

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)**IRAQ CRISIS**

AMOUNT: EUR 47 000 000

The full implementation of the HIP is conditional upon the necessary appropriations being made available from the 2014 general budget of the European Union.

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIPDecember 2014: modification n°5

The humanitarian situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate due to ongoing fighting and worsening weather conditions. As a result, an emergency has arisen with a large number of families with no or inadequate shelter for the upcoming harsh winter. In the Kurdish Region of Iraq 23% of the more than 900 000 IDPs are living in structures without doors and windows such as camps and unfinished buildings. The number of IDPs in Iraq is now estimated to be 2.1 million people with all 18 Governorates hosting families fleeing violence. Recurrent displacement in search of security and basic services continues with some IDPs having moved up to seven times.

Heavy fighting in Al-Anbar governorate between ISIL and other associated armed groups and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) has triggered another wave of population displacement (between September and November over 219 000 people were displaced). This is the fourth major wave since the beginning of the year and given the fluidity of security conditions and ongoing fighting further population movements are likely to occur in the coming months. Deliberate attacks by ISIL and militias on Iraqi civilians continue. In the last week, at least two Sunni tribes in Al-Anbar governorate have witnessed the killings of members of their communities by ISIL. Retaliatory killings and forced displacement of civilian population from areas changing hands between parties to the conflict are also on the rise.

The humanitarian space is further being restricted to humanitarian actors, with only limited access to the estimated 3.6 million people living in ISIL controlled areas across Iraq. UN and partner organizations estimate that there are around 2.2 million people in need of assistance and protection, who are currently beyond the reach of humanitarian actors. Shortages of basic resources and essential supplies in Ninewa, Al-Anbar, Salah Al Din and Diyala governorates are being reported including medicines and other medical supplies. The food security of people living in hard to reach areas is of serious concern with price increases and food, fuel and water shortages reported in cities like Mosul which has been under ISIL control for almost four months. Humanitarian organizations continue making efforts to reach those in need but insecurity hinders regular deliveries of life-saving assistance in sufficient quantities to meet peoples increasing needs in these areas. Kerbala, the Kurdish Region of Iraq and Bagdad have imposed direct restrictions to population access on those fleeing the intense fighting in Al-Anbar, restricting access through their internal borders to incoming IDPs.

The UN recently updated its Strategic Response Plan for Iraq estimating that there are 5.2 million people affected by the conflict in Iraq in need of humanitarian assistance. This is the third revision of the SRP since it was first prepared in February. The SRP has

a total budget USD 2.2 billion for 2014-2015 of which USD 696 million has been received during 2014. Remaining USD 1.5 billion is required for activities over the next 15 months. Main SRP activities are the protection of civilians and the provision of life-saving assistance to those most in need.

To respond to the increasing needs in the hard to reach areas ECHO will continue to step up support to its partners working in Al-Anbar and conflict ridden governorates of Iraq. Against continuous fighting and little access, addressing the rising humanitarian needs of populations in these areas remains a priority. Rapid response partnerships able to cover basic needs of the population through integrated modes, either through NFI/CRI distributions and/or more flexible modalities like cash assistance, as well as contingency planning and preparedness, will be considered for funding. Support to winterization needs in high altitude out of camp locations will be as well considered for funding.

In view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the number of populations displaced, the European Commission has decided to increase by EUR 27 million the allocation under the 2014 HIP. This additional funding will be mainly used to respond to the priority needs of newly displaced populations, populations trapped by the conflict, most at risk host communities.

October 2014: modification n°4

The humanitarian situation in Iraq has been deteriorating rapidly in the last months with the escalation of the armed conflict. The UN estimates that at least 23 million people are affected by the conflict with 5.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Amongst them, 1.8 million persons Internally Displaced (IDPs) since January 2014 and 3.6 million living in active conflict areas, of which, at least 2.2 million are in immediate need of humanitarian aid. Access in many parts of western and central Iraq is severely constrained, affecting the ability of partners to deliver humanitarian assistance. Moreover, grave concerns exist as to the increasingly fragile conditions of both local communities and IDPs in several parts of the country.

