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USAID-TARABOT YEAR 3 ANNUAL & CONCLUDED ACTIVITIES REPORT 2011-2014



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2011-2014

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ACRONYMS

AD	Administrative Decentralization	MoI	Ministry of Interior
BoQ	Bill of Quantities	MoIM	Ministry of Industry & Minerals
BPA	Business Process Analysis	MoJ	Ministry of Justice
BPP	Bureau of Public Policy (Presidency)	MoLSA	Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs
CoM	Council of Ministers	MoMD	Ministry of Migration & Displaced
COMSEC	Council of Ministers' Secretariat	MoMPW	Ministry of Municipalities & Public Works
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative/USAID	MoO	Ministry of Oil
CoR	Council of Representatives	MoP	Ministry of Planning
CoS	Chief of Staff	MoSPA	Ministry of State for Provincial Affairs
COSQC	Central Org. for Standardization and Quality Control	MoSWA	Ministry of State for Women's Affairs
CSR	Civil Service Reform Component	MoST	Ministry of Science & Technology
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)	MoT	Ministry of Trade
DG	Director General	MoTr	Ministry of Transport
DPMO	Deputy Prime Minister Office	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
FCSC	Federal Civil Service Commission	MoWR	Ministry of Water Resources
FCSI	Federal Civil Service Institute	MoYS	Ministry of Youth & Sport
GO	Governor's Office	MSI	Management Systems International
GZ	Green Zone (See IZ)	NDP	National Development Plan
GoI	Government of Iraq	NGO	Non-governmental Organization
GSP	Governance Strengthening Project (USAID)	NIC	National Investment Commission
HC	High Committee for Civil Service Reform	NPM	National Policy Management Component
HR	Human Resources	OD	Organizational Development
HRD	Human Resources Division	OPD	One Stop Shop service center
HRM	Human Resources Management	PAR	Public Administrative Reform Committee (See PSM)
HRMIS	Human Resources Management Information System	PC	Provincial Council
ICGE	Iraq Center for Government Excellence	PD	Process Development (See BPA)
IDMS	Iraq Development Management System	PCSC	Provincial Civil Service Commission
INMS	Iraqi National Monitoring System	PM	Prime Minister
IQD	Iraqi Dinar	PMAC	Prime Minister's Advisory Council
ISO	International Standards Organization	PMI	Project Management Institute
ISRAR	Iraq Solutions for Regulatory & Administrative Reform	PMO	Prime Minister's Office
IZ	International Zone (See GZ)	PMP	Project Management Professional Certification
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture	PSM	Public Sector Management Committee (See PAR)
MoC	Ministry of Communications	QM	Quality Management
MoCH	Ministry of Construction & Housing	RFP	Request for Proposal
MoCu	Ministry of Culture	RG	Regulatory Guillotine™
MoE	Ministry of Electricity	SCMT	State Company for Maritime Transport
MoEd	Ministry of Education	SES	Senior Executive Service
MoEn	Ministry of Environment	SoW	Scope of Work
MoF	Ministry of Finance	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
MoH	Ministry of Health	T&D	Training and Development
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education	TA	Technical Assistance
MoI	Ministry of Interior	ToR	Terms of Reference
		UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
		USAID	United States Agency for International Development
		USG	United States Government
		WB	World Bank

“THE BEST PEOPLE
TO BUILD THE NEW IRAQ
ARE IRAQIS ”

— NACEER AL-ANI, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENCY DIWAN



CONTEXT

The roots of the Tarabot Iraq Administrative Reform Project go back to the 2006 beginning of the predecessor National Capacity Development Project known as Tatweer. During the eight-year period of these two projects the political contexts and security climate evolved rapidly and sometimes unpredictably in both positive and negative ways. Without attempting to reprise the details of all of the events in Iraq over the past eight years let us just note the extraordinary challenges in the operating environment that directly impinged upon project implementation and management:

Projects Funding. Unexpected, large, and immediate funding increases (plus \$130 million to Tatweer in 2008) and sudden de-obligations (minus \$50 million from Tarabot in 2012), with partial re-obligation in 2014, required rapid, large, and difficult project expansion and contraction responses.

Expanding/Shrinking Scopes of Work.

Tatweer (a) expanded its brief from training to systems introduction, (b) expanded its coverage from 10 central line ministries to include over 100 ministry offices in 15 provinces, (c) and rapidly fielded a new unit of 18 highly specialized expatriates in the fields of petroleum and electricity. Budget constraints necessitated Tarabot to (a) cancel its Civil Service Reform component, and (b) summarily end its administrative decentralization activities with numerous important ministries with which USAID had signed formal MoUs.

Security Deteriorations. Horrific gyrations in the security environment especially affected the daily lives and fears of the Iraqi populace, including endangering our large locally hired staff. Security uncertainties (bombs and roadblocks) wreaked havoc with complex training and technical assistance schedules.

US Military Presence. The “surge” of the US military presence from approximately 100,000 soldiers up to close to 150,000 (2007-8) that needed to be matched by a civilian surge including the rapid hire of 26 new expat advisors for Tatweer. Then in 2010 the relatively sudden and total withdrawal of

the US military presence from Iraq, leaving large projects dependent solely on the Iraqi police and army for security.

Security Improvements. A 90% reduction in security events (2008-2012) following the “surge”, brought back a sense of normalcy to people’s daily lives and work, especially freeing USAID’s Government of Iraq (GOI) counterparts and



champions to engage more openly with American projects, especially for Tarabot's ambitious agenda.

US Elections. The Democratic victory in the US presidential election of 2008 signaled the beginning of the end of the open-ended American support to Iraq, heralding a shift of resources from the USAID Iraq portfolio to other countries and regions, ushering in the descending "glidepath" and the shrinking "footprint" for the US Embassy, USAID, and Tarabot.

Iraq Elections. Two sets of Iraqi national (2010; 2014) and provincial elections. Although successful in terms of Iraq's democratic development, the elections caused uncertainty and delays of up to eight

months while the new national and provincial regimes negotiated coalitions and appointed new officials.

ISIS/ISIL Invasion of Northern Iraq.

The sudden loss of Mosul and rapid spread of the ISIS forces throughout the northern and western provinces, down to the edge of Baghdad, opened a new chapter in Iraq's trials, re-introduced US engagement on Iraqi security issues, and created a massive new IDP situation for the newly formed government to address while trying to rebuild an army overnight. USAID-Iraq is re-defining its engagement, including an extension of Tarabot's end-of-performance date, and current designs for continuing and refocusing project assistance to the GOI.



TARABOT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Tarabot project's design grew out of the experience of the preceding Tatweer project, building on its successful and most ambitious activities, but restructuring the approach of the intervention to allow Tarabot to operate on less than half the resources (\$156 million) that had been available to Tatweer (\$340 million). The change in Arabic nomenclature is revealing. MSI had originally named the first project Islah, or "reform." Iraqi clients proudly balked at the notion that their public service needed "reform," for that implied that there was something systematically wrong, and so the nickname was changed to the innocuous "Tatweer" meaning "development."

The Tarabot project was named the "Administrative Reform (Islah) Project." The GOI clients now recognized that Iraq's public administration systems were indeed out of date and inadequate, and they embraced the word "reform." The new nickname, Tarabot, means "linkages," stressing that this new project, rather than struggle one ministry at a time, would create stronger "linkages" between the Executive Branch's responsibilities for establishing policy, the line ministries' responsibilities for implementing reforms, and the decentralization of practical decision-making and investment planning to the provincial levels of the ministries and to the governorate offices. This focus on linkages recognizes the necessary interconnectedness of a true national reform effort, and a multiplier approach in order to achieve the tangible impact required for improved services for citizens. With significantly less resources than its predecessor project, Tarabot more than doubled its effective outreach to fully engage the Executive Branch, doubled the number of participating ministries, and universally reached all 15 non-federated governorate offices with a full menu of reform programs.



The Tarabot Project Strategic Results Framework consisted of three major results or, operationally, the following components and sub-components:

1. People – Civil Service Reform

- Enact Civil Service Legislation Establish Civil Service Commissions (federal and provincial)
- Establish Civil Service Commissions (federal and provincial)
- Reform the HR management structures and functions

2. Policies – National Policy Management

- Establish Policy Development Offices in Prime Minister's Office and in key economic and social service ministries
- Perform Legal & Regulatory Reform with the "Guillotine" approach

3. Services – Administrative Decentralization

- Make service improvements through automation and other streamlined systems at the provincial level
- Support future service improvements through better capital investment management

A UNIQUE ENGAGEMENT

Benefitting from the years of assistance under the USAID-Tatweer project, USAID-Tarabot was able to cultivate an unprecedented level of support and buy-in from the Iraqi government from day one. The seeds of ownership were planted during the initial engagement with Gol counterparts, and grew rapidly as institutions and civil servants invested time and resources in implementing Tarabot's solutions. In relation to Tarabot's initiatives, Iraqi ownership encompassed a collaborative partnership, formal agreements, and significant levels of financial, human, and operational resources dedicated to implementing Tarabot's solutions.

Formal Engagement and Assistance Process:

At the outset, Tarabot employed a systematic process to secure buy-in and instill Iraqi ownership for reform in each partner ministry, governorate office, or executive agency. This process includes formal engagement, mutually agreed-upon assessments and action plans, high-level Memoranda of Understanding, cost-sharing commitments, and an ongoing cycle of technical assistance and consultation with counterpart institutions that spanned the entire Gol.

Top-Level Gol Coordination and Guidance:

To build and maintain top-down support for some of the project's biggest initiatives, USAID-Tarabot liaised with and often sat directly on a number of powerful national-level committees. These committees provided executive

Gol guidance and meaningful support when working with individual institutions to implement reform. These included:

- The Public Sector Modernization (PSM) Committee headed by PMAC Chairman Thamer Ghadban
- The Partnership Committee (PC) headed by Deputy Prime Minister Rowsh Nuri Shawais
- The High Committee for Civil Service Reform, headed by COMSEC DG Dr. Othman Salman
- The National Development Plan High Committee, led by Deputy Minister of Planning Dr. Sami Matti
- Decentralization and Service Improvement Committee, headed by Minister of Provincial Affairs Dr. Torhan Mufti
- USAID-Tarabot also advocated for the establishment of project steering committees within most partner ministries. These committees met with Tarabot regularly to discuss the progress made and ensure coordination on next steps.



Memoranda of Understanding:

Finally, USAID-Tarabot facilitated the signing of several top-level Memoranda of Understanding between the



Gol and USAID. The Prime Minister's Office signed a pair of agreements pledging to cooperate with the project's policy development and regulatory reform initiatives. The Sadrist-led Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) signed an agreement with USAID to continue assistance to the Social Safety Net (SSN). With Tarabot's help, USAID signed MoUs with several other ministries, including the Ministry of Oil (MoO), Ministry of Transportation (MoTR), Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW), as well as the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of Planning. The Gol's remarkable commitment to USAID-Tarabot's objectives and assistance helped cement a partnership that spanned every executive office, ministry, and province in Iraq. By living up to the "linkages" that Tarabot was named for, this partnership fostered an atmosphere of Iraqi ownership and commitment to long-term change in Iraq.

Significant Cash and In-Kind Cost Sharing:

Over the life of the project, USAID-Tarabot solicited and utilized Gol resources to the maximum extent possible. This resulted in USAID-Tarabot exceeding 1:1, dollar-for-dollar cost sharing with the Gol (see inset). This unprecedented figure is a product of the project's

distinct design and level of Iraqi ownership as well as the Gol's increasing ability to utilize its ample resources. As the balance tilted towards increased utilization of Gol funds for reform and improvement efforts, the Gol's contributions became an important impact force-multiplier and sustainability measure for Tarabot's interventions. Gol support for the project's activities ranged from significant in-kind and operational support to an exceptional level of direct financial contributions. The Gol's in-kind support includes the value of the time that civil servants contributed toward the project's programs, as well as the fair market value of facilities and other services they provided in direct support of our joint programs. For example, seventeen counterpart Gol ministries and four governorate offices allocated offices or desk spaces for USAID-Tarabot's advisors. Ministries often shared space not only in Baghdad, but in their provincial offices as well. Space is at a premium in government facilities, and this represented not only a significant contribution of resources to the project, but also tremendous buy-in to Tarabot's objectives. With this space, the project was able to maintain embedded staff in almost every partner entity and provide responsive technical assistance, follow up on pending initiatives, and ensure a smooth flow of work.

