



Save the Children®

Agreement No. HDA-A-00-03-00073-00

**JOINT NGO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE
(JNEPI)**

Final Report

Submitted to:

**U.S. Agency for International Development
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance**

Contacts:

Rudy von Bernuth
Vice President
Children in Emergencies & Crisis
Tel. (203) 221-4200
Fax (203) 221-4210
Rvonbern@savechildren.org

Sonia Khush
Iraq Program Manager
Children in Emergencies & Crisis
Tel. (202) 530-4382
Fax (202) 637-9362
SKhush@dc.savechildren.org

JNEPI Final Report

Inception of JNEPI

It is unusual for donors and humanitarian aid agencies to begin preparations months in advance for a major relief effort. In the case of Iraq, long before military operations commenced on 20 March 2003, there was a sense that military action was inevitable. There was time to prepare. It was, therefore, a bold initiative for a donor to fund a short-term project with the specific objective of preparing NGOs for a major relief effort in Iraq. A mechanism to try and coordinate information flow between major NGOs was being tried and tested; and in the future such coordination attempts may take place again. The JNEPI project can serve as a model for such future endeavors.

It may have been optimistic to believe that NGOs preparing for the expected humanitarian crisis in Iraq would be willing to be coordinated by an unknown entity. It became clear early on that a shift away from the original coordination/assessment role of JNEPI towards a more support-oriented role would be required. Operational support and information services were provided to a large number of NGOs, who valued this service.

Timing of the Grant

In hindsight it would have been preferable if JNEPI had started and finished later. The activities JNEPI was able to undertake in Jordan and Kuwait in the earlier months (January, February) preceding the conflict were of some, but limited, appeal. JNEPI did not conduct its own assessments and clearly its strength was in the area of information provision and support. As the war started and NGOs were more in need of real-time information, the pace of demands on JNEPI staff time increased markedly. By the time JNEPI established its reputation independent of the five implementing agencies and built up credibility within the humanitarian community with its services and products, the operational phase of the grant was nearly over.

To JNEPI staff, the difference in the attitude towards JNEPI between Amman-based and Kuwait-based NGO staff was conspicuous, even when these staff were from the same agency. Of the agencies assembling outside Iraq, the NGOs based in Kuwait were the first to become operational inside Iraq. The Kuwait-based NGOs readily helped themselves to the services offered by JNEPI, seeing JNEPI services as value-added to their individual capacities. Kuwait was also more of an unknown entity when it came to NGO regulations; therefore JNEPI filled a role in compiling this information and making it available to incoming organizations. In Amman, until NGOs became operational in Iraq, much energy was spent agonizing about the legitimacy of the imminent coalition action and whether or not to deal with “belligerent parties” to the conflict and their funding.

In April 2003, with the fall of Baghdad and the end of the war, the focus among humanitarian agencies in Amman quickly centered on Baghdad. JNEPI’s move to Baghdad was delayed due to security reasons and the fact that the implementing

partners could not agree on appropriate timing for JNEPI staff to enter. This harmed JNEPI's credibility and reduced its utility. This was partly redressed by the very positive outcomes of the JNEPI mission to Baghdad, Basra and Erbil at the end of May and early June, and the formidable reporting network established by the Information Officer. Very real assistance was provided in a short period of time, for example, financial support to Telecommunications Sans Frontieres (TSF) and the National Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) and the issuance of maps, sitreps, and the Iraq country fact sheet. This brought home to NGOs the essential and fundamental role JNEPI could have played in Baghdad helping NGOs become operational quickly, if it had gone into Iraq earlier and stayed longer. Far more information was forthcoming and needed when the NGO community began operating in an insecure and largely unknown environment.

Perceptions of JNEPI

There was initial misunderstanding of JNEPI's role among the NGO community, specifically in Amman, where several NGOs began to congregate in early 2003 in preparation for humanitarian operations. This was due mainly to early statements referring to a coordination role for which JNEPI had no mandate from the NGO community. This would in any case have been very difficult and infringed upon the domain of established agencies. Another common misconception was that JNEPI was attempting to usurp OCHA. However as JNEPI became operational and offered services of use to the community, such as initial CBRNE training held in February 2003, opinions regarding its utility began to change.

The initial negative perceptions of JNEPI due to its funding source was important initially as the project was attempting to establish credibility among NGOs in Amman. Debate over the source of funding dissipated with the passage of time but never completely disappeared. As late as June 2003, when JNEPI proposed granting funds to NCCI, there was heated debate centering on the issue of NCCI accepting funding from a belligerent party to a conflict. This was led by a small, but vocal group of mainly French NGOs. An effective NGO preparedness initiative must have a diversified funding source with a majority of its funding derived from a donor perceived as "neutral" or non-contentious.

One of JNEPI's early and significant weaknesses was the delay in funding approval. This relates not to the timing of operations but to the ability to respond to mis-perceptions over the role and intent of JNEPI. The specter of a US-funded NGO consortium/coordinating body hung over the growing NGO community in Amman for over a month. During this time, none of the five partner agencies or JNEPI itself was unable to make a formal announcement disputing the inaccurate theories in circulation or hit the ground with some solid services to win over the detractors.

Start Up Issues

Early on, the decision was made by the Steering Committee not to co-locate JNEPI with the Save/US Jordan Field Office, which would have allowed JNEPI to become operational almost immediately. Instead, JNEPI committed to a large modern office in Amman. A larger space was needed and it was thought that this would foster JNEPI's independent identity. As a result, however, considerable time, efforts, and resources

were expended before JNEPI became operational. The opening of the new JNEPI office was delayed until mid-March owing to religious holidays, snow, procurement delays and bureaucratic procedures. This delayed the development of a number of JNEPI products and made working conditions difficult for JNEPI staff.

JNEPI ordered a server that was to work in combination with a LAN system and a leased line. In Jordan, a leased line usually takes four to six weeks for approval by the government and installation. The fact that JNEPI did not get a leased line for so long meant that the networking/mailing system of the staff was very difficult for the first two months.

Staffing

The initial premise for the staffing structure of JNEPI was that each NGO partner would second individuals from within their ranks; individuals tried and tested by the respective organizations and known to bring specific skills and qualities to the team. This plan did not end up being fulfilled. In some cases, the seconded staffers contributed favorably to JNEPI's identity and operations. In others, the results were not so positive. Some agencies continued to have active and direct links with their secondees, bypassing and undermining JNEPI management authority. These direct dealings and different employment conditions were a point of friction throughout implementation.

In addition, the profile of required staff was somewhat off the mark. JNEPI might have benefited more from individuals with experience in working in a resource center or service-oriented business of some kind. This might have increased staff's effectiveness and reduced team members' dissatisfaction at their limited operational duties.

On the positive side JNEPI was able to recruit highly qualified and committed Jordanian staff. They made a significant contribution to the success of the project.

Management – Role of the Steering Committee

From the outset, the five partner agencies each nominated one member to the project Steering Committee. As per the original program design, “program direction/interventions and resource allocation would flow from a consultative decision-making process.” In the view of the JNEPI Project Manager, the Steering Committee approach to the management of JNEPI ended up being restrictive to JNEPI staff and slowed down operations. In his opinion, control of the project should have stayed with the Project Manager and the main grantee (Save the Children) who between them could have made the day-to-day operational decisions. Only strategic decisions should have been decided upon by the steering committee through monthly meetings.

The arrangement of holding weekly Steering Committee meetings by conference call had mixed results. In the beginning, it was of benefit to all concerned to have the input and experience of five independent agencies to guide this new entity. However as time went on and individual partner agencies became operational in Iraq, it became

very logistically challenging for Steering Committee members to connect by phone. Some partners were not consistent or active participants in the calls.

