

Cluster F

New Displacement in Iraq in 2006 from a Protection Perspective

Update on Figures¹

An estimated 640,000² persons were forced to flee their homes due to sectarian violence sparked by an attack on holy shrines in Samarra in February and the attacks in Sadr City on 23 November 2006. These are in addition to 1.2 million IDPs displaced prior to 22 February.

| Governorate | Newly displaced families (Post Samara) | Place of origin | Group |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Dahuk | 6,751 | Central and Southern Governorates | Christians, Kurds, Arabs (Sunnis/Shias) |
| Erbil | 2,322 | Central and Southern Governorates | Christians, Kurds, Arabs (Sunnis/ Shias) |
| Sulaymaniyah | 4,939 | Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul, Diyala and Salah al Din. | Arabs (Sunnis/Shias), Kurds, Christians |
| Total North | 14,012 | | |
| Anbar | 6,607 | Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Thi Qar, Kerbala, and Missan | Arab Sunnis |
| Baghdad | 15,500 | Diyala, Baghdad, Salah Al-Din, Anbar, Wassit, Babylon, Kirkuk, Ninewa | Shias and Sunnis, some Yazidis |
| Diyala | 6,670 | Baghdad, within Diyala, and Salah Al Din | Arab Sunnis and Shias |
| Kirkuk | 751 | Kirkuk, Baghdad, Basrah, and Thi Qar | Arab Sunnis, Shias and Christians |
| Ninewa | 5,250 | Basrah, Ninewa | Mostly Christian, some Sunnis and Shias |
| Salah al-Din | 7,500 | Baghdad, Basrah Thi-Qar | Arab Sunni |
| Total Centre | 42,278 | | |
| Babylon | 8,209 | Baghdad, Anbar, and Diyala | Arab Shias, small group of Arab Sunnis |
| Basrah | 4,300 | Baghdad, Anbar, Salah al-Din | Arab Shias |
| Diwaniya | 2,800 | Baghdad, Salah al Din, Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Babylon, | Arab Shias |
| Kerbala | 8,452 | Kirkuk, Baghdad, Diyala, Salah al-Din, Anbar, | Arab Shias |
| Missan | 4,820 | Ninewa, Anbar, Baghdad, Salah al Din, Diyala, Wassit | Arab Shias |
| Muthanna | 1,712 | Baghdad, Salah al Din, Kirkuk, Anbar | Arab Shias |
| Najaf | 6,500 | Anbar, Baghdad, Salah al-Din, Ninewa | Arab Shias |
| Thi-Qar | 4,879 | Baghdad, Salah al Din, Babylon, Kirkuk, Diyala, Ninewa | Arab Shias |
| Wassit | 8,698 | Kirkuk, Baghdad, Diyala, Anbar, Salah al Din | Arab Shias |
| Total South | 50,370 | | |
| Grand Total families | 106,660 | | |
| Grand Total individuals | 639,960 | | |

¹ This update reflects the situation of 2006 with the cut off date of 31 December 2006.

² Information is collected on the basis of families; the number of total individuals calculated on the basis of six-member families. Data provided by MoDM and Local Authorities in KRG as of 31 December 2006, with the exception of Anbar, which is provided by IOM. IOM assessed a total of 43,700 IDP families in the following Governorates: Anbar 6,607; Babylon 3,169; Baghdad 6,651; Basrah 1,439; Diyala 3,600; Kerbala 2,060; Missan 2,203; Muthanna 950; Najaf 2,069; Ninewa 3,683; Diwaniya 1,611; Salah Al Din 3,059; Kirkuk 920; Thi Qar 2,058; and Wassit 3,621. For more information, please see IOM, Emergency Assessment, 24 December 2006.

The Governorates that are most affected by new inflows of IDPs include Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Diyala, Dahuk, Kerbala, Najaf, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Wassit.

The Protection Situation of IDPs³

Arbitrary Displacement

IDPs fled primarily due to direct threats to their lives because of their sect or religion, generalized violence or forced displacement, and to a lesser degree, general fear and armed conflict.⁴ Several IDPs have been displaced twice and a few have been displaced up to four times.

