**Eighth Six-month progress report for Electyoral education Campaign project**

# REPORT COVER PAGE

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| Participating UN Organization: |  | Cluster: |
| UNOPS |  | Governance  |

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| Project No. and Project Title: |  | Report Number:  |
| G11-15 Electoral Education Campaign Period |  | 2 |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Reporting Period:  |  | Project Budget: |
| 1 January – 30 June 2008  |  | **US$ 5,006,148** |

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| List Implementing Partners: |  | Geographic Coverage/Scope: |
| * *UNAMI / IEAT*
* *Independent High Electoral Commission*
 |  | Complete national coverage |

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| Abbreviations and acronyms: |  | Duration/Closed Project/Timeline Extension: |
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| BoC  | Board of Commissioners (IHEC) |
| Com. | Commissioner (IHEC) |
| CSO | Civil society organisations |
| DAI | Development Alternatives Inc. |
| DFID | Department for International Development (UK) |
| EC | European Commission |
| EECP | Electoral Education Campaign Project |
| EEF | Electoral Education Forum |
| EEM | Electoral Education Manual |
| FA | Field Associate (UNOPS) |
| FCC | Forum Coordination Committee |
| GEEC | Governorate Electoral Education Committee |
| GEO | Governorate Electoral Office |
| *IEAT* | *Internal Electoral Assistance Team* |
| IFES | International Foundation for Electoral System |
| IHEC | Independent High Electoral Commission  |
| NEEP | National Electoral Education Plan |
| OLS | Opinion Leader Sessions |
| POD | Public Outreach Division (IHEC) |
| PRT  | Provincial Reconstruction Team (US) |
| SEC | Secretariat of the Forum (headquarters Baghdad) |
| SEC-G | Secretariat field officers in the governorates |
| UNAMI | United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq |
| VRU | Voter Registration Update |
| VRC | Voter Registration Center |

 |  | * October 2007- December 2008.
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# NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

# Purpose

* 1. **1.1 Provide the main objectives, outcomes, outputs of the programme/project**

The project seeks to raise public awareness of and create discussion around all aspects of electoral processes by supporting initiatives developed by the Iraqi civil society, in cooperation with the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)[[1]](#footnote-2), so that Iraqi voters will be better prepared for and participate more actively in the upcoming electoral events.

Immediate Objectives are:

1. Establish and support an Electoral Education Forum 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.
2. 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.
3. Create close cooperation between the IHEC and Iraqi civil society as a means to increase transparency, independence and success of the electoral processes.

Main Outputs

1. A National Electoral Education Plan, developed by an Electoral Education Forum made of representatives of the Civil Society and IHEC, sets policies and implementation mechanisms for a 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.
2. General public is more aware of and supports the Electoral Education Campaign as a result of a promotional campaign involving media materials (publications, radio, TV).
3. The Electoral Education Forum remains a permanent coordination body between the Civil Society and the IHEC after the conclusion of the project.
4. In each governorate, a Governorate Electoral Education Committee, composed of representatives from the IHEC, civil society and the media, is able to coordinate the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Campaign at the local level.
5. At least 55,000 Iraqis have gained accrued understanding of and interest for the electoral processes, translating into higher participation rate on Election Day.
6. Policies on electoral education are reviewed regularly through feedback gathered from grassroots activities.
7. The IHEC has developed stronger ties and cooperation channels with the civil society involved in civic education.
	1. **Explain how the programme/project is relevant to the following benchmarks:**
* **UN Assistance Strategy for Iraq,**
* **UN Millennium Development Goals,**
* **Joint Needs Assessment ,**
* **Iraqi National Development Strategy**

This project will directly respond to:

* UNCT Iraq Strategic Goal/Outcome Matrix Goal 3 and Outcome 3.1 UNCT Strategic Goal 3 being to: *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*).
* Cluster G Goal 3: *Voters in Iraq understand and participate in Electoral Process (Electoral Awareness & Education)*. At the same time the project will provide support through training for the IHEC staff in order to improve their understanding and ability to work with Civil Society. This will help the IHEC develop a better working relationship with the CSO that will be of benefit in better understanding the electoral education needs of the general Iraqi public and obtaining the input of these organizations in developing effective electoral awareness programs.

This project will contribute tangentially to the achievement of:

* MDG 8 concerning the global partnership for development. By providing access to the most up to date media technologies for disseminating electoral education information the project will assist the IHEC in their efforts to facilitate in the creation of a stable political system in Iraq. This system is essential to enable Iraq to develop in an acceptable and positive manner for all its citizens.
* MDG 3 contributing to increase the participation of women in the political life and in elected positions.
	1. **Indicate the main implementing partners, their roles and responsibilities, and their interaction with the Agency**

The main area of cooperation in this project is between the UNAMI and UNOPS with UNAMI providing overall technical supervision and UNOPS being engaged as the executing agency. This project is also closely linked to the on-going *Institutional Capacity-Building Program for the IHEC*, implemented by UNAMI, UNDP and UNOPS.

