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Governance Strengthening Project (Taqadum)

Kurdistan Regional Government Activity Summary
September 2013 – March 2014

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PREPARED BY CHEMONICS INTERNATIONAL
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ACRONYMS

ARDP	Accelerated Reconstruction and Development Project
CI	Component 1: Institutional Strengthening
C2	Component 2: Executive Oversight
COMSEC	Council of Ministers Secretariat
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Council of Representatives
CPL	Citizen Participation Law
CSD	Citizen Service Desk
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSS	Citizen Satisfaction Survey
DC	District Council
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
ENCC	Excellence Network-Iraq Coordination Committee
ESC	Essential Services Commission
ESD	Essential Service Delivery
ESDO	Essential Service Delivery Oversight
F-HH	Female-Headed Household
FO	Field Office
FY	Fiscal Year
GEI	Government Effectiveness Index
GO	Governor's Office
GOI	Government of Iraq
HR	Human Resources
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IR	Intermediate Result
ITRS	Issue Tracking and Reporting System
L/C	Letter of Credit
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MOSGA	State Ministry of State for Governorate Affairs
NC	Nahiya Council
NDP	National Development Plan

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NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSTP	Organizational Self-assessment and Transformation Program
P&B	Planning and Budgeting
PC	Provincial Council
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPL	Priority Project List
Q	Quarter
SAB	Supreme Audit Board
SDPS	Service Delivery Performance Standards
SLIT	Sub-Legislative Implementation Tracking
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
Taqadum	Governance Strengthening Project (GSP)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

SUMMARY

In September 2013, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Ministry of Planning, the Erbil Governorate, and the United States Agency for International Development began a collaborative relationship in support of common economic, social, and governmental goals. Through the Governance Strengthening Project (GSP), also known as Taqadam (GSP/Taqadam), USAID provided support to the Governorate of Erbil in more effectively responding to community needs. These activities continued through March 2014.

GSP/Taqadam was initiated in October 2011 with the goals of promoting the institutionalization of the provincial and local governments' core authorities and responsibilities and enabling provincial and local elected officials to improve their oversight of service delivery. GSP/Taqadam partners with officials and staff in provincial councils and governors' offices across Iraq to improve government service delivery to citizens by strengthening provincial and local government's institutional capacity, and improving governmental oversight by empowering local elected officials. At the specific request of the Erbil Governorate and KRG Ministry of Planning and due to the limited duration of project interventions in Erbil, GSP/Taqadam focused technical assistance in three areas:

- **Organizational Development:** GSP/Taqadam introduced the Organizational Self-assessment and Transformation Program (OSTP) to the Governor's Office (GO) as a tool for conducting participatory organizational assessments in five major areas: leadership, knowledge, finance, processes, and people. The project assisted with the institutionalization of this iterative organizational development process by establishing an Organizational Development Consulting Team, comprised of mid- and senior-level officials in the GO.
- **Capacity Building for District and Sub-District Mayors:** GSP/Taqadam delivered tailored training programs to the Erbil Governorate district and sub-district mayors in the areas of leadership, decision making, conflict management, consensus building, and project prioritization.
- **Capital Projects Construction Oversight and Execution.** GSP/Taqadam supported the Erbil Governorate to develop effective project oversight and project management processes and build staff capacity in project supervision, quality assurance, and quality control.

OVERALL RESULTS

From September 2013 to March 2014, GSP/Taqadum embarked on an ambitious and intensive set of capacity building activities with the Erbil Governorate. The ultimate goal of these activities was to increase the ability of the Governorate to provide improved service delivery through sustainable capacity building programs. Beneficiaries from the Erbil GO, as well as district and sub-district mayors received nearly 9,000 contact-hours of direct technical assistance and training from GSP/Taqadum during this period. The estimated value of the counterpart's contribution to this activity, through the in-kind contribution of salaries, office space, and other expenses, totaled \$188,480.

