

**United Nations Development Programme Iraq**

Unleashing the Potential for South South and Triangular Cooperation by Government of Iraq

 **Annual Progress Report**

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| **Project Title:** | Unleashing the Potential for South South and Triangular Cooperation by Government of Iraq |
| **UNDP Project #:** | 00087255 |
| **Project Duration:** | 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2014 |
| **Project Resources:** | TRAC |
| **UNDP Iraq Focal Point:** | Shigeru Handa, Portfolio Manager, Inclusive Growth and Private SectorMaan Al Maree, Programme Coordinator |

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| **UNDAF Outcome(s)** | UNDAF priority 2 of Inclusive, more equitable and sustainable economic growth. |
| **CP Outcome(s):** | 5. Enabling policy and frameworks for rapid economic recovery, inclusive and diversified growth and private sector development |
| **Output(s):** | Strengthened institutional arrangement for the South-South Cooperation established |
| **Implementing Partner:** | PMAC, MoP, MoF, MoFA |
| **Responsible Partner:** | UNDP Iraq |
| **Project Location(s):** | Nationwide |

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# Executive summary

The evolution of the South-South cooperation (SSC) and its effectiveness in development for effective implementation of development goals are globally recognized. The shift in the evolution of the SSC is also reflected in the growing volumes in SS trade, increasing flows of SS development assistance, the building of institutional capacities in support of SSC and a trend towards more concerted action for the effective implementation of a number of internationally agreed development goals. In light of this shift in the international cooperation landscape, including changes in development cooperation patterns, seizing potential benefits of SSC is important for Iraq. This is a new concept to the Government of Iraq (GoI) and first the project aimed at promoting its awareness of SSC and envisaged an establishment of institutional arrangement under GoI’s leadership and ownership to be engaged in this international development trend.

The project partially achieved the project output of “Strengthened institutional arrangement for the SSC established”. In February, the project made a significant progress with the establishment of an official committee for SSC[[1]](#footnote-1) in accordance with Diwani Order No. 17 dated 22 February 2014.

After the formation of the Committee for SSC, PMAC planned to convene the 1st committee meeting on 31 March 2014. However, due to the unavailability of the Chair of the committee, who is also the Chairperson of PMAC, the committee meeting was postponed until further notice (some time after the elections). As the political instability that followed the 30 April elections led to further delay in convening the committee, it was decided to continue the work on the technical level among committee members to develop a proposal on the institutional arrangements.

The project at least made some progress in successfully holding the concrete SSC workshop in Istanbul on 25-28 August 2014. GoI conducted a stocktaking survey on existing initiatives (Action 5 under Output 1). PMAC considered that the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the concessional loan assistance from international/bilateral financial institutions as a strategic entry point for SSC initiatives. One of the key monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is the joint committee with Japan/Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which PMAC even encouraged the World Bank to learn from. The workshop for Monitoring and Evaluation was held in Istanbul as a concrete SSC initiative among seven countries which receive a large volume of concessional loans (Iraq, Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Egypt, and Tunisia).

In response to the PMAC’s request of having a study tour in a neighboring country, in September 2014 UNDP submitted a proposal for a study tour to Egypt to learn from their experiences, take advantage of lessons learned from the Egyptian experience in the field, and discuss the optimal choice of the institutional set-up for Iraq to deepen the knowledge of Institutional set-up between South-South and Tringle Cooperation. This proposal was approved and UNDP Iraq is in discussion with UNDP Egypt to materialize this study tour in 2015.

Once this study tour takes place, the committee will officially convene to present the findings/lessons learnt that can be useful to Iraq and start developing its own proposal for the institutional set - up, ToR, agenda and action plan with UNDP’s support.

# Context

Most recent developments in South-South cooperation (SSC), such as “horizontal cooperation[[2]](#footnote-2)” could be characterized by the change in its dynamics, as seen in the rise of new policy frameworks aimed at fostering direct cooperation among developing countries at the national, regional, interregional and global levels.

South-South cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South that contributes to their national well-being, their national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

The shift in the evolution of the South-South cooperation is also reflected in the growing volumes in South-South trade, increasing flows of South-South development assistance, the building of institutional capacities in support of South-South cooperation and a trend towards more concerted action for the effective implementation of a number of internationally agreed development goals. Traditional cooperation has reached a point where some recipient countries have learnt sufficiently from development efforts and are now ready to transfer their knowledge, skills, experiences and resources to other countries.  In light of this shift in the international cooperation landscape, including changes in development cooperation patterns, seizing potential benefits of SSC is important for Iraq.

Iraq has significant lessons learnt, not only during post-conflict transition since 2003, but also from sectoral experiences, such as elections, renewable energy and water, which would be beneficial for other countries. As an example, IHEC Iraq experiences contributed to development discourse in Tunisia. Iraq will also benefit learning from other countries in key issues in the region. It's time for Iraq to start coordinating with other countries through this kind of knowledge/experience sharing. While GoI intends to initiate International Cooperation, currently the international cooperation mechanism is not institutionalized within the government. This project will provide the foundations that Iraq will be engaged in the SS cooperation which contributes to enhancing trading opportunities through South-South trade for inclusive growth as well as in the future become a donor country in the development field.

In order to initiate the institutionalization of International Cooperation and be engaged in the SSC, the following are key factors;

1. Establishment of the organizational set-up;
2. Policy formulation with priorities set;
3. Archive Iraqi substantive experiences from successful cases and/or lessons learnt, which can be disseminated to other countries.

Since this is still new to Iraq, it is critical to initiate the discussions under the leadership of PMAC with relevant key stakeholders of MoP, MoF and MoFA to explore an optimal organizational set up within the GoI. Through initial consultation with RCC and other UNDP country offices, the organizational arrangement to move forward is confirmed as key.

This initiative contributes to the UNDAF Outcome of priority 2, “Inclusive, more equitable and sustainable economic growth” as well as the CPAP Outcome of “5. Enabling policy and frameworks for rapid economic recovery, inclusive and diversified growth and private sector development”.

In order to accomplish the objectives described above, and in line with RBM principles, the following outputs are planned for sound implementation of the project:

**Output 1: Institutional arrangement of the Government of Iraq for the SSC established and the institutional capacity supported**

This project supported the GoI in establishing a special task force or unit within the GoI, in facilitating the internal discussions among key stakeholders within the GoI to initiate South-South and Triangular cooperation[[3]](#footnote-3) as well as provide the institutional capacity building required for implementing South-South cooperation.

