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USAID IRAQ ADMINISTRATIVE (REFORM PROJECT) MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT (MARCH 2012)

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Iraq Administrative Reform Project



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AD	Administrative Decentralization Component
BPA	Business Process Analysis
BPP	Bureau of Public Policy (Presidency)
CBO	Capacity Building Office (USAID)
CoM	Council of Ministers
COMSEC	Council of Ministers' Secretariat
CoI	Commission of Integrity
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative/USAID
CoR	Council of Representatives
CoS	Chief of Staff
CSR	Civil Service Reform Component
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DG	Director General
DPMO	Deputy Prime Minister Office
FCSC	Federal Civil Service Commission
FCSI	Federal Civil Service Institute
GO	Governor's Office
GZ	Green Zone (See IZ)
GoI	Government of Iraq
GSP	Governance Support Project (USAID)
HC	High Committee for Civil Service Reform
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Division
HRM	Human Resources Management
HRMIS	Human Resources Management Information System
IDMS	Iraq Development Management System
INMS	Iraqi National Monitoring System
ISRAR	Iraq Solutions for Regulatory and Administrative Reform
IZ	International Zone (See GZ)
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoC	Ministry of Communications
MoCH	Ministry of Construction & Housing
MoCu	Ministry of Culture
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoE	Ministry of Electricity
MoEd	Ministry of Education
MoEn	Ministry of Environment
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoHR	Ministry of Human Rights

MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoIM	Ministry of Industry & Minerals
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSA	Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs
MoMD	Ministry of Migration & Displaced
MoMPW	Ministry of Municipalities & Public Works
MoO	Ministry of Oil
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSPA	Ministry of State for Provincial Affairs
MoSWA	Ministry of State for Women's Affairs
MoST	Ministry of Science & Technology
MoT	Ministry of Trade
MoTA	Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities
MoTr	Ministry of Transport
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWR	Ministry of Water Resources
MoYS	Ministry of Youth & Sport
MSI	Management Systems International
NCCIT	National Center for Consultancy and Information Technology
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-government Organization
NIC	National Investment Commission
NPM	National Policy Management Component
OD	Organizational Development
OPD	Office of Policy Development (Prime Minister's Office)
PAR	Public Administrative Reform Committee (See PSM)
PC	Provincial Council
PCSC	Provincial Civil Service Commission
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMAC	Prime Minister's Advisory Council
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PSM	Public Sector Management Committee (See PAR)
RFP	Request for Proposal
RG	Regulatory Guillotine™
SAB	Supreme Audit Board
SES	Senior Executive Service
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SoW	Scope of Work
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

This report summarizes project activities and accomplishments under the Iraq Administrative Reform Project (USAID - *Tarabot*¹) for the period March 1 - 31, 2012. The next Monthly Report for April is due on May 2, 2012.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March opened with the visa situation still unresolved, with a number of advisors forced to work from Erbil, take early R&R leaves, or, for those who could not get visas for Erbil, work from their home of record. By the end of the month the issue of visas for all expatriates on the project was solved with standard one-year, multi-entry visas. This has removed an important risk factor for up-coming project performance.

March ended with the conclusion of the historic Arab League Summit meeting in Baghdad. This event, and its preparatory activities, pretty well brought the government, the airport, phone communications, and city traffic to a standstill for most of the final 10 days of the month. By March 31st, however, life was back to normal in Baghdad.

Despite these events, USAID-*Tarabot* had a very successful month.

The **Civil Service Reform** component helped complete the draft civil service law, including suggestions from reviews from the Shura Council and the Prime Minister's Office. Its next stop on the route toward passage will be the Council of Ministers.

For the **National Policy Management** component, an important development was the ending of the impasse between the Prime Minister's Office (PMAC) and COMSEC regarding the locus of the ISRAR regulatory reform program. ISRAR is to be situated with COMSEC. This decision clears the way for initiating operational requirements for the program.

For the **Administrative Decentralization** component there are a number of developments that helped solidify the project's engagement with all levels of the government.

- **Cost Sharing and MoUs.** Tremendous progress was made this month toward establishing agreed upon MoUs, "Road Maps" that spell out the respective responsibilities between each of the participating GOI entities and the USAID-*Tarabot* project. This month there are several examples of provincial governments and ministries taking the lead to fully fund important *Tarabot* activities from existing government resources.
- **Steering Committees.** The AD component is now actively participating in the Project Steering Committee and most of the ministerial and provincial counterpart entities. An equally important development is *Tarabot's* growing participation in appropriate high committees at the executive level of the government, strengthening the "linkages" between the higher central policy setting entities and the lower level implementing entities. Equally important, this month the Minister of Planning formally appointed *Tarabot*, and individual *Tarabot* advisors, as official members of the committee directing the revisions of the National Development Plan.

Finally for the AD component, this month saw the kick-off of an important new special component of the USAID-*Tarabot* project, the Ministry of Education Administrative Capacity Development program that will train hundreds of trainers and master trainers in critical administrative topics.

