



Empowering Female Candidates (EFC) Final Report 31 August 2013

Executive Summary:

The Empowering Female Candidates (EFC) project aimed increase the effectiveness of Iraqi women representatives in local councils and for Iraqi women. The Iraq Foundation (IF) successfully provided cascade trainings for a total of 621 women candidates to enable them to participate in the forthcoming elections with greater self-confidence and with a greater chance of attracting popular votes.

IF completed all cascade trainings successfully in all of the five provinces of Al-Muthanna, Kut, Baghdad and Thi Qar and Al-AL-Anbar. A total of 337 women candidates have been trained in the five provinces. A total of 16 women were successful in winning the election and all participants indicated that the training helped them to organize their campaign and present themselves to the voters professionally and confidently. Successful candidates expressed their appreciation of the effective training course provided by UN-Women through the Iraq Foundation. The 16 women that won seats are now actively working as provincial council members. These women are in contact with IF and partner NGOs and have expressed their readiness to participant in civil society programs which support the active participation of women in Iraqi society and enhance women's rights in Iraq

IF also provided a series of cascade trainings in the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). A total of 284 candidates were trained in the three KRG provinces as follows: 106 in Sulymania, 103 in Erbil and 75 in Dohuk. The Parliamentary election in KRG have not yet been held. According to the independent evaluator , the trainings were very successful and described as "high quality training." The interviewed candidates expressed their gratitude and highlighted the usefulness of the knowledge and skills imparted during the training. Participating candidates suggested that such training to be conducted on regular basis to empower candidates and improve their performance.

Addendums include:

- List of participating NGOs
- List of training of trainer (ToT) trainers.
- Training agenda of cascade trainings.
- Training manual provided for the NGOs.
- List of all trained candidates in the five provinces in Iraq.
- Database of all the 16 winning women in the elections
- Appreciation letters from political parties
- Profiles of political and security environment in each of the provinces of implementation.
- List of all trained women in the three provinces of KRG
- Independent evaluator report about the trainings for the provincial election and KRG training

Introduction

During the preparation period in February and early March, IF assigned staff to the project in Washington D.C and Iraq. All MOUs with the five projects partners were completed during the last week of February. NGOs sent IF their trainers' CVs, IF selected 24 trainers and all trainers attended a 4-day TOT training in Erbil March 13-16, 2013.

All project partners started the outreach campaign following the TOT training by reaching out to all the female candidates in the five provinces of AL-Anbar, Baghdad, Kut, Thi Qar and Muthanna. Invitations have been sent to all parties' representatives to invite their female candidates to the training. IF and all the four partners used radio spots, direct invitations, emails, and phone calls to reach candidates. Cascade trainings were implemented successfully in the five provinces. A total of 337 women candidates were trained in the five provinces.

IF partner NGO in KRG coordinated with the Iraqi Higher Election Commission (IHEC) during April and May to invite all the candidates in KRG to attend the training. IF implemented condensed outreach campaigns through radio, phone calls and direct invitation to the political parties' candidates in KRG. Invitations were sent to more than 450 candidates in the three provinces. The training in KRG began in late May and continued throughout June 2013. A total of 302 candidates have been trained in the three KRG provinces as follows: 106 in Sulaymaniyah, 103 in Erbil and 75 in Dohuk.

Activities and evaluation of progress on goals/objectives

Objective 1: Provide TOT to NGOs to enable them to train women candidates in the Iraqi provincial elections and the KRG parliamentary elections.

IF has successfully finished the implementation of the TOT training in Erbil by the 16th of March 2013. The main aim of the training was to train participants on the methodology and current practices of effective training. Participants learned various training techniques including role playing, brainstorming and group work.

All 24 trainers attended the training and represented the five provinces of Thi Qar, Al-Muthanna, Kut, Baghdad, Al-Ramadi and the KRG. The 24 trainers were divided into two groups of 12 each. The TOT covered 8 topics from the Terms of Reference (ToR), with elements of 4 additional topics. The TOT was designed so that two trainers from each NGO build their capacity in two topics of the eight training topics of the proposal. Upon completion of the training, the four trainers from each NGO gained the capacity to train candidates on all 8 topics. IF provided the trainees with resource materials, electronic aids, and all necessary training resources to conduct the cascade training in their provinces.

