

Independent Evaluation

IRAQ

Job Creation through Cottage and Micro-Industries Promotion in Al-Qadessiya (MISP III)



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

UNIDO EVALUATION GROUP

Independent Evaluation

IRAQ

Job Creation through Cottage and Micro-Industries Promotion in Al-Qadessiya (MISP III)

UNIDO Project Number FB/IRQ/07/001
FAO Project Number OSRO/IRQ/603/UDG



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
Vienna, 2011

Distr. GENERAL

OSL/EVA/10/R.38

May 2011

Original: English

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Mention of company names and commercial products does not imply the endorsement of UNIDO.

The views and opinions of the team do not necessarily reflect the views of the involved Governments and of UNIDO.

This document has not been formally edited.

Contents

Map of Project Area	v
Abbreviations and acronyms	vi
Glossary of evaluation related terms	vii
Executive Summary	ix
I. Introduction	1
1.1 Project description.....	1
1.2 Evaluation Programme	3
1.3 Evaluation Methodology	4
II. Socio-economic context	5
III. Project planning	7
3.1 Project Identification	7
3.2 Project formulation.....	8
3.3 Project Design – Logical Framework.....	8
3.4 Project Inception Phase	11
IV. Project implementation	15
4.1 Project management	15
4.2 Rehabilitation of the Diwaniyah Vocational Training Centre (VTC)	19
4.3 The training of trainers (TOT).....	20
4.4 The trainings of beneficiaries (TOB)	22
4.5 The tool kit component.....	28
4.6 The Identification of training subjects.....	32
4.7 Business training and mentoring	34
4.9 The Production Associations and Production Groups.....	38
4.10The community leader training component.....	42
4.11Project financing.....	44
V. Assessment of project performance	45
5.1 Relevance	45
5.2 Ownership	47
5.3 Efficiency	48
5.4 Effectiveness	49
5.5 Sustainability	52
VI. Recommendations	55
6.1 Recommendations for immediate action	55
6.2 Recommendations for future projects	55
VII. Lessons learned	59

Annex 1: Evaluation terms of reference.....	60
Annex 2: Questionnaire for Trainers.....	74
Annex 3: MISP III: Meeting Timeline.....	80
Annex 4: MISP III: Dewaniyah Vocational Training Centre.....	81

Map of Project Area



Abbreviations and acronyms

CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
COSIT	Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology
DOA	Department (Directorate) of Agriculture
DOLSA	Department (Directorate) of Labour and Social Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GOI	Government of Iraq
ID	Iraqi Dinar
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ISCI	Industry Standard Commercial Identifier
ISF	Information Security Forum
ISRB	Iraq Strategy Review Board
HQ	Headquarters
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MISP	Micro Industries Support Programme
MNFI	Multinational Force Iraq
MSSE	Micro- and Small-Scale Enterprise
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MOP	Ministry of Planning
NDS	National Development Strategy
NPC	National Project Coordinator
PA	Production Association
PG	Production Group
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
TOB	Training of Beneficiaries, but also in the project, and therefore in this report, used as abbreviation for “Trained Beneficiaries”
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers, but also in the project, and therefore in this report, used as abbreviation for “Trained Trainers”
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDG-ITF	United Nations Development Group – Iraq Trust Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USD	United States Dollars
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary of evaluation related terms

Term	Definition
Conclusions	Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
Impacts	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.
Institutional development impact	The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources, for example through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements and/or (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of an action.
Lessons learned	Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.
Logframe	Management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention. Related term: results based management.

Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Related terms: result, outputs, impacts, effect.
Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Recommendations	Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.
Results	The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention. Related terms: outcome, effect, impacts.
Sustainability	The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Executive Summary

This independent end-of-project evaluation concerns the joint UNIDO/FAO project “Job Creation Through the Promotion of Micro Industries in Al-Qadissiyah” (abbreviated “Micro Industry Support Programme III” (MISP III)). This project is the third in a series of similar projects in other Governorates of Iraq.

The project budget was USD 6,171,891 (USD 5,871,891 from the United Nations Development Group – Iraq Trust Fund (UNDG-ITF) and USD 300,000 from the Government of Iraq as in-kind contribution). The planned project duration was from 1st of February 2007 to 31 July 2008. However, the duration was extended from 18 to 41 months with an effective end date of 30 September 2010.

The evaluation was conducted by HAP Consultants, Denmark, hereafter referred to as “the evaluator”. The evaluation mission to Iraq took place between 7 and 23 April 2010. Two extensive surveys among Trained Trainers (TOT) and Trained Beneficiaries (TOB) were conducted.

Framework conditions

In Al-Qadissiyah, as in other parts of Iraq, the effects of international isolation, conflict, and instability have led to the near collapse of the education and vocational training systems. Existing institutions have difficulty in providing services due to lack of qualified staff and poorly equipped training facilities. During the project implementation period the Al-Qadissiyah Governorate was characterized by recurrent conflict and severe security problems. Compared to other regions, economic recovery has been slow.

Against this backdrop MISP III set out to:

- Build the capacity of targeted communities to plan and manage their development activities and restore the basis for economic growth and social peace.
- Improve the livelihood of 4,500 households through strengthening their productive capacities in post-harvest and other income-generating activities.
- Enable a large number of youth to gain basic knowledge in productive skills through practical experiences and activity-based learning with a particular emphasis on providing marketable skills in construction/rehabilitation, manufacturing or support services.

Project achievements

The project was implemented jointly by UNIDO (non-food skills and trades) and FAO (food skills and trades) under difficult conditions and severe security problems, in particular during the year 2008. It is remarkable that, under these conditions, many of the expected project outcomes were achieved.

The Vocational Training Centre (VTC) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Department of Agriculture (DOA) in Diwaniyah has been rehabilitated. At the time of the evaluation, the VTC was in good condition, well maintained and with an excellent layout for teaching, administration and functional rooms.

The VTC is equipped with internationally procured training equipment and other training resources. The choice of equipment for the VTC was appropriate under the post-crisis conditions prevailing in 2007. Since then, electricity supply and other boundary conditions have considerably improved. With the benefit of hindsight, the project could have opted for more sophisticated equipment.

The project trained 42 trainers (TOTs). TOTs were satisfied with the training in teaching methodologies although they found the levels of some of the technical training too low. All TOTs are still active in TOB training and said they will remain available for such training after project completion. Overall, the evaluation found that the outcome “active and competent group of skill trainers established” has been accomplished.

Under the project, about 1650 beneficiaries (TOBs) were trained in 13 skills and trades (eight non-food related and five food related). Identification and selection were transparently conducted by community-led selection committees. The selection criteria regarding gender, household type, education and experience, unemployment and income were largely met. Only the criterion regarding youth remained below expectations (38% of young participants against the planned 50%). Post-course evaluations by the trainees and the TOB survey show that TOBs were mostly satisfied with the training courses. Almost all trainees were provided with a tool-kit.

The project is set to establish 32 Production Groups (PGs) - 26 non-food and six food related - each of them equipped with equipment of an average value of 24,000 USD. At the time of the evaluation, not all planned PGs were active and some major reorganisations were still underway but there is a realistic probability that the PG component will be ultimately successful.

The evaluation offers some indications of the number of TOBs who, at the end of the project, could be expected to become either employed or self-employed. However, considerable discrepancies exist between the evaluation and monitoring figures. According to the TOB survey among 97 beneficiaries followed up by personal interviews of the evaluator with more than 30 beneficiaries, the success rate in terms of employed/self-employed beneficiaries is estimated around 30%. This figure is similar to the estimations of the TOTs that were collected under the TOT survey. By contrast, a telephone survey conducted by project staff among a 10% sample of the TOBs produced a much higher success rate of more than 60%. The evaluator and the project management maintain controversial views on this key success indicator, as explained in the report.

The increase of income generated by the project is estimated between 50% and 150%. With an average income of TOBs of approximately 100 USD per month, this adds up to an additional monthly income between 150 USD and 250 USD or approximately 2,500 USD per year.

Critical points

The evaluation found also a number of critical points that should be tackled under possible future projects of the same kind in Iraq or in other post-crisis countries:

Remote management from Project Management Unit (PMU) in Amman

Due to the security situation in Iraq there is no alternative to remote project management from a PMU in Amman. However, this implementation mode comes with certain problems. The evaluation produced evidence that serious problems in the field were either not or not timely reported back to the PMU, such as:

- Significant problems with a number of the selected non-food PGs;
- The observation of TOTs that too many TOBs in certain courses join the training courses with little or no intention to make practical use of the acquired skills;
- The observation of TOTs that too many TOBs in certain courses have insufficient basic education;
- Certain pieces of equipment are considered inappropriate, “useless” or of low quality by TOTs, stakeholders, local project staff and TOBs.

In a number of cases, decisions of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Technical Working Group (TWG) were documented in the minutes but not implemented.

Monitoring of key outcome indicators such as TOB satisfaction, TOB employment and self-employment rates and TOB income generation is paramount. However, the major discrepancies of the data collected under the project management scheme and the respective data collected by the evaluator hint at possible independence problems. Assigning such monitoring tasks to project implementers and not to specialized monitoring staff is problematic, in particular under conditions of remote project management. The critical mass of UNIDO projects managed from the PMU in Amman is sufficient to envisage an independent monitoring and reporting mechanism for all UNIDO projects in Iraq.

Local stakeholder involvement

The project involvement of the Department (Directorate) of Labour and Social Affairs (DOLSA) was rather weak and the one of the Governorate Council and Governor’s Office happened only rather late in the course of the project. It would have strengthened project implementation and sustainability if these bodies had been given formal roles already during the project design.

Joint project implementation responsibility of UNIDO and FAO

The evaluation has not found significant advantages or synergies of the joint UNIDO/FAO project implementation model. On the contrary, all involved parties at implementation level expressed various degrees of dissatisfaction with combining food and non-food activities in the same project because of the differences in perceptions and cultures of the involved organizations.

TOB selection and training topics

A relatively high percentage of the TOBs has, according to the TOTs, no intention to make use of their acquired skills as employees or for self-employment. This perception of the TOTs is supported by the evaluation survey among TOBs which found only low employment success for certain trades.

Several of the supported trades did not meet market demand:

- Lathe/metal working created only few job opportunities;
- Sewing has limited market prospects; local customers buy cheap, ready-made garments from India and China instead of tailor-made garments;
- Weaving has almost no market; customers buy cheap cotton carpets from India and China;
- Market opportunities for fruits & vegetables and dates processing are limited because of import competition.

Local participation

There has been a lack of participation of local stakeholders, project staff and project beneficiaries in:

- the selection of the original non-food PGs;
- the specification of non-food PG equipment;
- the specification of TOB tool kits.

Local counterpart at the VTC

The lack of a daily management counterpart at the VTC weakens the sustainability of the VTC and the replicability of the TOB training.

Language

The use of English as exclusive project communication language is problematic. Almost none of the stakeholders, local project staff or TOTs are in sufficient command of English. The NPC is the only local project staff with at least some basic English language skills, although the skills are far too weak for a management position. His reports are mostly based on photos and include only very few explanations.

As a result of this lack of English language skills, stakeholders and local project staff have only a very limited understanding of project implementation concepts and strategies. Given the fact that Arabic is an official UN language this is a severe shortcoming and difficult to accept.

Lessons from previous projects not applied

Some important experiences from MISP I and II were not applied in MISP III:

- The MISP II success with training topics addressing new markets for service provision following economic growth and technological development is not replicated in MISP III, with the exception of mobile phone repairs. These areas are particularly interesting for the younger generation; job opportunities are often many and within different sectors, and self-employment is a realistic possibility.
- Under MISP II, post-training mentoring of TOBs was identified as a key success factor for the establishment and sustainability of TOB enterprises. This is not replicated in MISP III where mentoring is undertaken only for a few TOBs and only at the TOTs' private initiative.
- Under MISP II business management training was recognized as an important component in all TOB trainings and a number of TOTs were trained specifically in this subject. For various reasons MISP III did not train TOTs in business management, and the subject has only been touched upon superficially in the TOB training courses.

Project duration

The very short project duration of 18 months defined in the project document was unrealistic and problematic as shown by the actual project period of 41 months. The project management has the following explanations for the delays:

- Time consuming procurement processes in FAO and UNIDO;
- Time consuming customs procedures;
- Time consuming bureaucratic procedures for food-PGs to obtain approval and registration of PG associations;
- The general security situation in the Governorate.

The evaluator sees also other explanations including the following:

- Short working days in Iraq;
- Often short working weeks in Iraq;
- No direct supervision of local project staff performance;
- Insufficient number of vehicles;
- No incentives for the local project staff to complete the project as early as possible. They are all on contracts which cease at project completion.

Community leaders training

The impact from the training of 13 community leaders in socio-economic community development is limited. The leaders are not anchored in a common scheme where their newly acquired knowledge could be effectively utilised. However, six or seven of them moved to new positions where they are involved in socio-economic development issues.

Main recommendations

For immediate action, the evaluation recommends

- to UNIDO and FAO to consolidate the Production Associations and Production Groups;
- to the Government of Iraq to ensure the sustainability of the VTC.

For future similar projects the evaluation recommends:

- to discontinue the joint UNIDO/FAO implementation and to separate future interventions in a project of UNIDO with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and a project of FAO with the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA);
- to involve ministries and other local bodies more closely in project preparation and implementation;
- to improve the remote management from Amman by establishing an independent monitoring and reporting mechanism at the PMU in Amman covering all UNIDO projects in Iraq;
- to apply professional and state-of-the-art HRM methods for selecting, interviewing and recruiting local staff;
- to conduct more rigorous market research for the identification of those trades and skills with the most promising prospects for job and income creation;
- to identify the equipment to be purchased for production groups in close cooperation with the members of these groups;
- to distribute tool kits only to the best performing 50% of the trainees to create sound competition between the trainees and reduce the number of course applicants who are not serious about;
- to consider local procurement options wherever possible;
- to closely watch the quality and appropriateness of the tool kit content;
- to seriously consider the possibility of using Arabic as project planning and implementation language.

I

Introduction

1.1 Project description

The MISP III project aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of the population in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate through community empowerment, rehabilitation of productive capacities, and the promotion of income-generating activities/job creation.

More specifically, the project aimed at increasing the capability of rural and urban communities in the Governorate to engage in viable non-farming enterprises, reducing their dependency on relief aid, and helping them to move towards sustainable livelihood.

The planned project duration was from 1 February 2007 to 31 July 2008. The project was extended to 30 September 2010 (from 18 to 41 months).

The project budget was USD 6,171,891 (USD 5,871,891 through United Nations Development Group – Iraq Trust Fund (UNDG-ITF) and USD 300,000 through the Government of Iraq (GOI) in kind contribution).

The project trained two categories of trainers (TOTs): Technical trainers in food and non-food technologies and socio-economic trainers to empower the community's capacity to articulate, conceptualize, formulate and implement development activities.

A number of Production Groups (PG) were established and supported with machinery, equipment and training with a view to generate employment for trained project beneficiaries (TOBs), deliver services to the communities and to become model enterprises to inspire other existing and potential entrepreneurs.

Table 1 provides an overview of the basic project data and the planned project objectives, outputs and activities.

Table 1: Project Brief

<p>Executing Agencies: UNIDO (lead) and FAO</p> <p>Sector: Agriculture and Food Security</p>	<p>National Counterparts: Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and Ministry of Sport and Youth</p>						
<p>Planned Project Start Date: January 2007 Actual Start Date: April 2007</p>	<p>Project Duration: 18 Months (2007– 2008) Original End Date: September 2008</p>						
<p>1st Extension: Until 31 March 2009 2nd Extension: Until 31 December 2009 3rd Extension: Until 30 June 2010 4th Extension Until 30 September 2010</p>	<p>New End Date: 30 September 2010</p>						
<p>Project Value:</p> <table> <tr> <td>UNDG ITF</td> <td>USD 5,871,891</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*GOI in kind contribution</td> <td>USD 300,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>USD 6,171,891</td> </tr> </table> <p>* Government of Iraq</p>	UNDG ITF	USD 5,871,891	*GOI in kind contribution	USD 300,000	Total	USD 6,171,891	<p>Project Location: across 15 sub-districts in Al-Qadessiyah Governorate</p>
UNDG ITF	USD 5,871,891						
*GOI in kind contribution	USD 300,000						
Total	USD 6,171,891						
<p>Development Goal</p>							
<p>Improve the socio-economic conditions of the population in the project area through community empowerment and rehabilitation of the livelihoods and productive capacities in the Al-Qadessiyah</p>							
<p>Key Immediate Objectives</p>							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide targeted communities with the capacity to plan and manage their development activities and restoring a functional base for economic growth and social peace. 2. Improve the livelihood of approximately 4500 people living in the project area through strengthening their productive capacities in post-harvest and other income-generating activities. 3. Enable a large number of youth, deprived by the conflict, to gain basic knowledge in productive skills through practical experience and activity-based learning. 							
<p>Outputs</p>							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Enhanced capacities at the community level in support of socio-economic growth and peaceful coexistence (Millennium Development Goals (MDGs 1, 3). 2.1. Sources of income and employment for men and women creating an environment for productive employment through training and provision of tools for individuals and organized production groups (associations) (MDG 1, 3 and 5). 3.1. A minimum of 1,000 people (50% female) are provided with marketable skills to enable them to obtain jobs and/or start-up an economic activity to sustain livelihoods for themselves and their families (MDG 1, 3). 							
<p>Summary Key Activities</p>							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessing the needs of project beneficiaries (using appropriate participatory survey tools), identifying viable productive income-generating activities and appropriate technologies. 2. Selecting project sites in collaboration with all stakeholders, based on the distribution of vulnerable groups in both rural and urban areas and the availability of raw materials and markets. 3. Determining and identifying eligible beneficiaries based on the criteria agreed upon by stakeholders: local government, women's associations, directorates of counterpart ministries, village elders and Project Steering Committee (PSC) members. 4. Rehabilitation of the vocational training centre. 5. Training of trainers in the selected technologies, entrepreneurship, and community development. 6. Developing specifications, procuring and installing plant and workshop equipment and tools for the vocational training centre, project beneficiaries, micro-enterprises and production groups selected for project support. 7. Training of beneficiaries in selected technologies and in entrepreneurial skills to improve their employability or for them to start their own business. 8. Mentoring the beneficiaries (production groups, micro-enterprises and individual beneficiaries) in their businesses. 9. Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system with regard to progress of implementation and assessment of project performance. 							

Source: Project document and progress reports

1.2 Evaluation Programme

This independent end-of-project evaluation was carried out by HAP Consultants, hereafter referred to as “the evaluator”. The Terms of Reference (ToR) are attached in Annex 1.

In January 2010 a briefing was held at UNIDO headquarters (HQ) in Vienna, where the evaluation work plan and methodology were discussed and agreed upon. It was agreed that the TOT survey would comprise at least 50% of the 43 project trained trainers while the TOB survey would be based on a stratified random sample of 100 of the 1,750 trained TOBs.

In April 2010 the evaluator met with the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) and project staff in Amman, Jordan, to discuss the detailed evaluation programme and the sample methodology for the TOB survey. Meetings were also held with the UNIDO Special Representative for Iraq and the responsible FAO project officer in Amman.

From 9 to 23 April 2010 the evaluator visited the project area in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate. For the field interviews and TOB and TOT surveys the evaluator was assisted by Mr. Ali Fikiki (economist) and Ms. Wurood Ahmed (numerator).

