
HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

IRAQ CRISIS

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

As with the deterioration of the humanitarian situation Iraqi refugees living in Syria are equally as affected as the local population living in Syria, DG ECHO¹ will be pursuing its support to Iraqis in Syria based on vulnerability and not status through this 2013 HIP for the Syria crisis.

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 2012. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that as of May 2012 approximately 1.33 million people remain displaced inside Iraq. As of June 2012, the active number of UNHCR registered Iraqi refugees was 149,897 (87,741 in Syria, 29,191 in Jordan, 8,751 in Lebanon, 11,322 in Turkey, 7,144 in Egypt, 3,514 in Iran and 2,234 in GCC²). In addition an unconfirmed number of unregistered Iraqi refugees remained displaced in other countries.

While some 92,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and nearly 26,500 refugees returned spontaneously in 2010, returns have more than doubled in 2011, with 193,610 IDPs and 67,080 refugees returning. In the first five months of 2012, this upward trend has continued with 118,060 IDPs and 36,640 refugees already returned (Source: UNHCR Iraq operation – Monthly statistical update on Return – May 2012). Meanwhile the majority of some 1.33 million IDPs in the country have found no solutions to their plight. There are also occasional reports of new displacements, particularly among the minority communities. An estimated 40,000 refugees and asylum seekers are residing in Iraq, most of them in governorates of Anbar, Ninewa, as well as the Kurdistan region and Baghdad.

The last US troops have left Iraq in December 2011 with security responsibility fully transferred to the Iraqi security forces. Although the security situation has not improved, a return to the full blown sectarian war in 2006-2007 is considered unlikely. Security incidents, like insurgencies and high criminality in Baghdad,

¹ The European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

² GCC: Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates)

northern/central governorates and the so-called Disputed Areas, remain at a level which affects development efforts in several ways. Firstly, it may slow down returns of IDPs and refugees. Secondly, it pushes Iraqis to neighbouring countries for either protection or economic migration.

At the same time the recent escalation of violence in Syria has triggered an increased return of Iraqis previously registered as refugees in Syria back to Iraq. It has also prompted Syrians both of Arab and Kurdish origin to flee to neighbouring Iraq. Until August 2012 almost 16,000 Syrian refugees have crossed into Iraq. The majority (11,626 people) have fled to the Kurdistan region of Iraq (Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah and Erbil governorates) and 4,272 people to the Anbar governorate.³

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 2012.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

1) Affected people / potential beneficiaries:

Inside Iraq

According to the United Nations in Iraq, 23% of the population (almost 7 million people) live below the poverty line (spending less than USD 2.2 per person per day). 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 almost 40,000 refugees and asylum seekers registered by UNHCR inside Iraq (Turkish and Iranian Kurds, Ahwazis and Palestinians). With the escalation of the conflict in Syria there is an additional 16,000 Syrian refugees who have fled to Iraq by August 2012, both to the Kurdistan region and to Anbar governorate. Above all, many civilians are victims of violent incidents and global insecurity keeps on affecting the capacity of the population living in the most violence-prone areas to access basic services.

Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries

It is impossible to know exactly how many Iraqis are in the region; while the number of UNHCR registered Iraqi refugees in the neighbouring countries remains below 150,000 as of end of June 2012, there are also a number of unregistered Iraqi refugees who remain unconfirmed. UNHCR has adopted a *prima facie* approach for Iraqis although neither Syria, Jordan nor Lebanon are signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. Therefore, any Iraqi from the most affected areas of the country (disputed territories, Baghdad) who requests to be registered with UNHCR is accepted on this basis. This does not imply that all registered Iraqis are vulnerable,

³ Source: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

but it is believed that the vulnerable Iraqis in need of assistance are included in these figures.

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Syrian refugees in Iraq

The civil unrest and its violent repression that have developed in Syria since March 2011 have led to Syrians fleeing also into neighbouring Iraq. Initially there was no significant refugee flow and only to the Kurdistan region of Iraq but since June 2012 a substantial number has also gone to the Anbar governorate. By August 2012 some 11,626 Syrians of Kurdish origin have fled to the Kurdistan region of Iraq (Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah and Erbil governorates) and 4,272 Syrians of Arab origin to the Anbar governorate.²

UNHCR Iraq has updated their contingency planning, focusing on a worst case scenario that foresees a potential mass influx into Iraq in the event of further deterioration of the security situation in Syria. This worst case scenario foresees the entry of up to 90,000 people (50,000 to the Kurdistan region of Iraq and 40,000 to the central region of Iraq/Anbar governorate).

