

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ

OVERVIEW ►

The security situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate and create further difficulties for the civilian population and the humanitarian community trying to assist it. It has now been confirmed that Médecins Sans Frontières has suspended all operations inside Iraq due to the level of risk for its field staff. As far as the situation in Falluja is concerned, it appears that a full scale military operation by MNF and Iraqi Army troops is now imminent. As a result, there are reports of an escalating number of internally displaced people, perhaps as many as 30.000 families, in areas adjacent to the city. UNAMI and UN Humanitarian agencies continue to closely monitor the situation on the ground together with NGOs currently involved with direct assistance to IDPs. UNAMI has undertaken demarches at the highest levels in Iraq and through UN HQ in New York in order to advocate for a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Furthermore, UNAMI and the UN humanitarian agencies have expressed their concern for continuing violation of human rights and principles of public international law.

HUMANITARIAN ►

UN agencies, Red Cross/Crescent Organizations and NGO partners are currently stepping up response capacity and reviewing response mechanisms to deal with further humanitarian consequences of the situation in Falluja.

In the past month the number of families displaced from Falluja and assessed as in need of humanitarian assistance has increased from 1,600 families to approximately 30,000 families (assessments not completed). Almost all of these IDPs are sheltered with host families. However, a recent request by an IOM implementing partner for 450 family tents may indicate that coping mechanisms of IDPs and/or their host families are becoming exhausted.

The total population of Falluja is estimated at 300,000 persons. The total number of IDPs is unknown (estimate 200,000-250,000 people). Assessments are ongoing to identify those in need of humanitarian assistance. Some have travelled to relatives in Baghdad or elsewhere, while for others the pattern is one of repeated local displacement and return, whereby the family or income earners move out of the city at night or in periods of heightened tension/conflict, but move back within hours or days to maintain their livelihoods and safeguard their properties.

IOM and its partner NGOs in the area have provided assistance in the form of Non-Food Items (hygiene products, bedding, etc.) and Intermediate Food Items (canned, powdered foods etc) to 1650 families displaced in the six sites around Falluja. The Public Distribution System is the regular source of food rations, though this is sometimes disrupted by the conflict and displacement. UN assistance includes WHO support through the Ministry of Health, and UNICEF's supply of compact units and support to water treatment and sewerage plants serving the city. UNICEF is also able to assist in the transfer of fuel if necessary.

For flash bulletins details on the humanitarian situation in Falluja refer to our website: www.uniraq.org

UNITED NATIONS ►

Mr. Ross Mountain, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq, will be officially leaving UNAMI on the 12th of November, 2004. Mr. Mountain will be taking the post of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Democratic Republic of Congo as of January, 2005. A new DSRSG has not yet been identified.

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

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UN ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE ►

Iraqis will now be able to check if their names are properly registered on voter rolls prepared by the Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq with help from United Nations electoral experts.

The six-week confirmation process, which began last Monday, is a significant step towards the holding of elections planned for January.

HUMAN RIGHTS ►

The UNAMI Human Rights Office continues to monitor the human rights situation from its three Iraq operation centers, (Amman, Baghdad and Kuwait City), especially in conflict areas such as Falluja, Ramadi, Baghdad and others. Recent clashes on the ground continue to give rise to concern for the impact on the daily life of the civilian population and civilian casualties;

In Amman, important consultations took place between UNAMI/HRO representatives and UN agencies, and other implementing partners including civil society organizations in the context of a Human Rights Programme which brings together some 30 projects currently being planned or carried out within the framework of the Human Rights strategy for Iraq.

UNAMI/HRO is organizing a meeting for forensic experts in collaboration with organisations with experience in the field, in the context of the mass graves in Iraq. This conference is scheduled to take place in Amman on the 8th and 9th of November, 2004. This technical meeting is intended to launch work on a project to support the Human Rights Ministry in dealing with the problem of mass graves.

PROGRAMME ►

Education and Culture (Cluster 1)

Delivery of School Supplies

UNICEF delivered 1,903,038 student kits and 3,077,646 school bags for children in grades one through four. UNICEF also delivered 1,557,743 student kits and 2,000,079 school bags for grades five through nine, and 33,937 chalk kits. These materials were delivered to all 21 Directorates of Education in Iraq.

School Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of two schools in Wasit governorate was completed by UNICEF. Bills of quantities for the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities for another 300 schools distributed in all governorates across Iraq were completed. Negotiations are ongoing with four international NGOs for the comprehensive rehabilitation of 16 schools and the rehabilitation of 20 water and sanitation facilities in 20 schools.

Support to Ministry of Education

UNICEF distributed stationary items to the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Baghdad and all Directorates of Education in south/centre governorates. 32 kits containing various stationary items were delivered to MoE, while each of the other Directorates of Education received 14 to 16 kits.

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

Health (Cluster 2)

Health Rehabilitation Programme for Iraq (HRPI)

On 18 October, IOM facilitated the return of the Iraqi medical team to Basrah after completing the one month training in interventional cardiology at the Chest Hospital in Kuwait. Equipment for the Interventional Cardiology Centre in Al Talimi Hospital in Basrah has arrived to Kuwait en-route to Basrah. IOM plans to complete the establishment of the Cath Lab at Al Talimi Hospital in Basrah on 30 October.

Emergency Health Support

UNICEF, in coordination with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and the MoH, is providing emergency health support to children and their families in conflict areas. Support was provided in the form of 1 million doses of Tetanus Toxoid at a total value of \$113,500 delivered to MoH/ Sera and Vaccine Institute in Baghdad to cover National Immunization Programme needs over a period of 3 months.

10,000 registry books at a total value of \$55,001 were printed and delivered to Baghdad for the Immunization Programme. Additionally, 30 emergency obstetrical kits and 20 first-aid kits were delivered to Fallujah by Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

Rehabilitation of Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs)

UNICEF prepared for bidding Bills of Quantities (BoQs) for the construction of 15 PHC centres. Contracts at a total value of \$292,903 were also issued for the rehabilitation of 4 PHC centres (two in Anbar, one in Wasit and one in Kirkuk governorates).

Nutrition Workshop in MoH, Erbil

UNICEF participated in a nutrition workshop held by MoH-Erbil, on the 25th of October, to draw strategies and plans for the 2005 nutrition programme.

Training of Trainers

UNICEF followed-up on the recommendations of the two week Training of Trainers course entitled, "Training Methodologies and Principles of Adult Learning; The Lactational Amenorrhea Method and Infant and Young Child Feeding." The training course was jointly organized with LINKAGES, Academy for Educational Development, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Jordanian MoH. Training proposals were prepared for the Breastfeeding and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) centres programme managers in the governorates. Proposals were also prepared for the training of senior doctors and nurses and establishing new support groups for women; using updated training methodologies, principles of adult learning and modules for training of trainers.

Reviving the Targeted Nutrition Programme

UNICEF monitors visited Al-Dewania Directorate of Health (DoH) in the south, and central warehouses in the three northern governorates, PHC centres, and Nutrition Research Centres (NRCs). UNICEF monitors also visited Al Balloura salt factory, which is the largest in Al-Dewania; currently producing more than MT 80 of iodized salt for food rations only. According to a special agreement signed between the MoT and the private sector, locally produced iodized salt is distributed with food rations. Al Balloura salt factory alone currently covers monthly needs of 4 southern governorates through the Public Distribution System (PDS).

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

22 iodine checkers at a total value of \$8,764 were delivered to the Nutrition Research Institute (NRI). After being standardized NRI staff, these checkers will be distributed to all governorates and the central lab in the Iraqi Bureau of Standards and Specifications and the central lab in NRI, where they will be used to collect quantitative data of iodine in tested salt samples.

Immunisation workshop

The MOH/WHO/UNICEF expanded Programme of Immunisation workshop started on the 31st October and is due to finish on the 4th November. This workshop will review and update the elimination plan for maternal and neo-natal tetanus in Iraq, to include rubella in the measles campaign in addition to the review and update of other EPI issues. There are 32 attendees from different governorates in Iraq, including Dohuk, Erbil and Suleimaniyah. Medical Doctors, cold chain engineers, bacteriologists, as well as administrative staff are all attending the meeting. This workshop is supported by the European Commission.