Ground rules

Participants highlighted what they considered guiding principles of the workshop as follows:

- Respecting other participants' points of view.
- Keeping time and commit to the agenda schedule.
- Allowing participants sufficient time to discuss issues
- Avoid unnecessary talking

- Avoid interrupting others
- Keeping the conversation on only relevant topics during discussions
- Encouraging active participation of all participants in the workshop
- Mute cell phones to avoid disruptions

Facilitation Methodologies:

The following methods were used in facilitating the workshop:

- Audio visual aids (power point and videos)
- Plenary sessions
- Group discussions
- Skits
- Short lectures

First days of the TOT training

The training started on March 13th at 9:00am. IF’s Executive Director, Ms. Rend Al-Rahim, welcomed all participants and thanked them for traveling to Kurdistan region to attend the meeting. Then she began explaining each topic listed on the 4-day meeting agenda (please find the meeting agenda attached). Ms. Al-Rahim then introduced Judge Qasim Al-Aboudy who provided unified training to all 24 participants. The sessions started at 9:30 am and lasted until 1:15 pm. The trainer introduced very interesting topics which raised fruitful discussions about the legal and constitutional context for election procedures and the formation of the new Iraqi government. The trainer then compared Iraq’s experience with that of other countries. The sessions were highly appreciated by all trainees and rated as one of the most important sessions by all 24 participants since it relayed important information that should be known by all the candidates when offered the training.

After the lunch break the participants were divided into two groups as follows:

Group (1) was trained by Ms. Suhair Al- Joburi, previous provincial council member. She conducted a training on local council processes and local councils. The topic was rated by training evaluator as being of average importance and relevance to the candidates and the trainer was given the rate of “good.”

Group(2) training was presented by Dr. Amira Al-Baldawi, former Parliamentarian, the topics included: Management and planning: environmental scans; forecasting; scenario planning; assessing resources; budget management; scheduling; program evaluation and review; planning and managing change; long term planning; personality analysis for team planning; planning political events. The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and the trainer was rated as “very good.”

The day first day of training was concluded by 5:00 pm as planned.

Second day of the TOT training:

The second day started as planned by 9:00 am. The trainees were divided into two groups and introduced to the following topics:

Group(1): The first training sessions was provided by Ashwaq Al-Jaff , parliament member, the topics included: how to develop a campaign agenda, the need to learn and understand the real needs of the people and to articulate specific and concrete campaign programs to draw the attention and interest of the electorate. The sessions finished by lunch time at 1:15. The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and also the trainer was given a rate of “very good” for her performance during the training.

The first noon(after lunch) sessions was presented by Ms. Suhair Al-Joboury from 2:15pm to 3:30 pm. The topics covered in this session were: defining the public and targeting voters. The topics were rated by the independent evaluator as being of less importance to the candidates.

The final session of the day took place from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm on the topic of why local issues are the most important and was presented by the trainer Ahmed Al-Shimmery. The topics were rated as of less importance by the independent evaluator. The trainer was rated “very good” for her performance during the training.

Group (2): The sessions from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm were presented by the media specialist, Mr. Ziyad Al-Zubaidy. The topics included: communication and media skills, basic media dynamics, political messaging, how to use new/social media, managing media conferences, talking to the media, interviews, public event management, managing negative issues, public speaking: the skills of public speaking; ethics; self-confidence; positioning around issues.

The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and the trainer was given the rating of “good.”

Third day of the TOT training:

The third day started as planned by 9:00 am. The trainees were divided into two groups and introduced to the following topics:

Group(1): The first training sessions started at 9:00am and lasted until 1:15pm and was provided by Ms. Suzan Aref, civil society activist, on: Leadership training skills: situational leadership; finding and keeping volunteers; managing people; and interpersonal communications. The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and also the trainer was given a rate of “very good” for her performance during the training.

The noon sessions started by 2:30pm and lasted until 5:00pm and was provided by the trainer Shahrazad Abbass. The topics covered by these sessions were: managing conflict and creative problem solving. The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and the trainer was given a rating of “excellent” for her performance during the training.