Ongoing military operations and the prevailing security situation affect the ability of all Iraqi civilians to exercise their fundamental human rights⁵ but this is particularly pronounced for those who have been displaced.

Vulnerable Groups

Women and children make up three quarters of the newly displaced (49% children, 28% women and 23% men),⁶ suggesting partial displacement (e.g. male(s) remain in place of origin while the women and children flee to another area)⁷ or a significant number of widows/female-headed households⁸ or unaccompanied/separated children.⁹ Men between the ages of 18 to 40 represent the overwhelming majority of those killed due to sectarian violence and indiscriminate killings.¹⁰ In addition to the groups mentioned above, there are other significant vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women, persons of old age, and persons with disabilities (mentally disabled and those with serious illnesses), who are entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment that takes into account their special needs.¹¹

Physical Risks

While most IDPs indicated that they feel secure in their place of displacement, in certain Governorates/areas which have mixed ethnic and religious populations,¹² religious shrines,¹³ factional,¹⁴ ongoing military operations, armed conflict or presence of MNF

³ The following analysis of the protection situation of IDPs has been prepared by UNHCR, and is primarily based on the IDP Governorate Assessment Reports (GARs) prepared by UNHCR/IRD for the three Northern Governorates and by IOM for the other 15 Governorates (the data is collected from IOM and UNHCR rapid assessments of new IDPs), as well as reports prepared by UNHCR-funded Legal Aid and Information Centres (LAICs). In addition, additional sources have been included where relevant.

⁴ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

⁵ UNAMI Human Rights Report, 1 November – 31 December 2006; see also UNHCR Governorate Assessment Reports on Basrah, Missan, Thi-Qar and Sulaymaniyah.

⁶ According to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society figures of IDPs dated 29 November 2006.

⁷ UNHCR LAIC, Basrah.

⁸ IOM GARs Anbar, Diyala and Kerbala. UNHCR LAICs.

⁹ IOM GAR Diyala.

¹⁰ Newsweek, *The Next Jihadists: Iraq's Lost Children*, 22 January 2007. The November/December 2006 UNAMI Human Rights Report states that the vast majority of civilians who were killed violently were men.

¹¹ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

¹² IOM GARs Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk and Ninewa.

¹³ IOM GARs Kerbala, Najaf and Salah al-Din.

¹⁴ IOM GARs Basrah and Southern Governorates.

bases,¹⁵ significant governmental institutions, business or international community, and frequent terrorist or insurgent attacks may jeopardize their safety.¹⁶ Many IDPs have been stripped of their usual protection mechanisms, including local knowledge of the area and support networks. Only a small number of incidents or threats of rape, including rape of children, were reported probably due to the lack of rapport established between monitors and interviewees and fear of socio-cultural repercussions.¹⁷ However, other reports suggest that rape is a much wider problem. A significant majority of IDPs reported having killings and injuries in their family caused by another citizen, mine accident, militant, MNF or Iraqi forces since displacement.¹⁸ While victims of terrorist attacks may apply for indemnification, this is difficult for IDPs to do as it must be done in their Governorate of origin.¹⁹ Many also reported disappearances and detentions after displacement,²⁰ with tracing and family reunification being difficult due to the circumstances. Forced military recruitment by militia groups of children between the ages of 10 and 14, motivated by revenge or money, was reported in Diyala.²¹ Domestic violence and divorce are reportedly on the rise in general, but also among new IDPs.²²

Some neighbourhoods in Baghdad and the authorities in Kerbala, Najaf, Anbar, Basrah, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk have imposed restrictions on who can enter and/or take residence (or where they can reside – rural versus urban areas²³) as well as work in their area. IDPs in those Governorates may be at risk of expulsion from them.²⁴ Measures or restrictions designed to halt new entries into some Governorates/areas/cities are motivated by security, saturation-related and political considerations.²⁵ Examples of political considerations include some southern Governorates which are reluctant to take new IDPs because, according to some political actors, it would be seen as encouraging displacement of Shias from areas, mainly Baghdad, where they wish to maintain a Shia presence,²⁶ while in the three Northern Governorates, the KRG wants to preserve the Kurdish character of the region.²⁷

Not many restrictions have been placed on IDPs within Governorates, except for those imposed by the MNF, insurgents or local authorities in the form of official or unofficial checkpoints, curfews or authorizations or resulting from cultural/tribal traditions affecting

¹⁵ IOM GARs Anbar, Baghdad and Basrah.

