



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief May 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)

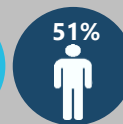
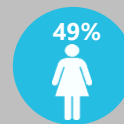
Poverty rate: **31.7%** (Ministry of Planning,
World Bank, UNICEF, 2020)

2020 Human Development Index:
123 of 189 (lowest)

1.2 million IDPs (IOM)
247,305 Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

In Numbers

265,725 people assisted
in May 2021



US\$2.71 million distributed through
cash-based transfers

US\$36.1 million six months net funding
requirements (June – November 2021)

Operational Updates

- In May, WFP provided cash and food assistance to 189,092 IDPs and 69,523 refugees, and 4,838 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through resilience building initiatives.
- The national COVID-19 vaccination campaign, begun by the Ministry of Health in late March, is ongoing. Although new COVID-19 cases continue to be diagnosed, there has been a decrease in the number of daily cases in May, marking a decline since the peak of the second wave in late April. Some protests continue across Iraq, linked to demands for better services, but so far have not been linked to any rise in infections. WFP and its partners continue to take all health and safety precautionary measures during activities.
- On 4 June, a fire broke out in Sharya camp in Duhok, burning down 370 tents. The cause was reportedly an electrical fault. The Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) has provided IQD 500,000 (USD 340) per family affected. On 7 June, WFP began distributing its monthly cash assistance to families in Sharya (nearly 13,000 people assisted monthly by WFP). WHO and partners distributed masks and sanitizers, and put in place a medical team to provide equipment, supplies and treatment to those affected. Other partners worked to provide temporary shelter in tents, while concrete shelters were being built for the families. Air coolers, blankets, stoves, water tanks and mattresses have also been distributed to the families by local authorities.
- In Sulaymaniyah, WFP is providing ready-to-eat food packages (Immediate Response Rations, IRRs) to assist families whose members contracted COVID-19 and have been placed in isolation sites in IDP camps.
- WFP continued the final preparatory visits and assessments in camps for the new 'fresh food project,' whereby WFP will build capacity and link retailers with lower-cost opportunities to source directly from farmers, offer better variety and prices for fresh food to people assisted.
- WFP conducted a training on Joint Logistics Information Exchange, with the Joint Crisis and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) in Baghdad. An advanced level session is planned, towards enhanced coordination on Emergency Preparedness.

Photo Caption: In Basra, WFP and its partners' resilience-building projects provide farmers such as Lateef with support such as the provision and installation of greenhouses, and creation or repair of irrigation systems. The initiative is helping Lateef build a sustainable income to provide for himself and his 11 family members.

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

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions 2020-2024 (in US\$)
522 m	180 m
Total Requirements for 2021	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (June – November 2021)
135 m	36.1 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.

- WFP and its partners continue preparations to commence the next stage of Rural and Urban Resilience projects. Meanwhile, EMPACT online classes continue in ICT and language, as well as expert tracks. EMPACT – ‘Empowerment in Action!’ – helps vulnerable youth to develop digital skills and English, equipping them for the job market.
- Although WFP and the Ministry of Education’s National School Feeding Programme remained on hold, due to school closures, a participatory workshop to develop the national strategy for school feeding was planned for June. WFP, UNICEF, Mercy Hands and local Directorate of Education continued the Girls Education pilot project in Basra. 2,272 adolescent girls were supported. The pilot project incentivizes girls to stay in school through the provision of cash-based entitlements to their households, which help meet their families’ immediate needs.

- Under the partnership with the Ministry of Trade (MoT) to digitalize the national Public Distribution System (PDS) for food rations, the preparations for the roll-out of the “Tamwini” (“My Food Ration”) mobile app to 1.6 million people across Najaf governorate are in the final stages and the roll out is expected in July. The app will enable people to update their data on their phone at home.

- As part of the joint Social Protection Programme with the Government of Iraq, EU, UNICEF and ILO, WFP and partners met with the Central Statistics Office, World Bank and Cash Consortium of Iraq to coordinate on the progress of joint activities, and long-term strategic planning. The government is finalising the questionnaire for the Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey with support from partners. WFP’s resilience-building team met with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and partner ministries to discuss collaboration on resilience initiatives under the Social Protection Programme.

Monitoring and Assessments

- In May, WFP conducted 171 monitoring visits, including 98 cash-out points for IDPs and Syrian refugees, six cash for work (cash-out sites), 16 EMPACT (cash-out sites), 39 e-voucher points, 10 shops, and two Immediate Response Ration distribution points. In addition, 61 monitoring interviews were carried out with people assisted.

- 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. WFP and the World Bank jointly released the [Iraq – High Frequency Phone Survey to Monitor Impacts of COVID-19](#) report.

- In light of media reports around low water levels in Iraq, WFP undertook a seasonal analysis. The assessments revealed that the 2021 rainfall season has been characterised by below average conditions, particularly in the northern governorates and Kurdistan Region. This could impact upon the final yield of the two major crops: wheat and barley. WFP’s May surveys noted that 8 percent of people in Ninewa and Kirkuk governorates have insufficient food consumption, twice as many as the 4 percent national average. Similarly, 13.4 percent of people in Ninewa reported employing negative coping strategies, above the 7.5 percent national average. WFP continues to monitor the situation closely, particularly the impact on food security.

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.