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## United Nations Development Programme Iraq Developing Disaster Risk Management Capacities in Iraq

### QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT



**Project Title:** Developing Disaster Risk Management Capacities in Iraq  
**UNDP Project #:** 00086493  
**Project Duration:** July 2013 – June 2016  
**Project Resources:** Total US\$ 6.519 million; BCPR, UNDP TRAC,  
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**UNDAF Outcome(s):** Outcome 4. Gol has the institutional framework to develop and implement MDG-based pro-poor, equitable and inclusive socio-economic and environmental policies and strategies  
**Implementing Partner:** Counterpart Ministry: Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST)  
**Responsible Partner:** Ministries of Planning, Agriculture, Environment, KRG, 3 Governorates – Erbil, Ninawa, Maysan and ???????  
**Project Location(s):** Iraq



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## Executive Summary:

One of the major achievements in the second quarter was successful organization of the DRR Inception workshop, held in Erbil during 15-16 April 2014. The workshop, which enjoyed wide participation from stakeholders at large, revealed that there is a strong buy-in of DRR project by the government of Iraq and particularly by the national DRR committee. The inception workshop was instrumental in building consensus among the key stakeholders on the key institutional aspects of a national DRM center (NDRMC) to be established in Iraq with UNDP's technical assistance.

Building capacity on disaster information management and DRR training has been identified as two key priorities toward creating institutional inroads for the proposed NDRMC. A disaster information management unit will be designed and established temporarily at the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), which will be transformed gradually over a period of 3 to 5 years to a fully-fledged EOC (Emergency Operational Centre) under the management control of the proposed NDRMC.

The understanding and awareness on DRR has been very poor among the stakeholders in Iraq and a comprehensive training programme needs to be undertaken to provide targeted training to a range of professionals and practitioners in Iraq. UNDP has already engaged to develop customized DRR training modules and will organize the first training programme during the last quarter in 2014.

Abu Ghraib flooding in May stressed the importance that Iraq is particularly vulnerable to disaster due to the potential threat of water control structure being used as weapon by terrorist groups. Iraq has a complex irrigation system and identification of risks associated with water control structures is also an important priority. UNDP, through close coordination with UNCT and the GoI, has conceptualized a study for systematic assessment of risks associated with hydrological systems and water control structures as well as to policy recommendations for mitigating the potential threats.

Lessons from a number of catastrophic incidents emphasized the need for developing a disaster web-portal for Iraq and UNDP has been engaged to provide technical support to the MoST in setting this up. This will be an organized information platform that would help capture and share timely and quality disaster information to the stakeholders at large. A technical guide has already been developed and shared with the counterpart ministry. The task was coordinated with the e-governance project of UNDP and the national web-portal development guidelines will be followed in setting up the DRR web-portal.

Local authorities and community are at frontline to deal with disaster risks. The DRR Project has started collaborating with UNDP's Local Areal Development Programme (LADP) to develop and deliver customized training on DRR for the provincial planning team with an objective to mainstream DRR into local planning and budgeting.

## Context:

### Background:

Iraq is increasingly exposed to a myriad of natural and human induced disasters, which include drought, floods, epidemics, sandstorms, desertification, destruction of marshlands, soil salinization of fertile lands, earthquakes, and industrial and chemical hazards. The country's vulnerability to such hazards has been worsened by the effects of war. Modern Iraq has inherited weak policies and institutions to deal with disaster risks. The disaster vulnerable people in Iraq have been experiencing increasing number of disasters in recent past, and the country has gained painful realization of very inefficient response actions in each and every time.

### Rationale:

The Government of Iraq (GoI), despite being constrained by increasing political violence and sectarian conflicts, has recognized the importance and urgency of disaster risk management and has started reinvigorating institutional and legal systems to address this pressing challenge. A National Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction has been set up under the chairmanship of the Minister for Science and Technology, which includes high-level representation of relevant national ministries and departments. The committee has drafted a new DRM law with support from UNDP, which has proposed the establishment of a National Disaster Risk Management Centre (NDRMC) in Iraq. However, the GOI needs support for implementation of DRR measures and in setting-up the Centre, for which UNDP's assistance has now called for. A number of disasters affected governorates have also requested UNDP's support separately. In response to these requests, UNDP has designed this project with the purpose of building national capacity on disaster risk management in Iraq.

