



Design Document

Improving Access to Livelihoods
Opportunities in Iraq for
Female Headed Households
and Extremely Vulnerable
Households
2012 - 2014

For submission to AusAID – February 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Organization	Danish Refugee Council
Project Title	Improving Access to Livelihoods Opportunities in Iraq for FHH and EVHs
Estimated Budget in AUD	\$9,084,357
Registration Number in Iraq	2122409
Headquarters' Legal Address	Borgergade 10 Copenhagen Denmark 1300-K Tel (direct): +45 3373 5049 Fax : +45 23 10 98 01
Regional Office Address	[REDACTED]
Country Office Address	DRC Iraq Jadrya Baghdad
Primary Contact Person	[REDACTED]

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Emerging from almost a decade of foreign military presence and near civil war, Iraq is faced with many stark political, economic and social challenges. Development of human capital and increasing the capacity of vulnerable populations to protect their human, social, political and economic rights is key to the long-term development and stability of Iraq. Unemployment ranks highest amongst the average Iraqi's concerns. The access of women in general, and of Female Headed Households in particular, to work/employment is significantly restrained.

This design document describes the rationale, modalities and implementation arrangements for the proposed project: **Improving Access to Livelihoods Opportunities in Iraq for Female Head of Households and Extremely Vulnerable Households**. The proposed dates for this project are March 2012 to February 2015.

The overall objective of this project is to facilitate Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVHH) and, specifically Female Headed Households (FHH), in vulnerable Iraqi communities to access stable incomes and livelihood opportunities through the provision of Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The project aims to target a total of 1,400 beneficiaries. The project will focus on EVHHs, 20%¹ of whom will be FHH from either displaced communities or host communities. DRC implements a conflict sensitive approach and through the inclusion of EVHHs from host communities, will seek to ensure that this project does not create further tensions between host and IDPs communities. Criteria for beneficiary selection will be established through a transparent and fair process. The project will also indirectly support the families² of the target beneficiaries, thereby reaching approximately 6,000 additional individuals.

Phase 1 of the project will focus initially in 2012 in urban areas and the population centres of Basra, Missan, Baghdad and Diyala Governorates. In Phase 2, the project will be extended to new urban areas as well as to rural areas within these Governorates. Phases 2 and 3 will also entail extension of the project to Ninewa.

The strategy for this proposed project is to **strengthen the direct provision** of necessary training in the short term whilst **promoting institutional buy-in and capacity** to provide the same in the long term. This project fits within the objectives of DRC's overall strategy for Iraq as it seeks to ultimately improve the access of EVHHs, particularly FHHs, IDPs, Returnees, Host and Marsh Arab communities to increased income generating opportunities. The project will target EVHHs with a three-year TVET programme aiming to increase their skills and income generating potential. The programme will then support the target TVET graduates to either enrol in other DRC livelihoods programmes or access other grant or business development opportunities (donor, private sector or government sponsored).

The programme strategy relies on a complementary approach, addressing directly the needs of the targeted population whilst simultaneously developing the willingness of duty-bearers and civil society stakeholders to meet these needs in the long term. At the macro level, the project will develop the capacities of state and civil society stakeholders to facilitate EVHHs in gaining independence thus reducing the burden of care on the extended family, wider community and state. This, combined with the potential multiplier effect of more cash in the

¹ National estimate average is 1 out of 10 households are headed by a woman in Iraq. Cf, IOM-IRAQ SPECIAL REPORT FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

² The average family size in Iraq is estimated to be around 7; however, family size for FHHs is estimated to be around 5.

local economy, should positively impact on the socio-economic conditions within the target communities well beyond the life of the project.

The project strategy relies on four main components to maximise impact and sustainability:

- Working with the various stakeholders, whether public, semi-public or CSO, in order to increase the number of service providers providing high quality TVET.
- Ensuring a review and improvements to existing curricula so that they are a better fit to the economic reality of Iraq and also comply with any existing national and international standards. This will include a clear economic and market analysis of employment opportunities and, therefore, TVET requirements in each area.
- Developing a framework of collaboration with the various line ministries and decentralised authorities; this framework will seek to establish a government entity that will take over the work initiated under this project. It will also promote coherence with broader economic and education reform activities at national level.
- Regular progress reviews throughout the project life cycle so that lessons learned can be understood and incorporated into the project design during implementation.

Key partners for implementation include the Ministry of Education, MoSLA, MoDM, CSO/LNGO, semi-state providers of Vocational Educational Training and private actors (See Annex 9 for details of partner responsibilities and contributions).

The project will be implemented in three annual phases. **Phase 1** (year 1) will focus on research, analysis, planning and programme design, initial beneficiary selection for the first round of 200 target EVHHs and initial discussions with Government. **Phase 2** (year 2) will build on the lessons from Phase 1 and see an expansion of TVET provision to a further 500 EVHHs in both rural and urban locations. Support for placement of TVET graduates into livelihoods programmes (in-kind grant, business development, etc) will be strengthened in Phase 2, building on the successes and lessons learned from Phase 1. Quality of TVET training will be improved from year 1 to year 2 through targeted support from DRC and the engagement of government institutions will be activated through targeted advocacy. It is envisaged that an inter-ministerial committee on TVET will be established to embed TVET into ongoing policy development across line ministries. DRC's exit strategy for this programme will be initiated in Phase 2 with focused support to the development of a draft framework for handover of TVET. **Phase 3** (year 3) will represent the consolidation of the programme and the last phase of geographic expansion of the DRC programme; 700 EVHHs will receive TVET training in this Phase with a target of 80% of all target beneficiaries engaged in income generating activities by the end of the programme. DRC will increase its focus during this final Phase on strengthening the implementing partners, creating linkages between partners and government as well as donors. Work will also be intensified with Government to strengthen the functioning of the inter-ministerial committee on TVET and mainstream TVET within line ministry policies and approaches.

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is well placed to deliver this project. It has been present in Iraq since April 2003 with operations in Diyala Governorate north-east of Baghdad. It has since opened offices in Basra governorate (April 2004), and in the governorates of Missan, Kerbala and Wassit (September 2007). Regionally, DRC is also present in Syria and Lebanon. In addition to a range of other sectoral projects, DRC has experience implementing income generating activities in the form of in-kind grants (IKGs), vocational trainings and business start ups to vulnerable households and individuals in Diyala and Basrah.

2 ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 Problem Analysis

Emerging from almost a decade of foreign military presence and near civil war, Iraq is faced with many stark political, economic and social challenges. Devastated physical, social and economic infrastructure, newly significant sectarian divides and a disenfranchised young population characterize and challenge the comparative peace and stability the country is currently experiencing.

Despite its significant oil reserves, Iraq's development indicators are amongst the worst in the region. The legacy of decades of authoritarian rule and economic isolationism coupled with widespread violence and political unrest following the 2003 invasion and subsequent upsurge in sectarian and political violence have left Iraq with a myriad of social, political and economic problems that require dynamic long term development solutions. Nonetheless, the current relative stability presents an opportunity to address the long term development challenges neglected during both the Baathist tenure and the conflicts of the past decade.

Development of human capital and increasing the capacity of vulnerable populations to protect their human, social, political and economic rights is key to the long-term development and stability of Iraq. This need is recognized and reflected in DRC's strategic objectives and informs all aspects of programming. In accordance with DRC's global protection mandate and DRC Iraq's focus on the development needs of vulnerable displacement affected demographics, this specific project aims to enable FHHs and EVHHs to realize the above rights.

Unemployment ranks highest amongst the average Iraqi's concerns. The rate of Iraq's unemployment varies depending on sources, but is estimated to be between 25-40%³. It is recognized to be much higher amongst IDPs, returning refugees and the other groups of concern to DRC such as FHHs and ethnic minorities. IDPs (estimated at 1.3 million⁴) are particularly susceptible to a lack of access; 75% of IDPs surveyed by IOM in 2011 reported 'access to work' as their most pressing need.⁵ IDP families are also predominantly driven to take on casual, unskilled work as this generates quick income. However, it can be unreliable and does not foster medium-long term skill development or entrepreneurship. IDP families, therefore, require targeted support to access education which leads to sustainable income generation.

Women, and especially Female Heads of Household (FHH), form a large percentage of the country's EVHHs in both IDP and host communities. Only 17% of Iraqi women participate in the labour force⁶, with only 7% engaged in non-agricultural sectors.⁷ The overall rate of technical and vocational education has dropped by 40% between 1996 and 2008.⁸ The access of women in general, and of FHHs in particular, to work/employment is significantly

³The Iraqi Ministry of Planning mentioned a 30% unemployment rate, whereas the Iraqi Ministry of Social Affairs claims it to be 48% (2008)

⁴ <http://www.iauiraq.org/documents/1462/FACT%20SHEET%20JUNE-JULY%202011.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.iomiraq.net/Documents/Five%20Years%20of%20postSamarra%20Displacement%20in%20Iraq,%20Feb%202011%20EN.pdf>

⁶ Common Country Assessment – UNDAF (2009)

⁷ COSIT Labour Force Survey (2008)

⁸ UN TWG report on essential services (August 2009)

restrained. Furthermore, decreased opportunities to improve human capital put this population at risk of becoming less self-reliant and ultimately more vulnerable.

The number of FHHs has increased significantly; a conservative government estimate places the number of FHH nationwide at 900,000. A 2010 evaluation carried out by ICRC noted that FHHs identified their greatest problem as lack of money or stable source of income. Many turn to short term negative coping strategies which have long term consequences, such as selling of existing assets, soliciting of loans and diversion of expenditure from family health and education to cover daily living needs. The current situation of FHHs in Iraq is symptomatic of the situation of the broader EVHH population. Furthermore, decreased opportunities to improve human capital put this population at risk of a further downward spiral of vulnerability.

Overall, the lack of human, social and economic capital are barriers to self-reliance for women in Iraq. A 2010 UNHCR survey of FHH found that 71% of the 1,355 FHHs indicated that while they were willing to work, they were unable to find employment. The ICRC evaluation shows that 46% of surveyed women have only received basic primary education and 45% were defined as illiterate. The vast majority of those surveyed had no professional certificate or diploma, and were new to the role of family” breadwinner”. Thus, poor educational outcomes matched with the traditional exclusion of women from the formal economy means that many currently lack a marketable skill set.

The 2008 Iraq Labour Force Analysis indicates that there is certainly space for EVHHs in the job market should they be given the right support. Research conducted by the Sumar Institute for Research and Strategic Studies stated that small- and micro-businesses experience problems in attracting qualified workers. Small business is, therefore, a window of opportunity for EVHHs to enter the work force, if provided with the appropriate skill set. In the 2010 ICRC study, many of the responders identified micro economic initiatives and training as their preferred requested support.

Baghdad

Baghdad is considered one of the more developed parts of Iraq. It is host to almost 40% of the country’s IDPs, many of whom do not wish to return to their places of origin. Despite being viewed as one of the most dangerous Governorates due to terrorist actions across the city, Baghdad is still witnessing waves of return. As such, demand for basic services and access to employment opportunities is high. While the unemployment rate of 12% is below the national average, the high density of young people in the capital means that development of educational and employment activities are a priority.

Basra

Basra governorate has been exposed to successive conflicts over the past 30 years, including gross violations of human rights by the prEVHHous regime. Over the years, Basra suffered from systematic neglect, resulting in a decayed infrastructure and a struggling economy. High expectations from the general population that living conditions would improve following the fall of the regime failed to materialise, thereby, creating an environment conducive to the spread of radicalism. This, in turn has allowed for the increasing influence of religious militias, demonstrated by their control over the governorate from 2005 – 2008. During this period, the existing infrastructure has deteriorated further and delivery of basic services to the general population has become severely degraded. Despite representing 50% of the Governorate’s population, women represent just 8.9% of the workforce in waged, non-agricultural employment

Diyala

Diyala performs poorly in many humanitarian indicators and degraded infrastructure results in poor service delivery, particularly in electricity and water provision. As with Ninewa, political disputes over territory between the Central Government and Kurdish Regional Government further inhibits development and the delivery of services to many areas within the Governorate. The public sector is the largest employer (36% of job market) with agriculture (19%) following. Diyala is one of the Governorates most severely affected by displacement; it currently hosts around 22,373 IDP families. On-going forced displacement results in new IDP populations and preclude returns. The number of IDP FHHs in Diyala is high at 13% compared with rates across the county according to IOM. These women are largely unemployed and their children have suffered noticeably high rates of psychological or physical trauma.

