

*Next Week NCCI will publish the first series of Briefing Papers on Iraq's humanitarian actors' operationality. Papers will be published in the Weekly Highlight after the formal launch that will occur next Thursday in Amman*

## EDITORIAL

Issue 100 – February 21, 2008

### **Safeguarding the Vulnerable is at the Heart of Protection Mandates**

Beginning in the mid-1990s, international and local NGOs, UN Agencies, the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement and donors began a collaborative effort to learn from field experience about how humanitarian and development aid interacted with conflict, and how aid agencies had found options to avoid doing inadvertent harm. The “Local Capacities for Peace Project”, and the analytical framework that emerged from it, was led by the [Collaborative for Development Action](#) (CDA) and is commonly known as “Do No Harm”.

[A few months ago](#) we highlighted the need to emphasise the “Do No Harm” approach to respond the humanitarian and protection crisis that Iraqis face today. The first “Do No Harm” workshop held by NCCI in Iraq was conducted in early 2004. Now, with the announced will of some actors to increase their presence, and with mounting political pressures on humanitarian actors, it is more important than ever to use such an analysis to keep the humanitarian imperative front and centre.

Part of the trend toward greater professionalism in humanitarian action includes a heightened vigilance against unintentionally making conflict any worse than it already is. Aid workers provide assistance and protection to the vulnerable out of the best of humanitarian intentions. Ideally, they also strive to be neutral towards parties in conflict. But experience in many war zones shows that aid is seldom neutral in terms of its effects on conflict. That is, it either helps people to disengage from fighting by providing space and voice for non-war attitudes and actions, institutions, systems etc, or it has a negative effect on conflict by providing flashpoints, increasing competition, hatred and mistrust, deepening divisions, etc. By the way it is provided, aid either makes tensions worse, or it helps to reduce them.

Currently, most actors in the humanitarian community are acutely concerned about the apparent manipulation for political purposes of the question of returns of IDPs and refugees to their homes in Iraq. Humanitarian agencies face a dilemma. On one hand, there are grounds for facilitating a return as soon as safely possible in order to avoid the entrenchment of displacement, and the consolidation of divisions that ratify inter-communal cleansing. However, there is a strong sense that a return is being rushed before conditions conducive to safety and dignity have been established, and suspicions that data on existing returns has been inflated and propagandized by Iraqi and international authorities in order to illustrate that Iraq is safer and more stable than it actually is.

There is an acute risk that as pressures mount on the humanitarian community to prematurely begin facilitating returns, returns will be neither safe nor sustainable. It is far from certain whether the localized and relative reduction in violence of the

last few months will persist. The potential for further bloodshed from rushed and premature returns is high, and there is a strong likelihood that those who are enticed to return prematurely will be returning to secondary displacement. This is not a new dilemma for humanitarian agencies working in conflict situations, and particularly for UNHCR. At the heart of protection mandates is the imperative to safeguard the vulnerable regardless of extraneous political agendas.

Programme managers, field staff and donors collectively have options for doing things differently within their programming environment because it is aid workers and donors who decide what is provided, who receives it, who provides it (staff and partners), who is drawn into the decision-making process about who-gets-what, when it is provided, where, and how.

Decisions on aid programmes that are taken in Amman, Geneva, New York and the Baghdad Bubble are often so self-referential and isolated from realities in Iraqi neighbourhoods that, compared with decisions taken in other humanitarian theatres, they pose a heightened risk of catastrophic failure. To avoid re-victimization of Iraq's refugees and displaced, humanitarian actors have a responsibility to resist political pressures and to be extremely sceptical about the claims of political authorities that conditions are conducive to return in safety and dignity.

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*Salaam,*  
NCCI Team

## **HUMANITARIAN UPDATES**

FROM NCCI, NGOs' REPORTS FROM THE FIELD AND UN AGENCIES

### **Advocacy**

- [Iraq death rate belies US claims of success](#)

Source: [The Independent](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **February 17, 2008**

Access: **Open**

*The death rate in Iraq in the past 12 months has been the second highest in any year since the invasion, according to figures that appear to contradict American claims that the troop "surge" has dramatically reduced the level of violence across the country.*

### **Operational Humanitarian Space**

- [Guiding Principles for Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action](#)

Source: [IASC](#)

Document: **Guidelines**

Date: **January 27, 2008**

Access: **Open**

*Over the past three years, the private sector has shown increasing interest in supporting humanitarian operations worldwide. Given this growing engagement, the World Economic Forum and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have devised the following set of principles to guide public-private collaboration for humanitarian action. These principles are meant to serve as a guide to the private sector and the humanitarian community, with an emphasis on communicating key humanitarian principles as well as integrating elements of lessons learnt from previous private sector engagement. These principles are the product of broad consultations with the humanitarian community and the private sector, though they are not meant to supersede or replace agency and sector specific guidelines and standard*