* **Activity 1:** Support GoI in establishing a special task force or unit to lead the SSC mechanism within the GoI
* **Activity 2:** Facilitate internal discussions among key stakeholders, based on gender inclusiveness criteria, and developing an action framework to institutionalize the SSC
	+ Since the establishment of the committee was achieved, the focus will be to agree with its ToR, agenda and action plan to materialize the South-South Cooperation initiatives
* **Activity 3:** Conduct study tours to learn from some leading countries in the SSC
* **Activity 4:** Support GoI in exposing to the Global and Regional SSC events.
* **Activity 5:** Support GoI for stocktaking on existing successful initiatives

The project was implemented under the Inclusive Growth and Private Sector Development Portfolio.

The Project Manager provided management and technical supports to the focal point of the GoI (PMAC), and facilitated necessary trainings to move forward with this initiative. The Project Manager closely coordinated with the RCC and UNDP Egypt office to have their technical inputs for the capacity development support to the established committee. Some leading countries of SSC, such as Egypt and Turkey in neighboring countries, were identified and the Project Manager will coordinate with the identified countries to conduct a study tour. A Programme Coordinator facilitated the consultation process within the GoI or stocktaking exercise.

# II. Performance review

## Progress review

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

Through this initiative, the GoI will be able to establish policy and frameworks for rapid economic recovery, inclusive and diversified growth and private sector development through SSC and trade as well as for enhancing foreign relations with other countries.

Under SSC, there is a growing recognition that the knowledge on what works and does not work to generate growth and sustainable development can be found increasingly in developing/similar economies. More relevant solutions resulting from comparable contexts, more affordable given proximity, sometimes language commonalities, and living standards/wages, which means more can be done with less funds. This can contribute to reducing required investment to be more efficient and effective.

Key stakeholders are the GoI, NGOs, professional associations and private sector enterprises.

Under this project, the GoI recognized the importance of SSC to support the Government with key partners in achieving the rapid economic recovery, inclusive and diversified growth and private sector development.

### **Capacity development**

The GoI’s capacity was very limited since SSC is still a new concept to the GoI. At the beginning of the project, GoI officials were not aware of the South South cooperation. During the project implementation, UNDP Iraq provided the overviews of the SSC and facilitated the opportunity for GoI officials to attend to the South South Global Expo in Vienna and Nairobi as well as the Regional South South conference in Doha where they were exposed to the dynamism of the South South Cooperation.

The GoI acknowledged its necessity to develop policy tools to promote the South South cooperation. The PMAC has committed to take an initiative in this regard by formulating a taskforce to coordinate with Ministry of Planning (MoP), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Ministry of Trade (MoT) to agree on the way forward of Iraq’s engagement in the international development issues and to arrange the official institutional set up within the GoI. This was a significant step toward institutionalizing the South South cooperation in the GoI. In February, an official committee for South South Cooperation was established under the leadership of PMAC with the member of MoT, MoP, MoF and MoFA in accordance with Diwani Order No. 17 dated 22 February 2014. The capacity development efforts focused on the members of this committee.

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

The project identified PMAC as the primary beneficiary together with MoP, MoF, MoFA and MoT and provided the necessary supports to PMAC. The project managed to support the Government in establishing the Committee under the chairperson of PMAC, which demonstrated a satisfaction of the beneficiary.

## Implementation strategy review

### **Participatory/consultative processes**

The project approach was participative and consultative by involving key stakeholders from the beginning in order to promote the South South cooperation concept. PMAC has taken a lead in institutionalizing South South cooperation in the GoI with close consultation with key GoI ministries of MoP, MoFA, MoF and MoT. In 2014, the official committee for South South Cooperation was established through wider consultation meeting in addition to these key GoI ministries. Through this process, the SSC was promoted not only to the key GoI ministries but also to other line ministries which has a potential role to implement actual South South Cooperation.

### Quality of partnerships

Iraqi Government Partnership:

This project is focusing on the promotion of South-South cooperation with the GoI. During the reporting period, UNDP successfully engaged the PMAC through participation in the Global South-South cooperation Expo (November 2012 in Vienna and October 2013 in Nairobi). Under the leadership of PMAC, UNDP was also invited to make a key presentation in January 2014 to invited ministries where the importance of South South Cooperation for Iraq development was recognized and the need to learn from other countries’ experience emphasized. PMAC shared the minutes of this meeting with a recommendation to Prime Minister’s Office to establish a committee to be chaired by the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission (PMAC) as well as high level representatives from CoMSec and a number of key and relevant Ministries. . At the same time, when it came to the organizational issues, the project focused on the established committee to set up its institutional arrangement. Once the solid institutional arrangement is made, the project will target even wider its partnership.

As part of the project, the Iraqi government, the Japanese Embassy, UNDP and JICA formed a Monitoring Committee and co-hosted monitoring meetings, held quarterly for project management team members of ongoing Japanese ODA loan projects to share information on the progress of each project and to promote issue resolution. UNDP, PMAC and JICA held a knowledge sharing workshop including six countries in Istanbul in August 2015 to share the Iraqi successful monitoring mechanism to other countries.

### National ownership

At the beginning of the project, PMAC was not so clear about the way forward. However, during intensive discussions and sharing the effectiveness of South South cooperation, PMAC started taking a lead on promoting the South South cooperation by assigning the DG of International Organization of PMAC as the focal point. PMAC requested UNDP to continuously support, but under its national ownership. PMAC sent an official request to the Prime Minister’s Office to officially establish the Committee for South South Cooperation. UNDP plays a supporting role to promote the importance of South South cooperation under GoI’s initiative.

### **Sustainability**

Since an official committee under PMAC was established in January 2014 in accordance with the Diwani order, the sustainability for continued South-South initiatives are in place. DG of International Organization of PMAC started to organize the GoI to hold internal ad hoc meetings to institutionalize the South South cooperation. The official structure should be established under the leadership of PMAC in details with its clear mandate and Terms of References to sustain this initiative.

## Management effectiveness review

### Quality of monitoring

Since this is a new initiative, the project acknowledged that monitoring was limited. However, in close collaboration with RCC as well as UN office for South South Cooperation, the project reviewed the progress of this initiative and received the solid advice on how to institutionalize the South South by referring to other countries’ models to make setting up the institutional arrangement a key priority. Throughout the year, the focus remained in this regard.

