

United Nations Development Group UNDAF Trust Fund
Project #88021: P1-06
Date and Quarter: 1 January to 31 March
1st Quarter 2014

Participating UN Organisation: UNDP ,UNOPS Sector: Governance and Human Rights

Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry: Independent High Electoral Commission - IHEC

Title	Institutional Development Support to the IHEC Phase II				
Geographic Location	Nationwide				
Project Cost	US\$2,134,050				
Duration	15 months				
Approval Date (SC)	14 October 2013	Starting Date	25 October 2013	Completion Date	31 December 2014
Project Description	<p>This programme has been jointly developed by the UN and the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to support the IHEC in its continued institutional development as a sustainable institution within the government structure of Iraq, carrying out its constitutional mandate independently, efficiently, transparently and accountably, in line with professional standards.</p> <p>The programme objectives are based on the results of a mid-tem review of the current Institutional Development Support to the IHEC initiative (G11-23) which took place in March 2012 and the Elections Needs Assessment Mission from the UN Electoral Assistance Division of DPA which took place from 20th November to 2nd December 2012. It is also based on discussions with the senior management of the UNAMI led International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT) and with discussions held with the current Board of Commissioners. The suggested outputs set out in the project document, as well as the corresponding activities, also take into account the work accomplished to date with IHEC. Finally, it takes on board recommendations from the current international advisors working closely with the IHEC on a day-to-day basis, and lessons learned from recent electoral events. These objectives aim to address significant gaps in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional framework and organisational capacity of the IHEC as Iraq’s permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution; 2. Human resource capacity of the IHEC (staff skills, knowledge and resources) at both central and governorate office levels; 3. Technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner. <p>The programme will be implemented through strong partnerships between the IHEC and the various UN entities mandated and experienced in the sector of electoral support to Iraq. The successful implementation of programme activities is expected to contribute significantly to the achievement of outcomes prioritised in the UN Development Assistance Framework 2011-2014.</p>				

Development Goal and Immediate Objectives

<p>UNDAF: Priority 1 Improved Governance, including the protection of human rights.</p> <p>UNDP CPAP: Outcome 1: GoI and civil society have strengthened participatory mechanisms in place for electoral processes, national dialogue and reconciliation.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Strengthened regulatory frameworks, institutions and processes in place for accountable, transparent and participatory governance at national and local levels.</p>
<p>Output 1: IHEC has strengthened institutional framework and organizational capacity to effectively conduct electoral processes as Iraq's permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution</p> <p>Output 2: IHEC has improved technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner</p>

Outputs, Key Activities and Procurement

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

Output 1	IHEC has strengthened institutional framework and organizational capacity to effectively conduct electoral processes as Iraq's permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution
Activities	<p>1.1 An improved Legal Framework for Electoral Processes.</p> <p>1.2 IHEC has improved Strategic Planning Processes.</p> <p>1.3 IHEC has enhanced external capacities relations</p> <p>1.4 IHEC has stronger female representation in the organization and is able to advocate effectively for the participation of women in electoral exercises.</p>
Output 2	IHEC has improved technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner
Activities	<p>2.1 IHEC has enhanced IT infrastructure and know-how to more effectively support electoral events.</p> <p>2.2 IHEC has enhanced voter registration capacities.</p>
Procurement (major items)	N/A

Funds Committed	UNDP: USD 531,821.63	% of received 1st tranche funds (USD)	48.55%
	UNOPS: USD480,129.07		46.23%
	TOTAL: USD 1,011,950.70		47.42%
Funds Disbursed	UNDP: USD 334,901.89	% of received 1st tranche funds (USD)	31.58%
	UNOPS: USD 464,976.25		44.77%
	TOTAL: USD 799,878.10		37.48%

Receipt of 2nd Tranche	All the approved project funds were received. Additional funds left over from the previous project may be allocated in April 2014.		
Forecast final date	31 December 2014	Delay (months)	0

