



المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات في العراق  
كۆميسونى باآلى سه ربه خۆى هه ئيزارد نه كان له عيراق

The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq

**International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT)**

## Election Update

### **IHEC, civil society organizations and opinion leaders, working hand in hand to better inform citizens**

The **Electoral Education Campaign (EEC)** is a project designed to serve this objective, and implemented by UNOPS with the support of UNAMI and in close coordination with the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq (IHEC). It aims at bringing together the IHEC, Iraqi civil society and Iraqi opinion leaders, at both the national and governorate levels, to improve the awareness of the Iraqi citizens about the electoral process.

In the framework of the EEC, a unique body has been created to bring together IHEC and civil society. The **Electoral Education Forum**, composed of representatives of the IHEC and of civil society organizations, has already met six times in 2008 and has formulated the National Electoral Education Plan which details the priorities of the Campaign.

In parallel, **75 Iraqi NGOs** have received micro-grants from UNOPS to carry out direct outreach activities, including in the most remote areas of the country. **More than 2000 activities a month** have been implemented between the 1 July and 30 November 2008, in all the governorates, with all target groups, including minorities, women, youth, IDPs, disabled people, first time voters, etc..

**Over 150,000 Iraqi citizens** have been directly reached through these granted operations.

Mr. Niels Guenther, Deputy Director of UNOPS Iraq Operations Center, emphasized *“It is already clear that the Electoral Education Campaign has reinforced the impact of the Iraqi national public outreach strategy, and UNOPS is proud that its support to both IHEC and Iraqi civil society has allowed a larger number of Iraqi citizens to better understand the importance of these elections”*.

The Electoral Education Campaign is now entering a new phase: in the run up to election day, UNOPS will organize with IHEC **more than 100 Opinion Leaders Sessions across Iraq**. The Opinion Leaders Sessions will provide information about the electoral process in the governorates where candidates are registered, and bring together 50 tribal and religious leaders, 50 civil servants and professional associations, 50 academics, 50 leaders of youth associations, and 50 leaders of women associations. By election day, **more than 6.000 Iraqi opinion leaders** will be in a better position to inform their community about the importance of elections.

*“This joint project will help deliver a strong message to the people of Iraq that these elections are Iraqi elections and participation of all elements of Iraqi society is key to their success ”* stated Sandra Mitchell, Head of the International Electoral Assistance Team

#### ***For further information on the EEC:***

Gregory Kehailia, Project Manager, Electoral Education Campaign, UNOPS Iraq Operations Center

[GregoryK@unops.org](mailto:GregoryK@unops.org) / +962 79.519.61.49