¹ For brevity and convenience the Administrative Reform Project is referred to in text by its Arabic name, *Tarabot*, meaning "Linkage".

March Events: The USAID-*Tarabot* project expanded its activities during March despite holiday leaves for local staff because of the Arab Summit Conference.

USAID-*Tarabot* teams held **190** events (workshops and formal meetings) during March. Only **46** of these events took place during the last two weeks of the month, due to the various elements of curfew, multiple checkpoints, and extended government closure.

- **Locations:** **142** events were held at locations in Baghdad, while **48** were delivered on location in **12** provinces.
- **Type of Event:** **178** were formal assessment meetings, action planning, or implementation workshops. **12** events were introductory meetings.
- **Institutions:** **145** events were with **17** ministries; **34** events supported the governors' offices; and **11** events were directly with the executive offices.
- ***Tarabot* Components:** **24** events were carried out by the civil service reform component, **17** by the national policy development component, and **149** by the administrative decentralization component

We total up and report on the numbers of events each month (here and in the AD Tracker on page 19) because they demonstrate the growing breadth and depth of *Tarabot's* engagement with a wide range of government entities. The numbers of events are not themselves results or outcomes, but they indicate and measure progress of the project's growing capacity toward eventually achieving its ambitious "whole of Government" impacts.

COMPONENT ONE: CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

High Committee for Civil Service Reform

With the *Tarabot* CSR team's help, the draft civil service law was finalized and submitted to COMSEC to be reviewed and discussed by the Council of Ministers before final submission to the Council of Representatives for voting. The CSR team worked hard with the High Committee members as well as the Shura Council to finalize the draft ahead of time. The *Tarabot* team looks forward to adoption of the law by the CoR and continuing the other steps of the reform directly ensuing from the new legislation, not only on the civil service system and human resources management but also the whole public administration and government management in Iraq as the draft law contains modern best practice principles in this regard. The draft law gives provinces more power in order to assert their administrative autonomy in managing their own affairs within the framework of the decentralization.

Civil Service Commissions

March also witnessed the finalization of draft standard operating procedures (SoPs) for 26 main functions of the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC), mandated under FCSC law 4 of 2009. This document defines step by step activities to carry out each of the functions of FCSC, which can be broadly categorized into six categories viz. (i) Law Enforcement & Regulatory Functions; (ii) Reporting & Accountability Functions; (iii) Organization Development Functions; (iv) HR Management of Civil Service Functions; (v) Civil Service Training Functions; and, (vi) Office Management Functions.

Establishing Modern HR Management Practices in Line Ministries & Provinces

March witnessed intensified work by the CSR advisors on several fronts. Four workshops and a series of meetings were conducted with national and provincial officials. USAID-*Tarabot* advisors conducted a workshop for HR managers and Deputy Managers from ten ministries and three provinces. The participants, including six women, discussed the team's feedback on the approaches of recruitment taken currently in each participating organization. This included the use of a point scoring system by stakeholders for assessing candidates. Participants were also introduced to the purpose, nature and requirements of recruitment based on merit. The draft procedures for recruitment on merit, as proposed by the CSR team, were explained and discussed. Changes in current procedures are required to enable all HR divisions to comply with the provisions of the new Civil Service Law once enacted.



CSR workshop with HR Managers & Deputies

The CSR team also delivered two workshops on staff recruitment for ten ministries and three provinces. The *Tarabot* advisors facilitated the understanding of the required changes in procedures needed to ensure that all recruitment processes are carried out in accordance with the law. The training sessions were designed in accordance with the draft procedures for recruitment. Participants worked in groups to put into practice

some of the improved approaches to short listing and interviewing candidates. Participants found this method of training useful and were keen to attend further courses to develop their skills as recruiters. A total of 35 people attended these two workshops, including 13 women.

On the topic of assessing baseline needs of performance and career managements, the CSR team carried out an assessment workshop with ten ministries and three provinces, documenting the ways that employees' performance is inadequately linked with career and succession planning. Accordingly, the CSR team designed a workshop methodology on performance management and career management. The concept and process of this important HR function is based on provisions of Federal Civil Service Commission Law that stipulate that the promotion and transfer of employees should be based on merit.



Tarabot Advisors Meeting Karbala Governor in Regard to HRD Implementation, March 14

Moreover, CSR advisors organized assessment meetings with the section heads of the HR departments of the MoP, MoA, MoEd in addition to Najaf, Diwaniyah, Babil, Ninawa, Karbala and Muthanna GOs to evaluate the duties of each HR section, and to bring them in line with the approved HRM structure. The CSR team also conducted assessments of the progress made in designing and implementation of job descriptions, based on previous workshops conducted for HR staffs, so as to identify and address the gaps in future workshops.