One of the key monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is the joint committee with Japan/Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which PMAC even encouraged the World Bank to learn from since the JICA loan funded projects demonstrated better performance than those by WB. A workshop for Monitoring and Evaluation was held to share the monitoring results of externally funded projects in Istanbul as a concrete SSC initiative among seven countries that receive a large volume of concessional loans (Iraq, Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Egypt, and Tunisia). Each country presented its own experience. As an example, the web-based remote monitoring mechanism by Philippines provided a future consideration to Iraq.

### Timely delivery of outputs

The project supported GoI in exposing to the Regional South South cooperation event in Doha, Qatar in February 2014. The official committee for South South cooperation was established in accordance with the Diwani Order in February 2014. Due to the national elections and political instability, the progress was delayed. Also, the study tours were shifted to 2015. However, as emphasized above, the recognition of the importance of South South cooperation was fully achieved in the GoI so that PMAC started taking the lead of this initiative.

### Resources allocation

No issue in particular was observed since most expenditures were programme related costs.

### Cost-effective use of inputs

Promoting a new concept within the GoI required intensive consultation process and long discussions. It could be considered that the project could have achieved more after an official establishment of the official committee with the available resources by pushing the GoI to move faster, but since this should be led under the GoI ownership, the project took a gradual approach to advocate the importance of South South cooperation.

# III. Project results summary

The project partially achieved its output of the project. The main output of **“Strengthening institutional arrangement for the South South cooperation established”** was not fully achieved. However, the official committee was established and setting up the institutional arrangement was fully acknowledged and in progress.

As to the indicators,

* Terms of References for Official institutional set up within the GoI: The official committee for South South cooperation was established with a simple mandate to promote the SSC. More detailed ToR needs to be developed and this was partially achieved.
* Action Plan for SSC initiative: Not achieved due to the delay of study tour to neighboring countries to define the first requirements of setting the ToR for the established committee.
* Gender balanced participation of key members: PMAC nominated a female focal point of this initiative (DG of International Organizations) and a participant to Regional SS Expo from the Ministry of Planning was a female official. Two female officials from seven members committee participated in this initiative.
* **Activity 1:** Support GoI in establishing a special task force or unit to lead the SSC mechanism within the GoI

This was achieved as the official committee for South South Cooperation was established with identified key members of the committee.

* **Activity 2:** Facilitate internal discussions among key stakeholders in the GoI through enhanced understanding on SSC and developing an action framework to institutionalize the SSC (International cooperation) within the GoI

Intensive discussions among key stakeholders in the GoI were conducted and understanding on SSC was enhanced among key stakeholders. However, it will take more efforts to institutionalize the SSC within the GoI. The scheduled study tour to neighbour countries should trigger this activity in 2015 under the ownership of PMAC.

* **Activity 3:** Conduct study tours to learn from some leading countries in the SSC

This was not achieved. However, the concept note of study tour was endorsed and the consultation with Egypt was initiated through RCC and UNDP Egypt. A positive response from Egypt was received and the study tour is scheduled to take place in 2015.

* **Activity 4:** Support GoI in exposing to the Global and Regional SSC events.

Partially Achieved. Ministry of Planning attended to the Regional SSC event. However, due to the unavailability of key officials from the committee to attend the Global SSC, attending to the Global SSC event was not achieved.

* **Activity 5:** Support GoI in conducting stocktaking on existing successful initiatives

Achieved. The project made some progress in successfully holding the concrete SSC workshop in Istanbul on 25-28 August 2014. GoI conducted a stocktaking survey on existing initiatives (Action 5 under Output 1). PMAC considered that the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the concessional loan assistance from international/bilateral financial institutions as a strategic entry point for SSC initiatives.

# V. Implementation challenges

## Project risks and actions

As a new initiative, there is a risk that the GoI might not continue this initiative to promote South South cooperation, especially this requires the high level of GoI’s political leadership.

Due to this potential risk, the project strongly encouraged the GoI to officially establish the committee for South South Cooperation, together with the project key counterparts. The committee was officially established in accordance with the Diwani order with the support from the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

However, the risk remains if the GoI key stakeholders do not see any benefit from these initiatives. So, it is important to continue concrete activities.

## Project issues and actions

## Even after the official establishment of the committee, the project anticipated a prolonged discussion. Due to the unstable political situation and security constraints, it was a challenge to start a new initiative. However, the project focused more on technical level discussions and prepared the required documentations and successful case studies, so that this initiative will not lose momentum, nor be affected by the current political situation.

Due to the political instability, the project faced challenges to move forward and the close coordination with PMAC was key.

It was envisaged to have regular meetings to overcome this coordination challenge once the ToR is developed to move forward, which may take place in 2015 under the leadership of PMAC.

Even with the limited budget, the project managed to assign a national staff, Programme coordinator, in Baghdad and he continuously followed up in consultation with the key counterparts.

# V. Lessons learnt and next steps

## Lessons learnt

At the beginning of the project, there was a concern that it was too early for Iraq to initiate the South South cooperation, especially establish an institutional arrangement. It did take long time to actually reach a common understanding and agree to move forward during the year of 2013 and the project faced some challenge in having strong support. Through the consultation process, the project managed to identify champions to promote this SSC initiative at PMAC, who took a lead to advocate this SSC. It is important to identify a champion, especially for this kind of new initiatives. Thanks to these, in 2014, the official committee was established.

The project maintained close coordination with the key counterparts with specific evidences of why this initiative was important and beneficial to the GoI. Also, the project facilitated the GoI’s participation in the Global and Regional Event where they could see the actual dynamism of SSC.

The study tours were postponed due to the political instability. However, the process of coordinating both with the GoI as well as other countries that will accept a study tour takes time. The project should have considered this time required for coordination.

## Recommendations

It is recommended to continue the efforts to promote South South cooperation initiatives within the GoI and to make sure that the GoI set up a solid institutional arrangement since the official committee was established after more than a year advocacy of SSC.

A new initiative always takes time, but it is important to continue UNDP’s efforts to support GoI move forward and ensure the wider participation to extend this initiative.

