



Iraq



IRFFI/UNDG IRAQ TRUST FUND (UNDG ITF)

**ANNUAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2009**

Submitted by:

UNDP

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Country and Thematic Area

Iraq

Governance

Programme No: G11-14a

Atlas Award No: 54967

MDTF Office Atlas No: 66967

Programme Title: Institutional
Development-Organizational and HR
Capacity Building for the IHEC

Participating Organization(s):

UNDP

UNOPS

UNAMI

Implementing Partners:

- *National counterparts: **Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq (IHEC)***

- *International Organizations:
UNDP, UNOPS & UNAMI*

Programme Budget (from the Fund):

*For Joint Programme provide breakdown
by UN Organization*

UNDP : USD 3, 735,426

UNOPS : USD 2, 584,466

Programme Duration (in months): 38

Start date: 10 April 2007

End date: 09 April 2008

Original end date: 09 April 2008

Revised end date:

- A.31 March 2009
- B.30 September 2009
- C.30 June 2010

Budget Revisions/Extensions:

A.31 March 2009, the submission date was: 21 September 2008

B.30 September 2009, the submission date was: 12 February 2009

C. 30 June 2010, the approval date was: 16 September 2009

NARRATIVE REPORT

I. Purpose

The International Election Assistance Team, under the leadership of UNAMI-EAD and including UNDP and UNOPS, has worked closely with the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to identify capacity building needs and develop specialized interventions to address these. Initiatives planned or undertaken include training programmes, public outreach initiatives, study tours and mentoring programmes tailored to IHEC's current operational and future institutional development needs at central and regional office levels. By providing this capacity building support, the UN enables the Commission to prepare for and conduct electoral processes and facilitates the increased participation of the Iraqi electorate, thus enhancing the sustainable democratization of the country.

Relevant to the following Benchmarks:

- NDS: Strengthening good governance and improve security
- ICI: Although there is not a specific benchmark for elections, this programme supports:
 - Section 3.1.2: Implementation of political/legislative timetable
 - Article 4.2: Strengthen institutions to improve Governance

Sector Team Outcome:

- Strengthened Electoral Process in Iraq.

Integrated Program Outcome:

- Strengthened electoral operations in Iraq, ensuring free and fair elections.

II. Resources

Financial Resources:

No cost-sharing agreement is in place with IHEC.

Below are the no-cost extensions that took place:

- *Till 31 March 2009*
- *Till 30 September 2009*
- *Till 30 June 2010*

No bottlenecks to report with regard to the financial procedures.

Human Resources:

- National Staff: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme).
 - Project Assistant
 - National Project Officer, Training Coordinator
- International Staff: Provide details on the number and type (operation/programme)
 - Project Manager (cost share with Media Project in 2008/2009)

III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

The project is executed by UNDP and UNOPS, which are part of the IEAT and benefitted from the provision of technical supervision from UNAMI-EAD. Management and oversight of the project is according to standard UN procedures laid out in the programming manual of UNDP and UNOPS and other reporting requirements agreed amongst UNOPS, UNAMI, UNDP and UNDG/ITF. All project activities are/were carried out in accordance with the project document and its work plan. The project implementers (UNDP and UNOPS) work closely and directly with IHEC in the identification and meeting of its capacity building needs and requirements. A project team was established to design and develop appropriate capacity building activities (workshops, training courses, round table discussions, study tours and work placements) and to implement those activities both inside and outside Iraq through carefully selected and supervised service providers.

All contracting and procurement are carried out according to the UNDP contracting and procurement procedures, supervised through UNDP personnel who are experienced in public procurement as per UN rules and regulations and the procedures involving UNDP back-office support (legal, procurement, management, HR, specific training expertise) where necessary. UNDP operations are subject to established monitoring procedures and regular reviews and auditing.

- *Provide details on the monitoring system(s) that are being used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the ongoing project.*

Management and oversight of the project are governed by the normal procedures laid out in the programming manuals of UNDP and other reporting requirements agreed between UNAMI/IEAT, UNDP, UNOPS and the funding source UNDG/ITF.

Technical monitoring, quality control and impact assessment are carried out by the technical supervisor UNAMI/IEAT and rely on the UN's broad experience of electoral support for Iraq and globally.

