

Iraq Partnership Facility

Independent Progress Review

October 2010

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AID ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Aid Activity Name	Iraq Partnership Facility		
AidWorks initiative number	INI278		
Commencement date	30 Sept 2008	Completion date	30 June 2011
Total Australian \$	\$20 million		
Total other \$	\$0		
Delivery organisation(s)	Coffey International Development		
Implementing Partner(s)	Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Finance Ministry of Trade Ministry of Human Rights		
Country/Region	Iraq		
Primary Sector	Agriculture Governance (finance, trade, human rights)		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

{to be completed on acceptance of the draft}

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP	Australian Federal Police
AIAS	Australia Iraq Agricultural Scholarships
AUD	Australian Dollars
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CoR	Council of Representatives
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
GoA	Government of Australia
GoI	Government of Iraq
ICBC	Iraq Customs and Border Control Project
IIG	Iraqi Interim Government
IPF	Iraq Partnership Facility
IPR	Independent Progress Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHR	Ministry of Human Rights
MoT	Ministry of Trade
MoU	Memoranda of Understanding
RAFI	Rehabilitation Assistance Facility: Iraq
RFT	Request for Tender
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank
WoG	Whole of Government

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Document Purpose

This is an independent progress review (IPR) of the Iraq Partnership Facility (IPF)—an initiative of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). This review was conducted by a team of two independent consultants during October 2010 as one element of a broader strategic assessment of the Iraq program (2009 – 2011). Other documents related to this review include IPRs for the Australia Iraq Agricultural Scholarships (AIAS) Program, the Iraq Customs and Border Control (ICBC) Project, and a sample of responsive micro projects implemented within the program. An overall Strategic Assessment report synthesises these activity-level findings to inform the development of a new three-year Country Strategy for AusAID in Iraq.

1.2 Activity Background

In March 2003 a US-led invasion of Iraq removed Saddam Hussein's regime and established the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to commence rehabilitation and democratisation processes. The Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) was installed from 28 June 2004 until elections in January 2005 when the Iraq Transitional Government was appointed. Further elections in December 2005 appointed the Council of Representatives (CoR) which approved most of the cabinet ministers on 20 May 2006, marking the transition from the IIG to Iraq's full-term government.

Australia provided humanitarian and development assistance in Iraq from 2003. Over the period 2003 – 2007 this assistance was predominantly provided through the World Bank (WB) and United Nations (UN) agencies. Some short-term technical assistance was provided to key ministries, and training of Government of Iraq (GoI) personnel was provided through AusAID's Rehabilitation Assistance Facility: Iraq (RAFI). RAFI was established in 2003 as a flexible and responsive mechanism to provide Australian technical assistance (TA) to key Iraqi public sector institutions. The deteriorating security situation necessitated the withdrawal of Australian personnel from Iraq and shifted the *modus operandi* of RAFI to in-Australia training of GoI personnel. An initial budget of AUD10 million was expanded to AUD20 million and managed by Coffey International Development (formerly SAGRIC International). The contract for RAFI was extended on four occasions.

In 2008 AusAID approved a design framework for the successor to RAFI—The Iraq Partnership Facility (IPF)—which was to build on the experience of RAFI but pursue a more narrowly focussed program of capacity building. A tender for implementation of the IPF design was won by Coffey International Development which commenced on 11 July 2009¹.

IPF is one part of Australia's current three-year development assistance program in Iraq (2009-11) which is funded through a AUD165 million budget measure delivered by AusAID (AUD140 million), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) (AUD15 million) and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) (AUD10 million). In the first year of the budget measure, over 40 activities were initiated. A process of rationalisation and streamlining is underway with multiyear funding being introduced. The selection of activities reflected the operating environment and political context in both countries. A number of major programs were instigated by Kevin Rudd, the then Australian Prime Minister. In June 2009, the then Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and six Iraqi Ministers signed six memoranda of understanding (MoU) which set the agenda for bilateral cooperation in agriculture, resources and energy, trade cooperation, education, training and research, public health, and security and border control.

¹ AusAID Contract 50886.

AusAID's program is guided by a Strategic Framework that focuses support on agriculture, public sector governance, vulnerable populations, and basic service delivery. The Program is managed in Canberra by a team of three, and supported by a posted officer in Baghdad. AusAID is a formal party to one of the six MoU² but there is complementarity between the intent of the MoU and AusAID's Strategic Framework. The current aid program is contributing substantively to five of the six MoU³.

This review is narrowly focussed on IPF, and the extent to which it has contributed to AusAID's Strategic Framework in Iraq, and the MoU signed by the Australian and Iraqi Governments. More broadly, this review may also contribute to thinking concerning a new whole of Government (WoG) strategy for engagement with Iraq from June 2011. A full review of the budget measure will be undertaken in late 2011.

1.3 Facility Overview

The 2008 design defined the goal of IPF as being: *"To contribute to assistance in Iraq's rehabilitation"*. This goal was to be pursued by: *"assist[ing] in building the capacity of staff in key agencies in governance and agriculture sectors, and other priority activities as identified by Gol and GoA"*.

The design articulated four components, three of which were concerned with the substantive work of the facility in agriculture, governance and emerging opportunities; the fourth concerned the management of the facility.

The facility was conceived as a 'flexible mechanism' to enable progressive and responsive engagement with selected Gol agencies. Training and study tours sponsored by the facility are the primary vehicle of assistance to Gol agencies, and from the Australian Government's perspective, are an important vehicle for progressing implementation of the six MoU.

At the time of this report IPF had delivered fourteen formal courses⁴ for 254 participants (27% female) from the ministries of Agriculture (41%), Finance (31%), Trade (15%) and Human Rights (13%). Agricultural courses were delivered by three 'preferred suppliers'; and non-agricultural courses were delivered by four providers selected through a competitive tender process in November 2009. IPF is housed within Coffey International Development's Adelaide office, and is managed by a team of three with support from Coffey corporate staff. Zozik Group is subcontracted by Coffey International Development to provide logistics support in Amman for travelling Gol personnel.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Review Objectives

This IPR conformed to AusAID's standard practice of commissioning independent evaluations midway through the implementation phase of initiatives. The purpose of this IPR was to improve effectiveness during the remainder of the facility's life, and to inform thinking about a new country strategy beyond June 2011. The terms of reference (ToR, see Appendix A) defined the basis for analysis of progress in terms of AusAID's standard evaluation criteria⁵: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender equality, monitoring & evaluation (M&E), and analysis & learning.

² Concerned with security and border control, given the experience and capacity of AusAID in this area.

³ The exception being the Resources and Energy MoU, although some training provided through the program may have also contributed to this sector.

⁴ A further seven 'ad hoc' initiatives were also requested by AusAID.

⁵ These dimensions of performance were drawn from AusAID's standard IPR criteria, which are based on the standard Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria.

2.2 Review Scope and Methods

The review was predominantly conducted by one member of the review team with oversight by the Team Leader during a two-week period in October 2010. In line with the requirement for a rapid review, the M&E specialist used qualitative methods; specifically key informant interviews and document reviews. Documents were provided by AusAID and the contractor as requested. Interviews were arranged at locations convenient for the interviewees or by telephone at agreed times. Content analysis of interview notes and documents aimed to identify predominant and exceptional themes from the various sources in relation to the evaluation criteria listed above (Section 2.1).

2.3 Limitations Encountered

The review team encountered the pervasive evaluation challenges of deciphering complex and ambiguous causal linkages, balancing multiple perspectives and appreciating their own outsider biases and limitations.

