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Reference

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DFID BASRAH: ISSUES PAPER

The DFID team in southern Iraq has been present in Basrah for the past ten days. During this time it has been engaged in UN, CIMOC, ORHA-led coordination meetings as well as numerous bilateral meetings. The team has also met with USAID, USAID contractors and the HOC. The ICRC (well established), UN agencies and NGOs are now gearing up for post conflict recovery through humanitarian intervention although output is not at full speed and some UN agencies (UNDP, FAO, HABITAT) are yet to be fully established here. As reported elsewhere the transition from Relief to Recovery has already begun although efforts must be made in areas of health, watsan, fuel (esp LPG) and protection to ensure that vulnerable populations do not slip into crisis. The late decision to establish an 'international' ORHA South (to replace the previous ORHA Office which relocated to Al Hillah) has resulted in late establishment of authority in this area. Initial gains made by UK 1 Div are now in danger of sudden erosion if not consolidated quickly and effectively. At this point, we thought it would be useful to take stock of where we are and to set out some initial ideas on how we might proceed over the next month. These are initial unpolished thoughts formulated within a fluid situation and some points have been mentioned in previous sitreps.

Key Issues for the Iraqi Population:

2. Key issues which will impact on recovery include (not an exhaustive list):
 - **Security.**
 - **Lack of central guidance (from Baghdad ministries) as well as Governorate top-level management in civil services.** ORHA directives reportedly discuss resumption of civil service by 1 June but do not detail the process nor operational requirements to achieve this objective. It is not clear how feasible this will be nor how effective these structures will be

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without Baghdad guidance or Governorate management in place. The process for re-instating this level of management is not clear and will undoubtedly vary from Governorate to Governorate and from sector to sector.

- **Lack of cash to maintain or in many cases restart civil service functions.**
- **Partially functioning distribution system for humanitarian as well as recovery-related goods (the cause of this is often linked to security-related concerns).**
- **Employment generation/development of business sector.**
- **Land Ownership/Property Rights.**

This paper seeks to examine the current status and future plans of agencies involved in supporting the reestablishment of the civil service and their ability to address immediate humanitarian needs (commensurate with the first three points). Note: As many issues will be time limited and given time constraints, this is not an exhaustive analysis but a quick and dirty issues paper for DFID staff both in London and in Iraq.

Support to Civil Administration:

ORHA

3. The **lack of policy guidance** from ORHA Baghdad continues to affect ORHA South's ability to function. This coupled with the slow trickle of support and sectoral programme staff will undoubtedly continue to undermine ORHA South's efficacy until remedied. Considering current staff in the pipeline, it appears that ORHA South will just be coming on line during the last week of May. Note: It is ironic that ORHA Directive 2 reportedly instructs all civil service employees to return to work by 1 June while the structure meant to support this process is not yet functioning.

4. The Danish staff in ORHA South have received \$500,000 from the Danish Government. This appears to be the extent of their immediately accessible funds. It is not clear where and when **additional funding** may arrive to support operational costs. NOTE: There is confusion both within and outside ORHA whether direct programming is a function of ORHA at regional office level. ORHA would not be able to manage programme/grant-related funds without a specifically dedicated programme manager and clear programme procedures.

5. The ORHA South **terms of reference and approach** is not yet clear. Ideally this civilian structure would take over the lead role in civilian administration issues (currently supported by the UK mil) as soon as possible. It is clear that they do not currently have the capacity to do so. ORHA South barely has enough staff to cover the most urgent regional issues (payment of salaries) and has not yet begun to address specific sectoral and governorate-level issues

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across its AOR. This is a serious concern. The southern region suffered neglect (withheld humanitarian goods, etc) under the regime of Saddam Hussein. There is a risk that neglect in these initial months of ORHA presence could result in a perception of continued discrimination and a rise in alternative structures to replace the absent support from ORHA South. Even with the recent postings of five Danish and five Whitehall staff plus the expected five MENAD staff, the current Deputy Coordinator of ORHA South is concerned that ORHA will not have the capacity to deliver across the four Governorates and within the required sectors. More support is required. (NOTE: Before further action is taken we recommend seeking guidance from [redacted] following her arrival this week and further information regarding how the adoption of GST – see below – will impact on ORHA's capacity)

