# United Nations Development Group UNDAF Trust Fund Project #82895: P1-04

Date and Quarter: 1 April to 30 June 2014 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2014

Participating UN Organisation: UNDP Sector: Governance and Human Rights

Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry: The Iraqi Commission of Integrity

Title	Enhancing Transparent Participatory Governance and Human Rights				
Geographic	Nationwide				
Location	Tuttonwide				
<b>Project Cost</b>	USD 3,091,526 <sup>1</sup> reco	eived in two tr	ranches.		
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Duration	24 months				
Approval	5 April 2012	Starting	15 May 2012	Completion	31 December
Date (SC)	_	Date	-	Date	2014
Project	UNDP, in close cor	nsultation wit	h national count	erparts will un	dertake a series of
Description	interlinked and com	plementary in	terventions withi	n a programm	atic framework that
	aims to promote tran	sparent partic	ipatory governar	ice and strength	nen human rights in
	Iraq. The framework	k has four ou	tputs focusing or	n strengthening	g human rights and
	transparency throug	h participator	ry governance n	nechanisms. Fi	rst, to support the
	mandate and organi	zational struc	ture of the Hum	an Rights Con	nmission, including
	the establishment of	of sub-nation	al commissions.	Second, to	provide long term
	institutional develop	pment of the	e Human Right	s Commission	and its outreach
	capabilities through participatory governance mechanisms. Third, combat corruption				
	through the promoti	on of accoun	tability, integrity	and transpare	ncy at all levels of
	government and civi	l society. This	s involves suppor	t to the roll-out	of the Government
	of Iraq's National Anti-Corruption Strategy, to strengthen the capacities of key				
	parliamentary committees, to address corruption issues, to enhance engagement of				
	civil society organisations and media in addressing corruption and to provide				
	technical support for the establishment of a new KRG Commission of Integrity and				
	KRG Board of Supreme Audit. Fourth, to utilise civil society organisations to				
	promote participatory and transparent governance which includes financial and				
	technical support to civil society organisations to enhance their engagement with				
	parliament.				

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Funding for the project will be through two tranche. The total amount committed to this project by the UNDAF Trust Fund is USD 3,091,526.

The first tranche has been released in the amount of USD 1,574,585 which is reflecting in the table above until the remaining second tranche is received by UNDP. The second tranche request is under preparation.

At the time of receipt of the second tranche for the amount of USD 1,516,941 this section will be adapted to reflect full project funds.

### **Development Goal and Immediate Objectives**

UNDAF: Priority 1

Improved Governance, including the protection of human rights.

Priority Outcome 1.4

The Iraqi State has more efficient, accountable and participatory governance at national and sub-national levels.

UNDP CPAP: Outcome 3

Strengthened regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes in place for accountable, transparent and participatory governance at national and local levels.

- Output 1: The Iraq Human Rights Commission has enhanced capacity to execute its mandate.
- Output 2: Iraq has a national platform for an expanded human rights dialogue.
- Output 3: The Iraqi state is able to promote and undertake governance process in an accountable and transparent manner.
- Output 4: Civil society organisations have enhanced capacity to engage with parliament and relevant parliamentary committees on policy issues.

## **Outputs, Key Activities and Procurement**

Note: Activities are in relation to section 4 page 10 of the project document

Output 1	1. The Iraq Human Rights Commission has enhanced capacity to execute its		
	mandate.		
Activities	1.1 The Iraq High Commission for Human Rights has the organisational structure to function effectively.		
	1.2 The Iraq High Commission for Human Rights has technically competent staff.		
	1.3 Subnational Iraq High Commission for Human Rights entities established.		
Output 2	2. Iraq has a national platform for an expanded human rights dialogue.		
Activities	2.6 A national dialogue on human rights supported.		
	2.7 Awareness raised on human rights issues and ways to protect these rights		
	2.8 The Iraq High Commission for Human Rights capacity to reach out and clarify		
	work and mandate enhanced.		
Output 3	3. The Iraqi state is able to promote and undertake governance process in an		
	accountable and transparent manner.		
Activities	3.1 The CoR capacity in undertaking accountability oversight functions increased.		
	3.2 The KRG plans for a Commission of Integrity in place.		
	3.3 The KRG's Board of Supreme Audit capacity enhanced.		
	3.4 An investigative journalism curriculum developed and in place.		
Output 4	4. Civil society organisations have enhanced capacity to engage with		
	parliament and relevant parliamentary committees on policy issues.		
Activities	4.1 Iraqi CSOs and independent media capacity to hold the government to account		
	in the areas of human rights, corruption and service delivery strengthened.		
	4.2 Interface between relevant parliamentary committees and CSOs on issues of		
	human rights, corruption and service delivery enhanced.		
	4.3a Advocacy and awareness-raising on corruption issues enhanced.		

