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footprint

EXPERIENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE



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Iraq



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Within the framework of a US\$33 million three-year programme to assist the Government of Iraq to create a viable private sector, a planning conference was held in Amman 22-24 June 2009 to review progress towards this end.

Key members from the government, representatives of the seven UN agencies⁽ⁱ⁾ implementing the programme as well as the European Commission, World Bank and the Government of Italy representing the donor community, participated.

'The need for concerted and significant efforts to promote private sector growth is central to the government's policy agenda,' stated Dr. Thamir Al-Ghadhban, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Advisory Board. 'Although challenging, such economic reforms are crucial as a means to achieve a functioning market economy, sustainable and increased employment opportunities, reduce poverty and create a regulatory framework conducive to much needed domestic and foreign investment,' he continued.

Areas covered in discussions included economic reforms for private sector expansion, assessment of the legal framework, privatization and restructuring of State Owned Enterprises, investment policy, banking and Small Medium Enterprises development.

Given the still fragile economic recovery in Iraq, reforms especially for privatization should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis and complemented with mitigation packages to limit the social impact was one of the key recommendations of

Government of Iraq tackles reforms for private sector expansion



the workshop. Another was the importance of institutionalizing inclusive policy and decision-making through consultations with employers and trade unions.

Consensus reached during this meeting will guide the UN Country Team Programme to support the

Government with the establishment of an enabling environment conducive to revitalizing the private sector for job creation and investment promotion.

⁽ⁱ⁾ UNDP, UNIDO, ILO, UN-Habitat, FAO, UNOPS, UNIFEM as well as IOM and CHF

Wrap-up of National Dialogue Programme

On 28 March 2009, the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) with support from UNDP held a one-day conference in Baghdad for 80 participants as the final activity of the National Dialogue Programme covering its two phases.

In her remarks, H.E. Ms. Wijdan Salem, Minister of Human Rights contrasted the security situation in Iraq in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009; citing statistics for the number of daily fatalities. Progress on citizen security was not due only to the military she said, the role of civil society in the reduction of violence was also an important factor. She said that CSOs act independently from politics and play an important role in many national issues. The Ministry of Human Rights had implemented some important activities such as the establishment of Truth Committees and working with CSOs to enable them to reach remote areas of the country.

UNDP highlighted some of the major national dialogue activities that had taken place over the life of the project underlining the role of civil society in creating good governance, especially at the local level, with the successful elections of January 2009. The government had announced that social service delivery would be a priority for the new Governorate councils, and linked this objective with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Iraq.

A summary of the work undertaken by many CSOs under the coordination of NCCI was presented. Especially important were the 13 workshops for some 270 participants on national dialogue and reconciliation, rule of law and the role of civil society in peace-building under phase 1. Under phase 2, the "Right to Live in Safety Campaign" developed two networks of



CSOs/NGOs and academicians, and created a pool of trainers throughout Iraq. Two study-tours to South Africa introduced participants to experiences of reconciliation through broad-based national dialogue.



Joint UNODC-UNDP Project

Helps Iraq Combat Corruption

In a jointly implemented project, UNODC and UNDP held the second in a series of workshops with senior Iraqi anti-corruption officials in Amman 25-30 April, 2009, to discuss the In Depth Needs Assessment Tool to be used for the implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in Iraq.

"Implementing an anti-corruption programme is the second

top priority after fighting terrorism in Iraq," said Judge Rahim Al-Ugaily, head of the Commission of Integrity. "Although we believe there is a need for great efforts, Iraq is on the way to eradicate corruption. As Iraqi citizens, we must coordinate and be responsible for these efforts in trying to eradicate corruption and pursue ways to comply with the provisions of the Convention," he noted.

Twenty-three senior officials participated, representing the country's main anti-corruption bodies, namely the Board of Supreme Audit, Inspectors General, Central Bank, Commission of Integrity, Central Office of Statistics and Information Technology at the Ministry of Planning as well as a representative from the Prime Minister's Office.

The Iraqi government has already taken several concrete measures that clearly demonstrate its commitment to combating corruption. Prime Minister Al-Maliki declared year

2008 as the year for fighting corruption and developed an 18-point Anti-Corruption Strategy, followed by his government becoming a signatory to UNCAC in March 2008.

The workshop led to the finalizing of the self-assessment analysis and recommendations to be used in developing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, and in the formation of working groups to deal with the specific requirements of Articles 5, 6 and 7 of UNCAC. While the Commission of Integrity will provide oversight, the other anti-corruption entities will be key members of the working groups.