Most of the displaced have moved in multiple occasions, seeking safer areas and availability of basic services. According to most recent assessments, only during the month of August, about 728 700 persons were displaced, accounting for 42% of the estimated total of IDPs since January. It is estimated that the KR-I hosts 850 000 IDPs, more than half in the governorate of Dohuk. Even though further displacement will continue to occur as a consequence of the ongoing conflict, administrative, security and absorption constraints will surely hamper access of fleeing civilians to safer ground.

Displaced and affected families are faced with multiple and diverse needs that, up until now, have been mainly addressed with in-kind assistance. The capacity of such assistance to meet the varying basic needs of most vulnerable populations groups can only be enhanced by accurate and ongoing needs and gaps assessments. The availability of such information has been scarce and geographically un-even. In locations where humanitarian access is not an issue, scaling up emergency relief efforts has been challenging and the crisis continues to exceed the capacity of the national authorities and the international community to respond.

Available funding will not be sufficient to cover the enormous scale of protracted needs beyond the beginning of 2015. In addition, despite Iraq's standing as an upper-middle income country the political crisis has led to budgetary paralysis (at both central and KRG level), having a direct impact on the delivery of social services and crisis management. It is important that the government of Iraq takes all necessary and immediate steps from their side to provide assistance to the displaced people, including budget transfers to KRG.

The Kurdish Regional Government and the UN have just approved a 2 month plan for the relocation of IDPs in public buildings. There was an urgency to find immediate solutions for IDPs hosted in schools, as these facilities needed to be vacated and made ready to start the - already delayed - academic year. Not all IDPs will have immediate solutions; the plan targets 223 790 IDPs out of the 390 000 living in public buildings. The plan proposes the set up of 26 camps in the 3 Kurdish Governorates for a total of 223 790 IDPS. It is not yet known what kind of shelter solution will be proposed for the IDPs unable/unwilling to relocate into camps but as winter approaches targeting the most vulnerable out of camp IDPs in the KR-I will be a priority.

The efforts of the KRG to receive IDPs and respond to their needs is commendable. Yet, the needs of families trapped in conflict areas should not be forgotten. Displaced persons inside the governorates of Al-Anbar, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Diyala, Kirkuk, and other parts of Iraq who face difficult conditions have been and are mainly supported by local communities whose resources are limited and overstretched. Trying to reach the most vulnerable Iraqis in the hard to reach areas will remain a priority. With the shrinking humanitarian space, ECHO will work with partners to build a programmatic response and access strategy before the situation further deteriorates. Rapid response partnerships able to cover basic, inter-sectorial needs through NFI/CRI distributions and more flexible modalities of assistance like cash in areas of active conflict will be considered for funding. The protection and assistance of people on the move in high-risk locations, staying at and around checkpoint areas, as well as the conditions of most vulnerable population groups such as children, elderly, pregnant women and people with disabilities will remain priorities. Due to the ongoing dynamics of the conflict, the transversal integration of protection and multi-sectorial, needs-based assistance will be encouraged to mitigate the consequences of this conflict and the rupture of Iraq's social fabric.

In view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the number of populations displaced, the European Commission has decided to increase by EUR 3 million the allocation under the 2014 HIP. This additional funding will be mainly used to respond to the priority needs of newly Internally Displaced Populations, populations trapped by the conflict, most at risk host communities, and Iraqi refugees in the neighbouring countries (Jordan and Lebanon, but also covering Syria, Iran and Turkey) if it should become necessary.

August 2014: modification n°3

The continuous escalation of the armed conflict in northern Iraq has again triggered the displacement of thousands of Iraqis across Ninewa and the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KR-I). In the past days, as heavy fighting in Sinjar extended to Tal Afar and areas close to the

Mosul Dam, nearly 200 000 people fled to several locations in Ninewa governorate and the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KR-I). This is in addition to those who were forcibly displaced as a result of heavy fighting in the Tal Afar area in the previous week. At least 30 000 IDPs reached Dohuk governorate on 7-9 August, and an unknown number are dispersed throughout Ninewa and the KR-I. Since early June, the Sinjar district in northwest Ninewa, inhabited by a majority of Yazidis and Turkmen, has been the focus of heavy and continuous armed fighting and insecurity, leading to new and secondary forced displacement of a large number of families.