At times the partners could not reach agreement on key issues, the main being security and timing of access of JNEPI staff to Iraq. Although each of the five agencies had their own personnel in Iraq, they could not agree on when to send JNEPI staff in. The resulting delay in sending JNEPI staff into Iraq greatly slowed down the momentum that the project had built up after a slow start.

Role of Assessments function

It quickly became apparent to the five implementing partner agencies that JNEPI would not coordinate or undertake a wide range of assessments in a number of regional countries. By the time JNEPI was fully staffed up and operational, many agencies, including the five partners, had already conducted individual assessments in Iraq and surrounding countries. Several of the JNEPI partners made efforts to share these assessments with the larger humanitarian aid community, either through JNEPI or via individual efforts. As a result though, the JNEPI Assessment Officers' roles became less clearly defined, and began to focus more on logistical support and information services.

Exit Plan

The objective of JNEPI's exit plan was to arrange to hand over as many of the key activities of JNEPI as practical to organizations that would continue to support them in the medium term.

A grant was made to encourage and nurture the establishment of the embryonic NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) as a viable body to represent the interests of NGOs in Baghdad (and hopefully later in the whole of Iraq) on such matters as:

- a) Advocacy
- b) Information exchange
- c) Security
- d) Sector coordination

The JNEPI grant enabled NCCI to attract additional support from UNOHCI, ECHO and member subscriptions. As such, NCCI's financial viability is assured until the end of 2003.

IOM took over the JNEPI web site. While having a security focus, IOM agreed that it would continue to publish information about the work of NGOs.

At the time of JNEPI close-out, the UN and several NGOs expressed strong interest in the continuation of the JNEPI Sitreps but no agency was willing to take on responsibility for the work involved. NCCI agreed to consider the possibility of taking the task on, perhaps with support from UNOHCI.

It had originally been intended by JNEPI staff to establish a communications facility at a JNEPI office in Baghdad. However due to JNEPI's late arrival in the city, coupled with the fact that other NGOs were undertaking similar ventures, JNEPI

instead decided to fund some of the data transmission costs at the existing Telecommunications San Frontieres (TSF) facility co-located with MDM-Greece. JNEPI also contributed to moving costs when TSF transferred its equipment to the NCCI office.

40,000 1: 250,000 topographic maps for the whole of Iraq were completed by mid-June. They were made available at UN HIC offices throughout Iraq. These detailed maps were an invaluable tool for project planning purposes and security planning

The Iraq Country Fact Sheet was completed by 30 June and posted on the website. It aimed to assist NGOs with establishment of operations in Iraq.

All equipment purchased by JNEPI was transported to the Save/US office in Basra for use on USAID projects in Iraq.

Achievements

Notwithstanding the many challenges JNEPI staff faced and overcame, a very significant contribution was made to speeding up and assisting the operational effectiveness of a large number of NGOs. A large and effective information network was established with about 100 NGOs and numerous UN agencies, international organizations, government representatives all over the Middle East, and individuals worldwide. The main achievements are as follows:

JNEPI training and seminars

- 15 trainings and seminars were attended by approximately 330 humanitarian aid workers (see attached schedule)

JNEPI Information Services

- 15 situation reports (weekly) were produced covering NGO news, security news and logistical information on the whole region. This included attending many coordination meetings in the region and interacting with humanitarian players from governments, UN and International Organizations.
- Six country fact sheets were issued
- A dynamic website with 180 pages providing quick news updates and detailed background information useful to the humanitarian community, including sit reps, country fact sheets, maps for download, section on the "response to Iraq" sorted by governorate, security section, meeting schedules, NGO notice board, etc.

Services provided at the JNEPI Service Center in Amman

- IT support base with NGO computer, scanner, printers, fax, photocopier.
- IT and technical assistance provided to all visitors
- Free copies of CDs with training documents, assessments, maps, visa forms, registration forms, etc. Included are the highly valued approximately 40,000 topographic maps (1:250'000).
- Regularly updated contact list of the humanitarian community in the Middle East, constant requests for contact details answered

- Advice on specific logistical, administrative, security or other issues given to NGOs visiting the office
- Answering of requests for information by e-mail and on the phone
- Rules and regulations produced by a Jordanian lawyer on long term registration procedures
- Networking by putting NGOs in touch with the appropriate person to address their issue
- NGO meeting and conference room

Services provided by JNEPI in Kuwait

- Security training
- Kuwait Handbook with logistical and registration information for NGOs in Kuwait
- liaison with Interaction and the HOC
- IT support base with computer, printer, and photocopier

Reporting on Project Objectives

Objective 1. Strengthen the coordination of NGO assessment and planning activities in the region.

As described earlier in the report, as JNEPI became operational in Amman, it became clear that NGOs on the ground were resistant to the idea of their activities being coordinated by a short-term unknown project entity. Individual members of the JNEPI project had also by this time begun to carry out assessments both in Iraq and surrounding countries. These assessments were by and large given to JNEPI as reference documents and for distribution as appropriate.

JNEPI staff also came to the conclusion that the strength of the organization was not in becoming operational and carrying out its own assessments. Rather it found its niche in the provision of information and support services to the NGO community in Jordan and Kuwait.

Objective 2. Provide a coherent point of contact for inter-agency communication and liaison.

Before, during and immediately after the war the service centers of JNEPI (the office in Amman and contact point in Kuwait) were actively used by NGOs. Once the service platform in Amman was operational, a constant stream of NGOs passed through the office, seeking information and also a means to network with other NGOs in Amman. The Information Officer spent at least 50% of her time responding to requests for information by NGOs, and received 250 requests by email. The IT consultant spent 30% of his time supporting NGO staff that came to use IT facilities (the NGO computer, scanner, color printer, fax, and copier). The NGO computer was in use by guests most of the time. The office maintained an accurate contact list of all NGO staff. It is estimated that of the 90 NGOs that traveled through Amman by April 2003, 85 visited the JNEPI premises at least once.

During the pre-war phase, NGOs showed a strong interest in the training courses offered by JNEPI. The CBRNE training in particular generated a large audience, not only due to the fact that it was a timely subject but also due to the good timing. The later in time that JNEPI offered courses, the more that NGOs were taken up by pressing duties in their efforts to become operational. These training courses did serve to break the ice with NGOs that were critical of JNEPI. They not only served the humanitarian community (including UN staff), they also gave JNEPI a broad contact and “customer base” from which to operate. In total, 330 NGO staff attended JNEPI training courses.

Objective 3. Improve information sharing and regular reporting within the NGO community.

JNEPI’s greatest accomplishments were in the area of information sharing among the NGO community and beyond. Before and during the war, NGOs were very interested in logistical information such as registration procedures in the countries surrounding Iraq, import and transit taxes, warehouses, etc. Since the procedures changed on a weekly basis and were complicated (e.g. registration procedures in Jordan, visas to Kuwait, access to Syria) the weekly JNEPI Sitrep was a widely read document. The JNEPI Information Officer received requests for information from around the world (more than 40 countries) and asked to be added to the mailing list. Several NGO staff commented that a large part of this information was available in general but not compiled in such a concise and understandable manner. By mid-June the JNEPI Sitrep mailing list had grown to 530 addresses, approximately 200 more than at the end of April.

The JNEPI “country fact sheets” including information about practical set-up and operational issued in Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, Iran and Turkey were of great interest to NGOs during the preparation phase. The country fact sheets facilitated fast and easy access to information. Unfortunately, due to regular turnover of secondees staff to JNEPI, there was a delay in issuing the fact sheets and they were only finalized by the end of April.

