

Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP)



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Area Based Recovery Approach (ABRA)

Pilot



The Context

Today's post-ISIL Iraq faces multiple challenges, with over two million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) still unable to return home due to prevailing security threats, extensive damage to public infrastructure, homes and lack of opportunities for employment and income. Almost 3.9 million Iraqis have chosen to return to their towns and cities of origin in an effort to rebuild their lives and they are facing similar challenges. Moreover, seven years on, over 250,000 Syrians remain in protracted displacement in Iraq, primarily in the Kurdistan Region. This complex crisis will continue to impact heavily on the daily lives of Iraqis across the country; and more so, on those from marginalised groups.

Early economic revitalization in crises (conflict and disaster) is complex and multidimensional. This has required UNDP, along with UN partners, to champion integrated approaches to respond to the multi-dimensional risks and underlying causes and consequences of crisis. These are grounded within its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding (HDP) nexus.

The key factors preventing sustainable return are also increasing the likelihood of social tensions and hence there is an urgent need to continue supporting the restoration of basic infrastructure for the provision of essential services and revitalizing local economies. The corollary of such interventions will be greater

confidence in state institutions, as well as, job and income creation. A critical consideration in all such assistance should also be the buy-in from affected communities themselves.

History teaches us that socio-economic interventions without appropriate community consultation are likely to fail and in the case of Iraq possibly fuel further tensions. For this reason, facilitating the engagement of the community in their own recovery process is critical to successful programming during this transition phase from emergency and stabilization interventions to longer-term recovery and development.

