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Emergency Plan of Action Operation Update Iraq: Civil Unrest

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRIQ010	Glide n° OT-2019-000126-IRQ
Operation update n° 1; 06 January 2020	Timeframe covered by this update: from 8 October to 30 December 2019
Operation start date: 08 October 2019	Operation timeframe: 3 months / 9th March 2020 <i>Extension two months included</i>
Funding requirements (CHF): 151,922	DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 151,922
N° of people being assisted: 25,000	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Partner National Societies (PNS): German Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, The Netherlands Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Ministry of Health of Iraq	

Summary of major revisions made to emergency plan of action:

The current DREF operation provided the Iraqi Red Crescent with necessary capacities to maintain the mobilization of the crisis management team, to continue preparedness activities in Headquarters and branches, and with the contingency capacities to respond to the current and future potential events. The DREF has also provided support to the Iraqi Red Crescent through provision and replenishment of first aid kits, mobilization and support of deployed volunteers as well as increased capacity to coordinate, communicate and respond to local humanitarian needs are ongoing.

A two months extension of the DREF operation is being requested to ensure continuity of IRCS response to the ongoing demonstrations and other recent events that have resulted to additional tension. The extension of the operation will continue to provide support to IRCS volunteers deployment and mobilization, equipment and logistics support; This will include the finalization of the procurement and the replenishment of First Aid stocks used since the beginning of the demonstrations on October 1, 2019.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

The Iraqi demonstrations erupted on 1 October 2019 in Baghdad and spread to the rest of the southern governorates of Iraq to protest mainly against the deteriorating economic conditions of the country, corruption, unemployment and inefficient public services. The demonstrators' demands resulted to the formation of an interim government and early elections.

The demonstrations were postponed due to the 40th visit of Imam Hussein, before commencing on Friday 25 October, the deadliest day of protests, when Dozen of people were killed and wounded, especially in Dhi Qar Governorate which led to the Iraqi Prime Minister's declaring his intention to resign.

On 30 November, the High Commission for Human Rights in Iraq reported that the death toll during the demonstrations in October and November rose to 460 and more than 17 thousand wounded.

Summary of current response

More than 500 volunteers and paramedics from Iraq Red Crescent continue to be deployed to assist injured people during demonstrations in Baghdad and other cities, mainly in Iraq's south. The paramedics are providing first aid services, transporting injured people to hospitals, and supporting medical teams inside the hospitals.

Overview of Host National Society

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is an independent national humanitarian organization whose work is to alleviate the pain and suffering of members of communities without discrimination in times of peace and war during natural and non-natural disasters. The National Society is one of the active organisations of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Its work depends on the principle of voluntary service, which is the basic rule in the work of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, one of the pillars of the Movement derives from the other Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society has been responding to the unrest since its onset in October 2019 relying on its capacities with the support allocated by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) through this DREF operation and with the financial and technical support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

From the first days of the protests that began in Baghdad on 1 October 2019, the staff members and the volunteers of IRCS have been daily monitoring the situation on the sites to assist the victims.

The IRCS established strong Coordination System with the Ministry of Health and deployed IRCS trained volunteers in the hospitals to offer assistance to the Medical staff due to high number of injured referred to Hospitals. The IRCS Teams carried out extensive outreach activity on the use of the emblem of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The first aid teams of the Iraqi RC were regularly monitoring the situation and providing first aid and psychological support to the affected people where necessary, as well as providing transportation services to the affected people to the nearest ambulance service points to be transported to the hospitals.

The National Society has immediately mobilized its entire first aid rapid response team to assist the victims. The IRCS used its warehouse emergency stocks to supply the volunteers with first aid kits. Currently, the IRCS has first aid teams operating in challenging operational context in different regions of the country.

The response is still ongoing especially with the unstable situation, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society provided first aid services such as: treatment ,medications and therapy for target affected areas in 8 governorates (Baghdad ,Najaf , Babel, Thi qar ,Basra , Muthanna, Karbala and diyala) from 10 to 13 November. All of these activities contributed to supporting the response of the ministry of health.

Since the humanitarian needs in this complex setting exceeds significantly the IRCS capacities, the priority was given to enhancing the effectiveness of the first aid rapid response teams in furnishing them with first aid kits and in preparing and training additional volunteers for emergency response activities.

This DREF supported the equipment of the first aid teams with necessary materials enabling them to undertake and implement successfully the relief activities.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies through its office in Iraq continues to observe and monitor the situation and the implementation of the DREF. IFRC has organised a call with the Movement partners and IRCS on 20 November 2019 to share and exchange information regarding the demonstrations in Iraq and to discuss the scope of IRCS response and to enhance the support provided to its current response operations.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The Ministry of Health is active in Iraq. Its primary task is to provide health and medical services to every Iraqi citizen during normal and emergency circumstances in the country. The ministry also administrates the affairs of health and medical cadres in Iraq. The IRCS is closely coordinating with the Ministry of Health.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

Needs analysis

The widespread protests and high level of violence led to increased level of services provided at the pre-hospital care of the Iraqi Red Crescent.

The expansion of the operational capacities of the National Society is necessary to ensure continuity of its services as one of the sole independent and neutral humanitarian service providers in the current situation.