A significant number of Yazidi families who did not manage to flee the city in the early stage of the fighting became trapped by ISIL/IS forces in Jebel Sinjar (the Sinjar mountain chain). Approximately 40 000 members of the Yazidi minority community stranded on the mountains of Sinjar. A still uncertain number of them were able to flee during recent days, either through air evacuations or through a high-risk trek towards the Syrian border. Some families managed to cross the border point of Rabya to Yaroubiyah on the Syrian side, with a proportion of them staying in camps previously hosting Syrian IDPs, other crossing back into Iraq through the PeshKhabour border into the governorate of Dohuk in the Kurdistan Region in Iraq (KR-I). Many of those who remain in the mountain are vulnerable women, children and elderly, under death threat by the armed group ISIL/IS which is surrounding them.

At the same time, armed groups overran the Christian town of Qaraqosh, between the cities of Mosul and Erbil. As a result, 50-80 000 people fled the town to KR-I on 7-8 August; the second displacement for this Christian community since July. In Kirkuk, where approximately 40 000 persons are newly displaced according to local authorities, insecurity is on the rise and new displacement from Kirkuk is now reaching the governorate of Sulaymaniyah in KR-I.

Since mid-July, humanitarian organizations point to a marked increase in the number of internally displaced persons countrywide. Preliminary OCHA figures indicate that the total number of Iraqi IDPs may now reach up to 1.2 million country wide, with the International Office for Migration (IOM) having identified IDPs in 1 381 locations across Iraq since January 2014. More than 54% (or 94 597 families) became displaced after June 2014. Today KR-I hosts many IDPs in camps, public buildings (schools, mosques) and informal settlements. The establishment of adequate protection measures for IDPs, especially for minorities and those staying in areas where military forces are being deployed, is of utmost importance.

While humanitarian organisations and local authorities continue responding to the most immediate needs of the displaced, there are serious concerns about the conditions and protection of those families who are today trapped as fighting and bombardment intensify in many parts of northern and central Iraq. Disruption of public services and support networks, budgetary disputes and political turmoil, severe restrictions of humanitarian access to Ninewa, the Disputed Internal Boundaries (DIB), Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and Diyala are on the rise. Attacks against civil structures in conflict areas further increase humanitarian needs for assistance and protection. The protection of people on the move in high-risk locations, staying at and around checkpoint areas, as well as the conditions of most vulnerable population groups such as children, elderly, pregnant women and people

with disabilities , are of paramount concern. In assessed locations, main needs among IDP families are core relief items (coolers, generators, household items and clothing), followed by shelter, Wash and food. Although the majority of IDPs are with host families, large numbers are renting or staying at hotels. The resources of IDP families and host communities are to reach their breaking point, with IDP families already engaged in tertiary forced displacements.

At the time of writing this report, the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals declared a level 3 emergency for Iraq. The objective of activating this procedure is to ensure a more effective response to the humanitarian needs of affected populations. The gravity of the situation requires the mobilization of resources, tools and leadership/coordination mechanisms beyond normally expected levels. The UN and NGO partners are updating and upscaling contingency plans and reviewing the Strategic Response Plan (SRP) which should be available by the end of September.

In addition to donor contributions and pledges confirmed in June, the United Kingdom, Japan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates confirmed the contributions of GBP 8 million, USD 6.5 million, USD 2 million and USD 5 million respectively. The generous donation by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of USD 500 million has been made available and allocated to UN agencies. Timely, effective and coordinated disbursement of this funding to implementing agencies and partners will boost the fast implementation of emergency response components integrated in the UN Strategic Response Plan for Iraq. DG ECHO, together with other donors, is ensuring a coordinated, principled, response in the allocation of funds available to respond to the humanitarian crisis.

In view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the number of populations displaced, the European Commission has decided to increase by EUR 5 million the allocation under the 2014 HIP. This additional funding will be mainly used to respond to the priority needs of newly Internally Displaced Populations, the most at risk host communities, and Iraqi refugees in the neighbouring countries (Jordan and Lebanon, but also covering Syria, Iran and Turkey if it should become necessary).

