



World Food Programme

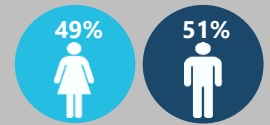
SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief April 2021

In Numbers

279,974 people assisted
in April 2021



US\$4.31 million distributed through cash-based transfers

US\$36 million six months net funding requirements (June – November 2021)

Operational Context

In Iraq, intermittent conflict continues to aggravate the poverty rate and threaten livelihoods. Following the return process that began in 2018, the situation and needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees remain precarious. WFP Iraq's assistance focuses on saving lives and protecting livelihoods – supporting the Government of Iraq's social safety nets towards zero hunger. The challenges of rebuilding infrastructure, providing basic services, promoting social cohesion, creating jobs, developing skills, and progressing towards gender equality whilst maintaining security have impeded the country's efforts to make progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2020-2024 in Iraq has an all-encompassing goal of supporting the Government of Iraq to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, shifting WFP's role from implementer to enabler. This is critical in the transitioning from immediate crisis response to greater resilience, and longer-term peace and development. Mainstreaming gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive programming is also key.

The first case of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 was recorded in Iraq in February 2020. Given the ongoing cases reported by the Ministry of Health, and the decision taken by the Iraqi government to limit gatherings, WFP and its partners continue to take additional measures to safeguard the health and wellbeing of people assisted.



Population: **39 million**
(Ministry of Trade, 2019)

Poverty rate: **31.7%** (Ministry of Planning, World Bank, UNICEF, 2020)

2020 Human Development Index:
123 of 189 (lowest)

1.2 million IDPs (IOM)
245,953 Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

Operational Updates

- In April, WFP provided cash and food assistance to 192,443 IDPs and 70,083 refugees, and 17,448 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through resilience building initiatives. COVID-19 cases across Iraq continued to rise; WFP continued to ensure precautionary measures were in place to help keep people safe. Some additional measures such as curfews and movement restrictions were also introduced by authorities during the month of Ramadan.
- A massive fire at Baghdad's Ibn Khatib hospital occurred overnight between 24 and 25 April, resulting in over 80 fatalities and 110 injuries. The fire started when oxygen tanks exploded in a ward for COVID-19 patients. People assisted by WFP were not affected, however the incident highlighted the need for stronger control measures and better COVID-19 treatment facilities in the country.
- WFP visited four camps in Duhok as part of preparations for the new 'fresh food project,' whereby WFP will build capacity and link retailers with new opportunities to source directly from farmers, lower their costs, and offer more variety and better prices for fresh food to people assisted. The team collected key information from the camp management, retailers, and held focus group discussions with families in the camps. A second phase of assessments is being planned, before recommendations are made and finalised.
- WFP's Emergency Preparedness Officer met with the Head of Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) in Erbil, to discuss support for Logistics Capacity Assessments, logistics planning and [Field-Based Preparedness Project](#) activities and updates.
- In Anbar, Baghdad, Duhok, Erbil, Ninewa and Sulaymaniyah, WFP began the 2021 programme of EMPACT online classes in literacy, ICT and language. EMPACT – 'Empowerment in Action!' – helps vulnerable Iraqi and Syrian refugee youth learn digital skills and English, equipping them with vital tools and knowhow for the job market.
- In Basra, WFP launched a Call for Partnerships for resilience-building Food for Assets (FFA) projects, to expand operations to help address food insecurity and climate change in vulnerable rural communities.

Contact: Sharon Rapose (sharon.rapose@wfp.org)
Representative: Abdirahman Meygag
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/iraq

Photo Caption: In April, WFP EMPACT graduate Ziney won the [2021 Pink Lady Photo Competition- WFP Storytellers category](#). Ziney, 20, from Al-Hasakeh in Syria, has been living in a refugee camp in the Kurdistan Region for eight years. Her winning photo theme was 'Family.' Ziney's photo represents "Our strong family ties and how we are always there for each other."

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions 2020-2024 (in USD)
522 m	180 m
Total Requirements for 2021	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (June – November 2021)
135 m	36 m

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.

- To further support economically vulnerable families in urban areas, WFP with partners Rebuild Iraq Recruitment Program (RIRP) and Mercy Hands are working on a new initiative prioritising women-headed households. As part of WFP’s ‘Urban Livelihoods’ programme for people directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the women-led small and medium businesses will receive cash grants, capacity strengthening, help with business development, and new or upgraded assets.
- Under the partnership with the Ministry of Trade (MoT) to digitalize the national Public Distribution System (PDS) for food rations, discussions are ongoing with the Central Bank of Iraq, Ministry of Trade, financial service providers and a ‘gateway’ payment company, to enable citizens to make e-payments on the ‘Tamwini’ (‘My Food Ration’) smartphone application, through a wide range of financial service providers. WFP is working with the gateway payment company, which is currently developing the proposal for

integration of different payment options in the Tamwini app. Meanwhile, WFP and MoT are continuing preparations to launch the Tamwini app in Najaf in June, making it available for all 1.6 million citizens in the governorate. The app will enable people to update their data on their phone at home.

- Given the increasing cases of COVID-19 in Iraq, the Ministry of Education (MoE) continued the countrywide closure of schools. WFP and the MoE intend to resume school meals during the next academic year 2021/22 when the health situation in the country has stabilised.
- The Girls Education project to support adolescent girls in Basra to stay in school is continuing, in partnership with the local Directorate of Education, UNICEF and Mercy Hands. On 22 April to mark Girls in ICT day, the partners launched a new Coding Club to empower girls in Basra to learn programming, the first club of its kind in Iraq.
- WFP’s social protection team met with counterparts at UNICEF and ILO to synergise approaches and develop a joint work plan, for their new partnership with the government under the EU-supported joint Social Protection Programme. The core team is ensuring that all activities are aligned and complementary. A Memorandum of Understanding with the government is also being developed.

Monitoring and Assessments

- In April, WFP conducted 162 site visits, including 90 cash-out points for internally displaced people and Syrian refugees, seven cash for work (cash-out sites), 15 EMPACT (cash-out sites), 40 e-voucher points and 10 shops. In addition, 75 monitoring interviews were carried out with people assisted, as well as 244 monitoring interviews with households benefiting from the Girls Education pilot project in Basra.
- WFP continued to publish [joint reports](#) with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Bank on the impact of COVID-19 on food security. Jointly with FAO, WFP also published a study on the [agricultural value chain for four key food commodities: dates, grapes, tomatoes and wheat](#). The [WFP Iraq Annual Country Report 2020](#) and [Infographic Overview](#) were also published.

Funding and Pipeline update

WFP requires an additional USD 36.1 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through November 2021.

Donors

WFP would like to thank all partners for their contributions including Belgium, Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, the Government of Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Nations Agencies, United States, the World Bank, Private Donors and Individual Donors through ShareTheMeal.