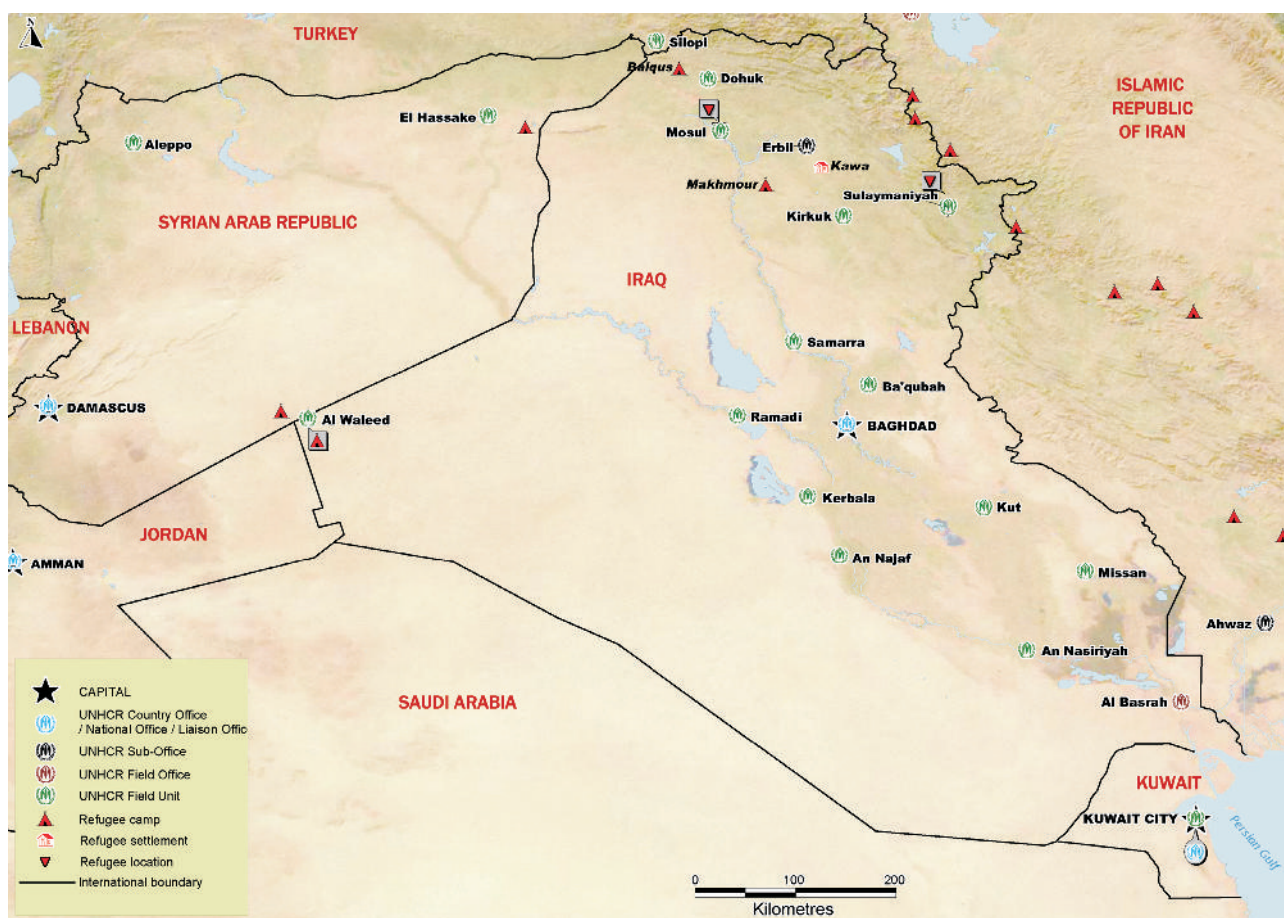


# IRAQ SITUATION



## Operational highlights

- UNHCR continued to work towards maintaining and expanding protection in the countries neighbouring Iraq: Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and the Gulf States. In 2009, the Office registered 50,000 new Iraqi refugees in these countries, bringing the total number of registered Iraqi refugees to 230,000.
- In Iraq, UNHCR strengthened its ability to protect and assist people of concern by doubling the number of staff and establishing new offices. The Office's shelter programme played a critical role in the initial reintegration of returning internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- UNHCR protected and assisted some 35,000 refugees inside Iraq by addressing their most immediate needs and resettling those most in need.
- In the countries of asylum, UNHCR expanded its financial assistance programme to some 15,000 families through the use of ATMs.
- Resettlement remained the main durable solution for vulnerable Iraqi refugees. The Office submitted 36,000 applications for resettlement and recorded some 23,000 departures. On the repatriation front, 2,500 Iraqi refugees in the region benefited from UNHCR's assistance to return to Iraq.

