

**DFID's reconstruction news****Preparing for Elections - The Facts**

Iraqi national and regional elections in January 2005 represent a milestone in Iraq's transition to a democratic society. For the first time in decades, ordinary Iraqi citizens will have the right to choose who they want to represent them in government. Elections will give legitimacy to the new Transitional Government. They will also have the potential to contribute to the restoration of peace and stability in Iraq.

What will people be voting for?

The Transitional National Assembly (TNA). The TNA will be the legislative authority of the Transitional Government. Executive authority will rest with a Presidency Council, the Prime Minister, and the Council of Ministers. The TNA is also responsible for drafting the permanent Constitution by August 2005. The draft constitution will then be put to the Iraqi people in a referendum to take place by October 2005. Assuming that the constitution is approved, elections to a fully constitutional government will take place in December 2005.

IECI 'Your Vote' advertising campaign*Member of the public reading the democracy posters***How will the executive be formed?**

The TNA will elect a three person Presidency Council (President and two Deputies) who need not be members of the TNA. The Presidency Council is responsible for nominating a Prime Minister and, upon the recommendation of the PM, a Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister and Cabinet must be endorsed by a TNA majority vote of confidence.

Who is responsible for organising the elections?

The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) is responsible for the oversight, organisation and conduct of the transitional elections. It is composed of Iraqi members, with one UN expert as a non-voting member.

What is the role of the UN?

A UN team of elections experts is advising and supporting the IECI in its work. For this reason, the UN cannot be responsible for monitoring the elections or determining key decisions.

Who will monitor the elections?

Civil society groups participating in domestic observation are receiving training under a USAID-funded programme. The EC will also provide

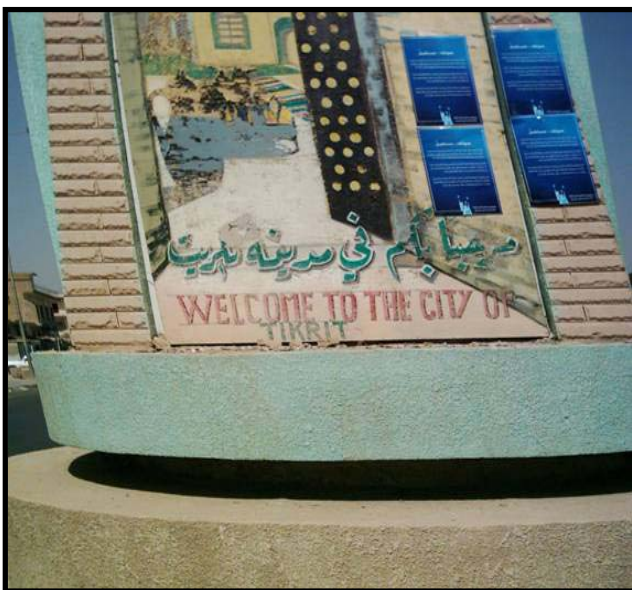
support. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) is also working closely with the Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq, and will be implementing a range of election monitoring projects.

What electoral system has been chosen?

Electoral procedures in Iraq will be reviewed during the constitutional process in 2005. In the meantime, elections for the Iraqi National Assembly will be conducted according to a system of proportional representation. The entire country will form a single electoral district. Parties with, for example, 10% of the vote will get 10% of the 275 seats. Every third name on parties' candidate lists must be a woman in order to achieve the agreed target of 25% female representation in the Assembly.

This system was chosen to promote inclusiveness, for practicality, and to avoid delays. It was agreed by the IECI, the Iraqi Interim Government, and the UN that this system would have a number of distinct advantages:

- The proportional representation system is the most effective method of gaining inclusive representation of a range of groups



Elections poster in the city of Tikrit

- It is simple and transparent
- It accommodates the goal of achieving a fair representation of women and ethnic minorities, as they will be able to vote collectively from around the country for the same list or candidate
- It encourages political groups to form alliances around the country and to appeal to as many constituencies as possible

Political parties

The certification of political entities and candidate lists is currently underway and managed by the IECI.

Any group or individual wishing to register as a political entity must collect 500 signatures. Groups are required to pay a deposit of 7.5 million Iraqi Dinars, and individuals 2.5 million Iraqi Dinars. Parties, associations or groups with militia wings are not able to register.

Timing of the elections

The process is currently on track. A preliminary voter list has been compiled by collating the databases used for food distribution. This amounts to 13.9 million names and covers 80 per cent of the electorate. 5.5 million registration forms have been distributed with ration packs to each family unit. Voters who are not on the list or require amendments have until mid-December to notify the local registration office.

Public information

Leaflets covering the registration process have been distributed with registration forms. The TV station Al-Iraqiya has begun airing an advertising campaign entitled "Your vote, your future". Training for the media on election reporting is being provided by the Iraqi Media Commission, and by UN and US agencies. Posters promoting the national elections are displayed in public places, and advertisements have been placed in newspapers and magazines. The campaign's impact over the next six weeks will be critical for increasing voter awareness, and to ensure that candidates understand the elections process as well.



Elections poster in newspapers

What is DFID doing to support the elections?

- \$10 million of DFID's existing allocation to the UN International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) is providing security support to the IECI Commissioners.
- DFID is supporting two members of the UN team providing technical advice to the IECI
- DFID's £5 million Political Participation Fund (PPF) was set up to help Iraqi civil society organisations to ensure that poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups in Iraq have a voice in the political debate. PPF projects so far include: a student voter education campaign conducted by an Iraqi student society; workshops on women's rights and the political process; and human rights events.

