



UN-Iraq Reconstruction and Development Update September 2007

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

Background

The present update is submitted as part of the United Nations' contribution to the nationwide reconstruction and development of Iraq, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in collaboration with the Iraqi Authorities, the private sector and NGO partners. Coordinated through the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the UNCT has employed a "cluster" approach to its reconstruction and development programmes as presented in the Joint UN-Iraq Assistance Strategy 2005 - 2007. This cluster approach has taken a lead role in the delivery of assistance and the strengthening of national capacity in Iraq. Despite the continued constraints due to the prevailing security situation, reconstruction and development activities are being implemented by the UN agencies through national partners and counterparts.

Key Challenges

Since the first case of cholera was recorded in Kirkuk on 14 August, a total of 2,803 cases have been confirmed by WHO in 33 (out of 116) districts of 8 governorates mainly in the Kurdistan region (especially Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Erbil). To date, 14 deaths have been attributed to the outbreak. While the number of reported new cases continues to decrease, the severity of the disease and its outspread across governorates appear to be increasing.

In an immediate response to the

cholera epidemic outbreak in Sulaymaniyah City, the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) for Iraq and UNDP-Iraq Director fielded a mission to Sulaymaniyah City in order to support the Government of Iraq (GoI) in containing the situation. Within its mandate, UNDP efforts were keyed to addressing the causes and developing sustainable solutions.

While the mission was spearheaded by WHO, UNDP participation included its WATSAN team leader. UNDP conducted extensive meetings with senior officials in Sulaymaniyah and Erbil including the Ministers of Health, Planning and Water Resources, the Governors of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, and the KRG Coordinator for UN Affairs. In these discussions, it was agreed to continue the urgent follow-up from UNDP to support remedial actions necessary to prevent sewage from being discharged into water used for human consumption. As an immediate follow-up, a second mission was fielded by the RCP Unit.

A task force was assembled to address the outbreak and a report prepared which includes an emergency action plan as well as longer term recommendations to control the outbreak in a sustainable manner. A partnership with UNICEF and WHO to react to the cholera outbreak in Sulaymaniyah governorate was developed in

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the last days of the month.

With the deterioration in security and large scale displacement of people both inside and outside of Iraq, the Public Distribution System (PDS) has had difficulties in reaching all locations of the country in a timely fashion with a complete food ration.

The situation is particularly severe for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In response to a request from the Ministry of Trade, WFP plans to support the Ministry to enhance the PDS capacity in areas such as importing & contracts, quality control, transportation & freight, food pipeline management, and warehousing in order to help the PDS overcome some of the bottlenecks that it is currently facing. This initiative will require time, thus, the emergency food distributions described below is a stop-gap measure to help meet the immediate food needs of the newly displaced before the Ministry of Trade can fulfill its responsibility of ensuring the food security of its entire population.

In response to the food needs of Iraq's growing Internally Displaced Populations, WFP is planning to distribute a supplementary food ration for up to 750,000 IDPs inside Iraq. The main objective of this project is to protect livelihoods in crises situations and enhance resilience to unforeseen circumstances.

This 12-month operation is scheduled to begin in December 2007. Numerous meetings have taken place during September between WFP and potential cooperating partners to determine the implementation modalities of this project which will be finalized in October.

The recent outbreak of water-borne diseases has underlined the inability of the Government of Iraq to meet the population's safe

drinking water needs. UNICEF has been requested to expand its water tankering operation and supply of water purification chemicals to respond to immediate needs.

Ongoing violence and insecurity are having adverse effects on the health status of children, precluding efforts by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and most Directorates of Health (DoHs) to deliver essential medical supplies, including vaccines, to the most vulnerable areas especially those with a high influx of IDPs and/or disease outbreaks.

While the overall number of violent incidents has been relatively low this month, displacement continues at a rate of over 60,000 per month across Iraq. According to IOM, the estimated number of displaced up until 15 September 2007 (since Samarra) stands at 1,058,424 individuals. This figure, combined with the 1.2 million individuals displaced before Samarra, gives a total of 2.26 million IDPs in Iraq to date.

Some areas, such as Anbar and parts of Baghdad, have seen improved security and therefore decreased displacement. In other areas, such as Diyala, Qadissiyah, and Salaheldin, increased instability is resulting in continued displacement.

There are reports that some governorate authorities are now restricting IDP entry and/or registration, including several southern and northern governorates. A recent decision by the Governments of Syria and Jordan to introduce visa regulations in an effort to stem the influx of Iraqi refugees is likely to force Iraqis to choose internal displacement, potentially increasing the number of IDPs per month by up to 20,000.

