**United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund**

**Project #:**(G11-15)

**Date and Quarter Updated: January- March, 1st Quarter 2009**

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| **Participating UN Organisation**: UNOPS | **Sector: Governance** |
| **Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry:** Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) | |

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| **Title** | Electoral Education Campaign | | | | |
| **Geographic Location** | Complete national coverage (19 Electoral Governorates) | | | | |
| **Project Cost** | 5,006,147 USD | | | | |
| **Duration** | Original: October 2007 – September 2008 (11 months)  Extension: until 30. June.2009 ( electoral calendar – 2 months)  Total duration: 13 months | | | | |
| **Approval Date (SC)** | 30/09/2007 | **Starting Date** | 03/10/2007 | **Completion Date** | 30/06/2009 |
| **Project Description** | The Electoral Education Campaign Project (EECP) seeks to raise public awareness of and  create discussion around all aspects of electoral processes by supporting initiatives  developed by the Iraqi civil society and by the Independent High Electoral Commission  (IHEC) of Iraq, so that Iraqi voters will be better prepared for and participate more actively  in the upcoming electoral events.  The two core objectives of the EECP are:  1. To establish around the electoral process at national and governorate levels  appropriate structures to create close cooperation between the IHEC and Iraqi civil society  as a means to increase transparency, independence and success of the electoral processes.  These structures will aim to remain a permanent coordination body between the civil  society and the IHEC after the conclusion of the project.  2. To enhance public awareness of electoral processes and principles using grant-funded  civil society projects as well as opportunities to link local opinion leaders with the IHEC,  following policies set by the Electoral Education Forum. | | | | |

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| **Development Goal and Immediate Objectives** |
| **Development Goals:**  The overall goal of the project is to promote democratic processes in Iraq, in particular elections and representative democracy, by increasing the understanding of Iraqi citizens of electoral processes and the importance of their participation in them.  The project directly contributes to the achievement of UNCT Goal 3 (*Mobilize civil society towards national unity*) and Goal 4 (*Promote good governance and democratic processes, assist to uphold the rule of law and establish a human rights regime*).  **Immediate Objectives:**   1. Establish and support an Electoral Education Forum (EEF) around the electoral process,   composed of prominent civic education-oriented networks and NGOs, the IHEC, as well as IEAT  and other international representatives, in which a strategy and action plan for the Electoral  Education Campaign can be negotiated, planned and monitored collegially.   1. Enhance public awareness of electoral processes and principles using grant-funded civil   society projects and opportunities to link local opinion leaders with the IHEC, following policies  set by the Electoral Education Forum.   1. Create long-term support of the IHEC towards the Iraqi civil society involvement in electoral   education as a means to increase transparency, independence and success of the electoral  processes. |