### **Blurring the lines**

- [New commander's Baghdad strategy: 'preserve gains'](#)

Source: [The Christian Science Monitor](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **February 20, 2008**

Access: **Open**

*The incoming commander of US forces in Baghdad, Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, said Tuesday that he's determined to preserve the progress seen here over the past year. But challenges still loom large, he says, especially as the US will have to fight the war with fewer troops by the summer, when American forces are expected to return to pre-surge levels.*

### **Humanitarian Needs and Assistance**

- [NCCI-NGOs Strategic Planning Workshop Day 1](#)

Source: [NCCI](#)

Document: **MoM**

Date: **February 19, 2008**

Access: **Members**

*Minutes of the first day of NCCI-NGOs strategic Planning meeting that was held on January 30th in Amman.*

## Food Security and Nutrition

### - [Health and Nutrition Sector Team](#)

Source: [WHO](#)

Document: MoM

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: **Members**

Sector Outcome Team Minutes of the 6th meeting held in Amman. Are also enclosed drafts of Monitoring and Evaluation examples; Sector Outcome Team ToRs and SOT Strategic Plan.

### - [Food Sector Outcome Team ToRs - Draft](#)

Source: [UNWFP](#)

Document: ToR

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: **Members**

These terms of reference outlines the coordination structure of the UN country team and other humanitarian partners. The framework is designed to reflect joint priorities, strengthen leadership and partnerships and improve operational predictability of humanitarian and development actors working in Iraq particularly in light of Security Council Resolution 1770.

## Health & Mental Health

### - [Ninth mission to Iraqi Kurdistan seals positively the end of the first two years of activities of MedChild Pilot Project](#)

Source: [MedChild](#)

Document: Press Release

Date: December 15, 2007

Access: **Open**

The ninth mission of MedChild-IME delegation to Iraqi Kurdistan took place between the 30th of November 2007 and the 6th of December 2007 in agreement with the Italian Government and under the direction of Dr. Ilja Gardi. Thirty-four (34) child-patients with heart diseases were transferred to Italy along with their parents for treatment, bringing the total number of children treated within the pilot Project to 281.

### - [Weekly situation report on acute watery diarrhea and cholera in Iraq](#)

Source: [WHO](#)

Document: Report

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: **Open**

Acute watery diarrhoea – laboratory – confirmed V. Cholerae (Cholera) cases reported during: 28 Jan – 03 February

### - [Iraqi medical system wrecked by war](#)

Source: [The Associated Press](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: **Open**

Already a troubled system, Iraqi medical care has fallen to the brink of collapse since the U.S.-led invasion five years ago. Scores of doctors have been slain, cancer patients have to hunt down their own drugs — even IV fluid is in short supply. On Tuesday, a former deputy health minister and the head of the ministry's security force will stand trial, a year after they were accused of letting Shiite death squads use ambulances and government hospitals to carry out kidnappings and killings.

## IDPs

### - [Shelter and Housing Sector Outcome Team meeting - Draft](#)

Source: [UNHABITAT](#)

Document: ToR

Date: February 20, 2008

Access: **Members**

The following terms of reference outlines the coordination structure for development cooperation in the Shelter & Housing sector of the UN country team and other humanitarian partners

- [Iraq Displacement Assessment and Statistics report](#)

Source: [IOM](#)

Date: February 15, 2007

Access: [Open](#)

Following the February 2006 bombing of Samara Al-Askari Mosque, escalating sectarian violence in Iraq caused massive displacement, both internally and to locations abroad. In coordination with Iraqi government's Ministry for Displaced and Migration (MODM), IOM continues to assess Iraqi displacement through a network of partners on the ground.

- [Kurds impose limits on where Arabs can live in Iraq's north](#)

Source: [McClatchy Newspapers](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: [Open](#)

Every three months, Munawer Fayeeg Rashid goes to the Asayech, an intelligence security agency in Irbil, and hands over his identification. The Shiite Muslim Arab never goes alone. He has to bring a Kurdish sponsor to vouch for him.

- [U.S. troops erect walls in Mosul as inhabitants flee](#)

Source: [Azzaman](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: February 17, 2007

Access: [Open](#)

U.S. and Iraqi troops are carrying out military operations in heavily populated areas of the northern city of Mosul to flush out insurgents. And in their bid they are separating and isolating residential quarters with security barriers and walls making movement rather difficult. Some quarters like Yarmouk, Thawar and Siha are completely isolated.

