



**FINAL REPORT FOR PROJECT:  
C8-01 RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF IDPS AND REFUGEES IN THE  
THREE NORTHERN GOVERNORATES**

## Summary

**Participating UN Organisation:**

UNOPS

**Cluster:**

F – Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and durable solutions.

**Project No. and Project Title:**

C8-01 - Return and Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees in the Three Northern Governorates

**Project Location/Region/Province:**

The project addresses issues of refugees and internally displaced people returning to their places of origin in Iraq's three northern governorates. UNDG Trust Fund funds the activities in the municipality of Kalar, in Sulaymaniyah governorate and the municipality of Sarsink, in Dahuk governorate. UNHCR funds the activities in the municipalities of Qushtapa and Soran in Erbil Governorate and Qaladza in Sulaymanyah Governorate.

**Reporting Period:**

1 September 2004 to December 2006

**Operationally Closed in December 2006**

**Report no:**

Final

**Counterpart organisations / implementing partners:**

Ministry of Humanitarian Aid and Cooperation  
Ministry of Displacement and Migrations  
Ministry of Relations and Cooperation  
Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk Governors  
Sarsink Mayor's office, Kalar Mayor's office,  
Qushtapa Mayor's office, Soran Mayor's office,  
Qaladza Mayor's office, Psychological Educational  
Treatment and Consulting Centre in Erbil,  
Kurdistan Workers Syndicate in Qaladza.

**Project cost:**

UNDG TF - US \$ 9,741,315  
UNHCR - - US \$ 2,011,830 (2004 budget)  
UNHCR - US \$ 1,336,167 (2005 budget)  
UNHCR - US \$ 5,800,000 (In kind)

**Abbreviations and acronyms:**

DPC – District Planning Committee  
CSG – Community Steering Group  
LPO – Local Purchase Order  
ITB – Invitation to Bid  
LA – Local Authority  
TOR – Term of Reference  
BOQ – Bill of Quantity  
DOE – Directorate of Education  
DOA – Directorate of Agriculture  
QIP – Quick Impact Project  
VTC – Vocational Training Courses  
MOA – Memorandum of Agreement  
IGP – Income Generation Project

**Project Duration:**

Originally 12 months (October 2004 – September 2005) plus 3 months liquidation period (October – December 2005).

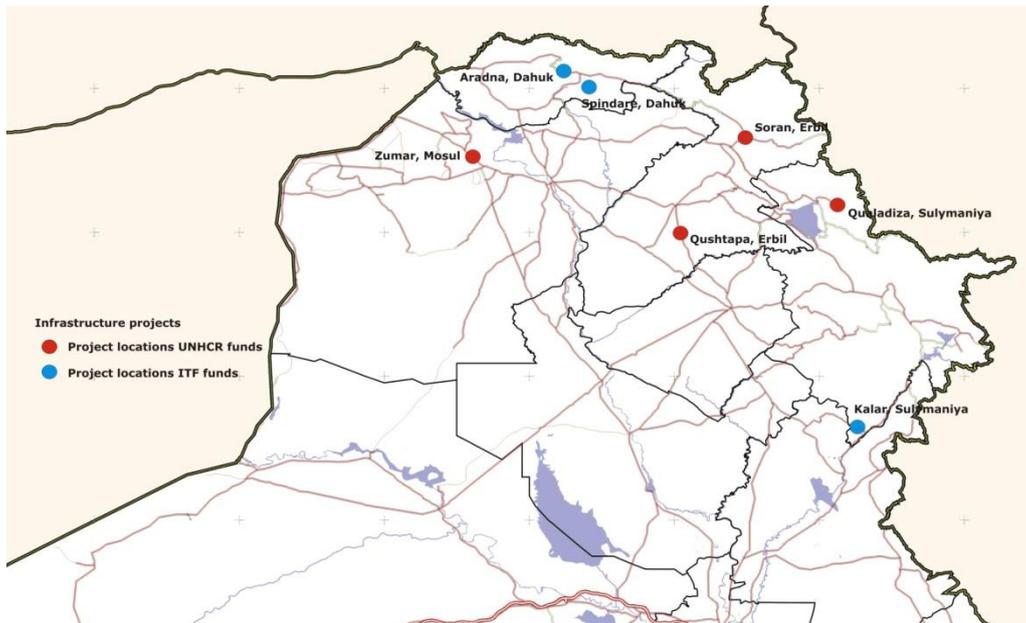
Prolongation requested to permit

- Completion of all activities
- Effective monitoring
- Evaluation of beneficiary perceptions on project impact

**Project Location/Region/Province:**

The following project locations were selected to be funded by UNDG TF: Kalar in Sulaymaniyah Governorate, Spindar and Aradna in Sarsink Governorate. However, as the proposed locations Spindar and Aradna did not meet the expectations of the beneficiaries, these were renegotiated and 7 new villages were selected and proposed by the local authorities.

The following project locations were selected to be funded by UNHCR: Qaladza in Sulaymaniyah Governorate, Qushtapa and Soran in Erbil Governorate.



## I. Purpose

### Main objectives and outcomes expected as per approved Project/Programme/project document:

The main objective of the project is to create conditions for the sustainable return and reintegration of IDP and refugee families in selected locations by addressing the issues of housing, community public services, economic well-being, as well as building the capacity of local government institutions through training and provision of improved facilities in order to assume their responsibility towards the local population.



The project was designed to provide the following outputs:

- Storage and distribution of UNHCR's internationally procured shelter material in Iraq;
- Supply 2,713 families returning to their places of origin with construction materials and - in cooperation with UNHCR implementing partners - provide guidance for the construction of houses;
- Improvement of basic communal services;
- Community social awareness promotion, employability enhancement and provision of micro-grants assistance to heads of households;
- Support to local authorities with human resource development through institutional capacity building activities and provision of facilities.

In order to allow funding the full scope of the project, UNHCR put together the UNDG ITF funds, UNHCR own resources as well as a significant contribution in kind.

### Reference to how the programme/project relates to the UN Assistance Strategy to Iraq 2005/5 and how it aims to support international and national development goals (revised National Development Strategy Dead Sea July 2005) including the Millennium Development Goals and other goals as pertinent:

The projects falls into the scope of Cluster F programme which is to *"...ensure that the Iraqi authorities apply international protection principles and standards to uprooted populations including IDPs, stateless persons and returnees and assist to achieve a sustainable return, relocation and reintegration process that prevents and reduces tensions, as well as to assist refugees in Iraq to realize a durable solution..."*. The project provides durable solutions as well as contributes to Pro Poor growth strategies.

It will also contribute to the achieving of the MDG "Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger".

In relation to the Iraqi National Development Strategy, the project supports the Social Advancement Programmes through support to reintegration of the returnees.

**Main international and national implementing partners involved, their specific roles and responsibilities in project implementation and their interaction with the agency:**

The project was implemented by UNOPS. For the IDP Monitoring component, the Joint Humanitarian Information Centre North coordinated the field monitoring, data entry, and initial analysis of collected data as a local implementing partner. UNHCR and IOM advised on monitoring framework and tools as key agencies of UNAMI Cluster F.

## II. Resources

**Total approved budget and summary of resources available to the programme/project from the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund and non-Trust Fund resources where applicable:**

Total budget funded by UNDG TF - US \$ 9,741,315

Total budget funded by UNHCR:

- initial budget - US\$ 4,548,313
- latest budget revision - US\$ 3,347,997
- In kind contribution - US\$ 5,800,000 (construction materials components provided by UNHCR core funding)

### III. Results

**An assessment of the extent to which the programme/project component / programme /project is progressing in relation to the outcomes and outputs expected for the year:**

The project is considered a flagship for the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) as well as the local authorities involved in the implementation. The project brings an innovative approach, different than that of the previous UN interventions in Iraq in the past few years. The main achievement of the project has been to bring together local authorities and representatives of beneficiaries and involve them in a dialog on demands and needs to be addressed and continuous cooperation at every step of the implementation process.

The Final Program Evaluation conducted for UNHCR and UNOPS on the *Resettlement and Re-Integration of IDPs and Refugee Returnees in Northern Iraq* was completed in May 2006. Findings from the field visits to the Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk Governorates carried out during the final evaluation present a consistent view of the various components of this project: housing, public services, economic well being, and capacity of local government institutions. Strengths of the sub-project include:

- The intervention program developed by the UNHCR and UNOPS takes an integrated approach to resettlement by combining infrastructure and human capital development with the provision of basic public services to effect sustainable outcomes.
- Successfully secured land distributions for beneficiaries through negotiations with LAs .
- The quality of life of most beneficiaries has substantially improved, since they now have a permanent place of residence, regained their property rights, and lost their label as IDPs.
- Provision of construction materials and building guidance for self-built units.
- Establishment of District Planning Committees and Community Steering Groups to monitor the progress of various sub-projects and introduce civic engagement in municipal decision making.
- UNOPS' use of a participatory and consultative approach in engaging and connecting with different government offices and community stakeholders to address human resource development needs through capacity building exercises and encourage transparency in selecting the proper intervention approach.
- Construction programs were credited to improving basic education and health services. Although facility improvements were made, the efficiency of services is still low in comparison to private medical services.