This joint investment of USAID, through GSP/Taqadum, and the Erbil Governorate yielded substantial results during the period of implementation, including:

- The 15-member OSTP team developed five specific solutions for transformative improvement within the Governor's Office.
- 62 GO staff received project oversight training.
- 61 engineers received training on International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Standards.
- 45 district and sub-district mayors received intensive leadership, decision making, communications and conflict management, and project prioritization trainings.



The Erbil GO oversight working group utilizes the GSP/Taqadum oversight process map and checklist during a visit to a delayed construction project.

DETAILED ACHIEVEMENTS BY ACTIVITY

Organizational Self-Assessment and Transformation Program (OSTP)

The Organizational Self-assessment and Transformation Program (OSTP) is a holistic approach for building the capacity of public sector organizations to continuously improve their performance. It is based upon a model of government excellence with three pillars: Citizen Focus, Effectiveness, and Transparency.

OSTP activities in Erbil were successful in several ways. First, GSP/Taqadum was able to institutionalize a continual improvement process structure with the Erbil GO which yields sustainable impact. Second, by introducing the Erbil 15-member OSTP team to the country-wide OSTP network supported by GSP/Taqadum, the project was able to share best practices from Erbil with other provincial teams. As a result of the relatively stability and resources the Erbil Governor's office has enjoyed, it was able to provide significant guidance to other provinces on best practices. The Erbil OSTP team was formed in the GO under the sponsorship of Mr. Rushdie Aziz, the Governor's Assistant for Administrative and Legal Affairs, and included 15 mid and senior level staff-members. GSP/Taqadum's OSTP activities were initiated during the *Introductory Self-assessment and Benchmark Report Workshop* from September 29 to October 3. At this initial workshop, the project provided the Erbil GO's OSTP team with a fundamental understanding of the principles of OSTP and good governance. The workshop prepared the team to begin collecting information for the data gathering phase of the organizational self-assessment process.

Using the collected data, the OSTP team completed its draft self-assessment benchmark report during a workshop held from October 21 to 23. The participants compiled the data in the OSTP reporting form, conducted analysis, and produced a draft report (see textbox). As a result of the short time frame for GSP/Taqadum assistance, the project



Erbil GO OSTP team sorts and enters the results of interviews and surveys conducted during the self-assessment

Illustrative Solutions Proposed by Erbil OSTP Team

Leadership:

- Improve distribution of GO vision, mission statement, and strategic plan
- Open customer service desk in the GO reception area

Knowledge:

- Establish database documenting experience of staff in order to promote knowledge sharing
- Develop and distribute relevant legal, administrative, and financial laws throughout the GO

Finance:

- Simplify purchasing procedure by reducing approvals required
- Tie budgeting process to strategic plan for the governorate

Process:

- Standardize recoding of citizen's complaints and conduct analysis and prioritization

Human Resources:

- Improve structural placement of the Human Resources Department
- Establish process to disseminate job descriptions throughout the GO

worked with the OSTP team to identify and prioritize quickly implementable solutions with high impact. In December 2013, GSP/Taqadum staff worked closely with the OSTP team to produce a solutions map that highlighted five critical recommendations for submission to the Governor for review and approval.

GSP/Taqadum was also able to draw on the experience of the Erbil Governor's office to assist other GO's OSTP teams in overcoming specific challenges. During a Process Criteria workshop held in Erbil with OSTP members from Baghdad, Kirkuk, Ninawa, Babil, Najaf, and Karbala, in November 2013, two officials from the Erbil provincial government presented successful case studies on recruitment and project tendering.

Capacity Building for District and Sub-District Mayors

GSP/Taqadum's capacity building program for District and Sub-District Mayors in Erbil was instituted at the direct request of the Erbil Governorate and MOP, and cut across multiple areas, including leadership, decision making, conflict management, and project prioritization.

GSP/Taqadum initiated the capacity building program at the request of the Erbil GO in September 2013. In order to assess capacity building needs, the project held a focus group with 37 mayors, the Governor, and Deputy Governor. During this meeting, the project lead attendees in completing a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of their needs. Additionally, participants completed questionnaires which were then analyzed by GSP/Taqadum staff, who used the data and SWOT analysis to develop the tailored capacity building program.