The CSR team also initiated a task to develop policy and procedures for human resources planning and organization development. The Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) Law No. 4 of 2009 states the responsibilities of FCSC in respect of organizational structures, job descriptions, numbers of employees and development of performance of ministries and all other civil service organizations.

Federal Civil Service Institute (FCSI) and Training Centers in Ministries & Provinces

The CSR team continued conducting assessment meetings on both national and provincial levels. During the month of March, CSR advisors evaluated the training centers of the ministries of Oil, Agriculture, Planning and Finance as well as the provinces of Diwaniyah, Diyala, Najaf and Karbala. The purpose of these meetings was to assess the training capacities, functions and the procedures implemented and development division and centers to identify their needs and plan for next steps by CSR program. Final assessment reports were produced for the five ministries of Health, Communication, Finance, Oil, and Planning and the six provinces of Baghdad, Diwaniyah, Diyala, Ninawa, Karbala and Najaf. Advisors are currently developing proper action plans to be shared with GoI officials.

The CSR team finalized a survey for the Training Information Management System (TIMS) which is planned to assess requirements of Training and Development divisions/units for developing and managing training needs analysis process through online questionnaires, electronic career development plans and electronic competencies based assessments.

Human Resources Management Information System

The CSR team conducted an introductory meeting with the IT department of the Ministry of Oil to view the current situation on HR/information system in ministries. The CSR team is tailoring as-needed technical assistance in order to assist ministries and the HRMIS working groups in establishing a whole of government HRMIS. Coordination also continues with the HRMIS committee in COMSEC to follow on progress of the assessment questionnaire and schedule for joint visits to ministries.

During the month, the CSR team drafted a document for "Buy versus Build" options to establish and operationalize an application or software. The document outlines the needed steps, processes to be followed and, the issues to be considered by the national counterparts when making a decision with regard to the following question: "Do we buy an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)/ HRMIS system or do we build it on our own?" This document will be part of the HRMIS assessment and will facilitate the national counterparts in the decision making process.

COMPONENT TWO: NATIONAL POLICY MANAGEMENT

Prime Minister's Office of Policy Development

In its ongoing work to strengthen the institution of the Prime Minister's Office of Policy Development (OPD), NPM advisors delivered the fourth and fifth workshops on the public policy making process, to sixteen advisors from the Prime Minister's OPD, including six women and PMAC's Chairman. The sessions focused on policy research and consultation and on policy communication and dissemination of policy decisions. Presenters utilized an interactive approach, prompting lively exchanges and thought provoking inquiries, and the sessions launched into practical, hands-on research exercises, focusing on the root causes of specific issues and tasking advisors with identifying solutions.

The NPM team also delivered a series of sessions throughout the month for the PM's advisors aimed at developing strategic planning process (SP) of the newly formed OPD. NPM advisors submitted to the PMAC Chairman and to the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff the results in a draft strategic plan, addressing the vision, mission, values, goals, and SWOT analysis. This SP is designed to implement the policy agenda of the Prime Minister for the years 2011-2014.

Also and recognizing the importance of prioritizing the PM's agenda for Iraq' development, a step which paves the way to decipher and further clarify policies, the OPD and NPM advisors were tasked with ranking by order of priority the six components of that Agenda. Not surprisingly, the results showed that security and stability policies were ranked first, followed by oil and gas policies. Next on the list came the improvement of the standard of living of Iraqi citizens. Further down, were the economy and business development policies, followed by civil service reform policies and federal and provincial relationship, including decentralization. NPM tem also worked with the advisors to examine carefully and to rank by order of priority both the subcategories and individual policy issues within each subcategory, for one of these six major components of the Prime Minister's Agenda, "Achieving a Better Economy and Increasing the Competitiveness of State and Private Sector Institutions".

Tarabot advisors also conducted a series of working sessions with the OPD on building a website for the Prime Minister's policy office. NPM policy advisors and IT experts teamed to make a full and detailed presentation, including a live demonstration, on the structure and functions of a newly completed, content management system website proposed for the OPD, which is now ready to provide basic functionality. NPM team made clear that the website can be enhanced as needed over time with additional functionality. During an in-depth discussion that followed, OPD advisors asked questions pertaining to both the organization and coverage of the proposed subject categories, and on procedures for use of this tool. The OPD advisors were tasked with reviewing closely the website's proposed structure, and with offering specific suggestions for changes. Having a functional website of this kind provides the OPD with access to information, data, and currently generated documents, and it serves as a two-way communication tool, giving the public access to policy proposals, and eliciting public input for the OPD through polls and written feedback.

Last but not the least, and upon a request of the Prime Minister's Office, the ceremony for signing the MOU between the PMO and USAID, for public policy activities, was delayed from the previously scheduled March 25 date until April 2, due to the closure of governmental offices in preparation of the Arab Summit.

