



UN-Iraq Humanitarian Update February 2006

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

Introduction

As part of the UNAMI mandate to coordinate and deliver essential humanitarian assistance, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in collaboration with Iraqi authorities and NGO partners, has a leading role in emergency preparedness and response activities for Iraq. By using the Cluster approach to address areas of common concern, UN agencies combine resources and expertise to implement coordinated emergency humanitarian responses and regular programme assistance.

When emergency situations arise, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator manages the humanitarian response of the UNCT and its NGO partners through the Emergency Working Group (EWG) in Amman. The EWG benefits from the participation of the UN Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator in Baghdad as well as NGOs and other stakeholders there. EWG members focus on the material and protection needs of communities affected by either military conflict or ethno-religious tensions.

Emergency Situations and Humanitarian Response Activities

Anbar:

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq traveled to Anbar with senior UNAMI colleagues and a representative of the UNCT. The team met with a broad spectrum of government and community representatives during visits to the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi and discussed a wide range of concerns including human rights, health care, education, agriculture and security. In Fallujah, the Mayor expressed concerns for the inhabitants particularly over the issue of compensation for the losses incurred as a result of the fighting. In Ramadi, the SRSG and his team met with the Governor and the Governorate Council of Anbar to hear first hand their concerns for Ramadi and other cities in the Governorate. The SRSG promised to actively engage with these representatives in exploring means to address the needs of the Governorate.

NGO monitors reported that at least 3,590 families remained displaced in 15 different locations with many being temporarily sheltered in public buildings or tented camps and some were mixed with host communities. More displaced families were thought to have returned to their locations of origin despite fears of insecurity and

inadequate return standards. An international NGO partner of IOM provided 4,907 affected families with food packets, hygienic kits, candles, jerry cans and water tanks. UNICEF supported a private trucking operation transporting an estimated 3.6 million litres of potable water to various IDP locations in Anbar. Additional food packages and bottled water were distributed to 144 families fleeing from sectarian problems in Baghdad. Towards the end of the month, UNAMI was closely monitoring the increasing displacement in various parts of the country arising from an upsurge in sectarian violence.

As part of the longer term effort to assist Anbar, UNHCR approved a project for displaced and vulnerable returnee families in three locations in February. As a result, an international NGO partner will drill wells in seven locations for displaced persons living in desert areas and with host communities. UNHCR also supported the ongoing rehabilitation of water systems at 24 primary schools as well as income generation activities with 50 IDP returnee families. The comprehensive rehabilitation of three schools in Fallujah was continuing with UNICEF support. UNOPS and an international NGO completed a pilot project to assist 35 returnee heads of family in

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Fallujah whose income from small business was affected when their workshops / assets were partially or totally destroyed. This project provided small in kind grants to enable the beneficiaries to re-start various businesses such as tailoring, shop-keeping, taxi driving, and hair-dressing.

Flooding in Iraq:

The UNAMI Humanitarian Coordinator convened the EWG on two occasions to coordinate information and responses to flooding which affected nine Governorates in the north, centre and south of the country. Based on initial assessments from EWG members, the UNAMI humanitarian affairs unit compiled a matrix of the flooded areas indicating that approximately 8,000 families were affected with the majority forced to leave their homes. The response from EWG members including UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM was the immediate release of food and winter non food items and basic health kits to

NGO partners for distributions in support of the relief operation led by central and local authorities. UNAMI continued to monitor the overall situation as the annual spring snow melt in mountainous regions of the country may exacerbate flooding in certain areas.

Avian Influenza:

A team of WHO and FAO specialists carried out a two-week mission in northern and southern Iraq as part of the UN's effort to support to the Iraqi government, particularly the Iraq National Ministerial Committee on Avian Influenza Emergency Preparedness and Response. For specific information on UNCT response activities click [HERE](#) to go to the February issue of the UNAMI Reconstruction and Development Update. In addition to this, click [HERE](#) to go to WHO avian influenza situation updates on Iraq.



Clearing access routes - UNHCR



Delivery of relief items in northern Iraq - UNHCR

Providing Regular Programme Assistance

UNICEF maintained the daily trucking of water to certain residential areas and hospitals in Baghdad using private contractors, permitting approximately 180,000 residents and 4,000 hospital patients and staff to have continued access to potable water. In addition essential chemicals were delivered to warehouses of the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW) in Baghdad and Basrah to assist the authorities with water purification.