Focus group participants completing the capacity building questionnaire

The capacity-building program for District and Sub-District mayors in the Erbil Governorate culminated in an intensive set of workshops held in February and March 2014. Forty-five mayors took place in the program and were split into three groups of fifteen. Each group attended two, four-day workshops. The first workshops focused on leadership and decision making and the second on conflict management and project prioritization. The design of the training program emphasized an interactive atmosphere of active participation, allowing each group to learn from each other as well as from the GSP/Taqadum presenters.

The first set of workshops, held in early-to-mid February, on leadership and decision-making, introduced participants to the concepts of leadership and management, leadership theories and models, decision-making styles and techniques, communications skills, and teamwork. During breakout sessions, participants discussed leadership models; the criteria for decision-making, especially in times of crisis; problem solving; and team building.



Erbil District and Mayors and Sub-district Mayors during the Project Prioritization and Conflict Management

The four-day workshops were opened by Governor’s Assistant Mr. Rushdie Aziz, who urged participants to actively participate and build their leadership skills. GSP/Taqadam staff lead the participants through an analysis of different theories of leadership, strategic communications, decision-making techniques and case studies, and how to conduct useful SWOT analysis. At the end of the workshop, participants thanked GSP/Taqadam, noting that they were eager to apply the tools and techniques to their daily work.

The second set of workshops was entitled “Project Prioritization and Conflict Management.” During the first two days of this four-day event, participants were introduced to managerial tools for prioritizing projects and the role of community participation in project prioritization through surveys, public meetings, and roundtables. The second half of the workshop was dedicated to conflict management and negotiation. Participants learned about the types of conflict and were introduced to useful ways of resolving conflict. Practical exercises were used during the workshop to increase participant knowledge and skills.

Capital Project Construction Oversight and Execution

GSP/Taqadam supported the Erbil Governorate in developing its project oversight and site management processes, as well as building staff capacity to supervise projects and conduct quality assurance and quality control. In addition, the project delivered International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) standards training.

GSP/Taqadam capitalized on its project oversight expertise and materials to quickly roll out interventions under this activity. The project’s technical experts presented GSP/Taqadam’s “Project Oversight Roadmap” to Ms. Vian Rasheed, the Erbil GO Relations Coordinator,

who committed to designating engineers from the GO planning and monitoring offices to be trained on the oversight process and form an “oversight working group.”

The first major workshop was held on “Project Construction Management” and took place January 5-9, 2014 for 26 officials and engineers from the Erbil GO Oversight Section. The workshop provided participants with the knowledge and skills to properly apply project construction management principles; introduced advanced project management tools; and offered an overview of the Primavera P6 Project Management software. On the final day of the workshop, GSP/Taqadum experts explained the role and responsibilities of the Erbil GO Oversight Section according to Kurdistan Provincial Law No. 3, in 2009.

These skills were quickly put to use. In January, GSP/Taqadum conducted a site visit with the oversight working group to the Shoresh and Roizgari Gas Station construction project, which had experienced project delays. Using the GSP/Taqadum oversight checklist to guide and document the site visit, the oversight group worked with the contractor to develop a recovery plan and updated schedule to speed up project implementation.



Dr. Eric Milstrey, USAID regional representative from the US Consulate in Erbil, addresses participants at the FIDIC workshop

In March 2014 Taqadum conducted three workshops on the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Standards for 61 Erbil GO officials and engineers. The main objectives of the workshop were to build the capacity and skills of engineers on the general conditions of contracts for construction projects; to brief participants about the content and principles of the FIDIC red, yellow and silver books; and to compare between current standards used by the GO and those used by FIDIC. The workshop was enriched with lively discussions, exercises, case studies, and real-life situations. As a result, participants gained better understanding of FIDIC practical applications of contract conditions and gained new insight about their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of contracts according to FIDIC principles. Several engineers who provided oversight to projects implemented by international companies learned how to respond to issues that faced them on the projects.