Public Policy in Ministries

During the month of March, the NPM team completed the final two in a series of eight workshops on policy development and implementation for ministerial policy unit staff. The two workshops, which gathered 32 participants, including six women, from the ministries: Trade, Electricity, Agriculture, Oil, and Industry & Minerals, and the National Investment Commission. In the course of four interactive sessions, NPM team covered key aspects of policy implementation: Time Management, Quality Management, Cost Management, and Procurement Management. The participants used practical exercises to apply their newly obtained knowledge of these analytical and planning tools, and they received feedback from NPM advisors during ensuing group discussions.



NPM Workshop on Public Policy to Ministries

In the arena of promoting strategic planning for GoI selected institutions, the NPM team launched strategic planning assistance to participating ministries by conducting a drafting workshop for 12 representatives of the policy units of the four ministries of Trade, Electricity, Agriculture, and Oil. The participants were introduced to major stages in the strategic planning process, with particular focus on key outputs and requirements. During practical exercise sessions, the counterparts worked to tailor a generic Terms of Reference for a policy unit to the needs and priorities of their respective ministries. The participants worked in groups to produce a first draft of their policy units' Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles.

An in-depth session was delivered for the Ministry of Electricity (MoE) officials and staff members, to assess progress in implementing project activities and to agree on next steps. Discussed in detail were key targets and components of technical assistance to be provided in the April-June quarter, namely: strategic planning for the policy unit, producing the unit's Terms of Reference, practicum on writing policy papers and policy implementation strategies, as well as drafting the unit's standard operating procedures. NPM advisors presented methodology for delivering that assistance, along with a detailed work plan and schedule of activities. Policy making needs assessment was discussed, with an emphasis on involving all relevant departments and units of the Ministry. It was agreed to hold a working session with MoE senior management to present assessment findings and to explore approaches to tailoring NPM assistance to address the ministry's priorities and urgent needs for policy making. Ministry personnel expressed full support for the assistance delivery approach and planned activities and agreed to involve additional staff in the unit, considering the scope of activities envisaged.

The President's Bureau of Public Policy

Preparing the President's Bureau of Public Policy for active policy making, the NPM team delivered the fourth and fifth in a series of five workshops on Public Policy Development to the advisors of the Public Policy Bureau of the President of the Republic. Participants included eight advisors from the President's Office, Vice President Office, and the Presidency Diwan. Highly participatory and focused on key issues, these workshops addressed the subjects of policy formulation and of decision making.



NPM Public Policy Development workshop to the Public Policy Bureau of the President

In discussion, the participants dealt with practical examples in exploring Iraq's urgent needs to formulate sound public policy. Participants continued to demonstrate a high level of interest in the process of policy making, posing excellent questions about thorny issues and offering perceptive observations.

Policy Communication & Outreach

To sustain the promotion of full stakeholder participation in policy development, the NPM team expanded its public policy outreach initiative with the delivery of a first-ever initiative - gathering official policy makers together with stakeholders important for shaping policy. The first of these two groundbreaking events gathered official policy makers together with policy shapers from academia and think tanks, followed by a second roundtable which gathered official policy makers together with policy shapers from business, NGO's and media outlets. The two roundtables combined gathered sixty eight participants, with fourteen women.

The participating government officials represented the President's Bureau of Public Policy, the Prime Minister's Office of Policy Development, the Offices of the Deputy Prime Ministers, eight ministries, and the Parliament. The sessions' focus was on government expectations of policy making support from the policy shapers, the policy shapers' perceptions of their role and the resources required for that purpose, and recommendations for action. The participants formulated action agendas with lists of detailed



NPM Public Policy Roundtable on the Cooperation between the Government, Private Sector, NGOs, and Media

recommendations, including the need for broad-based legislative reform, and for taking the steps required to build a fully participatory public policy process, enhancing the role of women as a primary measure to ensure inclusiveness. Two sets of surveys were taken at the end of each of the two sessions, one for the government officials, and the other for the policy shapers. These were indeed hallmark sessions, with leadership of the business, NGO, media, university and think tank communities, many for the first time, engaging in direct and animated dialogue with the GOI policy makers, including the Prime Minister's most senior policy advisors.

Major steps forward in promoting full stakeholder participation in policy development, these events were the culmination of a succession of NPM-lead public policy workshops over past months for a broad base of public and private sector stakeholders and for setting up the foundations for open, transparent and consultative networks between the parties of interest. Making the vision of a newly democratic nation work for Iraqis requires their full participation as stakeholders in shaping the public policy development process which the Constitution mandates that the Prime Minister discharge.

Also during the month and upon an invitation from the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs, NPM team participated in the women's day celebration held at the conference palace. NPM also participated in a forum on Public Policy held at the Parliament sponsored by The Public Policies Forum. Some forty participants also included four representatives of the Office of the Presidency, a major tribal leader, and a number of COR members. It was the expressed view of several of the participants that the NPM public policy initiative with the GOI has sparked significant growth in time and attention being devoted to the subject by a wide array of public officials and stakeholders.

