

HUMANITARIAN TRANSITION OVERVIEW 2024

IRAQ

ISSUED
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About

Under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, the Iraq Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) developed the Humanitarian Transition Overview (HTO) for 2024, building upon the foundation laid by the former Humanitarian Transition Overview 2023. Spearheaded and consolidated by OCHA on behalf of the Iraq HCT and its partners, in collaboration with the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), the HTO 2024 provides a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian situation in Iraq and identifies major humanitarian gaps and challenges. The HTO 2024 includes a summary of the status of the humanitarian transition and achievements under the Durable Solutions framework.

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The future leaders of Iraq arrive early to head to their classrooms, Salah Al-Din, 2024
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Introduction

During 2023, the efforts of the Iraq Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) focused on enhancing Government ownership by progressively handing over humanitarian operations and the coordination role to the line ministries in the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). This followed the complete deactivation of the Humanitarian Cluster system in December 2022, which was replaced by sectors, forums, and working groups, co-chaired with the relevant line ministries.

The GoI has assumed leadership in its respective sectors, with the UN and NGOs remaining actively involved as co-chairs and continuing to provide technical guidance and expertise.

To ensure continued coordination at the governorates' level, Joint Coordination Forums (JCFs) have been established following extensive discussions led by the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, with the Council of Ministers' Secretariat and the Joint Crisis Coordination Center (JCCC) of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The JCFs have replaced the pre-existing humanitarian coordination architecture, serving as nexus-type coordination body co-chaired by governorate authorities and a representative from the aid community, with memberships of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors.

Iraq has witnessed significant advancements in the humanitarian sphere, with a notable reduction in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from seven million, as a consequence of conflict, to 1.1 million currently. Out of all IDPs, nearly 157,714 persons continue to live in IDP camps mainly in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and in East Mosul, in Ninewa Governorate. Over 4.8 million individuals have been identified as returnees, with a relatively slow return movement witnessed in 2023 as the remaining IDPs caseload faces complex barriers and challenges hindering return.

In light of the humanitarian transition, the Iraq HCT has developed the Humanitarian Transition Overview (HTO) for the second consecutive year. While the 2023 HTO described the critical residual humanitarian needs and HCT's priorities, the 2024 HTO provides an overview of the humanitarian efforts conducted in 2023 and the support to IDPs provided by the Government. It also identifies the major humanitarian gaps and challenges which require continued attention both by the Government and the humanitarian community. Furthermore, it outlines progress in the Humanitarian Transition and achievements made under the Durable Solutions framework.

During the early stages of drafting the HTO, the GoI announced plans to close the remaining IDP camps and withdraw its services by 30 July 2024. Humanitarian and Durable Solutions partners are working jointly on a preparedness plan, ahead of the implementation of the decision. The UN continues its advocacy on dignified and voluntary choices for IDPs within the framework of the "Roadmap for Accelerating the Implementation of the National Plan to Resolve Displacement in Iraq" to ensure a more holistic response and a more sustainable solution to the displacement file.

The UN and its partners are committed to continue working with the GoI and KRG to address remaining humanitarian needs and ensure durable solutions for displaced populations residing in and out-of-camps, including through their support under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), particularly its Strategic Priority 5 (SP 5) on "achieving dignified, safe and voluntary durable solutions to displacement in Iraq", complemented where necessary by humanitarian interventions by UN and civil society partners.

Objectives

Building upon the foundations laid by the Humanitarian Transition Overview of 2023, this document aims to provide a summary of the humanitarian efforts undertaken in 2023 and outline progress made in the Humanitarian Transition process. The HTO will be shared with the GoI and KRG and will be a public document which serves as a guide to inform partners and donors of humanitarian gaps and challenges in 2024.

This HTO has been developed by OCHA in collaboration with the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF). The document is based on data collected by the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), as well as findings of the 2023 Cross-Cutting Needs Assessment conducted by REACH. The HTO does not include figures for people to be targeted, nor financial requirements. It will neither be monitored nor included in the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) for 2024.

Part 1:

Overview of the Humanitarian Situation

1.1

IDPs situation

As of December 2023, IOM's DTM identified 1,123,663 IDPs (192,665 households) across Iraq. This figure represents a decrease of 18,351 IDPs (-1.6%), compared to previous data collected in the period from May to August 2023. DTM's recent studies suggest that key obstacles preventing IDPs from returning to their areas of origin include housing destruction, inadequate functioning infrastructure, lack of livelihood opportunities, as well as security fears¹.

More than half of the IDPs (56%) originate from the Ninewa Governorate, in particular from the districts of Mosul (21%), Sinjar (15%), Al-Ba'a'aj (9%) and Telafar (6%). A further 22 per cent of the IDPs originate from Anbar and Salah al-Din Governorates, with each accounting for 11 per cent. While almost all 15 governorates in Iraq host IDPs, the majority reside in eight governorates, as detailed in the table below.

The vast majority of IDPs (77%) live in private accommodations in urban settings, another 14 per cent (157,714 individuals) reside in 23 camps in the KRI and East Mosul, while the remaining nine per cent live in critical shelters across Iraq.

According to the DTM, the highest number of IDPs are concentrated in twelve locations across five governorates, with the top-three being Markaz Sinjar in Ninewa (19,884 IDPs across 16 areas), Markaz Samarra in Salah al-Din (15,660 IDPs across 25 areas) and Al Amirya in Anbar (14,676 IDPs across 20 areas).

