

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW INSTITUTE
DEPAUL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW



QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT ON
IRAQ LEGAL EDUCATION REFORM PROJECT

REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FOR

AWARD NUMBER S-LMAQM-08-GR-566

PERIOD COVERED OCTOBER 1, 2008 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2008

1. Introduction and Project Overview

This report presents an overview of the activities conducted by the International Human Rights Law Institute (IHRLI) on the Iraq Legal Education Reform Project funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Human Rights Labor and Democracy (DRL). The report covers the second quarter of the project's operation (October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008).

In this 36-month project, the International Human Rights Law Institute (IHRLI) of DePaul University will work with Iraqi law faculty and law schools to support human rights and rule of law and improve training for future generations of Iraqi lawyers. The project builds the foundations for the sustainable modernization of legal education to enhance Iraq's integration into the international community. It also supports an intellectual and institutional commitment to democracy and human rights. IHRLI will work with Iraqi law faculty, students, law schools, and legal professionals to improve legal education with a special focus on facilities improvement and programming at the University of Kufa in the south; the University of Babil in Hilla in the center; and, the University of Salahaddin in Irbil in the north. The project builds on over four years of successful work in Iraq and extensive contacts throughout the country.

2. Project Objectives

The success of Iraq's democratic transition relies, in part, on establishing respect for the rule of law and a culture of human rights. Achieving these goals requires rebuilding the nation's legal profession, especially as regards the nation's legal education and future generations of lawyers. Since 2003, Iraq's legal education system has made impressive strides to move beyond the authoritarian demands of the Ba'ath regime. However, the nation's law schools and the legal profession more generally are in need of significant reform and capacity building, particularly in the area of human rights, international law, participatory education, and improved integration between law schools, the legal profession, legally-oriented NGOs, and the larger community. This project addresses these needs through a comprehensive approach to legal education reform working in close partnership with Iraqi law schools.

The Iraq Legal Education Reform Project has four key objectives:

- Enhance legal education capacity through an expansion of participatory training and improved integration of law schools with legal professionals, NGOs, and the larger society.
- Produce publications to improve Iraqi legal professionals' engagement with human rights and international law.
- Expand and improve law libraries and legal research skills and facilities to enable greater engagement with global legal concepts, with a special focus on international law and human rights.
- Improve and modernize law school curriculum and legal education with a special focus on human rights and international law.

This project builds on IHRLI's previous work on human rights training legal education reform, human rights documentation, and gender justice in Iraq.

3. Project activities and accomplishments

IHRLI was fortunate to host a visit from DRL representatives and other key USG staff working on human rights and rule of law programming. During the visit, IHRLI Chief-of-Party and others presented an update on project activities and accomplishments.

During the period covered in this report, these achievements include:

- *Continued meetings with law school deans, faculty and staff* – IHRLI continued discussions with key law school deans, faculty, staff and students and signed memorandums of understanding with 3 partner Iraqi universities.
- *Define cooperative plan with partner universities* – IHRLI staff are working with contacts in partner institutions to develop plans for implementing each of the components (law libraries, capacity building, course development, participatory education, etc.).
- *Human rights and international law source material* – Prepared draft versions of 2 of the human rights and international law source reading materials comprising 450 pages of readings and associated materials to assist Iraqi law schools in providing up-to-date rule of law training to young legal professionals.
- *Post-conflict justice publication* – Prepared draft of a 150 page publication on post-conflict justice in Iraq, linking a review of international experiences with a consideration of the challenges of the contemporary Iraqi context.
- *Identified international consultants and begun review of lessons learned* – IHRLI identified international consultants to prepare project materials and review lessons learned from prior legal education reform projects and general rule of law programming in Iraq.
- *Planning the refurbishment of law school libraries* – Pursuant to our discussions with the University of Salahaddin, IHRLI will set forth plans to reconstruct the existing law library and research facilities based on an assessment of the library's current state of conditions and determination of their needs and capabilities. The partner law schools will also be evaluated to determine their needs and current conditions.

4. Next steps

The Iraq Legal Education Reform Project is progressing on schedule and on budget. The following is an overview of planned next steps for the upcoming quarter (January 1, 2009 – March 31, 2009):

- *Hiring key staff* – Following DRL approval, IHRLI will hire a Director of Legal Education Reform to assist in the management of the project. This post is essential for meeting project objectives.
- *Human Rights Trainings* – Implement first university-based human rights trainings, linking law faculty, staff, students and NGOs involving 150-200 participants.
- *Library books* – Purchase and distribute 1,000 Arabic language law books to partner universities.
- *Post-conflict justice publication* – Prepare for publication of 2,000 copies of text on post-conflict justice in Iraq in English and Arabic.
- *Continue work on human rights and international law source reading material packets* – Working with text consultants, IHRLI will gather, review and translated key materials on international law for use in Iraqi law schools.

IHRLI looks forward to continuing to work closely with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Human Rights Labor and Democracy on the Iraq Legal Education Reform Project and to providing continual reports and updates on project progress.