Beyond these recognised and pervasive evaluation challenges, the depth and breadth of this review was affected by the time available, and by security considerations that precluded visiting Iraq or engaging directly with Iraqi counterparts. Notwithstanding these obvious limitations, the key informant interviews and document analyses proceeded as planned and provided valuable insights.

3. FINDINGS

In this section, findings are presented in relation to the five Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and AusAID's additional three criteria (gender equality, M&E, analysis & learning). Ratings against these criteria using AusAID's six-point ordinal quality scale are provided below, followed by discussion of the findings in subsequent sections.

3.1 Evaluation Criteria Ratings

Overall IPF was found to be making good progress within a challenging operating context. No rating was given for the 'impact' and 'sustainability' criteria owing to the fact that political and security considerations precluded the review team from engaging with the beneficiaries of the training courses.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1 – 6) ⁶
Relevance	4
Effectiveness	4
Efficiency	5
Impact	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Gender Equality	5
Monitoring & Evaluation	4
Analysis & Learning	4

⁶ 1=very poor quality; 2=poor quality; 3=less than adequate quality; 4=adequate quality; 5=good quality; 6=very high quality.

Relevance

'Relevance' is concerned with how the facility objectives aligned with the priorities of the GoI and AusAID, and the extent to which the objectives addressed a recognised need. The facility's relevance was assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6).

Relative strengths:

- Aligned with AusAID strategy and emerging Iraqi priorities
- Contributed to the progressive development of a bilateral relationship
- Consultative approach appreciated by Iraqi partners
- Allowed Australia to meet its international and moral obligations in the context of deteriorating security
- Addressed a widely recognised development need for capacity building of GoI personnel
- Recognised technical and environmental relevance in Australian assistance in Iraq (especially in agriculture and water resources)

Relative weaknesses:

- Ambiguity concerning WoG partner responsibilities/engagement regarding the six MoU
- Ambiguity in the relationship between AusAID's Strategic Framework and the six MoU
- Tension between a humanitarian/development rationale and a strategic/political rationale

Relevance to Australia

The IPF design framework explicitly aligned the facility with AusAID's Iraq Development Assistance Framework 2007 – 2010: *"by building the capacity of staff in key agencies in the key sectors of agriculture and governance and other priority capacity building activities"*. This focus is borne out in the IPF portfolio with 41% of activities directed at the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and the balance distributed across a range of governance-related areas (31% Ministry of Finance (MoF); 15% Ministry of Trade (MoT); 13% Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR)). The agricultural sector is acknowledged as a strategic area for AusAID given Australia's comparative advantage and technical expertise in areas of relevance to Iraqi agricultural sector. Further, as the largest employer in Iraq, the agricultural sector is considered a highly influential domain for a bilateral donor. According to a Coffey employee, *"politically, agriculture is very important. It is the biggest employer in the country and has influence from national level all the way down to individual households"*. The support invested in the other sectors aligns with widely held views concerning the need for strengthening of governance within the GoI.

Beyond the 'strategic relevance' of IPF within AusAID's Iraq program is the broader relevance of IPF within the Australian political economy. Firstly, numerous opinion surveys and commentary in the Australian media indicate a sense of 'moral obligation' among the Australian public concerning Australia's humanitarian and development responsibility to the people of Iraq, and hence broad support for the AusAID program. Kevin Rudd, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, recently met with the Iraqi Ambassador to Australia and assured him of *"Australia's warm support for the people of Iraq"*. Secondly, the strategic potential of Iraq as a future trading partner of Australia is widely recognised, with Iraq expected to reach middle-income status in coming years mainly through oil revenue from what are considered to be the largest oil reserves outside of Saudi Arabia. The Australian Ambassador in Iraq noted that *"the focus of our relationship is on capacity building, and we hope this will lead to trade and possibly investment opportunities. Certainly there are commercial opportunities stemming from the MoU"*. This view was affirmed by the Iraqi Ambassador to Australia who stated that *"I am here to help the Australian side to get to Iraq. I can open the gate so that you don't miss opportunities there"*. The aid program has been widely seen by Australian WoG partners as a mechanism for cementing the bilateral relationship and future trade possibilities. According to a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) interviewee, *"the aid program has helped us to build a range of relationships with Iraqi agencies...from a DFAT perspective we'd like to see the aid program in Iraq continue"*.

Notwithstanding the broad relevance to Australia of the aid program in general and IPF in particular, some ambiguity exists concerning AusAID's role *vis-a-vis* other Australian WoG partners. This ambiguity is borne out in what seems to be weak definition of the relationship between the six MoU and AusAID's Strategic Framework. This broad strategic issue is of relevance to IPF because as a form of aid, a facility by its very nature is vulnerable to diffusion of focus and, by extension erosion of relevance and effectiveness. As discussed in Section 3.4 (below), a risk facing IPF is that impact will be eroded if the focus of the facility is too broad. This risk is likely to be increased if the IPF mandate is expanded to encompass all the domains defined by the six MoU.

AusAID staff acknowledged a "*manageable tension*" between the political relevance of establishing relationships with key national stakeholders through IPF to support a wider WoG engagement agenda; and the ethical/developmental relevance of addressing humanitarian and human development needs within local communities. For IPF, the tension is 'manageable' while there are areas of clear overlap between a development/humanitarian rationale and strategic national engagements.

Recommendations

1. IPF should remain a key mechanism (form of aid) for achieving AusAID's development assistance objectives in Iraq.
2. IPF should focus specifically on AusAID's development assistance mandate, rather than a broader whole-of-government agenda, in order to strengthen relevance and effectiveness.

Relevance to Iraq

Iraq has drafted a National Development Plan, but this has not yet been translated into English, and is not widely available. Nevertheless, there is broad agreement concerning the need to strengthen capacity within GoI agencies as a means to ensuring basic services for the Iraqi people.

Of particular relevance to Iraq is Australia's technical capacity in agriculture. According to the Iraqi Ambassador to Australia "*our Prime Minister recognises that agriculture is the backbone of the country and that Australia is number one in the world in key areas of interest to Iraq, such as drip irrigation systems*". The Australian Ambassador in Iraq reported feedback from Iraqi counterparts that confirmed this view: "*they have a perception of us in agriculture as a source of prime commercial benefit*". The predominant focus of IPF on agricultural training (41%) has reportedly been appreciated by key Iraqi stakeholders.

Beyond the technical or sectoral emphasis of IPF, the consultative approach taken by the Australian government broadly, and by IPF specifically, has been appreciated by Iraqi counterparts. The Iraqi Prime Minister is reported to have held up to the Europeans the GoI relationship with Australia as a desirable model. IPF staff also reported "*[GoI personnel] seem to appreciate discussion and openness rather than being directed*". Beyond the diplomatic value of adopting a consultative approach is the development rationale—to ensure the relevance of the initiative. As observed by the Australian Ambassador in Iraq: "*the Iraqis have the best idea of what they need within their ministries*".

Relevance of the form of aid

The underlying principle of providing a flexible mechanism to respond to emerging Iraqi needs within a complex and dynamic context was appropriate. Although AusAID is a relatively small donor in Iraq, flexibility and consultation appear to have contributed to a disproportionately high profile for IPF among key GoI stakeholders. Further, at the time IPF was designed there was insufficient political stability and insufficient knowledge/experience to formulate coherent and focussed program. IPF has enabled AusAID to deepen its engagement with GoI and to develop a richer knowledge of the development challenges and opportunities.

3.2 Effectiveness

'Effectiveness' is concerned with the extent to which objectives were achieved, and the wider merit of these objectives. The effectiveness of IPF was assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6) in consideration of the operating context.