GOVERNORATE	TOTAL IDPS (INDIVIDUALS)
Ninewa	239,124
Duhok	235,251
Erbil	225,565
Sulaymaniyah	130,461
Kirkuk	92,640
Salah Al-Din	48,228
Diyala	43,554
Anbar	33,888
Total	1,048,711

1.2 IDPs Camps

The below table, based on UNHCR's data, displays the number of IDPs in the 23 camps across KRI and East Mosul as of 31 December 2023.

IDP CAMP	TOTAL IDPS (INDIVIDUALS)
Duhok	
Chamishku	20,014
Khanke	13,557
Essian	12,003
Shariya	11,746
Kabarto 1	11,602
Kabarto 2	11,353
Rwanga Community	11,295
Bajet Kandala	8,318
Mamrashan	7,237
Berseve 2	5,520
Berseve 1	3,726
Sheikhan	3,260
Darkar	2,299
Dawadia	1,620
Mamilian	872

IDP CAMP	TOTAL IDPS (INDIVIDUALS)
Erbil	
Debaga 1	6,877
Baharka	4,151
Harshm	1,185
East Mosul Camps	
Hasansham U3	5,283
Khazer M1	3,642
Hasansham U2	2,628
Sulaymaniyah	
Ashti	8,929
Tazade ¹²	597
Total	157,714

1.3 Informal sites

An estimated 100,000 IDPs continue to live in informal sites across Iraq. These communities, which the Government no longer considers as part of the IDP caseload, are excluded from Government assistance and planning, with limited exceptions for IDPs who come from blocked areas such as Jurf Al-Sakhar of Babil Governorate, and reside in informal sites such as Bzeibiz in Anbar Governorate. Humanitarian support to IDPs in informal sites has been decreasing in recent years. Although some key NGOs continue to provide much needed assistance, the demand for aid surpasses

available resources. As of January 2024, according to the DTM, a total of 10,228 families (8% IDPs, 18% returnees and 74% stayees²) residing in informal sites, mostly on lands owned by government entities, had received eviction notices by local authorities without any alternative plans for those families³. Fifty-five per cent of the households (HHs) at risk of eviction are in Ninewa Governorate, notably Mosul and Ba'aj, followed by 42 per cent in Tikrit in Salah Al-Din Governorate, and to a lesser extent, in Wassit, Karbala, Diyala and Anbar Governorates.

Part 2: Remaining Humanitarian Needs

A Cross-Cutting Needs Assessment⁴ (CCNA) was conducted by REACH between July and November 2023. The CCNA gathered representative surveys from 9,977 HHs belonging to three population groups: in-camp IDPs (2,241 HHs), out-of-camp IDPs (4,578 HHs) and returnees (3,158 HHs). The data were collected in 25 IDP sites and in 61 districts across 15 governorates hosting out-of-camp IDPs and returnees. The CCNA aimed to generate robust data on the multi-sectoral needs of displacement-affected households so as to enable evidence-based prioritization of aid, determine IDP movement intentions and barriers to return or integrate locally, and assess how the transition and the evolving context have affected displaced households' needs since the Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment round 10⁵ (MCNA X) conducted between June and August 2022.

Top three reported priority needs identified by the CCNA

The CCNA revealed that, while at a macro-level, many indicators hail positive figures and point to low needs, upon further analysis and data disaggregation, specific areas present greater vulnerabilities and needs. Through comparative analysis of findings with the MCNA X (2022), for the second year, **livelihoods, health care and shelter remained the top three reported priority needs.** While conditions have not deteriorated since the start of the humanitarian transition, geographical locations reliant on humanitarian programming present the highest needs, which may further increase in the absence of humanitarian and/or development programming.

Top three priority needs by percentage of HHs*



* Respondents could select up to 3 responses

SELF-REPORTED PRIORITY NEED	IN-CAMP (N=2,241)	OUT-OF-CAMP (N=4,578)	RETURNEE (N=3,158)
Livelihoods	74%	62%	61%
Healthcare	52%	46%	37%
Shelter	36%	62%	35%
Repay debt	25%	26%	34%
Food	50%	35%	16%
Drinking water	5%	6%	13%

Livelihoods

Households in all three assessed population groups reported at least one adult being unemployed, with increased job competition/lack of sufficient job opportunities being cited as the main barrier by 81 per cent of in-camp IDPs, 84 per cent of out-of-camp IDPs and 84 per cent of returnees.

Health care

While overall health findings were relatively positive at the national level, some data variations suggest potential gaps. In terms of services provided by the nearest functional hospital, most households reported access to emergency services (96%), pediatric services (93%), surgical services (89%), and maternity services (88%).

The comparison between in-camp and out-of-camp IDPs highlights greater barriers and needs faced by in-camp households, despite the presence of health centers within existing camps. The most cited challenge when attempting to access health services was the “High cost of medicines or treatment”, reported by 81 per cent of in-camp and 57 per cent of out-of-camp households.

Shelter

Housing, Land and Property (HLP) remain a priority need to encourage voluntary returns. Among all IDP households who reported an intention to remain in their current location in the upcoming 12-month period, 52 per cent of the in-camp and 28 per cent of the out-of-camp indicated that their homes in areas of origin had been destroyed. While 74 per cent of households affirmed being aware of the Government’s compensation scheme for reporting damaged HLP, only 62 per cent reportedly applied for the scheme, with 13 per cent indicating that they had received cash assistance from the Government as a result of their claim. Thirty-two per cent of surveyed households cited “heavy or lengthy bureaucratic procedures” as the main barrier for not receiving compensation, which peaked to 61 per cent among in-camp survey respondents.

