

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Iraq

Appeal No. MAAIQ002

15 August 2011

This report covers the period 01 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.



In May- June 2011, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies distributed assistance materials to most of the vulnerable Iraqi Returnees who were supported by the Iraqi Returnees Programme funded by the Swedish Red Cross.

In brief

Programme outcome:

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society is the leading humanitarian society in the country focusing on alleviating the suffering of the local community. The National Society strives to meet the needs of vulnerable people country-wide and to reduce their suffering. In collaboration with the International Federation. It implements programmes in health and care focussing on school first aid, hygiene promotion and community based first aid, distribution of non-food items to support the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and families affected by natural disasters and vulnerable families.

The International Federation is working with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society on building the capacity of their staff and volunteers.

The community based health and first aid (CBHFA) in schools with a total of 1639 courses in health promotion and First Aid were implemented in 18 governorates. The National Society will continue its support to the vulnerable communities that have for many years received a diverse range of services to alleviate their suffering.

Programme(s) summary:

The Society focuses on disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response with increasing improvement of the equality of services.

The Iraqi Returnees Programme

Since the number of rejected Iraqi asylum seekers in Sweden has been growing substantially. Many of them fear- among other things- the risk of facing social vulnerability upon return to their country of origin. The Iraqi RC, in cooperation with the Swedish RC and the Federation, has started to support the returnees with different means including facilitation of networking as an important aspect of re-integration.

The programme covers returnees in Baghdad, Erbil, Sulimaniya and Dahouk as well as Najaf and Basra.

The Iraqi Returnees programme has different sequential stages starting in receiving the returnees upon arrival, taking care of their immediate needs, providing psychosocial support, offering assistance (food items, non-food items, hygiene kits, children's kits, transit accommodation, medical care followed by periodic monitoring visits.

Organizational Development

Strengthening the organizational effectiveness of the Iraqi RC to improve their performance and build sustainable quality programs and services is one of the key areas of focus for the Federation. Building up organizational capacities in disaster management, logistics, health and care and organizational development including human and financial, resources represent the major areas of support in the capacity building and development efforts of the Iraqi RC...Modernization of the financial management system of the Society is part of this effort.

Financial situation:

The total (2011) budget is CHF 1, 932,003 of which CHF 1,278,627 (66 %) was covered during the reporting period. Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 618,399 (48 % per cent) of the budget.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we have reached:

The total number of families that benefited from the implementation of the Iraqi returnees programme was (27 families) while the number of individuals who were included in the collective support/ assistance was more than 50 persons. More than 30,000 teaching staff and pupils benefited from the First Aid training.

Our partners:

The Iraq country representation works with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society to implement all the planned activities. The main supporters are the Swedish Red Cross and the Swedish Government. Other partners include the International Committee of the Red Cross, Japan Red Cross, DIFID, UNHCR, UNOPS, OCHA and UNICEF.

Context

In spite of the improvements that Iraq has witnessed, varying levels of violence prevail. Water scarcity and pollution, food, health, education and displacements are but a few of the problems indicating deterioration of basic services.

On a more positive note, it is observed that the Iraqi community has developed a sense of awareness, where negative practices are no longer as accepted within communities. In addition,

the country has witnessed vast promotion campaigns addressing vital aspects of every day life, supported by numerous humanitarian organizations.

The main activities include awareness of unexploded war remnants and mines, prevention of physical and psychological child abuse; fostering the orphans, awareness regarding the dangers of drugs and smoking and international humanitarian laws. The promotion activities take different formats with seminars conducted and posters and flyers distributed to people in addition to the use of the media including the print and electronic media.

Positive health activities are widely practiced. A vaccination campaign against polio has been conducted during the reporting period. Family surveys were conducted to identify the needs of the average Iraqi families in mitigating diseases, improving personal hygiene, promoting breastfeeding and other health related issues. In general, there are some positive orientations, indicating a change of behaviour regarding prevention and control of diseases.

On 16 February, up to 2,000 protesters took over a provincial council building in the city of Kut. The protesters demanded that the provincial governor resign because of the lack of basic services such as electricity and water. On 24 February, Hawijah, Mosul, and Baghdad also experienced violent protests.

However, the programmes did not face extremely hindering events that affected their implementation to a certain limit. Some of the events in Iraq have slowed down the rhythm of the programmes. Demonstrations also took place in Baghdad during February 2011 where the NS staff and volunteers provided first aid services. The recurrent religious festivals—where most of the neighbourhoods are subjected to heavy security measures including imposition of curfew—had an impact in terms of limiting access to the returnees.