	<ul><li>4.3b Implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy through partnership with CSOs and independent media implemented.</li><li>4.4 Donor coordination on civil society issues in Iraq enhanced.</li></ul>
Procurement (major items)	

Funds Committed	TOTAL 3,013,719.42: USD Human Rights: 1,363,102.02 Anti-corruption: 1,324,699.95 CSO: 325,917.45	% of total funds from both 1 <sup>st</sup> tranche and 2 <sup>nd</sup> tranche (USD) 3,091,526	97%
Funds Disbursed	TOTAL 1,731,890.20: USD Human Rights: 747,284.69 Anti-corruption: 744,429.22 CSO: 240,176.29	% of funds from both 1 <sup>st</sup> tranche and second tranche (USD) 3,091,526	56%
Forecast final date	December 2014	Delay (months)	7

A request was submitted in March to the Iraq UNDAF Trust Fund Steering Committee for an extension until 31 December 2014. The overall implementation of the project is progressing well with good achievements; however the timeline of the project has been affected by the escalation of violence within Iraq since 2013. The extension takes into consideration the fact that the elections of late April put certain activities on hold due to the sensitivities and there is a shift of priorities related to some of the sensitive issues addressed by this project. In addition, the current post-election political and security scenario justifies a conservative estimate for a completion of the project by 31 December 2014.

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results

Output 1 The Iraq Human Rights Commission has enhanced capacity to execute its mandate.	- Support commence to the outreach including lessons learned and documentation report on the work of the COR Human Rights Committee.  Training on receiving complaints, investigations of human is postponed due to the current security situation.	% of planned	85%
Output 2 Iraq has a national platform for an expanded human rights dialogue.	<ul> <li>Support extended to enhance the institutional capacity of the IBHR to respond to the current IDP humanitarian crisis.</li> <li>Support completed and concluded to the establishment of the Human Rights Civil Society Advisory Board.</li> <li>Continuous support to establishment of Gender Coordination Board to support the work of the IHCHR.</li> </ul>	% of planned	90%
Output 3 The Iraqi state is able to promote and undertake governance process in an accountable and transparent manner.	<ul> <li>The CoR capacity in undertaking accountability oversight functions has increased.</li> <li>The Kurdistan Region plans for a Commission of Integrity are in place.</li> <li>The Kurdistan Region Board of Supreme Audit capacity has been enhanced.</li> <li>An investigative journalism curriculum has been developed and is in place.</li> </ul>	% of planned	75%
Output 4 Civil society organisations have enhanced capacity to engage with parliament and relevant parliamentary committees on policy issues.	- Iraqi CSOs' ability to hold the government accountable in the areas of human rights, corruption and service delivery has been strengthened. (31+6 CSOs engaged so far)	% of planned	80%

parliamentary committees and CSOs on issues of human rights, corruption and service delivery has been enhanced. (CSO Committee and Human Rights Committee engaged so far)	
- Advocacy and awareness- raising on corruption issues enhanced.	100%
- Implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy through partnership with CSOs and independent media implemented.	30%
- Donor coordination on civil society issues in Iraq has been enhanced. (Five informal CSO coordination meetings for development partners held so far in Baghdad and one in Erbil; two donor coordination meetings held so far)	100%

#### Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

#### Output 1: The Iraq Human Rights Commission has enhanced capacity to execute its mandate.

During the reporting period of time on 6 June 2014, UNDP recruited Human Rights Expert to support the development of the outreach strategy, strengthen the investigation and the reporting capacity of the IHCHR core staff. The Expert produces an assessment report on the existing investigation, outreach, and reporting capacity. Training of 35 core staff supposed to take place between 15 to 30 June in Baghdad. Due to the emerging political and security crisis the training is postponed to the third quarter providing for better security situation.