¹⁶ IOM GARs Anbar, Baghdad, Babylon, Diyala, Ninewa and Salah al-Din.

¹⁷ The November/December 2006 UNAMI Human Rights Report mentions repeated instances of honour killings.

¹⁸ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Diwaniya, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Muthana, Najaf, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Thi Qar.

¹⁹ UNHCR LAIC.

²⁰ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Kirkuk, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Thi Qar.

²¹ IOM GAR Diyala. There are also reports that military recruitment of children is happening in the Governorates of Anbar and Salah-Al-Din.

²² IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

²³ In Anbar and Najaf, new IDPs are asked to leave city centres and being redirected to rural areas. Information received by UNHCR.

²⁴ UNHCR LAIC.

²⁵ UNHCR LAICs.

²⁶ UNHCR LAICs.

²⁷ UNHCR LAICs.

primarily women or self-imposed due to the security situation.²⁸ Most IDPs report that they have been well received by host communities, including host families and tribal structures, explained perhaps by people moving to areas where they constitute a majority and could rely on the protection of their own community.²⁹ However, in areas where they do not constitute a majority, they may not be welcomed by the local community.³⁰ Moreover, quite a few IDPs in some Governorates feel pressure to leave from militants, the host community or neighbours, military and relatives and due to court-ordered eviction.³¹ One reason for this is that host communities are in need of support as their capacity to assist IDPs has grown thin, especially areas in which significant IDPs have been already hosted, or humanitarian access has been limited due to military operations and sectarian violence, forcing these communities to share already limited supplies, infrastructure and services.³² Another reason for growing resentment between new IDPs and host communities is that new IDPs are perceived as responsible for rising costs of living and rents (and real estate prices).³³ IDP settlements are also perceived as being ‘nests of crime’ and prostitution.³⁴ These tensions could escalate into conflict if they are not addressed properly. In order to avoid conflict or recriminations, IDPs are forced to follow certain policies, customs or agendas despite their true feelings.³⁵

Discrimination

Discrimination against IDPs has been noted, especially against minority groups,³⁶ and against people within the same religious group but considered of a lower class or “less” Sunni or Shia.³⁷ There is a lack of a harmonized approach among all Governorates towards IDPs.

Socio-economic Risks

Lack of stable income, insecure housing, lack of access to health and education services, and poor sanitation in many Governorates are all factors that make IDP households increasingly vulnerable to food and livelihood insecurity.

Shelter

Having left behind their homes, housing is quickly becoming an urgent need for the majority of IDPs in all Governorates.³⁸ In 14 Governorates, more than half of IDPs are renting but rents are increasing, savings are being depleted and they lack regular income. While most other IDPs have found shelter with host families or relatives, as time passes, IDPs are beginning to feel the pressure of overstaying their welcome due to overcrowded conditions and an inability to contribute to expenses. A significant number are also

²⁸ IOM GARs Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Thi Qar and Wassit. UNHCR LAICs.

²⁹ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

³⁰ For example, Arabs in the Kurdistan Region.

³¹ IOM GARs Basrah, Diwaniya, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Thi-Qar and Wassit.

³² UNHCR LAICs.

³³ UNHCR LAICs.

³⁴ UNHCR LAICs.

³⁵ Information received by UNHCR for Anbar, Kerbala and Najaf.

³⁶ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs Dahuk, Ninewa, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah.

³⁷ For example, Sunnis from the South who are displaced in Anbar and Shia in Najaf or Kerbala who are not originally from there. Information received by UNHCR.