## Working environment

The overall security environment improved in 2009, although the threat to some groups remained high. While the number of generalized attacks diminished, a wave of bombings underlined the tenuous nature of the situation. UNHCR expanded its presence significantly, with a doubling of its national staff and an enlargement of its international presence in Baghdad, Basra, Erbil and Mosul. Despite security restrictions which provide significant challenges for operational agencies, UNHCR is able to reach most areas of Iraq through national staff.

Large numbers of IDPs continued to return to their places of origin, with an estimated 167,000 returning in 2009. No significant conflict-generated displacement occurred, although reports of internal movements due to the severe drought were reported.

The refugee-hosting countries in the region continued to demonstrate a relatively generous and tolerant attitude towards the entry and stay of Iraqi refugees in their territories. Unfortunately, the majority of refugees are unable to work, and many have found themselves in an extremely vulnerable situation. In light of these difficulties and the relative improvement in security in Iraq, some Iraqi refugees have returned.



## | Achievements and impact |

### ● *Main objectives*

UNHCR's primary objectives with regard to the Iraq situation were to ensure protection and access to essential services for Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries, and promote resettlement for those in most need of it. The Office sought to maintain asylum space for Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries and improve their access to education and quality health care. It also aimed to enhance protection and access to essential services for refugees in Iraq and improve their living conditions.

Other objectives were to monitor population movements in and out of Iraq closely and to ensure timely and appropriate responses, including through the development of a rapid response plan and an individual case management strategy for spontaneous return. Finally, UNHCR aimed to cooperate closely with UN and other partners in consolidated efforts to address the needs of Iraqi refugees and IDPs.

### ● *Protection and solutions*

In 2009, with an expanded field presence in Iraq, UNHCR became increasingly aware of the serious humanitarian situation of refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs living in public buildings or makeshift settlements in the country.

In Iraq, 1,850 individuals were referred for resettlement, including 1,300 Palestinian refugees from Al Waleed camp who were provisionally accepted for resettlement. In addition, some 270 Palestinian and 140 Sudanese Darfurians

were evacuated to transit centres in Romania and the Slovak Republic, from where they were resettled.

UNHCR managed to monitor protection and provide legal assistance through 14 protection and assistance centres (PACs) and 35 mobile teams made up of 130 Iraqi staff. More than 1,200 community assessments were conducted throughout Iraq to monitor the protection environment, and the mobile teams conducted some 1,900 visits. In total, some 18,500 individuals (40 per cent women) benefited from PAC services, and over 11,600 cases related to basic rights were solved through legal assistance. UNHCR also used the PACs to raise awareness of protection issues, and organized several workshops and information campaigns in this regard.

In the countries neighbouring Iraq, UNHCR continued to advocate for the upholding of protection principles. Although most of these States are not signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention, they treat Iraqi refugees generously and allow them access to public services, including health care and education.

The Office registered and provided documentation to a total of some 50,000 Iraqi refugees in Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and the Gulf States in 2009. At the end of 2009, a total of 230,000 Iraqis were registered as refugees in these countries. Some 35 per cent of the refugees had special needs.

UNHCR continued to intervene in cases of deportation and arbitrary detention. In Lebanon, UNHCR succeeded in obtaining the release of 75 Iraqi refugees. In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNHCR secured the release of 43 detained refugees and prevented the deportation of 20 documented cases.



Marwa, a young displaced Iraqi, with her aunt in Erbil.

A major achievement in 2009 was the closure of the Al Tanf Camp. Intensive advocacy led to the resettlement of the majority of the camp's residents, and some 170 refugees were transferred to Al Hol Camp.

In 2009, resettlement continued to be the best durable solution for most vulnerable Iraqi refugees, as local integration is not a viable option in the region and conditions are not yet conducive to safe and dignified returns. The Office submitted more than 36,000 applications to 18 resettlement countries, bringing the cumulative total to some 91,000 resettlement referrals since 2007. More than 44,000 people had departed for their resettlement countries by the end of 2009.

Through its individual assessment and assistance scheme, UNHCR assisted 2,500 Iraqi refugees to return home.