In Al-Qadessiyah the evaluator worked closely with the NPC and his team and met with:

- The Chairman of the Al-Qadessiyah Provincial Council;
- The Director of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Directorate in Diwaniyah Department of Agriculture (DOA);
- The Director of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) Directorate in Diwaniyah (DOLSA);
- The Chairman of the Al-Qadessiyah Chamber of Commerce;
- The Chairman of the Diwaniyah Branch of the Businessmen Union of Iraq;
- 18 of the 43 project trained trainers (TOTs);
- 8 of the 13 project trained community leaders.

Field visits were conducted to:

- All 16 project-supported Production Groups (PGs) and Production Associations (PAs) established at the time of evaluation
- 37 project-trained beneficiaries (TOBs).

The TOT and TOB surveys were carried out between 11 and 17 April 2010 in Diwaniyah.

All meetings, visits and interviews were conducted with a view to validate the TOT and TOB survey findings and to get an in-depth understanding of the project performance and the realism of the project outcome and impact expectations.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

Methodology of Trainers' (TOT) Survey

The TOT survey was conducted through personal interviews. For each of the eleven training themes (sesame-processing not included) two TOTs were randomly selected for interviews. Thus, the survey comprised 22 TOTs. The questionnaire used for the interviews is attached as Annex 2.

Methodology of Trainees' (TOB) Survey

The TOB survey covered 4 sub-districts, 1 urban and 3 rural, and comprised 100 project trainees. The selection criteria for sub-districts to be covered by the survey were as follows:

- (1) Large number of people trained in the sub-district
- (2) Maximum number of training topics represented
- (3) In total all training topics shall be represented

Within each of the selected sub-districts the TOBs were distributed according to training topics, and the trainees of the latest training rounds were disregarded leaving a total number of about 1,000 TOBs to be considered. Hereafter a random sample of the trainees was established choosing 10% from each topic. Interviews were undertaken with each selected trained beneficiary, after they congregated in smaller groups (5-10 per group) for the interviews at convenient locations in Diwaniyah and the sub-districts.

29 of the TOBs selected for the survey interview could not be traced or did not show up. Attempts were made by the NPC office to replace them by other TOBs from the same district and with the same training topic, but only 26 were identified or willing to join. These 26 were not randomly selected but selected on their availability for the survey interview.



Country context

The project document of January 2007 describes the socio-economic context as follows:

The Al-Qadessiyah Governorate is one of the poorest in the country. It is characterised by slow social progress and economic recovery. Most of its population (about 1 million people) is without access to basic services and sustainable sources of income. The rate of unemployment is high. 56% of the age group 16-60 is unemployed, with the highest rate among youth and women. The main economic activity is agriculture, which constitutes the livelihood for more than 60% of the population, but it is in bad condition due to lack of any support, unaffordable input prices, competition from imports and low earnings from low quality and quantity of the produce. In addition, much of the harvest is wasted due to lack of basic post-harvesting equipment, improper storage and transport means, and the collapse of marketing infrastructure. All these factors are exacerbating the situation in terms of poverty, food insecurity and migration outflows.

The World Food Programme (WFP) baseline survey in the Governorate shows that 13.8 % of the population is extremely poor (less than a dollar a day expenditure), and 48.5 % of the population is poor with household expenditure of less than 3 dollars a day. The long lasting conflict in the region has also led to the destruction and near collapse of education and vocational training systems. Existing institutions have difficulty in providing their services effectively and efficiently due to lack of trained manpower and poorly equipped training facilities. The young people make up a large portion of the population that has been most seriously affected by these deficiencies and they are increasingly dissatisfied with insufficiency and poor quality of training and lack employment opportunities in their home areas. This segment of the population lacks both the marketable skills/knowledge and the funds to initiate any kind of income-generating activity.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) study “Unsatisfied Basic Needs Mapping and Living Standards in Iraq” of 2006 finds the highest deprivation level (comprising very low and low living standards) in the Al-Qadessiyah and its two neighbouring Governorates, Babil and Al-Muthannah. Deprivation in the study is defined as “human poverty”, which includes income poverty, as well as its social, human and capability dimensions. Thus in Al-Qadessiyah 51.6% of the population was classified as having very low and low

living standards (very high and high deprivation). In Babil it was 55.5% and in Al-Muthannah 56.4%.

Comparatively, the situation in Al-Qadessiyah may have changed to the worse since the UNDP study. At a meeting with the Chairman of the Al-Qadessiyah Provincial Council and his staff the evaluator was informed that the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate is now the poorest Governorate in Iraq and the Al Hamsa District covered by the MISP III project is the poorest district in the country. All social indicators are low and the Governorate has no natural resources or religious shrines, which could trigger Government support.

The government support institutions have difficulty to provide their services effectively and efficiently due to lack of trained manpower and financial resources and a limited involvement of the private sector. The younger part of the population is particularly victim of this situation.

The new political situation in Iraq that developed in 2009 created a relatively stable security situation in the Governorate which brings hope for the region and its population. The improved security situation in the province offers better conditions for economic recovery activities.



Project planning

3.1 Project Identification

It is in the above country context and in response to the above specific socio-economic conditions that the Government of Iraq requested the assistance of UNIDO and FAO to design the project “Job Creation Through Micro Industries Promotion in Al-Qadessiyah” (abbreviated MISP III) to provide assistance to address the challenges faced by its population around food insecurity, poverty and livelihood recovery.

MISP III is a replication of the FAO/UNIDO supported “Promotion of Cottage Industries in Rural and Urban Areas Project” in the Thi-Qar Governorate of Southern Iraq (MISP I) and the “Community Livelihoods and Micro-Industry Support Project in Rural and Urban Areas of Northern Iraq” (MISP II). The needs assessment for supporting development of cottage industries in Iraq was prepared by FAO in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture in Baghdad prior to the MISP I formulation. The needs assessment was supported by a project outline prepared by FAO entitled: “Support to Promotion of Food-related Cottage Industries”, and a project brief prepared by UNIDO entitled: “Development of Cottage Industries for the Reintegration of IDPs and Returnees”.

MISP III seeks to empower vulnerable communities in Al-Qadessiyah through targeted development assistance that aims to reinvigorate productive activities. Within this framework, the Government of Iraq, UNIDO and FAO collaborated to empower local communities, identify socio-economic needs, improve development planning capabilities, raise income levels for vulnerable households, and create an enabling environment to promote growth of sustainable income generation and micro enterprise activities.

The assessment of the socio-economic situation in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate was based on recent statistical data from the Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology, Ministry of Planning (COSIT) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). Furthermore, UNIDO and the Ministry of Planning (MOP) launched a Rapid Area Appraisal Survey to identify the most urgent needs, the farm and non-farm activities to be developed and the skills/technologies required. This appraisal confirmed the findings of the September 2004 World Food Programme (WFP) Baseline Survey, “Food Security

and Vulnerability Analysis in Iraq” and the FAO Socio-Economic Survey of 2003. The project proposal is therefore an outcome of the *Rapid Area Appraisal* collaboration and consultations between UNIDO and FAO on the one hand and the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on the other.

3.2 Project formulation

The project proposal was developed in a consultative process between the UN implementing agencies and Iraqi counterpart Ministries. Preparation of the project document resulted from review and scrutiny by a variety of agencies throughout the project approval process. The respective Project Approval Committees (UNIDO and FAO) reviewed and approved the project confirming that it meets their respective mandates and programmes; Cluster “A” team agreed that the project focuses on the prescribed goals of supporting *“economic and human development and sustainable management of natural resources, provision of basic services and the promotion of participative community development”*; the UN Agency Representatives Steering Committee reviewed and approved that the project intervention is within the framework of the UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq 2006-2007, and finally the Iraq Strategy Review Board (ISRB), the highest national body, approved that the project addresses Iraq’s National Development Strategy (NDS) priority areas, and on this basis the UNDG-ITF released the required funding for implementation.

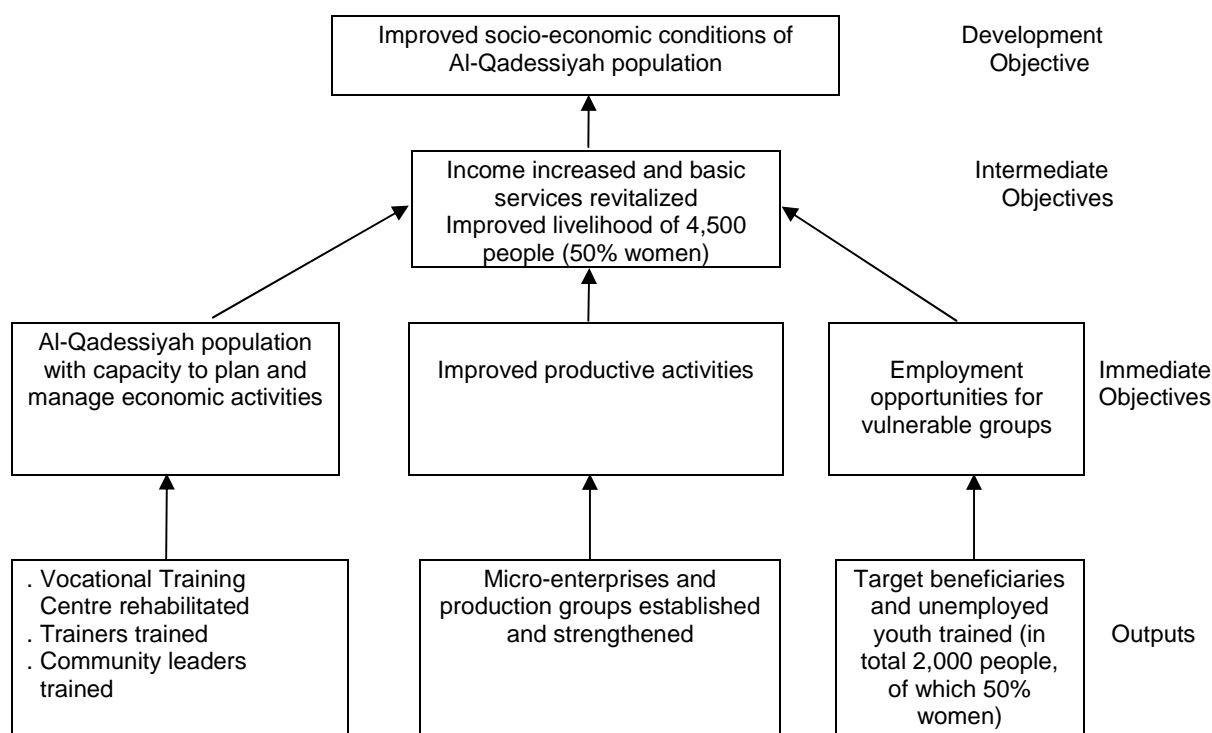
The project formulation builds on the MISP I and II models and the experience gained by FAO and UNIDO in MISP I and MISP II. Following the MISP I and II models would facilitate speedy project implementation, since a number of training manuals, technical specifications for various equipment, the process of identification and selection of beneficiaries, documents for preparation of contracts and procurement, etc., could be easily adapted to the new project area.

3.3 Project Design – Logical Framework

Project design and logical framework as presented in the project document is discussed in detail in the Project Mid-Term Evaluation Report and will not be repeated here. The main points were that some mixing up between objectives, outputs and activities had taken place in the logical framework, and that objectives and outputs had to be rephrased from “action” language to “change” language.

The result of the rearrangement and rephrasing of the project document’s logical framework is presented below in Diagram 1. Since the submission of the Mid-Term Evaluation Report in March 2009 this logical framework has formed the project basis.

Diagram 1: Project Logical Framework upon Mid-Term Evaluation

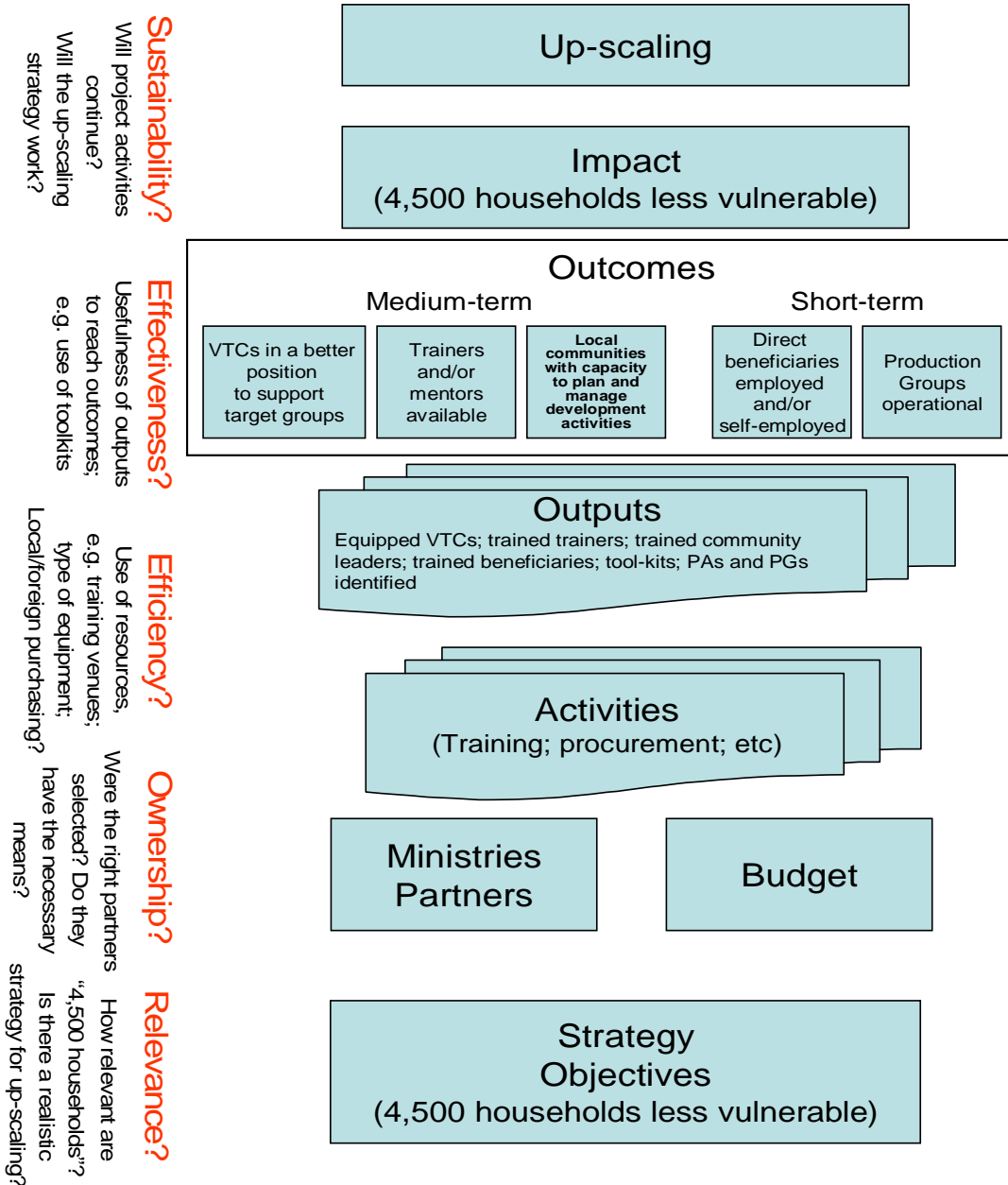


The basic project philosophy is to increase the capability of poor and marginalised, war-affected communities to engage in economically viable, small-scale productive activities in order to generate income and employment. The main strategy elements to achieve these objectives are:

- (1) Training of community leaders in community development and leadership for them to become trainers for other community development leaders.
- (2) Vocational, technical and business management training of selected relevant project stakeholder employees for them to become trainers for the project target beneficiaries.
- (3) Vocational, technical and business management training of 2,000 project target beneficiaries provided in cooperation with the Diwaniyah Vocational Training Centre. 50% (1,000) should be women and 50% (1,000) should be unemployed youth.
- (4) Delivery of certain technical tools and basic technical equipment to the successful trainees supporting them in performing their acquired skills as employed or self-employed.
- (5) Rehabilitation and technical up-grading of the Diwaniyah Vocational Training Centre and provision of state-of-the art training equipment and materials.
- (6) Rehabilitation and technical upgrading of a number of existing small-scale enterprises for them to become service providers for their local communities and development models for other small enterprises, directly and indirectly improving the livelihood of 2,500 people.

Although the project logical framework as presented in the project document included certain weaknesses, it is possible for the implementer to establish a fairly good picture of the project concepts, strategies and underlying intervention theory and use them as basis for preparing the project action plan. The project causal chain is depicted in Diagram 2.

Diagram 2: Project Causal Chain



3.4 Project Inception Phase

Project needs assessment report

In the 2nd quarter of 2007, Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) consultants were contracted to undertake a needs assessment study of the cottage industry sector in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate for the project, and the initial report was submitted in November 2007. The main findings of the study were the following:

- (1) There is a large amount of wood, metal and mechanical workshops in the Governorate.
- (2) Machines and hand tools are generally available in Iraq. All might not be found in Al-Qadessiyah, but Baghdad and some other Governorates can supply most.
- (3) The envisaged urban trades have good absorption capacities of skilled labour.
- (4) For most locally produced sewing and weaving products imported substitutes exist at competitive prices. Therefore, success depends very much on the entrepreneurial capabilities to create a market for the local products.
- (5) Cottage food-processing will need sustained assistance over a longer period of time, and assistance in finance, marketing and distribution. Smaller producer associations should be created and coached by a business person within the group or from outside.

Based on these findings the study recommended the following activities to be supported by the project:

- Carpentry, wood and bamboo working
- Motor mechanic/tractor mechanic
- Welding, metal works
- Blacksmithing
- Sewing
- Spinning and weaving
- Dairy
- Date-processing
- Fruit- & vegetable-processing

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) accepted these recommendations apart from blacksmithing and dairy. The latter was left out because UNIDO is supporting a comprehensive rehabilitation of the Diwanayah Dairy Factory. MOA

and MOLSA had in parallel conducted their own needs assessments and based on these mobile telephone repairs and beekeeping were added to the list.

Second and Third Steering Committee Meetings and Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting in July 2008

Upon engagement of the new Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) in January 2008, the second and third PSC meeting together with the TWG meeting in July 2008 laid the foundation for the project implementation.

The second PSC meeting in March 2008 made the following decisions:

- Strengthening of the needs assessment study prepared by COSIT
- Changing the beneficiary selection criteria to be based on a multi-dimensional definition of social vulnerability
- Stationing of the NPC in Diwaniyah and strengthening of his staff
- Provision of a site engineer to supervise and expedite the rehabilitation of the project Vocational Training Centre (VTC)
- Identifying other vocational training facilities or other relevant venues to be used until the completion of the project VTC
- Expediting the TOT training
- Introducing monitoring and evaluation tracking systems
- Confirmation of food and non-food PAs and PGs

The TWG meeting in July 2008 made decisions on:

- Selection of community leaders for training in Amman
- Interpretation of the project document's aim that 4,500 beneficiaries will be reached
- Mentoring of TOBs and PAs/PGs using suitable NGOs or other relevant institutions of private nature with business management/development skills to be sub-contracted. This task to be handed over to the NPC
- Application for project extension.