UDP continues with the planning of the upcoming study tour to India. The study tour was supposed to take place between 4 to 8 August with participation of the representatives, namely, core staff of the IHCHR and IBHR. The purpose of the study tour is to examine the Indian experience and assist the TwoIraqi institutions to develop their communication strategy.

## Output 2: Iraq has a national platform for an expanded human rights dialogue.

### Federal Level:

UNDP continues to support the establishment of the Human Rights Civil Society Board, a series of meetings were held in Baghdad in May 2014 to finalize the selection of the civil society representatives in the Board. A request was received from the IHCHR representative to extend the duration of the selection as well as the number of representations to ensure maximum inclusiveness. The Human Rights Civil Society Advisory Board will consist of 18 representatives from CSOs. Elections will open with a call for proposals and allow CSOs to nominate and vote for members of this Board. The process is ongoing, more details at the CS section.

As part of the project's support to establish a Gender equality mechanism to advance Gender within the work of the IHCHR, UNDP organised two meetings with Civil Society Organisations and Government Officials. As a result, a task force wass formed and has commenced meetings with different women's rights actors. Two meetings held in April and June 2014 resulted in the endorsement of the composition of the task force and the agreement to have the taskforce meetings rotationally chaired. The prime goal this exercise is to avoid the domination of one CSO and ensure participation of all members in the decision making process.

#### At Kurdistan Regional level:

UNDP expanded its support through this project to the Independent Board for Human Rights in Kurdistan (IBHR). During the reporting period, UNDP approved Terms of References to recruit an international consultant, who will produce a programme oriented assessment that will assist UNDP to prioritize its capacity building and the institutional development support. The recruitment of the expert will take place during the third quarter of the project. Due to the current Refugee and IDP humanitarian crisis in the KRG, UNDP has prioritized its support to enhance the capacity of the host-community to enable them to effectively respond to the crisis and provide the required services to the IDPs and the Syrian Refugees. In doing so UNDP is working very closely with IBHR to have two staff embedded within the IBHR to monitor

the human rights situation of the IDP and the Syrian Refugees in the two cities of Dahouk and Sulymainah. The two staff will be located in two cities to report on human rights situation in the camps as well as off camps. The two staff will report to the Head of the Board, who will share his findings with relevant Government institutions.

# Output 3: The Iraqi state is able to promote and undertake governance process in an accountable and transparent manner

## The Kurdistan Region plans in place for its forthcoming Commission of Integrity

- During the quarter UNDP continued support to the Kurdistan Region Commission of Integrity.
- During 4th Quarter 2013 fourteen staff members were recruited by the Kurdistan Commission of Integrity Office. The Kurdistan Commission of Integrity Office was established based on the plans developed within this project.
- The Kurdistan Commission of Integrity Office initiated work/implementation planning during 4th Ouarter 2013.
- The Kurdistan Commission of Integrity sent a letter to UNDP requesting technical support from the Accountability, Transparency and Anti-Corruption Programme during 4th Quarter 2013.
- Surpassed deliverable identified in project agreement 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2013.
- During 3rd Quarter 2013 the establishment of the Kurdistan Commission of Integrity was under development.
- At the end of 2nd Quarter 2013 an agreement on the structure, legal and operational framework of the Kurdistan Commission of Integrity reached and endorsed by the Commissioner of Integrity, completing this component.
- In June 2013 UNDP facilitated a meeting of key officials in the Kurdistan Region, including the new Commissioner of Integrity to review the proposed amendments to the present law. The review related to organizational independence, and instructions on prevention and investigation work. The workshop addressed additional areas such as: rights, access, work structure and framework for investigators.
- The findings of the study facilitated the Kurdistan Parliament to appoint the new Kurdistan Commissioner of Integrity in mid-May 2013.
- The comparative analytical study assisted in the drafting of amendments to address gaps in the current law and the development of a draft by-law. The draft by-law on the establishment of the KR-COI, included roles and responsibilities, organogram and provided instructions on work related illicit enrichment and regulation of investigative work during 2nd Quarter 2013.
- A comparative analytical study identifying gaps in laws and in the legal and operational framework of the Kurdistan Region Commission of Integrity was produced 1st Quarter 2013.