<p>Relative strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enabled flexibility within a dynamic and challenging environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrated commitment to good practice training and experiential learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attempting to utilise the facility mechanism to foster systemic institutional change where possible <p>Relative weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak design logic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poorly articulated development purpose (providing 'assistance' an end in itself) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disparate training activities with limited coherence or progression risks eroding impact

IPF effectiveness was challenging to assess owing in part to weak design logic that underpinned the facility, and an ambiguous *raison d'être*. The goal statement in the request for tender (RFT) simply directed the facility to "*contribute to assistance in Iraq's rehabilitation*". Aside from a critique of the grammar of this statement⁷ it failed to articulate the nature of any significant and lasting changes that might arise from the facility, or the ultimate beneficiaries of these changes, but instead defined assistance as an end in itself. The weak design logic is illustrated by isolating key elements in the causality as follows:

Output 1.1: "*Individual capacity building activities...implemented*"

↓ (in order...)

Component 1: "*To build capacity of staff...*"

↓ (in order...)

Purpose: "*To assist in building the capacity of staff...*"

↓ (in order...)

Goal: "*To contribute to Iraq's reconstruction through capability building...*"

This logic is tantamount to saying that IPF will 'build the capacity of Gol staff in order to build the capacity of Gol staff'. Further, the basis for judging success/failure was not clearly articulated in design documentation, although Australian officials and IPF staff seemed to have a tacit sense of what good performance would entail. According to the Australian Ambassador, the program will be successful if "*senior policy people and technocrats that have been trained by Australia understand what we are about, and see us as a prime source of commercial benefit to them*". According to IPF staff, the facility would be unsuccessful if training was untargeted ("*a scatter gun approach*"), driven wholly from the Australian side, and delivered only through conventional classroom training methods. Open participation with no influence over participant selection would also compromise effectiveness and the delivery of generalist rather than specialised topics.

Notwithstanding the critique of the design logic (above), the underlying principle of providing a flexible mechanism to respond to emerging Iraqi needs within a complex and dynamic context was appropriate. However, rather than being an end in itself, diversity and flexibility should be a means to exploring entry points and opportunities that can become the foundation for a focussed and coherent program that generates development impacts in the future.

⁷ It is unclear what '*contributing to assisting*' might actually mean, and why either of the simpler alternatives would not have sufficed: '*To contribute to Iraq's rehabilitation*'; or '*To assist in Iraq's rehabilitation*'. But in any case, '*contributing/assisting*' is a deliverable of the facility rather than an outcome or impact—it is not a significant and lasting change in the lives of ultimate beneficiaries.

Recommendation

3. IPF should proactively synthesise lessons from the diverse and flexible activities to inform future AusAID engagements.

IPF has evolved from an initiative without a discernable design focus, to one that is attempting to identify and respond to need in key areas. However, at least four factors are inhibiting this process of improving effectiveness:

- **Focus:** The WoG MoU which are creating a 'dispersion effect'. As noted by a senior Australian official, "*the MoU were drafted in such as way as to allow us to do anything we want within the bilateral program*". This carries the inherent risk that IPF can be drawn into disparate activities.
- **Monitoring:** The inability to adequately monitor the effectiveness of individual engagements in order to build the evidence-base required to improve the focus and effectiveness of the facility.
- **Prioritisation:** The lack of clarity within GoI about key priorities, and a strategic framework that gives structure to the various priorities presented.
- **Absorptive capacity:** The limited capacity of GoI to absorb inputs of the type offered by the IPF.

IPF staff noted that these inhibiting factors were especially evident with MoA where participation and course selection did not seem to be guided by an overall vision or strategy. One Australian official noted that "*requests for training come forward as ad hoc requests...there is weak coordination...there are lots of 'legacy requests'—training that has worked previously and is requested again*".

By contrast, the IPF experience of partnering with the MoF suggests that there might be some possibility of fostering systemic changes within the Ministry beyond individual transformations. Key indications include a stronger engagement in course selection by senior staff within the Ministry, and the articulation of a reform vision which training could support.

The above findings may suggest that IPF should narrow its focus to opportunities emerging within the MoF and move away from work in the agriculture sector where there is a lack of clarity and consensus around key needs and priorities for agriculture development. A continuing focus on the agriculture sector is justified, however, by the fact that the vast majority of the poor in Iraq are engaged in subsistence agriculture. Australia has a clear comparative advantage in assisting the rehabilitation of the Iraqi agricultural sector, and there is reciprocal value to Australia of developing agricultural trade linkages with Iraq (see Section 0 above, Relevance).

Nevertheless, AusAID needs to be highly strategic in the way in which the IPF mechanism is utilised to support the agriculture sector. This review suggests that continuing use of the IPF to provide *ad hoc* training across the agriculture sector is unlikely to reap significant or sustainable benefits. By contrast, the IPF is an appropriate mechanism for assisting GoI to address higher order challenges such as the establishment of the policy and regulatory framework required to transition from a command agricultural economy to a market based system.

Hence, it is worth IPF/AusAID exploring the potential for engaging with a range of relevant Ministries (e.g. agriculture related GoI agencies: MoF and MoT) in order to identify training needs specifically related to furthering reform of the agricultural sector.

A second way in which the IPF may focus its efforts in the agriculture sector is to link IPF training opportunities to other AusAID projects being supported in the sector whether research, micro-finance or on-ground projects.

Recommendations

4. The IPF focus on the Ministry of Finance should be maintained and strengthened by on-going dialogue with MoF to ensure that training effectively contributes to long term institutional strengthening.
5. IPF/AusAID should explore the potential for engaging with relevant GoI agencies on training needs specifically related to furthering reform of the agricultural sector.
6. Efforts should be made to link IPF training opportunities more closely to existing AusAID projects, whether research, micro-finance or on-ground projects.

According to IPF staff, factors that have positively influenced the effectiveness of training include: an increasing specialisation of the courses offered, exerting influence over the qualifications and experience of course participants and increasing stakeholder engagement in planning courses. Also, the issue of training methods is fundamental to adult learning and has been a key challenge faced by IPF. The most successful courses have been those where sub-contracted trainers have utilised interactive learning methods rather than conventional classroom-based methods. Arguably, a key additional value of IPF has been the pressure applied in this regard. The Facility Director reported: *"we've pushed a lot for course providers to move towards more experiential learning methods"*. All training materials are required to be translated into Arabic. Only one course has reportedly been considered to be below the expected standard.

AusAID staff posted in Baghdad stated that *"IPF is a really useful mechanism that is driven by what Iraq needs. I think it should be used for all of the training we deliver"*. One Coffey staff member noted that *"in some ways we've created new problems for AusAID because courses have gone so well which has created an expectation that meeting ad hoc training requests will just continue."*

Recommendation

7. AusAID should consider extending the facility as provided for in the contract.

3.3 Efficiency

'Efficiency' is concerned with implementation performance against time and budget parameters, value-for-money, and the quality and professionalism of deliverables. IPF was assessed as 'good quality' (5/6) in relation to these factors.

Relative strengths:

- Good progress made under challenging circumstances
- Budget likely to be fully expended within the life of the facility
- Responsive to AusAID's requirements
- Professionally managed facility; professionally delivered training
- Value-for-money in terms of the profile and strategic relationships developed

Relative weaknesses:

- Design concentrated resources in a relatively small number of individuals

Good progress has been achieved by IPF under challenging circumstances; not least because of restrictions placed on communication with Iraqi ministries and the posting of Australian personnel in Iraq. According to the facility director, the facility *"had a slow start...but currently looks like delivering all of the twenty proposed courses"*.