The third PSC meeting in September 2008 focussed on monitoring project activities and budget but also conducted a self-evaluation based on a questionnaire. The project performance was rated as follows:

PSC effectiveness:	4.1 out of 5 (Good)
Quality of decision-making:	4.1 out of 5 (Good)
Strength/quality of communication flows:	3.7 out of 5 (Fair/Good)
Value of output against input provided:	3.5 out of 5 (Fair/Good)
Confidence in implementation of decisions:	3.6 out of 5 (Fair/Good)

Based on this assessment, the PSC recommended that the PMU should:

- (1) Enhance communication between PSC members
- (2) Follow up more closely on PSC decisions
- (3) Strengthen communication between the NPC and the Government partners
- (4) Improve the communication between implementing organizations (UNIDO and FAO) at field level.

The PMU was rather successful in enhancing communication flows and was further strengthened when a new FAO CTA arrived. For a more timely unfolding of project activities, the PMU split its day-to-day management into a non-food part and a food part, the latter being managed by FAO, their own NPC situated in Baghdad and MOA/DOA; and the former by the UNIDO PMU and the NPC. Communication with local authorities was channelled through the Office of the Governor and the Chairman of the City Council, since MOLSA had a weak presence at the Directorate level.

IV

Project implementation

The project aimed at initiating a process of sustainable income generation for vulnerable households in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate through increased employment and self-employment of household members. The vehicle for this desired development is technical and business management training of selected beneficiaries undertaken by a number of project-trained trainers (TOTs) and a tool kit programme supporting the trainees (TOBs) in performing their acquired skills as employed or self-employed. The TOT training has taken place in Nassariyah, Iraq, other Arabic countries and Europe. The majority of the TOB training has been conducted at the MOA vocational training centre (VTC) in Diwaniyah(56% of the beneficiaries), but training has also been undertaken in the 3 other districts of the Governorate: 18% of the beneficiaries in Al Shamia, 13% in Al Hamsa and 13% in Afaq. This VTC has been strengthened by the project through building rehabilitation and supply and installation of relevant training equipment.

At the time of evaluation 27 PGs/PAs were established or in the process of being established with project support with the aim for them to generate employment for TOBs, deliver needed services to the communities, and as production models give inspiration to others, existing and potential entrepreneurs, within their respective trades.

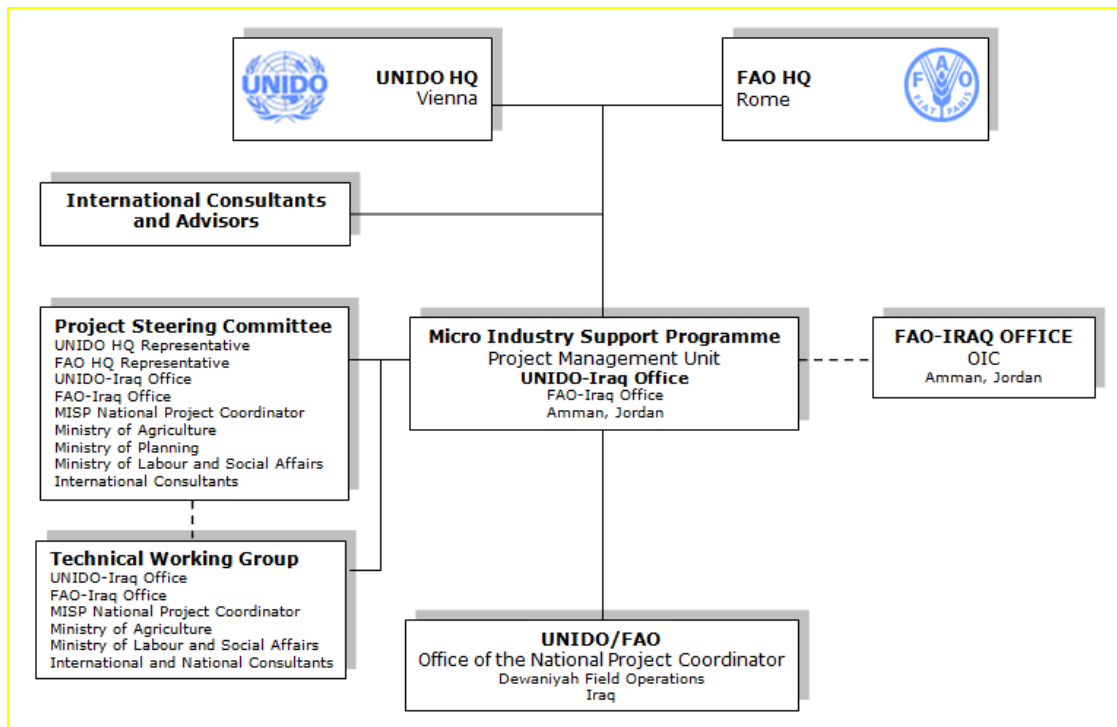
At the same time the project had trained 43 TOTs and 1,682 TOBs. (At project completion the TOB figure had increased to 1,750). More than 102 training courses were conducted attracting TOBs from 15 sub-districts of the Governorate.

4.1 Project management

UNIDO and FAO had overall responsibility for the implementation of the project and the use of donor funds. As a broad division of responsibilities, FAO concentrated on the food- processing component, while UNIDO focused on the non-food technologies. In collaboration with the Iraqi counterparts FAO and UNIDO jointly initiated and developed the planning, monitoring and evaluating of the progress of project implementation. UNIDO as the lead executing agency for the project, was responsible for submitting a variety of progress reports (quarterly, bi-annual and annual) to UNDG-ITF, on behalf of both agencies.

The organigram below presents the overall project organization.

Organogram for MISP III



A Project Management Unit (PMU) was established in Amman to implement the project under the guidance of FAO and UNIDO senior managers. The PMU was composed of the Chief Technical Advisers (CTAs) for both UNIDO-Iraq and FAO-Iraq in addition to the Technical Programme Officers of those respective offices. The PMU also included the Monitoring and Evaluation Officers of both FAO and UNIDO. The Office of the National Project Coordinator (NPC) situated in Diwaniyah executed the decisions of the PMU. The PMU provided the NPC with action plans and monitoring and reporting systems. The NPC and his staff mainly planned and executed tasks as per instructions of the PMU. The PMU prepared various progress reports that help to track and monitor progress towards the achievement of the results expected by the project.

At the policy and strategy level the project was assisted by the Project Steering Committee (PSC), whose members represented the following institutions: Ministry of Planning (MOP), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), FAO Iraq Programme (HQ), UNIDO Agro-Industry Unit (HQ), UNIDO PMU represented by the CTA who also served as the PSC Secretary, FAO Iraq Programme Coordination, and the NPC (operating out of the Diwaniyah project office). When required, the PSC was augmented through the inclusion of international consultants as well as with the participation of local authorities.

The main responsibility of the PSC was to advise the project management on the strategic direction of the project. At the time of evaluation, five PSC meetings had taken place, which had addressed important policy issues, including:

- Selection and endorsement of economic food and non-food activities for project support on the basis of needs assessment surveys;
- Review of work plans on the basis of progress of project implementation;
- The need for improvement of communication and information sharing between project stakeholders (e.g. extensive discussions and consensus reached during the 4th PSC meeting organized on 19 February 2009);
- Discussion on problems causing delays in project implementation and agreeing on mitigation measures (e.g. cumbersome procedures for officially receiving the Dewaniyah VTC);
- Need for improvement on timely action by Iraqi counterparts (e.g. confirmation of acceptance on project management proposals relating to machinery and equipment procurement).

The project also held Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings to review technical and management issues considered as key to attaining project objectives and outputs in the course of implementation. TWG participants were composed of project management and technical staff from UNIDO and FAO HQs, the FAO and UNIDO PMU in Amman and the NPC based in Diwaniyah. During two TWG meetings on 16 July and 18-19 November 2008, critical issues were discussed, including causes of delay in the rehabilitation of the vocational training centre, a rescheduling of the planned installation of machinery and equipment, expediting the planning and implementation of training of trainers, determining and expediting procurement of tool kits for beneficiaries and production groups, and measures to be taken to secure letters of exemption for quick clearance of machinery and equipment at points of entry.

In its November 2008 meeting, the TWG meeting also addressed the need for clarifying roles and responsibilities of stakeholder groups, the organizational structure of the project, the activities and outputs of the NPC office and the need to improve the communication between the project management and Iraqi counterparts. Discussions at the TWG and PSC meetings revealed that Iraqi counterparts had an insufficient understanding of their role as identified in the project document. Thus, the TWG clarified the respective roles of the PMU, national counterparts, field staff and the PSC as outlined in various project documents to the Iraqi counterparts. The meeting also specified, through the preparation of an endorsed communication plan, the modality of sharing reports and information to enable national counterparts to contribute more positively to the implementation of the project.

At the operational level, the cooperation between the food and the non-food part was strengthened by establishing two different management and oversight lines for food and non-food activities. The food line managed by the Director of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) in Diwaniyah reported to the FAO CTA in Amman, and the non-food line managed by the NPC reported to the UNIDO CTA in Amman – although the NPC was accountable to both FAO and UNIDO CTAs. This separation was decided by the PSC to assure a more efficient project implementation. The separation was welcomed by all parties but, in practice, the PMU depended almost totally on the NPC and his local staff for the

implementation of PSC decisions. During the evaluation, the DOA Director expressed his dissatisfaction with mixing food and non-food activities in the same project involving organizations with very different perceptions and organizational cultures. He also mentioned severe communication problems with the NPC and expressed his dissatisfaction with the NPC's performance. The evaluator found some evidence that this criticism was founded.

Project progress monitoring is documented in quarterly, semi-annual, and annual progress reports and as explained above in 5 PSC meeting minutes and 2 TWG meeting minutes. The project timeline of TWG and PSC meetings is presented in Annex 3.

The minutes from the second PSC meeting mid-March 2008 indicate that the project during the first 12 months did not make much progress. Severe delays were encountered in establishing the basic project infrastructure, such as the project VTC and the NPC office and logistic support. A needs assessment study was prepared but needed improvement according to the PSC minutes. A survey of training facilities in the Governorate had been carried out and concluded that decentralised training would not be feasible due to insufficient facilities in the districts and sub-districts outside Diwaniyah and that the central training centre under MOA/DOA in Diwaniyah would be the only realistic and financially feasible VTC to be rehabilitated and equipped as the project training centre. Tender documents for the rehabilitation of this VTC had been prepared. TOT training was not commenced and not all TOT candidates identified. 3,500 potential TOB candidates had been identified, but the screening and selection had not been carried out.

All these delays are mainly ascribed to the adverse security situation. Throughout 2008, the security situation in the province was a major issue. Due to major military operations curfews and village closures take place. Counter-insurgency measures led to travel restrictions and limited access by project staff to rural areas. However, there is evidence that some of the delays were also caused by cumbersome procurement procedures and long delivery times.

The project got a fresh start from the second PSC meeting. The PMU management was strengthened, and through constant and dedicated pressure on the contractor and the local counterparts the VTC became ready to host TOB training in February 2009, 10 months after the second steering committee meeting. During the following 12 months the PMU did its utmost to complete the project and at the time of evaluation this aim was within reach. The following chapters assess to which extent the PMU endeavour has been successful, and it is the assessment of the evaluator that the PMU has done whatever possible to guide, spur and manage the project implementation. However, due to the United Nations security restrictions on the movement of international staff, stationing the CTA in Amman with very limited possibilities to visit the project area has complicated the important day-to-day on-site management supervision and follow-up of the NPC and his staff, as well as of due actions of the local project stakeholders. This 'remote management' operational reality has been addressed through the adoption and use of a variety of other communication measures, including: use of video conferencing, email, use of SMSs, mobile phones (multiple lines), media announcements, conducting Baghdad-based meetings

with project staff and stakeholders, provision of staff capacity-building in-house training sessions in Amman, conducting online web-based surveys, and organization of regular field meetings between staff and stakeholders.

The PMU has developed a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system built on detailed databases and monitoring systems to track trainers, beneficiaries and production groups as well as procurement supplies and distribution and installation of equipment. For international procurement the project was supported by the procurement offices in UNIDO and FAO HQs, which have developed world class industrial procurement systems.

4.2 Rehabilitation of the Diwaniyah Vocational Training Centre (VTC)

The physical rehabilitation of the MOA/DOA training centre in Diwaniyah has been successfully carried out.¹ At the time of the evaluation the VTC was in good condition, well maintained and with an excellent layout for teaching, administration and function rooms and efficient use of the building area.

The VTC is resourced with an extensive range of internationally procured training equipment and other instructional resources. Not all of the equipment met the expectations of the TOTs and TOBs who had some reservations as to the suitability and appropriateness of the training equipment for dates, fruits and vegetable processing, pastry, weaving, and auto-mechanic. Generally they expected more up-to-date and electrical equipment instead of hand tools and stoves and ovens, which they consider as “outdated”. The weaving TOBs would have preferred vertical looms, but are trained mainly in horizontal weaving. Besides, weaving accessories are insufficient or missing at the VTC training, according to the weaving TOTs. Auto-mechanic training focuses on repair and maintenance of traditional engines, but all interviewed TOTs and TOBs within this trade expressed a need for training in modern engine technology.

In response to these TOB/TOT comments, the project management maintains that the choice of equipment for the VTC as well as for the TOB tool kits is appropriate under the conditions in Diwaniyah and the activities at cottage industry level and in line with the contents of TOB courses. The evaluator tends to go along with these appreciations. The PMU founded its procurement decisions on an assessment of local conditions and infrastructure that were prevailing in early to mid-2007. Over time the security situation in the province improved and allowed for the restoration of some basic services. At the time of the evaluation, most TOB households had access to the electricity grid. Although not stable, electricity supply is sufficient for households to use electrical devices such as mobile telephones, radio and TV-sets, stoves and ovens, mixers and sewing machines. Under these improved conditions, and with the benefit of hindsight, some of the procured equipment may indeed have become inappropriate. But it is an open question, whether such rapid improvements could

¹ A milestone overview of the Diwaniyah vocational training centre rehabilitation is presented in [Annex 4](#).

and should have been assumed at the moment when the procurement decisions were made.

The evaluator had expected the VTC to be managed by local staff from DOA with assistance from the NPC and his team. This was, however, not the case. Although the Centre is formally administered by the MOA/DOA Division of Extension Service and Training, the actual project training conducted at the VTC was carried out by the NPC and his project staff. Representatives from the DOA were involved in receiving equipment and facilities; training-related procurement; distribution of toolkits to beneficiaries; identification and management of beneficiaries; and in 'signing-off' training-related expenditures. DOA staff also benefited from the TOT component of the TOB training sessions and provided feedback on training courses and toolkit assessments.

Although there was an on-going engagement between MISP III project staff and administrators at the VTC, efforts to develop the administrative capacity of VTC managers could be enhanced. It is the assessment of the evaluator that sustainability and replicability of VTC training programmes could be strengthened by management-upgrading of VTC staff.

4.3 The training of trainers (TOT)

4.3.1 TOT selection and training

The project selected a total of 42 TOT candidates based on criteria discussed and approved in the PSC. The nominees (21 from MOA/DOA and 21 from MOLSA/DOLSA and the Ministry/Department of Youth and Sport) were to be permanent employees of the Ministries, have relevant education and experience and accept to serve as TOT for the next five years. The candidates from MOA had to be endorsed by FAO HQ and the non-food candidates by UNIDO.

UNIDO applied a two-phase training programme, with the first phase in-country and the second abroad. Most of the in-country training took place at MOLSA's vocational training centre in Nassariyah that was rehabilitated and equipped under MISP I. Only the successful candidates of the first phase were admitted for phase two and even non-food TOT candidates were excluded after the first training round. This phased approach ensured a high professional quality of the non-food TOTs. After the second round of training, the group consisted of 21 food TOTs and 21 non-food TOTs.

The project used field-tested training curricula and manuals developed under MISWP I and MISP II. For the second phase training abroad, UNIDO and FAO used training providers, such as the Vocational Training Organisation (Jordan, Amman); the University of Amman; the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Extension in Amman and similar institutions in Morocco, Tunisia, Spain and Syria. "Mobile telephone repairs" was the only new area of training, which required development. Upon training completion, the TOTs were given training manuals in the form of CD-ROMs for use as reference in TOB training.

Table 2 shows the training topics for the TOT courses and the number of TOTs trained per subject and active at the time of the evaluation. The numbers of TOTs are well balanced against the number of courses to be conducted.

Table 2: Number of TOTs trained per subject

TOT course topic	Number of TOTs by topics
Business management	0*
Dates	3
Pastry	4
Fruit and vegetable processing	4
Sesame processing	5
Beekeeping	5
Sewing	5
Weaving	2
Welding	4
Lathe	2
Wood working	2
Agro mechanics	2
Auto mechanics	2
Mobile telephone repair	2
TOTAL	42

* 6 selected, but did not join

The training of the five TOTs in sesame-processing in Amman was successful, but unfortunately the equipment in Amman used for the training differed considerably from the equipment provided by the project for the VTC. Consequently the TOTs abstained from teaching the TOBs before they themselves were trained on the VTC equipment. The project has tried to solve the problem in different ways, among others asking the equipment suppliers to provide after-sale support and to make arrangements for others, from the private sector, to provide the needed training, but without success. At the time of the evaluation no solution had been reached.

4.3.2 The TOT Survey

Twentytwo TOTs were selected for the evaluation survey, two from each training topic except mobile phone repairs and sesame-processing. The survey was followed up by individual interviews with 16 of the 22 TOTs and with the two TOTs for mobile telephone repairs. At the moment of the evaluation, all TOTs remain active in TOB training and informed the evaluator that they could easily be released from their jobs for conducting TOB training. From the questionnaire survey and the interviews the evaluator collected the following characteristics and perceptions of TOTs.

Relevant experience of the TOTs

All TOTs except the 2 weaving TOTs have relevant professional education and experience to become TOTs. The weaving TOTs were both computer technicians who had worked within this field for many years as employees in DOLSA.

Prior to the TOT training, only few of the candidates had experience as trainers and none of them in socio-economic development, micro and small-scale enterprise development, or working with vulnerable households and household members. The project tried to counterbalance this during the Amman training, which included a comprehensive programme of training methodology focussing on work with vulnerable and at-risk populations.

However, the perceptions of the TOTs collected under the survey and reported below still reflect their high, and sometimes unrealistic, expectations with regard to the technology and skills level that would be appropriate to vulnerable and at-risk target groups.

TOT perceptions of the training received

All TOTs found the TOT training useful for TOB training, particularly the training methodology sessions and the course materials received on CDs.

For dates, pastry, fruits and vegetables and beekeeping TOTs found the courses too short and lacking certain important subjects such as quality control, packaging, ISO standards and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) for dates, pastry and fruits and gender selection and artificial insemination for bees.

Participants on sewing, weaving, woodworking, agro mechanics, and auto mechanics had expected training in more modern technologies. Participants in sewing would have been interested in training on how to operate more modern sewing machines. They criticised that embroidery was not included and found training in design insufficient.

Weaving trainees found the training in Spain too short (5 days) and criticised that all the training was on horizontal looms except one hour on a vertical loom. However, vertical loom is what TOBs prefer due to tradition and less space requirement. Training in using accessories was also insufficient.

Welding lacked training in pipe welding. TOTs perceived this technology as important for Iraq although this is typically one of the trades that cannot be learned under a programme for vulnerable and at-risk populations.