UNDP is preparing periodic progress reports (narrative and financial) as defined by the MoU with the funding source UNDG/ITF. UNDP is also responsible for

preparation of the project's Final Financial Statement with particular respect to the components for which they have responsibility.

UNAMI/IEAT, UNDP and UNOPS shall monitor and refine the project implementation strategy through feedback from the IHEC/UNAMI and other concerned parties.

- *Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.*

Assessment missions to Iraq have identified the pressing needs throughout the Iraqi government and the IECI/IHEC for capacity building and training to enable IHEC to perform its duties in an optimal manner to the benefit of all Iraqis. During a June 2005 Electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to Iraq the issue of capacity building was a major issue and a range of training needs were identified for the IECI/IHEC and its personnel. Findings have indicated that while short-term training was necessary to help in the preparation of the IECI for the discharge of its immediate electoral responsibilities (as with the electoral processes of 2005) there was also the need for longer-term planning and organization of capacity building measures directed at improving the overall capacity of the IECI as an institution. It was agreed that such an approach should be implemented at all levels of the organization, if feasible.

A further NAM was undertaken in November 2006 in order to update the training and capacity building needs of the IECI. Thanks to this NAM it was possible to extend the initial Training Plan so that it could serve as a stand-alone Capacity Building Training Plan, without any further need for revision. Through this NAM and the close level of coordination that UNDP, UNOPS and UNEAD have enjoyed with the IECI, it has been possible to arrive at a better understanding of the actual Training/Capacity Building needs of the Commission.

The Project has commissioned three studies: Public perceptions of the IHEC and the electoral process; Women's access to electoral information; and a training needs assessment of the media relations unit. The first of these was presented in March 2009 in a lessons learned workshop for the GEO managers in Istanbul, and all three were presented in May 2009 in a workshop for the Public Outreach Department in Erbil. These have formed the basis of capacity-building strategies for the Public Outreach Department and GEO Managers and have informed similar strategies for other IHEC departments. The review of the Media Regulations has been presented to the IHEC and IEAT and has informed a capacity-building strategy for the IHEC.

IV. Results

Results Overview:

The following results were achieved:

1. The level of IHEC Board and Public Outreach Department skills was improved through the development of strategic management tools relating to public outreach;
2. Awareness of electoral best practices was enhanced through the development of strategic communications tools and guidelines for regulating and managing the media and reporting on elections.
3. Stakeholder relationships were strengthened through the development of tools and initiatives to increase transparency, public engagement and relations with the media.

The main medium-term outcome supported in this period is that of strengthening the electoral process in Iraq through increasing the accountability of the IHEC by strategic media engagement. The focus on media and public outreach was introduced in this reporting period on the advice of the Project Manager, who developed and further elaborated some of the project activities to support media and public outreach capacity development in collaboration with the IEAT. The original intention of sending IHEC officials on study tours was revised because of the need to prioritize operational needs in the run-up to the elections and engage in institutional restructuring and capacity building.

Outputs:

1.1 Improved level of IHEC management skills.

Physical progress: 50%

- Due to IHEC engagement with the preparations for the 2009 electoral events, activities related to this project output were suspended and UNDP was requested by IHEC and UNAMI to support IHEC during this phase with the procurement of computers and scanners for the data entry and tally centres. UNDP procured and delivered the required equipment within short notice/time frame due to the urgency of this request.

1.2 Enhanced awareness of electoral best practice.

Physical progress: 70%

- UNDP elections project team organized, in collaboration with International Election Assistance Team (IEAT), a lessons learned conference held in Istanbul for the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq's (IHEC) National Office and the Governorate Election Office Managers during 15-18 March 09. There were 37 senior officials from the IHEC, including the Head of Electoral Administration (a commissioner) and 5 members of the IEAT.
- The participants identified shortfalls/challenges faced during the Governorate Council Elections and agreed on recommendations to overcome such shortfalls/problems in future electoral events. This

conference is considered a first step in conducting electoral reforms after the Governorates Council elections.

