

IOM IRAQ

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





## DISCLAIMER

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) acknowledges the international community for their generous support, which has been instrumental in assisting the people of Iraq. This support is made possible through the ongoing cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM. The information contained in this report is for general information purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

IOM Iraq endeavours to keep this information as accurate as possible but makes no claim – expressed or implied – on the completeness, accuracy and suitability of the information provided through this report.

Publisher: IOM Iraq

UNAMI Compound, Diwan 2,

International Zone, Baghdad

IRAQ

Email: [iomiraq@iom.int](mailto:iomiraq@iom.int)

Website: [iraq.iom.int](http://iraq.iom.int)

Layout design: Crimson - [itscrimson.com](http://itscrimson.com)

Cover photo: The Mesopotamian marshes, one of Iraq's most captivating ecological wonders, are facing the grave threat of climate change and desertification. © IOM Iraq 2023/Anjam Rasool.

Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 IGO License (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO).\*

For further specifications please see the Copyright and Terms of Use.

This publication should not be used, published or redistributed for purposes primarily intended for or directed towards commercial advantage or monetary compensation, with the exception of educational purposes, e.g. to be included in textbooks.

Permissions: Requests for commercial use or further rights and licensing should be submitted to [publications@iom.int](mailto:publications@iom.int).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/igo/legalcode>

For any questions please contact: [iraq@iom.int](mailto:iraq@iom.int)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. IOM'S VISION	4
B. IOM'S CAPACITY AND STRATEGY	4
C. PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION	5
D. ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENT	6
E. ACCOUNTABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT	7
F. 2023 CONTEXT ANALYSIS	8
<b>2023 ANNUAL REPORT – RESULTS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>RESILIENCE</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Preparedness and Response	10
2. Migration and Health	12
3. Peacebuilding and Stabilization	15
4. Protection	19
5. Returns, Recovery and Transition	20
<b>MOBILITY</b>	<b>21</b>
1. Resettlement and Movement Management (RMM)	21
2. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration	21
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>22</b>

## A. IOM'S VISION

The Government of Iraq (GoI) is supported to develop and implement inclusive strategies towards well-managed migration, as well as recovery, peacebuilding and stabilization initiatives that address root causes of displacement and support durable solutions. Migrants, displaced populations, returnees and host communities in Iraq can exercise their rights in an inclusive and equitable environment.

## B. IOM'S CAPACITY AND STRATEGY



IOM conducts fit-to-travel health assessments for internally displaced persons leaving the Amriyat al Fallujah Camp through facilitated voluntary return movements. Photo ©IOM 2023/Rafal Abdulateef

The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Iraq Mission was established in 2003 and has over 1,600 staff, and sub-offices across all governorates, with main offices in Baghdad, Erbil, Mosul and Basra. IOM's strength lies with its large operational footprint and institutional expertise across a range of sectors. By leveraging experience working with host communities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, returnees from abroad and from within Iraq, as well as those transiting Iraq and international migrant workers' coming to Iraq and strong ties with government counterparts at national, governorate and local levels, IOM supports the GoI across the three strategic pillars of (A) Resilience, (B) Mobility and (C) Governance.

**IOM's support to the Government encompassed initiatives across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus with the cross-cutting theme of migration.**

IOM Iraq focuses on addressing humanitarian needs and reducing vulnerabilities linked to longer-term interventions, supporting durable solutions for displaced populations, tailored to local needs and priorities, and contributing to stability and peacebuilding, addressing drivers of instability and conflict. IOM supports government and civil society actors to create conditions for the revitalization, stabilization and reform of

social, economic and political life, and to manage safe, orderly and regular migration, including in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes interventions related to assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR), movement and resettlement including pre-departure orientations (PDO), community policing, immigration and border governance (IBG) and Humanitarian Border Management (HBM), labour mobility, migrants' rights and supporting Syrian refugees in Iraq. Under humanitarian programming, IOM provides emergency assistance, including shelter and non-food items (S-NFI), camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), health, protection, and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and implements the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) to analyse data on IDPs and returning populations' mobility, vulnerabilities and needs.

In Iraq, IOM follows an integrated approach to address the highest priority needs, including supporting economic opportunities and private sector revitalization via small grants through its flagship Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) programming, strengthening social cohesion between communities and enhancing the resilience of people affected by conflict and displacement while creating job opportunities for IDPs and host communities.

IOM is committed to providing lifesaving, humanitarian aid, as well as recovery and stabilization assistance, while working with national and local stakeholders to reduce the impact of the political, social, security and economic challenges. IOM's interventions contribute to a sustainable and stable environment that paves the way for recovery, durable solutions and long-term peace.

IOM Iraq has a dedicated team to work on protection mainstreaming. The team works to integrate protection principles across all programmes, operations and staff conduct of both IOM and its partners by prioritizing safety and security and avoiding causing harm, ensuring meaningful access to IOM services, promoting accountability to affected populations (AAP) and fostering participation and empowerment. Protection mainstreaming initiatives are carried out through capacity development, technical assistance and community outreach. IOM also holds a central role in safeguarding the affected population by co-chairing the interagency Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Network.

## C. PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

IOM works in close partnerships with United Nations (UN) agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) as a member of the UN Humanitarian Country Team (UNHCT) and the UN Country Team (UNCT). IOM is a member of the Cash Working Group (CWG). Further, IOM currently co-chairs the MHPSS Technical Working Group (TWG) at the national level and the governorate level in Anbar, Salah Al-Din, and Dohuk, together with the Directorates of Health (DoHs), and has been supporting the Gol in the development of the first-ever Iraqi National Suicide Prevention Strategy, which was endorsed by the government in September 2023. IOM is the co-chair for the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Working Group of UN Network for Migration and a member of the Human Rights and Protection Platform Core Group that succeeds National Protection Cluster that was deactivated in 2023. IOM also serves as co-chair of the interagency PSEA Network and an active member of the Monitoring, Analysis, and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) Working Group and Gender Task Force.

IOM, along with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is co-chairing the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF) and, in collaboration with UNDP and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG), chairs the Returns Working Group (RWG) working on national coordination and supports the Gol in formalizing and operationalizing the government National Plan related to DS/returns. Under the DS umbrella, IOM co-leads three of the eight Area-Based Coordination (ABC) groups and is a member of the other four ABCs, working to facilitate liaison among the national government, local authorities, tribal leaders, and other partners in supporting and advocating for necessary changes in durable solutions policies and practice. As one of the pilot countries under the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, the Iraq ABCs have transitioned to government-led Joint Coordination Forums. Among the sub-groups formed as part of the DSTWG, IOM also co-chairs the Monitoring and Assessments sub-group and the Facilitated Voluntary Returns sub-group. Furthermore, IOM's coordination role in multiple dimensions of the DS architecture put in place in Iraq (such as, for example, DSTF, RWG, and DSTWG) puts it in an advantageous position to ensure the application of relevant frameworks, such as the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN), across initiatives and activities around durable solutions to displacement in the country. These actions are in line with the structural reforms articulated by the Office of the Special Advisor, including strong government leadership, new generation of solutions strategies, action roadmaps, and financing frameworks. Throughout 2024, IOM will use its various resources in country to support the establishment of these structures, while also shifting towards a development-oriented approach to solutions in close partnership with other UN Agencies, financial institutions, the Resident Coordinator function, and the Gol.

IOM, along with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), co-chairs the TWG to support the return of Iraqi nationals from northeast Syria to facilitate collaboration and coordination across and between the Gol and UN entities at the technical level on all aspects related to the return of Iraqi nationals from northeast Syria (NES) and on related efforts to the returning Iraqis from NES. The TWG is also co-chaired by the Iraqi Office of the National Security Advisory, making it a cross governmental-UN coordination structure. It meets bi-monthly in either Baghdad or Erbil. The TWG is comprised of four taskforces: legal protection for children, security and accountability for adults, rehabilitation and transitional services, and reintegration. IOM also co-chairs the Rehabilitation and Transitional Services Taskforce in this structure, and is a contributing member of the other three taskforces. In 2023, IOM as co-chair was penholder for the One UN Plan, a strategy and resource mobilization document that outlines policies, programming priorities and funding gaps in UN programming linked to supporting the Government of Iraq in the return process from NES.

