

## IRAQ SPECIAL MEASURE

### 1. IDENTIFICATION

Title	<b>Support to Jordan's Education System to respond to the increasing educational needs of displaced Iraqi people</b>		
Total cost	EC contribution €26.68 million		
Aid method / management mode	Sector Policy Support Programme (centralised management)		
DAC-code	111, 112, 113	Sector	Education

### 2. RATIONALE AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

#### 2.1. Economic and social situation

Jordan is hosting an increasing number of displaced Iraqi men, women and children<sup>1</sup>. No accurate estimate of the number of Iraqi people who moved across their country's borders over the last four years exists. However, based on Iraqi demographic data and the official estimates of the governments in the region and UN agencies, of the two million externally displaced Iraqis, between 450 000 and 750 000 Iraqis may now live in Jordan.

Most Iraqis in Jordan live in urban centres (the capital Amman and in Ruseifa, Zarqa, Irbid and Balqa governorates) rather than in rural areas or refugee camps, but despite having been moderately integrated into Jordanian society, their living conditions differ and are for many increasingly complicated. Although food supply is not so much an issue, many Iraqis live with poor basic facilities (water, energy, primary health care, education). An estimated 20,000 Iraqi children attended Jordanian schools (public and private) in the course of 2006-2007. These large numbers of Iraqis draw heavily on the social/economic structure of the country with side effects on the local population, e.g. increase in prices for food and real estate. This has in some cases led to stigmatisation of the Iraqi population. Although an accurate analysis of the impact of Iraqi presence in Jordan is not as yet available, the high number of Iraqis has magnified internal security concerns, strained social services, and allegedly aggravated economic and environmental problems.

#### **Jordan's response to the presence of Iraqi displaced persons**

Jordan has not signed the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, the major international agreements governing the status of refugees. The Government has not provided a legal definition of refugees and has not established domestic policies for the determination of refugee status. The Jordanian Interior Ministry divides Iraqis into categories such as guests, visitors, investors or residents, but the

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<sup>1</sup> Jordan is according to UNHCR the 5<sup>th</sup> country in the top 10 refugee-hosting countries at the end of 2006 and ranks the 1<sup>st</sup> in the top host-countries, end-2006 with 84 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants more than double the second country, Armenia with 38 - <http://www.unhcr.org/country/jor.html>

term “refugee” is not used. The Government of Jordan has for long refused the principle of local integration, yet it has recently opened up public services and allows now Iraqi students to enrol in the Kingdom's public schools without the need to have a residency permit. The school registration period has been extended until the end of September 2007, and figures on children registration (including Iraqi students) may be released later.

At several occasions Jordan has called for support from the international community to deal with the impact of displaced Iraqis in the country. In several International Conferences on the matter organised this year, the Government stressed that it does not have the resources to meet the educational, health, utilities and other needs of a rapidly growing Iraqi community.

## **2.2. Cooperation policy of beneficiary country**

The National Agenda does not mention the challenge of providing basic services to an increasing influx of displaced persons as such and the Government of Jordan has made it clear from the outset that 'Iraqi visitors' will not be targeted through parallel structures but that the Government needs support for existing structures and systems to provide support for those most in need. The Iraqis Hosting Neighbouring Countries Meeting which took place in Jordan on 26 July 2007 reaffirmed this position and called for support to reinforce existing institutions and structures dealing with basic services to the population.

Given the ongoing "Support to the National Education Strategy" programme, a €42 million programme of the European Commission started in 2006, the EC was approached to extend its support to meet the needs of deprived Iraqi children and students, building on the existing Government's policies, strategies and programmes.

## **2.3. Government Sector Programme**

Lacking natural resources, the development of a high quality labour is a priority for Jordan. The country has one of the highest education enrolment rates of the MEDA region, relatively low illiteracy rates and almost gender balance (women represent 46% of university students). However, modernisation of infrastructure, equipment and an upgrading of training are necessary, in particular in relation to more deprived areas and to vulnerable groups. This involves an important financial effort for a demographically very young country which already devotes 5.3% of GDP and 10.20% of total government expenditure to education. The Government of Jordan first developed a major reform programme called '*Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE)*'. The Ministry of Education adopted in February 2006 a comprehensive National Education Strategy, a more complete vision covering the areas 'left out' by ERfKE such as universal access, opportunity and equity regardless of gender, ethnicity or economic status.