The UNODC-UNDP project not only targets the key national priority of fighting corruption, but also supports specific actions called for by the government to implement UNCAC, developing a national anti-corruption strategy and strengthening key anti-corruption institutions.

UNDP organized a technical aid management workshop for 20 participants from the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC), the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW) and the Ministry of Planning - Kurdistan Region (MoP KRG) from 20-25 June 2009. The objective was to develop their capacity to manage the Development Assistance Database (DAD), an aid information management system that tracks aid flows to Iraq, and to improve the government's (GoI) communications with citizens and the international community through effective portal management.

"This important workshop, with its multi-dimensional and interactive structure, will serve our ministry well in the long run. During the course, we learned new subjects and new fields in addition to being introduced to new means of cooperation with donors as well as the mechanisms for modifying the database. In addition, the portal is considered as an effective interface for Iraq ministries to liaise with the public and support their interests", said Saef F. Al-Quraishy, Head of IT Department, Iraq Strategic Review Board, MoPDC.

This workshop is the latest in a series of initiatives implemented through the UNDP Aid Effectiveness programme to develop the capacity of the GoI to own and lead the development process in Iraq. The workshop was led by UNDP with the support of technical experts from a leading web systems developer. Several topics were discussed during the six days including: functional review of DAD data and analytical features, database design and maintenance, IDM portal installation, administration and content management.

Since January 2006, the UNDP programme has assisted the government to establish a comprehensive, inter-ministerial, decentralized, transparent and accountable aid coordination system, based on multidimensional capacity building to ensure the ownership and effective leadership by the GoI and guarantee the long term sustainability of the initiative. With UNDP's support, the GoI endorsed the Paris Declaration on Aid

UNDP Provides Capacity Development and Technical Expertise for International Aid Coordination



Effectiveness in May 2008, reaffirming its commitment to revitalize and strengthen the partnership with the international community in line with national strategies.

"We need to work on one platform that unifies and standardizes our efforts and mutual cooperation; the result will be of great value and benefit to all parties. We have the expertise, personnel and resources; what we lack is an effective, sophisticated and flexible mechanism to coordinate our efforts together to reach our development goals. We seek to obtain the support of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers for this initiative", Al-Quraishy added.

In particular, the UNDP Aid Effectiveness programme supports the GoI to take informed and grounded decisions on the mobilization and coordination of aid as well as to define an e-governance strategy and develop pilot e-governance systems, including interactive web portals. As a result, the MoPDC now fully owns and maintains DAD Iraq and the MoPDC portal

through the International Cooperation Directorate (ICD), established within the Ministry with UNDP support.

The programme is also contributing to the decentralization process especially in the Kurdistan region. The MoP-KRG started working on DAD KRG in February 2008 and is currently modifying the existing projects imported from DAD Iraq as well as entering new project data.

"It is the beginning of investment in Iraq; DAD is the tool for all donors and firms to come and invest in Iraq. We will be showing the world how Iraq is ready to welcome and receive their contributions and investment", said Pshtiwan M. Sharif, Researcher and Reporter at the Department of Cooperation and Coordination, MoP-KRG.

The MoMPW is in the process of launching a new portal with UNDP support in order to improve communications and information services. In addition, the Ministry is developing a mechanism to receive complaints, inquiries and suggestions from citizens as well as carrying out studies to link its services across all the provinces of Iraq.

At the end of the workshop, the participants from the three ministries thanked the UNDP team for their continuous efforts: "We are impressed and grateful to the UN team for all the workshops and training courses delivered to date. This training in particular was very useful for us all. The DAD and portal are user-friendly and flexible by giving us the options to include our own inputs. Beside this, we will continue to learn more when we work on the portal and DAD system and we will continue to improve and customize them to meet our needs with the support of UNDP," Mr. Sharif concluded.



UN workshop identifies lessons learnt in Governorate Council elections

In collaboration with UNAMI's international election assistance team, the UNDP elections project organized a lessons learned workshop in Istanbul 15-18 March 2009. Thirty seven officials from the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq (IHEC), IEAT National Office and the Governorate Election Office attended. Participants discussed subjects ranging from

operational problems to public outreach, which had impacted on or enhanced their activities during the recent Governorate Council elections.

During the workshop, there was a presentation by the professional polling company YouGov, which has completed a nationwide survey of public perceptions of the IHEC and of the

electoral process in general. This survey, funded by UNDP, would be used to plan future operations and public outreach activities. The participants identified shortfalls/challenges faced during the Governorate Council Elections and agreed on recommendations to overcome such shortfalls/problems in future electoral events.