IOM is also co-chair of the Technical Cooperation Committee on community-based reconciliation and reintegration of children, young people and adults formerly associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq, and the secretariat of the UN Working Group on National Dialogue and Coexistence. IOM Iraq's DTM remains the main source of data related to displacement and returns and works alongside government partners. IOM implements humanitarian activities in coordination with Iraqi government authorities, including the Gol Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) and the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). IOM works in close coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MoMD) of the Gol and the KRG Ministry of Planning (MoP) and the Ministry of Health. IOM programmes are in line with Gol frameworks and priorities, including its national development plan, Vision 2030. IOM collaborates with civil society and communities, especially in efforts to improve national coordination and dialogue mechanisms. In line with its commitment to the Grand Bargain 2.0 Localization Agenda, IOM Iraq will continue working closely with local NGOs and national actors (LNAs) and actively advocate for programmes that provide more support for the leadership, delivery and capacity of local responders and participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs.

As the co-chair of the UN Network on Migration (UNNM), IOM ensures that there is an effective, timely and coordinated approach with other UN agencies within the country office on the main objective of the network of the implementation of the [Global Compact for Migration \(GCM\)](#). In carrying out its mandate, the Network will prioritize the rights and wellbeing of migrants and their communities of destination, origin, and transit. It will place emphasis on those issues where a common UN system approach would add value and from which results and impact can be readily gauged in Iraq.

## D. ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENT

IOM Iraq uses a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, navigating the complex governance environment through partnerships and collaboration at the institutional and community levels, and co-designing strategies tailored to local needs and priorities with the Government, community leaders and authorities. Initiatives are underpinned by strong capacity development and strategic guidance on migration and mobility. To address migration dynamics, IOM provides the Government with expertise to enhance existing migration governance capacities at the technical and strategic levels, and to support Iraq in fulfilling its role as a “Champion Country” of the GCM.

IOM Iraq continues to work closely with the GoI, and in particular with the Inter-Ministerial TWG on Migration (which serves as an inter-ministerial platform to facilitate coordination, communication and decision-making among relevant ministries working on migration issues, for implementing the GCM and working towards comprehensive migration policies in Iraq) and relevant Ministries to strengthen their capacities on migration management and governance, and to support the implementation of the National Migration Management Strategy (NMMS). IOM has supported the GoI with capacity-building on migration governance policy and legal frameworks, capacity-building on migration data, the establishment of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for the Reintegration of Returnees to refer returnees to service providers to receive reintegration services based on their needs, and consultations and capacity-building on return, readmission and reintegration (RRR). IOM has also supported the GoI in its efforts to modernize the Iraqi Migration Law, this initiative aims to ensure the legal framework aligns with the evolving needs of the country regarding migration and return and mandate of the MoMD, the modernized law will protect migrants’ rights, better manage migration flows, and contribute to Iraq’s development.

IOM Iraq supports the GoI in strengthening its border management capacities – both at the central level and in border areas – by providing integrated border management (IBM) assistance through capacity-building, strengthening infrastructure, providing border security and operational and technical equipment, and enhancing coordination between agencies involved in border security and migration management.

Under its Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) programme, IOM has coordinated with the Government’s Office of National Security Advisory (ONSA) to provide technical assistance to support the National Strategy for Combatting Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism (the National PVE Strategy), including through building a monitoring and evaluation framework. IOM has established a framework for collaboration with ONSA to implement the National PVE Strategy. Areas of cooperation recognized under the agreement include research and analysis; development of area-based Plans of Action (PoAs) for the implementation of the Strategy in priority locations; capacity-building of the PVE Committee and its sub-committees; and

support to the exchange of expertise with governments in the region and beyond.

Support to the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL) has been at the forefront of IOM Iraq’s efforts to strengthen transitional justice redress to survivors of ISIL’s atrocities against Iraq’s Yazidi, Shabak, Christian and Turkmen communities. IOM Iraq has provided critical support to the YSL implementing body Directorate for Survivors Affairs (Directorate) in preparing the application procedure for survivors through which survivors’ status is verified by an independent Government body. Among other things, IOM has provided technical assistance in developing an online portal for submission of applications, and rules of procedure for application review. Further, IOM has organized five induction trainings for the Committee members and Directorate staff on YSL and application procedure. Separately, IOM Iraq has also provided technical assistance to the Directorate in preparing an advocacy roadmap for establishing an accountability mechanism for genocide and crimes against humanity in Iraq. IOM Iraq and the Directorate have signed the Agreement of Cooperation, thus formalizing IOM Iraq’s position as the key technical partner of this institution. IOM Iraq also provides capacity strengthening and capacity sharing with Government counterparts and other key stakeholders in the delivery of legal assistance.

Under its community stabilization programming, IOM continues to strengthen government capacities to perform core functions and brings relevant government entities together with communities in a way that increases participatory decision-making, strengthens mutual trust, and builds accountability.

IOM Iraq engages with the GoI through capacity-building on protection themes to strengthen understanding and coordination with relevant governmental counterparts. This includes identifying and strengthening referral pathways, accountability mechanism, violence against women and girls and trafficking in persons; IOM also conducts protection monitoring and research to support advocacy and evidence-based programming with governmental and non-governmental actors on protection priorities and the needs of affected populations according to established coordination forums and mechanisms. Further, IOM has been supporting the GoI in the development of the first-ever Iraqi National Suicide Prevention Strategy, which was endorsed by the government in September 2023.

As part of its efforts to ensure sustainable improvement of the health system and service delivery, and under the umbrella of durable solutions, IOM has extensively worked to build the capacities of the Iraqi Ministry of Health (MoH) by providing a variety of technical trainings and trainings of trainers (ToTs) to various Departments of health staff at all levels on a variety of topics including outbreak preparedness, person-centred care and enhancing interdisciplinary health practices.



## E. ACCOUNTABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT

IOM Iraq acts to ensure communities' right to access information and encourages participation in decision-making, design of the interventions, and activity implementation. In line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) commitments and guidance on consultation and information provision to the affected populations, IOM provides accurate, timely, relevant and accessible information to the affected people on services through two-way communication channels using community platforms including the IOM call centre, community governance structures, and meetings. Hence, accountability to affected populations (AAP) is a key principle integrated into IOM Iraq interventions.

The people IOM seeks to help are not only receivers; they take part in different stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation. This results in a community-driven intervention, responds to community needs and priorities, builds ownership

and maximizes IOM accountability. Complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFM) (such as hotlines, complaints boxes, help desks, etc.) are integrated with the activities and promoted among community members. IOM makes sure that the information is communicated from the beneficiaries to the implementing teams, that the process is traced, and that feedback is given to the beneficiaries. CFM are in place for all interventions and all groups, including those with disabilities, and information is provided to the beneficiaries and communities. Through consistent internal follow-up, feedback is analyzed and shared with the programme team monthly for planning, decision-making, and early reflection/indication on how it supports programme implementation. Similarly, a response is provided to the affected population on related queries or complaints. Moreover, lessons learned and best practices are documented and disseminated to enhance ongoing or future implementation.



Through the Enterprise Development Fund, IOM supports small and medium businesses in the tourism sector in the Chibayish Marshes of Iraq's south. Photo ©IOM 2023/Rafal Abdulateef

## F. 2023 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Despite the end of the conflict with ISIL, the humanitarian situation in Iraq continues to be characterized by general instability, protracted internal displacement, the lack of public services, as well as inadequate shelter and housing. Humanitarian and protection needs remain significant across the country, despite the discontinuation of the humanitarian cluster system and the transition away from a post-conflict context towards durable solutions, stabilization, and sustainable development.

According to IOM's [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#), as of December 2023, more than 1.12 million people remain displaced mainly across Dohuk, Ninewa, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Diyala, and Anbar, with 166,330 people living in camps and 100,278 people in critical shelter conditions. Multiple humanitarian challenges persist as a result of years of violent conflict, massive displacement of populations, and structural challenges such as government and economic dysfunction, as well as unresolved tensions and grievances.

