

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

7-13 June 2004

OVERVIEW ►

As Iraq enters the summer period concerns have been expressed for the need to ensure a minimum supply of electricity and water, particularly in the south of the country. While United Nations (UN) activities continue, agencies have begun to report difficulty in programme implementation due to the prevailing insecurity. Costs too have risen dramatically, an issue which has a significant bearing upon rehabilitation efforts. The passing of a new Security Council (SC) resolution has recognised a sovereign Iraq Government, while also paving the way for future UN assistance when requested by Iraqis. The Resolution also allows for a multinational force (MNF) to provide security for UN operations inside Iraq.

HUMANITARIAN ►

Water and Electricity Shortages Water and electricity supply has further deteriorated in the recent weeks, particularly in the south of Iraq. While regular power cuts amount an average of 12-15 hours a day, electricity in Basra and its environs is available only for 6-8 hours a day. Blackouts are expected to last for longer periods in the summertime. Poor electricity supply severely cripples the water supply system, impacting heavily on the health situation of an estimated 4.5 million civilians in the four southern governorates. The shortage of water will become even more acute in the coming weeks as temperatures are already exceeding 50°C. The UN Water and Sanitation Cluster is urgently addressing this humanitarian concern, including water-tanking activities, provision of purification tablets, as well as cooperation with other UN Clusters.

Basra Insufficient water supply in Basra, a city of 1.2 million inhabitants, and other urban areas of southern Iraq, is of particular concern. The shortage of water in Basra has been exacerbated by a fall in the availability of electricity to as little as 3 hours per day in the second week of June rendering water pumps and purification plants inoperable. Some 40% of city's population is unable to access the piped water due to the poor state of local infrastructure. The UN children's agency, UNICEF, is trucking over 800,000 litres of potable water daily. The UN Health Cluster provides water purification tablets to prevent outbreaks of water-borne diseases caused by consumption of contaminated water. The lack of potable water is likely to become more acute in the coming weeks and, in tandem with continuing electricity and fuel shortages, may result in civil discontent.

Emergency Coordination Meeting The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq *ad interim* (SRSG a.i.) Mr. Ross Mountain, supported by the World Health Organisation (WHO), chaired the 9 June Emergency Action meeting. Presentations and updates were presented on the humanitarian situation, contingency planning, civil-military cooperation and funding of emergency activities. As follow-up to the contingency planning, WHO prepared an action matrix for follow-up activities.

SRSG a.i. Activities Mr. Mountain travelled to Kuwait to meet with the Iraq Lower South and Kuwait Country Teams, and inspect the new common UN premises in Kheitan. Mr. Mountain was accompanied by Mr. Geir Pedersen, Director, UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Asia and Pacific Division. The SRSG a.i. met with the acting Resident Coordinator Mr. Paolo Lembo and senior members of the Coalition, the Basra Provincial Council, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the Kuwaiti Under-Secretary General for Foreign Affairs, and Kuwait-based donors. Late last week Mr. Mountain attended a meeting in Egypt for UN Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representatives in the region.

Countrywide Survey Concludes The Fafu Institute for Applied Social Science (Fafu-AIS) which was contracted by UNDP to undertake a rapid assessment of living conditions in Iraq in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office in Baghdad, has now concluded its fieldwork across 16 governorates. A preliminary Tabulation Report covering key indicators such as population, housing, health, education, labour force, income and agriculture has been completed. The two outstanding Governorates of Dahuk and Erbil have now agreed to participate in the survey which should be finalized by end of July. The final report will be published by the end of the year. An inter-agency meeting convened by UNDP will take place shortly in New York to discuss the initial findings and policy for sharing of data, which is still in its raw form.

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NGO Mapping An international NGO has been contracted by UNDP to initiate the project for the mapping of NGOs currently active in Iraq. Mapping will commence mid-June, with a survey of NGOs implementing activities in the three northern governorates (3NG) of Iraq. Details will be posted on the UN Iraq webpage www.uniraq.org

HUMAN RIGHTS ►

Human Rights Training On 13 June, the University of Nottingham (United Kingdom) with the support of the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), commenced a week long training on human rights for officials of the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights in Amman, Jordan. Other human rights focal points from the Ministries of Defense, Interior and Justice are also participating in the training.

