

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

IRAQ AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES: HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

9 May 2003

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 08/03

Launched on 20 March 2003 for CHF 111,039,000 for 9 months for 305,000 beneficiaries.

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 75,000 in the pre-positioning phase

Beneficiaries: 305,000

Operations Update No. 06; Period covered: 18 April - 30 April 2003; last update: Operations Update no. 5, issued 17 April 2003; next Update (no. 7) expected 10 May 2003

IN BRIEF

Appeal coverage: 12.9 %

Related Appeals: 01.54/2002; 01.55/2002; 01.88/2003; 01.93/2003

Outstanding needs: CHF 96,565,737

Summary: The humanitarian situation in Iraq remains uncertain as the results of initial assessments are awaited. Neighbouring national societies, principally the Red Crescent Societies in Jordan and Syria, remain operational with their transit camps and standby preparedness. The Iranian Red Crescent continues its coordinated provision of relief supplies through the ICRC. The Federation Delegation in Iraq has returned to Baghdad and planning is now actively underway among stakeholders to determine appropriate actions upon which to base the planned revised appeal.

Operational Developments w

Although the period of intense conflict has passed, security remains uncertain in some parts of Iraq, with sporadic violence and looting still being reported.

Humanitarian agencies are slowly returning to Baghdad and to the other major population centres, and the first assessments of relief and rehabilitation requirements are starting to be circulated.

With the winding down of the critical emergency phase of the crisis, participating Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, the Federation, and the ICRC are now facing the challenge of determining the appropriate contribution to be made towards re-building the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, and through it, to assist the civil society in its new opportunities for stabilization and development.

Typically, the main objectives of the Federation in such post-emergency relief and rehabilitation programmes are to ensure the provision of basic services to disaster-affected people during the transition to formal recovery, and in particular to those groups who are especially vulnerable by reason of gender, age or disability.

First assessments received to date are indicating that initial priorities are water, power, security and specialised medical supplies, mainly medicaments for chronic health conditions. Basic medical provisions are generally still available inside Iraq; the challenge is to restart the existing health distribution system.

Due to difficulties in retaining medical and auxiliary staff to work in the health facilities, the services offered in some areas are emergency treatment only. The problems relate to the lack of transportation for staff to commute to and from work (means of transportation and fuel shortages) and the fear of looting if they leave their homes unsupervised. In areas where the security situation is gradually improving, the return to “normality” is being observed.

More comprehensive assessments of the food distribution system are underway, and restoration of the PDS (Public Distribution System) is gradually progressing in some towns. WFP is making good progress with food distributions. Fuel for transportation and cooking gas remain a challenge.

A meeting of participating national societies (PNS), coordinated by the ICRC, is scheduled for 13 May in Baghdad, for the stated intent of establishing “an independent humanitarian space in the context of the conflict in Iraq and the willingness of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to ensure a credible, independent, neutral and impartial humanitarian action.”

In the time leading up to that date, Federation personnel who are actively taking part in support of national society efforts in Iraq and neighbouring countries are preparing an updated and revised appeal to reflect the changing circumstance and, consequently, the best appropriate initiatives to complement overall Movement plans in and for Iraq.

Movement Coordination w

Coordination has continued at the country level and at the regional level among the national societies in neighbouring countries involved in supporting the emergency appeal, the ICRC and the Federation.

Joint assessments have begun by an ICRC/Federation team who have been travelling north from Kuwait through Basra, visiting Iraqi Red Crescent branches en route to Baghdad. The results of that assessment are awaited.

ICRC and Federation representatives continue to share an office for coordinated activities at the UN Coordination Centre in Larnaca, Cyprus, and both teams participate in meetings at the centre for coordinated activities in Kuwait City.

Inter-Agency Coordination w

The United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) began country-wide assessments in Iraq on 24 April, beginning in Basra. UNJLC initiatives have resulted in the establishment of air and land corridors for humanitarian agencies who are ramping up relief and rehabilitation programs for Iraq. Consequently, UN and other convoys are now crossing land borders from Iran at Shalamchah, Mehran and Penjwin, from Jordan on the main highway corridor out of Amman, from Syria through Al Tanf and Al Rubiah, and from Turkey via the Habur/Silopi crossing.