Sources of Cost Share Funds:

The Partnership Fund

- The Partnership Fund was first introduced by the GOI in their 2012 national budget, and repeated in the 2013 budget. The Partnership Fund provides funds to GOI entities to support initiatives by development partners, such as USAID. Examples of partnership fund allocations projected for Tarabot include:
 - Prime Ministers Advisory Commission (PMAC) support for staffing and services of the Central Unit of the Iraq Solutions for Regulatory and Administrative Reform (ISRAR).
 - International Training and Project Management Certification for engineers managing projects nationwide.
 - Support the Ministry of Planning's efforts to complete and roll out the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS) that automates the capital investment proposal and monitoring process nation-wide.
 - Cost share from Ministry Budgets
 - Costs related to training, conferences and study tours; and office space for Tarabot staff.
 - GOI staff salaries for GOI persons participating in Tarabot activities, such as training and workshop events.
 - Value of GOI facilities used by the Tarabot project (e.g. office space for Tarabot staff, training venues).
 - Cost of travel for GOI persons to participate in events and international study tours (in some instances special study tours were covered under PC funds).
 - Cost of logistics for large project events, such as conferences.
- Establishment of new offices and new systems
 - Salaries for GOI personnel employed in new offices or working units that were created as a direct result of Tarabot interventions, as well as office operating costs where applicable.
 - Salaries of GOI employees who are assigned specifically to implement major new systems and practices (not otherwise counted within new offices, above) introduced by Tarabot.
 - Facility, administrative, systems and equipment costs associated with creating and sustaining new offices and systems.





Some highlight examples of Tarabot-assisted cost share fund utilization include:

- 11 ministries and GOs sent their engineers and project managers to Lebanon for a certified 35 hour Project Management Professional (PMP) course at internationally-recognized Project Management Institute (PMI) training centers. This course is a requisite ahead of PMP certification.
- The Ministry of Oil sent 10 selected engineers to Jordan to attend the 35 hour course as well as sit for the PMP exam.
- Several other ministries paid for the 35 hour PMI training. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) sent a total of 21 staff to Malaysia for the training, while the Ministry of Construction and Housing (MoCH) sent 60 engineers to Erbil for the weeklong course.
- Ministries including the MoH, MoEN, and MoHR sent staff for training on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model, via the King Abdullah II Center for Excellence in Amman, Jordan.
- COMSEC sent 20 staff to attend ISO9001 Internal Auditing course in Dubai, UAE.
- Other ministries, such as the MoCH and MoH, sent 56 staff to attend ISO 9001 Internal Auditor courses in Sulimaniyeh.

“USAID-TARABOT KNEW
VERY WELL THE WAY
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-THAMER GHADBAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRIME MINISTER’S ADVISORY COUNCIL



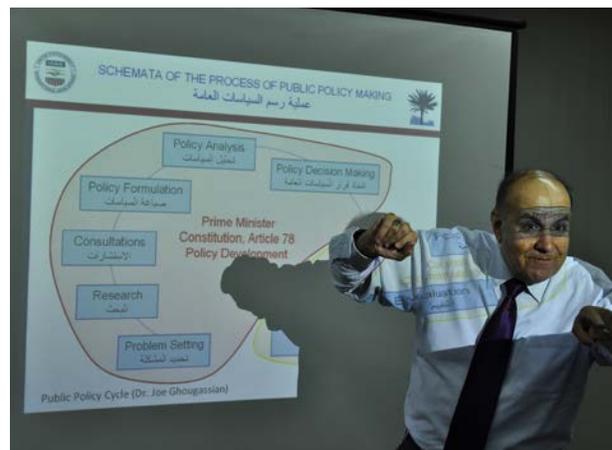
POLICIES: NATIONAL POLICY MANAGEMENT

Between 2011 and 2014, USAID-Tarabot laid the foundation for effective policymaking in Iraq. The project assisted the Gol to establish policy units in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Presidency, and several economically and socially-oriented ministries. These represented Iraq's first institutions dedicated to inclusive and technically sound policymaking. As USAID-Tarabot assisted the Gol to build appropriate structures, the project also helped fill the gap in individual policymaker capacity, by assisting Iraq's policymakers to learn and apply tools in policy development, analysis, implementation, outreach, and evaluation.

With USAID-Tarabot's assistance, Iraq's policy development systems are now working to directly address some of the critical issues facing its citizens in an inclusive manner. By the time Tarabot's National Policy Management (NPM) component formally ramped down in mid-2014, project-supported policy offices and bureaus in the Gol had drafted 20 key policies, engaged in broad outreach and engagement with Iraq's varied stakeholders, and were left well-positioned to move forward with the incoming Prime Minister Haider Al Abadi's ambitious agenda for reform and inclusion. This evolution highlights a total shift away from Iraq's decidedly unilateral and opaque policymaking processes of the past. With USAID-Tarabot's support, the Gol continues to embrace its policymaking responsibilities and tackle the key issues facing Iraqis.

SHIFTING FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE POLICY ARENA:

Under the preceding Tatweer project, USAID trained Gol staff across the executive offices (including the PMO, Deputy Prime Minister's Offices, Presidency, and others) on the basic principles of policymaking. This experience generated buy-in and laid the groundwork for Tarabot's more substantive engagement, which initiated with the establishment of the Prime Minister's Office of Policy Development (OPD) and the Presidency Diwan Bureau of Public Policy. The creation of these two units was among the Tarabot project's



earliest and most significant achievements under the National Policy Management component. Over the first two years of the project, Tarabot's NPM program shifted Gol policy development away from classrooms and into the policy arena, identifying practical policy targets and working to inclusively develop policy documents to address the issues. By the third year, Iraq's new policymakers were working their own way through real-life policy initiatives. With USAID-Tarabot's assistance, Gol-established policy offices have drafted over 20 new policies covering key social issues such as youth unemployment, river pollution, and industrial revitalization. The activation of the policy development process in earnest reflects not only the Gol's matured vision for policy in the country, but also the wide impact and long term sustainability of USAID-Tarabot efforts.

IRAQ'S EXECUTIVE-LEVEL POLICY OUTPUTS:

In previous years, Iraq's policies either collected dust on the desks where they were written, or were implemented without proper analysis of options, stakeholder perspectives or accountability mechanisms. Now, public policies in Iraq are drafted in collaborative fashion, incorporating ideas and solutions driven by inputs from stakeholders close to the issues, consensus-building discussions and roundtables, and technical research into recognized solutions from across the globe. Starting in 2011, Iraq's policy issues of concern were consistently socially oriented and service-based. With Tarabot's ongoing assistance, the Gol's new policy offices drafted 26 new documents, all of which are policy "firsts" for Iraq that address previously neglected policy areas. This marks a stark improvement from the antiquated policy-making processes of the past.

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT

From 2012 to 2014, PMO policy experts supported by Tarabot developed 13 policy proposals of which 11 were accepted. These included policies to improve or reform the Iraq postal service, youth unemployment, faculty rankings and promotions, university admissions, ground water, desertification, cybercrimes, curtailing invasive species, procedures to implement investment budgets, revitalization of scientific research, and the economics of the poultry industry in Iraq. Policies were produced in broad consultation with stakeholders, and two policies—the Iraqi postal system and cybercrimes—were publicly debated with the participation of government officials and Iraqi and international experts.

OPD Key Policy Output: Ameliorating Youth Unemployment

The problem of youth unemployment spiked in 1988 and has remained high since, approaching 25 percent in 2013. A generation of young people are often unable to live up to their potential, and such dynamics can have serious consequences, as was the case with the Arab Spring, where youth unemployment was a key driver. The OPD drafted a policy paper to frame this issue,

identify a strategy to mitigate it, and offer potential solutions. The paper details employment challenges facing youth, whether educated or uneducated, urban or rural. The paper also notes that social benefits alone do not constitute a sustainable long-term solution and that the private sector must take the leading role, a contrast from previous Iraqi efforts to reduce unemployment. The policy calls for federal-government support measures to bolster private-sector and targeted regulatory and legal reform. The OPD developed this paper with stakeholders from relevant Iraqi ministries, universities, civil society representatives, as well as the private sector.

OPD Key Policy Output: Reforming University Admissions Processes

University admissions requirements and procedures are antiquated, often biased, and open to corruption. The OPD addressed this issue through a high-profile policy debate and a paper. USAID-Tarabot trained the OPD team and assisted in developing and presenting the policy paper. The policy proposed that the Ministry of Higher Education give greater autonomy to local universities in the selection and admission of students, and allow students more input into choosing their career paths.

The policy calls for new criteria for university admissions – similar to those used in the UK, USA, China, Russia, and other Arab countries – based on an entrance exam, grade history, and interviews. At the same time, it aims to promote skill sets needed for Iraq's labor force. This policy was presented and debated by over 30 senior government officials and business representatives, including the President of Al Nahrain University as well as representatives from the Federation of Industries, the Technical Foundation and the Syndicate of Businessmen.

OPD Key Policy Output: Desertification and Groundwater Management

Led by a senior economic advisor, the OPD drafted and presented a policy paper titled "Desertification in Anbar Province" in 2013, which outlines the issue of desertification in Anbar Province and proposes a number of solutions. Desertification currently affects 77% of the province's already limited arable land.

The paper suggests three options to combat desertification:

- Investment in greenhouse farming using hydroponic systems
- Planting pasture land, and legume crops to mitigate over-grazing
- Reclaiming and rehabilitating 18 existing oasis

The paper was discussed in an open forum including senior officials from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), MoEN, MoLSA, and PMAC, as well as the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah, and numerous private sector representatives. The paper refers to recent MoA projects to combat the problem such as the creation of oasis and natural pastures, pointing out the political, environmental, economic, and security dimensions of these efforts.

PUBLIC POLICY BUREAU IN THE PRESIDENCY DIWAN

USAID-Tarabot strengthened the institutional capacity for public policy making in the Presidency Diwan by establishing a public policy unit and training 10 officials. The Presidency Diwan and USAID-Tarabot developed jointly a strategic plan and drafted standard operating procedures for the unit. USAID-Tarabot assisted the Presidency Diwan in developing their “Brain Gain” and “Homeless Orphans in Iraq” policies. Both policies were adopted by the Presidency Diwan in the spring of 2014.

Presidency Diwan Policy Output: “Brain Gain” or Restoring Iraq’s Academia

Thousands of academics left Iraq over the past decades, due to oppression, instability or lack of opportunity. They have had little incentive to return. Many have degrees from top schools in America, Europe and the Middle East and are working as professors, engineers, scientists, and doctors – professions that Iraq desperately needs. A great many wish to return to their country and support its rehabilitation, but are prevented by an out-of-date 1976 law restricting accreditation of foreign degrees. The Presidency Diwan Bureau of Public Policy with Tarabot’s assistance drafted an innovative new policy to permit and incentivize the return of Iraq’s thousands of émigré academics. The dissolution of the 1976 law was

chief among the policy’s recommendations. In response, the Council of Ministers amended Decree 441, one of the laws that restrict accreditation of foreign degrees. The policy also petitions 400 Iraqi academics to consider returning for a trial period of a year. The policy process saw numerous stakeholders at the table – the MoHE, the Presidency Diwan, Al-Nahrain and Baghdad Universities, the Iraqi Institute for Strategic Studies and Research, the head of the Parliament’s Education Committee, and the Society for Higher Education Abroad, an Iraqi NGO.



Presidency Diwan Key Policy Output: Helping Iraq’s Homeless Orphans

Thousands of children in Iraq are left homeless and displaced as the result of conflict, poverty, abandonment by parents, and a lack of government interest in their plight. With the support of USAID-Tarabot, the Bureau of Policy Development in the Presidency Diwan developed a policy paper to address the growing issue of Iraq’s orphaned and homeless street children. Policy-makers in the Presidency Diwan worked, with USAID-Tarabot guidance and assistance, to analyze national statistics on street children, current laws and regulations, and existing academic research undertaken by academics, NGOs, think-tanks, and international organizations. The Bureau also identified the issue’s primary stakeholders:

the Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs, Human Rights, Education, Health, Migration and Displacement, Planning, Provincial Affairs, Justice, and others.

ADDRESSING SECTOR SPECIFICS: POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRIES

In addition to the high-profile policy work at the executive level, USAID-Tarabot provided extensive assistance to ministerial policymakers. USAID-Tarabot undertook distinctive approaches for economic and social ministries. Assistance was delivered through a series of tailored policy development capacity building workshops covering policy development, analysis, implementation, outreach, and evaluation for nearly 600 individuals in the ministries. The USAID-Tarabot policy development program culminates with the hands-on development of policies identified and chosen by attendees as they simultaneously hone their skills and address issues under their ministry's purview.

Ministry of Industry & Minerals Key Policy Outputs: Industrial Monitoring and Revitalization

The Ministry of Industry and Minerals (MoIM) with USAID-Tarabot technical assistance finalized the Iraqi Industrial Strategy and designed a policy program for its implementation. The ministry's policy unit also developed a policy for institutionalization of industrial monitoring and evaluation systems, which was estimated to provide \$8.45 million in monetary benefits over four years. Currently, a working group led by the policy unit is setting indicators and putting in place processes for data collection and reporting.