In the interim, UNICEF delivered education supplies comprising tents, plastic sheets, school-in-a-box, recreation kits, chairs and desks to the Gardaseen IDP camp in Akre/Dohuk. A UNICEF facilitator visited the Esawa camp in Qaladiza to assess the situation of families displaced due to the shelling of the villages on the northern Iranian/Iraqi border. UNICEF is also supporting establishment of Community Child Care Units (CCCU) in IDP camps, which will help address and treat severe and moderate cases of malnutrition among children under five.

The MNF-I confirmed last month that it had approximately 800 children in custody near Baghdad. A recent UNICEF-supported site assessment of the Camp facility by the Iraq-based Juvenile Justice Co-coordinating Council (JJCC) highlighted many concerns about the welfare of these children, including lack of access to due legal process.

Concomitantly, Vice-President El-Hashimi visited an Iraqi Mol prison where he alleged that up to 400 children, mainly Sunni, were being detained and ill-treated. El-Hashimi has since called on the Prime Minister to grant these children amnesty. To this end, UNICEF is working closely with the UNAMI Human Rights Office (HRO) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as well as liaising with the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team to establish systematic and transparent mechanisms. Immediate actions include a UNICEF-hosted meeting of the JJCC and key Iraqi line Ministries, to establish a government policy on "diversion", amnesty for children under the age of criminal liability and respect for

international norms of juvenile justice. In this regard, a toolkit is being finalized for rapid and in-depth assessment of child detention facilities.

A meeting was held with the UNAMI HRO to agree on strategies for assessment visits to detention centres in the Baghdad area. UNICEF has also engaged D-SRSG, David Shearer (and will do so with the incoming SRSG), to advocate for an in-depth assessment of all child detention facilities in Iraq.

The HRO will be supported to set up mechanisms to monitor due legal process for children (including possibly recruiting a child rights lawyer to work alongside HRO). In the longer term, a comprehensive juvenile justice programme will be established to help these children reintegration into society.

Support to Constitutional Process

The time frame for submission of the final report of the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) has been extended from 4 September 2007 to the end of the year although, according to comments from senior members of the CRC, the process will most likely extend well into 2008 and possibly beyond. In the interim, the CRC continues to work on outstanding contentious issues, including the preambular language; the civil status clause (Article 41); and the powers of the Iraqi presidency (Article 67 ff). The latter issue, in particular, has become an element of intensified debate among Iraqi political leaders since the release of the Biden Amendment in the United States, which has expressed a particular position on the application of federalism in Iraq.

With respect to the parliamentary

process, it is expected that the CRC will be asked to play a formal role in the development of constitutionally-mandated legislation. Particular pieces of legislation that have been identified by the CRC as priority issues include the law on the Civil Service Commission; the draft Law on Governorates not incorporated into a Region; the enabling legislation for the Federal Constitutional Court; as well as draft legislation on water resources. In the interim, political discussions on the draft Justice and Accountability Law (formerly Deba'athification Law) are continuing, as is the debate on the hydrocarbon package, the latter against the backdrop of a set of contracts recently concluded between the Kurdistan Regional Government and international oil companies.

The UNAMI Office of Constitutional Support (OCS) envisages three principal lines of business under UN Security Council resolution 1770: First, OCS will continue to offer its advice and expertise, as requested, with respect to the ongoing political discussions about the constitutional text. Secondly, OCS is prepared to support the Iraqi Council of Representatives, via relevant sub-committees including the CRC, in the process of developing constitutionally-mandated legislation. OCS expects to benefit from the strength of its working relationship with the CRC and is in the process of deepening its engagement with other influential committees, including the Regions Committee, which is currently charged with developing the draft Law on Governorates not organized into a Region. The third component of OCS work would include the provision of assistance in the design and development of supporting institutions, which include the Federal Constitutional Court, the

Federal Public Service Council and numerous others. OCS will continue to coordinate all three areas of its work closely with members of the Baghdad-based international community, including the representation of the European Commission, the US and UK Embassies and others. In addition, OCS will continue to work with the UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS) and UN Country Team, as applicable, in the coordination, planning and design of supporting projects, such as seminars, workshops and training programmes.

Child Protection

Around 50 children between the ages of 7 and 16 were interned by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in the Kurdistan region, under the pretext of preventing child labour. UNICEF took immediate action to advocate for the unconditional release of these children with a number of relevant ministries, juvenile police, partners and UN agencies. As a result, most of the children have now been released, and only a few remain in detention pending inquiry into specific allegations. UNICEF is closely monitoring the situation to ensure that these children are released as soon as possible.

Despite recent media reports on torture/rape of detained Iraqi children, very little verifiable information has been received on conditions for juveniles held by the Iraqi government as a result of the surge, and numbers in MNF-I facilities are expected to grow from 800 to 1,000 by the end of the year. This is a key area for UNICEF action, and a

comprehensive action plan on the programmatic and advocacy side is being developed alongside the UNAMI HRO to ensure that international standards are respected.

