



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

## WFP Iraq Country Brief February 2023



## In Numbers



**174,114 people assisted**

in February 2023

**US\$ 2.35 million** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 20.8 million** six months (March-August 2023) net funding requirements

## Operational Context

In Iraq, intermittent conflict as well as the impact of climate change continue to affect the lives of people. There are currently 1.17 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Insecurity, lack of livelihoods, and destroyed or damaged housing hampers people's abilities to return home. WFP Iraq's assistance focuses on changing lives, saving lives, and supporting the Government of Iraq with social protection reform, youth empowerment, and combatting climate change towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger. Iraq's progress on the SDGs has been hindered by the challenges of rebuilding infrastructure in areas affected by conflict with ISIL, weak institutions and governance, climate change, delayed implementation of reforms and inadequate opportunities for youth.

WFP Iraq is currently shifting its role from emergency response to resilience building and long-term sustainable development. This paradigm shift is critical as Iraq is currently experiencing adverse effects of climate change (fifth most affected country globally) especially in southern Iraq, which is reflected in reduced rainfall and decreased water levels in the country's two rivers (Tigris and Euphrates) resulting in increased salinity that, in turn, heavily affects agriculture.



Population: **42.2 million** (UNFPA 2021)

2021 Human Development Index: 121 out of 191 (lowest)

Poverty rate: **24.8%** (Ministry of Planning, World Bank, 2021)

**1.17 million** IDPs (IOM)  
**260,686** Syrian refugees in Iraq

## Operational Updates

- In February, WFP provided cash assistance to more than 135,000 IDPs and over 38,000 refugees through its crisis response programme. Additionally, WFP provided 310 Immediate Ration Response kits to 161 families transferring from Al-Hol camp to Jadaa1 camp and 12 IRR kits to six additional families in Duhok affected by a fire incident in camp.
- Under the economic empowerment portfolio, WFP is supporting more than 5,000 young men and women in 13 governorates with technical vocational training, in-kind support, and market linkages. The training aims to transition breadwinners in Shariya camp in Duhok to be self-reliant through income generation. Preparations are ongoing for cash transfers and toolkit distributions. WFP is also supporting the technical vocational education and training (TVET) system by introducing training of trainers (TOT) on solar-powered systems and providing necessary equipment. This helps youth gain skills in this blooming sector.
- In the northern governorates of Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah, the Jousour programme completed various activities with universities and institutions including online courses, classes, and agreements. Additionally, twelve alumni have been accepted as online interns at Princeton Company in the United States.
- The implementation of the resilience and climate change projects is moving forward with the ongoing distribution of 200 beehives in the southern governorates as well as the rehabilitation of water infrastructure and construction of a mangrove nursery. Agricultural inputs have also been delivered to diversify rural livelihoods among vulnerable communities. In addition, to improve agriculture and combat desertification in several areas including Salah-Aldin, Anbar, Najaf, Wassit, Diwaniya and Duhok, WFP is distributing modern irrigation equipment, establishing dune fixation sites and implementing water infrastructure rehabilitation and climate-proofing activities. Additionally, farmers are being trained on the use of drought-tolerant seeds.

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**Photo Caption:** WFP staff provide technical assistance to Ministry of Trade's Directorate of Public Distribution in Najaf during digitalization

## Country Strategic Plan (CSP, 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2024)

| Total Requirements<br>(In US\$) | Total Received<br>(In US\$)  | Percentage Funded |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>601 m</b>                    | <b>315 m</b>   | <b>45%</b>        |
| 2023 Requirements<br>(In US\$)  | Six-Month Net Funding<br>Requirements (in US\$)<br>(March – August 2023) |                   |
| <b>80 m</b>                     | <b>20.8</b>  |                   |

### Strategic Result 1: Access to food (SDG Target 2.1)

**Strategic Outcome 1 (SO 1):** Crisis-affected people in Iraq, including IDPs and refugees, are able to meet basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises throughout the year.

**Focus area:** *Crisis Response*

#### Activities:

- Provide unconditional food assistance to IDPs, refugees and other crisis-affected people.

### Strategic Result 4: Sustainable food systems (SDG Target 2.4)

**Strategic Outcome 2 (SO 2):** Targeted communities, including farmers, have enhanced livelihoods and increased resilience to shocks by 2024

**Focus area:** *Resilience Building*

#### Activities:

- Provide livelihood support, asset creation and climate adaptation activities, including capacity strengthening, to targeted farmers and communities.

### Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening (SDG Target 17.9)

**Strategic Outcome 3 (SO 3):** National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities and systems for targeting and assisting food-insecure vulnerable people by 2024

**Focus area:** *Resilience Building*

#### Activities:

- Provide institutional capacity strengthening to Government officials and partners.
- Provide support to Government officials and partners in enhancing information technology for managing PDS modernization and in strengthening the safety net component of the Government social protection system.

- Under the social protection portfolio, the registration, verification, and activation process of the public distribution system (PDS) in Najaf governorate is ongoing reaching 84 percent of the Najaf population. The registration team also completed a Social Behaviour and Community Change (SBCC) campaign and planning to conduct an after-action review workshop with the Government.
- WFP finalized the single registry business process re-engineering report with Development Pathways. The report analysed the current social schemes, business processes and proposed key single registry business functions. Key recommendations will be discussed by the Technical Committees gathering the EU-UN Joint Partnership and six Government ministries, before

finalizing the single registry design. The school feeding programme has resumed in 13 districts in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and 6 contracted suppliers. Around 480,000 school-age children received daily nutritious meals over four feeding days weekly.

## Monitoring

- WFP conducted 210 monitoring visits in February, which included visits to 49 cash-out distribution points for IDPs and Syrian refugees, along with 75 visits to vocational training centres (VTC) in 13 governorates, 20 visits to rural livelihoods sites, 28 visits to Jousour locations, 31 visits for school feeding, four e-voucher points, and three shops. Additionally, 155 monitoring interviews were carried out with those who were assisted. VTC baseline data collection is ongoing in the areas of operation.

## Challenges

- WFP assistance for IDPs and refugees will conclude by April 2023 due to a significant funding shortfall. As this shortfall coincides with the holy month of Ramadan, WFP is seeking support from the Government of Iraq and the donor community to continue assisting these vulnerable families during this month of solidarity, and beyond. WFP Iraq requires US\$ 9 million to provide assistance to IDPs until 30 June 2023 and refugees until December 2023. WFP Iraq will continue to fundraise and advocate for continuing food assistance for refugees up to 2024.
- Due to the transition from humanitarian to development context in Iraq, WFP resilience activities in Iraq are challenged by the lack of consistent, sufficient and flexible funding.
- The school feeding programme also faced delays caused by administrative processes, and inadequate technical capacities and equipment for laboratory tests. To address these issues, WFP recommended adequate planning, hosting synergy events, and exploring options for supporting laboratories at the governorate level.
- Limited Government capacity and overlap between different Government entities are constraining the Public Distribution System registration process. However, WFP is conducting capacity strengthening through joint training and coordination between WFP and the Ministry of Trade staff to facilitate the implementation process.

## Donors

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