Concerning movement intentions, 95 per cent of both in-camp and out-of-camp IDPs reported the intention to remain in their current locations for the upcoming 12-month period. When compared to MCNA X, such intention has increased among all population groups, with findings confirming that damaged/destroyed housing and lack of livelihood opportunities in areas of origin represent the main reasons for not wishing to return within the upcoming 12 months.

2.1 Challenges and gaps in areas of displacement

According to the DTM’s Displacement Index⁶ findings, out of 2,581 locations assessed between September and December 2023, living conditions were “highly severe” in 106 locations hosting six per cent of the IDP population (56,250 individuals), “medium severe” in 498 locations where 27 per cent of the IDP population (255,486 individuals) resides, and “low severe” in 1,977 locations hosting 67 per cent of the IDP population (640,344 individuals).

High Severity	Medium Severity	Low Severity
6%	27%	67%
56K IDPs	255K IDPs	640K IDPs
106 locations	498 locations	1,977 locations

2.2 Challenges and gaps in areas of return

According to the DTM Return Index⁷ findings, out of 2,170 return locations assessed between May and August 2023, 477 of them, which host 12 per cent of the returnee population (600,480 individuals), present “highly severe” conditions. An increase of 4,344 returnees living in these conditions has been observed since the previous round of data collection between January and April 2023, when the share of returnees in severe conditions was also 12 per cent (596,136 individuals) of the total at that time. The largest increases were recorded in Ninewa (10,896 individuals), followed by Diyala (9,840) and Baghdad (558) Governorates.

High Severity	Medium Severity	Low Severity
12%	40%	48%
600K returnees	1.9M returnees	2.3M returnees

While some locations in the Salah Al-Din and Anbar Governorates have witnessed improvements in living conditions, others in the Ninewa and Diyala Governorates have seen a deterioration. In Salah Al-Din’s Tuz Khurmatu

district, improvements have been attributed to a noticeable decrease in violence, revenge acts, clashes between security forces, and ethno-religious or tribal tensions. In Anbar’s Heet district, improved conditions have been attributed to reconstruction efforts to address damaged or destroyed housing. In Ninewa, deteriorating conditions in the Sinjar and Telafar districts are attributed to intermittent electricity transmission and, in the case of Telafar, the presence of Popular Mobilization Forces at checkpoints and concerns about harassment. In Diyala’s Al-Khalis district, concerns over insufficient electricity and water supply are the main drivers of severity.

It is imperative to stress that Iraq remains one of the countries most contaminated by Explosive Ordnance (EO) in the world⁸, with over 2,733 square kilometers of recorded contaminated areas. The presence of EO prevents the safe return of IDPs and the restoration of normality. According to data by the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA), about 26 per cent of all EO hazards are currently found in agricultural lands, 20 per cent in infrastructures, 19 per cent in roads and another 22 per cent in water resources.

2.3

Support by humanitarian actors in 2023

In line with the Humanitarian Transition and the deactivation of the Humanitarian Cluster system in December 2022, humanitarian partners have drastically reduced the provision of humanitarian services to IDPs. The modest humanitarian support provided in 2023 was primarily geared towards **protection, health and nutrition, and livelihood** activities, many at relatively small scale.

Protection

UNHCR supported both in- and out-of-camp IDPs, returnees and certain vulnerable non-displaced Iraqi populations, including returnees from Al-Hol camp and other areas of north-east Syria, in accessing civil documentation in collaboration with the GoI Iraq's Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Civil Courts and through outreach and legal counselling.

During 2023, UNHCR and its partners provided individual legal counselling services to 51,300 people to aid them in accessing civil documentation, including 5,691 individuals with "complex cases", such as those with perceived affiliation to extremist groups or missing key supporting documents. UNHCR supported the Ministry of Interior and the Civil Courts through 50 mobile civil documentation missions. As a result, some 45,600 civil documents were secured in 2023.

In line with its global policy against encampment of forcibly displaced populations, UNHCR continued to work with the federal and Kurdistan authorities, as well as Durable Solutions partners, to identify and implement dignified solutions (which encompasses safe and voluntary return, relocation into other communities within the country, local integration in areas of displacement) for IDPs still residing in camps. UNHCR supported the delivery of civil documents to these IDPs, enabling them to apply for clearances to either return to their areas of origin or integrate locally. UNHCR's relentless advocacy resulted in a breakthrough in July 2023, when the KRG authorized IDPs residing in the

East Mosul camps to return to their villages surrounding the camps in Hasansham disputed area (under KRG's de facto control), which had been blocked for years. Additionally, UNHCR successfully advocated for in-camp IDPs in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate to be allowed to integrate locally during the camp consolidation process at the end of 2023.

Humanitarian actors within this arena continued to offer protection programming to meet ongoing needs, including through information sharing and case management. Protection actors remained crucial in aiding numerous individuals to comprehend procedures and apply for civil documentation.