The JNEPI website www.jnepi.org.jo was launched at the end of April and contained a wide variety of information useful to NGOs – sitreps, country fact sheets, maps for download, meeting schedules, training documents, a security site, and an NGO notice board. The particular strength of the website was the fact that it was dynamic (versus more web pages that are static). This, combined with the fact that JNEPI had two staff who were skilled in web publishing meant that JNEPI could publish new documents on the website within minutes while other NGO sites in the Middle East tended to update their information within a time span of two weeks. 100 users signed up to the JNEPI website within one week of its existence. By mid-June, people from 36 countries had registered as users of the site. Not only did NGO staff browse the information available, staff of the UN, international and national contractors, scientific bodies, consultants, and Embassies also registered on the site.

Figures illustrating interest of NGOs in JNEPI products as of mid-June 2003

number of NGOs that JNEPI staff networked with	approx. 100
number of people receiving JNEPI sitrep	approx. 530
number of people registered on JNEPI website	approx. 250
Total number of hits on JNEPI website	130,000
number of web pages published	180
number of info. requests answered by email by Info. Officer	approx. 250
number of info, requests answered by email by all staff	approx. 400
number of people who attended a JNEPI training event	330

Objective 4. Enable consortium members to establish adequate contingency staffing, systems, and resources in the region.

Each of the five implementing partners of JNEPI found real value-added in having JNEPI bridge funding in order to establish a presence in new countries, begin operations, purchase supplies, and conduct assessments. An individual report from each agency detailing its use of bridge funds follows.

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS (IMC)

I. OVERVIEW/ SUMMARY

In March 2003 coalition forces entered Iraq, forcing an end to the rule of the Ba'athist regime. The resulting conditions for the Iraqi population after the Iraq war was much different than what had been speculated in the months leading up to the conflict. The acute humanitarian crisis did not materialize as anticipated. The assumed high influx of refugees spilling over into neighboring Kuwait, Jordan and Turkey and the projected degree of internal displacement due to the military campaign by coalition forces simply did not transpire. As a result, emergency preparedness efforts were ultimately applied not towards responding to emergency humanitarian needs due to military action and forced population movement but rather to humanitarian needs resulting from increased civil insecurity, looting and years of neglect, isolation and oppression.

The Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative was established to provide “critically needed support and guidance to NGO preparedness efforts throughout the region” in order to expedite and increase effectiveness of humanitarian response efforts in Iraq. The efforts of organizations to set up operations in light of an ensuing emergency, rather than responding to an occurring disaster, afforded them the ability to preposition staff and equipment around the region, facilitating a rapid response mechanism preventing the logistic delays associated with the increased morbidity and mortality of previous relief contexts. In light of the unanticipated post-war situation, JNEPI provided relief agencies with information facilitating appropriate and expeditious response to emergency needs while infrastructure supporting essential basic human services (i.e. health, water, sanitation, food and nutrition) was being reestablished.

Prior to the war in Iraq, supplies and equipment were pre-positioned and planning teams were placed in Jordan, Kuwait and Turkey. Team members engaged in various logistical and analytical tasks, including the identification of vulnerable populations, coordinating with other relief agencies, and resource planning. IMC representatives visited Baghdad to assess prevailing health conditions. Such assessments provided valuable information, which IMC shared with representatives from other aid groups in the region by way of JNEPI.

As a result of these early efforts, IMC is operational in 13 Governorates in the North, Central, and Southern Iraq, delivering supplies (i.e. oxygen and chronic disease medicines) and equipment, conducting minor rehabilitation of health facilities, providing refresher training for physicians and nurses and direct specialist consultancy, restoring and improving access to water and sanitation and offering health education for affected communities.

II. JNEPI Expected Results

- 1. Strengthen coordination of NGO assessment and planning activities in the region.**

The primary purpose of JNEPI was to serve as a focal point for inter-agency communication within the international NGO community active in and around the Middle East region. It was expected that JNEPI would facilitate much improved coordination and communication among NGOs leading up to and throughout the initial response to the emergency developments in Iraq. It was hoped that by serving as an information clearinghouse, JNEPI would also help to streamline other NGO interactions, including those with host government authorities, the United Nations, and donors such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). The previous experience of the five consortium member organizations was to provide leadership and direction for the foresaid efforts.

IMC's dispatched personnel met and coordinated with relevant stakeholders in Turkey, Jordan and Kuwait in preparation for entry into Iraq. IMC medical, logistic and security experts examined existing capacities to respond to emergency and longer-term health care needs, discussed security issues and organized systems for possible coordinated efforts and reported findings back to JNEPI.

In Ankara, Turkey IMC's Medical Coordinator met with local and international NGOs (IMC worked very closely with IRC on cross-border operations), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNHCR, UNICEF and participated in bilateral meetings with DART teams. Meeting discussions were centered on developing responses to possible population movements into Turkey from northern Iraq. Preparations for the potential use of biochemical weapons against civilian populations were also discussed. Feedback with specific documentation needed for the registration was shared with JNEPI in order to facilitate movements of interested NGOs in Turkey.

In Amman, Jordan, IMC's Logistics and Operations Specialist attended meetings with UNOCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, MoH and other NGO coordination meetings. IMC worked closely with Jordanian Red Crescent Society; exploring appropriate responses to the potential influx of refugees and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) into Jordan. IMC also conducted, through JNEPI, a series of training for NGO participants and partners on CBRNE (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high yield explosives) in Amman. In collaboration with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) IMC developed a CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological & nuclear) CD-ROM training material for field practitioners facing possible exposure to weapons of mass destruction. JNEPI distributed the CD-ROM training materials to all participating and interested aid agencies. JNEPI hosted an awareness training in Amman in the beginning of March. Over 100 NGO staff from several countries in the region attended.

In Kuwait, IMC's Logistics Specialist attended HOC, UNICEF, WHO, USAID, DfID, NGO coordinating meetings. IMC conveyed information to JNEPI on the registration process for Kuwait, as well as for the HOC. Security and logistic issues were discussed and closely planned with US and British military personnel. IMC took the lead in WHO health coordination meetings; IMC was chosen to participate in a committee especially committed to handling possible outbreaks/disease surveillance.

IMC representatives made initial visits to Baghdad in 20 February 2003 to assess prevailing health conditions. The trip provided valuable information, which IMC

shared with representatives from 15 other aid groups in the region as well as OFDA. The briefing by IMC, which was organized by JNEPI, was indicative of the heightened level of coordination among those preparing for the possibility of a large-scale health emergency in Iraq, particularly Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

2. Established coherent NGO point of contact for inter-agency communication and liaison.

IMC seconded an expatriate logistics officer to the JNEPI team in Amman. The Logistics Officer helped JNEPI in identifying new office space, furniture, equipment and services. He also organized the CBRNE training, the briefing on Iraq after IMC's pre-war mission to Baghdad and coordinated with the United Nations Joint Logistics Center (UNJLC). He also attended coordination meetings on behalf of JNEPI. In March, IMC's expatriate Logistics Officer was replaced by a national staff who continued providing the needed support.

3. Improved information sharing and regular reporting within the NGO community.

IMC shared assessment reports and logistics information with and through JNEPI at intermittent periods through out the duration of the program. This information was further disseminated through the JNEPI and HIC websites.

IMC also shared information about registration, donors, NGOs and cross border operations in Turkey. IMC shared the outcome of its discussions with UNHCR, OFDA-DART and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Kuwait, IMC shared information about registration with the Government and the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC). IMC attended and participated in the different coordination meetings as well as the daily briefing at the HOC. Since IMC was the first agency to enter Southern Iraq, it shared findings with JNEPI, other NGOs, OFDA-DART and UN agencies.

