



Quarterly Progress Report Women Power in Politics Program Iraq

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Scope of Work

Goal 1: More women in leadership positions in parliament and federal government

Outcome A: Female aspirants are skilled and confident candidates in the election campaign

Output 1: 816 female election candidates in all 18 governorates of Iraq have been trained and supported in the run-up of the federal parliamentary elections

Activities 1 (Capacity building and assistance to female aspirants):

- 1.0. Preparatory meeting for training of trainers
- 1.1. Training of trainers
- 1.2. Local seminars for basic skills
- 1.3. Assistance during elections

Output 2: 311 high potential female candidates have received intense capacity building and support, and are connected with civil society at grassroots level

Activities 2 (Capacity building and assistance to high potentials):

- 2.0. Training of trainers
- 2.1. Selection of high potentials
- 2.2. Support to trainers
- 2.3. Advanced trainings and networking sessions for high potentials
- 2.4. Practical support to high potentials

Outcome C: Female representatives in parliament and federal government are more effective leaders who can promote women's rights, and engage in grassroots outreach

Output 3: 40-50 elected female members of parliament have received long-term support and assistance until almost a year after the elections

Activities 3 (Long term assistance to female MPs):

- 3.1. Training of trainers
- 3.2. Continuous support to female MPs and institutions
- 3.3. Advanced training workshops to elected MPs in Baghdad or elsewhere
- 3.4. Advanced training workshops to elected MPs in Erbil or elsewhere
- 3.5. Exchange with MPs from the Netherlands
- 3.6. Meetings to create more support from civil society

Outcome B: Political parties show more gender sensitivity by offering women's leadership training and women's support programs, and appointing more women in influential positions

Output 4: 8-15 political parties received information and support on engaging women on influential positions, offering women leadership training and gender support programs

Activities 4 (Engagement of political parties):

- 4.1. Discussion and educational meetings with Iraqi political parties
- 4.2. Exchange with Dutch political parties
- 4.3. Training and engagement of high potentials in influencing parties

Goal 2: Legislation and environment that is supportive of women's rights

Outcome C: Female representatives are more effective leaders who can promote a legislative agenda, supportive of women's rights, and engage in grassroots outreach (see also under goal 1)

Outcome D: Media have more attention for female politicians and their contributions to politics, show more balanced media coverage of female politicians

Output 5: The wider public (voters), authorities and other stakeholders have received balanced and correct information about the contribution of women to the democratic development of the country

Activities 5 (Awareness raising and education of voters):

- 5.1. Regional stakeholder conferences
- 5.2. Local community meetings for direct awareness raising
- 5.3. Engaging and informing influential media and journalists
- 5.4. Workshop with journalists and media professionals
- 5.5. Collection and publication of portraits and experiences of WPP women
- 5.6. Regular news releases about WPP program and female politicians

Activities 6 (evaluation and sharing for learning and awareness):

- 6.1. Mid-term review
- 6.2. End term evaluation
- 6.3. Conference to share results of the program incl. findings of research

Summary

The primary focus of our work in the first quarter of 2015 was on the training to new-coming female MPs and the exchange visit to Baghdad. The MP training took place in March and gave us a lot of food for thought on how to proceed. This will be reflected in this report. The exchange visit had to be postponed again, this time until after the end date of our contract with DRL.

Context: Relevant Developments

During the first quarter of 2015, the work of the federal parliament and its parliamentary committees showed more stability, in spite of the changes in some committees when some MPs moved from one committee to another, including the civil society committee. This was an evident improvement as compared to last year, after the elections had taken place. In January 2015, the parliament approved the state budget.

At present there are 86 women in parliament, exceeding the 25% quota, but this may be reduced, because the constitutional court refused to accept one female MP from Dhi Qar province to replace the newly appointed Minister of Health, Ms Adila Hamud Hussein, who is from Misan province – both women represent the same political party (Da'wa Party Iraq, a member of the Dawlat Al-Qanun bloc), but are from different geographical constituencies. Most probably, this parliamentary seat will be given to a man now. During the past quarter, our relations with female MPs became stronger and better. We attended two meetings in the Iraqi parliament where we interacted with them, which included some of the 17 women who became MP after they had received our support in the pre-election stage of the WPP program. One event was a conference about the relief projects by Iraqi civil society organisations. The other was a debate about the draft law on political parties. In general, we observed that civil society representatives are more than before engaged in the process of drafting laws.

