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IRAQ ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROJECT

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT APRIL, 2015

MAY 2, 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Management Systems International.

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Contracted under AID-267-C-11-0005 Iraq Administrative Reform Project

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CONTENTS

- Acronyms 1
- Summary..... 2
- 1. **Public procurement capacity building** 4
 - 1.1 Ministry of Planning Capacity Building 4
 - 1.2 Ministries and Governor Offices Capacity Building 6
- 2. **Political-economic analysis of the oil sector**..... 13
- 3. **Social safety net (SSN) Program with KRG** 14
- Project Administration**..... 15
 - Staffing, Deployment, Registration 15
 - Security 15
 - Close out **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
 - Badges/Visas..... 15

ACRONYMS

COMSEC	Council of Ministers Secretariat
COP	Chief of Party
DG	Director General
DGGC	Directorate General of Government Contracts
FY	Fiscal Year
GO	Governor Office
Gol	Government of Iraq
HQ	Headquarter
ISRAR	Iraq Solutions for Regulatory and Administrative Reform
IT	Information Technology
KMoLSA	Kurdistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MoE	Ministry of Electricity
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoO	Ministry of Oil
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoTr	Ministry of Transportation
NCMDIT	National Center for Management Development and Information Technology
OPDC	Oil Products Distribution Company
Qtr	Quarterly
SBDs	Standard Bidding Documents
SCOP	State Company for Oil Projects
SSN	Social Safety Net
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SUMMARY

In April, USAID-*Tarabot* continued to provide assistance to a range of Government of Iraq (GoI) partners in the application of internationally recognized procurement processes, through both hands-on training and workshops. Work continues to broaden the precedent set by GoI partners piloting the modern procurement techniques learned from USAID-*Tarabot*.

As a key measure of USAID-*Tarabot*'s strategy to secure the procurement initiative's sustainability, a range of capacity building assistance began for the Ministry of Planning (MoP). This includes direct training, as well as incorporating Ministry of Planning procurement officers as in-house trainers and advisors for both workshop facilitation and direct technical assistance provision to other GoI entities. The enthusiasm with which the ministry has taken up its role as the oversight body for procurement in Iraq is palpable and an encouraging sign for long-term sustainability.

Mr. Salman Al Jumeili, the Minister of Planning, approved the selection of ten ToT graduates (five males, five females) to participate in the final expert-level training course on public procurement at the International Training Center of ILO in Turin, Italy, August 31 through September 11, 2015. Six participants will be from the Ministry of Planning, and one each from Ministry of Industry and Minerals, Ministry of Municipality and Public Works, Babil Governor Office, and Muthanna Governor Office.

MoP continues to take the lead in advocating and implementing procurement reforms. A major step in this vein was the roll-out of its Help Desk activities to different provinces. The Help Desk continues to await final approval from the Minister of Planning, having been endorsed and approved by Dr. Azhar Hussein, the Director General for Government Contracts. In the meantime, MoP staff are undertaken the role and responsibilities of the Help Desk with:

- Training government officials on procurement regulations according to MoP training program for 2015
- Building the capacity of GoI entities on applying standard bidding documents (SBDs) to pilot projects
- Improving SBDs before translation and re-circulation

Support continues to six GoI entities to implement the comprehensive procurement reform package. The Ministries of Electricity, Health, Oil and Transportation, and Governor Offices of Basrah and Najaf are the direct beneficiaries of this eleven element program, where USAID-*Tarabot* provides technical guidance in a variety of areas including procurement process, planning, reporting, archiving, SBDs and webpage development.

USAID-*Tarabot* also continued the comprehensive study on the oil sector in Iraq. A team of experts from various public and private sector representatives gathered relevant material for analysis and contribution to the drafting of assessment reports in targeted areas for OPDC, SCOP and Mid-land Refineries Company, and a project management master plan for Ministry of Oil. These documents were reviewed by *Tarabot* COP and will support the final study.

Also progressing is the collaboration with Kurdistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (KMOLSA) to link and activate the SSN system. The Minister of Labor and Social Affairs for KRG authorized the deployment of the SSN system, and the provision of support to overcome some of the obstacles, such as the unavailability of internet service in some sites. USAID-*Tarabot* conducted a workshop for Social Welfare Directorate IT managers and engineers in targeted sites on conducting site surveys, using modern methods and techniques.