³⁸ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

living in public buildings, some under the threat of eviction. Smaller numbers are living in collective towns, makeshift accommodation or tents. There are also reports that new IDPs are now living in properties that people have fled from or been forced out of (also new IDPs).³⁹ Here, IDPs face the potential risk of being evicted without a place to go. Over time, many IDPs are increasingly under different forms of pressure to leave their temporary shelters, putting them at risk of homelessness and multiple displacements. In Sulaymaniyah, new IDPs are denied buying/registering properties in their names.⁴⁰

Though Cluster F has advised the government against setting up tented camps (only as a last resort), advocating rather that IDPs stay with host families or communal facilities are rehabilitated to house IDPs,⁴¹ in some Governorates, MODM and/or the IRCS set up camps to address the housing needs of IDPs. In general, these camps are not accepted by IDPs, not least because of lack of resources, infrastructure and services.⁴² Dire living conditions – overcrowding, unsanitary, without electricity - in public buildings are prevalent.

Food Insecurity

Access to food rations is a problem due to obstacles in transferring and registering with the public distribution system (PDS) and, if registered, complete rations are often not regularly reaching IDPs because of transportation-related issues and shortages.⁴³ Lack of access to food is particularly acute in areas where military operations are taking place, sectarian/factional violence is prevalent or militias are in control, causing insecure transportation routes. Food shortages in shops in Anbar and Baghdad are partly a consequence of lack of access to major wholesale markets. IDPs have received limited and sporadic food assistance from local authorities, relatives and NGOs.⁴⁴

Access to services

Potable water, proper sanitation and health services are pressing needs, particularly in villages or rural areas; IDPs in the North, however, generally have better access to services.⁴⁵ Water and sanitation structures have been badly affected by the various crises which have affected Iraq, notably because of lack of or insufficient maintenance. The new burden put on them by the arrival of IDPs has resulted in many of the structures becoming seriously deficient. Consequently, many IDPs either have difficulties in accessing water due to distance or some only have access to non-potable water.⁴⁶ This along with insufficient sanitation structures in some areas is causing serious health hazards. While the Government undertakes all efforts to keep hospitals working and to pursue vaccination campaigns, Primary Health Care centres (PHCs) are lacking proper

³⁹ IOM GARs Baghdad, Diyala and Ninewa.

⁴⁰ Information received by UNHCR.

⁴¹ Cluster F (Refugees, IDPs, Durable Solutions), *Housing and Assisting the Newly Displaced and Host Communities*, 18 June 2006.

⁴² IOM GARs Anbar, Baghdad, Basrah, Diwaniya, Kerbala, Missan, Najaf, Ninewa Thi Qar and Wassit.

⁴³ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs. UNHCR LAICs.

⁴⁴ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

⁴⁵ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs. UNHCR LAIC Basrah.

⁴⁶ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs Baghdad, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Thi Qar and Wassit

equipment, medicines and qualified staff.⁴⁷ In areas where IDPs are concentrated, the additional burden which they represent results in the inability of PHCs to serve them. There is a concern of families not being involved in vaccination campaigns and a risk of infectious diseases.⁴⁸ Very few facilities or services are available to provide psychological or mental support to numerous IDPs traumatized by the experience they have gone through which is particularly damaging to children.⁴⁹ Significant numbers of IDPs lack access to medicine due to distance, costs and shortages.⁵⁰ Lack of access to health services particularly affects pregnant women and infant children.

Access to services is often affected because of distance, unsafe passage or location or source controlled by an opposing group or militant groups.⁵¹

Lack of access to fuel due to non-availability/shortages or high costs are common in most Governorates.⁵²

Income

By fleeing from their homes, heads of families and other members of the family who had jobs, have lost them and many were unable to take many of their possessions.⁵³ Savings are quickly disappearing. Because of the high rate of unemployment in most of the areas to where they have been moving, most IDPs find themselves jobless and unable to support their families who become increasingly destitute. Many IDPs have faced difficulties or delays in transferring their government positions or their retirement salary to their governorate of displacement.⁵⁴ Increasingly, cases of child labour are being reported as well as cases of prostitution, including child prostitution. While the authorities in some areas have given financial assistance to IDPs, there are reports of mismanagement by authorities in the payment mechanism, whereby some IDPs are paid twice and some none at all.⁵⁵