Group (2): The first training sessions started at 9:00am and lasted until 1:15pm and was provided by Ms. Alya’ Al-Ansari , civil society activist. The topics were: Political mobilization: working with civil society; the electoral power of coalitions; the uses of social media for mobilizing people; networking; organizational communication; putting the genie back into the bottle. The topics were rated as very important by the independent evaluator and also the trainer was given a rating of “very good” for her performance during the training.

The noon sessions started by 2:30 and last until 5:00 pm and were provided by the trainer Ms. Huda Sajad. The topics covered by these sessions were: Party platforms, political mobilization and political discipline. The topics were rated as “important” by the independent evaluator and also the trainer was given a rating of “moderate” for her performance during the training.

The evening sessions

In the evening of the third day, project partners attended evening sessions from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

The first session started at 7:00 pm and continued until 8:00pm. During this session Ms. Alia Al-Ansari presented a session on means of enhancing trainers skills to deliver successful training. The sessions were very interactive and introduced the trainees to contents of the curriculum and how it can be used to design and deliver future trainings.

The second session started by 8:00pm and lasted until 9:00pm and was dedicated to developing a unified outreach strategy to reach all the women candidates in the project’s geographical coverage. Project partners actively participated in the session and each partner presented their outreach approach. At the conclusion of the session, all partners modified their plan of outreach to ensure the involvement of all political parties without exceptions. The outreach plan includes TV, radio, direct invitation to candidate, issuing official letter to the IHEC to get their support for the project and coordinating with them to be introduced to the political parties, using the social network websites, civil society internet distribution lists, and direct visits to political parties and cell phone calls to women candidates.

Fourth day of the TOT training:

The fourth day started as planned by 9:00 am. The trainees were divided into two groups and introduced to the following topics:

Group (1): The sessions from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm were presented by Ms.Huda Sajjad, Parliamentarian, the topics were as follows: How successful political leaders think: strategic and integrative thinking skills; innovation, creativity, tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty; decision making; and long term thinking motivating party members. The topics were rated as “very important” by the independent evaluator and also the trainer was given a rate of “good” for her performance during the training

Group (2): The first training sessions started at 9:00am and lasted until 1:15pm and was provided by Mr. Ali Saheb, Research Specialist, on the following topics: Public opinion research: most common research methodologies; basics of public opinion polling, uses and misuses; how political parties use polls; statistics: how to read data from research; internal political party research; web, mail in and in person surveys; reliability of polling.

The noon sessions started by 2:30 and last until 4:30 pm and were provided by the trainer Thimir Omar, lieutenant from KRG Ministry of the Interior. The topics covered by these sessions were: Safety and Security for political candidates: risk awareness, security planning and implementation of the physical security for the protection of the candidates, their staff and families. The topics were rated as “moderate” in importance by the independent evaluator and the trainer was given a rate of “average” for her performance during the training.

By the end of the training Ms. Al-Rahim thanked both the trainers and participants for their dedication and their contribution to make the TOT training such a success. Ms. Rend distributed participation certificates for all the trainees and wished all the partners a safe trip back home and emphasized the importance of starting the outreach and extending the invitations to all parties right away and starting the implementation as early as possible as agreed in the strategy to offer the candidates more time to implement the knowledge they gained from the training.

Link to the TOT pictures

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/TOT%20in%20Erbil.html

Objective 2: Provide simultaneous “cascade” training to 400 women candidates in 5 provinces for the provincial elections and on-going mentoring sessions

Al-Muthanna training

Al-Muthanna province was the first province to complete Preparation and implementation of the training. The two trainings were implemented during the 22nd and the 23rd of March 2013. The invitations were extended to all 88 candidates representing the 10 political parties running in Al-Muthanna province . The IHEC office in Al-Muthanna has sent a trainer to support the training courses and provide technical information related to the latest instructions and regulations issued by IHEC. The topics which were covered by IHEC focused on explaining the election process and how the votes will be counted. The training covered all the topics which were presented in Erbil and each training lasted for two days. More than 10 TV channels have covered and broadcasted the two trainings. 44 women candidates trained were Al-Muthanna as some of the parties sent their representatives to a unified training in Al-Najaf province and other political parties, such as the state of Law Coalition-*Dawlat Al-Qanoon*, has sent their representatives to a training in Lebanon.