The project intends to enable the different levels of Iraqi government and communities to reduce losses and damages from natural and human-induced disasters by adopting effective mitigation and preparedness approaches. The priorities of Hyogo Framework of Action formed the basis of project's strategic results, and also the interventions were designed in line with the priorities established by the national DRR committee and the consultation with national stakeholders.

### Intended Objectives:

The key objectives of the project are to enable the different levels of Iraqi government and communities to reduce losses and damages from natural and human-induced disasters by adopting gender-sensitive preparedness, response and risk reduction approaches.

### Main Project Stakeholders:

The Ministry of Science and Technology being the Chair of the National DRR Committee will serve as the key counterpart of the project.

The project intends to benefit the Government and the vulnerable people in Iraq through effective partnership with stakeholders at large, which include federal ministries, Civil Defense, governorates, universities, civil society organizations and media representatives.

The project will contribute to the achievement of the UNDAF 2011-14 Outcome 3.4, which calls for UNDP support to enhancing national capacities for DRR.

## Implementation Progress (approx. 2 pages max)

Despite difficult political context, the DRR project has been able to make significant progress in the second quarter and achieved a number of milestones as originally planned in the approved work plan. These are explained in the subsections below:

### **Organizing Inception workshop on DRR Project:**

The inception workshop of the project was successfully organized in Erbil at the International Hotel from 15-16 April where a total of 30 participants, including experts and senior officials from Government of Iraq, the KRG Regional Government, Governorates and UN agencies, joined. In the workshop, the participants were engaged in lively discussions for a comprehensive plan and prioritized actions for capacity building on disaster preparedness and risk reduction in Iraq. As a first step on building DRR capacity, experts and officials provided their collective inputs to develop the institutional framework for a National Disaster Risk Management Centre, which is expected to drive the shift from response and relief centric disaster management to a comprehensive risk reduction culture in Iraq. Dr. Samir Raouf, Deputy Minister of Science and Technology and Head of National DRR Committee, in his opening remarks, highlighted the importance of this new project that would cater to the need for institutional capacity building toward comprehensive risks management of both natural and human induced disasters in Iraq. Ms. Rini Reza, UNDP's Deputy Country Director, while welcoming the participants, emphasized the need to identify options to build resilience which will lead the government and the people of Iraq to be better prepared for and to recover from disasters.

### **Support to the establishment of Disaster Information Management Unit (DIMU):**

The members of the National DRR Committee and the stakeholders emphasised the urgency to build national capacity in two priority areas within the purview of setting up a national DRR centre. These are building capacity for disaster information management and tailor made DRR Training programme.

On building capacity for disaster information management, a new institutional entity will be created which will be temporarily premised within the ministry of Science and Technology. This is named as 'Disaster Information Management Unit (DIMU)', which will serve as the key information hub of disaster risk management in Iraq. UNDP is currently engaged in developing Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) for DIMU, which will be an integral part of disaster preparedness and coordination functions of National DRM Centre. Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) are detailed written instructions that ensure that all the functions and activities of the DIMU are carried forward consistently and effectively. The development and subsequent testing of SOPs are the integral parts of a successful quality system and provide DIMU staff with information on how to perform specific jobs during emergency events.

The DIMU is expected to operate within a complex environment along with a number of other Emergency Operations Centres and Control Rooms established in Iraq. There is a clear need for the DIMU over time to expand its current functions specific to information management to a more comprehensive role of an EOC. The DIMU will be ultimately housed in the National DRM Centre (NDRMC) once established. Following table briefly outlines a possible expansion of DIMU over a period of 3-5 years towards a full-fledged national Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) managed by the national DRM Centre.

3 – 5 years

Now	Interim	Future
DIMU under MoST operating within current system and undertaking the following tasks	More Developed DIMU under NDRMC assuming the following basic EOC functions	Fully functioning EOC incorporating the following functions.
Information Management	Continuation of Information Management functions	Refined Information management processes
Limited Coordination for non traditional events such as flood, drought, sand Dust Storm (SDS) etc.	Expanded coordination role and function across a variety of emergency events	Full coordination role across all emergency events
Early warning in support of formal systems such as Meteorological Department and other Forecasting entities in Iraq	Continuation of Early warning systems	Public Information
Limited Reporting Functions	Expanded Reporting Functions	Operational Management
	Logistics Support	Logistics Management
		Planning
		Coordination
		Financial Management

