RACING AGAINST THE CLOCK, 
HUMANITARIANS IN IRAQ NEED ADDITIONAL FUNDING

(Baghdad, 19 September 2016): Humanitarian agencies are rushing to prepare for hundreds of thousands of civilians who are expected to flee from Mosul during the upcoming military campaign to oust the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) from Iraq’s second largest city.

In a worst-case scenario, 1.2–1.5 million civilians may be impacted. One million people are expected to flee from Mosul and as many as 700,000 are likely to require shelter and other life-saving assistance.

With the military campaign projected to start in coming weeks, humanitarian agencies are racing against the clock to prepare for what is likely to be the single largest, most complex humanitarian operation in the world in 2016.

Ms. Lise Grande, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, said, “The complexity of this operation cannot be under-estimated. Hundreds of thousands of people who have been forced to live under ISIL for years will be fleeing for their lives, terrified of the fighting. Our top priority is making sure they have a safe place to go and receive the assistance they need. We have to help them.”

Humanitarian partners have been working for months to develop a realistic contingency plan to support civilians impacted in Mosul. In July, partners issued a flash appeal for US$284 million to prepare for Mosul. To date, half has been received.

“We’re very worried that we won’t be able to prepare in time,” said Ms. Grande. “We’re grateful to all of the donors who have stepped forward, but we need a lot more resources. With time running out, funding needs to go to the right agencies—to the ones building the emergency camps and providing the latrines, water and health services for these camps. We can’t wait any longer to get ready. We have to move now.”

Already, 10 million Iraqis require some form of humanitarian assistance. Depending on the scope of the military campaign, as many as 12–13 million Iraqis may be in trouble by the end of the year. Over half of the 226 projects included in the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq have already closed or could not start due to lack of funding.

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