Following are the final results for the reporting period for the 5 overall output components.

#### **Distribution of UNHCR Internationally Procured Material**

All internationally procured material for 2,713 houses was received in the warehouse and 37% of it has been distributed fully to construction sites managed by UNOPS (1000 houses). Another 9% has been distributed to two UNHCR implementing partners (233 houses). At reporting time, KRG have authorized the distribution of the material to 350 beneficiary families in Sulaymaniah and 300 families in Erbil for which they were to provide manpower for loading and trucks for transportation. In addition, Shelter for Life (FSL), an UNHCR implementing partner have requested material for the construction of 52 houses and various service projects A subsequent extension has been negotiated to rent the

warehouse until the end of September 2006. Currently, 7-8 trucks can be loaded daily to remove the material from the warehouse. It will take a total of 3 months to empty the warehouse. However, the LAs have indicated that they could not afford the high transportation costs. As a result, the goods have not been moved at all. At reporting time, the UNOPS Field Office in Erbil is currently waiting for UNHCR's decision around how to distribute the materials

### Housing

At all housing construction sites where UNOPS has provided guidance, land allocation has been completed but the beneficiaries have not necessarily received their title deeds as seen from the following table.

Governorate	District	Village	Property Registration
Erbil	Qushtapa	Elenjagh, Girdazaban, Sorash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All beneficiaries received land ownership titles</li> </ul>
	Soran		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No official documentation received</li> <li>Beneficiaries must register property</li> </ul>
Suleymaniyah	Qaladza		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only received land ownership title if beneficiaries registered property on their own</li> <li>Some beneficiaries already sold their homes</li> </ul>
	Kalar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No official documentation received</li> </ul>
Dohuk	Sarsink	Saidava, Barbanke, Skreen, Tajika, Ashawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land ownership titles not required as land is already inherited</li> </ul>

All internationally and locally procured material has been distributed but construction is still on-going. Of a total of 1,000 houses at all sites, 660 are completed and the remaining at various stages of construction. For a variety of reasons (see constraints underneath) implementation is running late and construction scheduled to be completed by end September 2005 will in fact be completed during 2006. On the other hand, locally procured material has been delivered to three UNHCR Implementing Partners for the construction of 500 houses

The evaluation concludes that this sub-project had a significant impact on the beneficiaries involved. The overall impression expressed by the beneficiary families across Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk was happiness for having regained property rights, securing a permanent place of residence, and for losing their label as IDPs. Without UNOPS' assistance, the beneficiaries would not have the financial capability to build a house and receive land distributions from the LAs. Housing for this project consists of self-built units, with materials and building guidance provided by UNOPS. Overall, the quality of life of all beneficiaries has improved.

Beneficiaries who deviated from the original blueprint had to outlay additional investments as per the following table:

Governorate	District	Village	Additional Investment
Erbil	Qushtapa	Elenjagh, Girdazaban, Sorash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1,500 - \$3,000</li> </ul>
	Soran		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$10,000 - \$14,000</li> <li>High cost attributed to building a secure foundation</li> </ul>
Suleymaniyah	Qaladza		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$2,000</li> <li>\$8,000 - \$10,000 for the construction of 2 stories</li> </ul>
	Kalar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$2,000 - \$5,000</li> </ul>
Dohuk	Sarsink	Saidava, Barbanke, Skreen, Tajika, Ashawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$3,000 - \$4,000</li> </ul>

### **Basic Communal Services**

With respect to basic communal services, 16 sub-projects have been identified consisting of 9 water projects, 3 schools and 4 health centres. All projects are completed.

#### Education

Three UNOPS mandated education projects were initiated as part of this sub-project and involved the construction of new primary schools. As of the end of this report, construction at all three sites (Qushtapa – Elenjagh, Kalar, Sarsink – Saidava) have been completed and the overall learning and teaching environment has dramatically improved.

#### Health

The construction of four health centers (Qushtapa – Girdazaban, Qaladza, Kalar, and Sarsink – Skreen) was part of this sub-project since investment in health is an important means of economic development by contributing to higher labor productivity, educational attainment, and reduction in poverty.

#### Water Distribution

In creating a dynamic environment for economic and social development, this sub-project intended to take a holistic approach to resettlement and build on existing capacities, resources, and structures to optimize the public services available. Based on priority needs, the installation of water distribution systems was a key component of this sub-project. However, the provision of basic infrastructure remains a challenge due to deficiencies in the operational capacity and accountability of the municipal government across the Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk governorates. Poor accessibility of roads, inconsistent electricity delivery, sanitation, and a functioning water distribution network continues to be a challenge, and public services such as garbage disposal remain largely absent.

As part of the final evaluation for this sub-project completed in May 2006, field surveys were conducted to assess the beneficiaries' level of satisfaction with regard to the service performance and availability of public services (water, power, municipal services, and transport). Various dimensions of public satisfaction were assessed including staff behaviour, quality of service, and information provided. Key findings from the beneficiaries across the governorates of Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk conclude that the LAs did not provide any kind of financial, materials, or physical assistance.

The beneficiaries living conditions remain unchanged since the last reporting period. Only some have directly benefited from UNOPS' water project depending on the LAs level of responsiveness. As of this report, no initiatives have been planned by the LAs, since the last reporting period ending December 2005 to address other public service issues related to water, electricity, roads, transportation, and garbage disposal.

Furthermore, beneficiaries remain mixed with respect to the LAs level of communication with the community, since the majority of the people who came to monitor the progress of the various sub-projects were from the local steering committee and not the municipal government

The following table presents the status of the beneficiaries access to water distribution networks at the end of the project.

Governorate	District	Village	Consumption Needs Met?	Connection to Water Distribution Network
Erbil	Qushtapa	Elenjagh	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct connection</li> </ul>
		Girdazaban, Sorash	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No direct connection</li> <li>• Use of community distribution points</li> </ul>
	Soran		Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct connection</li> </ul>
Suleymaniyah	Qaladza, Kalar		No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct connection, but not connected to municipality's water distribution map</li> <li>• Pay \$5.00 / tank for 3000L of water</li> </ul>
Dohuk	Sarsink	Saidava, Barbanke, Skreen	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct connection</li> </ul>
		Tajika	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High mineral content</li> <li>• Same water used for livestock in the summer</li> </ul>
		Ashawa	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct connection</li> <li>• Rate at which water is received is inadequate</li> </ul>

### **Income Generation and Vocational Training**

#### Income Generation

Two income generation initiatives were part of this sub-project:

- Sheep Distribution – Families selected received 10 vaccinated sheep
- Beehive Keeping – Families selected received 3 or 4 beehives

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 concludes that income generation

activities related to both the livestock rearing and the revolving beehive keeping program were extremely successful. Not only were the beneficiaries able to improve their livelihood, the project was self-sustaining given that beehives were being returned to the municipality and re-distributed to other vulnerable families. In terms of the livestock rearing program, although families had to initially sell or slaughter the sheep to meet short term food requirements and financial obligations, they were able to return one sheep to the municipality after one year. Continued monitoring of this initiative is required to ensure transferability of such practices to other vulnerable families.

#### Vocational Training

Four vocational training programs have been completed for a total of 205 trainees. Certificates and toolkits have been distributed to all graduates.

Several UNOPS implementing partners for vocational training are private companies. Course participants articulated their preference for private sector intervention due to the following reasons:

- Practicality
- Customer Focused – Training curriculum is targeted and modified to meet the different skill requirements of the course participants
- Comprehensive Business Network – The training partner had extensive business contacts within and beyond the Suleymaniyah Governorate providing participants with increased opportunities to find and access employment
- Updated Knowledge – Thought leadership on current and emerging business issues within the context of local and broader economic environment in which the course participants will operate

Private sector development (“PSD”) often promotes a more equitable diffusion of the benefits of growth and development. Further, PSDs are a source of wealth, dynamism, competition, and knowledge.

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 concludes that course participants across the Erbil and Suleymaniyah Districts were very satisfied with the level of training provided given the trainers’ experience and the knowledge gained based on the applicability of the course curriculum. It is important to note that a different group of survey respondents was used to determine vocational training effectiveness, since very few family members from the original list of households interviewed could participate in the training.

Course participants cited that the vocational training they received enabled them to apply their skills, and enter the labour market by starting their own business or by working as an apprentice for some of the trainers. Specifically, course participants who received concrete casting and tile fixing training started their own businesses and were able to transfer knowledge by hiring their own apprentices and improve their livelihoods. Several beneficiaries who participated in the sewing course were hired as apprentices by their trainers. Lastly, some course participants who received hairdressing training pooled together to open up their own hair salon.

The following table presents the salary or income level achieved by former course participants.