CLUSTER COORDINATION FOR IRAQ ►

Reconstruction Fund In addition to the 17 reconstruction and humanitarian assistance projects approved by the UN Development Group (UNDG) Iraq Trust Fund Steering Committee, totalling US\$232 million, the UN Clusters have submitted to-date another 55 projects for processing for funding from the Trust Fund.

Mine Action (Cluster 7)

Capacity Building The first Mine Action Exchange programme will commence in Yemen on 26 June 2004 for one month. Three staff members from the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) in Baghdad will study Yemen Mine Action Programme's institutional structure and strategic approach to mine action. This will provide Iraqi national staff with an indicative picture of how the Iraqi Mine Action Programme could be developed. This is just one component of the institutional capacity building that UN Mine Action provides to the Iraqi NMAA. With regard to implementation of mine action activities in Iraq, of the nine partners originally identified by UNDP, only one is now operating, the other eight having withdrawn due to security reasons.

Employment Assistance Services (Cluster 10)

Muthanna and Baghdad The UNDP Iraq Reconstruction and Employment Programme (IREP) is a quick-impact programme designed to provide immediate relief to families without income through the rehabilitation of community infrastructure and services, while building capacity within the counterparts in the area of project management and implementation. There are currently 58 sub-projects to be implemented in the Governorates of Basra, Missan, Muthanna and Thi Qar - principally in the areas of health, water supply networks, sewage, irrigation as well as support to municipalities and the Port of Umm Qasr. Immediate priority is being given to Muthanna and Baghdad. While the north and centre regions are still in their setup phase, operations in the southern region started at the beginning of March 2004. Over the period 1 March to 8 June 2004, 261,667 worker days were generated and 6,312 workers directly paid by the Programme. 50,512 family members of workers and a community population of some 4.6 million benefited indirectly.

Workforce Development and Veteran's Services (WDVS) Through an implementing partner in Baghdad, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) designed a Human Resource database for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) in collaboration with Ministry's Administration Unit. The database will collect, manage and track administrative information, including employee contract types and durations, vacation time, training and development programmes, terms of reference, and additional features. To assist the Ministry's Finance Unit, IOM and MOLSA also designed a financial tracking mechanism to record "on-the-job-training" expenditures, such as salary payments and compensation paid to participating employers.

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Health (Cluster 2)

Communicable Diseases No outbreaks or major public health problems have been reported except for the increase in the incidence of diarrhoea across most governorates. In direct response to this, WHO are preparing a proposal to establish mobile health education teams, specifically for the rural and high-risk areas. WHO has also ensured that health education through the Primary Health Care centres continues. Malaria and Leishmaniasis preventative spraying campaigns will be completed throughout the whole Iraq by mid-June, while fogging will continue until November, the campaigns are proceeding as planned. The purpose of the Spraying campaigns is to reduce the incidence of Malaria and Leishmaniasis.

Medical Assistance Using emergency funds released by UN Population Fund (UNFPA), WHO supported the procurement of 500 blood-testing kits into Iraq on the 8th June, for use in Najaf and Karbala. On the same time 2,000 rolls of absorbent cotton and 500 cotton gauze rolls (procured by WHO) were delivered to Iraq. At the request of the Ministry of Health (MOH), WHO is currently providing technical assistance in the area of quality testing of biological products. Samples of Immunoglobulin anti D received from the MOH are being tested in a regional laboratory specialised in testing vaccines and biological compounds. WHO has also responded to the Health Ministry's request (meeting with Toshiba in Jordan, and Kimadia in Iraq) in order to discuss the modalities of installation of six Computerised Tomography (CT) scanners, which were delivered to Iraq in March. Other assistance provided to the Ministry by WHO includes the continued supply of oxygen for medical use to 57 hospitals in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul. WHO has advised the MOH that this operation will continue until August 2004, allowing the MOH to explore other sustainable solutions. Furthermore, WHO shared a concept paper on "Oxygen for medical use in Iraq: current status and suggestions for short and long term solutions" with the Ministry so as to assist in making informed policy decisions. Outside these activities, within Mosul and Kirkuk, WHO is supporting the MOH by providing water quality control at water plants; housekeeping services in the main hospitals in Mosul and Kirkuk and supporting Food Supervision activities.

