

World Bank Iraq Trust Fund
Rationalization of the Universal Public Distribution System (PDS) Technical Assistance
(TF098607/P122031)
October 2011

Project Summary Sheet

Title	Rationalization of the Universal Public Distribution System (PDS) Technical Assistance				
Implementing Agency	World Bank				
Location	N/A – Institutional Support				
Sector code (OECD DAC)	16010 Social / Welfare Services				
Compact Priority	4.4.2 Social sector reform and integration of vulnerable populations				
Project Cost	US\$2.6 million				
Duration	26 months				
Approval Date	March 2011	Effective Date	March 2011	Closing Date	June 2013
Project Description	The purpose of the Project is to strengthen the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation's (MOPDC's) technical and institutional capacity to implement the rationalization of the universal public distribution system.				
Beneficiaries	The PDS reform plan envisages a gradual shift from universal distribution of foodstuff (to nearly 30 million Iraqis) to direct financial support for selected beneficiaries. The national authorities and international community are aware that PDS related reforms will likely take several years to be fully implemented. Simply repealing the PDS is not an option and would have adverse consequences for the Iraqi population: the poor would get poorer and the incidence of poverty would soar. Thus, the scope of the PDS should be gradually reduced to focus on the poor and vulnerable groups. The GOI plans to do so while protecting citizens from food price hikes, and boosting the Social Safety Net (SSN) system at the same time.				
Near Term Employment Creation	N/A				

Strategic Context and Donor Coordination

Technical assistance (TA) activities have been designed on the basis of consultations with the PDS and PRS High Committees and other donors. The TA was discussed with and endorsed by the Iraqi authorities in Beirut in April 2011. At the request of the authorities, the World Bank team presented the main pillars of the PDS TA and led two separate sessions on *targeting* and *communication strategy*, each followed by break-out groups and agreement on next steps. Building capacity in the areas of targeting and communication thus continue to constitute the main element of the PDS TA, as originally envisaged; and the activities planned under the TA will focus mainly on these pillars.

Project Development Objective

- Strengthen technical and administrative capacity of the MOPDC by developing targeting tools and adequate databases and supporting the development of integrated social protection programs
- Support the development and implementation of the universal public distribution system communication strategy to build national consensus for reform
- Assist with the design of an effective monitoring and evaluation system

Outputs, Key Activities and Procurement

Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened technical capacity on targeting • Gradual reduction of PDS beneficiaries • Integrated package of social protection programs • PDS rationalization/reform communication strategy • Robust monitoring & evaluation systems
Activities	<p>On targeting, activities for 2011 include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (i) evaluate the forms presented by GOI during the Beirut workshop in terms of their accuracy and effectiveness in determining eligibility to the PDS; • (ii) propose a (unified) revised targeting form underpinned by a robust methodological framework, using the data of the 2006/7 IHSES and more recent data to be made available to the World Bank team; • (iii) prepare a detailed proposal on how to roll out the new targeting form, starting in January 2012. <p>On the communication strategy, activities for 2011 include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (i) develop a terms of reference (TOR) and help identify a consultant who can carry out a Communications Needs Assessment as a first step to developing the broader communications strategy. Among other things, the needs assessment will identify key audiences and their positions, assess government capacity to communicate, analyze the media, socio-political and cultural environments, recommend areas for further research, and outline the strategic guidelines for the communication plan, including implementation arrangements.
Procurement	Consultants' Services and Training: US\$2.6 million

Financial Data

Funds Committed	US\$0.2 million	% approved	6
Funds Disbursed	US\$0.08 million	% approved	3
Closing Date	June 2013	Delay (months)	

Progress against Indicators: Not measurable yet. The project recently became effective.

		% of planned	

Qualitative Assessment of Project Performance: The project recently became effective.

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Major Implementation Obstacles

None identified currently.
