



UNDG IRAQ TRUST FUND

Iraq

FINAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE REPORT

<p align="center">Programme Title & Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: Institutional Development – Organizational and HR Capacity Building for the IECI/IHEC • Programme Number: G11-14a • MDTF Office Atlas Number: 66967 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Thematic Area(s)²</p> <p>Location: Iraq, Jordan and additional locations, as required for the capacity building component</p> <p>Thematic Area: Sector: Governance; Sub-sector: Electoral Support</p>
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <p>UNDP (G11-14a) UNOPS (G11-14b)</p>	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <p>IHEC, UNAMI</p>
<p align="center">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>MDTF Fund Contribution: UNDP: USD 3,735,426 • <i>by Agency</i> UNOPS: USD 2,584,466</p> <p>Agency Contribution N/A</p> <p>Government Contribution N/A</p> <p>Other Contribution (donor) N/A</p> <p>TOTAL: USD 6,319,892</p>	<p align="center">Programme Duration (months)</p> <p>Overall Duration 38.5 months</p> <p>Start Date³ 10 April 2007</p> <p>Original end date 09 April 2008 a. 31 March 2009 b. 30 September 2009 c. 30 June 2010</p> <p>Revised End Date,</p> <p>Operational Closure Date⁴ 30 June 2010</p> <p>Expected Financial Closure Date 30 October 2012</p>
<p align="center">Final Programme/ Project Evaluation</p> <p>Evaluation Completed X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: March-June 2010 Evaluation Report - Attached X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p align="center">Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name: Katie Green ○ Title: Programme Advisor (Electoral) ○ Participating Organization: UNDP ○ Contact information: katie.green@undp.org

Note: this final report covers the UNDP component of the programme (G11-14a).

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Sector for the UNDG ITF.

³ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MDTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org) (<http://mdtf.undp.org>).

⁴ All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MDTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MDTF Office.

FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT

I. PURPOSE

a. Provide a brief introduction to the programme/ project).

The programme “Institutional Development – Organizational and Human Resource Capacity Building for the IECI/IHEC” was jointly implemented by UNDP and UNOPS, under the technical oversight of the UNAMI Office of Electoral Support, as part of an integrated portfolio of capacity building support to the Iraqi electoral commission. The programme aimed to support the institutional development of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI)/Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)⁵ as a sustainable institution, operating independently, efficiently and transparently in line with professional standards. The programme was developed in line with ITF Cluster G Strategy, following two electoral needs assessment missions by the UN Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD) in June 2005 and late 2006. These assessments identified that, in addition to short-term training to prepare the Commission for the discharge of its immediate electoral responsibilities, there was a need for longer-term capacity development measures directed at improving the capacity of the IECI/IHEC as an institution at all levels. Through this programme, the executing agencies provided a range of targeted capacity building inputs in close consultation with UNAMI and the IECI/IHEC, to support the Commission in its transition to a permanent institution and to improve the ability of the IECI/IHEC to conduct transparent elections in line with professional standards. Based on their respective mandates, UNDP’s responsibility was to strengthen institutional and organizational capabilities, and the role of UNOPS was to improve IECI/IHEC staff skills through provision of training. This report covers the UNDP component of the programme.

b. Provide a list of the main outputs and outcomes of the programme as per the approved programmatic document.

Development Goal: In support of the institutional development of the IECI/IHEC as a sustainable institution, operating independently, efficiently and transparently in line with professional standards.

Key Immediate Objective (UNDP)⁶: To increase the capacity of the IECI/IHEC to conduct electoral activities by strengthening institutional capabilities in specifically targeted areas for the permanent electoral institution established under the constitution.

Outputs:

- 1.1 Improved level of IECI/IHEC management skills;
- 1.2 Enhanced awareness of electoral best practices;
- 1.3 Strengthened relationships with external stakeholders.

c. Explain how the Programme relates to the Strategic (UN) Planning Framework guiding the operations of the Fund.

UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1770 (extended by SCR 1830, 1883 and 1936) defines the mandate of UNAMI to provide assistance, support, and advice to the Iraqi government and the IHEC in order to maintain, administer and develop electoral processes in Iraq.

⁵ The IECI was established in 2004 as the transitional electoral management body. With the passage of the IHEC Law (No 11) in 2007, the IHEC was established as the permanent electoral commission.

⁶ Outcomes were termed ‘Development Goal and ‘Immediate Objective’ in the project document.

Under the operations of the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund, institutional development of the IECI/IHEC was identified as an area where assistance should be provided by Cluster G (Cluster G Matrix Outcome 3).

With the evolution of Clusters to Sector Outcome Teams, based on this SCR and existing strategy planning frameworks, the UNCT Sector Outcome Team “Governance” included “Support to Institutional Development of the IHEC” in its Assistance Strategy for 2008/2010 under the Sector Outcome *Strengthened Electoral Processes in Iraq*.

As outlined in the project document, this aimed to contribute to the realization of:

- UNCT Iraq Goal 4: *Promote good governance and democratic processes, assist to uphold the rule of law and establish a human right regime, and*
- UNCT Iraq Outcome 4.3: *Local and central institutions are accountable and have the capacity to make informed decisions and implement them in a transparent manner.*

d. List primary implementing partners and stakeholders including key beneficiaries.

Executing agencies:

- UNDP
- UNOPS

Primary implementing partner:

- UNAMI Office of Electoral Support

Line Ministry counterpart

- Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) / Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)

Direct Beneficiaries:

- Up to 700 IECI/IHEC personnel working in different departments at both the central and governorate office levels, who participated in capacity building activities implemented through the programme.

Indirect Beneficiaries

- All potential Iraqi voters benefitted from the enhanced Iraqi electoral processes. This project facilitated the participation of all Iraqi voters and benefitted the whole Iraqi population thereby representing a step towards consolidation of democratic processes in Iraq for all citizens.

II. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT RESULTS

a. Report on the key outputs achieved and explain any variance in achieved versus planned results.

The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) was initially mandated in 2004 to conduct electoral activities for the transitional period. With the passage of Law No 11 on the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) on 23 January 2007, the transitional IECI was replaced by the IHEC, the permanent institution responsible for conducting electoral activities in Iraq. This law was enacted and a new Board of Commissioners to the IHEC was appointed in April 2007, shortly after the start of this programme. In the following months, there ensued a process of orientation for the new Board of Commissioners and appointment of senior and middle management staff at both National Office and Governorate Election Office (GEO) level.

Following this, the programme initiated activities to strengthen the institutional capabilities of the newly established permanent electoral commission in targeted areas, according to the project document. However, with the IHEC process of making its new managerial appointments, activities under Output 1.1 became delayed. Additionally, time required to recruit UNDP project staff following approval of the programme, limited implementation of the extensive programme activities until staff were in place.

With the announcement in spring 2008 of Governorate Council elections, the focus of electoral assistance shifted to operational support. This continued through a series of subsequent electoral events until announcement of results for the Council of Representatives (CoR) election in June 2010. These electoral events included a voter registration update process in the summer of 2008 and Governorate Council elections in January 2009, collection of signatures for the proposed referendum on the formation of regions in Basrah in January 2009, a voter registration update period for elections in the Kurdistan Region in May-June 2009 and Kurdistan Region presidential and parliamentary elections in July 2009. This was followed immediately by a national voter registration update period in August-September 2009 for the Council of Representatives election, and the Council of Representatives election itself in March 2010.

Altogether this represents an extremely intensive two-year operational cycle of electoral events, which spanned most of the life of this programme. During this time, the IHEC was fully engaged in planning and implementation of electoral operations. UN support was required to adapt to this need, and to reduce targeted capacity development inputs and prioritise its focus on support to the IHEC's preparations for and conduct of electoral events. This required a greater focus on operational sectors of the IHEC, with the primary means of support on-the-job guidance and advice to the IHEC on operational issues.

Due to IHEC engagement with the preparations for the 2008 and subsequent electoral events, UNAMI, the lead of the International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT), in agreement with the IHEC, requested UNDP to suspend its capacity development activities that are related to Output 1.1 and 1.2 and to amend the work-plan to respond to the IHEC's immediate priorities. UNDP was requested to incorporate a set of media activities that focused on Output 1.3, to improve IHEC's capacity in communicating with the media and to improve its external relations practices through media. This was intended to improve the capacity of the IHEC in this area while also supporting development of appropriate IHEC media and communications strategies for electoral events. UNDP designed the requested activities, amended its work-plan accordingly and a change of project scope was agreed by the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund Steering Committee. Implementation of the media activities was initiated in June 2008.

These circumstances, and the need for the programme to remain flexible to electoral requirements, therefore led to fewer activities implemented under Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 than originally envisaged, in favour of a comprehensive programme support in the area of media and external relations under Output 1.3.

A full list and description of programme activities can be found in Annex III. Below summarises key achievements and their relevance to programme outputs.

1.1 Improved level of IECI/IHEC management skills

This output aimed to improve IHEC management capacity of the Board and middle and senior management. This included increased planning skills, and support to the development of financial and human resource management policies and practices. Due to the time required for recruitment of project staff and subsequent focus on election operations, activities in support of this output were more limited than originally planned in the project document. Activities were, however, initiated in two main areas, with support to the new Board of Commissioners and strategic planning skills.

With UNOPS programme staff already in place, it was agreed that initial orientation training for the new Commissioners would be transferred to their component of the programme (G11-14b). Subsequently UNDP organized a visit for IHEC Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners to the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea during their preparation phase in the run up to the December 2007 Presidential Election. The programme was designed for a new Board and was beneficial in providing an opportunity for Commissioners to see an independent Electoral Management Body (EMB) functioning during an electoral preparation period. It allowed participants to view commission management activities, organization of board meetings, mechanisms for decision making, and other typical board activities. Additionally, participants explored key electoral issues through the lens of international best practices and their application in South Korea, to highlight main policy areas which an EMB needs to consider for establishment of electoral, legal and institutional frameworks.

