

Iraq Healthcare and Humanitarian Reports:

Compiled by Ben Meyer, June 2007

IRIN: Iraq: Educational standards plummet (16 May 2007)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EVOD-739HE6?OpenDocument&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635P5D>

An IRIN report on the educational situation in Iraq. It quotes a staff member at Baghdad University who states, "Violence and lack of resources have undermined the education sector in Iraq. No student will graduate this year with sufficient competence to perform his or her job, and pupils will end the year with less than 60 percent of the knowledge that was supposed to have been imparted to them." Additionally, he states, "Medics, pharmacists, biologists and dentists are desperately seeking training in hospitals because what they have learnt so far does not give them enough confidence to treat patients."

IRIN: Iraq: Child mortality soars because of violence, poor health care (15 May 2007)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/TBRL-738KPC?OpenDocument&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635P5D>

An IRIN report summarizing the findings of Save the Children report on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The report states that, "50 Iraqi children died per 1,000 live births in 1990. Today, the rate is 125 per 1,000 births, more than double." Additionally, "122,000 Iraqi children died in 2005 before reaching their fifth birthday. More than half of these deaths were among newborn babies in the first month of life." The report states also that 30% of child deaths are caused by pneumonia and diarrhea, making them among the top killers of children in Iraq. Additionally, "[o]nly 35 percent of Iraqi children are fully immunized, and more than one-fifth are severely or moderately stunted." The article also states that Save the Children report notes that children faced a "grave humanitarian crisis" even before the 2003 invasion due to international sanctions and repression. It also notes that, "[s]ince 2003, electricity shortages, insufficient clean water, deteriorating health services and soaring inflation have worsened already difficult living conditions."

UN Assistance Mission in Iraq: Humanitarian Briefing on the Crisis in Iraq (2 May 2007)

<http://www.uniraq.org/documents/UN-Iraq%20Humanitarian%20Briefing%20Fact%20Sheet%20May%202007.pdf>

An overview of the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The report details the status of the protection of civilians by security forces; poverty; food distribution; availability of shelter; availability and quality of health care; the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons; access to basic services; and the situation of children. Also included in the report is a table (page 3) with statistics regarding the number of refugees; internally displaced persons; number of Iraqis living below the poverty line; unemployment and inflation rates; civilian casualties; and percentage of Iraqi children under five suffering from malnutrition.

World Health Organization: Violence threatens health in Iraq (17 April 2007)

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2007/pr15/en/index.html>

A World Health Organization overview of the current health situation in Iraq. The report states that on average 100 people killed per day in 2006 due to gunshot wounds, and many are more injured due to bullet wounds, shrapnel, and burns. Approximately 70% of critically injured patients die in emergency rooms and intensive care units due to shortage of drugs, equipment, and competent staff. The daily violence and difficult living and working conditions are causing hundreds of qualified and experienced health staff to leave the country. The internally displaced population puts an additional strain on the healthcare system. There is a shortage of basic services for the Iraqi population: 80% of people lack effective sanitation, 70% lack access to regular clean water, and only 60% have access to the public food distribution system. Diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections, worsened by increased levels of malnutrition, account for about two thirds of deaths among children under five. The chronic child malnutrition rate is estimated at 21%, according to the findings of the 2006 UNICEF Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS3).

International Society of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Civilians Without Protection: The ever worsening humanitarian crisis in Iraq (11 April 2007)

[http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/iraq-report-110407/\\$File/Iraq-report-icrc.pdf](http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/iraq-report-110407/$File/Iraq-report-icrc.pdf)

A Red Cross and Red Crescent assessment of the health, infrastructure, economic, and security situation in Iraq. The report notes that, “[a]ccording to the Iraqi Ministry of Health, more than half of the doctors have left the country.” Also that the massive influx of casualties has caused great strain on the healthcare system. Also, road-blocks and checkpoints prevent doctors and patients from reaching health-care centers on time, and poor security conditions are preventing staff at hospitals from providing medical services. There have been, “frequent reports of armed men storming hospitals and forcing doctors to give their companions priority treatment at the expense of others in more urgent need.” Additionally, security problems obstruct the distribution of medical supplies in many parts of Iraq and, “many sick and injured people do not go to the hospital because it is too dangerous.”

The report also states that drinking water supplies remain qualitatively and quantitatively insufficient, despite limited improvements in southern Iraq. The poor repair of sewage and water-supply networks leads to water contamination and discharge of sewage into rivers, which are a main source of drinking water. Electricity and fuel shortages also impact the availability of clean water and sewage treatment.

Additionally, ICRC reports that there are food shortages in several areas, which has contributed to increased levels of malnutrition over the past year. Many families rely on government food distributions to cover their immediate needs due to unemployment and poverty. The Iraqi government reports that one third of the population lives in poverty and over five percent live in extreme poverty.

Finally, the report states that Iraq’s vital infrastructure is in a state of disrepair due to lack of maintenance due to security issues. Also, “power shortages are growing worse throughout the country,” leading to a situation where, “water treatment facilities, primary health-care centers,

and hospitals rely mainly on back-up generators, which often break down owing to excess usage or fall victim to the chronic fuel shortages.”

UNICEF April 2007 Report on the Situation of Children in Iraq

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/C9AD95FC1A705F08852572C2005DD46C-Full_Report.pdf/\\$File/Full_Report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/C9AD95FC1A705F08852572C2005DD46C-Full_Report.pdf/$File/Full_Report.pdf)

A UNICEF report on the situation of children and civilians in Iraq. The report estimates that about 70% of the 720,000 Iraqis displaced since February 2006 are women and children. The study found that approximately 45% of internally displaced persons are living without private accommodations. Additionally, population movement caused by displacement and other causes has left social services unbalanced. The report states, “some classrooms and hospitals overcrowded while others are missing students, patients and services providers.” Additionally, the report notes that a recent UNICEF survey found that approximately 800,000 children (63% are girls) were out of school during 2005 through 2006 even before displacement issues that have arisen post-February 2006.

