

**Project Board Meeting
Security Sector Reform / Rule of Law Programme
Minutes**

Date: 23 November 2020

Venue: Multiple Locations (Virtual Meeting / MS Teams)

Chair: Ms Zena Ali Ahmad, Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq / Chair of the Project Board

Participants

Government Officials

Mr. Dhari Jabir Farhood, Deputy Prosecutor General, Supreme Judicial Council (SJC)

Mr. Raheem Abd Hassan, Director General of Judicial Guard, Supreme Judicial Council (SJC)

Mr. Ali Abdullah, Head of Security Sector Reform Support Committee / SSR National Coordinator/ Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA)

Mr. MG. Ziad Taha Ali, Director General Training and Qualification Directorate / Ministry of Interior (MoI)

Donors:

Present

Mr. Jan Pirouz Poulsen, Government of Denmark

Mr. Jort Posthumus, Government of Netherlands

Absent

Ms Kate Fiander and Mr Ryan Bush Government of Canada

Ms Jutta Weinmman and Ms Beate Hoppe, Government of Germany

Ms (?) Shoji Ryuno, Government of Japan

UNDP

Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad, Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq /Chair, Project Board

Mr. Ghimar Deeb, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq

Ms. Mahab Madani Al-Kurkash, Head of Governance & Reconciliation Pillar, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Yasir Hassan, Governance and Reconciliation Pillar, UNDP Iraq

Ms. Amanthi Wickramasinghe, Head- Programme Management and Support Unit, UNDP Iraq

Ms. Chamila Hemmathagama, Programme Manager, SSR/RoL Programme, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Finn Bernth Andersen, Senior Police Advisor– SSR/RoL Programme, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Philippe Gourdin, Senior SSR Advisor, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Ammar Altaie, SSR Project Manager/RoL, UNDP, Iraq

Mr. Beamie-Moses Seiwoh, Programme Management Specialist, SSR / RoL Programme, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Mustafa Al-Dahan, SSR/RoL Senior Translator, UNDP Iraq

Mr. Emad Al-Badri, SSR/RoL Translator, UNDP Iraq

Ms. Noor Al-Jadir, SSR/RoL Translator, UNDP Iraq

Ms. Dhuha Juhaishi, SSR/RoL Project Assistant, UNDP Iraq

Opening Remarks

Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad, Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq and Chair of the Project Board opened the Project Board Meeting and welcomed the Members to the first Board Meeting for the UNDP Security Sector Reform (SSR)/Rule of Law (RoL) Programme in 2020. She mentioned that the objective of the Project Board meeting was to hear about the progress, lessons learned, and critical challenges faced since the Programme's inception in 2019 to date and recommend a way forward.

Ms. Ahmad provided a brief background of the UNDP SSR/RoL multi-year programme, (hereafter referred to as the Programme), which has been operational since January 2019 and implemented in collaboration with the national Government partners. She noted that the Programme focuses on providing technical advisory and

capacity development support to the Iraqi Security Sector to strengthen local policing and the criminal justice system, as well as to a component of the community security integration process pilot initiative for former volunteer fighters.

Additionally, Ms. Ahmad commended Government partners for maintaining a very high degree of strategic and operational flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic considering the impact the pandemic has had on staff mobility and programmatic work worldwide since March 2020. She also extended her gratitude to the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the Government of USA, for their generous financial contributions to the the Programme.

Ms. Ahmad also informed the Board of changes effected in UNDP's operational modalities aimed at maximum flexibility to ensure business continuity.

Mr. Ali Abdullah (ONSA) noted that the Project Board meeting is an excellent platform to communicate with national Government partners and donors of the Programme. He further noted that there had been significant efforts from all partners to ensure that the Programme is implemented as planned, but the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge.

Additionally, he said that despite the circumstances, UNDP liaised with its national partners to find alternative modalities such as the utilisation of virtual platforms to conduct meetings and trainings to ensure business continuity.

Mr. Abdullah briefed the Board about the activities undertaken by the SSR Support Committee/ONSA in support of the implementation the government's Security Sector Reform Programme (SSRP). He noted that the eight systems within the SSRP had made significant progress even though there are some minor challenges which have caused delays in the implementation of some components. However, efforts are being made to ensure that the systems are implemented as planned.

