

# IRAQ

## REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE, CAPACITY BUILDING

CHF 3,706,000

Programme no 01.48/99

### The Context

UN Sanctions continue to affect a growing number of Iraqis. The deteriorating health of a large sector of the population is the result of poor nutrition, an inadequate supply of clean water, poor sanitation and general shortages.

On 6 June 1998 the Government of Iraq issued a decree halting all external aid, on the grounds that reliance on humanitarian assistance would not help solve its problems. This decree was rescinded on 13 July 1998 for all but a handful of humanitarian agencies. Those authorised to recommence activities were required to redirect their programmes from relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development.

An Agreement between the International Federation and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) enabled their joint relief programmes to continue. Both the food and medical relief programmes are still regarded as essential under present conditions and will be maintained, although medical relief will focus on the potential to rehabilitate pharmaceutical factories rather than to continue large scale distribution of medical supplies to institutions. Food distributions will draw on stocks in hand.

In early 1999 a joint logistics and relief health mission will take place, to evaluate the entire Iraq operation and design a continued strategy for support to vulnerable groups in Iraq as well as to the Iraqi Red Crescent to build its capacity for medium and long term activities. National Society representatives will be invited to participate.

### Objectives of the Operation

- Provide some basic drugs to health facilities and institutions. On an ad hoc basis assist in restoring the local manufacturing capacity of essential medicines and medical supplies
- Rehabilitate Primary Health Care Centres and provide training, with special emphasis on community education
- Expand the Community Based First Aid Programme; link it to the Landmine Victims Programmes, and assess and respond to landmine victims' special needs via the CBFA programme

- Assist the IRCS in establishing a disaster preparedness and response capacity
- Support IRCS in the further development of its management capacity and in building the capacity and programming of the branches
- Support IRCS in increasing the visibility of its activities, developing an information strategy and disseminating the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

#### Plan of Action

- Medical supplies

During 1998 the Federation supplied medical kits to hospitals and started a pilot project to restore pharmaceutical production facilities. This programme aims at eventually replacing imported/donated drugs and medical supplies provided by humanitarian organisations. The programme is currently supplying the Intravenous Fluid plant in Mosul with raw materials and spare parts and will continue to do so until the plant is fully autonomous. So far, the plant has increased its production to cover 60% of I.V. fluids needs.

- Structural renovation of Primary Health Centres

Ten Primary Health Centres will be renovated. After consultations with the Ministry of Health, the Federation and IRCS will make the final selection of centres, depending on location, number of patients seen per month, activities and services, and proximity to other services.

Structural work will include building repairs, water and sanitation (latrines, sewerage, drainage) systems, electrical rewiring, and repair of heating and cooling systems.

The IRCS will execute the works with support from the Federation.

- Primary Health Care Training

The Federation, IRCS and UNICEF will carry out a joint PHC training programme, linking UNICEF supported Community Child Care units (CCCU) throughout Iraq and the country-wide Federation/IRCS Community Based First Aid programme (CBFA). The programme will emphasise training courses for health workers (nutritional education and treatment of common illnesses), community health education, and educational programmes on safe water and sanitation (especially through primary schools).

The IRCS Higher Technical Committee for Training and Continuous Learning will work with the Federation delegates and UNICEF on defining training needs and priorities and the appropriate use of human, financial and technical resources. All planning and assessments will be co-ordinated with the MoH. Programmes will start in the second half of the year.

- Capacity building through Disaster Preparedness

In 1992, the IRCS was assigned responsibility by the Iraqi Civil Defence Department for the overall management and co-ordination of any disaster response. IRCS has done the groundwork for establishing this programme, which is now ready for further development, as follows.

Establishment of emergency stocks in Baghdad, Basrah (for the south) and Mosul (for the north); they will include tents, blankets, water containers for household use, water purification tablets and materials, etc.

Training of volunteers (particularly in Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul). Workshops on the Red Cross/Red Crescent Principles will be followed by training courses in disaster preparedness and response. This programme will be linked to the Community Based First Aid Programme.

Both projects will be managed by the IRCS Development Co-ordinator (who is also responsible for the IRCS Disaster Preparedness Programmes) and conducted as a joint programme with the Federation and the ICRC.

- Support to victims of landmine explosions

This project will concentrate on small scale, grassroots projects with direct links to people and communities and will emphasise vocational training and income generation. It will also provide advanced training for CBFA trainers and volunteers and appropriate first aid equipment (dressing materials, splints, stretchers, etc.). It will cover both the South/Central regions and the Autonomous Northern Governorates.

Activities will be linked through the well established countrywide CBFA (working with the Regional CBFA Co-ordinator) and will be closely co-ordinated with ICRC activities. Extensive needs assessments, conducted in collaboration with IRCS, ICRC, UN Agencies and the mine victims themselves, will be co-ordinated by the Federation Delegation. This process will take at least three months. Plans of action will then be drawn up and implementation will begin in the second half of the year.

## Capacity

- Iraqi Red Crescent Society

Through its involvement in the Federation-supported emergency relief operation the Iraqi Red Crescent Society has developed into an effective operational entity at both HQ and Branch level. Its 18 branches – one in each of the country's 18 governorates – are run by motivated volunteer leaders. It has established a high profile within the country as well as among international aid agencies. As the only indigenous organisation working throughout the country, its co-operation is sought by many NGOs in their relief activities.

- Federation

The Federation Delegation will be manned by four to five staff, including the Head of Delegation. The final staffing will be determined after the early 1999 programme review. The

Federation local staff is made available by the National Society against a monthly lumpsum. This budget will cover also the daily running costs of the Federation presence in Iraq.

#### Co-operation

The Federation co-ordinates closely with the ICRC Delegation in Baghdad and with the ICRC sub-Delegation in Erbil. It participates in meetings with all UN and humanitarian agencies operating in Iraq. On nutritional matters close contact is maintained with WFP and UNICEF.