Participating UN Organisation: UNDP (lead agency), UNOPS	Sector: Governance			
Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry: Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)				
Title	Institutional Development Support to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)			
Geographic Location	All Governorates of Iraq			

Project Cost	**Total ITF Budget: USD 24,861,991**
	     UNDP: USD 13,947,279
	     UNOPS: USD 10,914,712			

Duration	36 months			
Approval Date (SC)	29 September 2010	**Starting Date**	18 October 2010	**Completion Date**	17 October 2013
Project Description	This programme has been jointly developed by the UN and the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to support the IHEC in its continued institutional development as a sustainable institution within the government structure of Iraq, carrying out its constitutional mandate independently, efficiently, transparently and accountably, in line with professional standards. The programme objectives are based on the results of a comprehensive IHEC capacity assessment in October/November 2009, recommendations from the IHEC and inputs of international advisors working closely with the IHEC on a day-to-day basis, and lessons learned from recent electoral events. These objectives aim to address significant gaps in the following areas: 1. Institutional framework and organisational capacity of the IHEC as Iraq's permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution; 2. Human resource capacity of the IHEC (staff skills, knowledge and resources) at both central and governorate office levels; 3. Technological capacity of the IHEC to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner.			
Development Goal and Immediate Objectives				

Development goal: To contribute to an enhanced implementation of electoral processes in Iraq in line with the Governance Sector Outcome 1: *Strengthened electoral processes in Iraq* and the Iraq National development goal: *Strengthening good governance and improving security*.

UNDAF Outcome 1: *Improved governance, including the protection of human rights*
1.2 *The Iraqi state has more efficient, accountable and participatory governance at national and sub-national levels.(links with but after project initiated)*

The programme's immediate objective is: To support the IHEC in its continued institutional development as a sustainable institution within the government structure of Iraq, carrying out its constitutional mandate independently, efficiently, transparently and accountably, in line with professional standards.

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement	
Outputs	**JP Output 1: IHEC has strengthened institutional framework and organisational capacity to effectively conduct electoral processes as Iraq's permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution** Output 1.1: IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability; Output 1.2: IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices; Output 1.3: IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes. **JP Output 2: IHEC has enhanced human resource capacity by improving staff skills, knowledge and resources at both central and governorate office levels for staff to fulfil their functions effectively** Output 2.1: IHEC has enhanced internal professional development and capacity building strategy; Output 2.2: IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively. **JP Output 3: IHEC has improved technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner**
Activities	1.1.1 CoR reporting requirements reviewed with the IHEC 1.1.2 Board decisions published in Kurdish and Arabic 1.1.3 IHEC electoral regulatory framework reviewed 1.1.4 Electoral legal framework reviewed in cooperation with CoR Legal Committee 1.1.5 IHEC complaints process reviewed 1.1.6 Institutional framework for dispute resolution reviewed in cooperation with CoR Legal Committee, Accountability and Justice Commissioner, Electoral Judicial Panel 1.1.7 IHEC processes reviewed in relation to GoI regulations and procedures (admin, finance, contracts) 1.1.8. Number of capacity building activities[1] organised on transparency, accountability and legal framework 1.1.9 Number of personnel (male/female), representatives of relevant Iraqi partner institutions and external stakeholders engaged in capacity building activities on transparency, accountability and legal framework 1.1.10 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity 1.1.11 Number of consultants providing technical support to IHEC on improved transparency and accountability 1.2.1 IHEC SOPs drafted (finance, human resources, information management, administration approval processes) 1.2.2 IHEC reporting guidelines drafted 1.2.3 IHEC finance, human resources and inventory management systems assessed and upgraded 1.2.4 Number of management capacity building activities organised for enhancement of management structures and practices 1.2.5 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in management capacity building activities 1.2.6 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity 1.2.7 Number of consultants providing technical support to IHEC to improve institutional management structures and practices 1.3.1 Assessment of voter registration policies, operational processes and systems completed, in cooperation with relevant Iraqi government bodies 1.3.2 Study of IDP data and voting patterns completed, in cooperation with Ministry of Displacement and Migration 1.3.3 Systems for managing political entity and candidate data assessed and upgraded

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[1] Capacity building activity' refers to training, study visit, workshop, seminar, roundtable or election lessons learned event.