### ○ Activities and assistance

**Community services:** Throughout the region, more than 200 outreach workers assisted more than 150,000 refugees who benefited from social counselling, psycho-social support and community centre activities. Some 15,000 families are being visited individually by Iraqi volunteers, UNHCR staff or partners as part of a comprehensive home assessment programme. Moreover, some 7,000 Iraqi refugees participated in various types of vocational training. In Iraq, some 300 refugees also benefited from vocational training.

**Domestic needs and household support:** In Iraq, UNHCR provided some 37,400 families with non-food items (NFIs) as well as cash assistance. A total of 730 vulnerable refugee families and 120 orphans were provided with cash grants.

In Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey, UNHCR provided some 63,000 Iraqi refugees with monthly financial assistance to help with accommodation and other basic needs.

**Education:** UNHCR continued to implement a comprehensive education programme. In 2009, some 67,000 Iraqi refugee children attended formal education institutions in refugee-hosting countries. UNHCR also provided higher education opportunities through scholarship programmes to some 270 young refugees. Some 90,000 refugee children and adolescents benefited from non-formal and informal education activities. UNHCR also worked to increase the national education capacities of the host countries, constructing two schools in the Syrian Arab Republic and rehabilitating 65 new classrooms to provide additional space to nearly 3,300 students.

**Food:** In Iraq, UNHCR distributed 3,400 food baskets to Palestinians in Baghdad and 20,400 food baskets to Palestinians in Al Waleed Camp. In the Syrian Arab Republic, an average of 120,000 Iraqi refugees were provided with 28,600 tons of food, while Palestinian refugees in the camps received monthly food rations. In Lebanon, UNHCR provided more than 12,500 food coupons to vulnerable families and people with specific needs.

**Health and nutrition:** At the end of 2009, UNHCR noted some 43,900 Iraqi refugees with serious and chronic medical conditions. In 2009, some 461,000 medical interventions were made in the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt. UNHCR provided secondary and tertiary health care to

### Persons of concern inside Iraq

Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Islamic Rep. of Iran	12,400	12,400	49	37
	Occupied Palestinian Territory	11,900	11,900	49	33
	Turkey	10,100	10,100	51	43
	Syrian Arab Republic	800	800	38	41
	Various	10	10	20	-
Asylum-seekers	Turkey	1,800	1,800	51	38
	Islamic Republic of Iran	1,800	1,800	41	30
	Syrian Arab Republic	130	130	41	43
	Various	30	30	52	38
IDPs	Iraq	1,552,000	229,700	49	45
Stateless	Stateless persons	230,000	-	-	-
Returned ex-IDPs including returned IDP-like	Iraq	167,700	100,000	49	45
Returnees (refugees)	Various	38,000	11,500	49	45
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,026,670</b>	<b>380,170</b>		

### Persons of concern outside Iraq

Type of population	Origin	Total in country <sup>1</sup>	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female <sup>2</sup>	Per cent under 18
Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries	Jordan	450,000	46,600	49	32
	Syrian Arab Republic	1,050,000	218,500	49	37
	Lebanon	50,000	10,500	33	30
	Egypt	6,600	6,600	49	38
	Turkey	6,200	6,200	42	29
	Islamic Republic of Iran	47,900	47,900	38	44
	Gulf States	600	460	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,611,300</b>	<b>336,760</b>		

<sup>1</sup> Estimated by the authorities in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic

<sup>2</sup> Demographic data in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic refers to registered population only.



some 20,000 refugees. New health-care procedures were developed in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic and health-care committees were created to address tertiary health needs in a timely and appropriate manner.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNHCR supported nine Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) health clinics, six in Damascus and others in Aleppo, Homs and Idleb, and four other clinics operated by NGO partners. UNHCR's Health Information Systems (HIS) were implemented in 15 SARC clinics as well as the other clinics operated by partners.

**Income generation:** In Chile and Brazil, resettled Palestinian refugees were assisted with activities to access the labour market. In Iraq, tools and irrigation machines were distributed. In the neighbouring countries, community-based self-reliance activities were implemented.

**Legal assistance:** UNHCR continued its extensive registration and resettlement referral programmes to provide legal and other forms of counselling to Iraqi refugees. In the neighbouring countries, UNHCR extended its registration capacity with mobile teams conducting regular missions to all significant refugee locations. An average of 350 Iraqi refugees and asylum-seekers benefitted each month from legal counselling.