From the UN side, UNAMI and UNOPS will work together closely and coordinate their activities at all levels with the IHEC and other project partners and stakeholders. IFES, as a member of the IEAT, also provides technical assistance to the IHEC Board of Commissioners and Public Outreach Division in the implementation of this project.

The IHEC is also a partner in this project. The project is related directly to the IHEC and has been developed as a result of their concerns regarding the implementation of their electoral responsibilities and how best to convey electoral education information to the Iraqi population at large. The IHEC forms part of the Forum and GEECs, which are cornerstones of the Project and of the Grant Management Unit, which is responsible for selection of and oversight over the grantee NGOs implementing awareness raising activities countrywide.

The project will also work together with other UN agencies involved in civic education in Iraq (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIFEM) when and where applicable.

1. **Human Resources**
	1. National Staff & Consultants: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme)
	2. Programme
	3. Grant Associate - 1; Project Officer – 1; Field Associates – 2 full time, 4 part-time
	4. Operations
	5. Finance Assistant – 1
	6. International Staff: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme)
	7. Programme
	8. Project Manager – 1 (new project manager hired in June 2008)
	9. Civic education Specialist – 1 (part-time)
	10. Operations
	11. Admin/Finance Manager – 1 (part-time)
2. **Methods of Operating**
	1. **3.1 Summarize the implementation mechanisms primarily utilized and how they are adapted to achieve maximum impact given the challenging operating context.**

Project implementation regarding support and capacity building of the Forum and GEECs is being conducted through a purpose set up Secretariat.

The Secretariat was established through a competitive procurement process and has offices in all governorates of Iraq.

The Secretariat organisation also has strong experience with Iraqi civil society and elections and is thus well place to support the Forum, the governorate activities and the IHEC in improving relations with Iraqi civil society.

The Secretariat is also responsible for co-monitoring the NGO grantee activities in all governorates.

* 1. **3.2 Provide details on the procurement procedures utilized and explain variances in standard procedures.**

Standard procurement procedures have been applied for the purchase of services and equipment under this project (no works contracts until now), as well as for the selection of the 75 grantees funded under the project grant fund (open call for proposals).

* 1. **3.3 Provide details on the monitoring system(s) that are being used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the ongoing programme/project. Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.**

Double track monitoring system / each track including a headquarter supervision and a field based expertise:

* Track 1 (integrated monitoring): UNOPS IQOC Amman - UNOPS Project Associates covering all electoral governorates
* Track 2 (outsourced monitoring): Electoral Education Forum Secretariat – SEC Field Officers covering all electoral governorates

Integration of lessons learnt: project design is based on clusters of activities (i.e.: grant fund, GEEC trainings, Opinion Leaders Sessions, etc.). The holding of regular Forum meetings (7 meetings planed during the project) allows the project team to proceed with mid-term adaptation and integration of lessons learnt.

*In example, the first semester 2008 showed a need for integration of political entities; political entities became therefore one of the target groups of the Opinion Leaders Sessions to be organised as of August 2008*

1. **Results**
	1. **Provide a summary of programme/project progress in relation to planned outcomes and outputs; explain any variance in achieved versus planned outputs during the six month reporting period.**
	2. **Report on progress made toward the achievement of specific medium-term outcomes of the programme/project as a result of the achieved short-term outputs during this reporting period.**
	3. **Report on the key outputs achieved in the six month period including # and nature of the activities (inputs), % of completion and beneficiaries.**
	4. **Explain, if relevant, delays in programme/project implementation, the nature of the constraints, lessons learned in the process and actions taken to mitigate future delays.**
	5. **List the key partnerships and collaborations, and explain how such relationships impact on the achievement of results.**
	6. **Summarize achievements against planned results for cross cutting issues: security, gender, human rights, employment (including # of short and/or long-term jobs created), and environment.**
	7. The Electoral Education Forum composed of 19 representatives from various Iraqi civil society organisation and 4 members from the IHEC, held 5 meetings to develop its own internal rules and make plans for the Electoral Education Campaign. In particular, the Forum formulated the the National Electoral Education Plan which details the themes, sub-themes, target groups and outreach methods for the Campaign.
	8. Five newsletters (monthly) produced and issued by the Forum through the Secretariat.
	9. Message Development Committee established and first draft of Civic Education Manual under preparation.
	10. The purpose-made Secretariat has provided logistical, administrative and technical support to both the Forum and the Governorate Electoral Education Committees.
	11. Seventy five NGOs across 19 governorates selected through a competitive bidding process to participate in the Electoral Education Grant Fund to support direct public outreach initiatives targeting the general public. Two hundred and fifty two proposals were received and evaluated by UNOPS, UNAMI and the IHEC. MOAs between UNOPS and each of the 75 NGOs have been completed and first payments released.
	12. Four regional four-day training for the selected granted NGOs held in Erbil (1) and Baghdad (2) on proposal writing and grants management. Trainings for the Southern region were also held in Baghdad due to poor security conditions in Basra. The fighting in Basra and Baghdad in March caused delays in the training.
	13. NGOs grass roots awareness raising activities (holding meetings, radio shows etc) focusing on the Voter Registration Update started across the country. They were frozen until the decision of IHEC to launch the VRU and resume on the 1st of July 2008. Only for July, 1103 activities were planned; 50% of them are field monitored.
	14. Governorate Electoral Education Committees (GEEC) composed of the IHEC at the governorate level and grantee NGOs established in all 19 electoral governorates. Launch meetings of the GEECs held in each governorate except Karkh (security reason and delay of IHEC in appointing GEO Director)
	15. Four regional five-day training sessions for GEECs held in Erbil (1) and Baghdad (3). The training focused on the role of the GEEC, the NEEP, message development, and the holding of opinion leader sessions which will be conducted by the GEECs to raise awareness of such leaders.

