interests in the seed sector, after seed legislative and seed policy reforms are put in place; operating in a competitive environment these private initiatives may thus propel the development and delivery of greater supplies of better quality seeds to farmers in a more sustainable manner in the longer-term.

The agricultural research centres and SBSTC staff will participate in the process of rehabilitation and improvement of the infrastructures for their institutions through the scheduled assessments, development of required specifications and installation activities. The process of re-establishment of the technical capacities of these institutions will involve the training of trainers through overseas fellowships and study tours. The 26 staff members who will be trained overseas will be involved in the training of 165 other staff in their institutions in 6 locally conducted training courses in various seed industry disciplines. The technical agenda of putting in place, once again, the multi-year seed production cycle in the agricultural research centres and the re-strengthening of the seed



quality control operations of SBSTC will be determined by the trained staff upon rehabilitation of the physical infrastructures and installation of required equipment and machinery.

The National Seeds Board is expected to include all stakeholders, researchers, agriculture practitioners, private sector, etc together.

Universities will be invited and civil societies and NGOs will be involved where necessary.

II. Resources

Financial Resources:

2.1 Provide total funds provided, disbursed and committed

Total funds provided: US\$ 5,383,460

Total disbursed: US\$ 532,165

Total committed: US\$ 1,096,807

2.2 Highlight any variation(s) in projected versus actual spending for the reporting period indicating the reason for such variation(s).

None.

2.3 Explain programme/project expenditures within the 10 budget categories, including security expenditures.

The following are the expenditures on different budget lines:

5011 – Salaries (professional): US\$ 249, 588 –salaries of professional staff associated with the project implementation;

5012 – Salaries (general service): US\$ 10,222 – salaries of general services staff associated with the project implementation;

5013 – Consultants: US\$ 78, 333 – includes honorarium of the international consultants on project mission;

5014 – Contracts: US\$ 191,880 – Letter of Agreement for undertaking training

5020 – Locally contracted labour: US\$ 21,890

5021 – Travel: US\$ 135,067 - Includes travel cost for training

5023 – Training: US\$ 58.960 – Study tour, workshop cost



5025 – Non-expendable procurement: US\$ 747,095 – Procurement of farm equipment, seed processing machines and spare parts;

5027 – Technical support services: US\$ 7,170

5028 – General operating expenses: US\$ 97,265

5029 – Support cost: US\$ 31,502

2.4 Indicate other funding sources, if applicable.

Not applicable.

2.5 Provide details on any budget revisions approved by the UNDG ITF Steering Committee, if applicable

Not applicable

2.6 Project expenditures for the 1 July to 31 December 2007 period.

The project expenditure is estimated at US\$ 2,220,000 for the period 1 July to 31 December 2007 with the following budget lines:

5011 – Salaries (professional): US\$ 125,000

5012 – Salaries (general service): US\$ 25,000

5013 – Consultants: US\$ 45,000;

5014 – Contracts: US\$ 300,000;

5020 – Locally contracted labour: US\$ 25,000

5021 – Travel: US\$ 35,000;

5023 – Training: US\$ 535,000;

5025 – Non-expendable procurement: US\$ 800,000;

5027 – Technical support services: US\$ 5,000;

5028 – General operating expenses: US\$ 200,000;

5029 – Support cost: US\$ 125,000

Human Resources:

2.7 National Staff: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme)
1 FAO national coordinator based in Baghdad, Iraq

1 National Project Coordinator based in Baghdad, Iraq nominated by the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture for support to programme coordination, workplan formulation and activities implementation.



2.8 International Staff: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme)

1 Chief Technical Advisor for the Project is based in Amman (FAO/Iraq Office relocated in Amman).

1 International Consultant for the Project is based in Amman (FAO/Iraq Office relocated in Amman).

Other management and administrative staff are co shared with other UNDG ITF projects.

III. Methods of Operating

3.1 Summarize the implementation mechanisms primarily utilized and how they are adapted to achieve maximum impact given the challenging operating context.

The FAO works very closely with the counterpart Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) for the activities implementation.

Due to the prevailing security situation at present which does not allow for normal field visit of the international staff to the areas of programme implementation within Iraq, the management is undertaken from the FAO-Iraq Office relocated to Amman with remote-control mechanism.

