



# Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

## FAO'S ROLE IN THE CONSOLIDATED APPEAL FOR IRAQ 2008

### Background

The combined effects of four years of destructive conflict and 15 years of economic hardship have led to a severe decline in the living standards of the Iraqi population.

Throughout the country, conflict and increased lawlessness have seriously restricted access to essential services and resulted in widespread displacement. Already fragile local economies have been damaged by violence, administrative failures and restrictions on movement by state and non-state actors.

Since 2006, an estimated 1.2 million Iraqis have left their homes, doubling the country's existing post-war displacement levels, while millions more reside in communities where they have limited access to basics – food, water, health, shelter and protection.

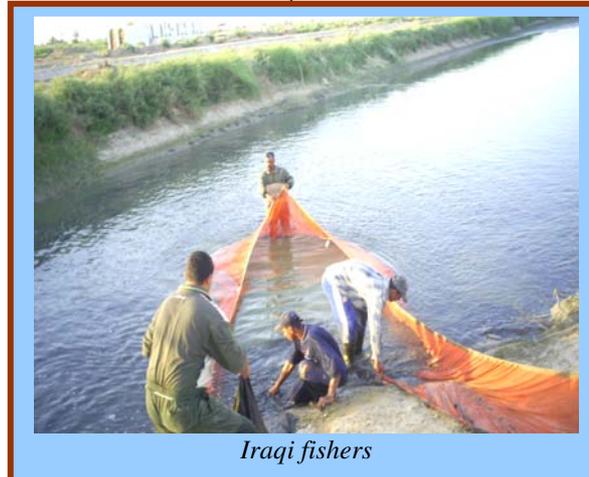
Prompt assistance is critical at this time to address the needs of Iraq's most vulnerable communities. The 2008 Iraq Consolidated Appeal is an action plan that seeks to rapidly and comprehensively meet the immediate priority needs of the most vulnerable Iraqis within the broader framework of Iraq's longer-term recovery goals. The short-term relief projects included in the Appeal will not replace Government service provision, but will assist in filling critical gaps while the Government expands its capacity to respond to the needs of its people.

### Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

In 2005, the World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that more than four million Iraqi families were food insecure, with a further eight million at risk.

The vital public distribution system (PDS), which provides food rations for every person in the country for a nominal fee, has been gradually deteriorating with incomplete and/or delayed rations becoming increasingly common owing to continued insecurity and local administrative failures. For at least 12 million Iraqis, the PDS remains a critical lifeline as it is one of the main social safety nets available to vulnerable people.

A large proportion of the country's food insecure population lives in low-income households in rural areas. Food insecurity has contributed to a rise in malnutrition rates since 2004, with acute malnutrition rates increasing at an alarming level and particularly affecting young children.



*Iraqi fishers*

The PDS does not include fresh food, such as fruits and vegetables, and poor households lack the purchasing power to supplement these rations. WFP has identified low micronutrient and protein intake, partially as a result of inadequate dietary diversity, as a key reason for the current high malnutrition levels among Iraqi children.

Furthermore, food security data collection mechanisms for analysis,

monitoring and evaluation are still limited in Iraq. The local and international response to food insecurity requires the availability of reliable, accurate and timely information on the prevalence and causes of food insecurity, malnutrition and vulnerability in order to design appropriate and effective interventions, monitor their progress and measure their impact.

### FAO in Iraq

As the lead agency in the food security and agriculture sectors, FAO has been supporting the development of income-generation activities for vulnerable people and the rehabilitation and maintenance of traditional irrigation schemes for resettled displaced households, among other activities.

Through the 2008 CAP for Iraq, FAO will provide support to improve dietary diversity for poor, vulnerable households through the distribution of vegetable seeds and inputs and essential, quality fishing gear and equipment, as well as organize training in the use of these inputs.

In addition, support will be provided to enhance evidence-based responses to the emerging food insecurity in Iraq through supporting the development of comprehensive food security analysis in the country.

