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USAID/OFDA Quarterly Program Performance Report

Program Title: Emergency Cash Assistance for Displaced Households in Northern Iraq

Project Dates: July 01, 2015 – March 31, 2016

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Country/Region:	Iraq
OFDA Grant Number:	AID-OFDA-G-15-00175
Type of Disaster	Conflict
Time Period covered by report	October 1 st 2015 – December 31 st 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project is providing multi-purpose cash assistance for 1,277 IDP households in Kirkuk Governorate, Iraq. In this second quarter, Tearfund distributed cash grants to 138 households (585 IDPs) who met the selection criteria. In the post distribution monitoring, 71% of households reported that it enabled them to purchase essential items. 25% reported that the cash grant enabled them to purchase items for winter such as blankets, heaters, and clothes.

In the face of security deterioration, Tearfund has amended existing operating procedures and security plans, improved communication with other actors and upgraded security in the base. These improvements in setup and operations are enabling Tearfund staff to continue to implement the project in a volatile operating environment.

Tearfund continues to lead the Kirkuk Cash Working Group (CWG). This entails coordinating with the cash actors to eliminate duplication, promote best practice and represent the cash working group to external actors such as the Inter Cluster Coordination Group, OCHA or inter-cluster meetings. In this quarter Tearfund signed MOUs with the cash working group members to create a master database, enabling agencies to conduct duplication checks on their potential beneficiaries. Furthermore, Tearfund have negotiated with the MoDM a minimum percentage of beneficiaries from the host community to be included in future projects.

Tearfund has made advancements in increasing efficiency and timeliness of the cash assistance whilst complying with the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM). This entails verifying the households' basic details over the phone, selecting the neighbourhoods with the highest proportion of registered IDPs, then conducting household surveys to identify who meets the agreed criteria.

SECTOR: Logistics Support and Relief Commodities

Objective: To respond to the immediate need of displaced households through provision of emergency cash grants

Table 1: Summary of project activities planned and executed 10/01/2015 – 12/31/2015

Activity	Progress/Achievement
Sub sector 1: Non-food items	
What was the planned activity?	What progress/achievements were made?
Beneficiary Verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lists of displaced families registered with the MoDM were requested ● Lists are normally small with many of the IDPs having moved, returned or not reachable ● Tearfund has been the only agency able to negotiate with the MoDM to receive a list of 17,000 households in November, other agencies receive lists of 3,000 households. ● Casual staff were hired specifically to complement existing staff in phone verifications of all 17,000 families, carried out over 9 days. This verified that they were still displaced and confirmed their neighbourhood. ● Tearfund ranked the neighbourhoods based on the highest number of families displaced.
Household assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Following the above activities, Tearfund carried out a thorough security analysis of the areas showing most displacement (as found by the beneficiary verification) ● Security mapping and briefings were carried out with staff ● Tearfund team commenced assessments in those neighbourhoods
Targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tearfund adjusted the targeting criteria for OFDA to improve targeting and align with findings (high percentage of households with disability and medical conditions), as well as a stronger national focus (national cash working group) on the household's economic situation ● No changes occur to the actual criteria, yet more priority is given to families with severe medical conditions, disability and lack of income
Distributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 distribution was carried out thus far for OFDA on December 21, 2015 reaching 138 families with cash assistance
Post Distribution Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post distribution monitoring has been conducted with a representative sample (95% confidence level, 6.5% confidence interval) of all HHs who have received multipurpose cash assistance from Tearfund in December 2015. ● The PDM survey was conducted within one month of the distribution. ● The top three categories HHs reported spending on are food (75% of HHs), rent (62%) and healthcare (61%). ● On average they spent 135,338 IQD (\$112) on rent, 134,803 IQD (\$112) on food; and 86,513 IQD (\$72) on healthcare.
Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As part of Tearfund's leadership in the Kirkuk Cash Working Group (CWG), mapping of referral systems has been carried out. Handicap International were invited to present on referral criteria and capacity to the CWG members in early December.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of the total beneficiaries who received cash under the OFDA grant (138 families) in the reporting period, 70 HHs (51%) have been identified as meeting the Handicap International referral criteria (disability or a severe medical condition of head of household or dependant) and are being referred to HI for specialised further assistance.
Cash coordination – Cash Working Group Kirkuk	<p>As previously reported, Tearfund has been selected as the lead of the Kirkuk cash working group in September 2015. The last reporting period as such saw many advances and outputs of the group which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly cash coordination meetings which have grown to around 10 participating agencies Tearfund was the agency selected for local market price gathering to feed into country Humanitarian Response Plan 2016 process Representation of CWG at inter-cluster coordination meetings Drafting and sharing of key documents (incl 3W matrix, overview of Kirkuk registration process among others) <p>Most notably Tearfund has lead the drafting, input and finalisation of an MoU among all cash actors signed by the main cash actors in Kirkuk (incl Mercy Corps, IRC, Terre des Hommes, Medair, Reach) to share beneficiary data on a master database. The master database, held by Tearfund, ensures that prior to distributions, agencies can request access and carry out duplication checks against some unique identifiable criteria (e.g. PDS (Public Distribution System) number, ID number, Date of Birth etc). This enables agencies to establish whether a beneficiary has received cash from a partner agency in the past. This database is up and running and utilised by agencies for duplication checks, which will improve targeting and minimise duplication at the beneficiary level.</p> <p>Another issue raised frequently in the CWG meetings has been the coordination of the percentages of host community the authorities have asked NGOs to include. Figures differed from 0% to 20%. As such, Tearfund, as the CWG lead, collaborated with UNAMI’s government liaison point to meet the governors’ assistant in Kirkuk and the IDP committee to raise this issue on behalf of the CWG and to agree on a solution going forward. This meeting was held in early December and resulted an agreement that assistance for a minimum of 10% host community is to be included by all NGOs for new projects. Existing commitments and projects shall remain as agreed. This was a very satisfying outcome for the cash actors as this message provides clarity from the government and going forward ensures NGOs have a more coherent approach on the issue of host community inclusion which is endorsed by authorities.</p>
Regular updates to OFDA in Erbil, Iraq	<p>Tearfund had a project update meeting with the OFDA Program Coordinator based in Erbil, Iraq in December, in which the content of this report was shared and discussed. Both parties agreed on regular project updates. Tearfund therefore submitted a short update later on in December. This has formally been agreed as a way of working and Tearfund will ensure regular project catch ups and updates are sent in the last quarter of this project.</p>