The overall programme management responsibility under supervision of the Officer-in-Charge of FAO-Iraq Programme is undertaken by the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) located at Amman. The CTA is at constant touch with the National Project Coordinator (NPC) located at the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture through enhanced communication by use of telephone, electronic mail and video-conferencing wherever necessity arises

Periodic progress reports are received from the field. The NPC is encouraged to make as many missions as necessary to Amman on programme planning, monitoring, technical specifications and bids evaluation review on procurement issues. The Project Steering Committee guides on the activities implementation and recommends alternative course of actions required.

Within the FAO system, the Special Emergency Programmes Service (TCES) of the Operations Division is responsible for operation of the project at the field and works together with the Technical Division (AGPS) which is the Lead Technical Unit for technical-backstopping and the Procurement Division (AFSP) for the equipment procurement.

3.2 Provide details on the procurement procedures utilized and explain variances in standard procedures.



The technical specifications of the equipment mentioned in the project document are drafted by the staff of the counterpart Ministry at Baghdad. This ensures that the items procured under the project are suitable to the local utilization by the beneficiaries. The Project CTA fine-tunes the specifications taking into consideration the latest technology available and the field requirements. The Technical Division at the HQs will provide the final comments and the clearance on the technical specifications.

The Operations Division then requests the AFSP for procurement of the equipment with provision of the detailed technical specifications, quantity and delivery points. AFSP following FAO procurement procedures is responsible to float the tender for the requested items.

The bids evaluation and technical clearance is undertaken by the Technical Division. The AFSP is responsible for awarding the purchase order to the supplier of the item technically cleared with the lowest cost. Prior to bids awarding by AFSP, the Operations Division ensures that the MoA endorses the bids evaluation undertaken by the Technical Division.

No variance in standard procurement has been required.

3.3 Provide details on the monitoring system(s) that are being used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the ongoing programme/project.

Physical monitoring visits to the programme implementation sites by the international staff stationed at Amman are not possible due to prevailing security situation. Constant communication channel between Amman and Baghdad (the NPC and Iraqi MoA) on activities implementation status, progress and constraints, periodic report preparation by the field, dissemination of relevant information have been key as monitoring tool. Decisions are taken as quickly as possible for any needful alternative actions.

A monthly progress report is prepared by the CTA and submitted to the OIC of FAO-Iraq Programme for necessary action and on-forwarding to the Operations Division at the headquarters. Periodically the Technical Division is apprised of the progress of the work activities in relation to the agreed upon workplan. The Technical Division would advise through available communication channels and makes backstopping field visits.

3.4 Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.

None.

IV. Results



- 4.1 Provide a summary of programme/project progress in relation to planned outcomes and outputs; explain any variance in achieved versus planned outputs during the six month reporting period.

Nations Seed Policy Formulation and Legislation Review:

A three-day National Seed Workshop participated by the 35 Iraqis representing the seed industry stakeholders from the Ministry of Agriculture, public and private sectors, breeders, seed entrepreneurs, seed growers, quality control, production, processing and marketing was organized at Amman. Eight technical papers were presented. There were following Working Group Panels on:

1. Seed policy, seed legislation, seed body organization and structure;
2. Varietal development, seed production and marketing; and
3. Seed quality control.

The Working Groups recommended the framework for the national seed policy and the required legislation addressing particularly the following issues:

- restructuring the National Seeds Committee;
- priorities for developing the seeds production;
- the role of the state in seed sector;
- the support and price element;
- varietal development;
- quality control of seeds;

The Workshop Working Groups' recommendation will be furthered with drafting of National Seed Policy with the involvement of national and international legal consultants and will be finalized after series of stakeholders' consultation. There will be review of the seed legislation so as to facilitate the growth of seed industry in line with the policy to be adopted. The undertaking of this activity is timely as scheduled in the workplan.

Procurement and Infrastructure Rehabilitation:

There were 48 items of farm tools, seed processing plants and seed testing equipment for which tenders were invited by FAO headquarters. These equipment would be used in seed production farm, for seed cleaning, grading and treating, and for seed quality testing in the laboratories.

The Purchase Orders (PO) to the suppliers of the farm tools and seed processing equipment have been issued. The process for issuing of the POs for the remaining seed testing equipment is progressing. Delivery of all these equipment is assured within the next reporting period.



