

**DRC Iraq
January 2012**

HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

1. Brief description of the Regional programme

The goal of DRC's work in the region is the protection and promotion of durable solutions to refugee and displacement problems in the Middle East and North Africa, on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights. Durable solutions are based on long-term safety and security, restitution or compensation for lost property, and establishment of an environment that sustains life of former refugees and IDPs under normal economic and social conditions.

DRC has been present in the Middle East since 2003 where an assessment was conducted in Iraq with the aim of mapping the need for DRC intervention in the country. DRC was one of the first organisations to provide humanitarian assistance following the invasion in 2003, opening an office in Diyala, and soon after in Basra in the south.

Over the years the programme has developed in both geographical spread and the types of assistance provided. At present DRC is implementing activities in 12 out of 18 governorates in Iraq, and expects to expand this to all 18. The main sectors of intervention are shelter, infrastructure rehabilitation, livelihoods, education, legal aid and capacity building of local government and NGOs.

Although the high level of insecurity required that expatriate staff relocate, the programme has continued successfully through remote management from Amman. However, since early 2011 DRC started to re-deploy expatriate staff into Iraq and plan to recruit even more international employees during 2012.

In Syria, DRC has been operating since 2007. DRC was one of the first INGOs to get authorisation from the Syrian authorities to operate in the country. Our activities in Syria target Iraqi refugees within the sectors of social support through community centres, education and livelihood support. Many of the refugees are illegal in the country and lack sufficient resources, why their ability to live decently and with dignity in a country affected by unemployment and extensive poverty is put at risk.

Since September 2004, DRC have been implementing projects in Lebanon, a country that hosts approximately 250,000 Palestinian and 12,000 Iraqi refugees. We are currently implementing several projects in favour of both groups. Over the years, the core activities within the programme have changed according to needs and the development of the projects. In general the main focus of our activities has been on advocacy, legal aid, education and livelihood activities.

DRC is currently in the process of getting registration to work in the occupied Palestinian territories.

2. DRC Iraq objectives, partners and stakeholders

Strategic Objective: DRCs strategic objectives for Iraq and the Iraqi displacement follow the direction set in the CAP and the Regional Response Plan. DRC's overall objective remains the protection and promotion

of durable solutions to displacement affected populations on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights.

DRC overall objective is framed by DRCs assistance framework and based on our comparative advantages and capacities available in each country program and in the region. A parallel implementation of complementary relief, rehabilitation and development activities is called for due to the fact that the operational context fluctuate in an often unpredictable manner between periods of relative tranquillity and violence. In line with this operational premise, DRC will continue to balance against the fact that most of the displaced Iraqi – whether refugees or IDPs – will not be able to pursue any of the durable solutions in near future, but on the contrary remain in danger of experiencing a deterioration in their livelihood and at times even requiring subsistence relief.

Considering the roles and capacities of the humanitarian stakeholders and duty-bearers throughout the region, DRC's ability to play a direct role in relation to resettlement is limited except from drawing attention to especially vulnerable caseloads and/or persons with special protection needs not available at their present refuge. DRCs support will consists mainly of advocacy and referral.

In terms of integration, the refugee hosting countries remain reluctant to support initiative that promote such a direction, but much is required and falls within DRC's capacity and comparative advantage in terms of strengthening and advocating for a legal framework protecting the rights and livelihoods of the refugees while waiting to pursue other durable solutions if not integration. Integration / re-integration for IDPs in Iraq remain an option pending political and security related stability as well as access to proper livelihoods. The capacity of duty-bearers and the national civil society are far from able to bridge this gap leaving the international humanitarian community, including DRC, with an important role of strengthening the capacity of the national stakeholders while addressing basic livelihood and subsistence needs through substitution.

The rehabilitation of Iraq remains crucial to establishing a conducive environment for return for both refugee and IDPs. The return as an informed and voluntary choice remains a precondition for all DRC involvement. With this precondition in mind, DRC regards return as the most ideal and realistic durable solution for the majority of the refugees and IDPs, and will be able to put interventions in place both in Iraq as well as in the refugee hosting countries of Syria and Lebanon to support such a development. While anticipating a conducive environment for return, vulnerable segments among the Iraqi refugee population continue to need targeted assistance to avoid a degeneration of livelihoods.

Partners: DRC main partners are

- the Iraqi authorities (central, regional, provincial and municipal);
- community leaders;
- local NGOs and civil society