Medical Emergency and Health Evacuation Programme for Iraq (MEHRPI) In coordination with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and other actors, the IOM-MEHRPI assisted in the evacuation of six cases last week. Three children and two young women from Baghdad, Basra, Kabala and Diyala were evacuated to Damascus for treatment unavailable in Iraq. The patients will receive free treatment including orthopedic corrective surgery, reconstruction surgery and neurological treatment. An additional patient was evacuated from Mosul to Kuwait for follow up treatment for eye problems.

Rising Operating Costs In Baghdad, UNDP has reported that their projects targeting the rehabilitation of health and civic facilities are facing considerable increases in the cost of key construction materials and labour – a 30% rise in Labour costs alone since January 2004.

Capacity Building As per the last UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) *Situation Report* the UN Health Cluster supported the MOH in a National Workshop on Maternal and Child Health/Reproductive Health Strategy/Partnership, in Amman, Jordan from 2-7 June. The UN Health Cluster (led by WHO) supported the MOH in organising the workshop through providing consultancy, facilitation and travel arrangements for all participants. The workshop has produced a draft National Strategy on Maternal and Child Health/Reproductive Health, which aims to reduce maternal, infant and under-five child mortality.

Basra Teaching Hospital The Iraqi MOH has agreed for IOM to facilitate the training of eight doctors and four nurses in July to work in the Interventional Cardiology Centre to be based in the Basra Teaching Hospital. The training will take place in Kuwait. IOM/MEHRPI is also facilitating the training of two doctors and two nurses in the Czech Republic as part of the Physician exchange program. Preparations continue for the rehabilitation of Interventional Cardiology Ward in the Basra Teaching Hospital.

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UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ

Ministerial Briefing The newly appointed Iraqi Minister for Health visited WHO Offices in Amman and Cairo and was presented with a brief on the UN Health Cluster/WHO activities. During his visit to Amman, the Minister met with the UN Health Cluster group and was briefed on the UN Integrated approach and its activities in support of the MOH and the UNDG Trust Fund working mechanisms for proposal development and funding.

Refugees and IDPs (Cluster 8)

On the 2nd and 10th of June, the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, facilitated the 25th and 26th refugee repatriation convoy from Iran (Khuzestan and Fars Province) to Iraq. A total of 255 refugees returned to Basra city bringing the total number of refugees who have returned from Iran, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon to more than 11,400. At the same time, since the middle of May a total of 130 Palestinian refugees have left Ruweished camp and No Man's land between Iraq and Jordan and have returned to Iraq. As far as UNHCR know, all returnees have arrived safely in Baghdad and some have been reunited with their families. The UN refugee agency helped those wishing to return voluntarily, with non food items (NFI), transport and rental support.

On Friday 11 and Saturday 12 June UNHCR and its capacity building consultants held a workshop to assess capacity building needs for the Ministry of Displacement and Migration in Iraq. The two international consultants have been in Amman, Jordan, over the past week and met with various agencies on the ground. A delegation from the Ministry, headed by the Director General for Humanitarian Affairs participated in the workshop as well as key members of Cluster 8 and the CPA advisor to the Ministry. A Plan of Action was drafted for the months to come.