For the purchase and installation of office automation equipment e.g. computer, laptop, printer, scanner, internet system for the use of the field is under progress.

For the construction of five buildings draft design and bill of quantity has been prepared by the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture. The sites belong to MoA's State Board for Agricultural Research (SBAR) and State Board for Seed Testing and Certification (SBSTC) as follows:

- Al Basra (SBSTC);
- Al Nassiriya – state of Abu Ghraib Centre (SBSTC);
- Al Sawair (SBAR);
- Al Qadisiyah (SBAR) and
- Al Mishkhab (SBAR)

The tendering process for the building construction is somewhat delayed due to inadequacy of required technical manpower for finalizing the building design and the bill of quantities in the MOA. FAO's effort at Amman level to engage private consulting companies for this purpose was not successful. To be implemented in the next reporting period the needful steps are planned so as to complete the tender documents with private sector service contract from within Iraq.

For the project period, foundation seed production of 50 metric tonne of what, 5 metric tonne of barley, 5 metric tonne of corn and 20 metric tonne of rice is planned.

According to the planting season, technical and inputs requirements have been arranged for production of targeted 20 metric tonne rice foundation seed at Al Mishkhab Research Station in the Governorate of Al Najaf.

Foundation seed production of the remaining target crops would be followed in the appropriate planting season.

Study Tour and Training:

Two senior Officials of the MoA comprised of the Director General of the SBSTC and the Plant Breeding Expert concurrently assigned as the National Project Coordinator made study tour of India, Australia and Egypt for a total period of about one month.

The main objectives of the study tour were:

- study seed production system;
- national seed policy and seed legislation;
- relation of government sector with private seed companies;
- variety development of wheat, corn, rice and barley.



The Officials visited in the three countries both the government and private sector facilities and obtained valuable information relevant to the growth and development of seed industry in Iraq.

Two-month overseas fellowship for 24 MOA staff in the following courses was finalized for UK:

- training on seed production and marketing;
- training on seed quality control; and
- training on varietal development and evaluation

However visa refusal by the host country compelled FAO to look for alternative training institutions.

Negotiation is underway for the training programme to be held at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) of the Indian Agricultural Research Council (ICAR) at New Delhi India.

The project envisages the Iraqi MOA staff upon return to their country would train the local technical personnel. However, the whole training programme has been delayed due to UK visa refusal. The training course to be organized in India will be completed only in the time beyond the next reporting period. This is because specific plant growing seasons have to be followed for the practical aspects of the training.

- 4.2 Report on progress made toward the achievement of specific medium-term outcomes of the programme/project as a result of the achieved short-term outputs during this reporting period.

The development objective of the project is to improve food security and nutrition in Iraq through rehabilitation and improvement of the national seed programme, which will promote the availability and use of high quality seeds of adapted varieties to farmers and provide the foundation of a sustainable seed industry.

The following three major outputs achieved during the reporting period have contributed in the targeted outcome.

- i) The holding of the First National Seed Workshop participated in by representatives of the stake holders of the Iraqi seed sector which provided for a platform for presentation of pertinent papers and venue of idea exchanges and preparation of the Working Groups Recommendations on national seed policy and legislation review would be useful to enhance the performance of national seed industry with improvement of coordination and oversight arrangements.
- ii) Procurement of field equipment and the seed processing machines with spare parts and production of foundation seeds of adapted varieties would contribute in variety maintenance, seed multiplication and quality control for increased capacity of national seed industry; and