UNHCR implemented programmes for the survivors of violence, particularly targeting women and girls. UNHCR's standard procedures for sexual and gender-based violence were adopted in all countries by governmental and non-governmental partners. In Iraq, 35 PAC mobile teams conducted 1,900 visits, 1,200 community assessments in IDP and returnee locations and more than 500 returnee household assessments to monitor the protection environment. PACs assisted nearly 18,500 individuals through legal interventions such as accessing documentation and services. Out of 13,800 legal cases, more than 11,600 were resolved.

**Operational support (to agencies):** UNHCR's activities in 10 countries were implemented through some 90 international and national NGOs, four government counterparts, IOM, UNOPS, UNDP, UNRWA and UNV. Inside Iraq, UNHCR partnered with some 70 national NGOs to enhance their existing programmes.

**Sanitation:** In Iraq, some 9,500 refugee families in 15 camps and settlements benefited from fumigation campaigns. Nearly 3,300 refugee and over 1,000 IDP families benefited from monthly garbage collection. A total of 12 community-based sanitation projects, benefiting some 3,700 IDP families and host communities, were implemented.

**Shelter and infrastructure:** In Iraq, UNHCR targeted the most vulnerable IDPs and returnees in its shelter programme. While the programme was implemented in 15 governorates, the major focus was on Baghdad and Diyala, the two largest returnee governorates. In 2009, UNHCR completed over 10,000 shelter units, covering almost 65,000 persons.

**Transport and logistics:** In Iraq, eight warehouses were rented and maintained. In the Syrian Arab Republic, over 28,600 tons of food and significant quantities of NFIs were delivered to 15 distribution centres, and two warehouses were constructed.

In order to facilitate the closure of Al Tanf camp, two groups of 83 and 90 Palestinian refugees, respectively, were transferred to Al Hol camp. In Iraq, UNHCR provided some 700 people with transportation to return to their places of origin. In Turkey, UNHCR facilitated over 700 bus trips for Iraqi refugees to attend interviews in Ankara.

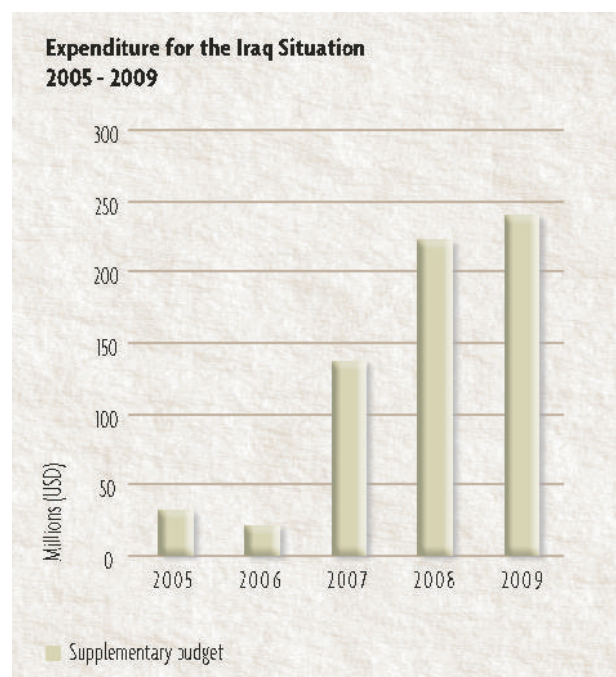
**Water:** In conjunction with the shelter programme, UNHCR implemented small-scale water and sanitation projects to improve returnees' access to clean and potable water. Some 45 water and sanitation projects were implemented throughout Iraq, benefiting some 118,000 persons. Around 1,500 refugees in Al Waleed camp received 40,000 litres of potable water and 40,000 litres of non-potable water per day through water pumping operations. In addition, 30,000 litres per day of drinking water were supplied by truck to 250 refugee families living in various settlements.

## ● Constraints

Inside Iraq, the fragile security situation continued to hamper UNHCR's mobility and complicated logistical arrangements. Access to beneficiaries remained restricted in the centre and south of the country, and the Office had to rely on national and international partners in order to protect and assist people of concern.

Slow progress in the economic and social sectors hindered improvements in the access to basic services and the reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure. The population suffers from regular electricity cuts, lack of safe drinking water, inaccessible health services, limited school capacities and a dearth of affordable housing.

