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**United Nations Development Programme Iraq**

**Iraq National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2014 n Youth**

**Annual Progress Report 2014**



**Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Nikolay Mladenov launching the Iraq NHDR 2014**

[](https://iraqnhdr3.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/iraqnhdr2014-english.pdf)

[**The full text of the Iraq NHDR 2014 could be accessed on this link**](https://iraqnhdr3.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/iraqnhdr2014-english.pdf)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Title:** | Iraq NHDR III 2014 |
| **UNDP Project #:** | 00075295 |
| **Project Duration:** | 1 Oct 2011 – 31 Dec 2014 |
| **Project Resources:** | TRAC 1: USD 684,785, 11888 USD 390,00 |
| **UNDP Iraq Focal Point:** | Khalid M. Khalid |
| **UNDAF Outcome(s)** | Outcome 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 |
| **CP Outcome(s):** | Outcome 4 |
| **Output(s):** | Iraq NHDR 2014, Policy Paper, Communication Strategy, HD and Youth Networks |
| **Implementing Partner:** | Direct Implementation |
| **Responsible Partner:** | Bayt Alhikma, Iraq (Bayt Alhikma is a think tank affiliated with the Ministry of Planning) |
| **Project Location(s):** | Nationwide |

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# Executive summary

The year 2014 witnessed the launch of the Iraq NHDR 2014, which is the main output of the project and concludes most of its activities. The Communication Strategy for the promotion of the NHDR was also completed as planned in the AWP.

The report was endorsed by the Iraqi government and the report was launched on 17 Dec in Baghdad through an event that was attended by the Iraqi Prime Minister and the UN DSRSG.

Persistent coordination and support from various participating teams enabled the completion the report in terms of substance and presentation. This was possible by early planning and securing the logistical arrangements for the printing of the report and its launch.

The report provides in depth analysis of the development situation in Iraq, particularly in relation to youth. This will be an important tool for national and international partners in planning programmes and interventions to support development in Iraq and to address youth issues.

The main challenge in 2014 was the escalation of violence in certain parts of the country. This, however, had minimum impact on the achievement of results as activities were well planned ahead and located in areas not affected by the security incidents. The project also implemented actions to cope with the minor impact the incidents had on the planned activities.

The main lesson learned is increase amount of support needed to the national team during the authoring of the report to ensure quality of analysis and the timely completion of the assignment.

# Context

This project aims to support the preparation of the third Iraqi National Human Development Report (NHDR) and comes as a result of the communications between UNDP Iraq and the Ministry of Planning (MoP) in August 2010. The main output of the project (the NDHR) will support development policy formulation and development planning with specific focus on Youth issues.

This is achieved through building national institutional and individual capacities to contribute to the preparation of the report. This includes government institutions, NGOs, and individuals from the academia, among others who will contribute to the report. The project supports the National Development Plan and the Youth Strategy through analysis, statistics, and policy recommendations, and the advocacy activities included in the project. Networks of experts and actors in Youth and Human Development areas are the basis of a pool of national expertise that will eventually contribute to future versions of the NHDR.

Rationale:

The basic rationale stems from the mandate of UNDP in supporting the preparation of Human Development Reports at the global, regional, and national levels. Moreover, the project strongly relates to the achievement of MDG as it will provide the situational analysis and policy recommendations that guide the achievement of sustainable development and the MDG. The NHDR will directly inform both national development processes as well as the development support provided by the development community including UNDP.

Intended objectives:

* Support development planning and policy making in Iraq
* Building the capacity of national institutions to design and implement policies that invest in human capital and empowerment of vulnerable groups such as women and youth
* Building the capacity of youth groups to participate and engage in decision making, social, economic, and political activities.

Intended beneficiaries:

* National policy making and development planning institutions including the Ministries of Planning, Finance, Labour and Social Affairs, Education, Health, and Higher Education are the main beneficiaries as well as Governorate Offices and the Governorate Councils
* Civil Society Organization, in particular those related to youth
* UN Agencies and the International Community

Main project stakeholders:

* **National**: Ministry of Planning, Baghdad, Central Statistics Organization, Kurdistan Region Statistics Office, Baytal Hikma (national think tank affiliated with the Ministry of Planning)
* **UN**: UNDP, ESCWA

Implementing arrangements:

The project is under Direct Implementation by UNDP Iraq. UNDP Iraq has allocated core resources from TRAC, complemented with additional funding from SOF 11888.