Vocation	Average Salary per Month
Concrete Casting	\$ 250.00
Fixing Tiles	\$ 200.00
Car Painting	\$ 133.33
Car Modification	\$ 87.00
Sewing	\$ 90.00
Hairdressing	\$ 85.00

As the initial staff teams conducting the training are no longer employed by UNOPS, no follow up monitoring is taking place to determine whether the municipal government will be offering new courses to upgrade existing skills or train new participants

#### Psychosocial Training

For psychosocial training, the teachers especially benefited from the following lectures:

- Social and Family Networks
- Negative Impact on Violence
- Positive Reinforcements
- Children Emotional and Social Development
- Discipline
- Recreational Activities in Primary Schools
- Child Disability
- Behavioural Problems of Children

Fifteen educational supervisors participated in the training and will serve an advocacy and training role for the other teachers in the region. An evaluation of the psychosocial training course in Soran and Qaladiza highlighted several important considerations. Given the nature of the training, course participants recommended that the training be spread out over a longer period of time to enable sufficient time for application, monitoring, evaluation, and feedback of the techniques they learnt in the classroom. Organizationally, the teachers also suggested that course materials be distributed a week in advance to adequately prepare for the training. Other recommendations include refresher courses, the inclusion of kindergarten teachers into the training program, filming the lectures, and expansion of the psychosocial training program to teachers in other regions.

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 concludes that teachers found the psychosocial training curriculum to be relevant and the materials to be comprehensive. However, follow up courses and expansion of the training program to other teachers and regions have not been initiated by the Ministry of Education as of the end of this report. This has prevented the dissemination of these lectures to other educators.

#### **Capacity Building and Support to the Local Authorities**

Assistance to develop the physical and institutional capabilities of local Iraqi governments requires understanding of the context within which these institutions operate, and not solely focus on these institutions in isolation. Further, to attain improvements in operational performance, changes are often required across various dimensions of an institution including, but are not limited to management performance, human and financial resources, organizational and physical elements. Thus, institutional reform as well as training of local authorities is a subset of a broader capacity-building process.

Institutional reform involves changes to structure and operating procedures, normally aimed at increasing efficiency and improving institutional performance.

With respect to capacity building of LAs, mayors offices have been furnished and provided with computer equipment and internet access. A capacity building workshop was held for the benefit of mayors, DPC and CSG members who actively participated in the preparation and the implementation of sub-projects in their respective areas.

In Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk, survey results indicated that the LAs were satisfied with the quality of training provided, given the training professional's level of experience and the support materials provided. The management development training held by the Jordan River Foundation in Amman has also benefited the LAs in improving their efficiency enabling them to apply new management, procurement, and administration techniques. One advantage of the course includes an economic development component which provided a framework for each municipality to manage their financial resources and operations. Whether these principles were applied after the training remains inconclusive.

**Main activities undertaken and achievements/ impacts:**

It should be noted that due to a shortfall in the UNHCR funding, some activities originally planned under UNHCR funding had to be transferred to ITF funding. These activities are identified hereunder.

**Output 1 -Storage and distribution of UNHCR's internationally procured shelter material in Iraq**

This output relates to the UNHCR in kind contribution of internationally procured shelter material.

All construction material procured internationally by UNHCR for the construction of 2,713 houses has been received and stored in the Erbil warehouse. Essentially, the material consists of doors, windows, locks, handles, caulking kits, lintels and other hardware and wooden spinders in lengths of 4 m and 2 m for the construction of mud roofs.

The work plan originally proposed to built a total of 2,713 houses, but as a result of cost escalation for construction material in Northern Iraq, the budget could only cover the purchase of local material for the construction of 1,600 houses, and the remaining internationally procured material would then be distributed to some 1,000 beneficiaries in order to upgrade or renovate their existing shelters.

All necessary internationally procured material has been delivered to the construction sites for which UNOPS has been providing construction guidance. This represents a total of 1,000 houses. Since the design at some of the sites was modified from mud roof to concrete slab roofs, the spinders required for the mud roofs were not delivered.

Internationally procured material had also been planned to be distributed for the construction of 600 houses by UNHCR implementing partners, 267 by Mission East (ME), 182 by Shelter For Life (SFL) and 151 by Qandil. Mission East cancelled their housing construction project because another project to procure water supply came up with dry wells in the housing area and Qandil reduced their number of housing from 151 to 51. In the end internationally procured material was delivered during the

reporting period for the construction of 233 houses with concrete roofs, hence without spinders.

A number of timbers were also distributed to Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), another UNHCR implementing partner.

With respect to delivery of internationally procured material to beneficiaries in order to upgrade or renovate their existing shelters, during the project two lists have been prepared by the local authorities and verified by UNOPS for compliance with UNHCR eligibility criterion, the first list for 311 beneficiary families in Dohuk Governorate, the second for 350 beneficiary families in Sulaymaniyah Governorate. Although lists have been prepared for Erbil Governorate, none has been judged compliant by UNOPS. However in the interim, UNHCR put the distribution on hold pending review/revision of eligibility criterion. Then MOHAC indicated in a letter to UNOPS that they are interested in distributing the material to some 1,000 families presently occupying public buildings in Erbil and about to be evicted. The current situation is as follows:

- The Acting Minister of Relations and Cooperation authorized the release of building materials to the 350 families refugee returnees in Kalar and Qaladiza, from Erbil warehouse.
- KRG also authorized the release of building materials to 300 IDP families in Erbil.
- KRG indicated in May 2006 that they will not provide labor for loading and also transport and UNHCR is evaluating an alternate course of action.
- Communications were held between Shelter for Life (SFL), UNHCR and UNOPS to provide construction material for FSL who are planning to build 52 houses and services as an UNHCR implementing partner. UNOPS provided information on material available.

When this material is delivered, including to the beneficiaries identified on the Dohuk list, there will still remain some 400 construction kits in the Erbil warehouse in addition to miscellaneous material. This issue should be raised with UNHCR and KRG to dispose of this material.. The miscellaneous material consists of spinders of 4m and 2m length procured locally, construction toolkits also procured locally for the houses that were cancelled by UNHCR implementing partners, 267 by Mission East and 100 by Qandil, and finally construction material received from Counterpart International, a UNHCR implementing partner. An up-to-date inventory of the contents of the Erbil warehouse has been prepared including material damaged as the result of various sequences of on-loading/offloading.

**Output 2 - Supply 2,713 families returning to their places of origin with construction materials and - in cooperation with UNHCR implementing partners - provide guidance for the construction of houses**

Qushtapa

The government allowed the beneficiaries to modify the original blueprint, provided that they submit a guarantee that they would complete the house. The final assessment for Elenjagh, Girdazaban, and Sorash were completed on April 17, 2006. Key findings across these villages include the following:

- Additional investment made by the beneficiaries in completing their homes ranged from \$1,500 to \$3,000. The amount varied depending on the size of the house being built.
- No financial, materials, or physical assistance from the LAs in completing the beneficiaries' shelters.
- Financing to purchase other materials came from selling the timber allotted to the roofing

portion of the construction for approximately \$100 USD to purchase cement.

- Beneficiaries received land ownership titles, a major milestone in legitimizing their re-integration in Iraq.
- Willingness to stay in the area provided that access to basic services and educational facilities improve.

The Elenjagh site visit concludes that all 28 houses under UNOPS' construction guidance have been completed and inhabited. Before this intervention, most families were living in mud houses that were in a state of decline. The self built homes were constructed in close proximity to the mud houses which are being used as storage today. Again, most of the beneficiaries modified the original housing design developed by UNHCR, given the size of most Kurdish families. The interviewed families do not need to receive official titles for land ownership, since they were already living on the land.

The Girdazaban site visit concludes that most houses under UNOPS' construction guidance have been completed. One of the shelters constructed as per the original design had the outside frame completed but remained uninhabited, since the inside of the house was still under construction. Beneficiaries also received an in kind contribution of \$250 USD / family from UNOPS

#### Soran

The final assessment for the Soran district was completed on April 30, 2006. The construction progress on the 225 homes under UNOPS' housing project consists of 189 completed houses, 25 at roof casting or finishing stage and 10 at foundation casting or outside infrastructure building.

Of the 225 homes being constructed, 90% of the families made changes to the original UNHCR house design. On average, most families invested an additional \$10,000 - \$14,000 for a two story home. The topographic nature of the land contributed to the high costs, since the land is extremely rocky. As a result, families only spent \$500 for settlement and preparation. Most of the interior of the homes remain in various stages of construction.

The beneficiaries are grateful for UNOPS' involvement with the housing construction, since they do not have the financial capability to build a house or purchase land. All beneficiaries interviewed indicated that they would remain in Soran. Accessibility to the water distribution network was a main influencer in their decision.