Child Protection

Throughout 2023, UNICEF's Child Protection (CP) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) programmes strived to address the needs of vulnerable populations in Iraq. These efforts aimed to provide essential services to individuals affected by crisis situations, particularly focusing on the most marginalized groups. CP and GBV programmes reached a total of 406,683 individuals (154,539 girls; 104,924 boys; 89,470 women and 54,902 men). Of these, 290,871 individuals benefited from child protection prevention and response services. Many humanitarian actors continued to offer child protection programmes to support children in accessing or returning to school. Yet, despite these crucial efforts, school dropout rates remain concerning with a high percentage of children not in full time education. Organizations conducted awareness-raising campaigns, provided non-formal education, and delivered educational support to children with additional needs through the preparation of learning plans and follow-up. Concerned by the high number of children in labour, Child Protection actors also conducted awareness-raising sessions and provided economic support to encourage children to leave employment and return to school.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

In support to reduce GBV, UNICEF reached 60,492 individuals (28,431 girls; 4,113 boys; 21,716 women and 6,049 men) with GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response services. In addition, the Communities Care Toolkit, a community driven prevention framework to address drivers of GBV and harmful practices, was rolled out through a Training of Trainers after a rigorous process of adaptation and pilot testing in Iraq.

Health and Nutrition

WHO remains the main provider of primary health care in IDPs camps. During 2023, through its partners, WHO provided health-care services to IDPs in the camps of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Duhok Governorates. In addition, WHO continues to provide a comprehensive package of health services to returnees in the Jeddah 1 Rehabilitation Center in Ninewa. WHO is also coordinating with the respective departments of health in these governorates on immunization and surveillance activities as well as detection and response to disease outbreaks. WHO is working closely with the Ministry of Health to strengthen the Iraqi health system in the areas of governance, workforce and supply chain management, which directly impact on service provision for the IDPs.

In 2023, UNICEF supported the direct provision of a package of services in almost all IDP camps in KRI and East Mosul. The package of services included routine immunization through fixed sites, mobile health teams and outreach teams, regular home visits, maternal, newborn and child health services with focus on pregnant and lactating women, and health counseling. UNICEF also provided nutrition and growth monitoring services for children under the age of five, including counseling sessions for mothers and caregivers on infant and young child feeding. Furthermore, the agency supported frontline workers in the nearest health facilities to IDP camps and areas of return with capacity-building on Maternal and Child Health (MCH) immunization and nutrition. Additionally, jointly with WHO, UNICEF supported the digitalization of health data by rolling out training on the District Health Information System (DHIS2) for all primary healthcare centers in Iraq, including in IDP camps and facilities in the areas of

return. Currently, monthly immunization aggregated data is collected digitally across the country.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

UNICEF provided mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to 17,455 parents and caregivers, including 10,996 women through the Parenting Education Programme. UNICEF also reached 15,444 children, of whom 9,266 girls, with specialized child protection services, including age and gender responsive case management and legal support. Despite the significant number of individuals reached with prevention and response services, there is a continued need to scale-up coverage, particularly by increasing MHPSS interventions for children and caregivers. Moreover, specialized child protection services, including age and gender responsive case management and legal support, require further attention to ensure holistic care for vulnerable children.

Livelihood

Humanitarian actors supported displacement-affected populations to enter employment, expand business ventures and to adapt or grow agricultural activities. This support included access to business loans, training, and awareness-raising on labour law. Climate change has severe consequences for small-scale farmers in Iraq, who lack resources to tackle challenges like extreme weather events and pest infestations. As a result, various actors implemented programmes aimed at supporting small-scale farmers, including through the provision of seeds and education, as well as assistance in transitioning towards climate resilient farming.

In 2023, FAO supported 1,500 returnee households, mainly smallholder crop and livestock farmers generating income from cereal and vegetable production, dairy and agri-food processing, small ruminant fattening and animal fodder production, through capacity development and technology transfer. This support contributed to improving their households' food security status and standard of living.

Mine Action

Mine action plays a pivotal role in enabling reconstruction and development efforts, facilitating the return of IDPs

and supporting the resumption of livelihood activities. In 2023, as a result of clearance operations conducted by the Government, humanitarian organizations and commercial companies, about 26 million square meters of land were surveyed and cleared in the country and are now identified as free of EO risks, according to data by the Department for Mine Action (DMA). Such interventions, however, have been conducted in less than 20 per cent of the total EO contaminated areas in Iraq including the conflict affected governorates⁹.

Food Security

During the last quarter of 2022, WFP implemented a targeting exercise to identify and better address the needs of the most food-insecure households. As a result of this exercise, the number of WFP beneficiaries decreased from 278,000 to 115,000 among IDPs, and from 74,000 to 38,000 among refugees. In March 2023, due to funding shortages, WFP had to proceed with a further prioritization of food assistance, ceasing support in IDP camps, while continuing to aid 38,000 Syrian refugees living in camps in the KRI and 2,000 returnees in the Jeddah 1 Rehabilitation Center in the Ninewa Governorate.

UNHCR and WFP continue to advocate for the inclusion of IDPs into the two main national social assistance programmes: the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the Social Safety Net (SSN). UNHCR also continues processing civil documents for IDPs, which would facilitate their access to public services, including the PDS and SSN. UNHCR advocated with the federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) to assess IDPs in camps and review their eligibility for inclusion in the SSN. Those eligible now receive IQD 125,000 (about US\$ 95) per person per month.

Since May 2023, WFP with support from the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), are providing monthly multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) to approximately 1,600 households across Ninewa, Kirkuk, Baghdad, Salah Al-Din, Anbar and Diyala. The project targets vulnerable households lacking essential civil documents and aims at supporting them

in covering essential needs, while they also receive legal counselling from UNHCR and its partners with the objective of obtaining civil documentation.