The overall observation about the women candidates in Al-Muthanna was that the majority did not have a plan to approach voters. The other observation was the lack of professional staff to lead the candidates’ campaign as most of them rely on family members to reach out to voters.

The training had a direct impact on the candidates. Some candidates started to use social media like Facebook to publish their activities and plans. Other candidates asked the trainers to help them better organize their campaign after finishing the training.

Link to the media coverage for the training in Al-Muthanna:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CW8b2bYWR9Y>

<http://www.alfayhaa.tv/news/iraq/97314.html>

<http://www.faceiraq.com/inews.php?id=1547861>

Link to the two trainings held in Al-Muthanna province

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Cascade%20Training%20Muthanna.html

Thi Qar Training:

Thi Qar province has a total of 105 female candidates who represent 10 political parties and coalitions as compared with 64 coalition and political parties in previous election. Invitations were sent to all the candidates in Thi Qar. The first training took place on the 22nd and the 23rd

of March 2013. A total of 23 women candidates attended the training. The training was covered by radio and TV stations. 22 total women candidates were trained in the first training. The training covered all training topics presented during the TOT in Erbil.

The second training course was held on the 29th and the 30 of March 2013. The training was attended by 23 candidates. The training was covered by the media. During an interview, the candidates expressed their gratitude to UN-Women and IF for offering the training to enhance their skills.

The total number of women candidates who received the training in Thi Qar was 45. IF's partner in Thi Qar did not implement the third training as all the remaining candidates who belonged to the big coalitions had already received training on similar topics and were working on voter outreach in Thi Qar. so they apologized from attending IF training since they are busy approaching the voters in Thi Qar.

The trainings were very participatory and the main questions which raised were:

- What is the importance of the media coverage during the campaign?
- How do you form and motivate the campaign team?
- What is the role of the family members and friends in the campaign?
- How do you allocate and operate the campaign budget?
- What is the importance of researching public opinion in the local context?

The trainers successfully addressed the above issues and offered free consultation and technical support after the end of the end of the training to all candidates.

The overall observation about the women candidates in Thi Qar was that the majority of women candidates didn't have a solid plan to approach for the voters. The other observation was the lack of professional staff to lead the candidates' campaign since most of them rely on their family members to approach the voters.

Media coverage link:

<http://nasiriyah.org/ara/post/29944>

Link to training pictures

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Cascade%20Training%20Thiqar.html

Al-Kut training:

Al-Kut province has a total of 112 female candidates who represent 15 political parties and coalitions as compared with 67 coalition and political parties who ran for the previous election. Invitations were sent to all the candidates in Kut. The first training took place on the 23rd and the 24th of March 2013. The training was covered by radio and TV stations. 19 total women candidates were trained in first training. The training covered all of the training topics presented at the TOT in Erbil.

The second training course was held on the 29th and the 30 of March 2013. The training was covered by the media including radio and TV. The total number of women candidates who participated in the second training was 22.

The third training course was held on the 2nd and the 3rd of April 2013. The training was covered by the media including radio and TV. The total number of women candidates who participated in the second training was 36.

The fourth training course was held on the 12th and the 13th of April 2013. The training was covered by the media including radio and T.V. The total women candidates who got the training in the second training are 22.

The trainings were very successful with 99 women candidates participating in the three training courses. The following represent some of the main questions raised during the training:

- The media campaigns are dominated by males so how can we get better media coverage?
- How can the candidate from small coalitions attract the voters considering the completions from the larger coalitions?
- How can I maximize the benefit from the training in the remaining days before the elections?

The trainers successfully addressed the above issues and offered their consultation and technical support at the end of the training to all candidates.

The overall observation about the women candidates in Al-Kut is that the majority of women candidates don't have solid political programs which attract the voters. The other observation is the lack of professional staff to lead the candidates' campaign since most of them rely on their family members to approach the voters.