As part of the 2008 CAP for Iraq, FAO is appealing for **US\$6 600 000**.



## FAO'S COMPONENT OF THE 2008 CONSOLIDATED APPEALS PROCESS FOR IRAQ

### **Project title:** Emergency support to food insecure rural households through establishing home gardens

**Objectives:** Improve the dietary intake of food insecure rural households by supporting home gardens through the provision of vegetable seeds and other basic inputs

**Beneficiaries:** 5 000 small-scale farming families (32 000 people) in five governorates of Iraq

**Implementing Partners:** Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the international non-governmental organization (NGO) Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)

**Project Duration:** Up to December 2008

**Funds Requested:** US\$3 000 000

Although vegetables are grown year round in Iraq, some 80 percent of vegetable seeds are imported. Through the proposed project, “**Emergency assistance to food insecure rural households through establishing home gardens**”, FAO will provide vegetable seeds and other essential inputs (including fertilizers, tools and plastic sheeting) to poor rural households with a maximum land holding of 5 *donums* and will train farmers in the use of these inputs to enable them to produce fresh vegetables.

This will improve the intake of micronutrients by increasing vegetable consumption on the part of 5 000 rural households. In addition, the sale/barter of some produce will generate income and enable beneficiaries to meet other household needs or access key services. The provision of training and equipment will ensure that the project has a longer-term impact on improved food security in the country.

### **Project title:** Emergency assistance to small-scale poor fishermen through provision of necessary fishing gear

**Objectives:** Improve the dietary intake of small-scale marine and inland fishermen and supplement their income through the provision of necessary fishing equipment

**Beneficiaries:** 6 032 vulnerable fishers and their households (approximately 38 604 individuals)

**Implementing Partners:** MoA, a Basra-based NGO (the Center for the Development of Fishing Resources) and ACTED

**Project Duration:** Up to December 2008

**Funds Requested:** US\$3 200 000

The project “**Emergency assistance to small-scale poor fishermen through provision of necessary fishing gear**” will also seek to improve the dietary intake and nutritional status of poor households in Iraq. Traders typically lend fishing equipment to fishers that lack appropriate gear in exchange for a portion of their daily catch, leaving small-scale fishers extremely vulnerable to exploitation and food insecurity.

Some 6 032 poor fishers will receive basic fishing equipment, including quality fishing nets and iceboxes for short-term storage and preservation, and training in improved quality control. Support will be provided for strengthening informal fishers’ groups through their participation in distributing the fishing gear and training in its use. As a result, about 38 604 individuals are expected to have improved dietary intake. The equipment distributed should halve fishers’ daily operational costs, increase their efficiency and improve the value of their daily yield, thus increasing their income-generation capacity

### **Project title:** Supporting emergency food security interventions through advancing food security analysis in Iraq

**Objectives:** Enhance evidence-based responses/interventions to the emerging food insecurity in Iraq through supporting/conducting comprehensive food security analyses

**Beneficiaries:** All food insecure, malnourished and vulnerable Iraqis (approximately 12 million people)

**Implementing Partners:** MoA, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoP) – Central Organization for Statistics Technology (COSIT)

**Project Duration:** March – December 2008

**Funds Requested:** US\$400 000

Enhanced information and analysis of food security, malnutrition and vulnerability in Iraq will lead to better targeting of emergency interventions, improve efficiency in food insecurity and poverty reduction policy development, increase coordination and collaboration among multiple stakeholders and provide a reliable set of indicators to monitor the effectiveness of interventions. The proposed project “**Supporting emergency food security interventions through advancing food security analysis in Iraq**” will seek to support this process.

The main project activities include: supporting increased cooperation between MoA and MoP-COSIT in terms of data sharing across ministries; supporting MoA and MoP in the process of agricultural policy development, based on food security analysis; and supporting MoA in identifying information gaps relevant to agricultural production and develop a plan to collect and use this information in policy development with technical assistance from FAO.

#### **For more information please contact:**

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