**Reference to institutional documents:**

**NDP**: Chapter 9(2): Training the young, helping them overcome social challenges and participate effectively in building society.

**UNDAF**: Priority Area 5: Investment in human capital and empowerment of women, youth and children.

**CPAP** Outcome 4: GoI has the institutional framework to develop and implement MDG-based pro-poor, equitable and inclusive socio-economic and environmental policies and strategies.

# II. Performance review

## Progress review

### **Overall progress towards the CPAP outcome and output(s)**

The NHDR 2014 adds a tool for policy formulation and development planning through the qualitative analysis and quantitative assessment of development issues in Iraq. The report identified Youth as a priority area and provided in-depth analysis supported by empirical evidence.

The report includes a final chapter in which the policy recommendations are summarized. This was achieved to specifically address the requirements of national and regional policy makers and planners in the Iraqi government to address issues related to Youth and development in general.

The report, therefore contributes directly to CPAP Outcome 4 as intended: “GoI has the institutional framework to develop and implement MDG-based pro-poor, equitable and inclusive socio-economic and environmental policies and strategies” and its output: “National and regional statistical offices capacitated for MDG monitoring and reporting for informed policy and national development planning processes”.

### **Capacity development**

Capacity development in preparing the National Human Development Reports is the core objective of the project. Most of the capacity building activities related to this objective were achieved in the years 2011-2013. The year 2014, however, was mainly occupied with the production of the report in terms of editing, design, and production that was mostly undertaken by the project directly and did not offer capacity building opportunities to the national counterpart.

However, the launch of the report and making it available to policy makers and development planners represents an important contribution to national capacities. The analysis, data, and policy recommendations offered in the report links directly to a number of high level processes taking place in the country such as the formulation and update of various national strategies that include the NDP, the National Youth Strategy, and the National Population Strategy. Feedback from the Ministry of Youth indicates their intention to revise the National Youth Strategy on the basis of some important findings of the Iraq NHDR 2014.

The report’s Communication Strategy (CS) also represents a useful tool that will help the Ministry of Planning promote the findings of the Iraq NHDR 2014 through a wide national network of actors, and will help these actors advocate the case for youth issues. The CS was planned to be mobilized through a set to two training workshops in Iraq throughout the year 2014. The escalation of violence in the first half of 2014 and the invasion of the country by the ISIS militia prevented the implementation of this activity. Post-project support is considered to address the requirements of the Ministry of Planning in implementing the CS which will be conducted with their own internal resources.

### **Impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries**

At the centre of the national direct beneficiaries is the ministerial structure of Iraq. The report was launched on 17 Dec 2014 in Baghdad under the sponsorship of the Iraqi Prime Minister who expressed his full endorsement of the report in his keynote speech. The fact that the Iraqi cabinet has endorsed the report is a major achievement that will facilitate the mobilization of the report’s findings in the work of the various line ministries involved in providing development support to the population.

Owing to the recent launch of the report, the signs of actual usage of the report in promoting development issues and youth related issues have not materialized yet. UNDP will maintain communication with the Ministry of Planning to monitor the impact of the report and process the feedback in future activities.

Youth groups that participated in the consultation process of the report are already showing signs of healthy ownership of the report. The representatives of the Youth networks that participated were all present in the launching ceremony and have expressed their assurance to promote the report’s findings and advocate its issues through their networks. They proposed to formulate a plan of action for the report’s advocacy in 2015.

## Implementation strategy review

### **Participatory/consultative processes**

The report itself is a testimony of an elaborate participatory and consultative process that permeated project’s activities since its inception. This is clearly reflected in the number of direct youth quotations and vision statements embedded in the text of the report. The consultative process was implemented by the project at many levels that include all stakeholders.

This approach was carried on in the production phase of the report in 2014. After ensuring the quality of the report through successive review and consultations, the design and layout of the report was done in full consultation with the stakeholders including the youth, who contributed the photo that was used in the cover of the report.

### Quality of partnerships

The partnership with the government, represented by the Federal Ministry of Planning and the Kurdistan Regional Office was instrumental in achieving results in 2014. The access to national statistics needed for the report analysis and the presence on the ground in all governorates was the main advantage of the government partner. Government partners also leveraged their connections with youth networks to contribute to the project, opening yet another opportunity of partnership with UNDP. Country knowledge offered by these partners completed UNDP knowledge in the NHDR methodology to achieve optimal results and take the project to final completion.