Program Progress by Program Objectives

Program Objective #1: Compared to the current situation, more women will be in leadership positions in parliament and national/federal government.

Significant program activities related to PO #1 during past quarter:

During the past quarter, we focused on organizing and realizing our first training to female MPs, because we felt it had been facing too much delay (for several reasons, as explained in previous reports). The training took place from 1 to 5 March 2015 in Erbil, 5 days, with participation of 17 new-coming female MPs, an official of the committee of civil society institutions (Ala' Jihan Bakhsh), the WPP national program manager and WPP project coordinator as well as the WPP parliamentary counsellor (Ms Balqees Mohammed, professor in politics sciences at Baghdad University), and three trainers/counsellors from the WPP program – all of them on top of the three trainers for this training (Ms Ilham Makki Hammadi from Iraq, Ms Joumana Mar'ee from Lebanon and Ms Khadija Al-Rabbah from Morocco). The 17 participating MPs are shown in annex 1, including explanatory notes on whether they had also participated in our pre-election program and whether they have also participated in NDI training. Our training to new-coming female MPs took place in the Canyon Hotel in Erbil.

We concentrated on making this first training a success, because we had some doubts about the modalities and to what extent the federal MPs would accept them, in particular Erbil as training location (as discussed at length with DRL). We therefore moved as careful as possible.

First of all, we invited almost all new-coming female MPs directly, without going first to the (male) leadership of their political blocs. This worked well for some MPs, as it gave them a feeling of independency in dealing with other parties, independent from the decisions and influence of their political blocs' leaders. However, other MPs considered it unacceptable or uncomfortable, because they were concerned that their participation would be misinterpreted as a move away from their political leaders. It should be noted that we had invited the female MPs in cooperation with the civil society committee in the Iraqi parliament, which facilitates communications with MPs and thus gave us easy access and communications with the MPs. This committee helped us to distribute the invitations and provided us with the required IDs of MPs for whom we needed to book a ticket to Erbil. It should also be noted that we had received the explicit approval and support from the speaker of parliament (the president of the Iraqi

parliament council). So, some MPs were happy with our direct invitation and some were not. We decided that for the next training workshop we will apply these two approaches for different MPs, in addition to a third one: by asking female MPs to promote our training workshops among other female MPs. To be complete, it should be added that some new-coming female MPs rejected our invitation because the training would not take place in an expensive five star hotel.

As mentioned, we had invited almost all new-coming female MPs. Initially, 33 of these new-coming female MPs had indicated to participate in our workshop, but this gradually dropped down to 19 participants two days before the workshop, to ultimately 17 participants.

Secondly, we had an agreement with the directorate of foreign relations in the parliament to facilitate the process of ticket booking. That is an important issue, because normally tickets Baghdad-Erbil need to be booked at least one month in advance. In addition, we needed the possible intervention of state officials to make sure that tickets could be canceled for any reason, so we would not lose that money. Indeed, we have made use of that help, because MPs cancelled their participation briefly before the training would start (2 MPs even apologized the night before).

The training to MPs existed of three parts:

Training module	Training days	Trainer
1. Gender, gender roles, gender identification, stages of creation of gender perceptions at home, in schools and in society	Day 1	Ilham Makki (Iraq)
2. Development of women rights within human rights, gender analysis and its tools, gender planning, comparisons of introduction of gender in public policies	Days 2-3	Joumana Mar'ee (Lebanon)
3. Gender sensitivity and gender responsible budgeting (mechanisms to analyze the general state budget from a gender point of view)	Days 4-5	Khadija Al-Rabbah (Morocco)

The feedback from the participating MPs was mixed, but on several points fairly negative, for different reasons. First of all, they had unrealistic expectations of what the training would bring them. Many of them feel weak and unequal vis-a-vis the male and the experienced MPs, and they thought that they would be fully empowered and skilled after the training. They did not know or realize that full empowerment cannot be achieved in one or two training workshops, but that it is a development process which needs time though training, hard work, constant reading and contact with communities.