**Refugees**

- [Inter Agency meeting in Jordan](#)

Source: [UNHCR Jordan](#)

Document: [MoM](#)

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: [Members](#)

Minutes of the last Inter Agency meeting held in Amman on February 5<sup>th</sup> 2008.

- [Iraqi refugees leaving Jordan remain pressured](#)

Source: [World Vision](#)

Document : [Press Release](#)

Date: February 18, 2007

Access: [Open](#)

Jordan announced last week that it would waive overstay fees for Iraqis wanting to leave the Kingdom, who had been in the country illegally. Around half a million Iraqi refugees are in Jordan, the majority of whom remain in the country as "guests" without formal status. But some refugees remain sceptical about the offer, believing it to be an incentive for Iraqis to leave Jordan. Only those Iraqis who return home or leave to a third country are exempt from the fines.

- [UNHCR welcomes Lebanon's recognition of Iraqi refugees](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document : [Article](#)

Date: February 20, 2007

Access: [Open](#)

The UN refugee agency has praised the Lebanese government for its decision to recognize thousands of Iraqi refugees who had been considered as illegal immigrants liable to detention.

- [Iraq: No solution in sight for Palestinian refugees stranded at border – In English and Arabic](#)

Source: [IRIN](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: Open

*Palestinian refugees trapped in three makeshift camps along the Iraqi-Syrian border living in very precarious conditions and their situation is deteriorating by the day, a senior Palestinian diploma said on 18 February.*

- [EU offers Nine million Euros to Syria to face health burdens of Iraqi refugees](#)

Source: [SANA](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Syria and the European Union on Monday signed an agreement on increasing financial aid to modernize health care utilities in Syria with an amount of 9 million Euros. The agreement comes as a support to Syrian Ministry of health to face the burdens it bears as a result of the big number of Iraqi refugees in the country. "The said amount will be used to supply 50 health care centers and a number of hospitals with necessary modern medical equipment in the regions mostly affected by the flow of Iraqi refugees," European commission in Syria said in a statement.*

### Education – Child Protection

- [Results of UNICEF/WHO psychosocial mapping of Iraq](#)

Source: [UNICEF / WHO](#)

Document: Report

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: Members

*Results of the agency mapping exercise that was recently conducted.*

- [Education Outcome Team - Draft](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: ToR

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: Members

*The following terms of reference outline the coordination structure for development cooperation by the UN Country Team and other partners in the Education sector of Iraq.*

- [Skin disease strikes Iraqi children](#)

Source: [The Kansas city star](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 14, 2008

Access: Open

*At least 275 children in southern Iraq have been infected with a disfiguring skin disease, an outbreak some health officials are blaming on the war's devastating effect on the public health system. According to the United Nations - citing reports from Iraq's southern province of Qadissiyah - 275 children have been struck with leishmaniasis, which is spread by sand flies. Most have a form that causes skin sores, but others have a type that strikes internal organs and can be fatal.*

- [The Children of Iraq](#)

Source: [Zona Europa Blog](#)

Document: Pictures

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Series of pictures illustrating the fate of Iraq's children over the 5 past years. Attention: some pictures are very graphic.*

### Human Rights & Protection (and violations...)

- [Iraq Launches Campaign to Halt Use of Mentally Disabled in Bombings](#)

Source: [VOA](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 21, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraq's Interior Ministry says it has ordered police to detain beggars, homeless and mentally disabled people from the streets of Baghdad to prevent insurgents from using them as unwitting suicide bombers.*

### **Water and Sanitation**

#### - [Watsan Sector Outcome Team](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: ToR

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: **Members**

*This sector outline provides a general overview of the context of Iraq's Watsan sector as it exists today, together with a brief outline of the Watsan sector. Included is an action plan based on the current situational assessment and recent experiences with Watsan sector activities in Iraq.*

### **NGOs and Agencies communication**

#### - [NGO Micro Grant and Expanded Humanitarian Response Fund Bulletin No. 5](#)

Source: [OCHA](#)

Document: Report

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*This is an update on two funding mechanisms for humanitarian action in Iraq. The bulletin will onward be produced on monthly basis. The NGO Micro Grant has provided small-scale funds for NGOs operating in Iraq since 2004. The Expanded Humanitarian Response Fund (ERF) for Iraq was approved and established in May 2007 and is administered by OCHA.*

#### - [Humanitarian Working Group](#)

Source: [OCHA](#)

Document: MoM

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: **Members**

*OCHA gave a brief introduction and an overview of the Humanitarian Working Group (HWG). Established in December 2007 and endorsed by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC)...*

 [HWG Draft ToR](#)