In the neighbouring countries, the numbers of the most vulnerable and those with specific needs continued to increase, and there was a rise in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, children dropping out from school and incidents of exploitation due to the increased cost of living and depleted savings. The urban nature of the Iraqi population in the countries neighbouring Iraq continued to make identifying and assessing the needs of the most vulnerable a challenge. Mobile



teams and refugee outreach workers significantly expanded access to vulnerable groups in the suburbs and within cities. Difficulties related to the urban dispersal of refugees persisted, necessitating a community-based approach.

## Financial information

The Iraq Operation was sufficiently funded in 2009, enabling effective implementation of planned activities and improvement of assistance and protection services.

## Organization and implementation

UNHCR strengthened its presence in Iraq with 23 international staff and 117 nationals. The operation consisted of the country office in Baghdad, the sub-office in Erbil and a field office in Basra, together with 12 field units (Al Waleed, Baquba, Dohuk, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Kut, Mosul, Najaf, Ramadi, Samarra, Suleyimaniyah and Trebil.) In Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, 232 UNHCR employees, as well as 215 additional workforce staff, provided Iraqi refugees with protection and assistance.

Due to the large number of urban refugees, particularly in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Office adopted a strategy to work with volunteers from the urban refugee communities to better understand their needs and improve assistance for them.

## Working with others

In order to expand the protection space in refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR worked with the respective governments and ministries. It also built the capacity of national NGOs. In 2009, UNHCR led the Consolidated Appeal Process in the neighbouring countries in cooperation with sister UN agencies and international and national NGOs. UNHCR also actively participated in the same process in Iraq under the leadership of UNAMI.

In Iraq, UNHCR introduced a new scheme to strengthen national NGOs that are implementing small-scale projects to support returnees and displaced people. These NGOs implemented micro-grant projects targeting the most destitute, particularly widows, orphans, older persons and other groups with special needs. A total of 88 projects were implemented by 76 NGOs in Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Kirkuk, Mosul and Thi Quar. Projects covered community services, human rights and education activities.

## Overall assessment

Despite the continuing array of challenges, UNHCR largely met its objectives, including reinforcing protection in the region and expanding its presence and impact inside Iraq. The relative improvement in the security situation inside Iraq and steady depletion of refugees' and IDPs' resources led to an increase in the number of returnees.

Resettlement of the most vulnerable refugees continued to be a key element of UNHCR's operations, with some 91,000 Iraqis having been referred for resettlement since early 2007. Of this figure, more than 44,000 have departed for their new homes. Despite a significant reduction in the support provided to government institutions, refugees continued to have access to education and health services.

Addressing the needs of such a large urban refugee population has required the Office to develop initiatives to ensure an efficient and effective response. These included the expansion of financial assistance through the use of ATM cards; the utilization of mobile telephones to send mass information to refugees; the extensive use of Iraqi refugee volunteers as outreach workers; and the use of bar coding to verify distributions.

Community-based approaches continued to be given priority, as did efforts to develop the capacity of local institutions, particularly through partnerships with national NGOs in Iraq. Inside Iraq, UNHCR increased its efforts to re-register refugees, particularly Palestinians, and to promote resettlement for those most in need. Significant progress was achieved in referring Palestinians for resettlement, with the objective of closing three border camps.

While welcoming the relative improvement in the security situation inside Iraq, it is imperative that UNHCR continues to work with regional states, host communities and the wider international community to ensure that the most vulnerable are not forced to return prematurely. Those with ongoing protection concerns must continue to receive appropriate support until a durable solution is found.

### Partners

**Government:** Ministry of Education, Syria; Ministry of Health, Syria; Ministry of Higher Education, Syria; Ministry of Interior, Jordan; Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan; Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Iraq; Office of the Governor of El Hassake, Syria

**NGOs:** *Acción Centra El Hambre*, Spain; Al Bassel Hospital (heart institute), Syria; Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers/Migrants, Turkey; Beiruni Hospital, Syria; Care, Australia; Caritas, Austria; Caritas, Brasil; Caritas, Egypt; Caritas Migrants Center, Lebanon; Caritas, Jordan; Cartong, Catholic Relief Services USCCB, USA, Common Charity Committee, Syria; Couvent Ibrahim Al-Khalil, Syria; *Croix-Rouge Francaise*, France; Danish Refugee Council, Evangelical Christian Alliance Church, Syria; General Assembly of Damascus Hospital, Syria; Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, Syria; Human Resources Developmnet Foundation, Turkey; International Catholic Migration Commission, International Medical Corps, UK; International Relief and Development Foundation, USA; Intersos, Italy; International Rescue Committee, International Blue Crescent and Relief Foundation, Turkey; Islamic Relief, Jordanian River Foundation, Jordan; Jordanian Red Crescent Society, King Hussein Cancer Foundation, Jordan; Lebanese Association for Population, Lebanon; Life Makers Society, Jordan; *Maison du bon pasteur*, Syria; Mercy Corps, Middle East Council of Churches, Lebanon; Millenium, USA; Mizan, Jordan; National Center for Human Rights, Jordan; Nippon International Cooperation, Japan; Noor-Al Hussein Foundation, Jordan; Palestinian Red Crescent Society, *Première urgence*, France; Regional Human Security Center, Jordan; Questscope, Jordan; Refugee Egypt, Relief International, USA; Save the Children Federation, USA; Syrian Red Crescent Society, Syrian Women's Association, Syria; Terre des hommes, Italy; Terre des hommes, Syria