Missan

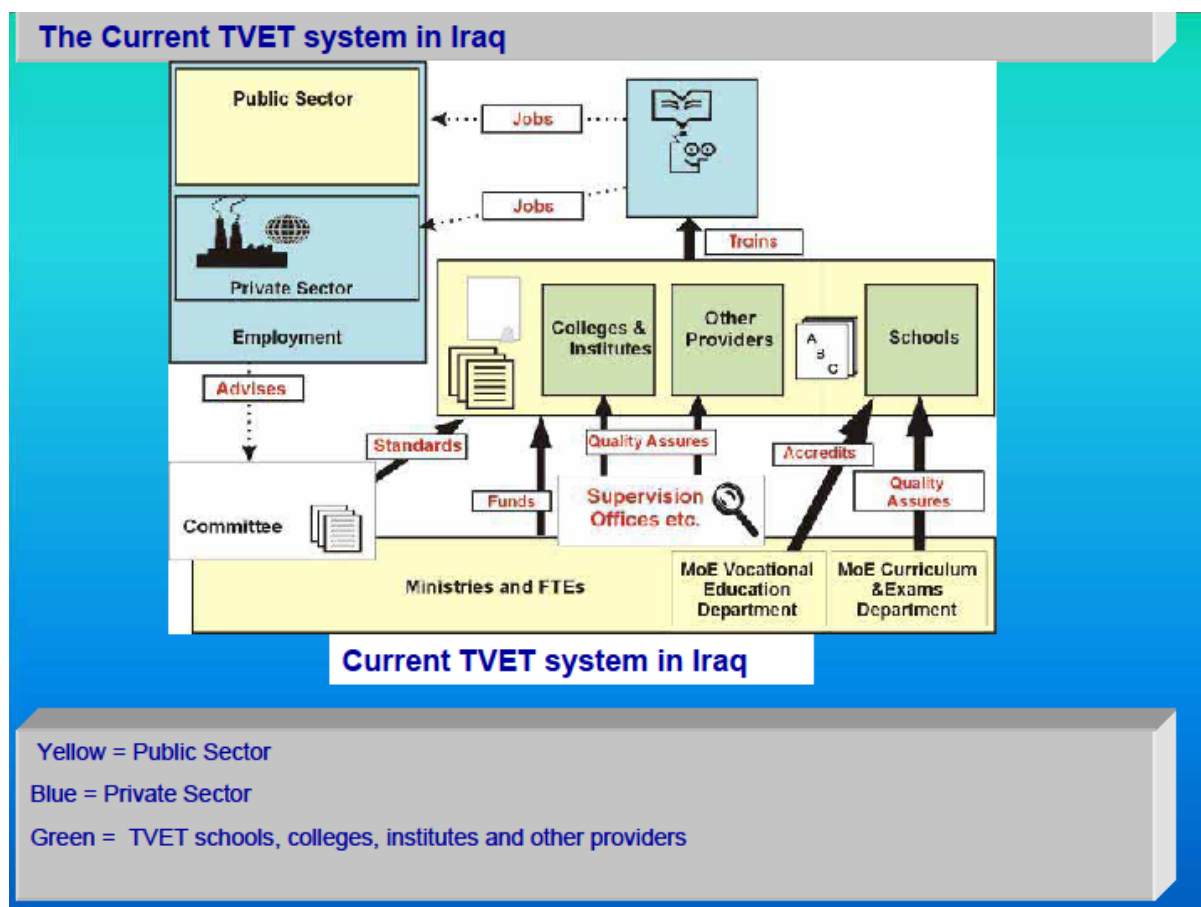
Once an important economic hub, Missan's economy has declined sharply in recent years due to poor infrastructure and resource scarcity. 40% of Missan's population is based in the Marshlands area and relies heavily on the marsh eco-system for water and livelihoods, which continues to suffer from environmental changes. The unemployment rate is 17%, slightly above the 15% national average. Female labour force participation is 8% but in rural areas this figure drops to 4%. Missan performs poorly – and often ranks amongst the worst within Iraq – according to many developmental and humanitarian indicators, particularly those related to child outcomes.

Ninewa

Ninewa governorate, and Mosul city in particular, is often said to be the most dangerous in the country. The disputed areas of the governorate are also home to a significant number of minority ethnic groups who are particularly vulnerable, including Kurds, Christians and Yazidis, among others. Communities throughout the governorate are also affected by on-going drought, placing them at further risk of displacement or rural to urban migration. Such a displacement would likely have destabilizing effects on both the sending and receiving areas. Host communities in disputed areas, already highly affected by displacement and degraded service delivery, will bear the increased burden of new arrivals. This will likely cause increased tensions, deteriorating conditions for IDPs and host communities, and will exacerbate currently high levels of unemployment. Most migrants are farmers, who have seen their livestock and production greatly decrease in the last few years. Whilst they are skilled in animal husbandry, they lack other transferable skills that would provide alternative income generation in the event of displacement. High rates of unemployment are widely understood to lead to engagement in criminal activity and recruitment into armed groups, thus perpetuating conflict in already tense regions. In this context, FHHs are particularly vulnerable.

For further information, see [Annex 02 - Summary Need Assessment](#)

2.2 Sectoral and Policy Overview of Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Iraq



There are three main TVET providers in Iraq. This includes: the Foundation of Technical Education (FTE) affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR), the General Directorate of Vocational Education (GDVE) in the Ministry of education (MoE) and The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). The first two bodies concentrate on formal education while the latter focuses on vocational training for unskilled labour.

The FTE is responsible for post-secondary TVET up to the level of Master of Science. FTE runs technical (secondary) schools. Established in 1969, it runs 38 technical institutions and 11 technical colleges distributed all over Iraq in all 18 Governorates. The 359 programmes offered cover engineering, management, agriculture and arts. It also runs a staff development centre (established in 1979) and one instructor training institute.

GDVE runs 250 technical schools. The programmes offered by the technical schools amount to 288 specializations; 178 industrial, 83 commercial, 11 agriculture and 16 home arts.

The MoSLA works on implementing its policies and agendas through 31 vocational training centres across Iraq. However, the dedicated budget was recently cut, and, therefore, a number of priority activities are currently on hold. So far it has provided some IDPs with micro-loans and in-kind grants (provided through UNEDO). A vocational training centre was established in Al Jabayesh in order to target the Arab marshes. These activities focus on building the capacities of those who are not employed and providing them with needed tool-

kits to help them initiate their own small businesses. A development programme with UNESCO that aims at improving and developing the local areas through establishing training centres in Al Ahwar in Missan (Al Majer and Maymona districts for Marsh Arabs) has been established as well.

A Governance Model has been developed to guide a holistic approach to the development of the TVET sector with policy direction being provided primarily by the employer community. Furthermore, a mandate and organizational structure for the Governance Model has been developed together with draft legislation. It is envisaged that this will empower implementation, through the participation of all relevant stakeholders and the support of the “IMPROVING QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN IRAQ” programme implemented jointly by UNESCO, UNILO and UNHABITAT until 2011.

This draft legislation has been presented to the Cabinet for discussion and support. However, recommendations have been made by the Cabinet to postpone establishment of a National body for the TVET sector and instead establish a Permanent Higher Committee.⁹ This Committee would be headed by the Deputy Head of the Panel of Advisors and membership of the president of FTE, DG of VE Department, DG Labour and Vocational Training Department in MoLSA along with heads of Business and Industry Unions in Iraq to adopt policies and coordinate among the three ministries and regulate relationships with the trade and industry sectors.

Another initiative from the British Government called the “RAWABIT” programme is also working in the TVET sector in Iraq with the same partners. The aims of this programme are to “support long term development and modernisation of the Iraqi technical education sector, through strategic partnerships at national level and college twinning links to support the development of individual institutions”. This programme highlights remaining challenges such as:

- Three Ministries working on a coherent TVET strategy;
- Ambition for TVET to play a major role in the economic and social development of the country;
- High quality provision based on innovation and rapid response to the needs of the changing employment market and a more democratic society;
- Ambition for TVET providers to take a pro-active role in identifying and meeting the needs of their localities;
- Professionalising & updating the skills of the TVET workforce.

Finally, GTZ (German Cooperation) and the EU have both established bilateral agreement with the Government of Iraq (GoI) in this sector. The GTZ is focusing on its cooperation with the FTE and looking at higher education. The EU Joint Strategy Paper 2011 – 2013 stresses the particular importance of education in Iraq because of its large young population, the high unemployment rate and the need to achieve economic recovery. The National Development Plan (NDP) emphasise the need to “tighten the relationship between the education and labour market in order to create self-motivation for learners to grasp educational opportunity.” Intrinsically linked to the achievement of educational goals is the elimination of barriers that keep children out of school (e.g. household work especially among the IDPs, participation of children in family businesses, girls prevented from receiving education because of socio-cultural norms). However, EU funding in this sector will only come on line

⁹ the formation of a higher technical committee for coordination among institutions involved in TVET and organization of its relationship with the private sector needs was made under the Decree number (Diwani 28 for the year 2010)

in 2013 with an estimated €21 Million. The EU's priority for this funding will remain on increasing access to formal secondary education, while improving the qualifications of women, IDPs and returnees.

Despite significant progress on the policy side and government engagement on this topic, much remains to be done. Priorities laid out are broad and most look at a higher level of formal education. Moreover, the Permanent Higher Committee has yet to yield any concrete decisions and action that would allow further progress in the development of the Iraqi TVET sector. Discussions on integrating vulnerable groups into the current policy framework are in their initial stages.

On an operational level, TVET providers in Iraq commonly agree that there is a lack of vision and mission within the TVET sector. TVET providers struggle with inappropriate facilities and equipment, outdated curriculum and learning materials, a lack of modern capacity in overall management, a shortage of qualified teachers and instructors, unmotivated staff. As a result of all of this the quality of TVET programmes suffers and their ability to expand activities is limited. There is an acknowledged need for expanded, high-quality, services from additional providers

The proposed DRC programme contained herein intends to work with the most vulnerable populations, largely that segment of the population that cannot afford traditional education. DRC intends to work mostly with the MoSLA and other non-governmental and private actors, for the practical delivery of TVET and ensure an adequate linkage so that TVETs provided through MoSLA are formally endorsed by the MoE. Subsequently, DRC will also work and advocate with relevant ministry as well as the Permanent Higher Council to ensure that the Iraq TVET strategy includes relevant provision for the inclusion of the most vulnerable. A focused scoping study will be undertaken in order to identify the most appropriate potential service providers together with a capacity assessment. Criteria for selection of service providers will be defined based upon the results provided by the initial assessment and research that will be conducted at the beginning of the project on Market Survey, Value Chain Analysis, Vulnerability Analysis and Cultural Barrier Access.

2.3 Lessons learned

DRC has been working in Iraq since 2003 and quickly started livelihood programming as one of its main priorities in promoting durable solutions.

Through its evolving programme, DRC has reached the conclusion that in order to address the real issues of access to sustainable incomes, a chain of action is needed to take the affected population from its lowest level to an acceptable international standard.

Such a chain of action could be defined in broad terms as follows:

- 1) Access to TVET for those with low level literacy or no literacy for skilling or re-skilling purposes;
- 2) Placement in the professional market or access to a more advanced TVET training;
- 3) For those with more entrepreneurial skills, access to In-Kind Grant Schemes and Small Business Start-up;
- 4) Referral to a Micro Grant facility for successful candidates.

Through its programming DRC also learned that even in the most conservative parts of Iraq there are certain forms of income generating activity which would be socially appropriate and acceptable for women. For example, women's photography training in the south (Basra) has

encountered significant success, following which women have become wedding photographers.¹⁰

The cost of living in Iraq is very high and despite its best efforts DRC has only been able to provide limited In-Kind Grant support (up to 2,500 USD per Grant). This has often been insufficient for those who wanted to create a business from scratch. However, creative solutions to this constraint have actually generated a multiplied impact. For example, in one instance several women joined together to create a beauty centre by pooling the resources offered by DRC. This example has strengthened DRC's resolve to ensure that a tailored service is provided to its beneficiaries whenever possible.

While there are a number of initiatives to improve TVET in Iraq, most initiatives focus on urban areas. DRC has learned from its experience that distances are real challenges and that even for its rural approach, DRC will require a more systematic linkage to a value chain analysis. In reality, product or income generating activities in rural areas do not yield sufficient revenue if these products or services are unable to access wider markets; one has to examine how to sell services or products beyond the immediate geographic area. Linking TVET to a proper market survey and value chain analysis would mitigate the negative impacts of such challenges and ensure that relevant targeted skills are developed within each beneficiary.