UNDP, in cooperation with IFES, implemented a four-day Strategic Planning Workshop for the IHEC on 25–28 July 2007. This was attended by all nine IHEC Commissioners and six members of middle and senior management. Following theoretical review of the guiding principles of strategic planning, facilitated working sessions took place during which participants discussed what should be included in an IHEC strategic plan. Workshop outputs included completion of a SWOT analysis, drafting of a mission statement, drafting of strategic goals and objectives and the decision to establish an IHEC committee to develop the strategic plan on return to Baghdad. This committee subsequently developed the first IHEC strategic plan which was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Due to operational priorities and the primary focus on operational sectors of the IHEC, activities aiming to support development of financial and human resource policies and practices could not be implemented. These are currently prioritized in the follow up programme G11-23, “Institutional Development Support to the IHEC”.

However, the programme was additionally able to respond to management requirements for election operations, arising from the need identified after 2009 Governorate Council elections for greater efficiency and accuracy in the data entry of voter registration data and tabulation of results, as well as further expediting the transfer of data between IHEC GEOs and the National Office. For this purpose, UNDP procured 180 desktop computers and 20 scanners for the IHEC Data Entry Centre in Baghdad. This procurement facilitated data transfer and data entry for the voter registration update period for the CoR election and subsequent election in January 2010. This increased efficiency of data entry and results tabulation, and contributed to the reduction in the timeline for announcement of final results for the CoR election. While this did not specifically target managerial skills, this enhanced the ability of IHEC to manage electoral processes and thus enhance trust in the IHEC and credibility of processes.

1.2 Enhanced awareness of electoral best practices

In the first year of the programme, progress was made in all specified areas of this output, reflecting IHEC priorities at that time. In particular, significant support was provided to enable IHEC to benefit from the BRIDGE⁷ programme, and to support IHEC’s ability to utilize BRIDGE resources and develop an appropriate strategy for incorporating BRIDGE into their capacity development programme.

In 2007, in cooperation with IFES and International IDEA, UNDP supported the participation of two IHEC trainers in the development and delivery of a BRIDGE workshop, thereby also enabling their full accreditation. Following this, UNDP enabled semi-accreditation of 13 additional IHEC staff members as BRIDGE facilitators alongside representatives from other regional EMBs, through organization of a regional Train the Facilitators Workshop. Two

⁷ ‘BRIDGE’ stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections. It is a comprehensive professional development course in election administration.

IHEC staff were also guided through review of BRIDGE materials on electoral systems, facilitated by UNDP and UNAMI staff. All activities aimed to enhance the experience of IHEC staff in using BRIDGE methodologies through supervised delivery, increase their confidence in constructing and delivering BRIDGE training modules, and expand the pool of IHEC staff authorized and able to use BRIDGE materials effectively.

UNDP held the first BRIDGE Implementation Workshop in the Arab region in October 2007, attended by representatives from the IHEC and four other countries of the region. This was facilitated by BRIDGE partners, International IDEA, IFES and the Australian Electoral Commission. The workshop was designed to guide capacity building managers and planners in the methodology, and long-term implementation strategies of using the BRIDGE programme within the respective EMBs. Furthermore, the programme increased available BRIDGE resources in the Arabic language for use by the IHEC and other EMBs in the region. UNDP arranged for Arabic translation of all materials for facilitators and participants of the Train the Facilitators course, and materials for an additional five BRIDGE training modules.



Successful Participants from the Regional BRIDGE Implementation Workshop

Several activities were organized to enhance knowledge of electoral best practices and broaden IHEC awareness of different electoral policies and methods of technical implementation. UNDP and IFES held a three-day workshop in July 2007, to focus discussions on operational and data management requirements for the next voter registration event in Iraq, and options for future elections. This served to initiate policy discussions amongst senior IHEC officials regarding this difficult and complex electoral process.

UNDP supported participation of one IHEC Capacity Building Department manager in a regional consultative forum “From Capacity Assessments to Capacity Development Strategies in Arab States” in February 2008. The forum’s objectives were to familiarize participants with UNDP’s approach to capacity development, to brainstorm on application of strategies in post-conflict countries in order to enhance the development of national implementation strategies, and to benefit from a network for sharing lessons learned and practices in the region.

In addition, two study visits were arranged for technical staff of IHEC’s Electoral Administration to observe activities over an election period. The first of these enabled three representatives from voter education, media and field coordination units to observe the November 2007 Australian federal elections, through participation in the Election Visit Program hosted by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). The second intervention

facilitated participation of six IHEC technical staff in observing the Spanish parliamentary election in March 2008. This focused on observation of polling and counting processes, public relations, announcement of results, and the role of observers and political party agents, with the aim of broadening awareness of different electoral methodologies and best practices.

In support of best practices for election operations, throughout the preparations for the March 2010 Council of Representatives election, the UNDP Electoral Programme Advisor provided specialist technical guidance and advice to the IHEC on the development of electoral procedures, including polling, counting, special voting and audit processes, and the establishment of appropriate anti-fraud measures for all electoral processes. Following the election, technical advice and assistance was provided on resolving problematic polling stations for incorporation into the results, and also on the development and implementation of recount procedures, following an order for recount of ballots for Baghdad Governorate.

Following certification of results for the Governorate Council elections, in cooperation with UNAMI, UNDP organized a lessons learned workshop in Istanbul for IHEC National Office and GEO Managers in March 2009. This reviewed operational planning and implementation of the election to order to identify electoral best practices and lessons learned from the election. Through extensive discussions, participants highlighted key issues arising from the election operation and defined a set of recommendations to be incorporated into IHEC policies and practices to improve the conduct of future elections.

1.3 Strengthened relationships with external stakeholders

Significant inputs were provided under this output from June 2008 until closure of the programme. In order to respond to IHEC's operational priorities and capacity needs for effective conduct of elections, an extensive series of media activities were incorporated into the programme, to improve IHEC's capacity in communicating with the media and to improve its media external relations practices. This included (i) technical support to IHEC on media and public outreach issues, (ii) support to media coverage of electoral processes, (iii) support to IHEC media and public outreach campaigns for 2008/2009 electoral events, and (iv) opinion surveys over 2009 Governorate Council elections.

(i) Technical Support to the IHEC on Media and Public Outreach

UNDP provided ongoing guidance and technical advice to the IHEC Public Outreach Department, External Media Section and Office of the Spokesperson from mid-2008 to mid-2009. This included support to the planning and preparation of media and communications strategies for electoral events in order to enhance the ability of the IHEC to engage a wide range of external stakeholders, and also capacity development support to IHEC policies, organizational framework and human resource knowledge and skills.

Areas of technical support to the IHEC included guidance and advice on the establishment of the IHEC Office of the Spokesperson, on development of regulations and procedures on media and accreditation for elections, on creation of a media policy and guidelines outlining authorities in dealing with the media, on development of a media plan for electoral events including use of new media, on establishment of an IHEC image bank, and on involvement of the IHEC Graphic Design Unit in developing designs for media and communications campaigns. Support was also provided to developing IHEC capacity to understand the media regulatory framework, through review of media regulations and policies.

In addition to the ongoing technical advice, an extensive training programme on planning and implementing a media strategy was designed and delivered, to address an area identified by the IHEC as a priority for capacity development in 2009-2010. Index on Censorship visited Iraq to conduct a detailed assessment of IHEC training needs, and subsequently developed handbooks and a training programme customized to IHEC needs. Index on Censorship

delivered four three-day sessions on ‘Implementing a Media Strategy’ for IHEC GEO Managers, Deputy GEO Managers and National Office and GEO public outreach staff, and one four-day session of ‘Planning and Implementing a Media Strategy’ for IHEC staff involved in managing media activities. A total of 120 IHEC participants (99 male and 21 female) benefited from the activity. Training took place in Erbil during May and June 2010.

As a primary tool for reaching Iraq’s voters, UNDP also provided support to the development and hosting of the IHEC website. Assistance was provided in developing an interactive content management system in English/Arabic and improving the website’s information architecture, creative design, content and online marketing. This aimed to promote provision of accurate, reliable and timely electoral information, record feedback from voters and observers around the country on the voting process and optimize IHEC service delivery to stakeholders. This was followed by the creation of a website in Kurdish in February 2009, in preparation for Kurdistan Region elections. On-job training for IHEC staff was also conducted on administration of the website to enable the IHEC to take full responsibility for this.

(ii) Support to Media Coverage of Electoral Processes

In order to promote effective coverage of electoral processes by the media, two initiatives were conducted which directly targeted the media. The first of these was translation and distribution to journalists of the English-Arabic UNESCO Guidelines for Election Reporting into additional Iraqi languages of Kurdish (both Kurmanji and Sorani), Turkmen and Syriac.

The second initiative was support to the organization of seminars and publishing of campaign materials for the “Campaign for Condemning Violence and Defending Journalists during Elections”, conducted by the Society to Defend Press Freedom in Iraq. This aimed to encourage the government and competing parties to exclude journalists from disputes, to emphasize that journalists are not part of the electoral campaign, and to explain that the purpose of journalism is to deliver information in an impartial and professional manner. In this way, it was intended to reduce risks to journalists during elections, promote their access to information and freedom of expression, and increase public awareness on the ethics of responsibly reporting elections.

In order to ensure the regulatory framework was up to date and in place for the elections, UNDP worked with the CMC and the IHEC to update regulations regarding media rights and responsibilities during the electoral campaign period and the silence period immediately prior to the elections. Through this, the 2005 Code of Conduct for the Media during Elections, and associated guidelines were updated in December 2008, printed and distributed in Arabic, Kurdish and English throughout Iraq.

