



IRAQ TRUST FUND

**ANNUAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2010**

Programme Title & Number
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: Assisting the Government of Iraq to Develop a National Tourism Strategy • Programme Number: Project C 9-30 • MDTF Office Atlas Number:

Country, Locality(s), Thematic Area(s)
<p>Country: Iraq Governorate: Baghdad, Erbil and Najaf; nationwide for mapping Town: Sector: Governance</p>

Participating Organization(s)
UNESCO

Implementing Partners
Ministry of Culture

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	
UNDG ITF:	USD 1,000,000
Agency Core: UNESCO:	USD 250,000
GoI Contribution	
Other Contribution	
Total	USD 1,250,000

Programme Duration (months)
Overall Duration: 12 months Start Date: 27.04.2010 Original End Date: 27.04.2011 Extension: One Year Extension to be requested

Programme Assessments/Mid-Term Evaluation
Assessment Completed - if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No Date: _____
Mid-Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: _____

Submitted By
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Introduction:

Pillar 1 of the National Development Strategy of Iraq (2007 – 2010) seeks to strengthen the foundations of economic growth through a variety of means including providing a greater role for tourism. Considering the economic might of the tourist industry, careful attention should be paid to this many-sided phenomenon with its global repercussions. It is UNESCO's intention to assist Iraqi Government in preparing a National Tourism Strategy. The main objective of the project is to strengthen capacities of relevant Government Institutions, in particular of the State Board of Tourism for the strategic planning of tourism sector and for promotion of cultural, religious and eco-tourism.

Development of a comprehensive tourism strategy for Iraq will cover different aspect of the tourist industry. Moreover, it will identify potential touristic products for cultural, religious and eco-tourism and will suggest ways of developing the sector at a short-, mid- and long-terms. The mapping of Iraq's rich cultural resources is at its very early stage targeting mainly the mapping of cultural heritage sites and museums collections. This extremely important exercise coordinated by the Ministry of Culture needs to be supported by extending the scope of mapped resources to religious and natural sites.

NARRATIVE REPORT

I. Purpose

The Project is designed to assist the Government of Iraq to develop National Tourism Strategy in cooperation with stakeholders responsible for cultural, religious and eco-tourism assets. The Project is articulated around two outputs 1) Capacity Development for Tourism Sector and 2) Support to the creation of tools for the promotion of cultural, religious and eco-tourism in Iraq.

The project will contribute to UNCT Sector Team Outcome "Strengthened regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes of national and local governance" through two outputs;

Output 1.1: Capacity Development for Tourism Sector, with the following anticipated results:

- Development of an institutional capacity building programme for concerned stakeholders
- Training the State Board of Tourism and other stakeholders on Strategic Planning to ensure the inclusive process of National Tourism Strategy Development and to enhance the tourism sector;
- Study tours in the region targeting three case studies: cultural tourism for world heritage site, religious tourism and eco-tourism;
- Strengthening of the coordination mechanism among tourism sector stakeholders;
- The final draft of Tourism Strategy developed and indorsed.

Output 1.2: Support to the creation of tools for the promotion of cultural, religious and eco-tourism in Iraq.

1. Development of Virtual Tours: The Project will train a team of young architects, archaeologists and web-designers for production of web-based virtual tours. Sample Virtual Tours will be developed for two cultural sites, two religious sites and two eco-tourism sites. The choice of the sites belongs to the State Board of Tourism with approval of the Steering Committee:

2. Support to the development of Tourism Guide Licensing System

The project assists the Government of Iraq in establishment of criteria for the Tourism Guide Licensing System Identification of training centers for future upgrading and licensing of guides for cultural, religious and eco-tourism sites and technical support for the curricula of those centers

Beneficiaries:

Direct Beneficiaries include the Government of Iraq and all relevant governmental institutions. Similarly youth and tour guides will benefit from the Virtual Tours development and licensing support. The project aims for at least 45% participation by women in all workshops and training sessions.

Programme relation to the Strategic (UN) Planning Framework guiding the operations of the Fund/JP.

UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq

The project will directly address the joint UN Assistance Framework guiding the operations of the UNDG ITF and contribute to UNCT Sector Outcome “Strengthened regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes of national and local governance” through Strengthening regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes of national and local governance.

UN Millennium Development Goals MDGs

This project contributes to MDG Goal 8, to develop a global partnership for development, Target 8a: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

Iraqi National Development Strategy (NDS) & the International Compact with Iraq (ICI)

Assisting the Government of Iraq to develop a National Tourism Strategy will strengthening the platform for economic growth and support national priorities detailed in the NDS; 5.3: Strengthen economic growth through tourism; 7.1: Human Development; 9.4: Strengthening institutions and improving governance; and ICC Benchmarks; 4.2.1.2 Adopt and implement comprehensive transparency policies and legislation.

II. Resources

The two funding resources available to the project are the above said, namely UNDGITF US\$ 1,000,000 and UNESCO core fund US\$ 250,000.

Provide details on any budget revisions approved by the appropriate decision-making body, if applicable.