The identified priorities to support and strengthen are:

- Strengthening the safety of all volunteers and staff of the Iraqi Red Crescent and offering adequate protection.
- Management of the situation should encourage the Iraqi Red Crescent with support of the IFRC, ICRC and PNSs to play an active role in the management of this crisis, in the other regions of the country as much as in capital Baghdad.
- Acceptance and respect of the Red Crescent, its emblem and work, remains a key component to guarantee continuity of humanitarian actions carried out by all Movement partners in the country.
- It is essential that activities in the DREF consider the added level of the demonstrations which may escalated in the near future.

Operation Risk Assessment

The situation in Iraq remains unpredictable and the violence might flare up again as the political and economic background does not favor the significant change expected by the people.

This situation of alternation of violent and calm phases could last months which implies a more complicated decision-making process for all actors involved in the humanitarian response in the country.

The best-case scenario would be favored by a significant but unlikely improvement in the economic and political situation of the country. The current political scene in Iraq remains scattered, and consensus between sides is hard to reach.

The worst-case scenario would take the country to generalized events of extreme violence. Such a situation would generate days, weeks or months of deep insecurity in the country which would forbid any humanitarian work.

In addition to the insecurity scenarios depicted above due to the ongoing socioeconomic crisis, as we move closer and closer to the floods season, there is a growing risk of a compounded scenario of civil unrest with that of a natural disaster to hit Iraq. Such a scenario would not only exacerbate the current crisis but limit or impede access to humanitarian work.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The main objectives of the operation are to guarantee continuity of the first aid and pre-hospital services provided by the Iraqi Red Crescent, continuous coordination and qualitative information management.

The current DREF operations should also encourage acceptance of the Red Crescent by all parties as a neutral and impartial actor to guarantee continuity and security of humanitarian work completed by the Movement in the country.

Proposed strategy

- Currently, security in demonstration areas and in the rest of the country governorates remains tense with lack of available indicators of improvement in the foreseeable future. All planned interventions must be developed and implemented in this light.
- A two months extension of the DREF operation is being requested to keep implementing the activities until March 9, 2020. The extension of the operation will support logistics operation in the Iraqi Red Crescent to ensure the good quality of items procurements and to maintain the Operations implementation team in place.
- The implementation of activities will continue to be monitored closely.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

 <p>Health People reached:25,564 Male: 13,094 Female: 12,470</p>		
<p>Outcome: Increased readiness of Iraqi Red Crescent First Aid teams to provide timely first aid services to casualties during protests.</p>		
<p>Output 1.1: Target population is provided with rapid medical management of injuries</p>		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached by NS with services to reduce relevant health risk factors	25,000	25,564
<p>Progress towards outcomes</p> <p>The Iraqi Red Crescent facilitated the procurement of 1,500 first aid kits under this DREF operation.</p> <p>Following a thorough market analysis, the Iraqi RC has successfully identified the qualified manufacturer. The Iraqi RC ensured compliance with IFRC procurement and administrative processes, including collecting quotations from different suppliers, and signing the agreement with the selected supplier.</p> <p>The procurement of 200 IRCS vests and caps with the IRCS logo is still under process. This shall ensure recognition and visibility of the IRCS staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Through this DREF, the team members of rapid response have received their daily incentive for their operational response in the field.</p> <p>The following activities and services were provided by the Iraqi Red Crescent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site injuries treatment at the first Aid centers installed at the protests assemblies' points in the governorates experiencing demonstrations. • Ambulance services have been provided during the protests and enabled the transportation of 7,321 cases to the hospitals during the events. • First aid treatment by the Iraqi Red Crescent health teams to the injured received at the hospitals. • First Aid Equipment provided to some hospitals for emergency treatment of the injured. • First Aid Kits provided to the field civil defense teams to treat the injured in the field. • The field medical services provided were: first aid, psychosocial support, and evacuation by ambulances. 75% of the injuries were asphyxia and 25% of injuries were mild to moderate) <p>The initial DREF allocation was planned for three months, to be completed by 31 December 2019.</p> <p>However, due to logistics difficulties to procure the items according to the rules and standard procedures, as well as challenges in procuring the teams first aid kits, three months extension was requested until 9th of March 2020, to allow the completion of the outstanding procurement activities.</p>		

D. Budget

The budget approved for this operation remains the same and has not required any major changes or additional disbursement.

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Iraq National Society

- Secretary General: Mohammed A. Mohammed; phone: +964 7706740050; email: Gs@ircs.org.iq

In the IFRC

- IFRC Iraq Country Office:**
Farid Aiywar, Head of IFRC Country Office in Iraq; phone: +964 790 192 2416; e-mail: farid.aiywar@ifrc.org
- IFRC MENA Regional Office / DCPRR Unit:**
Dr. Hosam Faysal, Head of Disaster and Crisis (Prevention, Response and Recovery); phone: +961 71 802 916; e-mail: hosam.faysal@ifrc.org

IFRC HQ (Geneva):

- Tiffany Loh, Operations Coordinator for Asia Pacific and MENA; phone: +41 (0) 79 251 8004; e-mail: tiffany.loh@ifrc.org
- Esther Matyeka, DREF Senior Officer; phone: +41 75 419 8604; e-mail eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

- IFRC Regional Office:** Yara Yassine, Regional Senior Partnerships and Resource Development Officer; phone: 00961 79 300 562; e-mail: yara.yassine@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting)

- IFRC Regional Office:** Nadine Haddad, PMER Manager; phone: +961 71 802 775; e-mail: Nadine.Haddad@ifrc.org

How we work

All IFRC 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 the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian 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:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace.**