# The capacity of the KRG's Board of Supreme Audit enhanced with the Needs Assessment completed and a Medium to Long Term Strategy for development presented

- Both the Needs Assessment and a Medium to Long Term Strategy were handed over to the KRG Prime Minister's Office before the end of 2013.
- The Board of Supreme Audit Needs Assessment and the Strategy were formally presented to the Kurdistan Regional Government Prime Minister's Office, Kurdistan Regional Government

Parliament and Kurdistan Regional Ministry of Finance in June 2013.

- Based on the findings of the Needs Assessment a medium to long term strategy for the development of the Kurdistan Region Board of Supreme Audit was developed during the 2nd Quarter 2013. This strategy is a roadmap to transform the Kurdistan Region Board of Supreme Audit into a modern effective state audit institution that ensures public sector transparency and accountability.
- The Board of Supreme Audit Needs Assessment was completed in the six areas of: a) legal framework and independence; b) governance structure and organisation; c) human resources; d) physical resources; e) audit methods; and f) external relations. The recommendations and needs assessment are available in both English and Arabic.
- In March 2013 UNDP in collaboration with the Kurdistan Region Board of Supreme Audit initiated a Needs Assessment to determine the capacity and institutional development needs. The Needs Assessment utilized the founding principles, prerequisites and fundamental principles of public sector audit set by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) as the baseline.

### The partners for Investigative Journalism defined and curriculum development initiating)

- The issue of Baghdad training with the consultant agency could not be resolved and resulted in readvertisement in 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2014. The re-advertisement will close during 2nd Quarter 2014.
- The consultant agency award for the investigative journalism curriculum went at risk during 4th
  Quarter 2013 as the Consultant Agency Board decided that their staff cannot provide training in
  Baghdad due to the deterioration in the security situation. Therefore, this activity could not move
  ahead until the security situation improved or their Board offered an alternate suggestion on how
  they would work for the University of Baghdad.
- UNDP held a consultative meeting March 2013 to identify immediate needs in improving skills of
  journalists in investigating and reporting corruption. This meeting resulted in a decision on the next
  steps for developing a technical and academic curriculum and that additional universities may
  become involved.
- The Baghdad University-Media College and the Iraq Anti-Corruption Academy expressed great interest and requested assistance and expertise to develop investigative journalism 1st Quarter 2013.

# Output 4: Civil society organisations have enhanced capacity to engage with parliament and relevant parliamentary committees on policy issues.

### 8 CSO Consortia grant implementation and networking with Council of Representatives

Eight grantee CSO Consortia (comprised of 31 local CSOs) have been implementing eight projects aimed at holding the government to account in the areas of human rights, corruption and service delivery since May 2013. The 8 projects where successfully completed at the end of April 2014. This experience under the project "Empowering CSOs in Iraq" (funded by the Danish Government) has served to build a model for engaging with CSOs and the CSO parliamentary committee under the "Enhancing Transparent Participatory Governance and Human Rights" project as part of Nordic donor coordination.

Final reports from the CSOs are due at the end of June and the achievements of the projects will be reported on in detail in the next quarterly report once there has been time to analyse them. The implementation of the eight projects has been accompanied by technical support for capacity development to the CSOs. Projects cover most Governorates of Iraq and relate mostly to enhancing accountability on local services, through citizen participation and networking between CSOs and local authorities. Other projects include, raising awareness on human rights, particularly minority rights and promoting better governance through enhanced women participation in the public sphere (see annexed project summaries for more details). Overall, implementation has gone well with CSOs being able to catch up with delays that had been incurred during the year of implementation. Fortunately the CSO Consortia finalized the implementation of their projects prior to the security crisis that initiated in June 2014 and the CSO projects have therefore not been affected directly.

### CSOs addressing Human Rights issues

The implementation of 6 NGO projects has been successfully completed on 15 March 2014 after 6 months of implementation. NGOs had received USD15,000 grants for Human Rights projects with the support of UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNAMI). Below is a brief account of the achievements by the 6 grantees:

# HR1/Bustan Association for Children Protection and Education Combating women's self-immolation in KRG

Bustan Association for Child Protection and Education managed to target youth, men and stakeholders from 16 rural areas (30 Communities) in Sulymaniyah and Erbil to address the issue of women's self-immolation in KRG. The organization used different tools such as focus groups, workshops and TV spots to generate debate about this important issue. In addition, to introduce different mechanisms to help women when they face social problem or women rights violation. The project helped the organization to establish good relationship with local communities, local authorities and other NGOs working on similar topics.

