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**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

***Iraq – Complex Emergency***

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

September 30, 2009

*The last situation report was dated May 28, 2009.*

**BACKGROUND**

The February 2006 bombing of the Al-Askari mosque in Samarra and ensuing sectarian violence led to the most significant wave of displacement in Iraq’s modern history, prompting more than 1.6 million people to flee their homes and bringing the total internally displaced population in Iraq to more than 2.8 million people by late 2007. In 2008, the displacement rate slowed considerably due to an overall decrease in security incidents and a growing pattern of community sectarian homogenization. In addition, as conditions improved, a limited number of displaced Iraqis returned to areas of origin, a trend that continues at a gradual pace in 2009. As of July 2009, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the Iraqi refugee population at 1.7 million people, a majority of whom reside in Syria and Jordan.

Improved security in 2009 also has contributed to increased humanitarian access to remaining internally displaced persons (IDPs) and vulnerable populations who continue to require emergency assistance. In the current operating environment, U.N. and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) report expanded emergency programs to identify and meet ongoing humanitarian needs in pockets of critical vulnerability throughout the country. As conditions stabilize in many areas of the country, humanitarian organizations also continue to shift focus to community-level analyses to inform and tailor early recovery interventions in both places of return and places of IDP integration into host communities.

In FY 2009, the U.S. Government (USG) has provided nearly \$387 million in humanitarian assistance to Iraq, including more than \$83.4 million from USAID/OFDA. Current USG-funded programs emphasize community-level interventions to promote sustainable returns through livelihoods recovery, as well as efforts to meet emergency food, health, shelter, protection, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene needs among vulnerable IDPs, Iraqi refugees throughout the region, and other Iraqis affected by conflict.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Post-2006 IDP Population	1.63 million	GoI <sup>1</sup> – September 2008
Estimated Total IDP Population	2.76 million	UNHCR – July 2009
Estimated Refugee Population	1.7 million <sup>2</sup>	UNHCR – July 2009
Estimated Returnee Population	325,000 – Primarily Post-2006 IDPs	IOM <sup>3</sup> – July 2009

**TOTAL FY 2009 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING**

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Iraq.....	<b>\$83,421,100</b>
State/PRM <sup>4</sup> Assistance <sup>5</sup> to Iraqi refugees, IDPs, and persons affected by conflict .....	<b>\$303,380,000</b>
<b>Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Iraqis .....</b>	<b>\$386,801,100</b>

**CURRENT SITUATION**

In the first half of 2009, IDPs and refugees returned to areas of origin at a gradual pace due to overall improved security in areas of origin and deteriorating living conditions in areas of displacement. Returnees, however, confront difficulties in areas of return, in particular noting needs for food, fuel, and other

emergency relief supplies. Approximately 60 percent of total IDPs intend to return to areas of origin, but continue to cite security concerns, psychosocial reasons, and limited employment prospects as obstacles to return. Humanitarian needs also persist in areas of displacement. Since 2006, IOM has assessed the

<sup>1</sup> Government of Iraq (GoI)

<sup>2</sup> Due to resource constraints, UNHCR has been unable to adequately monitor refugee documentation and has relied on host governments to provide refugee inflow estimates. Therefore, refugee estimates likely represent an inflation of actual displacement.

<sup>3</sup> The International Organization for Migration (IOM)

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

<sup>5</sup> State/PRM assistance is regional in scope and primarily addresses the needs of Iraqi refugees residing in host countries.

changing humanitarian conditions among IDPs displaced following the bombing of the Al-Askari mosque in Samarra. Governorate profiles released over the last three months by IOM reveal that the majority of IDPs continue to identify access to employment, shelter, and food as priority needs. IOM governorate profiles, by distinguishing needs by governorate and between IDPs and returnees, also help improve humanitarian coordination and subsequent programming.

On August 19, a series of nine explosions in central Baghdad killed nearly 100 people and injured more than 500 others. One USAID/OFDA partner responded to the event and subsequent brief displacements by providing urgently needed supplies to health care facilities. Security continues to improve in Diyala Governorate, however, following late April attacks that displaced 50 IDP families. Security remains precarious in Kirkuk, where IOM reported small-scale displacement in June. A severe two-year drought also has displaced several hundred families in Basrah and Ninewa Governorates and caused agricultural decline countrywide.