The post-conflict period has seen the gradual return of more than 4.8 million people to their areas of origin according to the [DTM data as of August 2023](#). IOM DTM's [Return Index](#) indicates that 600,480 individuals among the total returnees live in locations presenting high-severity conditions, questioning the sustainability of returns. Compounded factors such as limited access to services due to barriers, including stigmatization and social norms, harassment, traumas arising from the conflict, and limited livelihood opportunities put women, girls, persons with disabilities (PwD) and other marginalized groups at a heightened protection risk and facing negative coping mechanisms. The main protection risks they face include exploitation and abuse, violence against women and girls (VAWG), TiP, economic insecurity, and inadequate access to health, education, and other basic services. They are also at risk of displacement and face restrictions on movement due to a lack of civil documentation.

Households who have returned are often facing, on top of existing vulnerabilities, a lack of access to basic services, including health, water and sanitation, psychosocial and protection services, as well as livelihood opportunities; challenges related to safety and social cohesion; and lack of safe and dignified housing. In some instances, households have returned to areas highly affected by intra-group violence or to areas under the control of multiple security actors. Returning internally displaced persons (IDPs) with perceived affiliation to extremist groups such as ISIL might be exposed to harassment or retaliatory attacks, which might, in turn, reignite community violence.



IOM supports farmers in southern Iraq with grants to continue farming their lands, explore smart farming solutions to preserve them from degradation and adapt to climate change. © IOM Iraq 2023/Raber Aziz

Moreover, IDPs who want to return also often face issues related to access to housing; housing, land and property rights; and general access to documentation and public services. Secondary displacement or relocation and integration of displaced people to non-camp areas stretches the absorption capacity of the often already vulnerable host communities and jeopardizes social cohesion. Economic conditions, in general, remain challenging in Iraq, with a lack of competitiveness in various sectors of the economy, the impact of the conflict and now protracted displacement.

Iraq has been named as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change worldwide, affected by soaring temperatures, insufficient and diminishing rainfall, intensified droughts and water scarcity, frequent sand and dust storms, and flooding. Compounding this, rapid population growth, urbanization, water policies in neighboring countries and inefficient water use by the agricultural and industrial sectors are propelling demand for more water. Without preparation and planning, the scale of environmental degradation is likely to be devastating and may force Iraqis to relocate in order to survive. Climate migration is already a reality in Iraq<sup>1</sup>. As of [September 2023](#), IOM recorded more than 130,788 individuals as displaced due to water scarcity in 12 governorates experiencing displacement, high salinity, and poor water quality across Iraq. The deteriorating water situation in Iraq has led to significant declines in agricultural productivity, livestock raising, and fishing activities, affecting the livelihoods and health of communities residing there. As environmental changes intensify, displacement is likely to increase exponentially. Most cities are not well prepared to absorb the recent (and increasing) influx of climate migrants, according to IOM data from September 2023.

1. According to IOM report "Migration, Environment, and Climate Change in Iraq".



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## – RESULTS



A Marshman collecting reeds, which serve as a main source of fodder for livestock like buffaloes and cows in the Al Chibayish marshes of Iraq's southern Dhi Qar province. IOM Iraq 2022/Anjam RASOOL.

# RESILIENCE

Throughout 2023, IOM, in coordination with the GoI, the UN, NGOs and Iraqi civil society partners collaborated to prevent and respond to short- and long-term drivers and impact of displacement and forced migration, including for people in protracted displacement or seeking durable solutions.

## 1. PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

### a. Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)

Through CCCM support, IOM continued to enhance the living conditions of IDPs in camps and informal sites and settlements through coordinating services and assistance, upgrading site conditions and strengthening participation and governance

CCCM interventions include care and maintenance activities such as repair and upgrade of site infrastructures, electrical upgrade, and maintenance of pipes and taps for water supply. IOM CCCM activities reached 5,168 households (25,521 individuals (13,271 women and 12,250 men) in one formal displacement site (Jeddah 5), one rehabilitation centre (Jeddah 1 in Ninewa) and 28 informal displacement sites in Kirkuk, Baghdad, Anbar, and Ninewa governorates.

IOM worked closely with partners including MoMD camp administration to advocate and maintain the humanitarian nature of the camps for planned and principled consolidation and closure. As part of CCCM activities, IOM also conducted critical care and maintenance activities, including care, repair, maintenance, and decommissioning of infrastructure used for the provision of services to camp and site residents, including shelter, education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, MHPSS and protection facilities, among others. During implementation, IOM worked closely with beneficiaries to ensure their full participation in activities, camp care and maintenance efforts, and through their participation and inclusion in community mobilization activities, awareness raising and communication with communities' activities. IDPs also participated in the implementation of activities, such as basic maintenance and upgrades through Short-Term Employment for Public Works (EPW) programming, to inject cash into the community, build basic skills and promote ownership. Whenever appropriate and feasible IOM ensured that vulnerable groups are adequately included and consulted throughout these processes.

At the GoI's request, IOM continued providing CCCM site management support to the MoMD who serves as the camp manager in Jeddah 1, supporting the Iraqi families returning from Al Hol camp in northeast Syria. IOM will continue providing CCCM's support inside the camp through core site management support services, including infrastructure, care and

maintenance, support to coordination, high-level advocacy, and mobilization activities. Other targeted or seasonal measures have also been conducted, depending on context and needs, such as drainage network, road levelling, sandbagging of tents and other interventions meant to mitigate the risks related to flooding or weather hazards, and maintaining access to humanitarian actors for service delivery. IOM also maintains close coordination with the Government and humanitarian actors for timely and efficient response, particularly as new arrivals are expected throughout 2024 and beyond. To support the provision of humanitarian assistance in Jeddah 1, IOM continued to gather additional information on the returnee's profiles, needs, and intentions, to support transition and durable solutions actors.

IOM also provided mobile camp management services to informal sites, focusing on larger sites in hard-to-reach and underserved locations with a large presence of IDPs in protracted or secondary displacement following camp closure processes or other sudden events leading to further displacement, and who are prevented or not able to return or integrate locally.

### b. Critical Shelter

IOM's critical shelter response targeted IDPs in protracted or secondary displacement in out-of-camp locations, in Baghdad, Anbar, Salah Al-Din, Ninewa, and Kirkuk's informal sites.

IOM continued to act as Shelter Cluster Subnational Coordinator for Centre/South, and supported information management, supporting the Cluster partners to address shelter and NFI needs in country.

A total of 2,309 households equating to 12,844 individuals (6,522 women, 6,322 men) were reached with critical shelter upgrade support. The shelter response was conducted through in-kind assistance, through contractor-led rehabilitation works, aiming at significantly improving safety, security and privacy for better living conditions for the families.

### c. Non-Food Items

During 2023, IOM provided NFI assistance (in-kind and vouchers) to households, targeting the most vulnerable families that are secondary displaced or protracted displacement in informal sites, to help them cover their most basic needs.



IOM carried out in-kind NFI interventions in Anbar & Ninewa (Jeddah 1 camp) reaching 14,544 households (around 87,264 individuals). The basic kits included an electrical rechargeable light, cooking stove, mattresses, plastic sheet, plastic mat, bed sheet, kitchen set and solar light. In coordination, with the site management IOM purchased and dispatched it from its warehouse in Erbil to Anbar. The basic in-kind kits included items such as cooking stoves, lights, kitchen sets, Blankets mattresses, bed sheets jerrycans and heaters. The rest of the basic kits were received in vouchers in Anbar, Kirkuk and Ninewa targeting informal sites with the presence of CCCM or Shelter rehabilitation programs.

IOM provided NFI vouchers to 2,073 households (10,906 individuals) in Ninewa, Kirkuk, Salah Al-din, and Anbar.

#### d. Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)

During 2023, IOM provided cash assistance to 689 households (6,932 individuals) in Ninewa, Kirkuk, Salah Al-Din, Anbar, Baghdad, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah to support families to meet their basic needs.

MPCA assistance targeted IDP households who are living in secondary displacement, and who were affected by the camp closure and consolidation process but have not had access to any assistance and continue to live in substandard living conditions unable to meet basic needs, MPCA assistance was also provided to protracted displaced people in Informal sites. IOM also provided emergency cash to 214 households (1,022 individuals) displaced due to the closure of Jeddah 5 camp in Ninewa, Salah Al-Din.