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) to support the community re-integration of 5-6 children who were orphaned following the Sinjar bombing.

In an effort to improve the situation of institutionalized children and children with disabilities, UNICEF provided supplies to 12 child care institutions for children with disabilities and eight orphanages in Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. Supplies included school bags, First Aid Kits, stationery, and furniture.

Human Rights

UNDP supported on 23–27 September, 2007 the participation of three Directors-General from the Ministry of Human Rights in an ESCWA training course in proposal writing and project management. The training course brought together the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) officials and representatives of civil society organisations. This training course aimed at enhancing understanding and laying foundations as well as providing tools in project development and design, for strategic partnerships between the Government and civil society.

In conjunction with the European Union (EU) JUSTLEX (an integrated Rule of Law and Police Training Mission) and members of its penitentiary reform team, UNDP undertook a mission to Ireland to tour female

and juvenile prisons and to discuss further collaborative activities between UNDP and EU JUSTLEX.

It is envisioned that UNDP will hold further meetings with EU JUSTLEX and will arrange meetings with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department of Correctional Services (DoCS) officials in the Kurdistan Region, as well as conducting on-site visits to prisons in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah in November or December 2007.

Education

Following a one month delay, schools in south/centre Iraq finally opened on 30 September, with only two days notice by the Ministry of Education (MoE). MoE has intensified efforts to ensure that provision of school supplies, printing of textbooks and curricula, as well as distribution to provinces is completed and that schools receive all textbooks with the beginning of the new scholastic year 2007/2008.

Exam results for 2007 indicated that only 28% of all 17 year-olds sat their final exams, and less than 40% of those passed, representing a decline of 60% in comparison to 2006. This is highlighting a serious deterioration in both access to and quality of learning at that level. UNICEF's home learning curriculum and the Accelerated Learning Programme are thus being expanded; however the capacity of teaching staff, insecurity and overcrowding look set to continue hampering optimal learning during this coming school year.

Schools in northern Iraq opened mid-September, despite the cholera outbreak. The Iraqi Almada Daily Newspaper reported that the first day of school was attended by 1.2 million students

throughout the Kurdistan region.

970 out of 1,000 Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) teachers from 14 governorates have completed their training on child centered teaching methods, classroom management, Life Skills Education and adolescent psychology. In addition, ALP textbooks in Arabic and Kurdish have been revised to better suit the needs of the target age group (12-18). The development of a general guide for all ALP teachers is also underway.

10,000 copies of a revised version of school attendance and grade registers are now being printed as part of a pilot project.

Within the framework of "Distance Learning Project", UNESCO organized the first coordination meeting in Amman during 1 and 2 September 2007. The meeting agreed on the future implementation strategy in order to launch the operations.

Within the Higher Education project "Training of Trainers in Teacher Education for Sustained Quality Education", UNESCO organized a training course in English Language in favor of the remaining 7 Iraqi core trainers, who could not attend the initial training programme held in March 2007. The course was offered by the British Council in Syria during 9 – 20 September 2007.

In the framework of "Strengthening Secondary Education in Iraq" project, UNESCO organized a training program for e-library supervisors in Amman during 10 – 19 September 2007. The

programme benefited 11 school librarians and aimed at improving their competencies in managing, developing and maintaining e-library information resources and services.

UNESCO has been working on the emergency sub-project entitled "Online Textbooks". In this context,, UNESCO is now implementing the "**Online Textbooks Project**" for IDPs, refugees and school drop-out children to gain knowledge in reading, clerical and computer skills such as posting electronic Iraqi school textbooks in the PDF format on the website.

The website is currently being developed and as many as 55 textbooks will be posted in the initial stages. The website has links with all NGOs in Iraq. NGOs who are expressing an interest in supporting the project will be added to the website according to their geographical location to enable students to print any of the downloaded pages. NGOs may print and distribute requested pages at their own expense.

In addition, Iraqi refugee students who are unable to attend the education system in the hosting countries will have the opportunity to follow the Iraqi curriculum in their hosting countries and sit for final exams.

Within the framework of "Improving quality and relevance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Iraq" programme, a meeting between UN partner agencies and the European Training Foundation - ETF (based in Italy) was organized in Amman during 26 and 27 September 2007, in order to discuss ways and means of mutual cooperation in the implementation of the

programme in Iraq. ETF expressed its interest in supporting the TVET sub-sector in Iraq through the provision of technical inputs and expertise when needed during the project's implementation period.

Culture

In response to an invitation sent by the Iraqi Government, a delegation from UNESCO Iraq Office including the Office Director arrived in Baghdad on Thursday, 27 September to follow-up on the restoration of the Al Askari Shrine project in Samarra as a step towards achieving national reconciliation in the country.