In 2013, USAID-Tarabot advisors continued to assist the MoIM's newly-established policy unit as they designed the Iraqi Revival Program for Industrialization (IRPI) policy. IRPI aims to revitalize Iraq's industrial and manufacturing sector through support to micro, small, and medium-size enterprises, as well as establishing government-run business support centers. With assistance from USAID-Tarabot's advisors, the MoIM policy unit has developed a logical framework for the program, a three-pronged

intervention design, indicators and sources of verification for objectives, outcome and output levels. The program's main services were identified and a management structure was drafted. A detailed work plan was developed for the rest of year to guide the development of inception documents and to launch the program.

Ministry of Electricity Key Policy Output: Energy Efficiency

USAID-Tarabot assisted the Ministry of Electricity (MoE) to develop a public policy for energy efficiency, which was estimated to produce US\$63.48 billion in monetary benefits. Lack of sufficient reliable electricity has been a persistent concern in Iraq, a hot and dry country where electricity serves the critical functions of cooling houses and pumping water. Recent statistical data shows that electricity has superseded security as the top concern among Iraq's citizens. It is also the largest obstacle to Iraq's continued development and stability. The improving but still inadequate power grid is further hampered by significant transmission, distribution and consumer-side waste. With Tarabot's technical support, the MoE drafted a comprehensive energy-efficiency policy that aims to make better use of Iraq's existing energy capacity, focusing on three areas: creating an efficiency-enabling environment, innovative technical solutions, and renewable energy. Among the most important achievements of Tarabot's work with the MoE is that there is now demand and capacity for modern public policy making – the ministry leadership and senior officials increasingly appreciate the importance of informed decision making based on evidence and analysis, and realize its benefits both for the government and customers.

Ministry of Trade Key Policy Output: Streamlining Trade Agreements

The Ministry of Trade (MoT) with the help of USAID-Tarabot established a policy unit in the Foreign Economic Relations Directorate, trained the unit's members on policy process management and analytical methods, produced the unit's strategic plan, and introduced standard operating procedures for policy production. The MoT unit, with USAID-Tarabot technical assistance, developed a public policy for streamlining Iraq's trade agreements, which was estimated to provide US\$431

million in monetary benefits over five years. The policy unit held policy consultations with the ministry's senior officials, and currently, the ministry is implementing the policy through establishing an integrated trade management information system and producing a new procedure for managing trade agreements.

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Human Rights: Additional Social Policy Outputs

Other ministries have also followed up training and the establishment of policy units, strengthening their institutional capacity for public policy-making by going through the process of drafting actual policy papers with the support of USAID-Tarabot. The Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs, Human Rights, Migration and Displacement, and Environment drafted and submitted policy papers that address key issues such as needs of handicapped people in the work place, supporting homeless orphans, combating violence against women, revitalizing slums, protecting the ozone layer from gasses, and fighting the pollution of the Tigris River.

Among development practitioners, the notion that “the process is more important than the product” is an important mantra. In Iraq, the process so far has been effective, and is maturing through each cycle of the policy-making process. The results — Iraq’s first inclusively developed public policy documents — are themselves significant as well.

ENSURING CITIZEN IMPACT THROUGH POLICY OUTREACH

Historically, Iraq’s public-policy making process was devoid of external inputs. The roles of external actors, particularly in civil society, were foreign to many Iraqi officials well after 2003. USAID-Tarabot’s NPM component assisted the Gol to address this problem by establishing robust mechanisms for consultation and outreach to a broad array of ministerial, provincial, private, and civil society stakeholders on each policy issue.

As the Tarabot-supported policy process got underway,



the Gol’s policymakers took the initial steps towards a long-term culture change. For the first time in Iraq’s modern history, Gol policymakers came together with groups of nongovernmental stakeholders. These actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, women’s organizations, think-tanks, professional associations and private-sector organizations, were engaged as policy shapers in policy-making processes.

BRINGING CIVIL SOCIETY TO THE POLICY TABLE

USAID-Tarabot assisted 32 Iraqi non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations to participate in public policy roundtables with the Gol, which were facilitated by nine of Iraq’s universities. The NGOs and universities were also trained on the role of the private sector, universities, NGOs and the media in public policy and USAID-Tarabot recommended their involvement during the assessment phase of public policy development to all of its government partners, to ensure open, equitable and informed public policies.

Iraqi government officials found that NGOs were closer to the issues at hand, knew better the framing of the issues, and had valid ideas for solutions. Media organizations were able to offer further insight into public perceptions, further validating the process.

BUILDING LINKAGES TO CIVIL SOCIETY: OVER 150 IRAQI CSOS ENGAGED

Additionally, as Iraq's policymakers became more open to their contributions, the usefulness of NGO inputs for policy development and implementation became more apparent. USAID-Tarabot capitalized on this phenomenon by facilitating workshops where actors from the public, private, and civil-society sectors could discuss the policies in progress. With Tarabot's help, the Gol brought over 150 Iraqi NGOs to the table for policy debates, round tables, and conferences. These events became formative experiences for many of Iraq's new policymakers as well as members of civil society, and the start of a culture change was visibly apparent: the simple Iraqi tradition of exchanging business cards and phone numbers, but this time between public officials and nongovernmental actors.

USAID-Tarabot went on to facilitate a number of unprecedented policy outreach initiatives in 2013, bringing together Gol policy makers with a huge number of non-governmental stakeholders. These events ranged from high-profile policy debates and policy roundtables to smaller meetings and networking discussions.

With USAID-Tarabot's assistance, the Gol is now able to interface with hundreds of civil society sector stakeholders, including NGOs, universities, women's organizations, think-tanks, professional associations, and private sector organizations. These stakeholders are essential policy shapers, and their formalized inclusion reflects a sustained inclusive policy-making process that will directly impact Iraq's citizens.

SUSTAINING AND BUILDING IRAQ'S POLICY-MAKING SKILLS THROUGH UNIVERSITIES

As a final measure of sustainability, USAID-Tarabot worked extensively in collaboration with the Ministry

of Higher Education (MoHE) to train university professors across Iraq on the public policy making process. USAID-Tarabot trained professors from the Universities of Baghdad, Al Nahrain, Mustansiriyah, Qadissiyah, Wasit, Anbar, Mosul, and Dhi Qar. The objective of this intensive program was to train professors to lead an introductory course in public policy in their respective university, and plant the initial seed for public policy course offerings in the future. With MoHE support and USAID-Tarabot's technical assistance, the universities are expected to offer this introductory course in the coming academic year. Additionally, this program is designed to initiate the longer-term project of developing comprehensive public policy curricula in Iraq. Public policy is not taught in Iraqi universities with the exception of Al Nahrain University. The launch of public policy coursework at the university level is anticipated to coincide with the conclusion of the Tarabot project, with the project's legacy evident in the cycle of sustained education and improvement in Iraq's policy-making process.



Table 1: Illustrative list of Iraqi NGOs engaged by NPM-supported policy development, outreach, advocacy, and capacity-building activities:

VULNERABLE GROUPS SUPPORT & ADVOCACY	ACADEMIA & THINK TANKS	GENDER ORGANIZATIONS	MEDIA ASSOCIATIONS	AGRICULTURE & ECONOMIC GROWTH
Fatima House	Iraqi Institute for Economic Reform	Shams Al Rafidain Organization for Women	Free Media Center	Anwar Organization for Economic Development
Dilal Al Nakeel for Supporting Widows	Madarik Institute for Research and Studies	Tammoz for Development	Fikir Institute for Media and Culture	Babylon for Agriculture & Livestock Development
Al Kauthar for Orphans	Estiqraa for Research and Studies	Um Al Yateen Foundation	Women Journalists without Borders	Ruboo Al Rashid for Development
Channel Institute for Iraqi Orphans	Al Ain for Research and Development	Women's Rights Center Babil	Tareeq al Shaab Newspaper	The Iraqi Association for Environmental Protection
Omatuma Foundation for Disabled Persons	Republic Center for Security Research and Strategy	Kildanian Women's Federation	Al Mada Institute for Media and Culture	Sufaraa Institute for Development
Karbala Family and Childcare Organization	Progress Institute for Development	Baghdad Women's Group	Observatory for Journalistic Freedoms	Abu Ghraib Center for Agribusiness
Diwaniyah Association for the Care of Poor Families	Iktasaduna for Sustainable Development	Anwar Al Mustaqbal for Women's Care	Hakika Center for Media Development	Al Rafai for Agricultural Development

“THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION IS AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT IRAQI MINISTRIES BECAUSE IT TOUCHES MOST LIVES DAILY THROUGH LAND, AIR, OR MARINE TRANSPORTATION. USAID-TARABOT HAS WORKED WITH US SINCE THE FIRST DAYS OF 2012, AND IT HAS SINCE HELPED US TO PROVIDE THE BEST SERVICES FOR IRAQ’S CITIZENS. THE OUTCOMES OF THIS PARTNERSHIP HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT.”

— MR. BENKEN REKANI,
DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION



IRAQ SOLUTIONS FOR REGULATORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM (ISRAR)

CONTEXT: IRAQ'S BUSINESS-HINDERING ENVIRONMENT

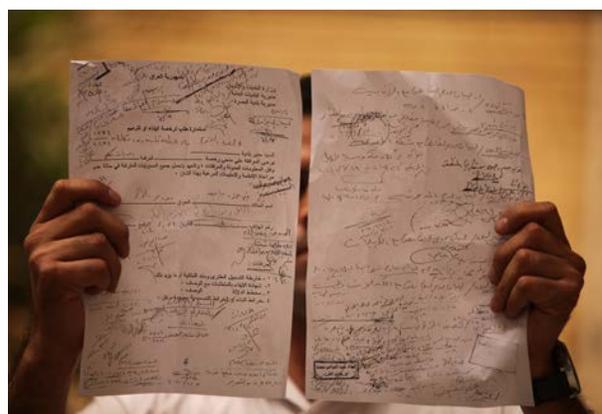
With over 25,000 laws and ministerial decrees on the books dating back decades, Iraq's legal framework is neither business friendly nor does it help the government to effectively deliver services to its citizens. In response to this challenge, USAID-Tarabot's Iraq Solutions for Regulatory and Administrative Reform (ISRAR) initiative partnered with government entities and private stakeholders to launch a national review of regulations, using the e-Guillotine method, to create an enabling environment for economic reforms. ISRAR's objective is to identify legislation and regulations that present an obstacle to economic growth, while building capacity for comprehensive regulatory reforms in Iraq based on sound economic principles.

During the first year of the project, ISRAR worked with the Prime Minister's Office to develop an initial package of recommendations focusing on key areas identified in the World Bank's Doing Business Report—construction permits, import-export licensing, and business registrations. The recommendations and potential impact of ISRAR's initial package persuaded the Government of Iraq to expand ISRAR activities across the national government. Reform units were established in 28 ministries and government entities, and \$483,000 in Gol cost share funding was committed to create and maintain a central unit to carry on ISRAR's work in regulatory reforms.

NOTABLE REGULATORY REFORM ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

MINISTRY OF TRADE COMPANY REGISTRATION PROCESS

In 2013, the World Bank determined that it took 60–90 days to register a company in Iraq. The process was complicated, involving approvals from multiple entities and



unnecessary fees, as well as a lawyer to successfully complete an application. ISRAR worked closely with the Ministry of Trade on this issue, and provided it with a full set of recommendations to reengineer its service processes, which have been adopted by the ministry in full. Significant changes include consolidating multiple company registration steps within the Ministry of Trade, reducing registration fees, and eliminating the need for a lawyer in the process. The Ministry of Trade has also taken initiative to deepen its working

relationships with other entities to expedite company registrations, such as having a branch of the Al Rasheed Bank beside the ministry to facilitate payments required during the process. The ministry is also working with the Ministry of Interior and the Iraqi Bar Association to hasten the entire registration process.

ISRAR's regulatory reviews are conducted through a transparent process built on extensive stakeholder input. ISRAR established private sector working groups to discuss and review regulations that affect them. Providing structured and informed recommendations to ISRAR's central unit, the participation of these working groups illustrate the support of the private sector for regulatory reforms in Iraq. With the support of ISRAR, the Ministry of Trade is also archiving all files to improve accountability in recordkeeping, maintaining a company registration website, and publishing updated guidelines on how best to access the ministry's One-Stop-Shop services.



CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Economic revitalization in Iraq will depend on its ability to quickly rebuild, yet construction processes are slowed by complex procedures for licenses that are lengthy and do not adequately address safety measures in infrastructure. Current construction licensing procedures require high fees and bureaucratic procedures that can delay project start-up by as many as 187 days. As a result, construction activities in Iraq are growing at a fraction of its potential. In consultation with the Ministries of Municipalities and Public

Works and Construction and Housing, ISRAR developed a set of reforms based on international best practices for the issuance of construction permits. These recommendations reduce the number of steps required to get a permit by 60 percent, assign a single window to handle an application from start to finish, and provide automatic approvals to builders if a decision is not made by a certain deadline. These recommendations have been finalized by ISRAR and all relevant stakeholders, and are ready to be approved for implementation.

IMPORT-EXPORT LICENSING

Countries with restrictive import-export regulations often suffer losses in economic productivity due to difficulties in moving goods across borders and distorted market practices. Iraq's strategic location and potential to act as a regional hub for goods and services are foundational to its economic future. Import and export procedures in Iraq are subjected to licensing requirements and product inspections that hinder and prevent trade in goods. Following years of advocacy by ISRAR and consultations with the highest levels of government and the Ministry of Trade, the Council of Ministers approved the removal of import licenses and forwarded the order onto the prime minister for his signature in July 2014.

ISRAR submitted draft instructions to the Ministry of Trade in March 2014, outlining a new import-export system based on economic best practices. The Minister of Trade demonstrated his support for the recommendation by penning a letter to the Committee of Economic Affairs of the Council of Ministries, formally endorsing ISRAR's recommendations. With these recommendations on hand, the former prime minister was able to quickly sign a new order, which allowed for the swift implementation of a new import-export regime.

During times of uncertainty, the elimination of import licenses can have a tremendous effect on the average citizen. Iraqis will no longer need to worry about long queues or a shortage of necessary goods and food staples. USAID-Tarabot is hopeful that citizens and the Government of Iraq will benefit from import liberalization, and that this will encourage them to also do away with export licensing.

STEPS TOWARD BROADER REFORM: COMPREHENSIVE REGULATORY REFORM PACKAGES

USAID-Tarabot delivered two regulatory reform packages to the Prime Minister's Advisory Council in 2014, comprising a total of 147 pieces of legislation. The first package contained general legislation, agreed

upon by both Tarabot and reviewing partners, for elimination. The second package contained legislations recommended for elimination because they were deemed unconstitutional. ISRAR will finalize its inward investment package, designed to reduce barriers to domestic investments in Iraq, and a fourth package for general legislations, at the end of 2014.

STEPS TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE, CYCLICAL GOI APPROACH TO REFORM

The extensive regulatory reforms needed to create an enabling environment in Iraq for economic growth and progress will require a long term commitment of time and resources. ISRAR has worked closely with PMAC and the Prime Minister's Office to ensure that Iraq is able to carry on necessary regulatory reforms into the future.

1. ISRAR set up and trained Ministry Units in 25 ministries and institutions with assistance from PMAC.
 2. PMAC set up an inter-ministerial ISRAR Steering Committee, chaired by head of PMAC Thamer Ghadban, to oversee and speed up recommended reforms.
 3. Iraq's first complete inventory of business regulations and procedures is completed. Almost 1,000 regulations are in the inventory and online in full text.
 4. An online open-access database is established, allowing for quick access to legislation under review, and thus improving transparency.
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“THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY USAID AND TARABOT HAS CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE HERE IN WASIT. OUR ENGINEERS HAVE LEARNED MODERN SKILLS PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN IN IRAQ, WE ARE PILOTING WORLD-CLASS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON OVER 20 IMPORTANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, AND WE NOW EVEN HAVE TRUE INTERNATIONAL FIRMS DOING BUSINESS HERE WHEN BEFORE THERE WERE NONE.”

— MAHMOOD ABDULRIDHA TALAL, GOVERNOR OF WASIT



SERVICES: ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION

The Administration Decentralization component of USAID-Tarabot emphasized the Project's eponymous concept of "linkages"—especially vertical linkages between the central government, the line ministries, and the increasingly endowed provincial governments, in order to accomplish a direct, felt, impact for large numbers of citizens.

USAID-Tarabot emphasized two dimensions of improving service delivery:

- Upstream service generation – improving Iraq's capital infrastructure investments
- Downstream service delivery – improving government services to its citizens

UPSTREAM SERVICE GENERATION – IMPROVING IRAQ'S CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Upstream service generation builds the capacity of the central government, line ministries, and provincial governments to plan, contract, implement, and monitor large infrastructure projects such as schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and tunnels, electricity generation and distribution, expanded service of water, sanitation and solid waste management. The Iraqi administration has been struggling up-hill with its national reconstruction program since the regime change of 2003 revealed the dilapidated state of infrastructure, the inexperience of the public sector personnel, and the inadequacies of systems for planning, budgeting, feasibility studies, procurement, implementation management of large investment projects were. This component of USAID-Tarabot truly picked up on the accomplishments under USAID-Tatweer, which helped raise "budget execution

rate" (the ability to simply spend the public budget) from levels below 30% up to levels over 85%, and trained over 100,000 public servants in basic management skills. USAID-Tarabot was dedicated to the quality of the national reconstruction program so that projects are completed on time and of sufficient quality.

Despite its extensive resources, the government's investments have seldom brought the intended and publically-felt improvements to Iraq's service-oriented infrastructure. Tarabot worked to improve the entire process for development investment performance through:

- Planning,
- Procurement, and
- Project Management.



In each of these crucial areas, Tarabot links the national strategic and enabling levels with the ministries' and provinces' selection and implementation responsibilities for specific projects. The results are impressive, especially in comparison to the struggles with low budget execution rates, as well as delays in and poor quality of projects in recent years. Iraq is finally mobilizing its considerable resources to provide basic services to its people.

TARABOT'S \$357 BILLION LEGACY: IRAQ'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2013-2017

The largest, most visible and far-reaching product of USAID-Tarabot's planning assistance is the government's transparent and inclusive process of formulating, and the Council of Ministers' approval, of the second National Development Plan (NDP) 2013-2017. Main features of the new NDP include:

- Capital investment of US\$357 billion dollars over five years
- Major investments to non-energy sectors including agriculture, industry, and tourism, facilitating an increasingly diversified Iraqi economy
- Planned investments would create jobs and decrease unemployment to 6% by the end of 2017
- Improved project-level planning and selection by ministries and provinces
- Two major NDP monitoring and management systems:
 - NDP monitoring system to monitor progress against high level benchmarks and indicator targets
 - Iraq Development Management System (IDMS) to manage and monitor progress on over 5,800 investment projects

Capitalizing on Experience. The government's decision to formulate the NDP 2013-2017 resulted from terms of the NDP 2010-2014 calling for a mid-plan progress review. This review noted successes and shortcomings in the previous NDP's progress, but more importantly revealed the great extent of



economic change since the previous NDP's adoption. These important economic developments included significant increase in projected oil revenue (based on cautious external international estimates of the petroleum markets), increased national oil production, and the active involvement of international oil companies. Also important are the greatly increased reconstruction budgets of the provinces. Given these transformations, the government decided to develop a new five-year plan rather than tweak the existing plan in its last two years. Ministry of Planning staff employed the same transparent and inclusive processes they had learned through the preparation of the previous plan, though improving upon them, and ensuring greater participation of the provinces and the Ministry of Finance in the process. The NDP 2013-2017 provides a comprehensive, updated, coordinated, analytical, and strategic approach to national development.

Technical Planning Assistance. Tarabot provided substantial advisory and technical support to the Ministry of Planning throughout the process of gathering and analyzing statistical data, drafting the plan, and developing a monitoring framework to evaluate its implementation progress. While incorporating central ideas from a previous plan – developed with the assistance of Tarabot's predecessor; USAID-Tatweer – the new NDP is updated to reflect these economic and political realities. With US\$357 billion in capital investments channeled into 5,861 development projects, the plan promotes the sustainable handling of oil revenues and a diversification of Iraq's economic base, while reducing poverty, improving education, upgrading health infrastructure, raising the



quality of life for vulnerable groups, and promoting sustainable environmental practices—all priorities in line with the government's central policy agenda.

Sustainability of the National Planning Process.

The success of the NDP extends well beyond the creation of a planning tool. As a sustainability-focused project, Tarabot's success in supporting the NDP lies equally in the broad capacity building from which the Ministry of Planning benefitted in the preparation process. The ministry brought to the process skills and knowledge acquired through developing the previous plan with the hands-on support of the Tatweer project; and the quality of the NDP 2013-2017 reflected those skills. Likewise, future NDPs will benefit from the ministry's experience with the Tarabot project.

Improving Ministry Project Planning and Selection Systems. USAID-Tarabot strove to improve the capacity of Gol officials to maximize the positive economic and

PLANNING TOOLS
Tarabot supported the Ministry of Planning in preparing an input-output table for the Iraqi economy, an important tool for gauging interdependencies among sectors of the national economy. By allowing the ministry to better discern the monetary value of inputs and outputs from various economic sectors, the table permits economic planning and resource allocation based on a more thorough analysis of the economic impact of investments. The tool supports the implementation of the NDP by allowing planners to forecast economic shifts and gauge the effectiveness of the projects included therein within a five-year period.

social impact of the capital investment budget by screening and selecting projects based on careful cost-benefit analyses of criteria covering economic, social, spatial, environmental, and financial considerations. To this end, USAID-Tarabot delivered a capacity building program, studying current planning processes and identifying weaknesses, developing selection criteria, and applying those criteria in the development of project plans or lists aligned with NDP goals. USAID-Tarabot's planning reform initiative worked with 10 ministries. Additionally, Tarabot continued its assistance to the Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs, Electricity, and Agriculture, assisting them to develop midterm investment plans that serve as broader strategies for prioritizing their project planning.

Improving Provincial Project Selection and Coordination Systems.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Provincial Affairs, USAID-Tarabot helped to establish Provincial Projects Steering Committees in Babil, Basrah, Diwaniyah, Muthanna and Ninawa to promote coordination in planning. These committees brought together officials from the line ministries, governorate offices, and other provincial stakeholders to discuss and select projects that would be most beneficial for the provinces.

Provincial project level planning in Iraq historically suffered from poor coordination, resulting in redundancy of projects and failure to efficiently match national objectives with the needs of citizens. This is partially the result of a dual budget system, in which ministries build infrastructure in the provinces using national capital investment funds, while governorate offices implement their projects through a separate regional development fund. Under this arrangement, ministries and governorate offices implemented projects independently of one another, with little to no coordination.

The newly established formal steering committees promoted improved project selection and coordination. For example, the Committees in Muthanna and Basrah capitalized on newly acquired technical skills, selection criteria, and an ongoing interface with ministry officials and other stakeholders to develop a well-rounded list of capital projects for 2013. These lists demonstrated

improved coordination among stakeholders, and closely reflected national and local development goals. In Muthanna, which suffers from drought, and registers among the lowest secondary education scores nationwide, selected projects included irrigation projects and schools. In Basrah, which also suffers from drought, projects selected by the committee included the installation of irrigation controllers, a conservation-minded addition to the renovation of the existing canal-based flood irrigation systems in a region where emblematic marshes were drained in part by irresponsible irrigation projects. Another project selected was for the construction of a dentistry college in the capital city. In all cases, the project lists developed reflect coordination that prevents duplicative and incompatible projects.

All five participating governorates submitted project lists to the Ministry of Planning, reflecting the work of the steering committees and with the use of USAID-Tarabot's project selection criteria. These lists demonstrate improved coordination among stakeholders, and more closely reflect national and local development goals. The graduation of these operational committees in October 2013 marked





an important achievement in USAID-Tarabot's work to improve capital investment in the provinces.

Investment Portfolio Management: the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS). Among the initiatives undertaken by Tarabot to support the implementation of the NDP is the Iraq Development Management System (IDMS), a comprehensive web-based application, available in Arabic and English, which facilitates management of the whole cycle of government and donor-funded development projects in Iraq. The development of the IDMS was a cooperative effort between USAID-Tarabot and UNDP, to transform UNDP's early Donor Activity Database (DAD) into a truly Iraqi managed system covering all development projects, donor and Iraqi. The system serves as a reliable and credible source of information on the distribution of development projects according to sector, location, and implementing institution. The IDMS feeds information for the decision-making process in planning, and will illuminate project implementation performance by ministry, sector, or individual projects. This information will allow government officials to make wiser decisions with its capital investment resources, and to better

identify and address any weaknesses in implementation, thus contributing to greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the allocation of development funds.