The blockage of roads prevented some of the actions including reception of returnees at the airport which also includes the provision of psychosocial support to the returnees. However, this did not affect the smooth relations between the IRCS and the returnees.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management: the Iraqi returnee's project.

The programme contained a detailed plan of action that extended to cover the period starting from December 2010, ending in June 2011.

It included activities varying from conducting needs assessment of the returnees, gathering information (both general and specific) which covered up to 19 categories of needs. The return network database and counselling are key aspects of the programme. Another part of the plan of action is monitoring of returnees which represents an interactive part that creates the humanitarian link with the returnees.

Information sharing has been conducted. Branch meetings held as required. Training workshops in psychosocial support have been conducted to enhance the capacity of the staff involved in the programme.

Outcome(s):

The needs assessment that has been conducted indicated that most of the returnees are in need of jobs, financial support and in some specific cases in need for medical care. Gathering the general and specific information proved to be quite purposeful; where most of the returnees needed to get updated information (for instance: school registration, issuing IDs, hospitals, accommodation, ministries...etc). The information collection enables to establish the Return Network data to be used by the programme assistants to provide answers to the various

questions by the returnees individual counselling is part of the psychosocial support for the returnees to assist them to be more capable of accepting their lives in their home country.

Monitoring returnees includes distribution of food parcels, hygiene parcels, relief items, children kits, transit accommodation, and medical supplies and above all it emphasizes the humanitarian aspect of the programme. The monitoring plan is based on first visit after three months from the date of arrival, the second monitoring visit after six months and the final one to be conducted after nine months.

Achievements:

During the period of the programme implementation, and on base of the monitoring visits that have been conducted to the returnees; a total of 30 food baskets, 30 hygiene kits, 10 non-food items' kits and 20 children's kits have been distributed. In addition to that, one wheelchair/walking aid and one bathroom chair have been delivered. Two transit accommodations have been provided to special cases of the returnees.

In general, psychosocial support and counselling have been offered to all of the returnees. All of the activities conducted during the programme implementation time frame have positively improved the lives of the returnees. The programme has benefited the family members of the returnees to restart life and re-unite with their families and communities and assisting them to find jobs in some specific cases.

Constraints or Challenges:

In some instances where a quick action was required to receive an urgent case, the administrative centralized chain caused some delays in responding to such cases.

Health and Car/school First Aid.

The school project included the promotion of first aid and health education, CBHFA, general health education on common diseases and injuries, as well as HIV/AIDS.

School First Aid with a thematic focus on hygiene promotion, and healthy lifestyles, essential basic first aid knowledge to primary, intermediary and secondary school students, up to 17 years of age, as well as teachers have been disseminated

Outcomes and achievements

Around 1, 639 courses in First Aid and health promotion have been conducted in schools that were previously selected in coordination with the 18 governorate branches of the IRCs. Other courses were given to the sub-offices of the Ministry of Education from which a total of 32,780 persons benefited represented by teaching staff and pupils. For the period from 10 April to 10 May 2011, proceeded by 20 refreshing courses to the Iraqi RC volunteers. A total of 3,500 Fist Aid and hygiene kits were procured and distributed to the selected schools according to the plan of action

Challenges

- High staff turnover within the IRCS for reasons related to salaries and benefits Difficulties in reaching some governorates due to armed conflicts and security challenges.

Organizational Development and Capacity Building

The Federation is committed to supporting the IRCS in its effort to enhance its capacities organizationally and operationally. The modernization of the financial management system of the Society is one of the key aspects which will be pursued with the installation of the appropriate software in further consultation with the NS.

Working in partnership

The IRCS has been playing a pivotal role especially in providing critical support to the returnees and increased promotion of First Aid in schools.

In addition to the Federation, the main partners include the Swedish RC, Japanese RC, ICRC, DFID and governmental organizations including the Ministry of Migration.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The First Aid and health activities channelled through a large network of schools contributes to longer term development, as it focuses on the protection of the safety and wellbeing of children. The programme for the returnees also goes a long way in supporting longer term development in communities in which the returnees are integrated. Both programmes also contribute to the development of the IRCS as a National Society with a capacity to assist people not only in terms of emergency but also in terms of other dimensions with longer term developmental implications.

Looking ahead

In response to the huge destruction caused by the long winding war since 2003, the IRCS is playing increasing roles not only in terms of emergencies but also in terms of rehabilitation of infrastructure and communities. The increasing role it plays in this respect will go a long way in enhancing its capacities to attract broad-based support to realize its full potential to contribute to the humanitarian and development efforts not only domestically but also within the regional and global context .

All Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to:

Inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

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