Localization

Many international actors have made progress in advancing their localization strategies, empowering local actors to lead humanitarian, peace and development efforts. Capacity building was provided to Government actors, with a notable example being the training delivered to Department of Education personnel to identify at-risk children and children with additional needs. Capacity building has also been provided to local NGOs on social cohesion, advocacy and communications. Furthermore, international actors continued to partner with local organizations leading on the implementation of social cohesion and protection programming.

2.4 Support by the Government

The GoI and the KRG have been supporting IDP camps located in KRI and in East Mosul. For East Mosul camps, the GoI Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD) provides water, food packages, hygiene kits, support to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, as well as electricity through the provision of generators, diesel fuel, kerosene for winter, and by covering operators' and maintenance costs. Moreover, the MoMD exceptionally provides some form of humanitarian assistance to IDPs from Jurf Al-Sakhr residing in informal sites in the Anbar governorate. In the KRI, the Ministry of Interior, with UNHCR funding, supports Camp Management through the JCCC, while the relevant KRG line ministries provide basic services, including electricity and WASH services, to most KRI camps.

Schools for IDPs both inside and outside camps are operated by the GoI Ministry of Education, that also covers the payment of staff salaries. Through UNICEF's advocacy, the KRG Ministry of Education and its General Directorates in Duhok, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah Governorates facilitated increased access to education for out-of-camp students, by implementing double shifts in over 120 school buildings within host communities. This collaborative effort significantly expanded educational opportunities for displaced students. Similarly, the operation of primary health-care centers is run by the GoI Ministry of Health, including the payment of salaries for staff working therein.

The KRG Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (KMoLSA) established child protection units at the Ministry and at governorate and district level. KMoLSA social workers provide case management support to children exposed to protection risks in many IDP camps, as well as to some out-of-camp children with support from UNICEF.

In terms of existing Governmental mechanisms to provide food assistance to IDPs, there are three types of services currently provided by the GoI: 1) food distributions by MoMD, 2) provision of food rations through the PDS, and 3) cash assistance under the SSN programme. IDPs enrolled in both the PDS, and the SSN programme are entitled to 12 food baskets per year.

2.5

Major Humanitarian Gaps and Challenges

Dire conditions in East Mosul Camps

The IDPs in the three East Mosul camps (Hasansham U2, Hasansham U3 and Khazer M1) face dire living conditions, compounded by severe restrictions on their freedom of movement, which make them dependent on assistance received in the absence of livelihoods opportunities. These IDPs have limited access to basic services, as camps are located far from any urban center. Electricity, water, sanitation and hygiene provision is inadequate, posing significant public health challenges and exacerbating protection risks. Schools within the camps are understaffed and overcrowded, while health services are inadequate, with residents often necessitating outside referrals that the majority, however, cannot access due to movement restrictions.

National social protection schemes

Existing national social protection schemes, including food rations provided through the PDS and the cash assistance SSN programme, currently do not benefit all the eligible IDPs. While the majority of IDP households in KRI camps receive food rations from the PDS (12 food baskets per year), some IDPs face challenges to register as beneficiaries at their places of origin. Residing in camps, beneficiaries make informal arrangements to collect their food baskets from the food agents at their place of origin. Of the 26,500 IDP households in KRI camps, only 9,000 receive cash assistance under the SSN programme. Due to the complex bureaucratic procedures required to access government support, IDPs are often reliant on protection actors to receive necessary information and register to obtain these services.

Civil Documentation

Promoting access to core civil documentation, including the national Unified ID, remains a priority. UNHCR continues to collaborate with the federal Ministry of Interior to deploy mobile civil documentation missions to the East Mosul Camps to assist individuals who are

unable to return to their areas of origin, even temporarily, to apply for core documentation. Advocacy continues at the central level to remove legal and administrative barriers to accessing documentation for persons with complex cases, including those with perceived affiliations to extremist groups.

Child Protection (CP) services

Due to the ongoing budget crisis in KRI, KRG MoLSA has not yet been able to take over CP services. The decrease in financial resources has led to short-term interventions and the interruption of CP services in many areas. UNICEF has continued to support CP and education services as a bridging effort until KRI budget issues are resolved. There is a need to institutionalize core CP services and provide capacity building to CP structures in KRG MoLSA, as well as within the judicial and police systems.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Protection actors identified an increased need for GBV programming, which has been exacerbated by the inadequacy of government services in this area. Although many actors continue to provide GBV support, the needs outweigh resources available to NGOs, and action from the Government is essential.

WASH

Many IDPs residing in informal sites lack access to essential WASH services such as water and waste disposal. Some actors were able to fill the gap by providing service extensions, benefiting both IDPs and host communities and positively impacting social cohesion.

Education

Neither the GoI nor KRG have funding for infrastructure upkeep or to cover recurrent maintenance costs; moreover, no training and development opportunities are available to teachers.

Health and Nutrition Services

Meeting the health needs of vulnerable groups remains a key challenge, as investments under the Stabilization Fund focused mainly on supporting the infrastructural component of the health sector and did not address the availability of health services. Current health services in informal settlements, and soon in many formal camps, will no longer be available to people in need, increasing morbidity and mortality amongst these populations and the risk of disease outbreaks within camps as well as host community.

The package of health and nutrition services, including growth monitoring of children under the age of five and routine immunizations, was handed over from UNICEF to the KRG Ministry of Health (KMoH). However, due to financial problems, KMoH was unable to provide these services at fixed locations in the camps.

Shelter

The replacement of tents by MoMD in the East Mosul Camps is required, and authorization by authorities for IDPs to upgrade their own shelters is essential.