Media coverage link:

<http://www.almadapaper.net/ar/news/261485/%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%B7-%D8%AA%D8%AB%D9%82%D9%81-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%B4%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7--%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%A3%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%8A>

http://www.ninanews.com/arabic/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GGLKLF

Link to training pictures

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Cascade%20Training%20Kut.html

Baghdad training

The trainings in Baghdad started by 27th of March 2013 and continued until the 12th of April. IF team conducted 6 training courses for the women candidates' in Baghdad. IF team coordinated with the IHEC office in Baghdad to inform them of the training and to obtain access to their database of candidates. Invitations were extended to all political parties and coalitions in Baghdad. Over 200 invitations were sent to individuals and parties and coalitions representatives. Based on the list of 23 women provided by UN-Women, the Baghdad team extended the invitations to women candidates from Dayalia and Salah Edden (Tikreet), including the Kurdish

candidates, to attend the training. Some of the Kurdish women were willing to cover their transportation cost and attended the training in Baghdad.

A total of 91 women candidate attended Baghdad training. All the candidates in Baghdad were motivated and interested to learn new skills to prepare to lead a successful election campaign.

The security threats in Baghdad have posed a significant challenge for holding the trainings in Baghdad. Killings in Baghdad and other provinces has resulted in extra caution by the candidates and restricted their movement. The security threats have slightly affected the total number of women who attended the training which was planned to be higher based on the invitations which has been sent to all political parties.

Link to Media coverage

http://majidalsudani.blogspot.com/2013/03/blog-post_20.html

Link to a trainee page who started using the social media after the training

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=124216757769173&set=a.115366378654211.1073741828.100005425483322&type=1&theater>

Al-AL-Anbar province training

Al-AL-Anbar province had an unexpected delay in conducting the elections due to the poor security security situation. Four training courses were implemented in Al-AL-Anbar province during the 5th of July until the 30th of April 2013. The invitations were extended to over 100 candidates who represented all political parties running for election in Al-AL-Anbar province . The IHEC office in Al-AL-Anbar sent a media representative to provide technical information related to the latest instructions and regulation issued by IHEC. The topics which were covered by IHEC focused on explaining the election process and how the votes will be counted.

Each training covered all topics presented at the Erbil TOT training and each training lasted for two days. Newspapers and media channels covered and broadcasted the trainings. The total women candidates trained in Al-AL-Anbar was 57. This was lower than the planned number due to security threats reducing participation.

The overall observation about the women candidates in Al-AL-Anbar was that the majority don't have a plan to approach voters. Only 8 candidates had a campaign manager and IF noticed that these individuals lack the skills to run an election campaign since most of them are family members of the candidates.

The training had a direct impact on the candidates. Some candidates started to use the social media like Facebook to publish their activities and plans.

Link to the four trainings held in Al-AL-Anbar province:

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Cascade%20Training%20Al-AL-Anbar.html

Objective 3: Provide “cascade” training to 375 women candidates in the KRG for parliamentary elections and on-going mentoring sessions

IF partner NGO in KRG coordinated with IHEC during April and May to invite all the candidates in KRG to attend trainings. IF implemented condensed outreach campaigns through radio stations, phone calls and direct invitation to the political parties' candidates in KRG. Invitations were sent to more than 450 candidate in the three provinces. The training in KRG began in late May and continued throughout June 2013. A total of 284 candidates have been trained in the three KRG provinces distributed as follows: 106 in Sulymania, 103 in Erbil and 75 in Dohuk.

The table below shows the total number of candidates trained in each province in KRG:

Political party	Sulymania	Dohuk	Erbil	Total
Al-Taghyeer	49	1	18	68
Al-Yakty	17	3	22	42
Al-Party		34	22	56
Commonest	8	2	14	24
Aynda	22		2	24
Kadiheen	5		3	8
Al-Ashory		9	9	18
Erbil provincial council			3	3
Islamic association		9		9
Individual	20	2	10	32
Total				284

Erbil province training:

The preparation in Erbil started in late April of 2013. Invitations were sent to all the political parties in Erbil. The invitations were extended to 150 women from all the political parties. IF and the partner NGOs implemented 4 training courses in Erbil. The trainings started by the 25th May and concluded by the 23rd of June 2013. The trainings were provided in Kurdish and Arabic by four trainers (Shahrazad Al- Abdely, Shaimaa Kadhum, Avan Mohammed, Karamanj Authman) who attended the TOT training in Erbil. Each training day lasted days and covered all the training topics presented during the TOT training. The training covered topics of media presence and public speaking, how to lead a successful campaign, leadership, presentation techniques etc. A total of 103 candidates were trained in Erbil.

