

United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund

Project #:A5-32

Date and Quarter Updated: (January-March 2012) (1st Quarter)

Participating UN Organisation: FAO

Sector: Agriculture and Food Security

Government of Iraq- Responsible Line Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC)

Title	Iraq Agricultural Growth and Employment Support (I-AGES) Program				
Geographic Location	National				
Project Cost	US \$5,000,000				
Duration	36 months				
Approval Date (SC)	27.06.2010	Starting Date	02.07.2010	Completion Date	02.07.2013
Project Description	<p>The purpose of the I-AGES program is to create an enabling environment that maximizes agricultural growth/diversification and employment generation in support of poverty reduction and food security. This will be achieved by removing binding constraints to growth at the policy, institutional and agrarian systems level through the strengthening of public sector investment, and by providing greater space for the private sector in this most important economic area.</p> <p>The proposed Iraq Agricultural Growth and Employment Generation Support (I-AGES) program has been designed as a nationally led priority investment program, aimed at undertaking urgent analytical and diagnostic work in Phase I (surveys and studies), to then develop for the first time a National Agricultural Policy and National Agricultural Investment Strategy in Phase 2, supported by the implementation of National Priority Programmes implemented through the national budget – as the primary tool of policy.</p> <p>I-AGES addresses two primary national investment priorities (i) the need for an evidence-based national agricultural policy and investment strategy to promote rapid economic diversification and (ii) sustained non-public sector employment generation.</p>				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

Development Goal:

1. Enabling environment created for sustaining agriculture development and food security.
2. Enhanced production and productivity in the agricultural sector.
3. Creation of efficient agricultural sector for poverty reduction and employment generation.

Immediate Objectives:

1. Collaborate with Government partners in completion of evidence based studies and surveys.
2. Enable and support the government in completion of an Agriculture Strategy.
3. Enable and support the government in completion of an Agriculture Policy.
4. Use of the Strategy and Policy to formulate National Projects.

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement

Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GoI and partners have improved knowledge and evidence base for the development of national agricultural policy and strategy 2. GOI better able to formulate and implement the National Agriculture Policy 3. GoI better able to develop and implement the agriculture sector investment strategy in line with national priorities
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and completed growth diagnostic design, identification and analysis of agriculture growth indicators, investment climate survey, labor market survey, value chain study, trade volume analysis. 2.1 MoA trained on developing a National Agriculture Policy and writing the final version. 3.1 MoA trained on developing a National Agriculture Sector Investment Strategy and writing the final version.
Procurement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computers and Monitors 2. Servers 3. Consultant staffing for the training and studies/surveys

Funds Committed	US\$ 2,128,771	% of approved	42.5%
Funds Disbursed	US\$ 1,398,910	% of approved	27.9%
Forecast final date	2 July 2013	Delay (months)	0

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned (current status)
Men	250	0%
Women	50	0%
Children	0	0%
IDPs	0	0%
Others		
Indirect beneficiaries	15,000	0%
Employment generation (men/women)	300	0%

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results		% of planned
GoI and partners have improved knowledge and evidence base for the development of national agricultural policy and strategy	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and completed growth diagnostic design.	75 %
	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and complete identification and analysis of agriculture growth indicators.	75 %
	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and complete investment climate survey.	15 %
	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and complete labor market survey.	15 %
	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and complete value chain study.	50 %
	MOA /COSIT/NAPWG/ University staff trained and complete trade volume analysis.	50 %
GOI better able to formulate and implement the National Agriculture Policy	MoA trained on developing a National Agriculture Policy and writing the final version.	0 %
GoI better able to develop and implement the agriculture sector investment strategy in line with national priorities	MoA trained on developing a National Agriculture Sector Investment Strategy and writing the final version.	0 %

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results
<p>The first meeting of the PSSU was held in Amman in February 26-27 2012. During this meeting, the PSSU representatives were briefed in detail on the I-AGES project, and reconfirmed their tasks. The PSSU members posed a number of problems from their side, related to the fact that all the PSSU members are already occupied with a different function, they are not remunerated for any work related to I-AGES, and have no logistical or administrative support (incl. office space, etc.).</p> <p><i>(Minutes of meeting could be added)</i></p> <p>Regarding the studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Growth Diagnostics component has been completed and sent for comments to key stakeholders. PSSU is expected to provide comments to the draft to enable proceeding with finalization; - A first draft of the Value Chain Analysis has been completed in November, using secondary data. At this time, the possibility to analyse more products is under discussion with the Iraqi authorities; - A first draft of the Trade Volume Analysis has been completed in December but it will be updated, revised and completed further in the following months; - The Investment Climate Review is delayed due to the necessity to collect primary data (dependent on the establishment and performing of the PSSU) - The Labor Survey was delayed due to administrative constraints existing on the ILO side.

To ensure the successful completion of the project, I-AGES staff will prioritise the following objectives over the coming weeks:

- Intensify communication between FAO technical and operational team with PSSU and PSC to obtain maximum cooperation possible from their side;
- Plan the implementation of primary research with the PSSU (ICA);
- Formally agree upon the implementation of the training program with the PSSU;
- Evaluate the constraints of the PSSU and support it a.s.a.p. to improve its efficiency.

- Growth Diagnostic Study:

Training materials have been developed for implementing the growth diagnostic analysis. This includes both theoretical sections and practical implementation steps for both the manager of the study and the implementing analyst. The draft has been sent for comments Q4 of 2011 and PSSU is expected to provide them in order to proceed with its finalization.

- Investment climate review:

Training manuals have been developed for the following areas: management, questionnaire development, sampling, data collection. Training workshops will be held with both analysts within the PSSU and CSO in research design and implementation to give the Iraqi authorities the expertise to collect primary data.

- Value chain study:

Training manual has been developed. It is envisioned that a workshop will train PSSU and CSO staff in designing and implementing a primary value chain analysis as well as drawing policy recommendations. Another workshop will train enumerators in data collection using survey, interview and focus group methodologies.

At this time, FAO is still expecting feedback from the Iraqi authorities (PSSU) on the first draft of Value Chain.

- The Trade Volume Analysis:

A first draft of the Trade Volume analysis has been completed in December. However, an update, review and completion of the draft will continue in the next months, before being sent for comments to PSSU.

- Labour survey

The Letter of Agreement has been prepared and already cleared by FAO HQ. ILO has not proceeded with providing transparent budgeting, and at the beginning of April they finally declined to commit. Subsequently, FAO started negotiations with UNESCO.

- Training

Progress has been made to outsource training and is expected to conclude within the 2nd quarter.

Main implementation constraints & challenges (2-3 sentences)

Delay in the implementation of training will reduce the pace at which implementation of primary research can commence and the quality of the findings. Delay in the establishment of an effective working environment for the PSSU, due to institutional constraints, or possible under-performance from PSC/PSSU will delay the implementation of the studies.