June 2014: modification n°2

The political and security environment in Iraq deteriorated substantially during the past two weeks, following a string of large-scale, coordinated operations by armed opposition

groups (AOGs) in Ninewa, Al-Anbar, Salah al-Din, Diyala and northern parts of Baghdad governorate.

As a result, some 500 000 people fled Mosul towards the Kurdish governorates and dispersed in the disputed territories between the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KR-I) and Ninewa. To date, approximately 200 000 IDPs are in Dohuk governorate, 100 000 in Erbil, 175 000 scattered throughout the region. Of those dispersed, many are in makeshift camps, public buildings and host communities along the border with the KR-I. A large number of women and children are observed among the displaced. Reports of hundreds maybe thousands of displaced families in the governorates of Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and

Diyala are also being received; access constraints due to the prevailing security situation are making this difficult to verify.

In the city of Mosul, estimated 25 000 are displaced. At the same time, UN sources report that some are moving back to parts of the city; fuel shortages are however having a dramatic impact on the provision of electricity and safe drinking water.

About 480 000 IDPs as a consequence of the conflict in Al-Anbar governorate add to the recently displaced from Ninewa. Thus, it is estimated that at least one million Iraqis have been forcibly displaced since January 2014. IDP numbers are likely to rise as the areas affected by conflict and violence expand throughout the Iraqi governorates, especially if hostilities move to the capital of Baghdad. At the time of writing, only few new arrivals of Iraqi refugees in the neighbouring countries are reported.

Amidst continuous fighting in Ninewa, Al-Anbar and other Iraqi governorates, there are growing concerns regarding the situation of civilians, including minorities, in conflict-affected areas, areas where population displacement is underway, and areas where IDPs are concentrating. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and a number of human rights organizations called on Government authorities and armed opposition groups (AOGs) in Iraq to stop violence and abuse against civilians in violation of international humanitarian law as summary executions, extrajudicial killings and the high risks of civilians caught in cross fire are being reported in various parts of the country.

Humanitarian organizations are supporting local Kurdish authorities in the organization of IDP camps. At present, two camps are being set up in Khazr and Garmawa in the disputed territories near Kurdish-forces checkpoints raising serious protection concerns.

The vast majority of the displaced in the KR-I are staying with relatives and friends, hotels or public spaces (schools, mosques, parks). Although conditions for IDPs hosted by local communities are stable for the moment, there are concerns that in days and weeks available household resources will be exhausted.

Access by humanitarian actors remains a major challenge due to genuine security concerns, internal security restrictions and impediments by armed actors. The provision of shelter and accommodation, food, non-food items, access to health for IDPs, and support to host communities are being identified as main priorities. The establishment of adequate protection measures for IDPs, especially for those staying in areas where military forces are being deployed is of utmost importance.

The UN and NGO partners are updating contingency plans and reviewing the Strategic Response Plan (SRP) that had been prepared for the humanitarian response to the Al-Anbar crisis at the beginning of the year. It is expected that the revised SRP and corresponding funding requirements will be finalized in the coming days. In addition, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator has submitted a request for emergency funding to the UN-managed Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

In the past days, first donor responses have included contributions from the UK (5M GBP), USA (12.8M USD), Norway (10M USD), Denmark (4M USD), Australia (3M USD), Canada (12M USD). The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has

recently announced a contribution of 500 M USD to be disbursed through the United Nations.

DG ECHO¹ will open an office in the Kurdish Region of Iraq –Erbil- with permanent presence early July to ensure a closely follow up of the humanitarian situation and response.

In view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the number of populations displaced, the European Commission has decided to increase by EUR 5 million the budget of the 2014 HIP. This additional funding will be mainly used to respond to the priority needs of newly Internally Displaced Populations and Iraqi refugees in the neighbouring countries (Jordan and Lebanon, but also covering Syria, Iran and Turkey if it should become necessary).