This progress contrasts with RAFI (the predecessor program) which struggled to expend the budget, and as a consequence was extended four times.

IPF's major cost centre is the delivery of targeted short-courses by seven sub-contracted training organisations⁸ within Australia. There was some initial discussion concerning the viability of delivering training in third country locations, but this was not taken up for several reasons, including:

- **Iraqi preference:** AusAID received a clear message that course participants preferred training in Australia. This likely arose from a desire for an 'Australian experience' as well as broader diplomatic concerns about other countries in the region.
- **Cost:** Cost analysis of various scenarios indicated that while some savings were possible through Australian trainers providing courses in third country locations, these savings were not significant.
- **Quality:** The quality of teaching and learning was deemed to be higher with courses delivered in Australia owing to access to a broader range of trainers and the possibility for site visits and other non-classroom experiences.

The human resource investment in IPF has been modest, with a small team within Coffey managing day-to-day implementation⁹ and AusAID's Iraq Program Manager taking responsibility for the facility as part of the broader Iraq program from Canberra. In Baghdad, AusAID staff have had front-line responsibility for negotiating with partner ministries concerning courses schedules, participation and content.

Coffey reported that they have experienced difficulty with the size of the imprest account, which necessitated negotiating partial payment arrangements with course providers—hence placing a strain on these relationships. However, AusAID has indicated that the contract provides for more regular payments and that the size of the imprest account should not be a constraining factor. Coffey noted that AusAID had been prompt with payments to date and appreciated the proactive stance of managers, especially in relation to 'urgent payments'. An independent audit of the imprest account in August 2010 found "*no material issues*".

Recommendation

8. Coffey International Development should invoice AusAID for training as required.

The management and implementation of the facility by both AusAID and Coffey seems to be well regarded. AusAID staff in Canberra and Baghdad affirmed the responsiveness and professionalism of IPF staff: "*Coffey has been very professional and great to work with*". Similarly, DFAT interviewees indicated that AusAID staff had been "*outstanding in the program they've developed. From DFAT's perspective we're very happy with what they've done. They've deployed first class people*". DFAT staff appreciated the professionalism of AusAID personnel, and noted strong collaboration evidenced by daily phone consultations and sharing of all key correspondence.

For AusAID, value-for-money is a key issue. Value generated from the investment relative to alternative investment possibilities, or alternative approaches generating the same value is a key consideration. The range of activities supported by the facility was defensible in the context of the overwhelming need and as a means to establishing Australia's credibility as a donor partner with an array of stakeholders. However, the actual number of trainees (254 to date) is relatively small, and so represents a high concentration of investment; especially when there is limited opportunity for follow-up or further engagement or consolidation (see Section 3.5, Sustainability).

⁸ Three preferred agricultural trainers and four non-agricultural trainers sourced through a competitive tender process (WWPMS, Austraining International, Ciptanet International and ANU).

⁹ Facility Director, Coordinator and Operations Manager.

3.4 Impact

Impact is concerned with significant and lasting changes (both intended and unintended) fostered by the program. It was not feasible to rate IPF performance against this criterion for the reasons outlined below. IPF's full impact will be realised in coming years.

<p>Relative strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence of profound personal transformations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some preliminary evidence of systemic changes within the Ministry of Finance <p>Relative weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diffuse training provided to personnel across four ministries rather than an integrated/coherent program of capacity building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited involvement in participant selection by IPF/AusAID
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Impact, as defined in the goal, is concerned with 'contributing to assistance in Iraq'. As critiqued in Section 3.2 (Effectiveness), the design logic rendered 'assistance' as an end in itself. However, implicit in the design was an expectation that Australian assistance would contribute to a functioning GoI bureaucracy. The Australian Ambassador in Iraq stated that:

"The primary purpose of the development assistance program is to build capacity within the bureaucracy to make them capable of running a more effective government that will help the country through this transition period until they can pump enough oil to resource the country".

Hence, the impact of IPF is expected to be borne out in more effective partner agencies; specifically MoA, MoF, MoHR and MoT. In practice, an assessment of facility impact was beyond the scope of this review, since it was not possible for the review team to have access to GoI staff or stakeholders. Further, no secondary data was available. As stated by an AusAID officer in Baghdad, "there are some small examples on the ground of impact, but no information to point to big structural changes". Even information from the managing contractor was limited, with an AusAID staff member acknowledging that "Coffey is great but we don't ask them about outcomes or impact".

Compounding the pragmatic factors is the widely recognised conceptual challenge of identifying causal linkages between training individuals and wider institutional impacts. This conceptual challenge is especially evident in a facility such as IPF when participants: are drawn from an array of institutional backgrounds and experience; only participate in short-term intensive training experiences, and; receive very limited post-training follow-up or mentoring. In reality, the nature of the facility and the contextual constraints are such that impact will largely be reflected as personal transformations within individual participants. IPF staff noted that this was especially the case with MoA personnel where participation and course selection did not seem to be guided by an overall vision or strategy; while the experience of partnering with the MoF suggested that there might be some possibility of fostering systemic change beyond individual transformation. The facility director stated: "we're not being strategic about the courses we're offering. We're just saying 'Australia has got all of this expertise, you choose what looks best'". This suggests that adopting a more systematic approach to the selection of courses and participants, combined with a more strategic view of how courses might be sequenced within a broader change agenda would yield greater impact. Both IPF staff and the Iraqi Ambassador reported that participants had requested follow-on 'advanced' courses to extend knowledge learned in IPF courses.

Recommendation

9. IPF should construct a program of courses that systematically fosters desirable changes within partner agencies.

In design and M&E convention, impact is maximised when the various components or activities of an initiative are integrated such that the resources invested consolidate results around a single focus. This integration of resources and effort to foster an explicit change is sometimes referred to as a unifying ‘theory of change’. The practical embodiment of a coherent theory of change is that all activities foster changes in a single class of human actor—the ‘ultimate beneficiaries’. By contrast, a fragmented theory of change disperses resources and influence across an array of ultimate beneficiaries. Arguably, the impact of IPF would be heightened if there is clarity concerning who (i.e. which Gol agency) is the ultimate beneficiary of the changes fostered, and precisely what these changes could reasonably be. Such a vision would then form the basis for a more strategic progression of courses—and would have greater impact.

The selection of ultimate beneficiaries is a function of the target criteria used, and hence the underlying *raison d’être* of the facility. In most documentation the explicit target of the facility was the MoA and other governance-related Gol agencies. However, greater clarity concerning the needs *within* these agencies, and the sections/departments (or even individuals) most likely to be able to foster systemic changes would increase the impact of the facility. In contrast, a broad/opportunistic approach to targeting that is not grounded in a clearly articulated theory of how change can be progressively/systematically achieved is likely to produce diffuse/fragmented changes. Participant selection has been a key challenge faced by IPF. Some course participants have reportedly complained to IPF staff about the inappropriateness of other participants having not understood that IPF has limited influence over who attends courses. Participants with inappropriate or different qualifications or experience can negatively affect course dynamics and the quality of discussion and engagement. IPF reported that the percentage of “*passengers*” on courses has been kept to a manageable level, but was to some extent inevitable in the Iraq political economy. AusAID has been able to challenge some nominated participants, and IPF provides clear guidelines/profiles for each course concerning the appropriate experience and qualification levels of course participants.

Recommendation

10. AusAID should apply pressure to ensure that all nominated course participants have the qualifications and experience required to participate fully in course activities.

The fact that specific changes expected in individual participants and their home agencies was not articulated in the design is likely a function of the uncertainty and dynamism within the Iraq context at the time of the design; or it may in fact have been a deliberate strategy—recognising the inherently political nature of the Iraq program.