IMC was also one the first agencies to enter Baghdad and information was shared with JNEPI in Amman and Kuwait on the situation in Baghdad and the possibility of establishing offices in the Capital. IMC constantly attended the weekly Steering Committee conference calls.

4. Consortium members enabled to establish adequate contingency staffing, systems, and resources in the region around Iraq with the provision of bridge funding.

JNEPI Bridge funds placed IMC in a position to rapidly deploy essential and emergency medicines and supplies along with teams of health professionals into Iraq upon clearance from the coalition forces. In all areas visited in the initial stages of the humanitarian intervention, IMC conducted assessments of health facilities, including: medical supply, warehousing, hospitals, laboratories and primary health care facilities. Rapid Assessments were carried out in: Umm Qasr, Zubeir, Rumeilah, Ad-Dair, Al-Qurnah, Al-Amarah, Al-Kut, Hillah, Baghdad, Diyala, Anbar, Arbil,

Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Mosul. Some additional accomplishments relating to bridge funds include:

- JNEPI funds played an essential role allowing IMC to pre-position medical supplies, worth in excess \$4,000,000, in Kuwait and Amman. To date all these supplies have been delivered to the Al Nasiriyah Central Drugs Warehouse and Al Kut Central Drugs Warehouse of the Iraqi Ministry of Health.
- IMC was the first NGO to enter Iraq and go into Nasiriyah, conducting a joint assessment and developing plans to respond to an urgent diarrhea outbreak in the province of Thi-Qar. Nasiriyah hospitals had run out of Metronidazole and IMC delivered 80,000 tablets, in addition to 25,000 sachets of ORS.
- IMC delivered pharmaceuticals and supplies worth in excess of \$8,000,000 directly to health facilities and through the central and the regional distribution systems covering approximately 6 hospitals and 33 clinics in Thi-Qar, 1 hospital and 4 clinics in Missan, 1 hospital in Wasit, and 3 hospitals in Basrah.
- IMC was able (and continues) to support the health care service, in the governorates of Basrah, Erbil, Ninewa, Tameem, Baghdad, Thi-Qar, Maysan, and Wasit with an approximate combined population of 13 million people. (1997 consensus figures used).

III. Comments and feedback on indicators including data when possible.

While JNEPI served as an important pilot project giving valuable lessons for future emergency preparedness endeavors, there are a number of areas in which future projects should be modified to enhance the potential benefits and outputs. To begin no matter how much preparation is done prior to an impending emergency, it should be recognized that the scope and breadth of such events are still difficult to predict. As such, it is important that future preparedness planning should be dynamic, streamlined, and above all focused to facilitate the situation at hand. The overall impact of the JNEPI initiative was weakened by two significant constraints:

1. European NGOs perceived it as funded by a “belligerent” government and went out of their way to not cooperate;
2. The project manager that was specifically hired to head up the initiative had not had any experience of a complex emergency in its rapid onset phase and no experience of working with the military in a humanitarian context.

The JNEPI consortium included extensive prior experience in technical knowledge, management, leadership, logistic support, etc, yet it seemed to lack decision-making capacity at the field level. Upon operational startup, it was observed that the authorization of various decision-making committees encumbered the relatively simple activities necessary for program startup. IMC recommends that future efforts should try to empower such processes at the field level. The Inter-Agency Steering Committee suffered from becoming entrenched in policy and planning decisions while implementing agencies needed to rapidly respond to urgent community needs.

Another area, which is important to look at for future preparedness efforts, is how the directives of JNEPI shifted from coordination, to facilitation and information sharing. The disagreement from some organizations over the role JNEPI was to play as an overall coordinating body for NGO's operating in the region resulted in an interim shift in focus and activities. Several NGOs began to balk at the idea of a body funded by one donor was to hold influence over the coordination of all partners. JNEPI was viewed less as a coordinating body, and became relegated to one of information dissemination. This status was not considered a total loss, however it limited the consortium from completely fulfilling its original mandate. It appears that this problem would not necessarily be limited to Iraq or the surrounding region if such preparatory bodies were needed in the future. One possible solution is multi-donor funds could be secured, ensuring equal representation of donor interests are represented.

IV. Other

Significant Changes in the Operational Environment

Rehabilitating the health care system for proper epidemiological surveillance and the updating skills of health professionals are prominent issues that have emerged from assessments carried out upon entering Iraq. Efforts in southern Iraq to strengthen disease surveillance, procure cholera diagnostic kits, and provide water and sanitation community education prepared communities to cope with the additional morbidity from diarrheal diseases. IMC also worked with WHO and the central laboratory in Basrah to improve disease surveillance in the southern governorates. IMC found that direct trauma care interventions were not essential because Iraqi doctors had the competency to respond to the caseload presented. Needed most, were medical supplies and equipment, minor structural rehabilitation and consultant support. As Iraqi health workers have been isolated from the global medical community for 12 years, there is a dire need of new medical equipment and technical and specialty training. IMC facilitated these needs by providing trauma medicines in Zubair, Umm Qasr, Nasiriyah and Al Qurnah and conducted refresher-training courses for physicians and nurses.

Additionally, IMC did not deploy emergency response staff from its regional bases to conflict sites, as earlier planned, because the security situation did not allow for any such deployment to take place. NGOs were simply not allowed in Iraqi regions bordering Kuwait, Jordan and Turkey because of military activities. IMC was the first NGO to deploy teams to perform rapid assessments of PHC facilities in Iraq (first team entered March 30th).

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC)

The International Rescue Committee was a member of the joint NGOs preparedness initiative (JNEPI), an OFDA-funded project that also involved Save the Children (SC/US) as a prime, in addition to International Medical Corps (IMC), Mercy Corps (MC), and World Vision (WV). The project's initial objective was to enhance the ability of International NGOs to coordinate, prepare for and response to urgent humanitarian needs resulting from a conflict in Iraq. The following sections represent IRC's contribution to the final report.

1. IRC Start up and Operations Process in Iraq

In 2003, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) had the rare opportunity to prepare in advance for a response to what was anticipated to be a humanitarian emergency in Iraq. Although events did not reach crisis proportions, IRC gained access to the country in early April and continues to operate programs inside the country to date. JNEPI did positively affect such early planning and coordination with other partners in addressing gaps and avoiding duplication of services and activities provided by other agencies.

In the midst of the current chaos in Iraq and uncertain humanitarian situation, IRC established a regional office in Amman, Jordan to support the deployment of four emergency response teams to the region and to provide overall management of its operation. Jordan has been chosen as the regional hub, as it is the country with the fewest legal obstacles for international NGOs, it is centrally located within the Middle East and it is a coordination and staging point for humanitarian organizations, including the UN and other international NGOs.

IRC joined the other JNEPI members, such as IMC and Save/US, to be among the first private aid organizations to enter Iraq since the war began. Several IRC missions to the cities of Umm Qasr, Basra, and Karbala revealed shortages of clean water, sanitation and health care and helped to adjust IRC interventions.

Currently, IRC is implementing emergency relief activities in South/Center and Northern Iraq. IRC's activities target the most vulnerable populations – displaced people and other war affected vulnerable families. The interventions include Environmental Health, Water and Sanitation and Primary Health care.

Under OFDA funding in the North and Upper South, IRC is currently responsible for supporting the solid waste collection system and cleaning the sewage system in Kirkuk; rehabilitating the sanitation of schools in Najaf and Karbala; rehabilitating health clinics in Kirkuk, Najaf and Karbala and training Midwives in Karbala and Najaf. Under USG funds, IRC is also implementing a sub-grants' intervention to support IDPs in the 3 Kurdish governorates. In cooperation with UNICEF, the IRC team is conducting a child assessment in Kirkuk, Najaf and the upper south. The program in the north involves 5 internationals and more than 70 nationals in Erbil, Soulimania and Kirkuk offices; and in the upper involves 2 international and more than another 70 nationals in Najaf and Karbala. IRC's Baghdad office is used as a

logistics Hub to serve as an entry and exit point to Iraq, with the presence of one international security advisor and several national support staff.