#### - [UNAMI Focus: Voices of the mission for February 2008](#)

Source: [UNAMI](#)

Document: Report

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Newsletter of UNAMI regarding the February 2008's UNCT activities, including the SRSG, Mr. Steffan de Mistura, presentation of the Secretary General's report to the Security Council.*

## **IRAQ CONTEXT**

## General Overview

### - [Iraq Crisis Report \(IraqHAR\)](#)

Source: [Centre of Excellence on Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance](#)

Document: Weekly report

Date: February 20, 2008

Access: Open

*A weekly Iraq humanitarian assistance report Compiled by Pacific Disaster Management Information Network*

### - [Juan Cole's informed comment's excerpts](#)

Source: [Informed Comment – Juan Cole's Web Blog.](#)

Document: Selection of daily comments

Date: February 15 to 21, 2008

Access: Open

*Juan Cole is a Professor of Modern Middle East and South Asian History at the University of Michigan. As such he brings daily much needed expertise and historical perspective to issues surrounding Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Good reading to have a weekly review of the Iraq daily situation.*

## Iraqis Living Conditions

### - [IRAQ: The Lights Have Gone Out, Who Cares](#)

Source: [IPS](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 15, 2008

Access: Open

*Lack of electricity in Baquba has shattered businesses, and the lives of families. Months of power failures has darkened morale everywhere.*

## Violence and (Un-) security

### - [U.S. Soldiers Kill Unarmed Iraqis and Afghanis](#)

Source: [Consortium New](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 15, 2008

Access: Open

*By forcing repeat combat assignments to Iraq and Afghanistan -- and by winking at torture and indiscriminate killings -- George W. Bush is degrading the reputation of the U.S. military, turning enlisted soldiers and intelligence officers into murderers and sadists.*

### - [Mortar attack kills 3 Iraqi children playing soccer](#)

Source: [Reuters](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 20, 2008

Access: Open

*A mortar attack on a U.S. base in Iraq killed three children playing soccer nearby, the U.S. military said on Wednesday. Seven other youngsters were also hurt in Tuesday's attack on the base near Balad, 80 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad. "This indiscriminate violence wrought by these terrorists is intolerable," said Major Peggy Kageleiry, spokeswoman for U.S. forces in northern Iraq.*

### - [Suicide Bomber Is Spotted and Shot, but Kills 3 in Baghdad](#)

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: Open

*It was Sunday, a busy day for shop owners in the bustling central Baghdad district of Karada, and Abbas Ali was tending to his morning routine when screams from people outside stopped him.*

## "Reconstruction" is not going so well...for Iraqis

### - [Iraq luring big oil investment](#)

Source: [Kuwait Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraq is inching toward attracting the billions of dollars needed to revamp its oil sector but international oil companies are still not ready to commit the massive sums required. Iraq has the world's third largest oil reserves, its reservoirs are among the cheapest anywhere to develop and the country is desperate for investment after years of sanctions and war. The lure of Iraq is all the more powerful as big oil has limited access to the Middle East's lucrative oilfields, which are mostly off-limits to foreign investors.*

- [Foreign firms seek Iraq oil deals](#)

Source: [Al Jazeera](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: Open

*More than 70 international firms have registered to compete for tenders to help develop Iraq's oil reserves, the world's third largest, the country's oil ministry says.*

### Iraqi Political process

- [The Future Elections in Iraq and the UN Role](#)

Source: [UNAMI](#)

Document: Press Release

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: Open

*During a press conference held in the Iraqi Convention Center, on 14 February 2008, the Special Representative of the Secretary General to the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI), Mr. Staffan de Mistura, the Iraqi President of the Council of Representatives (CoR) Mr. Mahmoud Almeshhadani, and his two deputies, Mr. Khalid al-Attiya and Mr. Aref Tayfour, announced a process for selecting the remaining eight Governorate Election Offices Directors. This event coincided with new legislation concerning governorate elections, passed the previous day.*

- [Time for Kurdish Realism](#)

Source: [Washington post](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 9, 2008

Access: Open

*Increasingly, Iraq's Kurds appear to be interfering with efforts to foster political accommodation among their country's major sectarian groups. Since Iraq's future hinges on establishing such a spirit of compromise, this trend has potentially grave implications for Iraq, its neighbors and the United States.*

- [Deal between key Iraq Shiite figures collapses](#)

Source: [AFP](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 17, 2008

Access: Open

*Radical Iraqi cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's movement Sunday announced it was canceling a pact it signed four months ago with its main Shiite rival aimed at reducing tension between the two groups.*

- [Iraq's Sadr may not extend truce](#)