Iraq Solutions for Regulatory and Administrative Reform (ISRAR)

Following a period in which the GOI reviewed the question of the appropriate institutional home for regulatory reform, the GoI announced this month its decision to shift the lead responsibilities and location of the regulatory reform apparatus to the Legal Department in COMSEC, rather than in PMAC, where the activity had begun. Both the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff CoS, and PMAC Chairman, confirmed that PMAC advisors would be detailed to that activity, exercising influence and that a Steering Committee, on which they both would serve, would provide strong oversight.

On his part, the advisor and Head of Legal Affairs at COMSEC, welcomed the prospect of the regulatory reform initiative being located in his office. He made clear that COMSEC took seriously the legal reform activity and was committed and determined to make it successful. He recognized the magnitude, the commitment required, and the urgency of the initiative, explaining that it could well be the solution for adjusting existing economic regulations to meet requirements for fostering the growth of a free market economy, as promoted by the Constitution. He also welcomed the idea of the MoU between USAID and COMSEC, and he understood the importance of and agreed to promote the Prime Ministerial Decree establishing *ISRAR* and committing the GoI to support the activity and to encourage the participation of stakeholders throughout Iraq. He added that he would report to the Secretary General of COMSEC, and then revert to NPM advisors about next steps.

Furthermore during the month of March, the NPM team moved forward with the assembly of survey results of recommendations made by participants in last month's workshop on priority focus areas for regulatory reform. The participants identified specific obstacles which they viewed as most harmful, and thereby most urgently requiring specific measures, in three key areas -- company law, registration and labor law; construction permits; and import licenses. By prioritizing the participants' specific recommendations, the current *ISRAR* initiative is now positioned to jump-start its work with significant and tangible "wins" in areas most critical for unleashing the flood of investment which is patiently awaiting the establishment of a receptive investment climate in Iraq.

COMPONENT THREE: ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION (AD)

In the face of difficult circumstances, the month of March was largely business as usual for the AD component. Despite being inhibited by delayed visas and a city-wide lockdown ahead of the Arab Summit, USAID-*Tarabot's* AD staff spent much of the month conducting meetings and workshops, and providing technical assistance to ministries and governors' offices. USAID-*Tarabot* continued its work to support Iraq's efforts to invest its resources towards economic development, sustainable development and investment in projects that improve the basic services for the Iraqi people. The AD component uses a comprehensive, five-step approach to support that objective.

This past month saw steady progress on virtually all fronts, and some particularly notable large steps forward on behalf of the GoI. Some highlights for the component include:

- a. Cost Sharing: Ministries and governors' offices alike are embracing the principles and practices of cost-sharing with USAID-*Tarabot*. The Basrah governor's office agreed to finance a specialized

procurement training for its key procurement staff in Erbil beginning at the end of this month. The governor also agreed to pay for a project management workshop in Lebanon. Similarly, the Ministry of Construction and Housing (MoCH) agreed to pay all expenses related to an Organizational Development (OD) training in Erbil.

- b. **Steering Committees:** The establishment of project/ministry steering committees has quickly become common practice for the AD component, with each committee serving as a powerful conduit of information, support, and direction within the designated ministry. In March, the MoED, MoJ, MoLSA, MoTr, and MoYS all agreed to form such steering committees. These committees are headed by a deputy minister or high-level DG, adding a further degree of visibility and commitment within the ranks of the ministries.
- c. **National Committees:** Additionally, the AD component has established partnerships with national-level counterparts in the form of the NDP revision committee, headed by MoP Minister Ali Shukri as well as the National Decentralization Committee, headed by the MoSPA Minister Torhan al Mufti. These committees represent a supra-ministerial counterpart in areas of focus for the AD component. The National Quality Committee is another similar entity with whom USAID-*Tarabot* is exploring a relationship.
- d. **MoUs/Roadmaps:** This month also marked the beginning of the MoU/Roadmap process. The component has drafted partnering documents for most of its counterpart GoI entities.
- e. **New Ministry:** USAID-*Tarabot* received official approval from the MoST to begin working with them through the minister's office. The first step of this work includes the introductory workshop on the USAID-*Tarabot* Administrative Decentralization technical advisory units.
- f. **Ministry of Education/Capacity Building Initiative:** March marked the successful kick-off of the USAID-*Tarabot* AD Education Capacity Building Initiative. The newly-arrived education capacity building team conducted a number of high-level meetings with MoED leadership and USAID. The MoED reiterated its desire for the AD component's traditional package of assistance as well as its acute need for the broad capacity-building services that this special initiative provides. The MoED also expressed its readiness to share costs with the new initiative. The stage is set for the full-scale public administration capacity building program to initiate in the coming weeks.
- g. **Assessments Completed:** This month, each of the AD component's advisory units drafted a summary memo describing the main findings from their respective sets of assessments. Each team noted commonalities, abnormalities, and specific interesting cases at the institutional level, as well as trends and roadblocks at the national level. These individual findings memos will be compiled into one report.