(iii) Support to IHEC Media and Outreach Campaigns for 2008/2009 Electoral Events

Support was provided to the IHEC to develop its media campaigns for electoral events in 2008 and 2009, including the 2008 and 2009 Voter Registration Update periods, January 2009 Governorate Council elections and July 2009 Kurdistan Region parliamentary and presidential elections. This included guidance to increase the understanding of IHEC staff on how to utilize “new media” to disseminate voter information to the widest possible target audience.

New media has emerged as an important forum for the dissemination and discussion of ideas and is an ideal space to engage Iraq’s young voters. This presents potential to reach a large number of people in a very short space of time. As part of a strategy to extend public outreach beyond traditional voter education methods such as posters, PSAs and brochures, to promote maximum participation and to reach the key demographic target group of youth, UNDP contributed to electoral awareness campaigns through a range of initiatives which piloted innovative ways of using new media. These electoral awareness campaigns aimed to ensure optimal use of multi-media and web-based information platforms and thereby generate awareness of and interest in the elections among potential voters and other key stakeholders.

A range of activities were implemented under the programme in support of this, including:

- Production of a series of 20 You-Tube films on the theme “Why Vote?” in which young Iraqis from all parts of the country and different socio-economic and ethno-religious backgrounds impressed upon the audience the importance of participating in the elections.
- An election website banner public awareness campaign over Governorate Council elections, on Yahoo.com index pages used by Iraqi account holders, using Abu Mutar, a character created by the IHEC Graphic Design Unit for voter education purposes. The Abu Mutar web banner campaign also ran for two months on Aswat al-Iraq news agency Arabic and Kurdish services.
- A SMS-based news delivery campaign implemented by the Iraqi news agency Aswat al Iraq, which covered both election periods, as a notification service for journalists in different outlets across the country. The alert service covered all news events organised or notified by IHEC and headlines of major stories relating to the elections. (Aswat al Iraq was awarded a prize by the IHEC for its impartial and professional coverage of the elections in the Kurdistan Region.)
- Establishment of blog sites to promote dialogue on electoral processes, including the blog site “Vote for Iraq” for Governorate Council elections and the site “Iraqi Voices Project” for Kurdistan Region elections, to serve as web-based information platforms and generate discussion and interest in the elections. These were also marketed through Facebook.



As part of the voter education campaign for the youth demographic, support was provided to a local youth electoral education initiative in Basrah Governorate in the run up to the Governorate Council elections. In cooperation with local councils and education institutes, the Iraqi NGO Child to Child Society held a series of 21 lectures in different locations in nine districts of Basrah Governorate, which were attended by 511 male and 336 female young people aged 18–20 years old. Lectures covered the importance of voting and using one’s voice and how to select an appropriate candidate, as well as information on political entity and candidate lists and how to vote on Election Day. These aimed to motivate young people to participate in the election and facilitate their participation by raising awareness of the electoral process.

(iv) Opinion Surveys, 2009 Governorate Council Elections

In late 2008 and early 2009, in order to assess public opinion of electoral processes for the Governorate Council elections and to analyse access to electoral information by specific stakeholders, three surveys were conducted. These intended to provide feedback to the IHEC on the needs of different stakeholders in the electoral process, and establish some baseline indicators for improving its public outreach campaigns in the future.

These included:

- A national survey on public perceptions of the electoral processes and institutions in order to analyse public confidence in the conduct of the elections;
- A survey on women’s access to electoral information in order to assess why, on the whole, fewer women vote than men and what motivates women to participate; and
- A pilot study to assess the effectiveness of IHEC’s information provision to Iraqi local media and IHEC’s engagement with local media on issues relating to the elections.

These opinion surveys represented initiatives to develop evidence-based strategies for information management, by providing feedback to the IHEC on its public outreach campaigns for elections and identifying problems in information delivery and engagement with certain stakeholders. In this way, outcomes of the surveys could be incorporated into public outreach strategies for future elections.

b. Report on how achieved outputs have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes and explain any variance in actual versus planned contributions to the outcomes. Highlight any institutional and/ or behavioural changes amongst beneficiaries at the outcome level.

This programme was initiated shortly after the establishment of the IHEC as Iraq’s permanent electoral commission, and the appointment of a new IHEC Board of Commissioners and its senior management team at the policy level. IHEC staff lacked a broad experience in electoral administration, since their experience had been gained almost exclusively from the conduct of 2005 electoral events, with significant international support from the UN, IFES, EU and other partners. As such, this limited the IHEC’s knowledge of different technical methods of election implementation and electoral policies. The needs of the Commission and its new management team at this time were extensive in scope.

Following the start of the programme to strengthen the institutional capabilities of the newly established electoral commission, the IHEC entered an intense operational phase for a two year period from spring 2008 until certification of results for the CoR election in June 2010. This meant time available for targeted capacity building inputs originally envisaged under the programme were reduced. However, in balance to this, the extended operational period offered the IHEC a broad opportunity for learning through practical experience. In support of this, UN

efforts were realigned primarily to provide on-job guidance, mentoring and transfer of knowledge through the extended operational phase.

In relation to the programme's Development Goal: "in support of development of the IECI/IHEC as a sustainable institution, operating independently, efficiently and transparently, in line with professional standards", and the UNDP Key Immediate Objective; "to increase the capacity of the IECI/IHEC to conduct electoral activities...", a marked improvement has been noted since the start of the programme in April 2007. This is evident through the IHEC's increased technical proficiency in managing electoral events from Governorate Council elections in 2009 through Kurdistan Parliamentary and Presidential elections in 2009 to the Council of Representatives election in March 2010. This culminated in a successful recount process for Baghdad Governorate for the CoR election, which confirmed results and the technical proficiency of the election, and thus enhanced the credibility of the IHEC in the public eyes.

This increased capacity to conduct electoral events is due to both opportunities for learning through practical experience offered by the need to deliver credible elections, and also from specific capacity development inputs. This programme has been able to respond to the need for flexibility in relation to the electoral calendar, and refocus its priorities in line with IHEC requirements and overall UN support. The support provided by this programme has taken place within the wider context of international electoral support in Iraq, in which a wide range of actors have been engaged in institutional development activities, in coordination with UNAMI. This programme has therefore contributed, alongside support from UN and other partners, to the widely recognized increase of IHEC capacity to conduct electoral activities.

A measure of progress can be seen in how the United Nations electoral support has evolved alongside IHEC development and needs. With the increasing experience of the IHEC, the UN focus has evolved from providing direct operational assistance in 2004-5, through initiation of the capacity development programme in 2007, to the situation now where it can consider carefully how best to meet the remaining developmental needs of the IHEC, and target its inputs in highly specific areas.

A further indication of behavioural change can be noted through the capacity building needs assessment conducted in late 2009. The previous assessment in 2006 had been conducted by EAD, and the results formed the basis for this current programme. In 2009, after two election cycles, the IHEC undertook a review and update of this needs assessment, with support from an integrated UN and IFES team. While this was a collaborative endeavour, it is notable in the progress of the IHEC that this 2009 assessment process was IHEC-led. The IHEC is now well able to define its own institutional development needs and seek support from the UN and other partners in areas where required.

The capacity assessment review, together with IHEC lessons learned review following the CoR election, formed the basis of the subsequent joint programme funded by the ITF, G11-23 "Institutional Development Support to the IHEC". This was jointly developed by UN partners together with the IHEC. This new programme is reflective of the strengthened capacity of the institution, targeting support in those areas still requiring international assistance, and complementing the IHEC's own capacity building activities. The programme strategy is intended to represent a last substantial initiative addressing the broad scope of institutional development support to the IHEC.

c. Explain the overall contribution of the programme to the Strategy Planning Framework or other strategic documents as relevant, e.g.: MDGs, National Priorities, UNDAF outcomes, etc

Iraq National Development Strategy (NDS 2007-2010): The programme contributed to the achievement of Pillar 4 of the Iraq NDS, *strengthening good governance and improving security*. The NDS specifically mentions that to achieve the goals of Pillar 4 it is required, among other things, to support the Iraqi electoral commission. This programme directly supported the development of the electoral commission to fulfil its constitutional mandate independently, transparently and professionally. The trust of stakeholders in electoral processes is key to consolidation of democratic processes in Iraq.

International Compact with Iraq (ICI): The programme contributed to the realisations of the objectives of the ICI Section 3.1.2: *implementation of political/legislative timetable*. Developing the capacities of IHEC better enables this commission to fulfil its responsibilities effectively in conducting electoral events, as requested by the Government of Iraq. Furthermore, electoral events are carried out in a transparent and *accountable* manner and in respect of Iraq's international obligations such as those arising from the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iraq is a signatory country.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): While the programme was not directly related to the achievement of the MDGs, it contributed to MDG 8 *Develop a global partnership for development*, which includes a commitment to good governance. The ability of the IHEC to implement fair and transparent electoral processes is a key element in building a stable and accountable political system in Iraq. Additionally, enhanced participation of Iraqi voters in electoral processes and the exercise of their democratic rights contribute towards development of good governance in Iraq.

The programme has contributed towards the achievement of MDG 3 *Promote gender equality and empower women*. In the broad context of access to electoral processes, the programme's institutional development activities aimed to ensure all target groups, including women, have equitable access to electoral processes and to promote full participation of all stakeholders. Activities implemented under Output 3 included promotion of women's access to electoral processes as part of support to the IHEC's public outreach for electoral events. The programme also aimed to promote gender equality in IHEC's internal processes, through consideration of its principles in all recommendations on policy and processes, and to ensure both men and women benefited from programme activities.

d. Explain the contribution of key partnerships and collaborations, and explain how such relationships impact on the achievement of results.

Essential to effective implementation of the programme were close partnerships with the IHEC and with the UN and other entities involved in electoral support to Iraq. Responsibilities for specific programme activities were assigned to the participating UN agencies based on their respective mandates, with UNAMI providing technical input through its electoral advisors in their respective areas of expertise and in managing the balance of activities between operational and non-operational electoral phases. This integrated approach was essential to ensure a cooperative approach, which drew on strengths of all partners and prevented duplication of efforts.