A UNJLC web site has been set up to coordinate air operations, with the exception of the ICRC, which is independently transporting personnel and supplies on a Beechcraft and a Hercules C-130. The Federation is currently using the services of the ICRC flights for the coverage of immediate Iraqi Red Crescent and Federation needs in Baghdad, namely for transportation of vehicles and office equipment.

All neighbouring governments are supporting these land and air logistics by either streamlining or waiving the typical permit and customs requirements.

The World Food Program has been running daily convoys from Turkey into northern Iraq, averaging 200 trucks per day. On 29 April, WFP announced that it had achieved pre-war levels of food security in the north, and was now expanding its operations into the central and southern regions of the country.

World Health Organization teams, working in collaboration with Iraqi national health staff, other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations, are in the process of conducting health assessments throughout the country, with focused investigations in Baghdad, Nasiriyah, Mosul, Kirkuk and Diyalah. WHO continues to find many hospitals throughout Iraq in a poor state of repair, with health staff working in extremely difficult conditions. Concern is being expressed about further casualties due to the deteriorating conditions, at a time when there is an opportunity to improve the beleaguered Iraqi health system.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees, in conjunction with the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization, continue to operate a camp at Ruwaished on the Jordanian border, as relatively small numbers of Third Country Nationals (less than 1,000 and mostly Palestinians) are gradually granted permission to cross into Jordan. Concern remains for a further 1,000 people stranded at Al Karama between Iraq and Jordan, including - at time of this report - 40 Iraqis and 930 Iranian ethnic Kurds, who do not have permission for either asylum nor onward travel. The UNHCR also intends to return its attention to some 11,000 Iranian refugees at the Al Tash camp, 120 km west of Baghdad.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action w

A position of standby readiness continues to be maintained by the Red Crescent national societies of Jordan and Syria, with transit camps in both countries supporting relatively low numbers of third country nationals.

The Iranian national society continues to provide relief items and logistic support to the ICRC on a coordinated basis. In light of the reduced threat of crisis activity on the Turkish border, Kizilay has largely stood down its state of preparedness at this time.

The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society has made a number of unilateral deliveries of relief items into southern Iraq, while Kuwait City remains a central point of coordination for the humanitarian community, pending an eventual re-location into Iraq itself, firstly to Basra in the next short while.

Red Crescent transit camps to date

Location	Camp population ¹	Trend
Jordan	2,012	steady
Syria - Al Bukamal	1,474	up
Syria - Al Tamf	99	down
Iran	no camps activated	---
TOTAL	3,585	

Note 1: given that these are transit camps, therefore the figures indicate the total numbers that have passed through the camps since the onset of the emergency.

Jordan

The Jordanian Red Crescent Society continues to deploy staff and volunteers to a transit camp that it has been operating since the onset of the crisis. A core group of six national staff and some 120 JRCS volunteers have been receiving third country nationals (TCN) transported from the border by the International Organization for Migration, where they are given shelter, 3 hot meals a day, shower facilities and toiletries, and access to a JRCS health clinic, before IOM transports them onwards for repatriation to countries of origin. UNICEF is operating a school for the children while they are resident in the JRCS camp.

It should be noted that approximately 200 Sudanese and Somali TCN have chosen not to be repatriated, nor to return to Iraq. Until their onward status is determined, JRCS provides shelter and sustenance.

Given that capacity-building is considered by the Federation as an integral part of a relief operation in conjunction with any Red Cross and Red Crescent national society emergency response initiative, therefore members of the regional delegation staff in Amman are scheduled to conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) with JRCS staff and volunteers who have been running the national society's transit camp. Recommendations from this exercise will be taken into consideration during the revision of the Federation appeal and its rehabilitation programmes.