Women

The negative effects of displacement particularly affect women and girls. Sexual and gender-based violence, particularly against displaced women and girls, is of major concern. Women are restricted in their freedom of movement, prevented from working, faced with abandonment, divorce, domestic violence, widowhood and becoming heads of households; girls are discouraged from going to school or forced into early marriages due to insecurity, economic hardship or cultural conservatism.⁵⁶ Restrictions on freedom of movement of women and girls limit also their access to health services, education and

⁴⁷ UNHCR LAIC Missan, Kerbala and Wassit.

⁴⁸ IOM GARs.

⁴⁹ See fn 10.

⁵⁰ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

⁵¹ IOM GARs. According to information received by UNHCR, Anbar (Karma) is cut off from water by Baghdad (Shula).

⁵² IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs.

⁵³ IOM and UNHCR GARs.

⁵⁴ UNHCR LAIC Kerbala.

⁵⁵ Information received by UNHCR.

⁵⁶ Reported widely in the South (Basrah, Kerbala and Muthanna,) and in Erbil. IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

employment.⁵⁷ Lack of access to employment puts not only female heads of households at risk of exploitation but also their children. Some women of mixed marriages reported that their husbands were threatened with death unless they divorced them due to their different religious background. Widows or female heads of households face many difficulties in traditional Iraqi society, where women rarely work outside the home. Widows face difficulties in accessing services, including social welfare, due to lack of documentation.⁵⁸ Homeless widows are also at risk of expulsion from Kerbala Governorate.

Children

Limited access to rations and humanitarian assistance, combined with widespread unemployment and lack of resources, is resulting in child labour or child beggars in the streets.⁵⁹ Many children have become orphans⁶⁰ and there are reports of drug abuse among children without parents.⁶¹ Unaccompanied children are at risk of exploitation and forced military recruitment. Children's nutrition may also be adversely affected.⁶²

Children's access to education is increasingly problematic. Directors of schools refer to overcrowded schools and a lack of equipment, school supplies and teachers to support additional students when denying or resisting registration.⁶³ Accessing schools is also difficult due to poor maintenance, lack of health equipments, unreachable roads and no bus transportation.⁶⁴ Some schools are closed because they are occupied by the MNF⁶⁵ or are temporarily closed or schedules disrupted as the security situation warrants.⁶⁶ Parents are not able to afford clothing and materials.⁶⁷ Children are faced with difficulties in registering for school and teachers are unable to transfer because of lack of documents.⁶⁸ Some children were set back a year due their displacement. Children are held back from going to school by their parent(s) due to the security situation and/or the family's economic situation; education is not deemed a priority under such circumstances, particularly for girls.⁶⁹ Lack of access to education may result in a growing illiterate population.

Lack of Documentation

Lack of documentation hinders access to services and may result in restrictions of freedom of movement and detention.⁷⁰ Women are particularly vulnerable as they often

⁵⁷ IOM GARs.

⁵⁸ UNHCR LAIC Kerbala.

⁵⁹ IOM GARs Anbar, Babylon, Basrah, Diwaniya, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan and Najaf.

⁶⁰ IOM GAR Anbar.

⁶¹ IOM GAR Diyala.

⁶² IOM GAR Kirkuk. There are reports that children are suffering from anaemia due to malnourishment in Kirkuk.

⁶³ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

⁶⁴ IOM GAR Wassit.

⁶⁵ IOM GAR Anbar.

⁶⁶ IOM GAR Diyala.

⁶⁷ IOM GARs.

⁶⁸ UNHCR LAICs.

⁶⁹ IOM GARs.