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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 (while the 60,000 Trac was allocated to this project in 2014, due to the overspent of the entire Trac of the CO, the project could not receive the entire amount)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Donor** | **Commitment****(Currency of the Agreement)** | **Received****(Currency of the Agreement)** | **Received (USD)** | **UNORE** | **Balance (Currency of the Agreement)** |
| **Trac** | USD 110,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  | **110,000** |  |  |

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: Expenditure Status (by activity)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Budget** **(A)** | **Donor** | **Cumulative Expenditure Status at[31 December 2013]** | **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** | 110,000 |  | 0 | 49,036 | 0 | 45,037 | 45,037 | 94,073 | 15,927 | 86 |
| **GMS**  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** | 110,000 |  |  | 49,036 |  | 45,037 | 45,037 | 94,073 | 15,927 | 86 |

## 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).

**Annexes 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EXPECTED OUTPUTS***And baseline, associated indicators and annual targets* | **PLANNED ACTIVITIES***List activity results and associated actions* | **TIMEFRAME** | **RESPONSIBLE PARTY** | **PLANNED BUDGET** |
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Funding Source | .Budget Description | Amount |
| **Output 1:** Strengthened institutional arrangement for the South-South Cooperation established Baseline: * No official institutional arrangement exist in the GoI up
* No action framework for SSC/International cooperation

Indicators: * Terms of References for Official institutional set up within the GoI
* Action Plan for SSC initiative
* Gender balanced participation as key members

Targets:* ToR of institutional arrangement developed
* Draft Action Plan for SSC developed
 | 1-1. Activity Result: Institutional arrangement of the GoI for the SSC established and the institutional capacity supported* **Activity 1:** Support GoI in establishing a special task force or unit to lead the SSC initiative;
* **Activity 2:** Facilitate internal discussions among key stakeholders, based on gender inclusiveness criteria, and developing an action framework to institutionalize the SSC
* **Activity 3:** Conduct study tours to learn from some leading countries in the SSC
* **Activity 4:** Support GoI in exposing to the Global and Regional SSC events.
* **Activity 5:** Support GoI for stocktaking on existing successful initiatives
 | XXXX | XXXXX | XXXX | XXXX | UNDP Iraq | TRAC | International Consultants or Contractual Services – IndividualTravelTraining / Study tours / ExpoContractual Services – Companies (translation etc)Miscellaneous ExpensesManagement Cost (Security, Communication) | 10,00010,00030,0005,0005004,500 |

**Annex 2**

**News (from JICA web)** [**http://www.jica.go.jp/english/news/field/2014/141017\_02.html**](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/news/field/2014/141017_02.html)

**South-South Cooperation Initiated from Iraq
Knowledge-sharing workshop “Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms for Development Results” was held in Istanbul**

\*Each country introduces its own monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and the challenges they face.

The JICA Iraq Office hosted the knowledge sharing workshop “Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for Development Results” with the United Nations Development Programme in Istanbul, Turkey, August 25-28. From Asia (India, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Viet Nam), and Middle East and Northern Africa (Iraq, Egypt and Tunisia), 29 people from seven countries participated from monitoring organizations, such as the Ministry of Planning, and project executing agencies.

For effective monitoring and evaluation of cooperation projects, day-to-day communication with implementing agencies in the counterpart country and regular project site visit are critical. However in Iraq, JICA staff are not able to carry them out frequently for security reasons. So the JICA Iraq Office made a partnership agreement with UNDP, which has active experiences in various locations in Iraq, as well as a network with the Iraqi governmental organizations. JICA has jointly implemented monitoring and evaluation with the support of local UNDP national staff, as well as capacity building training for Iraqi implementing agencies many times. The workshop shared with participating countries the efforts of monitoring and evaluation implemented by maximizing the strengths of each organization under such a restrictive situation in Iraq.

**Partnership with UNDP**

At the meetings, they analyze progress, time required for procurement and other aspects of each project from various dimensions, based on a framework for monitoring and evaluation developed by UNDP, and clarify structural problem solutions and actions by each organization involved. Then the results of the identified actions are reviewed at the next meeting.

Thanks to these efforts, according to the past four years' data, the time required for some procurement processes was reduced by no less than 60 percent and the capacity of Iraqi government agencies to manage projects in accordance with international business standards has increased remarkably. This is despite the fact that it has been just five years since Japanese ODA loans began in Iraq and Iraq has little experience with implementing those loans.

The mechanism not only identifies and resolves issues upon implementing projects, but also improves the business environment in Iraq through simplifying administrative procedures, which will also become beneficial for private sector development.

“I hoped that the people involved on the Iraqi side, who historically had limited opportunities to play an internationally active part, would realize the remarkable results so far by looking back on their efforts with people from other countries. And I hoped this would serve as a case of ‘South-South cooperation (1) initiated from Iraq’,” Hara said of his thoughts toward holding the workshop.

**High interest in good practices**

\*Participants hold theme-based discussions that go beyond the limits of their nationalities and affiliations.

Facilitated by Hara, the workshop was conducted using an interactive learning method. First, each country presented its monitoring and evaluation mechanism, efforts made in their organization or issues faced. At the thematic group discussions that followed, the participants actively discussed topics that went beyond the limits of their nationality and affiliation on such themes as “How to build a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that is not a mere ‘information collection’ or ‘reporting obligation,’ but is a feedback mechanism for problem solution” and “What is an evaluation method that fosters a healthy culture of responsibility/competition culture and improves project ownership of the implementing agencies?”

The participants also showed high interest when examples of good practices, such as a “web monitoring system” by the JICA Philippine Office, “achievement-oriented management” by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Limited of India, and “performance evaluation mechanism of each implementing agency” by UNDP in Iraq, were introduced.

**Promoting exchanges between Iraq and other countries**

\*Anwar Buni, director general, Ministry of Planning, Government of Iraq

After completing all sessions, many of the participants left positive comments such as, “Knowing good practices of different countries by interactive learning was a great inspiration” or “The network I gained with other participants is a valuable asset. By taking advantage of these assets, I would like to work to improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in my country.”

Anwar Buni, director general of International Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Planning, who is in charge of monitoring and evaluation of ODA projects in Iraq, gave her feedback on the workshop: “There is a monitoring and evaluation mechanism in Iraq, but it’s not fully utilized at this stage. We were able to learn many ideas for our future development.”

The JICA Iraq Office will continue to provide assistance in Iraq that could become a role model for other countries, and will use this workshop as an opportunity to promote information dissemination from Iraq and exchange with other countries.

Note:

1: A form of cooperation in which a developing country that has advanced in a field provides assistance to development in the field to another developing country. At this workshop, the goal was to mutually learn from the advantages of each country, which can be called South-South cooperation in a broad sense.