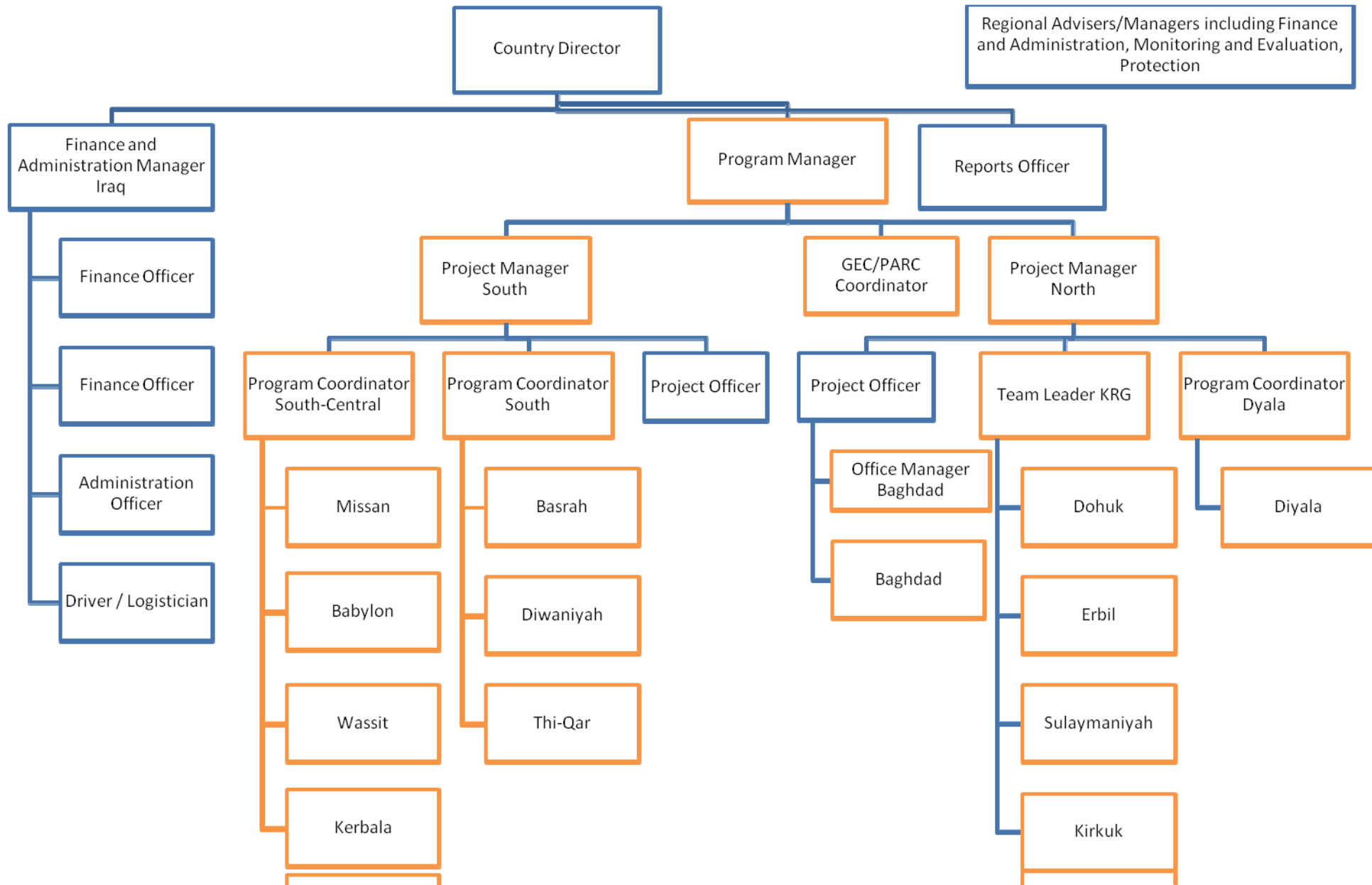
DRC activities in Iraq are currently funded by OFDA, UNICEF, UNHCR and AusAid.

Stakeholders:

- DRC's primary beneficiaries are Iraqis affected by displacement including IDPs, returnees and vulnerable members of displacement affected communities.
- DRC coordinates its operations with other international NGOs, ICRC, UN agencies and national NGOs. DRC has been an active member of the Protection and Shelter Sector outcome teams and intends to advocate for inclusion in the UNAMI equivalent replacing the SOTs with OCHA's phase out in Iraq.
- DRC participates in joint coordination platforms involving authorities and aid agencies in Iraq and Jordan, and further supports coordination at the governorate level in Iraq through its project 'Support to Governorate Emergency Cells.

- DRC is also an active member of the NGO coordination committee for Iraq (NCCI) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

3. Organisational Chart (in blue: DRC staff based in Jordan, in orange: DRC staff based in Iraq)



4. Local, external and internal standards

DRC Iraq is committed to the standards listed in the DRC global HAF (available on www.drc.dk).

The Danish Refugee Council applies a right-based approach incorporating its core principles into all DRC Middle East programming, as per the DRC Vision and Mandate. In line with its commitments, DRC ensures to be fully accountable to its target beneficiary groups and all relevant stakeholders through wide and proper information dissemination, open and transparent selection process, meaningful participation of relevant parties and properly established complaint handling procedures all through the phases of planning, implementation and monitoring of running activities. DRC further supports and ensures that all the duty-bearers are also held accountable.

5. How DRC relates to its beneficiaries

DRC Iraq is committed to providing useful information to its beneficiaries where the organisation deems it safe to do so. Due to the highly sensitive and complex Iraqi situation and to the related security constraints, DRC adopts a low profile approach. Security does vary significantly from governorate to governorate and DRC is currently looking into ways to improve HAF compliance in areas such as the Kurdish areas in the north. In general, DRC will avoid making information publicly available and will work in close cooperation with local authorities and community leaders to identify and relate to the beneficiaries.