⁷⁰ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

lack documents.⁷¹ Some IDPs tend not to have on them their nationality and civil ID cards.⁷² A significant number do not have marriage, birth or death certificates, which can negatively affect IDPs, for example, in school registration, inheritance, personal status matters or recognition issues.⁷³ Very few IDPs hold passports,⁷⁴ limiting their possibilities to exit the country for protection. Some IDPs face difficulties in obtaining documents because they are required to obtain information or go through procedures in their governorate of origin or due to political considerations.⁷⁵ For example, Kerbala places restrictions on providing birth certificates to IDPs.⁷⁶

Property

Many IDPs in almost all Governorates reported that they left behind property and either did know whether they had access to their property or that it had been destroyed or taken over by other citizens/IDPs, militias, militants, the government or the military.⁷⁷ Destroyed or occupied properties will present a significant obstacle to return, the preferred durable solution for a significant number of new IDPs.⁷⁸ Many IDPs have approached UNHCR LAICs seeking advice on how to regain lost immovable and moveable properties. Some IDPs have left their homes in the care of a neighbour/friend. Other IDPs are exchanging (temporarily or permanently) or selling their properties for less valuable properties or for substantially less than what they are worth.

There are reports that militias are taking over properties from which people have fled or been forced out of and allocating them to others, including IDPs, for free or for rent.⁷⁹ Reports also suggest that 'real estate agents' are emerging to broker sales or exchanges;⁸⁰ however, there are reports suggesting that these agents are in fact associated with militias.⁸¹ The Prime Minister recently stated before Parliament on 25 January 2007 that Iraqi security forces 'will start arresting anybody who took by force the house of a displaced family in order to open the way for their return'.⁸² The implementation of this statement may lead to a new wave of displacement of these occupants who might already be IDPs. The other concern is a risk of reprisals and of forceful re-occupation of homes in the context of spontaneous or orchestrated ethnic re-engineering.

Lack of Access and Assistance

The government, UN and NGOs continue to face great difficulties in assisting IDPs, and in certain areas are unable to access them or only sometimes as a consequence of security fears and military-imposed restrictions.⁸³

⁷¹ UNHCR LAIC Kerbala.

⁷² IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

⁷³ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

⁷⁴ IOM and UNHCR/IRD GARs and UNHCR LAICs.

⁷⁵ UNHCR LAICs.

⁷⁶ Information received by UNHCR.

⁷⁷ IOM GARs.

⁷⁸ IOM GARs.

⁷⁹ IOM GARs.

⁸⁰ IWPR, *Iraqi House-Swap Business*, ICR No. 208, 12 January 2007.

⁸¹ Information received by UNHCR.

⁸² The New York Times, *Iraq Leader and Sunni Officials in Clash on Security*, 26 January 2007.

⁸³ Baghdad.

Urgent Needs

1. Preposition of sufficient emergency items in order to deal with expected fresh displacement, particularly in Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Mosul, Anbar and flows to Southern Governorates and the Three Northern Governorates.
2. Strengthened protection monitoring: There is fatigue⁸⁴ among IDPs with regard to continuous visits and interviews with questionnaires, and the data collected from such is not always complete. There is equally a need for more qualitative monitoring, which can be done through MODM and the emergency cells in each Governorate with a system of cross checking information with municipal councils. Such initiatives will be complemented by agencies' own monitoring in order to receive independent data.
3. According to needs assessments carried out by IOM, IRD/UNHCR and NGOs, the main needs in the different Governorates are: food, shelter, water and sanitation, health, education and employment/job opportunities. The next step will be to particularly target host communities with a larger caseload of IDPs where these needs cannot be met. It will be vital to implement cross-sector and cross-Cluster projects.
4. Strengthen the capacity and expand the network of UNHCR LAICs to ensure their beneficiaries' access to efficient and effective services as well as legal protection.
5. Expand and strengthen the capacity of implementing partners, in order to facilitate IOM's, UNHCR's, and other Cluster F member's emergency response.
6. Strengthen the capacities of existing Governorate Emergency Cells or Governorate bodies to deal with IDP crisis management, including the Branch Offices of the Ministry of Displacement and Migration.