Through UNAMI's technical oversight of the programme, consideration was given as to which participating agency was better suited in implementing each activity. For this reason, some activities in the initial work-plan were transferred to UNOPS⁸, and during an operational

⁸ (i) Orientation workshop for the new IHEC Board of Commissioners; (ii) Activities in support of capacity development on financial management, budgeting and oversight; (iii) Training on human resources.

cycle, UNDP focused more on provision of support in the area of media and public outreach. Additionally, several activities were implemented jointly with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), a member of the International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT), in areas relevant to the technical expertise of IFES advisors working with the IHEC in Baghdad.

Significant efforts were made to ensure close cooperation with the IHEC, and key partnerships were developed with the various sectors of the IHEC involved in activities, in particular the Capacity Building Department and Public Outreach Department. Other important partnerships were with external stakeholders such as the Communications and Media Commission (CMC) and independent media agencies on media regulations and outreach for elections. This also promoted IHEC's engagement with these entities, which is essential for enhancing trust in electoral processes and the sustainability of the IHEC as an institution in the longer term.

e. Who have been the primary beneficiaries and how they were engaged in the programme/project implementation? Provide percentages/number of beneficiary groups, if relevant.

The primary beneficiary was the IECI/IHEC and its staff, working in different departments at both central and governorate office levels. Capacity development support provided through the programme was open for all personnel working throughout the electoral commission, including the Board of Commissioners, senior and middle management and all staff of both National and Governorate Electoral Offices. Beneficiaries were therefore personnel who participated in the programme's specific capacity building activities, as well as all IECI/IHEC staff who benefit from the improved capacity of the electoral commission in its management of the institution and of electoral processes. A total of 1,435 IHEC staff benefited directly from programme activities, including 977 men (68%) and 458 women (32%).

This programme was implemented in close cooperation with the IHEC. The IHEC was consulted continuously regarding the areas and types of support needed, and it therefore had an important role in steering the programme towards its objectives. All programme activities were discussed with the IHEC and approved by the IHEC Board of Commissioners. The IHEC also had responsibility for the selection of participants, according to the agreed target group.

The programme was implemented in particularly close consultation with the IHEC Capacity Building Department. It was essential to ensure that implementation was in line with IHEC internal procedures, and all support focused on complementarity to IHEC's own capacity development plan. Under the internal coordination of the IHEC Capacity Building Department, the IHEC became increasingly involved in defining its own needs, identifying areas for support, and initiating requests for specific activities.

Additional to direct beneficiaries envisaged in the project document, 2,900 journalists benefited directly from the programme activities promoting media coverage of electoral processes, through trainings and direct receipt of electoral information. Eight hundred and forty seven (847) young voters also benefited directly from participating in electoral awareness initiatives in Basrah Governorate. It is expected that a large number of stakeholders also benefitted from the programme's awareness initiatives for elections, through web-based activities utilizing new media. It is, however, not possible to quantify this.

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned
Men	977	100 %
Women	458	100 %
Children	n/a	
IDPs	n/a	
Others	3,747	
Indirect beneficiaries	All Iraqi registered voters	
Employment generation	n/a	

f. Highlight the contribution of the programme on cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported.

- **Were the needs of particularly vulnerable or marginalised groups addressed?**

Through enhancing transparent and accountable electoral processes in Iraq and developing the capacities of the IHEC, there has been a focus to increase the inclusive and equitable participation of all Iraqi voters. It was intended this would encourage all Iraqi citizens, including the more disadvantaged and marginalised, to take part actively in electoral processes and ensure the full exercise of their democratic rights. Additionally, the programme's primary focus on media and public outreach objectives aimed to ensure all target groups have equitable access to electoral processes and to promote inclusive participation by all stakeholders. Additionally, the programme aimed to ensure information provision in minority languages, such as the translation of the UNESCO Guidelines for Election Reporting into Kurdish (both Kurmanji and Sorani), Turkmen and Syriac, for distribution to journalists.

- **How did men and women benefit from the programme/project? How were gender inequalities handled?**

The programme focused on increasing the capacities of the IHEC, without discriminating by gender, age or community. While selection of participants in activities was the responsibility of the IHEC on the basis of needs identified by the electoral commission, the programme promoted inclusion of women in capacity building activities, appropriate to the defined target group. Of the total 1,435 IHEC staff who benefited directly from programme activities, this included 458 women, or 32% of total IHEC direct beneficiaries. Additionally, of the 847 young voters benefiting directly from electoral awareness events, 131 or 40% were women.

In the broader context of electoral processes, the programme aimed to promote equitable access for all target groups, including women. Encouraging women's participation is a specific component of the IHEC's public outreach for electoral events. This was specifically targeted within the programme through a public opinion survey, which assessed women's access to electoral information in order to analyse and improve the provision of electoral information to women in electoral public outreach campaigns in the future.

- **Were environmental concerns addressed including environmental impact/risk assessment where relevant?**

This programme did not pose any significant environmental risks and therefore no impact or risk assessments were conducted during this programme.

- **Were there any specific issues in relation to the security situation?**

Given the importance of electoral activities in Iraq's transition to democracy, the programme was implemented in a manner which took into consideration that programme staff, beneficiaries and partners may come under threat, and certain restrictions applied to staff movement and the conduct of activities. Additionally, activities had to take into consideration the varying security situations throughout Iraq, and higher or lower risks at certain times and in certain locations. The safety and security of all personnel took priority over programme delivery, and flexibility was maintained for this reason. While this did not cease overall implementation of activities, this at times affected timing or location of specific activities. The lower UN staff ceiling in Baghdad in 2007 resulted in a number of activities taking place outside Iraq, until the security situation more easily permitted implementation of activities in Iraq.

- **Did the project contribute to employment generation (gender disaggregated)?**

Employment generation did not fall directly within the framework of this programme. However, some local service provision contracts took place during implementation. Additionally, it is expected that the IHEC will benefit from having more competent and motivated personnel, which should increase the level of staff retention.

- g. Has the funding provided by the MDTF/JP to the programme been catalytic in attracting funding or other resources from other donors? If so, please elaborate.**

The funding provided by the programme has not directly attracted funding or resources from other donors. The programme has, however, led to development of subsequent programmes through the UNDG ITF, including the joint UNESCO and UNDP programme *Support for Enhanced Media Coverage and Monitoring of Electoral Processes (G11-22)* and the joint UNDP and UNOPS capacity development follow up programme *Institutional Development Support to the Independent High Electoral Commission (G11-23)*.

- h. Provide an assessment of the programme/ project based on performance indicators as per approved project document using the template in Section IV, if applicable.**

Refer to Section IV.

III. EVALUATION & LESSONS LEARNED

- a. Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken relating to the programme and how they were used during implementation. Has there been a final project evaluation and what are the key findings? Provide reasons if no evaluation of the programme have been done yet?**

Assessments

The programme was initially based on the UNEAD Needs Assessment Mission of June 2005, and the UNEAD Capacity Building Assessment of November/December 2006, which were conducted following the implementation of electoral events in 2004 and 2005. These assessments reviewed the IECI's organizational and human resource capacity to conduct electoral events and identified priority areas for capacity building, which were then incorporated into the development of this programme and a coordinated technical assistance plan for the IHEC.

Following the transition of the commission to permanent institution with the establishment of the IHEC in 2007 and its increase in experience through management of subsequent electoral events, an extensive capacity needs assessment was undertaken in late 2009, by the IHEC with support from the UN. This was comprehensive in scope; it reviewed all departments and units within the IHEC and recommended priorities for institutional development for the future. This assessment took place concurrently with planning for the final UNDP activity in this programme, allowing for any relevant best practices to be incorporated, and also formed the basis for a follow up programme, since approved by the ITF G11-23 'Institutional Development Support to the IHEC'.

In addition, rapid assessments (snapshots) were conducted periodically with a focus on specific IHEC departments or units, in cooperation with the relevant IEAT advisors. On a day-to-day basis, UN presence in Baghdad, with advisors working alongside their IHEC counterparts, provided regular review of progress in IHEC capacity development, and ensured needs were reviewed and addressed on an ongoing basis.

Lessons learned reviews of electoral events steered development of the programme work-plan. In addition to completion of election reports and focus group discussions held with individual IHEC sections, a lessons learned workshop on the field operation for the Governorate Council Elections was implemented under this programme in 2009. A parallel workshop for the Commissioners was implemented by UNOPS. As well as identifying challenges and shortcomings of the electoral process, these highlighted the current status in IHEC capacity and enabled appropriate refinement of the work-plan for this programme.

Surveys undertaken by the programme have also contributed to analysis of IHEC institutional development needs. These included a survey on public perceptions of the IHEC during 2009 electoral events, a survey on women's access to electoral information and a survey on media access to electoral information.

Project Evaluation

G11-14a was one of four UNDP governance projects selected for evaluation as per the UNDG ITF criteria in March-June 2010, while final programme activities were being completed. The following are three key lessons learned which were reported in the evaluation to highlight what approaches have worked well and what should be capitalized on for future interventions.

i. The ultimate success of capacity building interventions is to a great extent dependent on presence in Baghdad.

The evaluation stated of the programme that “when it has managed to have a presence in Baghdad, specifically when a Project Manager has been present within the IHEC offices, the results have been positive.” The evaluation concluded, however, that “intermittent” presence of UNDP, particularly in the early stages of the programme - partly due to restrictions in UN staff numbers in Baghdad and partly due to the lack of a full-time Project Manager – resulted in “distinctive contributions in specific areas” but “for only limited periods of time”. Regular presence in the IHEC office in Baghdad is necessary to ensure direct follow up on activities, close coordination with IEAT advisors, and programming of activities as part of a process of different interventions to target particular gaps, rather than isolated activities.

ii. Election operational cycles make it difficult to devote time to institutional capacity development.