The EC "Support to Jordan's National Education Reform" programme mentioned above comprises a €40.1 million budget support component, aimed at helping the Ministry of Education on the implementation of the ERfKE reform; and a Technical Assistance component of €1.9 million, targeted at the development of programmes and strategies for complementary areas like Vocational Training, Special Needs and

Handicapped Students Education and Educational Research and Development for Underperforming Students.

Last year between 14.000 and 20.000 Iraqi pupils with a residence permit joined the Jordanian educational system. Initial administrative barriers (fees, enrolment process) have now been addressed and the enrolment rate is therefore expected to increase. The main reasons for the so-far low level of Iraqi students' school enrolment are:

- Lack of capacity with already overcrowded schools (the basic educational needs of all Jordanian pupils have not been fully met as of yet)
- financial difficulty to cover education related costs (fees, transport, uniforms, supplies)
- need for the children to support the family, especially in female headed households
- psychological and legal vulnerability of the displaced
- No residency status when parents have failed to renew their visas.

Rough estimates indicate that a further intake of up to 50 000 Iraqi children will be needed before the end of 2007/08 (UNHCR/UNICEF call for a feasible intake of 40 000 Iraqi children this year). The cost per child per year is estimated by the Ministry of Education at 1000 JOD (equivalent to approximately €1000).

The Government of Jordan is facing the difficult question of how increasing needs can be met within an already difficult budgetary situation. For the implementation of the National Strategy and with EC support a simplified medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) has been developed. In the absence of a complete financial gap analysis the MTEF does show a shortage in financing for 2007 of 35 million JOD (including ongoing donor support). The gap will increase for 2008. EC support will continue to be channelled through sector budget support, accompanied with a technical assistance component.

#### **2.4. Lessons learnt**

The Government of Jordan has established a track record for undertaking reforms, which is one reason for having received significant support from the donor community. In the field of education the Government of Jordan has elaborated a clear sector policy, designed a reform strategy, and formulated a sound implementation plan. The EC's experience with budget support programmes in Jordan has been fairly positive, with favourable evaluations of previous Structural Adjustment Facilities.

As to the special question of Iraqi displaced persons the EC has developed a comprehensive and coherent approach to address the different questions, through its ongoing ECHO programme in Jordan and the region and the strong involvement of DG RELEX and other services in Iraq and the Neighbouring Countries. Two

missions took place in 2007 preceding this identification fiche: by ECHO in May 2007 and by RELEX in June 2007.

## **2.5. Complementary actions**

The Jordanian education reform programme receives co-funding through loans and grants from several donors (WB, USAID, UK, JICA, and CIDA). The Ministry of Education has set up a General Policy Steering Committee and four Sub-committees covering different components. The EC is a full member of the ongoing education coordination network and, through the €42 million "Support to Jordan's National Education Reform" programme, one of the main donors for the education sector in Jordan.

In terms of targeting the Iraqi population, UNHCR and UNICEF have called for vast support and the US pledged USD 30 Million and might pledge extra contributions to the UN in the near future. ECHO allocated so far €10.2 million for Iraqi displaced persons, and Europe Aid allocated €10 million to Cluster F (Refugees and IDPs) of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI).

## **2.6. Donor coordination**

The overall coordination, harmonisation and alignment of donor efforts in the country are currently led by UNDP, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the different line Ministries. The "Donor/Lender Consultation Group (DLCG)" process initiated in Jordan in 2000, where the EC has a very active role, ensures a forum for an 'exchange of views' between all active donors.

Cooperation between the EC and the EU Member States is effected through monthly meetings chaired by the EU, with a special emphasis on the implementation of an agreed "EU road map for donor harmonisation and alignment". Coordination with the World Bank and EIB is done under the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the three institutions, launched in 2004. Coordination meetings to address the humanitarian issues related to the presence of the Iraqi displaced persons exist and are attended by ECHO. UNICEF chairs the informal coordination group on 'Education for vulnerable Iraqi children' (attended by UN agencies, NGOs and donors including the EC) and convenes the education sector coordination group.

## **3. DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1. Objectives**

The overall objective of the EC support programme is to contribute - through the ongoing education reform programme - to the stabilisation of the education situation in Jordan following an unexpected influx of displaced persons from Iraq.

