



UNICEF IRAQ PROGRAMME UPDATE

1-30 September 2003

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



BACKGROUND

After the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003, UNICEF reduced the number of its international staff working on the ground in Iraq. The second bombing at UN headquarters on 22 September required UNICEF to re-evaluate its staffing once again, and the decision was taken to temporarily withdraw international staff. Plans were put in place to ensure that UNICEF's emergency response would continue, as well as UNICEF's work to help rehabilitate the country's social infrastructure. UNICEF is now working more closely than ever with its national counterparts, such as the Baghdad Water Authorities. UNICEF is also working closely with the private sector to be able to maintain essential programmes. However, many important initiatives are currently on hold due to the withdrawal of staff, and the implementation of other programmes has been slowed.

ISSUES

The main obstacle to all UNICEF programmes in Iraq has been, and continues to be, the lack of security for humanitarian workers in the country. This hinders the work of our teams in the field, slowing down implementation and preventing UNICEF from introducing new and important programmes.

A new office has been established in Amman where both international and national staff will continue to operate and support the work of our national colleagues still operating in Baghdad, Basra, and Erbil.

The current situation turns each action into a challenge, and logistics and communications are more important than ever to ensure that assistance reaches the children who need it the most. Security has also required UNICEF to take a lower profile in the media in order to avoid putting national staff at risk while delivering programmes in the field.

ACTION

Water and Sanitation

Water tankering operations continued throughout the month of September. Over 14.6 million liters of water are provided every day by UNICEF to deprived areas of Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and Kirkuk.

An average of 350,000 liters of fuel is also delivered daily to Baghdad Water Treatment Plants and Sewage Pumping Stations.

Large quantities of chemicals such as chlorine and Alum Sulphate were distributed to water treatments plants in September. Four hundred and fifty chlorine cylinders have arrived, and UNICEF is responsible for the distribution of these cylinders, according to a plan developed with the country's Water Authority.

Rehabilitation works at water and sewage projects are on-going, and UNICEF is currently involved in over 125 projects in the 15 South/Centre governorates. The status of these projects varies from the preparation of Bills of Quantity (BOQs) by engineers contracted by UNICEF, to completion of work for others. Projects include 62 compact water treatment units (CUs) in Baghdad that will benefit approximately one million people. Six of these were completed during September 2003.

Bidding is under process for two major water treatment plants in Baghdad City (Al-Karkh and Al-Karama). While bidding for Al-Karkh has had to be temporarily suspended in order to obtain more technical specifications from the government authorities, the work on the Al-Karkh water treatment plant is expected to enhance the Baghdad water supplies benefiting four million

people once completed. Work is on-going for 21 water projects in Kerbala, Salah Eldeen, Qadissya, Najaf and Babil.

UNICEF has also recruited more than 50 monitors who are monitoring rehabilitation works by local contractors as a means of quality assurance while staff mobility is limited by security concerns.

Health and Nutrition

Defaulter Immunization Campaign

The immunization campaign in September reached an estimated one million children who had not previously received vaccinations. Coverage in the campaign included “defaulters” in all governorates. UNICEF provided cash for the transportation of vaccines and other supplies, and supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) social mobilization campaigns that accompanied the immunization campaign.

Routine Immunization

Enhancement of routine immunization services is on-going, including the delivery of two training courses in each governorate for 500 paramedical staff. UNICEF is also procuring enough cold chain equipment and vaccines to cover Iraq’s needs until the end of 2003.

Rehabilitation

The physical rehabilitation of Primary Health Care centres (PHCs) and delivery rooms is on-going across the country. So far, 40 PHCs are being rehabilitated, and contracts have been issued for 40 more. Ten BOQs have been completed for construction of delivery rooms.

Health Care Services

A campaign for the enhancement of primary health care services started on 27 September to cover 1,150 health centers throughout all governorates. The campaign consists of field supervision and on-site training. In addition to training sessions on Maternal Health Care (MHC) and Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) that will be conducted over five weeks, UNICEF will also support training for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).

Targeted Nutrition Programme

The Targeted Nutrition Programme is mostly operational and 40-70% of Community Child Care Units (CCCUs) have now received supplies and High Protein Biscuits (HPB) depending on the governorate. More supplies have arrived and are being distributed to expand the number of fully functioning CCCUs. The CCCU referral system also functioned well throughout September, and the links between CCCUs, PHCs and Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres has improved.

Education

Despite many challenges, UNICEF has been able to find flexible ways of continuing its support to the education sector and in particular to the delivery of education kits, textbooks and office supplies to the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Directorates of Education (DOEs). In addition, UNICEF support to the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and its school rehabilitation activities is also continuing.

Back to school: Distribution of 68,247 education kits:

- Five different kinds of kits have been produced in order to satisfy the needs of each grade.
- The quantities have been worked out based on plans developed by the Directorates of Education during a planning workshop held in August in Baghdad and the last school survey data of the academic year 2002/3.