6. **Expectations** from the population are high and **information dissemination** has been minimal in ORHA South AOR. Perception is that the Occupying Power has been in Iraq for weeks, with assessments ongoing and limited results. Dialogue has been conducted at varying levels, within sectors and although many quick fixes have been implemented (to varying degrees), visibility of activities as well as ORHA mandate/decisions/intentions has been minimal at best. This is in part due to the lack of local media outlets but more to do with a lack of available information from ORHA (DFID team continue in their search for copies of the first ORHA directives. NOTE: Neither ORHA South nor [redacted] have been able to pass on the text). There is an urgent need for ORHA mandate, roles and responsibilities and all written directives to be disseminated to the population. ORHA could benefit from a public information officer.

7. **Support to local government structures** varies from Governorate to Governorate and depends largely on the personalities in situ. ORHA absence at the Governorate level has resulted in NGOs or the CIMOC taking the lead on supporting technical directorates and coordinating the provision of assistance. Nasiriyah is reportedly an exemplary example of a Civil Affairs group working closely with the technical directorates and one of the lead NGOs (GOAL) to rapidly match urgent needs with available assistance. In Basrah sectoral coordination groups are being led by UN agencies with varying participation of some directorates. However, oddly enough, the UK mil (7th Brigade) chairs the twice-weekly meeting of the technical directorates. Although these various coordination mechanisms are functioning with varying levels of progress, directorates need to be more central in these processes, initially side by side with ORHA.

8. ORHA and Coalition Forces are aware of the disconnect between the required ORHA presence and the current capacity of this structure. Recognising the need to fill this gap, General Garner noted the establishment of Coalition military **Governorate Support Teams (GSTs)** and Local Governance Teams (LGTs) and the establishment of interim local councils as two of his 12 objectives for the next 30 days (stated on 9 May). CFC FRAGO 09-087 [Governorate

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Support Teams] DTG 181958ZApr03 and CFLCC FRAGO 543, 281600ZAPR03 have been issued within the military chain of command. Although we have not yet seen these orders, we understand that they lay the groundwork for establishing military GSTs to act as focal points, provide technical advice/support to the Iraqi Governorate staff and implement ORHA directives at the Governorate level. These GSTs will liaise with LGTs (civilian contractors) and the ORHA Governorate representative to provide direct support to the Governorate structure.

9. It is hoped that the combination of GSTs will fill the current gap in supporting civil administration until which time the LGTs are in place (estimated to be fully operational by end of July) and ORHA is able to place appropriate staff at Governorate level. Although in many Governorates this process will only formalise the de facto relationship between ORHA South and civil affairs teams/CIMOC, enhanced clarity regarding reporting lines and mandate is necessary for all involved. (NOTE: more detail on this process can be provided to London if necessary). Again, ideally ORHA civilian structures would already be supporting the Iraqi government structures. However, in the absence of this capacity, there is an urgent need for the Occupying Power to ensure this gap is filled and that directorates are supported country-wide through standardised structures with a clear mandate to implement ORHA directives and provide necessary support.

10. We are conscious of the current **urban-centric focus** of ORHA as well as UN agencies. We should encourage GSTs to look more broadly across Governorates to obtain a fuller picture, however, recognising that priorities will probably remain urban centres.

QIPs:

11. We have heard from many military units that they do not have the **capacity** to undertake QIPs to the extent they would like. We understand that the UK 1 Div is aware of the disconnect between their capacity and that needed to implement £29 million additional QIPs and is discussing how to address this issue.

12. There are urgent needs which could be usefully addressed through QIPs including security-related support as well as material support to directorates. We have heard glowing reports, again from Nasiriyah, regarding the flexible delegated authority of certain NGOs to support directorates. As GSTs become established, ability to support directorates in a similar manner through **rapid, flexible disbursement mechanisms** would assist regeneration of government structures (priority as reportedly noted in ORHA Directive 2), and immediate technical directorate activities. We concur with the recommendations made by via email although given the scale of the funding and the urgent need to support civil administration, the above-noted should be considered.

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13. In order to facilitate QIPs, **capacity should be augmented**. (NOTE: the 60 strong Finnish CIMOC team in Afghanistan was required to programme a much smaller sum of funds).