### **Returns**

By July 2009, IOM had identified more than 55,000 post-Samarra returnee families in Iraq, an increase of 5,000 families since May 2009. Of the approximately 325,000 returnees initially displaced during and after 2006, less than 10 percent returned from abroad. Data compiled by UNHCR from national, regional, and local authorities indicate that Baghdad Governorate received 72 percent of total July 2009 returns, while 19 percent returned to Diyala Governorate. Since returns began to accelerate in 2008, Baghdad, Diyala, and Ninewa governorates consistently have received more returnees, often from areas within the same governorate. A majority of post-Samarra displacement occurred from within these governorates as well. Preliminary UNHCR–compiled data estimate the August 2009 return rate at approximately half of the peak return rate in September 2008.

As of April 2009, more than 60 percent of the returnee population reported insufficient access to food, nearly 40 percent cited a lack of safe drinking water, and more than 50 percent noted inadequate quantities of fuel and other essential supplies upon returning home. In addition, many returnees are returning to find property destroyed or occupied.

In June, IOM reported improved coordination between an array of actors in Baghdad to support sustainable returns to central Baghdad and surrounding districts.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA provided approximately \$60 million to programs that facilitate sustainable returns through direct assistance to returning families, support to communities with significant numbers of current or anticipated returnees, and general assistance

to vulnerable populations and families regardless of displacement status.

USAID/OFDA partners provide emergency relief supplies; improve water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities; offer protection services; and support economic recovery in areas of return. In addition, USAID/OFDA partners enhance coordination to improve returnee monitoring and build GoI capacity to assist with successful returnee reintegration. USAID/OFDA partner International Medical Corps (IMC) contributes staff to two Baghdad returnee assistance centers (RACs) to assist the GoI Ministry of Migration and Displacement in registering new arrivals and providing legal services. With USAID/OFDA funding, the Resafa and Karkh neighborhood centers had registered nearly 62,000 IDP and refugee returnees by June 30. With continued USAID/OFDA support, IMC recently opened a RAC in Diyala Governorate and plans to open a fourth center in Ninewa Governorate. Return rates in both governorates continue to increase.

In FY 2009, State/PRM is providing more than \$303 million in multisectoral assistance to benefit Iraqi refugees, IDPs, returnees, and other populations affected by conflict. Primary sectors include protection, education, health, food assistance, shelter, psychosocial assistance, and emergency relief supplies.

### **Health and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene**

In recent months, continuing drought in Iraq has resulted in severe water shortages in communities along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in southern Iraq. Low water levels in the rivers also contributed to increased salinity in the Shat al-Arab waterway, further reducing fresh water flows.

Due to water shortages in Basrah Governorate, southern Iraq, the provincial council declared disasters in three districts. In response, USAID/OFDA reallocated \$600,000 to implementing partners IOM and Mercy Corps to respond to requests for water trucking to meet emergency needs in Basrah. The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) also began water trucking in the governorate with USAID/OFDA funds. UNICEF's drought response using USAID/OFDA funds totaled \$2 million and also included activities in Qadisiyah and Muthanna governorates. In addition, IOM responded to drought conditions in Erbil Governorate with USAID/OFDA funds by providing more than 1 million liters of safe drinking water daily to approximately 21,000 people.

Access to safe drinking water remains limited in other parts of Iraq as well, due to damaged or insufficient water infrastructure. During recent needs assessments, IOM identified IDP and returnee families connected to old and overburdened networks or disconnected entirely from municipal supplies. Many families rely increasingly on untreated water from rivers and farms.

Some IDP families also travel long distances to retrieve water from wells. In addition, IOM observed sewage flows and the absence of sanitation networks in villages in five governorates. During countrywide assessments, IOM detected infrastructure-related water and sanitation problems in pockets of Anbar, Basrah, Diyala, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Najaf, Qadisiyah, Salah ad Din, Dhi Qar, and Wasit governorates.