Complementarity was also achieved through partnerships with UN Agencies. Owing to the youth portfolio that UNFPA manages, its knowledge inputs, and linkages with youth networks were beneficial to the project.

Partnership with responsible partners, such as the Grafica design and printing service in Amman contributed the possible completion of the project. Grafica has been providing consultancy services to UNDP Iraq for the period 2004-2014 and good trust was built between UNDP and this service provider. Their flexibility and responsiveness was key to completing the activities that led to the successful launch of the NHDR in December 2014.

### National ownership

The UNDP Corporate policy on NHDRs mandates the necessity of national ownership, as the foremost quality criteria. The project maintained the level of national ownership that was nurtured throughout the life of the project. Having completely contributed to the formulation of the report in its analytical and data content, the national partners also led the positioning of the report’s launch and visibility.

The report’s launch event was endorsement by the highest national executive, the Prime Minister. In his keynote speech he expressed his full endorsement of the report findings and called upon participating Ministry representatives to put the findings in action. Youth participating in the launch event also pledged the same, showing strong ownership of the report.

### **Sustainability**

The year 2014 focused on the production and launch of the NHDR. This concludes the bulk of the project’s activities and hands over the tool to the government for their own action. Capacity building activities that preceded the launch and enabled it remain with the partner government institutions and it is expected that this will enable the national counterpart to engage in future NHDR exercises.

## Management effectiveness review

### Quality of monitoring

Project activity monitoring enabled the completion of the planned activities and the launch of the NHDR in 2014. The actual production of the report in terms of design and production was closely monitored by the project manager in order to ensure that the highest quality of presentation is achieved.

The same level of follow up and monitoring was applied with the national counterparts to ensure the optimal visibility of the report through the launch of the project. Key national counterparts were identified for invitation to the launch of event, in addition to participants from the international community, the media, the academia, and the civil society.

### Timely delivery of outputs

The main outputs in the AWP were implemented. These include the launch of the NHDR and the production of its Communication Strategy. Both were implemented, excluding the training planned under the Communication Strategy. This was not implemented due to the outbreak of violence in the west parts of the country and the preoccupation of national efforts with the consequences. This training was rescheduled to the year 2015, and consultations with national counterparts indicate that they will cover this training.

### Resources allocation

Administrative, running, and staff costs were reasonable in 2014, and the ratio of project costs to operational costs is 91% out of the total 2014 expenditure of USD113,050.

### Cost-effective use of inputs

Owing to the very specific nature of the final activities expenditures were focused towards the production of the report and the launch event. In that sense, optimal usage of funds was exercised and all expenditures resulted from the strict application of UNDP procurement procedures that ensured best value for money.

In identifying the best service provider to print the NHDR, it was found that that had an LTA with UNDP for the past 10 years was still the most cost effective. Additionally, local printing services in Iraq are still not up to the standard required, and for quality output as that required for the NHDR, local printing shops will use third party printers outside Iraq. This explains the high cost of printing services that were quoted by local providers, and the project had to resort to a tried and tested services provider in Jordan which effectively delivered the required service within the time and cost tolerances.

# III. Project results summary

**Output 1: Production and launch of the Iraq NHDR 2014**

The report was successfully completed as per AWP and launched in Baghdad on 17 Dec 2104. The activities that were implemented towards this end include:

* Translation of the Arabic original to English: the issue of getting a quality translation for the NHDR remained a challenge. The root of the challenge remains with two factors: the first is the specificity of the original draft’s language to Iraqi technical terminology with no adequate local translation capacity. The second is the size of the report.

The project exercised a layered approach to address the challenge. The first layer included the identification of a qualified translator, not necessarily Iraqi, to deliver the first English draft. To overcome local terminology usage, the project prepared a glossary for the Lebanese translator that was identified. The second layer involved the review of the translation by an Iraqi expert who could use both Arabic and English. The final layer involved the editing of the English translation by a professional, native English editor. This ensured the best quality translation of the report

* Peer review: the English version was then circulated to a group of international experts to complement the work of the national peer review group. This included members from the UNDP Regional Centre, Cairo, and the Regional Bureau of Arab States. Comments provided by the peer review group were fed back to the author team for the final update of the draft.
* Printing: the project anticipated the complexity of securing a contract with the printing services early in the year and concluded the agreement with the service provider well ahead of the completion of the NHDR manuscript. Close monitoring and communication with the national team ensured the optimal production of the report. The active coordination enabled the responsiveness to last minute requirements for additional printing services for the launch event such as the promotional folder and material that were handed out to launch event participants.
* Launch: with the effective support of the UNDP Baghdad Office Events Management Team, the arrangements with the service providers in Baghdad were effectively managed. Again, responsive coordination was a key element in securing a successful event. This was specifically effective with the numerous change of the target date for the launch that resulted from matching the availability of the high level officials that participated in the event including the Iraqi PM and the UN SRSG, among other.