USAID-Tarabot trained targeted staff members from the Ministry of Planning and 57 other entities to update and enter project information into the system, query the system for information, and generate reports on capital investment projects and their implementation progress. The IDMS is a central component of the range of integrated initiatives undertaken by Tarabot with the goal of better equipping GoI partners to select, plan, and implement investment projects.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT REFORM

USAID-Tarabot, in partnership with the Ministry of Planning, is working to make use of its investment budget through fair and transparent procurement systems, ultimately leading to a more favorable environment for international businesses, and better services for the Iraqi people. USAID's investment in procurement improvement began with the major focus on procurement training in 2006, under the project's predecessor, USAID-Tatweer. Government units relied on disorganized, paper-based systems and antiquated processes that hindered transparency and efficiency in procurement. The government increasingly recognizes that large-scale projects require expertise that only international vendors offer, and sound procurement practices are essential to attracting them to Iraq. USAID-Tarabot works with the Ministry of Planning to deliver complementary capacity building activities and systems reform with the ultimate goal of establishing unified procurement system aligned with international standards. Tarabot has provided over 2,000 individuals with training on procurement processes, and facilitated practical application through ongoing technical support. Government partners are now implementing their capital investment budgets with greater transparency and efficiency, owing to improved procurement procedures.

Procurement Planning. Procurement planning is the foundation of Tarabot's procurement reforms. It is a process whereby stakeholders can determine their particular procurement needs and requirements,

and map out how they can be met. Procurement plans help government entities to more strategically approach decisions on what consultancies are needed and how to source them, while accounting for their annual budgets. In response to instructions issued by the Ministry of Planning, and with the assistance of Tarabot, a growing number of partners are now using standardized methods to plan their procurement activities. With well-prepared plans, government partners are better able to complete the contracting process on time by defining key activities and deadlines. This, in turn leads to improved execution of capital investment budgets.

Level Playing Fields and Standardized Bidding Documents. Tarabot's procurement reforms enhance transparency in contracting by leveling the playing field for consultants and firms. They help to create an environment conducive to fair and open competition in the tendering and award of contracts, and build the confidence of the private sector in the government's bidding process. USAID-Tarabot has supported 13 of its partner entities to prepare tender and contract documents for advertisement through the design of terms of references, evaluation of requests for proposals, use of prequalification documents, bid evaluation criteria, and workshops on bid opening and evaluation. Through this assistance, partner entities are equipped with the know-how to adequately identify procurement needs, specify requirements, and prepare and manage tenders for the bidding process. USAID-Tarabot promotes the use of standard bidding documents (SBDs) as a central pillar of its efforts to reform procurement processes.

International Web Portal. The public release and broad distribution of tenders are among the key requirements for an effective and transparent procurement system. In 2011, government entities were posting tenders through local newspapers, or in some cases on their websites, limiting the potential pool of applicants and expertise to respond to government needs. To address this, USAID-Tarabot began supporting its partners to use dgMarket, an open access web portal and the largest public venue for tenders and consulting opportunities worldwide. Government entities that have

subscribed to dgMarket increased from zero to 17 with the support of Tarabot, and 10 entities have successfully announced opportunities through this venue.

Procurement Record Management Systems. To ensure the integrity of Iraq's procurement methods and ensure timely access to information, USAID-Tarabot is also working with Government of Iraq partners to introduce record management systems and encourage the reporting of procurement activities. With Tarabot's assistance, 19 partner entities have reformed their record management systems to facilitate accountability in recordkeeping for procurement activities. Ten government entities are now documenting and reporting on their procurement activities, indicating work progress and communicating it to decision makers. This documentation provides information on future plans, contractual issues, achievement of performance indicators, and total monthly payments made. Government partners are now actively capitalizing on Tarabot's capacity building by applying the procurement processes they have learned throughout the entire procurement cycle.

Examples. With contracts awarded ranging from a few thousand dollars up in excess of US\$1 billion, the Iraqi public procurement system is working to provide better services and structures for the Iraqi people. Hundreds of millions of dollars in GoI tenders have now been issued according to international best practices. These include:

- Tenders for the procurement of maritime vessels. US\$385m. Ministry of Transportation (State Company for Maritime Transportation)
- Rehabilitation of residential neighborhoods. US\$28m. Governorate Office, Babil. US Construction Company
- Consulting services in project management & engineering. US\$54m. Governorate Office, Basrah US Consulting Company
- Design of a city sewage and storm water collection system. US\$25k. Governorate Office, Basrah

Ministry of Transportation. With the Ministry of Transportation, Tarabot supplemented the training of 171 ministry staff on procurement processes, working alongside ministry staff to guide them in the preparation of prequalification documents, terms of reference, and a request for proposals for the design and construction of vessels and tug boats valued at US\$380 million. Tarabot conducted bid opening and evaluation workshops for ministry staff to support the release of this tender, and provided technical assistance in drafting and posting invitations for prequalification. Tarabot helped the ministry to subscribe to and advertise the tender on dgMarket. The tender was advertised in July 2013, and received 23 expressions of interest; it was awarded to an international shipping firm in December of that year.

Babil Province. In July, 2014, after months of technical support from USAID-Tarabot, the Governorate of Babil awarded a \$10 million dollar contract to Mantid International, LLC, an American consulting firm, to develop a five-year investment strategy (2015–2020) and to implement their 2014 capital investment plan. Tarabot provided technical support for the development of a request for proposal, its announcement on dgMarket, bid analysis, and the preparation of a short list.

In Babil, with over 100 staff trained, Tarabot supported the application of procurement procedures for more than 60 public works and consultancy contracts including the construction and rehabilitation of more than 27 schools in the province, benefitting over 15,000 students; the design and implementation of a security camera network for all major cities in Babil as a security measure for residents, a contract valued at \$13 million and awarded to an international firm; and the rehabilitation of four neighborhoods in the city of Hilla, which included water and sewage networks, electricity, and roads, valued at \$28 million.

Through the tendering and award of these contracts, Government of Iraq partners have set a precedent for the successful application of the entire cycle of procurement practices promoted by Tarabot, including the use of standard bidding documents.



Central Government Enabling and Coordination.

As the chief coordinating entity for public contracting in Iraq, the Ministry of Planning has been a longstanding partner of USAID-Tarabot in procurement reform, and is positioning itself to take the lead on a national reform initiative. Tarabot has taken steps to prepare the ministry to do so through knowledge transfer and anchoring of sound practices. Procurement training was provided for Ministry of Planning staff, and was bolstered as staff worked with Tarabot to jointly conduct workshops and provide applied trainings for other GoI entities. These ongoing activities are important opportunities for Ministry of Planning staff to garner knowledge about procurement and acquire training skills, which will be critical as the ministry moves forward with the initiative.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT REFORM

Deficiencies in government project management capacity have historically plagued service delivery, as projects are delayed, run over budget, or sometimes canceled altogether. With the support of USAID-Tarabot and COMSEC, many government entities have

worked to address these shortcomings by embracing modern project management tools to improve scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring and controlling.

Now, Iraqis are enjoying more hours of electricity and more clean water. New schools and health facilities are opening their doors. As per the National Development Plan, the GoI is taking on over 5,800 projects, and with the use of internationally recognized processes developed by the Project Management Institute (PMI), it is able to better ensure that projects are completed on time and on budget. This is an encouraging sign as the political and security environment places great pressure on the government to show quick improvements in service delivery.

Tarabot's training and technical assistance focuses on five elements of the PMI system:

- Estimation Techniques. First, feasibility studies and other estimation techniques outline a project's value, the costs and resources required to carry it to successful completion, as well as potential threats
- Earned Value Management (EVM). Performance during a project's execution stage is measured through Earned Value Management, a process which helps project managers anticipate dates for project completion based on performance indexes, and enables them to make necessary adjustments as well as take corrective action to keep it on track
- MS Project. Tarabot promotes the use of the MS Project software package, a straightforward automated tool that dovetails with PMI processes for assigning resources, managing budgets, and tracking progress, and facilitates the comprehensive and precise breakdown of project work and activities
- Institutional Development. Establishment of Project Management Offices
- Professional Development. Engineers' PMI Certification and training

PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS (PMP)

USAID-Tarabot has also supported government engineers in their pursuit of certification as Project Management Professionals (PMP). The rigorous study and skill set required to achieve this certification makes PMP-certified candidates highly valuable in the public and private sectors.

By assisting its Government of Iraq partners to pilot project management tools with hands-on experience with over 50 pilot projects, Tarabot set a strong precedent for their successful application, which is leading to broadening institutionalization as this number grows, and a sizeable group of engineers hone their skills in many ministries and, especially, provinces.

Wasit. USAID-Tarabot assisted the Governorate Office to apply PMI processes throughout the lifecycle of a project for the construction of a water treatment plant, which was completed in July, 2014. The plant's capacity to provide clean water will be key in servicing a population that is expected to double in the next ten years, and which has been strained by inflows of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Estimation, scheduling and EVM techniques, as well as MS Project were used to plan the project and measure performance, and the project was completed ahead of schedule.

Wasit's Broad Adoption of PMI Systems. Having witnessed the effectiveness of PMI processes, the Governorate of Wasit went on to select over 30 projects for their application, and the Governor has pledged to expand this number significantly. These projects address needs for education, health, transportation, and sanitation infrastructure, and serve as a strong example of the need for PMI processes, and the effectiveness of pilot projects in bringing about increased institutionalization.

Babil. Engineers from the Governorate Office originally expected that a new water treatment plant would need

75 days to become operational and be connected to the existing water treatment network. During this time, sewage discharge would pass through unfiltered into the Euphrates River. Employing PMI processes for scheduling and estimation, the governorate was able to reduce the costs, time, and resources needed to address major deficiencies in the project's plan and to complete it in nearly half the expected time. Engineers were able to reduce the gap in the time of unfiltered sewage by 30 days. Now, approximately five million gallons of clean water pass through the water plant each day, positively impacting the health of Babil residents and neighboring provinces while contributing to responsible and sustainable environmental practices.

Najaf. The governorate decided to pilot the application of MS Project and PMI processes on the Al-Askareen Tunnel Project—a main road linking major hubs in the provinces of Najaf, Karbala, and Diwaniyah—valued at US\$11.2 million. Despite being one of the largest and most strategically important projects in the province, it had suffered from delays, cost overages, and a lack of coordination between engineers and the implementing firm. Using MS Project, a report was generated that showed significant project delays, requiring immediate corrective action for its timely completion. The contracting firm responded by significantly increasing the size of key

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICES

Many government entities have also embraced PMI systems through the establishment of Project Management Offices to oversee capital investment projects and ensure their rapid and cost-effective implementation with up-to-date methodologies, functions, and organizational structures. A total of 12 project management offices have been established in Iraq, and Tarabot has supported many of them to improve their functionality through restructuring and other means, with a goal of improving the ability of a given entity to implement projects.

worker groups, rectifying the lag in implementation and in October 2013 the project was completed.

Najaf's Broad Adoption of PMI Systems. The governor mandated the use of MS Project for 36 resident engineers' offices employing over 340 engineers.

Ministry of Construction and Housing. The ministry piloted PMI processes on a small but politically important project for the reconstruction of the Sayyidet Al Najat church in Baghdad, which had suffered a terrorist attack in 2010. Like other faiths in Iraq dislocated by violence, Christians were losing the belief they could safely worship again. The ministry pledged to rebuild the church and began its work in 2012; however, the project suffered from a six-month delay in scheduling. Tarabot helped the contractor to identify problems in implementation, and ministry engineers were able to speed up the completion of the renovation by using MS Project to develop new timelines and reallocate resources. Now, a parish of over 300 is able to workshop again in a fully rehabilitated church.

MoCH's Broad Adoption of PMI Systems. The successful completion of this project set a precedent for the value of MS Project, which resulted in an official order from the minister for the program to be applied across the ministry's capital investment portfolio. With Tarabot's assistance, engineers from the ministry went on to apply their new skills on a project for the construction of a laboratory in Baghdad, budgeted at \$15 million, which will conduct quality testing for construction materials. Tarabot assisted in developing the project's work breakdown structure, estimating costs and timelines, tracking project progress based on time and budget indicators, and applying MS Project for scheduling.

Ministry of Electricity and Basrah's Project Management Office. The Ministry of Electricity's Al Najibiyah power station in Basrah is projected to provide an extra 500kw of power to Iraq to close the gap between Iraq's supply and demand; however, even small shifts in market prices for materials, labor timelines, and other unexpected setbacks can have detrimental effects on the implementation of a complex project valued at US\$271 million. With the intervention of Tarabot and the

newly established Basrah Project Management Office, realistic timelines for project activities and the training of Ministry of Electricity engineers on standard monitoring and control systems, the ministry was able to manage project variance, respond to material and labor change requests, and put the project on an improved schedule. This station will provide Iraqis in Basrah and elsewhere on the national grid with more hours of electricity per day.