The materials originally distributed for construction assisted the beneficiaries in building their homes. However, only 70% of the beneficiaries interviewed were satisfied with the quality of the materials being distributed. Beneficiaries indicated that the quality of the cement, sand, gravel, pipes, and roofing materials was good, while the quality of internationally procured materials such as windows and doors was poor. The household's interviewed also confirmed that they did not receive proper electrical and water installation tools. As a result, they had to purchase all the construction equipment. The beneficiaries used all the materials that were distributed, since the LAs provided grant money of \$1,350 to cover the costs of converting the mud roofs to concrete roofs. UNOPS also provided \$283 to vulnerable families.

As of this report, beneficiaries who chose to stay in Soran have not received official documentation of land ownership. The municipality has not taken any legal action to date to convert the allocated land

to the beneficiaries' names directly. Instead, the beneficiaries have been informed by the municipality of Soran to start the land registration procedures on their own. Most of the households do not have the funds to register the land, since they have already spent a lot of money on housing construction.

The beneficiary selection process in Soran mostly covers the Hike tribe who were displaced since 1974 to Iran and who returned to Soran in 1991 and have been living in tents. Most of the beneficiaries are involved in the army, since it provides a stable source of income for people who were previously jobless and unskilled.

#### Qaladza

The new sub-division where houses are being built has recently been named Hanarok. The final assessment for the Qaladza district was completed on April 26, 2006 over a 2-day period. The construction progress on the 125 houses under UNOPS' housing project consists of 75 completed houses, 48 at roof casting or finishing stage and 2 at foundation casting or outside infrastructure building.

Only three families did not change the housing design provided by UNHCR, since they were the poorest families selected for UNOPS' housing project. Most families made large scale changes to the original UNHCR house design. On average, beneficiaries invested an additional \$2,000 to complete their homes. Families that constructed two floors invested an additional \$8,000 - \$10,000.

As of May 2006, 60% of the homes have been completed. However, only 27 families have moved into their new home. Instead, approximately 50% of the beneficiaries have sold their homes in a statement made by the UNOPS assigned monitor who is supervising the housing project in Qaladza. The primary reason cited was the lack of basic services such as potable water, electricity, road accessibility, and garbage collection. Another 27 families continue to live in a public building, since all the basic services are available.

The materials originally distributed for construction did not provide much benefit or assistance to the beneficiaries. All beneficiaries sold some of the materials to procure local materials of higher quality. The UNOPS Monitor and some of the beneficiary families noted that the quality of the materials was better in Qaladza than Kalar.

As of this report, beneficiaries who chose to stay in Qaladza received official documentation of land ownership. Beneficiaries who did not receive land ownership titles did not go to the land registration department in Qaladza as directed.

The beneficiary selection process in Qaladza was not as equitable as the selection process in Kalar, since the mayor's office in Qaladza was the only stakeholder to contribute in identifying beneficiary families. In Kalar, the Department of Human Rights, IDP, and Anfal Affairs as well as the local district planning committee was part of the selection process. As a result, the external appearance of most self-built homes in Qaladza contradicts UNHCR's intention and guidelines for selecting IDPs, refugee returnees, and the most vulnerable groups.

Aside from access to land, the extent to which the beneficiaries improved their living conditions has been limited. The absence of basic services has influenced families to sell their homes or remain in

public housing, due to financial constraints imposed by additional expenses for water, electricity, and transportation. Thus, beneficiaries remain inconclusive around permanently relocating to Qaladza. Nonetheless, the assistance provided by UNOPS had a very positive impact on the beneficiaries, since they were able to secure land, build a house, and are no longer labelled IDPs. Overall, a coordinated approach in community development is necessary for families to permanently relocate and integrate into their new place of residence. UNOPS' involvement with the housing construction gets mixed review from Qaladza (and Kalar) beneficiaries. They are grateful that UNOPS provided construction materials, but dissatisfied with the quality of the materials provided and subsequent shortages. It is important to note that without UNOPS' assistance, the beneficiaries would not have the financial capability to build a house and receive land distributions from the LAs. In addition, the beneficiaries did not gain any construction skills that could assist them in finding work, since some of the beneficiaries were teachers and the others were already unskilled laborers. Beneficiaries who are unskilled laborers mentioned that there was a high opportunity cost to this project, since they did not have the time to find a job during the construction period.

#### Kalar

The results gathered by UNHCR for the reporting period ending December 2005 noted that most beneficiaries had to hire skilled masons during different stages of construction. The majority of family members could only participate in the construction as unskilled laborers. Modifications to the original design and dimensions of the home resulted in shortages of materials, which the beneficiaries had to purchase themselves. Key materials purchased include cement blocks, gypsum, sand, gravel, materials for roofing, external fencing, and electrical supplies.

The final assessment for the Kalar district was completed on April 20, 2006 over a 3-day period. The assessment concludes that the beneficiaries did not receive any form of financial, materials, or physical assistance in completing their shelters from the LAs. The LAs only assigned the beneficiaries their plot of land. On average, families spent an additional \$2,000 - \$5,000 in completing their homes depending on its size. Financing for these homes has been raised by borrowing money from family members and extended relatives. Kalar is one of the few districts where many families did not make noticeable change to the design provided by UNHCR. However, site visits show that while most of the beneficiaries have completed the outside frame of the house, the inside remains at various stages of completion. Construction activities that still need to be completed include concreting the ground of the house and staining the walls with gypsum.

The materials originally distributed for construction did not provide much benefit or assistance to the beneficiaries. All beneficiaries sold some of the materials to procure local materials of higher quality, such as gypsum. In addition, most of the materials that were sold did not meet regional dimensional requirements.

As of this report, the beneficiaries have not received any official documentation that legalizes their property rights. The municipal government commented that they did not receive any official order from the ministry to register these houses under the names of the beneficiaries. Nonetheless, the beneficiaries stated that this project had a positive impact on their life. Given their economic status, they now have land, a house, and are no longer labeled as IDPs.

Beneficiaries remain inconclusive around permanently relocating to Kalar, since many do not have the

financial means to consistently pay for the additional expenditures they are now incurring. These expenditures include electricity, water, transportation to schooling and health centers.

#### Sarsink

The final assessment for the Sarsink sub-district was completed on May 4, 2006 over a 2-day period. Six villages were included in UNHCR and UNOPS' housing project: Ashawa, Barbanke, Gondik, Saidava, Skrine, and Tajika. All these villages have access to the main road except for Saidava. A total of 275 houses were built in the Sarsink sub-district.

Number of Homes Built	Name of Village	Distance from Sarsink
95	Ashawa	5.8 km
12	Barbanke	9.3 km
44	Gondik	7 km
19	Saidava	14.5 km
78	Skrine	8.3 km
27	Tajika	8.1 km

Given the size of most families, over 90% of beneficiaries made large scale changes to the original UNHCR house design. Approximately 30% of the houses remain in various stages of construction, due to financial constraints. On average, beneficiaries invested \$3,000 - \$4,000 to complete housing construction.

Overall, the beneficiaries are satisfied with UNOPS' involvement in creating sustainable conditions for their return and reintegration to those villages given the adequacy of the land and construction materials provided as well as the availability of basic services. Although the beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the quality of the materials, the quantity was not sufficient, given the extensive modifications.

As of this report, beneficiaries in Sarsink did not require official titles of land ownership, since they inherited the lands and were already living there. Beneficiaries stated that they are now busy cultivating their lands and orchards without fear of losing their properties. All stated their willingness to remain in Sarsink.

#### UNHCR Implementing Partners

Also, during the reporting period, locally procured construction material for 500 houses was delivered to UNHCR Implementing Partners; Mission East (267 houses), Shelter for Life (182 houses) and Qandil (51 houses). The contracts associated with this procurement were funded by the ITF budget. UNOPS also issued 51 construction toolkits to Qandil. It should be mentioned that, subsequent to delivery of this material, Mission East cancelled their project for the construction of 267 houses in Bosule (Dahuk) and the material reverted to UNHCR, UNOPS not being involved in the redistribution.

#### Output 3 - Improvement of basic communal services

In the 5 districts under consideration, basic communal services consist of the construction or renovation of primary schools, health centres, staff houses and the construction or extension of water

supply projects. In the original budget, the services provided to Sarsink and Kalar were to be funded by the ITF budget while the services provided to Soran, Qushtapa and Qaladza were to be funded by the UNHCR budget. As a result of the UNHCR budget shortfall and subsequent budget revision, all services are now funded by the ITF budget.

All service construction projects are completed. These projects are:

location	Project
Sarsink	Saidava water project
	Ashawa water project
	Skryne water project
	Kondkhi water project
	Barbanki water project
	Tajika water project
	Saidava primary school & staff house
	Skryne health center
Qushtapa	Elenjagh School
	Girdazaban Health Center & staff house
	Elenjagh water project
Soran	Soran water project
Qaladza	Qaladza Health Center & staff house
	Qaladza water project
Kalar	Bawanoor school
	Shekh Tawel Health center & staff house

Another project, for the construction of the health centre and staff house at Skryne in Sarsink was cancelled because of late re-tendering which prevented the schedule proposed by the low bidder to be accommodated within the time frame of the project. In addition, project budget would have been insufficient to cover this sub-project.

