

Independent Evaluation Report

**THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ**

**Evaluation of Micro Enterprises for  
Reintegration of Internally Displaced  
Persons in Thi Qar Governorate**



UNITED NATION  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

**UNIDO EVALUATION GROUP**

**Independent Evaluation**

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**TE/IRQ/08/004**



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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

COSIT	Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
IAU	Interagency Information and Analysis Unit
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LMI	Lower Middle Income
MENA	Middle East and North Africa region
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoM	Ministry of Migration
NVTC	Nasariyah Vocational Training Centre
PDS	Public Distribution System
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VTC	Vocational Training Centre

# Glossary of Evaluation-Related Terms

Term	Definition
Conclusions	Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
Impacts	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.
Institutional development impact	The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources, for example through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements and/or (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of an action.
Lessons learned	Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.
Logframe	Management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure.

Term	Definition
	It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention. Related term: results based management.
Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Related terms: result, outputs, impacts, effect.
Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Recommendations	Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.
Results	The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention. Related terms: outcome, effect, impacts.
Sustainability	The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.



# Executive Summary

UNIDO has supported five micro-enterprise projects in Iraq since 2004. The most recent project was implemented in the Thi Qar Governorate during the period 2008 to 2011; Development of Micro-Enterprise Industries for the Reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons (TE/IRQ/08/004). The project was implemented by UNIDO under the leadership of the Government of Iraq, with support from Italian Cooperation. Total value of the project was Euro 1,500,000.

The goal of *Development of Micro-Enterprise Industries for the Reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons* was to assist the Government of Iraq in its efforts towards the reintegration and socio-economic recovery of IDPs. In this context, the project's development objective was *“to increase income-generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi-Qar Governorate through enhancing and diversifying their skills and by promoting the micro- and small-scale agro-enterprises sector.”*

UNIDO commissioned a final project evaluation, which occurred between August and October, 2011. The purpose of the evaluation was to “assess the overall design and orientation of the project, review the project's implementation status and identify lessons learned”. The evaluation was implemented over four sequential components: a) Review of project documents, supplemented by participation in the final Project Steering Committee meeting, convened in Rome 5-6 July 2011. The process generated initial findings to support design of the field survey and interview tools; b) Field mission to Thi Qar, which took place over a two week period in August 2011. The mission was conducted by an Iraqi evaluation specialist with support from the UNIDO Project Management Team. The mission included interviews with key stakeholders, site inspection at the Vocational Training Centre facilities, other training facilities and the community development project, a field survey comprised of a random sample of 97 beneficiaries and focus group discussions at all four training sites; c) Debriefing of initial results with UNIDO in Vienna, and; d) Drafting and finalisation of the report, including review of the draft by UNIDO and stakeholders.

The project was implemented by the Counterparts during a period of transition.<sup>1</sup> Improving security conditions and progress towards consolidating the State institutions allowed for a shift in focus to broader development issues. Diversification of the non-petroleum economy, private sector development, job creation and improved training are priority areas for the Government. At the same

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Counterpart” includes UNIDO, Government of Iraq entities, other organisations delivering and the Donor working together during implementation, unless otherwise specified.

time, the project benefited from robust Iraqi leadership during the full implementation cycle. It was fully integrated into Government institutions, and Iraqi Counterparts played core strategic and implementation roles, through an active Project Steering Committee and the Vocational Training Centres. The changing context and robust ownership were important factors enhancing the relevance and sustainability of project outcomes.

Through a joint effort, UNIDO and Counterparts delivered high quality vocational training courses to 850 beneficiaries. Counterparts and beneficiaries expressed strong satisfaction with the results. As highlights:

- All objectives related to the selection of Course Instructors, the quality of Instructor training, the development of new course curriculum and the selection of beneficiaries were all met or exceeded. The quality of work in these areas was highly satisfactory, and built on a trusted relationship already established between the Counterparts.
- The project contributed to the expansion of physical infrastructure and human capacity of all four training locations. In particular, the project supported the opening of a new Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) training facility in Al Chibayish, where no facility was previously operational.
- The project succeeded in targeting beneficiaries with a high vulnerability profile, and in finding the appropriate balance between men, women and youth. It had robust systems in place to support the selection process, implemented by counterparts with UNIDO playing valuable oversight and technical roles. Assistance, therefore, was well targeted.
- Beneficiary targets for gender were met or exceeded, with at least 50 percent of the beneficiaries being women. Also, an important part of the cohort was youth, who with women comprise the two groups with the highest unemployment rates in Iraq.
- Beneficiary training was of high quality and delivered with in the spirit, if not the letter, of the project objectives. Results in this regard are positive, and appreciated by all beneficiaries and stakeholders. The number of beneficiaries was 15 percent below target, but still represents an 85 percent implementation rate.
- UNIDO progress reporting over the life of the project was of good quality, and credible in its accuracy and comprehensiveness.
- These accomplishments are significant, given the context. Regardless, the project only partially achieved its development objective. Gaps resulted primarily from weak linkages between training and entry into the labour market, and from the initial assessment and design. As particular areas of concern:

- The project underinvested in the initial assessment and design phase. The IDP assessment was inadequate; based on a small sampling of data with findings inappropriately applied to the context. The result was to embed inaccuracies into the design. Also, Counterparts had limited resources for the labour market assessment, which was incomplete.
- While the project met or exceeded its gender-based beneficiary target (50 percent), the assessment and design process did not produce a gender strategy to identify obstacles to women's entry into the labour market, or otherwise be economically active. As a result, the Counterparts programmed mainly in their zone of comfort (sewing/tailoring), while offering limited innovation or resource allocation on "non-traditional" areas of employment or strategies for moving women into the labour market. The project had insufficient resources to develop a gender strategy, and was implemented in the absence of a UNIDO corporate policy/strategy on how or if gender assessments should be done. The finding, therefore, reflects a larger institutional gap that an individual project could innovate around, but not resolve.
- The design phase did not develop an effective strategy for linking vocational training to either small business development opportunities or support for market entry. Some activities were identified in Project Inception Report results matrix. However, none of these were finally implemented, despite extensive discussion on some of them. In part, the activities were not part of a labour market strategy that would have identified obstacles to market entry, and provided targeted support. Note is made that Iraqi institutions do not have related market-entry programmes that can be scaled up, and there are limited other support mechanisms existing in the community.
- As a result of these gaps, the project took on a different form than intended. It was a highly effective vocational training intervention for vulnerable persons, successfully targeting women and youth. However, the project lacked the design or means to create livelihood opportunities or promote small business development. Arguably, the scope and objectives were too ambitious for the resources available, and the capacity of the Iraqi institutions.

The Counterparts made mid-term corrections that improved project effectiveness. They revised the beneficiary targets to reduce the IDP focus, added three courses for labour market-oriented women and eliminated support to small business development that may have been inappropriate, among other actions. The project governance and implementation mechanisms, therefore, responded effectively to changing conditions. Counterparts showed good "operational intelligence" in understanding conditions. However, adjustments were not able to

compensate for gaps in resources, strategy and design needed to achieve the original objectives.

The project partially met its development objective of increasing income generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi Qar Governorate. IDPs comprised 30 to 40 percent of the final beneficiary cohort. This fact did not undermine the value or quality of the final outputs, although it did result in some efficiency loss as adjustments were made.

The project partially met its revised development objective of generating income and opportunities for vulnerable persons. From the survey cohort, 42 percent of beneficiaries reported that their situation had improved as a result of the training, while only three percent said their situation had deteriorated. The perception of enhanced well-being was based on several variables, including income, and was strongest among women, of whom 60 percent reported they were better off. The impact was most significant among women who took the sewing course, almost all of whom reported they were earning modest additional income for the household and/or savings in the cost of family clothing. Seventy-eight percent reported an overall improvement in the well-being of their families, and improved ability to provide food and basic household goods. In contrast, over 70 percent of men reported their situation was the same.

However, actual results achieved for income and employment were modest. The majority of sewing course graduates reported earning a small amount of income from informal work (estimate USD 25-50 a month). Discounting for sewing graduates, 12 percent of the survey cohort reported success in finding employment. The figure likely underestimates the number of beneficiaries who actually found work. Ten 10 beneficiaries invited to participate in the survey declined as they could not miss work. Up to 22 percent of beneficiaries, therefore, may have found employment. Also, women taking the sewing courses were generally not expected to enter the labour market, but to work informally. Regardless, from the survey data:

- 12 percent found employment, of which only seven percent were women in the market-oriented courses found work.
- Twenty one percent of beneficiaries reported they had created businesses. However, “business” in this context referred to be self-employed, sometimes with a family members or partners, but with characteristics similar to casual labour. There was no instance where a small enterprise was created.
- From the focus groups, some beneficiaries also reported returning to their previous employment.

The project, therefore, resulted in a modest number of beneficiaries finding work, and there was limited evidence of small business creation. Women in job-market

oriented courses were the least likely to find employment or self-employment. While support to strengthening the capacity of training institutions was increased and is sustainable, growth in Iraq's human resources achieved through the project will erode with time, as beneficiaries do not use their skills.

The project concept and UNIDO's mandate and competence are highly relevant to the future. Iraq is in transition. Strengthening the private sector, employment creation and market-relevant skills development are essential elements of the Government's current development strategy, and UNIDO has a proven comparative advantage in the area of vocational training. However, small scale projects with micro-interventions in the market, such as the Thi Qar initiative, are less relevant to the emerging context. Future demand appears to be in the areas of policy development, labour market assessment, and providing the linkages between training and the market. For UNIDO to play a more effective role in these areas will require:

- An initiative by UNIDO to define its roles in the transitional context and position the organisation according to trends;
- A consensus between the Counterparts on what UNIDO's roles should be, that builds on the establish and trusted relationships;
- Adequate resourcing to play these roles effectively, including from Iraqi sources;
- Strengthening labour market assessment capacities, including related to gender and women's entry into the labour force, and working with Iraqi institutions to develop the training to market-entry linkage, in the context of an assessment-training-market entry continuum. Particular concern is for the relevance of the training to demand in the market, and guiding employers and graduates to the opportunities;
- The emergence of internal policies and procedures that allow UNIDO to work more effectively in conflict-affected situations, placing resources and decisions closer to the operations.

## **Recommendations**

UNIDO should identify the differentiated systems and procedures needed to work in conflict affected situations, such as Iraq. UNIDO can use the *Thematic Evaluation; UNIDO Post-crisis projects (2010)* as the basis to begin work. Without such systems, UNIDO cannot fully leverage its core competencies in fragile state or conflict -affected situations, such as Iraq. This is a corporate process, beyond the scope of any single project.

UNIDO and counterparts must make a robust investment in the assessment and design phases of projects. Assessment should be based on both original work and secondary sources, and involve close consultation with counterparts and others with relevant knowledge. Donors should be solicited to support effective assessment, given its importance to overall project effectiveness.

Future projects should incorporate a gender strategy, and expand options and support for women seeking to enter the job market. Projects should begin with a properly resourced assessment of the gender context. They should distinguish between home-based income and market-based employment objectives, and expand the repertoire of courses and options for women in both. Strategy also needs to consider the post-graduation support that addresses the specific obstacles to job market access faced by women. Meeting this recommendation will require a UNIDO corporate investment in developing the appropriate programme tools.

Projects must invest in the strategies and mechanisms to create linkages between training and employment and livelihood opportunity. Options should be identified, developed and resourced within the initial assessment and design process. Mechanisms will be most effective when integrated into counterpart systems, as a basis of operations.

The relevance of the MISP model to the changing context in Iraq may be declining. However, there is an opportunity for UNIDO to build on success and re-position the organisation to meet emerging Government priorities and needs. This should begin with consultations between the Counterparts (UNIDO, Government and potential donors) on UNIDO's potential contributions. Labour market assessment and strategies for linking training to the market appear to be value-adding contributions, particularly as the Government focuses on private sector development.

# 1.

## Introduction and Background

### Objectives of the Project

UNIDO has supported five micro-enterprise projects in Iraq since 2004, four of which were implemented in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).<sup>2</sup> The most recent project was implemented in the Thi Qar Governorate during the period 2008 to 2011; *Development of Micro-Enterprise Industries for the Reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons* (TE/IRQ/08/004). The project was implemented by UNIDO under the leadership of the Government of Iraq, and with financial support from Italian Cooperation. Total value was Euro 1,500,000. The FAO was not involved in this iteration of the project model.

The goal of *Development of Micro-Enterprise Industries for the Reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons* was to assist the Government of Iraq in its efforts towards the reintegration and socio-economic recovery of IDPs. The development objective was “to increase income-generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi-Qar Governorate through enhancing and diversifying their skills and by promoting the micro- and small-scale agro-enterprises sector.” The Project Document (2008) identified three main project components, used as the basis for the project’s results matrix and subsequent progress reporting:

Mobilization and organization of target communities: The project would use a participatory approach, and include consultation and activities to build confidence between the IDP beneficiaries and the Host Community. The objective was to minimize potential conflict between the IDP and host populations, and provide common benefits to the community.

Capacity building and skills development: The project would provide vocational training to beneficiaries from the IDP community, of which 50 percent would be women. Design leveraged past experience in the Thi-Qar Governorate, building on training programmes and facilities established in a previous project (Project No. FB/IRQ/04/001). Two training facilities, constructed in Nasariyah and Al-Quran, would be used to deliver training activities to the beneficiaries.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The first project was implemented in the Thi Qar Governorate (*Promotion of Cottage Industries in Rural and Urban Areas of the Thi Qar Governorate*, Cottage I, financed by the UNDG-ITF, November 2004 to December 2007).

<sup>3</sup> It is considered best practice to provide support to both the IDP or refugee population at the same time; supporting displaced persons while at the same time increasing the community’s ability to absorb them. One

Sustainable Livelihoods through job creation and start-up capital: The project would provide start-up/seed capital – in the form of vocational toolkits - for the trained IDPs and facilitate the establishment of micro- or small agro-enterprises. The creation of Producer Groups (PG) would be encouraged and individual entrepreneurs would be linked to business mentoring and other enterprise development and business service providers. Linkages would also be made with relevant private sector institutions and other financial entities to provide financing options for project-targeted entrepreneurs. Resources provided to support these activities would help to generate the growth and development of the local markets, increase agro-commercial productivity, and diversify the economic base in project targeted areas.

The Project Document identified three outputs:

Output 1: Improved sources of income and employment for internally displaced populations in the targeted communities.

Output 2: A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills to enable them to reduce their dependency on food aid and develop sustainable livelihoods.

Output 3: Increased number of micro-enterprise and small scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions.

The Project Document also proposed selection criteria, to target specific groups within the IDP community based on vulnerability (income and housing situation), proximity to training centres and gender (2008: 5). Widows, Women Headed Households and Youth were specially identified. The criteria were not specific on targets within the host community, beyond listing project options.

### Project Results Matrix

<b>Project Specific Objective: To increase income generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi Qar Governorate by enhancing and diversifying their skills and promoting the development of small scale micro-enterprises in agriculture, manufacturing and the service industries.</b>	
<b>Project Components</b>	<b>Project Outputs</b>
Mobilisation and organisation of the target communities (IDPs and their Host Communities).	Target Community has increased awareness of, and interest in project activities. Indicators: Hostility between host and target IDP community is reduced and host community is aware of their benefits from the project; All IDP groups are represented and have elected their representatives.
Capacity building and skills development/promotion of productive investment.	A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills to enable them to reduce their dependency on food aid and develop sustainable livelihoods. Indicators: A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills.
Sustainable livelihoods through job creation and start-up capital.	Increased number of micro-enterprise and small scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions. Indicator: Increased number of micro and small enterprises that respond to local market demand and conditions.

# Purpose of the Evaluation

UNIDO commissioned a final evaluation of the project *Development of micro-industries for the reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons*. The purpose of the evaluation was to “assess the overall design and orientation of the project, review the project’s implementation status and identify lessons learned” (Section V *Evaluation Purpose*).<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, the evaluation was directed to assess:

- Project relevance with regard to the priorities and policies of the Government of Iraq, the UNDG ITF and UNIDO
- Project effectiveness in terms of outputs produced and outcomes achieved as compared to those planned;
- Efficiency of implementation, quantity, quality, cost and timeliness of the UNIDO and counterpart input and activities;
- Prospects for a development impact; Long term sustainability of the support mechanisms, development and results; and
- Synergies, coordination and relations with Partners and the FAO in particular, in the context of an earlier phase of the project that was jointly implemented.

## Scope and Methodology

The evaluation methodology was implemented through four sequential stages:

**Document Review:** Scan team reviewed the project documents and data base, and related background documents on context.<sup>5</sup> The review was supplemented by participation in the final Project Steering Committee meeting, convened in Rome 5-6 July 2011. The process generated initial findings to support design of the field survey and interview tools, as outlined in the Inception Report.<sup>6</sup>

**Field Mission in Iraq:** The field mission to Thi Qar took place over a two week period in August 2011. The mission was conducted by an Iraqi evaluation specialist working with logistical support from the UNIDO project team. It included:

- a. Structured interviews with key stakeholders, from UNIDO, Government, the four implementing partners and the community development project.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Terms of Reference are included as Annex G to this report.

<sup>5</sup> The complete list of the Documents Consulted is included as Annex F.

<sup>6</sup> The Beneficiary Questionnaire is included as Annex A to this report. The Trainers Questionnaire and responses are included as Annex C.

<sup>7</sup> A List of Informants is included as Annex E

- b. Site inspection of VTC and training facilities, and the community development project.
- c. A field survey comprised of a random sample of 97 beneficiaries chosen from the UNIDO data base. Participants were taken from the cohort of 644 beneficiaries that their completed training before 31 December 2010. The intent was to permit a six month period for the training to show results, between course completion by December 2010 and the survey in August 2011.<sup>8</sup> While random in selecting survey participants, the survey included a representative sampling of the courses.<sup>9</sup>
- d. The survey was supported by focus group discussions at all four training sites. The focus groups were comprised of all beneficiaries that participated in the survey. Structured questions were intended to triangulate the written survey data.<sup>10</sup>
- e. A field survey with 13 of the 15 course instructors that received training from the project.
- f. The full evaluation team debriefed the results of the field work at a three-day working seminar in Erbil.

**Team Debriefing in Vienna:** The international consultant debriefed the initial findings of the field mission with UNIDO project and evaluation personnel, at a meeting in the UNIDO headquarters in Vienna.

**Finalization and Submission of the Report to UNIDO,** including review of the draft by UNIDO

Data on income and employment were not fully reliable. Members of the survey cohort were generally reluctant to provide information on their situation, as this related to incomes and employment. Also, responses given on the written questionnaires were sometime contradicted by focus group discussion. The evaluation attempted to balance all sources in making its findings.

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<sup>8</sup> Results of the Beneficiary Questionnaire are included as Annex B.

<sup>9</sup> The sample did not include courses that were delivered after December 2010, including vocation training in Chibayish.

<sup>10</sup> Some of the results of the Focus Group sessions are included Annex D, Notes from the Erbil Debriefing Workshop.



## 2.

# Country and project context

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## Project Context

The project Development of Micro-Industries for the Reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons was implemented during a period of transition in Iraq. Project documentation from 2007/8 shows a country affected by:

Multiple and interacting violent conflicts, dating back through three decades of external wars (Iran- Iraq War, 1980-1988; First Gulf War, 1990-1991; and the 2003 invasion), internal repression, and more recently resistance to occupation, sectarian conflict and the presence of other regional and international conflict actors (2004 to present).

Collapse of Iraq's political and state institutions after 2003, and the capacity of institutions in state and society to deliver key public services (health, education, potable water and sanitation, electricity). Rebuilding institutions has been a gradual and uneven process, hindered by violence and sectarian political divisions that extend down into the bureaucratic level of Ministries.

Long-term deterioration of Iraqi's economy, productive, physical and social infrastructure, resulting from the combined effect of conflict, a lack of public investment and 13 years of international isolation under United Nations sanctions (1990-2003)

Social conflict and fragmentation with ethno-sectarian divisions becoming the main determinant of social relations, and political, institutional and security dynamics. Sectarian-based conflict was the main factor producing internal displacement between 2006 and 2008.

The UNIDO project was designed to address some consequence of these dynamics.

Cited in the 2008 project documents, related issues included:

Chronic deterioration in the human development indicators over the past two decades, becoming more severe after 2003. Thi Qar was identified as one of the worst affected Governorates, with a poverty headcount of 32 percent in 2008 that was 10 percent above the national average of 23 percent.

Massive population displacement, estimated in the Project Document at two million persons becoming Refugees or Internally Displaced Persons between 2006 and 2008.<sup>11</sup> UNIDO observed that internal displacement “eroded livelihood opportunities and strained already scarce resources and basic public service institutions in host communities...” (UNIDO 2008: 3).

High level of unemployment and lack of access to livelihood opportunity. The overall rate of unemployment in Thi Qar for the duration of the project was estimated at 30 percent, with marked variations based on demographics (gender and age) and location (urban and rural). The situation was particularly difficult for youth, women and persons in rural areas. UNIDO also noted the lack of opportunity could, in part, be attributed a sharp decline in the number of small and medium businesses in Iraq, as a result of the violence.

The basic assumptions underlying the project accurately reflected conditions in Iraq, during the period of project design and implementation. The security situation has improved since 2008, showing a three year positive trend between 2009 and 2011. Thi Qar is one of the most secure Governorates.<sup>12</sup> Regardless, security remains volatile and there are significant unresolved issues, related to the nature of Iraqi federalism and internal boundaries.<sup>13</sup> Competition for position during the American withdrawal, scheduled for the end of 2011, contributed to spikes in violence during 2011. Deep ethno-sectarian divisions continue to have a determining influence on everything from policy choices, through to the appointment of positions in State institutions and social relations.

Improved security allowed Iraqis to shift their focus to governance and development issues. Core challenges remain consolidation of the State in its political and institutional dimensions, building of a unifying national identity, governance and the delivery of basic public goods and services. Progress in these areas is fundamental to the legitimacy and stability of the State and the social compact between state and society. Iraq is not in a “recovery” process, to re-establish the former State and economic structure. Rather, the effort is to create a “new normal”;<sup>14</sup> a new model of identity, governance, economic

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<sup>11</sup> Project documentation cites a figure of two million refugees and displaced, higher than the estimates of 1.6 million in the baseline documentation.

<sup>12</sup> The UNAMI Security Information Analysis Unit reported a 32 percent decline in the number of violence incidents across the country, between 2009 and June 2011. The baseline of 2009 itself was lower than the high of violence in 2007/8, when the project was being designed. See the Interagency Analysis Unit, <http://www.iauiiraq.org/reports.asp>. There have been spikes in violence, related to the 2010 elections and the withdrawal of US troops by the end of 2011. Violence spiked again towards the end of 2011 as the evaluation report was being finalised, reflecting a political crisis within the unity government.

<sup>13</sup> Tensions on the so-called “disputed areas” are an on-going source of instability. Disagreements remain on the precise boundaries of the Kurdish region in the north of Iraq. Negotiations cover hydrocarbon allocations, land issues, security responsibilities and demographics (UNDP 2011).

<sup>14</sup> Statement made by project informant during an interview.

development social contract between the state and society. The contract would be based, in part, on legitimate rule and taxation in exchange for service and public goods delivery. With economic development, key challenges include the reduction of State involvement and building up the private sector as the focus of economic activity.<sup>15</sup> Expanding the small and medium sized enterprise sector (SME) is seen as critical.