**Tailor-made DRR Training for Iraq:**

DRR Project has planned to mobilize actions and undertake a range of professional and technical level training on DRR targeted to the officials of the government and stakeholders at large. The types of DRR training and the target groups, as agreed during the inception workshop, are listed below:

Training subject	Target Group	Resources (Experts/Training facility)
Capacity building on Response and Recovery	Relevant staffs and practitioners	National and International expertise, GoI training facilities
Planning and mainstreaming DRR	Policy Makers, senior Officials, Line ministry officials	International and national experts, Ministry of Planning, GoI Training Facilities
Training volunteers in Governorates and region	Volunteer groups from the Governorates and the region	National institutions, CSOs, training the trainers with international capability
Community awareness on DRR	Selected vulnerable Communities	DRR center, Media, relevant institutions
DRR in Higher Education	Awareness and building supportive capacity	Ministry of higher education, ministry of Education, DRR center
DRM Training	Create specialist leadership	Int. experts in coordination with DRR

(Professional Level)	for Emergency cases	center
Early warning	Officials from relevant departments/ ministries	International and national Expert.
DRR Risk Assessment and Hazard Mapping	GOI officials (DRR center, line ministries, Governorate, humanitarian partners)	GOI Training facilities, Intl and national experts

The first training program has been planned for November/December 2014 and the detailed schedule and the participants of the proposed DRR training are being determined in consultation with the National DRR Committee. It has been planned that the training will utilize the existing facilities of the Government. In support of this training, the project has already initiated the process of hiring a national consultant who will work with the DRR Specialist in conducting the proposed training.

**Response to Abu Ghraib Flooding:**

Iraq faced serious water crisis due to the unprecedented use of water as weapon by the terrorist groups during late April at the location of Abu Ghraib Dam, where fighting between the Iraqi Security Forces and armed groups continues. This emerged as a complex crisis due to different forms adverse impacts in the affected communities:

Flooding caused by the forced closure of a major dam on the Euphrates River has destroyed villages and farms across a 200 sq.km area in Abu Ghraib, the west of Baghdad. This caused huge damages to crops and livestock, and destroyed 10,406 houses, and forced the closure of 49 schools and two primary healthcare centers (PHCs). This situation precipitated the displacement of more than 12,000 families.

Concurrently, the opening of the Al-Ghaleq dam on 6<sup>th</sup> May led to a sudden decrease in floodwater to the Abu Ghraib unified canals. As a result, the two distributaries, the Al-Tharthar-Yousfiayh River and the Abu Ghraib lined-canal were no longer fed with water, which had made lives difficult in the command area.

UNDP was actively involved and closely engaged with the UN Country Team in dealing with Abu Ghraib crisis. UNDP senior management participated in the field visit along with SRSG to Abu Ghraib and the DRR Project was particularly assigned to coordinate with the UN Country Team and the Government Counterpart in order to facilitate effective response to this sudden crisis. UNCT recognized the urgent need to undertake a hydrological study to analyze the complex conditions of water supply and stagnation in the affected region and UNDP, due to its engagement in water sector, has been requested to lead this initiative among the UN agencies in Iraq. In support of this initiative, the project has developed a concept note to mobilize an International Expert for undertaking a systematic assessment of the impact of flooding and drought in the affected areas caused by the unexpected terrorists’ attack on Abu Ghraib Dam which was designed to store and release water to benefit the downstream entitlement holders. The scope of the study includes identifying actions required to manage the water situations and bring back the water regulation in order. The main purpose is to come up with a set of recommendations at the policy and operation level that would potentially mitigate the future threats of using water as a weapon in the conflict prone areas of Iraq.

The commissioning of the proposed study has now put on hold due to upsurge of severe conflict in June. In the meantime, the project has also tried to capitalise the difficult experience of data



inaccessibility and sensitized the counterparts and facilitated in addressing the gap by developing a DRR web-portal for Iraq.

### **Support to development of a DRR Web portal for Iraq:**

Being challenged by the increasing number of catastrophic events in recent times, where the critical gaps of disaster information management were badly felt, the National DRR Committee has expressed a need for more effective and better coordinated information management systems. The aim is to improve coordination among agencies at all levels with access to appropriate, timely and accurate information before, during and after emergency situations. Without having a robust and integrated system, Iraq will not be able to effectively deal and manage disaster challenges. Against this background, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), with support from UNDP, has started developing a website that will systematically capture, archive and disseminate quality information on disaster events in a consistent and timely manner.