N/A

Constraints

The main challenge in the implementation of the project is the need to address the challenges of remote controlled implementation and the need to improve the preparatory phase with national counterparts and gain a firm commitment from each implementing partner. Therefore, this project is designed to have project implementation completely moved to Iraq.

Human Resources:

National Staff: Project manager based in Baghdad, and a two Project Assistants (based in Amman to ensure smooth administrative support to the implementation of the project), three National Programme Officers

(NPOs) based in Baghdad, Najaf and Erbil to coordinate with the partner representatives in the area. The NPOs will be responsible for the daily follow up on the project implementation and in order to fully ensure the inclusive process for development of the National Tourism Strategy.

Four national Consultants will be recruited to work with international consultants to provide the necessary training for creation of virtual tours, to support the development of the National Strategy and the criteria for Tourism Guide Licensing System, and to provide the training for mapping of religious and eco-tourism sites.

International Staff: The Project implementation consists of an international Culture Programme Specialist, based in Amman, responsible for the overall guidance of the project.

Five international Consultants will provide the necessary training for creation of virtual tours, to support the development of the National Strategy and the criteria for Tourism Guide Licensing System, and to provide the training for mapping of religious and eco-tourism sites.

III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

Summary of the implementation mechanisms primarily utilized

The UNESCO Office for Iraq, in Amman, is responsible for the overall management and implementation of the project. The Project Management Team consists of a Culture Programme Specialist (based in Amman), a Project Manager (based in Baghdad), and a two Project Assistants (based in Amman to ensure smooth administrative support to the implementation of the project). Three National Programme Officers (NPOs) will be based in Baghdad, Najaf and Erbil respectively to coordinate with the partner representatives in the area. The NPOs will have regular meetings with concerned stakeholders and members of the Steering Committee. In addition to the daily follow up on the project implementation and in order to fully ensure the inclusive process for development of the National Tourism Strategy, the NPOs will liaise with the consultants hired under the project. The Project Manager will be accountable to the Steering Committee, attending the Steering Committee once a month and will be updating them on the development of the project and preparation of all planned activities.

Project Steering Committee (SC)

A Steering Committee comprised of focal points from all concerned institutions and chaired by the Ministry of Culture, facilitate and guide the implementation of the project in accordance with the agreed programme. The SC receives quarterly progress reports on the implementation of the project compiled by the Project Manager and based on the monthly reports submitted to the Project Manager by National Project Officers in Baghdad, Erbil and Najaf.

Details on the procurement procedures utilized.

All procurement activities included in this project are implemented according to UNESCO's standard rules and procedures of international competitive bidding. Within this framework, procurement for goods up to a ceiling of \$100,000 may be undertaken directly by the Amman based team. For procurement of goods above \$100,000, a committee in Headquarters reviews and authorizes the contract in question.

Monitoring system(s) that are being used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the ongoing project.

The project is designed to meet the requirements for monitoring, evaluation and reporting in line with the Memorandum of Understanding of the UN Development Group Iraq Trust Fund as well as by the standard policies and procedures of UNESCO. The results framework are used as the basis for monitoring and reporting progress against outputs, stipulated indicators and their contribution towards the outcome.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementing partners of the Project is specified in the term of references of the contractual agreements. The UNESCO Culture Programme Specialist in close cooperation with the focal points of the project implementation representing national counterpart ensure that all outputs stipulated in the terms of reference are delivered in accordance with the contractual agreements without any delay.

During the implementation of the project UNESCO will undertake a – midterm review together with GOI to assess progress against outputs, stipulated indicators and their contribution towards the outcome as stated in the results framework and work plan, and as measured by the corresponding indicators. While focusing on output-to-outcome level results it will as well as identifying major problems or challenges to be addressed by the management of the project to ensure that expected results are achieved within the budget and proposed timeframe.

At the end of the project, an external evaluation will be undertaken to (i) assess and showcase the achieved progress and results against stipulated project results on all stakeholders especially beneficiary groups, (ii) assess the efficiency of the project interventions (iii) understand the effectiveness of project interventions in addressing the underlying problem (iv) assess the relevance of project components in addressing the needs and issues of beneficiary groups (v) assess management arrangements (including procurement procedures, coordination, monitoring) in place by the GoI and/ or the beneficiary communities towards the sustainability of various project-initiated services and benefits (vi) generate lessons on good practices based on assessment from the aforementioned evaluation objectives and to provide recommendations to all stakeholders (GoI, UN, donors, civil society) on how to maximize the results from similar initiatives in comparable situations.

Assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken

N/A (to date)

IV. Results

Programme progress in relation to planned outcomes and outputs

Assessment of the capacity/operational needs of the State Board of Tourism is on-going, as is collection of existing materials and data that will feed into the policy development component of the project. A cultural tourism expert dispatched by Italian Embassy for the project spent one month in Baghdad closely working with the State Tourism Board on data gathering and also training staff for introducing the international framework of tourism development as an industry that should respect sustainable management of cultural resources such as tourism, site, religious sites and ecological sites. The preparation of the kick off meeting is on-going.

Key outputs achieved in the reporting period including # and nature of the activities (inputs), % of completion and beneficiaries.