Knowledge Sharing Workshop on

“Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for Development Results”

25-27 August, 2014 in Istanbul

Discussion Record (for reference purpose only)

Summary:

* This workshop was triggered by Iraqi successful experience to encourage a knowledge sharing among recipient countries as well as JICA offices with the support from UNDP to enhance their monitoring and evaluation mechanism. All participating countries and JICA offices shared their M&E system and leant from other countries.
* While the interest between participants seems to be more oriented to project management, it was acknowledged that similarities between a larger cycle of M&E and project management (smaller cycle).
* A common principle is that a proper feedback mechanism has to be put in place as a system and that positive interactions with the various stakeholders for achieving targets are key.
* Improvement in M&E mechanism is linked with tackling existing system to achieve outcomes. By installing large and small M&E cycles in each level, M&E becomes a very powerful tool to change countries’ entire administration.
* Also important elements like strong leadership and communication among the parties for making things happen were also discussed. A question remains “How to imbed these items into the system as a culture?”
* MAs and EAs have a full of case studies of successes and failures. We can keep learning from each other. How to improve capacity of M&E in JICA as well as MAs continues to be an important agenda, beyond simply managing individual projects.

Day1 (August 25)

Introduction of the workshop

09:00-09:15

Opening Remarks

* Although Iraq is a new recipient country of Japanese ODA Loans, its Monitoring Committee (MC) has achieved a remarkable progress of disbursement in only 6 years from the beginning of Loans Operations.
* MC in Iraq has become a unique platform which contributed to solving challenges affecting project implementation for both cross cutting and project specific issues: problem solving of specific issues of individual projects, such as the delegation of power to Executing Agency (EA), which enhances speedy project implementation and to handling the cross cutting issues affecting the project implementation, such as tax exemption.
* Each JICA office across the world is cooperating with Monitoring Agencies (MAs) of each country to monitor the progress of on-going projects, but its mechanism has not been shared across the countries and offices.
* This workshop provides a knowledge sharing opportunity to learn from other countries’ experiences.
* It is also expected that participants from borrowing countries would give indications of the value of JICA’s monitoring. It may suggest us to define the role of JICA’s office and especially the national staff in project monitoring.

09:20-09:35

Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for Development Result

* This workshop intends to share Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanism of each country by learning from other countries. Not only from JICA office or MAs, it is also expected from EAs to share how the monitoring system for project implementation is utilized, and any areas of improvement can be identified as a take away of this workshop.
* Monitoring is a continuous process of regular feedback to achieve goals and objectives. It is most important but a challenge remains to make the outcome really happen. While, Evaluation is one-shot assessment to assess impact perspective. M&E is interlinked as contributing knowledge as a basis for accountability and enhanced performance. For effective program/project design as well as evaluation, a result based planning is essential.

09:35-10:30

JICA’s Monitoring and Evaluation

(At the beginning, the question “Why do we monitor projects?” was posed to the participants, and the answer from the participants were shared.)

* JICA and the borrowers are obliged to maintain project feasibility to achieve its targets according to JICA Law, E/N and L/A GTC.
* Establishing M&E mechanisms eventually leads to the discussions on the entire administration of the country, such as decentralization, or institutionalization.
* JICA may be able to fill the information gap among the parties (EAs, MAs, contractors, consultants, and other stakeholders) through individual site visits or access to all stakeholders. JICA, as an outsider of internal process, can interact with wide range of stakeholders, and can make feedbacks to decision makers, as their value added by M&E.
* M&E should focus on feedbacks for progress and improvement of the project instead of “Monitoring bureaucracy”, which may overburden EAs and hamper their ownership of the projects.

<Q&A, Comments>

* Consultant should also play a role to fill the gap of information, such as between the local engineering/procurement practice and international standards with their present at the field. This aspect of technical (engineering) support is rather missing in JICA/UNDP monitoring. Technical advice from the third party will be helpful for Iraqi side.
* The application of JICA’s guidelines and JICA’s monitoring help the project move smoothly. Many of non-JICA projects have not been completed even after 10 years, while JICA projects have. Transparency and efficiency, as required by JICA guidelines, stand as “good inspector”, and enhance culture of integrity in Iraq. JICA guidelines should be applied to non-JICA projects as it will keep the projects also away from over-inspections of the country system.
* It causes some difficulties when there is a contradiction between JICA rules and executing agencies’ own practice and standards. The difference should be addressed at the time of project formulation processes, especially with participation from JICA local offices.
* Time-bound action plan should be included into all major reporting indicators. The indicators should also be clearly defined.
* In large co-financing projects, donor group leads the monitoring process.
* The Philippines has experienced a long history of project monitoring with various improvements especially on follow-up actions. It has a built-in system and the annual evaluation report is sent to Congress.
* In India, face-to-face meetings are held based on monitoring documents. Quarterly Progress Report (QPR) does not sometimes reflect handy information which is really necessary for monitoring. This can be improved by JICA, by introducing some additional formats.

Session 1: Monitoring Mechanism (See each country materials)

11:00-11:45

Viet Nam

<Q&A, Comments>

* In general, is decentralization/harmonization preferable?
* Yes, but it may make monitoring difficult and require more accountability by the delegated bodies. Harmonization is also not to be criticized in general, but it is difficult to achieve its purpose to rationalize the indicators.

11:45-12:30

Philippines

<Q&A, Comments>

* What is the size of NEDA?
* Now 33 technical staffs and 10 administrative divided into 5 divisions work for monitoring of on-going 79 loans. Database indicators have been already prepared.
* It seems that Social Economic Report should be drafted by each Ministry not by NEDA.
* NEDA compiles information input by Ministry as well as executing agency.
* What kind of reference you use for finance especially terminating a project?
* Equity requirement will be reviewed with department of budget of NEDA.

14:00-14:45

Bangladesh

<Q&A, Comments>

* How is the government’s portion in co-financing project is approved by the government? Is it based on needs assessment?
* It is based on national priority, not just needs assessment.
* How is the Best Project Manager Award decided?
* JICA Bangladesh Office decides based on disbursement and physical progress. JICA Office explains the result and its reason at the annual monitoring review meeting. There is also other incentive mechanism that executing agency will gain target bonus if the target agreed between executing agency and the ministry is achieved within the targeted period.

15:00-15:45

India

<Q&A>

* As Delhi Metro Project has been completed such a short time schedule, How the land acquisition and resettlement has been completed?
* As this project is considered national prioritize project, special compensation is allocated in line with JICA social and environment guidelines.
* The success of Delhi Metro Project was taken as a case study of Harvard Business School. One major factor of the success is a strong leadership and commitment of the ex-chairman. His leadership is now institutionalized as a corporate culture even after he left the company.