- DRC Iraq analyses ways to involve intended beneficiaries in project design, implementation and monitoring where feasible but always giving the highest priority to beneficiary and DRC staff's safety,
- Where appropriate documentation is translated into Arabic, e.g. all documentation provided to beneficiaries such as those who use the Protection Assistance Centres (PACs). Where individuals are unable to read and write, DRC assists by either translating a document, or reading the information to them,
- DRC systematically consults the beneficiaries during the phases of needs assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through interviews, regular staff visit, impact surveys,
- To identify intended beneficiaries and their representatives, DRC discusses with the local authorities and other stakeholders. Representatives of local communities and local authorities participate in project assessments and design. They are involved all along the project implementation and are part of the monitoring process during and after project completion.

6. List of current projects

Project title	Supporting the improvement of water and sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion in Schools in Iraq
Focus area(s)	WASH, Education
Donor(s)	UNICEF
Objective(s)	Increased realization of children's rights to survival and development through enhanced WASH practices and access thereby increased equitably and sustainable access in schools in Iraq.
Beneficiaries	Iraqi IDPs, Returnees, Host communities
Authorities involved	Local authorities
Implementing partners	Danish Refugee Council

Project title	Enhancing capacity of duty bearers to respond to emergencies through strengthening and expanding governorate level coordination mechanisms.
Focus area(s)	Capacity building
Donor(s)	OFDA
Objective(s)	- Strengthen the coordination capacities and presence of the GECs across Iraq in

	emergency response and assistance to vulnerable populations in their area of responsibilities and finalize feasibility study for Baghdad GEC; - Ensure the existence of preparedness mechanisms including contingency plans to coordinate responses to disaster risks that may occur in the future within the governorate; - Expand and strengthen technical capacities of duty bearers in 17 governorates.
Beneficiaries	Iraqi IDPs, Returnees, Host communities
Authorities involved	Iraqi Government at governorate level
Implementing partners	Governorate Emergency Cells (GEC)

Project title	Pillar 3 Centre
Focus area(s)	Legal Aid, Protection Monitoring
Donor(s)	UNHCR
Objective(s)	- Civil Status documentation strengthened - Program management, coordination and support strengthened and optimized
Beneficiaries	Iraqi IDPs, returnees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and host communities
Authorities involved	Iraqi government ministries
Implementing partners	Local NGOs

Project title	Pillar 4 South
Focus area(s)	Shelter, Infrastructure, NGO capacity building
Donor(s)	UNHCR
Objective(s)	- Supply of potable water increased or maintained - Shelter and infrastructure improved - Co-operation with partners strengthened
Beneficiaries	Iraqi IDPs, returnees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and host communities
Authorities involved	Iraqi government ministries
Implementing partners	Local NGOs

Project title	Improving access to livelihood opportunities in Iraq
Focus area(s)	Education, Livelihoods
Donor(s)	AusAid
Objective(s)	To facilitate Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVI) and more specifically Female Headed Households (FHH) in vulnerable Iraqi communities to access stable incomes and livelihood opportunities through the provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET).
Beneficiaries	Iraqi IDPs, host communities and vulnerable individuals
Authorities involved	Iraqi government ministries
Implementing partners	Local NGOs

7. Accountability improvement plans for 2011/2012

New quality objectives	Outputs	Means of verification	Resp and timeframe
Contextualized framework for 2011-12.	HAF AIP developed for 11-12. Core principles translated into Arabic and available in DRC Iraq offices.	HAF AIP. IEC material in Arabic produced.	AL Feb 2011 To be reviewed end of Feb 2012
DRC staff skills are enhanced and quality of	Training package and plan for 2011-12.	Training plan. Training evaluations.	Feb 2012

assistance improved			
External communication and internal complaints mechanism strengthened.	Regional quarterly newsletter – Arabic and English Internal complaints mechanism revised and included in induction training. Pilot for partner and beneficiary complaints mechanism KRG and possibly CC Diyala	Newsletter. Induction training notes and # complaints received. Self-assessment 2011, 12.	AM (HQ) Ongoing MM Jan 2012EM Feb 012 De
More systematic use of participatory approach.	Guidance note and training on participatory methods. Ethical photography guidance and consent form.	Guidance note. Training plan. Impact evaluations. Completed forms received head office.	PMs Feb 2012
DRC staff are aware of their rights to complain and also provide feedback	Internal complaints mechanism more user-friendly and included in induction training. Annual Review.	Complaints record. Induction training plan. AR minutes.	Feb 2012
Commitment to continual improvement of DRC staff and partners	M&E plan for 2011-12. MTR and AR for 2011-12. Capacity building training for DRC staff, GoI and local NGOs External impact evaluation.	M&E plan. MTR and AR notes. Training plan and notes. Evaluation report.	All staff – ongoing

Full exonerations are requested for HAP 2010 Standard benchmark 3, 4 and 5 based on DRC staff safety and security. Where security and funding permits DRC Iraq is committed to HAP 2010 Standard, principles and benchmarks, and hence the actions included under these benchmarks refer to those areas where DRC staff can safely carry out such tasks.