

**United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund
Project #:C9-25**

Date and Quarter Updated: January - March, 1st Quarter 2012

Participating UN Organisation: UNOPS

Sector: Governance

Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry: Ministry of State for Civil Society Affairs

Title	Iraqi Civil Society Empowerment Project				
Geo. Location	National coverage, with specific activities targeting priority areas to be selected when the process of granting NGOs is initiated.				
Project Cost	4,255,193				
Duration	24 months + 20 months extension				
Approval Date	04.12.2008	Starting Date	9.12.2008	Completion Date	09.12.2010 extended to 31.08.2012
Project Description	This project builds on UNOPS experience in supporting Iraq's citizens with the assistance of Iraqi civil society over the past 4 years, be it through capacity-building, grant funding or technical assistance. ICSEP defines <i>empowerment</i> as a process where the Iraqi people, in this instance via civil society, gain greater independence through capacity-building. This project will enable civil society to develop into a stronger and more reliable partner for government and donors in order to better inform, monitor and support processes of democratization, stabilization, development and relief to the benefit of all Iraq's people. The Project comprises 4 stand-alone modules: 1. Capacity-Building, Awareness-Raising and Networking; 2. Emergency Response and Preparedness; 3. Citizen Participation in Local Governance; & 4. Community-based Peace-building. Special attention will be paid to gender and youth-sensitive programming. ICSEP adopts a two-pronged implementation strategy with certain outcomes pursued nationally while others follow area-based models. ICSEP rests on strong partnerships with our Iraqi partners - governmental (Min. of Civil Society, NAO, NCCMD) & NGOs.				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

*The project contributes to the following development goals in the relevant development strategies for Iraq: **Iraqi National Development Strategy (NDS):** 7.5.3. (Emergency Coordination, Preparedness and Response); 9.1.1. (National Dialogue and Reconciliation); 9.4.1 ('Engaging with Civil Society')*

International Compact with Iraq (ICI): Section 3.1.1. (National Dialogue and Reconciliation), 3.3.1. (Establish a comprehensive human rights regime country wide) and Section 4.2.1 ('Engaging with the Civil Society')

Sector Team Outcome(s) for the Governance Sector:

Outcome 2: *Strengthening national dialogue and civil society for governance and reconciliation.*

Outcome 3: *Strengthened regulatory framework, institutions and processes of national and local governance.*

Project objectives:

1. To establish a liberal legal and administrative framework for Iraqi NGOs, respected both by the authorities and the NGO community itself.
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.
4. To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.
5. To spearhead collaborative initiatives to counter conflict trends through civil society with the ultimate aim of protecting human rights and achieving community development.

Outputs, Key activities and Procurement

Outputs	1.1: Intn'l standards mainstreamed in draft laws and regulations governing NGO sector 1.2. Increased capacity of NGO Assistance Office to register NGOs timely and provide information support. 1.3: Higher awareness across civil society, government and public on rights & duties of
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	<p>NGOs.</p> <p>2.1 Increased Iraqi capacity to provide CB support to civil society organizations in core organizational functions and Human Rights Civic Education.</p> <p>2.2: Civic Education campaign on Human Rights conducted by empowered NGO network.</p> <p>3.1: NGO Emergency Preparedness and Response Network (EPRN) established nationwide</p> <p>3.2: Enhanced coordination of local humanitarian NGOs with humanitarian community (GoI, UN, Int. NGOs)</p> <p>3.3: Increased understanding of humanitarian ethics and advocacy role among NGO community.</p> <p>4.1. Increased capacities for evaluating local governance and producing recommendations to improve citizen participation.</p> <p>4.2: Civic Education campaign on citizen participation in local governance conducted by empowered NGO network.</p> <p>4.3: Citizen participation initiatives increase democratic local governance through close collaboration between NGOs and local authorities.</p> <p>4.4: Stronger policy debate for enhancing civil society and citizen participation in local governance.</p> <p>5.1: A cadre of peace-building resource persons able to initiate change in the larger relational patterns within their communities, is set-up in select locations.</p> <p>5.2: Civic Education campaign on community based peace-building and its contribution to national dialogue and reconciliation process conducted by empowered NGO network in Baghdad.</p> <p>5.3: Tension levels amongst the general Iraqi public decreased by peace-building initiatives run by CSOs and community leaders in select areas.</p> <p>5.4: Formerly divided communities are able to plan their future together.</p> <p>5.5: Stronger policy debate on integrated community-based peace-building.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>1.1.1 Provide TA to GoI and KRG Institutions on NGO legislations</p> <p>1.2.1.NAO staff capacity needs assessment</p> <p>1.2.2. Capacity-building of NAO staff</p> <p>1.2.3. IMS support to NAO NGO Database</p> <p>1.3.1 Training program for government officials on civil society / law</p> <p>1.3.2 Educating NGOs on NGO Law</p> <p>2.1.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Sulaymaniyah</p> <p>2.2.1. Support to capacity building of civil society network (HR) by CSSC</p> <p>2.2.2. Network plan and carry out Civic Education Campaign</p> <p>3.1.1. Create and Support EPRN network operations and expansion</p> <p>3.2.1. Set up communication protocols inside EPRN and with 3rd parties.</p> <p>3.2.2. Fast track data collection and early warning by EPRN nodes and compilation of all governorate databases into national DB.</p> <p>3.3.1. Produce media materials raising awareness of CSOs on humanitarian principles and advocacy.</p> <p>3.3.2. Hold governorate-level awareness raising events.</p> <p>4.1.1. Adapt & fine-tune local governance assessment (LGA) methodology.</p> <p>4.1.2. Carry out local governance assessments in 2 locations</p> <p>4.2.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Basrah</p> <p>4.2.2. Support to capacity building of civil society network (citizens participation) by CSSC</p> <p>4.2.3. Network plans and implements Civic Education Campaigns in Citizen Participation</p> <p>4.3.1. Implement citizen participation initiatives in 2 target areas</p> <p>4.3.2. Evaluate impact of initiatives (including baseline) via academic / research centers.</p> <p>4.4.1. Organize Roundtable to debate project outputs and propose policies to increase nationwide citizen participation.</p> <p>5.1.1. Carry out conflict assessments in 2 select areas Baghdad, Mosul)</p>