The woodworking TOTs felt that the woodworking course did not add much to their knowledge with the exception of the sessions in training methodology.

4.4 The trainings of beneficiaries (TOB)

4.4.1 TOB selection and training

The project document described the target beneficiaries as follows:

“The project is expected to benefit some 4,500 families. These households will be selected from the most vulnerable sectors of the population, including:

- (1) Poor and marginalized communities, especially widows, female-headed households, and internally displaced persons.
- (2) Those engaged in subsistence agriculture and presently lacking tools and equipment to undertake post-harvest activities, food-processing, garment making and other income generating cottage industries.
- (3) Unemployed and untrained youth.

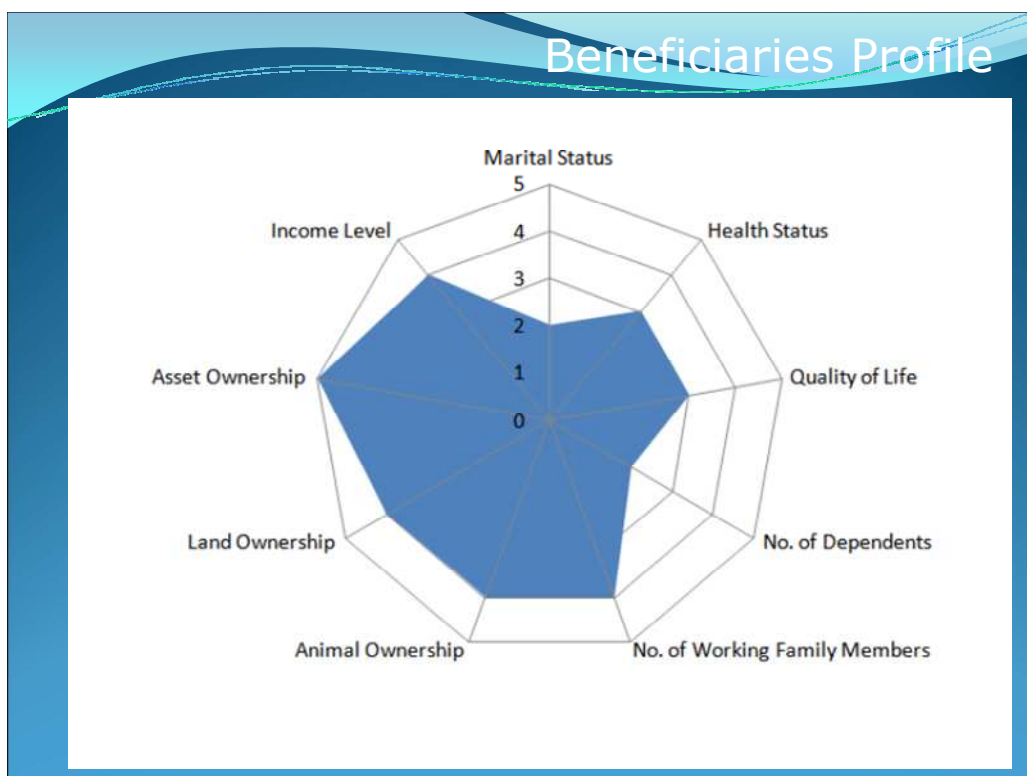
The target groups live in difficult conditions and face constraints that impede their development, including low levels of productivity, absence of suitable technological packages, poor access to markets, limited advisory support/training services, and limited access to finance. It is against this backdrop that project-trained beneficiaries will return. Training and toolkit specifications reflect these conditions. The project will extend its geographical reach to include the urban areas and scattered villages around Diwaniyah. The socio-economic profiles for these areas are distressing with their population severely affected by armed conflict leading to severe poverty and breakdown of socio-economic structures.”

From the outset, the project made great efforts to involve all relevant local authorities and village elders in the identification of beneficiaries eligible for project support and at the time of the 2nd PSC meeting 3,500 candidates for project TOB training were identified. In order to ensure that the selected beneficiaries were trainable and belonged to vulnerable families the new management of PMU introduced selection methodologies and criteria, which had proved successful in MISP II.

The selection process of TOBs was objective and transparent. Courses were advertised through various media and information disseminated to village councils and village elders. The project applied its multi-dimensional eligibility criteria on the basis of the information provided by the candidates. It is unclear to what extent the candidates were called for personal interviews, but the selection and endorsement were undertaken by community committees and the PSC. In cases where the project was unable to identify adequate training candidates, it used local newspaper notification and MOLSA's unemployment database to fill training sessions. In all cases, identification and selection of candidates for project training were conducted according to the endorsed MISP III candidate selection methodology.

A minimum of relevant experience and educational background was introduced as an important eligibility criterion in addition to a multi-dimensional set of 9 vulnerability criteria. Each criterion is rated from zero to 5 points. Eligibility requires less than 28 points and household income less than USD 400/month. The following graph shows the 9 criteria and illustrates how the project used spider web diagrams to get a quick overview of a candidate's eligibility.

Beneficiaries Profile



Training of beneficiaries commenced about 16 months after the start of the project, much later than planned, mainly because of the delayed rehabilitation of the project VTC. The project managers would have preferred to commence TOB training in parallel with the rehabilitation of the VTC. However, an in-depth survey of all relevant training institutions in the Governorate had shown that this was not feasible, since none of them had sufficient technical and spatial capacity to meet the project requirements.

Table 3 shows the number of trained beneficiaries distributed over the 15 sub-districts.

Table 3: Number of TOBs by sub-districts *

Afaq	110	Al-Salhia	134
Al-Bedair	17	Al-Shafie	149
Al-Daghara	54	Al-Shamia *	113
Al-Gamas	30	Al-Shanafiah *	84
Al-Hamsa *	74	Al-Somar	62
Al-Mohaniwa	23	Al-Sunnie	60
Al-Nafar	13	Diwaniyah *	621
Al-Sadair	58	Total	1602

* Sub-districts covered by the TOB survey

Taking into account lessons learnt in MISP I and II and supported by the MISP III Project Mid-Term Evaluation, the duration of the TOB courses was extended to four to five weeks for the non-food topics and three weeks for the food topics.

According to PMU statistics 63% of the TOBs are women. They constitute 87% of the food TOBs and 38% of the non-food TOBs. In food only beekeeping includes male TOBs (61%). Pastry, dates and fruits & vegetables only have female TOBs. Non-food has only female TOBs in sewing and weaving, and all the other topics have only male TOBs. Youth (aged 18-25) constitutes 38% of the TOBs; the age groups 26-35: 34%, 36-45: 23%, and TOBs older than 45 years 5%.

Number of trainings conducted

Table 4 shows the number of TOB training courses conducted by the TOTs and the number of TOBs trained by subject at the moment of the evaluation.

Table 4: Number of TOB Courses, TOBs trained and TOTs by subject

COURSE	Number of courses	Number of TOBs trained	Nos. of TOTs
Dates	14	251	3
Pastry	3	45	4
Fruit and vegetable	20	350	4
Beekeeping	12	240	5
Sesame processing	0	0	5
FOOD	49	886	21
Sewing	9	150	5
Weaving	8	112	2
Welding	10	150	2
Lathe	5	75	2
Woodworking	9	133	2
Agro mechanics	6	84	2
Auto mechanics	5	72	2
Mobile telephone repairs	1	20	2
NON-FOOD	53	796	19
TOTAL	102	1682	40

4.4.2 The TOB Survey

The TOB survey covered 97 randomly selected beneficiaries from one urban and three rural sub-districts (see Table 3) stratified as explained in Chapter 1.

Table 5 shows the characteristics of the surveyed TOB sample.

Table 5: Characteristics of TOBs in survey

	% of Respondents
Age	
18-25	35%
26-35	25%
36-45	32%
46 and more	8%
Gender	
Men	36%
Women	64%
Household position	
Husband	25%
Wife/Widow	40%
Child	35%
Type of household	
IDP	2%
Low income villager	92%
Widow	6%
School education	
None/illiterate	5%
Primary 3-6 years	41%
Intermediary 7-9 years	24%
Secondary 12 years	26%
College and BA	4%
Occupation before training	
Employee	3%
Self-employed	5%
Unemployed	92%
Unemployment period before training	
Less than 1 year	15%
1-2 years	20%
More than 2 years	65%
TOB income before training (USD/month)	
Nil	58%
USD 1-50	11%
USD 51-100	10%
USD 101-150	13%
USD 151-200	4%
USD 201-250	3%
More than USD 250	1%
Household income before training (USD/month)	
Nil	10%
USD 1-50	11%
USD 51-100	18%
USD 101-150	19%
USD 151-200	21%
USD 201-250	11%
USD 251-300	2%
More than USD 300	8%
Occupation after training	
Employee	25%
Self-employed	11%
Unemployed	64%

The sample of the TOB survey is largely:

- Rural based
- Between 18 and 35 years old
- Coming from low income villages
- Having less than 10 years of formal education
- Has been mostly unemployed for the last 2 years
- Earning less than USD 150/month

The TOB survey shows that the criteria in the project document regarding gender, household type, education and experience, unemployment and income have largely been met. Only the criterion regarding youth was below expectations (38% against the planned 50%).

The results of the survey and the following analysis of these results should be seen in the light of the above characteristics of the randomly selected sample.

Training venues

The TOB training venues were in general geographically close to the trainees. Hence boarding was avoided, which would have caused prohibitive training costs to the programme. The trainees arrived at the course in the morning and returned home in the afternoon. This was particularly important for the female TOBs and might be the main reason for the high percentage of female TOBs. Returning by mid-afternoon also allowed to get through the many security checkpoints that existed in the province in 2009 and early 2010. The number of trainees per course was 15-20. Each of them received a training allowance of USD10 per day to cover travel cost and meals plus compensation for possible income losses. All non-food courses except sewing and weaving were conducted at the project's VTC. Sewing and weaving and a good number of the food courses took place at various venues close to the TOBs.

Most training courses outside the VTC were in food training. 56% of the TOBs were trained in the project VTC, while 18% were trained in Al Shamea, 13% in Al Hamsa, and 13% in Afaq. Most of the venues did not have fixed audio-visual equipment. Equipping sub-district training venues creates security concerns and to move what is needed from the VTC every time a course is conducted outside involves high transaction costs and puts at risk project assets.

Availability and adequacy of training materials and equipment for TOB training

TOB course curricula, subject manuals and demonstration videos have been available for all TOTs and all courses/topics. Printed materials for the TOBs for the training and to bring back from the course consist of photocopies and a few leaflets. Arabic training curricula have been provided for the delivery of training courses in (i) mechanics (auto and heavy duty), (ii) mobile phone repair, (iii) woodworking, (iv) welding, (v) machine tools (lathe), (vi) sewing and tailoring, and (vii) weaving. In addition, FAO produced 19 booklets for use in project training, which have helped to build the resources of the VTC library portfolio.

4.5 The tool kit component

92% of the non-food TOBs (not counting lathe, which did not have tool kits) and 97% of the food TOBs received tool kits after the training. Table 6 shows the number of tool kits for each training topic and its estimated value.

Table 6: Estimated value of tool kits (in USD)

Training topic	Number of tool kits	Value of individual tool kit	Value of total tool kit package (USD)
Agro/Auto mechanics	150	300	45,000
Welding	150	407	61,000
Woodworking	120	433	52,000
Mobile phone repair*	20	2,300	46,000
Sewing	175	411	72,000
Weaving	90	678	61,000
Total non-food	705		337,000
Pastry	100	900	90,000
Beekeeping	150	447	67,000
Fruits and vegetables	350	514	180,000
Dates	250	320	80,000
Total food	850		417,000
Grand total	1555		754,000

* Mobile phone tool kits are in fact equipment for 2-person shops regarded as production groups (PGs). Thus for each shop it is USD 4,600.

The total cost of tool kits is estimated at USD 757,000, which gives a total average cost per kit of about UD 487. At certain courses there were different tool kits for the TOBs depending on their performance.

Use of toolkits

Of the 37 TOBs interviewed, the evaluator met 29 at their working place. All mobile phone TOBs and beekeepers used their tool kit, and the welders also made use of theirs except for the welding machine. The auto- and agro-mechanics and the woodworkers reported they had their tool kits at home and the lathe TOBs had not received any tool kits.

One date TOB used the kit, but the other did not. The remaining TOBs within weaving, pastry, fruits and vegetables presented their tool kits to the evaluator, but they were all unused. The weaver had no space for the horizontal loom and did not produce anything. The pastry and fruit ladies used their own tools. One of the pastry TOBs had sold the tool kit oven for USD 150 and bought a smaller and smarter one for USD 120.

Satisfaction of TOBs and TOTs with toolkits

The TOB survey revealed that 63% of the TOBs were not satisfied with the quality and/or the applicability of the received tool kit. Table 7 shows the degree of satisfaction of TOB with the toolkits by trades.

Table 7: TOB satisfaction with toolkits

	Satisfied	Less satisfied	Not satisfied
Mobile telephone	100%		
Welding	8%	33%	58%
Auto			100%
Agro			100%
Sewing	25%		75%
Weaving	11%		89%
Woodworks			100%
Bee Keeping	45%	55%	
Pastry		33%	67%
Dates	15%	23%	62%
Fruits and vegetables	35%		65%

The MISP III project management has challenged the accuracy of the above figures resulting from the TOB survey. According to the project management, the responses were biased by a parallel survey conducted by another project, which made the respondents believe that there might be a chance for them to receive another more sophisticated and more expensive set of equipment.

However, the evaluator maintains that the evidence base of these results is rather robust claiming that he has conducted personal interviews with 18 TOTs and 37 TOBs from all training subjects to better understand the underlying reasons of the mixed satisfaction with toolkits. The results of these individual visits and interviews are as follows.

Welding tool kit

The welding tool kit consists of a welding machine, a plate cutter, a grinder and a drilling machine. The TOBs and TOTs perceive the welding machine as of low quality. According to them it can only be used for small maintenance work, but not for production. All nine TOB welders agreed that the welding machines run warm very quickly (fan is too weak and coils are too small), particularly during summer. They were satisfied with the other tools and made use of them. If the budget only allows for the chosen welding machine, the TOBs and the TOTs would prefer equipment for pipe-cutting instead.

Auto and agro mechanics tool kits

The tool kit consists of common hand tools. The quality is good, but the same kind of tools at lower, but sufficiently good quality is available in the market at very low prices. None of the TOBs interviewed had made use of the tools at work. They were kept at home for home use and small repairs for family and friends during leisure time.

The TOBs would have preferred one or more of the following equipment: Testing pump for diesel; testing device for engine compression; jack(s); electrical drill; electrical grinder. The TOTs added to this list: a workbench; a battery tester; selected hand tools and a small press. The project management maintains that the toolkits for auto- and agro-mechanics are appropriate and in line with the work activities taught in the mechanics courses and within the toolkit budget allocated for the trainees.

Sewing tool kit

A share of 25% of the TOBs received a high quality Japanese sewing machine, 25% received a smaller Japanese machine (for home use, not suitable for production), and 50% received a Chinese machine of inferior quality. The latter 50% were extremely disappointed by the tool kit. The 25% with the smaller Japanese machine were not satisfied.

One of the two visited sewing TOBs had received a low quality machine. She had sold it and bought a good second hand machine instead. The other sewing TOT was a young lady with a physical handicap. She had received one of the good machines and made good use of it.

Weaving tool kit

55% of the weaving TOBs received a loom (horizontal or vertical). 50% found that the looms are of good quality, the other 50% found them to be of low quality. The TOBs with horizontal looms were particularly dissatisfied as these looms require too much space. They would have preferred vertical looms which, according to them, is the type used traditionally.² Both TOBs and TOTs found the spinning tools outdated and inappropriate for market production. 45% of the TOBs thought they had received outdated spinning tools. They want more modern solutions. The TOTs doubt that the spinning tool kits will be utilised at all. The same goes for the low quality looms. The project management disagrees and maintains that the tool kits are appropriate and of very high quality.

Wood working tool kit

The arguments are the same as for auto- and agro-mechanics. The tool kit consists of common hand tools. The quality is good, but the same kind of tools at lower but good quality are available in the market at very low prices. TOBs as well as TOTs would have prepared one or more electrical equipment. The project management disagrees and maintains that the tool kits are appropriate.

Mobile telephone repairs

This group was mostly satisfied with the tool kit but asked, in addition, for an electronic testing device, which, according to them, would significantly enhance their productivity. This request seems to be reasonable because the cost of the device of about 200 USD would add only about 4% to the cost of equipment given to each PG.

² The project management is of the view that vertical looms are only used by a small minority of weavers in southern Iraq and maintains that their technology decision reflects the practice of traditional artisanal weavers in the province.

Beekeeping tool kit

The TOBs are satisfied with the tool kit, but it is incomplete for the TOBs to commence production. It lacks a queen and workers for the hive. Most of the beekeeping TOBs are newcomers and have no hives with queens and workers themselves. Price for one hive with queen and workers is 300 USD. It may be over the project budget limit, but it would make it possible for all the TOBs to start production right away.

Pastry tool kit

All equipment of the pastry tool kit is very weak and of very cheap quality and appearance. Some may use it for home use, but it is not at all suitable for production. This is the common opinion of the TOBs, TOTs and the evaluator after being shown the kit. It consists of:

- Scale of plastic (up to 1 kg only), very weak, could easily break.
- A manual whisk of the cheapest Chinese quality.
- A plastic scraper
- A five litre plastic bucket.
- An electrical oven of low quality and inefficient in electricity use.
- Some cheap Chinese-made spoons.
- A cloth to be used as a sieve.
- Some unusual plastic/rubber moulds for cake-making

Most pastry TOBs have better equipment at home. There is generally great dissatisfaction with the oven. It is expressed in the TOB survey as well as in the interviews. The TOBs as well as the TOTs would have preferred:

- An electrical whisk/mixer
- An appropriate modern oven
- A solid modern scale for several kgs

The TOBs who have started pastry production use their own tools and not those received from the project.

Fruits and vegetable processing

All equipment of the fruit- and vegetable-processing tool kit is very weak and of very cheap quality and appearance. Some may use it for home use, but it is not at all suitable for production. This is the common opinion of the TOBs, TOTs and the evaluator after being shown the kit. It consists of:

- Very weak Chinese-made stove.
- A cap press for glass bottles, but there are no suitable bottles and caps to buy in the market.
- A very weak manual orange press, which will easily break. Besides, oranges are expensive and there is no market for "real" orange juice.
- A very weak manual mash potato press, which will easily break and cannot be used for production
- Some plastic buckets and cans
- Plastic bottles for pickles.

Vegetable pickles are the preferred product amongst the TOBs, since raw materials and ingredients are affordable. Fruits and sugar are expensive, so the TOBs cannot depend on juice or jam.

The TOBs as well as the TOTs would have preferred a salt tester and an electrical mixer. The TOBs use their own equipment for production. They are glad to receive the training and depend on the knowledge gained, but not on the tool kit.

Importance of the tool kit to become employed/self-employed

50% of the TOBs said that the tool kit has been important/decisive to become employed/self-employed. 71% of these were welders and 29% auto- and agro-mechanics and woodworkers. Respondents from other trades found that toolkits were not important/decisive.