It could be that a pure development argument for a narrower focus and clearly articulated rationale is in opposition with the broader political objective of engaging widely and responsively across the Gol bureaucracy as a means to establishing relationships and building trust. An IPF staff member stated that: “*I’m not really sure that we’re at the point where we can choose and narrow our focus yet. I think an extension should continue with the broad approach*”. This view may be pragmatic at this time, however, during the remainder of this phase IPF should proactively develop an evidence base to advise AusAID on areas most likely to have the greatest development impact and to progressively position the facility to engage in this manner in the medium term.

3.5 Sustainability

'Sustainability' concerns the likelihood that benefits will endure. This is considered a function of local ownership, committed resources and capacity. This dimension of IPF performance was not rated due to insufficient access to stakeholders.

Relative strengths:

- Increasingly specialised course content reflects increasing partner engagement

Relative weaknesses:

- No governing body to broker shared interests/priorities and to define arrangements for sustainability
- No reciprocal obligation from Gol to resource, support and integrate returning scholars
- Limited follow-up to consolidate adult learning outcomes

The extent of ownership among Gol stakeholders was difficult to assess without direct engagement. Nevertheless, the review team met with the Iraqi Ambassador to Australia who expressed a deep appreciation for Australia's assistance, and a strong commitment to the MoU. He was not abreast of specific matters concerning IPF.

According to Coffey staff, there has been increasing engagement by Gol stakeholders in the training initiative since RAFI, and throughout the life of IPF. This was evidenced by the increasing degree of specialisation of courses offered, which was reported to be a function of closer engagement with Gol stakeholders—especially by the MoF. Ownership is also reflected in the situation where returning course participants have become advocates for IPF courses. The increased demand for IPF courses is in contrast to RAFI which struggled to expend the budget. The Facility Director reported that *"we look like running out of money before we run out of course opportunities"*.

Currently there is no obligation placed on the Gol to match costs beyond releasing the participants for the duration of the course; and further there is no requirement to commit resources to utilise or extend the benefits of the training. One course provider has advocated for 'seed money' to support the implementation of action plans prepared by training participants following their return.

A key issue in the impact and sustainability of any training initiative is the extent to which formal learning can be integrated and supported in the workplace. The security and political barriers confronted by IPF impose a major constraint in this regard. In being barred from communicating directly with Gol agencies, and in the absence of an in-country presence, it is virtually impossible for IPF to provide any follow-up or mentoring of returning scholars. IPF provides a budget line for course providers to carry out follow-up with course participants by remote on a reimbursable basis, but this is demand-led. The Facility Director stated: *"I don't want to overstate this. My feeling is that less than 10% seek follow-up support"*. Most IPF courses encourage participants to prepare 'Action Plans' for how they might integrate new knowledge/skills into their workplace. However, there is no mechanism or resources to support these action plans, and no mechanism to hold participants accountable.

The sustainability of training benefits are to some extent contingent on institutional processes and culture that enable the newly acquired knowledge and skills to extend beyond the individuals involved for the benefit of their broader agencies. This may be in the form of modified procedures, structure, or attitudes. A key lesson is that senior participants are more likely to succeed in having new initiatives implemented following their repatriation. In contrast, *"more junior participants report 'hitting a brick wall' in terms of introducing new knowledge and promoting changes within their departments"* (IPF staff). The underlying success factor related to this issue is the original selection of participants by Gol, and approved by AusAID (Baghdad), as discussed in Section 3.4.

The confluence of the issues discussed above is that IPF is irregular from a development theory perspective since: i) it does not oblige counterparts to contribute or match any resources; ii) it exerts limited influence over beneficiary targeting or focus; iii) there are no mechanisms to promote mutual accountability; and iv) there is no clear articulation of significant or lasting changes that might arise from the interventions.

Recommendation

11. AusAID should explore with Gol counterparts mechanisms of mutual accountability to promote greater institutional value from the training invested in individuals.

Although the word ‘partnership’ is at the heart of IPF rhetoric, there is no formal structure or mechanism for dialogue about priorities and future directions, or to broker the needs of AusAID and the Gol agencies. As noted by Coffey’s Facility Director, “*IPF is called a partnership facility, but there is no board to govern the partnership*”. This is likely a function of IPF evolving out of a complex humanitarian response. However, as the bilateral relationship develops under the auspices of the MoU there is likely to be developmental value in establishing a ‘facility board’ or similar structure through which to debate the emerging focus of the initiative, and through which issues of sustainability and impact can be addressed.

Recommendation

12. AusAID should explore with Gol counterparts the merit of appointing Facility Board or similar governance body through the Office of the Prime Ministers MoU coordination group.

3.6 Gender Equality

‘Gender equality’ concerns the extent to which the program fostered greater equality between the genders. IPF was assessed as ‘good quality’ (5/6) owing to the practical way it addressed the challenge within a complex set of constraints.

Relative strengths:

- Positive trend in female participation (especially within Ministry of Finance)
- Proactive support for female scholars provided by IPF and training providers
- Positive advocacy role concerning gender equity by IPF and AusAID staff
- Evidence of personal transformation/emancipation among participating women

Relative weaknesses:

- Limited opportunities to formally engage with Gol partners concerning gender equity
- No possibility of ascertaining longer-term impact of training on women

Gender equality in Iraq is widely recognised as a major development challenge. The IPF Facility Director reported: “*gender was a huge issue initially, especially in relation to the Ministry of Agriculture*”.

The IPF team installed a range of measures to address gender equality, within the pragmatic constraints of access to Gol and location in Iraq. Examples of measures include:

- A requirement for course providers to engage female Arabic-speaking Welfare Officers to support participants in general, and female participants in particular.
- IPF appointed a female Iraqi Facility Coordinator whose role included proactively engaging with female participants and seeking their views about course content and the wider course arrangements.
- Collecting gender-disaggregated information about course participants and course feedback to promote responsiveness and continuous improvement in relation to female perspectives.

IPF staff acknowledged the work of a previous AusAID staff member in Baghdad in promoting gender equity, especially within the MoF. Through iterative engagements on the issue of female participation, AusAID was able to foster an increase to 50% participation. Some positive changes have been realised within MoA, MoT and MoHR but evidently to a lesser extent than in MoF. IPF staff observed that “AusAID could do more in ‘pushing back’ on gender equal participation in IPF courses”.

Recommendation

13. AusAID should exert influence on all partner ministries concerning equal gender participation in IPF courses.

A recognised issue facing AusAID and IPF is that the contextual constraints mean that there will be no way of knowing what the impact of IPF courses on higher-order gender outcomes within Gol have been.

Notwithstanding the ongoing challenges, IPF staff reported some encouraging changes, particularly at the personal level. The Facility Director stated: “*there is no explicit agenda of radical feminism, but it happens anyway*”. Evidently cases have been observed of female participants experiencing transformative experiences just by visiting a culture where women’s profiles and positions are closer to that of men in society. One participant reported: “*never mind what has been taught in the courses, the main value has been how people’s minds have been opened*”. IPF staff reported observing changes in women’s dress over the course of their stay in Australia, and also in the extent of their vocalisation in group discussions. Attitudes at the end of their stay in Australia were often contrasted with attitudes on arrival; for example first expressing shock at observing women crossing the street or going shopping unaccompanied by a male. Two female participants reportedly approached the course Welfare Officer to seek her assistance with purchasing swimwear and facilitating a swim at an Australian beach ‘in the Australian way’. While these personal experiences are broadly unrelated to course content, they reflect some of the apparently profound experiences of Gol staff in visiting Australia, and the positive nature of the experience at a personal level.