Infrastructure and Housing (Cluster 4)

Electricity rehabilitation

A meeting took place between 25 and 28 October with a high level delegation from Ministry of Electricity (MoE) headed by the Deputy Minister Mr. Salam Qazaz. Among the issues raised were: i) discussions on certain priority electricity projects that MoE had requested UNDP to secure funds for, ii) assisting MoE to secure funds for a pilot project to install Smart Meters in selected areas in Baghdad - such meters will assist in controlling power consumption and would also be the basis for future implementation of a tariff system and, iii) actions to expedite the ongoing funded projects in particular the Distribution Planning project funded by JIBC/Japan.

Technical bid evaluation for the communication, data exchange and control component under stages I and II of the National Dispatch Centre project took place during the period under review and are ongoing. Stage I is to be funded bilaterally while stage II is funded through IRFFI. A contract to the value of more than US\$ 10 m is expected to be in place before the end of 2004.

Two MoE engineers are on their way to Japan for a training course under stage 1 of the HARTHA rehabilitation project. The final steps in the technical and financial evaluation of the offer from an international contractor for the second stage of the rehabilitation of HARTHA power station are currently in progress. A contract for this IRFFI-funded project to the value of some US\$15 m is expected to be signed before the end of the year.

Various spare parts and consumables for emergency maintenance of the electricity network are now ready to be delivered in Iraq. This includes transformer oil, cables and transformers for relieving the existing overloaded transformers in the distribution network.

Agriculture, Water Resources, and Environment (Cluster 5)

FAO Restoration of Veterinary Services in Iraq Project

Tenders have been prepared and are now being called for supply of most of many items, (refrigerated trucks, motorcycles, veterinary laboratory supplies, field supplies, and veterinary reagents and chemicals, field vehicles and forklifts). These amount to estimated USD 3.37 million out of the total USD 3.39 million budgeted for procurement under this component. Some additional minor equipment will be procured locally.

FAO will conduct training to improve the capability of staff from the Iraq Veterinary Service (USD 1.285 million). Implemented over the next two years, this will (i) improve the perspective of senior planners in developing a modern veterinary service and (ii) enhance the technical capability of key, laboratory-based diagnostic staff. The structure of the training programme has been finalized and submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture for approval, and nomination of participants from central and governorate level positions in the Iraqi Veterinary Services Company are expected soon.

Ministry of Agriculture submitted a list of five veterinary hospitals to be built from new to replace facilities now destroyed, and has requested the construction of seven container-type cold stores. The drawings and bills of quantities for both these facilities have been submitted and are now under review. Subsequently they will be approved by Ministry of Agriculture whose approval will allow FAO to begin the contracting process for construction and/or supply for Veterinary Rehabilitation component of USD 1.6 Million.

FAO Rehabilitation of Pumping Stations

The assessment & survey of pumping stations has been completed and locations determined. The project will rehabilitate 8 pumping stations for the total value of USD 7,5 million. A series of meetings with manufacturers were held and FAO expert visited the original equipment manufactures. In addition a meeting was also held in Amman on 26th to 29th October with: FAO - Pump Station Rehabilitation Baghdad, the Chief Engineer Pump Stations and the Chief Engineer of Engineering Design. The purpose of the meeting was to review the completed pump station survey data.

FAO Community Irrigation Project

Rehabilitation: A pre-feasibility study was carried out in the field for 8 sub-projects. However, after the analysis it was recommended that stronger data and justifications were needed. Therefore, it was decided that one project at a time would be submitted for approval. The first sub- project was submitted on 28th October 2004 and provisionally cleared by FAO Water Resources Division. The submission of further 4 sub-projects will commence on 7th November 2004.

Equipment A decision was taken that 50% of the equipment would be purchased presently and the balance would be determined once the rehabilitation projects have been finalized.

Survey of Cottage Industries

UNIDO continued its preparations for a survey of cottage industries in Iraq. The principle was agreed upon by FAO, the MoPDC and UNIDO. The purpose of the assessment will be to survey cottage industries in the targeted project area. The assessment is planned to begin in November, with duration of two months. A meeting with the MoPDC, MoA, and MoLSA will be held to establish a national level steering committee to be mandated with coordination, review, and approval of procedures and policies for the project.