1.3 Strengthen relationship with external stakeholders

Physical progress: 85%

- Data collection and analysis completed for national study of the provincial elections and public attitude towards the electoral process.
 - Data collection and analysis completed for national study of women's access to electoral information.
 - Technical advice for IHEC Public Outreach Division (POD), and website content management system.
 - Support to dedicated server and hosting of IHEC website.
 - Survey of media access to electoral information.
 - Abu Mutar banner campaign on Yahoo and ASWAT Al-Iraq website.
 - SMS and media campaign on provincial elections.
 - Delivered training for IHEC and GEOs on planning and managing media relations.
 - Translation of BRIDGE Electoral Systems and Electoral Contestants Modules.
 - Institutionalization and mentoring of the External Media Unit and the Office of the Spokesperson
 - Developed regulatory and policy frameworks for engagement with the media and facilitating dialogue with other stakeholders such as the Communications and Media Commission(CMC), the Iraqi Media Network (IMN) and independent media
- *Explain, if relevant, delays in programme implementation, the nature of the constraints, actions taken to mitigate future delays and lessons learned in the process.*

UNDP was requested to suspend most of its capacity building activities on the work plan and to amend its assistance to support a set of media activities to respond to IHEC current operational priorities. This led to a delay in project implementation and the focus was shifted to the design of the media activities and contracting implementing partners for the new activities. Thus the implementation of the originally planned activities shows a lower rate than 100%, however additional activities were designed with IHEC and IEAT and were implemented.

- *List the key partnerships and collaborations, and explain how such relationships impact on the achievement of results.*

Key partnerships were developed with IHEC Public Outreach Department, IFES and UNAMI and UNOPS colleagues of the International Electoral Assistance Team. These meant that media development activities could be mainstreamed into institutional capacity-building activities. Other important partnerships were with

external stakeholders such as the Communications and Media Commission (the national regulatory agency) and independent media entities. The work undertaken under this project formed the basis for a new joint UNESCO/UNDP project “Support for Enhanced Media Coverage and Monitoring of Electoral Processes”, which was approved in December 2009.

- *Other highlights and cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on.*

The original project did not have specific results for security, gender, human rights, employment or environment. The re-alignment of the project outputs to focus on media supports the A19 rights to access to information, although it was not possible to develop freedom of information policies in the short period, as this requires a cultural paradigm shift within the IHEC and larger Iraqi society. Similarly it was not possible to introduce gender although the PM did provide some support to a UNDP initiative launched in October 2009 to promote women’s electoral rights in civil society.

V. Project Performance Indicators Table:

Output	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Means of Verification
Improved level of IHEC management skills	Operational plans for electoral events developed on time and implemented, based on the strategic plan	Strategic plan developed in 2007	Plan for electoral events are drafted	Successful implementation electoral events in 2008 and 2009	National and International Observers' Reports
Enhanced awareness of electoral best practices	Elections and electoral processes held in line with international standards	National and international elections observers' reports indicate implementation of international standards event by event (last report: 2009)	2008 and 2009 electoral events (voter registration updates, Governorates Council selections and Kurdistan Parliamentary elections) are conducted according to international standards	Observers' reports indicated that the 2008 and 2009 electoral events were conducted as per international standards.	National and International Observers' Reports
Strengthened relationships with external stakeholders	IHEC External Media Section is established and functioning	No External Media Section within the structure of IHEC (2007)	External Media Unit is established and external communications plan is developed	External Media Unit was established and the communications plan was finalized	External Communications Plan, UNAMI project progress reports

VI. Abbreviations and Acronyms

- UNOPS – UN Office for Project Services
- UNAMI – UN Assistance Mission to Iraq
- UNESCO – UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- IHEC - Independent High Election Commission IHEC
- BoC - IHEC Board of Commissioners
- GEO – Governorate Electoral Office
- UNDG ITF – UN Development Group Iraq Trust Fund
- IEAT – International Electoral Assistance Team
- CTA- Chief Technical Advisor
- CO- Country Office
- IFES- International Foundation for Electoral Systems
- PRT- Provincial Reconstruction Team
- BOC – Board of Commission
- NAM- Needs Assessment Mission
- CMC- Communications & Media Commission
- POD- Public Outreach Department
- GDD- Graphic Design Department
- GEOM: Governorate Electoral Office Manager