Mine Action

The mine action sector faced a downturn in donor funding in 2023, which is expected to further decline in 2024. The UN continues to advocate for allocating financial resources to humanitarian mine action through the State budget to reduce EO risks and enable the safe and dignified return of IDPs. Iraq is a state party to various humanitarian disarmament instruments including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Therefore, it is indispensable for the country to meet its obligations and protect the Iraqi people by mobilizing adequate human and financial resources.

Government of Iraq Decision to close IDP camps:

The Iraq Council of Ministers (CoM) discussed in its regular meeting on 2 January 2024 the displacement situation in Iraq, and set the deadline on 30 June, which was later extended to 30 July 2024, to close all the remaining formal IDP camps located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, offering a comprehensive package of incentives to encourage IDPs to voluntarily exit the camps, through three pathways: 1) return to areas of origin, 2) relocation, or 3) local integration.

The closure of the camps entails withdrawing all GoI services provided to IDPs in and out-of-camps in KRI by 30 July which includes operating health centers within the camps and schools for both in- and out-of-camp students, as well as the payment of related staff salaries. Provision of hygiene kits, food packages, and fuel for generators and kerosene during winter in the 23 IDP camps will be suspended. Furthermore, provision of water, WASH

services and electricity in the East Mosul camps will also be terminated.

Concerns remain that the withdrawal of assistance may result in premature returns to areas of origin or IDPs moving to informal sites in areas of return or areas of displacement, should the key obstacles to durable solutions (shelter, livelihoods, access to services, security) remain unaddressed.

Humanitarian actors and the UN in Iraq have consistently been advocating for dignified solutions for in camp IDPs and that durable solutions should continue to be explored before closing camps (safe and voluntary return of IDPs to their areas of origin, local integration for IDPs in areas of displacement, relocation of IDPs into other communities within the country).

Part 3:

Humanitarian Transition Progress

Humanitarian Transition efforts, including the shift to sector-level coordination, continued throughout 2023, with humanitarian actors working closely with line ministries and government entities to ensure a smooth handover of sectoral services and coordination role by enhancing Government ownership and capacity.

Health

Following the decision to dissolve the Cluster system, WHO has been working jointly with its main partner, the Ministry of Health, to coordinate the health response. Due to reduced financing, many health partners have ceased their operations, leaving WHO and MoH, alongside a few remaining partners, to mitigate gaps through close coordination at the governorates' level. Different capacity levels within the Departments of Health, coupled with varying levels of coordination, however, have led to less-than-optimal responses in some instances. Although since the initiation of the Humanitarian Transition, it was agreed that governorate-level departments of health (DoHs) would take over service delivery in IDP camps and informal settlements, this has not been implemented and remains a key priority, with continuing advocacy for the respective DoHs and MoH to take over this critical responsibility.

The transition from the WHO Early Warning (EWARN) system to detect disease outbreaks to the MoH surveillance system is on track. WHO is working closely with the different departments of health on enhancing their capacities and mainstreaming the surveillance as part of the national health system.

Child Protection (CP)

UNICEF is working with GoI MoLSA, through the Child Welfare Commission, to support the transition of the CP sub-cluster coordination mechanism, with multisectoral membership from relevant ministries' departments and national and international NGOs. In the KRI, UNICEF

supported the reactivation of the KRG MoLSA-led Child Protection High Level Committee to assume the CP coordination role in the region, with multisectoral membership from other relevant ministers, UN agencies, and civil society organizations (CSOs).

UNICEF is working to hand over CP services to the KRG MoLSA. While this transition was planned for 2023, the ongoing KRG budget crisis has prevented the handover in IDP camps and communities. In addition to the budget crisis, the expected adoption of the Children's Act by the KRG Parliament is also delayed due to the postponement of legislative elections. When these issues are resolved, UNICEF expects to be able to work closely with MoLSA to take over CP activities focused on IDPs and refugees. In the interim phase, it is critical to sustain these activities, so that they do not collapse before they can be transferred to the government.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Following the deactivation of the Cluster system, UNFPA played a critical role in handing over the GBV sub-cluster to both GoI and KRI authorities, through a phased-out approach that involved transitioning to a sector approach under the leadership of government lead agencies and national GBV service providers, with technical, operational, and funding support from UN agencies, INGOs, donors and national actors.

Additionally, UNFPA supported the development of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the GoI GBV sector working group. At the KRG level, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNFPA, MoLSA, and the SEED Foundation for the handover of the KRI GBV sector working group. Both working groups (GoI and KRI) started to hold meetings in June 2023. The KRI GBV sector also activated governorate-level working groups for Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah Governorates whose meetings take place on a monthly basis.

Furthermore, UNFPA Iraq has actively facilitated and supported sector-led groups at both the KRI and GoI levels, fostering a collaborative environment for addressing GBV challenges. By providing coordination and technical support for sector meetings, UNFPA Iraq has played a pivotal role in ensuring that stakeholders are able to come together, share best practices, and collectively work towards the common goal of combating GBV. This collaborative approach has not only strengthened partnerships but has also contributed to a comprehensive and sustainable response to GBV in Iraq.

Agriculture

FAO is co-chairing the Sector Coordination Group on Food, Agriculture and Irrigation (SCG-FAI). The Group meets regularly and discusses food systems and agri-food value chains covering the steps “From Farm to Fork”, with the aim of identifying priorities for action and investment that may foster higher outputs and job creation, while introducing new climate-smart technologies and management practices to achieve sustainable growth. The main objective is to fully incorporate the GoI, including a representative from KRI, into the structure with responsibility as one of the co-chairs.