The reports states that violence in the worst affected areas prevents children from going to school or even playing with their friend without fear. Also, a survey by the World Health Organization and the Government of Iraq found that 30% of Iraqi children are suffering from psychological problems.

Additionally, the study finds that immunization rates are also declining due to lack of access to primary health care facilities. The report states, “About half of Iraq’s districts (60 out of 116) are reporting immunization coverage of less than 80 per cent.” As of April 2007, the number of children with no immunity to measles has reached 1 million. UNICEF also expresses concern about the rising diarrhea rates in children, stating this could lead to an outbreak over the summer.

International Society of the Red Cross and Red Crescent : Final Report: Emergency Appeal November 2005 – January 2007 (issued April 2007)

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/42E87B5658461562C12572B100444AD6-Full_Report.pdf/\\$File/Full_Report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/42E87B5658461562C12572B100444AD6-Full_Report.pdf/$File/Full_Report.pdf)

A study of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of humanitarian conditions in Iraq. The report states that approximately 2,000 medical personal have been killed, 12,000 have fled, and 250 have been kidnapped since 2003. The study also references a household survey conducted in 2004 and 2006 by the World Food Programme, which states that 12.4 million Iraqis are at high risk for food insecurity. Additionally, extreme poverty, which is less than \$30 per month, has increased from 2.6 million people to 4.1 million people. Furthermore, “the highly vulnerable (between 30 and 54 US dollar/month) increased from 15% (3.6 million people) to 31.8% (8.3million people).” The Iraqi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs reports that the average unemployment rate was 70% between August 2005 to August 2006. The WFP household survey also found that there one fifth of Iraqi children are underweight, one third are chronically malnourished.

Medicines Sans Frontiers/Doctors Without Borders in Iraq Operational Update (September 2006)

<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/news/iraq.cfm>

MSF report focusing on the situation of medical services in Iraq. MSF left Iraq in 2004 due to deteriorating security conditions. It currently runs a center for reconstructive and other surgery in Amman, Jordan. The report states that lack of doctors, specialists and equipment, security concerns, and cost, it is difficult to receive specialized surgery in Iraq. The report states, “when it comes to reconstructive surgery, congenital malformations, microsurgery, or neurosurgery, it's almost impossible right now to get operated on in Iraq.” Furthermore, it states that although public hospitals offer free medical care, they can no longer provide specialized surgery, such surgeries are somewhat available from private hospitals, but are very expensive.

World Health Organization Bi-Weekly Bulletin (May 14 – May 31, 2006)

<http://www.emro.who.int/iraq/pdf/WeeklyReport-14-31-05-06.pdf>

The bulletin reports the status of healthcare in Iraq from May 14 – May 31, including new health initiatives carried out by the WHO and Iraqi Ministry of Health. Among the notable issues that are covered by the report are the status of communicable and other diseases. In this category, the report notes that as of the date of the report, there have been no reported outbreaks of cholera or other communicable diseases, and there have been only two cases of Avian Influenza have been reported in the country. The report further states, “No cases of Malaria have been reported in Iraq during the first four months of 2006 whereas five cases were reported during the first four months of 2005.” Also, there were “twenty-four Acute Flaccid Paralysis cases were reported in Iraq, bringing the total number of AFP cases to 197 for 2006.” Finally, during this reporting period, 14 out of 37 suspected measles cases were confirmed as measles. Also, twelve of these confirmed measles cases were reported from Wasit governorate. The report also contains a chart showing in malaria cases in Iraq from January 2005 – April 2006 on page 3; as well as a chart dealing with the prevalence of mental disorders among various segments of the population on page 4.

Useful Websites:

ReliefWeb: Iraq Emergency

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc108?OpenForm&emid=ACOS-635P5D&rc=3>

Relief Web provides press releases, reports, documents, appeals, articles, statements, maps, and other data regarding the humanitarian situation in Iraq. Managed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, contains reports from UN Agencies and other NGOs working in Iraq.

WHO Iraq Office

<http://www.emro.who.int/iraq>

World Health Organization Office in Iraq Homepage. Contains press releases, links to sites that offer reports and updates on the health situation in Iraq.

WHO Iraq Information Center

http://www.emro.who.int/iraq/Information_Resources.htm#InformationBulletin

The World Health Organization Information Center for Iraq provides bi-weekly bulletins and reports on the health situation in Iraq. The most recently posted bulletin is from May 2006.

WHO Iraq Situation Reports

<http://www.who.int/hac/crises/irq/sitreps/en/index.html>

World Health Organization reports, statements, and press releases regarding the humanitarian and health situation in Iraq.

UNAMI

<http://www.uniraq.org/>

United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq Homepage. Provides links to documents and reports on the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

IRIN Middle East

<http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-ME.aspx>

IRIN Middle East website. Contains articles and updates on the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

Map of Children Under 5 Years Old Suffering from Malnutrition

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/4C06D51C6AF04A8385256CED007D0D6C/\\$File/unosat_irqmaln180303.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/4C06D51C6AF04A8385256CED007D0D6C/$File/unosat_irqmaln180303.pdf?OpenElement)

A map created by UNOSAT in collaboration with UNICEF showing the areas of Iraq where children are affected by malnutrition. The map is color-coded to show severity of the malnutrition crisis in particular areas of Iraq.