Another constraint in the rural setting is that populations are more scattered. Currently, all TVET centres are static and often located far away from where beneficiaries live. DRC has established a system where it provides transportation to its beneficiaries; however, while this system works well in urban areas, it faces limits in rural areas due to the distances involved. The solution to this problem is to work with local NGOs that can provide limited TVET through mobile centres. NGOs are often more flexible than government entities and are able to provide tailored mobile TVET services.

2.4 Beneficiaries

2.4.1 Profile

The target group for this project represent the most extreme groups of vulnerable people in Iraq. They are identified as the Extremely Vulnerable Households (EVHH) comprised of IDPs, Returnees, Female Head of Households (FHH) and poor host communities, including communities from the Marsh Arabs. IDPs (estimated at 1.3 million¹¹) are particularly susceptible to a lack of access to employment. 75% of IDPs surveyed by IOM in 2011 reported 'access to work' as their most pressing need.¹² FHHs are estimated at approximately 900,000 across the country. It is estimated that the population living below the poverty line in Iraq is 22.9%.

Beneficiaries will be selected according to a strict criteria agreed upon, but not only with GoI, but also with local stakeholders (Community representatives and local authorities), by establishing a Beneficiary Selection Committee (BSC). The list of potential beneficiaries will be provided initially by the local stakeholders (MoDM, community representatives and local authorities). However, DRC will put in place safeguards to mitigate the risk of exploiting the selection process. This will include DRC carrying out a 'low-profile' assessment to confirm that the beneficiaries suggested by the authorities are the most vulnerable and to confirm their intention to stay in the Governorate in the long term. DRC will concurrently conduct a

¹⁰ In muslim tradition the wedding is divided in two parts, with one side for the women and the other for the men.

¹¹ <http://www.iauiraq.org/documents/1462/FACT%20SHEET%20JUNE-JULY%202011.pdf>

¹² <http://www.iomiraq.net/Documents/Five%20Years%20of%20postSamarra%20Displacement%20in%20Iraq,%20Feb%202011%20EN.pdf>

further assessment throughout the target area in order to ensure that vulnerable families who meet the criteria have not been missed. In addition, this programme will benefit from EVHH identification done through other DRC-supported projects such as the PARC (Protection, Assistance and Return Centre) and WCC (Women Community Centre) which could help generate priority beneficiaries for the TVET programme against the agreed criteria.

2.4.2 Numbers

- ❖ Direct beneficiaries from TVET: At least 1,400 out of which at least 280 will be women.
- ❖ Direct beneficiaries from capacity building: At least 104 people from GoI, NNGOs and CSOs

- ❖ Indirect beneficiaries: at least 6,000 out of which an estimated of 2,500 will be women and girls.

2.5 DRC Strategy and Approach in Iraq

The overall objective for DRC in Iraq is the protection and promotion of durable solutions to displacement-affected populations on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights. The objectives of the programme focus on both immediate subsistence needs, livelihoods and self-reliance support, as well as on longer term goals for capacity building. DRC's overarching core strategy for its activities in Iraq encompasses the following sectors:

- **Protection:** PARC, WASH, emergency preparedness and response, primary education
- **Promotion of Durable Solutions/Early Economic Recovery:** Vocational training and re-skilling, micro finance, small business start-up, income generating activities and livelihoods (In Kind Grants), Infrastructure (Shelter)/basic services, security
- **Cross cutting:** Capacity building (National Empowerment Programme), gender, youth, reintegration, advocacy

This is further defined by:

- 1) *Promotion of durable solutions for and protection of displacement affected Iraqi populations in the Middle East on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights.*
- 2) *Facilitation of an environment conducive to returns, (re) settlement, and (re) integration through improved access to and protection of basic services and rights with a particular emphasis on EVHHs.*
- 3) *Enhancement of capacity and willingness of duty bearers and other stakeholders at local, national, and international levels by investing in the development of human, social and economic capital.*

The strategy for this proposed project is to **strengthen the direct provision** of necessary training in the short term whilst **promoting institutional buy-in and capacity** to provide the same in the long term. This project fits within the objectives of DRC's overall strategy for Iraq as it seeks to ultimately improve the access of EVHHs, particularly FHHs, IDPs, Returnees, Host and Marsh Arab communities to increased income generating opportunities. The project will target EVHHs with a three-year TVET programme aiming to increase their skills and income generating potential. The programme will then support the target TVET graduates to either enrol in other DRC livelihoods programmes or access other grant or business development opportunities (donor, private sector or government sponsored). While the immediate verifiable outcome of this programme will be increased skills and income generating potential of those who have received training, the positive impact of this

programme will extend far beyond this, most notably for the younger members of the households.

The programme strategy relies on a complementary approach, addressing directly the needs of the targeted population whilst simultaneously developing the willingness of duty-bearers and civil society stakeholders to meet these needs in the long term. At the macro level, the project will develop the capacities of state and civil society stakeholders to facilitate EVHHs in gaining independence thus reducing the burden of care on the extended family, wider community and state. This, combined with the potential multiplier effect of more cash in the local economy, should positively impact on the socio-economic conditions within the target communities well beyond the life of the project.

The project strategy relies on four main components to maximise impact and sustainability:

- Working with the various stakeholders, whether public, semi-public or CSO, in order to increase the number of service providers providing high quality TVET for EVHH.
- Ensuring a review of and improvements to existing curricula together with MoE/MoSLA so that they are a better fit to the economic and cultural reality of Iraq for EVHH and also comply with any existing national and international standards. This will include a clear cultural, economic and market analysis of employment opportunities and, therefore, TVET requirements in each area.
- Enhancing a framework of collaboration with the various line ministries and decentralised authorities; this framework will seek to reinforce the Permanent Higher Committee in addressing EVHH TVET needs that will take over the work initiated under this project. It will also promote coherence with broader economic and education reform activities at national level.
- Regular progress reviews throughout the project life cycle so that lessons learned can be understood and incorporated into the project design during implementation.

This project will also benefit from the linkages and expertise of DRC's broader current and future activities in Iraq. This includes its established network of local NGOs (UNHCR National Empowerment Programme (NEP) run by DRC in Dyala, Baghdad, Missan, Diwaniyah, Basra, Thi Qar and Nassyriah), its programming in Income Generating Activities supported by DANIDA under the 3-year global framework agreement (2012-14). In addition, this project will benefit from EVHH identification done through the PARC (Protection, Assistance and Return Centre) and WCC (Women Community Centre) which will generate priority beneficiaries for the TVET programme against set criteria.

In spite of a considerable improvement in security, the situation in Iraq remains very volatile and the DRC approach must remain flexible in response to the constant changing security environment.

2.6 Theory of change

Iraq is currently suffering from high unemployment and a poorly developed private sector (excluding the oil industry). Assessments in Iraq by a variety of actors indicate that Extremely Vulnerable Households (EVHH), and in particular vulnerable Female-Headed Households (FHH), are disproportionately excluded from the labour market. EVHHs, and especially FHHs, have complex livelihood needs related to the effects of displacement and the specific protection vulnerabilities they face. As a result, they often lack marketable skillsets that could help them transition from rural to urban environments as well as maintain consistent income sources. EVHHs generally rely on humanitarian assistance and inconsistent income from unskilled, temporary employment; this deprives them of the ability to access stable income and eventually save and invest. This in turn perpetuates their status as "extremely vulnerable" households.

An effective way to begin to address these issues is to move EVHHs from unskilled, inconsistent work to semi-skilled labour. Semi-skilled labour provides more consistent and sustainable income than casual, unskilled work, mainly because semi-skilled vocations are commonly in demand and more likely to offer transferable skills that can be used in multiple sectors and contexts (urban/rural). An example of semi-skilled work is sewing – if a TVET programme is properly designed to provide key technical skills, a sewing graduate can work in a factory, in other sectors of the textiles industry, for a tailor, or from home.

However, in many areas of Iraq there is a major gap in quality vocational training provision, particularly in regards to training that addresses lifting unskilled labour into skilled labour. Where it exists, such TVET programmes are largely geared towards either male-dominated vocations (such as construction and other manual work) where many women do not feel comfortable participating or toward a higher level of education which most of the EVHH do not possess. While there are some smaller local organisations that could provide such services to EVHHs (and FHH in particular), they do not always adhere to vocational training standards.

The intended outcome of this programme is for EVHHs to “graduate” out of their extremely vulnerable status. To “graduate” means that:

- EVHHs that engage in unskilled labour can develop more marketable skillsets (through semi-skilled work);
- EVHHs that rely on humanitarian assistance and inconsistent income can access more stable incomes;
- EVHHs currently obliged to consume all of their income and assistance can break their cycle of economic vulnerability by saving and eventually investing in capital.

In summary, the Theory of Change for this programme is as follows: EVHHs can “graduate” out of their vulnerability status if they have access to quality TVET and economic inputs that reflect their livelihood needs and the market realities.

This theory of change contains four prerequisites in order to improve EVHHs’ access to livelihood opportunities:

- Improvement of TVET quality & accessibility for EVHHs (physical accessibility and gender-sensitive vocations). This includes technical vocational training, employability skills, and business development skills.
- Understanding of EVHH needs and market demand (by humanitarian actors and by beneficiaries themselves).
- Direct inputs for income generation.
- Ensuring beneficiaries have the tools to strive for sustainable income – including financial planning for saving and investment.

In Iraq, the main challenge to improving livelihood opportunities for EVHHs is the lack of access to quality TVET. In this proposal, DRC Iraq has therefore identified three specific objectives to improve livelihood opportunities for EVHHs that will allow this change to happen:

SO1: To create a sustainable environment conducive to enhanced quality and increased availability of TVET for EVHHs

SO2: To ensure that TVET leads to sustainable Income Generation for EVHHs

SO3: To strengthen state willingness and capacity to respond to the TVET needs of EVHH

Beyond the direct benefits of the programme on the target beneficiaries, the potential multiplier effects are significant. Families and extended families of the target beneficiaries

will potentially experience improved health, education and broader social conditions due to the economic empowerment of the beneficiaries themselves. The potential impact on women and girls from improved economic standing and active involvement in the economic life of their communities could have reap social dividends for their overall advancement. Furthermore, the surrounding communities will benefit not only from the increased purchasing power of the beneficiaries themselves, but also from the broader economic activities that each beneficiary undertakes through in-kind grants and business development activities.

The potential impact of the DRC programme on the broader sector cannot be underestimated. Successful initiation of a policy framework, improved TVET quality standards and expanded reach of TVET services to under-served, rural areas can have an unquantifiable impact, not only on the target areas but on the country-wide economic development in the medium term.

2.7 Consistency with Other Existing Donor/Multilateral Programmes

The proposed DRC programme will complement the wide range of programmes operating in the TVET sector (EU, USAID, UK). DRC will support the development of overarching frameworks for the sector which should positively impact both on the policy work as well as on the operational activities of other actors. For example, the proposed DRC programme will build on policy linkages between this programme and the on-going effort of the UK supported “Rawabit” programme. Furthermore, DRC’s cutting edge work on improving the quality of TVET implementation and expanding activities to rural areas as well as to underserved populations (EVHHs, including FHH) will also create an improved baseline for the sector.

This project will establish strategic linkages and synergies with existing initiatives in the area of “economic development,” the largest of which is currently being implemented by USAID in Iraq. This includes the “Governance Strengthening programme”, initiated in September 2011 for 5 years and implemented by Chemonics, which focuses on increasing the ability of Provincial Governors and Provincial and Local Councils to better respond to the needs of Iraqi citizens. DRC will actively promote strategic linkages with this USAID programme in order to leverage potential inter-connected impacts with DRC’s capacity building for the Ministry of Education at local level.

Multiple “entry points” and synergies will be developed between the proposed DRC TVET project and another USAID programme: “Provincial Economic Growth Program” - USAID/Tijara – (which means “trade” in Arabic). The objective of this USAID programme is to promote economic growth and employment in Iraq by increasing private sector access to finance, in particular micro, small and medium enterprises. Key areas for potential synergy include:

- ❖ Access to microfinance services: more than 11 Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) have been supported by USAID including some within the target area of this DRC project: Basra, Diyala, Missan and Ninewa. These MFIs provide loans (from 500 to 3000 USD) to support small business enterprises and income generating activities. The access to microfinance services generated by the USAID programme could represent an efficient and powerful tool to facilitate DRC’s “exit strategy” at the end of the DRC project. DRC will seek the possibility to refer its trained beneficiaries to these financial services in order to consolidate or diversify their business initiatives. The presence of sustainable MFIs in the field will also create incentives to establish partnership with the “Global Credit Facility,” a new DRC microfinance initiative dedicated to expanding financial access to conflict-affected people.