The emerging political sensitivity of development issues was demonstrated by nation-wide protests on 25 February 2011.<sup>16</sup> Calls for action on corruption, unemployment and improved service delivery in key areas, such as electricity, resulted in the Government adopting a *Strategic Government Program, 2011-2014*. The programme brings tighter focus to the pre-existing *National Development Plan 2010-2014*, and identified private sector development as one of its six priority areas. Among the actions relevant to employment, private sector development and vocational training:

- a. Improve the skill level of the productive workers through graduates of vocational schools, technical institutes and universities and enrolling them in training courses to develop and improve their performance level.
- b. Economic diversification, through support to small and medium-sized business, including a focus on the rural economy.
- c. Measures to empower women in the society as well as to ensure the reintegration of internally displaced persons. The strategy also notes the importance of opportunity for youth, given Iraq's demographic structure.
- d. There is a particular interest in expanding employment in the petroleum sector, where growth is constrained by a lack of qualified personnel. Here, government is placing new emphasis on training programs that involve government, private sector and civil society to ensure relevance and conduciveness to raise the productivity and competitive standards of the oil industry. The oil industry's backward linkages to the local economy can be a core driver.

Economic diversification has emerged as a core public policy area. Economic power and activity remains concentrated in the central State, with the oil sector

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<sup>15</sup>See the *National Development Strategy 2007-2010*, the *National Development Plan 2010- 2014* and the *Strategic Government Program, 2011-2014*.

<sup>16</sup> Protests over public service delivery have escalated with the decline in violence, with electricity blackouts and poor water and sanitation as key issues. Protests culminated in a "Day of Rage" on 25 February 2011, in which 20 protesters were killed in clashes with Iraqi Security Forces (Schmidt, "Demonstrations Turn Violent in Iraq", in the *New York Times*, 26 February 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/26/world/middleeast/26iraq.html>). The Government responded with by establishing a 100 day period to evaluate ministerial programmes, and with a new *Government Strategic Plan 2011- 2014*.

as its main source of revenue. Petroleum accounts for almost 90 per cent of State revenues. In turn, the State accounts for approximately 87 percent of the total domestic investment and over 30 percent of all jobs (UNDP 2011). Private sector investment accounted for only four to five percent of GDP during the programme period (IMF 2011). The effect is to crowd out non-petroleum sectors, and limit the role of the private sector in Iraq's development (Gol 2010; IMF 2011). In particular, small and medium business was significantly affected by post-2003 violence, and SMEs have not recovered their role in creating employment. With Iraq's demographic budge, the economy is not able to absorb the number of youth and women seeking entry into the labour market (Gol 2011; COSIT 2010).

Iraqi's poverty rate is estimated at 23 percent. Almost seven million Iraqis earn less than US\$2.5 a day.<sup>17</sup> Data does not show significant changes since 2008. There are important geographical and demographic variations across the country. In Thi Qar, the rural poverty headcount is 46 percent, the sixth highest in Iraq, while the urban rate is 23 percent.<sup>18</sup> The poverty gap and levels of inequality in Iraq are very low. However, the majority of those classified as "non-poor" live just above the poverty line, and their situation could be reversed by shocks, external or personal. Almost 80 percent of Iraqis, therefore, are considered vulnerable, with a slightly higher percentage in the Thi Qar Governorate (COSIT 2010).

Employment income is the most important determinant of poverty. Employment accounts for almost 70 percent of household income, for both poor and non-poor Iraqis. The third largest income source is Government transfers, mainly in the form of food rations.<sup>19</sup> Poverty analysis, therefore, is directly related to conditions in the labour market. Available data indicates that:

a) Only 38 percent of Iraqis are in the labour market and working. The rate is exceptionally low compared to other Lower Middle Income (LMI) countries (67 percent) and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (where average participation is approximately 50 percent).

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<sup>17</sup> Data cited in the 2008 project documentation is comparable to the data used in the 2010 COSIT/World Bank study, and the current *National Development Strategy* (2010). Data cited in this report is taken from the 2010 COSIT/World Bank report unless otherwise cited, as it provides the basis for Government planning. The *National Development Strategy* notes an increase in inequality as Iraq's economy begins to grow (COSIT WB 2010: 25)

<sup>18</sup> Nationally, 39 percent of the rural population is under the poverty line, compared to 16 percent of the urban population.

<sup>19</sup> The Public Distribution System is the largest social protection programme in Iraq, reaching an estimated 70 to 80 percent of Iraqis. Almost seven million Iraqis would fall below the poverty level without food rations, making it an important poverty reduction mechanism. However, the PDS accounted for 7.5 percent of the federal budget in 2010, making it more expensive than health and education combined. The effect is to crowd out more productive public services and Iraq moves out of an emergency situation, and to distort food prices (COSIT WB: 2010; UNDP 2011).

b) Opportunities for private sector job creation have been limited by insecurity, a dominant public sector, the absence of a favourable regulatory environment, and high dependence on oil revenues.<sup>20</sup> The number of Iraqis employed in the public sector has doubled since 2005, with the public sector currently providing 43 percent of all jobs in Iraq (full and part time) and almost 60 percent of all full time employment. Full time employment in the private sector accounts for only 22 percent of jobs.<sup>21</sup>

c) There is a strong preference for employment in the public sector. The preference is, in part, explained by the historical strength of the central Government. However, the public sector is the primary source of secure employment. The Interagency Information and Analysis Unit (IAU) data indicates vulnerability is significantly higher for persons without civil service positions.<sup>22</sup>

d) Among those seeking work, the unemployment rate was estimated in 2010 at 15 percent (COSIT WB 2010: 25).<sup>23</sup> Disaggregated, unemployment is rising among younger men. For 2010, 28 percent of the male labour force aged 15- 29 was unemployed compared to the national average of 18 percent.<sup>24</sup> Including women, the unemployment rate was approximately 40 percent for youth and 32 percent for women (UNDP 2011).

e). There are important variations in labour market participation, based on geography, gender, age and level of education. The general trend is that men, women and youth in urban areas, with high education levels are significantly more likely to be involved in the labour market. The exception is that rural women, often in agriculture, with less than secondary education more likely to participate than urban women.

f) The main factor contributing to Iraq's labour market non-participation rate of 57 percent is the low number of women entering the labour force. Only about 11 percent of working age women are employed compared to about 70 percent of men.<sup>25</sup> Almost 90 percent of working age women, therefore, are not in the labour market. Employment is high among those seeking to enter the market, mainly better educated women. Otherwise, most women put their working effort into household activities. Again, this is one of the highest rates in the LMI and MENA regions.

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<sup>20</sup> For the World Bank Ease of Doing Business reports issued between 2009 and 2011, Iraq ranked consistently at or near position 166 out of 183 countries.

<sup>21</sup> IAU 2010

<sup>22</sup> IAU, *Labour Market Factsheet*, 2011, <http://www.iauiraq.org/documents/1582/LB%20Factsheet-English.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> IAU cites an average unemployment level of 18 percent for 2010

<sup>24</sup> IAU 2010

<sup>25</sup> The 11 percent figure is taken from 2008 COSIT data, published in 2010. More recent data indicates that up to 14 percent of women are in the labour force (UNDP 2011). It is not clear whether this is the result of different data interpretations or a real increase in the number of women entering the labour market.

The Government of Iraq initiated a programme of reforms to the public and private sectors, beginning in 2009. Among these is the Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP), which is being implemented with support from UNIDO and six other United Nations agencies. However, reform efforts have not yet resulted in legislative and regulatory changes as stimulants to private sector growth.

## Findings and Conclusions

The situation analysis presented in the project documents represents an accurate summary of the context in Iraq. The situation of poverty and unemployment in Thi Qar was acute, with marked demographic and geographic differences; rural areas and youth and women were particularly disadvantaged. Trends did not show significant improvements over the project period. However, the project was implemented during a transition period. Reduced violence and insecurity allowed Iraqis to shift their focus to broader development issues; governance, public service delivery and economic diversification among them. The shift creates an opportunity for private sector development and for a focus on training to meet the demand for skilled labour.<sup>26</sup>

In this context, the project appeared highly relevant to the context. The poverty reduction strategy emerging from Government planning included measures to: a) diversify the economy and simulate growth in the small and medium business sectors; b) increase labour market participation, particularly in the geographic areas or demographic groups where unemployment is high and participation is low; c) improve employability, earning power and the value of labour through education and training, and; d) address the inequalities between men and women, again through education and training and measures to improve labour market access.<sup>27</sup> These priorities were all reinforced by the objectives of the UNIDO project, although taking into account the project's modest size and resources.

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<sup>26</sup> Concerns about weak analysis related to IDPs and gender are addressed in the following sections.

<sup>27</sup> These elements appear in various forms in the current UNDAF, the *National Development Strategy* (2010), and the COSIT/World Bank report (2010). They are also consistent with results of the evaluation field work.

### 3.

## Project Implementation Structure

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### Iraqi Leadership of the Project

The project was implemented using the Direct Execution (DEX) modality. Within the model, UNIDO exercised core management and fiduciary roles, in addition to providing technical and implementation support. The choice reflected stakeholder (donor and Iraqi) concerns about the robustness of national capacity, and the need for support with fiduciary management and speed of implementation. From interviews, stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the DEX arrangement. Iraqi stakeholders noted the benefit of an impartial international organisation being involved in aspects of implementation vulnerable to perceptions of favouritism or conflict of interest.

The PSC was an effective platform for representation and participation. Membership was at a high level and inclusive of the key stakeholder groups. Members included representation from the: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Displacement and Migration (Joined Officially in September 2009), The Nasariyah VTC – MOLSA, The Thi Qar Governorate Council , UNIDO, Project Donor (Italy).

There was evidence of strong Iraqi leadership, supported by project design. Iraqi stakeholders played the defining leadership role, from project inception through to the implementation stage. The use of the DEX modality did not appear to hinder the opportunity for leadership, as happened with other United Nations projects in Iraq during this period. There were at least three contributing factors:

- The project design includes a robust governance system through which Iraqi leadership could be exercised. Other design elements enabled good communication and collaboration, across the stakeholder groups.
- The project was based on a trusted relationship, established between UNIDO, Government and the Nasariyah Vocational Training Centre during implementation of a previous project in Thi Qar. UNIDO was a trusted partner, respected by the Iraqi authorities for its past performance.
- Iraqi counterpart institutions and UNIDO personnel and arrangements were relatively stable, although affected by the 2010 elections. There was

consistency in the participation of stakeholders, and the project was not affected by frequent changes in personnel and priorities.

Iraqi leadership at the strategic level was exercised through the Project Steering Committee (PSC). The PSC was mandated to provide oversight, guidance and make decisions on key issues, in addition to liaison functions back into their respective ministries.<sup>28</sup> It was established in February 2009, held its first meeting in Baghdad on the 08 March 2009 and met formally on at least seven occasions, on a regular basis. Individual members also provided support on a punctual basis consistently over the life of the project, including advocacy on behalf of the project within their respective institutions.

From interviews, PSC members showed satisfaction with the effectiveness of the committee, and their role in strategic level decision-making. Members were knowledgeable on project operations and were fully engaged in the discussion. It was particularly noteworthy that the Donor was engaged with the project, supportive and well informed. Stakeholders credit UNIDO for the effective support, communications and information flow that enabled the committee to function well.

The Committee played the determining role in decision-making, providing analysis and advice to the project, and helping resolve obstacles. The Committee functioned at the strategic level, above the operational management and implementation activities performed by UNIDO and the four training centres. It played a deciding role in key policy, design and implementation, including defining several mid-term adjustments to the project.<sup>29</sup> The PSC also focused on the resolution of implementation bottlenecks, and providing guidance and support on managing punctual issue in the project environment. In this regard, it provided guidance and support with contextual analysis on issues ranging from political and security dynamics, market assessment, the choice of vocational areas for courses and how best to move activities through institutional procedures.

Iraqi intuitions had primary responsibility for delivery of Output Two, related to training. Implementing organisations, including the Nasariyah Vocational Training Centre, the new MOLSA training centre in Al Chibayish), Nasariyah Women's Centre NGO and the Shatrah Youth Centre all demonstrated strong commitment to the quality of project, including in the delivery of course and maintaining physical infrastructure. They had responsibility for identifying and maintaining

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<sup>28</sup> The *Terms of Reference* for the PSC were approved at the first Steering Committee Meeting, 08 March 2009.

<sup>29</sup> These included the decision to expand the beneficiary scope, from a focus on IDPs to the broader community Minutes of the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting (09 February 2010) and the decision to not to fund specific small enterprises.

physical improvements to training facilities, supported under *Output One as Community Infrastructure Support*. There was material evidence of close Iraqi leadership and institutional involvement in the rehabilitation of facilities, opening of new facilities in Al Chibayish, market assessment, identification of course offerings and development of curricula, recruitment and selection of trainers and beneficiaries.

## UNIDO Implementation Model

UNIDO effectively implemented the project through an Iraq-based management system. UNIDO was unable to establish an international presence in Thi Qar, given security restrictions and prohibitive costs. The project used a “remote management” system, building on previous UNIDO experience. This protocol was adopted by most international agencies working in Iraq as conditions deteriorated in 2004/5, and remains in effect.<sup>30</sup> UNIDO’s management structure:

- The project was implemented within the institutional framework of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC, now the MoP) as the main counterpart, and the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) as cooperating partners for implementation;
- Retained *Senior Management* and central support and administrative functions in UNIDO HQ Vienna (senior country and programme management, finance, administration and procurement).
- An *international Chief Technical Advisor* in Amman, Jordan (later moved to Vienna) to head a *Thi Qar Project Implementation Unit*, with upward accountability to Vienna and daily management responsibility of operations in Iraq.
- A *Project Management Unit* (PMU) staffed by Iraqi nationals and directly engaged with Iraqi counterparts on a daily basis, with a direct report to the UNIDO project manager in Amman. The PMU was headed by a Nasiriya Field Coordinator and Field Project Assistants.
- A *project governance* structure, to enable interaction between Iraqi Counterparts, the Donor and UNIDO.

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<sup>30</sup> All UN agencies operate under the rules and guideline of the UN Department of Security and Safety. Iraq was under the Phase IV security protocol during the full implementation period. The number of international staff members at duty stations and their movement are restricted to vital emergency, humanitarian relief, security and other operations considered to be essential by the U.N. Secretary General. The UN has tried to expand its presence in Iraq in recent years. However, severe restrictions on travel in the field remain. Costs are also prohibitive.

The Amman Implementation Unit and the PMU provided effective support to project implementation, and for facilitating communication between Iraqi Stakeholders and UNIDO international personnel. The PMU worked under difficult field conditions, with challenges related to security, communication and logistics. The field mission survey confirmed reporting that the PMU was involved in a full range of assessment, implementation, administrative, liaison, communication, monitoring and reporting functions, under supervision from UNIDO international personnel. PMU staff appeared to be respected by Iraqi counterparts, for their professionalism and commitment to the project.

There were areas of concern regarding operational effectiveness of the model. Communications between the PMU and UNIDO international personnel in Amman were not always clear, or direct or reliable under prevailing conditions in Iraq. Communications difficulties added transaction cost and some uncertainty to project management. However, they are a common feature of the remote system, where understanding of implementation issues has several filters. Some Iraqi stakeholders express concern that the manager of the PMU was based in Basra and not in Thi Qar, and was not always available to the project on a daily basis. Distance and communications difficulties also added to project transaction costs.

## **Observations on Project Documentation**

The overall quality of project reporting documentation is highly satisfactory, concerns for the *Rapid Assessment Snapshot* notwithstanding. The quarterly *Progress Reports* are well written, easily understood, and with a coherent logical framework that shows cumulative progress towards outputs over time. The reports include elements of critical analysis, and are supported by reliable data on implementation. The documentation also demonstrates an effort within the project to learn, report accurately and to use analysis in support of PSC discussions. The field study verified the factual accuracy of the reports. They were a reliable source of information supporting management and decision-making, and meet the requirements of accountability to the Donor.

The quality of the *Project Document* (2008) is less robust, and includes incorrect assumptions about the situation in Thi Qar and project scope. The document had a results matrix with measurable indicators. However, much of the content appears taken from the previous project, and/or other projects in the MISP series. The document was not based on an original assessment specific to the Thi Qar experience in 2008:

The Rapid Area Assessment does not meet the basic standards for a programme assessment. For the IDP component, the assessment was based on findings

from a limited set of documents, and an inappropriate interpretation of the data and findings contained in those documents.<sup>31</sup> Data sources for the micro-enterprise components and vocational training elements are not sourced and the findings are not substantiated. The RAA cites a 2005 UNIDO study, but acknowledges the findings were of that study were incomplete, out of date and further assessment was required. Regardless, based on initial discussions, the RRA proposed seven training areas (UNIDO 2008).<sup>32</sup>

The Inception Report is well written. However, the report focuses on overall project design and management and implementation arrangements. The report does not add new assessment or analytical elements over the Project Document or the Rapid Area Assessment.

As a result, the matrix bears limited resemblance to the project that was finally implemented. For example:

- There was no work during implementation done in the agro-sector;
- The concept of Producer Groups were never pursued;
- There were changes in the vocational areas, as UNIDO (appropriately) adapted to conditions and identified new opportunities during the initial phase of implementation, and with PSC support;
- Post-graduation beneficiary support was not based on an original strategy and was not developed.

The results matrix and reporting were revised mid-term to reflect changes in actual implementation. There does not appear to have been a formal process or changes to the project's scope. In some cases, activities remain in the matrix but are not reported on. In the case of IDPs, the PSC revised the targets at its third meeting in July 2009. Of the 1000 beneficiary training target, 50 percent were to be IDPs, Family Headed by Women (Host Community) 20 percent, Vulnerable Groups (Poor in the Host Community) 20 percent and Youth (Host Community) was 10 percent. The changes were appropriate to implementation reality, and demonstrate good engagement by the Counterparts.

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<sup>31</sup> Concerns related to the RAA are developed in Part Three *Component One; Mobilization and Organization of Target Communities*

<sup>32</sup> It is not clear whether the RAA was written in consultation with the Counterparts. A market analysis was done in five vocational areas during 2009 or 2010 (documents are undated). Of these, three areas were included in the original RAA, and two were new areas.

## Findings and Conclusions

The project was supported by robust Iraqi leadership and project implementation structure throughout the full implementation cycle. Strong Iraqi ownership was a positive performance variable, contributing to the success of certain project outputs and their sustainability. Iraqi stakeholders played core strategic and implementation roles, through an active Project Steering Committee and the training centres. The level of engagement was robust throughout the project cycle, and the project was fully integrated into Government priorities and institutions. UNIDO's role focused, appropriately, on management and implementation, in the design phase and through the delivery of materials and project resources. UNIDO's implementation structure followed the previous modalities, and those used by other agencies.

The quality of project documentation was mixed. UNIDO underinvested in original project development and relied on mid-term adjustments to ensure design relevance. The quality of the *Project Document* (2008) was not satisfactory. The document included some inappropriate assumptions and design elements, based on a combination of previous experience and an incomplete understanding of the prevailing situation. The subsequent *Rapid Area Assessment* did not meet the basic requirements of a project assessment. The *Rapid Inception Report* provided a robust outline for implementation arrangements, but was not intended to add substantive elements.

Project monitoring reports produced were of highly satisfactory quality. Reporting was comprehensive and based on a reliable data collection systems. The field mission confirmed that reports were accurate, consistent with the results observed. Reporting was considered credible as an instrument for accountability and to support decision-making by the Donor and Iraqi Counterparts.

## 4.

# Implementation of the Three Project Components

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## Component 1: Mobilization and Organization of Target Communities

Component One included the project's main planning and design activities. These focused on establishing the project and creating a permissive environment for the delivery of project outputs to IDPs, including building confidence between IDP and host communities and planning for community infrastructure, situation analysis and market assessment. The output of Component One was the "target community has increased awareness of, and interest in project activities".

### **Analysis of the Human Development Context and the Situation of IDPs**

The project collected baseline data on the overall human development situation in Thi Qar, focusing on the situation of IDPs. Work was done at inception of the project, as the first activity in the results matrix. The tool for data gathering was a *Rapid Area Assessment*, conducted in 2009. Assessment findings were operationalized in the *Rapid Inception Report (2009)*.

UNIDO had access to a large body of data on the IDP situation in Thi Qar, supported by its own experience from a previous project and the availability of sister agencies involved in related work. Primary sources in the project file included United Nations agencies and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). In addition, UNIDO had access to information through the Project Steering Committee, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Migration. The data was good, and the scope and dynamics of the IDP issue well known by 2008/9. Basic data on human development was less well known and based on partial assessment methodologies. Much improved data came available during implementation, and will support future work.

UNIDO made ineffective use of the IDP data available. The objective of the *Rapid Assessment Snapshot* was to "contribute to the understanding of the status and

dynamics of the IDP population in the Thi Qar Governorate.” in addition to providing base line information for possible micro-industry sector and possible course offerings. However:

- Project design was based on a limited assessment of IDP data. The Rapid Area Assessment was conducted as a desk review of secondary sources. The IDP component referenced only five documents from two organisations (IOM and UNHCR).
- The report does not cite or otherwise substantiate the sources of information used as the basis for recommendations on the micro-industry sector. There are no references to previous MISIP evaluations or on-going UNIDO work.
- The assessment was not supported by interviews, field work, prior UNIDO experience or other sources to contextualise the document information. In particular, there is no reference in the assessment to Government sources or priorities.
- The Rapid Assessment makes selective and unrepresentative use of IDP data. Assessment and conclusions were based exclusively on examples from Al Chibayish, an improvised and conservative rural community in the Marsh area where approximately 30 percent of project resources were allocated.

The Rapid Assessment did not contextualise the IDP or human development data. Basing analysis on data from a single location created an inaccurate picture of the overall situation. Al Chibayish was not representative of the situation elsewhere in the Governorate. The profile for IDPs and the general population is significantly different than in urban areas of Thi Qar, where most project activities were implemented. As contextual examples:

- Field research indicates most of the IDPs in Al Chibayish were originally displaced from the Marsh Area during the 1990s. They had lived in Baghdad and were re-displaced back to their community of origin. Their situation was different than IDPs living in Nasariyah and area who were not originally from the Thi Qar Governorate, as they had better links into the host committee;
- Poverty levels in Al Chibayish are twice as high as in Nasariyah and public service access is significantly lower. Also, levels of literacy in Chibayish tended to be significantly lower and livelihood and employment opportunities more limited; and
- There are important cultural differences, with Al Chibayish described by counterparts as a conservative tribal area with a homogeneous population. Urban areas are more diverse, culturally and demographically.

There were particularly important implications for the design of gender-related components.

Important social factors affecting the living conditions of all beneficiaries were not identified. These relate particularly to groups identified by UNIDO as vulnerable (youth, widows, woman headed families). For example, beneficiaries appeared integrated into extended family units, which served to reduce vulnerability. IDPs in urban areas did not intend to return to their community of origin, which was an additional incentive to integrate into the host community. However, the IDPs did not have organisations with visible leadership or a distinct and identifiable relationship with the broader community; there was no discernible “IDP community” to a “host community”. Also, the field mission did not observe tensions between IDPs and other residents.

The *Rapid Assessment* did not assess or contextualise gender issues, or propose a gender-specific strategy. Fifty percent of the beneficiary target for the project was women. The assessment and other documentation cite “cultural” restrictions on acceptable roles and occupations. Such restrictions certainly exist. However, assumptions about culture were accepted without examination or supporting analysis, for rural and urban areas. The job market had significant gender-based inequalities that would hinder their opportunities.