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| **Outputs, Key activities and Procurement** | |
| **Outputs** | ***The 7 expected outputs of the Electoral Education Campaign***  **Expected output 1:** An Electoral Education Forum composed of prominent civic  education-oriented networks and NGOs and the IHEC is created at the national level,  gathers representatives of IHEC and of Iraqi civil society and meets on a regular basis.  **Expected output 2:** In each governorate, a Governorate Electoral Education Committee,  composed of representatives from the IHEC, civil society and the media, is created to  coordinate the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Campaign at the local  level and meets regularly.  **Expected output 3:** A group of NGOs is selected through a grant fund mechanism and  trained about project and financial management.  **Expected output 4:** The selected group of NGOs implements public outreach action plans  in each electoral governorate in order to ensure that at least 55,000 Iraqi citizens have  gained accrued understanding of and interest for the electoral processes, thus leading to  a higher participation rate on the Election Day.  **Expected output 5:** A National Electoral Education Plan which sets policies and  implementation mechanisms for the national Electoral Education Campaign, including an  overall strategy for the Campaign and detailing key messages to be delivered, roles and  responsibilities of governmental and non-governmental actors, methods and materials, as  well as oversight and coordination mechanisms, is developed.  **Expected output 6:** In each electoral governorate, Opinion Leaders Sessions targeting  political entities, civil servants, youth leaders, traditional leaders, etc. are implemented  and allows raising public awareness of at least 2.500 Opinion Leaders across the country.  **Expected output 7:** A promotional campaign involving media materials (publications,  radio, TV) is launched across the country to support key messages of the Campaign. |
| **Activities** | As per project documents:  1.1.1 An implementing partner is selected to establish the Service Providerof the Electoral  Education Forum, organize the launch meeting and subsequent meetings of the Forum  and support the implementation of governorate-based activities.  1.1.2. Finalize with the IHEC, the list of representatives invited to sit in the EEF[[1]](#footnote-2)  1.1.3. Organize a 4-day launch meeting of the EEF.  1.1.4. A website and e-Forum facility is set up for the EEF.  1.1.5. An EEF newsletter is produced on a monthly-basis.  1.1.6. A Monitoring Agent is selected to monitor and evaluate all activities undertaken by  the EEF.  1.2.1. The EEF reaches consensus on key themes to be tackled during the Electoral  Education Campaign, identifies key messages for public outreach and appropriate  methods for dissemination, all presented in a National Electoral Education Plan (NEEP).  1.2.2. The EEF agree on the division of responsibilities under the National Electoral  Education Plan between the IHEC and civil society and nominates a Board for the Forum  (with representation of the IHEC).  1.3.1. The EEF Board meets on a bi-weekly basis in Baghdad with support from the EEF  Secretariat.  1.3.2. The EEF convenes in plenary every 2 months in Baghdad for coordination meetings,  under the leadership of the Board and with operational support of the Secretariat, to  review progress and impact of campaign and discuss necessary adjustments in relation to  the actual situation of the electoral processes.  1.4.1. The EEF Service Provider develops terms of reference for a promotional campaign on the  EEF and NEEP, to be approved by the EEF Board.  1.4.2. A graphic design company is contracted by UNOPS to design, based on the Terms of  Reference, promotional materials made of: posters, banners, pamphlets, accessories (Tshirts,pins, notebooks, caps, stickers, etc.) as well as radio spots (x 3) and TV spots (x 2).  1.4.3. Materials are produced and dispatched to 18 GEECs.  1.4.4. Distribution to end-users through meetings with opinion leaders, Grant Fund  projects and media outlets.  1.4.5. Radio and TV spots are aired on national and local channels for a total of 3 months  (to be split according to actual schedule of the Electoral Education Campaign on the  ground) However, based on needs assessment in the field, other needs emerged and thus a reallocation of the funds is under consideration  1.5.1. The Monitoring Agent produces a final evaluation report on the EEF’s work,  including a post-campaign impact survey run on a sample of direct and indirect project  beneficiaries.  1.5.2. A final Conference of the EEF is held after completion of the project.  1.5.3. Decisions are made on the future and the statutes of the EEF including its funding  strategy.  2.1.1 Terms of Reference for the Electoral Education Grant Fund (EEGF) are prepared and  discussed with the IHEC, with a breakdown of funds made available per region and per  recipient institutions (1. NGOs, 2. Universities, 3. Schools, 4. Media outlets). A special  allocation is reserved as well for women & youth projects.  2.1.2. The Grant Fund is advertised throughout the country and receives proposals.  2.1.3. The Project Management Committee (PMC) made of the IHEC and IEAT selects  proposals for funding (target of 70 grants country-wide)[[2]](#footnote-3).  2.1.4. UNOPS staff and the EEF Service Providerassist selected NGOs in finalizing their proposal  and enhance their project management and reporting capacities.  2.2.1. Up to 70 electoral education projects are funded across the country, covering a  large spectrum of target groups and involving a diverse range of activities such as  workshops, seminars, art/culture events, production of materials, research and opinion  polls, etc. Each project reaches in average 600 beneficiaries.  2.2.2. Other rounds of small projects are funded at a later stage of the electoral process  through the same mechanism.  2.2.3. The Monitoring Agent monitors the Grant Fund projects and measures their  efficiency (number of persons actually reached).  3.1.1. With support from the Secretariat, Governorate Electoral Education Committees  (GEEC) are formed. Each GEEC is composed of representatives of grantees selected under  the Grant Fund and from IHEC Governorate Offices staff[[3]](#footnote-4).  3.1.2. Training of trainers for GEEC members4 on all relevant electoral themes and on the  National Electoral Education Plan, run on a regional basis (Erbil, Baghdad, Basrah) by the  EEF Secretariat[[4]](#footnote-5).  3.1.3. Each GEEC meets regularly to coordinate the various activities taking place at  governorate level for the Electoral Education Campaign (see Grant Fund under 2.2. and  debate / awareness sessions under 3.2).  3.2.1. Each GEEC defines an action plan to run consultations and training with opinion  leaders on electoral themes. Plans are reviewed and endorsed by the Board of the EEF  and funds to support them released by UNOPS.  3.2.2. Each GEEC reaches at least 125 opinion leaders (depending on governorate size)  through 2-day focus group meetings of about 25 persons each, resulting in at least 2500  civic leaders reached nation-wide.  3.2.3. The Monitoring Agent attends and reports on all GEEC outreach meetings  3.3.1. Each GEEC convenes for a wrap-up meeting after series of awareness trainings with  civic leaders carried out, and compiles outcomes of the process (suggestions, critics,  questions, appreciations raised by civic leaders on new electoral framework) in a  Governorate Report. Each wrap-up meeting is facilitated by the Secretariat.  3.3.2. The 18 Governorate Reports are received by the Service Providerand compiled in a  National Report.  3.3.3. The National Report is presented to the EEF and to the IHEC Board of  Commissioners.  4.1.1. Two Iraqi civil society experts are recruited, briefed and seconded to the IHEC  Public Outreach Division for the duration of the project.  4.1.2. The Public Outreach Division (POD) ensures optimal participation level from the  IHEC to initiatives run by the EEF.  4.1.3. The Public Outreach Division represents the IHEC in the Project Management Unit.  4.2.1. The IHEC staff directly involved with the EEF (members of the Forum and  governorate staff seating in the GEECs) receive a two-day orientation training on the civil  society (rights, laws) in Erbil, organized by the Secretariat.  4.2.2. The Public Outreach Division provides regular briefings to IHEC staff and  commissioners on the progress of the Electoral Education Campaign.  4.3.1. The IHEC chairs the Grant Selection Committee established within the Project  Management Committee.  4.3.2. After completion of the first round of grants [for a total of 1,5 m USD], and  assuming that evaluation by the monitoring agent has proven the efficiency of the  mechanism, the IHEC provides additional funds to the Grant Fund (with a target of 20%  co-funding). |
| **Procurement**  **(major items)** | All through January NGOs continued to send their Final reports on the grants as they have finished the implementation during the previous quarter.  The methodology of processing those reports is as follows:   * NGO prepares both narrative and financial reports based on UNOPS regulations * Field Staff conduct initial check on NGO reports * Narrative and Financial reports sent to EECP in Amman * Narrative reports are checked along with financial reports against support documents sent by the organization.   Final narrative and financial reports have been received. The process of checking and finalizing this large number of reports meant that the Project must apply high levels of flexibility in terms of time and method, and thus successfully finalize checking reports in due time.  Furthermore, a project extension was applied and approved during this quarter in order to apply the campaign work to the northern region in preparation for upcoming parliamentary elections in Jun this year. The extension will implement further Opinion Leaders Sessions, First time Voters Sessions, and outreach activities through 9 granted NGOs in the Northern region. |