Following is the current status at final report preparation of the various services.

#### Sarsink

As of the end of this report, UNOPS improved the existing water distribution network in Sarsink and constructed a concrete distribution tank for each village. All 225 houses built under the guidance of UNOPS have a direct connection to this water source. In addition, the LAs did not provide any assistance to improve the water resources system.

The beneficiaries from the villages of Saidava, Barbanke, and Skreen were very impressed with the implementation process as this project alleviated their problem of not receiving direct access to water. In addition, the beneficiaries are satisfied with the quality and amount of water received for human consumption. To date, none of the beneficiaries have been ill as a result of the water.

In Tajika, the quality of the water available is poor, due to the high mineral content especially calcium. As a result, many individuals have developed kidney problems from water consumption. In terms of covering daily requirements, beneficiaries indicated that there is enough water during the winter

season, but insufficient in the summer since the same resources are used to irrigate land. Thus, training and equipping farmers with water saving irrigation technology is vital to improving irrigation practices reliant on groundwater to enhance food security and crop production.

In Ashawa, the accessibility to water is limited; since the water which comes through a duct via a 1.5 inch pipe. Thus, the rate of the water received is insufficient. Nonetheless, the quality of water is adequate.

One primary school was built in Saidava under UNOPS' mandate. The school was recently handed over to the mayor of Sarsink. Thus, the village children will be attending school in this new facility later this year. The beneficiaries interviewed are extremely satisfied with the outcome of the project, since they do not have to send their children to live with their relatives in Dohuk to attend school anymore.

Although a UNOPS health center was mandated in Ashawa, construction was cancelled after the completion of the tendering process and reassessment and evaluation of the project. The medical equipment and furniture intended for the facility was transferred to Sarsink hospital after receiving verbal approval from UNOPS in Erbil.

#### Qushtapa

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 includes a site visit to Elenjagh's UNOPS education project. Results show that the primary school has been completed and functioning well. The students' needs are adequately met. However, at the secondary level, students need to travel 4 km outside of the village. As transportation is limited, most students have to travel by foot. As a result, the beneficiaries interviewed indicated that their daughters will not be continuing their study after the primary level.

A new health center and accompanying staff house funded by UNOPS was recently completed. The health center is in a central location, providing first line of treatment to the surrounding villages. However, the health center is not functioning, since the LAs are waiting for the Ministry of Health to equip the facility and provide medical staff.

UNOPS installed a water distribution network that is functioning properly and meeting the needs of Elenjagh residents. All 28 houses built under the guidance of UNOPS have a direct connection to this distribution network. Before UNOPS involvement, families had to transfer water from the concrete reservoir to their houses. The village's main source of water is from 2 deep wells. However, only one of the wells is functioning, since the pump is broken for the other. As a result, the water supply is insufficient to meet daily requirements for human consumption in the winter, but not in the summer, since the same source of water is used for livestock.

#### Soran

UNOPS installed a water distribution network that is functioning properly and meeting the needs of Soran residents. All 225 houses built under the guidance of UNOPS have a direct connection to this water source. As a result, daily water requirements for human consumption are adequately met. In general, all the beneficiaries were very impressed with the implementation plan to address the lack of water in the area.

### Qaladza

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 concludes that a new health center and accompanying staff house funded by UNOPS in the Hanarok Quarter is near completion. The expected hand over date to the municipality is on May 15, 2006. As the health center was not completed by the end of this report, an evaluation could not be completed to determine the extent to which this project benefited the community. Instead, a meeting with the Director of the Health Department in Qaladza indicated that Hanarok was chosen as the site for the new health center because it will serve as the primary health center for ten other neighboring villages that do not have any existing health care facilities. At present, Qaladza's general hospital is located 2.5 km from the beneficiaries' homes. It is the closest full service health care facility for most residents in the region. Further, the quality of the services currently provided by a nearby health center is mixed. Beneficiaries articulated that they mostly depend on private clinics and pharmacies in Qaladza town for treatment.

A UNOPS water network distribution project for 125 self built homes has been completed. Each property has direct access to the water network. However, the municipal government in Qaladza did not include this new development on the water distribution map. The main reason cited was the current shortage of water in already established districts in Qaladza. The municipal government also confirmed that the water distribution issue will be resolved in the coming months since the tendering process to expand the water project is already underway. At present, residents are obliged to ration and purchase water for human consumption (drinking, cooking, and washing) and have not benefited from UNOPS' water project. Each family consumes on average 2 tanks of water per week, depending on the size of the family. Each tank contains 3000L of water at \$5.00 per tank.

### Kalar

In Kalar, UNOPS was mandated to renovate the Bawanor Primary School. At the time of the evaluation, a review of the school could not be completed; the proper administration was not available to gain proper access to the site since the school was still in its final stages of construction. It has since been completed and handed over to the LAs.

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 notes that UNOPS has upgraded the health center located in the Shekh Tawel sub-district of Kalar, consisting of 20 villages some 80 km from Kalar. It is the only UNOPS health-related intervention in the Kalar district. The facility does not have a physician or a specialist and is not equipped with medical or laboratory equipment. Instead, the facility is equipped with one medical assistant employed by the Ministry of Health, and is accessible 24 hours/day for both regular and emergency care. Residents responded positively that medicine was available upon each visit.

### **Output 4 - Community social awareness promotion, employability enhancement and provision of micro-grants assistance to heads of households;**

#### **Sarsink**

A vocational training course was conducted in the period July-September 2005. Certificates and toolkits were distributed to the graduates. The details of the program are presented in the following table.

<b>Sarsink Vocational Training</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Duration (Day)</b>	<b>No. of Trainees</b>
Tire repair	50	3
Car mechanic	75	10
Welding	75	3
Carpentry	75	9
Sewing	75	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>

The final assessment completed in May 2006 concludes that while trainees found the course useful, many chose not to apply the skills they have learned. Instead, most of the trainees continued to work in the Kurdish armed forces in Peshmerga, where they are on duty for 15 days and are at home for the remainder. The armed forces are considered the main source of income for unskilled workers and currently employ over 80% of head of households from Sarsink. Of the few trainees who were able to apply their skills and generate income, all indicated that they were satisfied with the program and had no difficulties in reaching larger markets from their place of residence. Some of the trainees are working as skilled apprentices with their trainers and able to earn sufficient income. The trainees indicated that they need to continue apprenticing to acquire more advanced skills.

A short term employment project has been completed under MOA budget, consisting of tree plantation with coordination with the Directorate of Agriculture (DOA). The DOA provided trees and UNOPS provided labor cost for 45 laborers chosen among unemployed

An income generation project has also been implemented in July 2005 consisting of the distribution of 500 sheep (250 sheep and 250 lambs), 10 sheep per family to 50 families selected according to the criteria of a female or disabled head of household. Under a small contract with Directorate of Veterinary of Sarsink, the sheep were quarantined for 15 days and vaccinated prior to distribution. During the final site visit, approximately 95% of the beneficiaries who received this type of assistance were able to sell their sheep and lambs

In November 2005, the youth center in Sarsink was supplied with equipment and furniture.

### **Kalar**

A vocational Training Course was conducted in the period July-October 2005. Certificates and toolkits were distributed to the graduates. The details of the program are presented in the following table.

<b>Kalar Vocational Training</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Duration (Day)</b>	<b>No. of Trainees</b>
Concrete casting	75	6
Car electricity	75	6
Car mechanic	100	6

Car painting	100	4
Car modifications	100	4
Tile putting	75	8
Sewing	75	20
Hairdressing	50	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>64</b>

The Local Steering Group is well known to the beneficiaries, since group members have asked beneficiaries to participate in vocational training courses. All the government offices where the vocational training takes place are in the centre of town which is 2 km away from the majority of the beneficiaries' home. Beneficiaries mentioned that they were selected based on meeting a few standard requirements.

The final assessment of this project completed in May 2006 concludes that course participants were very satisfied with the level of training provided given the trainers' experience and the knowledge gained based on the applicability of the course curriculum. It is important to note that a different group of survey respondents was used to determine vocational training effectiveness, since none of the family members from the original list of households interviewed could participate in the training.

Beneficiaries cite that the timing of the course was a major issue, since most beneficiaries were busy constructing their homes. Instead, individuals who participated in the training were IDPs who returned from Faluja and Iran, and Kalar residents.

Course participants cited that the vocational training they received enabled them to apply their skills, and enter the labour market by starting their own business or by working as an apprentice for some of the trainers. Specifically, course participants who received concrete casting and tile fixing training started their own businesses and were able to transfer knowledge by hiring their own apprentices, thus improving their livelihoods. Lastly, course participants indicated that they had access to larger job markets and were not limited by transportation, since they did not live in UNOPS assisted housing. Continued livelihood improvements will come from more advanced skills training.

### **Qushtapa**

A vocational training course was conducted in the period July-October 2005 by ROHANI, a local NGO. Certificates and toolkits were distributed to the graduates. The details of the program are presented in the following table.