13,714 MT of wheat flour, vegetable oil and pea-wheat blended food has now been distributed to approximately 2,181,000 beneficiaries including pregnant and lactating women, TB patients and malnourished children at 933 Primary Healthcare Centres and Community Child Care Units. Under the Food for Education activities, approximately 8,988 MT of high energy biscuits and 2,085 MT of vegetable oil have now been distributed to approximately 1,860,000 primary school children.

In February, WFP dispatched 472 metric tonnes (MT) of food commodities to Iraq, bringing the total to 28,793 MT of food delivered during the last 12 months. Under vulnerable group feeding activities, an estimated total of

Using an OCHA small grant, UNAMI supported an international NGO to conduct one security training course and two driver training courses for staff from both national and international



Delivery of items to support a family with income generation in Fallujah - UNOPS

Advocacy and Human Rights

UNAMI and UNICEF issued a joint statement condemning in the strongest possible terms, the continuing violent attacks in Iraq which cause an ever-increasing loss of civilian lives, particularly those of innocent children. The SRSG called on all parties to adhere to and respect international humanitarian law. In a second statement, the SRSG condemned the continued targeting of Iraqi political figures by unknown assailants saying

this was a major impediment to achieving national unity and stability.

Following the attack on the Al Askarya Shrine in Samarra, UNAMI issued a press release expressing concern over the increase in sectarian violence in Iraq. The SRSG called upon the leaders of Iraq to intensify their efforts to adopt measures to stop the violence and promote national accord. The UN expressed its willingness to actively

assist and UN representatives will continue to meet with community, religious and political leaders to maintain reconciliatory dialogue on this. The SRSG called on all Iraqis to renounce violence and resolve differences through dialogue and mutual tolerance. (Click [HERE](#) to see the UNAMI press releases in full.)

The UN coordinated closely with the international donor community in examining the new draft law for the regulation of NGOs to be submitted to the Iraqi Council of Representatives. The opinion of the international community was that the draft law gave rise to several points of concern when assessed against democratic rights

guaranteed by the new constitution, the appropriate balance between the necessity for regulation and civil society freedom, and international best practices in this field.

UNAMI and the international donor community were ready to provide technical and legal assistance to the

Iraqi authorities in exploring alternative models and frameworks to strike a balance between the government's legitimate need to register NGOs, and the rights, provisions and principles articulated in the new Iraqi constitution.

IDPs, Refugees and Durable Solutions

UNHCR visited a group of Iranian Kurdish refugees on the Iraqi-Jordanian border and arranged for them to have necessary medical assistance. UNHCR and the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) coordinated the continuation of rental subsidies for Palestinian refugee families living in Baghdad. However, given that this costly measure does not offer a long term solution to the problem, UNHCR continued to advocate for alternative housing to be identified. In an attempt to address long standing civilian concerns at a camp near the border of Ninewa and Erbil Governorates, UNHCR met with relevant organizations to gather information and to draft a plan of action on how to assist the refugees in achieving durable solutions. The camp is currently home to approximately 11,000 Turkish Kurdish refugees who arrived in Iraq in the mid-1990s.

Gathering of data started as part of the process to develop the 'National Policy on Displacement Challenges and Durable Solutions: Internally Displaced Persons'. Consultations were held with various communities on issues and solutions for inclusion in the national policy. UNHCR organized three workshops for NGO partners to review lessons learned from pilot consultations and to develop enhanced tools for field implementation. In order to promote NGO awareness of IDP rights, the UNAMI Human Rights Office presented detailed information on the 'Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement'.

As part of the joint IOM, UNOPS, UNHCR project to conduct an IDP Intentions Survey with the MoDM and the Kurdistan Regional Government, English versions of the survey form and its guidance document were produced

and translated into Arabic and Kurdish. The survey form will be tested by NGO partners in the Governorates of Anbar and Erbil, to ensure the form and guidance document are well suited to the context.



Community members eagerly participate in a consultation in Baghdad Governorate - UNHCR

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(UNAMI)

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