Syria

The Al Bukamal transit camp operated by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society remains active, with new arrivals being registered daily. The Al Tanf camp is quiet, with just one Jordanian national in its care at the time of this report. The border remains closed to all except the most vulnerable, with the majority of TCNs continuing to be of Sudanese nationality.

The health clinics in the camps operated jointly by SARC and the Ministry of Health continue their outpatient services, with the recent addition of an MoH doctor at Al Bukamal for conducting minor surgical procedures.

The National Society's canteen at Al Bukamal maintains its provision of three meals per day, 2 hot and 1 dry for all beneficiaries, national society staff and volunteers. The level of support from SARC volunteers in the areas nearby the camps remains high and consistent.

ICRC tracing units continue to be present at the SARC camps, with administrative support from trained SARC volunteers, who assist camp residents to make family contacts using Thuraya satphones and network services provided by ICRC.

The national society emergency operation review meeting took place at Al Bukamal on 1 May, attended by 26 staff and volunteers from the national society headquarters, and from 6 branches engaged in the operation. Following brief overviews from the national society branch managers of the ongoing action at Al Bukamal and Al Tanf, and sectoral presentations from the technical units involved (camp management, health, water and sanitation, tracing, coordination and camp security), a positive and constructive discussion took place on lessons learnt, with an aim to provide clearer, improved mechanisms for disaster preparedness/disaster response in the future. The overall conclusion was that the Syrian Red Crescent response was successful, and ongoing activities continue to be effective. Initiatives will be followed up in collaboration with future disaster management support from the region and from participating national societies.

Iran

The border crossing with Iraq is now open for shipments of humanitarian relief supplies on a regular basis, which has allowed the Iranian Red Crescent Society to maximize its co-ordinated support of ICRC operations which are based in the country. Several shipments of food, medical supplies and relief items provided by the national society have been transported on vehicles under ICRC auspices. In one instance, where ICRC experienced logistical constraints, IRCS trucks were used by the ICRC to transport 160 MT of food through the Mehran border crossing.

During the reporting period, IRCS has provided ICRC with hospital beds, water tankers, medical equipment, food and other relief items. Most recently, in its continuing co-ordination with ICRC initiatives, and with funds collected from public donations, IRCS supplied 120 tonnes of relief supplies bound for Karbala, consisting of 40,000 kg rice, 60,000 cans of food, 8,000 loafs of bread, 20 tons cooking oil, 40 tons flour and sugar, 5,000 bars of soap, clothing for 40,000 people and 8,000 health kits.

Total quantities of relief supplies provided by IRCS to date, on a coordinated basis, include:

- 500 MT of relief and food items provided to Iraqi IDP who fled to the border of Iran at the height of the crisis
- 160 MT of food items (rice, sugar, edible oil, bread, canned food), hygiene kits and clothes
- 60 MT of other relief items, including water purification sets, wheelchairs, surgical supplies and hospital beds

Through its President, the IRCS has communicated that the national society will continue providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraq rehabilitation operation, especially in the field of infrastructure, health and medical services, in full cooperation with the International Federation and the ICRC.

Although the need for setting up refugee camps for people fleeing from Iraq seems remote at this stage, the level of preparedness has not been decreased, and branch volunteers remain on stand-by. IRCS personnel report that the experience gained by the active preparations has been extremely useful, and will be of direct benefit in future disaster response activities.

Kuwait

While the intensive level of coordinating activity based in Kuwait continues unabated, the humanitarian agencies operating from Kuwait City are beginning to plan for an eventual re-location to Iraq, initially with a move to Basra in the coming weeks. Specifically, the shift logistically by the UN agencies to southeastern Iraq will have a direct impact on the operations of other NGOs.

The focus of concern among operating agencies is also shifting from an emergency response mode to one of relief and rehabilitation. There are now early assessments available from various agencies. These assessments are tending to be followed rapidly by actions to fulfill the immediate requirements, whereas the longer-term needs still remain a challenge.