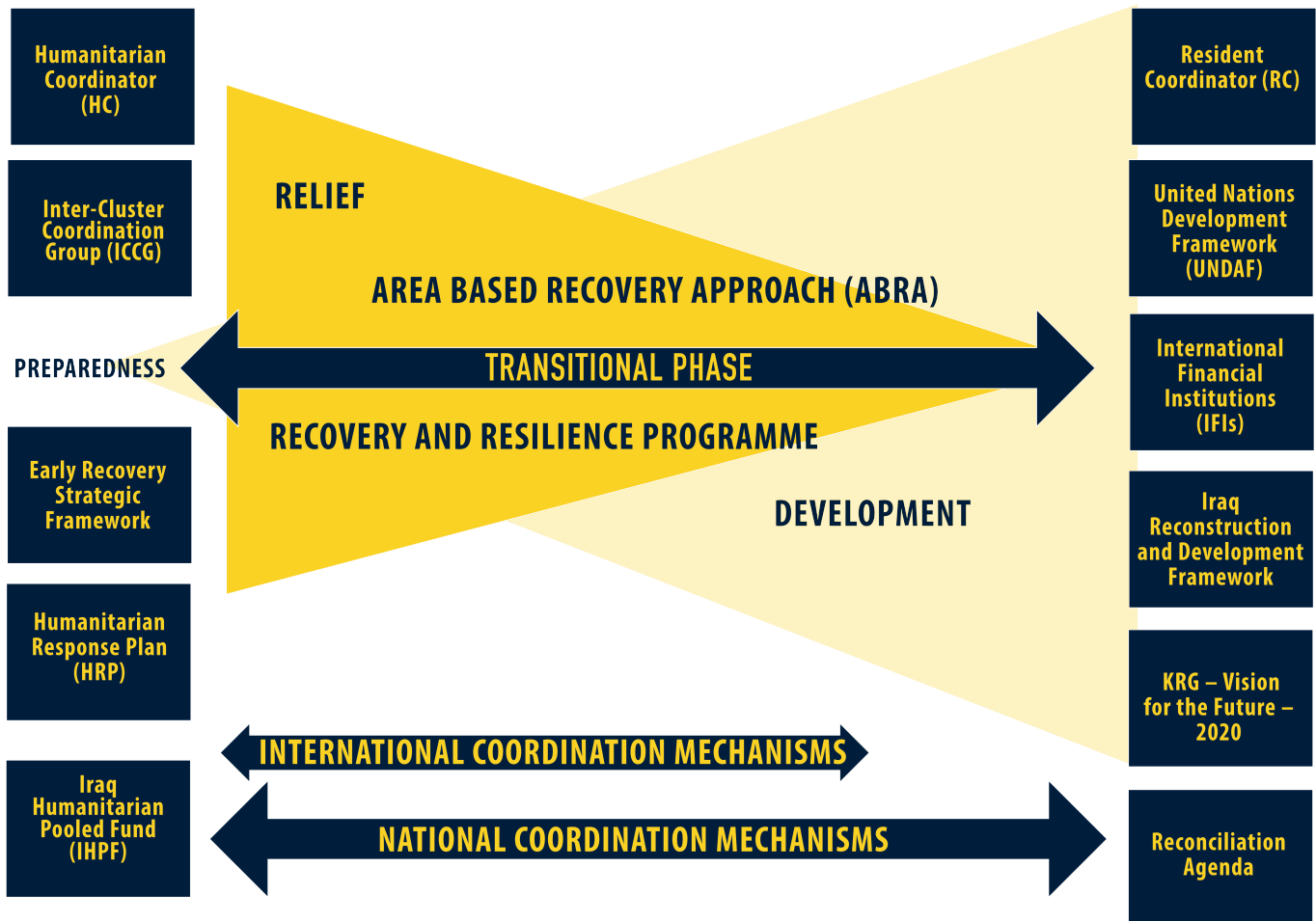
Delivering as One

In an ever more resource constrained environment there is a need to avoid duplication between humanitarian and development partners, harness existing data and information to avoid assessment fatigue in the population and create greater synergy between sectoral responses. With decades of experience in convening agencies around common goals, UNDP will use the Area Based Recovery Approach (ABRA) to advocate for the principle of *Delivering as One*, particularly important for the transitional phase which does not have the established architecture and frameworks typical of the humanitarian response¹. This approach is also synergistic with the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) of the UN Country Team and allows for succession in the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS).

¹<http://www.un.org/en/ga/deliveringasone/>



Bridging the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus



A Flagship Programme

UNDP’s Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) aims to help people restore and rebuild their lives. ICRRP, a flagship programme of UNDP in Iraq, is

piloting an integrated area-based approach, through immediate and long-term projects, while supporting government and civil society. The programme also places emphasis on engaging marginalized youth and vulnerable groups, including women heads of



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households, widows and minority groups that may have suffered specific persecution.

ICRRP complements life-saving and shorter-term stabilization activities, as well as the longer-term development programmes undertaken by other partners through directly addressing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Specifically, the Programme aims to:

1. Improve crisis response coordination and processes, along the disaster risk management cycle;
2. Improve community level access to basic services, including support to institutional delivery and

accountability for those services;

3. Improve livelihoods opportunities, such as job and business creation, particularly for communities with IDPs, refugees, and returnees;
4. Protect 'at risk' groups, specifically women and youth, who are at risk of Gender Based Violence (GBV);
5. Strengthen social cohesion and reconciliation through dialogue, peace education and capacity building of local communities.





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The Lessons Learned

To ensure swift and smooth recovery in post-ISIL Iraq, ICRRP's learning experience of the 2014-2016 period calls for comprehensive, integrated programming that harnesses the strengths of different programme components to increase the local multiplier effect, covers the broad range of needs and addresses the different levels of coordination with communities and government.

Lessons learned also show that there is a need to tailor assistance to socio-economic conditions that are distinctively different among the target areas and beneficiary groups, addressing underlining factors for

conflicts, and laying the foundation for longer-term recovery.

To cater for the highly diverse situations in affected communities, UNDP's ICRRP Iraq has adapted the well-established area based approach, to identify and respond to the specific needs emerging within each individual community. Using a geographic "area" as the entry point for more effective interventions, assistance is provided to a variety of different community-identified groups, including **members of the host community, IDPs, returnees and refugees**. Groups and individuals assisted are identified through community beneficiary identification.

ABRA IN BRIEF

ABRA means reaching specific geographical areas in Iraq, characterised by a complex humanitarian and development problem, through **an integrated, inclusive, participatory and flexible** approach, which is designed around **ground truth** data and promotes **localisation**.

Integrated: area-specific problems are addressed in a holistic manner that fully consider and harness the

advantages of the complex interplay between actors and factors in that area.

Inclusive: activities reach "communities" rather than specific target groups within those communities, even though the identified communities may have been selected because of the high prevalence of a disadvantaged group. However, by reaching entire communities, the ABRA is non-discriminatory. ICRRP



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will also bring separate communities together and build positive relations between them.

Participatory: successfully tackling the area-specific problems requires the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders in the area (representing all socio-economic members of the community) in a process that leads to a locally identified and appropriate resolution of the problem. This approach engages with the communities, local authorities, civil society, development and humanitarian partners for assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring while ensuring government and community ownership of the process.

Flexible: the programme must be highly responsive to changes in the area that may affect the problem so that its interventions remain relevant.

Ground truth: The way that people live, their history and their aspirations reflect the realities on the ground and tell us a lot about community dynamics. This is very important for ensuring that interventions are conflict sensitive and “Do No Harm”.

Localisation: implementing ABRA involves identifying locally available services, materials and goods, which allows for further investment by international organizations in local economic growth. Moreover, it creates more ownership within the community through their economic engagement in implementation, thereby creating a multiplier effect for local economic revitalization.