Secondly, although the invitation had been clear about the topics of the training, most of the participating MPs did not want to talk about women's or gender issues, because they consider these as minor issues, whereas there are more critical issues at stake in today's Iraq, they claimed. Some participants indicated that other MPs do not allow them to talk about women's issues in parliament anyway. Perhaps some MPs felt uncomfortable, out of their comfort zones, because becoming gender aware and gender sensitive is by definition personal and comes close to their own situation. In any case, it became quite clear that most of the participating MPs do not feel committed to adopt women's issues in their work in parliament. This created confusion and tension, especially during the second and third day, as most of the participants felt that the first training day was enough 'gender' for them, and started to criticize when also the second and third training day dealt with women issues in society, in relation to education, reproductive health, work, women's participation in improving policies and legislation that improve women's conditions in society, etc. The MPs were more comfortable with the sessions on the 4th and 5th day, about gender responsible budgeting, although they preferred to focus on the technical skills to analyze the state budget and ignore the gender aspects. This was very disappointing.

Also disappointing was the poor attendance level of the participating MPs. Many of them used to come late, and many left the training hall during training sessions to do phone calls, often about minor things that an MP should not be doing (for example solving the problem of a person from their constituency with the local authorities). Most MPs did not show serious commitment. In general, the federal MPs from Kurdistan showed more discipline and commitment than the MPs from elsewhere, which is remarkable, taking into account that the training took place in Erbil and they might be tempted more to do other things. When we held a meeting with them to identify their needs for future, they produced a huge list of needs, extremely huge in some cases. Summarizing, their needs and wishes for future training focus on: (1)

mechanisms of the legislation process, (2) international agreements and their relation with national laws and legislation, (3) communication with media and the audience, preparation for media performances and public speeches, mechanisms to prevent embarrassing questions.

It was planned that the next training to MPs would cover women's leadership, communication skills, facilitation skills, and strategic thinking, so this next training could meet many of the expectations of the MPs. In addition, the individual counselling to MPs also meets such needs (see below).

In addition, based on the reactions to the first training, we expect that less new-coming female MPs will come to the next training workshop. We see this as a major challenge. To optimize the participation level for our next training, we will (1) use different invitation procedures for different MPs (direct invitations, invitations via their parties and blocs, and promotion by female MPs among other female MPs), (2) combine our training with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), preferably as a joint training, (3) possibly adapt the program of the next training, (4) invite other people in addition to the new-coming female MPs, for example senior female MPs who did not receive good or sufficient training in the past, female officials from commissions, female managers in state directorates and ministries, and women's leaders from independent commissions (for human rights, for elections, for media, for integrity), and (5) have the next training in the Sheraton Hotel in Erbil, for which we negotiated a similar price as we had in the Canyon Hotel during the first training.

The collaboration with NDI was finally getting shape in the form of comparing lists of participants and topics of our trainings, as well as combining our training work to MPs by conducting a joint training in May 2015. The realization of better cooperation with NDI was a challenge too, as discussed with DRL.

The M&E team from US State Department visited our training to MPs on the 4th day. We gave them the opportunity to talk with the participating new-coming female MPs and invited them to have more meetings with them, but they declined this offer, meanwhile expressing that they appreciated that we opened these doors to them. We gave the local monitor copies of the agenda, attendance sheet, and training materials.

Besides the training to MPs, the counselling work with new-coming female MPs took place in February and March 2015. The focus of the support was on the communication with public and constituencies, in order to communicate ideas and opinions from their constituency communities to the state authorities, ministries, and relevant parliamentary committees. This mainly took place in Diwaniya, Najaf and Baghdad. The counsellors also answered questions from new-coming female MPs related to law and legislation drafting and mechanisms to reflect local needs in the process of legislation. The number of support services provided during the past quarter were 18. The duration of the services varied. Some services lasted for half an hour or less, by telephone for example, whereas other meetings lasted for more than two hours. We calculated the total duration of support services to be five days.

