

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

Iraq crisis

The activities proposed hereafter are still subject to the adoption of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/ BUD/2011/01000

1. CONTEXT

The February 2006 bombing of the Al-Askari mosque in Samarra and ensuing sectarian violence led to a significant wave of displacement, prompting more than 1.6 million people to flee their homes and bringing the post-2003 internally displaced population to more than 2.8 million people. Improved security conditions and patterns of community homogenization in 2008 slowed down displacement and led to a limited number of returns to places of origin, a trend that continues in 2010. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) currently estimates that approximately 2.76 million people remain displaced inside Iraq. As of September 2010, the active number of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) registered Iraqi refugees was 208,000 and an unconfirmed number of unregistered Iraqi refugees remained displaced in other countries.

The security situation has been deteriorating since the parliamentary election on 7 March 2010. Insurgents have continued to target police and soldiers, as well as civilians in mass explosions, in an effort to undermine faith in the Iraqi security forces as US troops prepare to leave Iraq by the end of 2011. Although a return to the full blown sectarian war in 2006-2007 is considered unlikely, security incidents, like insurgencies and high criminality in Baghdad, northern/central governorates and the so-called Disputed Areas, will remain at a level that will affect development efforts in several ways. Firstly, it will slow down returns of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees. Secondly, it will continue pushing Iraqis to neighbouring countries for either protection or economic migration.

Iraq belongs to category 3 (most severe) of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) Crisis Index and to category 2 of DG ECHO's vulnerability Index for 2010-2011.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

(1) Affected people/ potential beneficiaries:

Inside Iraq: According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), there were 1.5 million IDPs after 2006 and 1.2 million before 2006. 23% of the population live below the poverty line, the unemployment rate is 15% with a further 28% underemployed. Specific groups such as religious minorities suffer from protection problems. They form the largest group of refugees in the neighbouring countries, and are still targeted by violence in the areas with the worst security incidents such as Mosul and Kirkuk. There are about 42,300 refugees and asylum seekers registered by UNHCR in Iraq (Turkish and Iranian Kurds, Ahwazis and Palestinians). Finally, many civilians are victims of violent incidents.

Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries: It is impossible to know exactly how many Iraqis are in the region. UNHCR has adopted a *prima facie* approach for Iraqis. Therefore, any Iraqi

who requests to be registered with UNHCR is accepted on this basis¹. This does not imply that all registered Iraqis are vulnerable, but it is believed that the vulnerable Iraqis in need of assistance are included in these figures. The numbers of registered refugees have been steadily decreasing for the last two years. The latest available figures from UNHCR are approximately 208,000 in the region, with 153,000 in Syria, 32,000 in Jordan and 8,000 in Lebanon at the end of September 2010.

(2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs.

Iraq: At the moment no recent comprehensive and country-wide assessments exist, which makes the identification of the types of needs difficult. There are several assessments done on a micro level. However, as they are not connected, they do not provide a country-wide picture of the situation.

There is no widespread humanitarian crisis in Iraq, but some parts of the population suffer from a lack of access to basic services due to a combination of the legacy of sanctions, conflict, underdevelopment, corruption and lack of rule of law. It is difficult to define the acute humanitarian needs that are directly resulting from the conflict. These structural problems should not be dealt with through humanitarian interventions, but rather be tackled by development projects which have a medium to long-term strategy.

Neighbouring countries: A similar lack of needs assessment prevails in Jordan and Syria. The authorities do not allow surveys and outreach, and without a proper census of the refugees it is impossible to have a clear estimation of the vulnerable refugees.

In Syria, there is a general assumption that Iraqi refugees are poorer than in Jordan, and therefore assistance must be designed around a "blanket approach". However, this approach has not been supported yet by any specific needs assessments.

The main needs that have been identified in group discussions with Iraqis in all countries (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon) are a need for cash to pay rent, health support for chronic patients (diabetes, hypertension) and tertiary health care. Psychological problems are also widespread, ranging from mild depression to severe mental health issues for persons who have witnessed or have been directly affected by violent incidents.

