



# Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Against a backdrop of cyclical violence, protracted displacement and economic uncertainty, Iraq's fragility has grown during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Converging shocks have slowed the pace of reconstruction following years of conflict, disrupted access to basic services and devastated livelihoods.

## Objectives

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is working with partners in the Food Security Cluster to:

- Protect livelihood sources and improve food availability, access and stability for returnees and displaced populations in and out of camps.
- Foster self-reliance and minimize negative coping mechanisms of displaced and returnee populations.

## Activities



### Restore agricultural assets

irrigation schemes | cash-for-work activities | cash+



### Increase food production

animal fodder | animal health services (vaccination and treatment) | agrifood processing | backyard poultry | smallholder farming systems



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## Iraq

### Humanitarian Response Plan 2021



to assist

**185 090 people**



FAO requires

**USD 22.7 million**



period

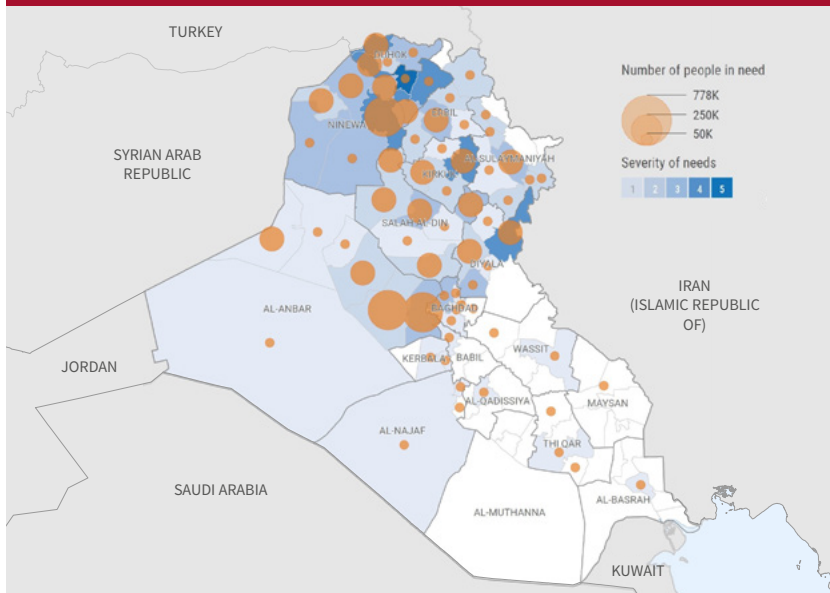
**January–December 2021**

Support for agricultural livelihoods will enable the most vulnerable households to meet their basic needs while building food security and supporting the transition towards self-reliance.



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## People in need and severity of needs (2021)



Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2021. *Iraq: Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*. (forthcoming)

## Situation analysis



**435 000** people in need of immediate food and livelihood assistance



**1.3 million** people internally displaced



**4.7 million** returnees

## Impact on food security

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have deepened vulnerabilities and stunted the progress of Iraq's agricultural rehabilitation in the wake of years of turmoil. Containment measures in response to the pandemic have disrupted livelihoods as well as trade. Iraq, which imports roughly 50 percent of its food, took an even greater hit with the collapse of the global oil market in 2020, further impacting its ability to import food and causing prices to rise while incomes plummeted. Despite a good harvest in 2020, vulnerable households that were already facing constraints within the agricultural value chain before the pandemic have seen their food security and livelihoods worsen.

Strained post-conflict rehabilitation, combined with the impacts of the pandemic, are preventing the most vulnerable from meeting their basic needs while prolonging dependence on humanitarian assistance. The internally displaced – both in and out of camps – and the growing returnee population have borne the brunt of the enduring crisis.

To continue restoring Iraq's fragile yet significant agriculture sector, livelihood activities are needed that can diversify food production, rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure

and restore agricultural value chains. Supporting animal health is particularly critical during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect livestock – an essential livelihood source for vulnerable households – and reduce the potential of a secondary zoonotic disease outbreak, which would burden an already stressed health system. Interventions that integrate cash and agricultural inputs are critical to provide an additional layer of social protection for vulnerable smallholder farmers, simultaneously helping to smooth household consumption patterns while improving production, generating income and increasing asset ownership for longer-term dietary diversity and food security.

These activities will support the integration of poor vulnerable households in local agricultural value chains, increase their access to markets and services, and provide them with the means to both meet their basic needs and move towards self-reliance.

## Contact

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