In addition, we did further preparatory work to organize the exchange visit of MPs and political parties. The plan was that there will be two simultaneous exchanges during this visit to Baghdad: an exchange of Dutch and Iraqi MPs (under Program Objective #1) and an exchange of representatives of Dutch and Iraqi political parties (under PO #2). Also in this quarter, we had selected various dates for the exchange, but it appeared impossible to find dates that were suitable for both the Iraqi MPs and the Dutch MPs and party representatives. It should be noted that all key players were on board. They were positive and ready for this event: the Iraqi Parliament (MPs knew about it and would be prepared more in detail right before the visit, the Speaker and vice Speaker supported it, the civil society committee and foreign affairs directorate were helping us getting it realized), the Dutch Parliament (a number of MPs from different parties were enthusiastic to go to Baghdad, the Parliament's safety coordinator had given the green light and supported the effort constructively), the Iraqi political parties (leaders of 4 parties and blocs), the Dutch political parties (we had 3 representatives from 3 different parties with varying relevant backgrounds, selected by the three political party foundations involved in the WPP program), the Dutch government (the Dutch Embassy in Baghdad and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the visit constructively), the Iraqi government (the Iraqi Embassy in The Hague supported the plan), the Dutch security services (the National Anti-Terrorism Bureau supported the exchange and cooperated very constructively, the Dutch military police was ready to protect the MPs on their trip to Baghdad), the private security subcontractor (Iraqi/British private security contractor Control Risks was ready) and Hivos (the director of Hivos was ready to go to Baghdad for this exchange visit). Also the US government was informed (the US State Department and the US Embassy in Baghdad). In addition, we had preparatory discussions with the

Women's Peace Group in Iraqi Kurdistan about the involvement of MPs from the Kurdish Parliament in the exchange visit, who could explain the federal MPs about the multi-party gender initiative in KRG. Organizing the exchange visit was a time-consuming challenge. For months we have prepared this exchange visit and it now seems impossible to organize it before the end of the WPP program in June 2015. This is very disappointing. To start with, the exchange was discussed in detail with the three Dutch political foundations which are involved in the WPP program ¹ in February 2014. It was agreed to have the exchange visit in Baghdad instead of Erbil (as indicated in the project application). The visit to Baghdad had first been planned for October 2014 (however: no green light from the Dutch Parliament, right after start of Dutch military operations in Iraq), then postponed until January 2015 (green light, but not a suitable timing for Iraqi Parliament, right after December leave and urgency to discuss state budget), then postponed to February 2015 (still green light, but not a suitable timing for Dutch MPs, right before the election campaigns), then again postponed to April 2015 and eventually May 2015. The weekend of 24-27 April 2015 seemed to be a convenient time for everyone involved, but when we checked the dates with the Iraqi Parliament, to be absolutely sure, we found out that the Iraqi Parliament had again changed its sessions schedule and that the Iraqi MPs would not be in Baghdad in that period. We were also informed that the Iraqi Parliament would probably have its holiday from early June on – or perhaps even from late May on already. On basis of the new Parliamentary sessions schedule of the Iraqi Parliament and its vacation time in June, we again determined a number of dates in May, which largely coincided with the May holiday of the Dutch Parliament. In Mid-April 2015, after several fruitless efforts to get the Dutch delegation complete by inviting MPs from different political parties, we decided to cancel the exchange visit for now. Because we did see a lot of enthusiasm and commitment, we plan to organize the exchange visit later in 2015, but that will be after finalization of the WPP program with DRL. Also, we may organize a countervisit of a selection of dedicated Iraqi MPs to the Dutch Parliament, as follow-up of the exchange visit. This countervisit might take place in late 2015.

Key successes/outcomes related to PO #1 during past quarter:

- 1st training to new-coming female MPs
- Counseling services to MPs
- Preparation of exchange visit to Baghdad
- Preparation of cooperation with NDI

Program Objective #2: Legislation and an environment that is supportive of women's rights.

Significant program activities related to PO #2 during past quarter:

As mentioned above, the preparations for the exchange visit for political parties took place. The exchange of the political parties is meant to contribute to a more supportive environment for women's political participation (PO #2). Four Iraqi political parties and blocs are particularly actively involved in the WPP program. These are the Hakim List (Al-Majlis Al-Islami Al-Alaa), the Sadrist Movement (Ahrar), the Da'wa Party-Iraq (member of Dawlat Al-Qanun) and the Sunni Bloc (Itihad Al-Quwa Al-Iraqiya). In addition, we are in good contact with the Kurdish bloc, but during the past quarter they were less actively involved in the WPP program than they were in the previous months.

In addition, we set concrete steps in the realization of the Portraits of Women, inspiring examples of women who participate in decision making and public life in Iraq, as part of the awareness raising and education of female voters – a way to contribute to a more supportive environment in society. In March it became clear that Magy Mahrous was not able to do the writing of portraits, due to work related obligations in Sudan. We have asked three Iraqi journalists to do the writing and invited gender expert Ilham Makki Hammadi to join the editing team to safeguard gender sensitivity in the description of portraits. We have also contacted four Iraqi photography agencies to make professional photos.