Under output 1.1 (GOI has improved capacities to develop the tourism sector); the assessment of the capacity and operational needs of the Iraqi tourism board is ongoing, by the end of reporting period 30% of the

assessment completed; and 30 (15 male, 15 female) government staff introduced to the tourism strategy development , achieving 60% of the total target number.

Explain, if relevant, delays in programme implementation, the nature of the constraints, actions taken to mitigate future delays and lessons learned in the process.

There was a delay of 2 months in releasing the fund causing the delay in starting the project.

Key partnerships and collaborations

The government counterparts are the Ministry of Culture, the State Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Endowment (Waqf) and Religious Affairs, State Board of Tourism, State Board of Antiquities and Heritage.

UNESCO will also cooperate with international institutions and NGO for heritage protection as follows: IGO- ICCROM, World Tourism Organization; International Council for Site and Monuments (ICOMOS) International Council for Museums (ICOM), World Monument Fund (WMF); Visiting Arts; Foundations: Getty Conservation Institute, and the national NGO Iraq Association to Support Culture, Culture for All.

Other highlights and cross-cutting issues:

Human rights: Acceptance and recognition of the diversity of culture is conducive to dialogue, respect and mutual understanding. Therefore the freedom of cultural expression is a basic human right. Moreover the implementation of cultural rights is a pre-requisite to peace and security. The Project is working with duty bearers and rights holders to ensure a broad-based understanding that cultural diversity is a driving force for sustainable development, and of the important role that diversity plays in supporting intercultural and inter religious dialogue.

Gender equality: The Project will ensure the gender balance for any activity and training within the capacity development component as well as integration of gender equality principles in the National Tourism Strategy.

Key environmental issues: A country's biodiversity, its protection and promotion is an integral part of tourism development of the country, and therefore the Project, developing eco-tourism destinations' will be addressing environmental issues, will respect and employ environmental policies established for Iraq in order to ensure the sustainable character of the development of ecotourism in Iraq.

Employment generation: The Project does not directly focus on employment. However, the virtual tour designers will be employed by the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage at least on a short term basis. Indirectly the Project will contribute to the development of the better opportunities for tour guides. In addition, it will also contribute to the long term development of the labor market connected to the tourism sector.

V. Future Work Plan

- Summarize the projected activities and expenditures for the following reporting period (1 January-31 December 2011), using the lessons learned during the previous reporting period.

For the following reporting period the project activities include;

1. Three trainings for strategic planning for State Tourism Board and all other stakeholders from relevant ministries; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 100,375

2. Three study tours on planning and management of 1) cultural, 2) religious and 3) eco-tourism sites in the region; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011), fund allocated for the activity: USD 115,750
3. Training of the staff of the Ministry of Environment and of the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs in data collection for religious and eco-tourism sites; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 80,500
4. Support to the preparation of a Draft Tourism Strategy; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 130,250
5. Conference to present and endorse the Tourism Strategy (Baghdad) in 2012; fund allocated for the activity: USD 90,000
6. External evaluation fund allocated for the activity: USD 15,000 in 2012
7. Training of recruited team of young architects archaeologist and web designers for virtual tour design; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 97,500
8. Development of Sample Virtual Tours; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 90,750
9. Technical Assistance for the establishment of criteria for Tourism Guide Licensing System; (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 76,375
10. Support to the identification of training centers for tourism guides in cultural, religious and eco-tourism. (Jan. 1st.- Dec. 31st. 2011) fund allocated for the activity: USD 70,500

Major adjustments in strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs planned.

No major adjustments in the planned outputs foreseen to date.

VIII. INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance (if any)	Source of Verification	Comments (if any)
Outcome 1 Strengthened regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes of national and local governance							
Output 1.1: GOI has improved capacities to develop the tourism sector	1.1.1 Assessment of the capacity and operational needs of the Iraqi tourism board completed	NO	Yes	80%		Project progress report	
	1.1.2 No. of government staff trained on strategic planning (gender disaggregated)	0	50	10%		Training report	
	1.1.3 % of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms relevance and usefulness	NA	80%	75%		Pre-post training assessment	
	1.1.4 Number of staff participating in study tours on planning and management cultural, religious, and ecotourism	0	30%			Training report	
	1.1.5 A tourism strategy is drafted	No	Yes			Strategy document	
	1.1.6 Number of Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Religious Affairs staff training in data collection of religious and eco -tourism sites	0	20			Training report	
	1.1.7 % of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms	NA	80%			Pre-post participants assessment	

	relevance and usefulness						
Output 1.2: GOI is better able to promote cultural, religious and eco -tourism	1.2.1 Number of young architects, archaeologists, web designers trained on virtual tour design	0	15			Training report	
	1.2.2 % of trainees satisfied with the quality of training in terms relevance and usefulness	NA	80%			Pre-post participants' assessment	
	1.2.3 Number of sample Virtual Tours on archaeological sites, religious shrines, and eco tourism sites developed	0	6			Programme records	
	1.2.4 A criteria for tourism Guide Licensing established	NO	Yes			Progress report	
	2.1.5 Number of training centers identified for tourism guides in cultural, religious and ecotourism identified	NA	3			Progress report	