UNDP trains Iraqi women judges on women's rights, modern legal database

As part of UNDP's support for the development of rule of law and judicial reform in Iraq, fifty-seven women judges gathered in Istanbul, Turkey 9-11 May, for a three-day conference on women's rights, international and Iraqi standards for the right to fair trial and modern tools such as the Iraqi legal database.

"These brave women are helping to shape the future of Iraq's legal system and we hope that this opportunity will continue to serve them in their future work and interactions," the UNDP project manager organising the event said following the successful conclusion of the meeting. "It is our hope that these women judges will use the connections made and information shared at this conference to continue to network and share



ideas as they return to their courthouses, detention centres and offices in Iraq," he continued.

The conference funded by the European Commission, marked the first opportunity for all Iraqi women judges to gather as a group and address the common challenges they face as women and members of a judicial system still in transition.

Following the regime change, it has been a priority for Iraqi authorities to increase the number of women judges in the country's courtrooms. "I am happy to announce that since

2003, the High Judicial Council (HJC) has increased the number of women in the judiciary by more than five fold, in addition to creating equal salaries and benefits for the judges and prosecutors," noted Medhat Al Mahmoud, Iraq's Chief Justice, who addressed the women judges on the topic of judicial ethics. "The HJC is still trying to emphasize the principles of the independence of the judiciary which faces many challenges on the political and legislative sides," he pointed out.

In addition to the intervention by the Chief Justice, participants also received presentations on the international framework for treaties regarding women's rights by UNIFEM, as well as international and Iraqi standards for the right to fair trial.

The conference concluded with a full day of training on the use of the Iraqi Legal Database (ILD), a new tool used to track the Iraqi Constitution and laws, which is supported by UNDP. It is the first database of its kind in the Arab region, and will result in a great reduction in wasted court time, judicial errors, miscarriages of justice, and similar. The ILD is a web-based, searchable database (accessible at: <http://www.iraq-ild.org>) of all Iraqi laws and regulations published in the country's Official Gazette since 1917, and includes 7,136 laws and 3,268 government regulations. 4,242 court decisions have also recently been added to the ILD.

Workshop on Parliamentary Oversight in conjunction with the UK House of Commons

The United Nations Development Programme organized a workshop in London from the 17-19 June 2009, specifically on the issue of parliamentary oversight, in collaboration with the UK House of Commons. The workshop brought together key members of the Iraqi Council, including members from the Finance, Economics, Investment and Reconstruction Committees, with senior officials from different governmental and non-governmental institutions involved in parliamentary oversight in the United Kingdom. The discussions allowed members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives to benefit from the United Kingdom's experience in this regard. The workshop included meetings with senior officials from House of Commons' Public Accounts Committee, the House of Commons' Treasury Committee, the House of Commons' Scrutiny Unit, the Ministry of Finance and the National Audit Office.

On the first day, a number of presentations were given by the House of Commons' Public Accounts Committee and the House of Commons' Treasury Committee. The presentations focused on the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary oversight in the UK, the role of the Public Accounts Committee and the suitability of establishing a similar Committee in the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR). The participants then moved on to discuss the role of the Treasury Committee in budget deliberations, as well as the relationship of this Committee with the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee.



On the following day, the sessions focused on the functions and responsibilities of the National Audit Office, the working relationship between the National Audit Office with the House of Commons and the Public Accounts Committee, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary oversight in the UK. The Treasury Committee provided important information on how budget deliberations in the UK can be improved (in particular in relation to preparing and executing the budget), and how Iraq could benefit from the UK's experience in this domain. The House of Commons' Scrutiny Unit also explained what its specific functions are, specifically with regards to auditing public expenditure and reviewing legislative bills. The participants then met with the Chairman of the National Audit Office (who had also previously been an advisor to the House of Commons and to the Treasury) pertaining to all matters of financial oversight.

On the final day, the participants discussed the strengths and weakness of parliamentary oversight in Iraq, the changes that can be implemented by the end of 2009, as well as the Board of Supreme Audit's (BSA) ability to effectively exert oversight on the Executive within the current Iraqi context. Some of the most important contributions made by the Iraqi participants included suggestions on establishing specialized committees that can assist in improving the channels of communication between the BSA and particular Ministries. Another contribution highlighted the importance of establishing a balance between the constitutional rights of the members of the Council to exercise oversight and preventing the politicization of parliament oversight.