¹ VVD International (Liberal Party VVD), Foundation Max van der Stoel (Labour Party PvdA) and Eduardo Frei Foundation (Christian-Democratic Party CDA).

Key successes/outcomes related to PO #2 during past quarter:

- Preparation of exchange visit to Baghdad
- Preparation of portraits of inspiring women

Significant other program activities during past quarter:

We participated in the Iraq Implementers Workshop, organized by DRL, in February 2015. Both Hivos and Al-Amal were represented there. Besides participating in and learning from the strategic discussions, we had the opportunity to meet other grantees of DRL, active in Iraq, and exchange information and experiences with them. This was very useful and has lead/will lead to follow-up communication. The final report of the Mid Term Review of the WPP Program was ready in February 2015, in English. Al-Amal would organize an Arabic translation of the report, which would be edited by evaluator Magy Mahrous. The translation was not ready in the first quarter of 2015, but the first discussions about the recommendations have nevertheless started between Hivos and Al-Amal. The MTR report was shared with DRL.

Key successes/outcomes related to other activities during past quarter:

- Participation in DRL strategy meeting
- First discussions about recommendations from mid term review

Updated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Please see the updated M&E Plan in the Annex 2 to this report.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges WPP programme during past quarter:

1. The demands and expectations of the MPs
2. The number of participants in our training
3. The commitment and attendance level of the MPs during the training
4. The sessions and vacation schedule of the Iraqi Parliament / the combination of the schedules of the Iraqi and Dutch Parliaments
5. Cost-sharing by the Iraqi Parliament or MPs
6. Visa applications

Main overall lesson learned:

During the pre-election stage it was important and urgent that we focused on capacity building of the women –the female candidates on party lists– but the work with political parties and the wider audience (partly through media) was too limited to change their mindsets about gender stereotypes and create political will among party leaders to have more women on key positions.

The demands and expectations of the MPs: During the training in Erbil, it became clear that most MPs had too high expectations and often wrong expectations – this particularly applied to the MPs who had not expected a training on gender issues. When we invited them to indicate their needs and wishes, they gave us a long list of topics for training, almost exclusively skills training. We can meet these demands and expectations in our next trainings, because this gender training (on gender stereotypes, gender related issues and gender responsible budgeting) was the first in a series of three training workshops, and the second and third training were planned to be more skills training anyway. Also, we have agreed with NDI to combine our training next time (NDI trainings are mostly skills trainings).

The number of participants in our training: The eventual number of participants in our training in Erbil (17 new-coming female MPs) was lower than what we are satisfied with. This relatively low participation level,

despite the support from the Iraqi Parliament, is partly due to our invitation policy (directly addressed to MPs), and partly to Erbil as location and the Canyon hotel as venue/accommodation. Based on the reactions to our first training to MPs, the gender training, we expect several of these MPs not to come next time. For the next training, we will offer a skills training (as planned) that will probably attract MPs more than a gender training, we will use a diversified invitation policy (direct invitations to some MPs, via parties and blocs for other MPs, and mouth-to-mouth by MPs), we have negotiated a fair price at the Sheraton Hotel in Erbil (similar to the price level of the Canyon Hotel), we will have this combined training with NDI, and we will also invite more senior female MPs and women in ministries and commissions. Nevertheless, because the post-election stage of the WPP program is about capacity development of female MPs, the core of the participants will have to be female MPs. It should be noted that the combination of our training with NDI will expectedly keep the MPs from anti-American parties away, such as the Sadrist Movement, whereas they normally participate in our training and events.

The commitment and attendance level of the MPs during the training: Many participating MPs came late and frequently left the training to do other things, mainly telephone calls. This is partly due to their (new) behavior as MPs, and partly because they considered gender issues as unimportant and uninteresting (and perhaps uncomfortable). We have the feeling that not many of these MPs will be willing to promote women's rights and equality. To deal with this, we will invite some new-coming female MPs to the high-profile conference on the Iraqi National Action Plan 1325 in Erbil in May 2015, organized by Al-Amal. This way we want to create more commitment among these MPs. This conference will also have a training component on Agenda 1325. For our next training to MPs, we expect a higher attendance and commitment level because it will be a skills training.