As specific objectives, the programme will try to consolidate the performance and quality of education services and to increase the managerial capacity of the Government of Jordan and specifically the Ministry of Education.

### 3.2. Expected results and main activities

The expected results include:

- Increased enrolment of Iraqi children during the next two school years;
- School physical environment is improved in order to maintain the quality of the public education system (pupil/teacher ratio etc...);
- Improved learning environment in primary and secondary by providing suitable equipment and materials;
- School principals, teachers and school counsellors working in targeted project areas are equipped with skills and knowledge to enable them to provide basic psycho-social support to displaced children and underperforming students;
- Improved capacity of the Ministry of Education to manage the influx of Iraqi children and to improve the performance of the system by proactive and reactive actions;
- Increased diagnosis capacity, provisions of quality education and support measures for schools enrolling displaced persons and a significant number of underperforming students.

Activities will include the provision of extra facilities, services, material, equipment, staffing and staff training.

To measure the outcomes and outputs of the support programme, specific indicators have been identified by the the Ministry of Education, including:

- Annual student population growth per level (primary-secondary-others);
- Implementation of a national survey on causes of possible system underperformance;
- Number of children enrolled per level per directorate disaggregated by gender;
- For the three school years of 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009:
  - - Number of Iraqi students enrolled, per level by gender and by directorate<sup>2</sup>;
  - - Number of existing schools and classrooms per level and per directorate;
  - - Number of teachers per level - distribution per directorate and by gender;
  - - Number of extra teachers recruited;

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<sup>2</sup>

A directorate is a MoE administrative unit at governorate level, there are 36 country wide.

- - Number of supervisors in place (per directorate and if possible by gender);

### **3.3. Stakeholders**

The main stakeholders are the Ministry of Education, the Governorate/District's Directorates of Education, and the schools. The beneficiaries of the EC support will be children and students, the staff of the Ministry and different directorates, the teachers and parents, in particular, but not exclusively, those who are a member of the Iraqi community living –temporarily- in Jordan.

### **3.4. Risks and assumptions**

Assumptions and related risks:

- Continued political and organisational commitment to support the Iraqi displaced population;
- Continued commitment and capacity of the Ministry of Education;
- Changes are introduced in the curricula and in the teacher training system to address identified causes of underperformance in key competences;
- Quality technical assistance for capacity building can be identified;

### **3.5. Crosscutting Issues**

The programme will have a clear positive effect on the awareness about respect for human rights and about equal opportunities for Jordanian and Iraqi boys and girls in terms of access to quality education. It is expected to be neutral on environment and good governance.

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

### **4.1. Implementation method**

This support to the ongoing education programme will have three components:

- the major component will be sector budget support under centralised management;
- a “technical assistance” component under centralised management will assist in building the capacity of the Ministry of Education;
- A follow-up, evaluation and audit component, under centralised procedures.

All payments will be centralised.

#### **4.2. Budget and calendar**

The total amount of EC support is €26.68 million, of which €26.48 million is in the form of direct budget support and € 200,000 for technical assistance, audit and evaluation. The technical assistance component will focus on capacity building with the Ministry of Education and where feasible at Governorate or District level. The operational period is 24 months as from the signature of the Financing Agreement.

The €26.48 million will be disbursed directly to the Treasury to be allocated for the Ministry of Education budget. Disbursement will be in two tranches - fast tracked to allow the enrolment of students in the school-years 2007/2008 and 2008/2009, yet conditional to the stability of the macro-economic framework, efficient public expenditure management, the ongoing implementation of the education sector strategy, respect of the sector MTEF, effective government-led donor coordination and - for the second tranche - achievement of performance indicators.

#### **4.3. Procurement and award of grants procedures**

All contracts implementing the financing agreement must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

#### **4.4. Performance monitoring and criteria for disbursement**

The Ministry of Education has an efficient system for the data collection and analysis allowing for a complete annual statistical repertory, available at a rhythm compatible with an efficient management of the system.

#### **4.5. Evaluation and audit**

The implementation of the programme will be followed up regularly by EC services, assisted by a team of qualified experts who will carry out supervision missions according with a mission schedule. One of the missions will have as objective the appreciation of the level of achievement of the targets set for the different indicators. The programme will be the subject of an external evaluation managed by the Commission at the end of the implementation.

#### **4.6. Communication and visibility**

The European Commission will follow the Visibility Guidelines pertaining to EC funded sector support programmes.