IOM Iraq upgraded shelters for displaced families in Anbar, providing safer living conditions and addressing urgent needs in conflict-affected areas.  
© IOM Iraq 2023/Raber Aziz

## 2. MIGRATION AND HEALTH

### a. Provision of Essential Primary Health Care Services

In 2023, IOM Iraq continued to work with the MoH to strengthen the national health system and ensure the provision of health services to vulnerable populations including IDPs, returnees, refugees, and host communities. During 2023, IOM supported a general hospital and 13 Primary Health Care Centres (PHCCs) including four camp clinics and nine out-of-camp PHCCs across six governorates: Anbar, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Dohuk, Erbil and Ninewa. 446,093 primary health-care consultations were provided in 2023 and more than 500 emergency and non-emergency referrals were supported.

### b. Non-communicable Diseases Screening Campaign

In 2023, IOM Iraq organized for the first time a non-communicable diseases (NCD) screening campaign, mainly for cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and Diabetes Mellitus in seven out-of-camps supported communities. A total of 1,044 beneficiaries (481 females and 563 males) were screened during the campaign, 457 (44%) were identified as having high CVD or Diabetes risk and were referred to the supported primary health care facilities for further investigation by the doctor, of which 281 (61%) have visited the PHC and received a consultation based on this referral. Multiple patients were diagnosed through the screening campaign, which allowed them to manage their conditions at an early stage and thus prevent complications.

### c. Community Based Surveillance (CBS)

After the successful pilot of the CBS activities on COVID-19, IOM Iraq launched in March 2023 the expanded CBS activities in five IDP camps and one informal settlement covering a variety of infectious and communicable diseases that are most reported in Iraq including: Cholera, Upper respiratory tract infection/ COVID-19, Leishmaniasis, Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic fever, rabies, and scabies. The activities included multiple components: active case finding, event-based surveillance, and misinformation tracking. Moreover, a referral mechanism was set in place that entails the referral of all suspected cases detected through the CBS activities to camp clinics where a full assessment and diagnosis is conducted by a physician, to be then confirmed by laboratory testing when needed.

A total of 4,530 households, of which 28 per cent were female-headed households, have been visited at least once during the CBS activities and a total of 5,371 Active case finding surveys have been conducted during the activities, 241 households reported residents with symptoms, and 379 symptomatic cases were assessed for different diseases, of which 252 were referred to the PHC for further investigation. 214 referred

cases visited the camp clinics, and 160 confirmed cases were detected including 145 cases of scabies, 14 cases of COVID-19 and two cholera cases.

Moreover, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with beneficiaries and community leaders, as well as with IOM senior community assistants who led the activities in their respective governorates. Findings from FGDs and KIIs were confirmatory to the acceptability survey and both beneficiaries and community leaders viewed the CBS program as very helpful and effective in protecting the camp communities against disease outbreaks.

### d. Health System Strengthening

As a trusted partner of the MoH, IOM contributed to major milestones in the country's strategy to develop a strengthened health system. IOM provided technical expertise and organized capacity building workshops, bringing together different local stakeholders including governmental sectors and civil society organizations, to develop national and district level plans and guidelines, including the first Annual Plan for Climate Change and Health and Migration which informed Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Plan for Thi-Qar governorate, and National Health Education and Promotion Guidelines.

#### • Technical Support to Departments of Health

As part of its efforts to ensure sustainable improvement of the health system and service delivery, and under the umbrella of durable solutions, IOM has extensively worked to build the capacities of the MoH through providing a variety of technical trainings and ToTs to over 300 healthcare workers and staff on a variety of topics including outbreak preparedness, Person Centre Care and Enhancing Interdisciplinary Health Practices.

### e. Health Promotion and Assistance for Migrants

#### • Facilitated Returns and Access to Basic Health Services

In 2023, IOM Iraq supported the facilitated returns of 367 families from AmeriyatAl-Fallujah (AAF) and Jeddah 5 camps to their areas of origin after the camps' permanent closure. 1,448 individuals received a health assessment and screening prior to their departure, sick patients were provided with needed medications, especially chronic medications, to be used until they find a healthcare provider in their areas of return.

#### • Health Promotion and Community Engagement

IOM Iraq has carried out continuous health promotion and community engagement activities throughout 2023. More than 60 community health promoters were recruited from the supported communities and were trained on different health topics including rational use of drug, maternal, newborn and child health, WASH in addition to the prevention of Cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea, Leishmaniasis, Crimean- Congo



fever and Tuberculosis. During 2023, more than 132,000 beneficiaries were reached through one-to-one, door-to-door and group community health promotion sessions across all supported communities.

## f. Health Assessments and Research

### • Household Health Assessment Phone Surveys

In 2023, IOM Iraq continued the Household Health Assessments phone surveys in three southern governorates (Thi-Qar, Missan and Diyala) reaching 1,180 households. The health assessments aimed to understand the major health needs for the residents of these governorates and assess their health profile to feed into future planning and projects. The findings contribute to the overall evidence on the health needs of the Southern governorates in Iraq, especially with regards to the effect of climate change on health and migration.

### • Usage of COVID-19 Rapid Diagnostic Antigen Tests

IOM completed the implementation of a research project aiming to identify good practices and guidance on optimal use of antigen rapid diagnostic tests in displacement settings. IOM piloted the use of Ag RDTs for COVID-19 in Iraq, in collaboration with FIND, the Global Alliance for Diagnostics, to facilitate access to testing and understand barriers and opportunities for testing in a displacement context.

## g. Middle East Response for Tuberculosis (TB)

### • Support to National Tuberculosis Program (NTP)

IOM Iraq continued its support to NTP in Iraq in 2023, through supporting mobile teams in eight governorates (Ninewa, Salah Al-Din, Anbar, Dohuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Baghdad) to conduct TB screening and follow-up for TB cases, in addition to supporting service provision at the NTP centres. Support to the NTP included provision of essential equipment and supplies and capacity building for NTP staff at different levels. During 2023, a total of 6,876 TB patients were detected and 142 Multidrug Resistance (MDR)-TB were detected. In addition, IOM has followed up on the treatment of 98 MDR-TB cases where 3,000 food packages were provided to increase treatment adherence.

To enhance the quality of services, IOM has worked jointly with the NTP and WHO to introduce a new health information system that will improve the surveillance activities and data collection, in addition, IOM worked to expand existing systems such as the pharmaceutical management system to other governments. This all goes under IOM's efforts to decentralize

the NTP services which will help improve the access of TB cases to care.

### • Efforts to Increase Detection Through Private Sector Engagement and Partners Collaboration.

In 2023, IOM and the NTP expanded private sector engagement activities, which aims to improve TB case detection, and ensure equitable access to treatment and thus adherence to it, in addition to improving reporting. During 2023, the number of cases detected and referred by the private sector to the NTP increased to 44 per cent out of total cases detected. Finally, IOM with the NTP and in collaboration with MSF launched a pilot for TB referral and detection in 6 biggest prisons in Baghdad and south governorate. As a result, 1,166 TB cases were detected during 2023.

## h. Migration Health Assessments and Travel Assistance

The two migration health centres run by IOM located in Erbil and Baghdad are conducting health assessments for migrants and refugees in Iraq since 2007. The health assessments are conducted at the request of the receiving countries as part of the visa application process. The main aim is to detect conditions of public health significance such as communicable diseases that will need to be treated before the visa applicant travels to another country. Part of the screening involves investigation for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases such as Tuberculosis, Syphilis, HIV, Hepatitis B and C and in some cases Gonorrhoea as per each destination country's requirements. Screening for non-communicable diseases such as Diabetes, Hypertension, Malignancies and Mental Health are also conducted routinely. The beneficiaries with any significant medical conditions are then linked to specialist physicians for further review and follow up of their medical conditions. Those requiring additional medical support during travel are assigned medical personnel to escort them to their final destination.

Compared to 2022, the health assessments caseload increased by 40 per cent. IOM conducted 11,402 health assessments in 2023. Most of these were immigrants 52 per cent while 48 per cent were refugees.

During 2023, clients referred by IOM to the PHCCs received a total of 3,004 doses of different vaccines.

Additionally due to highly complex medical conditions, 1,473 beneficiaries were referred for specialist care and stabilization prior to departure. A total of 3,566 pre-departure health checks were also conducted during 2023.





