
Quarterly Report

October – December 2008

Iraq Programme

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Description of conflict

Five years after the US-led invasion, Iraq remains a very unsettled and divided society. Iraq is faced with one of the largest displacement and humanitarian crises in the world.

Decades of successive conflict and international sanctions have left devastating effects on Iraq and its population. After the 2003 invasion there were high expectations for creating a stable and democratic Iraq and establishing a strong market economy. Unfortunately, the events took a different direction and what transpired was a severe security deterioration. The infrastructure is now in a worse condition than before 2003; major economic indicators are showing serious decline while the delivery of basic social services can hardly meet the demand. The serious blow to the already fragile situation was caused by the Samara shrine bombing on 22 February 2006. The outburst of sectarian violence that has escalated since resulted in movements of hundreds of thousands along sectarian lines. The estimates reported by IOM (mid 2007) are indicating that the number of new IDP's is close to 1,000,000. The large majority of IDPs have followed the "usual" displacement pattern for Iraq – tribal/family lines and areas. New IDP burdened together with the old IDP caseload made up the total number of IDPs in Iraq to 2.2 million. This situation has pushed the state system to the limits while the absorbing capacities of the host communities are barely coping with the additional population and the needs they represent.

Current Iraqi and American strategies for responding to the Iraqi displacement assume that security will continue to steadily improve over the next two years. However, the situation in Iraq remains very volatile, and consequently DRC is developing plans for Iraq based on all possible scenarios, whether this be a deterioration or improvement in security.

Displacement situation	<p>During the quarter we saw an increasing movement of IDP returnees to Dyala; a continued limited number of Kurdish refugees returning from Iran with limited change in the Southern governorates. It should be emphasised that the return of any significant scale is not happening in spite of expectations (and claims) of certain international and national actors. It has been reported that the issue of secondary displacement is emerging as many of those who return are not able to enter their property so they have to look for other alternatives. In order to deal with this issue the Prime Minister Maliki issued an order for all illegal occupants to vacate the properties or to face forceful eviction however it is widely thought that this can't be materialized as it would create more problems.</p>
DRC'S PRESENCE	
DRC history	<p>DRC has been working in Diyala governorate (north-central) since April 2003 and in Lower South (Basra) since March 2004. DRC was one of the first agencies to begin operations in Iraq after the invasion and ensured rapid-start-up to respond to the humanitarian needs of 60 000 secondary-displaced Arab IDPs, who mainly fled the Kurdish north to the Arab south of Diyala governorate. As the security situation deteriorated, DRC expatriate staff left Diyala in April 2004 and continued implementation by remote management. During late 2005, the security situation further deteriorated and resulted in a downscaling of activities in Diyala which has continued during 2006 and 2007.</p> <p>In Lower South, DRC opened its office in Basra in March 2004 but was soon after forced to relocate expatriate staff to Kuwait due to security concerns. The operation start-up was consequently delayed, but picked up during 2005 and has further improved since.</p> <p>In September 2007 DRC took over activities in three south central governorates, Kerbala, Wassit and Missan, from Ockenden International and all management for Iraq operations were centralised to Amman. In 2008 activities were started in the Kurdish area and Thi Qar. In the latter quarter DRC started the process of GEC capacity building in Babylon and Kirkuk.</p>
Brief narrative description of current DRC programme	<p>DRC is presently implementing programs across 11 of the 18 Governorates in Iraq, namely, Basra, Diyala, Missan, Wassit, Kerbala, Babylon and Thi-Qar, Kirkuk, Dohuk, Erbil and Sulamanyah. The DRC Iraq national team is roughly 140 strong.</p> <p>All implementation takes place in close co-operation with local stakeholders such as the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), Governorate officials, local councils and committees, UNHCR, IOM and other parties. Please see below a brief description of the activities undertaken by DRC:-</p> <p>Emergency distribution of non food items and water as the need dictates (to date this has been primarily in Diyala Governorate which has suffered extensively with</p>

	<p>ongoing conflicts).</p> <p>Income generation activities are implemented in six governorates. In Basra, Thi Qar and Diyala in the form of small in kind grants (IKG) and vocational trainings to vulnerable households. In Missan, Kerbala and Wassit DRC provides support for small business set ups.</p> <p>Shelters, consisting of 4x4 m concrete block extensions, are constructed in Basra and shelter kits (windows, door and plastic sheets) in Basra, Thi Qar and Diyala.</p> <p>Infrastructure is Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) such as repair of water supplies, electricity lines, bridges, schools, roads etc. These projects are implemented in all southern Governorates.</p> <p>Protection in the form of three Protection and Assistance Centres (PACs) manned by lawyers, and social workers take place in the south central areas.</p> <p>Capacity building exist in one form or another in all our activities but four interesting projects are: a) sub-grants to National NGOs in Diyala, b) support to the Governorate Emergency Cell (GEC) in 9 governorates including KRG and c) capacity building of unemployed persons in cooperation with industrial schools in Basra; d)capacity building of the Directorate of Displacement and Migration (DDM) in KRG.</p>
Strategic objective of programme	Protection and promotion of durable solutions to displacement affected populations on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights.
Immediate objectives of programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displacement affected populations have their immediate subsistence needs alleviated • Displacement affected groups are supported in restoring, protecting and developing self-reliance capacity. • Local stakeholders' capacity to protect fundamental rights of displacement affected groups has been strengthened.
Target group(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internally displaced, including old caseloads, newly (after February 2006) displaced and secondary displaced in Diyala • Returnee refugees • Refugees • Vulnerable host communities and households
Main sector(s) /type(s) of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection • Shelter and infrastructure • Income generating activities • Capacity Building • Emergency distributions
List of donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danida • UNHCR • IOM
MAIN DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PAST QUARTER	
Main external developments and challenges faced during	During the quarter we saw an increasing movement of IDP returnees to Dyala; a continued limited number of Kurdish refugees returning from Iran with limited change in the Southern governorates.

<p>the past quarter – in terms of politics, displacement situation and security</p>	<p>We saw a steady decline in security over the last quarter of 2008, with an increase in attacks against government officials and institutions, particularly against the Iraqi Forces. There has also been an increase of attacks against civilians in Dyala. In Basra we have seen an increase in criminality.</p> <p>In the last quarter the State of Forces Agreement was signed, confirming that the MNF-I will withdraw to large bases and off the streets of towns in Iraq by mid-2009, with a complete withdrawal from Iraq by 2011. The security of the international zone will also be handed over to the Iraq Security Forces in early 2009.</p> <p>The stand-off between the Kurdish and Iraq central government on disputed areas continued in the last quarter, with elections scheduled for end January 2009.</p> <p>No major developments in the socio and economic fields were witnessed during this quarter, although fuel prices were lowered, this was not mirrored in other prices of basic commodities.</p>
<p>Main internal achievements and challenges during the past quarter</p>	<p>All projects ran smoothly, despite the security situation. Effective monitoring was carried out by the UNHCR and IOM teams, confirming that our projects were running well.</p>
<p>Main funding developments during the past quarter</p>	<p>UNHCR requested DRC to carry out an emergency shelter programme in Basra which DRC accepted, with completion expected by February 09.</p>