- iii) The overseas tour undertaken by the officials of the Iraqi MoA and their on-the-spot study on various seed technology aspects has been useful in gaining information, skill and knowledge for adoption in the Iraqi setting itself.
- 4.3 Report on the key outputs achieved in the six month period including # and nature of the activities (inputs), % of completion and beneficiaries.
- A National Seed Workshop to be attended by 35 seed sectors stake holders from both public and private sectors from Iraq – 100% of planned;
 - Overseas study tour to three counties by the senior staff of the Iraqi MOA – 100% of planned;
 - Seed technology training course to be participated by 24 Iraqi MOA staff as overseas fellowship – 20% of planned;
 - Procurement of farm equipment, seed processing machines and seed testing equipment – 50% of planned;
 - Construction of seed testing laboratory buildings – 20% of planned;
- 4.4 Explain, if relevant, delays in programme/project implementation, the nature of the constraints, lessons learned in the process and actions taken to mitigate future delays.
- Delay was experienced in the finalization of the design and the preparation of the bill of quantity of five buildings due to unavailability of competent technical resources in the line ministry. Consulting Firm at Amman quoted very high cost for the job. The FAO-Field Office at Baghdad has been entrusted to take the service of the private sector in finalization of building tender documents. This would ensure timely completion of the construction works through contract.
 - The overseas training of the seed technology staff of the Iraqi MoA finalized to be undertaken at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB), Cambridge, UK was jeopardized and had to be cancelled at the last minute with the rejection by British Government of the required visa to the training candidates on the Iraqi security grounds. This over-seas training is important in the sense this would be followed by in-service training courses within the country. To remedy the visa issues, alternative country in the Asian region (particularly India) is being considered where the level of technology is suitable for Iraq and visa granting is not expected to be problematic.
 - Some delay in procurement of field and seed equipment have been experienced due to suppliers' request for extended period of manufacture, and unacceptable delivery point due to Iraq's security situation.



Alternative suppliers meeting technical specifications and alternative port of entry are being considered to mitigate the problems.

- 4.5 List the key partnerships and collaborations, and explain how such relationships impact on the achievement of results.

The project is operated in collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture. Generally there is high level of collaboration extended from the counterpart Ministry taking into account the security situation prevalent over Iraq.

FAO cooperates closely by providing technical support with the main development agencies of the Iraqi MoA namely State Board for Agricultural Research (SBAR) and the State Board for Seed Testing and Certification (SBSTC) which are involved in aspects of variety maintenance, seed production and quality control.

The process of review of the existing seed legislation, formulation of the national seed policy and the strengthening of the National Seed Board will be carried out in a participatory manner involving all stakeholders both in the public and private sectors – through meetings, seminars and workshops. The outcomes of the process will not only enhance ownership by the Iraqi nationals but also will forge closer collaborative linkages among the stakeholders during implementation, thereby ensuring success. There is a likely emergence of private sector interests in the seed sector, after seed legislative and seed policy reforms are put in place; operating in a competitive environment these private initiatives may thus propel the development and delivery of greater supplies of better quality seeds to farmers in a more sustainable manner in the longer-term.

The agricultural research centres and SBSTC staff will participate in the process of rehabilitation and improvement of the infrastructures for their institutions through the scheduled assessments, development of required specifications and installation activities. The process of re-establishment of the technical capacities of these institutions will involve the training of trainers through overseas fellowships and study tours. The 24 staff members who will be trained overseas will be involved in the training of 165 other staff in their institutions in 6 locally conducted training courses in various seed industry disciplines. The technical agenda of putting in place, once again, the multi-year seed production cycle in the agricultural research centres and the re-strengthening of the seed quality control operations of SBSTC will be determined by the trained staff upon rehabilitation of the physical infrastructures and installation of required equipment and machinery.

The National Seeds Board is expected to include all stakeholders, researchers, agriculture practitioners, private sector, etc together.



Universities will be invited and civil societies and NGOs will be involved where necessary.

- 4.6 Summarize achievements against planned results for cross cutting issues: security, gender, human rights, employment (including # of short and/or long-term jobs created), and environment.

In the short-term the project has target of creating around 500 job opportunities in connection with rehabilitation activities and increased seed production. In the longer term the private sector will increase seed production and there will be associated employment opportunities.

For the reporting period, it is not possible to exactly quantify the achievement on job creation as the rehabilitation and seed production activities are under progress. Relevant information would be provided in the next reporting period in this regards.

V. Future Work Plan

- 5.1 Summarize the projected activities up to the end of June 2007.

The following are the major project activities up to the end of December 2007;

- Formulation of a National Seed Policy and review of seed legislations;
- Finalization of design and BOQ, tendering and start of building construction works;
- Specifications finalization and start of greenhouse construction;
- Completion of procurement of farm tools, seed processing machines and seed testing equipment;
- Procurement process for office automation equipment, auxiliary equipment and laboratory supplies;
- Technical support the MoA on variety maintenance techniques, breeders seeds and foundations seeds production;
- All arrangement on overseas training of MoA staff; completion of the training on “Seed Production and Marketing” and on “Seed Quality Control”