March 2014: modification n°1

Iraq has seen a wave of violence in Anbar province, where armed groups have fought Government security forces in Falluja and Ramadi. The armed conflict was triggered in late December 2013 by the arrest of Sunni MP Alwani and the forced closure of a protest camp in Ramadi city. The situation in Anbar Governorate remains volatile and highly complex.

After weeks of fighting between armed groups and Iraqi forces the risk that conflict will spread to neighboring governorates of Ninewa (Mosul), Diyala and Salah-Al-Din is high. At the time of writing the civilian toll continues to mount. The Ministry of Displacement and Migration reports **62,679 families displaced** within Anbar, but also to Erbil, Suleymaniah, Dohuk (in the Kurdish region of Iraq), Karbala, Babil, Baghdad, Najaf, Salah-Al-Din and Ninewa. Accurate casualty figures are unknown, but range in the hundreds of civilians killed and wounded. Although still in small numbers, asylum seekers from the Al Anbar Governorate are arriving in Jordan.

The conditions of displaced families (residing in rented accommodation, schools, mosques, etc.) as well as those who have remained or are otherwise trapped in the cities of Ramadi and Fallujah is becoming more critical over time. Secondary and tertiary displacement as the conflict spreads and intensifies is making an already difficult situation more complex.

Windows of opportunity to provide emergency assistance during the ebbs and flow of combat continue to be available as agencies adapt to a new operating environment.

Despite calls by the UN Mission and diplomatic offices for a peaceful solution to the armed conflict, political initiatives have yet to quell the fighting or humanitarian fallout and the current conflict is not likely to be resolved anytime soon. The impact of military operations is becoming more dramatic over time and humanitarian needs are multiplying.

¹ Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

In the last few days, the GoI has announced 10 billion IQD (a little over 6M Euro) for relief operations, the formation of an emergency cell, and 100 billion IQD to rebuild Anbar. The UN Country Team submitted a proposal to the CERF with a total amount of USD 32.4 million. UNHCR is also preparing a separate Anbar emergency response appeal to donors not participating in the CERF.

In view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the number of populations displaced, the European Commission has decided to increase by EUR 3 million the budget of the 2014 HIP. This additional funding will be mainly used to respond to the priority needs of newly Internally Displaced Populations due to the conflict in Al Anbar province.

January 2014: Original HIP

1. CONTEXT

The general situation in Iraq is today characterized by multiple security, political, and economic challenges. DG ECHO's Integrated Analysis Framework for 2013-14 identified moderate humanitarian needs in Iraq. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crisis is assessed to be high. Iraq belongs to category 3 (most severe) of DG ECHO's Crisis Index and to category 2 of DG ECHO's vulnerability Index for 2011-2012.

In 2013, the country is still struggling to maintain national security and build political stability. After more than one year since the full withdrawal of US² troops, the lack of confidence in the Government's ability to effectively ensure the safety of all Iraqi communities is at a high. **In the recent months, security incidents and violent attacks rising both in number and scale have affected main Iraqi cities, thus sparking renewed concerns regarding the potential for a spread of armed violence along sectarian lines in the country.** High levels of criminality in Baghdad city, the so-called Disputed Territories and northern/central governorates are slowing down development efforts. Moreover, despite having become one of the leading oil producers in the world, the country continues dealing with financial hardships and structural difficulties to transform its oil wealth into assets based on sustained reconstruction and development. (IMF³ Country Report No. 13/218, April 2013 – <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13218.pdf>).

In this context, the process of return and resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has come to almost a halt. In the second quarter of 2013, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) reported that there were **1.13 million IDPs in Iraq**. Many Iraqi IDPs are living in protracted displacement and according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), most destitute

² United States

³ International Monetary Fund

IDPs are found in illegal settlements, exposed to eviction and security risks, limited access to basic services and livelihoods and lack of documentation. The largest concentration of IDPs is in the Baghdad governorate. Assessments conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) showed that the wish to return among IDPs had dropped from 45% in 2006 to about 6% in 2012 mostly due to security concerns. As a result, the already complex task of implementing durable solutions is becoming increasingly difficult with many seeing the returns of particular groups in terms of their impact on their communitarian makeup and the balance of power between the different communities.