<b>Qushtapa Vocational Training</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Duration (Day)</b>	<b>No. of Trainees</b>
Car mechanic	100	20
Sewing	50	20
Hairdressing	50	10
Flower & Leather Making	50	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>

It should be noted that this activity, previously budgeted under UNHCR funding has been

transferred to ITF funding.

The courses were beneficial to the participants, since they were acquiring new skills and learning a profession. As of the end of this report, while agricultural activities are a primary source of income for some families in Girdazaban, some of the course participants have gone into Erbil City to look for work. There is a large demand for unskilled construction labour, given the robust housing market throughout the Governorate and in nearby Turkey and Lebanon.

UNOPS had also coordinated with the mayor's office in Qushtapa to distribute sheep to vulnerable families. Twelve families were selected according to the criteria of a female or disabled head of household. Each family received 10 vaccinated sheep. In addition, UNOPS had coordinated with the mayor's office in Qushtapa to distribute beehives to vulnerable families. Seventeen families were selected to be trained in beehive keeping. Five families received 4 beehives each and 13 families received 3 beehives. Both income generation projects were funded from the UNHCR budget component.

### Soran

A vocational training course was conducted in the period July-October 2005. Certificates and toolkits were distributed to the graduates. The details of the program are presented in the following table.

<b>Soran Vocational Training</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Duration (Day)</b>	<b>No. of Trainees</b>
Concrete casting	75	10
Fixing tiles	75	8
Car modifications	75	6
Car painting	75	6
Domestic electricity installation	50	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>

It should be noted that this activity, previously budgeted under UNHCR funding has been transferred to ITF funding.

The courses were beneficial to the participants, since they were acquiring new skills and learning a profession. Some of the survey respondents who are currently apprenticing indicated that they require additional time and experience before setting up their own business.

A psychosocial training for 60 primary teachers in Soran has been completed and an initial evaluation was done by the Psychosocial Trainers. This course was funded by the UNHCR budget component.

### Qaladza

Toolkits have been provided related to a vocational training exercise that was completed and funded by the UNHCR budget. The provision of toolkits previously budgeted under UNHCR funding has been transferred to ITF funding. The courses were provided by Workers Syndicate. Courses include car electrical system, concrete casting, hairdressing, and sewing. The results gathered by UNHCR for

the reporting period ending December 2005 showed that approximately 43% of the families interviewed found temporary employment. Course participants indicated that they had access to larger job markets in Qaladza Town and were not limited by transportation, since most of the course participants do not live in UNOPS assisted housing.

Also under UNHCR funding, a psychosocial training course for 60 primary school teachers has been completed. All the participants passed an exam with good marks. More than 10 teachers obtained full marks, their names were sent to Department of Education to be used as trainers in future courses.

#### **Output 5 - Support to local authorities with human resource development through institutional capacity building activities and provision of facilities**

MOAs were signed with the Mayors of Kalar and Sarsink under ITF funding and the Mayors of Soran, Qushtapa and Kalladza under UNHCR funding and their offices were furnished and equipped with computers and supplies. The scope of this project implemented by UNOPS focuses on providing District Planning Committee (“DPC”) members, the mayor, and government employees with capacity building exercises and the provision of facilities. The exercises provided included the following:

- Leadership and Management Training
- Administration Development (across different government departments)
- Computer Training
- UNOPS procurement procedures
- Social and Economic Development
- English Language Instruction

The mayors, DPC members and CSG members from Sarsink and Kalar participated in a workshop on administration and leadership held by Jordanian River Foundation in Amman. The course included training on new technique in management, procurement and administration. The course also included a site visit to projects implemented by Jordanian River Foundation. The group met the governor and head of municipalities in Ajloun governorate and ideas were exchanged among the attendants.

The Mayors, DPCs and CSGs actively participated in the preparation and the implementation of sub-projects in their respective areas.

On 05-06 October 2005, a coordination meeting was held in Amman, Jordan with technical advisors and local steering groups from Sarsink, Kalar, Qushtapa, Soran and Qaladza. The objectives of the two day meeting was to report and review activities carried out and, based on identified issues, draft future planning.

All agreements with mayor offices have been completed. Under these agreements, all planned training courses related to capacity building support have been carried out to the Mayor, DPC, CSG and government employees.

During the final evaluation, interviews took place in all 5 districts with Mayors, government and or community representatives. Individual results by districts are presented underneath.

### Qushtapa

The mayor in Qushtapa indicated that UNOPS procurement training was very informative, especially around the tendering and company selection processes. He also praised the professionalism and close coordination he had with UNOPS across several areas:

- Involvement from a humanitarian organization using a participatory and consultative approach is the best method to engage and connect different government offices with community stakeholders to select the proper intervention approach.
- Using the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method was extremely successful in selecting the site of housing and basic services projects.
- Participatory method employed by UNOPS enables beneficiaries, both male and female to engage in municipal decision making.

### Soran

The mayor in Soran indicated that UNOPS' provision of office equipment has enabled him to improve the quality of service his staff is currently providing to the residents. In addition, the establishment of a District Planning Committee ("DPC") and Community Steering Group ("CSG") enabled many individuals to work in a team setting and collaborate in a constructive and transparent manner with a humanitarian organization such as UNOPS for the first time. The feedback was extremely positive in terms of the how UNOPS engaged the DPC and CSG in decision making around community redevelopment.

### Qaladza

In terms of the facilities and supplies that UNOPS contributed to the mayor's office, several stakeholders have already benefited from the new equipment:

- Several public schools were provided with photocopiers. Teachers no longer have to go to the market to print questions for examinations
- Several secondary schools (Kuestan, Kandel, and Peshang Secondary Schools) were provided with water pumps to enable water access at school
- Several health centers were provided microscopes
- Several government employees who took the computer training course benefited greatly, since they were appointed by their supervisors to manage all computer related activities in their department.

### Kalar

An internet system for the Mayor office of Kalar was installed with its equipment. While preparation is under way for installing the system to the College of Education.

Under quick impact projects and as support to the local institutions of Kalar, 4 desktop computers, 2 notebooks and 2 Internet connections were delivered and installed at respectively Kalar Mayor office and the college. In addition, 5 aluminium umbrellas for the traffic police department were manufactured and installed.

The mayor in Kalar emphasized how the economic development component of the Leadership and Management Training Program in Amman taught him how to better manage the income generated from municipal services. Furthermore, the training program enabled his office to apply new management and administration techniques to become more productive.

As of the end of this report, internet connection was not available, since the mayor's office in Kalar was awaiting the municipal budget from the Ministry of the Interior, before initiating connection.

#### Sarsink

In Sarsink, survey results indicated that the LAs were satisfied with the quality of training provided, given the training professional's level of experience and the support materials provided. Further, community programs improving the employment capacity of the youth in Sarsink are already underway. The final assessment completed in May 2006 concludes that the leadership and management training program was extremely beneficial for the representatives from Sarsink which included the mayor, the DPC, and two members from the CSG. Topics covered in the training include the concept and cycle of development, investment over a project's life, the concept of team work, and resource management.

Members from the community steering group indicated that this is the first time they worked collaboratively in a team environment. They were also interested to hear that Kurdistan is considered a viable place for further development from an economic and agricultural perspective. Clearly, providing the required training, technical advice, and support for government personnel to carry out their duties effectively is important in objectively surveying the needs of the community and managing project portfolios.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

UNHCR commissioned Emergency Strategies to make and report an interim evaluation of the Project. The evaluation report was distributed during September 2005. The main key finding of the evaluation was that the project "...was generally unsuccessful at meeting its key objectives. Primarily because of concerns that this project has not targeted the most vulnerable segments of the population". The evaluation recognized that the families identify to benefit from the project met the existing criteria of UNHCR but recommended that UNHCR review these criteria in order to prevent families already well off, although IDPs, from being selected.

Pro-Development Resources & Associates were mandated by UNOPS AIF to provide regular monitoring of project activities and backstopping and also to carry out a final evaluation of project impacts on the beneficiaries and the LAs. Their report was issued during the second week of may 2006. The main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are reported within this report.

#### **Implementation constraints, lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained from assessments, evaluations and studies that have taken place during the reporting period:**

The final evaluation report states that, although several concerns expressed by the beneficiaries need to be addressed, it is important to note that satisfaction surveys suffer from some drawbacks: responses can be influenced by subjective factors. Individuals may respond differently depending on service levels in different locations, level of income or educational attainment, personal expectations, household characteristics, peer group effect, and equality of access to services.

Clearly, focusing on the problems, constraints, and opportunities that relate to the beneficiaries basic needs as a priority, with diversification into other enterprises to increase or stabilize income sources

as appropriate should have been a primary program mandate.

Several areas of weakness of this sub-project have been identified and should be taken into account in the design of any future similar project. These are described in the following paragraphs.

