United Nations Development Programme Iraq
Iraq National Human Development Report 2014 on Youth

FINAL PROJECT REPORT 2017

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

The full text of the Iraq NHDR 2014 could be accessed on this link

Project Title:	Iraq NHDR III 2014
UNDP Project #:	00075295
Project Duration:	1 Oct 2011 – 31 Dec 2014
Project Resources:	TRAC 1: USD 802,897, 11888 USD 381,176
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:	Baytal Hikma, Iraq (Baytal Hikma is a think tank affiliated with the Ministry of Planning)
Project Location(s):	Nationwide

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Executive summary

The project activities were concluded in the end of 2014 with the launch of the Iraq NHDR 2014, which was the main output of the project. The Communication Strategy for the promotion of the NHDR was also completed as planned in the AWP. The closure of the project's accounts took place in end 2016, and the final financial status of the project is reflected in this report in Section VI.

The NHDR was endorsed by the Iraqi government and the report was launched on 17 Dec 2014 in Baghdad through an event that was supported by the Iraqi Prime Minister and the UN DSRSG in addition to several national institutions and international agency participants.

The NHDR 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 overall assessment of the project detailed in the following sections of this report shows that the objectives of the project were met. The project has effectively contributed to the capacity of the Ministry of Planning to manage the preparation of a national human development on a periodical basis and operationalize its findings and recommendations.

The main lesson learned is the need for better approaches to manage the disparities between the Federal Government and the Kurdistan Region Government and their jurisdictions. Also, there is a need to increase the amount of technical support needed by the national team during the authoring of the report to ensure the best quality of analysis and the timely completion of the report. Better coordination with the UNDP Regional Office and the HDR Office for the review of the report and its early completion is also needed.

I.   Context

This project aimed to support the preparation of the third Iraqi National Human Development Report (NHDR) and came 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 has been achieved through support aimed at building national institutional and individual capacities to contribute to the preparation of the report. This included government institutions, NGOs, and individuals from the academia, among others who contributed to the report. The result of the project supports the National Development Plan and the Youth Strategy through the analysis, thes statistics, the policy recommendations, and the advocacy activities included in the report's Communication Strategy. Networks of experts and actors in Youth and Human Development areas will become the basis of a pool of national expertise who 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 the MDG and eventually the Sustainable Development Goals. The NHDR will directly inform both national development processes as well as the development support provided by the development community including UNDP.

Intended objectives:
- To support development planning and policy making in Iraq;
- To build the capacity of national institutions to design and implement policies that invest in human capital and the empowerment of vulnerable groups such as women and youth;
- To advocate and encourage development actors to promote and advocate youth development;
- To build 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;
- Iraqi youth and the population at large.

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 was implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality by UNDP Iraq. UNDP Iraq allocated core resources from TRAC, which was 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

1. Overall progress towards the CPAP outcome and output(s)

The NHDR 2014 added 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 included a final chapter in which the policy recommendations were 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 contributed 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".

2. Capacity development

Capacity development in preparing the National Human Development Reports was 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 form capacity building activity to the national counterpart.

However, the launch of the report and making it available to policy makers and development planners represented 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 confirmed 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 represented 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.

3. Impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries

At the centre of the national direct beneficiaries is the ministerial structure in 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 fact that the report was launched only one year ago, the measurable impact of the report in promoting development issues and youth related issues has 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 have shown signs of a healthy ownership of the report. The representatives of the Youth networks that participated were all present in the launching ceremony and have taken the steps to promote the report's findings and advocate its issues through their networks.

Implementation Strategy Review

1. 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 the 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 final presentation of the report in terms of substance and design was done in full consultation with the stakeholders including the youth, who topped their contributions with the photo that was used in the cover of the report.

2. Quality of partnerships

The partnership with the government, represented by the Federal Ministry of Planning and the Kurdistan Regional Office was instrumental in achieving the project's results. The access to national statistics needed for the report analysis and the presence on the ground in all governorates was the main strength 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.