The Government “Comprehensive Plan to End Displacement”- prepared with the support of UNHCR - defined return as the preferred durable solution. The Plan also incorporated humanitarian elements aimed at improving access to basic services, livelihoods and employment in areas of return. For areas of displacement, shelter programmes were envisaged. The goal of the Plan to eradicate displacement by the end of 2011 remains unmet.

In parallel, returns of Iraqi refugees from Syria have continued regularly since 2011. UNHCR estimates that more than 80 000 Iraqis arrived from Syria since July 2012. Although many of the returning refugees state their intention of benefit from the global resettlement programme; the percentage of returnees indicating their willingness to settle permanently in the country has increased compared to 2011-2012. Main destinations for returning families are Baghdad governorate followed by Ninewa, Diyalla, Anbar and Basrah. UNHCR has put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure the continuity of the resettlement framework for those Iraqis who had initiated the process while still in Syria.

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 USD⁴ 2.2 per person per day). Above all, many Iraqis are victims of violence and insecurity that keeps affecting daily lives and access to basic services in the most violence-prone areas. Specific groups, such as religious minorities, face protection problems. They are still at risk in the areas where security incidents have become common occurrence, such as Mosul and Kirkuk.

Inside the country, there are more than 42 000 Turkish and Iranian Kurds, Ahwazis and Palestinian refugees and asylum seekers registered by UNHCR. Following the escalation of the armed conflict in Syria, an additional 171 984 Syrian refugees had fled to Iraq by September 2013, primarily to the northern Kurdish region and the Anbar governorate in central Iraq. The vast majority of the Syrian refugees are in the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI). The UNHCR-led 2013 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for Iraq estimates that 350 000 Syrians could potentially take refuge in Iraq.

The response to the Syrian refugees in Iraq is covered by HIP Syrian Crisis.⁵

Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries

Accurate figures of how many Iraqis are in neighbouring countries are not available. At the end of April 2013, UNHCR had registered 73 763 Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan; while the total number of Iraqi refugees in the region has decreased to approximately 105 484 registered refugees in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey and Iran. As of May 2013, UNHCR is not registering refugees any longer on *prima facie* basis and has issued new eligibility guidelines for assessing the international protection needs of asylum-seekers from Iraq.⁶

⁴ United States Dollar

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2013/HIPs/syria_en.pdf

⁶ <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4fc77d522.pdf>

2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs

Iraq

The complex security environment still does not allow for comprehensive and countrywide 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 NGOs⁷, most assessments are carried out at a local level and do not provide a global overview of the situation in country.

There is no large scale humanitarian crisis in Iraq, although parts of the population, especially in rural areas, suffer from a lack of access to basic services due to a combination of factors, most notably the long standing consequences of economic sanctions and under-development, prolonged years of conflict and recurrent waves of insecurity and armed violence, corruption, and lack of rule of law. It is difficult to identify the acute humanitarian needs that are the direct consequence of conflict. **Most of populations' vulnerabilities are largely the result of protracted poverty and structural under-development, which require mid- to long-term reconstruction and development responses.**

In the meantime, **large pockets of vulnerable civilians are exposed to an increasingly violence-prone environment, for example, in the Disputed Areas.** Such conditions affect the delivery as well as the access to basic services, especially safe water and quality healthcare.

Neighbouring countries

To some extent, similar gaps in needs assessment prevail in Jordan and Syria where authorities do not allow surveys and outreach. Moreover, without a proper census of the refugees it is impossible to have an accurate profiling of refugees' vulnerabilities and assistance needs.

Notwithstanding, alternative methodologies - including group discussions and consultations held with Iraqis in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon – show that **cash assistance for rent and healthcare (chronic diseases and tertiary treatment) are common priority needs.**

In Lebanon, protection issues are of concern due to the fact that Lebanon does not recognize Iraqis as refugees, who are therefore treated as migrants. The majority does not have a legal residency permit, is considered illegal migrants, and is subject to arrest and deportation.

In Jordan and Lebanon the needs of the Iraqi refugees and assistance to respond to the most vulnerable are seriously overshadowed by the large influx of Syrian refugees into both countries, whereas in Syria itself by the on-going conflict.