In addition to the programme context, there were two factors outside of the project constraining a gender assessment:

- The project did not have sufficient resources to conduct the necessary labour market or gender assessments; and
- UNIDO did not appear to have the required programme tools, at the corporate level, to support a gender assessment.

The lack of gender assessment, therefore, reflects larger issues in resourcing and the UNIDO corporate programme structure, that were beyond the ability of the project alone to resolve.

Subsequently, the project set robust gender-based targets, but there was no discussion on strategies to expand women’s opportunity.<sup>33</sup> Project development during the implementation phase noted two kinds of potential beneficiaries; women in more conservative situations that were likely to remain in the household and women who were more likely to enter the job market. Several course offerings were developed for the women’s cohort likely to enter the market

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<sup>33</sup> The evaluation distinguishes between establishing a gender-based target for beneficiary recruitment, and developing the strategy underlying the project, including the beneficiary targets.

outside of the household. These emerged based on innovation of UNIDO field personnel and the Iraqi stakeholders, as they responded to their assessment of the context. However, this occurred after the majority resources for women's training had been allocated to sewing, and did not include a strategy for facilitating entry to the job market, given many obstacles. The lack of gender analysis was a particular concern, as it emerged as a defining issue related to income generation.

The *Rapid Assessment* did not use or contextualise human development or labour market data. Existing data on the status of small business and labour market participation was not developed, to support design and targeting.

The Project Steering Committee made an important contribution to contextualising information, during early implementation. The PSC, collectively and as individual representatives played an important role contextualising information and adapting project design to field conditions.<sup>34</sup> Examples include the expansion of the vocational training offering, among them adding three “non-traditional” courses for women, expanding the beneficiary base to include non-IDPs and dropping initiatives linking training to support for job-market entry late in the implementation cycle.<sup>35</sup> The changes were effective mid-course corrections, supported by more robust UNIDO interventions. They help maintain project relevance through the implementation cycle.

## **Building Project Awareness and Confidence between IDP and the Host Communities**

None of the activities related to building confidence between the IDP and host communities were conducted as planned. The project was engaged in on-going discussions with local authorities at all project sites, including the more rural locations where the relationship would have a greater impact on implementation. However:

- a. There was no organised relationship between the project and the leadership of IDP communities. The documentation does not identify such IDP organisations as existing in civil society, with organised leadership. This relates to the small overall numbers of IDPs, and their intention to maintain a low profile and integrate into the community.
- b. There were no workshops between IDP and community leaders, on issues related to governance and conflict management; and

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<sup>34</sup> Supporting sources include the meeting minutes and interviews with PSC members.

<sup>35</sup> Relevant citations are found in the PSC minutes, which are generally comprehensive.

Community infrastructure did not focus on confidence building. The projects were implemented, were of good quality and have been of equal benefit to all community members, including IDPs. However, they were not implemented with the specific objective of building confidence between IDPs and host communities.<sup>36</sup>

## **Community Infrastructure Support Projects<sup>37</sup>**

The field mission confirmed that the Community Infrastructure support projects were delivered as reported, and project materials were accounted for.<sup>38</sup> The works were of good quality, consistent with specifications and maintenance protocols were in place and effective. There was evidence at the NVTC that works installed in the previous project were in good condition and were still being used. The choice of works was based on effective needs assessment and were discussed and approved by the PSC. On completion of the project, the works will form part of the permanent training infrastructure.

Training facilities delivered in Al Chibayish expanded MOLSA's vocational training capacity, in a vulnerable area that was previously not served. The project works were operational, of good quality and being used effectively. The facilities were properly staffed by MOLSA, and the ministry had made additional financial and material contributions to development of facilities. The sole concern expressed during the field mission was that welding facilities were located in the open air (roof, but not enclosed with proper ventilation). The working environment could be hot, and exposed to dust.

The school project was well executed, met a defined need and was of value to the community. The field mission could not visit the site and did not physically confirm quality. However, Government considers the school of value, and documentation indicates the school was installed as per specification. The presence of a UNIDO funded facility led government to invest further in school facilities. The project investment, therefore, had a multiplier effect in bringing in new State investment. There is no defined relationship between the school and

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<sup>36</sup> It is considered a best practice to provide support to both the host community and the IDP or refugee population at the same time. UNIDO was right to consider whether a sharing of benefits was necessary. However, in Thi Qar the displaced population did not appear to place excessive demands on the community's ability to absorb them. Also, neither community was organised in a manner to enter into such discussions. In this context, the practice was not relevant to the situation.

<sup>37</sup> Material support to the counterpart infrastructure is listed under Output 2 in the results matrix, as "potential infrastructure projects that will enhance and support training capacity of the Governorate..." However, later project *Progress Reports* place material support under *Community Infrastructure Support*, as a component of Output 1 of the matrix related to building confidence between IDP and host communities (see the 7<sup>th</sup> *Progress Report*, p. 12). Accordingly, the evaluation has also reported material support to counterparts under Output 1. However, placement under another Output could change the interpretation of results.

<sup>38</sup> Findings are based on the field mission results, reported in Annex D.

the objective of the project, as there appeared to be no IDPs in the area. Project management was aware of the issue early in the process, but commitments had been made to Government that were difficult to reverse. Arguably, money was diverted away from uses more appropriate to the project, specifically the tool kits. However, as an individual activity the school works were effective.

The exception was computer equipment installed at the Nasariyah Women's Centre. The women's centre is an NGO and not part of the MOLSA training system. The choice of working with the centre was motivated by the project objective of expanding access to training, and working with community level organisation. However, the centre was unable to provide to maintain equipment or deliver training at the level required by the project. Cooperation between the VTC and the Centre has ended, given PSC concerns about the quality of facilities at the NWC. The PSC decision to remove the computers to another location was intended to preserve the assets.

The field mission observed that: a). computers were not maintained properly something that appeared to be a matter of limited resources and not negligence on the part of the centre. b).the NWC had unreliable electricity, which affected training since the NWC did not have money to buy petrol for their generator, or to otherwise operate their generator. c).the instruction for IT was not at the same level of professional quality, although beneficiaries did not express dissatisfaction with the quality. d). the instruction for sewing appeared to be at a good level of quality. e). the area around the NWC is isolated, which had consequence for access. f).The Instructors were rated well, although they were not trained to the same standard as VTC Instructors.

## **Findings and Conclusions on Component One Activities**

Underinvested in project assessment and design resulted in mixed quality at entry. UNIDO had strong institutional knowledge, from long term experience with the MISP project series. However, experience was not a substitute for an updated assessment of the prevailing conditions in Thi Qar. The *Project Document* included unsubstantiated assumptions about the programme environment. The *Rapid Assessment* did not challenge these assumptions, made an inaccurate assessment of the IDP situation, and did not include a credible market analysis. The assessment made selective use of information from one geographic location, producing conclusions that were unrepresentative of the governorate as a whole.

The inception process also did not include a gender-based analysis of the job market and obstacles to women's participation. The omission occurred in spite of

project's orientation on vulnerability and equality. The assessment and design accepted assumptions about "cultural" restrictions and offered no effective strategy to address these restrictions. The chain of inaccuracies was introduced into the *Project Inception Report*, and into the project concept and design.

UNIDO and counterparts must make a robust investment in the assessment and design phases of projects. Assessment should be based on both original work and secondary sources, and involve close consultation with counterparts and others with relevant knowledge. Donors should be willing to support effective assessment, given its importance to overall project effectiveness.

## Component 2: Promotion of Productive Investments

### Selection and Profile of Beneficiaries

The beneficiary recruitment process was impartial, transparent and done on the basis of defined criteria. The selection methodology and criteria were informed by previous UNIDO projects. They were developed in consultation with stakeholders in Government and the NVTC, and approved by at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Steering Committee. The recruitment process appeared impartial, done through a public campaign and the use of Government data bases. Final selection appeared merit-based, with assessment of applications done by a committee with representation from UNIDO, MOLSA and Thi Qar Governorate Council.

The project met or exceeded its target that 50 percent of beneficiaries should be women. UNIDO and counterparts placed significant effort in meeting the target. As of December 2010, 55 percent of the beneficiaries were women and 45 percent were male (UNIDO 2011). UNIDO advised that the 50 percent ratio was maintained during the final iterations of conducted during the first two quarters of 2011, up to the project's closure. Of these, the majority of women were enrolled in the sewing courses; 100 percent in the case of Al Chibayish and approximately 60 percent at the other three locations.

The project placed an emphasis on youth, although specific recruitment targets for youth were not established. The *Quarterly Progress Reports* do not provide disaggregated data on participation of youth involvement in the courses. The project data base indicates that approximately 40 percent of the beneficiaries

were aged from 15 to 24. Similarly, 51 percent of the survey cohort fell into the youth category.<sup>39</sup>

Project design may have underestimated the economic importance of youth to household incomes. Among the survey cohort, 80 percent of youth described themselves as sons and daughters living in extended family situations. At the same time, approximately 60 percent described themselves as a spouse and/or the primary income earner. The data suggests, therefore, that youth are contributing to incomes of both their immediate and extended families, and have an important role in the poverty situation for the overall family.<sup>40</sup> However, their unemployment rates are significantly higher than the average.

The project successfully focused on low income families, showing high levels of unemployment. Out of 97 beneficiaries in the survey cohort, only one male beneficiary reported he lived alone. All other beneficiaries lived in family situations, with the majority in large and complex extended families.<sup>41</sup> Most or all of the beneficiaries, and their families appeared to fall within the project's criteria. From the cohort:

- a. Eighty-five percent of beneficiaries reported they were unemployed prior to taking the course. The focus groups and other data, indicate that many male beneficiaries were often economically active in the informal sector, or with casual labour. The employment, therefore, was more complex than the data suggests and might have implications for future project design. However, the work appeared unpredictable and low paid, and the beneficiaries appeared deserving.
- b. Fifty-five percent of beneficiaries reported they earned no income prior to the course, including 15 men and 43 women. Among the unemployed cohort, 18 men (47 percent of the unemployed) reported they earned between US\$25 and US\$200 a month through casual or informal labour. Men, therefore, were more likely to earn some form of income even if unemployed.
- c. No beneficiary acknowledged receiving state transfers, although transfers such as the food ration can account for up to 50 percent of food purchases for families with this profile. The data on state transfers, therefore, appeared incorrect.
- d. Women were more likely to be unemployed than men. Ninety-six percent of women in the survey cohort were unemployed, while 76 percent of men were without work. Inequality reflects low women's participation in the

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<sup>39</sup> Annex B, Table 2

<sup>40</sup> Annex B, Table 2

<sup>41</sup> Annex B, Table 3 and Table 4

Iraqi economy, and tendency in conservative areas or homes that women not enter the labour market.

- e. Most of the women were not seeking to enter the labour force. Some reported in the focus groups that they were economically active in the household, but earning small amounts of income. Estimating the economic value of these activities (support to the household, agriculture and others) would require a different kind of survey. The profile was influenced by the fact that most of the women were recruited for home-based sewing courses; and
- f. Women were earning much less than men. Among those employed, the only woman reporting an income earned US\$120 a month. Men reported earning between US\$100 and US\$300 a month, with five men earning US\$200 a month.<sup>42</sup>

Education levels appeared consistent with the requirements of course enrolment. From the survey cohort, the majority of the beneficiaries had the minimum level of education required for the courses they were enrolled in. Beneficiaries enrolled in courses that required advanced levels of education, such as Information Technology, demonstrated they had the necessary qualifications.<sup>43</sup> Interviews with the course Instructors and beneficiaries identified low education levels as a concern, but not a major impediment to learning.<sup>44</sup>

The survey data confirmed low education levels as an element of vulnerability, particularly for women, and affirmed the beneficiary selection process.<sup>45</sup> As observations on the survey results:

- a. Thirty-six percent had completed secondary education and at least some post-secondary studies. However, most of these persons were unemployed, or underemployed before the course. This included 16 women with advanced education, 15 of whom reported they were unemployed and could not find work in their chosen professions;
- b. Women had lower levels of education than men. Twenty one percent of women had no formal education while 57 percent had completed intermediate level or higher. All male beneficiaries had completed their primary education, while 80 percent had intermediate level or higher;

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<sup>42</sup> All data taken from Annex B, Table 9

<sup>43</sup> Annex B, Table 5

<sup>44</sup> Annex D

<sup>45</sup> All education data taken from Annex B, Table 5

- c. The lowest education levels were reported in the sewing courses, where one third of the beneficiaries had no formal education and 55 percent had primary level or less; and
- d. Further disaggregated, the lowest education levels for women were found in Al Chibayish, where all women beneficiaries were both IDPs from Central Iraq and enrolled in the sewing courses. Most of these women also reported they were seeking household-based income opportunities rather than entering the job market.<sup>46</sup>

Beneficiaries entered the courses with a high level of commitment and expectation. Members of the survey cohort showed a high degree of motivation when entering the courses. The large majority indicated they:

- a. Were seeking some form of income opportunity, including women enrolled in the sewing programme who expected to generate income for the household;
- b. Had the intention of acquiring new income-related skills. In particular, persons with higher education and/or some job-market experience sought but were unemployed expected to acquire new skills that would increase their opportunities. Some of these women with higher education, but who had not found work;
- c. Had high expectations that completing the courses would lead to some form of employment or opportunity. This included an expectation that the courses would lead to contacts with employers and opportunities; and
- d. Had modest expectations of an increase in their income and improvements to their overall living conditions.<sup>47</sup>

Few beneficiaries indicated they expected to start their own business after the course. From the survey cohort, only two beneficiaries stated their intention was to establish a small business after graduating, although many are effectively self-employed through casual labour or activity in the informal sector. Focus group discussion differed from the written responses in this regard. Most beneficiaries perceive a job in the public sector as the most desirable form of employment. The responses suggest a limited entrepreneurial culture, and that the objective of small business start-up was not well communicated to the beneficiaries.<sup>48</sup> The course also did not otherwise develop an orientation or culture towards small business development.

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<sup>46</sup> Observation from Focus Group interviews conducted in Al Chibayish, Annex D.

<sup>47</sup> Observations are taken from Annex B, Table 7, Table 8 and Table 10.

<sup>48</sup> Annex B, Table 8

## **Findings and Conclusions on Component Two Activities**

Implementation of project activities related to vocational training was highly satisfactory. Survey data indicates that output-level objectives related to the selection of Course Instructors and the quality of training, the development of new course curriculum, and the selection of beneficiaries were all met. In particular, the project succeeded in targeting beneficiaries with high vulnerability profiles, and in finding the appropriate balance between men, women and youth. Targets in all of these regards were met. The project had robust systems in place to support the selection process, implemented by counterparts with UNIDO playing valuable oversight and technical roles. Component 3: Sustainable Livelihoods through Job Creation and Start-up Capital

## **Component 3: Creating a linkage between training and income opportunities.**

**The component 3 was thought to create a linkage between training and income opportunities. Activities were to include:**

- a. The training in entrepreneurial skills and small business development;
- b. Encourage the formation of small business networks, through on the job training and support to 15 local small business who might hire IDPs;
- c. The provision of tool kits to a select group of IDPs; and
- d. Facilitating linkages to the private enterprises hiring or otherwise supporting small business development.

The tool kits were to be delivered to the top five percent of beneficiaries. Tool kit distribution, therefore, was not universal. Distribution was merit-based, to the beneficiaries who had scored at the top of their classes. There were two exceptions; beneficiaries from the Information Technology courses received no tool kits while all beneficiaries from the sewing courses received a sewing machine and basic tailoring equipment. Distribution of the tool kits was pending at the end of the course, and had not occurred by the time of evaluation. The PSC was involved in related discussions and decision-making.<sup>49</sup> The evaluation,

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<sup>49</sup> See the *Project Steering Committee Meeting Minutes*, 11 and 12 April, 2011

therefore, did not have the opportunity to assess whether tool kits had an influence on whether beneficiaries found employment or generated income.

Limited and late tool kit distribution was a contentious issue, within the PSC and among the beneficiaries. The project had insufficient resources to purchase tool kits for all beneficiaries and support universal distribution. Rather, distribution to a limited number of beneficiaries was a source of discontent and resentment among the overall beneficiary cohort, even though the selection process was transparent. Also, there was a delay in the distribution process until the end of the course. The tool kits were held in the NVTC storage facilities for an extended period, pending the closing event. As a result, some beneficiaries were not able to market skills immediately, but had to wait up to six months. To the extent that the project model linked tool kits to employment and business start-up, limited distribution also reduced the project's capacity to achieve these objectives.

The field study verified that beneficiaries in the sewing courses had received their tool kits. Participants to survey stated that the equipment was of good quality, received in good condition, and was in regular use. The equipment was considered a valuable household asset. There was no evidence from the field survey of the sewing machines being used for business start-up, with the exception of five women who were setting up a tailoring shop. Rather, the machines were for home use, or small income generation in the community on an informal basis.

Otherwise, none of the activities foreseen in Component Three were completed. Specifically:

- a. The evaluation was not aware of entrepreneur or business development training being provided.<sup>50</sup> There was no training support, therefore, for the objective of small business development. From the focus groups, few if any of the beneficiaries appeared to have previous small business experience, or the orientation and skills to develop a business.
- b. UNIDO advised that two small business development courses were delivered to the Thi Qar Chamber of Commerce, through a different UNIDO project managed by the Enterprise Development and Promotion Unit. However, there was no evidence in the documentation or from the field study of a synergy between the two projects.
- c. There was no record of on-the-job training being provided. The documents indicate that concept of mentoring was discussed but never developed by the project. No such service is otherwise provided by the

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<sup>50</sup> UNIDO notes that two small business development courses were delivered to the Thi Qar Chamber of Commerce, by a different UNIDO project managed by the E

training centres, although there was discussion within MOLSA of initiating a mentoring programme.<sup>51</sup>

- d. There was no record of referral services being provided for beneficiaries to micro-credit agencies, or to walk in business development services offered by the Chamber of Commerce. These services appear to be available, although they were not verified. However, UNIDO did not conduct a survey of potential agencies, the project did not make referrals or micro-credit entities or to the Chamber of Commerce. There were no other referrals to financial support or business start-up support, or clarity on what was available. Iraqi counterparts advised there may be a cultural predisposition to taking debt. Regardless, beneficiaries did not appear aware of such support.
- e. The enterprise assistance component was not delivered. Discussions were held with the Thi Qar Chamber of Commerce to identify 15 suitable enterprises. The list provided by the chamber was reviewed by the PMU, which found that the technical requirements of these shops were much larger than could be provided by the project. In addition, the enterprises appeared well-off and were not considered vulnerable. The PSC was concerned about reputation risk to the project, if there was any perception that aid had been channelled on the basis of favouritism to successful enterprises. The project re-initiated the survey process to identify microenterprises that have been functioning but are not able to grow without assistance. However, at the time of the evaluation no such survey was completed, or mechanism developed.

## **Findings and Conclusions on Component Three Activities**

The project did not deliver Outcome 3 activities linking training to the job market or livelihood opportunity. The overall linkage strategy was weak and was not developed during the assessment, design and inception process. Counterpart institutions did not have relevant programmes that could serve as a model, or base of programming to be scaled up. Implementation was not well resourced and did not begin until well into the project, when the training of beneficiaries was over 50 percent complete. Even if the enterprise support had been implemented, there would have been a gap between graduation and access to support programmes. Subsequently, none of the activities for Component Three had been delivered at the time of the evaluation. The exception was universal distribution of sewing machines, with the limited distribution of tool kits pending. UNIDO notes difficult job market conditions, including poverty and unemployment rates that are above the national average. Economic growth rates in the

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<sup>51</sup> See the *Project Steering Committee Meeting Minutes*, 11 and 12 April 2011.

Governorate are low, as are job creation rates. Many small businesses and economic activity in the informal sector appear family oriented, or otherwise employing only through trusted relationship. IDPs are particularly disadvantaged, when they lack relationships in the community. These are all aspects of a traumatized society, where both social relationships and economic activity become narrowly focused

In this context, some UNIDO informants stated that “*UNIDO cannot outperform the market*”. However, the projects objectives focus not only on training for beneficiaries, but improved livelihoods through linkages into the market. In this context, “outperforming the market” is both a core project concept and central to the UNIDO brand in Iraq. UNIDO and counterparts can outperform the market where the assessment-training-market entry linkages are made. In other words, identifying concrete market demands and opportunities, and providing appropriate training and support services that have a better chance of leading to market entry. The Thi Qar project’s performance gap rests with the fact that the market linkage strategy was not developed. Also, project resources were limited and Counterparts themselves had limited capacity to develop the market entry strategy. Modest performance in this regard, therefore, is not solely determined by the market itself, but overall *relevance* of interventions to the market. Also, the project lacked the scope, resources and orientation to address larger policy issues related to the labor market or vocational training. This left the Counterparts to address micro-linkages into the local market.

## 5.

# Assessment of Results

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## Relevance of the Project

The intended project outcomes were highly relevant to the context, the priorities of Government and the mandate of UNIDO (see Part One; Country Context). The country context experienced an important transition during the period of project implementation, moving to a greater focus on development issues. The transition is reflected in Government and United Nations priorities, which place growing emphasis on economic diversification, public sector reform, private sector development and employment creation. Special emphasis is given throughout on gender equality and youth, as important to economic development. Project objectives were based on these priorities. Relevance was sustained and appeared to strengthen over time. A key factor was robust national ownership over the full duration of the project.<sup>52</sup>

## Project Efficiency

Overall efficiency of the project was satisfactory. UNIDO has experience with the remote management model, and was able to establish an effective field presence through its PMU and the PSC. Efficiency was reduced by assessment and design problems, which diverted resources to an IDP focus that was not relevant. Also, resources expended on Outcome 3 activities did not produce outputs. These allocations had an impact on final programme performance, but were not significant in terms of cost.

UNIDO's international management and procurement system are centralised and not well suited to conflict-affected environments. Institutionally, UNIDO is increasingly working in fragile state and conflict affected situation. The *Thematic Evaluation; UNIDO Post-crisis projects (2010)* found that by 2008, UNIDO was implementing 40 post-crisis programmes and projects in 17 countries, with a value of approximately US\$ 40 million (UNIDO 2010).

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<sup>52</sup> A matrix of UN and Government priorities from development plans is included as Annex G to this report.

The *Thematic Evaluation* concluded that “a dominant topic in the evaluations is the centralised management style of UNIDO. Unnecessary delays were reported due to the need to sanction minor expenses through HQ. The current system was not found to favour fast reactions or flexibility required in fast changing post-crisis contexts (UNIDO 2010: xi).” Centralised systems left it to project personnel in the field to adapt and find solutions to overcome procedural complications. The evaluation also stressed the need for a rigorous assessment and analysis during the design phase.

UNIDO’s centralised systems were a factor affecting project implementation performance. There was no evidence UNIDO has acted to strengthen its procedures for work in contexts like Iraq. Overall, procedures do not differentiate between stable and conflict-affected, fragile and low capacity situations.

There are examples from the project where spending limits, procurement procedures, limited flexibility and inability to use local markets affected timeliness, and the appropriateness of deliverables. This occurred in a volatile context, with stability affected by what is delivered, and how quickly it arrives.

UNIDO’s lack of differentiated operating procedures undermines opportunity and effectiveness in fragile states or post-conflict situations. Inequality and poverty, with the perception of injustice that accompany them, are a fundamental cause of conflict. In turn, creating employment and livelihood income opportunities are a fundamental part of post-conflict stabilisation strategies.<sup>53</sup> Related issues are at the core of UNIDO’s mandate. However, the organisation does not appear to have consolidated its role by developing the required institutional systems and procedures.