On 28 September, UNESCO representative, the Turkish company delegation, senior Iraqi officials and members of Samara Shrine Committee visited Al-Askari Shrine in Samara city to have a first hand experience of the site of the project.

Following their visit to Samara city, UNESCO and Turkish company delegations met with the Prime Minister, Mr. Nuri Al Maliki on Saturday 29 September 2007 to discuss the latest developments in relation to the project including the time of its implementation. The implementation of the project is intended to begin as soon as the necessary security measures enter into force. After the meeting, a press conference was held on the margins of this visit.

Contracts for Samara Supervision will be finalized in October for submission and approval by the Headquarters Contract Committee.

Communication and Information

The BBC World Service Trust (WST) will facilitate discussions which aim to get agreement on a Journalism Code of Ethics (CoE) in Iraq. The draft of the Code of Ethics will be widely disseminated throughout the media and to other stakeholders for consultation in order to ensure that the code is brought into the public domain and promoted to the public at large and the authorities in particular.

The BBC World Service Trust is engaging the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)-funded Iraqi Media Security Group (IMSG) to lead a security awareness workshop during the Code of Ethics workshop. The Trust will ensure that practical security issues raised in the workshop are addressed and built on throughout the Code of Ethics development.

Discussions are also underway for the possibility of pursuing an action plan for establishment of a journalists' solidarity fund through the IMSG.

Infrastructure

A UNDP meeting with the Muthanna Governorate officials was held on 18-20 September in Amman for the launch of the Muthanna Governorate Electricity

The Distribution Development Plan is the result of long term efforts involving training and learning by officials of the Ministry of Electricity both in Baghdad and in the Governorate of Muthanna. The

plan was commended by Muthanna officials and donors alike as an indispensable roadmap for future rehabilitation of Muthanna Electricity Grid.

In collaboration with UNDP, training programmes for six Muthanna engineers on installation of 132/33/11 kV power transformer and Medium Voltage switchgear (both equipment being provided under Muthanna Governorate electricity rehabilitation project) were held at the manufacture's premises in Turkey.

A UNDP mission was fielded to Halabja in preparation for the construction of a specialized hospital for maternal and child health care to be funded by the Government of Japan. The project included adequate capacity to accommodate 50 patients per day, staff residence and a training facility. The mission also met with officials to discuss a project for the provision of electrical generators to hospitals in Halabja. The team also conducted a joint visit with UNHCR to IDP settlements in Khebat and Khazer near Erbil, to assess the essential needs of the IDPs.

Six schools are under bidding for comprehensive rehabilitation (33 schools already completed and 51 in process). The school rehabilitation project, managed jointly by UNICEF and UN-HABITAT aims at restoring 160 schools in 18 governorates benefiting 80,000 school-aged children.

Water and Sanitation

The World Health Organization supported a 5 day training course on Chemical Analysis for the Ministry of Environment laboratory technicians in the Lower South Governorate. 16

chemists from Missan, Muthana, Nasriya and Basra participated in the training at the Basra Water Quality Control Laboratory. The main objective of the training was to introduce participants to up-to-date techniques of chemical analysis of water quality.

The World Health Organization-Iraq office organized a 6-day training of trainer (TOT) workshop in Amman on Mini-identification of pathogenic bacteria (API) techniques for 8 participants from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Municipalities and the Baghdad Mayoralty. The purpose was to familiarize participants with the identification of pathogenic bacteria in drinking water.

The World Health Organization also organized a 12-day training of trainer (TOT) workshop in Amman on detection of Algae, Giardia and Cryptosporidium in drinking water for 8 participants from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Municipalities and the Baghdad Mayoralty.

*** The aforesaid training programmes were in collaboration with UNICEF within the water quality control project, funded by UNDG ITF (European Union contribution).**

UNICEF is currently implementing 17 projects to address basic needs for safe water and improved sanitation for the population in Wassit, Kirkuk, Basrah and Kerbala Governorates. Due to the volatile security situation in Iraq, work is progressing slowly and an additional six months are required for completion. The projects are expected to benefit an estimated 1.5 million end-users.

In parallel, joint project proposals with UNDP and WHO are being developed to mitigate inadequacies in the water supply infrastructure, increasing access to safe drinking water and protecting vulnerable populations against the risks of water-borne diseases. Additionally, UNICEF is planning training for water quality and waste water laboratory staff in sampling and testing of wastewater parameters, expected to take place in October/November.

During September, 160,000 people were served with 48 million liters of safe drinking water in seven residential areas on the outskirts of Baghdad, as well as six main hospitals and several schools.

At the request of the Mayoralty of Baghdad, UNICEF expanded its monthly distribution of tankered water and covered three additional residential areas and two main hospitals in the suburbs of Baghdad. IDP camps in Sinjar and Anbar also received potable water.