**Output 3: NHDR Communications Strategy**

The Communication Strategy for the promotion of the findings of the Iraq NHDR 2014 and the advocacy of youth issues was delivered prior to the launch of the report and formed the basis for the communication related matters related to the launch. This includes the media kit, the press release, the website, and the launch material hand-outs.

The AWP included two workshops to advise the Communication Strategy process. However, the escalation of violence in the country prevented the reasonable conduction of these workshops, and the consultative process was alternately conducted remotely through communication networks. The strong partnership established with the youth enabled their contribution to the preparation and finalization of the strategy.

# IV. Implementation challenges

## Project risks and actions

The year 2014 witnessed the resurgence of violence in the country. The details of the incidents is well documented elsewhere and referenced where relevant in this document, therefore the following section will only discuss what its effects were on the project.

The incidents did not impact the management of the project as the location of the managing team was in the Kurdistan area, which was relatively secure. Printing of the report was located outside the country and the activity proceeded as planned, and all risks in this matter were averted. This also applies to the delivery of the Communications Strategy that was conducted by an international consultant working from home outside the country.

The only impact that the security situation had on the project was in the conduction of two workshops related to the Communication Strategy which were planned in the country. These workshops were planned for governorate participation to participate in the subsequent promotion of the report’s findings and to consult with the participants on the possibilities related to their locations.

The youth network that was linked to the project since its inception came into play and remote communications was arranged for the youth’s contribution and involvement in the preparation of the Communication Strategy. This also laid the path for an agreement with the national counterparts to lead on the promotion of the report and advocate the issues through their own channels and using their own resources.

## Project issues and actions

No particular issues remain as the report was completed and launched. However, the exit of UNDP from the NHDR process in Iraq seems likely as no resources are being allocated for follow up activities.

# V. Lessons learnt and next steps

## Lessons learnt

**A) Operational**

In view of the difficulties that Baytal Hikma faced in delivering the report in the planned timeframe and the repeated postponement of the completion and launch of the report, the re-assessment of the capacity of Baytal Hikma to engage in future exercises of this kind has to be undertaken.

In the past two years during which Baytal Hikma has been implementing the Iraq NHDR, its management capacity has shown clear signs of regression. This is mainly in terms of its administrative structure and its operational ability to support the technical activities, such as the authoring of the report. The project’s final report will have to provide a complete assessment of Baytal Hikma’s performance and make recommendations for UNDP’s future partnership with this institution.

The translation of the report also proved to be a challenge in a number of ways. Most important is the technical nature and complexity of the report’s substance. This requires very specialized translation. Another challenge is the inability of the reviewing entities, such as the HDRO to review the report in its original language. The HDRO specifically requested and English version to proceed with the review of the report.

Therefore, the corporate evaluation of the report will be influenced by the quality of the translation, which no matter how good, will lose some of the quality of the original text. Future exercises might consider authoring the report in English in parallel with the Arabic version.

**B) Substantive**

1. The field work conducted under the current project and the report’s findings have shown wide regional disparities and highlights the need for more focused regional NHDRs. The Lead Author suggested two reports on a regional level: one for the more developed region in Kurdistan, and the other on the most deprived areas, such as the Marshes of Iraq.

2. The report has shown that inequalities among the Iraqi governorates are a serious development issue. Efforts to address poverty in Iraq and improve the living standards and the national level of development should address inequalities and focus on the less developed geographical regions for support.

3. Social inequalities are also an issue that the report highlights. The report quantitative analysis has shown that the youth segment is more deprived than the whole of the population, and that female youth are the most deprived, especially in terms of income generation.