⁷ Non-governmental organization

In addition to the immediate response to the needs described above, **it is essential to identify and frame an appropriate solution adapted to the situation of a large number of refugees who will not return or cannot 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 Government of Iraq (GoI) and its ministries for basic services such as health, water, agriculture, have significant budgets that are systematically underspent. The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) is responsible for the promotion and facilitation of assistance, return and integration of IDPs and refugees. **The Ministry has significant funds for IDPs integration and resettlement, but so far has managed to respond to only less than half of the requests it has received and budget allocations are underspent every year.** On a more positive note, GoI has improved its capacity for emergency response after mass casualty explosions.

According to the MoDM instructions of July 2012, returning Iraqi refugees are registered by the Ministry and entitled to cash assistance packages. However, reports from UN and NGO partners indicate that the distribution of cash assistance is extremely slow at governorate level and has so far covered only a portion of registered families and individuals.

Neighbouring countries

Syria: The Government of Syria, although not being signatory of both 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Protocol, maintained an open policy towards Iraqis since 2003. Iraqis can benefit from medical care and education although they cannot access the official labour market. However, the crisis in Syria has affected the situation of the Iraqis considerably. By the end of April 2013, UNHCR was assisting 44 931 Iraqi refugees in Syria and had facilitated the resettlement of approximately 3000 Iraqis to third countries.

Jordan: Due to internal political and security considerations Jordan has much stricter conditions for Iraqis entering its territory. Movement back and forth is not as easy compared to Syria, and vulnerable families often find themselves stuck in Jordan in precarious conditions: undetermined legal status, restricted access to the job market, and depleted savings.

Lebanon: Iraqis are considered as migrants transiting through Lebanon for resettlement to third countries. The Government of Lebanon is not party to the 1951 Convention and does not offer services to Iraqis and assistance has been deferred to UN agencies, NGOs and local charities.

2) International Humanitarian Response

The US remains the largest donor for the Iraqi crisis with a focus on increasing the capacity of Government institutions to take charge of Iraq's development and governance. A total of USD 573 million in bilateral assistance has been requested from the 2014 Fiscal Year (FY), which represents a reduction of 53% from 2012 FY budget levels. US assistance remains focused on support to GoI institutions for the provision of security services in country and economic reforms for the promotion of international trade and private sector-led economic growth.

Iraq

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) summarizes the collective actions and strategies developed by the United Nations Country Team to respond to Iraqi national development priorities for the period 2011-2014.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is currently operating a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) of USD 45.5 million for the period August 2010 - June 2014. The objective of the WFP operation is to support the Government in the provision of social protection and safety nets for vulnerable groups affected by conflict in 41 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 a limited number of organizations working to regain 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 areas of difficult access.

Neighbouring countries

The conflict in **Syria** is affecting the entire country including Iraqi refugees and their coping mechanisms, which are largely based on the informal economy. They are likely to increasingly rely on external assistance, notably NFIs⁸ and cash assistance.

In **Jordan**, 5 000 Iraqi families are meant to receive financial assistance from UNHCR in 2013 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.

In **Lebanon**, priority sectors of assistance for UNHCR and NGOs are health sector (primary health care, secondary, tertiary, and mental healthcare), and material support to the most vulnerable (mainly through food and NFI vouchers).

⁸ Non-food items

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 management of operations is still the norm in insecure areas. Security threats for international staff persist in the country and particularly in Baghdad, north/central governorates and the Disputed Territories. Attempts to redeploy INGO⁹ teams (including international staff) in the field as a result of acceptance approaches and policies multiplied recently. However, **the increasing number of violent attacks recorded in 2013 could trigger a reversal of some of the positive trends registered in 2010-2012.**

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 operations from a fragmented coverage. Their movements remain hindered by security, and they are mainly able to move freely in areas which are considered safe and of low level humanitarian needs such as the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI) and South Iraq. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an exception due to its mandate in armed conflict. Also, the organization has established access to all groups through the detention activities and developed a unique acceptance policy in Iraq which allows for a relatively strong field presence without using armed escorts. With more than 100 delegates covering the Iraqi crisis in Iraq and Jordan, ICRC has the widest coverage of all humanitarian organizations working in Iraq.