15:45-16:15

Iraq

<Q&A, Comments>

* How do you set the date targets for each procurement process?
* The targets are determined based on timeline of each projects.
* If the bottleneck or issue is found at MC, how the government of Iraq react to the issues?
* MC is established based on Cabinet Order, and under the leadership of Mr. Thamir Ghadhban, and ex-minister and the chairman of Prime Minister Advisory Commission, this MC can have an influence on problem solving.
* This MC is a cross learning process among PMTs. It is suitable to hold such monitoring meeting for all projects because now 20 projects, a handy number, are on-going in Iraq. However, for counties which have more ongoing projects, like India, it may be suggested to implement such monitoring meetings divided into state or sector basis.
* JICA Office, jointly with MAs or equivalent in each country, should be able to organize such kind of monitoring process by themselves in general. In Iraq, however, since JICA has limited access to the field due to security reasons, UNDP is cooperated as a fiduciary agent of monitoring committee as they can provide a support of field monitoring.

16:15-16:45

Tunisia

<Q&A, Comments>

* Does JICA Chief Representative (CR) chair the monitoring meeting? It should be chaired by government side.
* JICA CR chair as a FA of the projects.
* How does the monitoring committee tackle the issue of frequent change of project manager?
* Unfortunately there is no specific solution so far because it is rather political and bureaucratic matter.

Day2 (August 26)

Session 1: Monitoring Mechanism (continued)

09:00-9:45

Egypt

<Q&A, Comments>

* In case of the miss-match of priority, how to approve a loan?
* There will be coordination with national plan and proposal from the donors.
* As Central Bank of Egypt is responsible for disbursement, while Ministry of International Cooperation (MoIC) is responsible for E/N as the signer, how it can be managed?
* MoIC monitors projects based on QPR.
* The communication is required to go through MoIC but sometimes it would be better for JICA to have a communication directly executing agency, although MoIC would like to keep it through them.
* Who decides the tariff for Cairo Metro Project?
* National legal committee is responsible for tariff setting.

10:00-11:00

Session 2: Group Discussions

11:00-11:30

1. Setting targets and establishing indicators
* Monitoring targets are set by narrowing targets from national development plan.
* Harmonization between practices in the EAs and local laws cause difficulties.
* Multiple changes in the top management cause loose of leadership.
* Supports by experts, seminars, overseas trainings by donors has been implemented.

<Q&A, Comments>

* Can the media be utilized for effective follow-up?
* JICA India office contracted with outsourcing company to publish more than 1,000 articles to the media in a year. The media is not always supportive of the projects, but by keeping them well informed, wider media coverage of our projects will form a basis of support from the public.

11:30-12:15

1. Sustainable information flow
* Monitoring protocol has been established in the Philippines. It regulates the monitoring procedures, like the result of evaluation shall be opened 2 months after the evaluation, etc. Submission date of each report is also monitored.
* It is important to make information functioning. NEDA has various indicators to evaluate the projects, such as comparison of budget utilization rate and physical progress. And the result of M&E is linked to annual budget for next year.
* M&E and information flow should be in line with country systems.
* Integrity of information is expected to be improved, especially its accuracy from local government. Web-monitoring system can be one solution to this issue, as it can monitor project status real time basis.

<Q&A, Comments>

* To make information flow sustainable, reporting format should be simplified and be informative.
* It is important to make the format comprehensive, to train PMTs for their input work. If any issues is found in a project, put the project in the priority list for closer follow-up.
* Are there any incentives to comply with monitoring protocol?
* The “naming and shaming” approach has been introduced in the Philippines. The compliance to monitoring protocol is reviewed every quarterly and if any projects are evaluated below certain criteria it will be announced and monitored. Progress mapping of each project has also been utilized.

12:15-12:45

Web Based Monitoring System and GIS Mapping

* Web based monitoring has been introduced in the Philippines since 2006, as a tool of issue solving as well as information storage tool. It is also aligned with the format of PSR, so when EAs submit PSRs, they just print it out from the system and submit to JICA.
* The information is required to update by the officer of each EA. The challenge may be timely update by the officer, and it should be monitored by JICA program staffs.
* The World Bank has introduced a Geo-Tagging (GIS Mapping) system in the Philippines, which is easy to maintain and effective in monitoring project progress in remote and inaccessible areas like in Mindanao.

<Q&A, Comments>

* How this GIS mapping can be updated?
* It can be updated by utilizing public sources, like local staffs, etc, by putting up photos and information by GPS enabled devices from the field. It may be possible to ask civil society to support this system in the future.
* What is the cost of system installation?
* The installation cost is minimum. System only requires open source Google Map system and mobile phones or cameras with GIS, which many people already have, for tracking the locations.
* It may be even easier if this reporting requirement is incorporated in the contract with the contractors.

14:00-14:30

Information Flow within PMU

* Viet Nam has established M&E guidelines in 2000 but the challenge is that monitoring has not been necessarily reflected to decision making.
* Operating Indicators agreed in Minutes of Discussions at JICA appraisal has not been effectively utilized for monitoring purpose.

<Q&A, Comments>

* Should the communication with the contractor go through PMT, not directly from the consultant?
* It depends on responsibility of consultant as “a Engineer” under the contract. Both cases in Vietnam and in Iraq can be found in each contracts.

14:30-15:15

1. Progress assessment through monitoring
* EAs monitor physical progress themselves, while JICA monitor financial progress.
* Impact evaluation is a big challenge.

<Q&A, Comments>

* During the monitoring, feedbacks for encouraging right actions at the right time is critical, not just only one-way collection of information. MAs or JICA can support other responsible agencies by their feedbacks.
* Reporting updated information to related agencies is also essential. JICA India Office has introduced Back to Office Report, as well as Project Status Sheet for this purpose (the format is shared during workshop). Back to Office Report is prepared by JICA Staff when they visit the project, by summarizing the project status and outcome of the discussion, attached with a set of concrete action plans. By sharing such report not only with the EAs but also decision makers above and around the EAs, JICA can leverage rapport and support for overcoming various issues faced by the project.
* We also struggle for impact evaluation, especially two step-loan project to small and medium enterprise, how to evaluate its impact to improvement of unemployment.
* Baseline survey at the beginning of the project is essential.

15:15-16:00

1. Sustaining monitoring and feedback mechanism
* Feedback is not simple information sharing, but to let executing agency to think about the current situation of the project before the M&E meeting is held.
* There is no one-size-fit-all model of M&E. Most suitable feedback model shall be customized in each office based on country’s context.