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 21, 2008

Access: Open

*The Shiite cleric's aides say the cease-fire has hurt their movement, but the U.S. is counting on its extension to maintain security gains as it draws down extra troops.*

- [Iraq oil law stalled, no end to impasse in sight](#)

Source: [Reuters](#)

Document: Article

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: Open

*A law that could shape Iraq's future by clearing the way for investment in its oil fields is deadlocked by a battle for control of the reserves and no end to the impasse is in sight, lawmakers and officials say.*

### **Rule of Law**

#### - **Iraqi amnesty provision makes progress**

Source: UPI

Document: Article

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: Open

*A spokesman for the Iraqi judicial council said the general amnesty law enacted by Parliament will go into force once a presidential council ratifies it.*

### **Policies and Strategies**

#### - **Foreign guards in Iraq work in legal grey area**

Source: Reuters

Document: Article

Date: February 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Foreign private security companies in Iraq are operating in a legal grey area that means their victims have little recourse to justice despite U.S. steps to increase supervision, contractors and lawyers say.*

#### - **US-IRAQ: Surge Exposing Political Tensions**

Source: IPS

Document: Article

Date: February 19, 2008

Access: Open

*Despite assertions by the George W. Bush Administration that the escalation strategy in Iraq -- known as the "surge" -- has been a rousing success, many of the problems of pre-surge Iraq still exist and, along with new issues, are exacerbating a tenuous political situation there.*

## **HUMANITARIAN WORLD PERSPECTIVES & QUALITY OF AID**

#### - **IASC Report 2007**

Source: IASC

Document: Article

Date: January 28, 2008

Access: Open

*As per agreed upon work plan in 2007, the IASC focused on the implementation of the Humanitarian Reform initiatives related to the Cluster Approach, the Strengthening of the Humanitarian Coordinator System and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), with an emphasis on making humanitarian reform a field and action-oriented process. Another theme highlighted during the year was Humanitarian Space, Protection and Security, addressing the key challenge of delivering humanitarian action in high risk areas, leading to the ongoing development of a framework/matrix of the range of current humanitarian actors and activities. The IASC also addressed Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian Action and agreed to focus on what it means to practice disaster risk-informed humanitarian action.*

This Page is your page

If you have an announcement (training, workshop, etc) regarding your organisation, if you are aware about meetings, events, humanitarian update, if you would like to make known some information, please send them to [webmanager@ncciraq.org](mailto:webmanager@ncciraq.org)

## Weekly Schedule

*NCCI-NGOs Strategic Planning Workshop Day 2 on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>. We encourage you to check regularly our Weekly Schedule on our [Website](#) for updates. We have added on our [weekly schedule](#) some events hold in Iraq or Jordan that concern only specific invited people. They are highlighted as "restricted". This is to give better information on what is going on to our members.*

## Upcoming important dates

<i>Feb-22</i>	<i>Samarra Bombing Anniversary - Destruction of Imam Askari Shrine (2006)</i>
<i>Feb-24 / Saf-17</i>	<i>Martyrdom Imam Ali Ridha Anniversary</i>
<i>Feb-27 / Saf-20</i>	<i>Arbae'en (40's day of Imam Hussein's Death)</i>

## Updates & Announcements

### [New Trauma Rehabilitation & Training Center in Sulaymaniyah](#)

*Heartland Alliance – Iraq programme in cooperation with the Ministry of Health – Sulaymaniyah Directorate of Health and Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research– University of Sulaymaniyah; opened Trauma Rehabilitation & Training Center in Sulaymaniyah. The Center offers psychosocial, psychiatric, medical and case management services to individuals who have suffered trauma due to torture, gender based violence or armed conflict. Services are free and confidential and are provided without discrimination on the basis of religion, ethnicity, nationality or language. To inquire about these services, or schedule an appointment for an intake/assessment, please check announcement flyer in Arabic, Kurdish and English [on our website](#).*

### **World Tuberculosis Day celebration in Wasit**

*The director of the Chest Diseases' Consultant Clinic in Wasit Province is planning to participate in celebrating the World Tuberculosis Day (March 24) by giving a lecture and forum on the "Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and Community-Based Organizations in Controlling TB in Iraq". NGOs working in Wasit Province are invited to participate in this Forum and to celebrate the World TB Day so as to increase awareness among people and to halt TB new hideous resurgence. The activity is due to be held in the Province Hall.*

### [Call for Proposals](#)

*The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) announces the availability of Small Grants of up to USD \$8,000 to support advocacy and media campaigns, research, trainings, workshops, and other efforts by local organizations in the Middle East and North Africa advocating for civil society law reform. More information [on our website](#).*

## [NCCI's Contact List](#)