	<p>5.1.2. ToT on Peacebuilding and Awareness-raising for community stakeholders in alternative conflict / dispute resolution mechanisms</p> <p>5.2.1. Capacity building of Civil Society Service Center in Baghdad</p> <p>5.2.2. Support to capacity building of civil society network (peacebuilding) by CSSC</p> <p>5.2.3. Network plans and implements Civic Education Campaigns on Pecebuilding</p> <p>5.3.1. Peacebuilding projects implemented by local CSOs through grant funding</p> <p>5.3.2. Evaluate impact of initiatives.</p> <p>5.4.1. Organize community planning exercises after peace-building projects.</p> <p>5.4.2. Secure support of local authorities and civil society for funding of community plans through regular budget.</p> <p>5.5.1. Organize Roundtable to debate project outputs and propose policies to increase community-based peace-building networks and initiatives, with involvement from GoI and civil society at large.</p>
Procurement (major items)	<p>In the reporting period major procurement items included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request for proposal launched – Provision of Grant Administrators to implement activities that will answer to the short-term recommendations specified in the Local Governance Assessment reports.

Funds Committed		% of approved	89%
Funds Disbursed	\$ 3,778,902.54	% of approved	89%
Forecast final date	31 st August 2012	Delay (months)	20

Direct Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries	% of planned (current status)
Men		
Women		
Children		
IDPs		
Others	(At the end of the project it is expected that app. 1,300 NGOs and app. 600 GoI officials will have benefited)	
Indirect beneficiaries		
Employment generation (men/women)		

In general the project is to benefit the Iraqi public on a number of levels. The project is to provide certain short-term benefits through its direct activities in addition to long-term benefits obtained through adoption of the NGO law, improved capacity of civil society, and enhanced cooperation with the central, regional and local authorities of Iraq in order to improve the situation of the Iraqi people throughout the country.

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results		% of planned
1. To establish a liberal legal and administrative framework for Iraqi NGOs, respected both by the authorities and the NGO community itself.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the three training of trainers sessions on NGO law no 12 and relations between civil society and public sector awareness that were conducted in November and December 2011, grants have been awarded to 7 of the NGOs which attended the trainings to conduct follow up sessions in cooperation with Iraqi judiciary, police and local authorities. Another group of NGOs will be awarded grants by ICNL to conduct similar sessions in parallel. The trained trainers organize sessions for their peers across the country. 2. The institutional assessment of the NGO Directorate is still underway. Clic Consultants submitted their first progress report in January in which they explained the proposed organizational structure for the NGO Directorate. Field visits continued and the representatives from 	90

