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 on 24 February. Given the increasing cases reported by the Ministry of Health, and the decision taken by the Iraqi Government to limit gatherings, WFP and its partners are taking additional measures to safeguard the health and wellbeing of people assisted.

Operational Update & COVID-19 Response
- In October, WFP targeted 242,174 IDPs and 69,156 refugees; and 46,044 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through Food for Assets (FFA), Urban Livelihoods and EMPACT programmes, with cash and food assistance in 12 governorates.
- WFP continued its distribution of a “hybrid” combination of cash-based transfers (CBT) and in-kind food, using a variety of CBT delivery mechanisms including mobile money transfers and electronic vouchers (e-vouchers). WFP is also carrying out assessments to explore possibilities of inclusion of additional caseloads of vulnerable and food-insecure refugees currently not covered by WFP assistance.
- In response to a request from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), WFP is also providing assistance to over 28,000 returnees (5,771 households) in Sinjar through emergency food items. WFP and its partner Welthungerhilfe (WHH) are also implementing a livelihoods/resilience project in Sinjar to support returnees.
- Urban livelihoods interventions continue in Baghdad, Basra, Nineawa, and Wasit with the provision of temporary income generation opportunities while improving public infrastructure, such as cleaning streets, renovation of schools, and rehabilitation of school buildings and furniture. Since their inception in August, the interventions have now achieved 60 percent of their objectives while the current expenditure of the available funding lies at over 45 percent.
- WFP’s rural livelihoods (FFA) activities are ongoing in rural areas of Iraq. All cooperating partners continued the implementation of activities while adhering to the required COVID-19 precautionary measures. Some projects are being extended to address delays in project start-up in some areas, and to allow partners sufficient time to successfully complete activities. WFP and partner Action Against Hunger (ACF) are currently carrying out community outreach activities in Basra under a new FFA intervention. WFP plans to increase its FFA activities in the south of Iraq throughout 2021.
- Following the suspension of activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP resumed its EMPACT project with implementing partners in August via virtual classrooms. Through the programme, training was provided to 2,825 participants in August, September and October.

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In Numbers
- **357,374 people assisted** in October 2020*
- **0.52 mt** of in-kind assistance distributed
- **USD 4.09 million** distributed through cash-based transfers
- **USD 21.5 million** six months net funding requirements (November 2020 – April 2021)

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*Note: The numbers are subject to change and are based on the most recent available data at the time of publication.
**WFP Country Strategy**

**Country Strategic Plan**

(1 January 2020–31 December 2024)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirements (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>473 m</td>
<td>151 m</td>
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**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 4: (SO 4):** 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.

- Each participant undertook a basic English and IT course, which have now been successfully concluded. 80 percent of trainees who passed the basic stage continue a “hybrid learning” module composed of an advanced course and small-scale freelancing (“Microwork”) course, which has now started in all locations.

- WFP is working with the Ministry of Health and Environment and other partners to finalise a climate change focused project proposal to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund. The project will take place in the southern part of Iraq, and data collection and analysis commenced the last week of October in Basra, Thi-Qar, and Qadissiya.

- As part of the ongoing digitalisation of the Public Distribution System (PDS, the national food ration programme), WFP launched the “Tamwini” (“My Food Ration”) mobile app together with the Ministry of Trade in July in Baghdad and Mosul. The app enables citizens to stay home and update/access their data and pay for services digitally without visiting PDS offices. Tamwini will continue to be rolled out with citizens through their participating food agent. Plans are underway to undertake a large-scale trial for 1.6 million people in all of Najaf governorate in November.

- Given the ongoing pandemic, the start of the new academic year and reopening of schools is still pending. WFP continued preparations to resume its school feeding programme to adjust to different back-to-school scenarios which include distance learning, and different school grades attending on a rotation basis. In addition, WFP is continuing its capacity strengthening work with the Ministry of Education (MoE).

**Monitoring and Assessments**

- WFP’s Hunger Monitoring System found that around 4.5 million people, representing 11 percent of the total population, had insufficient levels of food consumption (30 October), an increase of around 1 million compared to the previous month. Meanwhile, the number of households using crisis or above crisis-level food-based coping mechanisms decreased by around 60,000 to 850,000 households (30 October) compared to last month. The most common coping strategies remain relying on less expensive food or borrowing to meet food needs.

- WFP is closely monitoring the closure of camps and will work in coordination with UN Agencies, government and other partners to ensure continued support through life-sustaining food assistance to IDPs and returnees during the proposed camp closure phases. In anticipation of the planned response to camp closures in Iraq, WFP is preparing for the procurement of contingency stock of ready-to-eat food packages (Immediate Response Rations) to cover the emergency food needs of returnee households.

**Funding and Pipeline update**

- WFP requires an additional USD 21.5 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through April 2021.

**Donors**

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

n.b. *all assistance-related numbers are provisional estimates and may be revised upwards or downwards after reconciliation.*