Having a space to come together and collectively mourn and remember loved ones is an important step in the collective healing of the Yazidi community. Supported by USAID and Nadia's Initiative, IOM built the Yazidi Genocide Monument which was inaugurated in October 2023 in Solagh, Sinjar. © IOM Iraq 2023/Raber Aziz



### 3. PEACEBUILDING AND STABILIZATION

Programming aimed to address the drivers of conflict and displacement through community-driven and community-led approaches to promote resilience, social cohesion and improved mental and emotional well-being in target areas. Interventions were implemented across urban settings, IDP camps, youth and sport centres in host communities and areas of return, and informal settlements.

#### a. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

IOM provided 68,963 MHPSS services (34,210 women, 16,962 men, 9,736 girls and 8,055 boys) in 2023, including awareness and outreach, community and family support, focused MHPSS support, integrated MHPSS in livelihoods and protection activities, specialized mental health support, and capacity development. These activities addressed the psychological, emotional and social needs of individuals experiencing distress. The activities supported internally displaced and host communities to improve psychosocial wellbeing, promote community resilience and facilitate (re)integration and return.

IOM continued supporting governmental institutions, communities, CSOs, health facilities and partner organizations through 128 MHPSS capacity building opportunities to provide holistic support. This contributed to the continuum of care, long-term recovery and sustainable development of communities. IOM supported the government in finalizing and launching the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP, 2023 – 2030). To strengthen localization, IOM supported 13 local CSOs with training, small grants and on-site guidance and coaching. With the increased return of IDPs to places of origin, IOM continued to provide systematic and adapted MHPSS in departure and return areas. This helped returnees throughout the transition to cope with stressors and adjust to changing conditions. IOM was able to fill some of the gaps in areas with limited mental health services and facilities.

#### b. Social Cohesion Support

In 2023, IOM provided 12,081 social cohesion services (4,325 to women, 4,705 to men, 1,769 to girls and 1,282 to boys), including awareness raising campaigns, community dialogues, vocational skills trainings, after school catch-up classes for returnee students, Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) to support vital community infrastructure and a wide range of activities aimed at bolstering volunteerism and civic action. IOM's interventions in this field aimed at increasing social cohesion within and among communities affected by conflict and displacement, including in areas of return, in camps and out-of-camp settings. Activities were conducted all over Iraq, with a focus on Basra, Anbar, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah Al-Din governorates, where IOM has a longstanding field presence. These activities fostered horizontal social cohesion by providing platforms for different communities to engage with one another, and enhanced vertical social cohesion by supporting dialogue, understanding, and cooperation between local communities and the governmental

authorities. To support these processes, IOM's approach to social cohesion included building the capacity of local CSOs and volunteers and co-designing and implementing interventions with them and rehabilitating and reviving community centres to provide a safe and effective space for engagement. Additionally, in 2023 IOM initiated multiple pilot activities in coordination with Women Empowerment Municipal Offices to empower vulnerable women and establish permanent women fora to enhance women's participation in decision making processes. Finally, IOM established the Conflict Sensitivity Hub and provided three rounds of capacity enhancing trainings to Iraqi organizations on 'do no harm' approaches and conflict sensitivity and established a community of practice comprising of more than 90 organizations (including UN agencies) that engage in discussions to mainstream conflict sensitivity in peacebuilding and protection work in Iraq.

---

#### DISABILITY INCLUSION

*In 2023, IOM continued efforts to improve services to PwD and to mainstream disability inclusion across its programmes. IOM supported and engaged Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in consultations and joint programming to increase representation and access to services for PwD through i) capacity building for IOM staff, OPDs, government officials, ii) engagement with the government, iii) promoting inclusive practices, iv) supporting OPDs to enable them to continue advocating for their rights and participating in societal activities*

---

#### c. Legal Assistance

During 2023, IOM Iraq made significant strides, providing essential legal services to vulnerable individuals, including IDPs and returnees, while also advocating for their rights with government bodies, local authorities and national and international non-governmental organizations at the local, regional and national levels. These individuals include, but are not limited to, those with perceived affiliations to the ISIL, female-headed households, victims of war and returnees.

The 2023 achievements include: assisting 16,767 individuals with direct legal services regarding civil and identity documentation and housing, land, and property (HLP) issues, conducting 6,000 legal counseling sessions, and representing 4,266 individuals successfully in courts and administrative bodies for claims related to civil and identity documentation and HLP. Moreover, 6,501 individuals were reached through information dissemination and awareness-raising sessions on civil and identity documentation, HLP rights and family law.

IOM Iraq engaged 91 government officials and community-based and civil society organizations' representatives in discussions aimed at 1) addressing the challenges faced by IDPs and returnees in different governorates in accessing civil and

identity documentation, particularly those residing in the Jeddah 1 rehabilitation centre, and 2) understanding the needs of the government and its institutions and how to support them in ensuring the sustainability of our interventions at the different levels.

Under the prioritization of research and evidence gathering to strengthen its understanding of the challenges faced by IDPs, returnees and host communities in accessing civil and identity documentation, exercising HLP rights, and applying for compensation and reparations, IOM Iraq conducted a study examining the impact of climate change on migration and explored Iraqi women's rights in passing lineage and citizenship to their children. Related reports will be published in 2024. These initiatives reflect the program's commitment to an intersectional and comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted challenges faced by IDPs, returnees, and host communities, and to innovative programming design.

### HIGHLIGHT FROM 2023

*IOM Iraq continued its advocacy efforts at national, regional and local levels, working with authorities to eliminate barriers preventing vulnerable and marginalized groups from accessing civil and identity documentation. Notable successes included the facilitation of identity documentation to a child from a family with perceived affiliation to ISIL in Anbar (Qa'im) and Kirkuk (Kirkuk city) governorates without requiring DNA testing, a crucial step toward ensuring all displaced individuals, especially children returning from Al-Hol camp, can access necessary documentation to rebuild their lives. Before IOM and other UN agencies conducted advocacy and provided assistance, this was not possible for these children in such locations. Furthermore, in 2023, IOM Iraq secured approval from the Ninewa governor's office to postpone forced evictions in Al-Intisar neighborhood in Mosul until early 2024, providing relief to residents and humanitarian organizations. Similar achievements were seen in the Qayyarah district in Ninewa governorate, where the program obtained approval to annul eviction orders against 25 families relocated from the Jeddah 5 camp after its closure, assisting them in obtaining permanent residency permits and civil documentation.*

## d. Reparations and Transitional Justice

Throughout 2023, IOM Iraq continued 1) supporting the authorities in development and implementation of transitional justice policies; 2) strengthening participation of civil society in the transitional justice processes, and 3) raising awareness about importance of transitional justice for peacebuilding and long-term reconciliation.

### • IOM Support to the Process of Implementation of Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL);

Since 2021, IOM Iraq provides extensive technical assistance to Gol in the implementation of the YSL. In 2023, the implementation of the YSL has made significant progress through bringing monthly salaries to more than 1,600 Yazidi, Turkmen, Shabak and Christian survivors of CRSV, and establishment of the referral system for MHPSS services for YSL beneficiaries. IOM's support was instrumental for both achievements, as it strengthened capacity of the staff working in YSL authorities, support to the Directorate for Survivors Affairs in designing and operating the MHPSS Referral System, and support to Directorate's outreach activities regarding the reparations and accountability.

### • Support to Three Survivors' Networks

In 2023, IOM Iraq continued its efforts to empower independent survivors networks in the process of transitional justice in Iraq.<sup>2</sup> IOM partnered with the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation, global renowned organization with mission of empowerment of survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) through organizing series of meetings with the Survivors Voice Network (SVN) to strengthening SVN's intuitional and advocacy capacity and a learning exchange visit of SEMA International Network of Survivors and the SVN to introduce their networks and visited Lalish Temple to learn about the Yazidi culture. IOM Iraq also provided capacity building trainings to survivors' networks in relation to accountability mechanisms and standards for prosecution of genocide and crimes against humanity, and mission of UNITAD. Following these trainings, the survivors' networks engaged with different stakeholders including General Directorate of Survivors' Affairs (GDSA), UNITAD and civil society and presented their demands and views on need for establishing domestic mechanism for prosecution of international crimes. Furthermore, IOM supported two campaign activities of Survivors' Voices Network and Hope Givers on the occasion of 9th anniversary of the genocide on August 3. One of them was planting 100 trees in Sinjar city to commemorate the anniversary of the genocide.