<Q&A, Comments>

* Is the feedback mechanism to Prime Minister in Vietnam introduced just as a formality, or according to his direct involvement?
* This is based on his own initiative as well as issue solving mechanism, to ask upper decision when the issue cannot be solved in below levels.
* Feedback is a tool to establish good relation between executing agency and monitoring agency.

16:30-17:00

1. Create a result –oriented culture / accountability
* Developing a competitive culture is important.
* Evaluation itself should be done by JICA. If implemented jointly with MAs, bureaucracy may intervene to the evaluation result.
* High level intervention should not be regular nor frequent, otherwise expectation becomes higher and ownership by the EAs would be lost. Project Implementation Unit needs to be suitably empowered and capacitated to handle operational issues by their own. Monitoring agency may be responsible for budget approval, but not for the work plan itself, otherwise speedy implementation would be hindered.

<Q&A, Comments>

* Not only giving an award to executing agency, but also the Line Ministry should be awarded based on their performance.
* Recently introduced front-end fee itself is also an incentive to complete the project in time.
* Activeness and Leadership of Project Director should also be considered for project ranking mechanism, like ability to explain his/her experience to the Minister or media.
* It enhances the competition between Ministries to share the evaluation result with all executing agencies and ministries. This could be implemented by sector depending on the size of operation.
* The empowerment and leadership of PMT is important, otherwise they may not want to take decisions.

Day3 August 27

08:30-09:30

Partnership among the Government, JICA and UNDP in Iraq (see the material)

* The current monitoring mechanism in Iraq has been launched based on the needs assessment of government of Iraq as well as JICA regarding their operation in Iraq.
* Outsourced agent may be able to implement monitoring, identifying bottleneck, as well as training to solve identified bottlenecks in a quick and beneficial manner.

Project Annual Evaluation in Iraq (see the material)

* Evaluation is not intended to evaluate any person, but output of project.

<Q&A, Comments>

* How the evaluation can be implemented annually, even though each project is in different stages, like preparation, procurement, and construction. Contract management and its performance may be under the responsibility of consultant, not for PMT’s responsibility. Also, establishment of a PMT may be sensitive during the procurement stage since it could be risk of confidentiality if lots of PMT members are involved in the procurement. Only key members should be assigned during procurement stage.
* Each project is divided into groups depending on their stages, preparation, procurement, and contract implementation. Those differences are accommodated into the total scoring process by adjusting the calculation. Contract management is still under development in Iraq, but currently trying to compare planned delivery date and the actual. PMT evaluation does not refer only staffing, but also other indicators, such as proper authorization to decision makers, decision-making procedures.
* In general, PMT should work on homework by themselves, and if it fails, ask monitoring agency to intervene. There is a case in Iraq where a PMT ranked poorly by the UNDP scoring had energetically addressed the line ministry to obtain larger decision making authorities by leveraging against the evaluation result.
* Is JICA’s performance also evaluated in this mechanism?
* JICA’s procurement process is monitored by tracking their response to concurrence request as well as monthly progress report.
* How this partnership with UNDP stands on legal basis?
* UNDP has partnership contract between JICA only. However, triangle cooperation agreement between JICA, PMAC, UNDP is also functional.
* Although monitoring is under responsibility of Ministry of Planning, PMAC is mainly involved to this monitoring mechanism to facilitate problem solving and accelerating project implementation. This monitoring mechanism has work well thanks to the commitment of the leader, Mr. Thamir Ghadhban, one of most influential persons in Iraqi government. He never missed attending the meeting since the beginning of monitoring committee 5 years ago.
* JICA Iraq Office outsourced a part of monitoring work to UNDP because of lack of access to the field and information, but it is primarily the role played by JICA Offices in normal circumstances. Other office should be able to set up such mechanism and operate by themselves.

09:30-10:00

Document Tracking

* In the Philippines a Document Tracking System has been very effective. Assigned document tracking officers follow up the documents every week chasing where they are, what are the problems, and organizes a meeting if necessary. Then, the period from PQ to contract signing has been shortened from several years to 6-7 months only.
* Where documents stay long, likely to be something going wrong. This is also a tool of monitoring and identifying the problems, and keeping integrity during the project implementation.
* JICA India office has created the Project Status Sheet. It covers outline of the project, the progress of procurement and disbursement as well as the remaining issues. This is updated quarterly and shared with each responsible Ministry.

When project staff made a site visit or meeting, Back to Office report is also drafted and shared to project authority.

To eliminate the delay in procurement and disbursement, JICA India office has implemented seminar of procurement, disbursement to PMTs by themselves.

* Check list for drafting bidding documents is also prepared.

10:00-10:45

1. Linkage with the Capacity Development Efforts
* During the 1st phase of the Delhi Metro Project, human resource development have considered as a very important issue, and training center for operation and maintenance has been established. It resulted in enough number of technicians and engineers capacitated in the company.
* Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) also enjoys unique work culture, like “Leading from the front and not push from the rear”. Knowledge session to share the lessons and learns or best practice every last Friday of the month.

Prompt payment to the contractors is also promoted as it will result in cost reduction.

10:45-11:20

Knowledge Sharing on Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism Development Results

* Ministry of Planning of Iraq has cooperated for training implementation with 5 countries, namely, India, China, Kuwait, Japan, and Korea.
* The evaluation process promotes the awareness of Japanese ODA programs.
* Many of Japanese ODA Loan projects will be completed in near future, and issues like operation and maintenance will become more important.

<Q&A, Comments>

* At time of project formulation, training needs should also be assessed. Continuous training implementation is important.
* The training for understanding of JICA format will be beneficial for monitoring agency and executing agency.
* It is important to ask participants for their feedback not only to JICA but also within the ministries or agencies after the training.
* Feedback seminar has been implemented every October in the Philippines.
* Are the training for PMTs implemented by JICA staffs themselves?
* No, but in the Philippines JICA Office facilitates the needs assessment and implementation in timely manner. We facilitated Practical Project Management training by Asian Institute of Technology, for example.

We also suggested to EA to put no leave rule for 3 years after the training to avoid leave of trained staffs.

11:20-12:00

Wrap-Up

* What is acquired from this workshop, what you bring back to country, any ideas or suggestion to JICA for improvement?
* I acquired many ideas for future improvement. Continuous support by JICA and UNDP in Iraq is appreciated.
* I would like to continue communication among the participants in different countries, to solve the problem of the projects now and future.
* It is suggested to include a topic about project management of STEP projects in next workshop.
* I understood the position of JICA, power of consultant, method of document tracking, back in office report, importance of timely payment.
* M&E results in timely payment, and improvement of project management in general.
* I learned many things such as good case of DMRC, the role of MAs, entire process of M&E, link to planning and budget, etc, as not only M&E but as total project management. Sustainability of M&E should be in plan as well as implementation phase. For next workshop, PPP project management, such as how government can maintain the trust from private partner, is recommended to include.
* I learned continuous monitoring is important, including not only formal reports, but also site visits and informal communication.