Events: USAID-*Tarabot* project engaged in a variety of activities during April. The following breakdown is a disaggregation of the events:

- **Total Events:** USAID-*Tarabot* teams held (59) events; representing (2) workshop and (57) meetings.
- **Locations:** (49) of these events were held at locations in Baghdad, while (4) events were delivered in Basrah, (3) events in Erbil, (2) in Najaf and in (1) Diwaniyah.
- **Institutions:** a total of (9) government institutions were involved in USAID-*Tarabot* activities in March; representing (7) ministries, and (2) governorates.
- ***Tarabot* Technical Teams:** (45) events were implemented by Procurement Advisory Unit, (11) events were implemented by Oil Assessment Team, and (3) events were implemented by SSN Senior Advisor in Kurdistan Region.

I. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT CAPACITY BUILDING

As part of its ongoing efforts to improve Iraq's service-oriented capital investments, USAID-*Tarabot* is partnering with the Ministry of Planning (MoP) to support the Government of Iraq (GoI) to institute reforms to its procurement systems. These transformations will improve service delivery by lending efficiency and transparency to the procurement process. Historically, the government's reliance on disorganized, paper-based systems and antiquated processes hindered this process; reform is needed to attract the international business so crucial to the success of large, complex government projects. USAID-*Tarabot* works with the MoP to deliver complementary capacity building activities and systems reform with the ultimate goal of establishing unified procurement system aligned with international standards. This will help to promote an environment conducive to fair and open competition in the tendering and awarding of contracts, and build the confidence of the private sector in the government's bidding process.

I.1 Ministry of Planning Capacity Building

As the chief coordinating entity for public contracting in Iraq, MoP has been a longstanding partner of USAID-*Tarabot* in procurement reform, and is positioned to take the lead on Iraq's national-level procurement reform initiative. Through knowledge-transfer and the anchoring of sound practices, USAID-*Tarabot* prepares the ministry to do so. MoP staff partner with USAID-*Tarabot* advisors to receive hands-on experience, jointly conduct workshops, and apply trainings for other GoI entities. These ongoing activities are important opportunities for MoP staff to learn about and acquire procurement and training skills, which will be critical as the national reform process moves forward.

I.1.1 Development of Public Procurement ToT Program

Mr. Salman Al Jumeili, the Minister of Planning, approved the selection of 10 ToT graduates (5 males, 5 females) to participate in the final expert-level training course on public procurement at the International Training Center of ILO in Turin, Italy. This will take place August 31 through September 11, 2015. Six participants are from the Ministry of Planning, and the remaining four are from the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, Ministry of Municipality and Public Works, the Babil Governor Office, and the Muthanna Governor Office.

With the completion of the ToT in-country training late last month, under the direction of the MoP the graduates began to train government officials on procurement regulations and standard bidding documents (SBDs). Simultaneously, these graduate trainers participate in site visits to GoI entities for the application of SBDs to selected pilot projects. These are further detailed below.

I.1.2 Public Procurement Help Desk

With the acceptance by Dr. Azhar Hussein, MoP Director General for Government Contracts (DGGCs), of the USAID-*Tarabot* help desk, joint activities of USAID-*Tarabot* and the help desk continued this month with the following activities. Approval from the Minister of Planning for the continuation of the help desk is currently pending.

i. Raising the awareness of GoI Entities on Public Procurement

MoP continued to train Gol entities on procurement regulations according to its training program for 2015. Two workshops at the National Center for Management Development and Information Technology (NCMDIT) trained 42 (30 males, 12 females) government officials on SBDs. Representatives from COMSEC and the Ministries of Agriculture, Communication, Electricity, Higher Education, Industry & Minerals, Interior, Labor and Social Affairs, Oil, Planning, Transportation, and Water Resource, and Baghdad Governor Office also attended. This workshop focused on four types of SBDs: general works, electro-mechanics, prequalification, and non-consultancy services documents. The final day of the workshop tested participants to gauge their level of understanding and assess their knowledge gained. In both trainings, Miss Thikra Mohammed Jawad, a ToT graduate from MoP contracts department, explained the pre-qualification document to participants, and the criteria for selection of contractors.