Central Government Support and Guidance for Project Management Reform. COMSEC has taken an active role in promoting Tarabot's project management reform initiative. In coordination with Tarabot, COMSEC sponsored a national project management conference in March 2014. The conference resulted in a list of recommendations issued to the Gol by COMSEC with the goal of broadening and improving adoption of PMI

processes, as well as encouraging certification as Project Management Professionals, and the establishment of project management offices. In September 2014, COMSEC co-hosted a forum with Tarabot to bring together project managers and engineers from a range of government entities to discuss improving the functionality of project management offices and the oversight of project implementation. Over 50 ministerial and governorate representatives shared their successes and challenges, and produced a list of recommendations. By supporting COMSEC to take oversight of this initiative, Tarabot continues to ensure its sustainability, leaves a legacy of concrete improvement to services, and deep, sustainable institutional reform that will continue to spread and benefit the Iraqi people for years to come.



Table 2: Illustrative Examples from the over \$500 million portfolio of Service-Generating Pilot Projects Successfully Adopting PMI Techniques

GoI IMPLEMENTER	PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	VALUE
MoEL	Al Najibiya Power Plant	Basrah	US \$271m
MoO	Oil Depot	Maysan	US \$82.5m
MoTR	Ground Transportation Company Compound and Staging Area	Baghdad	US \$23.2m
Najaf GO	Muslim Bin Aqeel Tunnel	Najaf	US \$19.1m
MoIM	Galvanization Factory	Baghdad	US \$16.3m
Ninawa GO	Al Najar – Iqtisadiyeen Bridge	Ninawa	US \$16m
MoIM	Khalidia Bridge	Basrah	US \$14.8m
Wasit GO	Al Naseej / Al Mutanabi Square Project	Wasit	US \$13.7m
Babil GO	Wastewater Treatment Plant	Babil	US \$12m
Najaf GO	Al Askareen Tunnel	Najaf	US \$11.3m
MoCH	Materials Quality Testing Laboratory	Baghdad	US \$8m
Wasit GO	Al Khachiyah Neighborhood Electrical Network	Wasit	US \$6.1m
Diwaniyah GO	Multistory Parking Garage	Diwaniyah	US \$3.7m
Wasit GO	500 m3 Water Compact Unit	Wasit	US \$2.6m
MoA	Refrigerated Crop Storage Warehouse	Wasit	US \$2.5m
MoMD	Provincial Branch Office, serving IDPs	Muthanna	US \$2m
Najaf GO	Sports and Games Center	Najaf	US \$1.9m
Diwaniyah GO	Secondary School Campus	Diwaniyah	US \$1.5m
MoH	Primary Healthcare Center	Baghdad	US \$1m
MoCH	Sayyidat Al Najat Church	Baghdad	US \$600k

DOWNSTREAM SERVICE DELIVERY – IMPROVING GOI SERVICES TO ITS CITIZENS

Downstream Service Delivery Systems introduce new information systems and specialized customer service elements that improve the experience of citizens in their interactions with government agencies. USAID-Tarabot worked extensively to establish or overhaul the following programs:

- Social Safety Net
- One-Stop-Shop Service Centers
- Citizens' Complaint System
- Decentralization
- Center of Excellence

SOCIAL SAFETY NET (SSN)

The Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs successfully completed the automation of the huge Social Safety Net program that provides \$500 million per year to 1.7

million qualified needy beneficiaries. By October 2014, the system had identified duplicative and improper claims amounting to \$41 million, \$22 million of which have already been reprogrammed as long-overdue monthly allowance increases to Iraqis with verified needs.

Background. In 2007, the Socio Economic Survey, carried out by the Ministry of Planning, revealed that about one-fourth of Iraqis lived under the poverty line. In response, the Government of Iraq took corrective measures, including the overhaul of the corrupt and inefficient cash distribution system through the old Social Safety Net programs. The new Social Safety Net system was designed to improve upon and correct the deficiencies of its primitive predecessor, which depended on isolated databases in 15 provinces, enabling misuse and corruption. Under this system, individuals were able to register to receive benefits in multiple provinces, and ineligible citizens were able to wrongfully receive benefits as the system in place was unable to detect duplicate or improper applicants.



The Social Safety Net automation project was championed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs with the support of USAID and the World Bank over a period of six years. The World Bank supported the ministry with the hardware and know-how required to establish the Social Safety Net, while USAID supported its software development and system roll-out. To establish the new system, 15 data centers were set up throughout Iraq's 15 provinces with customized software for the automation of the distribution of benefits. The datacenters were combined into a unified database at the headquarters of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Beneficiaries. The SSN project covers 473,407 families and 1,774,204 persons. Over a million widows, orphans, and disabled persons will be receiving modest monthly allowances through an efficient, fair, and transparent SSN system, which serves clients in every province and major city through the Ministry's SSN service centers. Beneficiaries are able to access their information from any of the service centers, whereas before they could only utilize the service center where they originally registered. Given the amount of displacement in Iraq, and the mobility from province to province, the ability to access accurate records from any location, and to receive the monthly payments from any location, is a major improvement for the convenience of the beneficiaries who are among Iraq's most vulnerable people. Furthermore, the new system provides real-time accurate information on clients, or if there are inaccuracies, it provides an automated means of review and correction.

Restoring Confidence in the Social Welfare System.

During the first run of the program, 54,000 records were flagged as suspicious, either as duplicates or not meeting requisites for receiving benefits. The SSN had long had a well-deserved reputation for corruption. The new system restores confidence in government fairness regarding the distribution of benefits to those who truly deserve them. The system is fully owned and operated by the ministry using its own staff and an allocated annual operational budget of \$300,000. The ministry's ownership of the system ensures its sustainability, and the successful reform of the system serves as a model for other national support systems (widows, retirement, and so forth).

KRG Social Safety Net. USAID also in late 2013 was requested by the Kurdistan Regional Government to assist them to complete their SSN system that had been suspended due to Kurdistan political issues in 2010. USAID's interest in this was that it would establish a national SSN system, as originally intended, and, for one benefit, would allow the comparison of the Kurdistan data with the data from the rest of the country in the interests of uncovering duplicate entries. The KRG SSN was completed in 2014. (Other aspects of the KRG SSN are discussed in the KRG section of this report.)

ONE-STOP-SHOP SERVICE CENTERS

USAID-Tarabot introduced the One-Stop-Shop service center concept that can make a tangible impact in Iraq's efforts to effectively deliver government services to the public, and improve the interface between government and its citizens. Tarabot's service center concept is based on three elements:

- A modern physical infrastructure;
- Automated and "re-engineered" information systems; and
- Service staff trained in modern approaches to customer-oriented management.

Background. Long lines, crowds, complicated procedures, and rude treatment have long been pervasive obstacles to citizens every time they need to secure a permit, notarize a document, or register for a government service. To address this, USAID-Tarabot introduced the One-Stop-Shop service center model to make a rapid and tangible impact on the government's ability to deliver services.

Architectural Design of One-Stop-Shops.

In collaboration with its Government of Iraq partners, USAID-Tarabot contracted a leading regional architectural firm to develop a professional, scalable design of a One-Stop-Shop service center. The design reflects the principles of linear business flow, customer comfort, and easy access for physically disabled persons. Tarabot has developed and tailored two- and three-dimensional architectural designs for the Ministries of Municipalities and Public Works, Oil, Migration and Displaced, Labor and Social Affairs, and Justice.



Automated Customer Records System.

To streamline processes and improve customer interactions, Tarabot supported a complete shift from paper-based to automated systems. To accomplish this, USAID-Tarabot worked with its government counterparts to thoroughly analyze and reengineer their business processes to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance with One-Stop-Shop principles. The product of this exercise became the basis for the design of customer service center software, which COMSEC completed with its own funds.

Customer Service Training. USAID-Tarabot delivered training in modern customer service techniques to over 400 personnel slated to man the One-Stop-Shops, stressing the treatment of the people applying for services as clients to be served as efficiently and politely as possible.

Support from National Executive Offices. In partnership with the Prime Minister's Advisory Council (PMAC), the One-Stop-Shop service center model and design was launched at a conference in April 2013 with the attendance of over four hundred delegates. In August 2013, the Council of Ministers' Secretariat (COMSEC) issued an official endorsement of the One-Stop-Shop model to all government entities, encouraging them to establish these service centers as a means of reforming public administration and improving services. USAID-Tarabot is working with COMSEC to develop long-term plans to scale up the deployment of One-Stop-Shop centers across

the nation, and COMSEC has taken the step of forming a committee that will be charged with championing the initiative. In October 2014, Tarabot formally gave all materials related to the One-Stop-Shop to the new Secretary General of COMSEC, Dr. Hamed Khalaf.

With the support of USAID-Tarabot, COMSEC is taking steps to make the One-Stop-Shop a reality for Iraqi citizens. Tarabot has conducted a workshop to provide an overview of procurement processes with a focus on selecting consultants and using standard bidding documents to develop requests for proposals. In the future COMSEC's One-Stop-Shop team will provide support to Government of Iraq entities to develop requests for proposals for software. Additionally, COMSEC's committee to oversee the implementation of the service center model is now equipped with blueprints, brochures, training materials, requests for proposals, terms of reference, and a physical model.

First One-Stop-Shop Established. A precedent for the establishment of a One-Stop Shop has been set, as Tarabot and the Kurdistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs completed renovations of a Service Center in Dahuk, which has now opened its doors to SSN beneficiaries. Tarabot has also assisted seven other entities in completing steps required to establish One-Stop Shops, and now with the ownership of COMSEC, an informational campaign by Tarabot, and the completion of the center in Dahuk, momentum is growing and a widening circle of GoI entities is demonstrating interest in establishing their own service centers.

CITIZENS' COMPLAINT SYSTEM

Fully Automated National System. The Citizen's Complaint System is a fully automated system designed to handle citizens' complaints by connecting 55 Citizen Affairs Offices in ministries, governors' offices, and other entities with the Directorate of Public Relations and Citizen Affairs at COMSEC. The project aims to reduce the routines and bureaucratic procedures for how government departments and ministries receive and respond to citizens' complaints. The new system, through better information sharing and transparency, will enable new levels of accountability from

government directorates and offices to the citizens of Iraq and the central government, and take citizens' issues seriously by considering them to be clients, for whom they are working.

Cooperation with Four USAID Projects. USAID first began its cooperation with COMSEC's Directorate of Public Relations and Citizen Affairs in 2009 under the USAID-Tatweer project when they automated their internal records on complaints, making it easier to track follow-up on complaints and to produce professional quarterly reports on the program. In 2013, COMSEC requested USAID's Access to Justice Project and the Tarabot Administrative Reform Project to assist with making the system fully automated and transparent from citizens' filing of complaints through COMSEC's and ministries' and governors' offices follow up and response. In order to reach out to all provinces, the COMSEC/Tarabot/Access to Justice team reached out the USAID's project on provincial governance, Taqadum, to connect with the existing citizen affairs offices in the provinces. Tarabot assisted COMSEC in designing the software system and in preparing the specifications for its request for proposals.

Cost Sharing. COMSEC provided the funding of \$250,000 for the program.

DECENTRALIZATION INITIATIVE

Iraq has a long history of highly centralized government, and recently a highly politicized environment on the issue of decentralization. At the start of the USAID-Tarabot project the examples were countless with provincial representatives of central ministries unable to approve employee vacation requests without explicit approval from Baghdad—much less manage bank accounts, or even authorize repairs for a broken water pipeline. These and many similar requirements of centralized administrative approvals delayed and hindered government agencies in providing basic services to citizens.

From Politics to Practicalities. Under USAID-Tarabot, the topic of decentralization evolved from theoretical discussion to concrete and practical steps.

Ministries have begun to relinquish authorities to local government, and local capacity to receive these authorities has greatly improved. Tarabot worked with central ministries, their provincial directorates, as well as governorate offices to explore opportunities to

EXAMPLES OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES DELEGATED TO MINISTRIES' PROVINCIAL DIRECTORATES

- The authority to open and manage local bank accounts (MoYS)
- Authorize the purchase of equipment, computers, and stationery (MoYS)
- Increase municipal officials' spending limits from US\$43,000 to US\$86,000 for operations, maintenance, and repair issues (MoMPW)
- Approve staff vacation, leave for special training, or conference participation (MoEnv)
- Purchase stationery and fuel as well as publish documents (MoEnv)
- Approve staff for local travel within Iraq (MoLSA)
- Conduct inter-office correspondence (MoLSA)
- Issue recommendations and appreciation letters to staff (MoLSA)
- Authorize provincial directorates to exercise more financial authority, including transfers between different parts of the operational budget (MoEd)

push operational decision-making authorities closer to the levels where services are actually delivered. If endowed with sufficient administrative autonomy, local governments are better able to assess and respond to local needs. Local government is more easily held accountable, and falls under greater pressure to explain or justify what it has done or failed to do. Tarabot's efforts dovetail with the aforementioned planning, procurement, and project management initiatives, which improved the capacity of these local entities to receive their new responsibilities.