2. JNEPI Expected versus Actual Results

JNEPI provided its members with an opportunity to discuss planning during a period of almost four months. However, it was clear that the **project's mandate** shifted gradually from its original coordination role towards a supportive role that focused on information sharing (including situation reports, trainings, maps, etc.) Confrontation and differences of perspectives between JNEPI member organizations (seen as US agencies) and the European NGOs (sometimes with UN agencies like OCHA) made the project difficult to fulfill its original mandate.

Coordination was also challenging with the other members of the NGO community. JNEPI was seen with no mandate to “represent” or “talk” on behalf of NGOs working in response to the Iraq crisis. Further, a significant turnover in JNEPI international staff did not help in building a credible team image of the project. Such an image is necessary when the mandate is to promote coordination among the NGO community.

The JNEPI project also supported its members with **bridge funding** to prepare for an effective response to urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq. Limited portions of these funds were designated to generate rapid and/or full assessments that can help in building a knowledge base of the Iraqi situation, pre and post war. The late approval of the project by OFDA and late delivery of JNEPI funds amplified such limitations.

IRC would like to highlight an important contribution of JNEPI in terms of **information sharing**. The publication of useful maps about Iraq and regular situation reports which were provided encompassed a comprehensive overview of who's doing what, when and where. The two outputs were significantly successful in terms of information dissemination.

Another achievement of JNEPI was the establishment of its **web site**. Although its comparative advantage was to provide quick logistical and security information, this advantage was lost as a result of its limited number of users, due to the late start-up and construction of the site. However, the late start up provided the opportunity to utilize other sources of information, like www.agoodplacetostart.org, to attract more users.

3. Feedback on specific indicators

IRC directly contributed in four of the thirteen **trainings and seminars** that JNEPI conducted. IRC Emergency Response Unit director, Gerry Martone, lead a one-day workshop on Assessment Training, which was held in Amman on March 12, 2003. Additionally, David Heed, IRC's security coordinator seconded to JNEPI as an assessment officer, also conducted 3 training sessions on security in Kuwait (April 24, 2003) and Amman (May 12 and June 14, 2003).

Two IRC **mission assessment reports** were also shared with JNEPI for further dissemination. The first is an early assessment on Jordan, which provided some

guidance on the various options available for NGO registration. The second mission report was focused on Turkey, which provided an update on the current access possibilities to Northern Iraq.

In terms of **staffing**, IRC was the first organization to appoint a full time person to launch JNEPI on the ground in late January and February. IRC continued to back the project with a security/assessment officer until the end of the project.

IRC co-chaired the Iraq working group at InterAction meetings. Regular updates were also shared and discussed within the JNEPI steering Committee regarding the outputs of the Iraq working group. While there was a possibility of using this information in formulating **advocacy** messages, JNEPI had a limited advocacy role during its life span, due to the difference in perspective between European and US NGOs about the war.

4. Other

JNEPI proved to be a **learning experience** for the project members. One of the lessons learned was what we have seen as a limited but functional coordination and coalition during the planning phase, and a collapse when NGOs become operational.

We have also seen difficulty in the **management** of the project on various levels, due to a lack of coherence among the systems of the different partners. This challenge is usually overcome with a prime organization taking a **leadership role** of the project, thereby assuming full responsibility of the day-to-day management. Such leadership was lacking.

The model of a **steering committee** is a structure that works to draw the strategic direction of the project. In the case of JNEPI, this role has been challenged by the geographical segregation of the committees' members and the difficulty in communication modes. Further, the level of commitment and interest varied among the partners, especially once the organizations become operational in the field.

MERCY CORPS

Overview of Iraq Response

Mercy Corps began planning for possible humanitarian operations in Iraq in November of 2002. Between November and January, Mercy Corps staff conducted several assessments and fact-finding missions in the region including visits to Jordan, Syria, and Iran. In January of 2003, Mercy Corps began deploying personnel to the region including several staff either as JNEPI secondees or funded out of JNEPI bridge funding.

Jordan: In the middle of January of 2003 Mercy Corps deployed one member of its Global Emergency Operations (GEO) team to Jordan (funded via JNEPI bridge funding). In addition, one Mercy Corps staff member was seconded directly to JNEPI as an assessment officer in Jordan in January and this was further supplemented by another JNEPI assessment officer seconded in February.

Kuwait: After the initial assessments in Jordan, Mercy Corps established its main base of operations in Kuwait City, Kuwait in February. The Mercy Corps Kuwait office began working with UNHCR, USAID, and other international NGOs on contingency plans for an influx of refugees into Kuwait.

Iraq: In February Mercy Corps seconded a members of its GEO team to Peace Winds Japan's U.S. Department of State-funded program to assist internally displaced persons in Northern Iraq. This secondee worked with Peace Winds Japan to develop contingency plans for new displacements in Northern Iraq and established mobile water and sanitation teams to meet current IDP needs and possible future needs. In addition, a member of Mercy Corps' Lebanon program conducted several assessments inside of southern Iraq during February and early March.

Turkey: In March Mercy Corps placed one of its staff member in Turkey to collect important information related humanitarian logistics and trans-border operations. Mercy Corps joined others to request Turkish Govt to open the humanitarian corridor to provided needed emergency support to the refugees and IDPs as a result of potential war. Also, Mercy Corps closely worked with OFDA in Turkey to prepare the humanitarian assistance program in case of an outflow of refugees from Northern Iraq.

Iran: Also in February, Mercy Corps (using JNEPI bridge funding) deployed an assessment officer to the Islamic Republic of Iran to work with Peace Winds Japan, UNHCR, and the Government of Iran on contingency plans for an influx of refugees.

When hostilities did commence on March 20, 2003 Mercy Corps had three members of its GEO team in Kuwait (one of whom was funded by JNEPI), two JNEPI Secondees in Jordan, one assessment officer in Iran (funded by JNEPI), one staff member in Northern Iraq, and one staff member in Turkey. Based upon its regional assessments and coordination with IOs, NGOs, and donors, Mercy Corps decided to focus its activities in three geographic areas: 1) South Central Iraq; 2) Northern Iraq;

and 3) Iran and to concentrate on four sectoral areas in Iraq (water and sanitation, distribution of food and non-food items, emergency shelter, and emergency health) and one sectoral area in Iran (distribution of supplementary non-food items). These staff and the materials they were able to prepare led to rapid implementation of USAID/OFDA and other donor-funded programs in both southern and northern Iraq

JNEPI Expected Results

1. Strengthen coordination of NGO assessment and planning activities in the region

The JNEPI project due to funding and then staffing delays did take sometime to establish itself as a legitimate point of NGO assessment and planning activities. Due to a weak UN structure and mandate initially JNEPI was looked at as a parallel coordination structure that was dominated by American NGOs. Once it became clear that JNEPI was not intended to replace but rather supplement and complement the normal UN structures (UNOCHA, UNOCHI, UNICEF, UNHCR, etc...) and that JNEPI had services to offer to all of the humanitarian community, other agencies began working more closely with JNEPI. While initially it was focused on the NGO community in Jordan and provided little benefit to the NGOs in Kuwait or other locations, JNEPI did succeed in eventually expanding into Kuwait and later Baghdad. It was in Kuwait that JNEPI had its biggest impact in supporting CBRN training, security training, and serving as a catalyst for information sharing and other activities.