As part of the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities, a meeting on the master plan for the Basrah Solid Waste Management Plan was held in Kuwait on the 20th of September with seven participants representing the Ministry of Municipalities, the Ministry of Environment and the Basrah Technical Working Group.

Environment

The Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the World Health Organization in Iraq conducted 64 training courses on Environmental awareness

for 1,600 participants from various ministries, community leaders, journalists and school teachers in 10 governorates, namely (Erbil, Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah, Baghdad, Basra, Kut, Nasriya, Missan, Najaf and Dewaniya). The trainings enabled participants to gain knowledge on the protection of the environment from pollution sources.

*** The programme was supported by UNDG ITF (European Union contribution).**

Mine Action

The UNDP supported national NGO Rafidain Demining Organization (RDO) has made 2,067,350 sqm of agriculture land safe for use by searching and disposing of 1,160 unexploded ordnance (UXOs) devices of which 248 were cluster munitions.

Project cooperation agreements with the Kurdistan Organization for the Rehabilitation of Disabled (KORD), the Diana Prosthetic Limbs Centre (DPLC) and the Prosthetic Limb Centre Dahuk (PLCD) on support to mine and other victims were concluded and the implementation began on 1 September 2007. This project will run for 18 months and is anticipated to be finalized by 31 March 2009.

*** This is a joint UNDP/WHO project funded by the Government of Japan.**

Project cooperation agreements with DDG and RDO for the continuation of mine/ Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) clearance operations in the south signed and the implementation with DDG and RDO will start as of 1 October

2007 for the coming 6 months.

*** The project is funded by AusAID.**

A Mine Action Exchange Programme for members of the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and the Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC) South was conducted on 9 - 20 September 2007 in the Kurdistan region with the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Centre (IKMAC-Erbil) and the General Directorate for Mine Action (GDMA - Sulaymaniyah). This activity is part of the project for institutional development support to the NMAA funded by the Government of Japan.

The UNDP national technical advisor in Basra arranged for a meeting between an Italian NGO (INTERSOS) conducting Mine Risk Education (MRE) in southern Iraq on behalf of UNICEF, and the Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC) South MRE staff. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate the MRE activities of the various operators in the area.

The UNDP national technical advisor played an active role in a meeting between a delegation of the NMAA and the Ministry of Electricity regarding the power line clearance project from Iran to Basra being executed by an Iranian company contracted by the Ministry of Electricity, and the Iraqi military. A physical visit to the clearance sites was also conducted. Deficiencies were identified regarding the standards applied for the clearance and the fact that the operators were not accredited by the NMAA. Measures are being determined on how to assist the Ministry of Electricity with clearance certification.

The UNDP national

representative at the NMAA reported on meetings that took place between the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Environment discussing the possible transfer of the NMAA to the Ministry of Environment. A follow-up meeting will take place on 1 October 2007 and will be attended by the UNDP representative. These meetings are of vital importance as the functioning of the NMAA is negatively affected by the uncertainty as to which ministry would take responsibility for mine action in Iraq.

UNDP processed administration arrangements and facilitation of the Mine Action Exchange Mission (MAX) for fifteen staff of NMAA and RMAC-S in Kurdistan Regional Government, conducted by IKMAC and GDMA. The MAX mission included presentation of IKMAC and GDMA mine action institutional and operational capacities in the KRG area. Field trips conducted to each of the mine action pillars, including different methods of clearance, mine risk education and mine victim assistance operators. The MAX was the first to be conducted in the Kurdistan Region taking the opportunity of utilizing available expertise in Iraq to improve the conduct of mine action throughout Iraq.

Together with the Director-General and senior staff of GDMA, UNDP conducted a meeting with Geneva Call's senior delegation to the KRG. The aim of the meeting was to advocate for mine action international meetings in the KRG area, starting with a regional mine action conference in Erbil during the

last quarter of 2007.

The Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA) between UNDP and the Victim Assistance Centers (DPLC, PLCD and KORD) were signed on 25 September 2007. The projects are part of the UNDP/WHO joint projects for Victim Assistance in the KRG area, funded by the Government of Japan. The projects are aiming at socio-economic reintegration of mine/UXO survivors through rehabilitation, vocational training and micro grant projects as well as psychological rehabilitation for the survivors.

UNICEF completed the training for Mine Risk Education (MRE) teams in September. These teams are expected to reach around 150,000 children and community members in four governorates and will also train around 800 teachers. Also, a needs assessment has started covering 100 contaminated communities in three centre-south governorates.

As part of the "Capacity Building for Social Workers in Iraq" by UNICEF, 35 social workers and teachers completed training on MRE. Concomitantly, 85 personnel dealing with children in conflict with the law in the Kurdistan region were also trained in international standards on juvenile justice, child rights and principles of child protection.