	1.3.4 Voter information campaign evaluated
	1.3.5 IHEC governorate helpdesk and call centre services assessed and improved
	1.3.6 Number of capacity building activities held to enhance electoral management policies and processes
	1.3.7 Number of personnel and representatives of relevant Iraqi partner institutions (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities to enhance electoral management policies and processes
	1.3.8 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity
	1.3.9 Number of consultants providing technical support to the IHEC to enhance electoral management policies and processes
	2.1.1 Internal capacity building procedures and evaluation tools developed by IHEC
	2.1.2 Number of personnel (male/female) using resources provided to the IHEC resource centre (books, publications)
	2.1.3 Number of capacity building activities organised for IHEC CB personnel
	2.1.4 Number of IHEC CB personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities
	2.1.5 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity
	2.1.6 Number of capacity building activities organised by IHEC CB Department
	2.1.7 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities organised by IHEC CB Department
	2.1.8 Number of personnel (male/female) fully accredited as BRIDGE facilitator
	2.1.9 Number of consultants providing support to the IHEC in delivery of capacity building activities
	2.2.1 Number of capacity building activities[7] organised to enhance technical skills
	2.2.2 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities to improve technical skills
	2.2.3 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity
	2.2.4 Number of personnel (male/female) trained in use of graphic design and translation equipment
	2.2.5 Number of consultants providing technical support to improve IHEC staff technical skills
	3.1.1 Number of technological assessments completed (IT and communications)
	3.1.2 Voter registration systems and equipment upgraded
	3.1.3 GIS system developed
	3.1.4 Number of personnel (male/female) trained on the usage and maintenance of IT systems
	3.1.5 Percentage of trainees passing the end of training technical test
	3.1.6 ITC Disaster Recovery Plan is developed
	3.1.7 Strategy for improving data entry centre processes is developed
	3.1.8 Number of IHEC staff participating in a study visit on effective and efficient tabulation of results
	3.1.9 IHEC call centre systems assessed and upgraded
	3.1.10 Number of consultants providing technical support to improve IHEC's IT communication and technology
Procurement (major items)	Procurement planned under the project: • Resources for the IHEC resource centre (books, publications, equipment) • Graphic Design equipment • Translation equipment (dictionaries, glossaries, simultaneous interpretation) • Call centre equipment and software • Voter registration equipment and systems • GIS hardware and software equipment • Equipment for implementation of ITC disaster recovery plan

Funds Committed (UNDP)	1, 361, 208	**% of approved**	10 %
Funds Disbursed (UNDP)	934, 999	**% of approved**	7 %
Forecast final date	17 October 2013	**Delay (months)**	0
Funds Committed (UNOPS)	2,142,769	**% of approved**	17 %
Funds Disbursed (UNOPS)	1,567,363	**% of approved**	13 %
Forecast final date	17 October 2013	**Delay (months)**	0
Funds Committed (total)	3, 503, 977	**% of approved**	14 %
Funds Disbursed (total)	2, 502, 362	**% of approved**	10 %
Direct Beneficiaries	**Number of Beneficiaries**	**% of planned (current status)**	
Men (Target: 1471)	321	22 %	
Women (Target: 368)	73	20 %	
Children	n/a	n/a	
IDPs	n/a	n/a	
Others	n/a	n/a	
Indirect beneficiaries	By contributing to a transparent democratic electoral process, the programme benefits the population of Iraq.	n/a	
Employment generation (men/women)	Employment generation does not fall directly within the framework of this programme. However, consultancies or service provision contracts may take place during implementation of the programme, utilising Iraqi trainers and service providers wherever possible.	n/a	

	% of planned
Output 1 / UNDP 1.1 IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability	17 %
Output 1.2 / UNDP IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices	12 %
Output 1.3 / UNDP lead w UNOPS IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes	14 %
Output 2.1 / UNDP lead w UNOPS IHEC has enhanced internal capacity building and professional development strategy	40%
Output 2.2 / UNOPS IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively	42 %
Output 3.1 / UNOPS IHEC has improved technological capacities to support electoral processes in a sustainable manner	11 %

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

During the reporting period, the institutional development programme has continued support to enhancing IHEC capacity in key priority areas of procurement, logistics, public outreach, complaints, graphic design, database development, ICT and capacity building. Additionally, activities were initiated in the areas of review of the electoral legal framework, security management and measures to improve the voter registry.

The IHEC-UN Projects Steering Committee and Project Management Committee held meetings to review progress in programme implementation in the third quarter of 2011. During these meetings, timelines were discussed and revised, and nine new activities were approved for implementation in the near future.

IHEC Capacity Building Department finalised their training plan for 2011. It consists of 88 trainings and will be implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and different Iraqi universities and colleges. The trainings target staff of the the IHEC National Office as well as Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs), and cover areas from IT, administration and English language to finance and budgeting.