Compromised water quality and insufficient sanitation services lead to or exacerbate health problems among IDPs and some returnees, evidenced by the high incidence of cholera and other diarrheal diseases in the country.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$13 million to address gaps in water, sanitation, and hygiene services countrywide, including \$4 million to support UNICEF's cholera prevention and management efforts. Other activities include infrastructure rehabilitation and sanitation and hygiene education.

In June, IOM reported health needs among IDPs in several small villages in Anbar, Babil, Diyala, Karbala, Kirkuk, Qadisiyah, Salah al Din, and Dhi Qar governorates, and noted that many communities would benefit from mobile health units. Some communities still require additional qualified staff and equipment, while other communities lack facilities altogether. Recent USAID/OFDA field visits to IDP camps in Baghdad's Hurriya and Shaab districts also revealed limited or no access to primary health care among some vulnerable residents.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$5.8 million to support health activities, including health education, capacity building among local health workers, and mobile health unit deployments to increase IDP access to basic health care and vaccinations.

### ***Agriculture and Food Security***

During a recent assessment in Ninewa Governorate, northern Iraq, IOM registered 1,200 families displaced by the drought and living in tents near Baaj city. According to a U.N. interagency assessment, as of August 2009, the two-year drought had affected nearly 39 percent of agricultural land, primarily in northern Iraq. In June, IOM reported that families in the north often cope by selling livestock and other assets, further reducing resilience to subsequent shocks.

The drought also continues to degrade Iraq's southern marshlands in Dhi Qar, Maysan, and Basrah governorates. The removal of water-diverting dams and canals after 2003 contributed to the revival of the marshlands and related fishing and agricultural livelihoods. However, as more areas in the marshlands succumb to drought, more households endure declining

livelihoods, with those more acutely affected by water shortages and livestock mortality compelled to leave the area. According to the Basrah Agriculture Directorate, diminished livelihoods in the marshlands caused an estimated 200 families, or 1,200 individuals, in the town of Fao to abandon land and cattle.

The GoI continues to proactively address water shortages and effects on agriculture, engaging in bilateral discussions with neighboring countries to secure water-sharing and releasing agreements and evaluating private investment proposals to devise a 30-year water management plan.

In response to declining agricultural prospects, as well as sector challenges resulting from conflict and displacement, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$1.3 million in FY 2009. USAID/OFDA programs aim to reduce food insecurity among IDPs and returnees by increasing farm production through the provision of inputs and seeds. USAID/OFDA also contributed \$1 million to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) to support food delivery logistics and planning.

### ***Economic Recovery and Market Systems***

For a majority of IDPs, access to income remains a priority need, particularly as rents continue to rise in accordance with increased demand for limited units and as host community members and IDPs compete for scarce employment opportunities. In September, IOM reported 99 percent unemployment among Kirkuk IDPs, 97 percent among Qadisiyah IDPs, and a 94 percent jobless rate among Basrah IDPs. More than 89 percent of Wasit IDPs remain unemployed, while income sources continue to elude 60 percent and 58 percent of Baghdad and Diyala IDPs, respectively.

Despite the higher rates of return to and within Baghdad relative to other governorates, remaining IDPs, particularly female-headed households, continue to require assistance. Females lead, on average, one in 10 households in Iraq, and in Baghdad, 90 percent of females who head households are unemployed and rely almost exclusively on external assistance. During recent USAID/OFDA field staff visits to IDP camps in Shaab and Hurriya districts, widows identified employment as the most critical need.

While more IDPs than returnees consistently cite access to work as the highest priority need, approximately one-third of all returnee families assessed by IOM still confront limited livelihood opportunities in areas of return. Income accumulation also proves difficult for returnees, as families devote savings or limited income to rebuilding houses destroyed during conflict or to soliciting legal assistance to reclaim property.

In Baghdad, however, USAID/OFDA field staff report progress towards sustainable recovery in some areas,

including Chilabeen village, where returnees have rebuilt houses, cultivated farmland, and intend to replenish livestock holdings.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$13.8 million in economic recovery assistance for IDPs, returnees, host communities, and other vulnerable Iraqis, including widows and female heads of household. Contributions include \$4 million to the WFP to help protect livelihoods and restore assets during humanitarian shocks, thereby contributing to sustained economic recovery. Activities also include capacity building at the national level to improve government-provided socio-economic protections.

