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## Quarterly Report July – September 2009

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### Iraq Programme

#### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

##### Description of conflict

Six years after regime change, Iraq is still facing serious challenges that could reverse the desired direction of development. Over the last three decades, Iraq has suffered from successive conflicts and a repressive regime, which consequently forced hundreds of thousands to leave their places of origin and caused the destruction of social and human capital to the point that it will take years, even under normal circumstances, before it can reach the prosperity and stability it had in the late 1970s. After the regime change in 2003, there were high expectations for creating a stable and democratic Iraq, establishing a strong market economy and favourable environment for return. Unfortunately, events took a different direction, the governing system and delivery of services collapsed which were followed by a severe deterioration in security. A serious blow to the already fragile situation was caused by the Samarra shrine bombing on 22 February 2006. The outburst of sectarian violence that subsequently escalated resulted in movement of hundreds of thousands of people along sectarian lines.

Security improvements seen in mid-2008 revived hopes that reconstruction and reconciliation could be re-started. Unfortunately, not much progress has been achieved as the national political scene remains focused on short-term political gains rather than on the implementation of reforms, rule of law and most importantly, the delivery of basic services.

At the start of 2009, a very prolonged post local election negotiation took place, with a focus on different agendas rather than improving the living conditions of the population. In mid-2009, following the withdrawal of American troops from urban areas, security took a downturn, with a steady increase in the number of incidents, initially in Baghdad and Mosul. The spread of insecurity to other governorates is currently being witnessed.

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**Displacement situation**

Iraq continues to be faced with one of the largest displacement and humanitarian crises in the world. It is estimated that there are 1.6 million post-2006 IDPs<sup>1</sup>, in addition to an estimated 1.2 million IDPs pre-February 2006<sup>2</sup> and more than 1 million Iraqis who fled to neighbouring countries (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iran).

The IDPs are still facing harsh living conditions due to the poor state of infrastructure (e.g. available hours of electricity, access to potable water) and the insufficient delivery of basic social services. One major challenge for the displaced populations, particularly those living in the public buildings is the threat of eviction. DRC tries to address this issue either through the PACs (wherever DRC has an operational PAC) or through the GECs.

Due to deteriorated security, very limited return movement has been reported during the considered period.

**DRC'S PRESENCE****DRC history**

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.

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.

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, Babylon and Thi Qar. In the latter quarter DRC started the process of GEC capacity building in Kirkuk.

In 2009 DRC remained operational in the same governorates as in 2008.

The main offices responsible for the Iraq programme management are located in Erbil, Diyala, Basra, Missan and Jordan.

**Brief narrative description of**

DRC is presently implementing programs across 12 of the 18 Governorates in Iraq, namely, Basra, Diyala, Missan, Wassit, Kerbala, Diwaniya, Babylon, Thi-Qar, Kirkuk, Dohuk, Erbil and Sulamaniya. The DRC Iraq national team is roughly 130

<b>current DRC programme</b>	<p>strong.</p> <p>All DRC projects are implemented in cooperation with local stakeholders such as the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), Governorate officials, local councils and committees.</p> <p>Activities currently implemented by DRC are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Emergency distribution</b> of non food items as the need dictates. To date, emergency distributions have been implemented in Diyala Governorate which has been impacted extensively by the ongoing conflict.</li> <li>– <b>Income generation</b> activities are implemented in Basra and Diyala governorates in the form of small in kind grants (IKG) and vocational trainings to vulnerable households.</li> <li>– <b>Shelter assistance</b> is provided through house rehabilitation in Basra, Diwaniya, Missan, Wassit, Kerbala and Diyala. DRC also undertakes minor house repair in Missan, Basra and Diyala.</li> <li>– <b>Infrastructures</b> are rehabilitated by implementing Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) focusing on improving water and sanitation conditions for selected communities and households. QIPs are implemented in Diyala, Missan and Basra.</li> <li>– <b>Protection</b> activities are implemented in Missan, Kerbala and Wassit governorates through three Protection and Assistance Centres (PACs) manned by lawyers, and social workers.</li> <li>– <b>Capacity building</b> is a priority for DRC and therefore constitutes a cross-cutting issue in all projects being implemented. Two projects: sub-grants to National NGOs in Diyala and support to the Governorate Emergency Cell (GEC) in 10 governorates focus specifically on building the capacities of local actors.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic objective of programme</b>	Improved protection and promotion of durable solutions to vulnerable and displacement affected populations across Iraq
<b>Immediate objectives of programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Alleviate the immediate subsistence needs of the displacement affected populations and other groups affected by emergency situations.</li> <li>– Provide appropriate livelihood assistance which addresses the needs of displacement affected groups with a focus on supporting returnees in attaining durable solutions</li> <li>– Strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders to address the protection needs of the displacement affected population.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Internally displaced persons</li> <li>– Returnees</li> <li>– Refugees</li> <li>– Vulnerable host communities and households</li> </ul>
<b>Main sector(s) /type(s) of intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protection</li> <li>– Shelter</li> <li>– Livelihoods</li> <li>– Capacity Building</li> </ul>

	– Emergency distributions
<b>List of donors</b>	– Danida – UNHCR – IOM

**MAIN DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PAST QUARTER**

<b>Main external developments and challenges faced during the past quarter – in terms of politics, displacement situation and security</b>	<p><b><i>Political issues</i></b></p> <p>The elections for Kurdistan parliament took place on July 25, 2009. The PDK-PUK coalition won the majority of the seats and Mr. Massoud Barzani was re-elected president of Kurdistan Iraq. The referendum on Kurdistan’s constitution was postponed (date not defined). The announcement of the results did not trigger any major violent reaction. The elections also witnessed the appearance of a viable opposition to the old guard parties (PUK and KDP) that have dominated the political arena in the semiautonomous region until today.</p> <p>In August 2009, the Iraqi National Alliance List was announced. This list that will participate in the January 2010 elections includes the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC led by Ammar al-Hakeem), the Sadrist movement (the mainstream led by Muqtada al-Sader), the Fadila party and others. No other major coalitions for the 2010 elections were announced during the reporting period.</p> <p><b><i>Security issues</i></b></p> <p>The third quarter of 2009 witnessed many incidents that attest to the general volatile security situation in the country.</p> <p>On August 19, 2009, three coordinated car bomb attacks and a number of mortar strikes in Baghdad killed at least 101 persons and wounded more than 500. The bombings targeted government ministries (foreign affairs and finances) in highly protected zones. One of the purposes of this attack is seemingly to undermine the ability of the government to provide protection to the population.</p> <p>Furthermore, in a period when there were high hopes of an increased regional cooperation and coordination on different issues, the Baghdad bombing triggered renewed tensions between Iraq and Syria.</p> <p>In Dyala, the security has been deteriorating since the first quarter of 2009. The number of attacks against civilians and military remains high during the reporting period and affects the accessibility of DRC staff to some areas.</p> <p>In the Southern provinces, the number of security related incidents is on steady rise (SAF, IED, mortars, magnetic bombs) with tactics and equipments getting more sophisticated.</p> <p>In addition, the level of criminality remains high (robberies, kidnappings, looting).</p>
<b>Main internal achievements and challenges during the</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– All 2009 programmes (DANIDA, UNHCR) are running smoothly despite the difficult security situation.</li> <li>– IOM income generating project was completed in July 2009</li> </ul>

**past quarter**

**Main  
funding  
development  
s during the  
past quarter**

DRC is currently developing proposals for 2010