The absence of electoral events on the calendar for the first year of the programme provided opportunities for initiating capacity development inputs in a number of areas. However, from April 2008 until June 2010, the IHEC was fully engaged in operational planning and implementation. UNAMI determined that operational exigencies would require a cease of planned capacity building activities and a redirection of efforts in support of conduct of electoral events. Any electoral institutional development support needed to remain flexible to requirements of operational cycles and election timelines.

iii. Partnerships on capacity development between UN bodies with different mandates is beneficial in programme implementation.

The programme management structure was established on the basis of the specific organizational mandates of the different bodies. UNDP was to provide long-term institutional capacity development; UNOPS was to provide short-term training with logistical support; and UNAMI advisors were to provide technical inputs and advice as needed. Programme implementation was most effective when these relative strengths were

harnessed, and responsibilities were shared according to the mandate of each agency and the most appropriate role in the given circumstances.

Towards the end of this programme, an external review was undertaken of the follow up programme G11-23 “Institutional Development Support to the IHEC”, which examined and confirmed the strengths and weaknesses of interventions under the current programme. This has ensured that results have been fully evaluated and lessons learned incorporated into the design of the follow-up programme for longer term institutional development of the IHEC.

b. Explain, if relevant, challenges such as delays in programme implementation, and the nature of the constraints such as management arrangements, human resources, as well as the actions taken to mitigate, and how such challenges and/or actions impacted on the overall achievement of results.

The main challenge to programme implementation was the intense series of electoral events in Iraq, which started in April 2008 with the call for Governorate Council elections and ended in June 2010 with the certification of results for the Council of Representatives election. During this period, the IHEC was fully engaged in preparing for and implementing electoral events over an extremely intensive two-year operational cycle.

In April 2008, UNAMI determined that requirements for planning and implementing these electoral events would make it difficult for the IHEC to devote time to capacity building activities, and that electoral support should be focused on electoral operations. It was agreed that UNDP would target its primary support to appropriate gaps in operations, which included prioritising media and public relations and provision of equipment for the Data Entry Centre. This intense operational period resulted in extensions to the original end date, as well as a change of scope and reallocation of funds in September 2008. The focus on election operations therefore delayed project implementation and refocused programme direction, with more limited results for Output 1.1: Improved Level of IECI/IHEC Management Skills, in favour of greater focus on output 1.3: Strengthened Relationships with External Stakeholders.

Security remained one of the main constraints to programme implementation, with limitations on numbers of UN staff deployed in Baghdad. One important aspect of the UN’s support to the electoral process is their close relationship with the IHEC, and presence on a daily basis in Baghdad, working with their counterparts. At the outset of the programme, increased security restrictions to numbers of personnel in Baghdad, as well as periods of time when there was no full time project manager, impacted on the ability of UNDP to discuss the programme and its activities directly with IHEC counterparts. While not ceasing activities, this caused delays to programme implementation. Security factors also at times resulted in travel restrictions for participants, and demanded flexibility throughout in timing and location of specific activities.

Additionally, during the operational period, priority areas for support by electoral advisors were those directly benefiting the conduct of electoral events, which limited opportunities for deployment of advisors to assess and provide recommendations in non-operational sectors, such as administration. This reduced the programme’s ability to move forward such areas, while electoral operations were ongoing.

c. Report key lessons learned that would facilitate future programme design and implementation, including issues related to management arrangements, human resources, resources, etc.

In addition to lessons learned outlined in section IIIa above, there were a number of lessons learned identified through review of institutional development initiatives and the evaluation of this programme. These have been fully incorporated into design of a subsequent institutional development programme, developed in 2010. These lessons learned include the following:

- It is essential that any institutional development support is developed in cooperation with the IHEC, and that the programme is both understood and accepted by IHEC personnel. This is necessary to ensure full participation of IHEC personnel and foster a sense of ownership of the programme as a whole.
- The importance of ensuring detailed definition of objectives and content of specific activities, in close consultation with the IHEC, is of high priority. This is to ensure that the objectives and content of capacity building activities are clear to all programme partners and conducted to ensure optimal benefit to IHEC staff.
- Activity outlines on all capacity building activities must be developed with the IHEC prior to the implementation of the activity, in order to ensure feasibility, proper planning and IHEC commitment. These should include relevant information, such as timeframe, target group, number of participants and location.
- It is important to ensure that Standard Operating Procedures on implementation of institutional development activities are jointly agreed at the start of the programme and adhered to by all implementing partners and the IHEC. This is to ensure consistency of standards applied in implementation of programme activities.
- Efforts must be made to ensure establishment of standardized reporting templates, to ensure consistency and quality of reporting on technical outcomes of all capacity building, and not only training activities.
- It is also important to establish mechanisms whereby capacity building activities will be evaluated according to processes and standards agreed by the implementing agencies and the IHEC from the outset of the programme, and that the programme is also periodically evaluated and reviewed jointly by the IHEC, UNDP, UNOPS and UNAMI.
- Appropriate participant selection is key to ensuring optimal benefit of resources. It is essential to ensure that the target group for any activity is clearly defined and that criteria for selection are fully understood. It is also important for the UN and IHEC to agree appropriate mechanisms for participant selection and ensure these are adhered to.
- The selection of training locations is also important. Serious consideration has to be given to the appropriate location for training as well as giving preference to suitable capacity building suppliers in Iraq itself or in the mission area.
- Timing of activities is key to maximizing impact of institutional development initiatives. This includes ensuring that adequate time is available for appropriate follow up and IHEC staff are able to fully focus on assimilation of outcomes into working practices.
- Best practices from previous capacity building activities indicate that training inputs are most effective when planned with designated periods to exercise these skills and put them into practice in the workplace. Work placements for a small number of staff for longer periods are also considered particularly effective in consolidating learning.
- It is essential to ensure that the work-plan remains flexible and is continually reviewed according to new capacity assessments, electoral lessons learned reviews and requirements of the electoral calendar. The work-plan must be modified as necessary, evolving to take into account any new developments and requirements.

IV. 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 (UNDP Key Immediate Objective): Increased capacity of the IECI/IHEC to conduct electoral activities by strengthening institutional capabilities in specifically targeted areas for the permanent electoral institution established under the constitution.							
Output 1.1 Improved level of IECI/IHEC management skills	Indicator 1.1.1 Activities organized to develop management capacity of new Commissioners	0	Not specified	1		Capacity building activity reports; participant evaluations	Commissioners' Study Visit to South Korea
	Indicator 1.1.2 IHEC personnel engaged in strategic and operational planning activities	0	Not specified	15		Capacity building activity reports; IHEC draft strategic plan; IHEC operational plans	Strategic Planning Workshop and subsequent meetings in the IHEC
	Indicator 1.1.3 Expert or consultancy firm in place to provide advice on IHEC financial management, budgeting and oversight	No	Yes	No	Finance Advisor recruited under a different project	ToR and consultancy contract	
	Indicator 1.1.4 IHEC personnel trained in human resource management and personnel policies	0	Not specified	0	Training agreed to be implemented by UNOPS	Training activity reports; participant evaluations	
	Indicator 1.1.5 Activities organized to improve IHEC management skills	0	Not specified	1		Capacity building activity reports; participant evaluations	Governorate Council Elections Lessons Learned Workshop

Note: the original logical framework in the project document is of a different format. Indicators have therefore been developed for this report based on activities listed in the project document and change of scope documentation.

Additionally, at the request of UNAMI, 180 desktop computers and 20 scanners were procured for the IHEC Data Entry Centre in Baghdad, to increase efficiency in transfer and data entry of voter registration data and tabulation of results.

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance (if any)	Source of Verification	Comments (if any)
Output 1.2 Enhanced awareness of electoral best practices	Indicator 1.2.1 IHEC staff fully accredited as BRIDGE facilitators	0	2	2		Capacity building activity reports; BRIDGE facilitator assessments	Supervised delivery of BRIDGE module, in cooperation with IFES Egypt
	Indicator 1.2.2 Additional IHEC staff semi-accredited as BRIDGE facilitators	0	12	13		Capacity building activity reports; BRIDGE facilitator assessments	Regional BRIDGE Training the Facilitators Workshop
	Indicator 1.2.3 Election observation activities organized for IHEC staff	0	Not specified	1		Capacity building activity reports; participant evaluations	Observation Study Visit, Spain
	Indicator 1.2.4 Activities organized to increase to increase knowledge of voter education methodologies and electoral best practices	0	Not specified	1		Capacity building activity reports; participant evaluations	Study Visit, Australia Voter Registration Workshop
<p>Additional activities: BRIDGE Training Preparation: Electoral Systems BRIDGE Implementation Workshop Participation in UNDP Regional Workshop: "From Capacity Assessments to Capacity Development Strategies" Translation of BRIDGE resources Provision of technical advice to the IHEC on best practices in electoral procedures, count centre audit and anti-fraud mechanisms.</p>							

