

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund

Project #: F8-13

Date and Quarter Updated: July – September 2011 (3rd Quarter)

Participating UN Organisation: UNESCO (Lead Agency); UNOPS

Sector: Protection

Government of Iraq – Ministry of Human Rights; Communications and Media Commission

Title	Protection of Media Professionals, Members of the Academic Community and Human Rights Defenders in Iraq				
Geo. Location	Nationwide with hubs in Baghdad, and Erbil				
Project Cost	US\$ 1,000,000 (UNESCO: USD 589,452 / UNOPS: USD 410,548)				
Duration	12 months + 12 months extension				
Approval Date	27/06/2010	Starting Date	09/07/2010	Completion Date	9/07/2011 extended to 09/07/2012
Project Description	<p>This project aims at supporting the following groups: media professionals, Human Rights Defenders and members of the academic community, who have been especially targeted by extremists, suffering the consequences of violence and threats inside Iraq. The project is divided into three inter-related outputs: (i) National institutions (e.i. MoJ, MoHR, CMC and IBA) and CSOs have an active Federation promoting a greater understanding and increasing the capacity to react to human rights issues, including raising awareness of human rights abuses in Iraq. A series of consultative meetings to address human rights concerns will focus on the development of an official Iraq wide federation of CSOs. The federation will work to raise human rights awareness among the general public national institutions and the target groups and monitor human rights issues; (ii) the targeted groups will each receive specialized training on human rights protection systems and monitoring human rights violations. In addition, roundtables will be held on human rights protection between the target groups, government officials and members of the Iraqi Bar Association; (iii) personal and safety training will be provided to increase their capacity to cope with threats and professionals risk; and two local experts to work within an Iraqi NGO in Baghdad and Erbil to create its capacity to serve as regional resources on safety and security issues, to monitor and report on the security situation in Iraq, coordinate the trainings, as well as serve as a regional network coordinator for beneficiaries.</p> <p>While UNESCO will lead the overall project, the division of labour will be shared according to UNESCO and UNOPS mandates and expertise, and in association with NGOs and with Iraqi civil society, as well as with the beneficiary groups.</p>				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

Project Outcome:

Independent civil society and media enabled through legal and regulatory frameworks, professional development and strengthened institutions.

Objective 1: Develop an active Federation between national institutions, such as the MoJ, the MoHR, the CMC, the Iraqi Bar Association, and CSOs, in promoting a greater understanding and the increased capacity to react to human rights issues, including raising awareness of human rights abuses in Iraq. This will result in the creation of an official federation of CSOs which will be responsible in the continued awareness raising and reporting on human rights issues among the general public, national institutions and the target groups.

Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity of the targeted groups to promote a human rights system by providing practical tools to report and monitor human rights violations to national and international institutions.

Objective 3: Increase the capacity of the targeted groups to cope with threats and professionals risk by providing practical tools on security issues to ensure their personal safety.

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement	
Outputs	<p>Output 1: National institutions and CSOs have an active Federation promoting a greater understanding and increasing the capacity to react to human rights issues, including raising awareness of human rights abuses in Iraq.</p> <p>Output 2: Government officials, HRDs, media organizations, members of the academic community and professional unions have strengthened capacities to promote human rights protection systems and report to national and international human rights institutions.</p> <p>Output 3: HRDs, academics and media workers have increased capacities to cope with threats and professional risks.</p>
Activities	<p>Output 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultative meetings to establish key issues within the domain of human rights in Iraq and to coordinate a unified response mechanism. - Monthly news sheets and mailing list. - National Conference in Baghdad to launch a Federation of CSOs. - Interactive website. <p>Output 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainings of trainers in human right protection systems. - Roundtables in human rights. - Trainings in human rights protection and personal safety and security issues. - Legal awareness training to governmental officials and lawyers. <p>Output 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainings of trainers in personal safety and security issues. - Establishment of two resources centres/hubs (Baghdad and Erbil). - Reproducing and distributing of a Field Work Safety Manual.
Procurement	N/A

Funds Committed (UNESCO)	US\$ 125,030.73	% of approved	21.21%
Funds Disbursed	US\$ 83,541.31	% of approved	14.17%
Forecast final date	July 2012	Delay (months)	12 month

Funds Committed (UNOPS)	US\$ 350,006.60	% of approved	85.27%
Funds Disbursed	US\$ 182,266.22	% of approved	52.07%
Forecast final date	September 2011	Delay (months)	2

*Above figures reflect actual commitments and disbursements out of a total UNOPS budget of \$410,458.

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned (current status)
Men	0	0
Women	0	0
Children	0	0
IDPs	0	0
Others	0	0
Indirect beneficiaries	220 Iraqi human rights Activists	95%
Employment generation (men/women)	0	0

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results		% of planned
Objective 1: Develop an active Federation develop national institutions, such as the MoJ, the MoHR,	Activities Consultative meetings to establish key issues within the domain of human rights in Iraq and to coordinate a unified response mechanism.	100%