## HR2/Baghdad Women Association (BWA)

### Raising awareness on violence against women in Sader city

Baghdad Women Association managed to highlight and generate community debate about violence against women in Al- Sader city, especially among men, tribal leaders and religious men. Addressing issues like early marriages, contract marriages outside the courts, Depriving girls of education...etc. About 160 male leaders have participated in the activities of this project to enhance their understanding of women rights. A set of recommendations has been developed with the participation of stakeholders. The organization managed to get the municipal council and other institutions involved in implementing the activities of the project, establishing promising partnership that would lead to further cooperation.

#### HR3/NFDO

# Special Needs Rights - Awareness Campaign

The project aims to raise awareness about the rights of people with special needs in Dhuk and Zakhow. The organization used different tools to outreach more than 400 people (Special Needs, their families and service providers). The project highlighted the role of media in addressing such issue, and led to establish good relation and starting cooperation with the Journalists Association and most of the media channels in Dhuk and Zakhow.

#### HR4/PAO

#### Eye on Prisons

Through the activities of this project, the organization managed to collect information about 18 prisons located in 13 different governorates, and comparing this information to international standards. The organization established very good relationship with the Ministry of Justice in KRG among other governmental institutions to facilitate and guarantee access to prisons. On the other hand, the organization established relations with other organizations to conduct field visits to prisons in the rest of Iraq, which highlighted the importance of the topic and increased interest in carrying out such monitoring activities. A report with a set of observations and recommendations about prisons in Iraq has been prepared and published to provide a reference for future advocacy, awareness or monitoring projects and activities.

## HR5/ Equality for Human Rights Human Rights Defenders Network

This is project is the first of its kind in Al-Mothana governorate, which aims to establish a foundation for a Human Rights defenders network. About 60 participants (NGOs, media, activists, academics and college students) have been involved in a set of training workshops to enhance their knowledge and skills in Human Rights monitoring. The project highlighted the importance of Human Rights monitoring mechanisms among the target group and their communities. A report has been published about Human Rights situation in the governorate, based on the monitoring activities of the members of the network. Direct contact and cooperation with government institutions has been established such as the Ministry of Human Rights, the Human Rights High Commission and the Iraqi Parliament.

### HR6/ Orphans Mother

## The path to the Human Rights High Commission

The project aims to introduce practical mechanisms to report Human Rights violations to the Human Right High Commission. The organization managed to sign an MOU with the commission to allow direct contact and cooperation with the committee that is responsible for collecting the Human Rights complains and Human Rights violations. Boxes to collect HR complains have been placed in three government institutions including the Baghdad Governorate Council. This project contained different activities and tools to introduce and to raise awareness about the role of Human Right High Commission in Iraq in governmental and non-governmental institutions in Baghdad, Babil, Najaf and Dyala governorates.

# Reinforcing linkages between CSOs, the Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights Parliamentary Committee.

The establishment of an NGO Human Rights Advisory Board is progressing well. In April, UNDP launched a call for Expression of Interest for NGOs working on Human Rights issues in Iraq to become members of the Advisory Board platform and to nominate and vote for representatives for each governorate of Iraq. Over 200 NGO responses where processed and assessed against an objective set of criteria. The results of this process where presented at an Observer Committee comprised of representatives from the Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights parliamentary Committee, the CSO parliamentary Committee, the NGO Directorate, Iraqi Minorities Council NGO and Tammuz NGO. The conclusion of this first round was that 88 NGOs qualified to be regular members of the Advisory Board and 52 valid nominations (30 men and 22 women) to become representatives at the governing body could go for the voting process. The meeting was a very valuable forum for ideas to be exchanged among the observers and solutions to practical implementation problems were found through discussion and compromise.

The next phase of the process is for these results to be announced to the 88 concerned NGOs and for their votes to be collected to establish the final 19 members (18 governorates + 1 extra for Baghdad) of the governing body. Given the current security situation it is anticipated that this process will be delayed and results of the voting process might not be obtainable until August or September. UNDP will then support the initial meetings of the Advisory Board, in particular to ensure consolidating a relation with the Human Rights Commission.