- ❖ Training for Youth: DRC will seek the possibility of establishing partnerships and complementarities with the youth-focused program promoted by the Provincial Economic Growth project (USAID-Tijara). Its specific objective is to create a variety of opportunities for youth - primarily recent graduates - to learn trades and enter new professions, establish new businesses, earn salaries and profits and generate additional employment.

2.8 Rationale for AusAID Involvement

The strategy for this proposed project is to strengthen the provision of vocational training as well as capacitating local institutions to ensure both the increased self-reliance of the target population as well as the continued development of TVET in Iraq.

Given DRC's objectives in Iraq focus on the protection and promotion of durable solutions to displacement-affected populations on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights, the objectives of this programme focuses on both immediate subsistence needs, livelihoods and self-reliance support, as well as on longer term goals for capacity building. This programme is, therefore, directly aligned to the broader AusAid Iraq Country Strategy, specifically Pillar 2, supporting public sector governance' and Pillar 4, supporting vulnerable populations in Iraq. DRC's strong focus on capacity building of relevant government stakeholders and communities directly supports the goal of Australia's aid program, to improve the quality of life in Iraq by strengthening governance and building national capacity. DRC's focus on underserved and vulnerable populations is directly in line with AusAid's focus on 'supporting the most vulnerable' (specifically referenced as IDP, refugees and women) which also includes provision to support local authorities to provide better services for the most vulnerable.

3 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

3.1 Project Objectives

The Overall Objective of the project is to facilitate Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVHH) and more specifically Female Headed Households (FHH) in vulnerable Iraqi communities to access stable incomes and livelihood opportunities through the provision of Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

The Specific Objectives of the project are to:

- 1) *To create a sustainable environment conducive to enhanced quality and increased availability of TVET for EVHHs*
 - % of FHHs among TVET students
 - # of available TVET courses
 - # of other TVET providers endorsing and duplicating DRC/MoE/MoSLA TVET curricula
- 2) *To ensure that TVET leads to sustainable Income Generation for EVHHs*
 - % of household income diverted toward investment in social and economic capital 6 months after TVET graduation
 - # of TVET beneficiaries engaged in formal employment 6 months after TVET graduation
 - % increase in beneficiary household income 6 months after TVET graduation

- 3) *To strengthen state willingness and capacity to respond to the TVET needs of EVHH*
- # of graduates of TVET centres who report at the end of each phase that the training was satisfactory and relevant
 - # of instances where TVET has been formally raised by the Permanent Higher Committee members
 - # of TVET centres run and/or supported by GoI (Government of Iraq) that use MoE/MoSLA/DRC curricula (or similar) by the end of each phase
 - # of EVHHs who successfully complete TVET courses in government-supported centres at the end of each phase

3.2 Expected Outcomes

Through the provision of TVET to EVHHs and FHHs, this programme will support key actors and beneficiaries in achieving the capacities necessary for self-reliance in the provision of income generation activities. This will lead to improved social, economic and political capital of direct beneficiaries and the wider community. The outcomes listed will be measured against a thorough research and mapping exercise as detailed in section 5 of this proposal.

- 1.1 *National capacity to provide TVET has increased*
 - # partners providing TVET
 - # of signed MoUs
- 1.2 *Provision of TVET for vulnerable populations has been increased*
 - # EVHH beneficiaries graduated from TVET
 - # of EVHH beneficiaries receiving TVET
- 1.3 *Sustainability of TVET provision for vulnerable populations is mainstreamed*
 - # of partners who have successfully completed performance evaluation
 - # of partners accessing diverse funding streams
 - # of meetings held by the Permanent Higher Committee with donors
 - % of government budget allocated to support TVET activities
- 2.1. *100% of target population are better equipped to access sustainable income*
 - # of TVET beneficiaries engaged in income generating activities
 - # of CSOs able to offer quality TVET programming for EVHHs
 - # of referrals to TVET programming from other structures/organizations/programmes
- 3.1. *Government acknowledges need for TVET for EVHHs*
 - # of Government actors engaged in dialogue with DRC and partners
 - # of meetings between DRC and government actors
 - # of local authority representatives participating in DRC organized trainings through the secondment initiative
- 3.2. *Government engagement in meeting the TVET needs of vulnerable populations is increased*
 - # of meetings of Permanent Higher Committee on TVET for EVHHs
 - # of governments actors/bodies providing TVET to EVHHs
 - # of diverse funding streams identified
- 3.3. *Government leads future TVET initiatives for vulnerable populations*
 - Existence of a framework strategy

3.3 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In order to achieve the target objectives, the following activities will be implemented with key milestones. For further details, see Annex 01 – Logical Framework and Annex 03 - Milestones Schedule

Immediate objective 1: to create a sustainable environment conducive to enhanced quality and increased availability of TVET for EVHH

1.1 National capacity to provide TVET is increased

MILESTONE 1: Potential partners identified and framework for collaboration established

1.1.1. Mapping of Civil Society Organisations and TVET Private Sector (PS) providers carried out

1.1.2. Potential IPs identified

1.1.3. MOU signed with selected IPs

MILESTONE 2: Capacity of potential partners assessed and areas in need of capacity building addressed

1.1.4. Capacity assessment of IPs

1.1.5. Training provided to IPs

1.2. Provision of TVET for vulnerable populations is strengthened

MILESTONE 9: Identified IPs are able to provide TVET to beneficiaries under mentoring and supervision of DRC

1.2.1. Capacity of IPs is reviewed

1.2.2. Phase 1 IPs provided with further training and capacity building

1.2.3. Selected IPs provided with sub-grants for start up costs

1.2.4. Selected IPs provided with mentoring by DRC programme staff

1.2.5. Facilitate working relationship between DRC IPs and other TVET PS providers

1.2.6. Monitor work quality of IPs providing TVET through grade monitoring and beneficiary feedback

1.3. Sustainability of TVET provision for vulnerable populations is mainstreamed

MILESTONE 13: DRC partners have technical and organizational capacity to independently provide TVET

1.3.1. Performance review of IPs providing TVET from Phase 2

1.3.2. Gradual handover of responsibilities to IPs

1.3.3. Evaluation and review of IPs TVET provision

MILESTONE 14: Diverse funding streams identified and linked to TVET providers

1.3.4. Provide IPs with training and capacity building in donor liaison and institutional fundraising

1.3.5. Facilitate relationship between IPs and donors

1.3.6. Develop advocacy plan to influence government and local government representatives for inclusion of specific provision for EVHHs TVET needs within the existing draft framework and establishing funding mechanism

1.3.7. Facilitate relationship between IPs and potential GOI funding mechanism

1.3.8. Devolve responsibility for funding mechanism to the Permanent Higher Committee

Immediate objective 2: to ensure that TVET leads to sustainable IG for EVHHs

2.1. *100% of target population are better equipped to access sustainable income*

MILESTONE 3: TVET pilot is rolled out

- 2.1.1. Conduct baseline surveys
- 2.1.2. Conduct economic opportunity mapping and analysis
- 2.1.3. Conduct KAP survey
- 2.1.4. Identify partner TVET Centres for pilot phase
- 2.1.5. Review existing curriculum and accreditation criteria, in cooperation with MoE/MoSLA and selected IPs
- 2.1.6. Improve and develop curriculum as appropriate in line with identified market needs and in cooperation with MoE/MoSLA
- 2.1.7. Disseminate revised curriculum and accreditation criteria to selected IPs
- 2.1.8. Establish beneficiary selection criteria
- 2.1.9. Conduct beneficiary selection
- 2.1.10. Enrol 200 beneficiaries in relevant TVET programme
- 2.1.11. Establish beneficiary database
- 2.1.12. Periodically follow up with beneficiaries through Social Mobilizers

MILESTONE 4: Referral mechanism to DRC and external IG activities is established and functional

- 2.1.13. Service mapping of IGA, Microfinance providers, as well as existing Business Development Services (BDS) and government counterparts for business support
- 2.1.14. Identify potential partnerships with IGA actors
- 2.1.15. Establish communication lines and working relationships with partners
- 2.1.16. Establish MOU or ToR for referrals to external agencies
- 2.1.17. Assess graduated TVET beneficiaries for eligibility for DRC IGA
- 2.1.18. Enrol eligible graduated TVET beneficiaries in DRC IGA
- 2.1.19. Establish follow up mechanism through Social Mobilizer network
- 2.1.20. Use beneficiary database to monitor referrals

MILESTONE 6: Finalized TVET model is fully rolled out and expanded to new geographical areas

- 2.1.21. Liaise with community leaders for awareness-raising and buy in
- 2.1.22. Assessments and mapping carried out in new urban locations of existing Governorates, with addition of Ninewa
- 2.1.23. Potential IPs in Ninewa are identified and selected through service mapping and capacity assessment
- 2.1.24. MoU signed with selected IPs
- 2.1.25. Training provided to selected IPs
- 2.1.26. Curriculum and accreditation systems disseminated to new areas
- 2.1.27. 400 new beneficiaries enrolled in urban TVET programme

MILESTONE 7: New TVET pilot for rural areas rolled out by the end of Year 2

- 2.1.28. Liaise with community leaders for awareness-raising and buy in
- 2.1.29. Assessment and mapping carried out in rural areas
- 2.1.30. Economic opportunity mapping for agricultural/rural livelihoods carried out
- 2.1.31. Additional training provided to DRC IPs
- 2.1.32. Curriculum and accreditation systems disseminated to new areas
- 2.1.33. Beneficiary selection criteria reviewed and carried out
- 2.1.34. 100 beneficiaries enrolled in pilot rural TVET

MILESTONE 8: 50% of Phase 1 and Phase 2 beneficiaries are engaged in IG activities

- 2.1.35. Periodic follow up of graduated beneficiaries carried out
- 2.1.36. TVET beneficiaries referred to DRC and external IGA

MILESTONE 11: Geographical expansion is complete

- 2.1.37. Liaise with community leaders for awareness-raising and buy in
- 2.1.38. Assessment and mapping carried out in new areas
- 2.1.39. Additional or refresher training provided to IPs
- 2.1.40. Curriculum and accreditation systems disseminated to new areas
- 2.1.41. Beneficiary selection carried out
- 2.1.42. 700 beneficiaries enrolled in TVET programme

MILESTONE 12: 80% of Phase 1, 2 and 3 beneficiaries engaged in IG

- 2.1.43. Periodic follow up of graduated beneficiaries carried out
- 2.1.44. TVET beneficiaries referred to DRC and external IG
- 2.1.45. Conduct post TVET beneficiary household income and expenditure survey

Immediate objective 3: to strengthen state willingness and capacity to respond to the TVET needs of EVHHs

3.1. *Government acknowledges need for TVET for EVHHs*

MILESTONE 5: Meaningful dialogue established with state actors

- 3.1.1 Recruit Govt Liaison Officers
- 3.1.2 Develop advocacy plan and materials
- 3.1.3 Establish communication at ministry and local level
- 3.1.4 Facilitate meetings between DRC, IP and State actors
- 3.1.5 Sensitize the Permanent Higher Committee on specific EVHH TVET needs
- 3.1.6 Contribute to amend the draft legal framework to ensure handover of TVET for EVHH

3.2. *Government engagement in meeting the TVET needs of vulnerable populations is increased*

MILESTONE 10: Government institutions are engaged in TVET

- 3.2.1 Sustained coordination at Line Ministry level through advocacy, facilitation of meetings/workshops
- 3.2.2 Training and capacity building of relevant government staff
- 3.2.3 Facilitate finalisation of draft framework for handover of TVET
- 3.2.4 Preliminary handover of Phase 1 partners
- 3.2.5 Civil servants engaged in joint supervision and monitoring of TVET
- 3.2.6 Secondment initiative for relevant government staff to TVET training and capacity building activities
- 3.2.7 Lessons learned incorporated into the handover framework

3.3 *Government leads future TVET initiatives for vulnerable populations*

MILESTONE 15: DRC TVET programme mainstreamed by Line Ministries by end of Phase 3