The other important partnership with a national entity was that with Baytal Hikma. The partnership with Baytal Hikma was actually established in the implementation of the previous NHDR 2008. Baytal Hikma in both cases demonstrated the ability to mobilize national expertise needed for the compilation of the background papers and the synthesis of the information and knowledge generated by these papers with the output of the consultation process into the report's chapters. The partnership with Baytal Hikma spawned the partnership with the youth network that was the infrastructure of the consultation process. Baytal Hikma was also useful in extending partnerships to the academia, national media, and governorate level partnerships across the country.

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. The Joint Analysis Unit (JAU) was also instrumental in achieving the intended results. The JAU had the shared interest in developing the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for Iraq, which is one of the main indicators in the HDR. The JAU assigned a statistics researcher to contribute to the report in terms of developing the indicators of the report such as the HDI, GII, and the MPI. With the support of the JAU, UNDP could conduct the technical training workshops for the national team of statistical experts who contributed to the compilation of the statistics needed for the HDR.

The collaboration with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was a central partnership that helped achieve the project's results. ESCWA contributed the services of a Senior Regional Advisor and helped in identifying and assigning a junior researcher. The

ESCWA team participated in all project activities and were central in the capacity building activities as well as the synthesis of the report's chapters and their review.

Finally, secondary partnerships established with service providers in the earlier NHDRs, such as at that with Grafica Design and Printing service in Amman contributed to the effective 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 were key to the quality presentation of the NHDR and the delivery of the final product in time for the launch of the report.

3. 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 Prime Minister's sponsorship of the report's launch represents the endorsement of the report at the highest national executive level. 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.

The national ownership of the project and its results, as demonstrated by the examples above, was the fruit of the dedication to put the national stakeholders of the project in the driving seat and carry out the process of the project with their full knowledge, contribution, and involvement.

4. Sustainability

Capacity building was central to the three rounds of NHDR preparation in Iraq. This was specifically the case with the Iraq NHDR 2014 which included a series of capacity building activities that targeted institutions as well as individual capacities. This has led to the establishment of a national network of NHDR experts that forms the core of future NHDR preparation activities.

The roster of this network is mainly owned by the Human Development Section in the Central Statistics Organization in the Federal Ministry of Planning, as well as the Kurdistan Region Statistical Office. The part of the network that is related to the Federal Government is also shared with Baytal Hikma. These parties will be central to mobilize national capacity to engage in future NHDR processes.

The project also created the required knowledge links between the national network and the global knowledge NHDR networks that is managed by UNDP. This will ensure the sustained update of national knowledge with developments in the area of Human Development, and will create the basis for the ready deployment of national expertise to prepare NHDRs in the future.

Management effectiveness review

1. Quality of monitoring

The project monitoring activities enabled the completion of the planned activities and the completion and launch of the NHDR. The monitoring process covered the whole period of the report preparation and generated copious information that was documented in a set of progress reports and an online documentation in the form of a web portal that recorded and advised the project stakeholders in real-time (http://iraqnhdr3.wordpress.com).

Corporate project management requirements were duly applied throughout the implementation of the project. Project Board meetings were conducted annually and the outcome of these meetings in terms of the recommendations were carefully implemented. This enabled the production of the NHDR within the standard expected by the targeted user groups.

The monitoring of the project was carried out in UNDP at several levels that extended beyond the project structure. These levels include the ERPAP Unit, the PMSU, and the Senior Management of the UNDP Iraq Office. More than three office-wide presentations and two inter-unit review teams were carried out to ensure the engagement of the UNDP team in the process.

The UNDP corporate policies require that the HDRO be involved to ensure that the NHDR complies with the standards set by UNDP for NHDRs to carry the UNDP logo. Accordingly, the report drafts and the account of events were shared with the HDRO, in addition to RBAS and the Regional Centre in Cairo in order that they maintain their role in monitoring the progress and the quality of the NHDR.

2. Timely delivery of outputs

The project's main outputs included the production of the NHDR, the Communications Strategy, and the national HD network. While all the intended outputs were delivered, there was some delay in completing the main output of the project, namely the NHDR itself.