Quantitative achievements against objectives and results

Result /Goals	Activities	Baseline Info	Performance Benchmark and Targets	Implementation Progress in reporting quarter
Output 1: IHEC has strengthened institutional framework and organizational capacity to effectively conduct electoral processes as Iraq's permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution	1.1 An improved Legal Framework for Electoral Processes.			30%
	1.1.1. Electoral legal framework reviewed in support to UNAMI in cooperation with the CoR Legal Committee.	No	Yes	Guidance provided on electoral legal interpretations.
	1.1.2 IHEC complaints process reviewed with support of UNAMI	No	Yes	Complaints process for the COR elections reviewed.
	1.1.3 Institutional framework for dispute resolution reviewed in support to UNAMI cooperation with CoR Legal Committee, AJC, EJP	No	Yes	Study visit to Australia on electoral dispute resolution processes conducted.
	1.2 IHEC has improved Strategic Planning Processes.			35%
	1.2.1. Detailed Guidance note and recommendations for a new strategic plan for IHEC submitted, with special focus on women's empowerment and gender equality measures.	No	Yes	-Strategy for harmonisation of candidate data under discussion
	1.2.2. Organisational capacity and structural review undertaken paying special attention to women's	No	Yes	-Advice on OCV for COR elections

	empowerment and gender equality			provided.
	1.2.3 Specialised training modules developed for public speaking, strategic media management and strategic communications submitted and accepted	No	Yes	Not yet implemented
	1.3 IHEC has enhanced external capacities relations			25%
	1.3.1. Guidance and recommendations for an IHEC external relations strategy submitted, paying special attention to measures to include women and other marginalised groups	No	Yes	-Concept note on political party dialogue prepared. -Dialogue sessions planned for implementation after elections.
	1.3.2. Staff development training on political entities delivered targeting a minimum 30% women	0	10	No progress
	1.3.3. Recommendations for establishing a Political Entities resource centre submitted	No	Yes	No progress
	1.4 IHEC has stronger female representation in the organization and is able to advocate effectively for the participation of women in electoral exercises.			40%
	1.4.1. Recommendations for affirmative recruitment policy to ensure adequate representation of women in IHEC submitted.	No	Yes	No progress to report
	1.4.2. Promotional activities to assure incorporation of gender in all electoral activities conducted.	No	2	4 meetings held with the IHEC Gender team. FAQs developed targeting women voters
	1.4.3. Women friendly and women specific campaign strategies developed.	No	2	-Campaign tools developed for the COR elections. -Support to IHEC's efforts to mainstream gender

				in the electoral process.
	1.4.4 Seminar to discuss regional experiences in women participation in the electoral process conducted	No	1	Not yet implemented
IHEC has improved technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner	2.1 IHEC has enhanced IT infrastructure and know-how to more effectively support electoral events.	No	Yes	50%
	2.1.1. Assistance to the IHEC in the development of an ICT strategy and technological roadmap provided that is gender sensitive	No	Yes	Draft outline of the technology roadmap and strategy developed in association with the IHEC IT department.
	2.1.2 Specific trainings delivered to IHEC in the area of specific technologies and database, especially on-the-job knowledge transfer and mentoring/coaching (minimum 30% female participation).	0	4	On-the-job training for WiFi Infrastructure Management and Security conducted
	2.2 IHEC has enhanced voter registration capacities.			25%
	2.2.1. Detailed guidance note on appropriate technological options for voter registration	No	Yes	Disaster recovery procedure developed for the Voter list database systems.
	2.2.2 Voter registration with Subject Matter Experts and thought leaders organised to allow IHEC to gain insights in its own registration processes and roadmap for the future that allows for sex disaggregated data	0	1	Initial discussions have taken place with IHEC on the processes and project plan for Biometric Voter Registration.

Qualitative achievements against objectives and results

During the reporting period, advisors provided daily guidance and technical support to various

departments of the IHEC and worked with the IHEC in preparation for the conduct of the Council of Representatives elections to be conducted on 30 April 2014. This support was provided in the areas of external relations, procurement and out of country voting.

In the quarter, UNDP organized and sponsored a study visit to Australia for the IHEC and Election Judicial Panel (EJP) to learn on the best practices for electoral dispute resolution processes. This study visit resulted into the strengthening the electoral dispute processes in Iraq ahead of the highly contested 2014 Council of Representatives elections.

UNOPS continued to provide support to the IHEC Data Entry Management Centre on database and application management for voter registration for the Council of Representatives and Kurdistan Regional Government Council elections. An on-the-job training on “WiFi Security and Management” was also conducted for IHEC Information Technology Staff to upgrade their skills on how to secure vital electoral information.

