

UN PARTICIPATING ORGANISATION
LOGO

United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund



UNDG



FIFTH SIX MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR PROJECT:

C10-02 - International Employment Conference

Summary

Participating UN Organisation:

ILO, FAO, UNDP, UNAMI, UNOPS, IOM,
ESCWA, UNIDO, HABITAT, World Bank

Cluster:

C – Governance and Human Development

Project No. and Project Title:

C10-02
International Employment Conference

Project Location/Region/Province:

Amman-Jordan

Reporting Period:

1 July- 31 December 2006

Report no:

5

Counterpart organisations / implementing partners:

International Labour Organization
Iraq Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Iraq Ministry of Planning and Development
Cooperation
European Commission

Project cost:

US\$321,000
Funds received 1/10/2004

Abbreviations and acronyms:

Project Duration:

The main activity took place in Amman over two days for the International Employment Conference, and five days for a technical and training workshop.

I. Purpose

Main objectives and outcomes expected as per approved Project/Programme/project document:

Main objective of the project: An established a platform for discussions and exchange of experiences between Iraqi decision makers on the best means to promote employment through international best practices, both at policy and programme levels.

Outcomes:

- Examination of the current employment situation and the key elements which contribute to the creation of adequate job opportunities and basic social protection provision;
- Development of an Iraqi " Employment for the future" vision for a policy environment which nurtures productive job opportunities, the development of SMEs and equitable economic development for the Iraqi people, including social security and social dialogue element;
- Recognition of concerned parties of the centrality of employment in rebuilding of the new Iraq, and in Iraq's development strategy, the need for fostering of socio-economic rehabilitation, and development approaches in Iraq.

Reference to how the programme/project relates to the UN Assistance Strategy to Iraq 2005/5 and how it aims to support international and national development goals (revised National Development Strategy Dead Sea July 2005) including the Millennium Development Goals and other goals as pertinent:

The project was fully integrated into Cluster 10, Poverty and Human development assistance strategy (presently C). Employment creation is furthermore a cross cutting issue throughout the UNDG Clusters. The Conference Adopted A Declaration and an Action Plan setting up a set of policy measures to tackle the employment issue and support the government's efforts in tackling and solving the un-employment crisis in the country, as well as building the environment for an inclusive economic growth leading to a sustainable productive and remunerative employment. It also aimed at involving all UN agencies to raise awareness and discuss common approaches to achieve greater employment impact in the UN programme for Iraq. The Conference involved extensive consultation with the key ministries, mainly the Labour and Social Affairs, and of Planning and Development Cooperation. Discussions focussed on the employment policies and programmes of MOLSA aiming at alleviating poverty and making employment central to the socio-economic policies and strategies adopted by the government of Iraq.

Main international and national implementing partners involved, their specific roles and responsibilities in project implementation and their interaction with the agency:

The implementation was directly by the ILO, in coordination with key national ministries, mainly Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation. The Regional Office in Beirut and ILO office in Amman were responsible for the overall coordination and management of the project.

UN agencies, members of Cluster 10, have also contributed to the preparation of the Conference. Due to the security situation, the event had to be across the borders of Iraq, in Amman.

Around 72 high-level officials from 11 Iraqi ministries, in addition to 70 representatives from the employers' and workers' organizations, civil authorities, UN agency representatives, World Bank, IMF, European Commission, major donors the USA, UK and Japan.

II. Resources

Total approved budget and summary of resources available to the programme/project from the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund and non-Trust Fund resources where applicable:

ILO received from UNDG ITF funds the amount of \$321,000

Amount disbursed as at end December 2006: US\$ 320,458

Amounts still available to the project as at end February 2007: \$542

The available balance has been committed to cover 2006 late charges.

III. Results

An assessment of the extent to which the programme/project component / programme /project is progressing in relation to the outcomes and outputs expected for the year:

The International Employment Conference was conducted in Amman, December 2004. All outcomes and outputs were achieved in December 2004. Following the conference, 30 high-level Iraqi officials from across several ministries and the Central Bank participated in a five-day technical workshop on job creation. It allowed them to identify priorities in the Action Plan adopted, and to prepare a set of proposals on employment creation through SME development, local economic development, reform of the social security systems, and capacity building workshops.

The project continued during the period under review, to support ILO activities in follow-up to the action plan adopted at the end of the conference, mainly the work related to the submission and approval of the projects proposals designed to Cluster C for funding within the framework off the UNDI Trust Fund..

Main activities undertaken and achievements/ impacts:

- Technical consultations with Iraqi counterparts;
- Labour Impact Assessment of selected UN projects in Iraq conducted and report produced.
- Technical papers and policy material on "Labour –Audit" prepared by national and international consultants, before and after the Conference;
- Conference accomplished 12-13 December 2004;
- Technical workshop on job creation accomplished 14-19 December 2004;
- A number of project proposals were designed and submitted to Cluster C for funding within the framework of the UNDG Trust Fund.