The reasons that let to delays in completing the NHDR could be attributed to the following factors:
- Difficulties in synthesizing the outcome of youth consultations into the background papers that eventually fed into the report's analysis. It was originally anticipated that the youth core team would compile the inputs for the background papers from all the focus group discussions and workshops. However, their final inputs were inadequate and had to be reviewed and improved further. The project team responded by requesting the ESCWA research team to revise the youth team's inputs based on the material generated by the consultation process;
- Baytal Hikma, which was commissioned to deliver the final draft of the report in Arabic went through a period of administrative problems that affected the management of the contracts with the background papers and the chapter authors. The project team highlights the need to commission national experts directly in future rounds of the NHDR.
- The country went through a major crisis because of the invasion of ISIS and their capture of one third of the country. Most of the project activities were completed by then,

however the launch date of the report was slightly postponed in result, in addition to some additions to the substance of the report that references the incident that was recent to the launch of the report.

3.   Resources allocation

The project overall demonstrated an effective use of resources and their allocation across programmatic and operational activities. This was possible due to the minimal employment of project staff and the early assignment of project financial resources to activities that lead to the intended programmatic outputs.

The CO Office HDR focal person acted as the Project Manager and was not paid by the project. The only support staff needed was a Project Associate who was assigned for 1 year during the peak period of project activities.

4.   Cost-effective use of inputs

Most of the financial inputs allocated to the project went to programmatic activities. The nature of the project did not require premise or expansive staff costs. Thus, only minimal resources were spent on basic operational requirements, which included the salary costs of the Project Associate for one year only, and a marginal percentage of premise, evaluation, audit, and communication costs that are normally charged to project budgets by the CO.

Costs were also brought down in result to UN ESCWA's contribution of the time of their Regional Advisor to provide expert advisory service to the National Team that prepared the report. The resulted in the saving of USD50,000, which is the estimated cost of the services provided by the ESCWA Advisor.

The detailed use of inputs was demonstrated in the previous section.

III. Project results summary

Output 1: Production and launch of the Iraq NHDR 2014

The project was successfully completed and the report was launched in Baghdad on 17 Dec 2104. The specific results that were achieved under this output include:

- Iraq NHDR 2014: comprises 8 chapters, 3 annexes, 21 tables showing HD indicators, and a set of 18 tables specifically showing youth development indicators that represents a policy and development planning support tool for development actors in Iraq. The report was reviewed by HDRO and RBAS to ensure compliance with corporate standards on NHDRs. The report was produced in Arabic and English;
- All indicators in the report are disaggregated by sex. Gender issues were mainstreamed in the report's analysis;
- Gender balance (to the best possible extent) in all activities related to the preparation and capacity building required for the report. Record of activities could be accessed on the link: www.iraqnhdr3.wordpress.com.

Output 2: Technical and Policy Papers to Support the National Youth Strategy: the numerous papers and data documents were used as background papers to support the authoring of the report chapters.

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.

Two rounds of communication training were planned during the project's lifecycle. The first round focused on training the project's youth team and was conducted in June 2012 (https://iraqnhdr3.wordpress.com/2012/09/26/youth-and-communications-workshop-15-19-june-2012/). The second round was planned to take place in the period September to November 2014, however, the ISIS invasion in Iraq prevented the arrangement of this workshop. However, in assessing the communications capacity available with the various related actors, the Project Team decided to proceed with the project launch building of the resources available and as described in this section, namely the Communications Strategy, and a group of trained youth and academics to support post launch promotion of the report.

IV. Implementation challenges

Project risks and actions

One of the major challenges in producing the NHDR was the synthesis of information and data generated by the experts and the consultations into a report that was

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 HDR knowledge beyond the existing network of experts and exploring the possibility of producing educational material for secondary school and university level studies.

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	802,897	802,897	802,897	-	-
11888	381,176	381,176	381,176	-	-
Total	1,184,073	1,184,073	1,184,073		

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	Donor	Cumulative Expenditure Status at [Date,i.e. end of preceding year]		Expenditure in Reporting Year		Yearly Total Expenditure	Total Expenditure	Budget Balance	Delivery Rate
			Commitment	-Expenses + full asset cost	Commitment	Expenses + full asset cost	(F=D+E)			
	(A)		(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)		(G=B+C+F)	(H=A-G)	(% I =G/A)
Activity 1	802,897	TRAC						802,897	0	100%
	381,176	11888						381,176	0	100%
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