2. Establish coherent NGO point of contact for inter-agency communication and liaison

As stated above, once it became clear that JNEPI was a service provision agency to that could provide information on previous assessments and up to date information (including logistics, communication, banking, local laws, registration, procurement, etc..) humanitarian actors began seeing JNEPI as a resource for the entire community. In addition, several of the NGOs who participated in JNEPI, worked together to lobby the Turkish government to allow increased access to Northern Iraq via Turkey. This and pressure from other sources, eventually enabled the humanitarian community to position staff and resources in northern Iraq for humanitarian programs.

3. Improved Information sharing and regular reporting within the NGO Community

The JNEPI website and its reports (both JNEPI reports and JNEPI member reports) were widely disseminated throughout the humanitarian community in the region. In addition the Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, and Radiological training that JNEPI facilitated were well received in both Jordan and Kuwait as few agencies previously had access to these trainings.

4. Consortium Members enabled to establish adequate contingency staffing, systems and resources in the region around Iraq with provision of bridge funding.

The provision of bridge funding provided an excellent platform for establishing contingency staffing, systems, and resources in Jordan, Kuwait, and Iran. Using the bridge funding, Mercy Corps deployed a member of the GEO team to Amman, Jordan in January of 2003. This person participated in coordination and policy meetings in both Amman and in Lebanon including water and sanitation contingency planning and other humanitarian-related topics. In February this same person deployed to Kuwait and established the Mercy Corps office there (co-located with Save the Children US). Using the Kuwait office as the main base of regional operations, Mercy Corps moved over 25 expatriate staff members through Kuwait into Iraq between March 1st and June 15. The staff moving via Kuwait, proved critical to the rapid start of the USAID/OFDA-funded program operations in south central Iraq, which led directly to over \$2.5 million in programming between April-July.

In February, Mercy Corps used the bridge funding to deploy an assessment officer to Iran. Working in collaboration with Peace Winds Japan this assessment officer established a Mercy Corps office in Tehran and conducted several logistics and programmatic assessments between February and May. In February, the assessment officer conducted a one-day assessment of the Kermanshah border crossing area looking at the warehousing, transport, and communication facilities in the area. From March 8-9 at the invitation of the Iranian Government the assessment officer participated in a joint assessment (with eight other international organizations) to assess eight current and potential refugee camp sites including their existing and needed infrastructure. Based upon these assessments and meetings with UNHCR and the Iranian Government, Mercy Corps worked with Peace Winds Japan to develop a non-food item (NFI) distribution program to fill gaps in the UNHCR's NFI pipeline. Buckets, Soap, and sanitary napkins were procured for a potential caseload of 270,000 refugees. Note: When the anticipated outflow of refugees did not occur, these items were later distributed to old caseload refugees from Iraq who had been displaced during previous conflicts in Iraq.

In May, Mercy Corps also conducted an assessment of the two largest refugee camps in southwestern Iraq. This marked the first time in three years that any international agency had gained access to these camps. Based upon this assessment Mercy Corps has submitted a proposal to USDOS/BPRM to support health and hygiene promotion within the refugee camps in southwestern Iran and to improve critical social infrastructure inside of Iraq to areas where refugees intend to return.

Mercy Corps presence in Iran was also critical in assisting in the placement of staff into and out of Northern Iraq at a time when few if any other options were available. Through its relations with the Iranian government, Mercy Corps was able to assist in the transit of four expatriate staff members into and out of Northern Iraq. All of these staff members were critical in the rapid implementation of later USAID/OFDA funded activities in Northern Iraq, including four water and sanitation project and one material aid distribution.

Comments and Feedback on Indicators

As outlined in Richard Harman's final report, despite the challenges, JNEPI did provide significant services to a large segment of the humanitarian community in the

region. JNEPI facilitated 15 trainings with over 330 participants, published 15 situation reports and six country fact sheets, and created a web-site with over 180 pages of information and updates. JNEPI also provided the humanitarian community with access to computers, scanners, printers, copiers, and fax; CDs with maps, registration information, visa forms, and training materials; regularly updated lists of NGO contacts throughout the region; and a Kuwaiti handbook with useful information on logistics for NGOs in Kuwait.

Once up and fully running JNEPI did provide a good organization for providing information out to the wider humanitarian community, however, internal information sharing between the JNEPI partners still proved difficult at times. In addition, although joint assessments was used as an indicator it was not until April that JNEPI members really began talking about or planning for joint assessments and by this time most agencies had already entered Iraq.

Other Comments

Overall the concept of the JNEPI was a good idea however in practical terms it was still a difficult project to implement. The initial delay in funding, the mixed messages about what JNEPI was, the reliance on a single donor, and the perception of JNEPI being an American organization were challenges that in the future can be avoided or mitigated. In addition, while some of the participating NGOs within JNEPI appeared to fully support the project others appeared uninterested in it. This led to the posting of less than qualified staff or long stretches without staff from certain organizations. This meant that the project did not have the maximum impact possible.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

Regional Preparedness Planning

Save the Children (SC) began planning for a possible humanitarian response in Iraq and surrounding countries in October 2002. Together with its partner agency SC/UK, the agency began preparations in order to be able to respond to an emergency from all countries neighboring Iraq, as well as to be able to implement emergency response operations within countries in the region.

Iraq: In January 2003 SC sent two staff to Iraq, with an OFAC license, in order to conduct an assessment of the humanitarian situation and to establish contacts with UN agencies, the Iraqi Red Crescent, and various other groups.

Jordan: In November 2002 SC held an Emergency Preparedness and Response Training for regional SC staff as well as staff from Jordanian partner NGOs. This training served as a valuable team-building exercise for staff that would eventually be involved in Iraq operations, as well as imparted significant emergency programming skills, security management, and logistical issues such as the protocol and use of radio equipment.

From November 2002 until the outbreak of war the SC Jordan Field Office continued to engage in discussions with UNHCR for possible programs (camp management, community services, health) in refugee camps.

The SC Jordan Field Office also assisted in the start-up of the JNEPI office in Amman. One SC staff member was seconded to JNEPI to serve as Finance Manager. The JNEPI Project Manager was also hired by SC and posted to the office in Jordan.

West Bank/Gaza: In November 2002 SC staff conducted an Emergency Preparedness Planning and Security Management workshop for the West Bank/Gaza Field Office. This was done in an effort to equip the field office with an Emergency Preparedness Plan that could be used everyday but particularly in the event of a regional crisis that spilled across Iraq's borders.

Turkey: In November 2002 two SC staff traveled to Turkey to conduct an assessment of humanitarian preparations and to establish contact with the Turkish Red Crescent and other UN agencies. In March 2003, using JNEPI bridge funding, SC posted an Emergency Coordinator to Turkey in order to establish a formal SC presence in preparation for refugee flows (at the time, UN estimates ranged from between 136,000 – 270,000 Iraqis would seek refuge in Turkey). The Emergency Coordinator established relationships with the Turkish Government, the UN, and the Turkish Red Crescent. By early April, when it became apparent that there would most likely not be an influx of refugees into Turkey, this staff member joined the SC/US team in Kuwait.

Kuwait: In January 2002 SC conducted an initial assessment to Kuwait in order to determine the feasibility of setting up operations in the country. In February 2002, using JNEPI bridge funding, SC posted a staff member to Kuwait to set up an office,

begin coordination with humanitarian groups, and prepare for refugee flows into Kuwait. The SC representative in Kuwait established relationships with the Kuwaiti government, the UN, the US Government, and other NGOs as they began to arrive in Kuwait. SC also pre-positioned supplies such as pre-school kits. SC/US was the first NGO to set up a permanent presence in Kuwait, and as such, served as a base of knowledge for other NGOs that followed. SC shared such information with JNEPI for distribution to the larger JNEPI network. SC/US used its base in Kuwait, which exists until today, as a launching pad for humanitarian operations into Southern Iraq.