- Distribution of kits will start in the main cities of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul by the beginning of October, and the remaining governorates will receive the kits in the following weeks. Three quarters of all kits will be delivered by 14 October 2003.

Textbook printing and distribution:

UNICEF is continuing the planned printing of textbooks for primary, intermediate and secondary schools as well as textbooks for vocational education and teacher training schools. This printing is ongoing both within and outside Iraq. With respect to printing inside Iraq, the procurement process has begun. Quantities and distribution schedules will soon be provided.

"Office in a box": Support to MOE and DOEs

Following the destruction, burning and looting of government offices in center/south Iraq, UNICEF has procured urgent office equipment and supplies to strengthen the functionality of the MOE and DOEs. The distribution plan is currently being finalized with the ministry. It is expected that these supplies will reach the MOE and DOEs by the end of October 2003.

School Rehabilitation

Construction work is on-going, and follow up is being conducted in 70 primary schools currently under rehabilitation.

Communication

Despite difficulties in getting into the field, the Communication Section is still implementing a number of programmes including health education, breastfeeding promotion, Mine Risk Education (MRE), and campaigns to get children back to school.

UNICEF is currently working with the Civil Defense Organization to undertake a detailed survey on the extent of UXO contamination in central Iraq, as well as to determine how many people have been affected by leftover explosive remnants of war. The results of the survey will be used to design Mine Risk Education (MRE) activities and to establish priority areas for MRE communication and training. The Iraq Media Network (IMN) will run subtitles announcing the implementation of the survey and asking communities to collaborate with the field teams. Two million copies of UXO awareness leaflets are being produced for distribution in the School-in-a-Box kits to children across the country.

Five health education TV programmes have been produced in collaboration with the health education department of MOH. The programmes cover priority areas, including prevention of diarrhea, promotion of breastfeeding, hygiene promotion and immunization promotion.

Children's storybooks based on Facts for Life have been finalized along with booklets for religious leaders. However, printing has been delayed.

UNICEF completed training of young people in radio programming under an agreement with the BBC World Service Trust. The training is designed to provide young people with essential skills for participating in Iraq's growing new media. This will enable young people to have a voice in the development of their country. Two additional workshops on radio and TV were postponed because of the current security situation. In collaboration with the IMN, 12 episodes of adolescent TV programmes are being produced to promote inter-generational dialogue covering the 12 most common adolescent problems as identified by young people themselves. Two participatory workshops with youth were conducted to get their inputs for the programmes and to prioritize the problems. The young people even wrote drama stories about the issues. These will form the basis of the TV programmes.

Child Protection

UNICEF is developing a number of pilot projects with NGO partners with the aim of addressing children in need of special protection, while at the same time preventing exploitation and violence. These projects will serve as models to be replicated countrywide, taking into consideration the needs of adaptation in different regions of the country.

Inter-Agency Assessment

Five international NGOs (Christian Children's Fund [CCF], Save the Children UK, Save the Children US, World Vision and International Rescue Committee) and UNICEF carried out a situation analysis in 15 governorates to map out the needs and coping mechanisms of children and families in post-war Iraq. Jill Clark, CCF's international assessor and the person who contributed the most to the methodology of the inter-agency assessment, passed away in the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Iraq on 19 August 2003. Jill's contributions will be greatly missed. However, her assessment and findings from the Baghdad area were assumed by CCF. The assessors from the other NGO partners are, at the moment, outside Iraq. They are re-assessing the security situation in Iraq, in order to finalize the assessment in their respective regions of the country as soon as possible.

Beit Al Toful (Child's Home)

In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and Enfants du Monde - Droits d'Homme (EMDH), UNICEF created a recreational and educational centre for children immediately after the war. Child's Home will continue to run with the management of the national staff of Enfants du Monde. From the very beginning, EMDH had been urged to empower national staff in order to invest the experience of international staff in up-coming projects. Due to this, Child's Home will face no difficulty or problems in being managed under the current security conditions.

Drop-in-Centre

In partnership with EMDH and with the support of MOLSA, a day centre for street children was created in central Baghdad. The Centre is temporarily closed due to the poor security in Baghdad. However UNICEF and EMDH are looking at ways to resume this important activity as quickly as possible.

Child Friendly Space

Under the Child Friendly Initiative, INTERSOS and UNICEF are partnering for the rehabilitation of a school, a football field, basketball court, a community theatre and swimming pool in Al-Baya'a community. An awareness raising campaign on child rights will also be extensively carried out. Leaflets and brochures on child rights will be produced by the children themselves and twenty thousand copies will be printed and distributed in the Al-Baya'a community. INTERSOS has decided to remain and continue its work in the country, and thus this project will enter its second phase.