- 3.3.1 Continued support to Committee by DRC until project end
- 3.3.2 Completed framework is in place and handover complete
- 3.3.3 Lessons Learned shared by DRC

For further details, see Annex 01 - Logical framework and Annex 03 – Milestone Schedule

3.4 Estimated Program Budget & Timing

No.	LINE ITEMS	Total Cost USD (year 1)	Total Cost USD (year 2)	Total Cost USD (year 3)	Total Cost USD (3 years)	Total 3 yrs Ausaid Contribution AUD	Total 3 yrs Partner Contribution AUD
	Programme Costs	886,680	1,601,660	1,516,100	4,004,440	4,142,513	-
1	Research, Planning and Design	173,200	81,600	84,600	339,400	351,103	-
2	Identification and Capacity Building of providers and key stakeholders	123,680	117,760	80,000	321,440	332,523	-
3	Advocacy and Information Sharing	112,300	112,300	111,500	336,100	347,689	-
4	Facilitation of TVET training and Establishment of referral mechanisms to IG opportunities	477,500	1,290,000	1,240,000	3,007,500	3,111,199	-
	Direct Programme Support Costs	1,165,298	951,558	1,051,558	9,486,840	3,277,661	6,536,285
5	National Staff Salaries (salaries of staff directly working for project)	444,198	497,958	497,958	4,673,340	1,489,769	3,344,708
6	Expat Staff Salaries (salaries of staff directly supporting for project)	225,600	225,600	225,600	2,376,000	700,136	1,757,788
7	Project logistics and Transport costs	297,500	30,000	130,000	457,500	473,275	
8	Other direct cost	198,000	198,000	198,000	1,980,000	614,481	1,433,789
	Indirect Programme Support Costs	248,030	284,330	278,030	2,862,600	838,332	2,122,970
9	Indirect Project support costs (Admin, utilities, communication and office supplies)	209,430	215,730	209,430	2,661,600	656,471	2,096,901
10	Operational Learning, M&E, Financial audits	38,600	68,600	68,600	201,000	181,862	26,069
	Total Project Cost	2,300,008	2,837,548	2,845,688	16,353,880	8,258,506	8,659,256
	Indirect cost 3% (regional)	69,000	85,126	85,371	490,616	247,755	253,540
	Indirect cost 7%	161,001	198,628	199,198	1,144,772	578,095	
	GRAND TOTAL	2,530,009	3,121,303	3,130,257	17,989,268	9,084,357	8,912,795

Payment request will be spread over the three years and DRC will request a first instalment of 2,530,009 USD for the first year.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

3.5 Project Methodology

The project will be implemented in three annual phases. **Phase 1** (year 1) will focus on research, analysis, planning and programme design, initial beneficiary selection for the first round of 200 target EVHHs and initial discussions with Government. **Phase 2** (year 2) will build on the lessons from Phase 1 and see an expansion of TVET provision to a further 500 EVHHs in both rural and urban locations. Support for placement of TVET graduates into livelihoods programmes (in-kind grant, business development, etc) will be strengthened in Phase 2, building on the successes and lessons learned from Phase 1. Quality of TVET training is improved from year 1 to year 2 through targeted support from DRC and the engagement of government institutions is activated through targeted advocacy. It is envisaged that the programme will engage with the Permanent Higher Committee to embed TVET for EVHHs into on-going policy development across line ministries. DRC's exit strategy for this programme is initiated in Phase 2 with focused support to the development of a draft framework for handover of TVET. **Phase 3** (year 3) represents the consolidation of the programme and the last phase of geographic expansion of the DRC programme; 700 EVHHs will receive TVET training in this Phase with a target of 80% of all target beneficiaries engaged in income generating activities by the end of the programme. DRC increases its focus during this final Phase on strengthening the implementing partners, creating linkages between partners and government as well as donors. Work is intensified with Government to strengthen the functioning of the Permanent Higher committee on TVET and mainstream TVET within line ministry policies and approaches.

Specific activities will be outlined in more detail below.

3.5.1 Research, planning, and design

Project start-up will entail a comprehensive research, planning and design stage of 3 to 6 months. The aim of this stage is to increase and formalize organizational knowledge and understanding of the context so that programming is targeted in the most effective and efficient manner. Activities planned under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Baseline surveys, needs assessments of the targeted communities and lessons learned
 - Needs assessment
 - Vulnerability assessment (including cultural barrier)
 - Contextual wealth analysis
 - Programme rEVHHew, through quality satisfaction surveys and participatory lessons learned exercise
- Extensive economic opportunity and services mapping and analysis.
 - Labour market assessment
 - Market survey
 - Value chain analysis
 - Mapping of training providers
 - CSO and TVET centre capacity assessments
 - Business Development and potential referral service mapping
- Community liaison and participatory rural assessments.

DRC will take a holistic approach which will build on existing organizational knowledge of the contextual challenges faced by the target communities as well as self-identified needs and

existing skill sets. In addition to identifying beneficiary needs and preferences, the research in this phase aims to identify viable opportunities for entry into the labour market. This will be done through economic opportunity mapping within the targeted governorates, which will assess current levels of market supply and demand. Such a study will help to ensure that the TVET curricula are appropriate for the available employment options. In addition, a mapping of service providers will identify potential referral options (both within the DRC programme and externally) for graduates to receive follow-up mentoring and support.

The research will also provide a baseline against which project outcomes and impact indicators may be measured. As a part of this process, DRC will seek to identify contextually appropriate indicators of wealth and livelihood status upon which to base evaluations of impact. DRC will hire a team of enumerators to work with existing programme teams to ensure the veracity of the data collected.

Whilst trainings provided must be culturally appropriate for the target beneficiaries, research will furthermore seek to clarify current perceptions of access to the labour market (particularly for women), and how both beneficiaries and service providers might work to mitigate any existing barriers. For example, restricted access to formal education for women may have resulted in low levels of basic literacy and numeracy skills, which hinder the establishment and success of small businesses and/or access to formal employment. Findings will, in turn, influence the design of curricula so as to ensure such barriers are addressed. (See section 5.1.5 for further information on the Gender Equality Action Plan.)

Additionally, it will be essential for this research phase to assess any existing national standards for the delivery of TVET in Iraq, alongside internationally recognised standards, to ensure that the developed curricula leads to officially recognised and meaningful qualifications.

Community liaison at an early stage will be an essential part of this process; community acceptance is essential to ensure that interventions are culturally and socially appropriate and to ensure that community support for these activities extend beyond the life cycle of DRC's project. DRC will expand its existing structure of Social Mobilizers under this programme in order to maintain close links with both the direct beneficiaries and their wider communities.

This research stage will also include initial scoping and engagement with the GoI at policy level. This stage will seek to generate additional support for the programme itself as well as to ensure that GoI ownership is obtained from an early stage, both for the influencing of the Permanent Higher Committee as well as for the TVET activities at field level.

3.5.2 Identification and Capacity Building of Partners and Key Stakeholders

Parallel to the research activities outlined above, DRC will use services mapping to identify partners for implementation. This mapping will include a detailed capacity assessment of potential TVET training providers, which will aid in selection as well as assist in determining the type of capacity building activities required. Capacity assessment will examine governance, management practices, finance, technical / service delivery, staff capacity organisation mission and sustainability. DRC has extensive experience in capacity building and will employ tools and methods designed for preVHHous capacity assessment exercises, including those developed for the UNHCR-sponsored NEP (National Empowerment Programme) currently under implementation by DRC. Additionally the Capacity Assessment tools will be adjusted according to findings of the initial research phase.

Following the mapping of potential IPs, DRC will undertake a selection process, in collaboration with GoI, to finalise the list of partners. Selection criteria will be developed and

refined during both the research as well as the mapping stage; it will then be agreed with the GoI before IP selection begins. DRC will put in place strict measures to mitigate risks of potential partners manipulating this process.

In Phase 1, TVET service provision by partners will be tightly focused and coupled with intensive capacity building activities; this is essential to ensure that the programme and its partners have the capacity to provide high quality TVET training. Initial TVET training in Phase 1 will be in urban areas; therefore, the partners will most likely be formal TVET Centres and Private Sector (PS) providers. As training providers in rural areas are less readily available, later phases targeting rural areas will rely more heavily on local NGOs (LNGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Significant capacity building of these LNGOs and CSOs is integrated into the programme design during Phase 1 and 2.

In Phase 1, while CSOs are undergoing capacity building, the project will rely on existing government service providers, largely the private sector. Under DRC's exiting DANIDA-funded Income Generation projects, DRC has established a network of trusted providers whose expertise and willingness can be counted on for implementation. DRC will seek to further build the technical capacity of these providers through training while also identifying new private sector partners.

In Phases 2 and 3 of the programme, as LNGOs and CSOs capacity increases, they will increasingly take on the role as service providers. To support their capacity development, DRC will facilitate productive partnerships between the civil society and private sector providers so that relationships are complementary rather than competitive. One way this facilitation is envisioned is by promoting the use of LNGOs and CSOs as "satellite providers" for the private sector institutions. As such, LNGOs with operational experience in more remote or less accessible areas of intervention will support and be supported by the existing structures and institutional knowledge of centralized private TVET providers. In this way the programme will have a wider geographic reach. Considering that many of the program locations are still experiencing on-going sectarian violence, DRC will take a conflict sensitive approach to the selection of CSOs, LNGOs, private sector providers and, of course, beneficiaries.

In Phases 2 and 3, the active involvement of LNGOs and CSOs together with the PS providers will be greatly increased in line with their improved capacity. In order for LNGOs to become operational in the provision of TVET, small sub-grants will be provided for set-up costs (training facilities and materials). These small sub-grants will come from the NEP and the DANIDA project. In Phase 3, DRC will extend its capacity building support to include coaching in government and donor liaison, including fundraising.

As a critical part of its strategy, including a robust handover strategy, DRC will place a strong emphasis on engaging with and building the capacity of existing state providers of TVET, as identified in the services mapping. Complementary to the capacity building efforts at field implementation level, DRC will undertake advocacy and liaison activities at the Line Ministry level (see section 5.1.3 below). This will seek to create a policy environment whereby state stakeholders have the willingness to engage in the provision of TVET and the necessary preliminary capacity to engage in TVET-related activities. DRC will seek to initiate handover as early as possible in the programme implementation.

Throughout the implementation, DRC will engage with the authorities both to continually build ownership and buy-in to the programme as well as on the issue of maintaining clear quality standards for TVET. This could include developing an eventual regulatory framework for TVET providers.

3.5.3 Advocacy and Engagement of Relevant Government Stakeholders

At the higher strategic policy level, DRC will build on and expand its productive engagement with Line Ministries so as to engender support for the aims of the programme. DRC will advocate with the Ministries of Displacement and Migration, Labour & Social Affairs and Education and the Women's Directorate at the Baghdad level as well as their local level counterparts to ensure support and engagement with the programme's objectives.

DRC has learned from its capacity building programme on the DRC Governorate Emergency Cells programme¹³ that disconnects between the central government and local government is one big challenge for progress on policy implementation. This issue often translates into low level of policy implementation or policy that is inadequate when faced with field realities. Building on its experience and, in order to facilitate its advocacy activities, DRC will recruit TVET Liaison Officers with the specific task of liaising with relevant institutional actors in their area. In Phase 1 of the project, one Liaison Officer will be assigned per Governorate but as the project activities expand so too will the number of Liaison Officers. Their responsibilities will include advocacy and awareness-raising so as to influence the Permanent Higher Committee and ensure that the draft law includes specific provision for the EVHH TVET needs in Iraq. In the last quarter of Phase 1, DRC will seek to have the draft law amended to include an outline strategy for support and funding of state and CSO TVET provision for vulnerable populations. This is an essential component of this programme in terms of ensuring future sustainability of interventions and a lasting paradigm shift. In order to achieve this objective, DRC's Liaison team will facilitate workshops and meetings between relevant LNGOs, CSOs and government actors at district, Governorate and national level.

Phase 2 will see the advocacy and awareness raising activities of Phase 1 formalized and expanded upon. During the first quarter of Phase 2, DRC will seek to have the draft law finalized. In the second quarter, DRC will initiate a preliminary, gradual handover of the TVET centres already engaged in the project. This handover will continue throughout the project, and will include joint monitoring between DRC and government officials. In the first quarter of Phase 3, DRC will begin the same gradual handover of TVET providers in rural areas.