Rehabilitation of a Dairy Pilot

UNIDO is also finalizing a workshop, to be held November 17, in Amman, for the “Pilot Project for the Rehabilitation of the Dairy Sector in Iraq”. This meeting will bring together the stakeholders from the MoIM, MoA, Municipality of Basrah, NGOs, technical representatives from interested donor countries, and cluster members to agree on implementation roles and modalities.

UNEP continued setting up training programme with the International Leadership Institute of the UN University for Environmental Governance. In parallel, preparations for continuation of the training for the Iraqi Government Officials on Environmental Sides Assessment were taking place. Procurement of equipment for the Environmental Sides Assessment was under preparation.

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

Food Security (Cluster 6)

Assistance to Primary School Children and Vulnerable Groups

A Training of trainers workshop was held in Amman from 23 – 26 October for training on implementation of WFP's new Emergency Operation. Participants came from the Iraqi Ministries of Health and Education. The objectives of the workshop were to familiarize partners with the EMOP objectives, targeting procedures, management structure, monitoring and evaluation activities. In addition, the workshop developed a 3-month work plan for the start up, to be further updated at governorate level.

A key component of all modules of the Workshop was to provide participants with a sense of ownership of the project. At the end of the workshop, programme management units (PMUs) submitted the draft work plans to the Programme Management Committee (PMC) which have been reviewed and commented on by both PMC members and WFP Staff. The comments were taken into account and will be incorporated when the participants return to their respective areas and finalize the work plan.

Mine Action (Cluster 7)

A middle management training course for 21 staff members of National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), the Regional Mine Action Centre south (REMAC), the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Center and senior staff of local mine action NGOs, commenced on 23 October 2004 in Amman. This course, presented by Cranfield University and funded by US Department of State, is supported by Cluster 7.

A detailed inventory of 9 vehicles and one container of mine action equipment was prepared during two UNDP mine action team members' mission in Kuwait from 18 – 21 October 04. The team supervised the movement of 9 vehicles and the container to the UN compound. The vehicles and equipment will be used inside Iraq for the development of the first clearance NGO in the south.

Mine Clearance

The situation in the south is unchanged with continuing threats from vehicle borne and roadside Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). On 17 October, an employee contracted by UNOPS to monitor the execution of the mine action contract was seriously injured as a result of a roadside IED. During the reporting period, a total of 46 items were destroyed and a total of 136,670 m² of land were cleared visually. This impacted positively on the living conditions of families living and moving through the area.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) De-miner Course (Level 3) took place on 28 September 2004, and a Team Leader's course followed on immediately. All six students successfully passed the course.

A meeting took place with the Director General of Erbil Regional Mine Action Center, part of the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Center (IKMAC). General security situation in the region, mine action programme update, donor conferences and funds, and the UN mine action cluster role were the main points discussed. The Director General emphasized the fact that IKMAC remains part of the national structure, that they are in need of funding for the continuity of operations of the mine action NGOs, the important role that the UN can play if it strengthen its presence in northern Iraq, and their needs for specialized training.

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons - IDPs (Cluster 8)

IDP Assistance

In coordination with the MoDM, Ministry of Trade, and other relevant actors, in order to respond to the immediate needs of IDP and vulnerable populations around Fallujah, IOM partners continue to distribute for 1,600 displaced families (11,200 individuals) in the areas of Habaniya, 'Al Karmah, 'Al `Amiriyah, Nieamiya, 'As Saqlawiyah (4,750 mattresses, 6,600 blankets, 1,650 cooking stoves, 3,300 jerry cans, 3,300 buckets, 1,650 hygienic kits, 8,250 canned chicken meat, 3,300 milk powder, 1,650 canned beans, 1,650 canned chicken pieces, 1,650 canned lentils, 6,600 canned vegetables, 3,300 canned date syrup, 1,650 canned cheese, 1,650 tomato cans and 3,300 vegetable oil).

IOM has recently identified a new partner for IDP Monitoring Activities for the governorate of Baghdad. The newest partner is a newly established National NGO and will be conducting activities for the next two months.