Output 1.1: IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability

Detailed review has been initiated of the applicable legal framework for future elections, including for district and sub-district elections and for Kurdistan Region Governorate Council elections. This includes an analysis of proposed amendments to the relevant laws and their implications for the conduct of election operations. UNDP, UNAMI and the IHEC will be discussing this analysis in the coming quarter, and considering how best to take forward relevant issues with the parliamentary legal committees.

The UNDP Legal/Complaints Advisor has also continued work on the assessment of the IHEC electoral complaints system. Interviews were conducted with National Office Complaints Section staff to discuss the database and recordkeeping processes used by the Complaints Section in recent elections. An extensive report has been completed for review together with the IHEC during the final quarter of 2011, which includes options for improving the transparency, accountability and efficiency of IHEC's processing of election complaints.

Output 1.2: IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices

At the request of the Manager of the IHEC Kurdistan Regional Election Office (KREO), the UNDP Procurement Advisor facilitated a seminar on procurement for 10 KREO staff in Erbil on 02 August 2011. This aimed to familiarize KREO staff with the different stages of the public procurement process, Iraqi procurement legislation, and the role and delineation of functions among those involved in the process.

The UNDP Procurement Advisor together with IHEC organized in-house training on the preparation of specifications and procurement terms of reference. This was held in the IHEC National Office in Baghdad on 20 - 21 September 2011 and was attended by 16 IHEC staff from several different departments. The training aimed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of IHEC staff in developing appropriate specifications in order to obtain goods and services according to the clients' requirements as well as avoiding disputes with vendors during the contract implementation phase. Training was delivered by the IHEC procurement team, supported by the Procurement Advisor in the development of the training programme and presentation materials.

Assessment of IHEC procurement processes had also highlighted the need to update IHEC solicitation documents and contract templates. The tender documents currently in use by the IHEC are similar to those utilized by UNDP, as both use public funds and exercise public procurement practices in solicitation of goods and services. The Procurement Advisor provided the IHEC with UNDP solicitation, bid documents and contract templates, and is currently working with the IHEC to incorporate their best practices and synchronize templates with Iraq procurement legislation, for use as appropriate.

Additionally, UNOPS deployed a Senior Security Advisor to Baghdad. This advisor worked with key IHEC personnel to review existing security arrangements for the IHEC premises and outside perimeter and identify formal recommendations for improvement which were presented to IHEC senior management. The IHEC Head of Security has requested in-house training for IHEC staff on emergency evacuation procedures. This is under preparation and will take place in the 4th Quarter of 2011. The improvements to IHEC security management has also contributed to increased access for the UN Electoral Assistance Team to the IHEC premises.

Output 1.3: IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes

Two workshop sessions on Different Approaches in Packing, Tracking and Accounting for Election Materials were implemented by UNDP in Erbil on 17-21 and 24-28 July for IHEC logistics staff. As an outcome of recommendations of election lessons learned activities, the workshop aimed to consider methodologies for handling election materials. Emphasis was given to the proper tracking and accounting of sensitive materials such as ballot papers, to improve the transparency and integrity of the electoral process. A total of 40 logistics staff from the National Office and Governorate Election Offices and other selected staff took part in the two sessions of the training. Participants noted that discussions on election materials specifications, handling and tracking were particularly beneficial in enhancing their knowledge of election logistics.

A training workshop to enhance the skills of the IHEC Public Outreach Department in preparing message content for voter education campaigns was conducted in Erbil on 06-10 September. Training was implemented by UNDP and delivered by Prisma, a Jordanian-based company specialised in social marketing and behavioral change communication. 16 IHEC participants attended the training, primarily staff from the Public Outreach Department. The workshop aimed to enable participants to develop strategic communications materials in a variety of media formats for voter education and electoral public awareness campaigns. Topics included, amongst others, use of social media, situation analysis, target audience segmentation and analysis, monitoring and evaluation methods, and branding concepts and strategies. One day was also dedicated for the evaluation of the previous campaign conducted by the IHEC.

A series of consultative meetings to discuss the possibility of implementing a nation-wide survey to assess the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the IHEC voter registry took place during the reporting period between UNDP, UNAMI and the IHEC. The current voter registry was initially developed from the Ministry of Trade Public Distribution System database, and has been through significant quality control and updates that increased its accuracy for voting purposes Iraq-wide. The survey will aim to provide an independent assessment of the accuracy of the voter registry and will contribute towards the development of policy recommendations on processes for further development of the registry. Meetings held over the past two months have discussed detailed development of the questionnaire and how to identify resources needed for the design of the sample, taking into consideration socio demographic realities in Iraq. Consideration of options for development of longer term sustainable solutions for the voter registry is a key priority for the IHEC over the next two years.