Toolkit distribution policy

The toolkit distribution policy of MISP projects has been variable. Under MISP I tool kits were donated to all participants, including also the less serious and less dedicated TOBs. According to the evaluation of this project this policy had the consequence that 13% of the beneficiaries had sold their toolkits instead of using them. Drawing conclusions from the MISP I experience, MISP II was successful in creating a certain amount of competition among trainees by defining course performance as a criterion for receiving a toolkit. The evaluation of MISP II did not find evidence of tool kits being sold. Instead of applying the MISP II policy, MISP III fell back to the MISP I distribution policy.

4.6 The Identification of training subjects

The identification of training subjects was based on the needs assessment study conducted during the 2nd quarter of 2007 by Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) consultants (see above under chapter 3.4). This needs assessment study was rooted in a traditional cottage industry thinking targeting vulnerable beneficiaries with very limited initial potential and did not reflect the new eligibility criteria introduced in early 2008, which emphasize professional experience and educational background in addition to vulnerability criteria (see above under chapter 4.4).

When the new PMU management coming from MISP II took office, the training subjects for MISP III were already firmly defined and training equipment and tool kits had already been purchased. This coincidence was unfortunate because the new management had been successful under MISP II with identifying and introducing more market-oriented training subjects.

Table 8 shows an assessment of the job creation potential of the various MISP III training subjects derived from the evaluation surveys and interviews with the NPC and TOTs.

Table 8: Job creation potential by training subjects

	Excellent	Good	Modest	Poor
Non food				
Mobile phones	X			
Welding	X			
Auto and agro mechanics	X			
Sewing (home textiles and uniforms)		X		
Woodworking			X	
Lathe			X	
Weaving				X
Food				
Beekeeping			X	
Fruit & vegetables				X
Pastry				X
Dates				X

Sewing and tailoring of garments in micro enterprises has had its time also in Diwaniyah. Cheap ready-made clothes of all sizes and designs are floating into Iraq from China and India, particularly. Prices are very low due to the open market policy without tariff barriers and product quality is generally better than from “home” tailoring and sewing. There is, however, a promising niche for sewing, which has already been discovered by the sewing PG in Diwaniyah and that is “home” textiles and uniforms.

In Al-Qadessiyah lathe (machine shop) operations are closely connected to agricultural activities. Until mid-2009, Iraqi farmers had limited access to finance and most farming inputs and were struggling to compete against cheap imported products. These unfavourable conditions created serious obstacles for Iraq’s agricultural sector and negatively impacted the machine tools market. In the meantime, Iraqi trade policy has restricted agricultural imports and made food importers buy set volumes of locally produced agro-commodities. These moves are expected to improve the agricultural investment climate and provide a stimulus for agricultural modernization and mechanization, which in turn is expected to fuel growth in auxiliary sectors like machine tools. This development may help Iraqi agriculture to regain its strength and, as a consequence, prospects for local machine shops in agricultural areas like Diwaniyah could improve.

Weaving is a sunset trade in Diwaniyah. The market is loaded with cheap carpets of all sizes and good quality from India and neighbouring countries. The weaving PG in the Afaq sub-district visited by the evaluator hardly managed to sell anything. The owner had been in the trade for years but the quality of his produce is low and his input prices too high. He had for a period produced to stock, but has now almost stopped production.

From interviews with community leaders at the Chamber of Commerce and with TOTs and from his own observations the evaluator assesses computer skills, computer repairs, small generator repairs, internal wiring and hairdressing as non-food trades with excellent employment opportunities.

These options may not have been obvious or viable at the time when the needs assessment was carried out. Conditions are changing fast in Iraq, including Al-Qadessiyah, where normal-day life has started to take root. However, the evaluator assesses that a higher degree of creativity when defining the TOB training topics would probably have improved the project outcome in terms of income and job creation. Also the information given in the needs assessment study for sewing was fairly rudimentary and the analysis of competitive threats to the textile sector (sewing and weaving) was not adequately developed. Greater attention to these sectors would have triggered further issues for the PSC to consider and perhaps additional investigation and assessment.

4.7 Business training and mentoring

Business training

Under MISP II business training and mentoring had been identified as key success factors. In 2008 a training for business mentors from MISP II and MISP III has been organized at the Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Turin. While MISP II candidates attended the training, MISP III candidates did not attend, due to poor field-level communication.

In late 2009 the project management made an additional effort and identified areas of synergy with USAID in the provision of small grants and loans and the delivery of training and support for small business management and development. In April 2010, 20 dynamic TOBs successfully completed the training at the USAID funded Small Business Development Centre. These training courses were followed by two additional training sessions. In addition, the PMU allocated remaining funds to conduct similar trainings for the non-food PGs in cooperation with the University of Diwaniyah.

Mentoring of TOBs

95% of the respondents of the TOB survey stated that they need mentoring support but that, at the time of the evaluation, they had not received such support. 60% of them said they need mostly technical support, while 40% were most in need of business support. These figures may reflect the fact that the TOB survey is largely geared towards the characteristics and activities of the more rural beneficiaries group. In more urban areas, TOTs in mobile telephone repairs have provided mentoring assistance to all 20 TOBs, and the 5 TOTs in sewing from the Directorate of Youth and Sport are mentoring over 65% of their TOBs.

According to the TOTs, the low mentoring rate is because they have no authority and no budget from their employer to undertake this task. The case is different for the TOTs from the Directorate of Youth and Sport responsible for sewing and mobile telephone repairs, which explains the high mentoring rates for these trades.

However, PSC minutes show that mentoring of TOBs (and PAs/PGs) is an accepted activity at central ministerial level but these commitments have not yet trickled down to the field. It seems that, at the central ministerial level, budgetary resources for mentoring are available to DOA and DOLSA staff upon request but, apparently, TOTs have not yet made serious efforts to access these funds. As a result only approximately 10% of TOBs have received dedicated mentoring support. Where they have taken place, mentoring activities are mostly conducted via mobile phone but only few mentoring visits were made to TOBs. As a reaction to this state of play, the PMU decided to move to direct business management training and link project trainees to the Small Business Development Centre in Diwaniyah Centre.

4.8 Job creation results

As explained above, the TOB survey covered a sample of 97 out of 1600 trained beneficiaries. All respondents of the survey were satisfied with the received training. Table 9 shows that, before the training, 89 of the 97 persons in the survey were unemployed. After the training, 27 out of these had found a job or had become self-employed, corresponding to a success rate of about 31%. Table 6 breaks down these figures obtained from the TOB by skills.

Table 9: Success rate by skills (from TOB survey)

Skill	Unemployed before training	Unemployed after training	Employed and/or self-employed after training	Newly employed and/or self-employed
Auto and Agro	10	5	5	50%
Lathe	3	3	0	0
Mobile	0	0	0	0
Sewing	17	11	6	35%
Weaving	9	8	1	11%
Welding	10	0	10	100%
Woodworking	4	3	1	25%
Subtotal non-food	53	30	23	43%
Pastry	3	3	0	0%
Beekeeping	10	8	2	20%
Fruits & vegetables	11	8	3	27%
Dates	12	12	0	0%
Subtotal food	36	31	5	14%
Total	89	61	28	31%

Table 9 shows that, according to the TOB survey, success rates are quite variable across skills. Non-food trades come out as much more successful than food trades. However, these figures should be treated with caution, since the lower levels of employment linked to the food-training fields are influenced by the seasonality of food-related activities. Auto and agro machinery repair, welding

and sewing appear to be the most successful trades, while lathe, mobile, pastry and dates are the least successful job creators.

The project management challenges these job creation figures from the TOB survey, mostly on the grounds that the randomly selected sample described in Table 5 is not representative. According to them, the responses reflect the conditions and perceived opportunities of low income semi-urban and rural groups. The project management maintains that more extensive monitoring data collected by the project staff through a telephone survey show a significant employment effect. This monitoring data is presented in table 10. All trades except beekeeping come out with success rates above 50% and the average figure for newly employed and/or self-employed trainees reaches 69%.

Table 10: Success rate by skills (from project monitoring)

Skill	Total	Unemployed after training	Under-employed after training	Self-employed after training	Employed after training	Newly employed and/or self-employed
Auto and Agro	13	4	4	1	4	54%
Lathe	9	4	3	0	2	55%
Mobile	5	0	0	0	5	100%
Sewing	12	3	1	5	6	75%
Weaving	14	2	2	3	4	86%
Welding	18	4	4	2	8	78%
Woodworking	9	3	3	1	2	67%
<i>Subtotal non-food</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>75%</i>
Pastry	11	2	0	5	4	82%
Beekeeping	14	10	0	4	0	28%
Fruits & vegetables	31	10	1	3	17	68%
Dates	21	7	0	3	11	67%
<i>Subtotal food</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>62%</i>
Total	157	49	18	27	63	69%

The evaluator underlines that he has followed up on the TOB survey through personal interviews and maintains that, based on his interviews, the monitoring figures from the project seem to be overoptimistic.

The interviews the evaluator conducted with TOTs provide some additional evidence. In these interviews the TOTs reported on trained beneficiaries and the number of TOBs mentored as well as on their estimations of the number of trainees who started a business or obtained a job.

Table 11 shows the figures derived from the TOT interviews, which suggest an average success rate of 24%, an even lower score than the figures from the TOB survey. The table offers also figures about the TOT's appreciation of the "seriousness" of their trainees. This opinion of the trainers is of course subjective. However, it should be underlined that, according to the perception of TOTs, incentives like the 10 USD daily allowances and the donated toolkits did play a significant role in the decisions of trainees to participate in the project-funded courses.

Table 11: Assessment of TOBs by TOTs

Subject	No. of TOB trained	TOB who started own micro business	TOB who got a job	% TOB self-employed and employed	TOT in continuous contact with TOB by phone	TOB considered "serious" to actually utilise skills
Auto	72	4	25	40%	12	60%
Agro	84	10	32	50%	20	70%
Lathe	52	0	4	8%	10	75%
Mobile	20	20	-	100%	20	100%
Sewing	150	75	0	50%	100	90%
Weaving	130	0	14	11%	15	20%
Welding	135	45	15	44%	15	100%
Woodwork	135	15	10	19%	10	80%
Pastry	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Beekeeping	240	20	20	17%	17	55%
Fruits & Veg.	350	20	0	6%	25	70%
Dates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	1368	209	120	24%	244	

Quite interestingly, the percentage of "serious" participants varies widely depending on the trades. The proportion of TOBs perceived by their TOTs as "less serious" is 80% in weaving, 40 to 45% for auto-mechanics and beekeeping, 20 to 30% for agro-mechanics, lathe, fruits and vegetables and woodworks and less than 10% for mobile telephone repairs, welding and sewing.

According to the interviews with TOTs, education level could be another factor that influences success rates. Particularly the lathe TOTs but also the woodworking TOTs said that teaching participants of which about 30% were illiterate or with little basic education was a serious challenge. At least for these two trades, TOTs considered the chances of illiterate TOBs to get a job as only minor. Interestingly, as the TOB eligibility criteria do not allow illiterates or persons with insufficient basic education to join the courses, this information seems to indicate that the selection criteria were not entirely adhered to.

TOB income after training

TOB respondents answered only qualitatively to this question, without exact figures. However, all employed and self-employed TOBs state that their income has increased. The evaluator interviewed 37 TOBs, 27 self-employed and 10 employed. None of the self-employed TOBs have employees, but some get assistance from family members when needed.

On average those previously unemployed and with no income now earn between USD 50 and USD 100 per month and those who had income before the training increased their income by 50 to 150%, typically from a level of about USD 100 per month, which means new additional income between USD 150 and USD 250 per month.

Most of the increase is consumed by the household, i.e. not used as pocket money by the TOBs themselves. Thus, the additional income has improved the living conditions of a larger group of persons. The quantity and quality of food increased for all of them and some 20% obtained better housing. However, only a few (3%) have invested some of the increased income in education.

4.9 The Production Associations and Production Groups

One of the outputs in the project document is the establishment of and support to a number of production groups (PGs) or production associations (PAs). This output was further elaborated in the TWG meeting of July 2008:

“Approximately 15 producer groups (9 food + 6 non-food) will be formed amongst the trained beneficiaries, each consisting of a limited number of 4 to 5 members. For the non-food sectors they will be identified based on selected areas, markets, demands, etc. For the food sectors production associations will be identified during the training of beneficiaries, taking into account geographical concentration of trainees, raw material availability, etc.”

The PGs/PAs have four main purposes: (1) to undertake production and services which are lacking/scarcely, but highly needed in a certain geographical area; (2) to create employment and income for an increasing number of employees (TOBs);

(3) to be available for on-site training of TOBs; and (4) to constitute a model for other enterprises within the same trade.

In practice, FAO and MOA decided to form PAs for each of the selected training skills, comprising a maximum of 5 TOBs per association as equal owners and operators and with one or two subject-related TOTs as leaders/mentors. UNIDO and MOLSA chose the PG model applied in MISIP II, where existing small enterprises were selected for project support, comprising the rehabilitation of workshop facilities, provision of relevant additional machinery and tools and training and mentoring of the PG owners with the aim to develop the enterprise and generate jobs for project TOBs as well as extended and improved services for the community.

In order to join the project, the selected production associations/groups have to sign a contract with MOA/DOA for food and MOLSA/DOLSA for non-food including the following main conditions:

- Equipment made available by the project shall be properly installed, operated and maintained;
- the equipment cannot be sold or otherwise disposed of for a period of less than three years, and after this period disposal is allowed only with the approval of the concerned Ministry/Department;
- the equipment can be withdrawn by the project or MOA/Ministry of Industry (MOI), if abused or not properly maintained;
- preference shall be given to project TOBs in case of new employments
- business records, accounts and costing must be properly kept and made available to project staff/TOTs;
- a credible business plan must be developed;
- the PG must be available for on-site training of TOBs.

Production associations (food) under FAO management

At the time of the evaluation the following six food PAs were defined and TOBs and TOTs for each of them identified:

- one fruits and vegetables
- one pastry
- two beekeeping
- two date-processing

It is planned to also establish 4 sesame-processing production associations but training of the 5 sesame TOTs in operating the equipment procured under the project and subsequent training of 20 sesame TOBs have to be completed first. Buildings for the PAs have been identified by DOA and the equipment sits already in the project warehouse. However, the physical establishment of the associations awaits agreement by the Central Government in Baghdad, and final approval of the budget for the refurbishment of buildings and machinery installation by FAO in Rome. The number of TOBs initially engaged in the production associations, including sesame, will be about 50.

Questions about the relevance of toolkits, as expressed by the TOBs and TOTs, also apply to the tools and equipment provided for the food associations, the selection of which was carried out by FAO, reportedly without participation of the NPC, TOTs, stakeholders or beneficiaries. The equipment for the production associations is the same as used for TOB training in the VTC and therefore known to both TOBs and TOTs.

The involved TOBs and TOTs assess the equipment for the pastry association as inappropriate and the TOBs plan to use their own equipment instead. The equipment for fruits & vegetables and dates has also weaknesses according to the respective TOBs and TOTs.

All food association members (except the sesame-processing group) are well prepared and guided by the TOT leaders. Association members of vegetable-processing, pastry and dates have already started some production from their private homes. The products have been well received in the market.

Production groups (non-food) under UNIDO management

For the identification of suitable candidates the PMU assigned a local consultant to undertake a techno-economic assessment of relevant non-food micro-enterprises. Based on this survey, the PMU signed contracts with six privately owned workshops as PGs, which the project was to support through building refurbishments and relevant additional machinery and tools. The contracted enterprises included:

- one auto-mechanic group
- one agro-mechanic group
- one machine shop (lathe)
- one welding group
- two woodworking groups
- one weaving group.

Further, on the initiative of the NPC, the following TOB-owned production groups were established with project support:

- one sewing group
- one weaving group
- 10 mobile phone repairs groups.

The sewing group started with three TOB owners, the weaving group with six TOB owners and the mobile telephone groups with two TOB owners each.

During the evaluation the project management realized that the selection of the private machine shop (lathe), the welding enterprise, the weaving enterprise in Afaq, and one of the woodworking enterprises was a mistake, and actions were taken to cease the agreement with the owners and remove the granted equipment from the workshops and use it for the establishment of a number of new micro enterprises owned by smaller groups of TOBs.

Consequently the list of non-food PGs established or to be established was changed as follows:

- One auto
- one agro
- two lathe
- ten mobile telephone repairs
- two sewing
- two weaving
- four welding
- four woodworking

The PGs in the auto- and agro fields as well as one of the woodworking PGs are existing, privately owned workshops. The remaining PGs were established with TOBs as owners. About 60 TOBs are expected to be involved in all non-food PGs and PAs.

Due to the UNIDO procurement procedures and timeline for sourcing and shipping, the technical specifications for the PG equipment had to be defined early in the project before the PGs were formed. As a result, the specifications were endorsed only by the technical staff at MOLSA but not by the PG owners themselves and, in some cases, the equipment was at odds with the immediate needs of the selected PGs. All PGs would have preferred other types, capacities or strengths of machinery than what they received and the evaluator agrees with the reasons put forward by them. This lacking participation of involved parties and stakeholders is assessed by the evaluator as a major weakness originating from UNIDO's time consuming procedures for procurement, sourcing and shipping. After the evaluation mission, the PMU decided to withdraw and redistribute the machinery and equipment given to four of the PGs.

The redistribution of the machinery and equipment from four of the seven original PGs to a number of smaller TOB-owned PGs partly solved the machinery and equipment problem. The new PGs start from scratch and can make good use of the equipment distributed to them. The owners of the three remaining privately owned PGs, the auto-mechanic, agro-mechanic and woodworking workshops are industrious and trustworthy and eager to develop their businesses and would like to sell some of the machinery and equipment received and purchase what they need in order to diversify the competency and capacity of the PGs.

At the time of the evaluation the project managers were preparing a course in business management for all the non-food PGs. Business management and mentoring support for the sewing and weaving PGs will be taken care of by the TOTs from the Youth and Sport Directorate. Agreement with MOLSA/DOLSA on mentoring of the PGs was not in place during the evaluation, but the evaluator firmly assumes that it will be reached.

Current PA and PG results

Apart from the definition of the six PA teams there was no output, outcome or impact for the food PAs at the time of the evaluation. However, because of the involvement of TOTs in the day-to-day operation and the close supervision by

DOA, the evaluator assesses the likelihood to reach the expected outcome and impact from this component as high.

The non-food PG component is more advanced. 23 workshops owned and operated by TOBs plus 3 single-owner, private enterprises in auto-mechanics, agro-mechanics and woodworking are operational. The outcome and impact of the component remains to be seen, but if the assumed continuous TOT mentoring of the groups is institutionalised in MOLSA/DOLSA, with a budget and terms of reference for the activity, the evaluator assesses the probability of project outcome and impact realization as good.

Overall the project invested USD 854,800 in equipment, equipment installation, civil works and refurbishment for the PA/PGs, on average USD 23,744 by PA/PG. Investment costs per PA/PG are presented in Table 12 below. The evaluator assesses the costs of investment and support to the PA/PGs as acceptable in view of the potentials created.