Employment Generation and Essential Service Repair in the South

Successive opinion polls show that the overriding concerns of most Iraqi citizens are jobs and security. The two are closely linked. In the south, the poorest part of Iraq, adult male unemployment is estimated at 27-30%. This is compounded by large and uncounted numbers of returning Shia Muslim refugees who fled persecution from the former regime. Southern Iraq also suffers from major weaknesses in electricity, water and sanitation infrastructure, caused by years of under-investment.

The DFID Southern Iraq Employment and Services Programme (SIESP) was launched in July 2004, with a total commitment of £16.5 million. Its goal is to provide short-term work opportunities that will benefit the public, and to provide emergency support to essential services if needed.

SIESP has two components:

- The first is an employment generation scheme; enabling the southern Provincial and local councils to enter into contracts address public works needs and reduce unemployment.
- The second is an Emergency Response Facility to address weaknesses in electricity, water, and sewerage services.

Progress so far

DFID has provided training for Iraqi programme managers in procurement and contracting procedures, and has encouraged council staff to investigate potential work projects. DFID has also set up systems to improve provincial and sub-provincial councils' understanding of the programme and how it can help them.

Al Muthanna province is the poorest area of Iraq in terms of income. DFID has agreed \$500,000 funding for projects which will create 160,000 days of work in different areas of the province. Work was due to start in mid-November on projects which include rehabilitating local parks, street cleaning, and refuse removal.

In Maysan province, DFID has approved funding of \$280,000 for a series of community projects which will create over 66,000 days of work. The projects have all been proposed by local organisations and groups, and include: refurbishing public parks, cleaning open sewer systems and external drains, re-paving roads, and dredging rivers.

The SIESP Emergency Response Fund has funded the emergency repair of a 132KV transmission line from Hartha power station to north Basra city, serving 1.5 million residents.

SIESP Key Facts

- Employment projects range from rehabilitating over 300 school gardens throughout Al Muthanna province, to rebuilding municipal parks, repairing and painting streets, and clearing out sewage channels.
- 95 proposals totalling over \$6.8 million have been submitted across the four Governorates.
- Under the Emergency Response Fund, a power transmission line to north Basra city was repaired, serving 1.5 million people.

The future

SIESP procedures are now well established and provincial and local councils across the southern region are receiving a steady stream of project proposals. Further employment projects are currently being developed in Basra, Dhi Qar, and Al Muthanna. Three proposals for emergency repair works are also under consideration, including repair to water pumping facilities at a Basra hospital, and sewerage projects in Maysan.



SIESP Project: Iraqi workers laying water mains in Basra

Other news....

ange of Iraqi NGOs engaged in human rights work have been invited to attend. The objectives of the event are:

of domestic, regional and international human

To strengthen local capacity to promote a

and programmes of support between Iraqi NGOs and international human rights

al Envoy on Human Rights in Iraq, will attend the conference, and will also host an evening reception.

International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) Donor Conference, Tokyo, 13-14 October

The third meeting of the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI - the UN and World Bank managed trust funds) took place in Tokyo on 14 October at the invitation of the Government of Japan. It was preceded on 13 October by an expanded meeting to which all current and potential donors to Iraq were invited. The UK delegation was led by DFID Iraq Director, Jim Drummond.

The conference brought together 57 countries and institutions, including members of the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG). UN and World Bank delegations were present to discuss the progress of programmes and projects and to seek further pledges for the year 2005. Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Barham Saleh, presented Iraq's new National Development Strategy. The Strategy set out the targets and concrete measures drawn up by Iraqis for the reconstruction of their country over the next three years (2005-2007).

Iran joined the Donor Committee as its newest full member following its commitment to contribute \$10 million. The Iraqi delegation and many donors expressed their strong commitment to elections taking place by January 2005. Japan, The EC, Canada and the US announced that additional money would be allocated for electoral support. DFID agreed to fund two experts to support the Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq, in addition to \$10 million already provided through the Trust Fund for security for the IEI.

The Fourth Donor Committee meeting will take place in Jordan in Spring 2005.

International Conference, Sharm El Sheikh

An International Ministerial Meeting on Iraq will be held on 23 November in Sharm El Sheikh, at the invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The Conference was proposed under UNSCR 1546. The objectives of the conference are: to strengthen international support for the Iraqi Interim Government and for the elections in January; to strengthen regional co-operation in tackling insurgent activity in Iraq; and to broaden international support for the political and reconstruction process in 2005.

Those attending the meeting will include the Foreign Ministers of "The Group of Countries Neighbouring Iraq" (Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Saudia Arabia, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Kuwait), G8 members, as well as China as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The Secretary Generals of the UN, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference and

representatives of the European Union are also expected to participate.

DFID IN IRAQ

DFID's strategy for working in Iraq is set out in our Interim Country Assistance Plan which was published in February. It is available on DFID's website (www.dfid.gov.uk)

DFID has committed over £333 million for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq since the conflict in 2003. This includes:

£84.8 million to UN agencies in response to 2003 emergency appeals

£32 million to the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement

£79.4 million for reconstruction and capacity-building projects in southern Iraq

£19.5 million for advisory support to central government, the justice sector, independent media, civil society and political participation

£28.2 million for secondments and consultants for the Coalition Provisional Authority (up to June 2004) and related security costs

£70 million to the World Bank and UN International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq – IRFFI – trust funds

£11.7 through the IMF and the International Finance Corporation for economic governance support and small business development

£7.4 million through NGOs.

DFID has offices co-located with the British Embassy in Baghdad and Basra, which work closely with the Iraqi Interim Government and other donors, and help to deliver our assistance.

Full details of the programme can be found at www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/asia/iraq.asp

Other updates available on Iraq:

www.USAID.gov

www.reliefweb.int

www.uniraq.org