

Medical Evacuation & Health Rehabilitation Program for Iraq

MEHRPI Project Update # 9

1-31 March 2004



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

- ❖ IOM and WiRED Partnership
- ❖ Preparation of the Burn Ward in Basra
- ❖ Coordination with KHCC
- ❖ Marwa's story – the return



IOM/MEHRPI

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10 April 2004

About MEHRPI

MEHRPI employs a two-pronged approach: aiming to provide pro-bono medical assistance that is not available in Iraq to approximately 300 Iraqis requiring specialized treatment in the region and other countries, and seeks to contribute to the in-country reconstruction of the devastated national health infrastructure with the cooperation of interested international health professionals and other partners. IOM continues its close coordination with its MEHRPI partners including the members of the IMAC, CPA, Iraqi MoH, WHO, UNICEF, ICRC, Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Medicine de Monde Greece, Association of Iraqi Doctors in Germany, Brothers Together and many more NGO representatives. Funded by the Government of Kuwait and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO).

Dear MEHRPI Partners,
Please find attached IOM's Medical Evacuation and Health Reconstruction Programme for Iraq (MEHRPI) Situation Report for the period covering from 1 to 31 March 2004. As you will no doubt remember, the tragic incident of Marwa, she had stood on a landmine and lost a leg. MEHRPI was able to facilitate her travel from Iraq to Germany. After few months of successful treatment in Germany, she returned to Baghdad. Thanks again to our partners without whose help, this event wouldn't be possible.

Marwa is one the 248 patients evacuated to 17 countries. To date, 932 cases have been referred to MEHRPI by hospitals throughout Iraq. Some 658 have been identified as eligible for evacuation by the programme's international medical selection team (IMST), in which the Ministry of Health participates. 153 cases have already returned safely to Iraq, following successful treatment

Despite our Medevac actions, MEHRPI continues to enhance the provision of the assistance in the field of rehabilitation of Iraqi health facilities. Together with WiRED International, the installation of one E-medical library took place in Basra along with the installation of video conference system.

Nevertheless the securing of funding will be as crucial as the second component of MEHRPI, the rehabilitation of the Iraqi specialized referral healthcare infrastructures, continues to grow rapidly

Thank you again, MEHRPI TEAM

Health Infrastructure Rehabilitation

The beds and nukes arrived at the Burn Ward in Basra General Hospital. IOM organized the transport from



The donation of beds/nukes arrived in Basra (March 2004)

Kuwait of 33 beds and nukes to the Burn ward in Basra in March 2004. This generous in-kind donation was made possible by Dr. Shenhyan and the Iraqi Doctors Association in Germany.

In close consultation with the medical team from the General hospital in Basra, IOM finalized the procurement of the equipment for the Burn ward. MEHRPI is confident that all necessary work could be completed by the end of May 2004.

MEHRPI facilitates the visit of WiRED in Iraq. Gary Selnow, the Director of WiRED International, launched the installation for the "video visit" in the King Hussain Cancer Centre in Amman, Jordan and two hospitals in Iraq (the Basra Teaching hospital and Al Mansour Paediatric Hospital). Initiated in Kosovo, this project provides audio/visual connection between children sent abroad for life saving medical treatment and their families who remain at home. WiRED provided the equipment (computers and webcams), training and coordination for this process.

WiRED also installed a CD-based, medical e-library in Thalimi hospital in Basra. In future WiRED will provide on-line access to professional medical Websites. WiRED arranges for free access to proprietary sites and to extensive collections of on-line biomedical journals. These include every major medical journal in the English language. For a health care system so long isolated from the outside world, these resources offer the opportunity to rapidly advance the study and the practice of medicine. IOM and WiRED are in discussion for widening the cooperation partnership in Iraq.

MEHRPI in coordination with KHCC in Amman (Jordan)

King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) in Amman is a well-known cancer center, opened in the fall of 2002; the name came in recognition of His late Majesty King Hussein who fought the disease and confronted it with courage. King Abdullah and Queen Rania were briefed on plans to upgrade the medical services at the facility to meet international standards. The center is working also to attract more expertise to advance its capabilities and offer its services to more Jordanian and Arab patients.

Following an agreement between KHCC, the MoH in Iraq and IOM, KHCC accepted 100 cases from IOM's list for treatment. 22 cases to be sent in one month gradually and IOM will assist by transport of oncology cases to KHCC. Several cases will be also sponsored by KHCC to be treated in King Faisal Cancer Center in Riyadh (KSA).