#### ***Shelter and Settlements***

In July 2009, UN-HABITAT cited a housing deficit in Iraq of 1.5 million units and annual increases to the deficit of 300,000 units until 2015. Approximately 40 percent of IOM-assessed returnees reported returning to find partially or completely destroyed property.

According to April 2009 IOM estimates, 59 percent of IDPs resided in rented spaces, 22 percent continued to

live in collective settlements and public buildings, and nearly 20 percent resided with host families. Limited livelihood opportunities, dwindling savings, host community strains, and evictions continued to result in actual and imminent shelter needs among 82 percent of IOM-surveyed IDPs. In June 2009, IOM began reporting an increasing number of IDPs constructing shelters illegally on public land or other people's property, particularly in Qadisiyah Governorate. In Najaf and Babil governorates, IOM observed several improvised shelters of mud, reed, and palm leaves, noting the insufficient protection afforded by such materials.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$13.5 million to six partners to construct safe and secure transitional shelter for IDPs and returnees in support of sustainable and streamlined integration and returns. In August 2009, USAID/OFDA partner IMC commenced shelter rehabilitation projects in seven Baghdad Governorate villages to benefit nearly 4,000 individuals, while CHF International plans to address shelter needs among nearly 5,000 people in Anbar Governorate.

### **FY 2009 USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQI RETURNEES, IDPS, REFUGEES, AND PERSONS AFFECTED BY CONFLICT**

<b>FY 2009</b>			
<b><i>Implementing Partner</i></b>	<b><i>Activity</i></b>	<b><i>Location</i></b>	<b><i>Amount</i></b>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
ACTED	Agriculture and Food Security; Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Emergency Relief Supplies; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Muthanna, Dhi Qar, Erbil, Wasit	\$2,547,653
CHF International	Shelter and Settlements	Anbar	\$3,868,135
IMC	Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Health; Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Basrah, Diyala, Karbala, Najaf, Ninawa, Qadisiyah, Wasit	\$18,075,687
IOM	Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Emergency Relief Supplies; Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management; Protection; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Anbar, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Ninawa, Qadisiyah, Sulaymaniyah, Wasit; Countrywide	\$10,430,249
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Emergency Relief Supplies; Protection; Shelter and Settlements	Anbar, Baghdad, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninawa, Sulaymaniyah	\$4,975,648
International Relief and Development (IRD)	Agriculture and Food Security; Emergency Relief Supplies; Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Health; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Anbar, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Ninawa	\$9,441,496

Mercy Corps	Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Emergency Relief Supplies; Humanitarian Studies, Analysis, or Applications; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Salah ad Din, Sulaymaniyah; Countrywide	\$14,500,000
Save the Children/US (SC/US)	Protection	Basrah, Dhi Qar, Maysan, Muthanna	\$3,000,000
UNICEF	Protection; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Countrywide	\$8,000,000
WFP	Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Logistics; Emergency Relief Supplies; Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$8,000,000
	Administrative Support		\$582,232
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA</b>			<b>\$83,421,100</b>
<b>STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE<sup>2</sup></b>			
UNHCR	Emergency Relief Supplies; Education; Food Assistance; Health; Protection; Shelter; Cash Assistance for Extremely Vulnerable Individuals	Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and other neighboring countries	\$198,000,000
UNICEF	Education; Health; Water and Sanitation	Jordan, Syria, and other neighboring countries	\$15,000,000
IOM	Socio-economic Reintegration for Returnees; Psychosocial, Legal, Health, and Livelihoods Support for IDP and Returnee Female-headed Households; Anti-trafficking Programs.	Iraq, Syria, Jordan and other neighboring countries	\$12,700,000
NGOs	Health; Education; Emergency Relief Supplies	Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt	\$41,360,000
Other International Organizations	Protection; Health; Water and Sanitation; Emergency Relief Supplies; Livelihoods Support	Iraq, Jordan, and Syria	\$36,320,000
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM</b>			<b>\$303,380,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ IN FY 2009</b>			<b>\$386,801,100</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> State/PRM funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2009. Final figures will be released in early FY 2010.