In facilitating the process, DRR project coordinated with the E-governance project and send the public portal guidelines finalized in early 2014. In addition, the DRR project developed a technical guidance note for DRR portal and had shared with the national counterpart.

This will be a collaborative task of developing a web-portal for the Government of Iraq on 'Disaster Information Management' and will be carried forward in partnership with the key institutions involved in disaster risk management in Iraq. The advantage of setting up a web-portal is that it serves as a means to gain speedy access to a multitude of information services and knowledge. Given the strategic importance of this web-portal in a crisis-affected country like Iraq, the technical design process must adhere to appropriate protection measures and security compliances.

As articulated in the DRR Guidance Note, the key purpose of this web-portal is to collect, coordinate and disseminate disaster information, early warning and alert messages, and DRR information, guidelines from source down to the last mile. The portal will enable the GoI to collect, analyze and disseminate information for risk reduction and emergency response. This web-portal will establish data communication network to link the national DRR centre with government agencies, humanitarian partners and other organizations concerned with disaster management at the regional, national and local levels through its various functionality. The web portal will be an organized common platform to capture, organize and share the knowledge of disaster management and to create a versatile interface among policy-makers in the Government and disaster managers at all tiers and levels.

## Challenges (approx. 1 page max)

The project has stepped into implementation early this year and has successfully generated momentum through the inception workshop in April. This momentum and the speed of implementation have now been affected significantly by the escalated conflict situation in Iraq. In fact, some of the planned deliverables require actions and logistical support by the counterparts, and under the current context, it will be rather difficult to secure the required level of support from the counterpart as originally envisaged. A number of meetings with the counterparts had to be postponed due to travel restrictions.

On the other hand, DRR being closely linked to humanitarian actions, the project offers an opportunity for UNDP Iraq to mobilize actions and channel UNDP's imminent humanitarian support to build capacity of the host community, if need be. In fact, output 4 of this project is targeted to local capacity building for better preparedness, recovery and risk reduction.

The project continues to suffer from shortage of funds and it is important that UNDP Iraq prioritizes this project as a strategic initiative for building resilience at the community level and mobilize resources for this project to deliver results in order to create grounds for building resilience.

The current political impasse following parliamentary election in April 2014 has delayed the process for approval of the draft DRR law which was earlier cleared by the Shura Council. This is a significant setback since the enactment of DRR Law has been considered as the key driver for advancing DRR agenda in Iraq.

## Lessons Learned (approx. 1 page max)

A number of catastrophic incidents during second quarter such as Abu Ghraib flooding, blasts in oil refinery in Kirkuk etc., provided valuable lessons and raised questions on the role of the national DRR committee. The DRR Project has been capitalizing these lessons and played a catalytic role to draw attention of the national DRR committee in responding to these incidents.

Continued consultation with the national counterpart is critical for preparing the key deliverables under DRR project. The project needs to make resources available to avoid interruption at the face of increased conflicts and political violence.

## Future Plans (approx. 1 page max)

The third quarter is expected to be critical for the project to complete the development of SOP for the Disaster Information Management Unit (DIMU). This has to follow a consultative process involving the key stakeholders and it is not certain how this can be achieved within the current security situation. Institutional development such as setting up Disaster Information Management Unit (DIMU) is a core government process and the counterpart's ability to pursue this task with full energy is doubtful under the current political context.

The DRR training module needs to be developed within the third quarter. The recruitment of the national DRR consultant needs to be completed in the third quarter in order to support translation of the Training module in Arabic.

DRR project has been collaborating with the LADP project and is going to organize a training course for mainstreaming DRR into local and regional planning. The targeted participants will be the provincial planning team and the training programme is expected to be hosted by the LADP project.