At the end of the three-day workshop, the participants agreed upon a list of final recommendations that included amongst other things, the decision to name a number of specialists from both the Council and the BSA to form a joint commission that would be responsible for coordinating with UNDP to establish a draft memorandum of understanding that will govern the working relationship between the two institutions based on international standards. Ensuring a permanent seat in the CoR for the BSA to attend and answer any inquiries during Council's sessions, and increasing the number of employees and experts in the parliamentary committees to increase their efficiency were also proposed. Finally it was suggested that the permanent parliamentary committees refer the amended and draft laws with reference to financial matters to the BSA, and guaranteeing that the Council will provide assistance to the BSA through (1) compelling Ministries to provide the BSA with the necessary documents, (2) obliging Ministries to respond to the comments in the BSA reports and provide answers to the questions.

BSA collaborates with Italian Court of Audit on money laundering detection

Within the framework of the UNDP implemented project to strengthen the capacity of the Bureau of Supreme Audit (BSA), a three-day study tour to Rome took place 24-26 March 2009. It was organized jointly by BSA's President and the Italian Court of Audit – units responsible for investigating suspected money-laundering transactions and providing financial information for the monitoring and prevention of money laundering activities. The visit comes in the context of increased emphasis by the international community to promote good governance and to fight corruption in Iraq.

The study visit was a valuable opportunity for the BSA President and the Iraqi delegation to establish initial working relations with the host institutions in Rome. It also allowed BSA exposure to the system and methods used in Italy for the interception and investigation of 'suspect' money laundering activities and to explore the legal framework systems and procedures for safeguarding, auditing and control of public expenditure.

Iraqi media discusses telecoms regulation

The UNDP Media Project sponsored a 25-member delegation of parliamentarians, telecoms operators, government officials, regulators and media to attend the Arab Advisors conference on Media and Telecommunications Convergence in Amman 1-2 June, 2009.

The delegates then attended an expert roundtable on 3 June organised by UNDP and facilitated by the UK-based consultancy Albany Associates to discuss the draft Iraqi telecommunications law and mapped a strategy to support further stakeholder consultations and expert interventions.

The meeting was the first time that government and operators had sat down to discuss telecoms regulation in Iraq. The next step is an international conference on telecoms regulation which will be organised in Baghdad in autumn in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union, and sponsored by the telecoms operators.

UN – Iraqi media mark World Press Freedom Day



On May 3, 2009 on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, UNDP and sister agencies UNESCO and UNAMI supported a conference in Erbil organised by the Aswat al-Iraq independent news agency. This brought together over 50 media practitioners, academics and government officials and representatives of the Independent High Election Commission to discuss the role of independent media in ensuring legitimate and credible elections.

The event in Erbil is the first step in a dialogue among stakeholders to help shape the media and communications sector in the Kurdistan region. The Iraqi constitution enshrines freedom of expression but is silent on the right to access information. It is vital that the right of citizens to receive information and ideas is legally protected, especially during elections where issues such as the funding of election campaigns and the probity and honesty of candidates are critical factors in the credibility of the process.

Aswat al Iraq is an Iraq success story and as such has been acknowledged internationally. On 22 June 2009, together with UNDP, a team from Aswat al Iraq travelled to London to the awards ceremony of the One World Broadcasting Trust, where it was honoured as a shortlisted entrant for the Special Media Prize for 2009.

UNDP Supports Iraq in building a Human Rights Culture

From 31 May 31 to 9 June 2009, UNDP conducted a training workshop in Amman targeting 15 trainers from the Iraqi National Institute of Human Rights, to disseminate the culture of Human Rights, as well as raising awareness about human rights principles in both public and civil sectors.

"UNDP support of Human Rights is one of the most important and outstanding programmes that the Governance Unit implements in Iraq, complementing activities in support of transparency, fighting corruption and building the institutional capacity of civil society organizations. All focus on the role of the individual to produce and contribute for the purpose of building a new Iraq," said Elballa Hagona, UNDP-Iraq's Deputy Country Director.

During the workshop, UNDP helped the trainers acquire and develop knowledge and skills in the field of Human Rights

education, with particular focus on the rights of women, children, and minorities; models and methodologies for Human Rights education; and strengthening the participants' skills in planning and development of Human Rights strategies.

"These sessions will help us strengthen future mechanisms to end impunity and promote integrated rehabilitation and compensation for victims of human rights violations," said Dr. Ali Al-Ubaidi, head of the Iraqi delegation. "In addition, it will increase the availability of legal information to the public to enhance Iraqi citizens' awareness of Human Rights and knowledge of how to exercise those rights. This workshop will also help us link theoretical concepts with the reality in Iraq."

Started in March 2009, this project has already organised four workshops during its initial phase. It has also drawn the attention and support of the Minister for Human Rights, who recommended the continuation of this pilot project in order to involve as many areas as possible in Iraq.