The response to the Syrian refugees in Iraq is covered by the Humanitarian Implementation Plan for the Syria Crisis.

2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs.

Iraq

The complex security environment still does not allow comprehensive and country-wide assessments, which makes the identification of the types of needs difficult. In spite of some initiatives to enhance information gathering and to support coordination of activities between non-governmental organisations (NGOs), most of the assessments are done on a micro level, are not connected, and do not provide a country-wide picture of the situation.

There is no widespread humanitarian crisis in Iraq, but some parts of the population, especially in rural areas, suffer from a lack of access to basic services due to a combination of factors such as: the legacy of the sanctions, years of conflict, underdevelopment, corruption, lack of rule of law, widespread bombings and armed violence. It is difficult to define the acute humanitarian needs that are directly resulting from the conflict while most of the problems faced by the population are largely structural, deserve mid-long term responses and should be addressed by development projects.

In the meantime, large pockets of vulnerable civilians remain confronted to an intense violence-prone environment, such as in the Disputed Areas, which directly

affects their ability to access basic services such as safe water or quality health care in remote areas while on-going sectarian violence keeps on hindering the capacity of the local authorities to provide such services.

Neighbouring countries

To a limited extent, a similar lack of needs assessment prevails in Jordan and Syria where 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.

The main needs that have been identified in group discussions with Iraqis in Syria, Jordan and 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.

In all three countries and in addition to the immediate response to the above-described needs, it is essential to identify and frame an appropriate response adapted to the situation of a large number of refugees who will not return or benefit from resettlement programmes. Projects and resources must adapt to these mid-long term perspectives.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

1) National / local response and involvement

Iraq

The 2012 Government of Iraq (GoI) budget is USD 100.5 billion. The GoI and the ministries for basic services such as health, water, agriculture, have significant budgets that are systematically underspent. 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 underspent every year. On the contrary, one positive example is the improved GoI capacity for emergency response after mass casualty explosions. The authorities are fully capable of taking care of the wounded without requesting or needing outside specialised support.

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. Consequently, Iraqis can benefit from medical care and their children can attend schools in Syria but they cannot access the official labour market. The 2011 civil unrest and its violent repression froze the resettlement process of Iraqi refugees from Syria towards countries such as the US and contributed to further blur perspectives for thousands of refugees waiting for resettlement. Due to the intensified unrest in Syria in 2012 there has been according to UNHCR an increased net return from Syria back to Iraq. By the end of June 2012 approx. 87,000 Iraqis were registered with UNHCR in Syria, with the majority of them (around 64,000) living in Damascus followed by Aleppo and Al-Hasaka governorates.

Jordan: due to internal political and security considerations Jordan has much stricter conditions for Iraqis entering its territory. Vulnerable families are often stuck in Jordan where they suffer from precarious conditions: lack of legal status, limited access to the labour market, depletion of savings.

Lebanon: Iraqis are considered as migrants, transiting through Lebanon for resettlement to third countries. Assistance has been delegated to UN agencies, NGOs and local charities, and no service is offered by the State.

2) International Humanitarian Response

The US remains by far the largest donor in the Iraqi crisis though its focus has shifted from directly implementing reconstruction projects to increasing the capacity of the GoI to take charge of the country's development and to govern effectively. The Fiscal Year 2012 request of USD 2.36 billion is broken into two components:

USD 360.1 million for non-proliferation, antiterrorism, and demining military, education and training.

The second component, Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), covers the USD 2 billion extraordinary assistance to assist the GoI until it has the capacity and resources to perform critical government security functions on its own.

Iraq

After a 2009 full-fledged Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), the common appeal process evolved in 2010 into an IHAP (Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan), representing a joint humanitarian strategy for Iraq. Perceived to be better adapted to recovery efforts, the IHAP was not accompanied by detailed projects proposals. No consolidated version of the IHAP has been publicised in 2011, instead, the United Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) explicates the collective actions and strategies developed by the United Nations Country Team to respond to national development priorities. It covers the period 2011-2014.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is currently operating a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) of USD 45.5 million. This project initiated in August 2010 and will finish at the end of June 2014. The role of this operation is to support

the government in its social protection for vulnerable groups endeavour affected by conflict in 41 vulnerable districts.