3.7 Monitoring & Evaluation

'Monitoring and evaluation' concerns the extent to which adequate arrangements were put in place to ensure accountability, enhance decision-making and promote learning. The M&E arrangements for IPF were assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6) given the constraints of the situation.

Relative strengths:

- 'Hands-on' approach to monitoring course delivery yielded relevant and timely information
- Structured process installed to capture and assimilate lessons learned
- IPF responsive to routine and *ad hoc* information needs by AusAID

Relative weaknesses:

- No mechanism to ascertain impact of training within partner ministries; or sustainability of personal changes
- No partner engagement in M&E processes, or capacity building of M&E systems

IPF prepared an M&E Plan as a deliverable of the facility (November 2009) and articulated M&E processes at both activity and facility level. This plan was predominantly focused on course quality issues rather than outcomes and impact due to the security and political constraints. Even so, the Facility Director reflected that "*in hindsight the M&E plan was over ambitious*". For example, none of the baseline data or post-course follow-up data suggested in the plan would be captured.

Some significant constraints were imposed on the M&E arrangements due to Coffey being prevented from contacting GoI stakeholders for follow-up. The implications of this are that very little outcome or impact information will be compiled. As noted in Section 3.4, AusAID recognised that no impact information would be available. According to the Facility Director, "*key questions posed in the M&E plan were hampered by the security and practical constraints. This meant that, in practice, we can't answer big picture questions*". Nevertheless, AusAID managers reported that IPF was able to efficiently respond to any information needs that they had tabled, and as such were satisfied that reasonable measures were in place. What will inevitably be missed will be evidence to support higher level judgements concerning the value or merit of the initiative in terms of development changes.

Activity level M&E was largely delegated to course providers; however, the Facility Coordinator played an active monitoring role during courses by establishing rapport with participants and carrying out interviews and surveys. A database was developed to capture participant data and feedback. Much of this data is sensitive in the Iraq context: ethnicity, age, gender, etc. The course coordinator conducts informal conversations with participants, especially women. Synthesised findings are fed back to training providers and reported to AusAID¹⁰.

In-country monitoring and follow-up is hampered by resource and security constraints. AusAID staff in Baghdad reported "*we don't really have the information to know what changes the program has realised. The administrative workload of the program is in conflict with any substantive M&E work and also our ability to move around is hampered by security concerns. Even getting reports from the UN has been a challenge*". One challenging feature of the M&E arrangements is that AusAID managers have variously been defined as an information source, information agent and information client.

¹⁰ N.B. IPF assigns a score to various dimensions of course provider performance and then averages these scores to obtain an overall performance rating for each course. While the rationale is laudable this is inappropriate treatment of ordinal data (see http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/itdi/cookbook/info_likert_scale/).

3.8 Analysis and Learning

Analysis and learning concerns the extent to which relevant analysis of the context was carried out and past lessons learned informed the design and approaches taken. IPF was assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6) in this regard.

Relative strengths:

- Lessons learned from RAFI incorporated into IPF design and implementation
- Involvement of the same contractor personnel provided continuity
- Evidence of learning and continuous improvement in terms of course development and delivery
- Valuable lessons learned by AusAID through IPF engagement with Gol

Relative weaknesses:

- Extent of learning limited by constraints placed on communication with Gol and scholars

The implementation context for IPF in Iraq has placed unique constraints on the contractor, especially in relation to the flow of information, and hence the opportunity for learning and nuanced analysis. Nevertheless, within the limits of the situation, there was evidence of learning and continuous improvement.

Firstly, the design framework for IPF assimilated key lessons learned during RAFI such that the facility was more focussed and structured in terms of course development and delivery. Secondly, there is evidence of implementation lessons from RAFI being incorporated into IPF as a function of Coffey being successful in both tenders, and the continuity of key staff members. Thirdly, M&E and management processes installed by IPF have enabled the capture lessons from each course conducted. Examples were discussed with the IPR team where critical feedback had led to improvements in subsequent courses.

Arguably, the greatest value arising from IPF is the insights about dynamics within partner ministries and the establishment of relationships with key Gol stakeholders that have been garnered to date. During the remainder of this phase, the challenge will be to further extend the analysis and learning within the facility such that AusAID can acquire an evidence base to inform more strategically focussed programming in the future.

APPENDIX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

DRAFT

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
IRAQ PROGRAM
INDEPENDENT REVIEW VERSION 8**

28 JULY 2010



1. Background

Australia's current three year (2009-11) development assistance program to Iraq, funded through a \$165 million budget measure, is delivered by AusAID (\$140 million), the AFP (\$15 million) and DIAC (\$10 million). The program is guided by a Strategic Framework focusing on supporting; agriculture, public sector governance and vulnerable populations, and improving basic service delivery.

In June 2009, the then Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and six Iraqi Ministers signed six memoranda of understanding (MOU) which set the agenda for the future bilateral cooperation in: agriculture; resources and energy; trade cooperation; education, training and research; public health and; security and border control.

AusAID is not a formal party to the MoUs, with the exception of security and border control due to our large customs and quarantine training programming practice, but there is complementarity between the two frameworks, and current aid programs are contributing significantly to five of the six MoUs (all except Resources and Energy). Training and study tours sponsored by the aid program have been leveraged to assist line agencies to progress MoU implementation.

The program appears on track-to achieve good results in a difficult operating environment. For example, it is assisting Iraq to rebuild its agricultural capacity through research, 117 scholarships and training in Australia and Syria for over 300 official and scientists. Australia is helping to establish an estimated 7,000 rural businesses and home gardens. Reproductive health and education services have been provided to 17,850 Iraqi refugees and host communities in Jordan and Syria and shelters. Water and sanitation infrastructure construction has commenced to encourage returns to Diyala governorate. 1,350 paramedics and doctors and 4,000 community responders have been trained in emergency medicine and first aid and 8 million square meters of land has been cleared of mines (see **Attachment 1**).

AusAID has had experience in delivering programs in Iraq since 2003 and Australia's bilateral relationship with Iraq is maturing. Although we are a relatively small donor, the Government of Iraq considers us a significant and trusted development partner. This is due to Australia's consultative approach to delivering aid and focus on responding flexibly to Iraqi needs.

In the first year of the Budget initiative over 40 programs were active. Over time programs have been rationalized and streamlined with multiyear funding introduced. Selection of program activities has reflected the operating environment and political context in both countries. A number of major programs have been instigated by the

Prime Minister. The Program is managed in Canberra by a team of three and supported by a posted officer in Baghdad.

Independent Progress reports are required for three major programs - Iraq Partnership Facility; Iraq Customs and Border Control Program and the Scholarships Program are required. Finding from these reviews will not only improve the effectiveness of the activities for the remainder of the funding but will inform the direction of the new Country Strategy. These 3 activities receive approximately half the funding of the program.

AusAID is preparing a new whole of Government Country Strategy for engagement with Iraq commencing June 2011. A full review of the budget measure will be undertaken in late 2011. To inform the development of a new Country Strategy and to enable early reporting on outcomes a broad strategic assessment of achievements to date and lessons learnt is to be undertaken. AusAID recognises that development of a country program takes time and is incremental. Thus future programming will build on the successes of the Iraq Program to date.

2. Objectives

- i. To complete Independent Progress Reports and make recommendations for future directions (both for the remainder of the current program and future program) of the following initiatives:
 - Iraq Partnership Facility,
 - Iraq Scholarships Program, and
 - CCES Project (**Refer Attachments 5-7**).
- ii. Undertake a broad Strategic Assessment of achievements to date and lessons learnt during the implementation of the current program to inform the development of the new Country Strategy and develop a Strategic Assessment Report.
- iii. Provide input into development of a Performance Framework for the new country strategy and develop an outline for that Framework.