One of the recent achievements of the SSR Support Committee/ONSA, according to Mr. Abdallah was the SSR High Committee meeting convened and chaired by Mr. Qasim al-Araji, the National Security Advisor, who, during the meeting, encouraged the Committee to continue effective coordination to ensure that the government's SSR programme is implemented under the central framework led by ONSA.

Mr. Abdullah also mentioned that the SSR Support Committee / ONSA had made good progress in the drafting of the National Security Architecture, which includes institutional, legal objectives which are aligned with the Government's programme, and which clearly define decision making and the commanding control sector roles. He additionally noted that the draft also indicates the roles and responsibilities of the security services and institutions. Mr. Abdullah informed of the recommendations by the working group to merge some services or institutions to ensure downsizing of the National Security Architecture, which will pave the way for the restructuring these services. Mr. Abdullah also updated that the draft National Security Architecture is currently with the Ministries and Agencies for their reviews and approvals before it is shared with the National Security Council for final approval.

Mr. Abdullah also briefed the Board about the oversight and accountability system/ component of the SSRP. He said the working group had done a good job in conducting an institutional analysis which captured the current situation of the institution; provided recommendations on how to improve oversight roles and responded to anti-corruption requirements. He also mentioned that there had been some progress in the drafting of the border management strategy. The border management working group was also reported to have hosted the commander of border guards who welcomed the efforts identified in the institutional analysis report.

Mr. Abdullah also noted good progress in the other areas of the SSRP such as the defence strategy, a working group within the Ministry of Defence, that is working on developing/strengthening strategic guidelines to improve the work of units or services, for enhanced command and control, within the National Security Architecture.

He also highlighted that progress had been made with the criminal justice and law enforcement system of the SSRP that is being implemented in direct coordination with UNDP. A working group at the Ministry of Interior, is tracking both administrative and technical aspects of this system..

For the critical infrastructure protection (CIP) system, Mr Abdullah noted that the work was also implemented in coordination with UNDP and reported that the CIP Strategy was approved by the National Security Council and now pending its adoption by the Council of Ministers. There will be a follow-up team established to ensure the implementation of the CIP strategy following its approval by the Council of Ministers.

On National Security Legislation system of the SSRP Mr. Abdallah informed that the SSR Support Committee/ONSA had noted the requirements mentioned by the working group to facilitate the work on security laws and legislation. He also highlighted that it is one of the delayed components because several former chairpersons of the working group were officials with very busy schedules. It has thus affected the percentage of achievements, which has not exceeded thirty percent (30%). Concluding his remarks Mr Abdulla said that the SSR Support Committee is in contact with the implementing ministries and agencies who provide quarterly implementation progress updates to ensure proper implementation of the SSRP. He also extends his sincere gratitude and thanks to UNDP and the donors for their on going support and collaboration..

MG. Ziad Ali (MoI) appreciated the achievements highlighted by Mr. Abdullah regarding the SSRP and thanked UNDP and its donors for the continued partnership with the Ministry of Interior (MoI). He mentioned that the Ministry was very much honoured to have received a request from ONSA to follow-up on the implementation of the criminal justice and law Enforcement SSRP System. Informed that the Ministry is ready to continue undertaking this task, and is very pleased with the coordination among partners– ONSA, SJC, and UNDP who are supporting implementation of this system.

MG. Ali, also mentioned that the MoI has received a lot of capacity building support from its international partners, including from UNDP. Recently, UNDP launched training courses on criminal investigations within the criminal justice and law enforcement system of the SSRP. They aim to raise awareness and security culture among police officers. He noted that COVID-19 health pandemic was a challenge that impeded the implementation of SSRP. However, through effective coordination among partners - UNDP with support from Danish National Police provided alternative training modalities, the trainings are now delivered virtually. As a result, the Improving Effectiveness of Local Police (IELP) and criminal investigations training courses for police officers are currently ongoing.

In conclusion, MG Ali noted that with UNDP's continued collaboration with national partners, the implementation challenges identified would be resolved through collective efforts to ensure that the SSR/RoL programme achieves its intended objectives within the set timeframe.

Mr. Farhood thanked UNDP for liaising with the national partners and donors to organise the first SSR/RoL project board meeting in 2020. He also thanked colleagues from ONSA and MoI for highlighting notable achievements of the SSR/RoL programme.