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance (if any)	Source of Verification	Comments (if any)
Output 1.3 Strengthened relationships with external stakeholders	Indicator 1.3.1 IHEC Office of Spokesperson and external media unit established and institutionalized	No	Yes	Yes		ToR and IHEC employment contracts	
	Indicator 1.3.2 Electoral media regulatory and policy frameworks developed	Partly	Yes	Yes		IHEC media regulation; Code of Conduct for Media during Elections	IHEC media regulation for all elections; Code of Conduct for Media in cooperation with CMC
	Indicator 1.3.3 IHEC personnel and media trained on providing voter information	0	Not specified	120		Training activity reports; evaluations	Five Index on Censorship trainings on planning and implementing a media strategy
	Indicator 1.3.4 IHEC website redesigned and improved	No	Yes	Yes		IHEC website; Contract with website service provider	Contract with Nashita for development and hosting of IHEC website; Development of OCV website
	Indicator 1.3.5 Web-based voter education, and election public awareness, initiatives completed	0	Not specified	10		Web initiatives; blog sites; SMS campaigns; public awareness events	Youth events Basra; U-tube initiatives; blogging sites; Yahoo banner and Aswat Al-Iraq campaigns; SMS campaign; OCV postal alert Denmark
	Indicator 1.3.6 Surveys conducted to inform IHEC public outreach campaigns	0	Not specified	3		Survey data and reports	Public Perceptions of the IHEC; Women's Access to Electoral Information; Media Access to Electoral Information
<p>Additional activities</p> <p>More than 300 media professionals and members of the public trained on the importance of media safety in elections</p> <p>Translation and dissemination of UNESCO guidelines on reporting elections in Turkmen, Kurdish and Assyrian</p> <p>Establishment of an Image Bank for the IHEC Graphic Design Unit</p> <p>Provision of technical advice to IHEC Public Outreach Department, Office of the Spokesperson and OCV Headquarters on media and public outreach strategies.</p>							

V. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Main abbreviations and acronyms used in the report:

AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CoR	Council of Representatives
CMC	Communications and Media Commission
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
EAD	(United Nations) Electoral Assistance Division
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EU	European Union
GEO	Governorate Electoral Office
GoI	Government of Iraq
ICI	International Compact with Iraq
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEAT	International Electoral Assistance Team
IECI	Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IHEC	Independent High Electoral Commission
ITF	Iraq Trust Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PSA	Public Service Announcement
SCR	(United Nations) Security Council Resolution
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United National Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEAD	United Nations Electoral Assistance Division
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

ANNEX I – SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

Output 1.1: Improved Level of IECI/IHEC Management Skills

Strategic Planning Workshop

UNDP, in cooperation with IFES, implemented a four-day Strategic Planning Workshop for the IHEC, at the Dead Sea in Jordan on 25–28 July 2007. This was attended by all nine IHEC Commissioners and six members of middle and senior management. Following theoretical review of the guiding principles of strategic planning, facilitated working sessions took place during which participants discussed what should be included in an IHEC strategic plan. Workshop outputs included completion of a SWOT analysis, drafting of a mission statement, drafting of strategic goals and objectives and the decision to establish an IHEC committee to develop the strategic plan on return to Baghdad. This committee subsequently developed the first IHEC strategic plan which was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioners' Study Visit: South Korea

At the invitation of the National Election Commission (NEC) of the Republic of Korea, UNDP implemented a study visit on electoral management during the preparation phase for the December 2007 Presidential Election. All nine IHEC Commissioners and five Deputy Commissioners attended the eight-day programme hosted by the NEC from 31 October to 07 November 2007 in Seoul. The programme was developed by the NEC appropriate for a new Board of Commissioners, and aimed to provide an opportunity for Commissioners to see an independent Electoral Management Body (EMB) functioning during an electoral preparation period. It allowed participants to view commission management activities, organization of board meetings, mechanisms for decision making, and other typical board activities. Additionally, in cooperation with the South Korean Civil Education Institute for Democracy, a capacity building institute attached to the NEC, participants explored key policy and operational issues through the lens of international best practices and their application in the South Korean context. The activity was beneficial in highlighting to participants the central areas which an EMB needs to consider for establishment of electoral, legal and institutional frameworks.

Equipment for Data Entry Centre

Lessons learned from January 2009 elections, identified the need for greater efficiency and accuracy in the data entry of voter registration data and in tabulation of results, as well as the transfer of data between IHEC Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs) and the National Office. As a result of this and at the request of UNAMI, UNDP procured 180 desktop computers and 20 scanners for the IHEC Data Entry Centre in Baghdad. These were used for transfer and data entry of voter registration data in August-September 2009 and subsequent elections in January 2010. Provision of this equipment increased efficiency of data entry and results tabulation processes, and contributed to the reduction in time to 19 days for announcement of final results for the Council of Representatives (CoR) election. While this did not directly target IHEC managerial skills, this enhanced the infrastructure which enables to manage electoral processes and thus enhance trust in the IHEC and credibility of processes.

Output 1.2: Enhanced Awareness of Electoral Best Practices

Voter Registration Workshop

UNDP and IFES jointly held a three-day Voter Registration Workshop on 29-31 July 2007 at the Dead Sea in Jordan. This aimed to focus discussions on operational and data management requirements for voter registration in Iraq, following recent formation of a voter registration unit within the IHEC structure. The workshop was attended by 18 IHEC Commissioners and members of senior and middle management, along with UN and IFES staff. Topics included

comparative examples of voter registration models in other countries, lessons learned from experiences in Iraq and operational and data options for future elections. Participants also discussed the IHEC proposal for its next voter registration update exercise and reviewed the necessary policy decisions that will need to be made for this. The workshop served to initiate policy discussions amongst senior IHEC officials on this difficult and complex process.

BRIDGE⁹: Enabling Full Accreditation

UNDP arranged for two IHEC trainers, qualified in 2006 as semi-accredited BRIDGE facilitators, to participate in delivering a BRIDGE workshop, hosted by IFES Egypt in cooperation with International IDEA. The purpose was to enhance their experience in using BRIDGE methodologies and to enable their full accreditation as BRIDGE facilitators, through supervised delivery of a BRIDGE module. The two IHEC staff members spent two weeks working with experienced facilitators in Cairo, with four days' preparation and five days delivery of the workshop on 08-12 July 2007. The workshop was based on four BRIDGE modules: Election Management, Electoral Systems, Voter Registration, and Voter Education. It was conducted for senior election officials involved in electoral implementation in Egypt, including members of the state court, judge's association, and Ministry of the Interior. The two IHEC staff members successfully achieved full accreditation as BRIDGE facilitators, thereby making possible the use of BRIDGE resources by the IHEC inside Iraq.

BRIDGE Train the Facilitators (TfF) Workshop

A regional BRIDGE Training the Facilitators Workshop was implemented in Amman, Jordan on 02-13 September 2007. This aimed to enable semi-accreditation for electoral officials in the region, enhance their ability to construct and deliver BRIDGE training modules, and improve their knowledge of how to use BRIDGE resources for capacity building purposes. Thirteen IHEC staff participated alongside eight representatives from EMBs and relevant NGOs from Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, and Jordan. All participants achieved semi-accreditation as BRIDGE facilitators. In addition, facilitators from International IDEA, UNDP and UNAMI were joined by the two IHEC staff who had recently gained full accreditation, in order to gain further experience in preparation and delivery of BRIDGE courses. The activity also completed translation into Arabic of the four main TfF training materials: Facilitators' Notes, Introductory Module, Participant's Handbook and Facilitation Manual. UNDP supported organization of the workshop, participation of IHEC staff and translation of materials.

BRIDGE Implementation Workshop

UNDP held the first BRIDGE Implementation Workshop in the Arab region in Amman, Jordan, on 22-25 October 2007, with facilitators from BRIDGE partners International IDEA, IFES and the AEC. The Implementation Workshop is designed to guide capacity building managers and planners in the methodology and long-term implementation strategies of using the BRIDGE programme. Eight IHEC participants attended, including senior representatives of the Capacity Building Division, Training Section, Office of the CEO and the Kurdistan Regional Electoral Office, together with seven regional representatives from Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan. The activity concluded with discussions on developing an appropriate BRIDGE strategy for subsequent follow up within the respective EMBs.

BRIDGE Training Preparation: Electoral Systems

An agreement was made with IFES Egypt for two IHEC staff members, qualified as semi-accredited BRIDGE facilitators, to assist in co-facilitating a BRIDGE workshop on electoral systems in Cairo on 20-22 January 2008. This supervised delivery was also intended to enable

⁹ 'BRIDGE' stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections. It is a comprehensive professional development course in election administration. BRIDGE partners are: International IDEA, Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), UNEAD, IFES and UNDP.

their full accreditation and thereby expand the pool of IHEC staff permitted to use BRIDGE resources. The two participants travelled to Amman, Jordan, the week prior to this to familiarize themselves with workshop materials, with support from UNDP. Due to delay in issuance of their visas, they were unable to travel to Cairo in time for the activity. The period 14-19 January was, however, utilized in reviewing the materials on electoral systems and discussing the subject at length with UN electoral advisors to ensure a thorough understanding.

Provision of Electoral Resources (Translation of BRIDGE Materials into Arabic)

In addition to BRIDGE Training the Facilitators materials, in 2008 and 2009 UNDP arranged for translation of a series of BRIDGE modules into Arabic, to extend available Arabic language BRIDGE resources for use by the IHEC and other EMBs in the region, following subsequent quality control and approval by BRIDGE organizers. The following modules were translated into Arabic: (i) Electoral Systems, (ii) Electoral Contestants, (iii) Media and Elections, (iv), Voter Information, and (v) Pre-election Activities.

Study Visit: Election Operations, Australia

Three IHEC technical staff from voter education, media and field coordination sections participated in a study visit to observe the 24 November 2007 Australian federal elections. The observation visit extended over eleven days (16 – 27 November) and included a five-day pre-election programme in Melbourne on electoral activities at state level. This consisted of a briefing by the Divisional Returning Officer, and visits to pre-polling facilities for those unable to vote on election day, to the Australian Electoral Education Centre, the call centre and mobile voting facilities. This was followed by participation in the Election Visit Program hosted by the Australian Electoral Commission in Canberra on November 22–25 to observe electoral activities at federal level, and a post-election programme, in which they shadowed relevant departments for two days.

Observation Study Visit: Polling and Counting (Spain)

Six IHEC staff of the Training and Procedures Section, Public Outreach Department and Office of the CEO participated in a seven-day observation study visit to Spain over the parliamentary election. The programme was established and hosted by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs according to their election visitor programme, and ran from 04 to 10 March 2008. The programme focused on observation of polling and counting processes, public relations and announcement of results, and the role of observers and political party agents. It also covered briefings on the legal framework and voter registry data management, with the aim of broadening awareness of different electoral methodologies and best practices.