Concluding Remarks

* The interest between participants seems to be more oriented to project management, but we found similarities between a larger cycle of M&E and project management (smaller cycle). A common principle is a proper feedback mechanisms and positive interactions with the various stakeholders for achieving targets. Improvement in M&E mechanism is linked with tackling existing system to achieve outcomes. By installing large and small M&E cycles in each level, M&E becomes a very powerful tool to change countries’ entire administration.
* Many practical tools and systems are shared during this workshop, which can be replicated in other countries according to their country context.
* Also important elements like strong leadership and communication among the parties for making things happen were also discussed. A question remains “How to imbed these items into the system as a culture?”
* JICA, MAs and EAs have a full of case studies of successes and failures. We can keep learning from each other. How to improve capacity of M&E in JICA as well as MAs continues to be an important agenda, beyond simply managing individual projects.
* This workshop is a new mode of JICA National Staff training. Though launched from Iraq for the first time, any country or JICA Office can host such a workshop. We are happy to see other volunteers for a next occasion.

**Annex 3**

**Concept Note on a Study Tour**

**on South - South and Triangular Cooperation Institutional Set Up in Egypt**

October, 2014

South-South and Triangular Cooperation is initiated, organized and managed by developing countries themselves; often, Governments play leading role, with active participation from public- and private-sector institutions, non-governmental organizations and individuals. It involves different and evolving forms, including the sharing of knowledge and experience, training, technology transfer, financial and monetary cooperation and in-kind contributions. South-South cooperation can include different sectors and can be bilateral, multilateral, sub regional, regional or interregional in nature.

In order to institutionalize South-South and Triangular cooperation and to be appropriately engage in the SSTC, the following are key factors should be considered;

1. Establishment of the institutional set-up;
2. Policy formulation with priorities set;
3. Archive the substantive experiences from successful cases and/or lessons learnt, which could be disseminated to other countries.

In February 2014, the Secretariat General of the Council of Ministers of Iraq issued Diwani Order No. 17 dated 22 February 2014 that established a committee to set the basis for South - South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TC) and to determine Iraq's and the regional priorities. The committee is chaired by the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission (PMAC) with Deputy Minister of Trade, DG of Governmental Follow - Up and Coordination of the Secretariat General of the Council of Ministers (CoMSec), DG of International Organizations of PMAC, DG of the Economic Department of Ministry of Finance, DG of Economic and Financial Policies Department of Ministry of Planning and a First Secretary from Ministry of Foreign Affairs as members.

While this committee is expected to start its deliberations soon, it is important to learn from the experiences of other countries to have an effective institutional set up that shall move forward the SSTC initiatives. The study tour will be arranged to learn about the institutional set ups for the SSC and TC with the purpose of identifying the optimal institutional set up for Iraq and the conjoint issues between Iraq and the selected study tour country depending on the experience and past performance in the field. Also, prioritize the areas of joint work, such as youth employment, women empowerment, environment or any other topic will be identified within the discussions with the selected country.

As the first step, UNDP presented to the GoI several models of institutional set ups as indicated below at the preparatory meeting convened by PMAC on 22 January, 2014.

1. National agency hosted at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Planning
2. National cross-agency, within the government
3. Sectoral agency that can have offices in partner countries
4. Public-Private company

While the 2nd type “National cross-agency within the government” model is probably the closest to the one that Iraq is envisaged to have, the first study tour should be considered in the neighbouring countries of more similar context. Therefore, UNDP would like to propose the committee to have a first study tour in Egypt to deepen the knowledge of SSC / TC institutional arrangement. Egypt has the 1st type (in the above) of institutional set up:

Egypt: Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of SS/TC initiatives and undertakes technical cooperation programmes mainly through the below entities under MoFA;

* Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with Africa (EFTCA)
* Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with the Commonwealth EFTCC

Egypt also has established the South–South Industrial Cooperation Centre (SICC) under Ministry of Trade and Industry for promoting cooperation in the industrial field.

Once this study tour takes place, the committee will be officially convened to present the findings/lessons learnt to be useful for Iraq and start developing its own proposal for the institutional set - up, ToR, agenda and action plan with UNDP’s technical support. Also, Iraq has significant lessons learnt not only during post-conflict transition since 2003, but also from sectoral experiences, such as elections, post-conflict reconstruction and marshland restoration, which would be beneficial for other countries. It's time for Iraq to start coordinating with other countries through this kind of knowledge/experience sharing.

The below is an example of agenda for our discussions;

* Where the South - South (international) cooperation structure (department, division, etc.) was established? Why?
* What is the mandate, ToR, internal structure and coordination mechanism?
* Have there been any changes in the institutional set up during the process? Any lessons learned?
* What is the mechanism to formulate concrete SSC or TC projects (project identification, implementation mechanism)
* How do they partner with academia, civil society, private sector or international / regional organizations?
* How SSC/TC is related to the foreign and national economic / trade policy (the so - called development diplomacy)?
* Explore the mechanism of identifying potential countries, starting from the region for South South and Triangular cooperation. Also learn about any available tools for this engagement to lead to the optimal outputs for this initiative.

It would be highly appreciated if the above study tour could be approved by the SSTC Committee chairman in order to be conducted in 2014 or early 2015. The proposed study tour is being discussed with the Egyptian side by UNDP team and UNDP awaits the Egyptian response for the availability and readiness of Egyptian entities. Once the agreement with Egyptian side is made, an official invitation letter will be sent to the Iraqi SSTC Committee.

1. The committee is chaired by the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission (PMAC) with Deputy Minister of Trade, DG of Governmental Follow - Up and Coordination of the Secretariat General of the Council of Ministers (CoMSec), DG of International Organizations of PMAC, DG of the Economic Department of Ministry of Finance, DG of Economic and Financial Policies Department of Ministry of Planning and a First Secretary from Ministry of Foreign Affairs as members. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A broad framework for collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. Involving two or more developing countries, it can take place on a bilateral, regional, sub-regional or interregional basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Triangular cooperation involves two or more developing countries in collaboration with a third party, typically a developed country government or organization, contributing to the exchanges with its own knowledge and resources. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)