MoP ToT graduate delivers training at NCMDIT on SBDs

These workshops will help equip Gol entities to increase productivity and overcome obstacles in implementing new regulations. Each workshop aimed to compare new regulations to the old, and ensure participants understood the distinction of the new practices, particularly in regard to consultancy services. Throughout these trainings, USAID-Tarabot is limiting its role so as to build the capacity of Gol entities in SBDs, and to encourage the MoP's piloting of future trainings of Gol officials.

In the meantime, MoP has expanded SBDs training to governorates and ministry directorates. In conjunction with USAID-Tarabot, MoP issued the following schedule for training southern provinces:

Beneficiaries	Date	Location
Maysan and Wasit officials	May 09-18, 2015	Maysan Governor Office
Basrah, Dhi Qar and Muthanna officials	May 23-June 01, 2015	NCMDIT Basrah
Babil, Diwaniyah, Karbala, and Najaf officials	June 06-15, 2015	NCMDIT Diwaniyah

ii. Improvements on the Standard Bidding Documents

USAID-Tarabot began working with the designated committee from MoP DGGC, to complete the revisions of the SBDs. The revisions began with: (1) unifying the information and terminology throughout the documents to comply with internationally recognized standards, and (2) modifying the sections for advertising and instructions to bidders.



Feedback and Comments on SBDs are reviewed and discussed with MoP

Once all the sections are completed, the final version of the SBDs will be translated in English.

1.1.3 Public Procurement Curriculum

USAID-Tarabot continued modifying the procurement curriculum, based on feedback from attendees participating in procurement trainings. Three competency-level documents under current review include an Instructor’s Guide, Participants Workbook and power point presentation. Once completed, modification of the advance level documents will begin.

1.2 Ministries and Governor Offices Capacity Building

1.2.1 Implementation of Standard Bidding Documents

Per the MoP schedule for applying SBDs to pilot projects, a team composed of experts from MoP Help Desk, ToT graduates, and USAID-Tarabot Procurement Advisors conducted two site visits this month to Ministry of Health (MoH), and Diwaniyah GO to train and mentor government officials on applying SBDs to selected pilot projects.



MoP Help Desk with the support of ToT graduates assist Diwaniyah GO in Applying SBDs to Pilot Project

SBDs were applied to the following selected pilot projects:

GoI Entity	Name of Pilot Project (Procurement Contract)	Location
Ministry of Health (MoH)	Construction of 300 beds hospital for women and children in Diwaniyah	Diwaniyah
	Study and design for construction of 200 beds hospital in Wasit	Wasit
	Study and design of German model storage in Al Adeel warehouse	Baghdad
Diwaniyah GO	Study and designs for Diwaniyah museum	Diwaniyah

MoP issued a new schedule for site visits to the Ministries of Communication (MoC), Electricity (MoE), Environment (MoEn), Higher Education (MoHE), and Baghdad GO, Amanat Baghdad, and Christian, Eazidi & Sabiaa Mindaieia Endowment. Nine ToT graduates are among the teams of experts that will implement this schedule. Like last month’s visit to Ministry of Water Resource (MoWR), the site visit to MoC will be done without the assistance of *Tarabot*.

1.2.2 Comprehensive Capacity Building for selected Ministries and Governor Offices (11 Elements Program)

USAID-Tarabot continued its broad procurement reform program with 6 GoI entities: engaging with four ministries (Electricity, Health, Oil/ State Company for Oil Projects (SCOP), and Transportation), and two Governor Offices (Basrah and Najaf). This program consists of the following 11 elements, where improvements contribute to better performance:

1. Implementing Procurement Laws and Regulations
2. Have a Fully Functional Procurement Department
3. Have Qualified Procurement Staff
4. Procurement Standard Process
5. Procurement Plans
6. Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs)
7. Procurement Performance Indicators
8. Procurement Records Management/Archiving
9. Reporting on Procurement Activities
10. Procurement Department Webpage
11. Subscription to dg Market

USAID-Tarabot implements these activities according to the agreed-upon action plan with each targeted ministry and GO. This month's progress is as follows:

Ministry of Electricity (MoE)

Work with the Ministry of Electricity this month focused on the following elements:

- **Implementing Procurement Laws and Regulations**

Qualification criteria and application for works and goods contracts, according to MoP's 2014 Regulations for Implementation of Government Contracts. This is critical to prepare MoE for the anticipated MoP's staff visit to the ministry in June to discuss the implementation of SBDs on a select pilot project.