A Second Phase of LADP: In the Pipeline

The process of reconstruction and development in Iraq is increasingly placing emphasis on more effective governance systems, increased efforts at decentralization, and an increased focus on sustainable poverty alleviation. This is being achieved in part by shifting increased responsibility for economic development, service delivery, and other public functions from central government to local authorities at the governorate level. At the heart of this approach is a critical need for effective planning in governorates and districts that must achieve a balance between meeting national policy directions and responding to development priorities in each area.

In response to this need, Phase One of the Local Area Development Programme (LADP) was launched in 2007 as a joint undertaking of seven UN agencies and the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC). It was to support sustainable development management at the local level through the provision of support for local area participatory planning processes, economic recovery initiatives and design and implementation of physical improvements and delivery of targeted training.

A second phase of the LADP is now proposed to capitalize on the achievements of Phase One (2007-2009) with an emphasis on integrating programme approaches into institutional practice and building the capacity of local government bodies to support decentralisation. The overall development objective of LADP Phase Two is to improve living conditions



and contribute to sustainable poverty reduction in ten governorates in Iraq by:

1. *Strengthening institutional capacity in selected districts and governorates to (i) prepare inclusive, participatory sustainable development plans (ii) improve physical infrastructure and (iii) enhance service delivery;*
2. *Empowering local people to identify and address their needs and priorities for poverty reduction, improvement of livelihoods and general enhancement of their quality of life;*
3. *Promoting innovative public, private, civil society and community partnerships and initiatives for job creation and local improved service delivery*

and socio-economic development, especially for vulnerable population groups such as women;

4. Institutionalising of local area/district planning processes through their integration with national and local government planning and development frameworks to ensure long-term sustainability and durability of programme initiatives and approaches.

LADP Phase Two will build on the lessons learnt during Phase One and the greater level of capacity, knowledge and confidence that now exists both within the programme and with counterparts at national and local levels. The programme will support the government, in particular the MoPDC, municipalities and key technical departments with the intention that, at the end of Phase Two, government organisations will be in a position to lead and implement local development planning processes without requiring further input from the international community.

Phase Two is proposed to be launched in 2010 over a three-year implementation period ending in 2012. In the next few weeks, further consultation with the GoI will guide the finalization of the programme document for the proposed second phase while cost-sharing with GoI will be discussed and additional funding sources will be identified and secured.

Partnership for sustainable housing delivery system

Erbil, 3 May 2009- A UNDP and UN-HABITAT supported housing sector project was formally launched today by the Governor of Erbil. The project, the first of its kind, will support implementation of the recently formulated Erbil Housing Strategy.

The Erbil Housing Strategy proposes improvements on several fronts to address serious housing problems, such as substandard and informal housing on the one hand, and over-design and poor energy efficiency on the other. This includes upgrading of informal areas and substandard housing to acceptable standards. It also highlights the need for making available more serviced land, cost-effective and energy efficient designs, technologies and building materials. Furthermore, the Strategy proposes improving access to affordable housing finance and strengthening systems for improved land management and adequate housing delivery for all.

The project is funded through the multi-donor Iraq Trust Fund with a contribution from the Government of Korea and co-financed by Erbil Governorate. The Office of the Governor of Erbil, Erbil Municipality along with the Ministries of Municipalities & Public Works and Housing will be actively involved in the project's delivery. An international NGO, CHF International will make available innovative micro-finance products for housing. The Erbil experience will be disseminated not only in the Kurdistan region, but across the entire country.



Dr. Dindar Zebari, Head of the Office for Coordination of UN affairs, welcomed the gathering and expressed the need for the KRG and UN agencies to deepen the partnership and look at longer term programmes for policy, strategy and technical knowledge development on a co-financing basis.

The honorable Governor of Erbil Mr. Nawzad Hadi welcomed this new partnership, where UN agencies are bringing in specialist technical inputs while physical works will be funded through budgets of local authorities. A Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works presentation

gave an overview of the role of the Ministry in housing delivery and highlighted some recent initiatives in city planning and public-private partnerships.

Mr. Nuraddin Saeed, speaking on behalf of H. E. Nazaneen Wasu, Minister of Municipalities committed not only full support for this project, but also to push for mainstreaming of the systems innovations that will be introduced under this project.

Ms. Natsuko Yukawa, UNDP pointed out that use of energy efficient building materials and designs can deliver significant environmental benefits through reduction of CO2 emissions. According to Mr. Basil Mihyar, UNDP a well-functioning housing sector can generate substantial jobs in construction and in the production of building materials, furniture and other household accessories.