Three Levels of Decentralization: Deconcentration, Delegation, and Devolution.

Decentralization has taken various forms—Deconcentration, Delegation and Devolution—whereby central ministries grant their own provincial directorates increased authority or fully devolve responsibilities to local government. Ministries are often reluctant to fully devolve authority, irrevocably relinquishing it from the ministry's control and giving it to a governor. In contrast, delegation and de-concentration are less politically sensitive, and yet can positively impact the responsiveness of government to citizens' needs and desires. They may not offer as much autonomy and accountability as devolution, whereby an authority would be given to a governor who is appointed by a locally elected provincial council. However, they can establish a functional structure for localized service delivery, which can later be devolved to local government as fully functioning systems. The work of Tarabot's decentralization initiative first focused primarily on identifying administrative functions, promoting their delegation and de-concentration as practical and

palatable, yet effective steps towards decentralization and improved service delivery.

Delegation of “Minor” Administrative Authorities to Provincial Directorates of Line Ministries.

Nearly every ministry Tarabot worked under the initiative delegated some powers to provincial directors, and a total of 60 specific delegations to provincial directors have been made by ministerial order or letter. These delegations include key authorities such as procurement and contracting and human resources management, which are identified by the World Bank as being among the most critical to the autonomy of local governments. Furthermore, most Iraqis in or out of government acknowledge the necessity to delegate at least some routine procurement, human resources, contracting, operational and enforcement authorities to provincial offices. For this reason, the ever-present ideological, interest-based, and practical opposition to decentralization does not present so frequent an impediment to these specific and critical areas of reform.

Raising the Amounts of Provincial Level Financial Authorizations.

With the advocacy and support of Tarabot, the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works has delegated authority of up to 500 million IQD for operations and maintenance, as well as payment of operations and maintenance bills of up to 100 million IQD. It has also granted directors general authority equal to that of the minister to authorize capital investment projects within the province. The Ministry of Youth and Sports delegated authority to contract units with corresponding bank accounts. This shift, an antecedent for financial decentralization, significantly accelerates procurements for equipment, maintenance, and construction, to the great benefit of youth clubs and centers in each province.

Devolution of Authorities from Line Ministries' Headquarters to Provincial Government.

USAID-Tarabot helped bring about full devolution of authorities in several instances. Tarabot brokered devolution of power to provincial government by assisting the Babel governor in persuading the Minister of Education to implement a provision in Article 13 of the 2013 budget

law which allows ministers to transfer capital projects to provincial governments. In this case, the Minister of Education gave control of all school building projects within Babel governorate to the governorate. The Deputy Minister of Environment has also formed a committee to pilot the devolution of authority over environmental enforcement and clean-up in Basrah province. While limited in number, such instances of devolution set an important political precedent.

Revisions to the Provincial Powers Act, Law 21.

While USAID-Tarabot's assistance has focused on the nuts and bolts of decentralization, it also indirectly, yet significantly, contributed to Iraq's national decentralization legislation in the 2013 revision to Iraq's Law 21, or the Provincial Powers Act. Law 21 is the main legislative pillar for decentralization in Iraq; however, in its initial drafting in 2008 its impact was weakened by inconsistencies and ambiguities including ambiguities regarding divisions of authority between federal and local legislative, executive, and financial bodies, and with other federal laws. USAID-Tarabot provided technical assistance to stakeholders involved in the re-thinking and re-drafting of the law, notably governorate offices. In August 2013, Iraq's parliament passed a revised Law 21 that adopted stronger guidelines for decentralization, rectifying many of its constraints and hindrances. In several places, clauses and language present in the law were taken nearly word-for-word from USAID-Tarabot recommendations to its partners in the governorate offices. Finally, Article 45 of the newly-revised Law 21 identifies seven ministries to be "decentralized", requiring that they develop plans over a two-year period to fully devolve their responsibilities to provincial governments.

THE IRAQI CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT

Establishment of High Level National Excellence Center. The establishment of the Iraq Center for Excellence in Government is the critical culmination of years of efforts to promulgate programs in government ministries and institutions to address performance improvement in areas of citizen service. Experience shows, with similar apex excellence centers in Jordan and Dubai, that the high level Excellence Center is essential to the sustainability

EXAMPLES OF ICEG'S TARGETED SHORT-TERM, HIGH-IMPACT SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

- **Ministry of Construction and Housing:** 1) to reduce time in processing complaints made by suppliers, contractors, and citizens; and 2) in receiving responses from responsible authorities.
- **Ministry of Transport:** 1) to reduce time in processing complaints made by suppliers, contractors, and citizens; and 2) in receiving responses from responsible authorities.
- **Ministry of Health, Medical City Facility:** 1) to improve the process of patient entrance and registration to the medical consulting room; and 2) to improve the process of patient entrance and registration to the Surgical OR room.
- **Ministry of Human Rights:** reduce bureaucratic hurdles and waiting times for families affected by 1) the search for missing persons since 2003 in Iraq; and 2) the search for war prisoners from both Gulf Wars.

of individual ministries' performance programs, and, most importantly, essential to the continued expansion of performance improvement actions throughout the government.

Following this model, the Iraq Excellence Center will set and disseminate standards, based on the widely accepted European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). This model provides a holistic view of an entity based on seven institutional development criteria – leadership, people, knowledge, strategy, resources, processes, and



results – and how these elements relate to one another to affect organizational performance.

The center will provide audits of participating ministries' performance improvement programs, and, most visibly, establish a prestigious annual awards program, highlighting and putting the spotlight on the best government service improvement programs.

Excellence/Performance Progress in 12 Ministries.

Leading up to the establishment of the Iraq Excellence Center, USAID-Tarabot worked with an impressive range of public institutions, including the Ministry of Construction & Housing, Ministry of Health (including the ministry and selected medical facilities), the Ministry of Transportation (including the Port Authority operations), the Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Migration & Displaced, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Basrah University, Mosul University, and COMSEC. Of these organizations, four had developed (under Tarabot) quality improvement programs and units (ISO 9001), and five had developed organizational development units, addressing service provision systems. With the official establishment of the Excellence program they all transformed their achievements from these initiatives to be compatible with the Excellence model. Tarabot trained 755 staff members from across a range of ministries and entities

in the core components of the Excellence model, including Organizational Development, Process Development, and Quality Management, providing them with the knowledge and capacity to apply it within their own organizations. Four ministries sent their staff to the King Abdullah II Center of Excellence in Jordan for training, and eleven of the participating ministries completed their assessments and action plans, and in some cases, began implementation.

Continuing Requirements for ICEG Sustainability.

With COMSEC's ownership, the Iraq Center for Excellence in Government has the high level visibility and leadership needed to ensure the sustainability and continued expansion of this initiative. However, the Center itself will require more technical assistance and experience in order to develop the technical credibility and leadership required. This technical assistance is available from regional government excellence centers, such as the King Abdullah II center, or from international assistance programs. The IGEC, fully functioning, serves as the "sustainability insurance" necessary to protecting the investments that USAID-Tarabot and many institutions of the Government of Iraq have made in Public Administration Reform and Modernization.

OTHER TARABOT INITIATIVES:

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (KRG)

In response to a special request from the Kurdish Ministry of Planning and the Kurdish Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, USAID amended the Tarabot project to engage with the Kurdistan Regional Government in late 2013. The intent of this intervention was to rapidly assist key Kurdish ministries in a select number of Tarabot's focus areas, most notably project management and service delivery. USAID, the Kurdistan Ministry of Planning and the Kurdistan Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs signed MoUs in October 2013, outlining the technical engagement, cost sharing, and other details. USAID-Tarabot established office and residential space, assigned and seconded staff to the program, and began work immediately.

KRG Project Management. The improved implementation of capital investment projects is a major component of USAID-Tarabot's work in Iraq. In Kurdistan, Tarabot worked build the capacity over 100 staff from critical service ministries—the Kurdistan Ministries of Construction and Housing, Municipality and Tourism, and Electricity—through the introduction and facilitation of critical Project Management Institute techniques. With the use of up-to-date methodologies, functions, and organizations, the offices will help Kurdish ministries to oversee and manage their capital investment projects, and ensure their rapid and cost-effective implementation.

KRG Branches of the Social Safety Net. Beginning in 2013, USAID-Tarabot worked to deploy the SSN system in the KRG, where it provides benefits for 150,000 families or 750,000 individuals. As was the case throughout federal Iraq, the new SSN replaced multiple and disconnected databases in Kurdistan's provinces and link them, thus eliminating duplicate records and ineligible payments. Tarabot completed the installation of the system in all sites in the Kurdistan Regional Government. This makes the new SSN system a truly national system, capable of also checking for duplicate entries between the Kurdistan Region and the other 15 provinces.



KRG One-Stop-Shop in Dahuk. As part of its SSN program in Kurdistan, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and USAID-Tarabot added a One-Stop-Shop facility to the provincial office in Dahuk. USAID-Tarabot developed and delivered a professional, scalable architectural design of the One-Stop-Shop service center for the Dahuk Directorate of the Social Safety Net, and provided technical support for the redesign of the existing site to ensure it reflects the principles of linear business flow, customer comfort, and easy access for the physically

disabled. Additionally, technical assistance was provided to introduce and enhance the customer service skills of Social Safety Network staff in the Dahuk Directorate. Tarabot worked with the Kurdistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to complete the renovations of the center into Iraq's first example of the One-Stop-Shop model, which has opened its doors to the SSN clients. Also innovative, the One-Stop-Shop facility in Dahuk is supported by a Corporate Responsibility Grant of \$150,000 from Chevron to help cover the costs of the automated customer system.

EDUCATION CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE (ECBI)

At the request of the Ministry of Education, USAID added a special capacity development component to the Tarabot project in order to provide the ministry public administration capacity development training, based on the previous Tatweer project model. Under this component, USAID-Tarabot trained a critical mass of Ministry of Education staff in the development of core area skills in project management, fiscal management and budgeting, information technology, procurement, and leadership and communication.

Training Management Capacity. Tarabot also introduced training management concepts and structures that will continue delivering these management skills programs. Upon completion of the program, those trained become subject matter experts in how to analyze, conduct, evaluate, and implement the ministry's training programs. Through this program, Tarabot introduced critical aspects of the Training Management System to the ministry and laid the groundwork for future training programs in the ministry and its directorates. With this solid footing, the ministry has actively pursued a contract with the World Bank to further efforts achieved with Tarabot in the implementation of this training management program in its Teacher Training Institute and Training Development section.

Three-Tiered Program. The training program is centered around four distinct modules focusing on analysis, design, evaluation, and implementation. These modules are designed to provide participants with the skills and knowledge to: 1) identify training requirements within their ministry, 2) develop training courses that will fulfill the training shortfalls identified in the analysis process, 3) conduct training evaluations, and 4) implement effective training programs. The following are the three

tiers of training personnel:

- **Subject Matter Experts/Trainers.** USAID-Tarabot equipped 533 ministry staff as Subject Matter Experts with the ability to identify administrative deficiencies throughout the ministry and its directorates, and develop the necessary training courses and programs to meet shortfalls.
- **Trainers of Trainers (TOT).** Of the subject matter experts, 117 qualified to become Trainers of Trainers. Instructed and certified by Tarabot, they are qualified to educate future Subject Matter Experts.

Master Trainers. In Tarabot's final round of training, 57 trainers of trainers out of the pool of 117 were qualified as Master Trainers, responsible for managing training programs, introducing new courses, performing training needs assessments, and training new TOTs as needed.

Cost Share. To illustrate ownership of this initiative and ensure the sustainability of Tarabot's work, the Government of Iraq allocated \$2.1 million in cost share funding to support USAID-Tarabot's activities with the Ministry of Education.

PEOPLE: CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

The Civil Service Reform component, building directly on successes from the earlier Tatweer project, especially the enactment of the Civil Service Commission Law re-establishing the semi-independence of the civil service, as well as putting into law the principles of merit-based hiring and promotion, including gender equality, and disallowing hiring and promotion based on sectarian affiliations. This law reinstated the Commission that was abolished by Saddam Hussein, and its passage fulfilled an important requirement of the new Iraqi Constitution.

The plan under Tarabot was to follow up with the enactment of a new Civil Service Reform law that would replace the previous 1960 law that had become encrusted with over 600 contradictory amendments. The new law was drafted by the COMSEC Committee on Civil Service Reform, including a companion law to establish a much-needed Senior Executive Service. The drafts of these laws were reviewed by the lawyers of the Shura Council as well as by the Secretary General

of COMSEC and the Office of the Prime Minister. However it proved impossible to gain adequate support from the Council of Representatives to push these two laws forward.