- **Procurement Plans**

Review of procurement plans for four ministry directorates (Electricity Production, Electricity Transmission, Electricity Distribution, and Electricity Projects) before submission to MoP

- **Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs)**

Training delivered on the use of SBDs in supplying goods and electro-mechanical works. This further ensures participants understand the importance of using SBDs in these types of contracts

- **Procurement Records Management/Archiving**

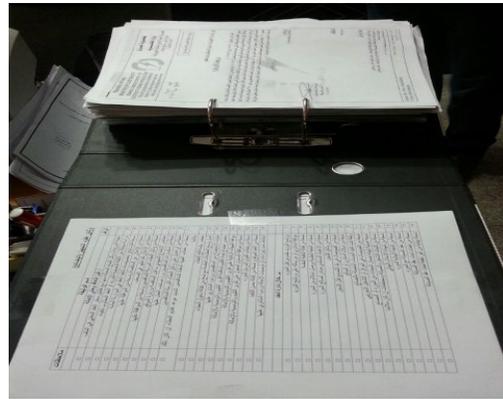
The existing paper archiving system lacks essential documents that are part of any contract (ie. correspondence with contractors, internal memos). There are also no checklists which reference the documents available for each contract. USAID-Tarabot identified these weaknesses began to improve the paper archiving system of the ministry, and initiated hands-on-training to complete the archiving of three separate projects. The ministry will apply this method of archiving for other records under the supervision of Tarabot

- **Reporting on Procurement Activities**

USAID-Tarabot explained the necessity of developing frequent reports for procurement activities, and introduced a template and sample report. Additional guidance and mentoring will be delivered over the coming months to assist the ministry in moving forward in this area.

- **Using dgMarket website**

USAID-Tarabot provided technical guidance on the requirements for uploading projects to this website, and the varying methods of uploading (manually or automatically). The ministry received hands-on-training to upload the “Supply vanadium inhibitor” tender onto the dgMarket.



MoE use USAID-Tarabot Checklist for Archiving Procurement Records

Ministry of Health (MoH)

USAID-Tarabot interventions this month with the Ministry of Health focused on the following elements:

- **Procurement Plans**

Technical assistance provided in developing the MoH 2015 procurement plan. This plan has 168 on-going projects from the previous year.

- **Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs)**

This month, the ministry applied SBDs to three pilot projects: (1) construction of a 300-bed hospital for women and children in Diwaniyah, (2) study and design for construction of 200-bed hospital in Wasit, and (3) study and design of German model storage in Al Adeel warehouse, Baghdad. Training was delivered to 13 (5 males, 8 females) ministry staff

- **Using dgMarket website**

Demonstrated two methods (manually or automatically) for re-announcing tenders onto the dgMarket website



Ministry of Oil (MoO)

The State Company for Oil Projects (SCOP) is the main beneficiary of USAID-Tarabot technical support. USAID-Tarabot provided technical assistance in the following elements:

- **Procurement Plans**

SCOP submitted their procurement plan for the 2nd half of 2014 to MoO for review

- **Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs)**

Selected company staff received training and mentoring on applying SBDs to the pilot project “Supply Cathodic Protection Equipment.” This project is already under implementation, but was selected based on the recommendation of DG Mr. Nihad Ahmed Mousa. Originally, two pilot projects were selected, and work commenced last month in developing the SBDs for the first project. However, due to the absence of the project manager, no progress was made this month. For this reason, and to avoid any delays in mentoring staff, USAID-Tarabot provided training on the development of SBDs for supplying goods for this project. Company staff can easily replicate these and apply to other projects of a similar type (bidding documents for supplying goods)



- **Reporting on Procurement Activities**

Introduced a reporting template and sample report for documenting procurement activities to the Quality Management Department Manager, explaining the process, departments involved, and frequency of reporting

Ministry of Transportation (MoTr)

Work with the Ministry of Transportation this month focused on the following elements:

- **Procurement Plans**

Provided technical assistance to the Contracting Department Manager in finalizing Qtr I FY 2015 procurement plan for both investments and the operation budget before submission to MoP. This process involved video conferencing with two ministry directorates, requesting updates to their procurement plans. These directorates utilized the ministry on-line electronic system to provide later updates, where a part of this system allows all ministry directorates to provide on-line updates to the ministry procurement plan

This system was presented to a team of experts from MoP, and they acknowledged the positive impact of using this system. The team of experts will promote this system and discuss with the higher authorities at MoP for broader application.

