



The United States Agency for International Development

U.S. Humanitarian Assistance to Iraq

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FACT SHEET

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2003-034

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2003

The U.S. Government, in coordination with international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), is fully committed to providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq - to save lives, alleviate suffering, and mitigate the impact of emergency situations. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), working closely with the Department of State and other U.S. government agencies, has planned for humanitarian assistance by:

- ▶ Deploying a specially trained U.S. humanitarian rapid response team;
- ▶ Continuing to pre-position stockpiles of emergency supplies and commodities;
- ▶ Communicating and coordinating with U.S. and international humanitarian organizations; and
- ▶ Funding the planning and preparation efforts of IOs and non-governmental organizations NGOs, whose relief professionals will help deliver assistance.

Rapid response. The United States has trained and deployed the largest Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in U.S. history. Initially, the DART is being headquartered in Kuwait City and will have three mobile field offices in the region. The team will conduct assessments, direct assistance towards vulnerable populations, and provide funding to IOs and NGOs. The DART is comprised of more than 60 humanitarian response experts from USAID; the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM); and the Department of Health and Human Service's Public Health Service. In addition to technical experts in areas such as health, food, water, and shelter, the DART has the authority to provide grants on-site, and includes administrative officers in logistics, transportation, and procurement, enabling the team to function as a turnkey response mechanism for assessment and funding in the field.

Commodities. The United States has pre-positioned emergency supplies for the Iraqi people, including materiel in warehouses throughout the region. In addition to pre-positioned and in-transit food, these supplies include wool blankets, rolls of plastic sheeting for emergency shelter, personal hygiene kits, World Health Organization (WHO) emergency health kits, and water jugs, bladders, containers, and treatment units.

Coordination. U.S. government agencies have been meeting for several months with a wide range of U.S. and international organizations in order to undertake contingency planning for the humanitarian response in Iraq. In the region, the DART will continue to serve as a central point of

contact for U.S. government humanitarian operations, facilitating the exchange of information, and assisting in the coordination of humanitarian assistance among NGOs, U.N. agencies, IOs, and the U.S. military. The U.S. Government fully supports the U.N. mandate for the coordination of humanitarian assistance. USAID has funded a significant contingency coordination effort for many NGOs preparing to assist in Iraq called the "Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative" (JNEPI), offering support to the NGOs in assessment, logistics, stockpiling, and staffing needs. PRM funding has also gone to contingency preparations of international humanitarian relief organizations.

Focusing on areas of greatest need. DART's areas of expertise and responsibility include:

- Health and medicines
- Water and sanitation
- Food and nutrition
- Emergency shelter
- Protection of internally displaced persons and refugees
- Humanitarian assistance infrastructure

Health and medicines. Through technical assessments, pre-positioned supplies, and the ability for immediate response, the U.S. Government, in coordination with IOs and NGOs, will work to ensure the essential basic healthcare needs of the Iraqi people are met. Goals include:

- ▶ Assessing local health infrastructure, including facilities, medicine availability, and immunization rates.
- ▶ Preventing excessive deaths by focusing on preventative and primary healthcare.
- ▶ Expediting funding for U.N. agencies, IOs, and NGOs.
- ▶ Assisting in the establishment of a national Health Information System (HIS) platform.

Water and sanitation. A successful emergency response requires adequate levels of potable water, and sanitary waste disposal and wastewater removal systems. Other goals include:

- ▶ Overall damage assessment of water and sanitation facilities that reach all major populations centers.
- ▶ Immediate assessment and response in order to provide adequate supplies of potable water.
- ▶ Extensive coordination with, and expedited funding to, water and sanitation experts and organizations.

Food and nutrition. It is estimated that 60 percent of the Iraqi people are completely reliant on food aid, and that households currently have an average of one month of food stocks. The DART will:

- ▶ Help to ensure the nutritional needs of the population are met through food availability and distribution.
- ▶ Work with international organizations to maintain the countrywide public food distribution ration system on an emergency basis and support internally displaced persons and refugees.

Emergency shelter. The DART's emergency response will include:

- ▶ Helping to meet emergency shelter needs of vulnerable populations through the provision of pre-positioned plastic sheeting and tents.
- ▶ Expediting funding to the U.N. and NGOs to meet basic shelter needs for vulnerable populations.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. The DART will focus on meeting the basic needs of newly displaced populations and refugees. This will include:

- Ensuring access to healthcare, clean water, nutrition programs, and shelter.
- Expediting funding to the U.N., IOs, and NGOs to establish and manage assistance programs for displaced populations inside Iraq or in neighboring countries.
- Promoting conditions that enable the return of IDPs and refugees to places of origin.

Humanitarian assistance infrastructure. Emergency interventions and high-impact projects will be used to facilitate humanitarian access and program implementation. These will include:

- ▶ Monitoring the physical transportation infrastructure to ensure access to populations in need.
- ▶ Contracting transportation to move and distribute supplies.
- ▶ Communicating with vulnerable populations regarding the availability and location of assistance.
- ▶ Small grants that support community infrastructure and reconstruction projects.

Humanitarian assistance and relief funding to date.

- ▶ Thus far, USAID has positioned \$206.4 million for Iraq humanitarian relief, food distribution, reconstruction and transition initiatives. Additional funds are in the pipeline.
 - ▶ USAID has made available 610,000 metric tons of commodities valued at \$300 million to ensure the that nutritional needs of the Iraqi people are satisfied.
 - ▶ PRM has contributed \$36.6 million to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) , and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for pre-positioning emergency relief supplies and staff and early humanitarian response. Additional funds are in the pipeline.
 - ▶ USAID has provided support, including \$900,000 in funding, to establish a consortium to conduct chemical/biological/radiological/nuclear detection training for other NGOs.
 - ▶ An additional \$100,000 was provided to the NGO consortium Interaction to fund an NGO observer to the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) in Kuwait City.
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