3.1. Several meetings held with the IHEC to improve the cooperation between the IHEC and Iraqi civil society in electoral education.

**Among the main key outputs achieved in the six month period:**

* + Introductory Forum meeting held in January
	+ 4 day Launch meeting held in Erbil in February
	+ 2 day Forum meeting held in March, 1 day in May and 2 day in July
	+ Internal rules of the Forum formally adopted.
	+ NEEP formulated, approved by the Forum and disseminated
	+ 75 grantees selected after competitive bidding and evaluation process; only for July, 1103 activities granted; 50% of them field monitored.
	+ 4 day regional trainings held with all grantee NGOs on proposal writing and grants management
	+ GEECs set up and 1 day Launch meeting held
	+ 5 day regional training held for GEECs on the NEEP and holding electoral education activities

**Objective 1 – 80%** completed. Beneficiaries: 19 civil society representatives and their parent organizations, sitting on the Electoral Education Forum; IHEC members of the Forum and staff of the IHEC Public Outreach Division. Iraqi NGOs involved in electoral education will also benefit from the NEEP as will the Iraqi public.

**Objective 2 - 60%** completed. 75 NGOs have been selected to receive funding and capacity building through the Electoral Education Grant Fund. The activities of the grantee NGOs will directly benefit 150.000 Iraqi citizens minimum. 19 GEECs established and trained on holding opinion leader sessions.

**Objective 3 – 25%** completed. IHEC - Iraqi civil society’s cooperation enhanced through the Forum, Opinion Leader Sessions under preparation.

**Cross cutting issues are well integrated into the project.**

Project is also conceived as a stabilization tool which will help to improve security situation of the country, by enlarging and diversifying the support of Iraqi citizens to the electoral process.

Gender issues are integrated in all phases of the project, by establishing minimum quota of women participants for all project components.

Human rights and democratization are of course directly linked to the topic of the project (elections).

Project has impact in term of employment since it has allowed the creation of 63 full–time staff in the implementing organization (Secretariat) as well as dozens of full time and short term operational and financial positions in the 75 granted NGOs.

Project has no environmental impact, either positive of negative.

**Although the project is globally on track and on time, some delays occur in project implementation.**

The close involvement of the IHEC in the Project implementation means that the Project is subject to the IHEC procedures and processes, which has caused some delay. In particular, the Project has been requested twice to delay two key activities: the Launch Meeting of the Forum and the Final Selection Meeting for the Grant Fund. Further, once Project implementation had started, the IHEC has questioned certain areas/processes which have previously been agreed to.

Specifically, project implementation has experienced delays with regard to evaluation of the grant fund due to the huge translation burden, high quantity of proposals received (252 proposals) and logical arrangements of sending hard-copies of proposals to the IHEC in Iraq. However, the grant fund has been closely coordinated with the IHEC and the electoral calendar to ensure that the NGOs start implementing their activities in line with the upcoming electoral processes – in particular with the start of the voter registration update.

Deteriorating security conditions has also been an area of concern. The fighting that broke out in March in Basra, spreading to Baghdad, impacted on the Project: trainings for the NGOs were delayed, meeting/contacting NGOs has been more difficult, access by NGOs for their activities has been reduced in certain areas. Implementation of granted operations in the most instable regions (i.e. Mosul) is cumbersome.

Granted activities were frozen until 1st of July 2008, lying in wait of the Voter Registration Update.

Opinion Leader Sessions have been delayed waiting for clarifications of IHEC following overlap with other initiatives carried by IHEC.

1. **Future Work Plan**
	1. **5.1 Summarize the projected activities up to the end of December 2008 indicating any major adjustments in strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs planned.**
	* Continuation of implementation of NGO activities under the Grant Fund;
	* Continuation of monitoring activities by the Secretariat and UNOPS Field Associates;
	* Implementation of GEEC Opinion Leader Sessions;
	* Two last Forum Meetings: September and December (final meeting);
	* Finalization and dissemination of the Civic Education Manual;
	* Implementation of the Forum promotional campaign (involving production of public relation material and radio/TV spots).
1. The IECI was initially mandated in 2004 by CPA Order 92 to conduct election activities for the transitional period. With the approval of the Law on the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) by the Council of Representatives on 26 February 2007, as noted above, the IECI has become the permanent IHEC. The appointment of the new Board of Commissioners was completed by 30 April 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)