Additionally, Mr. Farhood briefed the Board about the main contents of the approved Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) for criminal investigations. Mr.Farhood noted that copies of the SOP were distributed to judges, prosecutors, and judicial investigators for implementation. However, the SJC noted a few areas to be included in the SOP in future. An example is the international principles of the right of a detainee to communicate with the defence lawyer from the moment of arrest. However, he said there was a need to consider the limitations of this right like acquiring approvals and official permission.

In conclusion, Mr. Farhood noted that the SC would continue to liaise with UNDP to provide capacity building support to judges to enable them to combat financial and administrative corruption in Iraq, noting that these two continue to undermine and destroy state institutions, which negatively affects public service delivery. Based on Mr. Farhood's request for support to enable the SJC to fight corruption. In response, Ms. Ahmad mentioned that UNDP is the UN agency mandated to support national institutions and capacities for anti-corruption initiatives. She further noted that UNDP has an anti-corruption programme that will be launched soon, and UNDP will be in touch with its national partners.

Presentation

Ms. Chamila Hemmathagama

The presentation was divided into two sections: Brief introduction to the terms of reference and responsibilities of the project board, and project presentation which focused on the overview, progress update, challenges since the project inception in 2019 and the way forward.

Brief introduction to the terms of reference and responsibilities of the project board.

The following **key points** were covered during the presentation.

- An overview of the Project Board: It was noted that Project Boards are one of UNDP's tools to guide and provide oversight to its projects. Therefore, the Project Board is ultimately responsible for making sure that the Programme remains on course to deliver the desired results within the agreed timeframe and in a cost-effective manner.
- The Project Board composition include representatives from the following institutions with the stated responsibilities: The Executive of Board is the UNDP Resident Representative as a chair. The representatives of the Senior Supplier include the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (Programme) and Development Partners (Donors).
- The representatives of the Senior Beneficiaries include representatives from ONSA and corresponding Government of Iraqi Institutions– MoI and SJC and other personnel such as Programme Managers, Technical Advisory Team (SSR, Criminal Justice & Police, Community Integration Process CIP), programme and operations staff.

Programme presentation which focused on the overview, progress update, lessons learned, challenges faced and the way forward (2021).

The following **key points** were covered during the presentation.

- An overview of the Programme's results– progress against each of the three outputs and the related indicators, and financial progress - expenditure and estimated balance, which included the new funding contribution from INL signed in October 2020. The Programme's key lessons learned, and challenges faced. Way forward in 2021– continued programme implementation plans including the Programme's mid-term evaluation to be commissioned in April 2021 (Refer to Annex 1 for detailed PowerPoint presentation).
- The revision to the Pro Doct in removing output 4 that was in the original Pro Doct and to be implemented jointly with UNDP Environmental Programme (Iraq's national strategy for critical infrastructure protection is developed and implemented) because it was concluded at a later stage by the programme team in consultation with the programme management support unit (PMSU) this output is best implemented within UNDP Environmental Programme's broader support to Mosul Dam protection and related activities.
- The revision of the Programme document's results and resource framework to include the INL indicators under output 2.

Plenary: Q&A

Complimentary remarks were made by Mr. Jan Pirouz Poulsen and Mr. Jort Posthumus, the Representatives from the Governments of Denmark and Netherlands, respectively.

Mr. Jan Pirouz Poulsen, the Representative from the Government of Denmark, thanked UNDP for organising the Project Board Meeting– a platform where partners are informed about the Project implementation progress, lessons learned, and challenges. Also extended his appreciation on the level of transparency from UNDP in managing the Project. Also acknowledged the progress in project implementation despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 health pandemic.

Mr. Jort Posthumus, the Representative from the Government of Netherlands, thanked UNDP for organising the Project Board Meeting and noted the need for continued coordination among SSR/RoL partners. Mr. Posthumus also shared similar sentiments regarding the project implementation progress as noted by Mr. Poulsen.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ms. Ahmad thanked the members of the Board for their presence and continued support in ensuring that the SSR/RoL Programme remains focused on achieving its intended objectives.

Actions for Programme Manager– SSR/RoL

The Programme Manager should:

- Share signed Project Board meeting minutes with board members for their review and endorsement.
- Schedule the next Project Board Meeting in 2021

Minutes endorsed:



Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad
Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq / Chair, Project Board

Annex 1- Presentation for the Project Board Meeting