- **Procurement Records Management/Archiving**

USAID-Tarabot provided guidance on improving the ministry paper archiving system for procurement records by developing an index table showing the contents of each project. The ministry began including an index table, on the first page for each project box file

- **Reporting on Procurement Activities**

USAID-Tarabot introduced to the DG for Contracts and Licenses a reporting template and sample report for documenting procurement activities. The DG began communicating with all related departments (technical, projects, follow up, and finance) to develop a monthly procurement report.



USAID-Tarabot Procurement Reporting template introduced to DG for Contracts and Licenses



MO Meeting to update MoTr Procurement Plan

Basrah Governor Office

USAID-Tarabot interventions this month with Basrah GO focused on the following elements:

- **Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs)**

Hosting of a three-day SBDs workshop for 20 (9 males, 11 females) Basrah officials from various contracts directorates and departments (i.e. project management, accountant, contracting, planning, quality control, and engineering). Two certified ToT graduates participated in the delivery of this training with USAID-Tarabot. This included instructions to the bidders, the data paper, the prequalification criteria, financial, legal and technical forms, and general and special conditions. The Governor's Consultant for contracting issues attended the first day of the workshop.



Basrah GO ToT graduate delivers training on SBDs

USAID-Tarabot revised the ToR for the selection of a consultancy firm, which would provide services to overcome problems in implementation of projects, and review submitted designs and studies

- **Procurement Performance Indicators**

It became clear through performance indicator training that the GO are using some performance indicators (i.e. advertisement of bids and publication of awards) for internal purpose only. They are not used in reporting nor are they being submitted to MoP. The reason behind this is because last year, MoP had informed all ministries and GoI entities to stop using the 14 official performance indicators recognized by MoP.

- **Reporting on Procurement Activities**

USAID-Tarabot explained the effectiveness of developing procurement reports on a regular basis, supported with a Tarabot-designed template of a sample procurement report. The GO is already developing periodic reports that monitor implementation of projects, identify problems, and keep track of financial activities. Such a comprehensive report is similar to what was proposed by USAID-Tarabot

- **Using dgMarket website**

Technical assistance was provided on the announcement of two projects in the dgMarket. These two projects are for establishing transmitting lines to supply sub-stations with power from the main plant.

Najaf Governor Office

Work with Najaf GO, this month focused on the following elements:

- **Procurement Plans**

USAID-Tarabot worked with both Department Managers for Contracting and Archiving to update the GO 2015 procurement plan. This provided clarity on several issues regarding 2014 regulations for the selection of consultants.



- **Procurement Records Management/Archiving**

Engineers, contracting managers, and media managers for Al Najaf Reconstruction Commission received technical support, and additional documents were identified for future inclusion in the archiving system.

- **Reporting on Procurement Activities**

Introduced a reporting template and sample report for documenting procurement activities, explaining the necessity of producing periodic procurement reports for decision-making.

2. POLITICAL-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE OIL SECTOR

USAID-Tarabot progressed on the comprehensive study for the oil sector in Iraq with on-going visits to Ministry of Oil and selected ministry directorates and companies (OPDC, SCOP and Al Doura Refinery). These visits also facilitated the collection of data and documents to support the drafting of initial assessment reports. During this month, the following documents were drafted and reviewed by USAID-Tarabot COP:

GoI Entity	Assessment Function
Ministry of Oil	Project Management Master Plan
	Technical Service Contracts Study
State Company for Oil Projects (SCOP)	Project Management Systems Assessment Report
	Organization and Management Capacity Assessment Report
	Public Procurement
Mid-land Oil Refineries Company (Al Doura Refinery)	Project Management Systems Assessment Report
	Organization and Management Capacity Assessment Report
	Public Procurement Assessment Report
Oil Production and Distribution Company (OPDC)	Service Delivery of Refined Oil Products Assessment Report

Among the significant meetings was a discussion with the MoO steering committee, an entity established to coordinate and oversee Tarabot's activities. The purpose of the meeting was to review progress of the political analysis assessment study and to plan future activities. The chairman of the committee, Dr. Ihsan El Attar, expressed that he is pleased with the progress so far, and that all work is supervised by the Deputy Minister of Oil, Mr. Fayyad Nimeh. Both groups agreed to continue working in all areas identified in the scope of work, and to hold a workshop with all concerned oil entities in the future to explain USAID-Tarabot methodology of work.



