

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP  
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**Iraq: The Cluster Approach (REVISED)**

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In anticipation of a sovereign transitional government for Iraq due to take office at the end of June 2004, the Secretary-General has given consideration to which UN activities are appropriate now, as well as identifying those activities that ought to wait until formation of the government. The general areas of major needs are humanitarian assistance, emergency rehabilitation, technical assistance to key ministries, and critical reconstruction activities. Civil society, due to its vital role in the political dialogue processes at various levels, will be supported, particularly human rights organisations and national media. All of these are areas in which the UN has a great deal of expertise and experience. The challenge, as indicated by the Secretary-General, is to develop a detailed and credible plan of action that considers the conditions required for the UN to play an effective role both inside and outside Iraq.

In response the UN Country Team (UNCT) has adopted a strategic, holistic approach incorporating results-based management principles in its programming, covering security, planning, operations, support, management and oversight. The UNCT has fundamentally rethought how it operates its business processes – core and support. As it is absolutely committed to the safety of all staff, the agencies that go to make up the UNCT are committed to working increasingly in an integrated and innovative manner so as to reduce staff exposure to situations of high risk. This includes joint planning, combining support and common services, sharing and pooling of resources, empowering national staff to carry out programme activities, and taking steps to cover technical and managerial backstopping. This is very important given that the UN is striving to work within a capacity defined by ever-changing security, without the presence of international staff, in what is described as a “light footprint”. A detailed planning process was initiated at a meeting held in Cyprus in mid-November, focussing on an integrated implementation team, empowering national staff, increasing cross-border activities, enhancing engagement with Iraqi partners, and such like. This was followed by a series of meetings and a two-day intensive planning workshop, after which the UN Country Team outlined the framework for a strategic plan. This framework, while reflecting a three-year perspective, concentrates on outputs in 2004.

*The UN Clusters*

- (1) Education and Culture**
- (2) Health**
- (3) Water and Sanitation**
- (4) Infrastructure and Housing**
- (5) Agriculture, Water Resources and Environment**
- (6) Food Security**
- (7) Mine Action**
- (8) Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Refugees**
- (9) Governance and Civil Society**
- (10) Poverty Reduction and Human Development**

*The Cross-cutting Themes*

- **Security**
- **Human Rights**
- **Gender**
- **Environment**
- **Employment Generation**

There may be an additional Cluster covering the need for assistance as described in paragraph 99 of the Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council (17 July, 2003) and again in the paragraphs 69 – 81 of subsequent Report (5 December 2003) namely electoral processes, constitutional processes, transitional justice (institutions and training), military demobilisation and re-integration, public administration reform, long-term policy development and so on. A coordinated UN response to needs of this nature depends on (a) an invitation from Iraqi authorities for the UN to assist, and (b) the security climate permitting a realistic level of operations. At this time the current security situation would only permit restricted in-country assistance, supported by cross-border operations. Extensive assistance is anticipated because of the very nature of the needs and the urgency, and the UNCT is already preparing to respond when directed to do so, under clusters (9) and (10) above. Given the sheer size of the financial resources to be applied during the eight months to end-January 2005, possibly running to several hundred million USD, it may be better to establish a new cluster for the election process alone, so as not to swamp the programmes in clusters (9) and (10). Other needs may emerge over time, and given that the UN Strategy is a rolling one, reviewed periodically, these could be accommodated as and when they arise.