Food Security

In terms of the transition from WFP to Government-led food assistance, a WFP survey conducted in August-September 2023 shows that the situation differs across various population groups. In March 2023, due to funding shortages, WFP halted food assistance for IDPs in KRI camps and this is the IDP group that has thus far experienced the most comprehensive transition: 58.1 per cent of IDPs reported having received both PDS and MoMD assistance, 29.6 per cent only PDS support and 8.8 per cent only MoMD assistance. Another 3.5 per cent reportedly received no assistance, neither from MoMD nor PDS. WFP is advocating for continued PDS support, and for the inclusion of all qualifying in and out-of-camp IDPs in the SSN cash programme.

WASH

WASH sector coordination is led by the GoI Ministry of Construction, Housing, and Public Municipalities in Baghdad and by the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism in KRI, and in both cases is co-chaired by UNICEF. By mobilizing available resources and leveraging the skills and expertise of other stakeholders, including Mercy Corps and the Global WASH Cluster, UNICEF is enhancing the capacity of the two ministries to lead sectoral coordination. UNICEF is also planning to support the establishment of a management information system (MIS) for the two entities in 2024.

Education

To ensure coordination among education partners, UNICEF supports the education sector coordination at governorate level, which is led by the Governors. It is important to support the Government to ensure that access to education is available and sustainable for all IDP children irrespective of their location. With the GoI decision to close the IDP camps, and its Representative offices in KRI, it becomes imperative to support the government to create a permanent education system for IDPs who will remain in the KRI in the foreseeable future until they found a durable solutions suitable to them including potentially integration in the area of displacement. Additionally, given the assumption that IDP returns may happen spontaneously over the foreseeable future, it is important that the Government’s system is supportive in terms of school transfer and certification recognition.

The Iraq Cash Forum (ICF)

This forum, co-chaired by WFP, World Vision and the Rwanda Foundation, focuses on strengthening collaboration between recovery and development actors in Iraq, by facilitating engagement and coordination on Cash and Vouchers Assistance (CVA), market assessment tools, and linking CVA with social protection and advocacy towards integration of vulnerable population groups.

Mine Action

The two national mine action authorities, the Gol Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) in KRI, lead the mine action sector, by managing, overseeing, coordinating and monitoring the activities implemented by mine action operators.

In support of sustainable mine action response through continued donor contributions, UNMAS established the Local Mine Action Support Group (LMASG) in April 2023. The LMASG seeks to enhance mine action coordination among donors, with both DMA and IKMAA invited to take part. UNMAS provided technical and advisory support to mine action entities to effectively manage and coordinate the sector. Furthermore, UNMAS continues to enhance the capacity of national operators and is currently directly funding two national NGOs to implement mine action activities in the Mosul/ Tel Kaif and Sinjar districts in Ninewa.

The National Mine Action Strategy 2023-2028 was launched in August 2023. The strategy focuses on enhanced national mine action ownership by strengthening capacity, and by empowering the two national mine action authorities (NMAAs), namely the DMA and IKMAA, to fulfill their responsibilities in the most effective manner.

Part 4:

Overview of Durable Solutions' achievements in 2023 under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and Durable Solutions Framework

Since the establishment of the Durable Solutions mechanism in Iraq, the HCT has recognized the need for a development-focused approach in addressing the remaining needs of Iraqi citizens. Working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, partners have been implementing activities and programmes to address protracted displacement and achieve durable solutions outcomes.

In 2023, Durable Solutions partners implemented more than 1,542 projects which addressed livelihoods, housing, land and property issues, basic services, social cohesion, documentation and legal protection, as well as government strengthening needs¹⁰. Concerted efforts between partners and local authorities enabled more than 27,000 IDPs to return to their areas of origin; this however, represents a significant decrease compared to 2022 when 123,930 IDPs returned to areas of origin¹¹. Remaining needs are more complex and interlinked, requiring significant investment by the Government and support from development actors. Shelter, livelihoods, access to public services and security remain a key priority in locations such as Diyala, Salah Al-Din, and in the Ba'aj and Sinjar districts of Ninewa.

In response to evolving coordination priorities and the need for increased Government leadership, the Area-Based Coordination groups (ABCs), comprising humanitarian, development, stabilization, and peace-building actors that were established in 2020, were phased out in 2023, and seven Joint Coordination Forums (JCFs) were set up across various governorates (Anbar, Diyala, Ninewa, Salah-al-Din, Kirkuk, Basra and KRI) to

replace the ABCs starting from January 2024. The JCFs now serve as the primary platforms for governorate-level coordination, strengthening collaboration between authorities and aid actors. However, in light of the unique challenges faced in Ninewa's Sinjar and Ba'aj districts, ABC Sinjar will continue to operate, providing ongoing area-level coordination and support. As part of the handover of the ABCs, six revised plans of actions were drafted with the Government to map out remaining gaps related to durable solutions for East and [West Anbar](#), Kirkuk, Salah-Al-Din, [Mosul](#) and [Sinjar](#).

The DSTF and Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) have been closely working on drafting the 'Roadmap on Accelerating the Implementation of the National Plan to Resolve Displacement in Iraq'. This Roadmap aims to guide the convergence of efforts between the Government and its partners, establishing pathways for Durable Solutions to displacement. While the initial version was presented to the government relevant authorities in November 2023 to solicit additional feedback prior to finalization from GOI and KRG. In early 2024, the Government of Iraq announced additional provisions and entitlements specific to IDP population residing in IDP camps in Kurdistan region of Iraq, the provisions are announced in an adopted Cabinet Resolution 24007 for the year 2024 by the Iraqi Council of Ministers. This development necessitates updating the Roadmap to ensure all former and recent provisions targeting IDPs are integrated into the broader durable solutions framework. Subsequently, the road map had been reworked and an action plan is under preparation.