At the same time it proved equally impossible, despite several attempts on the part of the government, to persuade the Council of Representatives to approve two successive slates of proposed members of the Civil Service Commission, leaving the federal Civil Service Commission as well as the proposed Provincial Civil Service Commissions in limbo. Despite the government's efforts, supported by USAID's Tatweer and Tarabot projects, civil service reform remained the "third rail" of Iraqi politics.

Given this situation, the COMSEC formed a Committee on Civil Service Reform and focused Tarabot's efforts on capacity development to improve HR management structures and functions in the ministries, and to prepare the Governorate Offices and Provincial Councils for the expected introduction of Provincial Civil Service Commissions. The COMSEC Committee plan was to keep the civil service reform momentum alive by developing technical skills and introducing the new structures spelled out in the stalled Civil Service Reform bill. Tarabot experts delivered technical assistance and training to eight ministries and five governors' offices to establish a new and integrated civil service structure in each ministry,



linking manpower planning, annual training programs, and hiring and promotions in a single structure.

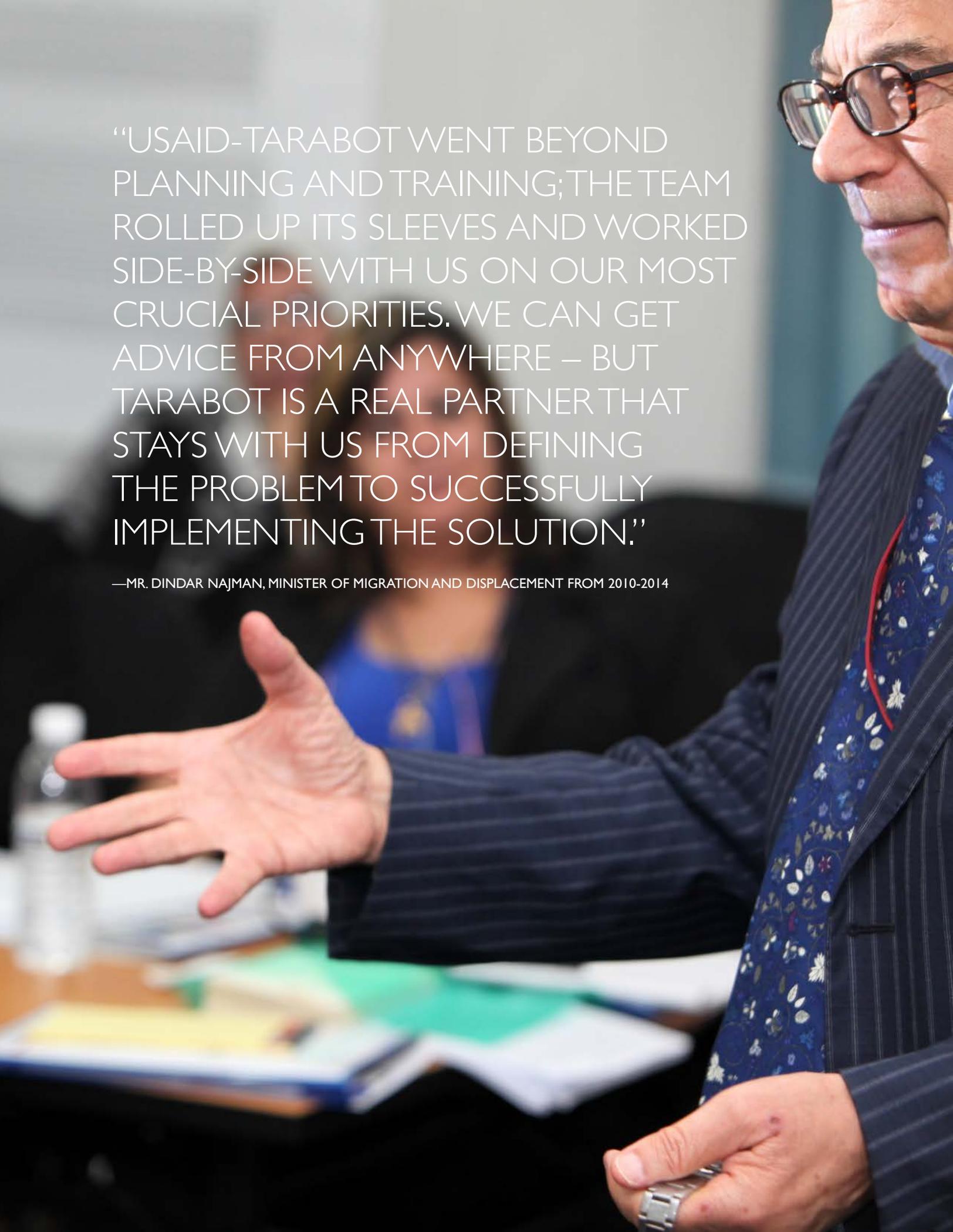
Finally, in March 2013, the Government named a new slate of Civil Service Commissioners, including the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission. At this point, COMSEC disbanded its Civil Service Reform committee, as responsibility for all civil service reform efforts should be in the hands of the now imminent Civil Service Commission. As USAID-Tarabot's assistance in civil service reform was fully under an agreement with COMSEC, project civil service work ended.

Also in the months leading up to this event it had become public knowledge that USAID, as part of large funding cuts, had also decided to end its civil service

reform program. Although Tarabot personnel regretted the closing of the component, they understood the dire USAID budgetary problem and understood the political conundrum facing COMSEC.

Despite this sudden termination of the civil service component, the USAID-Tatweer and Tarabot efforts established and disseminated the fundamental principles of a modern civil service (a) in the enacted commission legislation, and (b) in the draft civil service reform bill, circulated to all ministries and interested international organizations for comments, and discussed at Civil Service Reform Conferences of all ministries' and provinces' HR Directors, and (c) through the restructuring Technical Assistance directly delivered to ministries and governors' offices.



A close-up, profile view of a man with glasses, wearing a dark pinstriped suit jacket and a blue patterned tie. He is gesturing with his right hand, palm facing up, as if speaking or explaining something. The background is blurred, showing another person in a blue shirt and some papers on a desk.

“USAID-TARABOT WENT BEYOND PLANNING AND TRAINING; THE TEAM ROLLED UP ITS SLEEVES AND WORKED SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH US ON OUR MOST CRUCIAL PRIORITIES. WE CAN GET ADVICE FROM ANYWHERE – BUT TARABOT IS A REAL PARTNER THAT STAYS WITH US FROM DEFINING THE PROBLEM TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION.”

—MR. DINDAR NAJMAN, MINISTER OF MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT FROM 2010-2014

LOOKING FORWARD

Administrative Reform and Modernization, once begun, is a perpetual process and commitment for a government. At the end of any development assistance project—or, in this case, the end of eight years of assistance through two large, successful, and comprehensive projects—there is always a sense of “unfinished business,” and questions about how the recipient agencies of the assistance will address this unfinished business and their own future and perpetual modernization commitments and requirements.

USAID Budget Shift of 2013-14. The sense of “unfinished business” is especially strong with the departure of the Tarabot project due to the shifts in USAID funding that pushed USAID projects’ end-dates earlier than designed and truncated many on-going initiatives. It has been less than the ideal transition from donor assistance to client assumption of the key initiatives.

At the time of the curtailing of Tarabot’s timeline for its endgame, we carefully selected for continuation those project elements one felt could be effectively completed and transitioned in the revised timeframe. The present report clearly demonstrates that in many respects the endgame scenario succeeded. Even though some large and important initiatives did not quite achieve the optimal breadth of impact or depth of sustainability, the results described in this final report are nonetheless impressive.

Endgame Plan and Iraq’s Evolving Security and Political Crisis. It was understood at the time of redesigning the endgame that the selected remaining initiatives’ tight schedules would run up against Iraq’s third national election, with the uncertainties that might entail. However, it was not foreseen that the election’s period of uncertainty and inter-regnum would stretch through a crisis of forcing out the previous two-term Prime Minister, and it was not foreseen that at the same time Iraq would face the ISIL invasion, the collapse of its military, the loss of control of major cities and a wide swath of territory, and a massive expansion of the numbers of internally displaced persons, combined with the normal challenges, especially in a fledgling democracy, of transitioning to a new administration, balanced upon a new coalition, and filled with new ministers.

One-Stop-Shop Service Centers. It is in this situation that we find, for instance, that the important One-Stop-Shop program-participating ministries were unable to wrap up their arrangements for financing and contracting software companies, and constructing their desired new customer service facilities, except in the calm corner of Dahuk where the lone first One-Stop-Shop has opened its doors. But, under the current crisis, the new government knows and the Prime Minister has stated that it needs to show early evidence of the type of improved service and respect for its citizens. The government also knows that the planned and well advanced One-Stop-Shops for such ministries as Justice, Migration and Displaced, Labor and Social Affairs, and Municipalities & Public Works, if moved forward, could provide ready practical evidence of the new administration’s commitment.

Center of Excellence. Similarly, although the previous administration finally resolved its issues of which high executive office would have the honor of hosting the Center of Excellence in Government, time ran out for truly providing the Center with the necessary technical assistance to put it



on an active pathway before ISIL took Mosul and showed up at the gates of Baghdad. The in-coming administration and the COMSEC had more pressing issues, and so it is a huge success that the ICEG was established, and established in an appropriately prestigious government office. It was also a significant achievement that twelve ministries set up their Excellence Units and developed their Excellence Plans, but more needs to be done, and done soon, to assure that the center achieves its role. The ICEG is not a luxury during these trying times, but a necessary beacon shining a light on the new government's commitment to improving its performance and service to citizens.

Economic Institutions. The difficult but essential government program of systematic regulatory reform is one of Tarabot's and the Prime Minister's Office's prized initiatives. However, it has not been able, during this period of uncertainty, to spread its program as widely across the economy to change the way business is done. This is at a time of crisis when Iraq's economy desperately needs to respond with speed and effectiveness in the face of ISIL, and in a period of uncertain oil prices/government revenues when the government needs to fully utilize its new economic investment management systems including its NDP and associated Iraq Development Management System. The ISRAR program has shown a "proof of concept" but not yet changed the overall system of regulations. More important, until the present, the leadership for economic reform and economic management has rested largely with the Ministry of Planning, COMSEC, and the Prime Minister's Office. The Ministry of Finance has been engaged in these developments, but has yet to show leadership. This is an important piece of "unfinished business."

Project Management. This report shows the impressive success of the adoption of modern techniques for assuring that expensive and necessary development facilities for increased delivery of essential services such as water, education, and electricity, come on line quickly and effectively. This is where all the planning, procurement, and investments of Iraq's resources finally meet the needs of citizens. The truth is that under the pressure to show maximum results before the Tarabot project's new end-date, the project responded to the pressing demands from provinces, under strong pressure to perform with their increased investment

resources. Tarabot's work with a number of the central ministries, which displayed less of a sense of crisis compared to the newly-funded, close-to-the-people provinces was less impactful. There is serious unfinished business to get more of the established central line ministers on board with the proven worth of the PMI techniques, institutions, and professional certification of engineers.

Lessons Learned from Previous Challenging Periods in Iraq. In the past when security problems loomed large in Iraq, progress on capacity development and administrative reform continued, although at a slower pace than at other times. There were three factors in the continuation of programs during such times. One was the unbelievable positive response of citizens and regular civil servants, desperate for signs of progress and willing to take risks to participate. The second element were the government leaders, who also wanted to be doing something positive even in such times, since they were at their offices, nonetheless, and also welcomed the chance to do positive work. The third element was the third party donor project (Tatweer), which served as a "coach" and catalyst to the government leaders to break through the natural caution and lethargy in such periods to push forward, despite the real obstacles of travel restrictions, limited permissive geographic areas, and disrupted schedules of meetings, trainings, and development-oriented events. USAID can again respectfully play that catalytic and supportive role.

This is not necessarily the inevitable suggestion for further extending the Tarabot project. The Iraq government can, for instance, and should, take advantage of regional institutions for training in PMI certification, utilize regional Centers of Excellence and performance institutions in Jordan and the Gulf, and engage in more direct contracting with international consulting firms, such as Basrah's contracting with the Hill International firm for project management assistance. Our experience is that, especially during periods when the high levels of government are distracted and discouraged by crises, they will need and welcome USAID-Tarabot's initiative to facilitate the connections with these regional institutions, to design the procurement documents for international RFPs, and to otherwise encourage, provide cover and courage to temporarily cautious officials, to do things they know are important and necessary, even if not pressing.

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