The term “cluster” is a useful way of expressing the logical grouping of UN interventions and programmes in Iraq, rather than using the term “sector”, which could be confused with the list of 14 specific sectors and seven cross-cutting issues given in the UN/WB Needs Assessment. There will be five cross-cutting issues addressed in UNCT programmes for Iraq – security, human rights, gender, environment, and employment generation. The challenge here will be for existing programmes to take account of the evolving security situation and also in seeking out opportunities for equitable income generating activities, for individuals and private sector alike. The use of clusters is not a theoretical exercise in reshuffling the UN agencies into a smaller number of “entities”. It is a very serious attempt requested by the Secretary-General, led by the UNCT to reconfigure how the UN family should work together and to organise itself in a way that maximises safety, efficiency and added value. Hence, instead of dealing with twenty or more agencies, key ministries such as Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation will have just ten clusters presenting coordinated and collaborative joint programming. This approach is along the lines of a joint venture, a common modality used by the private sector to deliver multi-disciplined, complex programmes and projects, often running into billions of dollars over several years involving activities in several countries.

In summary, each of the ten clusters will be coordinated by a Cluster Task Manager, who will provide a number of services to the cluster under agreed Terms of Reference (ToR), which are under regular review. For now all Cluster Task Managers are temporarily based in nearby Amman, but stand ready to re-deploy to Iraq once security permits. The progress in implementing the cluster approach has been such that, as of 20 May 2004, the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund – Steering Committee has processed, subject to final approval by the Iraqi Strategic Review Board, no less than 17 programmes and projects valued at \$232 million in clusters (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), and (8),. This was fully endorsed by the Donor Committee at the Doha Meeting on 25-26 May 2004.

Third background document on the agenda item of Iraq

<b>C1: Education &amp; Culture</b>	<b>C2: Health</b>	<b>C3: Water &amp; Sanitation</b>	<b>C4: Infrastructure &amp; Housing</b>	<b>C5: Agriculture, Water Resources &amp; Environment</b>	<b>C6: Food Security</b>	<b>C7: Mine Action</b>	<b>C8: IDPs &amp; Refugees</b>	<b>C9: Governance &amp; Civil Society</b>	<b>C10: Poverty Reduction &amp; Human Development</b>
UNICEF™	WHO™	UNICEF™	UNDP™	FAO™	WFP™	UNDP™	UNHCR™	UNDP™	UNDP™
UNESCO	UNICEF	UNDP	ITU	UNEP	FAO	UNICEF	IOM	OHCHR	ILO
UN-HABITAT	UNFPA	UNOPS	UN-HABITAT	UNIDO	WHO	UNEP	UNICEF	UNIFEM	ESCWA
UNIFEM	WFP	UNIDO	ESCWA	UNESCO	UNICEF	UNMAS	UNOPS	ILO	UN-HABITAT
WFP	IOM	WHO	UNHCR	ILO		WHO	UN-HABITAT	UNICEF	UNIDO
WHO	UNIDO	UN-HABITAT	UNIDO	UNICEF			UNAMI	UN-HABITAT	IOM
UNOPS	UNODC		ILO	UNDP			FAO	UNESCO	UNCDF
OHCHR	UNIFEM						ILO	UNODC	
WFP	UNAIDS						OHCHR	WHO	
UNIDO	UNDP						UNDP	ESCWA	
ESCWA							UNIDO	IOM	
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(World Bank)	(World Bank)	(World Bank)	(World Bank)	(World Bank)	(World Bank)			(World Bank)	(World Bank)

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Ministry of Education	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Municipalities and Public Work	Ministry of Planning and Development and Cooperation	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation	National Mine Action Authority	Ministry of Displacement and Migration	Ministry of Human Rights	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
Ministry of Higher Education		Ministry of Industry and Minerals	Ministry of Housing and Construction	Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Health		Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Planning
Ministry of Culture			Ministry of Municipalities and Public Work	Ministry of Water Resources	Ministry of Education		Ministry of Human Rights	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Public Works
			Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare	Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation	Ministry of Trade			Ministry of Public Works and Municipalities	Ministry of Finance
			Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Environment				Ministry of Housing and Construction	Ministry of Education
			Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Industry and Mines				Ministry of Planning and Development	
			Ministry of Industry and Minerals					Ministry of Finance	
								Ministry of Health	
								Ministry of Interior	
								Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	
								Ministry of Environment	