New UNHCR Project During this week's Cluster 8 meeting a 7,126,000 US\$ UNHCR project for the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the south of Iraq, was reviewed. The project entails community-based activities in returnee-affected communities aimed at ensuring access to basic services such as water, sanitation, education rehabilitation/supplies and primary health care rehabilitation/supplies prioritizing the needs of returnee-affected rural communities. Additionally pilot shelter activities will be undertaken to meet returnee accommodation needs and capacity-building for government ministries, regional authorities and local NGOs in order to ensure that the most vulnerable returnees are able to receive direct, individual assistance. Capacity-building will also be pursued to ensure that national structures have the capacity to find solutions and meet urgent protection and assistance needs of returnees, including people of UNHCR concern. The project will benefit more than 140,000 returnees and their (20) refugee return communities. After some extensive discussions, with slight changes, Cluster 8 endorsed the proposal for submission to the Steering Committee.

Falluja IOM continued to monitor closely the situation in Falluja, where new clashes between Coalition Forces and insurgents were reported in the Al Karamah area. At present, hostilities appear to have ceased and the situation is now reported to be tense, but calm.

Floods in South IOM Monitoring Partners have reported that water levels have receded in flood-affected areas of Muthana. However, 1150 families in Missan which have already received some NFIs reportedly require additional assistance. IOM is coordinating with its partners in Missan in preparation for additional distributions to support the vulnerable families.

Refugees and Displaced Persons Advice Bureau in Maysan Funding has been extended for this bureau, which supports the registration of IDPs and returnees with local authorities to issue ID cards, marriage certificates and food ration cards targeting those who have been excluded by the former regime for political reasons. Following the success of this model, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) expressed interest in replicating the Bureau's registration system in other governorates.

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Capacity Building In the wake of the two-day UNHCR-sponsored workshop in Amman with the MoDM, IOM held a briefing for the Ministry's four Directors General (DGs) on the IOM IDP Monitoring Exercise and IDP database system. In addition, consultants retained by IOM briefed the DGs on their upcoming visit to the Ministry in Baghdad. At the request of MoDM and in coordination with Cluster 8, IOM consultants will assess the administration, finance, human resources, information, IT and other sections of this new Ministry in order to identify needs and help develop an appropriate capacity building programme.

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ►

New Security Council Resolution The SC on Tuesday 8 June coalesced around a comprehensive resolution on Iraq, which endorsed the formation of the interim government and the holding of democratic elections by January 2005, welcomed the end of occupation by 30 June, and determined the status of the multinational force and its relationship with the Iraqi Government, as well as the role of the UN in the political transition.

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the SC, through the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1546 (2004), endorsed the timetable for the political transition leading to a constitutionally elected government by 31 December 2005, as well as the convening of a National Conference. Among the several provisions concerning the MNF, the SC decided that the force should have the authority to "take all necessary measures" to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq in accordance with the letters from the Prime Minister of the Interim Government Ayad Allawi and United States Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to the SC President. The SC also decided that the mandate for the MNF should be reviewed at the request of the Iraqi Government or 12 months from the date of the Resolution, and that the mandate should expire upon completion of the political process. It would terminate the mandate earlier if requested by the Government of Iraq.

The SC also decided that the SRSF and the UNAMI, as requested by the Iraqi Government, should play a leading role in, among other tasks, the electoral process, the development of effective civil and social services, and coordination and delivery of reconstruction, development, and humanitarian assistance. To these ends, the SC noted the intention of creating a separate force under the command of the MNF dedicated to providing security for the UN presence in Iraq, and called on countries to provide the necessary resources, including contributions to that force.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said he believed the Resolution was a "genuine expression" of the international community's will "to come together again after last year's divisions and to help the Iraqi people take charge of their own political destiny, in peace and freedom, under a sovereign government of their choosing."

SECURITY ►

Security Awareness Induction Training IOM's three-day Security Awareness Induction Training (SAIT) course had a full quota of students last week from which 24 successfully passed. The course aims to better train and inform UN staff of the security requirements for operating in Iraq. Successful conclusion of the course is a requirement before UN staff can be deployed in Iraq. SAIT training covers a range of subjects from EMOSS, COMMS procedures, to IED awareness and avoidance.

New Visa Requirements All visitors to Iraq, including diplomats and aid workers, will be required to conform with new visa requirements with effect post-June 30.

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