Youth House

A centre in Al-Magreb area of the Adhamiya District has been established for children and adolescents. The centre has been established with the close cooperation of the local community and Adhamiya Relief Association. This initiative was launched in partnership with the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). The centre was inaugurated on the 18th of September. The community named a section of the house after Chris Klein-Beekman, UNICEF's Programme Coordinator who was killed in the UN bombing. Chris was a significant supporter of this programme.

Capacity Building on Social Work

UNICEF, in partnership with the International Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), carried out a training programme for Iraqi social workers to reinforce their skills and expertise in dealing with children in need of special protection. Experts were brought in from Italy to train 115 social workers, 75 from MOLSA and 40 from the University of Baghdad. Training and field-work is currently being carried out and will continue until the end of October 2003 as planned.

Psychosocial Intervention

UNICEF established a multidisciplinary Technical Coordination Team to train 72 teachers from approximately 35 schools (Baghdad, Basra and Mosul) on psychosocial recovery of children. In addition, more than 600 Palestinian refugee children living in a camp in Baghdad benefited from UNICEF psychosocial interventions.

Physical Rehabilitation of MOLSA premises and institutes

The rehabilitation of the MOLSA headquarters has been finalized. As for the child care institutes, the process is at the bidding stage.

IMPACT

In order to adapt to the severe constraints imposed by the insecurity, UNICEF has altered its method of operating. UNICEF provides cash advances to government counterparts and contracts private companies for certain activities such as rehabilitation of infrastructure. This method of operating allows us to maintain a large throughput of financial resources while minimizing the risks to staff. The following examples of service delivery indicate that, despite serious obstacles that prevent us from operating at full capacity, we are still able to help the Iraqi authorities improve the lives of children and their families.

Each day, UNICEF delivers 14.6 million litres of water benefiting 825,000 people. To date, over 340 million liters of water have been distributed to 55 communities in Baghdad alone, including numerous hospitals.

Rehabilitation of water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants and water networks offers better access to water, improving both the hygiene and health of children.

Routine immunization is now back on track. Close to complete coverage should be reached by the end of the year. Provision of more vehicles, kerosene refrigerators, and vaccines will further improve immunization coverage to counter outbreaks.

Over 400,000 under 5 children have been screened in CCCUs since the end of the war. This is an extraordinary achievement given that 1.2 million children were screened in 2002 when there were few constraints. Of the children screened, those found to be malnourished have received HPB and/or Therapeutic Milk (THM) for rehabilitation.

In education, the Back-to-School campaign has enabled Iraqi children to resume schooling on the first of October. Each child will have necessary school materials by the end of October.

FLASH/CRISIS APPEAL (April - December 2003)			
GOVERNMENTS	Pledges	Contributions	Total
United States	-	31,000,000	31,000,000
United Kingdom	-	22,170,993	22,170,993
Japan	-	15,285,822	15,285,822
ECHO	-	9,654,944	9,654,944
Australia	-	9,167,753	9,167,753
Canada	-	6,085,910	6,085,910
Norway	-	3,711,460	3,711,460
Netherlands	-	3,000,000	3,000,000
France	-	2,152,860	2,152,860
Italy	-	1,655,167	1,655,167
Belgium	-	1,179,328	1,179,328
Ireland	-	1,087,060	1,087,060
Spain	-	1,076,430	1,076,430
Denmark	-	1,014,510	1,014,510
Korea, Rep	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Finland	-	753,501	753,501
Sweden	-	600,250	600,250
Luxembourg	-	460,828	460,828
AGFUND	300,000	-	300,000
Greece	-	200,000	200,000
Portugal	-	109,769	109,769
Turkey	-	100,000	100,000
Slovenia	-	72,143	72,143
Andorra	65,862	-	65,862
Lithuania	-	31,791	31,791
Sub-Total GOVTS	365,862	111,570,519	111,936,381
NATCOMS			
Japan NC	-	8,000,000	8,000,000
German NC	-	7,745,150	7,745,150
US Fund	-	2,346,000	2,346,000
UK NC	-	2,234,177	2,234,177
Italian NC	-	2,219,290	2,219,290
French NC	-	1,600,418	1,600,418
Australian NC	-	1,139,678	1,139,678
Canadian NC	-	905,981	905,981
Danish NC	-	590,840	590,840
Netherlands NC	-	534,394	534,394
Irish NC	-	500,000	500,000
Spanish NC	-	460,838	460,838
Hong Kong NC	-	448,603	448,603
Belgian NC	-	388,097	388,097
Swiss NC	-	370,370	370,370
Finnish NC	-	325,055	325,055
Korean NC	-	300,000	300,000
Swedish NC	-	284,375	284,375
Norwegian NC	-	229,909	229,909
Portuguese NC	-	215,286	215,286
Slovenian NC	-	158,337	158,337
Austrian NC	-	137,143	137,143
New Zealand NC	-	41,714	41,714
Sub-total NATCOMs	-	31,175,655	31,175,655
UN System	-	96,600	96,600
Others	-	662,091	662,091
TOTAL FLASH	365,862	143,504,865	143,870,727