Table 12: Overview of expenditures on production groups/associations

Topic	No. PG/PAs established	Average expenditures per PG/PA (in USD)	Total expenditures (in USD)
Auto-mechanics	1	48,900	48,900
Agro-mechanics	1	48,650	48,650
Machine tools	2	23,250	46,500
Welding	4	10,963	43,850
Woodworking	4	8,063	32,250
Sewing	2	7,500	15,000
Weaving	2	10,625	21,250
Mobile phones	10	4,600	46,000
<i>Total non-food</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>11,631</i>	<i>302,404</i>
Pastry	1	11,800	11,800
Beekeeping	2	9,000	18,000
Fruits and veg.s	1	44,500	44,500
Dates	2	94,600	47,600
Sesame	4	95,875	383,500
<i>Total food</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>55,540</i>	<i>505,400</i>
Grand total	36	22,438	807,800

4.10 The community leader training component

One of the main objectives of the project is: “Targeted communities provided with the capacity to plan and manage their development activities and restoring a functional base for economic growth and social peace”. This objective is assumed to be achieved through training of relevant community leaders.

In cooperation with the USAID-supported training institute WEADAT located in Amman, Jordan, the project managers developed a comprehensive three week

training course on community development and leadership. 13 community leaders were selected for the training based on the following selection criteria:

- Trainees should not to be elected officials but
- have a university degree within one of the following fields: economics, business management, engineering, public health, or sociology;
- have a professional background from one of the following fields: engineering, vocational training, community/municipal training, government advising, extension/outreach service, and small loans;
- have more than five years of professional experience;
- 25% shall be women.

The identification and selection process of candidates has been well managed and transparent involving relevant stakeholders, the PMU and PSC. All 13 selected leaders meet the selection criteria, three of the 13 being women, five being from DOA, three from the Governorate Council, three from district councils, one from the Directorate of Youth and Sport and one from the Diwaniyah dairy.

The evaluator interviewed 8 of the 13 trained community leaders, 3 from the Governorate Council, 3 from DOA, 1 from a district council, and 1 from the Diwaniyah dairy factory. All interviewed persons expressed high satisfaction with the Amman training course and at the end of the course all were eager to apply the new knowledge after their return to Diwaniyah.

After the training in Amman the three leaders from the Governorate Council have made good use of their acquired knowledge. One changed his job from the Governorate Council to the Diwaniyah City Council where he advises the Council in socio-economic, business and project management, including questions pertaining to development plans and the targeting of beneficiaries. The other leader changed job from the Governorate Council Construction Committee to the Governor's Office where he works with development investment issues. The last one also moved, from the Governorate Council to the Diwaniyah City Council where he works with public relations to local communities on development issues, among others working with unemployed people trying to direct them into income-generating activities. All three were satisfied with their new positions and they feel confident in their work due to the Amman training.

The lady from the Diwaniyah dairy factory changed her job from the finance department to the public relations/human resource department. She works with the dairy farmers supplying raw milk to the factory in order to maintain and improve their relationship with the factory. Besides, she assists in marketing and in human resource development within the factory. She is satisfied with the new job and feels that she is making good use of her Amman training.

The remaining four leaders interviewed (three from DOA and one from a district council) were all very disappointed since they have not been able to apply anything they have learnt in Amman. The three leaders from DOA (two men and one woman) returned to their old jobs after the Amman training and the district council member moved to the legal department of the Governor's Office. As a result, none of them work for socio-economic development.

Although the output of the community leaders training meets the project expectations with 13 community leaders being well trained and eager to apply their new knowledge, the assumed outcome of leaders being engaged in socio-economic development, has not yet fully materialised. From the interview one could extrapolate that 50% of the leaders are undertaking tasks relevant to their Amman training, while the other 50% make no use of their training.

At the time of the evaluation it was too early to assess the impact of the effort made by the 50% of the leaders working with socio-economic development.

4.11 Project financing

Table 13 shows the project budget and expenditures at the time of the evaluation.

Table 13: Project budget and expenditures (in USD)

Category	Project document budget	Expenditures at the time of evaluation	Variation
National project personnel/Consultants	331,200	303,205	27,995
International project personnel/Consultants	558,000	686,578	-128,578
Study tours	N/A	366,087	N/A
In-service training	590,000	602,638	-12,038
Contracts	715,000	649,038	65,962
Premises	142,000	25,500	116,500
Equipment	2,700,000	2,430,981	269,019
Non-UNDP meeting	N/A	43,253	N/A
Travel	206,560	45,582	160,978
Miscellaneous	142,000	147,642	-5,642
Security	104,855	85,194	19,661
Agency management support	366,993	174,395	192,598
Total	5,871,891	5,530,093	341,798*

* Non-audited

The expenditures for equipment are distributed as follows:

Tool kits	USD 757,000
PGs	USD 854,800
VTCs	USD 745,807
Others	USD 73,374
Total	USD 2,430,981

V

Assessment of project performance

5.1 Relevance

Government relevance

Developing the skills of the vulnerable part of the population to improve their income and livelihoods through employment and self-employment is a high priority on the Government agenda. This Government priority is fully in line with the skills training and micro industry development strategies of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Against the background of the long lasting war and conflict Iraq continues to face challenges in its efforts to improve the quality of life and security of its population. The project has therefore been conceptualised to assist the Government of Iraq in laying down the necessary foundation for the revitalisation of productive activities and improved livelihoods of the Al-Qadessiyah population.

The project complements the National Development Strategy, aiming at: "Rehabilitating livelihoods that have been destroyed and helping people to develop sustainable livelihoods through a right-based approach to reduce poverty".

UN relevance

The project also conforms to the United Nations Assistance Strategy for Iraq, which aims at:

- Supporting economic and human development and sustainable management of natural resources
- Assisting in the provision of basic services and promotion of community development participation

The project is aligned with three Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

- MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

The project objectives conform to FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015, focusing on the following global goals:

- Goal 1: Access of all people at all times to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe food
- Goal 2: The continued contribution of sustainable agriculture and rural development
- Goal 3: The conservation, improvement and sustainable utilisation of natural resources

The project was designed in conformity with UNIDO's thematic area "Poverty Reduction through Production Activities", whose main components and thrust include:

- Agro-processing and value chain development offering technical cooperation and advice combined with direct interventions to build institutional capacities (public and private) and infrastructures for agro-based business
- Rural and women's entrepreneurship development to promote gender equality and empowering women.

Target group relevance

With most of its population of about 1 million people being without sustainable sources of income, and an unemployment rate of more than 50% for the age group 16-60 years, it may be assumed that about half a million people or around 100,000 households are vulnerable as defined by the project. The project aims to reach directly through training 2,000 target beneficiaries representing the same number of vulnerable households. Further, it is assumed that 2,500 people or vulnerable households will benefit from improved provision of services from micro enterprises established by TOBs and PA/PGs supported under the project. In total 4,500 people representing about 4,500 vulnerable households are assumed to be assisted by direct activities and those derived from the project. This corresponds to 4.5% of the potential target group and may appear modest and a challenge to the relevance of the project. However, increased income for poor families has a high economic multiplier effect, since almost all money will be spent and only little saved. It can be expected that the potential for economic growth from the improved income of 4,500 poor families is bigger than the increased income of the immediate beneficiaries. It can be assumed that this effect together with the expected continuous TOB training after project completion will in the short to medium term increase the relevance of the project with regard to income creation and poverty relief.

The relevance of the PG component for the project's target beneficiaries remains to be seen, but the redirection of the component, through a focus on support to TOBs in establishing and operating PAs and PGs, is promising. The evaluator assesses the possibility of this component to develop positively over time and meeting the project output expectations as realistic.

5.2 Ownership

The Government of Iraq, represented by MOA, DOA, MOPDC and also by MOLSA, has demonstrated ownership of the project implementation through:

- Participation in PSC meetings
- Contribution of premises for the establishment of the project VTC
- Covering the operating expenditure for running the VTC for project use, including the salaries of the trainers
- Playing a significant role in the beneficiary selection process

Other counterparts have been involved in decisions including:

- Design of the VTC rehabilitation work
- Evaluation and approval of rehabilitation bids
- Selection of trainers

The non-food part of the project has been driven almost entirely by the NPC and his staff with little or no cooperation with DOLSA. The Director of DOLSA claims that he has not been involved in project implementation since April 2009. Consequently, he and his staff have only limited understanding of project concepts and strategies and, hence, limited ownership. The non-food training equipment belongs to MOLSA/DOLSA but is located in the VTC, which belongs to MOA/DOA. At the time of evaluation, the cooperation between DOLSA and DOA was limited, and no agreement on the use of the VTC by DOLSA after project completion was prepared. Further, as the oversight and follow up roles of the Office of the Governor, the Provincial and Municipal Council, and the Chamber of Commerce grows in relevance and importance, it is not clear whether and to what extent DOLSA will provide continuous support to the non-food PGs and TOB micro-enterprises after project completion.

MOA and in particular DOA show strong project ownership. As decided by the PSC, DOA has taken over implementation of all food PAs from the NPC office. The Director of DOA reviewed and endorsed all specifications of food tool kits, training equipment, and food-related PG technology packages. As of mid-2010, the DOA has not yet arranged for budgetary resources to be made available for continued TOB training, tool kits and mentoring of TOB food micro enterprises. However, the evaluator assesses that the VTC and its main food training functions can be expected to be internalised within the DOA.

During the course of implementation the project has developed close contacts with the Governorate Council and the Diwaniyah Chamber of Commerce, and project ownership has been built within both bodies. The Chairman of the Governorate Council appreciates the project concept but the Council has no budget for the continuation of project activities. It will, however, continue to provide monitoring and oversight functions as agreed with the Project Management Unit. The Council is in severe need of external assistance for socio-economic development. The Chamber of Commerce has some resources, although limited, to assist project TOBs in developing their micro enterprises and the Chamber plans to continue this support after project completion.

The evaluator concludes that the project has selected the right cooperating partners and that project ownership has been internalised with them, with the exception of MOLSA/DOLSA. However, the selection of MOLSA/DOLSA as cooperating partner(s) is correct. MOLSA has started anchoring its presence in the province and it is likely that the experience of project staff related to MOLSA will be integrated into their vocational training activities in the Governorate.

5.3 Efficiency

The project has been very efficient with the rehabilitation and equipment of the VTC, the selection and training of a significant number of TOTs and the establishment of 10 food PAs and 26 non-food PGs.

This was achieved despite the rather low initial efficiency. During the first year of implementation, a needs assessment was carried out that, at a later stage, was found in need of strengthening. The identification of target beneficiaries was undertaken without having clear eligibility criteria in place. The PMU and the NPC offices were not properly established and staffed. Cooperation and coordination with main local stakeholders (DOA and DOSLA) were not efficiently undertaken, particularly with respect to specifications and procurement of tools and equipment.

In January 2008 the PMU was strengthened through the appointment of a new CTA and several SC and TWG decisions improved project efficiency significantly. However, the efficiency weaknesses originating from the NPC unit continued. The evaluation finds that a good part of delays can be attributed to insufficient efficiency of the NPC and his office. The following weaknesses are found to be at least partially related to insufficient efficiency:

- Less than 2,000 target beneficiaries trained;
- Problematic initial identification of non-food PGs;
- Insufficient mentoring of TOBs and non-food PGs;
- Insufficient training equipment at certain training venues;
- Insufficient (in certain cases lack of) cooperation with DOA and DOLSA;
- Insufficient feedback to PMU on required tasks not performed and lack of information to PMU on certain project problems.

In post-conflict projects, where the overall project management has no possibility to undertake on-site monitoring, the quality of the NPC and his/her office is crucial. The evaluation finds significant weaknesses of the NPC recruitment process undertaken by UNIDO and FAO.

The TOTs and some TOBs perceive a good part of the tools and equipment procured for TOBs and PA/PGs as not meeting the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries, resulting, if true, in a less than optimal use of project funds. The main reason for this is that the end users or knowledgeable representatives of the end users have not been sufficiently involved in the specification process.

Moreover, with the situation gradually improving, more could be purchased locally and thereby savings be made on transportation costs and maybe also on prices.

5.4 Effectiveness

The expected outcomes can be summarized as follows:

- The VTC is in a better position to support (train) project target beneficiaries;
- Competent TOTs are available for TOB and PA/PG training and mentoring;
- TOBs obtain employment or self-employment;
- Competent community leaders are involved in local development;
- PAs and PGs provide services, create jobs and generate income of target beneficiaries and pilot model enterprises for others to follow.

This section assesses the extent to which these outcomes have been achieved or are likely to be achieved.

VTC in a better position

The rehabilitation and refurbishment of the VTC has significantly improved its physical and vocational training standards, and it has the potential to maintain its present position as the leading vocational training centre in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate. However, its proper utilisation depends on an agreement to be reached between MOA and MOSLA on the use of the centre, not only for food training subjects, but also for non-food ones. Further, financial resources and TOTs for conducting training courses must be available, preferably also including funds for tool kits and training fees. Finally, the lack of a daily management counterpart at the VTC during project implementation may have weakened the centres' capacity, through effective facility management, to reach its full potential regarding TOB training. It is therefore recommended that MOA/DOA put an effective VTC management in place as early as possible.

Competent TOTs available

As part of the PMU's overall assessment of its vocational training activities in the entire country, the PMU has been working with its Government partners to adapt training courses to the fast technological development of the country in most areas of training. This 'stock-taking' exercise has resulted in the development of a number of recommendations for future programming in the country, including:

Skills training need to be enhanced through longer training sessions:

- Training sessions should be flexible enough to provide basic and advanced type of training;
- Training should be linked to viable marketable fields;
- Training should be graded up to higher level trainings, e.g. (1) general, (2) basic, (3) advanced. Training should aim for recognition within a certification system;
- Adequacy of TOT numbers per training topic

The TOTs trained under the project are competent and committed to their training responsibilities. If budgets are made available for TOB training, the TOTs will be ready to conduct the courses. Besides, they are eager to undertake post-course mentoring to TOBs and assistance to PAs and PGs, but apart from the TOTs from the Youth and Sport Directorate they need permission from their Directorates to do the job and budgets for transportation and telecommunication. It is likely that such permission and budgets can be achieved for the DOA TOTs, while the probability for this to happen for the DOLSA TOTs is rather low. However, at the Central Government there is a political movement towards strengthening staff and budgets for vocational training.

TOT output, outcome and impact analysis

42 persons have been trained and are active as TOTs. This is 5 more than assumed in the project document. The TOT evaluation survey reveals that all selected TOTs have relevant educational background and 95% relevant professional experience. For the non-food side, the two-tier TOT training has proved to be an efficient means to ensure a high professional standard of the TOTs and their dedication to undertake the expected tasks.

For the food side, the commitment of the DOA and involvement of FAO technical staff in the selection of trainers has been successful in cultivating a strong core of professional trainers. Thus the evaluator assesses that the outcome expectation for the TOT component - "active and competent group of skill trainers established" - has been fulfilled. Post-course evaluations by the trainees (TOBs) and the TOB survey show that all TOBs are satisfied with the training courses performed by the TOTs.

The terms of reference regarding the responsibilities of the TOTs after training have been prepared together with a TOT code of conduct. Both have been accepted by all TOTs.

Sustainability of TOTs as skills trainers is part of the project outcome expectation for this component, and the evaluator assesses the likelihood of the TOTs to continue as skills trainers for new TOBs after project completion to be very high. MOA/DOA is determined to use the TOTs on food as mentors for production groups and to continue the project skills training activities. MOLSA is in the process of establishing its own VTC in Diwaniyah, which should be ready at the end of 2011. By that time, the project's non-food training equipment will need to be moved from the MOA VTC to the new MOLSA Centre. The non-food TOTs will be needed for skills training courses there.

Due to the short actual (field) implementation period (about one year), lasting impact of the project on food and non-food training activities in the Governorate could not be measured at the time of evaluation. However, strong indications by the representatives of MOA and MOLSA in the PSC that the Ministries will eventually plan and budget for the continuation of project activities point towards a positive project impact on the quality and quantity of food training in the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate. However, at the time of the evaluation no plans or budgets for TOB training after project completion were in place.

Competent community leaders involved

The training of community leaders addresses the project objective to empower local communities with the capacity to articulate, conceptualise, formulate and implement development activities. The evaluation finds that all 13 community leaders trained in Amman are competent for the trained subjects and interested to work in socio-economic community development. However, at present only 6 to 7 of the 13 trained community leaders make practical use of their newly acquired knowledge. Overall the evaluator assesses the effectiveness of this project component as modest.

Competent TOBs obtaining employment or self-employment

The effectiveness of the TOB training meets expectations. At the time of the evaluation, 1,682 of the planned 2,000 target beneficiaries had been trained and at project completion this number increased to 1,775, constituting 89% of the target. Non-food TOBs have good to high occupation rates after training, whereas for food TOBs these rates are modest to low. This may be partly attributed to the seasonal dependency for beekeeping, fruits and vegetables and dates, while the evaluation took place during the off-season.

However, there are also some serious question marks to be made with regard to the effectiveness of employment or self-employment. One serious drawback is the fact that post-training mentoring of TOBs has not yet been systematically established. Furthermore, the TOTs survey revealed that, for a significant part of the TOBs, the TOTs have serious doubts whether these are seriously pursuing employment or self-employment after training. And, last but not least, TOTs and TOBs see the quality and appropriateness of some of the tool kits as a limiting factor.

PAs and PGs creating jobs and income and delivering services

The non-food component of the project has put in place 23 workshops owned and operated by TOBs and 3 single-owner, private enterprises in the auto-mechanics, agro-mechanics and woodworking sectors. The outcome of this component remains to be seen, but if the TOT mentoring of the groups is continuously institutionalised in DOLSA with budget and terms of reference for the activity, the evaluator expects that the project outcome can be realized.

As far as the non-food component is concerned, there was no output at the time of the evaluation apart from the designation of the 6 Production Association (PA) teams. However, with the TOTs being involved in the day-to-day operation under close supervision from DOA, the evaluator assesses the likelihood of this component to reach the expected outcome as high.

5.5 Sustainability

General

At a national level, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Promotion of Cottage Industry representing MOPDC (chair), MOLSA, MOA, and MOI decided to implement policies and strategies for the advancement of cottage industries in Iraq. This points at the Government commitment to sustain and up-scale project results and to replicate the project in other Governorates for broader national impact. However, there is lack of fiscal incentives and accessible credit facilities that specifically promote cottage industries.

VTC operation

During the project, the management situation of the VTC was rather unstable. The Director was replaced three times, leading to a situation, where the project took over responsibilities that, under normal circumstances, should be with the counterpart. At the time of the evaluation, the VTC was formally managed by the VTC Director from DOA. However, in practice, project activities at the VTC were managed by the project NPC and other project staff assisted by three TOTs specializing in mobile telephone repairs (DOA), woodworking (DOLSA) and lathe (DOLSA).

Uncertainties subsist whether the Government will assign managers and staff in the right quantity and right quality at the VTC and what will be the final status of the non-food training equipment and the operational ownership of the VTC. While it might be expected that the VTC will be sustainable for TOB training at the current level, it is an open question whether sufficient financial resources will be made available for expansion.

Availability of TOTs

After project completion the TOTs will return to their positions in the concerned departments: DOA, MOLSA and Youth & Sport. There is no plan to anchor the TOTs at the VTC as a cadre of trainers for continuous TOB training. However, if budgets are established for TOB training, the evaluator assesses that the TOTs will be available to conduct courses.

TOTs anchored as a group at the VTC

Although no trainer had difficulty taking leave from his respective Ministry, none of the TOTs expect to be permanent trainers at the VTC. They will perform a dual role for their Ministries. They will continue in their present positions in the respective ministerial departments and be part of a resource base for skills training. This modality maximizes the use of these important human assets and ensures that they are regular contributors to the various activities of their respective Ministries.