### • Sinjar Open Space (SOS): Consultative Platform with Yazidi Youth Activists in Sinjar

In 2023, IOM Iraq supported establishment and activities of SOS, a community-based advocacy campaign conceived by a coalition of activists and civil society organizations working on Sinjar issues. The aim of the SOS platform is to bring attention to the challenges facing the district, conduct community initiatives, and organize local and national advocacy efforts to improve conditions for Sinjari people.

2. Survivors' Voices Network, Hope Givers and Specier Camp Massacre Victims' Families.



## e. Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE)

Under its PVE programme, IOM coordinated with ONSA to provide technical assistance to support the National Strategy for Combatting Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism (the National PVE Strategy), including through building a monitoring and evaluation framework. IOM established a framework for collaboration with ONSA to implement the National PVE Strategy. Areas of cooperation recognized under the agreement include research and analysis; development of area-based Plans of Action (PoAs) for the implementation of the Strategy in priority locations; capacity building of the PVE Committee and its sub-committees; and support to the exchange of expertise with governments in the region and beyond.

In 2023, IOM Iraq continued to support Iraqi civil society organizations through IOM's Wasl Civil Society Fund. In partnership with more than 40 CSOs across the country, IOM has empowered communities to take a leading role in identifying drivers of instability, conflict and violent extremism while promoting initiatives that pursue sustainable peace and development in crisis-affected communities. In multiple locations, IOM's CSO partners established autonomous coordination systems with the local authorities which continue to prove their utility without IOM's direct involvement.

## f. Community Policing

IOM Iraq continued to support Community Policing (CP) in Iraq, by supporting the establishment of two new Community Policing Forums (CPFs) in Baghdad and Basra, bringing the total number of active CPFs in Iraq to 172 (138 CPFs established with IOM support and 34 established by the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

IOM Iraq provided training for 52 community members from communities in Baghdad and Basra on CP approach. Based on the knowledge and skills acquired during the training, community members developed Community Safety Plans (CSPs) and implemented Community Safety Initiatives (CSIs) in cooperation with CP officers and with the support of IOM. IOM supported the implementation of five CSIs on security issues including violence against women, early marriage, domestic violence, harassment, cyber security, and a conference was organized to address the issue of communication and cooperation among community members and security actors.

IOM Iraq also provided training to 52 law enforcement officials from Model Police Stations (MPSs) in Baghdad, Anbar and Ninewa on the CP approach to mainstream the concept of CP among other police unit. Furthermore, IOM provided ToTs and

cascading training for 48 female officers on the CP approach as a part of increasing the number CP female officers.

IOM Iraq has supported six field visits of female delegates to Anbar, Basra, Missan, Ninewa, Anbar, Salah Al-Din and Kirkuk to oversee women's inclusion and discuss the role of women in security and safety dialogues.

## g. Climate Security

IOM continued to address drivers of conflict and displacement through a multi-faceted approach that both increased the capacity of the GoI to respond to climate related drivers of conflict and increased the resilience of affected communities through a community-led approach.

Areas of programmatic priorities for 2023 included i) expansion of evidence-based on the climate security nexus to inform policy and programming, ii) supporting the capacity of sub-national and civil society to respond to climate related drivers of conflict, iii) supporting the resilience of rural communities affected by climate change and security concerns, and iv) supporting community cohesion and resilience in areas of displacement.

In 2023, IOM Iraq contributed to increased resilience of climate change-affected communities in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) through increased access to comprehensive data to support the anticipation and management of climate induced mobility and improved resilience to the climatic adverse drivers that compel people to move. In particular, the data collected by IOM built the evidence-base towards unveiling linkages between migration, climate change, socio-economic vulnerabilities, and social cohesion. IOM also piloted a community-focused approach to enhance resilience and mitigate conflict and related displacement through community-based mapping, empowering community-led Natural Resource/Conflict Management committees and support effective and equitable resource management through QIPs.

Additionally, IOM, building on joint programming with WFP, and following the human security approach, contributed to the prevention of further displacement in the Southern Iraq's governorate of Thi-Qar, which was affected by the adverse effects of climate change. IOM Iraq has strengthened the capacity of the health system to prevent, prepare and respond to health emergencies induced by climate change by strengthening the skills and capacities of health personnel. Local capacities and vulnerabilities to climate-related security issues were assessed and conflict resolution mechanisms to strengthen broader and inclusive social cohesion were identified. The project improved access to sustainable livelihoods through the introduction of alternative, climate-smart and water-efficient agricultural production technologies.

IOM also supported Iraq's delegation and negotiation team in preparations to the UNFCCC COP28 conference (Dubai, Dec. 2023) through a workshop based on topics of Climate Displacement and Security and more specifically on Climate-induced displacement in central and southern Iraq. IOM also supported the organization of the COP 28 Side Event at the Iraqi Pavilion titled, "Climate, Peace and Security: Increasing Resilience to Environmental Drivers of Instability in Iraq."

#### h. Tribal Engagement

IOM focuses on sustainable and tangible approaches to understand, address and where possible, mitigate complex community or tribal barriers that impede safe and durable returns or relocation. The approach is centered on engaging relevant community members, tribal leaders and government stakeholders through facilitated dialogue and supporting work to address the community-identified social and tribal barriers in an appropriate, systematic, and timely manner. The tribal and community engagement services follow a prescribed series of steps and are provided by a mobile field team, who are responsible for coordinating all services focused on the best communal interests. In 2023, IOM Iraq supported 232 families

facing communal barriers and blockages to return due to tribal issues and disputes due to being perceived as affiliated with ISIL.

IOM has supported through its Visitor Center facility in Jeddah 1 - which has opened shortly after the Gol recommenced the return process of Iraqi nationals from Al Hol camp in May 2021 - the families to reconnect with their communities and relatives. It provides a welcoming space for receiving visitors from families' areas of origin, fostering the essential process of re-socialization and community integration for those returning from Al Hol and prior to their departure from Jeddah 1. During 2023, 36 visiting activities were facilitated through the center - more than 8,535 visitors from host communities and 9,472 Jeddah 1 residents.

To better understand and address barriers to reintegration in Iraq's governorates of return, IOM has organized i) a two-day conference in Erbil, with the attendance of more than 70 participants from key stakeholders from Anbar, Salah Al-Din, Ninewa, and Kirkuk and ii) eight workshops in Anbar during which key security, administrative, and community stakeholders from Anbar, as well as government and local authority representatives and local organizations were able to jointly identify and discuss key challenges to the return of Iraqi nationals from NES.



A Yazidi woman prays at the Yazidi Temple of Lalish, the holiest temple of the faith, Duhok governorate. © IOM Iraq 2023/Anjam Rasool.



## 4. PROTECTION

IOM's protection goal in Iraq is to place the rights and well-being of migrants, including IDPs – regardless of their status – at the centre of its operations. Recognizing the inherent dignity and rights of every individual, IOM prioritizes protection programming with tailored assistance for survivors of violence and abuse and supports the safe return and reintegration of returnees. IOM works to achieve protection outcomes through a whole-of-society and a whole-of-government approach, partnering with national and local governments, the United Nations system, communities and a wide range of organizations and associations in academic, private, governmental and civil society sectors.

### a. Core Protection

In 2023, IOM Iraq provided protection services to 11,729 individuals (consisting of 2,442 men; 8,558 women, 510 girls and 219 boys; of which 494 are PwD) in Iraq; including 5,573 IDPs; 4,886 returnees; and 1,062 host community members.

Protection services targeted survivors and persons at heightened risk of human rights violations with tailored case management services, including 1,148 individuals (929 women, 195 men, 18 girls and 6 boys; and 128 PwD) who have experienced or are at risk of violations and abuse, including violence against women and girls in camps, informal sites, and areas of return. Other activities within the protection intervention included information services such as awareness sessions and campaigns, referrals to specialized services, community outreach, recreational activities, and emergency in-kind and cash distributions.