### **Social needs of Communities**

Despite strong interventions, the social needs of the communities were not adequately met, since most of the funding was allocated to housing construction. Whereas the project includes a component on community social awareness promotion, employability enhancement and provision of micro-grants assistance to heads of household, the budget allocation to this component of the program is only 5% of the overall program budget. In total, 379 beneficiaries received vocational and psychosocial training, 75 vulnerable families received production inputs and 400 beneficiaries short term employment. Any future similar project should be designed to increase the relative budget of this component. The provision of basic public services remains a challenge and a major barrier to permanent resettlement.

The provision of housing to IDPs or refugees is certainly important. However, the acquisition of skills and know-how is a priority in order to participate in income generation activities. All capacity building and training programs have been completed under either UNHCR or ITF funding generally without major problems. Two issues have been lack of transport in one case with the result that trainees have not gained full benefits from the training and another case were trainees were called to military service during the course and were replaced by other beneficiaries. All capacity building and training programs have been more than well received by the beneficiaries. However this is just a first step, there is yet a need for follow-up programs, either in additional training and/or micro-credit support to artisans and farmers. This is imperative to positively encourage beneficiaries to remain in their communities rather than migrate to urban centres in search of employment in construction and services for which they may not be qualified, hence join the ranks of the unemployed.

In order for small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs to raise their incomes and benefit from the expected economic growth in the Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk Governorates, establishing networks between the villages and the major commercial centres in the region are necessary to improve productivity and take advantage of new opportunities. Further, measures are required to encourage diversification and help identify other sources of income and business opportunities in rural areas to ensure the sustainability of the area. This will enable residents to generate a steady source of income beyond subsistence levels.

Clearly, return and reintegration initiatives in rural areas should be accompanied by socio-economic programs. Such adjustments need to be accompanied by effective social safety nets and policies to encourage small, family-run farms and businesses to become more competitive. Overall, these programs should be expanded to assist other returning families who do not have land for farming.

Additional investments in education should be a key component of future resettlement initiatives, since poor infrastructure and school proximity has impacted student enrolment. In certain regions, transportation to and from school is a challenge given the road conditions, lack of available public

transportation, and the distance required to travel. Education materials are also in short supply. At present, many schools across Governorates of Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk are deteriorating, without electricity, washroom facilities, running water, a canteen, or a playground. Although students will benefit greatly from the new primary school facilities and access, gender differentials in schooling remain large, particularly in rural areas. Enrollment gaps between girls and boys increase with age, peaking at age 12-13, the normal middle school transition point, since safety and prevailing cultural norms around the appropriate chaperoning of young women is of primary concern. Thus, strategies that can get female students safely to school are crucial.

Despite the central location of the health centers constructed with project funds, several are not functioning, since residents are waiting for the municipal government to equip the facility with medical staff, supplies, and equipment (laboratories, x-ray machines, ECGs, incinerators, diagnostics, etc.) to meet basic medical needs. As a result, most families have yet to benefit from the new health centers. Currently, many families travel to nearby district hospitals to seek medical assistance. However, most rely on private clinics and pharmacies instead, due to better quality service. Overall, the municipal government's lack of support in creating viable health infrastructures for the sustainable return of IDPs and refugee returnees will divert resettlement to urban centers instead. Recommendations made in the UNHCR's previous interim evaluation report suggested that assistance to existing health centers and hospitals should be given priority, since current facilities were inadequately equipped. As of the end of this report, none of the feedback has been taken into consideration by the municipal government to address these public health issues.

Whether refugee or IDP returnees will remain in the location they have moved to depends on the location's proximity to other rural or urban centres and the level of development support provided by the local authorities. In short, given the operational capacities of local governments, establishing secure foundations on which the communities can build sustainable developments are uncertain without outside monitoring and financial support

### **Project Execution**

The UN's capacity to deliver the project was diminished due to the absence of its competent and experienced international officers on the ground. No goodwill and commitment to humanitarian ideals can replace the technical expertise and know how necessary for sound planning and management of resources, efficient implementation, diligent progress monitoring, and cost effective delivery of successful projects.

National staff had to comply with any directives on security and movement issues as dictated by DSS/UNAMI. Moreover, international staff found it almost impossible to visit the project area and personally assess progress and constraints. During the reporting period, the Project Manager and the Program Officer have been able to visit the project once each for a very limited duration and very limited movement. These limitations result in diminished effective support to the programme implementation and minimize potential interactions and monitoring with municipalities, beneficiaries and stakeholders. It is imperative that the modalities in executing such program in the future be reviewed in order to disengage most of the staff from such constraints. A proposed solution for such project submitted to such constraint in the future is the sub-contracting of technical work to the private sector which may operate under far greater freedom of movement, provide selection of competent

staff and implement work as dictated by the contract schedule.

### **Use of Resources**

The use of resources was less efficient than anticipated given that assistance was characterized by prolonged implementation periods resulting in cost over-runs and/or cut-back on outputs and disbursements. The main reasons are cited underneath.

The single most important constraint to achieving the programmed outputs has been on one hand the cutback in the UNHCR budget component compounded by significant price escalation of construction material in the project area. This has caused the following modifications to outputs during implementation:

- Shortage of funds to purchase locally procured material for the construction of houses. While some 3,000 houses were expected to be build, funds were sufficient to build only 1,500 houses.
- Reallocation of half of the internationally procured material to upgrade or renovate existing shelters as opposed to build new shelters. At project closure, the situation is as follows:
  - more than half of the internationally procured material is still in the warehouse, consisting of kits for some 1,470-1,480 houses and most of the timber. Currently, the warehouse is rented until end-September 2006 out of UNHCR supplementary funding. The LAs have authorized the distribution of this material to some 650-700 houses but since they will not, as previously advised, provide the funds for transportation, UNHCR are attempting to find an alternate solution.
  - One of the conclusions of the monitoring and evaluation programme was that all the items that have been sourced from overseas could have been easily manufactured locally in selected workshops and, with the savings obtained from transportation, higher standards and specifications could have been achieved. Moreover proper monitoring of specifications and material quality would have been ensured. It is also evident now that this approach would have added extra flexibility such as reducing material purchase rather than delivery of available material at all cost. In particular, feedback from most beneficiaries across the three governorates during the final project evaluation indicated that the internationally procured materials (windows and doors) were inadequate from a quality perspective and did not meet regional dimensional requirements. Imported doors are 1.90 m high while local doors are 2m high. Similarly, imported windows are 1.30m high while the local equivalent is 1.50m high. Some of the building materials were sold to procure local materials of higher quality. Overall, importation has not achieved any cost effectiveness, given that locally manufactured products could be obtained at a fraction of the cost, due to major savings on transport and security. The quality of the cement, sand, gravel, pipes, and roofing materials, provided locally was adequate.
- Revision of the budget, reallocating to the ITF components some service and income generation sub-projects while cancelling others.
- Extension of the project timeline as budget were revised, supply and services contracts were renegotiated.

- A final budget revision to extend the project duration up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006, and to justify the movement of remaining funds between budget components was submitted. UNOPS considered that the prolongation would permit the closure and final payment of all activities including the project external evaluation by Prodev; and requested the shift of remaining funds to ensure that the expenditures in each line are covered by the budget allocated. The significant extension in the project duration meant that staff costs increased. Approval of the budget revision was granted on 08.10.2007

Additional reasons identified during the final evaluation include:

- Inadequate articulation of roles and functions of collaborating government institutions and agencies
- Ineffective institutional arrangements for implementation which resulted in process-related failures – e.g. poor procurement and disbursement of materials, fulfilment of covenants, etc.
- Inadequate preparation, appraisal, and selection of appropriate project management systems and strategies

### **Self Built Houses**

Although the self-built units are structurally sound, technical resources allocated to the project were insufficient to ensure quality planning, implementation, and monitoring.

The original housing design developed by UNHCR involved the construction of mud roofs which followed existing building practices. However, beneficiaries made subsequent amendments to the housing design and used concrete roofing instead to improve durability, safety, and energy efficiency. The lack of technological innovation applied to building practices have contributed to the procurement of unwanted materials leading to waste.

Overall, from an implementation perspective, beneficiaries who used the standard housing design provided by UNOPS have completed construction of their homes. Beneficiaries who chose not to use the original blueprint are at various stages of construction. The main reason is attributed to the high escalation in price of construction material. Other factors include the beneficiaries' financial capacity, family structure (many live with their extended family), and different building designs incorporating cultural elements that were more elaborate. To mitigate economic hardship, UNOPS had assisted with extra cash some families among the most vulnerable beneficiaries such as widow headed families or families with members with disabilities as assistance for construction of houses. These families were selected by the district planning committees and community steering groups according to the UNHCR vulnerability criteria. Soran is an exception, where the topography of the land dictated additional investments in the foundation. Clearly, the lack of preparation for housing projects will definitely lead to downstream problems in addressing rainstorm water drainage, sanitation, efficient hydraulic design for water supply, etc.