<p>the CMC, the Iraqi Bar Association, and CSOs, in promoting a greater understanding and the increased capacity to react to human rights issues, including raising awareness of human rights abuses in Iraq. This will result in the creation of an official federation of CSOs which will be responsible in the continued awareness raising and reporting on human rights issues among the general public, national institutions and the target groups.</p>	<p>Monthly news sheets and mailing list. 100%</p> <p>Creation and launch of Federation (Setting up a Steering Committee; Drafting Federation Charter & ToR; Launching Federation) 100%</p> <p>National Conference on the situation of HRDs in Iraq. 100%</p> <p>The development and design of the interactive website was completed during the previous quarter and the site is now online at http://www.modafaaun.com/. This site benefits activist, academics and journalists who are on a regularly growing mailing list and notified whenever articles or reports are uploaded to the site. The website is open to the public. 100%</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p>
<p>Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity of the targeted groups to promote a human rights system by providing practical tools to report and monitor human rights violations to national and international institutions.</p>	<p>Trainings of trainers in human right protection systems completed in the last reporting period. 100%</p> <p>Roundtables in human rights. 100%</p> <p>Trainings in human rights protection and personal safety and security issues. 0%</p> <p>Legal awareness training to governmental officials and lawyers. 0%</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>0%</p>
<p>Objective 3: Increase the capacity of the targeted groups to cope with threats and professionals risk by providing practical tools on security issues to ensure their personal safety.</p>	<p>Trainings of trainers in personal safety and security issues. 0%</p> <p>Establishment of two resources centres/hubs (Baghdad and Erbil). 15%</p> <p>Reproducing and distributing of a Field Work Safety Manual. 0%</p>	<p>0%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>0%</p>

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

This quarter, UNESCO, in cooperation with UNAMI HRO and UNOPS, formed a Steering Committee for a Federation comprised of 16 Iraqi activists from within the field of human rights, academia and media. Such Steering Committee had its inaugural meeting on 26th September 2011 in Erbil. During the meeting the Committee agreed on its overall responsibility: developing a federation of human rights defenders aimed to raise awareness among the general public national institutions and the civil society and monitor human rights issues in Iraq. They also elected the President and Secretary of the Committee, in addition to 2 general advisors and a legal advisor. The Committee prepared a first draft proposal for a Federation. This proposal was presented at the Human Rights Defenders Conference held in Erbil from 27th-29th September 2011. It is expected that the Committee will work in the next quarters in (1) defining the mission and purpose of the federation; (2) drafting the Charter and Terms of Reference of the federation, and (3) promoting the concept of the federation.

UNESCO has started the recruitment of qualified and interested candidates for the 2 positions of safety and security coordinators, responsible for setting up the two Regional Resource Centres to be based in Erbil and Baghdad. The coordinators are expected to be on board by November 2011. Their first task will be to conduct an assessment aimed at identifying local civil society or non-governmental organizations that are working or might work on some activity in the area of security awareness for journalists, for the purposes of identifying the appropriate NGO to be a base for the regional safety resource hubs.

In addition, UNESCO completed its public bidding process for selecting an implementing partner and is finalizing the evaluation of proposals. Once contracting is completed, project activities (i.e. Safety and Security basic training and ToT, legal awareness training, field safety manual) are expected to start by the end of the next quarter.

UNOPS organized the national conference, held in Erbil from 27 to 29 September that discussed the situation of human right defenders in Iraq. Discussion included challenges the three target groups face in their work and how to develop a framework where HRDs are better protected. The conference was attended by academics, journalists, CSO members, Ministry of Human Rights officials including the Deputy Minister as well as other government representatives from the central and KRG region. The conference was facilitated by Iraqi civil society experts and supported by UNAMI HRO, UNESCO and UNOPS. Keynote speeches were delivered by the Deputy Minister of Human Rights, representatives from the CoR and from the Human Rights Office of the KRG as well as the Chief of UNAMI HRO and Civil Society representatives.

As a result of the conference, participants agreed on the establishment of an Iraqi federation of human rights defenders expected to raise awareness of human rights issues as well as promoting on the national level the culture of human rights.

A number of recommendations were given by participants on the formation of the federation. In particular the following was noted during the conference:

- (a) The goal of the federation is the creation of a union for the protection of human rights defenders and they work to promote a culture of human rights in Iraq
- (b) Activities should include capacity building and awareness raising; coordination and communication with national institutions on human rights; unification of the efforts of human rights defenders in addressing violations and human rights issues; follow up of Iraq's international obligations; reporting; outreach and the creation of a structure to help project HRD's
- (c) The federation should be registered under relevant Iraq law on syndicates and unions
- (d) An administrative base should be set up in Baghdad with membership Iraq wide
- (e) Donations will be sought to sustain the federation

General recommendations made by conference participants on the situation of HRD's in Iraq included the following:

1. Build the capacity of human rights defenders and increase their experience through training courses and experience sharing seminars/
2. Strengthening the culture of human rights awareness raising within communities.
3. Improve coordination and communication with governmental and judicial bodies, including parliamentary provincial councils as well as supporting international and regional human rights defenders.

4. Ensure wider access to informational materials on human rights.
5. Call on Parliament to enact laws that protect human rights defenders, both on legal and administrative levels.
6. Encourage the implementation of international conventions ratified by Iraq by following up on their ratification and adaptation of their contents into national law.
7. Speed up the formation of the Independent Human Rights Commission in Iraq to ensure a champion for human rights in Iraq.

Additionally during this reporting period, UNOPS completed in excess the newsletter publications linked to the project website www.modafaun.com. To date a total of 16 newsletters out of a planned 14 have been sent out electronically. The project website continues to be popular and in the month of July alone, the website received 644 visitors. Three focal points selected during the federation steering committee will continue to oversee the management of the project website with the assistance of the current website manager, it is expected that this sharing of tasks and link to the federation will add to the sustainability of the site beyond the project timeframe.

Main Challenges

The security situation in Iraq remains a factor of concern for the implementation of the project, particularly for training activities that have to be conducted once the UNESCO's implementer is on board.