UN Family:

14. Despite teething problems and some logistical delays, the UN family is establishing itself in Basrah. **Coordination mechanisms** are in place and the first steps are being taken to bring the local authorities into the assessment and planning process. Most of the UN agencies are in the assessment phase and full-scale needs-based programming, in some cases, will not begin for another few weeks. Expectations must be managed to ensure that the population does not become discouraged by this pace.

15. The UN mandate in the current context is a humanitarian one and much of their activities will not support the rehabilitation of civil administration.

16. UNOHCI and ORHA have yet to establish a comfortable working relationship. This may settle once ORHA capacity increases and they begin to attend/chair relevant meetings.

USAID:

17. Local governance interventions, including grants (which could be utilised for rehabilitation of civil administration structures) as well as technical/training support, will be made available through the USAID contractor, Research Triangle Institute which has a budget of \$168 million. It is expected that they will be present in Basrah within the next two weeks. ORHA may be able to tap into this grant for support in this sector.

DFID's Operational Objectives in Iraq:

18. DFID team welcomes guidance on CHAD/MENAD discussions regarding future DFID operational objectives country-wide as well as specific to Basrah AOR. These objectives may include:

- Continued overview of international community activities? This has been useful as agencies get in the ground and establish mechanisms for intervention/coordination.
- Input into ORHA South?
- Operational role?
- Long-term CHAD/MENAD presence in Basrah?

Current DFID Basrah Approach

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19. Currently DFID Basrah maintain an information-gathering, facilitating and advocacy role in Basrah. This has been useful to date in securing operational linkages between appropriate agencies, highlighting potential programmatic overlaps as well as raising operational concerns to the appropriate organisations. However, more vitally, the DFID team has obtained a good picture of the following:

- The immediate needs and key concerns within Basrah AOR,
- Current ORHA South capacity,
- External perceptions of ORHA within the International Community in Basrah,
- Establishment of the UN family in Basrah,
- UN coordination mechanisms,
- The progress within sectoral working groups,
- USAID approaches,
- Operational and facilitative sectoral activities of UK 1 Div.

20. Placement in Basrah has been useful to understanding the constraints faced within the current context. Country-wide policy issues have subsequently been raised with DFID London.

21. It should be noted, however, that the DFID team has only been present in Basrah City and therefore does not have an authoritative first-hand view of the situation, context and approaches in other Governorates within the South AOR.

Potential Future DFID Basrah Approach

Continued DFID Basrah presence under current mandate:

22. Future DFID secondees to ORHA/UK 1 Div should maintain oversight of a number of the issues currently covered by the DFID team. They will be better placed to identify key issues of concern within ORHA South and address them. They will also undoubtedly be best placed to monitor the engagement of USAID and its contractors. Within a few weeks time, the UN and ORHA South will have established a relationship, although it may always be slightly tenuous.

23. The added-value of a continued DFID team within this context would be independent reporting (although regular ORHA, IO and CENTCOM reporting should be received through official channels already, constituting a partial remedy to this problem – London already advised of the need for this reporting).

Continued DFID Basrah Presence with Limited Delegated Authority

24. Provision of delegated authority to the DFID team would not provide added value in the current context. It is not in DFID interest to manage that type of operational programme when so many others are on the ground with more capacity and geographical reach. The DFID team's current added-value lies in

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advocating for these agencies undertake coordinated activities in support of established/sustainable Iraqi structures.

Continued DFID Basrah presence under adjusted mandate:

25. A CHAD/MENAD DFID team could establish a longer-term presence. Part of their role could be to advise DFID London on development/reconstruction related programming needs and possible DFID medium/longer term approaches. Support to many activities would be contingent upon guidance from the Attorney General regarding legalities of interventions.

26. However, this is only advisable if DFID prioritises Basrah AOR for development programmes/assistance. A presence in Baghdad (with monitoring visits to other AORs) would contribute to a more comprehensive approach to country-wide programming and would therefore be more advisable, security permitting.

Recommendation:

27. An overlap of the DFID team with new DFID secondees to ORHA South will be critical to ensure initial issues/concerns regarding ORHA South are raised with DFID London while these new staff get established. However, DFID team presence beyond the next few weeks under the status quo would have diminishing returns. We recommend that an updated assessment be made to London by 1 June as to recommended timeline bearing in mind the issues as outlined above.

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