The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society conducted a comprehensive disaster preparedness workshop on 18 April, delivered by the Federation's disaster management coordinator for Kuwait, which covered coordination, relief logistics, reporting, public relations and financial management. The national society response indicates their interest in further engagement in DP training and development.

Turkey

The Turkish Red Crescent Society is in its final stages of winding down preparedness for an influx of refugees, now that hostilities have subsided and the border area with Iraq remains quiet. The national society's staff trained for this emergency have returned to their respective branches, where lessons learned are being integrated into ongoing activities.

Federation Delegation w

The regional delegation based in Amman, Jordan continues to play a strategic role in support of the neighbouring national societies that have been assisting in response to this humanitarian crisis.

The Federation's country delegation offices in the region remain operational, and their respective roles, staffing and the overall structure will be adjusted accordingly when plans are finalized for the second phase of the operation, i.e. rehabilitation. The re-established Federation office in Baghdad will play a major role in this effort.

Advocacy/Public Information w

Although the security situation in Iraq remains cautionary, renewed access to the country for NGOs and the media has resulted in a shift of focus from the neighbouring countries, with a resulting increase of media presence in Iraq, based mostly in Baghdad.

Consequently, the attention received by the information team in Amman has subsided, and the number of interviews with personnel at the regional delegation, in the surrounding country delegations, with national societies' personnel, with visits to the JRCS and SARC refugee camps, have decreased accordingly.

Plans are underway to staff the country delegation in Iraq with a dedicated information and advocacy resource, and therefore the delegates at the regional office in Amman are beginning to work on other ongoing and important programs within their scope of responsibility, including Federation-supported activities in Syria, Iran and Palestine.

Outstanding needs w

Please refer to the attached list of pledges, for detailed information on the coverage of the appeal.

Unearmarked contributions continue to be required to ensure enough flexibility in the design and implementation of the second phase of the operation.

Also, donors are requested to coordinate their contributions with the Federation and ICRC, to avoid duplication of assistance and/or gaps in the provision of the same.

For further details please contact:

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Donors providing in-kind relief in response to large-scale emergencies are urged to contact Birgitte Stalder-Olsen, email: birgitte.olsen@ifrc.org, phone: 41 22 730 4245, fax: 41 22 733 0395 in the Federation's Logistics and Resource Mobilization Department to avoid any unnecessary delays in the clearance and delivery of emergency relief assistance.

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website. For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Iraq - Humanitarian crisis						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 08/2003		PLEDGES RECEIVED				09.05.2003
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				111'039'000		TOTAL COVERAGE 12.9%
AMERICAN - RC		15'000	USD	20'400	07.03.03	SYRIA RC DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
AMERICAN - RC		15'000	USD	20'400	07.03.03	JORDAN RCS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
AMERICAN -RC		100'000	USD	136'000	20.03.03	THE REGION
AMERICAN - GOVT/PRM		3'000'000	USD	4'080'000	27.03.03	THE REGION
AMERICAN PRIVATE DONOR				3'627	09.05.03	
AMERICAN PRIVATE DONOR		900	USD	1'225	11.04.03	
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT/RC		942'911	AUD	774'601	22.04.03	IRAN
BANGLADESH - PRIVATE DONOR		25'000	BDT	584	22.04.03	IRAQI CHILDREN
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID				50'000	07.08.2002	IRAQ
BRITISH - RC		10'000	GBP	22'425	19.02.03	SYRIA CONTINGENCY RELIEF STOCKS
BRITISH RC/DIFD		490'196	GBP	1'052'941	21.03.03	THE REGION
CANADIAN - RC		25'000	CAD	23'200	09.04.03	THE REGION
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA		990'000	CAD	918'720	10.04.03	THE REGION
CHINESE - RC		50'000	USD	68'075	01.04.03	THE REGION
DANISH - RC		462'500	DKK	90'650	11.12.2002	IRAQ
DANISH - GOVT		5'634	USD	7'648	13.01.03	REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
DANISH - RC		925'000	DKK	182'225	20.03.03	THE REGION
FINNISH - RC		40'000	EUR	58'656	12.12.2002	SYRIA & JORDAN CONTINGENCY
FINNISH - GOVT		144'231	EUR	211'082	05.03.03	IRAQ
FINNISH - RC		95'000	EUR	140'173	01.04.03	THE REGION
GERMAN - RC				50'000	04.02.03	IRAQ
ICELANDIC - RC		6'000'000	ISK	105'330	24.03.03	THE REGION
IRISH - GOVT		500'000	EUR	737'750	31.03.03	THE REGION
IRISH - RC		25'000	EUR	36'888	07.04.03	THE REGION
ITALIAN - GOVT/BILATERAL EMERGENCY FUND)		100'000	EUR	147'550	20.03.03	SYRIA
ITALIAN - GOVT/BILATERAL EMERGENCY FUND)		900'000	EUR	1'327'950	28.03.03	THE REGION
JAPANESE - RC		10'000'000	JPY	121'140	16.12.2002	IRAQ
JAPANESE - RC		415'904	USD	565'629	24.03.03	THE REGION
KOREAN, REP. - RC				50'000	04.02.03	THE REGION
MONACO - RC		15'000	EUR	22'133	20.03.03	THE REGION
NETHERLANDS - RC		89'345	EUR	130'756	27.02.03	MOBILISATION TABLE
NEW ZEALAND - RC		25'000	NZD	18'763	04.03.03	IRAQ