Examples that emerge repeatedly from the evaluation and in other evaluation reporting included centralised systems, limited field presence and procurement requirements that limit UNIDO’s ability to engage with local suppliers and contribute in return to the local economy. Instead UNIDO relies on the ability of its personnel to find innovations within existing procedures. However, these come with a high transaction cost, for the project and for UNIDO personnel. Poor performance creates opportunity costs and reputation risks for UNIDO.

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<sup>53</sup> World Bank, *World Development Report 2011; Conflict, Security and Development*, 2011

## Project Effectiveness

The project partially met its objective of improving sources of income to Internally Displaced Persons.<sup>54</sup> From the survey cohort, 35 percent of the beneficiaries were IDPs, with approximately 65 percent of the beneficiaries being non-IDPs. The largest group of IDP beneficiaries in the cohort was located in the rural district of Al Chibayish, where 100 percent of the survey cohort was IDPs. Discounting for Al Chibayish, IDPs comprised only 14 percent of the survey cohort. These beneficiaries lived mainly in the urban areas in the Nasariyah district. This is a reasonable distribution, given settlement patterns.

The total number of IDPs enrolled in the courses was not known. The project did not record the status of beneficiaries in its data base. Also, there was evidence that IDP beneficiaries did not always reveal their status. Regardless, UNIDO and VTC personnel estimated that IDPs comprised 30 to 40 percent of the total number of beneficiaries. The estimate is consistent with survey findings.

The reason for low IDP numbers appeared to be lack of demand, given the small size of the IDP community in Thi Qar, the community's lack of organization and specifics of living conditions and incentives. The fact that IDPs were 30 to 40 percent of the final beneficiary group was the result of an effective public information campaign launched by the Counterparts. Shifting to a mixed beneficiary profile (IDPs and non-IDPs all selected on the basis vulnerability criteria) did not undermine the final achievements of the project.

The target of providing course opportunities to women and youth was met or exceeded, albeit within the scope of a reduced IDP cohort. Seventy percent of the beneficiaries reporting IDP status were women. Of this number, 73 percent of the women IDPs were resident in Al Chibayish, considered a conservative area. The remaining 23 percent of female IDPs lived in Nasariyah or Shattrah districts. Fifty-one percent of the IDP cohort was aged between 15 to 24 years, the official UN definition of "youth".

The project undertook a campaign to publicise the courses to IDPs, including making broad use of media. The campaign appears comprehensive, and should have reasonably generated eligible candidates. However, UNIDO and VTC personnel advised that few IDPs presented themselves during the first round of recruitment. The project was based on incorrect assumptions about the living situation of potential beneficiaries:

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<sup>54</sup> Recruitment also fell below the revised 50 percent IDP target established by the PSC at its third meeting in July 2009.

- a. IDPs are a small minority in the Thi Qar Governorate. The pool of potential IDP beneficiaries was small in comparison to the total population of Thi Qar, and to other potential beneficiary groups. According to the baseline data, there were approximately 47,000 IDPs in the governorate by 2008, or 0.3 percent of the governorate's total population.<sup>55</sup> The exception was in the Marsh areas, where there is a concentration of IDPs displaced from Central Iraq. Similarly, IDP displaced to Thi Qar between 2006 and 2008 comprised less than 0.3 percent of the Iraqi's total IDP population, estimated at over 1.6 million.
- b. IDPs were not an organised or visible community. Project design assumed that the IDP population had some form of community organisation and leadership, and could be accessed through those structures. However, IDPs in survey cohort living in urban areas appeared to hide their status.<sup>56</sup> They worked to integrate into host communities, reduce their visibility and appeared reluctant to share personal information. Survey data also indicates 90 percent of the IDP cohort lived in large extended families, sometimes within entirely displaced families but more often with the relatives in the host community.<sup>57</sup> In this regard, their living situation was similar to most non-IDP beneficiaries. None of the beneficiaries reported they were living in a more visible shelter facility where they could be more easily contacted.

The exception to the pattern was Al Chibayish. Baseline data indicates that Chibayish had a higher percentage of IDPs relative to the total population than in other areas of Thi Qar (IOM 2008). Also, Chibayish had a more homogeneous Shia population, and a more complex displacement pattern. Families were originally displaced from the Marsh area to central Iraq after the first Gulf War, and the suppression of the Marsh Shiite opposition that followed. Most were effectively returning, with their families, to their place of origin after a 15-20 year absence. There appeared to be less reluctance in the cohort, therefore, to revealing status.<sup>58</sup> As a result of these factors, the IDP profile in Al Chibayish

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<sup>55</sup> Thi Qar was not affected by the large internal displacements that took between 2006 and 2008. UNHCR and the IOM report the number of IDPs in Thi Qar peaked during 2010 at 49,000, and declined slightly during 2011 (UNHCR 2011). At the same time, only 1.3 percent of the Governorate's population was displaced out to other parts of the country. Figures are for *registered* IDPs only. The IOM and UNHCR both acknowledge there are important unregistered populations.

<sup>56</sup> From focus group interviews, incentives for hiding IDP status ranged from wanting to avoid discrimination to using family contacts to find income opportunities. Publically identifying themselves as IDPs did not enhance employment opportunity, or generate other benefits. The original 2007 IOM data also indicated that 67 percent of the IDPs assessed intended to integrate into their host community, rather than return to their place of origin (IOM 2007: 3). This was particularly the case in Chibayish, where 81 percent preferred to integrate rather than return.

<sup>57</sup> See Annex B, Tables 3 and 4.

<sup>58</sup> See Annex B, Table 1.

district emerges more strongly than other areas of the Governorate. Also, hostility towards returnees did not appear to be an issue.

The project had a mid-term correction, when it became apparent that IDP demand was not sufficient. The project adapted to conditions, and revised beneficiary targets to include non-IDPs, in July 2009. Stakeholders advised that the second round of recruitment in 2009 was opened and the positions filled. The project, therefore, did not lose significant time or resources as the result of adjustments.

Revision of project targets did not undermine achievements or efficiency. Rather, stakeholders showed flexibility aligning the project with its environment. The exception was the misallocation of resources to Component 1, and outputs related to building increased awareness and confidence in the Host Community.<sup>59</sup>

The project did not meet its target of training 1000 beneficiaries. At closure, approximately 850 beneficiaries had graduated from the 16 distinct courses offered, at the four training sites. However, under prevailing conditions and given the overall quality of the training, the evaluation did not consider that the enrolment shortfall detracted from the project achieving the project's Outcome 2 objective. Rather, an 85 percent delivery rate on training was a positive achievement under the conditions.

**Effectiveness of Outcome 2:**

Capacity building and skills development/promotion of productive investment. A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills to enable them to reduce their dependency on food aid and develop sustainable livelihoods.

Indicators: A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills.

Vocational training resulted in few of the beneficiaries finding predictable employment or creating small businesses. The exception was with graduates of the sewing courses, most of who appeared to be saving money for their families, and/or earning modest amounts of money working from home to supplement family income. Regardless, many beneficiaries reported improved well-being, opportunity and some increase in their income. The data suggests that many continued to earn income through temporary employment, although the linkage to the training was unclear.

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<sup>59</sup> The methodology of providing support to both IDP and host communities is considered best practice, in contexts where large IDP populations create an economic burden on the Host Community that might result in conflict. This was the original intent of the project design. However, the practice did not appear relevant in the Thi Qar context, given the low IDP population size and their efforts to integrate and reduce visibility.

## Improvements to Overall Situation<sup>60</sup>

Six months or more after the course, 42 percent of beneficiaries said that their overall situation had improved. The written question focused on an increase in beneficiary incomes. However, from the focus groups, many beneficiaries took other factors into account, such as their perception of increased opportunity and the value of the course stipend as household income. The stipend had the value of one month's wage or more, and was generally considered by the beneficiaries as income. The response, therefore, had employment, monetary and perception dimensions. Overall, 42 percent of beneficiaries said their situation has improved (41 respondents), 56 percent said their situation was the same (55 beneficiaries) and two said their situation was worse (2 percent).

Women beneficiaries were more than two times more likely to say their situation had improved. The responses on improved well-being could be disaggregated by gender, and between women who had taken the household-based sewing course and women enrolled in job-market courses:

- The large majority of the positive responses came from graduates of the sewing courses (78 percent responding positively), particularly in Al Chibayish. Reference was made not only to income, but to the benefit of having tailoring equipment in the household. The equipment was received by all women and considered a valuable household asset for family and income-related uses.
- Women from the job market-based vocational areas were less likely to respond that their situation had improved (24 percent), with approximately 70 percent believing their situation remained the same. These figures are the same as male respondents, 26 percent of whom said their situation had improved. Persons reporting the same situation did not report increased income or opportunity; and
- The focus groups showed a marked increased level of self-confidence and optimism, consistent with the high expectations shown on entering the course. The optimism had been maintained even in situations where beneficiaries had not found work. Beneficiaries did not believe that their connections or opportunity had increased, but optimism emerged from having new skills.

## Finding Employment and Income Opportunities

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<sup>60</sup> All Data taken from Annex B, Table 12, with cross reference to Annex B, Table 11.

Twenty-four percent of beneficiaries reported they found employment after graduating. Also, up to 10 beneficiaries responded that they could not participate in the survey cohort, as they had to attend work. The percentage of beneficiaries' findings employment, therefore, could have increased by as much as 35 percent. However, it is important to note that only a small number of beneficiaries found permanent employment, and direct attribution between the courses and employment was difficult to make.

There were also variables in the survey data that lead to important inconsistencies in the reporting and definition of "employment". From the focus groups, employment was broadly interpreted as an income earning opportunity, and not necessarily a "job" or permanent position. Inconsistencies resulted from these mixed definitions:

- a. Sixteen of the 23 beneficiaries that responded positively when asked if they found work were graduates of the sewing courses. These women were earning modest income working from home, but did not enter the labour market;
- b. Discounting for sewing, seven beneficiaries found employment after the course, or six percent. Of these, only one beneficiary was woman. Women, therefore, were much less likely to find market-based employment, even though they were 50 percent of the beneficiary target.
- c. Seventy-four percent of beneficiaries reported they did not find employment, six months or more after graduating. This includes four persons who reported they returned to their previous employment and a number of beneficiaries that continued as casual labourers, through previous contacts.

Overall, 43 beneficiaries reported that they had established their own business. Again, the data requires consideration of the response variables, many of which emerged in the focus groups. The survey did not find any cases where a beneficiary established a legally registered small business. Of the 33 graduates of the sewing course that reported they had set up a business, the focus groups identified only one actual start-up business; five women in Nasariyah established a tailoring business, with financing from a family source. The rest of the women reported earning small amounts of income from doing work for neighbours. They were effectively part of the informal sector, but they had not established a business. Twelve male and one female beneficiary from other courses reported starting a business, but the focus group discussion indicated that many actually self-employed doing casual labour, albeit with most using skills acquired in the courses.

In summary, the largest group reporting new income earning opportunities were graduates of the sewing course, albeit these opportunities were modest. The women generally appeared to be making between US\$25 and US\$50 a month, or otherwise contributing to the family through savings on the purchase and care of clothing. However, only five of the 33 graduates created a small business, which occurred in an urban area with financing from family members. None of the sewing graduates found actual employment. Rather, in the focus groups they reported earning income from sewing within their immediate communities, and saving money for the family through making and repairing clothes. Women outside of the sewing course were the least likely to find employment or self-employment, with only two beneficiaries reporting opportunities.

## **Increasing income and household well-being**

Fifty-five percent of beneficiaries said that they were better able to meet household needs as a result of the course. The data reflects five variables:

- a. Some beneficiaries found employment, which was directly or indirectly related to the courses;
- b. Approximately 50 percent of beneficiaries stated they had some form of new income opportunity. Thirty-nine said the situation is the same and three responded their situation is worse;
- c. Most women from the sewing course perceived they had acquired an important household asset that was of value to their families. They tended to perceive an improvement in their situation, regardless of whether they were earning new income, and
- d. The stipend received for attending the course was considered an important, although temporary income for beneficiaries.

Areas where gains in household well-being were achieved reflect the likelihood that income gains were temporary or unpredictable. Housing and food were the areas that showed an immediate improvement, with a modest increase in income from the course or employment. The areas of education and health showed much lower gains, and would require longer term investments.

## **Obstacles to Finding Employment**

Beneficiaries perceived significant obstacles to finding employment. Some of the obstacles were structural in the job market, and related to the lack of opportunity. However, the lack of beneficiary access to “Wasta” (a colloquial term) was also perceived as a significant constraint. Wasta refers to corruption and/or favouritism in employment recruitment and the lack of personal or family

connections with potential employers. This appeared to be particularly the case with small businesses, which tended to employ family members or trusted persons from the community.

Seventy four percent of beneficiaries stated the most important constraint to finding employment was the lack of opportunity. The reason was cited equally by men and women. The lack of financing and tool kits (business start-up), transport costs to work sites, corruption and *Wasta* were cited as factors contributing other reasons cited. However, the focus group discussion placed much more emphasis a combination of factors:

- a. Beneficiaries generally did not have the financing, connections or knowledge required to establish them in a small business. Creating a formally registered business was beyond the vision and means of the large majority of beneficiaries. There appeared to be a reluctance to engage the state, before even consideration of challenges navigating the registration process. The problem of business skills and means remained for informal businesses. Project Output 3 provided no assistance in this regard.
- b. The reason for lack of opportunities related to both the absolute scarcity of jobs in Thi Qar's small private sector, and the lack of personal connections into companies; "I have no *Wasta*". Employment in both companies and Government was perceived to depend on such connections;
- c. IDPs were particularly disadvantaged where they did not have extended family. Some beneficiaries noted that, given past violence and lingering suspicions, small companies were unlikely to hire strangers without some form of connection. In this regard, the issue facing IDPs appeared to be integration into the community, and not poverty; and
- d. Positions in Government were highly regarded by beneficiaries. However, beneficiaries perceived that access to positions depended on "*Wasta*".

"Opportunity", therefore, has several dimensions that created significant barriers to employment. These were generally not articulated as part of an employment support strategy. In addition to poor financial conditions:

- a. To create a *small business*, beneficiaries generally perceived they lacked the business knowledge and financing, and access to support;
- b. To find employment in the *private sector*, the existence of an open position needed to be accompanied by "*Wasta*" in order for it to become an "opportunity"; and

- c. To find employment in the public sector, the existence of a position needed to be accompanied by “Wasta” and a bribe in order for it to become an “opportunity”.

The beneficiaries did not associate the lack of employment opportunity with deficiencies in the courses. Most beneficiaries did not appear to have an expectation of post-graduation support. However, they perceived that opportunity could have been enhanced with:

- a. More training and formal qualifications, meaning that majority of the beneficiaries believed additional training would increase their opportunity;
- b. Tools and financing required to start businesses or be self-employed. Some beneficiaries also noted that tradespersons were often required to bring their own tools to worksites; and
- c. No beneficiary stated that the quality of training was poor, and contributed to them not finding a job. Beneficiaries also did not articulate more complex employment support schemes, suggesting that the project strategy was not discussed.

From the focus groups, beneficiaries had hoped the course would also provide them with some “Wasta”. This was understood as contacts to be made through the VTC or the courses, direct access to employers recruiting graduates, or some other preferential access to employment opportunities. There was some disappointment among beneficiaries that the courses did not enhance their connections. The primary form of support would have been through Output 3 market entry linkages.

## **The Situation of Graduates from the Sewing Courses**

The situation of women taking the sewing course was unique. Beneficiaries generally did not expect to enter the job market and were responsible for homecare and secondary income earners. As such, the provision of training and sewing equipment was more likely to be seen as a poverty reduction measure than an employment or job creation one. The sewing courses were short-term interventions with limited possibility to improve the overall situation of women, and including moving them into the job market. In particular, the course worked only with a culturally acceptable vocational area and did not attempt to expand their options. There was no market or gender assessment to support discussion of options.

Regardless, graduates from the sewing courses reported the most improvement in their situation, and satisfaction with the programme. This occurred even though

actual income and opportunity gains were modest. The reason appeared to be that the skills and equipment had the potential to expand their economic activity in the household, and the community:

- a. Twenty seven of 33 sewing course beneficiaries responded that their overall situation had improved, or 82 percent. From the focus groups, the response was based on perception as much as material improvements. For example, some women spoke about the opportunity to leave the household and socialise with other women. Only five women said their situation had not improved;
- b. Twenty six or 79 percent responded that their income increased. The focus groups noted these increases tended to be small (usually under US\$50 a month). Regardless, women owned an asset and appeared better able to contribute to the household; and
- c. Eighty five percent responded that they had increased opportunity to be economically active, while 90 percent believed that course skills and equipment were relevant to their situation.

The objective of Outcome 3 was not met. With the exception of the distribution of sewing equipment and tool kits, none of the anticipated outputs were delivered. The project did not facilitate a link between training and opportunity, or support the creation of small enterprises that would respond to local market demand. There were neither outputs nor outcomes that could be attributed to the project, in the project reporting or observed during the field mission. With sewing machines, there was evidence that possession of a productive tool had a small improvement on overall well-being in the household.

**Results of Outcome 3:**

Sustainable livelihoods through job creation and start-up capital. Increased number of micro-enterprise and small scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions. Indicator: Increased number of micro and small enterprises that respond to local market demand and conditions.

There were two primary causes for the inability to deliver Outcome 3. First, project design and resource allocation were not oriented to achieve these results. The design process did not appear to incorporate institutional knowledge. Also, the proposed collaboration with the UNIDO project *Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion Unit* either did not occur or did not result in activities. Second, the Iraqi counterparts did not have relevant programmes, which serve as a model or basis for operations. Facilitating the linkage did not appear as part of their mandate or organisational experience. This is an important design issue for

discussion with UNIDO's Iraqi counterparts, and may itself be the basis of a future cooperation programme.

The lack of investment in Outcome 3 fundamentally changed the orientation of the project itself. The absence of post-graduation support effectively broke the linkage between assessment, training and income, employment, or small business development. It reduced the scope of the project, from being a comprehensive sustainable livelihoods intervention to a more narrow vocational training intervention targeted to vulnerable groups. Resources were focused on the training component, while the project provided no post-graduation support to beneficiaries, beyond full distribution of sewing machines and limited distribution of tool kits. However, vulnerable persons were not only deprived of training opportunity, but also of the means to access the job market. Basic project design, therefore, was not oriented towards its outcome statement.

## **Sustainability**

The sustainability of project components related to the development of training centres is high. There is a high probability that enhancements to the capacity of the NVTC and the new MOLSA centre in Al Chibayish will be sustained. Sustainability is determined by extent of government involvement. The GoI has identified vocational training as a priority related to its employment creation and poverty reduction strategies. Materials provided by the project were relevant, complemented other MOLSA investments and were well maintained. The field mission observed that MOLSA is making long-term investments in the centres. Courses are being integrated into the regular curriculum, the majority of the trained Instructors remain with the VTCs. Sustainability is the result of close MOLSA involvement in the project, and over time in the relationship with UNIDO.

It is unlikely that the facilities at the Nasariyah Women's Centre can be sustained, due to lack of resources. Equipment was scheduled for removal by the end of the project. Regardless, assets have been preserved and integrated into other MOLSA operations.

The sustainability of the human capital developed by the training appears mixed to low. Vocational skills require practice in a work setting, to be sustained and improved. Women with sewing machines are using their equipment and skills. Otherwise, many of the beneficiaries have not found opportunities in their chosen vocational field, with the exception of sewing. Their skills will degrade with time and the lack of practice. As their skills degrade, opportunities will narrow and the employability of beneficiaries will also degrade. The project offered no opportunity for refresher instruction, to maintain skill level. There was early discussion in the

project of creating a form of internship, through support to local businesses. The relevance of the qualification, therefore, will deteriorate over time when not used.

**Output 3** was not delivered and, therefore, will not be sustained. Output 3 was to provide the linkage between training and opportunity. Inability to deliver Output 3 has three implications for sustainability: a). Beneficiary skills are not being used and sustained; b). Institutional capacity within the VTCs to make the linkage between training and the employment market has not been established, and cannot be sustained; and c). Capacity in the private sector to develop small business able to absorb beneficiaries was not established and cannot be sustained.

## Gender

The survey found important differences between male and female beneficiaries within the cohort.<sup>61</sup> In general terms, female beneficiaries entered the programme with less education and economic opportunity than their male counterparts. Those seeking to enter the job market had higher unemployment and lower incomes. There were important differences also between the situation in urban and rural areas, with urban women showing higher education levels, but limited economic opportunity:

- a. Women seeking to enter the job market (outside of the home) lived exclusively in urban areas. Only two of the 47 women reported they were employed before the course, compared to 12 of 50 men;
- b. No female beneficiaries from rural areas were seeking to enter the workforce, and were primarily engaged in household activities. From the focus group discussion, women had limited freedom of movement outside of the household;
- c. Most rural female beneficiaries appeared economically active in some manner, such as agriculture. These activities were not wage-based, but appeared to generate value for the family;
- d. The majority of women in urban areas appeared to be looking for employment outside of the home, while a minority intended to remain in the household;
- e. In the focus groups, women reported there were fewer culturally acceptable vocations for them to enter, in addition to higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts; and

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<sup>61</sup> Data summarised from Annex B, Table 9

- f. In general, male beneficiaries showed lower levels of unemployment and higher incomes prior to taking the course, including better access to casual or informal employment.

Course design included options for both groups of women; vocational training in three specific areas for urban women seeking employment outside of the home, and sewing for women in rural and urban areas seeking home-based income opportunity. The sewing courses were valued by beneficiaries, and the majority reported that they could generate modest amounts of income outside of the home (sewing in the neighbourhood), save money on the family clothing expenses or both. However, women seeking to enter the job market reported much less positive results. Only one of the 14 women graduating from a non-sewing course reported that she had found employment.

The project had gender-based targets, but no gender strategy. As noted, the original assessment and project design did not include an assessment of gender issues, or offer a gender-strategy. The project did not have the resources or corporate tools to conduct this work. In particular, the project worked within a narrowly based scope of what was assumed to be culturally acceptable. The three non-home based courses represent an initial effort to explore other options, albeit some were introduced well along on project implementation. However:

- a. The focus of the project is mainly training and income generation for home-based employment. This is an area where UNIDO and counterparts have previous experience. While the courses offer modest income improvements, they are not likely to expand women's participation in the job market, or expand opportunities beyond the current definition of what stakeholder's perceived as culturally acceptable;
- b. Sewing adds minimal value to women's labour and, therefore, is not much of income stimulation. Sewing does not address the issue of access to the job market, or expand what is acceptable in culture;
- c. A much smaller resource allocation was made to non-home based employment that would move women into the labour market and increase women's overall participation. The lack of post-graduation support meant that the courses did not appear to increase women's access to the job market. Despite the unique obstacles faced by women, there was no strategy or resources to support them.

## 6.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

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Iraq is in transition, from a focus on security to broader governance and development issues. Strengthening the private sector, employment creation and market-relevant skills development are all essential elements of the government's development strategy. They are also essential to the future stability of Iraq, and the social compact between State and Society.

UNIDO Iraq has a proven comparative advantage in the area of vocational training, which is central to its mandate. UNIDO also has the benefits of a good overall performance record in Iraq, and enjoys a trusted relationship with its counterparts. These are important achievements, earned by UNIDO in a difficult country context.