Planning Advisory Unit:

The Planning Advisory unit continued its two-prong approach of working with individual GoI institutions as well as providing assistance to the national level effort of revising the National Development Plan. During March, USAID-*Tarabot's* Planning Advisory Unit team participated in a number of NDP committee and subcommittee meetings, hosted by the MoP, to initiate the revision process for the NDP. USAID-*Tarabot* has been officially appointed as a member of almost all of these committees, and this past month included meetings of the revenues subcommittee, the policies committee. USAID-*Tarabot* is providing additional technical assistance to refine the MoP's GDP estimates through its national accounting system.

Also during the month, the Planning team finalized assessments and action plans in Basrah, Diwaniyah, and Najaf. The Basrah governorate is moving quickly to establish a provincial steering committee, one of the main points in the Planning Advisory Unit's proposed activities.

Procurement Advisory Unit:

The Procurement Advisory Unit enjoyed widespread progress in all of its initiatives over the month of March, both with individual ministries as well as at the national level.

This month, MoP responded positively to a standing recommendation from the *Tarabot* procurement unit and created a webpage linked to the ministry's main website. The MoP's Office of Government Public Contracts and Policy (OGPCP) aims to use this webpage to provide all GoI procurement units/departments/directorates easy access to the nation's procurement materials, including legal texts and standard bidding documents, in order to help improve procurement performance and contract awards. Additionally, the officials indicated that the Iraqi government had approved the longstanding MoP proposal to divide the MoP's procurement responsibilities to include a separate function for procurement consulting services. USAID-*Tarabot* has provided extensive support to the MoP in this field, including a comprehensive review of the proposed revisions to the nation's procurement regulation, which resulted in over 80 suggested revisions.

The procurement advisory unit conducted technical workshops for the MoCH, MoEN, MoHE and its universities, MoIM, MoP, MoTr, and the governors' offices in Babil, Basrah, Diwaniyah, Kirkuk, Ninawa, and Muthanna. In most cases, these workshops represent the first step on each entity's action plan, and a first step towards tangibly improved procurement systems and performance for these entities. These workshops bolstered the attendees' knowledge of the current system and on how it fits into the international best practices. This includes practical methods and skills for the ministry's practitioners, such as developing project cycles, procurement processes, procurement planning, prequalification, and the standard bidding documents. The majority of the workshops' participants were officials from each entity's contracts department, legal department, and the office of the ministry's inspector general.

Also during the month of March, a workshop for the director generals of the MoMPW was a particularly exemplary example of progress in systems reform. The two-day workshop was attended by relevant DGs and aimed at introducing standard bidding documents, issued by the MoP, and their application in the three major procurement categories: works, goods, and consulting services. The ultimate goal of the workshop was for the ministry to adopt and apply these documents in the implementation of its investment plans, thus overcoming delays in awarding contracts in a timely manner. At the end of the workshop, the participants agreed that the director general will make the following recommendations to the ministry's leadership:

- Adopt the standard bidding documents to be applied in procurement implementation of all ministry's contracts;
- Decentralize the procurement process, as a pilot, to the ministry offices in three governorates.

USAID-*Tarabot's* procurement advisory unit reiterated its readiness to assist in both of these vitally important activities.

Finally, the procurement team finalized its assessments for the MoTR and MoIM, and subsequently received each ministry's formal approval on the document.

Fiscal Management Advisory Unit:

The fiscal management unit has been particularly hindered by ongoing political issues within the country. However, the long-awaited passage of the 2012 Federal Budget Law was a relief and allowed the completion of many facets of the unit's work. The Fiscal Management advisors made continued progress throughout the month both in implementing its assessments with selected counterpart ministries as well as analyzing Iraq's national fiscal management system. Following the passage of the 2012 Iraqi Federal Budget Law, USAID-*Tarabot* completed its annual update to the Hammurabi Knowledge Base. The Hammurabi is essentially a budget execution roadmap, containing detailed instructions and procedures to take its users through the entire capital investment cycle. Each year, the budget law makes a number of changes to the processes,

procedures, and parties involved in this exhaustive activity. Also during March, the USAID-*Tarabot* Fiscal Management team initiated its assessment phase for the MoIM and MoTR.

The unit also completed a two-day workshop in the MoHED's University of Technology to transfer skills on budget preparation to university officials.

Project Management Advisory Unit:

The project management advisory unit has enjoyed success with many GoI entities agreeing to establish a Project Management Office (PMO), in most cases a much-needed organizational entity to manage to the complex operations surrounding projects implementation.

The project management unit conducted assessments and developed action plans for the MoA, MoCU, MoIM, MoJ, and MoTR in March. Through a series of meetings and small workshops, the project management unit evaluates the status and capacity of each entity's project management department or functions, their specific needs, and existing weak points that *Tarabot's* assistance will be able to improve. Attendees in these meetings were generally managers and engineers from the PM-pertinent departments. Four out of five of these ministries have huge capital allocations and accompanying portfolios of projects. All of the ministries are extremely interested in improving project management functions and systems in their respective ministry. On the provincial level, the project management team completed needs assessments for Kirkuk and Ninawa provinces.