At the end of Phase Two, it is expected/anticipated that the draft law and funding mechanism will be finalized and disseminated for comment. This will allow for lessons learned to be incorporated into the framework before it is finalised.

Complementary to the advocacy discussions with Government, a secondment initiative will be rolled out in order to promote state engagement and capacity to become service providers. Under this initiative, local authorities and representatives will be invited to participate in trainings provided to both implementing partners and direct beneficiaries. The rationale of this approach is that a practicum, whereby stakeholders' learning is facilitated by "showing" rather than "telling" is more participatory and, therefore, more sustainable. This approach will give government stakeholders the opportunity to feed into the process at a basic implementation level and not just at the more abstract policy level.

Given that the objective of this framework is to transfer ownership of TVET provision for EVHHs to key community and state stakeholders, DRC's role in supporting the drafting and finalization of this framework and mechanism will be limited to an advocacy, facilitation and stewardship role. In the "best-case scenario", the training providers will benefit further in this

¹³ DRC since 2007 has established 17 coordination cells within the governors' offices of each governorate in Iraq apart for Baghdad. This programme is called the Governorate Emergency Cells (GECs) with the aim of strengthening coordination on emergency preparedness and response at governorate level. The GEC at governorate level is own by the governor and the branches of the various Iraqi line ministries

process from the training provided to them on fundraising and government/donor engagement. However, in the event that engagement of government in the handover process does not proceed within the specified timeframe, LNGO and CSO fundraising skills developed through the programme will allow them to lobby other donors for alternative or supplementary funds. DRC will ensure that throughout the project duration, it continues to build a network of donors (national and international) which it can link to its TVET partners.

Advocacy efforts at community level will be ongoing throughout the project duration via the Social Mobilizer network. This will be an essential part of the project's sustainability and community acceptance strategy. Given that the project will target vulnerable groups who may traditionally be excluded from the formal economy, DRC will engage in constant and open dialogue with key community figures so as to ensure communities are aware of and support DRC's project objectives and beneficiary targeting. As with all DRC interventions, careful consideration is given to the need to avoid creating or exacerbating tensions within or between communities.

In addition, advocacy activities will be facilitated by the initial mapping exercise, which will seek to identify agencies and service providers with similar objectives in the education sector, in order to ensure a comprehensive advocacy message.

3.5.4 Facilitation of TVET Training and establishment of referral mechanisms to Income Generation opportunities where feasible

Using results of the research stage, DRC will work with partners to review curricula and, where necessary, propose and facilitate necessary improvements. DRC will work with relevant Line Ministries and accreditation bodies to ensure standardized accreditation systems are in place so that qualifications gained in the DRC project are recognized externally. These will comply with national standards, where they exist, and will comply with international standards in areas where national standards do not. GoI engagement and buy-in at each stage will be prioritised by DRC.

1,400 beneficiaries will be targeted for this programme, all of whom will meet DRC's strict criteria, including their ranking as an extremely vulnerable individual. Beneficiaries will be selected according to a strict criteria agreed. not only with GoI, but also with local stakeholders (community representatives and local authorities). The list of potential beneficiaries will be provided initially by the local stakeholders (MoDM, community representatives and local authorities). However, in parallel, DRC will put in place safeguards to mitigate the risk of exploiting the selection process. This will include, DRC carrying out a 'low-profile' assessment to confirm that the beneficiaries suggested by the authorities are the most vulnerable and to confirm their intention to stay in the Governorate in the long term. DRC will concurrently conduct a further assessment throughout the target area in order to ensure that vulnerable families who meet the criteria have not been missed.

At least 20% or 280 will be women. DRC will seek to exceed this number, however, would prefer to maintain 20% initially until the full research and mapping stage, both of potential beneficiaries, as well as the market analysis. Initial needs assessment has indicated that some sectors of the market are exceedingly difficult for women to access; the initial research and mapping stage will examine this issue in detail and ensure all training is adapted to business opportunities most likely to succeed in the Iraq context. It should be noted that of the indirect beneficiaries from this programme (estimated at 6,000), an estimated 2,500 will be women and girls.

The research, planning and design stage will help identify sectors and subjects in which to train beneficiaries based both on their stated needs and desires as well as the potential to exploit the acquired skills in the current economy. In addition, and as mentioned above, this

initial stage will also identify the need for additional skills, such as basic numeracy, literacy, and career mentoring, which will be essential for the effectiveness of the project. Where necessary the curricula will take this into account. DRC's extensive experience in this sector will assist in developing a clear understanding of the needs and gaps in the employment environment; this will be augmented during the research stage of each Phase and further supplemented by the findings of other agencies. In the urban context, DRC has successfully implemented TVET schemes across a diverse range of sectors including: photography for women, generator repair, computer maintenance, tailoring and hairdressing. For this project, DRC will seek to identify and provide training in new sectors, particularly those that will be considered culturally appropriate for women (examples of previously implemented projects include web design, accounting and book keeping, etc). DRC recognizes the perceptions of female workforce participation differ from location to location. This is particularly true of agricultural livelihoods. In many areas it is considered more culturally appropriate for women to engage in traditional farming activities than in more conservative regions. In recognition of this, trainings provided will be tailored to each specific context. DRC will explore agricultural livelihoods and necessary TVET inputs that will be both culturally appropriate for female engagement as well as a sustainable source of income. Examples include nursery farming, greenhouse horticulture and orchard cultivation. TVET will also foster livelihood opportunities that are suitable to the limits of the natural environment, especially for the drought-affected areas.

Phase 1 will involve an initial pilot rolled out in four Governorates in which DRC already has considerable operational experience and contextual knowledge: Basra, Missan, Baghdad and Diyala. This pilot project will focus on the urban areas or population centres in which DRC is currently operational. In Phase 2, capitalizing on the methodology fine-tuned in Phase 1 and lessons learned from the pilot phase, as well as on the knowledge gained through the rollout of other DRC projects (UNICEF WASH and Education) in new areas, the project will become operational in new locations and, by extension, new sectors. This phase will also see the piloting of a rural TVET model with a focus on training in agricultural livelihoods skill sets.

While enrolled in the TVET programme, beneficiaries will receive a small stipend where necessary to ensure that they can commit time to learning without negatively impacting on existing household income. This will be means tested to take in to account other sources of income. A ceiling will be set so as to prevent a situation whereby the stipend rather than the training is the main incentive to participate in the programme. Courses will be of three to six months in duration depending on the time required to provide adequate training. Furthermore, family members of TVET beneficiaries will be engaged in infrastructure projects under the QIPs (Quick Impact Projects) intervention, where feasible.

Given DRC's strategic focus on promoting durable solutions through sustainable interventions, a key activity of this project will be to establish referral mechanisms. This will be essential to ensure that beneficiaries graduating from the TVET programme are guided and assisted towards the Income Generation opportunities necessary to capitalize on their newly acquired skills. Where possible, beneficiaries will be referred to the In Kind Grant, Business Start Up or Microfinance components of DRC's DANIDA and SIDA-funded Livelihoods programme under which they would receive the necessary capital investment to use their skills for entrepreneurial means. However, in recognition that it will not be feasible to refer all AusAID TVET beneficiaries to DANIDA and SIDA opportunities due to the disparity in programme size, DRC will actively seek to foster relationships and formal referral mechanisms with other key stakeholders. This will include INGO, institutional donor programmes, private sector initiatives and government schemes. As mentioned above, the services mapping will include an assessment of not only training providers, but also potential

support and mentoring providers, such as Business Development Services (BDS). This will eventually provide a database for referrals of TVET graduates.

Regular programme reviews will be conducted at the end of each phase to capture lessons learned and identify any areas for programme adjustment. This is especially relevant due to the relatively short time scale for the scale up of programme activities from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

DRC is also cognisant that target beneficiaries in the Phase 3 will only benefit from the programme for a relatively short time, as compared to those who enter the programme in Phase 1 or 2. DRC will engage in intensified efforts to ensure that follow on support is available through the government providers and/or through other actors in the TVET sector to provide as much follow up support as possible. This would include policy engagement to promote a referral system between TVET and the wider business community.

3.5.5 Coordination

As outlined in the advocacy and community outreach activities described above, coordination will be a key component of this project with formal mechanisms being established and requisite staff dedicated to it. Coordination with state actors will be led by Liaison Officers at the local level and by Programme Manager at the national level. The Liaison Officers will maintain regular contact with individual representatives while also facilitating regular meetings and workshops between the state actors and other stakeholders. Coordination with CSO and private sector actors will be carried out by Programme Officers while the on-going community liaison will be facilitated by Social Mobilizers. In addition to the coordination mechanisms necessary and explicit in the implementation of this project, DRC will continue and expand its coordination with external stakeholders in order to build contextual knowledge, strengthen referral mechanisms and avoid duplication of activities; this will include other INGOs, UN Agencies and private sector initiatives involved in development activities.

DRC is a strong advocate of a broader and integrated programme approach and enhanced coordination of all actors active in Iraq. This position is promoted by proactive participation in the main coordination and policy-making forums such as the Sector Outcome Teams (SOTs), NCCI (DRC is currently a member of the Board of the NCCI), OCHA coordination, Iraq Humanitarian Forum. DRC also holds bilateral meetings with all relevant stakeholders. DRC was also voted by its peer INGOs to sit on the Humanitarian Country Team (this body was established by the Humanitarian Coordinator and includes representation Agency heads of WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, OCHA, IOM, ICRC, WFP. It has 4 NGO seats). DRC is also now a member of three SPWGs under the UNDAF: Protection, Shelter and WASH. DRC is also currently advocating for ad hoc coordination mechanisms in both sectors throughout the country in order to ensure there is a more comprehensive approach.

3.5.6 Visibility Plan

Due to the highly sensitive and complex Iraqi situation and to the related security constraints, DRC adopts a low profile approach. Therefore, no visibility activities are undertaken under any of DRC project grants. However, the AusAid contribution to the DRC Iraq programme will be acknowledged on the DRC Iraq web page as well as in any general publications produced by the programme such as the quarterly newsletters or the Annual Report.

3.6 Management and Governance Arrangements and Structure

For detailed elaboration see:

[Annex 06 - Map of Operation](#)

[Annex 07 - Programme Structure](#)

3.7 Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

As per DRC's monitoring and evaluation policy, DRC projects are monitored throughout implementation and will gather gender and age disaggregated data. For each project component, a monitoring plan will be developed that enables proper follow-up of activities and beneficiaries, including identification and response to emerging or new requirements. Standardized formats will be developed and disseminated in the initial stages of the project and a database created to store and analyse findings. A data management team and M&E Officers will be employed to conduct the necessary assessments and oversee the project implementation in conjunction with the programme managers.

The monitoring system will comprise of:

- **Baseline information:** prior to activity implementation, DRC will gather baseline information about the area of intervention, beneficiaries, partners and broader stakeholders. This will also include analysis of economic opportunities and viable TVET sectors. See section 3.4.1.
- **Assessments:** assessments will be undertaken at the beginning of each phase and findings will inform the project design. These adjustments will be subsequently fed into the M&E plan to ensure adequate follow-up. In this way, the project will be responsive to the changing realities of this transitional context.
- **Mid-term reviews:** In addition to the assessments developed in the research phase of the project, mid-term reviews will also be undertaken. As a component of the mid-term reviews, DRC will undertake structured and semi-structured sessions with DRC staff, TVET partners and broader stakeholders to capture lessons learned and identify necessary modifications for the following phase. For example, lessons learned will consider the level, type and scope of support provided by DRC to the training providers, as well as the quality of training delivered to beneficiaries. This review will be particularly important following Phase 1.
- **Progress monitoring:** DRC staff will regularly undertake field visits, and, if and when possible, joint visits together with Ministry representatives in order to ensure timely and efficient implementation, follow-up with beneficiaries and identify possible issues or challenges faced during project implementation.
- **Activity monitoring:** all activities carried out by DRC such as capacity building and training will be monitored during and after implementation in order to assess their efficiency and effectiveness. Again, government partners will be systematically invited to participate to the monitoring activities as part of the capacity building approaches undertaken with this project and to build ownership. In addition, DRC will initiate a core monitoring group consisting of DRC, GoI representative and a representative of another implementing partner. This will encourage a culture of lesson learning, peer review and networking between the various implementing partners with a different partner participating on each monitoring visit. DRC sees this as a critical element of their capacity building efforts with the implementing partners.
- **Impact monitoring/internal evaluations:** a few months after project completion, DRC will carry out an impact monitoring exercise in order to assess the project strategy and achieved outputs. This evaluation will be carried out 6 months after each training course is completed, so as to measure the impact upon graduation, and to provide a rolling assessment of the overall project impact.
- **Gender review:** throughout the project cycle, DRC will aim to ensure gender equality is sufficiently assessed and monitored. Gender components will be mainstreamed into all project assessments and evaluations, and data will be age and gender disaggregated to allow for effective measurement.
- **External evaluation:** external monitoring in the form of an external evaluation will be undertaken at the completion of the project.