3. Scope of Services

3.1 Independent Progress Reviews and Reports

Complete Independent Progress Reviews and Reports for the following three major Iraq initiatives: the Iraq Partnership Facility, Customs and Border Control Project, and the Iraq Scholarships Program.

The reports are to be completed as per the AusAID Independent Progress Report (6 page template) and will evaluate programming according to AusAID's preferred evaluation criteria (**Refer Attachment 2**).

In addition the reports should include recommendations on the future direction of the Iraq Partnership Facility and Customs and Border Control Project. Consideration

should be given to consolidating long term management arrangements, greater integration into the rest of the Program and options to further facilitate MoU implementation.

Note that AusAID does not intend to extend or repeat the AIAS scheme.

3.2 Strategic assessment

The consultants will undertake a broad Strategic Assessment of achievements to date and lessons learnt and provide recommendations to inform the development of a new country strategy.

The assessment will include but not be limited to an analysis of:

- individual project achievements to date against the strategic framework and sectoral objectives
- program selection and implementation (including an assessment of different approaches ie fully funding or partial funding of activity)
- Government relations

Recommendations for future direction should include program options and cover strategies to ensure (if appropriate, but not limited to):

- Achieving greater integration of activities (particularly the agriculture sector) while balancing selectivity with flexibility.
- Reducing AusAID's program management resource requirements.
- Enhancing program strategic focus including increased involvement with MoU implementation and the Government of Iraq.
- Developing agreed outcomes with realistic performance indicators.

These issues will be further refined during the initial briefing.

Data will be drawn from the review of Iraq Partnership Facility, Customs and Border Control Project, and the Iraq Scholarships Program, existing collated material and discussions with AusAID Canberra, Post, DFAT and program implementers.

The Strategic Assessment Report will be no more than 10 pages excluding an executive summary which will summarise key achievements and major recommendations.

3.3.3 Performance Framework.

Assist the Iraq Program Team to develop a performance framework for the new country strategy that will generate data appropriate to AusAID's internal and external reporting needs. A short report of up to five pages on the performance strategy will be developed.

The review will commence 28 September 2010 and be completed by 30 June 2011. The review team shall deliver the services in a phased manner, as follows:

- i. Preparation and Planning
 - Desk briefing: Initial briefing with Iraq program (desk), document handover

- ii. Research & Review
- Review key documents including, but not limited to, the documents identified in **Attachment 3**.
- iii. Consultations
- Conduct consultations with key stakeholders identified in **Attachment 4**, with AusAID and its partners.
- iv. Document Preparation:
- Draft three Independent Progress Reports by 13 October;
 - Draft Strategic Assessment Report by 29 October;
 - Finalise reports, incorporating AusAID comments by 25 October;
 - Finalise Strategic Assessment Report by 30 November;
 - Provide Performance Strategy outline by 1 June 2011;
- The review team will provide the following inputs:

Activity	Timeframe for Team Leader (indicative days) Kaye Bysouth	Timeframe for Technical Specialist (indicative days) Paul Crawford
Pre-mission preparation and evaluation plan	1	1
Research & Review	Up to 5	Up to 4
Consultations	Up to 3	Up to 3
Draft IPR reports	Up to 5	Up to 5
Draft Strategic Review Report	Up to 4	Up to 4
Redrafting IPRs (if required)	Up to 2	Up to 2
Redrafting of Strategic Review Report	Up to 2	Up to 1
Performance f'work outline	Up to 5	Up to 3
Total	27 days	23 days

Note: The number of days quoted is indicative and may be adjusted according to the composition of the evaluation team and the proposed evaluation approach.

4. Independent Review Team

The review team will consist of:

- a Team Leader who is a Program Management/M&E specialist;
- a Program Specialist with experience in design, delivery and review of aid initiatives in Iraq or conflict affected countries

The responsibilities of each position follow.

Team Leader:

- Manage all aspects of the review, including team members inputs, to ensure objectives of the review are met, all activities are completed within agreed timeframe and
- Lead consultations with stakeholders
- Coordinate relationships with AusAID and other stakeholders
- Lead the drafting process of the review report, draft major segments of the report and take overall responsibility for the production of a quality report in consultation with other team members
- Undertake redrafting as required.
- Provide leadership in the discussions and strategic and conceptual guidance during the review process

Program Specialist:

- Participate in planning and preparation
- Participate in consultations with stakeholders
- Draft segments of the review reports as directed by the Team Leader
- Be available to undertake redrafting as required

The Program specialist will be under the direction of the Team Leader.

5. Deliverables

Review deliverables include the following:

- Three draft and final independent progress reports using the preferred template of no more than 6 pages (plus Annexes) to the Iraq Program plus recommendations for the future direction of the Program if applicable
- A draft and final Strategic Assessment Report.

	Deliverable	Due Date
1	Draft Independent Progress Reports	18 October
2	Final Independent Progress Reports (milestone)	5 November
3	Draft Strategic Assessment Report	29 October
4	Final Strategic Assessment Report (milestone)	30 November
5	Complete assistance to develop Performance Framework (milestone)	1 June 2011

The review team must provide the following reports by the due date and in the format indicated. All reports are to be submitted to the Iraq Program and must:

- be accurate and not misleading in any respect;
- be clear, brief and useful
- be prepared in accordance with directions provided by the Iraq program;
- allow AusAID to properly assess progress under the Contracts;

- be provided in the format, number and on the media approved or requested by AusAID;
- not incorporate either AusAID or the Contractor’s logo;
- be provided at the time specified in this Schedule; and
- Incorporate sufficient information to allow monitoring and assessment of the success of the Services in achieving AusAID’s objectives.

Attachment 1: SUMMARY OF ASSISTANCE TO DATE

Attach the Budget Measure Reporting document.

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Attachment 2: AUSAID PREFERRED EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Questions for an Independent Progress Report

Relevance

- Are the objectives relevant to Australian Government and partner government priorities?
- Are the objectives relevant to the context/needs of beneficiaries?
- If not, what changes need to be made to the activity or its objectives to ensure continued relevance?

Effectiveness

- Are the objectives on track to being achieved? If not, what changes need to be made to objectives to ensure they can be achieved?
- To what extent has the activity contributed to achievement of objectives?

Efficiency

- Has the implementation of the activity made effective use of time and resources to achieve the outcomes?

Sub-questions:

- Have there been any financial variations to the activity? If so, was value for money considered in making these amendments?
- Has management of the activity been responsive to changing needs? If not, why not?
- Has the activity suffered from delays in implementation? If so, why and what was done about it?
- Has the activity had sufficient and appropriate staffing resources?
- Was a risk management approach applied to management of the activity (including anti-corruption)?
- What are the risks to achievement of objectives? Have the risks been managed appropriately?

Impact (if feasible)

- Has the activity produced intended or unintended changes in the lives of beneficiaries and their environment, directly or indirectly?
- Have there been positive or negative impacts from external factors?

Sustainability

- Do beneficiaries and/or partner country stakeholders have sufficient ownership, capacity and resources to maintain the activity outcomes after Australian Government funding has ceased?

- Are there any actions that can be taken now that will increase the likelihood that the activity will be sustainable? Are there any areas of the activity that are clearly not sustainable? What actions should be taken to address this?

Gender Equality

- Was the activity designed to provide equal participation and benefits for women and men, boys and girls?
- Is the activity promoting equal participation and benefits for women and men, boys and girls?