Also during the month of March, the project management advisors conducted a number of important workshops to transfer knowledge and practices in-line with the Project Management Institute. A set of ten-day workshops was conducted for the MoEn, MoHE, and MoDM. This 10-day workshop is one of the cornerstones of virtually all of the project management unit's action plans, and is one of the most rigorous in terms of material that is presented. Ministry staff work with project management processes, tools, techniques, and forms that are compliant with the PMI standard, in order to introduce this standard widely within their ministries.



26 participants from MoEn, MoEd attending Project Management workshop on March 4-15

Maysan Governor's Office issued a formal approval for the creation of a project management office in the province. Maysan is the sixth province to approve the creation of a PMO. Additionally, the team has worked with the governors' offices in Babil, Basrah, Karbala, and Kirkuk to follow-up on the assessment, action plan, and implementation for PMI systems and processes into the existing systems.

Iraq Development Management System (IDMS):

The USAID-*Tarabot* IDMS Advisory Unit, in cooperation with the MoP IDMS team, continues to exceed expectations in the rollout the system. By the end of March, the IDMS unit has now installed the system or trainer users at more than 40 GoI entities, ranging from all major ministries to other central entities, including the *Amanat* Baghdad, High Electoral Commission, the Sunni, Shia, and Christian Endowments. The progress of the rollout of the IDMS highlights the government's support for the initiative and understanding of the value of a unified system for managing capital investments nationwide.

Moreover, the USAID-*Tarabot* IDMS advisors agreed with the MoP on a draft plan for rolling out the IDMS to the provinces. The MoP is heading up the plan, which is set to begin in the first week of April.

Several employees of the MoP's IDMS Help Desk were invited by the UNDP to attend a training course in Armenia, which will be held by the IDMS' designer, the Synergy Company. USAID-Tarabot assisted directly in the creation of the Help Desk, and this opportunity will only bolster that Help Desk staff's skills and abilities to manage the IDMS as the number of users and data input increases over the coming months.

Organizational Development (OD):

Following the USAID-Tarabot OD team's technical assistance and advise, a pair of key service-providing ministries agreed to institutionalize organizational development units within their organizations and to the initiation of technical assistance to a number of GoI counterpart entities in the provinces. The MoA and MoMD both approved the formation of an internal organizational development unit within their respective ministries. The MoA has historically been a steadfast proponent of organizational development initiatives, and this is the most significant step taken in its budding partnership with USAID-Tarabot. In the MoMD, the minister himself agreed to establish and staff an internal Organizational Development unit within the ministry. The MoMD had previously approved to create a committee to explore OD activities. Both ministries also promised to put strong candidates forward to man these units. The OD team will work closely with these ministries over the coming months to stand up this new unit as it is established.



OD Workshop for Babil University Officials

Regarding implementing OD ministries' action plans, the OD team initiated "Phase 1" with a number of entities, particularly in the provinces. This included MoMPW directorates in Basrah, Kirkuk, and Maysan, as well as the MoHED entities in Basrah, Babil, and Baghdad. This initial activity introduces participants to the OD methodology and provides them the tools to conduct effective assessment interviews. The participants are primarily comprised of that entity's own internal OD team. Also this month, the OD Advisory Unit completed its assessment for the MoIM,

Service Centers Advisory Unit:

The Service Centers advisors initiated technical assistance to improve several of the services that have already been identified and agreed upon as potential target services by the GoI. To-date, the service improvement advisory unit identified the MoHE, MoJ, MoMD, and MoMPW as partners with whom the unit will explore and implement "One-Stop Shop" Service Centers. The SC unit completed the Business Process Mapping (BPM) of the delivery process for the MoHE's selected services. These services include degree verification and validation, processing academic records requests, registrar issues, and registering student complaints. The process maps were developed through interviews and reviews of the ministry's existing manuals and procedure documents. The next phase will entail analyzing and re-engineering the selected processes.

The Service Centers team attended a large assessment meeting at the MoJ with the DGs of Planning and the Notary Public, the deputy DG of Planning, and the manager of the Planning and Follow department. The SC team provided an introduction of the concepts and the objectives of the service centers, the one stop shop approach and how USAID-Tarabot will help the Notary Public General Directorate to establish an integrated service center to improve service delivery for the Iraqi citizens. The meeting also the discussed the necessity of coordination between the Planning General Directorate and the Notary Public General Directorate in regards the establishing a service centers with coordination with the SC team from USAID-Tarabot. Also with the MoMPW, the Tarabot advisors finalized the needs assessments and initiated Business Process Mapping with the MoMPW's Water and Sewage Directorates in Basrah, Diwaniyah, Karbala and

Najaf. The unit also met extensively with the Basrah Governor's Office to explore developing a service center.