Populations living outside urban centres, in areas particularly affected by the violence, such as the Disputed Territories are receiving limited ad hoc assistance from the rare actors working on regaining access to these areas. In addition to providing immediate relief to extremely vulnerable persons, such initiatives are paving the way to the restoration of essential services in remote areas.

Neighbouring countries

The 2012 Regional Response Plan for Iraqi Refugees (RRP) requested USD 245 million, broken down to USD 148 million for Syria, USD 62 million for Jordan and USD 13 million for Lebanon and USD 22 million for the rest of the region.

In **Syria**, while the escalation of the crisis is affecting meanwhile the entire country, Iraqi refugees are also particularly impacted. Resettlement has already been one of the most affected programmes so far and already increased return to Iraq over resettlement can be observed. At the same time the on-going situation will further affect Iraqi refugees in Syria and their coping mechanisms, which are largely based on the informal economy. They shall rely even more on external assistance, notably non-food items (NFIs) and cash assistance.

In **Jordan**, 6,000 Iraqi families are meant to receive financial assistance from UNHCR in 2012 while several organizations have been developing programmes to address specific vulnerabilities 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, and 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 remains limited in Iraq and remote control operations are still the norm in the areas with security problems. Security threats for international staff remain high in the country and particularly in Baghdad, north/central governorates and the Disputed Territories. Attempts to redeploy international non-governmental organisations (INGO) teams (including international staff) in the field as a result of the development of acceptance policies have multiplied over the past months. 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 started re-building from a fragmented coverage. Their movements remain hampered by security constraints, and they are mainly able to move freely in areas which are considered safe and without any urgent humanitarian needs such as Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and South Iraq. The International Committee of the Red Cross (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 armed escorts. With more than 100 delegates covering the Iraqi crisis in Iraq and Jordan they constitute the widest coverage of any humanitarian organization.

Monitoring for DG ECHO remains a concern. Recently, it has not been deemed feasible for ECHO to monitor NGO projects or accompany them during needs assessment while UN safety procedures leading to systematic use of armed escort have as well been considered as an obstacle for ECHO to join their missions. So far, only the ICRC has been perceived as the only partner with a proven record of risk management and capacity to do field visits in most of Iraq.

DG ECHO attaches fundamental importance to ensuring **aid effectiveness, sound financial management and respect of humanitarian principles**, which implies monitoring of the action during the lifetime of the project by DG ECHO's representatives. DG ECHO also considers that assessment and monitoring of projects by its Partners are keys for the quality of its humanitarian interventions and expects to avail itself of the first-hand security assessment made by its Partners prior to carrying out its own monitoring mission. In light of this, and taking into account the present circumstances and conditions currently prevailing in Iraq, DG ECHO does **not** consider **full remote control** as a sound option for projects it finances in the country.

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 surveys or needs assessments while very few outreach activities are authorized. There are only few NGOs that cover urgent and essential humanitarian needs. They are mainly funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), UNHCR and DG ECHO. UN agencies implement regularly underfunded development projects for the general population.

The on-going movement of political contestation and related violent crackdown organized by the Syrian authorities have further hindered the capacity of humanitarian actors to have free and unimpeded access to persons in need of humanitarian assistance: a situation deemed very concerning even though over the first months of the crisis few programs in support to the Iraqi refugees have been affected.

Jordan: The Government has been more open in letting INGOs work. Outreach is possible, and NGOs can work virtually everywhere in the country.

4) Envisaged DG ECHO response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions

The proposed humanitarian response includes the following activities :

Iraq: After several years of active exchanges with partners, it is clear that apart from specific punctual interventions to cover gaps and enhance access to basic services in remote violence-prone areas neglected by the authorities 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 development interventions.

Support to detention/protection activities shall be an exception to the above. DG ECHO support in detention/protection activities shall remain beyond the US forces hand-over of detainees to national authorities a priority.

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: DG ECHO's support is meant to remain adapted to the constant trend of diminishing numbers of registered refugees in a context where few urgent lifesaving projects are under-funded.