Community leaders' support

The evaluator foresees no change in the job situation of the 13 community leaders trained in Amman, or in the perspective of this project component's

impact on community development, unless one or more of the local project stakeholders decide to make more intensive use of their knowledge. The optimum solution would be to institutionalise their function as TOTs in socio-economic community development. The evaluator recommends that MOA/DOA and MOSLA/DOSLA take steps to make use of the 13 community leaders as TOTs for up-scaling the community's socio-economic development activities commenced under this project component.

Employed and self-employed TOBs

It is the ToTs' opinion that approximately 30-40% of the total number of TOBs will struggle to make use of their new knowledge either as employees, self-employed, or as members in PG groups. Thus, from their side it is expected that about 670 of the 1,682 TOBs trained will succeed in improving their livelihood by utilising their new skills.

The evaluator assesses this result to be likely to be achieved and sustainable. Up-scaling of the TOB component depends fully on the financial and organizational ability of the VTC to continue the project TOB course activity and the TOT's availability to conduct the courses.

PAs and PGs in Operation

If the economic situation in Iraq and Al-Qadessiyah is not deteriorating, the evaluator assesses that the PAs and PGs established or in the process of being established will be sustainable and grow, particularly if the economy continues to improve. Up-scaling of this project component is a possibility, if the PA and PG formation is encouraged amongst the TOBs in future courses and Government or donor support can be made available for enterprise establishment.

The Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce has established a Committee to support TOB self-employment. The support comprises:

- Assistance to market the TOB products: Permanent exhibition in the Department of Culture facility, and planned permanent exhibition in the Chamber of Commerce building
- Radio promotion of TOB products
- Newspaper promotion of TOB products
- Business management courses for TOBs
- Assistance to TOBs to obtain health & hygiene certificates.

The evaluator assesses the Chamber of Commerce Committee as an important partner for sustaining the project's self-employed TOBs.

PRT/USAID

The project has linked up with PRT/USAID for support to TOBs to start their own business. At the time of the evaluation 20 TOBs were selected for this support. Each will receive a grant of up to USD 5,000 for investments.

VI

Recommendations

6.1 Recommendations for immediate action

The evaluation recommends the following immediate actions:

(1) Consolidate the Production Groups

UNIDO and DOLSA are recommended to focus on the newly established PGs with TOB owners.

FAO and DOA are recommended to install equipment for all food PAs, including the four sesame PAs, and to provide additional training for sesame TOTs to make sure that skills match equipment.

For some of the individually owned PGs, UNIDO is recommended to consider allowing them to sell those parts of the received equipment, which they find less useful, and buy what is mostly needed. This action should be under the control of the project or MOLSA.

(2) Ensure sustainability and follow-up

UNIDO and FAO are recommended to make arrangements with MOLSA and MOA to ensure that organizational and financial conditions for TOT mentoring are in place and that mentoring continues after project completion.

UNIDO is recommended to agree with USAID on the modalities of their follow-up/mentoring of the TOBs. UNIDO and FAO are recommended to make arrangements with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure its post-project support to the PGs and TOBs.

6.2 Recommendations for future projects

For future projects of the same kind as MISP III, recommendations to UNIDO and FAO are as follows:

(3) Recruitment of local project personnel

Recruitment of local project personnel, particularly the NPC, should apply professional state-of-the-art interview and testing techniques. For post-conflict projects, where standard management and supervision structures cannot be established in the project area, it is crucial for project implementation and performance that the right NPC and other local staff be engaged.

(4) Monitoring and reporting

Improve the remote management approach by introducing an independent monitoring and reporting mechanism located in Iraq.

(5) Local stakeholder involvement

Involve local Directorates of line Ministries as well as other relevant local bodies/agencies in project preparation and implementation as members of PSC and TWG. For MISP III this would imply representation in overall project management of DOLSA, DOA, the Governorate Council and the Governor's Office.

(6) Counterpart management

It is recommended that counterpart management to the NPC should always be in place in cases where the NPC is given management authority (and not only a management assistance role) over one or more project activities. In the case of MISP III, counterpart management of the project VTC should have been in place throughout the period of active project use of the VTC.

(7) Discontinue joint project implementation by UNIDO and FAO

Possible future projects of the same nature should be split into two projects with UNIDO working with MOLSA as the line ministry and FAO with MOA.

(8) TOB selection

It is recommended to develop more sophisticated methods to identify the most appropriate TOB candidates. It could be an option to use a multi-dimensional personality profile, including: vulnerability; gender; education and skills; and sincerity of the candidate to apply the newly acquired skills for income generation.

(9) Trades, curricula and tool kits

Conduct a thorough (on-site) demand/market survey during the inception phase in order to identify the most promising trades/skills for training courses. The identification of trades should not be based mainly on statistics and historical data.

It is recommended that, where and whenever possible, training curricula and tool kits be defined in cooperation with project beneficiary focus group(s) to ensure that they match the technological level of the targeted environment as well as the expectations of the project beneficiaries.

Tool kits should only be offered to the best performing 50% of the trainees. This will create a sound competition between the TOBs and reduce the number of less serious course applicants.

(10) Project time planning

In order to define a realistic project period and avoid unnecessary delays it is recommended that better time planning methods (“critical path”) be applied with regard to:

- time necessary for procurement and delivery;
- time necessary for customs procedures;
- time necessary for food-PAs to obtain approval and registration at the Central Government and FAO HQ;
- length of working days and working weeks;
- availability of transportation and other important project implementation means.

Further it is recommended to introduce accelerated procurement procedures for post-conflict and early recovery projects.

(11) Local procurement

Wherever possible, it is recommended to purchase tool kits and other equipment locally and only turn to international procurement when it is cost-efficient or the items to be procured are not available locally.

(12) Production Groups

The Production Group approach should be tailor-made for the specific socio-economic conditions in the project region. In more advanced areas such as MISP II in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) the “existing SME upgrading” approach is feasible. In less advanced areas such as the Al-Qadessiyah Governorate the best trainees (TOBs) should be selected and supported to set up PA/PGs.

Equipment for PA/PGs needs to be thoroughly defined in cooperation with TOTs and TOBs

(12) Community development component

This component is important, but requires a more thorough design. Providing training (only) is insufficient. The trained community leaders (counselors) should be given the necessary means and a clear role to apply their skills as counselors within a scheme/programme defined and sanctioned by the involved parties in the project document.

(13) Language

For future projects in Iraq, project documents, progress reports, steering committee minutes and other important documents should be available in Arabic.

VII

Lessons learned

Lessons learnt for future similar projects are the following:

(1) TOB training

Training curricula and tool kits should be defined in cooperation with project beneficiary focus group(s) to ensure that they match the technological level of the targeted society as well as the technological expectations of the project beneficiaries to be selected.

Basic business training modules should be strengthened and become a mandatory part of all trainings.

Improve the tool kit component:

- Better quality of tools (food)
- No “household” tools (food)
- Greater flexibility to match individual needs
- Introduce an element of competition into the distribution of tool kits (dependent on individual motivation and success of the trainees)

Improve the mentoring component. Mentors should have:

- The necessary mentoring skills and experience
- The authority and budget to undertake mentoring
- The necessary means (transport; communication) and time

Make sure that mentoring continues after project completion (crucial for sustainability).

(2) Local participation

Participation of local representations/Directorates of involved line Ministries as well as participation of project beneficiaries is crucial for the identification of training topics, selection of trades for PA/PGs, and specification of equipment and tool kits.

Annex 1: Evaluation terms of reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE: INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

Project:
**“Job Creation through Cottage and Micro Industries Promotion in
Al-Qadessiya”**

FB/IRQ/07/001 (UNIDO Project Number)
OSRO/IRQ/603/UDG (FAO Project Number)

BACKGROUND

The project covers the Al Qadissiya Governorate in Central Iraq. It is the third of a series of four similar Community Livelihoods and Micro Industry Support Projects (CLARIS) in Iraq. The first CLARIS project has been implemented in the Thi-Qar governorate in South Iraq and the second in the Erbil and Suleiymaniyah governorates of Northern Iraq. The project in the South has been evaluated in 2007 and the one in North Iraq in spring 2009.³ The present evaluation should build upon the findings and lessons learned from these evaluations, and use a same or similar methodology in order to allow for comparison.

All CLARIS projects are carried out jointly by UNIDO and FAO. The basic project philosophy is to increase the capability of poor and marginalized war-affected communities to engage in economically viable small-scale productive activities in order to generate income and increase employment figures. The main levers in order to achieve this objective are technical and business management trainings provided in cooperation with existing vocational training centres and the delivery of certain technical tools and basic technical equipment to the successful trainees. Furthermore, the approach involves a certain amount of rehabilitation or upgrading of vocational training centres; training of trainers and the production of training material.

A major commonality of all CLARIS projects are adverse conditions, including security problems, which have led to periods of partial or total implementation standstill. This has also caused challenges with regard to synchronizing the interventions of the two implementing agencies. The restricted access to the regions of implementation for international experts and UN officials is another major challenge. This restriction will also influence the design and implementation of the present evaluation.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The project pursues the promotion of self-employment and job creation in micro-enterprise industries in the Al Qadissiya Governorate, one of the poorest regions in Iraq.

The project receives its funding from the multidonor UN Trust Fund for Iraq (UNDG ITF). In line with the national development strategy and the UN assistance strategy and the general project philosophy described above, the project is expected to increased income and employment of the rural and urban population by facilitating self-employment of the vulnerable groups.

The expected outcomes (immediate objectives), of the project are:

³ The evaluation of the project in South Iraq is available from:
<http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=o49971>

- Provide targeted communities with the capacity to plan and manage their development activities and restoring a functional base for economic growth and social peace.
- Improve the livelihood of approximately 4,500 people living in the project area through strengthening of their productive capacities in post-harvest and other income-generating activities.
- Enable larger number of youth who have been deprived by the conflict to gain basic knowledge in productive skills through practical experiences and activity-based learning.

The income generation activities targeted by the project are:

- Beekeeping and honey, bread and pastry, date processing, fruit and vegetable processing and tahina production in the food area covered by FAO;
- agro/auto-mechanics, welding, woodwork, machine-operation, cell phone repairing, sewing/tailoring in the non-food area covered by UNIDO.

The project is jointly implemented by UNIDO and FAO following signature of an interagency agreement. The project is being implemented by the project offices of the two Organizations in Amman, headed by a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) and a National Project Coordinator (NPC) in the target region. At headquarters of the two agencies, project managers, operations officers and technical backstopping officers are assigned to coordinate the overall planning and implementation the project. Short term international and national consultants are recruited for specific activities.

Partners in the Government of Iraq are the Ministries of Planning (MOPDC), Agriculture (MOA) and of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and the Regional Government of the Al Qadissiya Governorate. At project end the capacities of counterparts are expected to be strengthened.

Initially, the project had been approved for a period of 18 months until February 2008. This initial duration has been extended until the end of 2009.

III. PROJECT BUDGET

Total Allotment

UNDG Iraq Fund	US\$ 5,871,891
Government contribution:	US\$ 300,000 (in kind)
Total	US\$ 6,171,891
UNIDO allotment	US\$ 2,783,066
FAO allotment	US\$ 3,088,825

IV. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the:

1. Project relevance with regard to the priorities and policies of the Government of Iraq, the UNDG ITF; UNIDO and FAO;
2. Project effectiveness in terms of the outputs produced and outcomes achieved as compared to those planned;
3. Efficiency of implementation: quantity, quality, cost and timeliness of UNIDO/FAO and counterpart inputs and activities;
4. Efficiency of the cooperation arrangements between UNIDO and FAO, and if applicable make recommendations for improvements;
5. Prospects for development impact;
6. Long-term sustainability of the support mechanisms results and benefits;

The evaluation should provide the necessary analytical basis and make recommendations to the Government, to the donor, to UNIDO and to FAO for the closure of the project and for ensuring its sustainability. The evaluation should also draw lessons of wider applicability for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects.

V. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will be carried out in keeping with agreed evaluation standards and requirements. More specifically it will fully respect the principles laid down in the “UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation” and Evaluation Policies of UNIDO and FAO.⁴ The evaluation shall determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, efficiency, achievements (outputs, prospects for achieving expected outcomes and impact) and sustainability of the project. To this end, the evaluation will assess the achievements of the project against its key objectives, as set out in the project document and the inception report, including a review of the relevance of the objectives and of the design. It will also identify factors that have facilitated or impeded the achievement of the objectives.

While maintaining independence, the evaluation will be carried out based on a participatory approach, which seeks the views and assessments of all parties. It will address the following issues:

Project identification and formulation:

- The extent to which a participatory project identification process was applied in selecting problem areas and counterparts requiring technical cooperation support;

⁴ All documents available from the websites of the UN Evaluation Group:
<http://www.uneval.org/>

- Relevance of the project to development priorities and needs;
- Clarity and realism of the project's development and immediate objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries and prospects for sustainability.
- Clarity and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity and time-frame);
- Realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
- Realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation and the work plan;
- Likely cost-effectiveness of the project design.

Project ownership:

- The extent to which the project was formulated with the participation of the national counterpart and/or target beneficiaries;
- The extent to which counterparts have been appropriately involved and have been participating in the identification of their critical problem areas, in the development of technical cooperation strategies and in the implementation of the project approach
- The extent to which counterpart contributions and other inputs have been received from the Government (including Governorates) as compared to the project document work plan, and the extent to which the project's follow-up is integrated into Government budgets and workplans.

Project coordination and management:

- The extent to which the national management and overall field coordination mechanisms of the project have been efficient and effective;
- The extent to which the UNIDO and FAO based management, coordination, quality control and input delivery mechanisms have been efficient and effective;
- The extent to which monitoring and self-evaluation have been carried out effectively, based on indicators for outputs, outcomes and objectives and using that information for project steering and adaptive management;
- The extent to which changes in planning documents during implementation have been approved and documented;
- The extent to which coordination envisaged with any other development cooperation programmes in the country has been realized and benefits achieved.
- The extent to which synergy benefits can be found in relation to other UNIDO/FAO and UN activities in the country.

Efficiency of Implementation:

Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including: availability of funds as compared with the provisional budget (donor and national contribution); the quality

and timeliness of inputs delivered by UNIDO and FAO (expertise, training, equipment, methodologies, etc.) and the Government as compared to the work plan(s); managerial and work efficiency; implementation difficulties; adequacy of monitoring and reporting; the extent of national support and commitment and the quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by UNIDO/FAO.

Effectiveness and Project Results:

Full and systematic assessment of outputs produced to date (quantity and quality as compared with work plan and progress towards achieving the immediate objectives); The quality of the outputs produced and how the target beneficiaries use these outputs, with particular attention to gender aspects; the outcomes, which have occurred or which are likely to happen through utilization of outputs. In particular, this includes an analysis of the likely effects of micro-enterprise industry activities as a means of creating employment and raising household incomes.

Prospects to achieve expected outcomes, impact and sustainability:

Prospects to achieve the expected outcomes and impact and prospects for sustaining the project's results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project, and identification of developmental changes (economic, environmental, social) that are likely to occur as a result of the intervention, and how far they are sustainable.

Cost-effectiveness of the Project

Assessment of whether the project approach represented the best use of given resources for achieving the planned objectives.

Recommendations for a possible next project phase, or replication elsewhere

Based on the above analysis the evaluators will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any necessary further action by Government and/or UNIDO/FAO and/or the UN or other donors to ensure sustainable development, including any need for additional assistance and activities of the project prior to its completion. The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest. Any proposal for further assistance should include precise specification of objectives and the major suggested outputs and inputs.

VI. EVALUATION TIMING AND MAIN TASKS

The evaluation is scheduled to take place between December 2009 and March 2010.

The evaluation will be carried out through analyses of various sources of information, including desk analysis, field visits, survey data, and interviews with counterparts, beneficiaries, partner agencies, donor representatives, programme managers and through the cross-validation of data. In view of the particular aspects

of this evaluation particular attention will be given to the elaboration of a strategy for field surveys, the elaboration and test of questionnaires and the implementation of the surveys in line with agreed professional and impartiality standards.

The evaluation will encompass the following main tasks:

1. Desk study of available documents and definition of the evaluation methodology with a catalogue of project specific evaluation questions, to which the evaluation should provide answers; this methodology will have to be discussed and agreed with the evaluation units of UNIDO and FAO;
2. Briefing and interviews with UNIDO and FAO project staff in Vienna, Rome and/or Amman;
3. Organization of a two-day kick-off meeting in Amman or in Iraq, as appropriate, involving national and international project staff, counterpart representatives and the entire evaluation team;
4. Analytical review of the economic, political and security conditions in the region of intervention (drawing on information received from policy makers, and also other UN Organizations and providers of technical assistance in Iraq and in the region) and assessment of the relevance, needs orientation and realism of the project design and implementation (gathering information from project stakeholders and private sector players in the region);
5. Design and execution of a survey on the capabilities of the trainers; this survey shall assess *inter alia*: the profile of the trainers and whether their professional qualification and experience are appropriate with a view to empowering vulnerable and marginalized groups to engage in income creation; whether the quality of the training of trainers (TOT) they received has been adequate; how many beneficiaries they have trained; under which conditions these trainings occurred; whether there have been follow-up activities (coaching); and how trainers assess the success of the trainings; this survey would address at least 50% of the trainers who received training under the project;
6. Design and execution of a survey among trainees; this survey would address a representative sample of at least 100 trainees, if possible more; this survey shall assess *inter alia*: the profile of the trainees and to what extent the selection of trainees matches the objectives of the project to support vulnerable and marginalized groups; the quality of the training and of the equipment received and whether these inputs are perceived as adequate with a view to empowering the target groups to engage in income creation; the status of the income creation activities of the trainees (self employment; business creation; employment in existing companies); the impact of the project on their income and living conditions;

7. On-site visits of the various project sites (vocational training centres; alternative training providers; project partners from the public and private sectors; workshops/micro-enterprises set up by individual beneficiaries and producer groups);
8. Organization of a meeting in Amman where the evaluation team will present its raw results and preliminary findings to project staff and counterparts and collect their feed-back;
9. Production of a first draft evaluation report and submission of this report to the evaluation departments and project managers of UNIDO and FAO for feed-back;
10. Incorporation of comments into a second draft and submission of this draft to the government, project participants and stakeholders for comments;
11. Incorporation of comments into final draft.
12. Final debriefing and presentation of final report with UNIDO and FAO in Vienna, Rome and/or Amman.

VII. SERVICES REQUIRED

The evaluation will require the following functions, competencies and skills:

1. Evaluation team leader with documented experience in:
 - a. Designing and managing complex evaluations;
 - b. Leading multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams of evaluators;
 - c. Development projects in Arab speaking countries;
 - d. Development projects related to income generation for vulnerable groups;
 - e. Designing and supervising qualitative and quantitative field surveys;
 - f. Preparing evaluation reports in line with agreed UN and DAC standards;
 - g. Drafting reports in English (excellent drafting skills to be demonstrated).
2. Evaluators with documented experience in executing:
 - a. Development projects for income creation of vulnerable groups;
 - b. Analysis of micro-enterprise industry activities as a means of creating employment and raising household incomes;
 - c. Evaluation of vocational training schemes;
 - d. Evaluations in Arab speaking countries;
 - e. Qualitative and quantitative field surveys;
 - f. Interviews in Arab language with the entire range of stakeholders from vulnerable war-affected groups to high-level officials.