	<p>Clic are still meeting with the NGO Directorate in Baghdad. The assessment is reaching its final stage.</p> <p>3. The small grant fund which was created for 6 of the NGOs that participated in the May 2011 NGO registration training in Erbil has been concluded and NGOs reported that all sessions planned were implemented successfully with the assistance of trainers from the NGO Directorate.</p> <p>4. A study visit to Beirut for members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, representatives of the NGO Directorate, Justice & Accountability Commission, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Woman and Iraqi civil society leaders has been concluded from February 13-18. The Iraqi delegation visited the Lebanese Parliament, Ministry of Environment, NGOs, local authorities, and a university where they met with the Lebanese Minister of Environment, MPs, civil society leaders, academics and public officials, among others. The second part of the visit included a training of trainers on the NGO law no 12 and relations between civil society and public authorities awareness.</p> <p>5. Following the Beirut study visit, NGOs which participated in the study visit have been awarded grants to implement follow up sessions in the Iraqi Council of Representatives and government offices. Grant contracts were signed by 6 NGOs to start the implementation of activities.</p>	
2. To increase organizational capacity for advocacy of the Iraqi civil society.	All the planned activities under this objective have been delivered and reported on in previous quarters.	100%
3. To improve access of Iraqi citizens to relief assistance following increased role of NGO community in conducting emergency response.	All the planned activities under this objective have been delivered and reported on in previous quarters.	100%
4. To strengthen citizen participation in local governance processes, facilitated by civil society, which impacts positively on local economic development and social assistance delivery.	An impact assessment has been implemented in the three areas of the LGAs	100%
5. To spearhead collaborative initiatives to counter conflict trends through civil society with the ultimate aim of protecting human rights and achieving community development.	<p>The Civic Education campaign, implemented by NCCI, was completed. NCCI partnered with local NGOs to form an NGO Network to carry out the campaign throughout Iraq. The campaign itself, which is now finished, focused on community-based peace building and human rights protection and contributed to the national dialogue and reconciliation process.</p> <p>The project achieved most of the objectives of spreading the principles of peace, coexistence and benevolence among stakeholders. The final conference to discuss the project outputs and propose policies to increase community-based peace building networks and initiatives was held on January 12 with involvement from the Government of Iraq and civil society at large.</p>	100

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

Objective 1:

- 1- Following the registration training in Erbil in May 2011, UNOPS and ICNL contracted three NGOs each (six in total) to reach out to unregistered NGOs in Iraq. The six NGOs were selected with an even geographical distribution so that each NGO covers three governorates. The NGOs contracted by UNOPS conducted 10 trainings in Erbil, Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah, Najaf, Diwaniya, Karbala, Baghdad and Wassit. The campaign started in December and ended in January with total number of participation of 339 participants. 228 males and 111 females participated in these trainings. 10 of the participants were from the local authorities.
- 2- [Clic Consultants](#) are still working on the needs assessment to the NGO Directorate in Baghdad. According to the second progress report recently submitted by the company, a significant number of documents, reports, media news reports and the website of the Directorate were reviewed. Clic also received a significant amount of information from the NCCMD assessment report of 2009 for NGO Directorate, which produced information and recommendations that were very useful. The documents were critical to the development of the questionnaires which were developed based on the organizational diagram that was provided to the Clic consultant by the NGO Directorate. The institutional assessment was well underway in March and interviews were made with different staff from the NGO Directorate. Clic will continue visits and meetings in April. The staff of the NGO Directorate were cooperative, providing the necessary documents. More information is expected to be received from Clic regarding this assessment when submitting the final report.
- 3- Under the same objective, UNOPS and ICNL organized three trainings for trainers on NGO Law Awareness in Erbil between November and December 2011. The first training targeted local authorities and NGOs. The second targeted police and NGOs, and the third one targeted justice system, police and NGOs. The NGOs that participated in these trainings submitted proposals for funding from UNOPS and ICNL to share what they learned during these sessions with NGOs, local authorities, police and justice entities in their respective governorates. Seven NGOs were contracted to train NGOs in their respective governorates (including the Kurdistan Region) about NGO Law No. 12 and to partnerships between civil society and public authorities on the local and federal levels. When the NGOs deliver these trainings jointly with local authorities, police and representatives of the justice system, it should reinforce this partnership and help each partner understand their responsibilities towards each other.
- 4- A study visit & ToT in Lebanon was conducted from 12th to 18th February for representatives from the CoR, the GoI and various NGOs. The Iraqi delegation visited the Lebanese Parliament, Ministry of Environment, NGOs, local authorities, and a university where they among others met with the Lebanese Minister of Environment, MPs, civil society leaders, academics and public officials. They have been shown how the Lebanese public authorities and civil society achieved their current level of partnership under circumstances which have parallels to Iraq. They were briefed on how members of Lebanese civil society are systematically invited by parliamentary committees to discuss and comment on draft laws, how they monitor and contribute to the drafting of the national budget, and how the Ministry of Environment relies on NGOs to complement its work in addressing vast environmental needs. They also saw how Lebanese organisations have developed long term relationships with State institutions and are trusted and respected for the quality services they deliver. The head of civil society committee in the Iraqi council of representatives pledged to work hard to promote the concept of partnership between parliament, government and civil society and will also look into establishing a national fund for NGOs. As part of the agenda for the study visit and ToT, some of the participants were interviewed by local Lebanese TV Channels in addition to Iraqi satellite channels. The participating NGOs in this activity expressed their appreciation for this opportunity as it represented a platform of interaction with other stakeholders which is not always afforded.. The stakeholders formed teams to deliver trainings in Iraq for other parliament members, government officials and NGOs these trainings will be funded by UNOPS as we will see below.
- 5- An RFQ was issued for NGOs that participated in the Lebanon study visit and ToT. The NGOs have now been contracted after they responded to the RFQ with proposals. NGOs proposed to implement follow up sessions on the Iraqi NGO law no 12 and on the Lebanese experience on building partnerships between the public sector and civil society. These sessions will be implemented by the