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| **Funds Committed** | 618887.81 | **% of approved** | 87.11% |
| **Funds Disbursed** | 220911.54 | **% of approved** | 31.09% |
| **Forecast final date** | 30/06/2009 | **Delay (months)** | None |

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| **Direct Beneficiaries** | **Number of Beneficiaries** | **% of planned (current status)** |
| Men | 156,436 | 424% (planned: 36,850) |
| Women | 107,690 | 593% (planned: 18,150) |
| Children | N/A | N/A |
| IDPs | 20,535\* | N/A |
| Others *(Youth, First time voters, Disabled)* | Youth: 98,497\*  First time voters: 63,917\*  Disabled: 5,214\* | N/A |
| Indirect beneficiaries | N/A | N/A |
| Employment generation (men/women) | New posts in all 75 granted NGOs | N/A |
| *\*all figures are included in the Men and Women totals.* | | |

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| **Quantitative achievements against objectives and results** | | | |
| Obj 1 | The Electoral Education Forum has become the first platform of discussion and coordination of NGOs and IHEC’s public outreach strategies. 19 Governorate Electoral Education Committees established and trained on holding opinion leader sessions. | **100% of planned** |  |
| Obj 2 | 75 NGOs have been selected to receive funding and capacity building through the Electoral Education Grant Fund. The granted NGOs have completed the implementation of their projects and reached 264,126 Iraqi citizens (against an objective of 55,000 beneficiaries). | **100 % of planned** |  |
| Obj 3 | IHEC - Iraqi civil society’s cooperation enhanced through the Forum, GEEC and Opinion Leader Sessions. Usefulness of the partnership understood by both parties, and mainstreamed in preparation on a possible next phase of the project | **100% of planned** |  |

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| **Qualitative achievements against objectives and results** |
| **Output 1 –** 100% achievedduring previous reporting periods |
| **Output 2 –** 100% achieved during previous reporting periods |
| **Output 3 –** 100% achieved during previous reporting periods |
| **Output 4** – 100% achieved during previous reporting periods  The project extension was approved during this reporting period to implement a new set of activities (granted operations, Opinion Leaders Sessions, First Time Voter Sessions) to support the Kurdish Parliamentary elections. The implementation plan for this extension is currently being finalized. |
| **Output 5 –** 100% achieved during previous reporting periods |
| **Output 6 –** 100% achieved  During the previous quarter 49 Opinion Leaders’ Sessions (OLS) were implemented in all Iraqi governorates, targeting political entities, tribal and religious leaders reaching 3988 opinion leaders.  During this quarter an additional 4599 opinion leaders were targeted through 45 sessions for civil servants and academics, youth and women associations, and university students. The total number reached through the opinion leaders sessions is 8587 (against 2500 planned).  More OLS are currently being planned under the approved project extension, to be implemented in the Northern region for the Kurdish Parliamentary Elections. |

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| **Main implementation constrains & challenges (2-3 sentences)** |
| The pre-electoral phase is logically the peak period of any electoral education project. Paradoxically, this is also the one during which the main implementing partner of the Electoral Education Campaign, the IHEC, was the less available, due to the incredible workload carried by the Board of Commissioners. However, this did not create any major bottleneck effect, thanks to a realistic work plan (on a daily or even hourly basis for the last days before the elections), agreed sufficiently in advance with the IHEC. |
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1. Total membership should remain around 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. To avoid conflicts of interest, civil society members of the EEF cannot set in this selection committee [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Exact size of membership in each GEEC will vary but a rule will be applied making civil society representation in these committees higher than IHEC’s [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. This TOT will be run as soon as recipients of grant fund support are selected so that these CSOs can apply the knowledge acquired in these training sessions in their own projects [↑](#footnote-ref-5)