In Lebanon, protection issues are widespread. This is due to the fact that Lebanon does not recognize Iraqis as refugees. They are not granted a special status and are treated as migrants. Those who are lacking a residency permit (which is the majority) are considered illegal migrants and are subject to arrest and deportation.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

(1) National / local response and involvement

Iraq: The 2010 Government of Iraq (GoI) budget is USD 72 billion. The Ministry of Health budget is more than USD 4 billion (USD 132 per person). The GoI and the ministries for

¹ With the exception of Kurds and Iraqis from the southern governorates who have to go through individual status determination. In practice, there are very few Iraqis from the south that do not get refugee status.

basic services such as health, water, agriculture, have significant budgets that are systematically under-spent. The Ministry of Displacement and Migration has the responsibility to promote and facilitate return of IDPs and refugees. It has significant funds for the integration of IDPs, but so far has managed to respond to only less than half of the requests it has received. As a result, its budget is also under-spent every year. On the contrary, one positive example is the improved GoI capacity for emergency response after mass casualty explosions. The authorities are now capable of taking care of the wounded without requesting or needing outside support (International Committee of the Red Cross-ICRC, Médecins Sans Frontières-MSF, United Nations Children's Fund-UNICEF).

Neighbouring countries:

Syria: Syria has been the country with the most open policy towards Iraqis. In parallel, the Government has been very clear since the beginning on their intention not to promote the integration of Iraqis. They consider them as guests who will return to Iraq once the situation improves.

Jordan: Jordan has much stricter conditions for Iraqis entering its territory. Movement back and forth is not as easy compared to Syria, and vulnerable families are often stuck in Jordan.

Lebanon: No significant changes should be expected in Lebanon in the treatment of Iraqis. They will continue to be considered as migrants, transiting through Lebanon for resettlement to third countries. Assistance will be delegated to UN agencies, NGOs and local charities, and no services will be offered by the State.

(2) International Humanitarian Response

The US is by far the largest donor in the Iraqi crisis. For the 2010 Fiscal Year, the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM) has contributed USD 310.5 million to the Iraqi crisis (the majority to Iraq's neighbouring countries), and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) an additional USD 45.2 million within Iraq.

Inside Iraq, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) budget request for Fiscal Year 2011 includes USD 2.6 billion – resources that will be used to support the democratic process and ensure a smooth transition to civilian-led security training and operational support (Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's presentation to Congress in March 2010).

Iraq: After a 2009 full-fledged Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), the common appeal process evolved to the 2010 IHAP (Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan), representing a joint humanitarian strategy for Iraq. It targets 21% of the general population in Iraq. The total funding requested is USD 193 million. It is noteworthy that the UNHCR Iraq budget (USD 264.3 million) is not included in the CAP. There will not be a common appeal for 2011.

The World Food Programme (WFP) launched this summer an Emergency Operation (EMOP) of USD 235 million over a two-year period. WFP target inter-governorate IDPs that can not access their PDS (Public Distribution System) due to their displacement.

Neighbouring countries:

There is no CAP in the region. As a substitute, there is the 2010 Regional Response Plan for Iraqi Refugees (RRP). The total amount requested is USD 364 million, broken down to USD 231 million for Syria, USD 112 million for Jordan and USD 21 million for Lebanon. UNHCR has the largest budget request for USD 243 million, followed by UNICEF for USD 28 million and WFP for USD 27 million. WFP in Syria launched a new EMOP in 05/2010, amounting to USD 32.1 million and targeting 150,000 beneficiaries. USD 13 million (41%) is covered to date.

Medical assistance is the activity with the highest number of beneficiaries, with approximately 131,000 and 260,000 primary health care (PHC) consultations in Syria and Jordan in 2009. UNHCR's cash assistance is the most expensive component, currently covering a good percentage of the refugee population in Syria and Jordan (35,000 and 12,800 persons, respectively).