**Others:** IOM, UNAMI, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNRWA, WFP, WHO

### Budget, income and expenditure for the Iraq Situation (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions *	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Iraq Situation SB	397,500,000	247,524,379	15,408,846	262,933,225	239,844,498
<b>Total</b>	<b>397,500,000</b>	<b>247,524,379</b>	<b>15,408,846</b>	<b>262,933,225</b>	<b>239,844,498</b>

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

## Financial report for UNHCR's operations in the Iraq Situation (USD)

Activities and services	Argentina	Brazil	Egypt	Iraq	Islamic Republic of Iran	Jordan	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia	Slovak Republic	Syrian Arab Republic	Turkey	United Arab Emirates	Regional activities in the Middle East Region	Head-quarters	Grand Total
Protection, monitoring and coordination	0	0	75,551	6,127,681	91,547	3,127,405	2,401,186	141,961	2,951	5,303,980	41,084	0	0	0	17,313,344
Community services	97,324	142,807	10,088	1,021,326	2,986	3,427,811	305,538	0	0	1,457,858	197,323	0	4,943	0	6,668,004
Domestic needs/household support	160,888	199,826	222,111	7,513,994	248,972	14,645,718	451,451	22,666	0	26,569,453	164,587	0	(628,958)	0	49,570,709
Education	39,085	105,356	156,284	412,034	0	1,203,379	258,913	0	0	6,608,978	16,214	0	0	0	8,800,243
Food	0	0	0	1,003,103	0	51,827	0	0	0	6,738,034	0	0	128,565	0	7,921,528
Health and nutrition	20,317	49,072	178,858	483,390	125,934	7,138,892	373,017	0	0	12,191,704	68,930	0	10,335	0	20,640,450
Income generation	23,037	0	14,422	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37,459
Instalments to implementing partners	474,672	198,907	1,223,574	36,575,946	93,840	2,092,985	1,376,114	0	0	20,372,598	257,701	0	1,014,476	0	63,680,815
Legal assistance	92,509	41,874	42,409	3,875,899	8,101	1,657,637	380,342	0	0	3,745,476	371,805	0	920,607	0	11,136,659
Operational support to agencies	138,440	55,745	76,593	3,676,889	2,979	2,843,583	221,987	0	0	1,010,130	48,440	0	98,239	0	8,173,024
Sanitation	0	0	0	496,327	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	496,327
Shelter and infrastructure	589	205,014	0	18,673,581	41,583	0	0	0	0	69,058	0	0	6,989	0	18,996,814
Transport and logistics	0	9,730	296,836	2,234,976	76,626	20,408	0	0	0	8,362,193	19,326	0	34,369	0	11,054,465
Water	0	0	0	1,003,956	8,365	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,012,321
<b>Subtotal operational activities</b>	<b>1,046,861</b>	<b>1,008,331</b>	<b>2,296,726</b>	<b>83,099,100</b>	<b>700,934</b>	<b>36,209,646</b>	<b>5,768,547</b>	<b>164,626</b>	<b>2,951</b>	<b>92,429,463</b>	<b>1,185,411</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,589,565</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>225,502,160</b>
Programme support	0	0	40,951	5,655,109	0	2,684,945	414,121	50,701	0	3,149,064	264,552	79,132	0	2,003,763	14,342,338
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,046,861</b>	<b>1,008,331</b>	<b>2,337,677</b>	<b>88,754,209</b>	<b>700,934</b>	<b>38,894,590</b>	<b>6,182,668</b>	<b>215,328</b>	<b>2,951</b>	<b>95,578,527</b>	<b>1,449,963</b>	<b>79,132</b>	<b>1,589,565</b>	<b>2,003,763</b>	<b>239,844,498</b>