Responses

Policy development: The Iraqi MoDM bears the responsibility to coordinate protection and assistance to IDPs. The Ministry together with the KRG, with the support of UNHCR and IOM, has begun the process of developing a *Policy Framework for Internally Displaced Persons*, which has included consultations with IDPs, host communities and local authorities and an IDP Intentions Survey. Given the new displacement and as discussed with national counterparts, the Policy Framework will now also focus on meeting the protection and assistance needs of IDPs in emergency situations. To achieve broad agreement on the content of the *Policy Framework*, a Conference is tentatively planned for May 2007.

Guidance: The UN Country Team for Iraq endorsed the Cluster F 'Strategic Plan on Assistance and Durable Solutions for IDPs in Iraq' in December 2005, to ensure that all activities in Iraq take into account the circumstances of IDPs. The Strategic Plan provides guidance to deal with various displacement challenges, which is still valid in the current context. Overall, the UN response in Iraq is coordinated by inter-agency thematic/sectoral Clusters, of which UNHCR-coordinated (with IOM as its Deputy) Cluster F is responsible for all issues related to IDPs.

New strategy: To adequately address the new pattern of displacement, Cluster F with input from the Ministry of Displacement and Migration crafted the *Emergency Response*

⁸⁴ Reported by UNHCR LAICs in the South.

*Strategy for Newly Displaced Persons within Iraq.*⁸⁵ This strategy provides a broad outline of different interventions, including in times of emergency, and provides a broad framework for the development of assistance and protection programmes.

Assistance to authorities/IDPs/coordination: In addition, Cluster F provides technical support to the government and coordinates, in close conjunction with the Humanitarian Coordinator, the provision of protection and assistance to IDPs. Given the limited funding available, Cluster F agencies were only able to provide limited emergency assistance (food, water, NFIs), emergency shelter packages, income-generating activities and provision of legal assistance.⁸⁶ WHO, UNICEF and UN-Habitat, leading or active in other Clusters, included IDPs in their various interventions.

Development of responses/interventions: There is also an IDP Working Group chaired by UNHCR under the umbrella of Cluster F, a forum which allows for the exchange of information and development of responses among the key humanitarian agencies and NGOs. To design effective interventions addressing gaps and needs in the areas of nutrition/food, health, water/sanitation, education, emergency shelter, camp coordination/management and protection as they relate to IDPs, Task Forces lead by key agencies (including WFP and UNHCR) have been established as part of the IDP Working Group.

Cluster F

Amman, 15 February 2007

⁸⁵ Originally issued in May 2006, then updated in August 2006 (currently under revision by Cluster F).

⁸⁶ Cluster F emergency relief distributions provided life-saving assistance to over 350,000 IDPs in 2006: IOM provided food, water, and NFIs to 156,000 beneficiaries in the Centre and South, and implemented 20 quick impact projects in the areas of community mobilization, wat/san, income-generation training, and basic hygiene, reaching 223,589 individuals; UNHCR provided NFIs to 124,000 beneficiaries nationwide; UNICEF provided water kits to 250 beneficiaries in Wassit, hygiene kits to 1,800 beneficiaries in Salah al-Din, emergency health to 15,000 beneficiaries in lower South, Kirkuk and Anbar, wat/san assistance in Anbar, NFIs/hygiene in Baghdad and health school supplies in the North. UNHCR funded Legal Aid and Information Centres provide IDPs with legal aid, including representation, and information and intervene and advocate on their behalf with authorities on various protection issues. In 2006, these LAICs assisted 11,000 IDPs, including new IDPs, at their centres or through mobile teams, in over 13,200 cases, mainly with transferring PDS ration cards; obtaining documents such as civil ID, birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, heirs deeds, nationality cards and passports; accessing health care (e.g. medical cards for elderly), employment, education, social welfare, pensions and housing; and gaining entry into Governorates and registration in order to access services and assistance. LAICs have also engaged in awareness raising campaigns on legal rights of women, health awareness for women and rights of IDPs. UNHCR also carried out income generation quick impact projects, which included old and new IDP beneficiaries.