4. The NHDR exercise as a whole has generated a wealth of information for each of the Iraqi governorates, and this should be considered in the next step of HD reporting on Iraq. It is important to repackage the data and information generated in dedicated governorate profiles to compliment the aggregated presentation that the NHDR will provide. Sub governorate level data are much in demand by the humanitarian and development activities and initiatives. The governorate profiles exercise could be linked with the local area initiatives that the office is supporting, such as the Local Area Development Programme. These profiles will be very useful in determining levels of development and designing the proper approaches to improve them at the local level by the local actors.

## Recommendations

* Start discussions with the national counterparts for the next round of NHDR reporting, focusing on regional specific requirements.
* Exploring the option of simultaneous language authoring to avoid later translation problems
* Considering the possibility of fixed annual financial allocations for HD reporting
* Extending NHDR knowledge across the CO

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# VI. Financial Section

*[Note: All financial data presented in this report are provisional. From* UNDP Bureau of Management/Office of Finance and Administration, an annual certified financial statement as of 31 December will be submitted every year no later than 30 June of the following year.]

## Table 1: Funding Overview

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Donor** | **Commitment**  **(Currency of the Agreement)** | **Received**  **(Currency of the Agreement)** | **Received (USD)** | **UNORE** | **Balance  (Currency of the Agreement)** |
| **TRAC** | 708,219 | 708,219 | 708,219 | - | - |
| **11888** | 390,000 | 390,000 | 390,000 | - | - |
| **Total** | 1,098,219 | 1,098,219 | 1,098,219 |  |  |

The table on funding overview will cover funding since inception of the project, and will include only those contributions for which legal basis i.e. agreement/ letters exchange, exist. Column 1: will include the name of the donor, with a new adjacent cell created for every different agreement signed with the same donor. Column 2, commitment, will include the amount of the commitment as stated in the agreement in the same currency as in the agreement. Column 3: shows the amount of the money received against every commitment. If the currency in the agreement is denominated in USD, this slot can be left blank. Column 4: provides for the US equivalent of the received amount of the local currency, with Column 5: providing the United Nations Operational Rate of Exchange at the date of the receipt of funds. Column 6: provides for the balance of the contribution expected to be received from the donor. This is arrived at through subtraction of total received amount from the commitments.

## Table 2: 2014 Expenditure Status (by activity)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Budget**  **(A)** | **Donor** | **Cumulative Expenditure Status at [Date,i.e. end of preceding year]** | | **Expenditure in Reporting Year** | | **Yearly 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) |
| **Activity 1** | 708,219 | TRAC |  |  | 0 | 56,157 |  |  |  |  |
|  | 390 | 11888 |  |  | 0 | 55,212 |  |  |  |  |
| **GMS** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## With regards, to GMS, projects should reflect only ATLAS records as GMS is expected to be posted on time this year. Columns 1, 2 and 3 which respectively indicate activity, budget and donor of the project reflect the planned budget as in the AWP. Column 4/5, which indicates Expenditure Status at date of closure of the last reporting phase, will show commitments and disbursement up to that point. It is advised to use the IPSAS project resource management reports - fund resource overview; project resource overview; project budget balance; project transaction detail. This section has been re-aligned with these reports to make the reporting meaningful and easy. Commitments are the written contractual obligations which the project has signed out, while disbursements indicate the amount of money which was actually paid for the obligations. In UNDP corporate terms: OPEN REPORTED COMMITMENTS as at the reporting period ARE UNRECEIPTED POs ONLY. Columns 6/7 similarly indicate commitments and disbursements, however only for the reporting quarter. Column 8, Quarterly expenditure, will sum up the commitments and disbursements in the reporting quarter. Column 9, on total expenditures will add the quarter expenditure (column 8) to the expenditure status at the end of the last reporting quarter (columns 4/5). Column 10, the Balance, is arrived at through subtracting, total expenditure (column 9), from the budget (column 2). Finally the last column, Column 11, delivery, will be expressed in percentage terms, and is calculated by dividing total expenditure (column 9) by the budget (column2).

## Table 3: Expenditure Status (by donor)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Donor** | **Budget** | **Activity** | **Expenditure Status at [Date]** | | | **Expenditure in Reporting Year** | | **Yearly Expenditure** | **Total Expenditure** | **Balance** | **Delivery** |
| Commitment | Disbursement | | Commitment | Disbursement |
|  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **GMS** |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The explanation under this section is similar to the above section, however here the difference is that on this table expenditure is categorized as per source of funding/donor