**Financial Section:**

**Table 1: Funding Overview**

Donor	Commitment (Currency of the Agreement)	Received (Currency of the Agreement)	Received (USD)	UNORE	Balance (Currency of the Agreement)
UNDP TRAC	100,000\$	100,000\$	100,000\$		-
BCPR TRAC	704,080.00\$	352,028\$	352,028\$		352,0524
<b>Total</b>	<b>804,080.00\$</b>	<b>452,028.00\$</b>	<b>452,028.00\$</b>		<b>352,0524</b>

**Table 2: Expenditure Status (by activity)**

Activity	Budget  (A)	Donor	Cumulative Expenditure Status at [Date, i.e. end of preceding quarter]		Expenditure in Reporting Quarter		Quarter Total Expenditure  (F=D+E)	Total Expenditure  (G=B+C+F)	Budget Balance  (H=A-G)	Delivery Rate  (% I =G/A)
			Commitment (B)	-Expenses + full asset cost (C)	Commitment (D)	Expenses + full asset cost (E)				
Act1	269,682.000	00012	0.00	\$6,725.86	\$1,271.82	\$77,678.25	\$78,950.07	\$85,675.93	\$184,006.07	32%
Act2	66,673.00	00012	0.00	\$2,938.60	\$17.00	12,147.18	12,164.18	15,102.78	51,570.22	23%
Act3	65,673.00	00012	0.00	\$1,232.86	0	12,034.17	12,034.17	13,267.03	52,405.97	20%
Act4	10,000.00	00012	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00	0%
Act5	40,000.00	00012	0.00	\$32.00	\$1,600.00	\$8,075.50	\$9,675.50	\$9,707.50	30,292.50	24%

<b>GMS</b>	0.00									0%
<b>Total</b>	452,028.00\$		0.00	\$10,929.32	\$2,888.82	\$109,935.10	\$112,823.92	\$123,753.24	328,274.76	27%

**Table 3: Expenditure Status (by donor)**

Donor	Budget	Activity	Expenditure Status as [30 June, 2014]		Expenditure in Reporting Quarter		Quarter Expenditure	Total Expenditure	Balance	Delivery
			Commitment	Disbursement	Commitment	Disbursement				
00012	452,028.00	Act 1,2,3,4,5	0.00	\$10,929.32	\$2,888.82	\$109,935.10	\$112,823.92	\$123,753.24	328,274.76	%27
<b>GMS</b>	0.00									
<b>Total</b>	452,028.00\$		0.00	\$10,929.32	\$2,888.82	\$109,935.10	\$112,823.92	\$123,753.24	328,274.76	%27

## **Annexes**

### **Annex I: Performance Tracking Matrix**

As explained in earlier section, the project experience a unique implementation context and will develop a new implementation strategy and work plan during the second quarter. The revised work plan has been submitted to PMSU for review and once approved, performance-tracking matrix will be filled-in.

## Annex II: Risk Log:

Project Title: Developing Disaster Risk Management Capacities in Iraq							Award ID:	Date: April 2014	
#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact and Probability	Counter measure/ Mitigation Strategies/ Management Response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
1	Delay in the startup of the program	December 2012	Operational	There would be subsequent delays in the implementation of program activities and challenges in resource mobilization.  P = 1 I = 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure flexibility in program design to accommodate possible delays;</li> <li>2. Organize launching workshop as an opportunity to develop detail implementation plans involving Member States</li> <li>3. Continuously monitor</li> </ol>	MoST, UNDP		March 2014	<p>The project stepped into implementation without securing resource commitment from any sources except the support from BCPR for a full time DRR Specialist.</p> <p>A revised implementation strategy has been developed in consultation with the counterparts which include flexibility and also pursuing DRR results through ongoing</p>





									possible funding of DRR project. Follow on discussion needs to follow once the new government is formed and the national budget is approved by the parliament.
4	The Iraqi government, ministries, governorates and urban authorities don't provide funding to implement the recommendations made by the experts	December 2012	Strategic	Advocacy to National DRR Committee to mobilize support from GOI to allocate funding for implementation of recommendations  P = 2 I = 5	Bilateral meeting with other organizations (donors) providing support to GOI/governorates	MoST, UNDP Project Manager			This has been discussed and some in-kind support are being mobilized.
5	Delay in the Implementation due to lack of project staffs/personnel	March 2014	Operational	There would be subsequent delays in the implementation of program activities  P = 1 I = 5	Revise the work plan and ensure flexibility in program by drawing a new implementation strategy against each outputs involving counterparts and stakeholders	MoST, UNDP			A revised implementation strategy has been developed and also the ToRs for at least one national expert and one associate have been developed for submission.

					Identify and propose core staffs needed to support implementation of the programme in 2014				
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