Mr. Sudipto Mukerjee, Head of Mission, UN-HABITAT lauded the KRG for pursuing reforms in the housing sector and committing substantial resources for this project. He noted that the success of this project will require the collective efforts of all the relevant ministries and authorities and the private sector. Professor Babar Mumtaz, a renowned international housing specialist and the principal technical consultant for this project said, "A sustainable housing delivery system needs to take into account local realities and respond to social needs and aspirations – policies that have not worked will need to be replaced with innovative, holistic approaches."



ElBalla Hagona
Deputy Country Director,
UNDP Iraq

"Although the KRG has an average per capita income greater than most other areas in Iraq, poverty still affects a large number of Kurdish children, women and men. Improving basic service delivery will be key to meet the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty by half, achieving universal primary education, and attaining gender equality by 2020. The PFM Action Plan will be the backbone of this reform agenda. UNDP is pleased to support you in this endeavor."

Erbil, 5-6 May 2009. A two-day conference was held to adopt the KRG Public Finance Management (PFM) Action Plan and launch the Budget Execution Support Project, developed by UNDP in support of the KRG authorities under the leadership of the KRG Ministries of Finance and Planning. The adopted Action Plan provides an overall policy and operational framework for designing and implementing an integrated PFM reform and institution building programme, aligning this program with the national PFM Action Plan, fostering coordination and mobilizing donors' support.

Approved widely also at the conference was the USD 4.5 million KRG Budget Execution Support Project developed by UNDP. Improving the budgetary process is key to accelerating Kurdistan region's stabilization, recovery and development efforts. The project, which supports the implementation of the KRG PFM Action Plan, aims to strengthen KRG's budgetary capacity in policy, planning, execution and control. It enhances much needed transparency, efficiency and accountability in mobilizing and using public resources and building of capacity for improved public financial management in the KRG.

During the technical meeting on the first day, two coordination frameworks for the Action Plan's implementation were established; a Memorandum Of Understanding between the KRG and the central government and a KRG-led PFM Donor Coordination Group. Development partners were urged to



Public Finance Management for transparency, efficiency and accountability

present their on-going and future activities in the area of budget execution or public finance management in general, as well as pledging support.

The conference on the second day included participation by large number of high level officials such as the KRG Deputy Prime Minister Imad Ahmed, 17 KRG ministers, KRG governors, representatives from the central government, UN, World Bank, the donor community, NGOs and international and national media representative. In addition to those on the first day, several more donors expressed interest in taking part in the KRG led Donor Coordination Group, as well as in considering financial/technical assistance for the KRG Budget Execution Support Project. A further pledge of USD 2 million of financial support to the project was announced by the World

Bank's representative in Iraq, Mr. Jean-Michel Happi, in addition to the USD 0.5 million committed by Mr. Rasheed Taher, KRG Deputy Minister of Finance announced on the first day.

As stated by the project manager of the KRG Budget Execution Support project in her opening remarks, one of the objectives of the conference was to build partnerships in the area of PFM in Iraq. At the conference, not only were promises for coordination made among the development partners and between the KRG and central government but also an MOU, KRG PFM Action Plan as well as the Budget Execution Support Project were adopted and launched by KRG authorities. Finally, a forum of dialogue and exchange on PFM in Iraq was provided to over 200 participants.

Boosting power & water availability to Iraqi population

The 2009 second quarter saw the completion of three large-scale UNDP infrastructure rehabilitation projects responding to the needs of the population in Iraq, by supplying additional reliable power generation to the national grid as well as potable water to some one million people in the Baghdad area.

With the repair of Units 1, 4 and 6 at Taji Gas Power Station in Baghdad Governorate, some 50 extra megawatts of electricity are now available to the national electricity grid. Two Units 1 and 6 were converted to burn liquid fuel instead of gas after the gas pipeline supplying the power station was blown up in 2006. At the close of the project Units 1 and 6 were producing 38 MW and Unit 4 was repaired but could not be commissioned due to lack of gas.

During 2009 the Ministry of Electricity has completed the repair on the gas line and Unit 4 is now energized resulting in some 50 extra megawatts of electricity daily being produced by Taji Gas Power Station.

In parallel, a similar rehabilitation project was taking place at Mosul Gas Power Station located close to the city of Mosul, about 400 km north of Baghdad. The technical rehabilitation of Units 2 and 4 at the power station has led to an additional 30 MW of electricity becoming available to the national grid. Rehabilitation of these units has halted their eventual further deterioration and greatly reduced the risk of frequent tripping which results in shortening the operational life span of the units.