Output 2.1: IHEC has enhanced internal capacity building and professional development strategy

In response to requests from the IHEC for support in improving monitoring and evaluation of capacity building activities, UNDP and UNOPS developed an 'IHEC Guide on Design, Monitoring and Evaluation'. This provides a theoretical framework to M&E methodologies and aims to establish a standardized approach to the design, monitoring and evaluation of both activities and projects. The guide will form the basis of a training activity and subsequent guidance to IHEC Capacity Building Department staff in the development of IHEC internal projects.

UNDP and UNOPS electoral programme staff are also providing ongoing guidance to the IHEC Capacity Building Department on establishing an appropriate framework for development and implementation of internal IHEC projects. This includes development of an overall strategy and key goals under which all projects would fall, as well as a common framework for project design and implementation. This also includes establishing an appropriate structure for monitoring and evaluation of projects, consistent with the above mentioned IHEC Guide on Design, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Output 2.2: IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively

The UNOPS Graphic Design Advisor continued training the IHEC graphic designers on use of equipment, hardware and software procured in the previous quarter. The Graphic Design Advisor has also been working with the IHEC Graphic Design Unit to develop a training plan for advanced training for the IHEC graphic designers during the next six months.

The extensive software development training programme defined by UNDP, UNOPS, UNAMI, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the IHEC to develop a longer term strategy for enhancing IHEC database development and data management continued throughout the reporting period. The

strategy encompasses the need for increased in-house capacity for writing code through specialist training, to improve IHEC capacity to execute all projects relating to developing and maintaining complex database systems. Following implementation of the first two training modules in the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2011 (Visual Studio 2008 ASP.NET 3.5 and Microsoft Visual Studio 2008), a 16-day accelerated programme was delivered on 03 – 20 July 2011 to four IHEC staff who had not been able to attend these two modules. All four passed the programme's post assessment.

The third software development training module, which covers SQL Server, also started the first group of IHEC database developers The training is the longest module of the larger programme and will take place in Amman for this group from 11 September until 12 November. All database training under the project to date has been implemented by UNOPS and delivered by Providence International.

Output 3: IHEC has improved technological capacities to support electoral processes in a sustainable manner

UNOPS finalised the recruitment for a national consultant to support the IHEC in its work on IT and communications. This consultant is working on location at the IHEC Offices in Baghdad on a daily basis and has been providing guidance and on-job training for IHEC IT staff in different areas including configuration of the CISCO phone network.

Following a UNOPS tender process, a company was contracted to conduct an independent assessment of the IHEC IT and communications infrastructure. The completed assessment consists of an overview of the entire IT and communications infrastructure in the IHEC National Office, Data Entry Centre, KREO and GEOs of Erbil and Basrah. The assessment will be further analysed in partnership with the IHEC with the aim of developing an overall strategy for improving the IHEC ICT infrastructure.

At the request of the KREO, the UN Database Advisor and National ICT Consultant went to Erbil to assess the information and communication technology set-up in the KREO, as well as in the Erbil and Dahuk GEOs. This information and the recently completed assessment at IHEC has aimed to achieve a comprehensive review of the status of the IHEC ICT infrastructure in order to identify ICT needs at both National Office and field level.

The first of a series of trainings for the IHEC ICT Section started on 31 July 2011. The training aims to create the expertise required within the IHEC to maintain a basic network based on Windows Server 2008 and to address deficiencies detected in the overall IHEC infrastructure. Participants have been divided into two groups of six for training on two modules in their separate groups. Module One took place 31 July – 21 August 2011 and 23 August – 15 September 2011. All 12 participants completed this successfully training and passed the related Microsoft Certification exam. The training is delivered by Providence International and implemented by UNOPS.

Main Implementation Constraints and Challenges (2-3 sentences)

An important aspect of the UN's support to the electoral process is the close relationship with the IHEC and daily presence in Baghdad, working with the IHEC counterparts. The main constraint during previous quarters has been the limited access of UN personnel to the IHEC National Office in Baghdad and the resulting reduced contact with IHEC counterparts. During the reporting period, however, access of UN advisors to the IHEC National Office improved considerably due to improved IHEC security management and the efforts of a Senior Security Advisor, recruited under the programme.

The Holy Month of Ramadan was a quiet month as many IHEC staff took leave and it was not possible to implement many activities. Advantage was taken of this time to focus on planning for the last four months of the year. The IHEC insisted on moving forward on the MS Server training for IT staff during Ramadan, as this is considered high priority, and the training was successful despite the participants' fatigue from fasting, which revealed significant commitment on the part of participants.