
Quarterly Report

April – June 2008

Iraq Programme

BACKGROUND AND CONFLICT

**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>The displacement situation slowed down during the latter part of 2007 and continued on this trend throughout the first half of 2008. This can be contributed to the fact that most people had already moved from mixed areas where sectarian violence had erupted (moving to areas where similar ethnic groups were residing). The situation for Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries has become far more difficult due to visa and work permit restrictions.</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 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.</p>
Brief narrative description of current DRC programme	<p>DRC is presently implementing programs across 9 of the 18 Governorates in Iraq, namely, Basra, Diyala, Missan, Wassit, Kerbela and Thi Qar, of which 3 are in the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG): Dahuk, Erbil and Sulamanyah. The DRC Iraq national team is roughly 120 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 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</p>

	<p>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 three interesting projects are; a) subgrants to National NGOs in Diyala, b) support to the Governorate Emergency Cell (GEC) in seven governorates including KRG and c) capacity building of unemployed persons in cooperation with industrial schools in Basra.</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 the past	<p>The situation in Iraq is still characterised by ongoing sectarian, military and criminally related violence. Whilst the security situation improved during the second half of 2007 and beginning of 2008 but latter half of March saw the Iraqi Government (IG) security forces attack Mahdi militia in the south causing a great deal of unsettlement. During the last quarter the security situation has improved, seeing a more stable</p>
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quarter – in terms of politics, displacement situation and security	environment in the south of Iraq, with some improvement in the other areas.
Main internal achievements and challenges during the past quarter	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.
Main funding developments during the past quarter	No new funds were received during this quarter although proposals were submitted to both ECHO and SIDA.