### **Beneficiaries Selection Criteria**

The interim evaluation found that there was lack of uniformity in applying the selection criteria to identify the most vulnerable beneficiaries across the three governorates. As a result, UNHCR

reviewed their selection criteria but the list of beneficiaries previously drafted and accepted by all parties were retained since the project was too much advanced to restart this activity. This however resulted in further delays for the distribution of internationally procured material. For this same reason, many of the recommendations made in UNHCR's interim evaluation report, though soundly based, have not been reflected in actions to improve the remainder of the project. The intention is to have these recommendations reflected in the design, planning, and execution of future projects in the region.

**Key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, impact on results:**

Coordination meetings have been taking place on monthly and on need basis with MOHAC, MORAC, department of Rural Rehabilitation, IDP liaison offices, mayor offices, department of rural water, department of education and department of health to discuss, share view of different aspects of project implementation and provide technical advices.

**Highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on, e.g. gender disaggregation, policy engagement and participation of the public:**

Gender

Based on the list of beneficiaries provided by UNOPS, only 10.6% of heads-of-households are female, while 89.4% are male. As livelihood strategies are a key component of resettlement programs, women were selected for traditionally female low skilled service-oriented vocational training activities such as hairdressing, sewing, and flower making or income generation projects related to agriculture. These professions earn substantially less than traditionally male vocations such as concrete casting and fixing tiles, which are much more likely to keep women close to or inside the home. Given that women work in a much narrower set of occupations than men, it may be difficult for them to transition from the informal and micro-businesses in which they participate in to the more formal and larger markets to grow. In addition, there was little or no early and active involvement by beneficiaries, especially female, in the project identification and promotion stages. Issues related to nursing schools for the infants and children of working mothers, literacy, and capacity training beyond low skilled service professions were not addressed

In conclusion, increasing women's political and community participation by soliciting their input in local planning and decision making is necessary to better articulate the needs of this SME group.

Coordination

The overall coordination with national, regional, and local authorities was adequate. At the municipal level, the LAs were satisfied with the level of coordination and cooperation between UNOPS and the district planning committees and steering groups. The LAs cited the level of transparency and friendliness exhibited by the UNOPS staff in guiding the community towards successful project outcomes. Primary reasons for the LAs overall satisfaction with UNOPS' involvement include:

- Transparency in all activities conducted by UNOPS
- Consultative approach in the decision making process around various proposals and training initiatives

- Participatory approach in engaging and soliciting feedback from stakeholders across government departments and communities
- Team based approach that involve the distribution of responsibilities between UNOPS and the various stakeholders

Because of budget limitations, advance training of the national project staff to adapt to the changing working environment has been limited

## IV. Future Work Plan

**Priority actions planned for the subsequent reporting period to overcome constraints, build on achievements and partnerships, and use the lessons learned during the previous period:**

**Indication of major adjustments in the strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs:**

The successful implementation of development assistance and the achievement and sustainability of its long-term development objectives in the Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk Governorates is predicated upon understanding the economic and social linkages within the community and the contributions required from various stakeholders in the local governments. At the end of the project, the evaluation identified several areas of opportunity for future intervention. These programs include:

### **Program Development**

While it is difficult to separate relief actions from rehabilitation/reconstruction projects in a program whose duration crosses beyond the state of emergency, it is imperative to understand that quick solutions may provide short-term relief, but have no long-term impact.

- Country assistance strategies should increase its focus on holistic approaches to poverty reduction, labor market issues, and a more analytical determination of development priorities
- Future intervention programs need to allocate a specific portion of the budget to address the social welfare concerns and human capital development needs of the community
- Focus on results/performance management principles to achieve effective and cost-efficient delivery of services

### **Education**

This sub-project focused on constructions programs at the primary level and the provision of basic vocational training. Project outcomes were satisfactory and appropriate. In general, infrastructure improvements and the provision of educational supplies / equipment at all education levels are required. In designing future intervention programs, reviewing the policy issues for the whole education sector in collaboration with the local government to determine a suitable assistance strategy will be more effective in prioritising regional needs. Further, curriculum reforms beginning at the primary school level is required to address issues such as improving the quality of instruction through teacher training, curriculum revision, and the provision of textbooks. Economic and entrepreneurship education to improve literacy and future employment prospects of students are also important.

Non-economic constraints are also a contributing factor to gender inequalities in access to education. School proximity is a significant determinant of enrollment and school retention decisions for girls. Sensitivity to school proximity increases with age, since safety and prevailing cultural norms around the appropriate chaperoning of young women become a huge issue. Thus, strategies to improve school accessibility and enrolment for girls include:

- Public provision of school transport
- Transport subsidies for households at a distance from the nearest relevant school (e.g. primary, middle, secondary, or vocational school)
- Provision of trained chaperons for the walk to and from school
- Stipends based on school distance

Each of these strategies should be complementary to existing programs targeted at improving the education system.

### **Health**

The health-related initiatives that were part of this sub-project focused on construction programs. Future health system improvements should focus more on improving the efficiency and delivery of existing care. For instance, investment in transportation services to take patients to more advanced health facilities in the region is required, as most individuals travel by foot.

Developing good quality public and private sector partnerships / services that respond to the health needs of residents, since many already use of private clinics and pharmacies to seek treatment. Often, the public sector lacks the capacity either to deliver health services to the entire population or to ensure that health services delivered by the private sector promote health objectives. The type of partnership that governments can develop with private providers will vary according to patterns of use and their relative strengths and qualities. More importantly, ensuring that the municipal government will properly equip all UNOPS health centers with the proper physicians, equipment, and medication will optimize the productivity and intended use of those facilities.

Local governments have the option to contract out particular services, or seek to improve the quality of services available in the private-for-profit sector. If governments select this policy option, they will have to strengthen their capacity for regulating, contracting out, and monitoring.

As health infrastructures improve, the establishment of equitable health financing systems should be taken into consideration to improve access to healthcare and protect residents from the high cost of ill health.

### **Public Services**

A bottom-up approach is fundamental to the successful settlement and reintegration IDPs to the Erbil, Suleymaniyah, and Dohuk Governorates. Thus, basic infrastructure requirements which enable beneficiaries to carry out activities to build their livelihoods are an integral part of any development program. Basic infrastructure requirements include:

- Road accessibility
- Clean and adequate water supply
- Electricity
- Education
- Public Health Center

Thus, the UNHCR should refocus and prioritise its investments to place a heavier emphasis on basic infrastructure needs to ensure long-term resettlement. Through field visits and observation, IDPs in Iraq have shown that the financial support received from their extended family status make housing not a major priority for most of the beneficiaries.

## **Government**

Good governance is recognized as an integral part of sustainable development. Opportunities include:

- Emphasize government accountability to citizens at the regional and municipal levels. Assist the government in establishing clear lines of commitment to provide institutional and financial support prior to project initiation and contribute to sustainable project outcomes.
- Increase public participation in decision making by soliciting input from citizens and civic groups on issues that reflect their priorities for services and development projects and involve them in monitoring and oversight of those projects
- Importance of establishing / reinforcing women advocacy networks to influence decisions shaping the regulatory, legal and social environment in which they work
- Develop programs that improve government fiscal responsibility and operational capacity to enable them to manage their own resources and finances given budget constraints
- Strengthen understanding and skills of local governments in negotiations, problem solving, responses to crises, managing resource, amongst other topics to build advocacy
- Increase the time allotted for attaining capacity-building goals by focusing less on getting the job done

On the whole, the impact of the field visits has been positive, since they helped to increase public awareness and expectation around the quality of the public services they were receiving. This in turn stimulated discussion amongst citizens to take action and exert pressure on the municipal government to be more accountable and take remedial actions to improve service delivery.

## **Capacity Building and Livelihood Strategies**

Continuing to develop and support the growth potential of emerging business sectors in the Erbil, Suleymaniya, and Dohuk Governorates requires an integrated regional economic strategy aimed at the eradication of poverty through employment creation and increased productivity especially in the rural sector where the majority of the beneficiaries live and derive their livelihood. Thus, institutional and human resource capacity development is critical at levels, including that of the beneficiaries. Capacity building opportunities include:

- Facilitating agricultural transformation to address poverty among smallholder farmers through establishment of a market-based agricultural credit and inputs system to revive certain agricultural sub-sectors
- Enhance the viability and growth potential of micro, small, and medium enterprises by providing greater, more reliable access to sustainable financial services, training and other appropriate technical assistance
  - A standard percentage of program budgets should focus on livelihood strategies
  - Set up of a professional training center through an industry professional association or a private sector partnership to offer business development services
  - Provide grants to microfinance institutions, SMB, women-owned businesses and agricultural enterprises
- Increasing rural participation in the political, economic, social, cultural, and educational fields to reinforce their rights and status in broader Iraqi society

- Vocational training should encourage train-the-trainer initiatives, seminars, and workshops that leverage institutional know-how and increase access to networks and markets
- Promoting the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop technical skills
- Offer peer learning and coaching services through mentorship and shadowing with local men and women as points of contact
- Improve the literacy skills of the adult beneficiary population

**Estimated Budget required (including any major funding shortfalls):**

N/A