The Parliamentary schedule of sessions and vacations: This refers to the frequently changing sessions and vacation schedule of the Iraqi Parliament and the combination of the schedules of the Iraqi and Dutch Parliaments. After all, the planning of our training workshops and exchange visit depends on these. We had to postpone the exchange visit again. The only way to deal with this is keeping in close contact with the Parliament, in particular the civil society committee of the Iraqi Parliament, and accept that working with Parliament means unpredictability in planning and slow progress.

Cost-sharing by the Iraqi Parliament or MPs: The only cost-sharing that the Iraqi Parliament considers are contributions in kind. Individual MPs use their travel budgets for travelling between Baghdad and their constituencies.

Visa applications: The visa application process is a major obstacle for Hivos staff to travel to federal Iraq South of Iraqi Kurdistan. The rules seem to be changing all the time. Good intentions and promises do not get us the required visa, so there is no other way than starting the application process and waiting for the decision from Baghdad.

Main overall lesson learned: During the pre-election stage it was important and urgent that we focused on capacity building of the women –the female candidates on party lists– but the work with political parties and the wider audience (partly through media) was too limited to change their mindsets about gender stereotypes and create political will among party leaders to have more women on key positions. The number of women in Parliament and government in Iraq is disappointing and stays far from the norms as formulated for the Iraqi NAP 1325 (30% quota). To create more awareness and political will, more focused and longer term efforts should be targeted to the political parties. The exchange of Iraqi and Dutch political parties, postponed until the second half of 2015, will meet this demand to some extent.

In general, we have learned that working with female election candidates was much easier than working with them as MPs. Their entry into Parliament changed their attitudes and their communications with others.

Proposed Activities for Next Quarter

The activities planned for the following quarter (Q2 2015) are shown in the overview below. Because we have been granted a no-cost project extension for three extra months, until 30 June 2015, this will be the last quarter of the WPP program.

	Quarter:	Q2 2015		
	Months:	#19	#20	#21
		Apr	May	Jun
3. Long term assistance to elected female representatives				
3.2. Continuous support to female MPs		x	x	x
3.3. Advanced training to female MPs in Baghdad or elsewhere (MP training #3)			x	
3.4. Advanced training to female MPs in Erbil or elsewhere (MP training #2)			x	
3.5. Exchange with Dutch MPs (postponed to 2 nd half of 2015)				
3.6. Meetings to create more support from civil society				x
4. Engagement of political parties				
4.1. Discussion and educational meetings with Iraqi political parties (postponed to 2 nd half of 2015)				
4.2. Exchange with reps of Dutch political parties (postponed to 2 nd half of 2015)				
5. Awareness raising and education of female voters				
5.2. Local community meetings				x
5.5. Publication Portraits of Women: Experiences			x	x
6. Monitoring & evaluation				
6.2. End term evaluation				x
6.3. End conference				x
6.4. Regular monitoring		x	x	x
6.5. Planning and monitoring visits			x	x
6.6. Financial audit				x
6.7. Quarterly reporting				x

Coordination with other Donors

We have been coordinating with the Dutch government, the co-donor of the WPP program, mainly concerning the exchange visit of MPs and political parties to Baghdad. Beyond that, we did not coordinate with other donor agencies.

Sustainability

The report of the mid term review mentioned observations and challenges concerning the sustainability of the WPP program (see previous report Q4 2014). It also included three recommendations to increase the sustainability. These were: (1) more in-depth gender training for MPs as well as candidates in next elections, but also for political parties, men, husbands, etc, (2) more in-depth studies on barriers of women participation, and (3) collaboration with other donors/INGOs.

In the half-year immediately following the end date of the contract with DRL, June 30th 2015, we will continue to finalize the WPP program with the remaining funding from the Dutch government. This particularly refers to the visit of Dutch MPs and party representatives to Baghdad for the exchange of Iraqi and Dutch MPs and political parties, a possible countervisit of a selection of Iraqi MPs to the Netherlands, and –if possible- some extra efforts to make Iraqi political parties more gender aware and sensitive. The cooperation with NDI may be continued as well, depending on the experiences of our first joint training in May 2015. Hopefully, we can also ensure some follow-up by Iraqi MPs on the implementation of the Iraqi National Action Plan 1325, as a result of our training and their participation in our conference on INAP 1325 in May 2015.