Health and Nutrition

The Ministry of Health in Iraq in conjunction with the World Health Organization launched a cholera education and

awareness campaign in response to the first official announcement of the outbreak, in an effort to provide technical information on preventive measures and early diagnosis of the disease.

The World Health Organization's representative in Iraq, Dr. Naeema Al-Gasseer, said "An effective awareness campaign is one of the key pillars in supporting the implementation of any Outbreak Response Plan and crucial action to ensure the participation of the community in cholera control."

Extensive community awareness campaigns are now running to disseminate several messages focusing on safe water, safe food, personal sanitation and hygiene as well as general disinfection practices. The campaigns make use of several different communication tools, including 5000 posters detailing WHO case management guidelines which have been prepared and distributed to all hospitals and PHC centres in all governorates in addition to TV spots, radio and group work discussions. The campaign targeted the community, cholera patients and housewives in affected areas.

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education in Iraq, in collaboration with the World Health Organization, conducted a Workshop on "Development of Training Programme of Family Medicine in Iraq" covering the period of 10 – 13 September.

The workshop aimed at reviewing the current curriculum implementation and teaching/ learning methods and evaluation of such programme,

in an effort to develop a comprehensive plan of action on strengthening Family Medicine in Iraq based on WHO / EMRO guidelines and strategies, while discussing the accreditation of the Iraq Foreign Ministry's programme and receiving certificates from the Arab Board.

Under the patronage of Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, the WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, and Dr Ali Asaad, acting Minister of Health of Jordan, 17 countries (which have introduced Integrated Management of Child Health (IMCI) strategy) were invited to participate in a Regional IMCI coordinators' Meeting on 2 September for 5 days to review over 10 years of IMCI implementation in the region and discuss approaches to scale up the coverage of cost-effective interventions.

As part of the "strengthening school health services through health promoting schools" project, the school health screening and environmental health assessment questionnaire tools were revised and finalized by the Ministry of Health with technical assistance from the World Health Organization. The implementation of those activities will start in October 2007 with the resumption of the 2007-2008 academic year.

This programme represents the realisation of recommendations raised in the latest "School Health Workshop" which was conducted in Amman on 26-31 August 2007.

The first steering committee meeting on the implementation of the UNDG

ITF project for the Strengthening Medical Equipment Management and Maintenance Systems at the central maintenance workshop/Kimadia and 5 DoHs (Rasafa, Karkh, Basra, Ninawah and Erbil) was held in Amman from 3-6 September 2007.

The meeting was attended by 10 participants from selected Departments of Engineering and Maintenance to review implementation mechanisms and rates, discuss obstacles and agree on needed actions for the different components of the project, as well as drafting future plans, including mechanisms for coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

The joint project between UNICEF and WHO successfully completed the first round of the Polio National Immunization Days (PNIDs), reaching more than 4.2 million children under five, representing a 90% coverage rate. Only one Directorate of Health (DoH) (Baghdad/Karkh) was reported to have coverage rates below 80%. During the campaign, UNICEF supported extensive social mobilization activities, provided transportation services for nearly 5,000 vaccination teams, distributed 12,000 registers, supplied 10 million doses of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) and assisted MoH with its distribution to all governorates.

To date, UNICEF has contributed to the delivery of 15,000 sachets of ORS; the provision of consumable medical supplies, including 4,000 cannulas / needles to Sulaymaniyah health authorities; 12,000 family water kits, 2 water testing kits

for Erbil; provision of transport for two months (24 vehicles) to health authorities in Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Erbil to support active surveillance, monitoring and supervision; the provision of technical support to training courses on Diarrhea Management for key staff of Sulaymaniyah health authorities; and strengthening social mobilization activities. 10,000 sachets of ORS have been pre-positioned in Basra DoH to respond to any outbreaks in the southern governorates.

In September, nearly 150 metric tones of premix for Wheat Flour Fortification (WFF) (with a total value of around US\$ 450,000) were delivered to the Ministry of Trade (MoT) warehouse in Baghdad for distribution to more than 180 flour mills throughout the country. Advocacy is ongoing for MoT to take over the procurement of premix from 2008 and beyond.

UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Health (MoH) in negotiating access to the Central Vaccine Store during blockades of the area by MFN-I/Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). In September, following a request by MoH, UNICEF supported the transportation of routine vaccines for six governorates adequate for a period of three to four months. In addition, UNICEF assisted in transporting ORS and potassium iodated to various DoHs.

Governance and Human Development

In collaboration with UNDP, the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) staged on 11 -

13 September the eleventh National Dialogue seminar series which hosted 35 representatives of Iraqi trade unions. Participants discussed the influential role of unions in Iraqi society, and their potential to mobilize workers in support of national dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.