Participation in UNDP Regional Workshop: “From Capacity Assessments to Capacity Development Strategies”

UNDP supported participation of the IHEC Deputy Director of the Capacity Building Department in a regional consultative forum “From Capacity Assessments to Capacity Development Strategies in Arab States”, organized by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy Capacity Development Group and the Capacity Development Team for Arab States. This took place in Damascus on 11-13 February 2008. The objectives were to familiarize participants with UNDP’s approach to capacity development, including capacity assessment methodology and response strategies, to brainstorm on application of strategies in post-conflict countries in order to enhance the development of national implementation strategies, and to benefit from a network for sharing lessons learned and best practices in the region.

Governorate Council Elections Lessons Learned Workshop for the IHEC National Office and GEO Managers

Following the Governorate Council elections, in collaboration with the UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance, UNDP organized a lessons learned workshop in Istanbul for IHEC National Office and GEO Managers. This took place in Istanbul on 15-18 March 2009. Thirty seven IHEC officials and five UN electoral advisors participated in this activity, which aimed to review operational planning and implementation of the election to identify best practices and lessons learned in order to improve the conduct of future elections. Participants discussed a range of subjects relating to voter registration, polling and counting processes for the elections, which had impacted on or enhanced their activities during the elections. There was also a presentation by YouGov of its recently completed nationwide survey of public perceptions of the electoral process, also implemented under this programme. The workshop resulted in agreed recommendations for planning and implementation of future elections.

Technical Advice

Throughout the preparations for the March 2010 Council of Representatives election, specialist technical guidance and advice was provided to the IHEC on the development of electoral procedures, including polling, counting, special voting and audit processes. This included advice on the establishment of appropriate anti-fraud measures for all electoral processes. After the election, technical support was provided on audit and troubleshooting to resolve problematic polling stations for incorporation into the results, and also on the development and implementation of recount procedures, following an order for recount of ballots for Baghdad governorate, in response to outcomes of the appeal process.

Output 1.3: Strengthened Relationships with External Stakeholders

Support to Media Coverage of Electoral Processes

(i) Translation of UNESCO Guidelines for Election Reporting

In the second half of 2008, in preparation for Governorate Council elections, UNDP arranged for translation of the UNESCO Guidelines for Election Reporting, existing in English and Arabic, into additional Iraqi languages. This included translation into Kurdish (both Kurmanji and Sorani), Turkmen and Syriac. The guide was then distributed to journalists through 1000 copies on flash disk and through a dedicated website.

(ii) Campaign on Reporting Elections Safely

The high risk to media practitioners in Iraq has been widely recognized. Since 2003, journalists have been exposed to risks of kidnap, blackmail and threat. This has contributed to the restriction of freedom of expression and limited journalists' access to accurate information. The risks further increase in the time of elections, due to contest between different parties. For this purpose, the Society to Defend Press Freedom in Iraq, an organization which works to monitor and follow up on violations against journalists throughout Iraq, launched the 'Campaign for Condemning Violence and Defending Journalists during Elections'. This aimed to encourage the government and competing parties to exclude journalists from disputes, to emphasize that journalists are not part of the conflict or the electoral campaign, and to explain that the purpose of journalism is to deliver information to the public in an impartial and professional manner. To promote this, UNDP supported a series of public seminars on journalism safety, and the publishing of leaflets and other campaign material in August and September 2008. Pamphlets and posters were produced and distributed in the main Iraqi cities of Baghdad, Najaf, Anbar, Diyala, Basra, Amara and Diwanyah. Additionally, public seminars were organized over a two week period to increase public awareness on the ethics of responsibly reporting elections.

(iii) Communications and Media Commission (CMC) Media Regulations for Elections

UNDP worked with the CMC and the IHEC to update regulations regarding media rights and responsibilities during the electoral campaign period and silence period immediately prior to the elections. Through this, the 2005 Code of Conduct for the Media during Elections, and Guidelines on Equitable Access as Required by the Code of Conduct for Media During Elections were updated in December 2008, printed and distributed in Arabic, Kurdish and English. UNDP facilitated this process, supported translation and ensured distribution of regulatory documents to the IHEC GEOs across Iraq and through the IHEC website for the January 2009 elections.

Provision of Technical Advice to the IHEC Media and Public Outreach Units

UNDP provided ongoing guidance and technical advice to the IHEC Public Outreach Department, External Media Section and Office of the Spokesperson from mid-2008 to mid-2009. This included support to the planning and preparation of media and communications strategies for electoral events in order to enhance the ability of the IHEC to engage a wide range of external stakeholders, and also capacity development support to developing IHEC staff skills and knowledge in this area. Technical support to the IHEC in this field included:

- Advice on the establishment of the IHEC Office of the Spokesperson, including development of TORs and recruitment of personnel;
- Advice on development of regulations and procedures on media and accreditation; a policy outlining delegation of authority to the GEOs to deal with the media; and guidelines to enable safe access to polling stations of electronic recording equipment;
- Advice to the Public Outreach Department and External Media Section on designing a media and communications plan for electoral events;
- Development of IHEC capacity to understand media engagement and the regulatory framework, through review of media regulations and policies;
- Support to the establishment of an IHEC image bank which provides the Graphic Design Department with a pool of high quality images that can be used without violation of copyright and without risk to the security of the models;
- Promotion of involvement of the IHEC Graphic Design Unit in innovative designs for media and communications campaigns, including design of web-banners and animations for web-based and audio-visual campaigns.

Coordination of Electoral Support for Public Outreach

Additionally, the UNDP Media Project Manager directly assisted in establishing public outreach coordination mechanisms between the IEAT and external stakeholders engaged in electoral support, such as PRTs, to ensure appropriate coordination on public outreach issues.

Support to Development and Hosting of the IHEC Website

In order to promote provision of accurate, reliable and timely electoral information, record feedback from around the country on the voting process and optimize IHEC service delivery to stakeholders, support was provided to the development of the IHEC website. This included development of an interactive website content management system in English/Arabic. Nashita, a Baghdad-based web company, was contracted to provide assistance to the IHEC from July 2008 to February 2009 on improving the website's information architecture, creative design, content and online marketing, and to conduct on-job training for IHEC staff on administration of the website. A Kurdish site was also created in February 2009 for Kurdistan elections.

Nashita was also contracted to provide dedicated server and hosting of the IHEC website from November 2008 to end 2009 until the IHEC would be able to take over management of this process. This was initially planned for one year. However, with the postponement of the CoR election, this was extended to ensure that the IHEC website stayed online over the election period, given that it is a primary tool for reaching Iraq's in and out of country voters. IHEC has since assumed full administration of the website and contract hosting services.

Support to IHEC Media Campaigns for 2009 Electoral Events

Advice and guidance was provided to the IHEC on development of its media campaigns for electoral events in 2008 and 2009, including 2008 and 2009 Voter Registration Update Periods, January 2009 Governorate Council elections and July 2009 Kurdistan Region Parliamentary and Presidential elections. This included increasing the understanding of IHEC staff on how to utilize “new media” and innovative methods to disseminate voter information to the widest possible target audience. A range of initiatives were implemented in support of this.

(i) U-tube Productions “Why Vote?”

In the public space of new media, U-Tube has emerged as an important forum for the dissemination and discussion of ideas and is an ideal space to engage Iraq’s young voters. A pilot project was therefore developed, targeting young Iraqi citizens through production of U-tube films on the theme of “Why Vote?” The Iraqi NGO Media in Conflict and Transition was contracted to produce a series of 20 short video clips, presenting 20 young Iraqis from all parts of the country and different socio-economic and ethno-religious backgrounds, with an aim to impress upon the audience the importance of elections, no matter what one’s background. In the video clips, young Iraqis presented their ideas and visions for the upcoming Governorate Council elections. Each character told why, in a country which has experienced so much violence, it is important to be engaged in shaping the country’s future by going to the ballot box to vote. The clips were formatted for internet, television and mobile phone use, and a website on YouTube was registered for the online presentation of the films. The films were also used as training material for IHEC to demonstrate the kind of material that will engage young people.

(ii) Blog Site “Vote for Iraq” (for 2009 Governorate Council elections)

In the run up to January 2009 elections, a pilot blog site “Vote for Iraq” was developed, with an aim of ensuring optimal use of multi-media and web-based information platforms and generating discussion and interest in the elections among the key youth demographic. The website <http://voteiraq.maktoobblog.com/> was created to gather opinions, input and general points of view of people directly and indirectly concerned with the Iraqi elections. The website was marketed using several online tools including personal networking, Facebook, Arab web forums, blogs, and e-mail reminders. From its creation in October 2008 until 31 January 2009 Election Day, numerous visits were recorded and 131 user posts were established. Content included blog editorial articles, news, reports, discussions, audio and video material, imagery, analytical writings and links. Various topics were covered, including general information on voting, rules and regulations of the electoral process, the necessity of voting, news coverage countdown to the elections, information on candidates, women’s perspectives, the Iraqi youth’s hopes for the elections, democracy in Iraq, and many others.

(iii) Blog Site “Iraqi Voices Project” (for 2009 Kurdistan elections)

Building on the successful pilot “Vote for Iraq” above, and requests from users to continue the blog site after the January 2009 elections, the “Iraqi Voices Project” was developed as a follow up. This ran from March to September 2009, and covered issues relating to the July 2009 elections in Kurdistan Region, and initial preparations for the CoR election. The blog site was similar in aims to the earlier pilot. Its overall goal was to provide a digital platform for young people to engage in dialogue around different Iraqi electoral issues, and through this motivate citizen participation. To do this, it aimed to encourage young people to engage in an open and free discussion about politics, through (i) encouraging people to write and shoot photos, (ii) introducing different websites, links, chat forums, social networking groups that discuss politics in Iraq, and (iii) making the blog a good stop for people who want to understand Iraqi politics. The digital gateway was included on the website for the Iraqi electoral commission, thereby aiming to enhance the attractiveness of the official website to young people.