Community-Led Recovery- Linking to Resilience

Utilizing a community-based approach, area-based recovery and development fosters partnerships between local authorities and citizens, and builds local capacities and linkages among actors at the local level. It encourages civic engagement and promotes wider political participation.

At the same time, area-based development feeds into national processes of policy and institutional reform, as well as international commitments, thereby linking micro-level with macro-level considerations, as shown in the graph above.

The **theory of change** will be adopted to make these links. Research has shown that short-term programming may not translate into long-term effects.

For instance, temporary employment may not last beyond the end of the programme itself. In the absence of long-term employment opportunities, affected communities are unable to generate income and sustain their livelihood, perhaps exacerbating tensions or leading to migration push factors.

In addition, addressing the root causes of conflict and disasters is paramount to strengthen inclusive, effective and accountable institutions and mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of conflict and for advancing social cohesion.

A well-managed transition from emergency responses to sound support systems, livelihoods recovery and social cohesion programming is therefore fundamental to promote resilient communities and sustainable peace.



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Connecting Communities

In the Iraq context, the community centres can play a critical role to further strengthen ABRA, as they can serve as the nucleus for a community-driven and owned recovery process. Centres can provide a physical space from which community engagement and planning processes can be undertaken, as well as, information dissemination, service provision and coordination.

In 2018 several community centres will be established

by humanitarian partners in liberated areas with high returns. Moreover, the *leadership role* of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) in the community centres will provide a catalytic opportunity to build confidence in state institutions while ensuring that the ABRA fits within broader strategic plans and programmes of the government.

While community centres are not established in all governorates of Iraq, the community centres model can be found over the entire country, including the

proposed target areas for this intervention, and in many instances are supported by different ministries, particularly the Ministry of Youth and Sports. UNDP will be exploring options with its government partners and other relevant government agencies on supporting

similar community models in areas hosting large numbers of IDPs and Syrian refugees. Through the ABRA approach, ICRRP aims to create synergies between different interventions, as shown in the graph below.



CROSS CUTTING ISSUES ADDRESSED THROUGH ABRA

- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Disaster risk reduction and management
- Protection of the most vulnerable groups



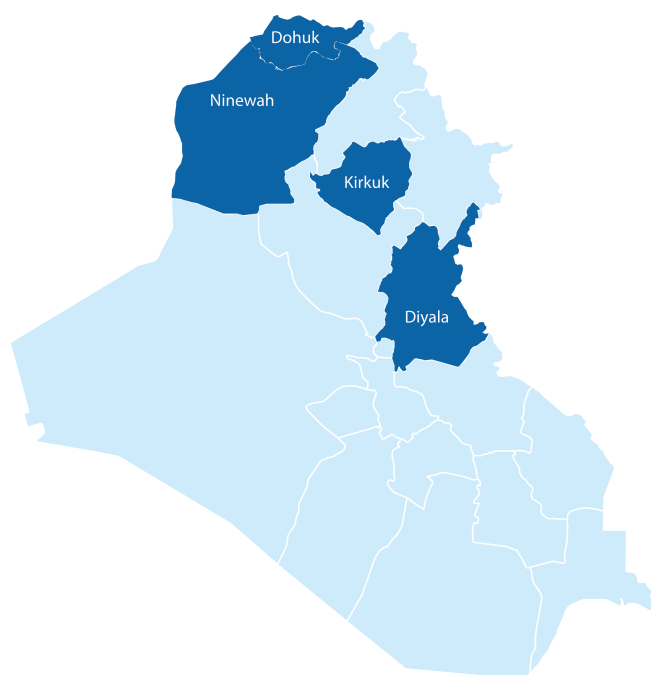
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UNDP implements the ABRA through a rigorous partner selection process. A coordination system will be established with the local community, UN partners, other cluster partners and relevant entities to synergize the impact of the interventions.

In addition, local civil society partners, including formal and/or informal women's and youth groups, are engaged throughout the process to bolster community ownership, contribute to greater sustainability and facilitate social cohesion, and provide capacity building support as part of the exit strategy for the Programme.

The Governorates of Dohuk, Diyala, Ninewah and Kirkuk have been selected by UNDP for the ABRA pilot based on a number of factors, including: continuity with previous UNDP's stabilization interventions, existing community centres (supported directly by UNDP or other agencies) and areas in which UNDP can convene inter-agency coordination in recovery and resilience programming. The areas selected are also known to have degrees of fragility, a high number of IDPs, returnees or Syrian refugees and are accessible in terms of security. In addition, existing multi-sectoral data and information has been collected by partner agency IOM for all areas within the last six months to inform programming.

Proposed ABRA Pilot Geographical Focus ²



²These pilot areas are still in the final stages of selection based on identifying appropriate partners.



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ABRA implementation