Table 2: Impact Indicator Progress

Indicators		Base line	Target	Progress this quarter	Cumulative Progress to date
Sub Sector 1 : Non-food items					
Indicator 1	Total number and per item USD value of cash/vouchers distributed for NFIs, by type.	0	1277 cash grants of \$360	138 households have received cash assistance (137 families \$360, 1 family \$500)	138 HHs
Indicator 2	Total number of people receiving NFIs, by sex and type.	0	1277 HH (approx. 6,385 individuals); 50% M/F	273 M & 312 F (585 IDPs)	273 M & 312 F (585 IDPs)

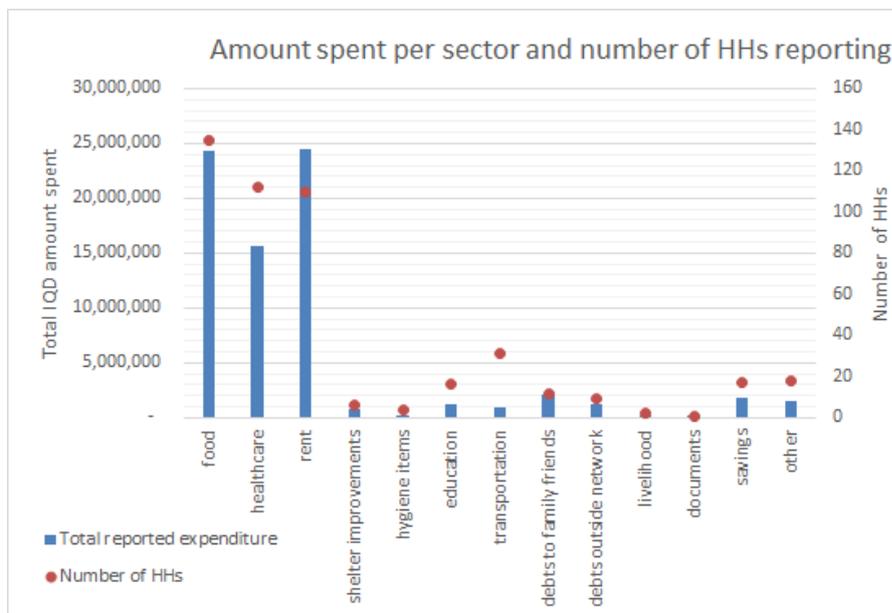
Update on indicators

On December 21 a distribution to a total of 138 families was carried out by the Tearfund team in Kirkuk. These comprised of 137 families who received \$360 and one family who received \$500. The latter qualified for the higher amount due to having ten or more family members. With an additional large list of displaced families requested (which increases efficiency as explained in constraints section below), Tearfund is positive that the remaining families can be reached in this project.

Post Distribution Monitoring - findings

The Post Distribution Monitoring conducted within one month of the distribution found a high beneficiary satisfaction level, in which 100% reported being satisfied (19%) or very satisfied (81%) with the distribution; 89% were satisfied with the size of the grant and 96% were satisfied with receiving it in USD. Furthermore 100% of the beneficiaries reported that Tearfund staff treated them with respect and 99% agreed with the criteria.

The majority of households used the cash for essential items, with 71% of households reporting that the cash enabled them to purchase something they considered to be an essential items. 25% reported that the cash grant enabled them to purchase items for winter such as blankets, heaters, and clothes. A detailed breakdown of expenditure per sector and the number of HHs that reported spending some of the grant per sector can be seen in the graph below which shows that most households spend their grant on rent, food and healthcare.



CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

Deterioration of Security

Since the start of the OFDA project, there has been a significant change in the security situation. There have been 428 recorded incidents between July - December 2015, compared with a total of 18 incidents recorded between January to April 2015. This means there was a 24 fold increase in incidents when comparing these two periods. Throughout the current reporting period Islamic State (IS) has been proactive along its front lines with Kurdistan Regional Government Security Forces (KRG-SF) in Kirkuk governorates, where an increase in its attacks on KRG-SF positions was seen, particularly in December. A total of 28 targeted attacks were recorded to be initiated by IS, mainly related to small arms fires, mortar and explosives attacks on Kurdish or Iraqi forces. Additionally, a total of 45 coalition forces airstrikes were recorded in Kirkuk targeting IS locations.

December security reports confirmed that the security situation in Kirkuk remains volatile, with numerous targeted killings and abductions. Apart from activity on the frontlines, Kirkuk city has seen a significant increase in incidents. The reporting period saw a total of 313 officially confirmed security incidents in Kirkuk governorate, out of which 169 (54%) happened in the Kirkuk district and 125 (40%) in Kirkuk city itself. The quarter previous to the reporting period saw a similar total of incidents, with 311 reported in Kirkuk governorate. Of these incidences, 38% occurred in Kirkuk district and 24 (8%) in the Kirkuk city. This demonstrates the deterioration of the security situation in Kirkuk city in particular, with a notable 32% increase in incidents recorded between the reporting period and the previous quarter.

To strengthen the project in light of Kirkuk's volatile security situation, Tearfund revisited its existing operating procedures and security plans. This resulted in tightened movement procedures, base improvements, and conducting hostile environment security training for all staff. Standard operating procedures include security assessments of neighbourhoods of operation and connecting with local security forces, as well as informal local contacts, to scope the area. Jointly with the Area Coordinator previous incidents are mapped, analysed and the team are given detailed briefings on new areas prior to departure. Standard operating procedures also include carrying multiple modes of communication, proximity to the driver at all times, the carrying of specialised emergency trauma kits, as well as regular security check-ins. Tearfund has worked closely with other INGOs and INSOs (International NGO

Safety Organisations) to build a security network and share information. As such, Tearfund setup and operations have been improved to facilitate safe project delivery.

Beneficiary verification from MoDM lists

The prescribed way of working in Kirkuk currently entails requesting lists from the MoDM, which beneficiaries can be selected from once verified and assessed. Initially these lists included about 3,000 families. Beneficiaries on these lists were spread across 311 neighbourhoods, many of which were populated with only 1 HH per neighbourhood. To maximise project efficiency, Tearfund took the most populated areas from the list and called all households to confirm their location. Of these, Tearfund found that 9.4% had returned home, 23.1% had moved area within Kirkuk, and 44.8% were unreachable. As such, Tearfund commenced work in neighbourhoods showing the highest number of displacement, e.g. 21 HHs located in one neighbourhood. However, the neighbourhoods are large geographical areas, rendering the process of searching for the houses of those families on the MoDM as very time consuming. As such, a comparatively low number of assessments can be accomplished per day, slowing the total progress down.

Whilst advocacy to improve the ministry’s prescribed way of working is ongoing, Tearfund was able to negotiate to receive a list of 17,000 families. Whilst there are remaining high percentages of people who have moved, returned or whose phone remains switched off despite numerous attempts, having an initially larger list ensures the identification of higher numbers of up to 400 families in some neighbourhoods, compared to 21 families in one neighbourhood (as stated above) previously. This makes field trips more efficient and ensures a higher number of assessments can be carried out per day, increasing the speed of the response overall. So far, Tearfund is the only agency to have negotiated a list of this size with the ministry. Much emphasis is placed on continuing to build and maintain our good relations with authorities. Another list of 17,000 households will be requested in January 2016.

Financial Expenditure

Tearfund expenditure currently shows around one third of funds spent. With one quarter remaining to finalise the project, Tearfund is positive to reach full expenditure. As explained above, the principle delays were related to the restrictive and changing operating environment in Kirkuk. Tearfund has made good progress on receiving beneficiary names, verifying identity and location, conducting efficient household assessments, beneficiary selection, and streamlining distributions and post distribution monitoring. A good working relationships has been built with a local Hawala agent who has proven reliable and compliant with operating procedures. As the majority of expenses are reserved for the actual cash distributions and the direct operational costs associated with this, full expenditure is expected by the end of the project.

Beneficiary quotes

‘I suffered from many diseases; [with this cash] I could go to the doctor which was very important.’



Pictures 1 and 2: OFDA distribution, Kirkuk. Two beneficiaries receiving cash assistance from Tearfund’s team on December 21, 2015



Pictures 3: Beneficiary accountability and feedback desk at OFDA distribution by Tearfund, December 21, 2015, Kirkuk.