On a final note, the USAID-*Tarabot* service centers advisory unit completed its assessment for the MoIM in Baghdad. The SC unit learned that the MoIM has made significant progress in unifying its service-delivery functions; the ministry has already documented its SOPs, and has something called a "unified window" in which its clients can collect any necessary application forms from the ministry. The ministry also has a database connecting all departments to manage service delivery. The MoIM requested additional support to improve these functions. However, an effective model at the MoIM may also be a valuable illustrative example for other ministries considering implementing their own service centers. The SC advisory unit will complete the service audit, needs assessment, and produce a report detailing the findings.

Quality Management Advisory Unit:

The quality management advisory unit continues to move forward with selected partners in the MoCH and MoHE, as well as initiating a relationship with Iraq's Central Organization for Standards and Quality Control and the National Quality Committee. In addition to institution-level objectives, the QM unit agreed with COSQC on the objective of "Disseminating a Culture of Quality." During March, the quality management advisory unit team completed its assessments with the MoIM and took initial steps in the plan to work with the MoCH and MoHE.

Decentralization of Basic Administrative Functions

The administrative decentralization advisory unit spent the month liaising with both central ministry and provincial counterparts exploring avenues for administrative decentralization. In addition to various ministries and their accompanying provincial directorates, the unit visited seven governor's offices (Muthanna, Maysan, Babil, Diwaniyah, Najaf, Diyala, and Kirkuk). These visits worked to identify some specific authorities/responsibilities that the governors' offices are interested in taking over from certain ministries, including the MoEd, MoH, MoLSA, and the MoMPW. One of the main challenges faced by the unit so far revolves around varying levels of overlap in duties among ministries in different provinces.

Upon specific request from the ministry, the decentralization advisory unit presented its approach to the leadership of the MoIM. The ministry also discussed the overlaps between the local governments with the MoIM and requested the DC unit's assistance to clarify the roles of local government with the ministry's mandate, according to Iraqi constitution and Iraqi laws.

Social Safety Net (SSN):

March was marked by the successful deployment of the SSN to the provinces of Karbala and Wasit. The system was set up and configured, and the MoLSA employees responsible for the SSN's operation in each province were trained on data-entry. Currently there are two additional sites ready for deployment - Dhi Qar and Diyala, with Muthanna to follow.



Tarabot - Administrative Decentralization Component Engagement Tracker

GOI Offices	Introductory Letter	Introductory Meeting	Official Presentation	Assessment Phase	Action plan	Steering Committee	Office Space	MOU	Technical Assistance
Ministries and Central Entities									
Ministry of Agriculture	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	↕	↕	↕	☐
Ministry of Communications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Construction & Housing	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	↕	↕
Ministry of Culture	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	↕	↕	☐
Ministry of Education	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Electricity	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Environment	☑	☑	☑	↕	↕	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Finance	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Health	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Higher Education	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	↕	↕
Ministry of Human Rights	☑	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Industry & Minerals	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Justice	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Migration & Displaced	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Municipalities & Public Works	☑	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	↕	↕
Ministry of Oil	☑	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Planning	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ministry of Science & Technology	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	↕	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Trade	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Transportation	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Water Resources	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Youth and Sports	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☑	↕	↕	☐
Coordination Entities									
Presidency Diwan	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Council of Ministers Secretariat	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministry of Provincial Affairs	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provinces									
Anbar	☑	☑	☑	↕	↕	☐	↕	↕	☐
Babil	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	↕	↕
Baghdad	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Basrah	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	↕	↕	☐
Diyala	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Diwaniyah	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	↕
Dhi Qar	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Karbala	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Kirkuk	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Maysan	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Muthana	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Najaf	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Ninawa	☑	☑	☑	↕	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Salah ad Din	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	↕	☐
Wasit	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	↕	☐

☑	Completed
↕	Ongoing
☑	Scheduled
☐	Pending

Blue Highlights indicate activities completed this reporting month

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

- **Staffing and Deployment:** The project has a staff of 33 expatriate and 196 local personnel as of March 31, 2012.
- **Communication:** The project reached an agreement with Zain to provide a much improved and more cost effective communication package for all resident and local staff. This package is particularly useful to the many staff we have embedded in ministries and stationed around the country.
- **Visas:** The problem of the “freeze” on renewing existing visas and granting new ones was ended for *Tarabot* this month, thanks to the strong support and intervention from the Prime Minister’s Office. Multiple-entry, year-long visas were approved for all staff members. The new visa process still involves some inconvenient trips out of Iraq and back in, but the process is working smoothly.
- **IZ presence:** We are still waiting for the decision from the IZ Commander regarding permission for MSI to assume the former Sallyport villa in the IZ. We are optimistic that this will be approved once the Arab Summit and other important IZ events are over.