Output 1.1: An Improved Legal Framework for Electoral Processes

- Five IHEC officials, four male and one female, and four male members of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Election Judicial Panel (EJP) jointly participated in a study tour to Melbourne, Australia from 26 January to 2nd February 2014, in line with efforts to strengthen institutional capacities for electoral dispute resolution in Iraq. The Iraq delegation witnessed an actual judicial proceeding by the Australian High Court about the missing ballot papers for the Western Australia Senate elections which had affected the outcome of six seats. Apart from lessons learnt from the court case with regard to procedures and distinct roles of the Courts and electoral management body, the delegation also learned best practices in the areas of vote counting procedures and related dispute resolution processes, public awareness and the voting and process. The key lessons that the delegation had learnt from the Australian Electoral Commission counterparts were that the electoral management body should be independent by action, and transparency and accountability are essential for instilling public trust in the electoral process.

Output 1.2: IHEC has improved strategic planning capacities

- The Electoral Procurement Advisor was appointed member of the IHEC Out of Country (OCV) Committee to provide guidance and technical advice on OCV strategy for the 2014 Council of Representative elections. The strategy included the recruitment and training of staff and the scheduled transfer of election materials from international suppliers to the 14 OCV country offices which will be opened for the Council of Representatives elections.
- The Political Entities Advisor held a number of discussions with the Head of the IHEC Political Entities Section and the Commissioner responsible for political entities on a strategy for political entities dialogue as well as the harmonization of candidate data. Workshops for IHEC political entities staff have been planned for implementation after the COR elections.

Output 1.3: IHEC has enhanced external relations capabilities

- Activity plans aimed to strengthen relations between the IHEC and the political entities as well as among the political entities themselves have been drawn. The activities will be implemented

after the 2014 Council of Representatives elections to help ease any potential post-election conflicts.

Output 1.4: IHEC has stronger female representation in the organization and is able to advocate effectively for the participation of women in electoral exercises.

- Three meetings were held between the IHEC Gender Team and UNDP to discuss on production of 2014 Council of Representatives elections public outreach materials targeting women voters. The outcome of the meetings was the production of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) brochure for women voters. The brochure was aimed at providing clarity to some questions which women voters usually ask on the polling process.
- Two female IHEC officials participated in a workshop on “Women’s Participation in Elections” for countries holding elections in 2014 in the Middle East and North Africa region. The workshop took place in Romania on 7 and 8 March 2014 and it came up with strategies to improve public awareness regarding the international electoral standards to enhance the regional knowledge base on women’s participation in elections. These strategies will guide the IHEC in coming up with effective gender-mainstreaming interventions in Iraq’s electoral processes. This workshop addressed IHEC’s capacity building needs in this field and adequately addressed challenges to women’s participation in electoral process both as voters and as candidates.

Output 2.1: IHEC has enhanced IT infrastructure and know-how to more effectively support electoral events.

In the reporting period, UNOPS Information and Communication Technology (ICT) team implemented the following activities:

- A secure and resilient WiFi infrastructure to support mobility and increased operational effectiveness has been put in place.
- Email security has been enhanced by introduction of an email security gateway for secure email exchange, filtering SPAM and malware detection.
- The outline for the ICT strategy was developed and shared with stakeholders and counterparts for comments and suggestions. These will be incorporated into the final strategy document and shared with IHEC Management.
- A competency inventory and development plan has been developed and presented to the IHEC management. The competency development plan is based on the latest SFIA standard.
- The ICT team assisted IHEC with the preparation of the Data Entry Centre network and server infrastructure for the tabulation of results for the upcoming COR and KRG elections.
- On-the-job training on “WiFi Security and Management” was conducted for the IHEC IT staff.

- The UNOPS ICT team has completed the installation and configuration of the IT telephony and unified communication (instant messaging, video conferencing and scheduling). Cideo conferencing and Call Centre telephony is expected to be operationalized in the next quarter.

Output 2.2: IHEC has enhanced voter registration capacities

- The ICT team supported the Data Entry Management Centre during the voter registration period and provided advise on database and application management for voter registration for the upcoming COR and KRG elections.
- A Disaster Recovery process has been put in place for critical voter list databases, following intensive discussions.
- The UNOPS team continued to assist the IHEC with several application development and management activities, related to Voter Registration activities which included the Audit Software, Web Search used by VRU call centre and the system used to register complaints.

Challenges

Lack of adequate funding to implement support activities for the IHEC remained a major challenge in the quarter. However, the programme continued to implement its activities on a cost-share basis with the IHEC. Efforts to mobilize additional resources for activity implementation will continue in the coming quarter.

As the 2014 Council of Representatives elections approaches, the security situation in Iraq has kept worsening. While this may not have a direct bearing on the implementation of the programme, it has a huge effect on the impact that the programme intended to make nationwide as the implementation of the 2014 electoral process will be conducted under a volatile environment. This is likely to negatively affect the citizens' participation in the political process.