Medical Evacuation

Since its inception in May 2003, 932 cases have been registered with IOM/MEHRPI. 658 out 832 cases reviewed by IMST are eligible for the program. As of 31 March 248 patients have been evacuated for treatment abroad to 17 countries and 153 patients, so far, returned back home,

During the months of March, a total of 20 patients were evacuated, while a total of 17 patients have returned home following successful treatment.

The Return of Marwa's 'My house, my school, my friends... even my little brother!' The list of things Marwa was looking forward to was as long as those she already missed from Germany.

Marwa was barely a teenager when she was evacuated to Germany in November 2003 by IOM's Medical Evacuation and Health Rehabilitation Programme (MEHRPI) for urgent treatment which was unavailable in Iraq. Earlier that year she had stood on a landmine and injured her right leg, also with it her dreams of becoming a professional footballer, was shattered.

In Germany, Marwa was operated on, by Dr Toft at the Alpha Klinik, who removed shrapnel's from the lower part of her right leg and fitted a new prosthesis.

Time, good nursing and Marwa's indomitable spirit healed her injuries, and the girl that emerged from the airport in Jordan was very different from the one that IOM staff first encountered in Baghdad, several months before her journey.

Dr. Toft promised that one day Marwa would kick a football again. I think he underestimates her – she will be the top goal scorer!' Said Marwa's mother, Faliha, a forthright lady who talked volubly about the kindness of her German hosts, the snow and the difficulties of finding Iraqi rice in Munich.

And Marwa? 'What's the first thing you are going to do when you get back home tomorrow?' I asked to her departing back. 'I don't make interviews anymore thank you.' She replied in Arabic-German and was up and away, zipping around the hotel lobby on her new brightly coloured crutches 'Don't mind her,' Said Faliha shaking her head. 'when she learns to walk again, she will be even more trouble - that's what teenagers do best'

MEHRPI Annex and Graphs in March 2004

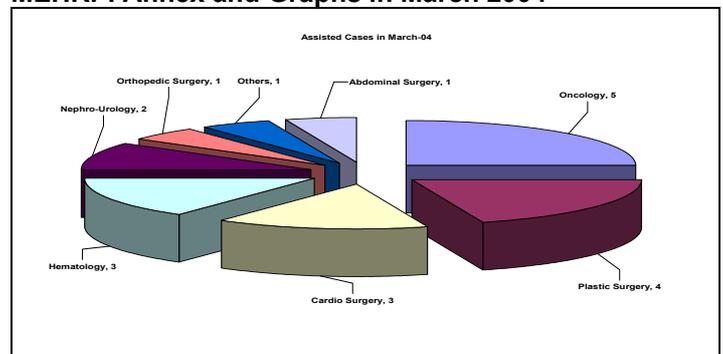


Fig:1 Data Compiled by IOM/MEHRPI

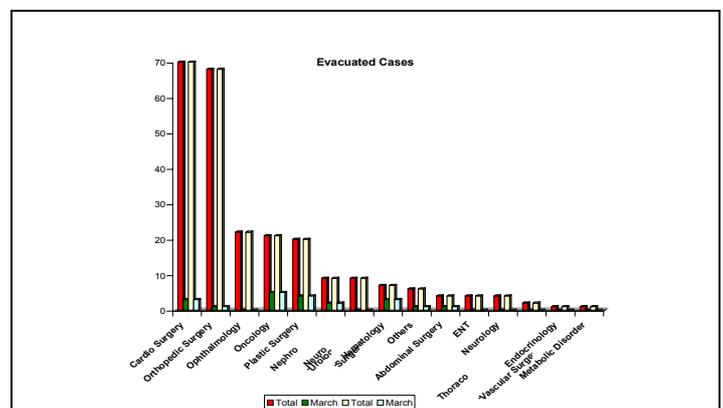


Fig: 2 Data Compiled by IOM/MEHRPI

Anticipated Activities

- ❖ MEHRPI will support the visit of a team of Iraqi Doctors attending "Plast 2004" Conference, in Kuwait.
- ❖ Preparation for evacuation for 10 cases to KHCC, 15 cases to Germany, 20 cases to Syria, 2 cases to Saudi Arabia and 6 cases to USA

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