Syria and Iran – Save the Children/UK, Alliance partner of SC, assumed the lead role in pre-positioning relief supplies and personnel in these two countries. SC/UK had also been operational in the Kurdish areas of Iraq (non-GOI controlled) on a continuous basis since 1991.

As a result of these significant investments made in preparedness and planning, since April 2003 Save the Children has carried out programs in five governorates in the Upper and Lower South regions of Iraq. With funding from OFDA (Water/Sanitation, Health, Nutrition, Shelter), USAID (Community Action Program), UNICEF (Child Protection Assessments, Summer Camps), World Food Program (Food Distribution to IDPs), IOM (IDP registration) and SC Alliance partners (Child Protection, Education, School Rehabilitation) SC continues to be an active implementing agency.

JNEPI Expected Results

1. Strengthen coordination of NGO assessment and planning activities in the region

Initial perceptions of JNEPI as a coordination agency was met with trepidation by NGOs in the region. However once JNEPI was able to find its niche and strengths (such as dissemination of sit reps detailing activities of operational NGOs) by and large these initial reactions dissipated. JNEPI staff continued to make the point that it was not attempting to usurp traditional coordination structures (UN-OCHA) but rather was meant to complement these. In any event, “coordination of assessment and planning activities” of the NGO community at large was not one of the main roles of JNEPI. JNEPI ended up receiving a warm reception from Kuwait NGOs who were pleased to avail of JNEPI security trainings and documents such as the Kuwait NGO Handbook. The Kuwait NGO Handbook contained information on topics such as relevant contact information, an introduction to the functions of the HOC, customs and freight clearance, banking, NGO registration, insurance, cross-border movements, communications, and security. The Kuwait NGO Handbook proved to be very useful to NGOs who were arriving in Kuwait everyday en route to Iraq.

2. Establish coherent NGO point of contact for inter-agency communication and liaison

After a slow start due to delays in staffing up JNEPI and technical issues involved with setting up a new office in Amman, JNEPI ended up filling a useful role as a point

of contact for NGOs. The Kuwait NGO handbook serves as a good example of a service that JNEPI provided to the INGO community in Kuwait. NGOs who arrived in Kuwait to set up operations, starting with SC in February 2003, had little or no information regarding banking procedures, warehouse rental, registration with the Govt. of Kuwait, etc. JNEPI's handbook served as a valuable resource for NGOs that arrived after mid-April 2003.

3. Improved Information sharing and regular reporting within the NGO community

The JNEPI sit reps were widely referred to not only by the humanitarian community but by others who simply had an interest as to what programs were unfolding in Iraq. The Security and CBRNE trainings were also seen as timely and useful by INGO participants.

4. Consortium members enabled to establish contingency staffing, systems and resources in the region around Iraq with provision of bridge funding

The bridge funding provided by JNEPI was a key enabler of SC's ability to pre-position emergency response staff around the region. SC/US used bridge funding to establish a presence and operations in Kuwait. The Kuwait staff member established relations with the HOC, UN agencies, and the OFDA/DART team, and attended sectoral coordination meetings. Based on the initial investment in establishing a base in Kuwait, SC/US's entry into Umm Qasr first, and then Basra, and establishment of initial programs was greatly facilitated. SC is still to this day using the Kuwait office as a logistical support base for its ongoing programs in Basra and the lower South.

SC also used bridge funding to establish a presence in Turkey. Although refugee flows did not materialize, SC was well-positioned to respond to a humanitarian crisis along the Turkey-Iraq border. As funding for the Emergency Coordinator was not tied to a specific location, SC was able to rapidly move the staff member to Kuwait where he joined the team and conducted activities such as organizing the distribution of LPG cylinders to the families of Umm Qasr.

Bridge funding allowed SC to send its headquarters-based Security Director to Kuwait and then Iraq in the initial days of access into the country. He conducted a security assessment which then cleared the way for agency operational staff to enter and commence relief programs.

Finally, bridge funding was used for emergency communications supplies, which enhanced the security of SC emergency response staff.

WORLD VISION

Overview/Summary

The start up of World Vision's program occurred in 4 phases:

- Pre-positioning and office start up
- Jordan/Syria program start up
- Iraq Assessment process
- Iraq Program start up

World Vision Pre-Positioning and office start up

In response to the crisis, WV undertook pre-assessments in Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Turkey, Syria and Jordan starting in October 2002. Early on in this period, WV established a relief office in Amman, Jordan and further support offices in Larnaca, Cyprus and Kuwait. The multiple office locations allowed flexibility to mobilize a response into Iraq from a variety of fronts. It also enabled effective co-ordination with other agencies, UN, INGOs, local partners in these key locations. WV joined the Joint NGO Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI) in Amman from January 2003. JNEPI funding covered the expenses incurred by positioning of one staff member in Kuwait (Ian Ridley). Ian provided largely a liaison role (with the HOC and UN) and provided a possible entry point in the event that WV started a program in the south. In the end this did not occur and WV eventually entered Iraq from the west (Jordan) and the northwest (Syria).

WV established relationships with key partner agencies in Turkey (Caritas Turkey), Syria (MECC), Jordan (Red Crescent Jordan, Caritas Jordan, JECRaD) and Iraq (Caritas Iraq) which together have extensive experience and local contextual knowledge and understanding of the region. Combined with WV's international experience of large scale relief responses, internal relief systems, adherence to international standards and availability of private funds, a working alliance was formed.

World Vision, (WV) prepared to respond to this potential crisis through pre-positioning of relief items throughout the region. Currently WV was actively engaged through local partners JECRaD and Red Crescent Jordan in supporting the "third country nationals" in the Al Rwashid camp on the Jordan/Iraq border.

By April 2003 WV had 15 expatriate staff working from Amman, Jordan and others in Kuwait, Syria and Cyprus. 51 relief specialists from within World Vision were on standby for rapid deployment to the region to assist with assessments once access to Iraq was declared secure for humanitarian agencies and implementation of subsequent programs. 2 human resource specialists were working full time to recruit the 36 international staff required for the planned programs with WFP and IOM and anticipated quick impact interventions.

Jordan/Syria Program Start up

Jordan: Prior to the war, WV was one of the few NGO's with capacity to provide the much needed GIK and equipment to support the establishment of the TNC camp on the western border. By April 2003 WV had provided the TNC camp with a camp kitchen, 2 DAF trucks and Non Food Items for 5000 people. This proved valuable to the Jordanian Govt and the Jordanian Red Crescent. The Brindisi airlift from the Global Pre-positioning Unit was a demonstration of the GPU's capabilities and of WV's capacity to deliver what is needed, when it is needed.

Syria: As was the case in Jordan, WV was able to rise to the potential refugees crisis with high capacity and commitment. WV was able to use expertise and GPU stock to make sure that the border camps were well stocked in the event of a refugee crisis. When the refugee situation did not unfold as expected this stock was able to be moved into Iraq to meet needs of IDPs in Mosul.

WV assessment process and office set up in Iraq

WV focused its assessment efforts in Iraq initially on the following broad sectors:

- emergency health (including water/sanitation),
- shelter,
- provision of food (in collaboration with WFP)
- IDPs

In terms of assessment missions within the JNEPI reporting period the first two assessments took place in Al Rutba. Ton Von Zutphen and Dr Alni Farouqa implemented the April assessment. This assessment provided the springboard from which all WV's Al Rutba operations proceeded. Also on 15 - 17 May 2003, Debs Harris, Al Dwyer and Vivian Manneh their made the first trip in to Rutba. This led to the second assessment report and the establishment of Al Rutba program office. In May 2003 WV established an office in Al Rutba that was funded by JNEPI. Vivian Manneh was the program coordinator at the time. John Salibi succeeded her in July 2003.