Acknowledging the importance of local knowledge, expertise and resources in designing and implementing protection interventions, and in order to ensure localization and knowledge transfer, IOM has partnered with two local CSOs providing protection support and supported many more with capacity building.

IOM contributes to evidence-based protection advocacy through protection monitoring and research. In 2023, IOM led seven information products and contributed to seven Protection Platform Monitoring Reports. Protection monitoring was carried out to identify protection risks and needs of residents of Jeddah 1 within the centre and upon their departure to support evidence-based programming and advocacy. Protection monitoring was conducted in Jeddah 1 for the first time between 17 August and 12 September 2023. Post-Departure Protection Monitoring was systematically conducted over the year for Jeddah 1 returnee households at different stages of the return journey to identify the vulnerabilities, protection risks and capacities that returning IDPs face post return. Protection monitoring reports have been shared with relevant stakeholders for advocacy.

### b. Migrant Protection: Return & Reintegration

IOM Iraq continued to support Iraqi migrants in vulnerable situation abroad and stranded or trafficked non-Iraqi migrants in

Iraq. This includes protection case management and counselling, post-arrival assistance, in-kind or cash reintegration support, housing allowance, job placement, education grants, childcare and psychosocial support.

In 2023, IOM Iraq assisted the voluntary return of 1,577 Iraqis who wished to return but did not have means to do so from more than 20 countries, primarily Germany and Türkiye. IOM also provided tailored reintegration assistance to 1,068 returnees for them to overcome any immediate and longer-term barriers to sustainable reintegration into the society. Based on IOM's long-standing expertise on counter-trafficking, IOM Iraq assisted nine victims of trafficking including foreign nationals. The services ranged from covering immediate needs to safely returning to their countries of origin for those who wished to. In 2023, IOM strengthened its coordination and cooperation with key anti-TIP actors through its established TIP Working Group, in coordination with relevant UN agencies and local NGOs and CSOs, IOM has led the development of the TIP Working Group workplan which was validated in December 2023. Additionally in 2023, IOM conducted awareness raising sessions on TIP in Sharia and Khanke camps in Dohuk governorate and in West Mosul in Ninewa Governorate to ensure community members and camp residents in those locations were aware of available support services as they may be at risk of exploitative or trafficking conditions. In total, 50 individuals across the three locations were informed about the risks of TIP and how to identify indicators of exploitation and trafficking.

To enhance sustainability of economic reintegration, IOM increased its private sector engagement to better support and provide opportunities to Iraqi returnees. In 2023, IOM Iraq collaborated with Toyota in Erbil to provide tailored technical vocational training to four returnees from Belarus, Belgium, Finland, and the Netherlands. The four returnees went through a one-month programme to learn about car maintenance and customer service skills and were able to graduate in December 2023.

### c. Protection Mainstreaming

IOM Iraq provided support to promote protection mainstreaming and safeguarding through technical guidance, joint development of tools and training. IOM trained a total of 783 individuals (285 women and 498 men) on diverse themes related to protection mainstreaming including principles and best practices of Protection Mainstreaming, PSEA, Respectful Communication with Communities, Human Rights Violation and Safe Referral, AAP, and Data Protection. Moreover, Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) focal points served as case managers and support people for individuals affected by sexual misconduct. IOM also holds a leading role on PSEA initiatives in the country by co-chairing the Interagency PSEA Network. IOM organized a ToT on PSEAH for 38 participants (24 women, 14 men) from 28 organizations (7 UN agencies, 10 national NGOs, 11 international NGOs). The training reinforced PSEA capacity in the country and

served as an opportunity to expand the network membership to organizations that were not previously part of the network.

IOM partnered with OPDs to reach affected population with safeguarding messages including PwD. IOM trained the members of OPDs, and women sign language interpreters on humanitarian principles, PSEA and reporting mechanisms. The trained OPD members and sign language interpreter joined the IOM team in organizing information sessions on the topics to IDPs in camps that grouped persons with and without disabilities, reaffirming IOM's inclusive approach in communicating with communities. Including the joint awareness raising with OPDs, IOM reached 1,832 individuals (1,372 women, 349 men, 8 boys and 103 girls) with information on PSEA.

With the country transitioning towards development interventions, the importance of developing government capacity to serve the needs of its population in an accessible and respectful way has become paramount. IOM worked with the MoMD in Ninewa Branch to enhance the Government's accountability mechanism towards the residents of Jeddah 1 Rehabilitation Centre. Collaboration included a series of training and support in developing accountability policies and complaint and feedback mechanisms.

## 5. RETURNS, RECOVERY AND TRANSITION

IOM employs a comprehensive strategy encompassing various facets such as community infrastructure support, housing restoration, economic revitalization, livelihood assistance, and the enhancement of civil society capacity to engage effectively with communities and stakeholders. Over the course of 2023, these initiatives made significant strides in enhancing conditions for sustainable economic recovery, promoting social inclusion, and facilitating the sustainable reintegration of vulnerable individuals and communities.

### a. Durable Solutions and Facilitated Returns Movements

During 2023, IOM Iraq continued to provide its Facilitated Voluntary Movements (FVM) programme and supported the dignified, informed and voluntary return of 2,012 households from camps to their areas of origin or secondary locations, in close coordination with MoMD, local authorities, other relevant government institutions and stakeholders. Interested IDPs were provided with key information through help desks located in areas of displacement, particularly in camps, to assess the situation in the IDPs' areas of origin, identify the main barriers to their return and make an informed decision. Upon return, IOM ensured follow-up through protection monitoring, referrals to services and provision of cash grants to support the returnees' (re)integration. IOM's FVM programme is key to assist IDPs to assess the causes of their displacement and to safely and voluntarily return or relocate in a durable and sustainable manner.

### b. Sustainable Reintegration and Economic Development

IOM Iraq continued providing assistance to economic recovery and reintegration needs by offering medium- and short-term employment opportunities. IOM directly supported 3,830 beneficiaries through Individual Livelihoods Assistance (ILA), which included vocational and on-the-job trainings, business support packages and small grants, to enhance the beneficiaries' employability and create jobs through micro-enterprises. IOM also supported 3,586 beneficiaries and families in need through EPW.

Within its Enterprise Development Fund (EDF), IOM selected 772 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to receive EDF grants and to resume or expand their operations, thus planning to create 3,595 new jobs in addition to sustaining 4,391 existing ones. SMEs were supported with a cumulative 11.9 million United States dollars, contributing to economic recovery in areas of return and origin as well as enabling returnees and host communities alike to improve their living conditions. These efforts are part of a broader goal to support improved access to durable solutions including local integration or relocation, through enhancing access to basic services and supporting livelihood opportunities, the absence of either being main barriers to return.

### c. Restoring Access to Basic Services

In 2023, IOM Iraq rehabilitated 13 economic and industrial infrastructures providing the infrastructure necessary for local authorities to re-establish services to enable economic activities and recovery. IOM implemented 56 QIPs to enable access to basic services for IDPs, returnees and host communities, and to support conditions for sustainable return and integration, addressing education, electricity, environmental, health and water needs. Projects aimed at individuals vulnerable to displacement caused by climate change addressed access to fundamental water services, along with the implementation of climate-resilient water systems, enhanced irrigation methods, adaptive infrastructure, and other identified requirements.

### d. Housing Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

With support from IOM, 445 households completed housing rehabilitation/reconstruction in Ninewa, Anbar, Salah Al-Din and Diyala in 2023. A further 318 households started their rehabilitation/reconstruction works in 2023 and are to be completed during the first half of 2024. This support included the rehabilitation of damaged homes (in cases of light to moderate damage) as well as constructing incremental core housing for those whose homes were completely destroyed. IOM also provided HLP support to returnee and host community families and provided assistance for demolition and debris removal. Households managed their own construction works through a cash-based owner-driven approach. The intervention specifically targeted IDPs returning through IOM's FVM programme, recent returnees and host community members in situations of vulnerability.



## HIGHLIGHT FROM 2023

Since 2018, IOM's EDF has supported 2,424 SMEs in Iraq; generating 11,217 new jobs and enhancing 12,980 existing ones. This initiative, aligns with key priorities of the Gol, supports SMEs recovering from various challenges and facing barriers to their expansion such as access to finance, high interest rates and perception of high risk from financial institutions.