UNIDO has a less robust advantage promoting the overall linkage between training and labour market entry, which is a core requirement to generate opportunity and employment.<sup>62</sup> The agency's capacity in related areas (labour market and labour force assessment, ensuring the relevance of vocational training to market demand and post-graduation support to market entry) is not known to the evaluation. However, the evaluation noted that the capacity and orientation of Iraqi institutions in these areas is limited.

In these regards, UNIDO's mandate and global competence appear highly relevant to the medium-term development context in Iraq. There is already a significant UN joint initiative related to *Private Sector Development* ongoing, where UNIDO has an opportunity to support labour market development on a national scale.

Looking towards the future, UNIDO will need to confirm where it can add value in a changing context. For the Thi Qar project, UNIDO's contribution appears to focus in three areas: Fiduciary management on behalf of the donor; technical assistance and addition implementation capacity, and; access to UNIDO global knowledge. Much of the value added to VTC systems lies in assessment and market linkage processes. The future trends include:

- a. A rapid decline in Donor funding and increased national funding, as oil revenues expand. The fiduciary management role, therefore, has a limited

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<sup>62</sup> Based on the current project and not a global assessment.

medium-term future. Also, if UNIDO is looking for Iraqi money it will need to demonstrate it has a unique competence that does not exist elsewhere in the system.

- b. Increased VTC capacity in the area of training, using national resources and expertise. UNIDO will find technical assistance niches medium term. However, the GOI is able to deliver its own training and will rely on UNIDO less.
- c. Greater GOI focus on the economy, meaning private sector development, employment creation, market-based training and support to market entry. These discussions are taking place already in UN Private Sector Development Programme.

UNIDO has something unique to offer both up and down stream of the training, in assessment and market-entry strategies. This is where the Government may be in need of technical assistance, and in strengthening the relevance of the VTC curriculum. Also, the linkages are necessary to translate training into human development results. These are all part of UNIDO mandate and competence, but are precisely where the Thi Qar project does not perform well. These are roles that must be negotiated with Government, in the context of larger private sector development and employment policy and strategy. While UNIDO has responsibility for identifying its contributions, Donors and Government must be willing to adequately fund UNIDO to play larger roles. These are difficult to achieve within the context of small scale, localised and time-bound projects.

## Recommendations

UNIDO should identify the differentiated systems and procedures needed to work in conflict affected situations, such as Iraq. UNIDO can use the *Thematic Evaluation; UNIDO Post-crisis projects (2010)* as the basis to begin work. Without such systems, UNIDO cannot fully leverage its core competencies in fragile state or conflict -affected situations, such as Iraq. This is a corporate process, beyond the scope of any single project.

UNIDO and counterparts must make a robust investment in the assessment and design phases of projects. Assessment should be based on both original work and secondary sources, and involve close consultation with counterparts and others with relevant knowledge. Donors should be solicited to support effective assessment, given its importance to overall project effectiveness.

Future projects should incorporate a gender strategy, and expand options and support for women seeking to enter the job market. Projects should begin with a properly resourced assessment of the gender context. They should distinguish between home-based income and market-based employment objectives, and expand the repertoire of courses and options for women in both. Strategy also needs to consider the post-graduation support that addresses the specific obstacles to job market access faced by women. Meeting this recommendation will require a UNIDO corporate investment in developing the appropriate programme tools.

Projects must invest in the strategies and mechanisms to create linkages between training and employment and livelihood opportunity. Options should be identified, developed and resourced within the initial assessment and design process. Mechanisms will be most effective when integrated into counterpart systems, as a basis of operations.

The relevance of the MISP model to the changing context in Iraq may be declining. However, there is an opportunity for UNIDO to build on success and re-position the organisation to meet emerging Government priorities and needs. This should begin with consultations between the Counterparts (UNIDO, Government and potential donors) on UNIDO's potential contributions. Labour market assessment and strategies for linking training to the market appear to be value-adding contributions, particularly as the Government focuses on private sector development.





# Annex A: Guide to the Beneficiary Questionnaire

QUESTION	RESPONSE
<b>Part 1: Information about You</b>	
The value <NA> universally applies as <No Answer>	
How old are you?	Enter <Age>
Are you female or male?	M = <Male> F = <Female>
Place of origin	Enter <Name of town>
Where do you live now?	Enter <name of town>
Level of education	a = <No formal education> b = <Primary School (3 to 6 years)> c = <Intermediate (7 to 9 years)> d = <Secondary School (12 years) > e = <Post Secondary Education> f = <Vocational or other training? In what trade or occupation?>
What is the size of your household?	Enter <Number of persons in household>
What type of household do you live in? (May chose more than one value. Note most families are extended families, with different branches of the family living together. Requires differentiation)	a = <Husband and wife both present> b = <Martyr> c = <Widow> d = <Woman is the head of the household> e = <Internally displaced family> f = <Divorced> g = <Extended Family>
What is your position in the household? (May chose only one value)	a = <Head of the family> b = <Main income earner> c = <Wife or husband> d = <Son or daughter (youth under 24 years) > e = <Single person living alone >

<b>Part 2: About Your Situation before the UNIDO Training</b>	
Are you an Internally Displaced person?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
If you are an Internally Displaced Person, were you employed where you lived previously?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
What was your occupation/job?	Enter <Name of job>
If you were self employed, what was your occupation/job?	Enter <Name of occupation or job>
Where you currently live, did you have a job before you took the UNIDO training?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
What was your occupation/job?	Enter <Name of occupation or job>
If you were self-employed where you currently live, what was your work before the UNIDO course?	Enter <Name of occupation or job>
Before the course, did you have other activities that generated income for your household?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
What was your monthly income before taking the course?	Enter <monthly income number>
Was your household receiving any assistance from the Government or other sources, other than what you earned from working?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
<b>Part 3: About Your Experience with the Training</b>	
What motivated you to take the training?	Narrative
What were your expectations?	Narrative
When did you complete the training?	Enter <date training completed>
What course did you take?	Enter <Name of course>
Was this a new occupation (skill?) for you?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
<b>Were you satisfied with:</b>	
The quality of the course?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4= <highest value>
The quality of the Instruction?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4= <highest value>
The quality of the training facilities and materials?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3= <highest value>
When you completed the course, did you believe that you had the skills needed to find work?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>

<b>Part 4: About Your Situation after the Training</b>	
Are there jobs or income earning opportunities where you live for the skills that you learned during the course?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Have you found employment using the skills you learned during the training?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
<b>If you found employment or are self employed:</b>	
What kind of company or enterprise do you work for now?	Enter <type of company>
What is the area of business?	Enter <kind of company>
How many employees does the company have?	Enter <Number of Employees>
Do you believe you found work because of the training?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
Do you use the skills that you learned in the course as part of your job?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
If you are self-employed, what is your work?	Entre <Kind of work>
Did you create your business using the skills you learned during the training?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
Did you receive a tool kit from UNIDO?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
<b>If you received a tool kit:</b>	
Was the tool kit good quality?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Relevant to the skills you learned?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Were the tools important to helping you find work?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Do you use the tools in your work?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Do you use the tools for other things, such as in your household?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
What do you expect to earn monthly?	Enter <Earnings>
Did your income increase or decrease from before the course?	I = <Increase> D = <Decrease>
<b>How has your situation changed?</b>	
Is your household better able to meet its basic needs (housing, water, electricity) as a result of your income?	Yes =<Y> No = <N>
Is your housing situation better? The same? Or worse?	B = <Better> S = <Same>

	W = <Worse>
Has the amount of money you are to spend on food improved? Stayed the same? Gotten worse?	B = <Better> S = <Same> W = <Worse>
Has your ability to afford education for children improved? Stayed the same? Gotten worse?	B = <Better> S = <Same> W = <Worse>
Has your ability to afford healthcare for family members improved? Stayed the same? Gotten worse?	B = <Better> S = <Same> W = <Worse>
If you received other assistance from the Government before the training, do you still receive such assistance now?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
<b>If you have not yet found employment or self-employment</b>	
If you have not found employment or self employment opportunities, what kinds of difficulty do you encounter as you look for work?	Enter <Narrative text on difficulty experienced finding work>
Do you believe that the skills you learned during the training will lead to employment or self-employment soon?	1 = <lowest value> 2 3 4 = <highest value>
Do you have a concrete offer/opportunity for employment?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
If you believe the skills you learned during the training will NOT lead to employment or self-employment soon, please tell us why not:	a = <There are no jobs or self employment opportunities for the skills that you learned> b = <You need more training to be qualified for the employment that is available> c = <The quality of your training is not good > d = <You do not have support or money to start your own business> e = <Other reasons>
<b>Section Five: To be completed only by Women who have taken the Sewing Course</b>	
Do you believe the situation of your household improved as a result of skills you acquired during the training?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
Are you earning some income from the training?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
If you are earning money, does the income contribute improve your status in the household?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
Does income created other opportunities for you to contribute to the household?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
Is the sewing machine important to earning that income or better caring for your family?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>
What problems – if any – have you encountered in using the skills you have learned to improve your livelihood?	Enter <Narrative text on difficulty encountered>
If you are not earning income from the training, do your new skills allow you to contribute in other ways?	Yes = <Y> No = <N>

## Annex B: Summary of Beneficiary Survey Data

Table 1: IDP Participation in the Project

		IDP		Gender			Grand Total	
		N			Y			
		F	M	Total	F	M		Total
Origin	Current							
Baghdad	Chibayish				11		11	11
	Nasariyah				3	7	10	10
	Shatrah				1		1	1
	<i>Total</i>				15	7	22	22
Babel	Chibayish				1		1	1
Babelyon	Chibayish				1		1	1
Kirkuk	Nasariyah					2	2	2
Nasariyah	Nasariyah	16	28	44				44
NA	Nasariyah		1	1		1	1	2
Ramadi	Chibayish				3		3	3
Shatrah	Shatrah	7	11	18				18
Samara	Chibayish				3		3	3
Tikrit	Chibayish				1		1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>		23	40	63	24	10	34	97

### Observations on Table 1 Data

IDPs comprised .3 percent of the total population of Thi Qar of November 2010. IDPs, therefore, were not a significant or visible minority in the Governorate (IOM 2010).<sup>63</sup>

The majority of beneficiaries from the sample cohort were not IDPs. From the sample cohort, 34 beneficiaries (35 percent) were IDPs, and 63 beneficiaries (65 percent) were not IDPs. The UNIDO data base does not record whether the beneficiaries were IDPs (UNIDO, March 2011). It is not known, therefore, whether the sample cohort is consistent with the profile of the total beneficiary cohort. However, UNIDO personnel estimated that between 30 to 40 percent of the beneficiaries were IDPs.

Women comprised the majority of IDP beneficiaries in the sample cohort. Seventy percent of the IDP beneficiaries interviewed were female, while 30

<sup>63</sup> 2010 IOM data is similar to the data used by UNIDO during project design, as most displacement to Thi Qar occurred during 2006. The total population of the Thi Qar Governorate was estimated at 1,610,000, while the IDP population approached 47,000 (IOM 2010).

percent were male. Of the female IDP beneficiaries, 73 percent were resident in Chibayish.

The majority of the IDPs were displaced from the Baghdad area post-2006. 65 percent of the IDP reported Baghdad as the location they were displaced from. Almost 90 percent were from the central region, including Samara. From the focus groups, most or all were displaced during the peak of sectarian violence in 2006/7. The profile of the cohort is consistent with UNHCR and IOM data from the period, which reports that 65 percent of IDPs in Thi Qar originated from Baghdad during 2006/7 (UNHCR 2011; IOM 2007 and 2010).

The largest IDP population in the sampling was resident in Chibayish (100 percent), where all beneficiaries interviewed were women graduated from a sewing course. The second largest IDP group was resident in Nasariyah; 10 IDP beneficiaries or 18 percent of the total sample cohort resident in Nasariyah. It is not known whether expanding the sample to other to cover other vocational and male beneficiaries would have changed the size of the IDP cohort.

The displacement pattern for Chibayish is complex. Beneficiaries that participated in the focus group reported their families were originally displaced from the Marsh area to central Iraq after the first Gulf War, and the suppression of the Marsh Shiite opposition that followed. Most or all were effectively returning, with their families, to their place of origin after a 15-20 year absence. They were displaced by sectarian violence during 2006. The profile is consistent with IOM data (2010).

The phenomenon of displacement to other areas of Thi Qar is also complex. From the focus groups:

Persons displaced to Nasariyah integrated into an urban area. IOM data from 2007 notes that 52% lived in rented homes and almost 30 % were living with relatives (2007). The pattern is consistent with the survey findings, although the survey data is complete in this regard (see Table 3);

- IDPs did not form an identifiable community, organized and with leadership that could be easily targeted by UNIDO. Rather, IDPs tended to keep a low profile and/or to hide their status. Rather, data from Table 3 indicates they were organised into extended family units;
- The small size of the IDP population meant they did not form a visible group in the larger community. Also, IOM and UNHCR reporting notes the possibility of discrimination against IDPs, which may be an incentive for IDPs to hide their status from others;

- From IOM and UNHCR surveys between 2007 and 2011, only a minority of IDPs in Thi Qar express an interest in returning to their place of origin, or relocating to a third location. The percentage was lowest in Al Chibayish, where 85 percent told a 2011 UNHCR survey that they intended to remain. The 2010/11 UNHCR data indicates that almost no IDPs left Thi Qar to return to their place of origin. IDPs therefore, appeared to be focusing on integration and establishing permanent residence in Thi Qar.

## **Conclusions**

The project did not fully meet its objective of targeting IDP beneficiaries. IDPs comprised only 35 percent of the sample cohort. If the beneficiaries from Al Chibayish are discounted, IDPs comprised only 14 percent of the cohort. It is not known if this sampling was an accurate reflection of the total beneficiary cohort, given the lack of data on IDPs in the project registration data base.

Regardless, the project did have relative success attracting IDPs beneficiaries. The IDP component of the sampling cohort (34%) was significantly larger than the percent of IDPs in the general population (3).



# Conclusions

The sampling of men and women in the cohort adequately reflected the balance of male and female beneficiaries. The course offering for women was restricted to four areas that UNIDO and the Iraqi stakeholders considered to be culturally acceptable. This included four courses for women that would seek employment outside of the home, and two courses from women seeking home-based income activities. There was a broad course offering for men.

**Table 3: Beneficiary Households**

Gender	HH Type	IDP	HH Size																	Grand Total							
		N	Y											Total	Total												
			10	11	12	13	14	4	5	6	7	8	9			10	12	13	17		4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
F	A						1						1													1	
	G										1		1												1	1	3
	GA			1	1					2	3	2	3	12	2	1	2	1		1	2	2	5	5	21	33	
	GB			1	1				1	1				4					1							1	5
	GC									1	1	1		3					1							1	4
	GE										1			1													1
	Total			2	2			1	1	4	6	3	4	23	2	1	2	1		3	2	2	5	6	24	47	
M	A							1					1					2								2	3
	G									1			1												1	1	2
	GA	3	4	3	2	1	1	4	8	5	3	2	36		1				2		3			1	7	43	
	GB									1			1														1
	GC			1									1														1
Total	3	5	3	2	1	1	5	9	6	3	2	40		1			2	2		3			2	10	50		
Grand Total		3	7	5	2	1	2	6	13	12	6	6	63	2	2	2	1	2	5	2	5	5	8	34	97		

## Observations on Table 3 Data

Household size ranged from 5 to 17 persons. Most IDP households range between five and nine persons, with a median size of 11. Most non-IDP families ranged between five to 12 persons, with a median size of nine persons. The average family size for both IDP and non-IDP families ranged between and nine, with IDP families being slightly larger. Data indicates, therefore, that most beneficiaries lived in large family settings.

### Most IDP and non-IDP beneficiaries lived in complex extended family situations:

- 96 percent of beneficiaries lived in extended families, with only four beneficiaries reporting they lived in single family situations. Extended families appeared to include in-laws, adult brothers and sisters and parents;
- 81 percent of households reported that both husband and wife were present, including 28 of 34 IDP families and 48 of 63 non-IDP families.

- Nine percent of women reported that they were either widowed, or in a “Martyr” family, with seven of the nine women being from non-IDP families.
- No women reported they were the Heads of the Household (note this conflicts with data from Table 4, and may be the result of the multiple choices given).
- All women who were widowed or the wife of a Martyr appeared integrated into extended family situations. No women reported living alone.

## Conclusions

See Table 4 Observations

**Table 4: Position of Beneficiaries in the Household**

		IDP		Grand Total
		N	Y	
Gender	HH Position			
F	A	3	3	6
	C	7	18	25
	D	13	3	16
	<i>Total</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>47</i>
M	A	8	5	13
	C	15	3	18
	D	16	2	18
	E	1		1
	<i>Total</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>50</i>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>63</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>97</b>

## Observations on Table 4 Data

### For Non-IDPs Female Beneficiaries:

- Three women reported they were the Head of the Household, and primary wage earner
- Seven women identified themselves as a spouse
- 13 women reported they were a daughter (youth member of an extended family, with the possibility also of being married)
- No women reported they were living alone

### For IDP Female Beneficiaries:

- Three IDP women reported being the Head of the Household and primary wage earner
- Seven IDP women identified themselves as a spouse
- Three IDP were daughters in an extended family situation

**For Non-IDP Males:**

- Only one beneficiary reported he was divorced, although it appears he lived in an extended family situation
- 23 were husbands and/or the Head of the Household (primary wage earner)
- 16 identified themselves as sons, in an extended family context

**For Male IDPs:**

- Eight were husbands and/or the Head of the Household
- Two identified themselves as sons, in an extended family context

**Conclusions on Table 3 and 4**

A substantial majority of the beneficiaries lived in large and complex extended family situations. These included widows and the wives of Martyrs, who may have been absorbed into households. The families were inter-generational, from a single family and/or extended family groupings that included in-laws and relatives.

The extended family structure is a form of coping mechanism. There was evidence from elsewhere in the study of families pool resources and reduce vulnerability, including social benefits received from Government. Income earners also contributed back into the overall family income.

Both spouses were present in the majority of the family groupings, with only seven percent reporting they were headed by a woman/widow. In the case of widows, most also appeared to be integrated into extended families. While six women reported being the primary wage earner, they also appeared integrated into extended families and not living alone. There were no instances of beneficiaries living alone.

Within the family structure, the beneficiary group was equally divided between parents with primary responsibility wage earning, and the adult children or in-laws who were looking for work or otherwise making a contribution. Beneficiaries identifying themselves as sons and daughter comprised 35 percent of the beneficiary group.

IDPs were also integrated into extended family structures. The survey did not gather empirical information on whether they moved in with relatives, or whether the entire extended families relocated. There was evidence from the interview process that both situations existed, with IDPs relocating to Chibayish most likely to have extended family in the community for support.

The existence of extended family and contacts into the community appeared to be a factor in the choice of location. IDPs outside of Chibayish sought anonymity; to integrate into communities, build on family or other ties and not be identified as outsiders. The desire for anonymity, and the resulting absence of a cohesive IDP community with leadership, was a factor affecting targeting of an IDP constituency for the courses.

**Table 5: Education Levels in the Sampling**

		Education level					Grand Total
		A	B	C	D	E	
Gender	Course Name						
F	Appliance					1	1
	IT				3	5	8
	Mar			3		2	5
	Sewing	10	8	6	1	8	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47</b>
M	Electrician					2	2
	Generator		6	4	1	2	13
	IT					9	9
	Mar			1			1
	Pipefitter				1	3	4
	Welding		4	9	5	3	21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>97</b>

#### Observations on Table 5 Data

Women reported the lowest education levels. 57 percent (27 women of 47) responded they had completed intermediate education or less, with 21 percent of female beneficiaries having no formal education at all. Most of the women reporting no formal education lived in Chibayish.

The lowest education levels were found in the sewing course, although nine women in sewing had completed secondary or post-secondary education. The well educated women reported they had completed a post-secondary programme, but were unable to find work in their chosen field.

Men had higher education levels on average. No male beneficiary reported having no formal education, while 48 percent had completed at least intermediate

level education. 16 men had post-secondary education, but were unable to find work in their chosen field.

In general, levels of education appeared consistent with course requirements. In particular, all persons taking courses requiring literacy had completed at least basic education. This was particularly the case with IT, where 83 percent of the beneficiaries had some post-secondary education, and the rest had completed their secondary qualifications.

### **Conclusions**

The selection process appeared to be consistent with the learning requirements of the courses. The survey did not find instances where beneficiaries lacked sufficient formal education for the course they were enrolled in.

Women had the lowest education levels. Low education levels limited the training options available, within the repertoire of courses being offered. However, there were a significant number of women with secondary and post-secondary education and training that were also enrolled. These women may have been over-educated for some of the courses.

**Table 6: Beneficiary Perceptions of Quality of the Course Offering**

		Find Employment				Find quality instruction			Find quality institution		
		N	NA	Y	Total	3	4	Total	3	4	Total
Course Name	Gender										
Appliance	F			1	1		1	1		1	1
Electrician	M			2	2	2		2	2		2
Generator	M			13	13	12	1	13	13		13
IT	F	1		7	8	6	2	8	6	2	8
	M			9	9	9		9	9		9
	Total	1		16	17	15	2	17	15	2	17
Mar	F			5	5	5		5	5		5
	M			1	1	1		1	1		1
	Total			6	6	6		6	6		6
Pipefitter	M			4	4	4		4	4		4
Sewing	F	2	5	26	33	27	6	33	27	6	33
Welding	M			21	21	21		21	21		21
<b>Grand Total</b>		3	5	89	97	87	10	97	88	9	97

### Observations on Table 6

The beneficiaries were asked if they expected to find employment after the course. The reference was to their expectations when they entered the course. 92 percent of beneficiaries responded that they expected to find employment. These included women that expected to earn some money working from the household or assist their families, but did not expect to enter the job market outside of the household. Five the eight persons that that responded they did not expect to find employment were women from the sewing course. During the focus group, these women responded that they would use the skills and equipment for the benefit of family and neighbours. The economic benefit was money saved from the purchase of clothing.

The beneficiaries were asked to rate the quality of the course and the instruction. 90 percent of the beneficiaries rated the quality of instruction and materials at 3, the second highest ranking level. The remaining 10 percent rated the course at 4, the highest level. No beneficiaries rated the quality of the course and instruction at 2 or less. From the focus groups, beneficiaries demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the course, and satisfaction and trust in the professional quality of the instructors. There were only two critical comments made during the focus groups about the quality of instruction.

The beneficiaries were asked to rate the quality of the institutional setting (quality of the facilities at the VTCs). 91 percent of the beneficiaries rated the quality of

institutional setting at 3, the second highest ranking level. The remaining 11 percent rated the institutional setting at 4, the highest level. No beneficiaries rated the quality of the institutional setting at 2 or less. From the focus groups, beneficiaries demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the institutions that provided the training. This was the case for all four institutions delivering training, and the responses did not indicate a significant difference in the rating given across the institutions.

**Conclusions**

The expectation levels of beneficiaries entering the training programme were high. Most expected to find employment on completion of the training. The majority of those that did not expect to find employment were women, who would use their skills and equipment for the benefit of the household or home-based income generation. Once in the programme, the beneficiaries showed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of the course material, the quality and professionalism of the instruction, and with the quality of the institutional setting (learning facilities). There were no generalised concerns expressed about quality, to the extent that these would undermine opportunities.

**Table 7: Beneficiary Motives for Taking Training**

	Gender		Grand Total
	F	M	
<b>Motivation</b>			
Employment	31	21	52
Government Job	1		1
NA	15	29	44
Grand Total	47	50	97

**Observations on Table 7 Data**

Beneficiaries were asked “What motivated you to take the training?” The question was open, with no pre-determined menu of responses provided.