contracted NGOs working jointly with teams composed of representatives of the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Council of Representatives as planned and agreed during the course of the ToT in Beirut. NGOs are expected to increase awareness on the NGO law among NGOs and public authorities. The sessions will be organized at the Iraqi Council of Representatives and institutions of the Government of Iraq. The trainings will target MPs, representatives of the government and NGOs and trainings will be carried out by mixed teams composed of: MPs, representatives of the government and NGOs.

Objective 4:

1. First module - LGA

An impact assessment has been implemented in the three areas of the LGAs. The contracted NGOs disseminated questionnaires in addition to face to face interaction with citizens in order to conduct the assessment. The assessment recommended further follow up on the recommendations stated in the initial LGAs done in 2010, to increase the number of complaint boxes further and that cooperation with international organizations be continued to facilitate the creation of democratic local governance based on interactive efforts.

Objective 5:

The activities under this objective implemented by NCCI aim to promote peaceful coexistence by way of utilising references to Iraqi history. Iraq is well known as an ancient civilization but this concept has been used to prove to the stakeholders and the beneficiaries that such a civilization would not have been achieved without peaceful coexistence and benevolence. The campaign succeeded in promoting principles of peaceful coexistence among the citizens through workshops, trainings, conflict management sessions, marches and tours all over Iraq. It is noteworthy that most of these activities were hosted by tribal sheikhs, religious men and grassroots organizations that were willing to be part of the campaign.

On January 22 2012, NCCI held its final “Youth Build Peace” Conference to encourage a stronger policy debate on the advantages of integrating a community-based peace building approach throughout the country. The conference was held in the Iraqi Parliament in cooperation with the Civil Society Committee, it was attended by policy makers, international donors and civil society leaders. Among the NGOs were representatives from each of the 44 organizations that came together to create, with NCCI, the “Peace-Builders Network” to design and implement the peace-building initiative which came to be known as the “Youth Build Peace Project” that included 19 youth activities all over Iraq . While the creative approach the Peace-Building Network took towards the project before it arrived at the Parliament’s door was a notable outcome of the project itself, this conference raised the visibility of the campaign to national decision makers and donors by demonstrating the activities that were implemented to raise the youth awareness on peace building and how they can contribute to achieve peace building in their country.

Main implementation constraints & challenges (2-3 sentences)

- The Iraqi registration process for local and international NGOs remains a major constraint for the selection of suitable and qualified NGOs for implementation of the grant funds.
- Low quality of project proposals and an inability of applicant NGOs to understand requirements (ToRs) of request for proposals resulted in the need to work closely with selected NGOs to finalize the project proposals. This had negative implications in terms of slowing down the implementation pace of the project.
- Given restrictions imposed by security concerns, ensuring proper monitoring of grants is a challenge. However, great efforts are made to make up for the limited access to Iraq and to follow up that all activities are properly monitored by UNOPS staff. External monitoring companies are also hired along with UNOPS monitoring staff.
- It is expected that NGOs under the Lebanon study visit and ToT follow up grant fund will face delays in their project implementation due to the Arab summit (last week of March) and recess (expected from April 20th to May 20th) in the Iraqi Parliament. NGOs will be given time till the end of July to be able to implement their projects.