NORWEGIAN - RC		67'445	NOK	13'521	10.12.2002	REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		503'000	NOK	101'204	29.10.2002	IRAQ
NORWEGIAN - RC		5'000'000	NOK	943'750	24.03.03	THE REGION
PRIVATE DONORS				40'808	02.05.03	
SINGAPORE - PRIVATE DONOR		2'500	EUR	3'689	29.04.03	IRAQ
SPANISH - RC		66'000	EUR	96'063	17.01.2003	REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
SPANISH - RC		6'898	EUR	10'178	04.04.03	PROGRAMME MGT SUPPORT
SWEDISH - GOVT		1'000'000	SEK	159'000	11.10.2002	IRAQ
SWEDISH - GOVT		500'000	SEK	80'250	20.02.03	SYRIA
SWEDISH - GOVT		500'000	SEK	80'250	20.02.03	JORDAN
SWEDISH - GOVT		500'000	SEK	80'250	21.03.03	SYRIA
SWEDISH - GOVT		500'000	SEK	80'250	21.03.03	JORDAN
SWISS - GOVT				225'000	18.10.2002	IRAQ
SWISS - RC				6'500	13.03.03	PROGRAMME SUPPORT
SWISS - GOVT/RC				230'000	19.03.03	JORDAN
SWISS - GOVT/SDC				100'000	18.03.2003	CAMP PREPARATION IN SYRIA
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				13'427'234	CHF	12.1%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		86'670	USD	117'655	13.01.03	810 PCES FAMILY TENTS
IRANIAN - RC				75'000	15.02.03	500 TENTS TO SYRIA
NORWAY RC		1'548'900	NOK	310'508	10.12.2002	REGIONAL DP STOCKS
SPANISH - RC		106'120	EUR	156'580	04.04.03	412 FAMILY TENTS FOR JORDAN
SWISS- RC				100'000	13.03.03	KITCHEN SETS FOR JORDAN WAREHOUSE
AUSTRALIA	DELEGATE(S)			18'563		
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			8'378		
GERMANY	DELEGATE(S)			14'949		
ICELAND	DELEGATE(S)			7'229		
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			11'992		
NETHERLANDS	DELEGATE(S)			9'035		
NORWAY	DELEGATE(S)			10'678		
SPAIN	DELEGATE(S)			15'113		
SWITZERLAND	DELEGATE(S)			7'228		

SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				862'908	CHF	0.8%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		135'780	USD	184'321	31.12.02	BILATERAL RELIEF ITEMS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				184'321	CHF	