The majority of beneficiaries responded that their motive was to find employment. Forty- four percent did not respond. In the focus groups, beneficiaries showed a high level of expectation that the training would improve their chances for employment or income generation.

Also from the focus groups, “employment” was broadly interpreted as formal employment, casual employment and income generation. The expectations ran the full spectrum of options. Beneficiaries did not distinguish between these categories.

The beneficiaries were also asked if the training was in a new professional area. Discounting the sewing, approximately 85 percent of beneficiaries stated that the area was new. Most of the respondents, therefore, were looking to diversify employment options with new skills.

**Table 8: Beneficiary Perceptions of Employment Expectations**

		Expectations				Grand Total
		Employment	Government Job	NA	Open Business	
Gender	Course Name					
F	Appliance	1				1
	IT	6		2		8
	Mar	4		1		5
	Sewing	17	3	13		33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47</b>
M	Electrician	2				2
	Generator	8		3	2	13
	IT	6	1	2		9
	Mar	1				1
	Pipefitter	3		1		4
	Welding	16	1	4		21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50</b>
Grand Total		64	5	26	2	97

### Observations on Table 8 Data

The beneficiaries were asked what kind of employment they expected to find, on completing the course. Only two persons from the Generator course aspired to open a small business. In the focus group, many beneficiaries were doing informal or contract work, but did not perceive this as self-employment. Generally, there appeared to be no small business culture within the focus groups.

Five beneficiaries responded they aspired to find jobs in Government. Focus group discussion indicates that this number may be much larger. Government remains the dominant economic actor in Iraq, and the public sector is the largest single employer. The public sector is still perceived as the most stable and secure employer. For example, a minority of women taking the sewing programme stated in the focus group that aspired to Government employment.

The largest group of 66 percent of replied they were looking for employment. The actual nature of the employment was not specified. Twenty-seven percent of beneficiaries did not respond.

## **Conclusions**

The beneficiaries had high expectations of finding an employment or income opportunity after the course. Focus group discussion differed from the written responses. Many beneficiaries perceive the public sector as the most desirable form of employment. Only two of 97 beneficiaries aspired to start their own small business, although many are effectively self-employed through casual labour or activity in the informal sector. The finding suggests a limited entrepreneurial culture, and that perceive of the beneficiaries did not change during the course. This may be reflected in the fact that limited small business skills and start-up support was provided.

**Table 9: Employment and Income Situation before the Course**

**Table 9a: Employment Prior to the Course by Gender**

	Employment before UNIDO		Grand Total
	N	Y	
<b>Gender</b>			
F	45	2	47
M	38	12	50
<b>Grand Total</b>	83	14	97

**Table 9b: Employment and Income by Gender**

	Employment before UNIDO								Income Monthly before UNIDO								Grand Total		
	N								Y										
	0	25	120	150	170	200	NA	Total	100	120	125	130	150	175	200	300		NA	Total
<b>Gender</b>																			
F	43					1	1	45		1							1	2	47
M	15	1	1	6	2	8	5	38	1		1	1	2	1	5	1		12	50
<b>Grand Total</b>	58	1	1	6	2	9	6	83	1	1	1	1	2	1	5	1	1	14	97

**Table 9c: Income by Course Assignment**

	Course Name	Income Monthly													Grand Total				
		0	25	100	120	125	130	150	170	175	200	300	NA						
F	Appliance	1																1	
	IT	6												1			1	8	
	Mar	5																5	
	Sewing	31				1												1	33
	<b>Total</b>	43				1									1			2	47
M	Electrician				1										1			2	
	Generator	4							3					3			3	13	
	IT	5					1	1					1			1		9	
	Mar	1																1	
	Pipefitter	2							2									4	
	Welding	3	1			1			3	2			9				2	21	
	<b>Total</b>	15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	2	1	13	1			5	50	
<b>Grand Total</b>	58	1	1	2	1	1	1	8	2	1	14	1			7		97		

## Observations on Table 9 Data

The data on pre-course employment and income is incomplete and not fully reliable. Course participants were generally reluctant to discuss past employment, past or current incomes levels or whether they received social benefits received from Government. Regarding the latter, no course participant reported they received support from the Government. However, most persons attending the courses would have received some form of support. For example, 85 percent of Iraqi households received food subsidies from Iraq's *Public Distribution System* (PDS). The programme accounted for approximately 50 percent of the food purchasing power of low income households in 2007, and remains important in 2011 (World Bank: 2009).

Concerns with the accuracy of data notwithstanding:

- Eighty six percent of beneficiaries reported they were unemployed prior to taking the course or 83 out of 97 beneficiaries in the cohort. Only 14 beneficiaries reported they had some form of employment, or 14 percent of the cohort. Some beneficiaries from both groups may have under reported their participation in the informal sector, or work as casual labour.
- Women were more likely to be unemployed than men. Ninety six percent of women were unemployed, while 76 percent of men were without work. From the focus groups, women in rural areas had lower levels of education and were less likely to be formally employed. However, they also appeared more likely to be economically active than women in urban areas. Women in urban areas seeking to enter the work force had a significantly higher level of unemployment than men.
- Fifty-five percent of beneficiaries reported they earned no income prior to the course, including 15 men and 43 women. Among the unemployed cohort, 18 men (47 percent of the unemployed) reported they earned between USD 25 and USD200 a month through casual or informal labour. Men, therefore, were more likely to earn some form of income even if unemployed.
- Most of the women were not seeking to enter the labour force. Some reported in the focus groups that they were economically active from the household, but earning small amounts of income only. Estimating the economic value of these activities (support to the household, agriculture and others) would require a different kind of survey.
- Among the employed, the only woman reporting an income earned US120 a month. Men reported earning between 100 and 300 a month, with five men earning USD 200 a month.

- Men entering the vocations of welding, generator repair and IT reported the highest levels of income.

## Conclusions

The project met its target of focusing on unemployed beneficiaries. The majority of the beneficiaries were unemployed (65 percent). Of those with employment, most had temporary or casual labouring positions. This situation also applied to persons who described themselves as unemployed, but were able to earn some income from casual employment or activity in the informal sector. The unifying characteristic between the two groups is that few if any of the beneficiaries had stable employment or income prior to the courses.

The project met its target of focusing on low income beneficiaries. The majority of beneficiaries (61 percent) earned below the USD 2.5 a day identified as poverty level in Iraq.<sup>64</sup> No beneficiary reported an income of over USD 300 a month, which is still low relative to the cost of living for an extended family. Note that the data does not give a complete picture of the situation in extended families, which will have multiple sources of income and access to Government provided safety nets.

Data on income levels was not fully reliable. In particular, informants' under-reported income received through the Public Distribution System, which can account for up to 50 percent of low income household purchasing power for basic food commodities. Access to the subsidy should not change the eligibility of beneficiaries. The PDS has been an important mechanism for poverty reduction and food security in Iraq. However, it is part of the social safety net and does not promote income self-sufficiency.

Gender was the defining economic characteristic within the cohort. The project design focused on IDPs, with special consideration given to the situation of female IDPs. However, gender appears to have been the defining economic characteristic of the beneficiary cohort. In general terms, female beneficiaries entered the programme with less education and economic opportunity than their male counterparts. There were important differences between the situation in urban and rural areas:

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<sup>64</sup> The evaluation used the poverty level cited in *Confronting Poverty in Iraq* (2011: 38), which represents the most recent data. The rate is set at approximately ID 80,000 or USD 70 a month, at the September 2011 rate of exchange. The report concluded that income poverty was most closely related to employment, although 21 percent of household income was estimated to come from Government programmes. Households earning below USD 2.5 a day, therefore, were considered to be poor.

- World Bank data indicates that 87 percent of Iraqi women are not involved in the formal economy (Gol and WB 2010: 39). The official unemployment rate for women seeking to enter the economy is 32 percent (UNDP 2011: 12).
- Almost no female beneficiaries from rural areas were seeking to enter the workforce, and were primarily engaged in household activities. From the focus group discussion, these women had limited freedom of movement outside of the household.
- Most rural female beneficiaries appeared economically active in some form, such as agriculture. These activities were wage-based, but did generate value for the family.
- The majority of women in urban areas appeared to be looking for employment outside of the home, while a minority intended to remain in the household.
- In the focus groups, women reported there were fewer culturally acceptable vocations for them to enter, in addition to higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts.
- In general, male beneficiaries showed lower levels of unemployment and higher incomes prior to taking the course, including better access to casual or informal employment.
- Notwithstanding gender-based comparisons, male beneficiaries also showed a high level of unemployment, with dependence on casual labour, the informal sector.

**Table 10: Expected Income after the Course**

		Expected Monthly Income								Grand Total
		0	50	120	150	170	200	250	NA	
Gender	Course Name									
F	Appliance								1	1
	IT	3					1		4	8
	Mar	2							3	5
	Sewing		1	1		1	1		29	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>47</b>
M	Electrician							1	1	2
	Generator				2		1		10	13
	IT				1				8	9
	Mar								1	1
	Pipefitter				1				3	4
	Welding	1			2	2	8	1	7	21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>97</b>	

### Observations on Table 10 Data

The participants were asked to describe what they had expected to earn after completing the course. The question related to expectations prior to the course. The data did not indicate beneficiaries had significant income expectations after the course. The majority of participants (70 percent) did not respond to the question. In general, beneficiaries were reluctant to reveal their income. The lack of response is consistent with beneficiary reluctance to discuss income in other areas of the survey.

Men were twice as likely to answer the question as women. Women also had lower income expectations. The finding would have been influenced by the large number of female beneficiaries from rural areas in the cohort.

Among the 10 female respondents, five did not expect to earn an income (working in the household for the family) and the other five expected to earn between USD 50 and 200 a month.

Among the 20 male respondents, 30 percent said they did not expect to earn an income. From the focus groups, the response appeared to reflect pessimism over finding stable employment, or achieving an increase in income.

The remaining 70 percent of male respondents expected to earn between USD 150 and USD 250 a month. Male beneficiaries, therefore, had higher income expectations than their female counterparts.

**Table 11: Perception of Situation after the Training**

			Increase in income				
			IN	S	W	Total	
Genre	Course name	Current					
F	Appliance	Shatrah	1			1	
	IT	Nasariyah	1	4	1	6	
		Shatrah			2	2	
	Mar	Nasariyah		4	1	5	
	Sewing	Chibayish		14	6		20
		Nasariyah		6	1		7
		Shatrah		6			6
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>		
M	Electrician	Shatrah	1	1		2	
	Generator	Nasariyah	2	11		13	
	IT	Shatrah	2	7		9	
	Mar	Nasariyah	1			1	
	Pipefitter	Nasariyah	1	3		4	
	Welding	Nasariyah	6	15		21	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>41</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>97</b>	

## Observations on Table 11 Data

Beneficiaries were asked if they believed their situation was better after the course. The written question focused on an increase in beneficiary incomes. However, from the focus group many beneficiaries interpreted the question as referring to their overall situation, including an income but also considering other factors, such as increased opportunity.

Overall, 42 percent of beneficiaries said their situation has improved (41 respondents), 56 percent said their situation was the same (55 beneficiaries) and two said their situation was the same (2 percent). All survey participants responded to the question.

### Among the male beneficiaries:

- 26 percent said their situation had improved (13 respondents)
- 74 percent said their situation was the same (37 respondents)
- Men from the welding courses were most likely to respond positively

### Among the female beneficiaries:

- 60 percent said their situation had improved
- 36 percent believed their situation was the same
- Four percent said their situation was worse

- Women from the sewing courses were most likely to perceive an improvement in their situation, with 78 percent responding positively
- Women from the other vocational areas were less likely to respond that their situation had improved (28 percent), while most believed their situation remained the same (71 percent). These figures are the same as male respondents.

## **Conclusions**

Forty-two percent beneficiaries believed their situation had improved as a result of taking the course. The perception was based on an actual increase in income, and/or the belief that their opportunity for a job or income had also increase. From the focus groups, some beneficiaries considered their situation had improved with new skills and the income they received as a stipend, which was equivalent to a casual labourer's wage.

The perception of improvement was most strongly held by women, in rural areas who took the sewing course. Their strong numbers had the effect of increasing the overall percentage. When discounting women from the sewing courses, approximately 26 to 28 percent of beneficiaries responded that their situation had improved. Approximately 70 percent responded that their situation remained the same, with only two percent overall reporting a decline in their situation.

The majority of beneficiaries responded that their situation remained the same. They did not report increased income or opportunity, although the focus groups showed an increased level of self-confidence and optimism. Only two percent reported deterioration in their situation.

**Table 12: Change in Beneficiary Employment Situation**

		Employment found				Creation of own business			
		Y	N	NA	Grand Total	Y	N	NA	Grand Total
Gender	Course name								
F	Appliance		1		1			1	1
	IT	1	7		8	1		7	8
	Mar		5		5			5	5
	Sewing	16	16	1	33	30	1	2	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>47</b>
M	Electrician	1	1		2		1	1	2
	Generator	1	12		13	3		10	13
	IT	2	7		9			9	9
	Mar		1		1	1			1
	Pipefitter		4		4	2		2	4
	Welding	2	19		21	6		15	21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>44</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>97</b>

### Observations on Table 12 Data

Beneficiaries were asked whether they found employment after the course, or if they created a new business. Overall, 23 beneficiaries responded that they found employment after the course, or 24 percent. From the focus groups, employment was broadly interpreted as an income earning opportunity, and not necessarily a permanent position.

From the data:

- There is a variable in the data related to interpretation. Sixteen of the 23 beneficiaries that responded positively were graduates of the sewing courses, who reported they had new income earning opportunities. Also, at least four of the beneficiaries returned to their previous employment, and did not report this.
- Discounting for sewing, only seven beneficiaries found employment after the course, or six percent. Of these only one beneficiary was woman.
- Seventy-four percent of beneficiaries reported they did not find employment. As noted elsewhere, this number includes four persons who reported they returned to their previous employment and a number of beneficiaries that continued as casual labourers, through previous contacts.

Overall, 43 beneficiaries reported that they had established their own business. The data is not fully reliable, and requires consideration of the variables:

- The evaluation is not aware of a single instance where a beneficiary established a legally registered small business. Most beneficiaries did not have the resources to establish a register a company. Corruption, the lack of financing, lack of business experience and heavy administration requirements were all disincentives.
- Of the 33 graduate of the sewing course that reported they had set up a business, the focus groups identified only one actual start-up business. Up to five women in Nasariyah established a tailoring business, with financing from a family source. The rest of the women reported earning small amounts of income from doing work for neighbours, but they had not established a business. Also, there was double counting between the women that reported they found employment and those reporting they had set up a business. In both cases, beneficiaries were describing new income opportunities.
- Twelve male and one female beneficiary reported being self-employed and/or starting a business, when the sewing graduates are discounted.
- Fifty two beneficiaries did not respond to the question on opening their own business. From the focus groups none of these persons had opened a business.

## **Conclusions**

The largest group reporting income new earning opportunities were graduates of the sewing course. However, only five of the 33 graduates created a small business, which occurred in an urban area with financing from family members. None of the sewing graduates found actual employment. Rather, in the focus groups they reported earning income sewing within their immediate communities, and saving money for the family through making and repairing cloths. Only six of the beneficiaries reporting finding new employment and 12 beneficiaries had created businesses. “Business” in this context referred to be self-employed, sometimes including partners. There was no instance where a registered business was created. From the focus groups, some beneficiaries reported returning to their previous employment. Eighteen beneficiaries, or 19 percent, therefore, reported finding employment or becoming self-employed. Accounting for graduates of the sewing courses, 52 percent of beneficiaries, or 51 persons, reported having employment, self-employment or new income opportunities. Women outside of the sewing course were the least likely to find employment or self-employment, with only two beneficiaries reporting opportunities.

Table 13; Youth Employment and Income

	Age	Employment Found			Self Employment				Income Increase				HH Needs		
		N	Y	Total	N	NA	Y	Total	IN	S	W	Total	N	Y	Total
F	18	1	1	2			2	2	1	1		2	1	1	2
	19	1	1	2		1	1	2	1	1		2	1	1	2
	20	1	1	2		1	1	2	1	1		2	1	1	2
	21	1		1			1	1		1		1	1		1
	22		1	1		1		1	1			1		1	1
	23	2	1	3		1	2	3	1	2		3	1	2	3
	24		2	2			2	2	2			2		2	2
	25	4		4		3	1	4	1	2	1	4	1	3	4
	26	1	1	2		2		2		1	1	2	1	1	2
	27	3	2	5	1	1	3	5	4	1		5		5	5
	29		2	2			2	2	2			2		2	2
	30	1	1	2		1	1	2	2			2		2	2
	31	1		1			1	1		1		1	1		1
	32	1		1			1	1	1			1		1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>
M	16	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	1
	18	1		1		1		1		1		1	1		1
	19	2		2			2	2	1	1		2	1	1	2
	20	1	1	2		1	1	2	1	1		2	1	1	2
	21	5	1	6		4	2	6	2	4		6	1	5	6
	22	5		5		1	4	5	2	3		5	3	2	5
	23	6	1	7		7		7	1	6		7	5	2	7
	24	2	1	3		3		3	1	2		3	2	1	3
	25	3		3		3		3		3		3	3		3
	26	6		6		5	1	6	2	4		6	4	2	6
	27	4		4		3	1	4		4		4	3	1	4
	29	2	1	3		3		3	1	2		3	2	1	3
	30	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	1
	32	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>75</b>

**Table 14: Change in Household Situation**

		Food	Education	Health	Other Assistance				
		B			S	W			
		B			S	S	W		
		B		S	S	S	W		
		B	S	S	S	S	W	Total	Grand Total
HH Needs	Housing								
N	S					39		39	42
	W						3	3	
Y	B	2	6	5	4	3		20	55
	S		1	2	4	28		35	
Grand Total		2	7	7	8	70	3	97	97

**Observations on Table 14 Data**

Fifty-five percent of beneficiaries said that they were better able to meet household needs as a result of the course. The data reflects two factors:

- 57 percent of beneficiaries stated they had some form of new income opportunity as a result of the course. Thirty nine said the situation is the same and three responded their situation is worse.
- Most women from the sewing course perceived they had acquired an important household asset that was of value to their families.
- The stipend received for attending the course was considered an important, although temporary income for beneficiaries.
- Housing and food were the areas that showed an immediate improvement, with a modest increase in income from the course or employment.
- The areas of education and health showed much lower gains, and would require longer term investments.

**Table 15: Beneficiary Perceptions of Obstacles to Finding Employment**

		Difficulties									Grand Total
		Corruption	Financing	Financing to start business	NA	No Opp	No Opp with Gov	No Tools	Start up	Transport	
Gender	Course Name										
F	Appliance					1					1
	IT					8					8
	Mar					5					5
	Sewing		1	1	7	20	1		1	1	33
	Total		1	1	7	34	1		1	1	47
M	Electrician					2					2
	Generator	1				11		1			13
	IT				1	8					9
	Mar					1					1
	Pipefitter					2			2		4
	Welding	1			3	15			2		21
	Total	2			4	39		1	4		50
Grand Total	2	1	1	11	73	1	1	1	5	1	97

### Observations on Table 15 Data

Seventy four percent of beneficiaries stated the most important constraint to finding employment was the lack of opportunity. The reason was cited equally by men and women. The lack of financing and tool kits (business start up), transport costs to work sites, corruption and *Wasta* (lack of personal connections and the patronage of someone within a company or government agency) were other reasons cited.

The focus group discussion placed much more emphasis a combination of factors:

- Beneficiaries generally did not have the financing, connections or knowledge required to establish them self in a small business. Creating a formally registered business was beyond the vision of the large majority of beneficiaries. There appeared to a reluctance to engage the state, before even consideration of challenges navigating the registration process
- The reason for lack of opportunities related to both the absolute scarcity of jobs in Thi Qar’s small private sector, and the lack of personnel, family or tribal connections into companies. Employment in both companies and Government depended on such connections. IDPs appeared particularly disadvantaged in this regard, as they were new to the area. Some beneficiaries notes that, given past violence and lingering suspicions,

small companies were unlikely to hire strangers without some form of connection.

- Positions in Government were highly regarded by beneficiaries. However, access to positions depended on both personnel connections and the payment of bribes. Several beneficiaries noted that the bribe required hired, should a position exist, could be up to six months of salary at hiring. No beneficiaries had this kind of resource.

## Conclusions

The lack of opportunity was the primary obstacle to finding employment. However, “opportunity” has several dimensions that created significant non-skill and non-market barriers to employment:

- To create small business, beneficiaries generally perceived they lacked the business knowledge and financing.
- To find employment in the private sector, the existence of a position needed to be accompanied by “*Wasta*” (personal or family contacts with the company) in order for it to become an “opportunity”.
- To find employment in the public sector, the existence of a position needed to be accompanied by “*Wasta*” and a bribe in order for it to become an “opportunity”.

Corruption and lack of personal connections, therefore, were important impediments to finding employment, even in contexts where jobs may have existed.

**Table 16: Perceptions of Why Training May Not Lead to Employment**

		Skill not Relevant											Grand Total
		a	ab	abc	abd	ac	acd	ad	b	bd	d	NA	Grand Total
Gender	Course Name												
F	Appliance							1					1
	IT		1	1	4			2					8
	Mar	2						3					5
	Sewing	11	11					6			3	2	33
	Total	13	12	1	4			12			3	2	47
M	Electrician				2								2
	Generator				4		1	8					13
	IT		1		7							1	9
	Mar							1					1
	Pipefitter	1			1					1	1		4
	Welding	4			4	1		10	1		1		21
	Total	5	1		18	1	1	19	1	1	2	1	50
Grand Total	18	13	1	22	1	1	31	1	1	5	3	97	

### Observations on Table 16 Data

Beneficiaries were asked if they believe the skills learned during the training will NOT lead to employment or self-employment soon, and to explain me not. The key was:

- a = <There are no jobs or self employment opportunities for the skills that you learned>
- b = <You need more training to be qualified for the employment that is available>
- c = <The quality of your training is not good enough>
- d = <You do not have tools or support or money to start your own business>
- e = <Other reasons>

Seventy eight percent of beneficiaries indicated there were not jobs available in their chosen fields. The absence of opportunity was combined with multiple secondary factors: a). More training and qualifications were required; meaning that majority of the beneficiaries believed additional training would increase their opportunity. b).Tools and financing were required in order to start businesses or be self employed. Some beneficiaries also noted that tradespersons were often required to bring their own tools to worksites. c). No beneficiary stated that the quality of training was poor, and contributed to them not finding a job.



**Table 17: Perceptions of Sewing Course Beneficiaries**

			Better HH			Opportunity			SM Relevant			
			N	NA	Y	Grand Total	N	Y	Grand Total	N	Y	Grand Total
Course Name	Improve Situation	Improve Income										
Sewing	Y	N	1		1	2	2		2		2	
		Y	4	1	26	31	3	28	31	1	30	31
		Total	5	1	27	33	5	28	33	1	32	33
	Total		5	1	27	33	5	28	33	1	32	33
Grand Total			5	1	27	33	5	28	33	1	32	33

## Observations on Table 17 Data

The situation of women taking the sewing course was unique. Beneficiaries were generally not expected to enter the job market, and were secondary income earners. In this regard, the sewing course was a short term intervention that had limited possibility to improve the overall situation of women. In particular, the course worked only with a culturally acceptable vocational area, and did not attempt to expand their options. However, the skills and equipment had the potential to expand their economic activity in the household, and the community.