Agriculture and Food Security

FAO as leading agency is implementing in partnership with UNIDO the project "Rehabilitation of the Date Palm Sector in Iraq" intended to improve food security through the rehabilitation and modernization of the date palm production system. In addition, the project will help propagate date palm varieties by implementing tissue culture techniques in order to meet international standards.



Iraqi labors are planted date palm offshoots in the mother orchards Zaffarina, Baghdad

WFP has been working with the Government of Iraq since 2003 in assessing, monitoring and reporting on the food security situation in the country. To date, two extensive food security studies have been published (in 2004 and 2006). The latest survey indicated that just over

four million people (15.4 percent of the surveyed population) are food insecure and in dire need of different types of humanitarian assistance including food despite the PDS rations they are receiving.

With the rapidly changing circumstances inside Iraq, it is important to have an idea of the current levels of malnutrition and food security. Thus, a follow-up nationwide survey is now being planned with the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, including for the first time the three northern governorates of Kurdistan.

The data collection, scheduled to begin on 2 August, has been delayed following the assassination of WFP's principal counterpart from the Ministry of Planning who was coordinating this survey. The data collection will go ahead in November, following Ramadan, with results published in March/April 2008.

Community Assistance

Two IOM Community Assistance Projects (CAPs) under the framework of its IDP assistance programme were signed in September. The first, Emergency Response to the Health Crises in Sulaymaniyah, addressed the medical emergency in Sulaymaniyah (the spread of cholera) by providing medication to the health department in Sulaymaniyah. The second grant was Income generation for IDP & Vulnerable Host Community Women in Missan, Phase II. This project will assist another 80 IDPs and vulnerable host community women in tailoring skills, enabling them to

produce marketable items and generate income for their families. It will provide women participants with skills and in-kind income generation grants (sewing machines). Eleven grants and concept papers are under consideration.

Technical Assistance/ Capacity Building

IOM continued to support the collection, processing and dissemination by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration Capacity Building Programme (MoDM CBP) of accurate data on IDPs – a core function of the Ministry responsible with coordinating on behalf of the Government of Iraq (GoI) assistance to IDPs, refugees, returnees and other caseloads. Five MoDM representatives from the Information Department traveled to Amman for a workshop on data processing, verification, editing and analysis organized by IOM in framework of its MoDM Capacity Building Programme. Registration data available from all 15 governorates was "cleaned" and compiled in a database which allows MoDM to produce reports by governorate and district. This database also enables the production of IDP lists for various assistance purposes. Further training on data collection is planned for MoDM's Branch Offices in 15 Iraqi governorates.

Under the Capacity Building in Migration Management Programme (CBMMP) implemented by IOM, 14 pieces of document inspection devices (EIA TEST III) donated by the Czech Republic to Iraqi Ministry of Interior arrived in Baghdad. The devices were installed in the Immigration Training Centre

established by IOM under the MOI Directorate of Residence Affairs (DoRA) and will be used for the training of Iraqi passport and residence officers in document examination. The CBMM IT consultant was trained in the Czech Republic on 19th and 20th of September 2007 on the use of these devices.

The IOM's CBMMP supported the participation of an Immigration Officer from Erbil Airport in the International Migration Law Course from 17-21 September in Sanremo, Italy. The purpose of the course was to focus on the International Legal Framework governing migration. It aimed at raising awareness of government officials and those working in the migration context of the importance of International legal instruments in the management migration.

CBMMP will hand over the Immigration Training Centre to the Ministry of Interior and the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residency. The handing over mechanism will be conducted gradually starting from October 2007. The Immigration Training Centre in the Residential Affairs department is continuously holding courses, wherein the one cycle contains five courses; English Language training, IT training, Document Examination training, Management training and Legal Residency Law training.

To further promote the Capacity Building in Integrated Border Management at the Southern Borders of Iraq Programme (CBIBMP) activities, strengthen the linkages with IOM partners and explore future coordination with relevant counterparts, IOM held briefing meetings in Kuwait during the reporting period.

The Chief of Mission and CBIBM Programme Officer carried out several visits and met with relevant diplomatic and Kuwaiti officials in Kuwait. Briefing meetings has been held with American, Australian, and Japanese embassies; United Nations Country Team (UNCT), Humanitarian Operation Centre (HOC), Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Ministry of Interior (Mol).

Under the framework of CBIBM and as part of its efforts to build the training capacity for south borders services in Basra, IOM has started the civil works and renovation of the Immigration Training Extension Centre (ITEC) within the premises of the Police Academy in Basra. IOM is currently in process of contracting an International expert to develop a national curriculum on document examination, develop training plan for ITEC and conduct basic and advanced document examination training for Iraqi immigration officials.