As a consequence direct project monitoring activities remain a concern for DG ECHO. It has not been deemed feasible for the majority of DG ECHO partners to directly monitor their projects or for DG ECHO to accompany their teams during field needs assessment. Again in this case, the ICRC is an exception as the only partner with a proven record of risk management and capacity to carry out field visits in most of Iraq.

Neighbouring countries

Syria: The on-going armed conflict in the country has seriously hindered the capacity of humanitarian actors to have free and unimpeded access to persons in need of humanitarian assistance. This situation affects also programmes in support to Iraqi refugees. The Government is imposing strict procedures to authorize the work of INGOs in country, including clearances by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) for all its activities. It is very difficult to undertake

⁹ International non-governmental organization

independent surveys or needs assessments while very few outreach activities are either possible due to security risks or authorized by Syrian authorities.

Jordan: The Government has implemented a more open policy to the work of INGOs. Outreach is possible, and NGOs can work virtually everywhere in the country.

Lebanon: The Government does not recognize Iraqis as refugees and are therefore treated as migrants. The majority does not have a legal residency permit, is considered illegal migrants, and is subject to arrest and deportation.

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

The proposed humanitarian response includes the following activities:

Iraq: Following extensive consultations with partners, DG ECHO contribution will continue focusing on selected interventions aimed at covering **urgent needs and enhancing access to basic services in remote violence-prone areas**. DG ECHO support in **detention/protection activities shall remain a priority** beyond the US forces hand-over of detainees to national authorities. DG ECHO actions to address the needs of Syrian refugees in Iraq will be covered by the HIP for the Syria crisis.

Neighbouring countries:

Syria: 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 the HIP for the Syria crisis.

Jordan: DG ECHO should continue 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 continue supporting **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 and health to Iraqi refugees) for the most vulnerable.

Effective coordination is essential. DG ECHO supports the **Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda (ITA)** and encourages partners to demonstrate their engagement in implementing its objectives, to take part in coordination mechanisms (e.g. Humanitarian Country Team/Clusters) and to allocate resources to foster the ITA roll-out.

Partners will be expected to ensure full compliance with **visibility** requirements and to acknowledge the funding role of the EU/DG ECHO, as set out in the applicable contractual arrangements.

4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

4.1. Other DG ECHO interventions

In the past years, the focus of EU assistance to Iraq has gradually shifted from infrastructure rehabilitation to capacity and institution building to assist Iraqi institutions in mobilising its own resources to improve the welfare of the population. In this light, capacity building for the authorities in the sectors of education, water and governance 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.

The on-going programming exercise 2014-2020 has identified three focal areas of intervention: Rule of Law and Human Rights; Capacity Building in primary and secondary education; Sustainable Energy for all. The budget allocation is still under discussion.

- Through the Syria crisis Humanitarian Implementation Plan (ECHO/WWD/ BUD/2014/91000), DG ECHO will pursue its support to Iraqis in Syria. With the deterioration of the humanitarian situation, Iraqi refugees living in Syria are equally affected as the local population living in Syria.
- The 2012 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the European Union for its over six decades' contribution to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe, dedicated the award money to children affected by conflict. In Iraq, ACTED¹⁰ is running an EU Children of Peace project in Domiz camp offering a place where youngsters between the ages five to 15 can participate in supervised recreational and therapeutic activities.

¹⁰ Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development

4.2. Other concomitant EU interventions

In the context of the EC support to countries affected by the Syria crisis, non-humanitarian assistance to Iraq totals Euro 7.4 million with funds coming from the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) of the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation EuropeAid (DG DEVCO) and from the Instrument for Stability (IfS) managed by the European External Action Service (EEAS). Through these funds 2 main operations are being implemented:

- A project to support the management of migration and Iraqi refugees fleeing Syria and returning to Iraq.
- A regional Capacity-Building project for host-countries (including Iraq) to better cope with refugee influx.

4.3 Exit scenarios

Considering the violent attacks of recent months and the explosive situation inside Iraq with potential spread of armed violence along sectarian lines in the country, exit scenarios are not yet to be considered.