Remarkably, some 279 tons of spare parts and equipment were procured and transported by road to the gas power plant sites and safely stored in spite of the distance traveled and the precarious security situation at the time. As rehabilitation activities progressed, work was supervised and monitored from Amman on a daily basis with the plant engineers via webcam and video conferencing – a 'first' for



Supervision and monitoring of the project progress through video conferencing from Amman



Taji: Installation of procured equipment

corporate UNDP delivering by remote in a post conflict country. Mobile cameras at the sites of work were installed to facilitate real time monitoring of site activities and provided on-the-spot technical guidance by experts from the Amman office.

As training was an integral part of both projects, twelve Taji and Mosul site engineers received extensive training at the manufacturer's facility in Japan, in turn, becoming potential trainers. There has been a positive impact on the technical capacity, skills and know-how of the plant staff. After completing their training, the Iraqi engineers are now able to adequately operate and maintain the power plant as per international standards. The project created local employment and on-the-job training for some 60 unskilled workers at Taji. Moreover, they are able to train other junior engineers, which will further expand the benefits of the training through increased longer-term sustainability by knowledge transfer.

If the power stations were a stand-alone service it is estimated that the increase in generation would benefit some 220,000 inhabitants residing in Baghdad and the Central Region of Iraq from the rehabilitation of the units at Taji and some 100,000 in inhabitants in Mosul and its environs.

UNDP has recently completed the first ever chlorination system that conforms to the mandatory health and safety requirements in Iraq in the rehabilitation of Al Karama Water Treatment Plant Line I and in the partial rehabilitation of Line

II and Line III. This has improved the supply of water to the population by 40 per cent. The result is that approximately one million inhabitants residing on the Karkh side of Baghdad now have improved access, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to potable water supply services. The completion of this work brings the total plant output back to the pre 1990 capacity with an increased production of Line I by 10 Million Gallons per Day (MGD).

Water quality has improved by 75 per cent and 300 per cent related to the turbidity (solid content of water) and the chlorine content in the treated water, respectively.

Works covered the complete rehabilitation of the entire Line 1 including civil and electro-mechanical works on the raw river water pumping station, the two step chlorination facility, flocculation, sedimentation and storage tanks, complete sand filtration plant, treated water pumping station, electrical power supply system and several overhead cranes. As unspent funds became available, activities were expanded to include the partial rehabilitation of Lines II and III of the treatment plant covering various aspects including upgrading the electrical power supply, construction of a chlorine building, sedimentation tanks, overhead cranes and pumps.

Given UNDP's commitment to fostering sustainable development, staff from the water treatment plant operation and maintenance (O&M), Baghdad Water Authority and the Mayoralty of Baghdad have received the equivalent of 120 man/women days of comprehensive training on O&M covering a diverse range of activities that would allow long-term trouble-free operation of the various systems.

Project implementation of these three projects occurred at the time of deteriorating security in Iraq, resulting in challenges and delays. For example, in January 2007 four employees of a subcontractor were kidnapped and murdered forcing work to be suspended at Taji Gas Power Plant. In order



Delivery of equipment to Mosul

to restart the project and provide safe working and commuting conditions, a camp facility with accommodation and dining facilities had to be established at the power station to ensure the availability of project workers and enable works to progress. The deteriorating security situation was a serious hurdle for implementation at Mosul Gas Power Plant which required the introduction of new implementation modalities. It was estimated that the change



Cleaning and sludge removal from the Karama Clarifier

of three Directors General at Baghdad Water Authority over the life of the project led to a delay of some 18 months in the rehabilitation of the Karama Water Treatment Plant.

Although UNDP Iraq is shifting its activities towards major upstream policy interventions and capacity-building, the need for a regular and reliable supply of electricity and potable water remains a pressing priority for the population. These interventions are in line with the Millennium



Construction of the roof on the new water tank in Karama

Development Goals and are vital for private sector development and economic growth of the country.

On 7th July 2009, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Ad Melkert as his Special Representative for Iraq. As he leaves his present post in UNDP, he stressed the following: "... Yet, we should still insist more that necessary commitments for the rest of the century should go hand in hand with immediate provision of electricity, water and sanitation to the one third of excluded on this planet that cannot afford waiting any longer..."

UNICEF and UNDP together with the Iraqi Ministry of Environment launched a report in Baghdad on 1 July 2009 which raises concerns that Iraq is unable to meet its obligations under the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty.

"After decades of war and conflict, Iraq has become one of the world's most contaminated countries in terms of landmines and unexploded remnants of war, impacting the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis," said Paolo Lembo, UNDP's Country Director for Iraq. "Unfortunately, with the Government's current capacities and resources, it is unlikely Iraq will be able to meet its obligations under the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Treaty, as it will take decades to clear all mines and unexploded ordnance."