There are a couple of "niche" sectors where DG ECHO partners have demonstrated their added value over the past years while successfully building local capacities to support psychological care for traumatized children and their families.

Food assistance in Syria is rather a livelihoods assistance to give the opportunity of families to prioritize their spending; bearing in mind that housing rent is their largest expenditure. The relevance of provision of food package and even food voucher in this context remain to be proven. DG ECHO believes that cash-based assistance is the most appropriate response. DG ECHO also considers that it is time to evolve from a blanket distribution to targeted assistance.

Jordan: DG ECHO should keep on supporting the promotion of 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.

Expected results of humanitarian aid interventions

- Enhanced protection and access to basic services for extremely vulnerable and conflict affected populations, detainees and returnees. Supported promotion, application and respect of International Humanitarian Law in Iraq.

- Increased access to basic assistance (cash, NFIs, health and psychological services to Iraqi refugees) for the most vulnerable.

4. LRRD (LINKING RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT), COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

1) Other DG ECHO interventions

DG ECHO's Syria crisis Humanitarian Implementation Plan (ECHO/WWD/BUD/2013/91000) for an amount of EUR 35,000,000 is covering the needs of the Syrian refugees in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. As with the deterioration of the humanitarian situation Iraqi refugees living in Syria are equally affected as the local population living in Syria, DG ECHO will be pursuing its support to Iraqis in Syria based on vulnerability and not status and through this 2013 HIP for the Syria crisis.

2) Other services/donors availability (such as for LRRD and transition)

In the past years, EU assistance to Iraq has gradually moved away from rehabilitation to capacity and institution building to assist Iraq in mobilising its own resources to improve the welfare of the population. As a result, the first Joint Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme for Iraq for the period 2011-2013 (EU and Sweden indicative allocation of around EUR 95 million; plus Italian soft loan of EUR 300 million for 2011-2012), targets three main sectors: water management, good governance and rule of law, and socio-economic recovery through education and labour market. The Strategy reflects the Iraqi Government's own priority policies for international development cooperation. This illustrates the EU's wish to set its co-operation with Iraq on a regular track, based on multi-annual strategy. EU is committed to continuing bilateral support through capacity building programmes. The EU foresees to engaging in future activities of mutual EU Iraq interest, including implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, signed this year between EU-Iraq as well as activities implementing the Instrument for Cooperation with Industrialized Countries (ICI+) between EU and Iraq Energy Center.

For neighbouring countries, so far no funding is planned for 2012 from the Instrument for Stability managed by the Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments and other budget lines managed by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation EuropeAid (DG DEVCO).

Inside Iraq, most of the factors related to the difficult living conditions for the population are related to structural problems and require a long term response from the GoI. In the meantime, while these difficulties are largely emphasized by the ongoing violence, in areas where vulnerable populations are neglected and deprived from most basic services, punctual response can be envisaged. 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/2013/01000 and the general conditions of the Partnership Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

5.1. Contacts⁴

Operational Unit in charge : ECHO/B4

Contact persons at HQ : Catherine LIBERT (catherine.libert@ec.europa.eu)
in the field : Marilena CHATZIANTONIOU
(marilena.chatziantoniou@echofield.eu)

5.2. Financial info

Indicative Allocation: EUR 7 million

Man-made crises: Hum. Aid: EUR 7 million

5.3. Proposal Assessment

Assessment round 1

- a) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round: All interventions as described under section 3.4 of this HIP.
- b) Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 7 million.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2013⁵
- d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 12 months.
- e) Potential partners: All DG ECHO Partners.
- f) Information to be provided: Letter of intent⁶, based on the Single form format and including at least: area of intervention, sector, duration, beneficiaries, context/needs assessment, proposed response (results, activities), estimated costs, requested contribution, contact details. Alternatively, the Letter of intent can be free format (max 5 pages), including

⁴ Letters of intent should be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL. Instructions on how to submit Letters of intent using APPEL are available at:
http://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/preparing_an_action/financing_decision/intention_letter

⁵ 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, whatever occurs latest.

⁶ In case letters of intent 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 letters of intent, 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.

the same information. 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.

- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 15/01/2013⁷.
- h) 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.

⁷ The Commission reserves the right to consider letters of intent/Single Forms transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/priorities are not covered by the received letters of intent/Single Forms.