DRC intends for the monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken as a part of this project to feed into wider sectoral development. Relevant areas of lessons learned will feed into the development of the overall Framework, sectoral standards and any discussion on a regulatory framework. It is, therefore, hoped that the impacts of this programme reach well beyond the immediate stated outcomes and the programme life.

For further details, see Annex 10: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP)

3.8 Procurement Arrangements

DRC's procurement guidelines have been pre-qualified by its donors. DRC procures almost all items in Iraq locally. This local procurement benefits DRC by reducing delays in transport or import whilst also supporting the local economy. Another benefit to local procurement is that security and instability only delays supplies for a few days at a time. DRC's local staff are very aware of security implications relating to locations for offices or warehouse rentals and providers of goods and services. DRC also uses invitational bidding, rather than open tenders, to lessen security risks.

3.9 Sustainability Issues

DRC's overall goal of durable solutions places a natural emphasis on ensuring sustainability. The priorities and intentions of beneficiaries are always assessed as part of the project design. This is complemented by such means as e.g. sharing responsibility for infrastructure construction with communities and local administrations, and providing training in business management and entrepreneurship to recipients of business grants.

As an essential component of the proposed project, DRC will support the amendment of the government Framework which should outline a strategy for support and funding of state and CSO TVET provision for vulnerable populations. Combined with the advocacy efforts and the capacity building of relevant partners, the aim is to ensure the future sustainability of interventions and a lasting paradigm shift. Obviously in a fluid context like Iraq, and despite the tremendous effort for stabilisation of the country, there are always possibilities that such a policy framework may not be in force by the end of the programme. However, building on 6 years of policy work from major UN agencies such as UNESCO, ILO, etc. DRC is strongly confident that the regulatory framework (with the inclusion of specific provision for the EVHH needs in relation to TVET) will be in place by the end of this programme, if not earlier. Furthermore, DRC has a long-standing working experience in Iraq in term of government capacity building at local level, specifically DRC has engaged in its Governorate Emergency Cell Project since 2007. DRC currently has 17 liaison officer seconded to governor offices in Iraq (not counting Baghdad) and will build on this experience for the secondment of liaison officers for the TVET programme. These secondments are expected to play a significant role in DRC advocacy objectives.

Additionally, through its 3 year DANIDA-funded programme, DRC intend to support the establishment of an Iraqi national fund for NNGOs and CSOs in Iraq. It is envisaged that such an initiative will contribute to provide funding access for the network of NNGOs and CSOS TVET providers in Iraq and prolong the impact of this initiative beyond the end of the proposed programme.

Moreover, throughout this programme, several lasting gain will be obtained such as:

- Quality TVET provider networks for the most vulnerable at community level, especially at rural level;
- Adapted TVET curricula to meet market requirements and culturally appropriate for women;
- New TVET approaches intended to support the most vulnerable population with a strong emphasis on women;

- TVET providers trained in the provision of TVET curricula approved by the MoE/MoSLA ensuring a critical mass of capacity available in country;
- Thousands of beneficiaries trained and engaged in income generating activities.

3.10 Overarching policy issues including gender, anticorruption, environment and child protection

3.10.1 General

DRC is a private, independent, non-profit organisation, devoted, on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights in general, to securing the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, and to promoting long term solutions to the problems of forced displacement. Thus the main vision and values of the organisation are in line with the AusAID Humanitarian Policy.

DRC is a rights-based organization that works with all aspects of the refugee (and displacement) cause and in compliance with the HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management. The following operational principles are also applied:

Participation: DRC includes the target group in project design, beneficiary selection and implementation. It also ensures, to the extent possible, beneficiary, community and administration contributions in the form of labour and materials to housing, infrastructure and income-generating projects. DRC maintains a complaints mechanism through which it receives feedback on its programs and makes any necessary adjustments.

Capacity Development: DRC works to strengthen capacities of its partner communities and NGOs, primarily through implementing projects in close partnership, so offering practical on-the-job guidance as well as formal training.

Gender, Age, Diversity: As one of DRC's global Strategic Focal Areas, gender is mainstreamed into projects through analysis of gender-specific risks, vulnerabilities and capacities. Such an approach is practically feasible, because DRC also internally ensures that female staff is prioritized in its staff capacity building efforts

DRCs Gender, Age and Diversity Vision:

- DRC will contribute to the recognition, respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of all members in a given community that fall within DRC's mandate and scope of work
- DRC works to ensure that all relevant recipients of DRC's support, without discrimination based on their age, gender, identity and status/different realities, have access to and equal opportunity to benefit from DRC's interventions
- DRC works to create an age, gender and diversity balanced working place and sensitive working environment with equal opportunities and conducive working conditions for DRC employees, irrespective of their age, gender, identity and status/different realities

To DRC, diversity is understood as individuals or groups of different ethnicity, caste/clan, religion, legal status (asylum-seeker, refugee, stateless persons, etc.), socio-economic status, level of education, whether living in urban or rural areas, with disabilities and any other social distinction.

Advocacy: DRC seeks to advocate on behalf of displaced groups, in cooperation with the UNHCR and primarily through relations with local governments. The environment for

advocacy in the region is not particularly favourable. Nevertheless, DRC is carefully developing initiatives to promote the rights of displaced persons in the region.

Do-No-Harm: The tailor made approach developed on a careful risk analysis in most programming ensures DRC's attention to Do-No-Harm. Likewise, DRC staff are aware to limit and manage potential expectations of the target group, e.g. through transparency of project ability and beneficiary selection. In targeting DRC seeks to reach also the local vulnerable people.

Collaboration with Local Partners: As part of its capacity building efforts and exit strategy, as well as to harness local expertise, DRC seeks to partner with LNGOs and communities in its projects. In general, the operation will be most relevant and sustainable when based on a partnership with local communities. This is additionally part of the security strategy for the region.

Complementarity: DRC has always worked closely with other organisations to not only avoid duplication in assistance, but also to get more out of the total donor funding in the region. Consortiums between NGOs are always something DRC would engage in when relevant, feasible and pertinent.

General Replicability of Strategies and Methods: DRC is a learning organisation which strives to learn from the experiences of other humanitarian players as well, and to disseminate own lessons learned through a large number of humanitarian associations and institutions and its website.

DRC insists on protection and livelihood, such as education and vocational training as well as other potentially income generating activities maintaining a prominent role in DRC individual programmes as well as in the DRC regional strategy. Particular focus is put on promoting the youth and their future employment and empowerment of displaced vulnerable women throughout the region.

Partnerships: As part of the strategy to capacity build and strengthen local communities, DRC strives to cooperate and coordinate with local partners such as LNGOs and local government institutions in the countries of operation. This is primarily done by implementing projects in close partnership while offering guidance and training. The partnerships will in general ensure the relevance and sustainability of the projects on a short as well as a long term basis.

A strategic priority for this particular project will be to involve relevant Ministries, such as the Ministries of Displacement and Migration, Labour & Social Affairs and Education and the Women's Directorate at the Baghdad level as well as their local level counterparts to ensure support and engagement with the programme's objectives.

3.10.2 Gender

It is DRC's policy to recruit, hire, train and promote individuals, as well as administer any and all personnel actions, without regard to gender, race, national, clan or tribal origin or ancestry, marital status, status, sexual orientation, or status as a qualified individual, in accordance with applicable laws.

In order to ensure compliance with the DRC Gender, Age and Diversity approach, DRC will conduct capacity assessments of training providers and government partners during the project planning and design stage.

DRC seeks to ensure that men and women have equal access to programmes. When doing so, it should be done with a view to ensuring that programmes:

- Benefit both men and women;
- Recognise and utilize their respective capacities;
- Recognise and take into consideration their special needs;
- Support positive changes in gender relations, i.e. changes in terms of greater gender equality; and
- Avoid undermining women's decision-making capacities, and increasing their workload.

3.10.2.1 Gender Equality Action Plan

During the research, planning and design stage of Phase, DRC will undertake assessments of the current status of gender equality, both within the community as well as at institutional and policy level. Rather than conducting separate gender focused assessments, a gender analysis component will be integrated throughout the broader assessments listed in section 5.1.1. The analysis from all of these assessments will allow for the disaggregation of data for both men and women, thus allowing the indicators outlined in the logical framework (see Annex: Logical Framework) to measure impact for both groups. It will also, as mentioned earlier, identify the constraints to participation for men and women, in both the training provided and in the market place. A gender analysis will also identify the potential negative impacts of the intervention on both men and women.

Additional indicators for gender equality may be developed during the design stage, based on the findings of the above noted assessments, particularly in relation to structural changes required at policy level.

DRC will also conduct capacity assessments of training providers and government partners during the project planning and design stage. These will identify gaps in the institutional capacity of partners to integrate gender considerations into development activities. In order to promote structural change where necessary, DRC will seek to influence at three levels; with the community, with TVET providers and with government partners.

a) Capacity: Ensure TVET providers have sufficient capacity to address gender issues

Capacity building activities with TVET providers will raise awareness of gender equality issues as identified during the planning phase. In developing the curricula jointly with the TVET centres and in the general running of this project, DRC and training providers will ensure that gender equality is taken into consideration. This will ensure entry criteria provides equal access to both men and women, that men and women receive the same quality of training and qualification, and that curricula adequately contributes to the desired endpoint of equal access to livelihoods. Curricula and training provision will be made culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of both men and women

b) Policy: Advocate and influence the TVET regulatory framework for a better inclusion of gender issues

Throughout DRC's engagement with government partners, specifically MoDM, MoE, MoLSA and Women's Commission, gender equality will be a vital issue for discussion. It is expected that women and men should be equally represented in meetings. Furthermore, the framework for the handover of this project will require specific recognition of the need for gender equality in the future of TVET in Iraq. It is anticipated that the draft framework will include specific commitments to this effect. Again it is expected that the finding of the DRC research phase will inform concrete recommendations for the amendment of the draft TVET regulatory framework, including recommendations for the provision of more specific actions to address the TVET needs of the most vulnerable.

c) *Access. Ensure equal access for women, to the extent feasible*

Social mobilizers and enumerators will engage with men and women at the community level during assessments and throughout project monitoring. Female enumerators and project staff will provide access to female community members.

By using participatory approaches in both initial research and in beneficiary identification, DRC has already experienced willingness amongst communities to identify both men and women as 'most vulnerable' on a case by case basis, and, therefore, promote these individuals as those most in need of assistance from DRC projects. Through established relationships with community members, DRC will continue to employ this approach. Experience to date has shown that where community engagement is strong and project objectives are clearly explained, communities are less likely to be resistant to the proposed activities.

Service mapping will include an assessment of other actors working towards gender equality. This should encourage coordination and synergies in advocacy messaging as well as activities. In addition, DRC has a strong network of LNGO partners developed with the NEP (National Empowerment Programme funded by UNHCR and implemented by DRC) as well as under the DRC programme funded by DANIDA, and finally the PARC (Protection Assistance and Reintegration Centres, UNHCR), who provide support and guidance to men and women on legal rights. Any relevant advocacy messaging or coordination between the proposed project and these on-going activities will be leveraged.

d) *Accountability: Establish comprehensive M&E framework with age and gender disaggregated data*

All data collected by DRC are age and gender disaggregated, furthermore, DRC intends to use the Knowledge and Attitude Practices (KAP) technique to establish baseline data and to measure its beneficiaries and partner progress both in understanding of gender issues throughout the project as well as in implementing measures in order to address them.

e) *Sustainability: Ensure long lasting impact of the action*

This project will address gender mainstreaming at three levels:

- 1) Through the project and by providing opportunities to women to access certain form of semi-skilled labours, it is expected that the communities will accept certain behavioural changes, paving the way to a more equal gender approach. It is anticipated that the knowledge gained by communities could then transfer to the next generations.
- 2) DRC's partners will gain a greater understanding regarding how to ensure gender sensitive programming. Through a consistent approach, this awareness will encourage them to continue applying the same principles well beyond the life of the programme.
- 3) Ultimately, government policy will have the greater lasting impact. Including gender specific needs of EVHs into this TVET programmes will allow greater advocacy space for the implementation of such activities in the future.