Sub-questions:

- Is the activity promoting more equal access by women and men to the benefits of the activity, and more broadly to resources, services and skills?
- Is the activity promoting equality of decision-making between women and men?
- Is the initiative helping to promote women's rights?
- Is the initiative helping to develop capacity (donors, partner government, civil society, etc) to understand and promote gender equality?

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Does evidence exist to show that objectives are on track to being achieved?
- Is the M&E system collecting the right information to allow judgement to be made about meeting objectives and sustainability at the next evaluation point?
- Is data gender-disaggregated to measure the outcomes of the activity on men, women, boys and girls?
- Is the M&E system collecting useful information on cross-cutting issues?

Analysis & Learning

- How well was the design based on previous learning and analysis?
- How well has learning from implementation and previous reviews (self-assessment and independent) been integrated into the activity?

Lessons

- What lessons from the activity can be applied to (select as appropriate: further implementation/designing the next phase of the activity/applying thematic practices [i.e. working in partner systems/environment/fragile stages] to the rest of the program/designing future activities).

Attachment 3: LIST OF KEY DOCUMENTS

Preparatory Research –

- Iraq unit planning documents.
- Iraq-Australia Memoranda of Understanding
- Review of Iraq Program Agriculture programming
- UN and NGO reports
- Iraq Partnership Facility reports
- Australia-Iraq Scholarship Program reports
- Iraq Border Control Program reports.

Program Documents

- Iraq Program Framework
- Draft Country Situation Analysis
- Program achievements to date
- IPF Program Design Document, QAE and QAI reporting, Annual Report
- Customs and Border Control Design Document
- Scholarships Design Document and M&E framework
- Project Contracts / Agreements
- Program Monitoring and Evaluation framework (DRAFT)
- Iraq Program Agriculture review report
- UN program design documents (To be provided by Iraq Program)

Attachment 4: KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR CONSULTATION

Primary Stakeholders for discussion

AusAID

- Iraq Program, including post
- Scholarships

Implementing partners for discussion

- Centre for Customs and Excise Studies
- Rural Solutions
- Agwest
- Coffey International
- UWA
- CU
- UQ
- UA
- Iraqi Embassy in Australia
- Australian Ambassador to Iraq
- DFAT Iraq desk (other WoG partners as necessary)

Appendix 5. Brief details of the Iraq Customs and Border control Project

Program: Iraq Customs and Border Control Project

Iraq Program Pillar: Governance

Duration: 2 Nov 2009 30 May 2011

Partners: Centre for Customs and Excise Studies (CCES)

Background: The Iraq Customs and Border Control was announced by Prime Minister Rudd on 12 March 2009, following discussions with the Prime Minister of Iraq, Nouri Al-Maliki. It builds the skills of Iraq's customs and quarantine agencies.

The project aims to train 630 officers by mid-2011. It targets four areas: training frontline officers in operational skills such as risk management and search techniques; training operational managers; training senior managers to plan and implement the Iraqi Government's reform and modernisation agenda; and a curriculum and train the trainer program to build a sustainable training capacity within the organisations. The program is in the early implementation stage.

The first course, a senior management course for 14 customs officials, was delivered on schedule in November 2009. Three more courses and a project steering committee meeting are expected to be held in the coming months. Due to security concerns in Iraq, all training will be delivered in Jordan.

Building the skills of Iraq's border control agencies would contribute to Iraq's broader efforts to reduce poverty. A transparent, rules-based excise and border control regime would assist Iraq's transition into a market based economy and facilitate trade and economic growth. A robust, professional quarantine service would protect Iraq's vital agricultural sector from pests and diseases, while also improving food security by facilitating the import of essential agricultural inputs and food items. An efficient excise regime would also provide a stable, alternative source of taxation to unpredictable oil revenues, providing greater predictability for the Government of Iraq to plan spending on infrastructure and essential services.

Appendix 6. Brief details of the The Australia-Iraq Agricultural Scholarship (AIAS) Program

Iraq Program Pillar: Agriculture

Duration: 01/09/2008 to 30/6/2011

Partners: The scholarships are offered through the University of Adelaide (UA), the Curtin University of Technology (CUT), the University of Queensland (UQ) and the University of Western Australia (UWA).

Background: The Australia-Iraq Agricultural Scholarship (AIAS) Program was established to fulfill the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP's December 2007 commitment to provide 100 post-graduate agricultural scholarships for Iraqis previously requested by Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki.

The AIAS Program is a unique opportunity to train already well-placed professionals in highly applicable skills. The AIAS Program reinforces interpersonal and diplomatic links between the two countries and is a flagship initiative for AusAID's Iraq Program (and the Australian Government more broadly).

The scholarships support the Iraqi agriculture which is Iraq's largest employer. Australia and Iraq share comparative dry climates and salinity problems and Australia has developed world-renowned expertise in the field.

Some 150 Iraqi Public Servants from the Ministry of Agriculture were awarded AIAS scholarship offers based on merit and of these, 126 accepted offers. Due to withdrawal of some participants, largely relating to health or family issues, there are currently 117 Students including 21 women.

Appendix 7. Brief details of the Iraq Partnership Facility

IPF is an AusAID facility designed to further contribute to Iraq's rehabilitation through capability development, training and service delivery. Australia's assistance to Iraq focuses on development assistance and capacity building mainly within niche areas where Australia has particular expertise. The objectives of IPF activities are to increase the capacity of staff in key Iraqi agencies, particularly in the areas of governance (e.g. human rights, administration and financial management), agriculture and other priority areas identified during the program.

IPF is managed by Coffey through a small management team supported by Coffey corporate staff and resources. The core team consists of Dr Alan Pope, Mr Pat McKeen and Ms Zahra Abdulla, all of whom are based in Coffey's Adelaide office. In-Iraq support and logistics are provided by Zozik Group, with Tawfiq F. Jawid providing leadership.

Approved activities under the Facility are delivered by sub-contracted providers, including three preferred suppliers in the agriculture sector (AgWEST, Rural Solutions and University of WA).

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Iraq Partnership Facility (IPF) is to contribute to Iraq's rehabilitation through capability development, training and service delivery.

The Objectives of the IPF are to:

- (a) increase the capacity of staff in key Iraqi agencies in governance related areas;
- (b) increase the capacity of staff in key Iraqi agencies in the agricultural sector;
- (c) increase the capacity of staff in key Iraqi agencies in additional priority areas as identified by the Government of Iraq and the Government of Australia; and
- (d) provide ad hoc support to the AusAID Iraq Desk.

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES AND PHASING

The Contractor shall manage Australia's contribution by:

- (a) in the agriculture sectors, acting as an intermediary between AusAID and its pre-selected suppliers to provide administrative, logistical and project management services, and
- (b) in the remaining sectors of interest and any other areas identified, being responsible for and managing all aspects of the project cycle, including selection of suppliers as well as administrative, logistical and project management services as outlined for stream a) above.

The Contractor shall maximise access to a wide range of expertise and not link itself with particular suppliers except for those listed in Table 1 at Clause 7.12 of this Schedule 1.

The IPF will have up to four (4) phases as follows:

- (i) Phase 1 – Standing Up the Facility – period to 31 July 2009;

- (ii) Phase 2 – Embedding Facility Procedures - period from 1 August 2009 to 31 December 2009;
- (iii) Phase 3 – Facility Fully Mature - period from 1 January 2010 to 31 Mar 2011;
- (iv) Phase 4 – Facility Extension (if approved) - period from 31 Mar 2011 for up to 24 months.

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