In Syria, the largest common denominator of assistance has been food and non food items (NFI) distribution. The numbers of beneficiaries peaked in December 2008 with 144,000 beneficiaries receiving a full ration of 2,100 kcal, but steadily decreased since to 110,000 beneficiaries in April 2010.

In Jordan, UNHCR estimates that around 25,000 Iraqis regularly show up either at the UNHCR office or at their partners requesting some form of assistance. There are several projects in the sectors of health, psycho-social, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and education. The primary health care is well covered.

In Lebanon, the priority sectors of assistance by UNHCR and NGOs are the health sector (primary health care, secondary, tertiary), access to mental health, material support to the most vulnerable (mainly through food and NFI vouchers). Health care is extended to all in need, but material support is offered to a relatively small group that is identified through outreach visits by NGOs.

(3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

Iraq: Humanitarian space is limited in Iraq. Remote control operations are still the norm in the areas with security problems. Security threats for international staff remain high in Baghdad, north/central governorates and the Disputed Areas. In the southern governorates, security threats are much lower but most INGOs have not yet managed to develop an "acceptance" policy and as a result have a very limited presence. The UN agencies are hampered in their action by the strict security measures imposed by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

INGOs have a considerable fragmented coverage. All their movements are hampered by security, and they are only able to move freely in areas that are considered safe and without any urgent humanitarian needs such as Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and South Iraq.

ICRC is an exception to the above: Due to their mandate in armed conflicts and their access to all groups through the detention activities, they have developed a unique acceptance policy in Iraq which allows them to have a relatively strong presence, without using any armed escorts. With more than 80 delegates in Iraq they constitute the widest coverage of any humanitarian organization.

Monitoring for DG ECHO remains a concern. In the current context, it is not possible to monitor NGO projects or accompany them in needs assessment visits. Visiting with UN agencies is not an option due to the armed escorts. ICRC is the only partner with a proven record of risk management and capacity to do field visits in most of Iraq.

Neighbouring countries:

Syria: INGOs have to be approved by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) before being authorized to work in Syria, and are obliged to get an approval on all activities. It is not possible to undertake independent and thorough surveys and needs assessments and outreach activities are not authorized. There are only few NGOs that cover urgent and essential humanitarian needs. They are usually funded through USAID, UNHCR and DG ECHO. UN agencies implement regularly underfunded development projects for the general population.

Jordan: The Government has been more open in letting INGOs work. Outreach is possible, and NGOs can work virtually everywhere in the country. There is a high percentage of Iraqis benefiting one way or another from UNHCR and its partners.

- (4) Envisaged DG ECHO response.

Iraq

After three years of active exchanges with partners, it is clear that there is no added value for DG ECHO to support small scale operations in a context where the needs of the population can and should be addressed by the authorities and long term interventions.

The exception to the above should be detention/protection. The hand over of detainees from US forces to national authorities is expected to be finalized in 2011, in parallel with the withdrawal of all US combat troops (August 2010). In terms of DG ECHO's constraints, access problems remain acute. Moreover, it is difficult for DG ECHO to monitor the projects implemented by the NGOs and UN agencies.

Neighbouring countries

Syria: At this stage, there is no phase out perspective for DG ECHO. However, the constant trend of diminishing numbers of registered refugees must be taken into consideration. There are not many obviously under-funded projects that would respond to urgent and life saving needs for Iraqis, where DG ECHO would have an added value.

There are a couple of "niche" sectors where DG ECHO partners have demonstrated added value: Psychological care for traumatized children and their families is a sector where DG ECHO's specialized partners have done some good work, and where other NGOs do not cover the same needs. Access to primary health care in areas outside Damascus is also a sector where the numbers of Iraqis are relatively low when compared to Damascus, but it is important to ensure that this access is available.