# Advocacy and awareness-raising on corruption issues through the National Anti-Corruption Campaign completed

- Activity Complete: 96 workshops held with 3,240 attendees (987 female / 2,253 male).
- The interactive workshops enabled participants to come forward with recommendations to intensify the anti-corruption campaign and build coalitions and networks 3rd Quarter 2013.
- The Master Trainers conducted 96 workshops introducing different types of corruption, and means and ways to report suspected corruption to 3,240 attendees (987 female / 2,253 male) with attendance larger than anticipated. This completed 3rd Quarter 2013.
- The National Anti-Corruption Campaign completed in July 2013 within the 15 governorates, outside of the Kurdistan Region. Full breakdown of dates and attendance available. This is ahead of the Work Plan schedule.
- UNDP launched the National Anti-Corruption Campaign on 16 February 2013 in order to engage local citizens and civil society organisations in efforts against corruption. This Campaign was within 15 governorates, outside of the Kurdistan Region and completed July 2013.

## Enhancing CSO Anti-corruption intervention capacities

11 NGOs have received micro-grants (USD 5,000) to start their anti-corruption initiatives on 1 April 2014 and were due to complete their work by 30 June. Given the outburst of violence in the country in June it is now unclear what the situation of these grantees is. UNDP is reaching out to the NGOs that can be contacted to find out about their safety and the status of the projects. On NGO based in Anbar had already requested a no-cost extension early June and has been unreachable since then. It is anticipated that some of these initiatives will need time extensions and re-design.

The table below summarizes the micro-grants initiatives approved.

Ref.	Name	Project Title	Geographic Coverage
AC1	ALManahil Association for Women Development	The role of technology in improving governance and anti-corruption education and awareness promotion	Basra
AC2	Al-Tadhamun Iraqi League for Youth	Civil Observatory to monitor and evaluate the government's performance and to address administrative corruption in Anbar	Anbar
AC3	Child Rights and Family Protection Association	Promote integrity, transparency and accountability	Mosul

AC4	Children and Woman Affairs Organization	To promote and strengthen measures to combat corruption in government institutions in Diwaniyah	Qadisiya
AC5	Hannah Youth Organization	Corruption food scourge of society and everyone is responsible to detect fight and eliminate it	Baghdad
AC6	Iraqi Civic Action Network	The role of the marginalized groups in fighting corruption	Babil
AC7	Iraqi Civil Awareness Team	Yes we can	Baghdad
AC8	Negotiation & Strategic Studies Organization	Identify the sources and forms of corruption in real estate loans and how to address them	Erbil
AC9	Shaaub for Democracy Culture Foundation	Promote community participation in the monitoring of local service sectors	Baghdad
AC10	Um Al Yateem Foundation	CSOs alliance for accountability	Baghdad
AC11	Wand Alkhair Human Organization	Promote proper behavior in public office and empowering civil society	Diyala

# Challenges and Constraints

#### Challenges for Human Rights:

The recent eruption of conflict in Mousel and central Iraq coupled with the current security situation hinders UNDP from having expanded presence in Baghdad and will have impact on the implementation of the activities. Some activities will be managed remotely. Due to the security situation, UNDP will not be able to deploy experts inside Baghdad, so some of the project activities will be managed from Kurdistan Region of Iraq. UNDP is in consultation with all counterparts to prioritize project outputs and the implementation of activities.

#### CSO Component Challenges:

Given the security crisis in June 2014 it is anticipated that:

- The 11 Anti-Corruption grantee NGOs will probably not be able to continue implementing their projects. One NGO in Anbar could not be reached for 3 weeks now. A review of the project timelines and activities will need to be done.
- An anti-corruption training workshop is planned for September with the NGOs, it is unclear if the security situation will allow NGOs to gather for this event. The assignments of consultants Salem Poles and Ahmed Jassam might need to be revised.
- The voting process by NGOs to form an NGO Human Rights Advisory Board will continue ahead but it is anticipated that this process will be very slow as most NGOs will not be responsive by email
- Once the advisory board is created it is unclear if physical meetings will be able to take place due to the security, the assignment of the consultant Ms. Manal Benham related to this activity might have to be adjusted.

It has also been challenging in the past months for the project to maintain its close relation with the parliamentary committee on CSOs. Following the recent elections, the Iraqi Parliament has been focusing on political negotiations of the different blocks and meetings with UNDP on this CSO project have not been given priority by the MPs of the CSO committee. Because the new parliament will take time to be formed it

is anticipated that this project will continue working closely to the NGO Directorate as a local counterpart in its final stages.