The trainings were participatory and the main questions raised were:

- What is the importance of the media coverage during the campaign?
- What is the importance of researching public opinion in a local context?

Link to the training pictures held in Erbil

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Erbil-training.html

Dohuk Province training

The preparation in Dohuk began by the end of April 2013. Invitations were sent to all the political parties in the Dohuk. The invitation was extended to 100 women from all political parties. IF and the partner NGO implemented 3 training courses in Dohuk. The three trainings courses took place on the 8th and 9th of June 2013. The trainings were provided by four trainers (Shahrazad Al-Abdely, Shaimaa Kadhum, Avan Mohammed, Karamanj Authman) who attended the TOT training in Erbil. Each training course lasted for two days and covered all the training topics presented during the TOT training. The training covered topics of media presence and public speaking, how to lead a successful campaign, leadership, presentation techniques etc. The trainings were participatory and the main questions raised were:

- How to form and motivate the campaign team?
- The role of the family members and friends in the campaign?
- How to best allocate and operate the campaign budget?

A total of 76 candidates were trained in Dohuk.

Link to the training held in Dohuk:

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Dohuk-training.html

Sulymania province training

The preparation in Sulymania started by the end of April 2013. Invitation were sent to all the political parties in the Sulymania. The invitation was extended to about 200 women from all the political parties. IF and the partner NGO implemented 4 training courses in Sulymania. The trainings started by the 3rd of June and concluded by the 5th of June 2013. The trainings were provided in Kurdish and Arabic by four trainers (Shahrazad Al-Abdely, Shaimaa Kadhum, Avan Mohammed, Karamanj Authman) who attended the TOT training in Erbil. Trainings lasted for two days and covered all the training topics which were presented during the TOT training. The training covered topics of media presence and public speaking, how to lead successful campaign, leadership, presentation techniques etc.

A total of 106 candidates have been trained in Sulymania.

Link to the training held in Sulymania:

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/projects_new/EFC/Suli-training.html

Training Manual:

Iraq Foundation contracted an expert in curriculum design and development to produce a 50-page training manual out of the training material used during the TOT. The manual was completed, printed and shared with all project partners.

Deliverables:

- Completing TOT training for 24 trainers representing five NGOs.
- 6 Cascade trainings in Baghdad
- 4 Cascade trainings in Kut
- 2 Cascade trainings in Al-Muthanna
- 2 Cascade trainings in Thi Qar
- 4 Cascade trainings in AL-Anbar.
- 4 Cascade trainings in Erbil.
- 4 Cascade trainings in Sulymania.
- 3 Cascade trainings in Dohuk.
- Completing the training manual

Successes:

Cascade training

The trainings were of great benefit to the candidates and had a positive direct impact on their ability to lead an effective campaign to reach out to voters. The training resulted in 16 women winning the election in five provinces. All 16 women maintained close relations with the Iraq Foundation and the partner NGOs after becoming provincial council members. The officials expressed their gratitude to UN-Women and expressed their willingness to support and cooperate with Iraq Foundation in future programs to improve the role of women in politics and make a profound impact on decision-making and end violence against women.

Challenges and Remedies:

The timing of the project was very critical since it was very close to the provincial election date and most the candidates were busy conducting voter outreach and had to often which made it difficult for them to attend the training.

IF started the preparation immediately following award notification. IF and partners started the implementation of the cascade trainings one week after the TOT training to allow more time for the candidates to adjust their campaigns and scheduled flexible dates for the training in coordination with the schedules of the candidates to enable maximum participation.

The poor security situation and killings prevented the women candidates from the outskirts of Baghdad from attending the trainings.

IF staff in Baghdad offered to go to the political parties' offices and provide the training there especially in the areas located in remote distances from the location of the training hall in Baghdad.

Some political parties had already trained their candidates and because of the short remaining time prior to Election Day, these women couldn't join trainings and instead decided to invest their time conducting voter outreach. Therefore, in Thi Qar IF was unable to train the target number of candidates.