IOM is in contact with the Advisor to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and other senior Iraqi officials to endorse the formation of the Border Control Oversight Committee (BCOC) and to allocate a lead agency (LA) for CBIBM and representatives for Programme Advisory Committee (PAC). IOM sent an official request to PMO and the programme is still waiting for response. IOM extended an invitation to advisor to the Prime Minister for consultation meeting with the programme manager for briefing and to discuss the creation of Border Control Oversight Committee (BCOC).

Iraqi children call for change—Gehan's story

The Convention on the Rights of the Child first came into force in 1989. It quickly became the most ratified international convention on earth, pledging governments and adults everywhere to protect and promote the special rights of childhood. Eighteen years later, despite great progress for many children worldwide, others continue to struggle with unacceptable deprivation and abuse. Those in conflict zones, such as Iraq, face some of the greatest challenges of all. And yet they are also the deepest reservoirs of hope. This is Gehan's story.



UNICEF/Dhayi/2007: Gehan edits her one-minute video during the UNICEF "18 by 18" workshop

My name is Gehan. I am a Kurd, but I was born in Baghdad and live there to this day. The year of my birth is 1989, which makes me 18 years old – the same age as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. But in the last 18 years I fear we Iraqi children have seen our rights diminishing instead of improving.

I used to live in big family with my grandparents, uncles and aunts and their children in an enormous house. But our family has been getting smaller. My uncles and aunts have started to flee the country because of the dangers and difficulties of

life here. My eldest uncle's house was robbed by armed men who blindfolded his wife and children at gun point. My father was also kidnapped and released only when we paid a ransom.

I recently finished my high school and have been dreaming all my life of the day I could go to university and graduate to become an engineer. But in Baghdad, where I live with my family and grandmother, it is not safe enough to go to college every day. I could move to Sulaymaniyah where my aunt lives, but then we would have to rent a house and I would be away from my parents and friends. The date of application for university is drawing very near and soon my family and I must face this difficult decision.

All students in Baghdad would love to go to schools and colleges. But many Iraqi students have to choose between staying safe at home or else risk our lives to build our futures. My school attendance this year was often irregular. At best, I attended three days a week. There were entire weeks that I had to stay at home because of the curfews and closure of districts during security operations. At the final exam it was very difficult for students to concentrate and answer the questions. They were frightened at news of other schools attacked by militia.

In conditions such as those of Iraq, children miss a lot of opportunities to learn positive things to help them build their character and future. Children in Iraq have been deprived for far too long of their basic rights to good education, medical services and family life.

It makes me very sad to see very young boys in our neighbourhood sell petrol on the street or candies at traffic lights when weather is very hot or very cold. Others flock to collect material from piles of garbage to sell them for few dinars. They have to fight with older children and hurt themselves; they look miserable, dirty and exhausted. I don't think that those who have been deprived of their rights at early age will ever be able to fulfill their duties towards their communities.

So when UNICEF invited me to make a short video for the 18th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, I wanted to show the world the challenges faced by children inside Iraq trying to claim their rights, and also show Iraqi children's strong hope that the next 18 years will be better than the last.



UNICEF/Dhayi/2007: Re-creating Baghdad on the streets of Amman

To make this video I joined 18 other young people from Iraq, Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, some as young as ten and some my own age. We worked together over five days in Amman, Jordan, to make our stories. It was fun to learn how to develop an idea and a storyboard, and discuss content, symbolism and themes.

I was the director of my video, titled *My Life, My Dreams*. The story is a true one about an Iraqi child whose father was killed in the violence. The child found himself responsible for his mother and brothers; he had to leave school and work to secure his family's living. He was sad but had never stopped dreaming and hoping for a better life.

Shooting the video took a lot of work, and I ended up with a tape more than one hour long! I had to edit it down to one minute – and it was very sad for me to abandon so many shots that I loved. But I had help from the other young people and in the end it worked out fine.

I was invited to this workshop because my previous participation in UNICEF's radio journalism workshop for children. Ever since that workshop I have loved media work; I liked filming, editing and interviewing people. It gives me confidence and hope that I can make a difference.

What we all learned during this workshop is that no matter how talented a person may be, no one can produce a documentary on his or her own. We need a full team of people with different skills; we need actors, writers, translators, a director, a camera man, editor, sound and light technicians and many other professions. We have to work together harmoniously or else nothing gets done.

One other thing that I have realized during this workshop that millions of children around the world are currently facing serious challenges endangering their lives and their development. I do not understand how this can be

possible, if nearly every government has signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child promising to protect and support children.

Iraqi children are not the only ones suffering. Children across our Middle East region and many other regions of the world are also deprived of their rights. What kind of future can adults expect if this situation is allowed to continue?

This is why the message of my video is calling on adults and governments of the world to pay more attention to children's issues and fulfill their promises to children in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We need the help of adults to grow up as good citizens, so we can carry our own responsibilities forward.

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