Assessment Progress reviewed by MoO Steering Committee

Engagement also continued with the private sector, when USAID-Tarabot met with the technical advisor from TOYO Engineering Corporation Representative Office in Iraq. Discussed here was information on increasing oil production, and the difficulties and problems hindering that production. Obtaining information from the private sector is essential to the study, to compare the information collected and ensure its accuracy.

Finally, USAID-Tarabot completed the hire of Gary Vogler to provide technical expertise to the assessment report about the current status, gaps, obstacles, including political, administrative, and economic dimensions, and propose potential areas of quick interventions that will yield into increasing oil revenues within a period not to exceed twelve months.

3. SOCIAL SAFETY NET (SSN) PROGRAM WITH KRG

Under this extended initiative, USAID-Tarabot is working closely with the KRG Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (KMoLSA), and its four main sites in Erbil, Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah and Garman to link and activate the SSN system.



The deployment of the SSN system commenced this month with several meetings, most notably with the Kurdistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (KMoLSA), Mr. Mohammed Khader Mohammed. Ministry consultants, the IT manager and the PR manager attended, in addition to DGs and SSN department managers for all the main social welfare sites (Dahuk, Erbil, Garman and Sulaymaniyah). Discussion centered on three main issues: (1) internet connectivity in all targeted sites, (2) on-job-training to targeted IT managers and system users, and (3) data migration and cleansing

Minister of Labor for KRG discuss the deployment of SSN system with all Social Welfare managers

The meeting resulted in:

- The minister will ensure internet connectivity is available in all targeted sites
- USAID-Tarabot and IT Manager at MoLSA HQ will develop a training planning
- All targeted sites will supply USAID-Tarabot with data to begin the cleansing process

To progress in the deployment of the SSN system, USAID-Tarabot hosted a workshop for 25 (18 males, 7 females) government officials, representing Social Welfare Directorate IT managers and engineers in targeted sites on conducting site surveys, using modern methods and techniques. Also explained were the requirements needed to complete linking and operating the SSN system. Once this information is available, USAID-Tarabot will review, analyze, and develop a status report to be submitted to the minister.

Finally, on-job-training for IT engineers in Social Welfare sites is planned for May, where participants will begin building the SSN infrastructure starting with installation of MS Windows Server 2008 administration. In the meantime, Garman site was the 1st site to send in their database for cleansing. All the remaining sites are targeting next week for submission, according to the deadline.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Staffing, Deployment, Registration

During the month of April 2015, project staff increased to 33 consisting of 30 local and 3 expats.

- Gary Vogler joins USAID-*Tarabot* as a senior level technical advisor guiding the oil sector analysis. Specifically, Mr. Vogler will finalize the oil assessment methodology, draft the rapid assessment oil report, and present his findings to USAID and MoO government officials.
- *Tarabot* project manager Ms. Arielle Snyder arrived from the MSI Home Office to support the project in technical and administrative aspects.
- Two new local staff joined the team:
 - IT specialist: Mr. Hayder Jafar to support the IT unit. The IT unit has been understaffed since December 2014
 - Finance Assistant: Mr. Bashar Nehad. To support the finance unit during the absence of Ms. Sally Hachim during maternity leave.

Security

During this month, the security situation in Iraq was tense, with ongoing fighting in the north and west of Iraq, and continued explosions and attacks in Baghdad. Military operations are still ongoing by the Iraqi Forces with the assistance of the Coalition Forces. This has not affected *Tarabot* operations in Baghdad.

Three major incidents occurred during this month:

- Izzat Ibrahim Al-Douri, a former deputy to Saddam Hussein was killed in a security operation by Iraqi security forces and Shia militia members in the Hamrin Mountains between Tikrit and Kirkuk,
- A car bomb attacked Al Yarmouk Hospital, Southern Mansour districted in Baghdad
- A car bomb exploded April 27, next to a very busy restaurant located on 14th Ramadan Street in Baghdad's western district of Mansour (about 1.5Km west of USAID-*Tarabot* Mansour compound)

Badges/Visas

During this month, *Tarabot* received three multiple visa approvals and applied for one multiple visa.

The IZ badging office resumed the process of printing badges. *Tarabot* project processed the printing of six gray badges, seven biometrics, and two security screenings