In response to potential camps closure due to the implementation of the cabinet Resolution, the DSTF has also developed key advocacy messages emphasizing the importance of informed, safe, voluntary and dignified returns, local integration and relocation. This advocacy aims to ensure that humanitarian principles are upheld and that all provisions and entitlements enlisted in the decision are accessible for IDPs that wish to depart the camps.

The Durable Solutions coordination mechanism comprising the DSTF, the DSTWG, the Return Working Group (RWG) and the remaining Sinjar ABC will continue to fulfil the overall objective enshrined in the Iraq Durable Solutions Strategy and Operational Framework, to ensure that coordinated interventions support IDPs, returnees and other displacement-affected population to pursue and ultimately achieve voluntary, safe, and dignified durable solutions to their displacement through return, local integration, or settlement elsewhere in Iraq. With the JCFs led by the Government providing more overarching coordination, the 2020-2024 UNSDCF with its separate pillar on durable solutions will give way to a new UNSDCF at the end of 2024.

Going forward, the priorities under the Durable Solutions workstream include strengthening Government systems and processes in the areas of compensation for damaged property, restoration of public services, creating enabling environments for livelihood opportunities, strengthening resilience and tackling obstacles to durable solutions for IDPs facing political and security barriers.

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations	IOM	International Organization for Migration
ABC	Area-Based Coordination	JCCC	Joint Crisis Coordination Center
APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	JCF	Joint Coordination Forum
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
CCNA	Cross-Cutting Needs Assessment	KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions	LMASG	Local Mine Action Support Group
CP	Child Protection	MA	Mine Action
CSO	Civil Society Organizations	MCNA	Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment
CoM	Council of Ministers	MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance	MIS	Management Information System
CwC	Communication with Communities	MoCHPS	Ministry of Construction, Housing and Public Municipalities
DHIS	District Health Information System	MoE	Ministry of Education
DMA	Directorate of Mine Action	MoH	Ministry of Health
DoH	Department of Health	Mol	Ministry of Interior
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix	MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
DSTF	Durable Solutions Task Force	MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
DSTWG	Durable Solutions Technical Working Group	MPCA	Multi-purpose Cash Assistance
ECHO	European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	NFI	Non-Food Item
EH	Explosive Hazard	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
EMC	East Mosul Camps	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
EO	Explosive Ordnance	PDS	Public Distribution System
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	RWG	Return Working Group
EWARN	Early Warning, Alert and Response Network	SCG-FAI	Sector Coordination Group on Food, Agriculture and Irrigation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	SEED	Social, Educational, and Economic Development Foundation
GBV	Gender-based Violence	SNFI	Shelter and Non-Food Items
GHO	Global Humanitarian Overview	SSN	Social Safety Net
GoI	Government of Iraq	UN	United Nations
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator	UNCT	United Nations Country Team
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
HH	Household	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
HLP	Housing, Land and Property	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Services
HTO	Humanitarian Transition Overview	UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
ICF	Iraq Cash Forum	US\$	United States Dollar
IDPs	Internally Displaced Person/s	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
IED	Improvised Explosive Device	WFP	World Food Programme
IKMAA	Iraq Kurdistan Mine Action Agency	WHO	World Health Organization

End notes

- 1 See [Progress Towards Solutions Index – IRAQ DTM \(iom.int\)](#).
- 2 Stayees are people who did not flee their homes due to the 2014-2017 crisis
- 3 See, [1-15 JAN Eviction ET 2024 \(iom.int\)](#).
- 4 [Iraq: Cross-Cutting Needs Assessment \(CCNA\) Key Multi-Sectoral Findings \(January 2024\) - Iraq | ReliefWeb](#)
- 5 [PowerPoint Presentation \(impact-initiatives.org\)](#)
- 6 DI is a tool designed to measure the severity of conditions in the locations of displacement [does not include in-camp populations]. The DI is based on 20 indicators across 5 domains: (1) livelihoods, (2) housing, (3) infrastructure and services, (4) safety and security and (5) social inclusiveness. [Displacement Index - IRAQ DTM \(iom.int\)](#) page 2 and 3
- 7 The Return Index is a tool designed to measure the severity of conditions in locations of return and is based on 16 indicators across two domains: (1) livelihoods and basic services, and (2) social cohesion and safety perceptions. [Return_index_round19_October2023.pdf \(iom.int\)](#)
- 8 The term explosive ordnance encompasses the following munitions: Mines, Cluster Munitions, Unexploded Ordnance, Abandoned Ordnance, Booby traps, and Improvised Explosive Devices
- 9 Source: Directorate for Mine Action database, 30 April 2024
- 10 Of these 747 projects were completed, 936 projects were ongoing and 219 were under planning. See [Home \(iraqdurablesolutions.net\)](#) ABC Dashboard.
- 11 See DTM Master List Report.
- 12 In line with the Iraq Council of Ministers' decision to close all IDPs camps by 30 July 2024, the Tazade camp in Sulaymaniyah was closed on 19 March 2024. It had hosted a total of 121 families, comprising 565 individuals.

**HUMANITARIAN
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IRAQ

ISSUED JUNE 2024