- Twenty seven of 33 sewing course beneficiaries responded that their overall situation had improved, or 82 percent. From the focus groups, the response was based on perception as much as material improvements. For example, some women spoke about the opportunity to leave the household and socialise with other women. Only five women said their situation had not improved.
- Twenty six responded that their income increased, or 79 percent. The focus groups noted these increases tended to be small (under USD 50 a month). Regardless, women appeared better able to contribute to the household.
- Twenty eight responded that they had increased opportunity to be economically active, or 85 percent.
- Thirty responded that the skills and equipment were relevant to their situation.

# Annex C: Question and Response for the Trainer's Focus Groups

## Observations on the Trainer's Questionnaire Response

For the purpose of this report, Questions 2 and Question 3 were discounted. Responses indicate there was a general awareness on the part of all trainers that IDP may have special needs. However:

- The curriculum for the training did not include any specific instruction related to working with IDPs.
- The delivery of the courses did not any specific provision for IDPs, related to instruction or sensitisation.
- The majority of Trainers stated they were advised to show sensitivity to IDPs. However, they concluded that IDPs did not require or want special attention or recognition.

These points were noted as a finding. However, Question 2 and Question 3 were discounted from the questionnaire summary.

## Question and Response

All instructors were asked the following questions

1. ***What were your expectations of the training course that you took? In which areas were your expectations met? In which areas were your expectations not met?***
  - All respondents indicated their expectation was to improve their professional skills and/or instruction skills. Twelve of the 13 respondents stated that their expectations had been met.
2. ***Are there any important differences between working with Internally Displaced Persons over other student groups? What are these differences?***
  - See Observations
3. ***Did the training adequately prepare you to work with Internally Displaced Persons? In particular, did it give you a good methodology for working with the students?***
  - See Observations

**4. *Was the training of good quality, delivered by qualified professionals using good quality materials and facilities, and covering the most important vocational skill areas?***

- Twelve of the 13 respondents indicated that the instruction in Amman was of high quality, with some adding that the instruction was to good international standards.
- One respondent stated that the instructors were not to a high standard (the respondent's specific area was mobile phone repair).
- The majority of respondents stated that the quality of the curriculum, materials and facilities were of good. No respondent expressed a concern about curriculum, materials or facilities.
- Several respondents noted that changes were made to the courses in response to the Trainers' requests for additional information and instruction (one course was extended by 10 days).
- A minority of respondents stated that the course was too short, and requested additional days.

**5. *Did the training improve your level of professional skill and knowledge? In what ways?***

- Twelve of 13 Trainers stated that the course increased their professional knowledge and skill. The majority described substantial improvements, including introduction to new vocational skill areas.
- Only one Trainer stated that his level of professional qualification was not increased.
- The majority of Trainers described an improvement in their instruction skills also resulting from the courses.

**6. *What do you believe are the accomplishments of the training for the beneficiaries?***

- The question was intended to identify the specific benefits to the course students, from the perspective of Trainers.
- All Trainers stated that were accomplishments for the beneficiaries from taking the course being offer by the VTCs, and under their instruction.
- All Trainers stated the primary benefit of the training was new skills that would open opportunity for them in the job market.
- Most Trainers' observed secondary benefits, in addition to skill and opportunity. The most important of these was an enhanced sense of self confidence about their skills and possibilities.

**7. Do you believe that the training will result in the beneficiaries having more employment and income generating opportunities? Why or why not?**

- From interviews, the Trainers generally perceived the beneficiaries were serious about their studies, diligent and conscientious in their attendance and participation, and showing the will to learn.
- Trainers also generally perceived that the selection of the beneficiaries was appropriate, and that the beneficiaries were both deserving and qualified in their respective areas. No Trainer raised a general concern in this regard.
- All Trainers perceived that the courses could lead to some form of employment or income opportunity.
- The majority of Trainers stated they believed that the courses were relevant to the market, and that the curriculum was appropriate. No Trainer stated that the overall course offering, or specific courses, were irrelevant to market conditions.
- Trainers in new vocational areas (phone repair, parquetry, generator repair, boat motor repair) perceived that there were employment or income opportunities in these areas, and that the decision to train in them was correct.
- No Trainers stated the choice of courses was inappropriate, that the curriculum was deficient or that they perceived other problems with choice, design or facilities that would undermine participant opportunities.

**8. Were there obstacles to delivering better training? What were the obstacles?**

- The primary obstacle to course effectiveness was lack of sufficient time. The majority of Trainers believed that the time was insufficient to cover more than basics. This was particularly the case for vocations such as welding, where theory must be supported with significant practice time under supervision.
- Trainers from the new Chibayish facility expressed concern that some facilities were outdoors, and the instruction was difficult with temperatures and dust. Some Trainers from Chibayish also noted that there was insufficient materials and equipment, and that beneficiaries had to share.<sup>65</sup>

**9. How would you improve the project?**

- All Trainers proposed extending the duration of the courses.

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<sup>65</sup> These concerns did not relate the sewing courses.

### Summary of Trainer Responses

	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Quality of training</b>	<b>Improved Skills</b>	<b>Accomplishments for Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Training will lead to Employment</b>	<b>Obstacles to training</b>	<b>Improvement proposed</b>
<b>Instructor 1</b>	Learn new skill and instruction techniques. Expectations met.	High quality instruction and curriculum . Good equipment and good participant selection.	Clear improvement in skills	Will create opportunities in the oil sector	Yes	More time needed	Extend course to 3 months
<b>Instructor 2</b>	Learn new professional and instruction skills. Expectations met.	High quality international instruction with good curriculum	Yes. Will teach with more confidence	Beneficiaries have new skill and confidence	Yes, mobile phone repair is a strong and growing sector.	No obstacles. Good equipment.	Extend the time for training.
<b>Instructor 3</b>	Improve performance as an instructor. Expectations met.	Good quality instruction , curriculum and materials.	New skill learned and now being taught.	Beneficiaries have new skill and confidence that will improve their standard of living	Yes	No obstacles.	Extend the time for training.
<b>Instructor 4</b>	Learn new skill and instruction techniques.	Yes, high quality instruction	Yes, learned new skills	Opening new possibilities in a competitive job	Yes	No	Extend the course a week or two

	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Quality of training</b>	<b>Improved Skills</b>	<b>Accomplishments for Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Training will lead to Employment</b>	<b>Obstacles to training</b>	<b>Improvement proposed</b>
		and materials	and increased confidence	market			
<b>Instructor 5</b>	Improve professional and teaching skills	Yes, high quality instruction and materials	New subject area, gained skills and confidence	New skills and job possibilities, as the oil sector is expanding.	Yes, in the expanding oil sector	Course too short	Extend the course
<b>Instructor 6</b>	Poor quality and expectations not met	Training not to a good standard. Too short. Facilities good	Yes, although knew most of subject areas	Yes, in phone repair	Yes, opening phone repair stores	No obstacles to learning	Not enough time
<b>Instructor 7</b>	Learn new skill and instruction techniques. All expectations met.	High quality training, good international instructors, good personal attention.	Improved professional ability and instruction skills	Expanded skill and opportunity	Yes, carpentry skills are in demand in Iraq	No obstacles	No recommendations
<b>Instructor 8</b>	Excellent instruction, practical	Good professional quality.	Improved professional skills	Good job opportunities in welding	Yes, expected graduates to	Course too short to gain	Extend the course to a level where

	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Quality of training</b>	<b>Improved Skills</b>	<b>Accomplishments for Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Training will lead to Employment</b>	<b>Obstacles to training</b>	<b>Improvement proposed</b>
	orientation, expectations met.		and given certification		find employment	sufficient welding expertise	graduates can be certified
<b>Instructor 9</b>	Satisfied with the course. Programme of good quality and well arranged.	Good quality training and materials	Improved professional skills and teaching ability	Learning a new skill (sewing) that will help family and earn some income.	Yes, can sew for their families and neighbours. Work from home and not a shop.	No obstacles, workshop well equipped.	Course at the elementary level.
<b>Instructor 10</b>	Very satisfied with training. Organisation and quality of instruction good.	Good quality lectures and efficient instruction.	New subject area. Improved subject knowledge and training skills.	Have new skills in an area (generators) where there is demand for workers.	Yes, there are opportunities	No. Course can be expanded to work with big generators.	Expand course to include large generators.
<b>Instructor 11</b>	Good course and learned necessary skills.	High professional standard in teaching. Good materials.	Yes, learned new skills.	Should provide skills and confidence	Yes, there are jobs and the skills learned are relevant.	Outside workshop in Chibayish difficult. Not enough materials for the students,	Better workshop in Chibayish. Course requires more time and should be extended.

	Expectations	Quality of training	Improved Skills	Accomplishments for Beneficiaries	Training will lead to Employment	Obstacles to training	Improvement proposed
						so they have to share.	
<b>Instructor 12</b>	Learn new skills. Expectations met.	High quality instruction , materials, curriculum and facilities.	Yes, improved instruction skills and new knowledge	There is a market for small motor repair in Chibayish	Yes, have a good chance of finding employment	Training new and Chibayish workshop still not in good condition . Needs improvement to building.	New building and instruction equipment. But facilities ok for a start.
<b>Instructor 13</b>	To improve skills and work at a higher level. Expectation met.	Instructor was excellent at his job. Good facilities and materials.	Better skilled with welding and instruction.	New skills will open opportunities, and welding market is growing.	Yes, there are jobs available for welders and course gave basic skills.	No obstacles. Facilities and equipment good.	Extend the course to at least three months.

# **Annex D: Notes from the Field Mission Debriefing Meeting in Erbil**

## **Notes from the Field Survey Debriefing in Erbil, 22 to 25 August 2011**

### **Observations on the Survey Methodology and Factor that Influenced the Responses**

1. There was a bias in the sample against beneficiaries that found employment. There were 120 beneficiaries were invited to participate in the questionnaire. They were required to attend a focus group meeting at the Nasariyah VTC. Approximately 20 beneficiaries responded they were working and could not attend. The team had no further information on the employment situation of these persons, or whether their employment could be attributed to the UNIDO training. Only that they were employed.
2. The sample, therefore, has an inbuilt bias. It was based on beneficiaries that could attend a meeting during working hours, some of who had employment, and discounted approximately 20 percent of the original invitation list that was unable to attend. The team noted the bias in its findings, but did not have the resources to follow up with individuals.
3. The team did not have full control of identifying the sample. The original sample was chosen by the team, based on the principle of representation (balanced selection based on gender, course and location) and randomness (random selection of individuals). Names were provided to Nasariyah personnel, who were contracted to contact the beneficiaries with an invitation to participate. However, the VTC personnel may not have been completely faithful to original list, and invited other persons. The team was advised that some changes were made for practical purposes; inviting beneficiaries that lived in easy travel distance. The team does have any evidence on how changes may have affected the results.
4. The sample questions did not captured the complexity of problems being faced by beneficiaries trying to enter the job market, in addition to high levels of unemployment. These issues emerged in the focus group discussions, and appeared to affect both IDP and non-IDP beneficiaries:

- Employment is often acquired through connections and “Wasta” (patronage and corruption). Some beneficiaries stated they did not have the necessary personnel connections. IDPs appeared particularly disadvantaged in this regard, as they were not as well established in a location. Without “Wasta”, one beneficiary stated “*I only have God*”;
  - Some beneficiaries stated they could not pay the bribes that are often demanded to secure positions (usually for the public service or state enterprises). The bribe can be from two to four months of salary. Beneficiaries did not have the cash reserves to make such a payment, personally or in extended family networks;
  - Some beneficiaries were hoping to find “Wasta” through the course (a patron or person with a connection to help them find work). However, the course did not provide any follow employment support, or other mechanism to link training to a livelihood; and
  - Poor persons had limited access to tools or start up capital. Training did not resolve these problems, although it might have made persons more qualified. Also, most beneficiaries did not have the skills to start and manage a small business, and often continued to sell their labour in the informal market. Training, therefore, did not provide the skills and capital they needed to move into a business opportunities or a more formal employment situation.
5. Beneficiaries did not have access to financial assistance to start new business ventures or buy tools. Beneficiaries identified the lack of support as an important obstacle to finding employment. The project did not include a micro-grant component, provided a limited number of tool kits and did not offer any further form of support. No support was available from the VTC, linking the training to the job market. VTC officials noted that education institutions usually do not provide such support, or link their programmes to the market. There is a cultural pre-disposition not to take interest-based loans.
6. There were examples of beneficiaries that had ideas, aspirations, initiative and ability, but no start-up capital. There are programmes in the Government that can provide, but there are no links between the training and access to such programmes. Also, high levels of corruption in the local government means that state-based assistance programmes are/or would likely be ineffective.

7. Some respondents counted money received from the course *Per Diem* as income. Included *Per Diem* may have inflated their income earned from actual employment, and beneficiary income status. It is also a further indication of vulnerability and lack of predictable income, that the *Per Diem* would be important to family income. The USD 200 per diem was equivalent to one month of salary for a labourer, and was considered a good wage. It appeared that many of the beneficiaries would not have been able to afford to attend without the support.
8. There is a strong cultural bias in favour of working in the public sector. From the focus groups discussions, many of the beneficiaries hoped to find employment in the public sector, or with a state owned enterprise. The public sector was viewed a source of security. The bias reflects Iraq's long standing centralisation, and the State's dominant role in the economy. It is only in most recent *Iraq National Development Plan (2011 to 2014)* that the transition from state to private sector and accompanying economic reforms are articulated. The bias works against the UNIDO training programme's orientation towards strengthening the private sector.
9. The response "No Income" often refers to *no predictable income*. From the focus groups, many male beneficiaries were taking informal or part time/short term employment (day labour) before the course, and continued afterwards. Beneficiaries were also living in extended families, and within social welfare systems. These sources of income were usually not mentioned. The questionnaire, therefore, did not capture the full range of economic activities and coping mechanisms.
10. The movement of IDPs is complex, and not always captured within the programme analysis. IDPs returning from Chibayish were usually persons, or members of families, that had been displaced from the Marsh region during the conflicts of the 1990s. Many of these persons were effectively returning "home" after a long period of absence, and had the same cultural and religious characteristics of the majority population. This statement is made noting that their return was not voluntary, and they were moving from areas of the country that showed better human development indicators. That being said, they appeared less likely to suffer from the security and discrimination problems that affected other IDPs.
11. There was a strong incentive not to mention other assistance from the Government. No beneficiary stated that they were receiving assistance

from government before or after the training. The answer was not accurate. Most of the beneficiaries would receive a food subsidy, and other form of support from the state. Some indicated this was the case, during the focus groups. However, acknowledging receipt of one form might mean disqualification from getting another of another.

12. The survey may not have captured fully the number of people that returned to their old jobs. A small number of persons reported during the survey that they had returned to their old position. Several additional persons made this statement during the focus group. Reference to former employment may have included temporary (day labour) employment, which was not related to skills acquired during the training
13. The training does not provide a certificate, or formal certification. The lack of certification, regardless of the level, means that beneficiaries have difficulty demonstrating that they completed the training, and the quality of the skills acquired.
14. Beneficiary perception of their situation is affected by events in the extended family. A significant majority of beneficiary live in extended family situations. They are both recipients as well as provides of support into the family situation. From the focus group, beneficiary responses to questions on improvements to their well-being were affected by the overall situation of the family, and not by improvements to their individual or immediate family situation.

### **Notes on the Focus Group Discussions with Beneficiaries**

#### **Beneficiaries were satisfied with all courses:**

- Beneficiaries showed strong satisfaction with the relevance of the course, and content and syllabus, the quality of the instruction and the quality of the facilities. This statement is true across all courses and locations.
- The exception to the latter is Chibayish, where there was some concern expressed about the quality of welding faculties (outdoors given the need for good ventilation, but very hot learning conditions as a result).
- Beneficiaries demonstrated a high degree of trust in the course trainers. Genuine respect and satisfaction with the experience comes through in the discussion. No complaints about the trainers. Satisfaction most strongly expressed in Nasariyah.
- No complaints of corruption or favouritism in the courses, directed at either the instructors or training institutions

- No one stated the courses were irrelevant, or that there is no market for the skills they learned.

**The main concerns expressed by beneficiaries related to course duration:**

- Short duration of the course, and that an insufficient level of expertise was reached through the training. Beneficiaries wanted to learn more. The sentiment comes through in all courses.
- Economic incentive may have influenced satisfaction levels. The USD 200 was an important benefit in the extended families, and considered a source of income equivalent to a casual labourer's wage. The per diem was a good incentive and had a positive impact for families.
- However, beneficiaries generally demonstrated a genuine desire to learn, improve their lives, and appreciation for the course.
- The high level of satisfaction with the course was accompanied by high expectations training will improve their chances to find employment. The expectation extends even after six months of unemployment, when skills and the chance of employment will both be in decline.
- Many beneficiaries were looking for addition training through the centre, although most can't afford it given there is a cost associated and no subsidy.
- Beneficiaries also demonstrated a perception of improved wellbeing, even when in fact their situation had not improved when assessed as increased income, opportunity or access to basic goods and services.
- Beneficiaries expressed more hope because they have a skill, where they did not have a skill before. They also expressed a sense of self-confidence.
- Regardless, there was some pessimism about the general situation in the country, the lack of opportunity and the unfairness of corruption and reliance on personal connections. This creates a high degree of mistrust between individuals and society.

**The sewing course have been criticised in previous evaluations. The team noted that a gender-based assessment of the course options might identify new opportunities. However, the sewing course appeared to have a positive impact:**

- Some women stated the project helped end their isolation, with social interaction between women being a benefit noted by some.
- Every woman who took the sewing course was doing work for her family. At a minimum they are saving money.
- The machines and tailoring equipment were highly valued as a household asset.

- The equipment is sufficient for them to sew/tailor in the community, and earn small amounts of money. Contributions are considered to be of value, even if small.
- Many women hoping to enter the job market, after a lifetime “at home”. Some were trying to be more independent. Few are successful through the courses, given lack of opportunity.
- There was evidence through the focus groups that women are using the small amounts to improve their own position in the home, less dependent.
- The sewing women are asking for a large workshop, so they can do the tailoring, as are the Mar.

**The obstacles to finding employment stated in the focus groups included:**

- The general lack of opportunity in the Iraqi economy, in all skill areas.
- Shown in the fact that many beneficiaries already have good education, but were still coming back to look for training in new areas that might expand their options.
- Other structural problems (corruption and *Wasta*) in the work force, when looking for formal employment.
- Insufficient business background and financial resources to establish an SME. Also, the SME environment was seen as highly affected by corruption and violence. Note that SMEs were a specific target for violence during the most violent period.

**Some beneficiaries noted the absence of a linkage between the course and the market:**

- There is no mentoring or on the job training. This was identified in the original project document but not done for lack of resources.
- No job reference or search support, with beneficiaries not expanding networks or access to opportunities through references.
- No relationship with local enterprises was developed, where beneficiaries could receive on the job training.
- Limited tool kit access and long delay in distribution, even though the tools were held in stores (stated by VTC officials). As a result, some beneficiaries were not able to market skills immediately, but had to wait up to six months. Skills learned need to be practiced to remain valid, and deteriorated over this period.
- Distribution of tolls to only the top five percent of beneficiaries created resentment, as did the distribution delay.

- However, the biggest issue was appropriate support to enter the market. A formal job usually does not require tools kits, but it does require support for a job search or additional on-the-job training.
- Check the 6<sup>th</sup> SC meeting. Problems with the distribution of tool kits a significant issue of concern for the Government.
- A person working in the informal sector or perhaps a local SME needs appropriate support, depending on context. Otherwise, can be financial support, access to start up financing. None are in a system, and cultural disposition again paying interest. Social systems are not sufficient to provide start up capital.
- At this point, the solution is a government programme tied to the training, and perhaps access to UNIDO supported micro-credit. Can help establish workshop, sustained by profit and providing on the job training as a point of transition into the market.
- Beneficiaries appeared cut off too quickly from the training possibility with no access to start up opportunity.
- There was a commitment to on-the-job training for 100 students, getting support from UNIDO and the government. Required USD 15000 each for rehabilitation of business faculties. There was to be 15 benefiting SMEs. The Mol blocked the project, over concern for potential corruption/perception of favouritism for personal gain of business owners. The Nasariyah VTC mentioned this as a lost opportunity.

**The community project was well executed and of value to the community, but appeared irrelevant to project objectives:**

- The school project was well executed, met a defined need and was of value to the community.
- The field mission did not get support to visit the site and cannot confirm quality.
- However, Government considers the school of value, and documentation indicates of good quality, and per specification.
- The presence of a UNIDO funded facility lead government to invest further in school facilities. The UNIDO investment, therefore, had a multiplier effect in bringing in new state investment.
- There is no defined relationship between the school and the objective of the project, as there were no IDPs in the area.
- The school project was based on a set of assumptions about the IDP community that were not valid. While best practice in other contexts, there was no requirement to build confidence between IDPs and the community at this location.

- Project management was aware of the issue early in the process, but commitments had been made to Government that were difficult to reverse.
- Arguably, was money diverted from better uses such as for more tools kits
- Establish a stronger relationship between the training centre and local government and companies, to build opportunities.
- Local government and the trainees. Money shared between national and international sources, managed by the VTC, experience and better able to start a company.
- Not an emergency programme, but rather a transition to building the institutional capacity and linked to a more coherent employment and poverty reduction programme.
- Different time, different concept is required.

Additional notes on the Nasariyah Women's Centre. Cooperation between the VTC and the Centre will be ended, given VTC concerns about the quality of facilities at the NWC. The VTC also expressed concern that it did not control the standard of instruction, although the evaluation did not find evidence of substandard instruction. As a result, no further courses will be held at the NWC:

- Sewing machines were not maintained well and were not being well used.
- The NWC had a problem with unreliable electricity, which affected training. The NWC did not have money to buy petrol for their generator, or to otherwise operate the generator.
- The project SC decision to remove the computers to another location, to preserve the assets.
- Instruction for IT not at the same level of professional quality, although beneficiaries did not express dissatisfaction with the quality. Instruction for sewing appeared to be at a good level of quality.
- The area around the NWC is isolated, which affected access. The Instructors were rated well, although they were not trained to the same standard as others (did not go to the Amman courses, although university graduates).
- Formerly a women's association in Iraq. WC all through Iraq. A union of women. Belong to the MoW.
- No previous training experience in related vocational areas. Did not have appropriate staff, experience or facilities. Did not receive the same training as NTC, and trainers were not paid regularly.
- Paid beneficiaries USD 4 and not USD 8 a day. Resulted from a UNIDO decision, as beneficiaries did not have to travel as far. In Shattrah as well. Area is close and they don't have to pay money on transport.
- There is a problem with the original assessment that needs to be reviewed. Not the right place for training.

**Course Instructors appeared satisfied with their training, and were performing well. The instructors are an asset to the VTCs:**

- Instructors stated their expectations of the Amman training were met. Supported by documentation and evaluations done by the training agent in Amman.
- Instructors were concerned the Amman was too short, and the time for some courses should have been extended.
- Training was perceived as professional, and delivered by high quality international staff
- There were cases where curriculum was revised during the courses to meet the requests of the Instructors. There was one instance where extension was requested and granted. For generators, additional curriculum on control systems was brought in. Demonstrates flexibility to meet requirements.