(iv) Yahoo! Web banner Campaign

As part of a strategy to extend public outreach beyond traditional voter education methods (posters, PSAs and brochures) and to reach the key demographic target group of youth by piloting innovative ways of using new media, the programme utilized web banners. This is a potential way of reaching thousands of young people in a very short period of time. Consultation with IHEC employees and a sample of Iraqi urban youth indicated a high level of email usage with the @yahoo.com suffix being the most popular in an informal poll. A campaign of display banner advertisements was therefore run from December 2008 until 31 January 2009, with the slogan "Let's Vote! My vote, my country, my future! Let's participate in the elections!" As well as encouraging Iraqi citizens to vote, the initiative also provided a training opportunity for the IHEC Graphic Design Unit in designing the animated banner advertisement and creating innovative story boards. Between 18 December and 01 February, a total of 12,423,109 delivered impressions were recorded, with 52,549 clicks (0.42%).

(v) Aswat al-Iraq for Media Development: Support to Electoral Public Outreach

As part of the series of initiatives to use innovative means to reach key demographic target groups quickly and effectively, UNDP contracted Aswat al-Iraq news agency to support IHEC public outreach campaigns through two services: providing banner advertising services on Aswat al-Iraq news agency website and conducting an SMS texting service to Iraqi journalists to cover all news events organized by IHEC. Aswat al-Iraq for Media Development is an independent news agency based in Erbil with a national network. This initiative aimed to build upon the established reputation of Aswat al-Iraq as an impartial and professional broker of news, respected across the political spectrum, to reach a large number of electoral stakeholders.

a) Aswat al-Iraq Web-banner Advertising

Aswat al-Iraq news agency offered the top advertising banner slot on both its Arabic (<http://ar.aswataliraq.info>) and Kurdish services (<http://ku.aswataliraq.info>). This ran for two months from 10 December 2008 to 10 February 2009, and used the graphic animation development by the IHEC Graphic Design Unit

b) Aswat al-Iraq Texting Service for Governorate Council Elections

Nearly all journalists in Iraq have mobile phones and an SMS service is a powerful notification service for many journalists who are not continuously connected to the internet, and takes advantage of Aswat al-Iraq's function as a news agency of operating in real-time. UNDP therefore supported an Aswat al-Iraq Arabic SMS alert service to up to 1,000 journalists across Iraq for a period of 50 days, from mid-December to mid-February. The alert service covered all news events organised or notified by IHEC and headlines of major stories relating to the elections. The list of journalists from all parts of the country was put together by Aswat al-Iraq, and grouped by governorate so messages were targeted for each governorate. A smaller list of journalists was also created which received all alerts and events for the whole country by request.

c) Aswat al-Iraq Texting Service for Kurdistan Region Elections

A repeat of the successful SMS initiative was undertaken for Kurdistan Region elections. Aswat al-Iraq provided an SMS alert service to up to 600 journalists across governorates of the Kurdistan Region, Mosul and Diyala. This ran for a period of 50 days between 01 May and 10 July 2009. The alert service covered all news events organised or notified by IHEC and headlines of major stories relating to the elections. The initiative also strengthened the IHEC's capacity to engage with the Iraqi media, as the IHEC worked alongside Aswat al-Iraq to develop the SMS texts for dissemination.

Youth Election Awareness Campaign in Basra Governorate

Support was provided to a local youth electoral education initiative in Basra governorate in the run up to January 2009 Governorate Council elections. This aimed to motivate young people to participate in the election and raise their awareness of the electoral process. In late 2008, in cooperation with local councils and education institutes, the Iraqi NGO Child to Child Society (ICCS) held a series of 21 lectures in different locations in nine districts of Basra governorate, which were attended by 511 male and 336 female young people aged 18–20 years. Lectures covered the importance of voting and using one's voice and how to select an appropriate candidate, as well as specific voter information on political entity and candidate lists and how to vote on Election Day. Outcomes noted were that most participants previously had little idea about political entity and candidate agendas and the election process as a whole, but believed that their participation is important to democratic processes and would vote in the election.

Opinion Surveys on Electoral Processes

In late 2008 and early 2009, in order to assess public opinion of electoral processes for the Governorate Council elections and assess access to electoral information by specific stakeholders (women and media), three surveys were conducted. These intended to provide feedback to the IHEC on the needs of different stakeholders in the electoral process, and establish some baseline indicators for improving its public outreach campaigns in the future.

(i) Survey on Public Perceptions of Electoral Processes

A national survey on public perceptions of the electoral process was commissioned in late 2008 in order to analyse public opinion on the conduct of the Governorate Council elections. The contract was awarded to YouGov, a UK-based market research company, experienced in conducting public opinion polling services. The objective of the survey was to assess public confidence in Iraqi electoral processes and institutions in order to support the development of IHEC's public outreach strategy. Questions addressed voter perceptions of democracy, voter perceptions of the electoral process, how voters voted, whether they voted, the reasons for their choices, and whether they believe elections will help them.

Survey outcomes indicated generally high levels of awareness of IHEC but specific knowledge was low and there was confusion over the extent of IHEC's remit. Information from the IHEC was generally received and trusted, but with some variation. The principles of participatory democracy were supported but with differences of opinion over how elections should be conducted (what electoral system should be in place). The survey provided general information on patterns of Iraqi political and electoral attitudes, including reasons for motivation for voting, views on the impact of politicians on quality of life, opinions on the accuracy of electoral information received and the influence of ordinary Iraqis on election outcomes. On the whole, it was felt the election would be 'credible and legitimate', although there was some uncertainty about the degree to which this was entirely correct. Survey results were presented to the IHEC, to ensure outcomes could be incorporated into public outreach strategies for future elections.

(ii) Survey on Women's Access to Electoral Information

The above survey, which explored voting behaviour in the Governorate Council elections, indicated that on the whole, fewer women said they were likely to vote in the elections than men. This was particularly pronounced for younger women. A further survey on women's access to electoral information was therefore commissioned and conducted by YouGov with remaining funds from the above. YouGov conducted eight focus groups of women in Baghdad, Anbar and Mosul, and utilized the findings to inform a quantitative survey designed to measure what motivates women to participate, what de-motivates them and what might simply stand in their way. This small survey was used to introduce an understanding to the IHEC of the gender dimension to information management and access in elections, and to provide indications on how to improve public outreach activities targeting women.

Survey on Media Access to Electoral Information

In order to help understand the needs of media as a stakeholder in electoral processes, a further survey was conducted on media access to electoral information by a local radio station, UR FM Radio, in January 2009. This represented a pilot study which aimed to assess the effectiveness of IHEC's information provision to Iraqi local media and engagement with local media on various issues relating to the Governorate Council elections. Interviews were conducted with a sample of 50 media professionals working in print, radio and television media in all 14 governorates covered by the elections, who were engaged directly in local coverage of the elections. These media professionals were asked 25 questions about the transparency of the IHEC with journalists. The answers varied, with some expressing support for IHEC's interaction with the media, while others expressed views that they had not obtained sufficient information to effectively cover electoral proceedings. The small opinion poll was designed to help the IHEC External Media Section to identify problems in information delivery and engagement with the media, and strengthen initiatives to develop evidence based strategies.

Training on Planning and Implementing a Media Strategy (Index on Censorship)

An extensive training programme was implemented on planning and implementing a media strategy, thereby addressing a key area for capacity development identified as a priority in 2008-2010. Index on Censorship, a UK based organization focusing on freedom of expression, was contracted to develop and deliver the trainings. After a visit to Iraq to conduct a detailed assessment of IHEC training needs, preparatory activities were completed by 28 April 2009. However, due to exigencies of election operations throughout 2009 and early 2010, training was delayed at the request of the IHEC until after the March 2010 CoR election.

Index on Censorship developed and delivered four three-day sessions on 'Implementing a Media Strategy' for IHEC GEO Managers, Deputy GEO Managers and public outreach staff, and one four-day session of 'Planning and Implementing a Media Strategy' for IHEC staff involved in managing media activities. A total of 120 IHEC participants (99 male/21 female) benefited from the activity. Training took place in Erbil in May and June 2010 as follows:

- 02–04 May: 'Implementing a Media Strategy' for 23 participants, including GEO Managers.
- 06–08 May: 'Implementing a Media Strategy' for 22 participants, including Deputy GEO Managers.
- 10–12 May: 'Implementing a Media Strategy' for 24 GEO public outreach participants.
- 09–12 June: 'Planning and Implementing a Media Strategy', including a lessons learned review of the CoR election, for 31 IHEC staff involved in management of media activities.
- 14–16 June: 'Implementing a Media Strategy' for 20 IHEC Baghdad National Office and GEO staff of the specified target groups who were engaged in recount processes and therefore unable to attend previous workshops.

The programme provided two handbooks to the IHEC, developed by Index on Censorship, to support the training, with 150 copies provided of the handbook 'Planning and Management of a Media Strategy', and 100 copies of 'Design and Implementation of a Media Strategy'.

In Support of All Project Outputs

Capacity Needs Assessment Review

In support of overall programme objectives, and to aid development of future institutional development plans, the IHEC conducted an assessment of its future capacity building needs in October/November 2009, in cooperation with UNDP and UNOPS. A series of over 80 interviews were conducted with the range of departments within the IHEC. The assessment reviewed areas requiring attention within the IHEC to conduct future successful electoral events and recommended priorities for institutional development for the next few years. Daily support to this process was provided by the UNDP Electoral Programme Advisor in Baghdad.