IOM and NGO partners are also conducting assessments and gearing up emergency capacity response in light of recent reported massive movements of IDPs.

Since the previous reporting period the IDP programme has approved new grants for Iraq totalling roughly USD \$2 million dollars.

IOM has recently approved a grant in Salah Al Din to complement other winterization activities. This grant will fund the provision of 1,460 kerosene heaters for 142 schools to mitigate the adverse effects of winter season in Tooz district- Salah Al Din Governorate. Providing schools with kerosene heaters is a vital step in improving school conditions, thus enhancing education opportunities for thousands of children, many of them are vulnerable IDPs.

Capacity Building for Migration Management (CBMM)

In October 2004 the CBMM programme has significantly intensified its contacts and consultations with Iraqi Ministries with migration functions. In addition to the Ministries of Displacement and Migration (MODM), Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), and Health (MOH) with who IOM have already had a close cooperation, the CBMM programme established contacts with the Ministries of Interior (MOI), Planning (MOP), Justice (MOJ), Finance (MOF), Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Defence (MOD) and Higher Education (MOHE). All these ministries have important roles to play in addressing migration problems in Iraq and thus have been invited to take part in a Migration Management Workshop to tentatively schedules in Jordan in December 2004. The workshop will assist the Government of Iraq to streamline migration management portfolios of concerned ministries, set up priority areas for the CBMM programme interventions, and develop a work-plan for targeted technical assistance in this sector of governance.

In support to this workshop IOM has initiated a survey to study the current status of migration management in Iraq. A specific questionnaire has been designed and distributed to all concerned ministries. The questionnaire solicits data on existing Iraqi policies, administration, and legislation related to migration. Responses of ministries will then be analyzed, compiled in a booklet and distributed to the workshop participants.

Currently IOM is in the process of developing the details of the December workshop. IOM has started negotiations with international immigration experts who will be invited to guide the Iraqi participants throughout the workshop and help them, identify gaps, weaknesses, strengths and functional misplacements of the current migration management setting in Iraq. This exercise will also lead to identifying next steps for improving migration management systems in Iraq.

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

18 October – 31 October 2004

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ

Governance and Civil Society (Cluster 9)

Strategic Planning meeting with the Provincial Affairs (MoPA) and UNDP

Senior staff of the Ministry of Provincial Affairs, headed by Deputy Minister Mr. Mokdad Hussein and the staff of UNDP's Governance Team met on Oct. 31, 2004 to discuss short and long term capacity building issues on local governance and decentralization.

The purpose of the meeting was to develop the priorities of the Ministry of Provincial Affairs, identify capacity building approaches/methodologies and prepare an agreement to proceed with the next steps. The new Ministry is responsible for the development of effective and representative local institutions at the governorate and local councils' levels. UNDP recognizes that provincial and municipal councils play a pivotal role in the reconstruction efforts of Iraq and towards that end, it is pleased to provide the necessary support. At the close of the meeting, it was agreed that UNDP would proceed to develop a proposal for short and long term capacity building program, on municipal and local governance for MoPA to be submitted to the Trust Fund (IRFFI), as well as seeking contributions from bilateral donors.

Meeting with the Ministry of Interior

A meeting was held on 27 October between UNDP and senior staff of Ministry of Interior to discuss strategic priorities and capacity building needs. The needs of the Ministry focus on the managerial capacity of senior management, mid-level managers and front line supervisors.

Poverty Reduction and Human Development (Cluster 10)

The ILO is leading a Cluster 10 effort for a National Employment Conference that will take place in Amman on the 12th and 13th of December. The conference was specifically requested by the IIG and the MoP and will include Representatives from MOP, MOLSA, Baghdad Municipality and Ministry of Housing. The WB has been invited to provide inputs to the agenda, present the WB program, and act as panelists/participants in the conference.

It is envisioned that the Conference will focus on 3 areas: (a) the current reconstruction effort, and agencies' efforts to affect domestic employment; (b) the recovery phase, and efforts to focus on PSD, micro and Small and Medium size, education; and (b) the long-term development phase, and the types of policies and institutions involved (diversification would be discussed here).

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