By acceding to the treaty, Iraq has committed to never again use, produce, acquire, or export antipersonnel mines. It has also committed to destroy stockpiled mines in four years and to clear minefields in ten years.

The report, entitled "Overview of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Iraq", notes that around 20 million landmines and 2.66 million cluster bomblets are contaminating more than 1,700 square kilometres of Iraq's land, including oil fields and farmlands. These unexploded remnants of war are affecting more than 1.6 million Iraqis in some 4,000 communities by significantly impeding both their own and their country's economic recovery.

Iraq's signature of the Mine Ban Treaty came into force in February 2008. Since then, approximately 20 square kilometres have been cleared by national and

UNICEF and UNDP concerned Iraq unable to meet its Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty obligations



The report is available for download on UNDP Iraq web page
www.iq.undp.org

international demining organizations and 276,658 people have received mine awareness training through UNICEF-supported activities. Under the terms of the Convention, Iraq must clear all areas containing or suspected to contain antipersonnel mines before February 2018.

"At the onset of Iraq's ratification of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, we have been engaged in the very difficult task of seeing

Iraq's obligations to the convention fulfilled" said Her Excellency Narmin Othman, Iraq's Minister of Environment. "This report makes abundantly clear the enormity of the task ahead and that more must be done".

The report also notes that around one million Iraqi children are at risk of being injured or killed by mines and unexploded ordnance and that 2,000 children (one quarter of all victims) have been maimed or killed by cluster bomblets since 2003.

"Iraqi children have the right to grow up in a safe environment without risk to their well being and lives as much as any other child in the world" said Sikander Khan, UNICEF Iraq Representative. "More action to clear mines and other unexploded ordnance is urgently needed so all Iraqi children can grow up without fear of this hidden enemy and be assured of a safer and better future".

For the past 10 years, UNICEF has supported the Mine Risk Education Programme in Iraq where two million people received information and prevention tools on the dangers of mines and explosive remnants of war. UNDP coordinates UN Mine Action in Iraq, supporting the Iraqi Government and civilian mine action authorities through building an operational demining and clearing capacity and developing a coordination and regulatory framework on mine action.

UNDP-Iraq Mine Action arranged and facilitated a training course in Erbil 4-7 May 2009, on mechanical demining and demining machines test and accreditation for Iraqi mine action authorities from across the country. The course was implemented by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. Its purpose was to enhance the capacity of mechanical demining and Quality Assurance mine action staff as UNDP had observed that the current mechanical demining capacity, in terms of deployment, more effective use of machines and monitoring, was in need of improvement and better planning.



Site visit to Choman/Soran, 4th May 09

The course covered a wide range of topics ranging from International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and categorization of demining machines to environmental considerations during mechanical demining and test and evaluation of demining machines.

In addition to the above topics covered in theoretical lessons, two field visits were carried out on the first and last day of the training period to minefields close to the Iranian border in the

Training course on mechanical demining and demining machines test and accreditation for Iraqi mine action authorities from across the country.

Mechanical demining training for Iraqi Mine Action staff

Haitham Lafta from the Regional Mine Action Centre-South in Basra: *“The training course focused on a very important subject - mechanical demining and mechanical accreditation - of which we in the centre and south of the country lack knowledge.”*

areas of Choman in Soran District, and another location in Shaqlawa district, some two hours north of Erbil. During these field visits, the participants were trained on site assessments and task planning. On the last day of the training course, all the trainees were tested individually and passed successfully. The support from the Erbil based Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency during the training was outstanding and its head Mr. Siraj Barzani, accompanied the trainees during one of the field visits giving greater importance to the event.

“The training course focused on a very important subject - mechanical demining and mechanical accreditation - of which we in the centre and south of the country lack knowledge,” said Haitham Lafta from the Regional Mine Action Centre-South in Basra.

A second week of mechanical demining training was conducted 29 June to 2 July 2009 in Jordan, in close coordination with the Jordanian National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) and the Norwegian People Aid (NPA) demining programme. A presentation was made on demining activities in Jordan by NCDR which also showed great interest in supporting mine action in Iraq. The following two days covered field visits to NPA and Jordanian military engineering mechanical operations sites with Quality

Assurance and Quality Control briefings. The last day focused on practical exercises for mechanical demining task assessment and implementation planning.

There are still many challenges ahead for the various mine action agencies in Iraq before the mechanical demining assets that are available can be used effectively such as mechanical demining task planning, demining machines deployment and monitoring mechanical demining operations.



Graduation ceremony, UN compound/Erbil, 7th May 09