►The main substantive achievement of the Conference was the adoption of a Declaration and an Action Plan for employment creation, recognizing the centrality of employment in the reconstruction and development of Iraq.

►The Action plan adopted on employment creation in Iraq emphasized the priorities for the immediate, medium and long terms. Participants agreed unanimously that the creation of a productive remunerative and decent employment must be made central in all Iraqi economic and social policy making decisions.

►ILO organized, within the framework of follow-up to the Action Plan adopted at the end of the Conference, several meetings with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, and Ministry of finance in April 2005 in Beirut and in November 2005 in Geneva. These meetings allowed the establishment of a coherent and series of activities focussed

on the application of labour-based reconstruction methodologies, skills development, local economic development, SMEs sector development, reform of social security schemes and social dialogue.

► ILO succeeded in 2005 in placing employment promotion at the heart of the National Development Strategy of Iraq for the biennium 2005-2007.

► A Higher National Council for Employment creation was established in Iraq, headed by the two key ministries: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, with other ten line ministries as key members;

► An English and Arabic Technical Guidelines on Maximizing employment creation in infra-structures, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and development programmes, was carried out and produced by the ILO. This policy and technical tool is intended to mainstream labour-based and employment intensive approaches within the national, UN and donor-led reconstruction programmes. The document was adopted by the Government and the Higher National Committee, as its core strategy for infra-structure reconstruction and development programmes, under the government budget, as well as for investments by the donor and financing agencies, and the UN family working in Iraq in the post crisis period. The document was distributed to the concerned ministries for application in all reconstruction projects and programmes in Iraq;

► ILO helped in definition of a social security reform strategy through a high-level workshop in Geneva in December 2005.

- *Consultation meetings in Geneva and Amman, between the ILO, MOLSA, MOPDC and Iraqi social partners;*
- *Translation and production of 250 copies of an Arabic/English version of the ILO Book entitled "Guidelines for local employment in infra- structure reconstruction and development programmes in Iraq". These copies will be diffused, care of ILO Office Baghdad, across all the Ministries in Iraq for wider understanding of the Iraqi Labour Market and key challenges.*

Impact:

- All major international and national stakeholders in the field of employment promotion (key ministries, UN agencies, the World Bank and donor community) sensitized and informed on employment issues in Iraq;
- Series of policy and academic papers developed with the participation of relevant Ministries, and distributed to improve knowledge on labour market issues and concrete alternatives to address those.
- Agreement among these stakeholders on a strategic Action Plan for employment promotion in the country;
- Establishment by the Prime Minister's office of the National Committee for Employment (NCE) (Cabinet's letter of 30/7/2005 refers) headed by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, with participation at DG level of the ministries of Planning and Development Cooperatives, Finance, Industry and metals, Municipality and Public Works, Migrants and Emigrants, Water resources, Electricity, Oil, Human Rights, Agriculture, Housing and Reconstruction, Woman and Civil Society organizations. The Council is playing a vital role in the design of national employment and vocational training politics with the objective to tackle the un-employment issue and to implement the central plan of action for employment.
- *The follow-up consultation meetings allowed sustaining dialogue with the UN agencies on ILO's support in the areas of employment promotion, social security, skills development, and social dialogue within the framework of the UNCT Cluster setting, and within the context of the Iraqi national Development Strategy 2005-2007.*

Implementation constraints, lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained from assessments, evaluations and studies that have taken place during the reporting period:

The restless security situation inside Iraq slowed down the implementation of the follow-up components of the project. This impeded the extension of the project's life to allow comprehensive benefit of the project's resources.

Key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, impact on results:

Key partners: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation; UN cluster C agencies; World Bank; European Commission.

Highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on, e.g. Gender disaggregation, policy engagement and participation of the public:

The Conference theme was Employment. The international community, Iraqi government, its academia and the civil society including the Employers' and Workers' organizations were synthesized. Gender issue and woman participation in the labour market were given significant attention and consideration in the discussions for inclusion in the reconstruction process. The Conference established a proper consultative platform for the Iraqis, major stakeholders and international community, to tackle the issue of employment, exchange the best international experiences at policy and strategic levels, with the view to establish a clear and concerted policy and programme directions in rebuilding a new Iraq.

IV. Future Work Plan

Priority actions planned for the subsequent reporting period to overcome constraints, build on achievements and partnerships, and use the lessons learned during the previous period:

The following activities were completed in follow-up to the conference:

- Translation to Arabic and production on CD ILO technical tool "Maximizing employment creation in infra-structures, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and development programmes guidelines";
- Technical support services rendered in follow-up to the Action Plan;
- Clear late un-paid expenses related to the organization of the Conference which dates back to 2004.
- Development of a tool for project design to the benefit of UN agencies and government stakeholders to maximise employment creation in the reconstruction programme. The tool is expected to be completed by November 06.

- *It is planned to spend the remaining allocation to cover some 2006 late charges, to close the project*

Indication of major adjustments in the strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs:

N/A

Estimated Budget required (including any major funding shortfalls):

No major funding shortfall.