The evaluation team must have the necessary technical competence and experience to assess the quality of the technical assistance provided under this project to small scale and micro-level production in the areas of:

- Beekeeping and honey, bread and pastry, date processing, fruit and vegetable processing and tahina production in the food area covered by FAO;
- agro/auto-mechanics, welding, woodwork, machine-operation, cell phone repairing, sewing/tailoring in the non-food area covered by UNIDO.

The above-mentioned functions, competencies and skills may be distributed among several persons in the evaluation team. Team members may be located in different countries but an effective coordination mechanism will have to be demonstrated. Evaluation team members must be independent and not have been involved in the formulation, implementation or backstopping of the project.

The execution of the evaluation will require full command and control of the specific situation in Iraq and full respect of the UN security rules for Iraq. The ability to carry out field operations in Iraq is a key requirement and must be demonstrated.

The evaluation team leader will be responsible for elaboration of an evaluation strategy, including the design of field surveys and elaboration of questionnaires; guiding the national evaluators for their field work in Iraq; analysis of survey results; gathering of complementary information from project staff, collaborators and stakeholders through telephone interviews and other means; and preparing a presentation of conclusions and recommendations as well as a final evaluation report.

The evaluator(s) will be responsible for carrying out the field surveys (under the guidance of the team leader). The field surveys will provide the foundation for the evaluation and must therefore be executed in line with the highest standards of professionalism and impartiality.

The UNIDO Evaluation Group and the FAO Evaluation Service will be jointly responsible for the quality control of the evaluation process and report. They will provide inputs regarding findings, lessons learned and recommendations from other evaluations, ensuring that the evaluation report is in compliance with established evaluation norms and standards and useful for organizational learning of all parties.

The project office in Amman will logistically and administratively support the evaluation team to the extent possible. However, it should be understood that the evaluation team is responsible for its own arrangements for transport, lodging, security etc.

VIII. CONSULTATIONS AND LIAISON

Liaison of the evaluation team with the Iraqi authorities will be provided by an official nominated by the Government of Iraq.

The evaluation team will maintain close liaison with the representatives of UNIDO, FAO, other UN agencies and UNDG as well as with the concerned national agencies and with national and international project staff. The evaluation team is free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the Government, the donor, UNIDO or FAO.

VIII. REPORTING

The evaluation report shall follow the structure given in Annex 1. Reporting language will be English. The executive summary, recommendations and lessons learned shall be an important part of the presentations to be prepared for debriefing sessions in Amman, Rome and/or Vienna.

Draft reports submitted to UNIDO Evaluation Group and FAO Evaluation Service are shared with the corresponding Programme or Project Officer for initial review and consultation. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. The consultation also seeks agreement on the findings and recommendations. The evaluators will take the comments into consideration in preparing the final version of the report.

The evaluation will be subject to quality assessments by UNIDO Evaluation Group and the FAO Evaluation Service. These apply evaluation quality assessment criteria and are used as a tool for providing structured feedback. The quality of the evaluation report will be assessed and rated against the criteria set forth in the Checklist on evaluation report quality.

Annex 1: Template of in-depth evaluation reports

I. Executive summary

- Must be self-explanatory
- Not more than five pages focusing on the most important findings and recommendations
- Overview showing strengths and weaknesses of the project

II. Introduction

- Information on the evaluation: why, when, by whom, etc.
- Information sources and availability of information
- Methodological remarks and validity of the findings
- Project summary (“fact sheet”, including project structure, objectives, donors, counterparts, timing, cost, etc)

III. Country and project context

This chapter provides evidence for the assessment under chapter VI (in particular relevance and sustainability)

- Brief description including history and previous cooperation
- Project specific framework conditions; situation of the country; major changes over project duration
- Positioning of the project (other initiatives of government, other donors, private sector, etc.)
- Counterpart organisation(s); (changes in the) situation of the

IV. Project Planning

This chapter describes the planning process as far as relevant for the assessment under chapter VI

- Project identification (stakeholder involvement, needs of target groups analysed, depth of analysis, etc.)
- Project formulation (stakeholder involvement, quality of project document, coherence of intervention logic, etc.)
- Description of the underlying intervention theory (causal chain: inputs-activities-outputs-outcomes)
- Funds mobilization

V. Project Implementation

This chapter describes what has been done and provides evidence for the assessment under chapter VI

- Financial implementation (overview of expenditures, changes in approach reflected by budget revisions, etc.)
- Management (in particular monitoring, self assessment, adaptation to changed circumstances, etc.)
- Outputs (inputs used and activities carried out to produce project outputs)
- Outcome, impact (what changes at the level of target groups could be observed, refer to outcome indicators in prodoc if any)

VI. Assessment

The assessment is based on the analysis carried out in chapter III, IV and V. It assesses the underlying intervention theory (causal chain: inputs-activities-outputs-outcomes). Did it prove to be plausible and realistic? Has it changed during implementation? This chapter includes the following aspects:

- Relevance (evolution of relevance over time: relevance to UNIDO, Government, counterparts, target groups)
- Ownership
- Efficiency (quality of management, quality of inputs, were outputs produced as planned?, were synergies with other initiatives sufficiently exploited? Did UNIDO draw on relevant in-house and external expertise? Was management results oriented?)
- Effectiveness and impact (assessment of outcomes and impact, reaching target groups)
- Sustainability
- If applicable: overview table showing performance by outcomes/outputs

VII. Issues with regard to a possible next phase

- Assessment, in the light of the evaluation, of proposals put forward for a possible next phase
- Recommendations on how to proceed under a possible next phase, overall focus, outputs, activities, budgets, etc.

VIII. Recommendations

- Recommendations must be based on evaluation findings
- The implementation of the recommendations must be verifiable (indicate means of verification)
- Recommendations must be actionable; addressed to a specific officer, group or entity who can act on it; have a proposed timeline for implementation
- Recommendations should be structured by addressees:
 - UNIDO
 - FAO
 - Government and/or Counterpart Organisations
 - Donor

IX. Lessons learned

- Lessons learned must be of wider applicability beyond the evaluated project but must be based on findings and conclusions of the evaluation

Report quality criteria	UNIDO Evaluation Group and FAO Evaluation Service Assessment notes	Rating
A. Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives?		
B. Were the report consistent and the evidence complete and convincing?		
C. Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes or did it explain why this is not (yet) possible?		
D. Did the evidence presented support the lessons and recommendations?		
E. Did the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity)?		
F. Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?		
G. Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?		
H. Was the report well written? (Clear language and correct grammar)		
I. Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TOR adequately addressed?		
J. Was the report delivered in a timely manner?		

Checklist on evaluation report quality

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

Assessment criteria

Tenders will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

Evidence that the proposed evaluation team leader has:	Number and significance of experience as documented in the tender documents
1. Managed complex evaluations involving multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams of evaluators	
2. Been involved in development projects in Arab speaking countries	
3. Been involved in development projects related to rural entrepreneurship and livelihood development	
4. Prepared evaluation reports in line with agreed UN and DAC standards and in good linguistic and editorial quality	
Evidence that the proposed evaluation team members have:	
1. Proficient knowledge of Arabic	
2. Participated in project/program evaluations	

Annex 2: Questionnaire for Trainers

Profile of the Trainer

- (1) Name of respondent:
- (2) Address: Governorate, District, (Sub-district), Village, contact telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail:
- (3) Gender:
- (4) Professional education:
- (5) Professional experience:
- (6) How many years experience as a trainer (if any)?
- (7) What are the main subject matter expertises?
- (8) Employment (employer's name and address) and position before project training:
- (9) Present employment and position:

Appropriateness of Professional Qualifications and Experiences for Engaging Project Beneficiaries in Income Generating Activities

- (10) Prior qualifications and experiences in socio-economic development:
- (11) Prior qualifications and experiences in Micro- and Small-Scale Enterprise (MSSE) development:
- (12) Prior qualifications and experiences in working with vulnerable households and household members:

Adequacy of Received Project Training

- (13) Training received under the project. List main subjects:
- (14) Name and address of training institution attended:
- (15) Calendar period of training/duration:
- (16) Number and names of other course participants supported under the project:
- (17) Main training subjects: Technical, business planning, accounting and costing, record keeping, marketing, financing, banking culture/loan management:
- (18) Perceived quality of the training: Satisfactory, less satisfactory, poor:
- (19) Was the training evaluated by participants at completion? Result?
- (20) Which part of the training (if any) was insufficient or less comprehensive than expected?
- (21) What suggestions do you have to improve the training programme?
- (22) Was the training sufficiently comprehensive and adequate to form the basis to train project beneficiaries in engaging efficiently in income generating activities?
- (23) If not, which subjects were missing?

- (24) Acknowledgement of training effort: Diploma, acknowledgement letter, test score, other (which?):
- (25) Do you agree with the course acknowledgement you received?

Training Conducted as a Trainer

- (26) Have you conducted training of project beneficiaries after your training?
- (27) How many courses have you conducted and how many beneficiaries have in total attended?
- (28) What have been the main subjects of your training courses: Technical, business planning, accounting and costing, record keeping, marketing, financing, banking culture/loan management?
- (29) How useful was the training you have received for the training you conducted: Very useful, useful, less useful?
- (30) How do you judge the training material and equipment made available for your courses: Satisfactory, less satisfactory, poor?
- (31) What were the main deficiencies (if any)?
- (32) Were the training courses evaluated by participants or others at completion?
- (33) Which parts of the training (if any) were insufficient or less comprehensive than expected by the participants?
- (34) What suggestions do you have to improve your the training courses?
- (35) Have you received further training under the project after your training?
- (36) If no, do you need further training? If yes, in which subjects?
- (37) Are you in (systematic) contact with your earlier trainees?
- (38) Are your trainees given the opportunity to contact you for needed advice?
- (39) Have you given post course mentoring support to your trainees?
- (40) If yes, what have been the subjects for mentoring: Technical, business planning, accounting/record keeping, marketing, financing, banking culture/loan management?
- (41) How do you assess the success of your training courses?
- (42) How do you assess the trainability of the participants in your courses considering that they upon the course should be able to commence income generating activities?

Sustainability of the project trainer group

- (43) Have the trainers been organised as a core group (with e.g. subject matter sub-groups) for experience exchange and further education, mentoring of existing beneficiaries, and continued training of other beneficiaries and additional trainers?
- (44) If yes, where have the core group/your subject matter sub-group been organisationally anchored to ensure sustainability?
- (45) If no, are you a member of any formal or informal networks established amongst the project trainers?

- (46) Have you undertaken training for participants outside the project?
- (47) If yes, how many courses and how many participants in total?
- (48) Can you freely release yourself from other duties to undertake beneficiary training?
- (49) Are you satisfied with the contracts and remuneration you receive for your training courses under the project?
- (50) If no, which improvements will you propose?

Questionnaire for Trainees (Beneficiaries)

Profile of the Trainee

- (1) Name of respondent:
- (2) Address: Sub-district, village, contact telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail:
- (3) Age:
- (4) Gender:
- (5) Household status: Head, wife, child, relative:
- (6) School education: Number of years:
- (7) Other education(s)/skills training before project training: Type, number of years:
- (8) Name of skill/trade/profession:
- (9) Occupation situation before project training: self-employed, employed, unemployed:
- (10) If unemployed, how many months without job:
- (11) Monthly/yearly income of the trainee before training:

Profile of Household

- (12) Type of household: Woman headed/widow, IDP, returnee, low income villager, other (explain):
- (13) Household size: Number of household members:
- (14) Occupation/income generating activity of spouse (if any):
- (15) Monthly/yearly present income of spouse:
- (16) Monthly/yearly income of the household before training:

Project Training Received

- (17) *Food:* Processing of dates, fruit and vegetable processing, beekeeping, bakery (bread and pastry), Tahini processing (sesame paste)
Non-food: Auto and agro-mechanics, textile/sewing/tailoring, weaving, metalworking/machine shop/lathe, welding, wood working, small generator repair, cellular phone repair
- (18) Name and address of VCT or other training provider:
- (19) Name of project trainer(s)
- (20) Trainer's organisational affiliation:
- (21) Calendar period of training/duration:
- (22) Number of course participants:
- (23) Has group formation for after course cooperation/networking been established amongst the participants?
- (24) Main training subjects: Technical, business planning, accounting and costing, record keeping, marketing, financing, banking culture/loan management.
- (25) Acknowledgement of training effort: Diploma, acknowledgement letter, test score, other (which?):
- (26) Were the acknowledgement requirements (including the possible tool kit grant) transparent and clear?
- (27) Did your course include the possibility of receiving a tool kit grant?
- (28) If yes, did you receive a tool kit from the project?

(29) If not, what is your perceived reason of this situation?

Quality and Sufficiency of the Training

- (30) Perceived quality of the training: Satisfactory, less satisfactory, poor:
- (31) Was the training evaluated by participants at completion?
- (32) If yes, what was the result?
- (33) Which part of the training (if any) was insufficient or less comprehensive than expected?
- (34) What suggestions do you have to improve the training programme?
- (35) Do you agree with the course acknowledgement you received?
- (36) Was the training sufficiently comprehensive and adequate to form the basis for you to engage efficiently in income generating activities?
- (37) If no, which subjects are missing?
- (38) Have you received post training mentoring from the project (the TOTs)?
- (39) If no, do you need post training mentoring?
- (40) If yes, what should be the subject for mentoring: Technical, business planning, accounting/record keeping, marketing, financing, banking culture/loan management, other (which)?
- (41) Please mention the three most important things you have learnt from the project training course:
- -
 -

Timeliness, Quality and Sufficiency of Tool Kit Received

- (42) Did you receive the tool kit at the end of the training course or later?
- (43) If later, how many months later?
- (44) Perceived quality of the received tool kit: Satisfactory, less satisfactory, poor.
- (45) Is the tool kit sufficient and adequate for undertaking the desired trade/activity?
- (46) If no, what is missing in the tool kit to cover the needs of the desired trade/activity?

Type of Income Generating Activity Resulting from Project Training

- (47) Project trade/activity taken up:
- (48) *Food:* Processing of dates, fruit and vegetable processing, beekeeping, bakery (bread and pastry), Tahini processing (sesame paste)
Non-food: Auto and agro-mechanics, textile/sewing/tailoring, weaving, metalworking/machine shop/lathe, welding, wood working, small generator repair, cellular phone repair
Non-project trade taken up: Type?
No trade taken up: Reason?
- (49) Occupation situation after project training: self-employed, employed, unemployed.
- (50) If self-employed:
Has the project training been decisive for your start of business?
Are you a member of a production network?

- (51) If yes: What are the benefits of being part of the network: Input sourcing, technical support, product development, marketing, financing, other (which?)?
- (52) If employed:
Have the project training been decisive for your employment?
Are you employed in a Producer Group?
- (53) If yes: What are the benefits of being employed in a PG?
- (54) Was the tool kit decisive/important/not important for self-employment/employment?
- (55) If unemployed: have you received a tool kit?
- (56) If yes, what use have you made of it?

Impact of the Project Training on Trainee's Income

- (57) How has the trainee's monthly income developed since completed training?
- (58) How much (amount or %) of the monthly income is consumed within the trainee's household?

Impact of the Project Training on the Living Conditions of Trainee's Household

- (59) How has the monthly income of the trainee's household developed since completed training?
- (60) How in money terms has the trainee's project training impacted on the monthly income earning situation of other household members?
- (61) How have the living conditions of the household developed since training: accommodation, food, amenities, education, information, communication, other (which?)?

Impact of the Project Training on the Trainees Business Development

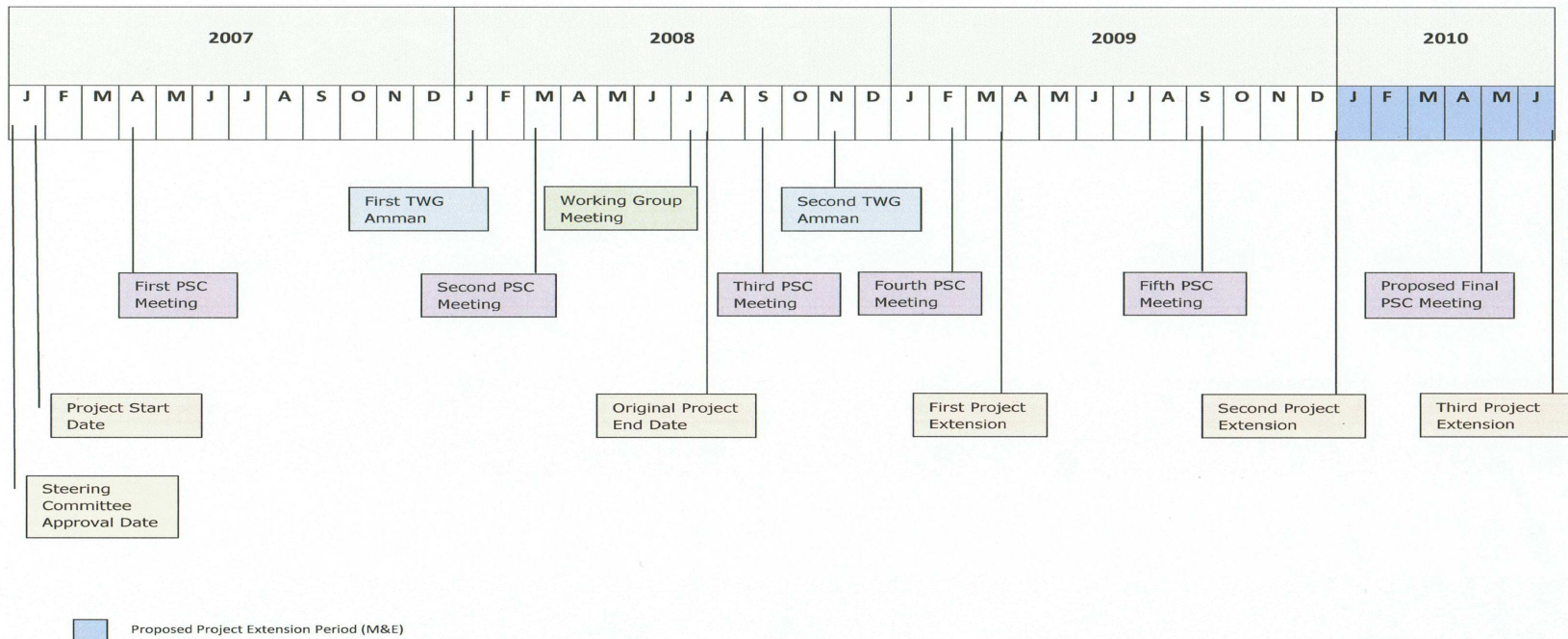
- (62) Has the trainee formulated a business plan?
- (63) If yes, explain main contents:
- (64) Has a business accounting and costing system been established?
- (65) Has a business recording system been established?
- (66) Has a marketing network been established?
- (67) Has a bank account been opened?
- (68) Has a bank loan been obtained?
- (69) How many employees are presently engaged in the trainee's business: Household members, others?

Annex 3: MISP III: Meeting Timeline

United Nations Industrial Development Organization
 MISP III: Meeting Timeline

PSC: Project Steering Committee
TWG: Technical Working Group

Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group Meetings Overview



Annex 4: MISP III: Dewaniyah Vocational Training Centre

United Nations Industrial Development Organization
 MISP III: Dewaniyah Vocational Training Centre

Dewaniyah Vocational Training Centre Milestones Overview