Food assistance in Syria: Cash-based assistance (cash or vouchers) is considered as the most efficient method of assistance in these urban settings where food is available in markets. It also gives families the opportunity to prioritize their spending; bearing in mind that housing rent is their largest expenditure. It remains to be proved that in kind food assistance has an added value in this context. In an urban context, DG ECHO believes that it is time to evolve from a blanket distribution to targeted assistance of food insecure households, adjust the

kilocalorie coverage if relevant (currently a full ration is provided), phase-out from in-kind assistance (extensive and well documented selling of food), and demonstrate the added value of the food voucher system which currently exists as a pilot project. A necessary condition should be a proper food security assessment, which has not been negotiated with the authorities so far.

Jordan: The priority for DG ECHO in the future should be to promote the integration of vulnerable Iraqis into “social safety net” projects available to Jordanians. DG ECHO should concentrate on supporting specialized agencies' protection mandate, and use existing projects to promote the linking between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). Any new funding requests from other partners will have to demonstrate urgent unmet needs and added value.

Lebanon: DG ECHO should keep providing support to protection activities.

- (5) Expected results of humanitarian aid interventions.
- Enhanced protection for those affected by conflict, detainees and returnees and the promotion, the application and respect of International Humanitarian Law in Iraq and neighbouring countries.
 - The provision of basic assistance (cash, NFIs, health and psychological services to Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan).

4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

Capacity building for the authorities in the sector of education and water will be the main priority of the Commission in the coming years. The Joint Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme for Iraq for the period 2011-2013, which represents the joint efforts of the Commission, Italy and Sweden, foresee an indicative allocation of around EUR 95 million (EU and Sweden). The Italian contribution will be determined based on the annual budget adopted at the end of each year and will come on top of this amount. In addition to the grants, Italy will provide a soft loan of EUR 300 million for the period 2011-2012.

For neighbouring countries, so far no funding is planned for 2011 from the Instrument for Stability and other budget lines managed by the Directorate-General for External Relations (DG RELEX) and the EuropeAid Co-operation Office (DG AIDCO).

By 2012, exit from Iraq should be possible as the situation is becoming relatively stable; the difficult living conditions for the population are due to structural problems and require a long-term response from the GoI. In neighbouring countries, a partial exit can only be gradual, since it is unlikely that the refugee numbers will decrease significantly.

5. OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2011/01000 and the general conditions of the Partnership Agreement with the European Commission supersede the provisions in this document.

5.1. Contacts²

Operational Unit in charge : ECHO/A3

Contact persons at HQ : Antoine Lemasson
in the field : Yorgos Kapranis

5.2. Financial info

Indicative Allocation: EUR 10 million

Man-made crisis: Hum. Aid: EUR 10 million

5.3. Proposal Assessment

Assessment round 1

- Description of the humanitarian aid interventions (*as per 3.4*) relating to this assessment round: All interventions as described under section 3.4 of this HIP.
- Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 10 million.
- Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2011³.
- The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 12 months.
- Potential partners: All DG ECHO Partners.
- Information to be provided: Intention Letter⁴ (max 5 pages, based on the Single form format) including at least: area intervention, sector, duration, beneficiaries, context/needs assessment, proposed response (results, activities), estimated costs, requested contribution, contact details. For projects in Iraq, in case of remote control/management modus operandi, additional information should be provided, such as: Number of staff present within Iraq (expatriate and national); monitoring capacity; needs assessments capacity; procurement procedures; capacity for emergency response; security arrangements.
- Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 15/01/2011⁵.

² All intention letters and Single Forms must be sent to ECHO-CENTRAL-MAILBOX@ec.europa.eu

³ The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, what ever occurs latest.

⁴ In case intention letters are requested an initial analysis will be done on the basis of the information received, Single Forms and other sources, such as humanitarian programmes and appeals (CAPs or CHAPs). For the retained intention letters, partners will be requested to submit a Single Form, which will be the subject of a more detailed assessment. Only accepted Single Forms can lead to the signature of an agreement.

⁵ The Commission reserves the right to consider intention letters transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/ priorities are not covered by the received intention letters.

- Commonly used principles will be applied for the assessment of proposals, such as quality of needs assessment, relevance of intervention sectors, and knowledge of the country / region.