JNEPI funded also support the first assessment missions to Mosul. Ashraf Yacoub implemented the first of these by road via Baghdad and simultaneously from the Syrian border by Doris Knochel. The four met up in Mosul on around 1 May 2003. On 3 May 03 Margaret Chilcott, James East and James Addis departed Amman by road through Syria arriving in Erbil on 5 May 03. The team worked from Erbil in the beginning as since security in Mosul was considered dubious. First overnight stays in Mosul from 15 May 03 - at the Ninevah Palace Hotel.

On 27 May, Carol Hawthorne, Patrick Bouchebel and Debs Harris flew into Erbil from Kuwait and joined the Mosul team. At this stage WV was still operating from the Ninevah Palace Hotel in Mosul. Based upon assessment data the team was planning projects with KOICA and OFDA at the time. Debs Harris represented WV at Child Protection workshop in Erbil with all the UNICEF partners on May 29-30th. This finalized WV signing of the child protection cooperative agreement. As part of WV GFP role, the IOM IDP registration underway with under Marg Chilcott coordination. WFP negotiations were also underway with Al Dwyer.

On Saturday 3 June 03 we moved from the Ninevah Palace Hotel to establish the Mosul program new office / team house. This office set up was funded by JNEPI. Initially staff lived upstairs and worked downstairs It was fortuitous for us that WV was able to move at that time. The owner of the Ninevah Palace Hotel was murdered just before we moved out. WV stopped using the hotel afterwards as it was said that foreigners were not welcome there. The ability to open the Mosul office (with JNEPI funding) was critical to enabling WV to maintain presence in Mosul at that time. In June WV secured a new site for the team housing and the original office was expanded to both floors.

World Vision has sought a flexible approach to both the emerging needs in Iraq and constraints of responding to those needs, in order to build an effective and appropriate programme. Though the terms of the agreement were written with the best information available at the time, there has been an evolving program that has diverged somewhat from original plans. As originally proposed WV has launched a series of assessment missions into Iraq from an operational base in a neighboring country.

Early on in the project period, the main focus of WV operations shifted to include Ninewa and Anbar Governorates; this was due to WV accepting the role of Governorate Focal Point for IDPs with IOM and ongoing negotiations with WFP. The Anbar programme initially emerged as WV sought to address unmet needs in Al Rutba town. WV's Ninewa/Anbar focus of operations was further consolidated with WV's assigned area in the current UNICEF led nationwide child protection assessment.

While some expenditure was incurred in setting up a temporary office/presence in Kuwait, this location decreased in viability given the geographical areas of focus for WV in the North and West parts of Iraq. Instead, the existing WV office in Amman was significantly scaled up to support operations and assessment missions into both Al Rutba and Mosul. WV has also established an office in Mosul and Al Rutba to support programs and ongoing assessment missions.

World Vision's Iraq Program

Main program focus of WV's program in Iraq has been school rehabilitation, water and sanitation projects, provision of medical supplies and registration of IDPs and then provision of relief items to IDP's. World Vision has become the key focus for rehabilitation of 191 schools, water and sanitation projects in rural areas, provision of medical supplies to hospitals and PHC clinics, registration of internally displaced persons and then provision of relief items to IDP's. WV is the United Nations Governorate Focal Point (GFP) for UNICEF, WFP and IOM (United Nations International Organisation for Migration) in Ninewa Governorate. This means that World Vision have become the UN's lead agency in working with the 31,000 IDP's in the Ninewa and for Child Protection. WV works in school rehabilitation is proving to be on time, on budget and to a higher quality than other NGOs' working in Ninewa and Al Rutba. WV are currently exploring the options to expand of schools water and sanitation work into general rural water and sanitation programs, using the remaining OFDA funding and possible ECHO/German Government funding. At this moment in

time, WV is the only still based in Ninewa. All other NGO's have removed their staff due to security concerns, and are making day trips from Erbil to work in Ninewa. The reason behind WV's ability to continue to working in such conditions is that the community values the work we are doing, we have maintained a low profile working mainly through local staff rather than expats, and we have excellent security advice from our security officer and the local staff.

JNEPI Expected Results

Strengthen coordination of NGO assessment and planning activities in the region.

WV needs assessments in Al Rutba and Mosul were funded by JNEPI. The results of these assessments allow WV to start a program in both locations. The assessment results were shared with OFDA, IOM, KOICA, JNEPI and UNICEF, who were all WV partners the time. Meetings were attend in Erbil and Kuwait by WV staff

Established coherent NGO point of contact for inter-agency communication and liaison.

JNEPI provided WV and other NGO's in the region with practical information, assessment data, expert briefings, specialized workshops and advice on logistics. JNEPI can also acted as a forum for exchange of information and where agencies could make their needs known. The types of services JNEPI provided to NGO's included:

- Situation reports on humanitarian scenarios and planning activities
- Country fact sheets, including logistical considerations for operational set-up
- Contact information for other NGO's and IOs
- Assessment documents
- Expert briefings and briefing papers
- Training and workshops
- Comprehensive website with details of the above items

Improved information sharing and regular reporting within the NGO community

The stand out success in terms of information sharing was the website and twice weekly situation report produced by Rachel Dungar, Communications officer. Both of these services were widely used within WV and by other NGO's in the region.

Consortium members enabled to establish adequate contingency staffing, systems, and resources in the region around Iraq with the provision of bridge funding.

JNEPI bridge funding was critical in allowing World Vision to start up to new offices, one in Mosul and one in Al Rutba. Funding was also used for positioning key staff in Kuwait, Syria and Jordan giving World Vision flexibility to choose the most appropriate entry point. The multiple assessment missions during the start-up phase,

allowed World Vision to identify priority sectors and potential office locations. The data gathered during JNEPI funded assessment missions was used by World Vision to design and implement the only still interventions with KOICA and OFDA.

Positive aspects of JNEPI:

- JNEPI helped to fill a coordination gap that existed for the NGO community
- Establishment of website as an information hub/publication of the NGO handbook
- Donor flexibility in responding to changing NGO needs on the ground (location of offices, proposed assessments, etc.) A mechanism to coordinate between major INGOs was tried; such mechanisms will come up again and again in the future
- In principle each of the participating agencies contributed with personnel
- JNEPI facilitated the information exchange on preparedness for the Iraq crisis with the US government

Negative aspects of JNEPI:

- Lack of follow-up, transition to other coordinating body following disbanding of JNEPI
- Perception as a U.S.-centric coordinating body did not help to foster relations with European NGOs
- Questions of effectiveness of JNEPI in liaising with the HOC? (this is a perception only, and may need to be validated)
- The JNEPI drivers in Washington DC did not enough take into consideration the views of their staff in Amman which led to serious flaws in establishing JNEPI's office
- The info exchange (in writing in particular) on preparedness between JNEPI members remained mediocre throughout; perhaps with the exception of Mercy Corps
- JNEPI complicated the info exchange on preparedness with other INGOs, UN and bilateral funders, because it was seen as US-initiated, funded, and therefore perhaps impartial
- JNEPI members in the field and in Washington never clarified the aspect whether JNEPI could move from preparedness and pre-positioning toward implementing work inside Iraq. When Iraq became accessible, members' interest had faded; JNEPI was then driven by its staff on the ground in Amman and in Baghdad.