IF shifted the training allocation from Thi Qar to Baghdad where there is larger number of candidate to participate in the training.

The security situation in Al-AL-Anbar was very difficult and the advertisement could have imposed a serious threat to the staff and candidates if the training location was declared publicly.

Direct invitations and phone calls were used instead of the advertisements through radio and TV. IF partner in Al-AL-Anbar coordinated with the Iraqi police to offer protection of the training location.

The parliamentary election in KRG was delayed until the 21st of September 2013 which made List of candidates and political parties unavailable at IHEC, thereby making it difficult to contact the candidates.

IF and partner NGOs reached out to the political parties and asked them to provide us with the names and contact details of their candidates for the parliamentary election. The procedure was very successful and we were able to extend the invitation to more than 450 women candidates in the four provinces.

Summary of evaluation report

The independent evaluation report was prepared by "Integrity M&E Ltd" company which presented the findings of evaluating "Empowering Female Candidates (EFC) in Iraq" implemented by IF. The evaluation was mostly summative and focused on training of candidates in five governorates (Baghdad, AL-Anbar, Wassit, Muthanna and ThiQar) only. 63 structured interviews with candidates were conducted after trainings and after provincial election.

The evaluation revealed that IF and its four partners in the targeted governorates successfully implemented the EFC program. The five organizations delivered high quality training of ten political subjects to 336 candidates through a series of workshops in the five governorates.

The evaluation revealed that IF and its partner in Kurdistan, Women Empowerment Organization (WEO), successfully implemented the EFC program. The two organizations delivered high quality training of ten political subjects to 284 candidates through a series of workshops in the three Northern governorates (Erbil, Sulimaniyah and Duhok).

The interviewed candidates running in the parliament election in KRG and the provincial council elections highly rated the implementing organization, the topics of the training, and the usefulness of the learned knowledge. The candidates not only recommended such training to be

conducted during political events but on a regular basis to empower the candidates and improve their performance.

The report also highlights a few areas that need to be improved and many ideas and suggestions of the candidates to enrich such training in future.

Finally, the implementing NGO and the training for trainers (TOT) workshop were evaluated by interviewing 18 trainees who eventually trained the candidates. The majority of the interviewed candidates did not pinpoint any weaknesses. Others identified the short duration of the training, conducting the training near election date and locating the training far from city center as weak points in the performance of the organization.

Recommendations of the trainees :

According to the report of the independent evaluator the candidates made the following suggestions to improve future trainings (in order of frequency):

- Extending the duration of the workshops
- Conducting the training earlier before election
- Conducting these workshops periodically or more often (annually or monthly)
- Conducting the training during morning only (from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon)
- Conducting the training outside the governorate or outside the country
- Conducting advanced training

The candidates further suggested other types of (specialized) training to empower female candidates on topics such as:

- Empowering women/rights of women in election
- Iraqi constitution/provincial law
- Enforcing laws and orders
- Woman rights in employment
- Conflict mitigation
- Political science
- Communication skills

Conclusion

According to the independent evaluator report; IF did excellent job training 24 trainers from 6 NGOs, including trainers for IF and one NGO in Kurdistan. Those trainees became the core trainers for training the female candidates in eight governorates through a series of training workshops.

IF and its partners were very successful in delivering quality and useful training to empower female candidates for the provincial election. The candidates highly rated the implementing NGOs for selecting qualified trainers and for the effectiveness of the training. However, the candidates, particularly those from Baghdad, were not very happy about advertising for the training, the date of conducting the training and the duration of the training.

The candidates expressed their appreciation for the topics of the training in relevance to their political careers, the ways the subjects were delivered, and for the supporting materials that were provided to the participants. All the interviewed candidates encouraged such training to be repeated and other politicians to participate in these trainings. Many candidates would like to

upgrade the learned knowledge through advanced follow-up trainings.

The candidates believe that their knowledge and skills in the training topics have been enhanced to a very high level because of these trainings. In asking the interviewed candidates whether the learned knowledge and skills helped in their election campaigns, the candidates indicated that they believed the learned knowledge and skills were very practical and beneficial in their election activities. The candidates brought forth many ideas to improve future trainings and empower female candidates.