**The selection of Instructors was transparent; merit based and brought in well qualified persons:**

- UNIDO did a video cam test, to ensure the neutrality of the process and de-politicise and eliminate the perception of favouritism. Potential security issue. The use of video created an implicit de-selection process, as persons self-selected themselves out if they were not qualified. There was no expression of favouritism on the part of VTC staff, or expression that inappropriate persons were selected or that the process was in some way compromised.
- High quality personnel, VTC responsible for the recruitment from the general staff. Has a reputation as a good training centre, with a good performance history. Chosen as the one of the best VTC in Iraq by the Ministry.
- Most instructors stated that the training has improved their skills. For most, the training received was in a new area of instruction. As a result, they had new or enhanced skill areas, relevant to the market and based on market assessment. The impact appeared to be expanded/more diverse capacity to the VTCs.
- The instructors believe there will be jobs for the beneficiaries, in the areas of instruction chosen. Statements made recognising the limited opportunities in the market.
- All want more time in the course. Too short to cover the syllabus and develop the skill. Ok with Theory, but not with the practice.

**VTC administration of the courses is good:**

- Good paper work on the students. Good documentation on the students, profiling, attendance and building a file.
- Attendance taken regularly (3x daily). There was good oversight on the syllabus to ensure that it is correctly delivered. Payment was given strictly based on the attendance records.
- Systems were strongest for NVTC and Chibayish, and less robust with the youth centre and the NWC.
- Good oversight on the procurement and quality of the materials that were brought in through UNIDO.
- Good oversight in purchase, to received materials and confirm it is the right/quality materials consistent with the BOQ.
- Cost checks and good storage facilities. Good maintenance of the materials that have been in use.
- Good inventory and storage of material, in class and in stores. Responsibility is shared broadly through the systems, to create incentives for all to take responsibility.
- All materials in good condition, including materials from the original UNIDO project implemented several years ago.
- NWC systems not as robust, not to the same specification. Evidence of poor storage NWC. However, this appeared to be the result of resource limitations at the NWC.
- Delays with approval and installation of infrastructure in the Government Centres. Relates to Government systems, between different levels of Government.
- Good quality works for UNIDO installed goods, with no concern with quality of works. Good use of materials, and good management. Some design concerns, as outside not inside and exposed to heat and dirt and in the open. No complaints on this issue.

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## Annex F: Relevance Matrix

Iraq National Development Strategy 2007-2010	UN Country Assistance Strategy 2007- 2010	UN Common Country Assessment 2009	National Development Plan, 2011-2014	UN Development Assistance Framework 2010- 2014
<p>Unemployment is a major problem in Iraq. Yet the dominant sector of the economy (oil) is capital intensive. Developing the agriculture, industry and tourism sectors which are labor intensive will help create jobs directly through farming, fishing and supply chains associated with hotels and transportation.</p>	<p>&gt;50% of the active population is unemployed or underemployed and &gt;55% may face difficulties in covering basic living costs.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Enhance local economy in most deprived areas</p> <p><b>Output:</b> Over 50% of the population is unemployed or underemployed and over 55% face difficulties in covering basic living</p>	<p>Lack of economic diversification and high unemployment/underemployment are contributors to poverty and vulnerability.</p> <p>Significant growth of the public sector results in a lack of competitiveness and incentive in the private sector, and insufficient levels of job creation. Women and youth are particularly vulnerable. Support to private sector development is essential to poverty reduction (pp 35-40).</p>	<p>The vision is to design a population policy aimed at achieving a balanced population growth rate that results in better human development and considers job market needs, thereby securing achievement of an optimal employment rate for the labor force.</p>	<p>UNDAF Priority 2: Inclusive, more equitable and sustainable economic growth.</p> <p>Economic diversification and increased productivity in all economic sectors Sustainable jobs and income generation especially among youth and women.</p>

Iraq National Development Strategy 2007-2010	UN Country Assistance Strategy 2007- 2010	UN Common Country Assessment 2009	National Development Plan, 2011-2014	UN Development Assistance Framework 2010- 2014
<p>This requires increasing the productivity and promoting small and medium size businesses.</p> <p>The government must support the development of the employment generating private sector through fiscal incentives, limited bureaucracy, and transparent and fair competition and reorganize the vocational education system to respond to labour market needs for skills and to encourage employment.</p>	<p><b>Output:</b> Local economic strategies and plans developed in line with national and provincial frameworks in most deprived geographical areas.</p> <p>Economic and social regeneration pilot projects implemented in most deprived areas</p>	<p>Lack of economic diversification and high unemployment/underemployment are contributors to poverty and vulnerability.</p> <p>Significant growth of the public sector results in a lack of competitiveness and incentive in the private sector, and insufficient levels of job creation. Women and youth are particularly vulnerable. Support to private sector development is essential to poverty reduction (pp 35-40).</p>	<p>The vision is to design a population policy aimed at achieving a balanced population growth rate that results in better human development and considers job market needs.</p> <p><b>Objective1:</b> Reduction of unemployment rates from 15 percent to 7 percent during plan years</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Increase in economic participation in general</p>	<p>Enhancing the role of the private sector in the national development process.</p>

# **Annex G: Terms of Reference**

## **Terms of Reference (16 May 2011)**

### **CALL FOR PROJECT EVALUATION SERVICES**

#### **Independent Final Evaluation of the UNIDO Project:**

#### **“DEVELOPMENT OF MICRO-INDUSTRIES FOR THE REINTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS”**

**Project number: TE/IRQ/08/004  
Period covered: 2008-2011**

#### **1. Introduction**

This call for tenders is aimed at the selection of a competent firm to conduct an in-depth final evaluation of UNIDO's project with the Government of Iraq implemented in Thi Qar (or Dhi Qar) Governorate, (project code 'TE/IRQ/08/004') and entitled "*Development of micro-industries for the reintegration of internally displaced persons*".

#### **2. Background**

Since year 1980, Iraq has been embroiled in a series of long-running geo-political disputes and conflicts that have significantly reversed her earlier human development gains, and caused enormous social, cultural and economic harm. Chief among these is the dislocation experienced by millions of Iraqis who have become refugees or internally displaced persons since the US-led invasion of Iraq in year 2003.

The Thi Qar (or Dhi Qar) governorate is among the worst affected, as it also suffered heavily from the draining of Marshland areas in the south west of the governorate during the 1980s. Thi-Qar performs poorly according to many humanitarian and developmental indicators. 32% of the population lives below

the national poverty line, with the Marshlands areas worst hit. Low education levels are a major problem among women: outside Nassriya district, over 37% of women aged ten years and over are illiterate and over 61% are without a primary education. Just 6% of rural women aged 15-64 years are economically active. The quality of electricity supply is generally very good, with the exception of Al Rifa'i district, where it is extremely poor. Water access is extremely poor outside Nassriya.



Source: Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit

### 3. Project information

In the above context, the development objective of the project launched in 2008 was “to increase income-generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi Qar Governorate by enhancing and diversifying their skills and promoting the development of micro and small-scale enterprises in the agriculture, manufacturing and service industries.” The project was a follow-up to an earlier phase (Promotion of cottage industries in rural and urban areas – FBIRQ04001) implemented jointly with FAO. The latter project was evaluated upon completion. Neither the preceding project nor the evaluation report is mentioned in the follow-up project’s documents. This is despite the fact that the evaluation was rather positive about phase I.

The project was launched in December 2008 for 2 years and subsequently extended to July 2011 with three core components:

1. Mobilization and organization of target communities
2. Capacity building and skills development / Promotion of Productive Investments

### 3. Sustainable livelihoods through job-creation and start-up capital

The expected outcomes and outputs of the project are the following:

1. Improved sources of income and employment for internally displaced populations in targeted communities:
  - 1.1. The target community has increased awareness of and interest in project activities.
  - 1.2. Confidence building between host communities and IDPs.
2. A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills to enable them to reduce their dependency on food aid and develop sustainable livelihoods.
  - 2.1. A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills.
3. Increased number of micro- and small-scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions.
  - 3.1. Increased number of micro- and small-scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions.

## 4. Budget information

Total Allotment: €1,401,870

Total Expenditure: €1,200,217

Donor: Italy

## 5. Evaluation Purpose

The evaluation will be conducted as a final evaluation with a focus on results and will thus be conducted as an assessment of the overall design and orientation of the project, a review of the project's implementation status and for identifying lessons that could be useful for the design and implementation of similar projects in Iraq and countries in special development situation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the:

1. Project relevance with regard to the priorities and policies of the Government of Iraq, the UNDG ITF and UNIDO;
2. Project effectiveness in terms of the outputs produced and outcomes achieved as compared to those planned;

3. Efficiency of implementation: quantity, quality, cost and timeliness of UNIDO and counterpart inputs and activities;
4. Prospects for development impact;
5. Long-term sustainability of the support mechanisms results and benefits;
6. Synergies, coordination and relations with partners, and with FAO in particular, in the context of the above mentioned earlier project phase that was jointly implemented.

## **6. Methodology and scope of Evaluation**

The evaluation will be carried out in keeping with agreed evaluation standards and requirements. More specifically it will fully respect the principles laid down in the “UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation” and Evaluation Policies of UNIDO.<sup>66</sup>

The evaluation will attempt to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, efficiency, achievements (outputs, prospects for achieving expected outcomes and impact) and sustainability of the project.

The evaluation will be carried out through analyses of various sources of information, including desk analysis, survey data, and interviews with counterparts, beneficiaries, partner agencies, donor representatives, programme managers and through the cross-validation of data. In view of the particular security aspects of this evaluation, particular attention will be given to the elaboration of a strategy for field surveys and elaboration of questionnaires. This will include the design of three surveys to be carried out by national evaluators:

- Visits to and surveys of the material/equipment investment and training centres rehabilitations/new constructions
- Survey among trainers on their qualifications and the scope, content, conditions and quality of training provided, as well as the skills imparted and used;
- Survey among trainees (quality and appropriateness of training and equipment received; conditions under which self employment/business creation took place; to what extent self employment/business creation has taken place and are successful; etc).

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<sup>66</sup> All documents available from the websites of the UN Evaluation Group: <http://www.uneval.org/>

## 7. Evaluation Issues

While maintaining independence, the evaluation will be carried out based on a participatory approach, which seeks the views and assessments of all parties. It will address the following issues:

### Project identification and formulation:

- The extent to which a participatory project identification process was applied in selecting problem areas and counterparts requiring technical cooperation support;
- The extent to which lessons from an earlier phase of the project jointly implemented with FAO were taken on board in the formulation process including lessons and recommendations in the latter's in-depth evaluation report;
- Relevance of the project to development priorities and needs;
- Clarity and realism of the project's development and immediate objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries and prospects for sustainability.

### Project ownership:

- The manner in which beneficiaries were selected, and the extent to which the project was formulated with the participation of the national counterpart and/or target beneficiaries;
- The counterparts have been appropriately involved and were participating in the identification of their critical problem areas and in the development of technical cooperation strategies and are actively supporting the implementation of the project approach

### Project coordination and management:

- The extent to which the national management and overall field coordination mechanisms of the project have been efficient and effective;
- An assessment of crisis context-specific measures devised and put in place by UNIDO and the project managers, and related recommendations and lessons;
- An assessment of implementation partnerships and advantages/disadvantages in working without FAO as compared to phase 1 of the project;

#### Efficiency of Implementation:

Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including: availability of funds as compared with budget for both the donor and national component; the quality and timeliness of input delivery by both UNIDO (expertise, training, equipment, methodologies, etc.) and the Government as compared to the work plan(s); managerial and work efficiency; implementation difficulties; adequacy of monitoring and reporting; the extent of national support and commitment and the quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by UNIDO. Also assessment of whether the project approach represented the best use of given resources for achieving the planned objectives.

#### Effectiveness and Project Results:

- Full and systematic assessment of outputs produced to date (quantity and quality as compared with work plan and progress towards achieving the immediate objectives);
- The relevance of the outputs produced and how the target beneficiaries use the outputs, with particular attention to gender aspects;
- The outcomes, which have occurred or which are likely to happen through utilization of outputs.

#### Prospects for achieving the expected impact and sustainability:

Prospects for achieving the desired outcomes and impact and prospects for sustaining the project's results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project, and identification of developmental changes (economic, environmental, social) that are likely to occur as a result of the intervention, and how far they are sustainable.

#### Recommendations for the next phase, or replication elsewhere (if applicable):

Based on the above analysis the mission will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any necessary further action by the Government and/or UNIDO and/or the UN or other donors to ensure sustainable development, including any need for additional assistance and activities of the project prior to its completion. The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest. Any proposal for further assistance should include precise specification of objectives and the major suggested outputs and inputs.

#### Main evaluation tasks:

The evaluation will encompass the following main tasks:

1. Desk study of available documents and definition of the evaluation methodology.

2. Initial briefing and interviews with UNIDO project staff and managers in Vienna.
3. Analytical review of the economic, political and security conditions in the region of intervention.
4. Organization of a two-day kick-off meeting in Amman.
5. Design and execution of a survey on the capabilities of the trainers.
6. Design and execution of a survey among trainees
7. On-site visits of the various project sites (vocational training centres; alternative training providers; project partners from the public and private sectors; workshops/micro-enterprises set up by individual beneficiaries and producer groups)
8. Organization of a meeting in Amman (or Iraq if security permits) where the evaluation team will present its raw results and preliminary findings.
9. Production of a first draft evaluation report.
10. Incorporation of comments into a second draft and resubmission.
11. Incorporation of comments into final draft.
12. Final debriefing and presentation of final report with UNIDO in Vienna.

## **8 Services required**

The evaluation team will have the following functions, competencies and skills:

- 1. Evaluation team leader with documented experience in:**
  - a. Designing and managing complex evaluations;
  - b. Leading multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams of evaluators;
  - c. Development projects in Arab speaking countries;
  - d. Development projects related to income generation for vulnerable groups;
  - e. Designing and supervising qualitative and quantitative field surveys;
  - f. Preparing evaluation reports in line with agreed UN and DAC standards;
  - g. Drafting reports in English (excellent drafting skills to be demonstrated).
- 2. Evaluators with documented experience in executing:**
  - a. Development projects for income creation of vulnerable groups;
  - b. Analysis of micro-enterprise industry activities as a means of creating employment and raising household incomes;
  - c. Evaluations in Arab speaking countries;
  - d. Qualitative and quantitative field surveys;
  - e. Interviews in Arabic with the entire range of stakeholders from vulnerable war-affected groups to high-level officials.

3. **A number of local staff to help collect and manage data, and to conduct surveys and interviews, as required with a range of skills and experience in:** a).Evaluators with documented experience in executing; b) Native Arabic speakers; c)Translation of English to Arabic and vice versa; d )Proven track record in conducting interviews; e).Ability to prepare interview/site visit reports; f.)Preparing basic data files.

## 8. Language requirements

Local interviews and surveys will be conducted in Arabic. All data and interview reports must be translated into English. Performing a linguistic quality control of all interview reports is part of the scope of contract. The evaluation report must be delivered in English.

## 9. Timing

The evaluation is scheduled to be launched before the end of June 2011 and the final report is to be completed by the end of September.

**Draft Timetable**

Activity	Time/Place	Actors
Desk study of project documents, reports, recent evaluation reports of other projects, etc Elaboration of a strategy for field surveys and elaboration of questionnaires	20-26 June	Evaluating company
Finalization of a strategy for field surveys and of questionnaires	27 June	
First mission to Amman; interviews with project staff of UNIDO Presentation of evaluation approach and instruments	28 June – 1 July	Evaluating company, UNIDO/ back stoppers; UNIDO Evaluation Manager
Guidance to staff carrying out the field surveys (Amman/Iraq)	2 – 4 July	Evaluating company
Field surveys (Iraq)	July	
Analysis of survey results and preparation of initial survey report	July-August	
Presentation of analytical report of survey results and discussion with project staff of UNIDO (Vienna)	August	Evaluating company (UNIDO back stoppers; UNIDO Evaluation Manager – to be decided)
Writing of the draft evaluation report	Aug/Sept	Evaluating company
Presentation of conclusions and recommendations (Vienna)	September	
Debriefing to UNIDO	September	
Submission of draft report to stakeholders for factual verification	September	
Finalization of report	September	

The International Consultants as well as the local survey staff (all recruited and managed by the evaluating company) will be expected to work for at least 30 days (duration to be reviewed once Field Surveys have started) over a period of 3 months.

## **10. Consultations**

The mission will maintain close liaison with the representatives of other UN agencies, the UNIDO Representative and the concerned national agencies, as well as with national and international project staff. Although the mission should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the Government, the donor, or UNIDO.

## **11. Deliverables**

1. Final evaluation report (English)
2. Initial and final survey reports (English & an additional copy in Arabic if available)
3. Draft evaluation report (English)
4. Draft survey questionnaire (English & Arabic)
5. Copies of all completed survey questionnaires (Arabic)

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The assessment of bids received for the evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

1. The company's years of working experience in similar types of projects – minimum 3 years
2. Experience of working with UN organizations (minimum 3 years)
3. Minimum of three years' experience in the region
4. At least 2 evaluation projects completed in the last 5 years in the region
5. Quality of the CVs of the evaluation team members, based on criteria outlined under 'Services required' section above

## **Annex 1**

### **Template of in-depth evaluation reports (abbreviated version)**

#### **Executive summary**

- Must be self-explanatory
- Not more than five pages focusing on the most important findings and recommendations

#### **Introduction**

- Information on the evaluation: why, when, by whom, etc.
- Information sources and availability of information

#### **Country and project context**

This chapter provides evidence for the assessment under chapter VI ( in particular relevance and sustainability)

#### **Project Planning**

*This chapter describes the planning process as far as relevant for the assessment under chapter VI*

#### **Project Implementation**

*This chapter describes what has been done and provides evidence for the assessment under chapter VI*

- Financial implementation
- Management

#### **Assessment**

*The assessment is based on the analysis carried out in chapter III, IV and V. It assesses the underlying intervention theory (causal chain: inputs-activities-outputs-outcomes). Did it prove to be plausible and realistic? Has it changed during implementation?*

- Relevance
- Ownership
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness and impact
- Sustainability

#### **Issues with regard to a possible next phase**

#### **Recommendations**

#### **Lessons learned**

*Lessons learned must be of wider applicability beyond the evaluated project but must be based on findings and conclusions of the evaluation*

## Annex 2

Report quality criteria	Evaluation Group Assessment notes	Rating
Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives?		
Were the report consistent and the evidence complete and convincing?		
Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes or did it explain why this is not (yet) possible?		
Did the evidence presented support the lessons and recommendations?		
Did the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity)?		
Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?		
Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?		
Was the report well written? (Clear language and correct grammar)		
Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TOR adequately addressed?		
Was the report delivered in a timely manner?		

### Rating system for quality of evaluation reports:

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

## Annex 3

### Project Logframe

Narrative Summary.	Objectively Verifiable Indicator	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p><b>Overall Goal:</b> To assist the Government of Iraq in its efforts towards the reintegration and socio-economic recovery of IDPs</p>	<p>The number of IDPs is reduced at the national level and regional levels</p>	<p>-Project data compared with pre-project baseline data -COSIT and IOM statistics</p>	<p>The Gov. maintains its policies to promote IDPs reintegration</p>
<p><b>Project specific objectives:</b> To increase income-generating opportunities for the IDP community in the Thi-Qar Governorate through enhancing and diversifying their skills and promoting the micro- and small-scale agro-enterprise sector.</p>	<p>-Unemployment rate of IDPs is reduced by 25% within a year of project start against baseline data</p>	<p>-Annual M &amp; E of the programme -Surveys</p>	<p>Commitment of the Gov. to IDPs Security situation improved.</p>
<p><b>Outputs of the Project:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The target community has increased awareness of- and interest in project activities.</li> <li>2. Confidence building between host communities and IDPs</li> <li>3. A minimum of 1000 beneficiaries (50% female) provided with technical and market-based skills.</li> </ol>	<p>-Number of IDPs involved in project activities segregated by gender -Hostility between host and target IDP communities is reduced and host community is aware of their benefits from the project -All IDP groups are represented in formed IDP</p>	<p>Comprehensive plan of activity report. Annual M &amp; E of the project. -Training records. -Completion and evaluation reports.</p>	<p>Commitment of the Gov. and local authorities to project objectives. Security situation does not deteriorate.</p>

Narrative Summary.	Objectively Verifiable Indicator	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>4. Increased number of micro- and small-scale agro-enterprises that are able to respond to local market demand conditions.</p>	<p>and have elected their representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-An activities work plan is prepared using a participatory approach</li> <li>-Number of rehabilitation project carried-out</li> <li>-Number of training subjects conducted.</li> <li>-Number of enrolled women in training activities</li> <li>-Increased employability of beneficiaries</li> <li>-Beneficiaries are increasingly participating in income-generating activities (% women)</li> <li>-Number of micro- and small-enterprises created</li> <li>-Type of micro- and small-enterprises created</li> </ul>		
<b>Activities</b>		<b>Inputs</b>	

Narrative Summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumption
<p><b><u>Component 1 - Mobilization and organization of target communities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collect baseline data of the target community, segregated by gender and age, using a participatory approach</li> <li>➤ Conduct an assessment of community infrastructure to promote social capital formation</li> <li>➤ Identify target intervention sectors/industries based on market res.</li> <li>➤ Examine and verify existing skills and interests of target community</li> <li>➤ Conduct awareness workshops with IDP leaders, host community leaders and government officials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Select IDP representatives based upon approved criteria, including female leaders</li> <li>○ Propose a detailed work plan for project implementation</li> <li>○ Finalize participation criteria, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Plan and conduct good governance and conflict management workshops for IDP representatives and host communities' leaders.</li> <li>➤ Based on activity (1.12), with the IDPs, plan and conduct some rehabilitation projects in host communities, including renovations, expansion of building/rooms, renovation of access roads etc.</li> <li>➤ Monitor activities and corrective measures</li> </ul>		<p><b><u>Project side:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Personnel/expertise:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ HQ technical backstopping.</li> <li>➤ Long-term expert: Technical Adviser.</li> <li>➤ Project National Coordinators.</li> <li>➤ National Field-Assistants</li> <li>➤ Short-term National and International experts (When necessity arises).</li> <li>➤ Administrative support personnel.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Equipment:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Woodworking</li> <li>➤ Metalworking</li> <li>➤ Textile/garment</li> <li>➤ Mobile phone repair kits</li> <li>➤ Transport</li> <li>➤ Other equipment and materials necessary for the implementation of the project.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Training, study tours, workshops, etc.</u></b></p>	

Narrative Summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumption
<p><b><u>Component 2 - Promotion of Productive investments</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Based on activities (1.1.3) and (1.1.4) plan and conduct training programmes in identified sectors.</li> <li>➤ Implement activities specifically tailored for women, such as sewing, food processing, kitchen gardening etc.</li> <li>➤ Provide on-the-job training for specific tasks such as rehabilitation of health centers and water networks, construction of access roads, maintenance and repair of machinery and equipment, etc.</li> <li>➤ Develop and implement an evaluation strategy for the training programme</li> <li>➤ Monitor and corrective measures</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Component 3: Sustainable Livelihoods through job creation and start-up capital</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Plan and conduct training in entrepreneurial skills/business development</li> <li>➤ Encourage the formation of business networks and the integration of IDPs into the local community</li> <li>➤ Procure and provide start-up capital in form of equipment, machinery and tools to selected beneficiaries</li> <li>➤ Establish communication channels to institutions providing micro-finance programs</li> <li>➤ Establish and implement monitoring systems for equipment usage, processing and quality</li> </ul>		<p style="text-align: right;"><b><u>Counterparts Side:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Personnel:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Senior officers to serve as national focal points</li> <li>➤ Administrative support personnel.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Facilities:</u></b></p> <p>Offices and working rooms</p>	