3.10.3 Anticorruption

DRC is committed to maintaining a high level of integrity in order to ensure that our work is conducted transparently and efficiently and that our status as a neutral humanitarian organization is never compromised. One of the main reasons for DRC to redeploy internationals on the ground is to mitigate the rampant corruption which is prevailing in Iraq. So far, this redeployment has proven very useful despite the high security cost it has generated. Key gains have included better acceptance and advocacy with the GoI, as well

as increased DRC national staff capacity to better implement more rigid, financial, administrative and procurement protocols.

3.10.4 Environment

DRC projects include an understanding of the effects of activities on the environment and efforts to minimize or mitigate any harmful impacts. DRC programming will be planned in a manner that ensures minimum damage to the natural and cultural environment. DRC will not be able to address all three AusAID strategic environmental priorities, however through the improvement of the TVET curricula for the most vulnerable it will use this opportunity to add an education module on hygiene practices, including water and sanitation and waste management. Such modules will contribute to an improved environment at community level, the first step to a more eco-friendly living environment, especially for children.

3.10.5 Child protection

Child Protection: Save the Children (DK) is a member organisation of the Danish Refugee Council. Through this membership, Save the Children (DK) influences the overall policy work of DRC. DRC has adopted the Save the Children (DK) policies for children in conflict- and war situations. In parallel with DRC's own policy framework, these policies are fully based on the Geneva Conventions, The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. This is in line with AusAID's Guiding Principles on Child Protection.

3.11 Critical Risks and Risk Management Strategies

It is assumed that the security situation in Iraq, including in the operational areas, will remain relatively stable thus permitting project implementation. However, if the security situation deteriorates, DRC will continue to implement activities for as long as possible, continuously assessing security conditions on the ground. DRC has extensive experience in monitoring the security environment in Iraq and managing risks to allow for continued implementation. DRC has extensive experience in remote managing projects in an effective manner in the Iraqi context; it has only recently moved from a remote management model to a model which includes an international presence in country. Should it be necessary, DRC has the institutional experience and capacity to revert to a remote management model on a temporary basis. DRC maintains a support office in Amman, which would be used in the event that an in-country presence could not be maintained by expat staff. Under this model, implementation through national staff in field offices would allow the continuation of the project.

It is also assumed that target communities will be receptive to the proposed intervention and targeting of beneficiaries. By including significant time in year 1 for outreach, awareness raising and community/beneficiary selection, DRC will seek to ensure that there is broad consensus for the project. If challenges emerge within communities, DRC has the expertise to engage and, ideally, manage these challenges to allow for project implementation. Regular reviews and lesson learning should ensure that any such challenges are identified and addressed early.

Further, it is assumed that civil society, state and private actors will be willing to engage and eventually take ownership of the project objectives. Early, intensive and consistent engagement with stakeholders should assist in this process. This will be particularly important with line ministries, to ensure coherence with national reform processes and to promote sustainability of the project activities. To promote government engagement, DRC is dedicated significant time to generate buy-in and awareness within the relevant Line Ministries and will maintain consistent support to the amendment of the current draft TVET regulatory framework.

In the long term, it is assumed that there will be continued donor willingness to fund income generation and microfinance initiatives so that TVET graduates can continue to convert their skills into income.

For further details see:

Annex 04 - Risk Matrix

Annex 05 - Security Guidelines

4 DRC OVERVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL PRESENCE IN IRAQ

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has been present in Iraq since April 2003 with operations in Diyala Governorate north-east of Baghdad. It has since opened offices in Basra governorate (April 2004), and in the governorates of Missan, Kerbala and Wassit (September 2007). Regionally, DRC is also present in Syria and Lebanon.

The overall objective for DRC in Iraq is the protection and promotion of durable solutions to displacement-affected populations on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights. The objectives of the programme focus on both immediate subsistence needs, livelihoods and self-reliance support, as well as on longer term goals for capacity building and environment building. In spite of a considerable improvement in security, the situation in Iraq remains very volatile.

As a certified organisation of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), DRC is committed to documenting our accountability to the beneficiary population and the impact of our activities. Complying with these commitments is challenged by the limited access. DRC adopts a community-based approach, whereby beneficiaries and local authorities are included in the prioritising, planning and implementation of activities as an important measure of rehabilitation and capacity building.

DRC has implemented the following activities in Iraq during 2010 and 2011:

- › **Shelter** assistance through shelter construction in Missan and shelter rehabilitation of existing housing units in Basrah, Missan, Wassit, Kerbala and Diyala. DRC also undertook minor home repairs in Missan, Basrah, and Diyala.
- › **Capacity building through** technical assistance, sub-grants and a study tour to national NGOs in Diyala, support to the Governorate Emergency Cells (GECs) in eight governorates and to the Bureau of Migration and Displacement (BMD) in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).
- › **Protection** activities were implemented in Missan, Kerbala, Wassit, and Diyala governorates through four Protection and Assistance Centres (PACs) staffed by DRC lawyers and community workers.
- › **Income generation** activities in the form of in-kind grants (IKGs), vocational trainings and business start ups to vulnerable households and individuals in Diyala and Basrah.
- › **Infrastructures** were rehabilitated through **Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)** focusing on **improving water and sanitation** conditions in Diyala, Wassit, Kerbala, Missan, Sulaymaniyah, Babylon and Basrah, including in schools.
- › **Provision of health awareness sessions and health bags** targeting some of the most pressing health awareness issues amongst vulnerable populations in the South.

All DRC activities are guided by the following operational principles:

- **Community-based approach:** Wherever suitable, multiple activities are implemented in the same area/community to increase their total impact and address the needs of the displaced populations and reduce the burden on the host community.
- **Integrated Programming:** DRC believes that providing multiple services through integrated programming is vital to ensure access and to meet the expectations of different groups affected by displacement. Adopting this comprehensive approach - as opposed to focusing on one set of needs - improves DRC's image with the local community and other stakeholders including government authorities and increases the sustainability of the interventions.
- **Build the capacities of the local stakeholders.** DRC has adopted a flexible approach to coordination and capacity building of national stakeholders by focusing on the persons, organisations, and/or authorities who show interest and ability. The difficult working environment in Iraq makes it even more important to strengthen local resources, thereby making capacity building initiatives a priority for DRC.
- **Transparency, accountability, and complementarities.** DRC is an independent NGO operating in a transparent manner towards donors, authorities, and beneficiaries. DRC is committed to accountability towards beneficiaries and therefore, DRC involves the beneficiary population in the development and implementation of all activities whenever possible. Furthermore, in order to maximise impact by ensuring that programmes complement each other, DRC coordinates closely with all relevant stakeholders to avoid overlaps and use resources wisely.
- **Gender sensitivity.** DRC is committed to prioritising groups and people with special protection needs. Iraq is in a transition period of increasing influence from conservative religious groups, making the needs of women especially important to address. As a result, DRC targets vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, adolescent girls, female children, and infants.
- **Strengthening accountability.** Due to the additional challenges posed by the volatile security environment in Iraq, the need to strengthen accountability towards the beneficiary population is very strong. DRC has been certified by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) and strives to implement the requirements under the HAP benchmarks whenever possible.

In 2009, DRC introduced a new programme handbook in all its operations worldwide. The DRC-Iraq office translated key sections of the handbook into Arabic and organized trainings for all programme and programme support staff. The trainings focused on topics from the handbook such as the DRC Code of Conduct, gender, SGBV, human rights, and protection.

DRC was one of the first organisations to provide humanitarian assistance in Iraq following the advent of military operations; opening an office first in Diyala in 2003 and then in Basra in 2004. In 2010, DRC implemented programmes across 11 of the 18 governorates in Iraq: Basrah, Diyala, Missan, Wassit, Kerbala, Babylon, Thi-Qar, Kirkuk, Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah in addition to administrative/coordination offices in Baghdad and Amman, Jordan. DRC currently has more than 100 staff working on the Iraq programme. DRC now has seven offices in Iraq, and focal points who work with the Government Emergency Cells in 11 governorates.

Financially, DRC is funded by a variety of UN and governmental donors, including UNHCR, UNICEF, DANIDA, OFDA, and as such our financial reporting systems are compliant with both donor and internal DRC rules and regulations. In 2010, DRC received more than 11 million USD from UNHCR, DANIDA, SIDA and IOM for humanitarian programming in Iraq and spent approximately 10 million USD on 2010 activities. In 2010, approximately 84 percent of total funding went to direct programming operational costs with 16 percent going

to operational and programme support costs. DRC's procurement guidelines have been pre-qualified by its donors. DRC procures almost all items in Iraq locally. This local procurement benefits DRC by reducing delays in transport or import whilst also supporting the local economy. Another benefit to local procurement is that security and instability only delays supplies for a few days at a time. DRC's local staff are very aware of security implications relating to locations for offices or warehouse rentals and providers of goods and services. DRC also uses invitational bidding, rather than open tenders, to lessen security risks.

Staff support and development

DRC is fully committed to ensuring that all staff are provided with the relevant knowledge, skills and experience enabling them to perform their work effectively, and to develop their expertise and potential. The Staff Appraisal process is a key tool in facilitating this commitment. The aim of the Appraisal is to facilitate development, motivate and improve performance. It is also used to identify potential training needs of staff, for their own professional development. It is intended that throughout the duration of employment, project staff will build a variety of skills through both on-the-job learning and specific training workshops, which will facilitate career development and future employment.

DRC guidelines and minimum standards on gender

DRC recognizes gender as one of the primary organizational principles of any society and thus also that conflicts tend to bring about fundamental changes in the relations between men and women, their respective roles and access to resources, with potentially positive and negative effects. Therefore, DRC seeks to ensure that men and women have equal access to programmes. When doing so, it should be done with a view to ensuring that programmes:

- Benefit both men and women;
- Recognise and utilize their respective capacities;
- Recognise and take into consideration their special needs;
- Support positive changes in gender relations, i.e. changes in terms of greater gender equality; and
- Avoid undermining women's decision-making capacities, and increasing their workload.

In doing so, DRC bases its work on fundamental human rights and internationally recognized instruments.¹⁴

DRC operates by a number of minimum standards on Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD), which are outlined below:

1. In assessments, analyses and strategic planning documents, the capacity and vulnerability assessment of the affected population should distinguish between the responses, needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups, across gender, age and diversity
2. In project and strategic programme documents, the indicators are disaggregated on age, gender and diversity (different groups), except when it is obviously irrelevant to do so
3. All project beneficiary data collection/statistics are disaggregated on age, gender and different groups (wherever applicable). The disaggregated data material is analysed with the aim of adjusting and informing current as well as future programming and advocacy efforts

¹⁴ DRC Programme Handbook, Section 6.5.3, page 26

4. During planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of DRC's activities, a participatory approach, to solicit views and priorities, with a balanced age, gender and diversity representation of beneficiaries and stakeholders is applied, where at all possible
5. DRC operations will monitor how its activities, policies and procedures impact (positively and negatively) on the target group and staff, across age, gender and diversity
6. In the Annual Review, DRC operations' compliance with the DRC AGD Standards will be assessed by the individual programme and concrete and realistic benchmarks are developed on how to move forward on integrating and further strengthening age, gender and diversity aspects in the individual operation
7. In the Quarterly Reports to DRC HQ, a brief sub-section on AGD aspects will indicate the measures to be taken to strengthen age, gender and diversity aspects in the individual operation during the next quarter, (covering as a minimum the DRC AGD Standards)
8. DRC will seek to attract and recruit a diverse mix and composition of staff at *all* levels of the organisation (reflecting the composition of the surrounding society)
9. DRC will seek to create and maintain a working environment and conditions conducive for female and male, young and old employees, as well as employees of e.g. different ethnicity, religion and minority group

5 ANNEXES

Annex 01 - DRC Iraq – AusAid TVET - Logical framework

Annex 02 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Summary Need Assessment

Annex 03 – DRC Iraq – AusAid TVET – Milestone Schedule

Annex 04 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Risk Matrix

Annex 05 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Security Guidelines

Annex 06 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Map of Operation

Annex 07 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Programme Structure

Annex 08 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET - Budget

Annex 09 - DRC Iraq - AusAid TVET – Partners Schedule

Annex 10 – DRC Iraq – AusAID TVET - Monitoring and Evaluation Plan