EDF includes tailored adaptations for women, farmers and physically destroyed businesses, fostering flexibility and inclusivity. The EDF programme receives support from multiple international partners, reflecting a collective commitment to Iraq's economic growth and social stability.

## MOBILITY

IOM addressed the migration and mobility needs of migrants, specifically through resettlement, assisted return and reintegration programmes, including capacity development for governmental entities.

### 1. RESETTLEMENT AND MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT (RMM)

IOM Iraq provided movement assistance to migrants, refugees, and returnees, who may be third country nationals, victims of trafficking or voluntary returnees to ensure safe and dignified movement.

IOM Iraq works closely with partners such as local government, donors, national and international organizations to provide integrated movement assistance services for beneficiaries before, during and after the movement. Such assistance includes liaison with the immigration departments of resettlement countries, coordination on visa and travel document issuance, ground and air travel arrangements, cultural orientation and follow-up with transit and receiving missions to confirm safe arrival.

In 2023, IOM Iraq provided resettlement and/or relocation assistance to 3,506 beneficiaries, of which 1,904 were Syrian asylum seekers in Iraq, nine were voluntary returnees to their home countries, and the remainder were Iraqi migrants and refugees of other nationalities. Additionally, arrival assistance was provided for 450 AVRR beneficiaries.

IOM also provides resettlement country selection mission assistance to resettlement country partners who are interviewing refugees for resettlement consideration. In support of this effort, IOM installed six new interview rooms and rehabilitated the beneficiary waiting area at its office in Erbil.

### 2. ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

In coordination with the Gol, IOM Iraq supported Iraqis who chose to return home from abroad. Through various AVRR projects, IOM supported these Iraqis with movement and reception assistance, tailored assistance, including reception assistance, interview and counselling, reintegration plan formation, cash assistance, in-kind assistance and monitoring, post-arrival assistance, cash grants and in-kind assistance to small businesses, job placements, vocational training, education and a housing allowance. In 2023, IOM assisted more than 1,000 returnees through providing post-arrival assistance; 865 returnees through cash assistance including cash upon arrival and reintegration cash grant; and 268 beneficiaries with vocational training, employment support, job placements, business start-up and expansion support, medical assistance, and/or housing support.

## HIGHLIGHT FROM 2023

IOM Iraq through the Family Assistance Project (FAP) provided support for family reunification in Germany to 18,078 individuals (7,309 families) of which 83.67 per cent were female-headed. Over 4,575 applications were processed at the FAP centre in Erbil and then transferred to the German consulate, where remote assistance was provided to over 25,964 beneficiaries via phone calls and emails and 916 families were assisted through sending the family registration file to be legalized by the German Embassy.

In addition, case management support was provided to 175 families, comprising 479 individuals, which included arranging their transportation to and from the FAP office from various locations.

## GOVERNANCE

In 2023, IOM Iraq made significant contributions to strengthening national capacities for effective migration and displacement governance. This involved a multifaceted approach, supporting national, regional, and local authorities and organizations across several key areas (Legislative and Policy Development, Improved Systems and Processes, Partnerships and Cooperation, Data Management, Return, Readmission, and reintegration).

Through these efforts, IOM Iraq contributed to a more effective and responsive migration and displacement governance framework in Iraq. This paves the way for better management of migration flows, improved protection for migrants and displaced persons, and the fulfillment of international commitments like the GCM.

### a. Migration Management and Migration Governance

In 2023, IOM Iraq continued to work closely with the Gol and KRG, and in particular with the Inter-Ministerial TWG on Migration and relevant Ministries to strengthen their capacities on migration management and governance, and to support the implementation of the NMMS and the framework to implement the GCM.

In 2023, IOM Iraq supported the Gol and KRG with i) development of the National Migration Data Assessment and Migration Data Action Plan, this initiative demonstrates our involvement in shaping Iraq's migration data strategy as part of the implementation of the NMMS, ii) supporting the establishment and enhancement of a NRM and expanding the NRM to Basra and Sulaymaniyah, iii) development of best practices in return, readmission, and reintegration cooperation, this achievement emphasizes our work in creating effective practices for handling migration flows and supporting individuals returning to Iraq on policy level, iv) advancing the Iraq's migration governance framework via completed the development of the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) Iraq Second Profile.

Throughout 2023, IOM actively contributed to the submitting and development of Iraq's comprehensive Migration Law and supporting the Gol in finalizing and submitting the Comprehensive National Plan on Irregular Migration.

### b. Integrated Border Management and Governance

IOM has maintained its activities to improve the border management skills of the Border Guard Force and to enhance their surveillance and monitoring capabilities through deploying

IOM's Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS)<sup>3</sup> at the Iraq- Iran borders by providing Four Mobile Border Processing Units (MBPU), each one consisting of one MIDAS mobile kit and one patrol vehicle, equipped with communication and mobile surveillance equipment, the MBPUs will be covering the southern border of the Iraq-Iran borders, these MBPUs will be using MIDAS to register irregular crossing of the border, and also by providing two MIDAS local servers on the Iraq-Iran borders in order to increase the coverage of data collection at the borders. IOM has provided surveillance equipment including three thermal cameras to increase the capacity of surveillance and border management to enhance good migration management. The cameras will cover the Iraq-Iran border to increase the surveillance capacity and decrease irregular crossing, smuggling and trafficking, and drug smuggling.

Furthermore, the Gol enlisted IOM's support to digitize the workflow at the Trebil border crossing point. In response, IOM Iraq collaborated with the Gol to introduce a pioneering system dedicated to digitizing the flow of goods and people across the border point. By introducing a pilot system through development and deployment, IOM supported to enhance the efficiency of handling goods and facilitated individual movement.

#### • Legal Identity

To identify gaps in the legal identity system in Iraq, IOM Iraq conducted an assessment of Iraq's functional systems relating to legal identity in direct collaboration with the Gol in general and Mol specifically. Following the findings, IOM has supported the Gol in significantly increasing the rate of Unified ID registration. This was achieved by providing 410 computers and 366 printers to registration offices across Iraq's governorates. Additionally, IOM has supported the Mol in reducing the time required to print (personalize) Unified IDs from three-five months to just two-three days by supplying specialized equipment, including 30 document examination devices, which enhanced printing efficiency. Moreover, IOM expanded its capacity building support through providing equipment and rehabilitating the Unified ID training centre, in addition to establishing three new unified ID training centres in Baghdad, Najaf and Basrah.

As part of the same initiative and to enhance legal identity management capacity, IOM conducted training sessions and study visits to the UAE to exchange on best practices. Furthermore, IOM enhanced the capacity of Iraqi officials involved in legal identity management through additional training, the provision of document examination devices, and the establishment of the document examination lab at Baghdad International Airport.

3. Developed by IOM in 2009, MIDAS is a high-quality, user-friendly and fully customizable Border Management Information System (BMIS) for States in need of a cost-effective and comprehensive solution. With the capability to collect, process, store, and analyze traveler information in real time and across an entire border network, MIDAS enables States to monitor more effectively those entering and exiting their territory while providing a sound statistical basis for migration policy-related planning.



### c. Displacement Tracking Matrix

IOM DTM continued to be the main provider of timely and accurate data and information on displacement in Iraq. DTM published a series of information products, namely the Return Index, the Displacement Index, the IDP and returnee master lists, the Integrated Location Assessment, the Climate Vulnerability Assessment and various ad hoc Emergency Trackers on sudden onset displacement. In addition, IOM published a series of in-depth reports on durable solutions, barriers to return

and barriers to reintegration, which are essential to inform programming and policy development in Iraq. All reports and publications are available on [IOM Iraq DTM website](#) and [IOM Iraq website](#).

For further information on IOM Iraq interventions, please visit the [IOM Iraq website](#) and IOM Iraq's accounts on social media: [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly Twitter), and [Instagram](#).



IOM organized a football match for returnees from Belgium to support their reintegration through networking events in Baghdad. ©IOM 2023/Rafal Abdulateef

 [iraq.iom.int](http://iraq.iom.int)

 [iomiraq@iom.int](mailto:iomiraq@iom.int)

UNAMI Compound (Diwan 2)  
International Zone,  
Baghdad / Iraq

     [@IOMIraq](https://www.facebook.com/IOMIraq)

