



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP Iraq Country Brief September 2021

### Operational Context

In Iraq, intermittent conflict continues to aggravate the poverty rate and threaten livelihoods. Alongside the return of families from camps, that continue since 2018, the situation and needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees remain precarious. WFP Iraq's assistance focuses on saving lives, changing lives: supporting the Government of Iraq's social protection work towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger. The challenges of rebuilding infrastructure, providing basic services, promoting social cohesion, creating jobs, developing skills, opportunities for youth and working towards gender equality whilst maintaining security have impeded the country's efforts to make progress on the SDGs.

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 implementing to enabling and capacity strengthening. This is critical in transitioning from crisis response to resilience building, and for 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, WFP and its partners continue to take additional measures to safeguard the health and wellbeing of people assisted. Supporting vulnerable families is even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively impacted upon people's food security.



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

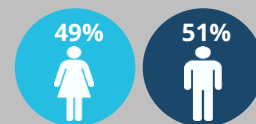
Poverty rate: **31.7%** (Ministry of Planning, World Bank, UNICEF, 2020)

2020 Human Development Index:  
**123 of 189** (lowest)

**1.2 million** IDPs (IOM)  
**249,733** Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

## In Numbers

**287,785** people assisted  
in September 2021



**US\$3.4 million** distributed through  
cash-based transfers

**US\$14 million** six months net funding  
requirements (October 2021– March 2022)\*\*

### Operational Updates

- In September, WFP provided cash and food assistance to 185,902 IDPs, 68,918 refugees, and 32,965 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through resilience building and capacity strengthening initiatives.
- The number of new daily COVID-19 cases continued to decline from the beginning of September, from 6,937 to 2,434 cases by the end of the month. Iraq's Council of Ministers held an extraordinary session to discuss preparations for the upcoming October parliamentary elections amid heightened security measures.
- The Government of Iraq, UNICEF, WFP and ILO and European Union launched a landmark programme on the reform of the social protection system in Iraq that will run for three years. The new programme, with funding of EUR 30 million from the EU, focuses on enhanced response to the socio-economic requirements of vulnerable Iraqis.
- WFP's out of camp assistance to vulnerable families continues to expand as 72 families in Jeddah 5 camp chose to partake in IOM's voluntary return programme and have departed the camp heading home.
- Under WFP's resilience-building programme, Food for Asset (FFA) activities continue, prioritising nearly 94,000 people via the creation and rehabilitation of assets in areas that were affected by the conflict, alongside capacity strengthening. These activities aim towards elevating the resilience of smallholder farmer communities and positively adapting to climate change. Currently, WFP is collaborating on projects with partners in Anbar (almost concluding activities), Salah al-Din, Ninewa (Sinjar, Baaj and Hamdaniya) and Thi-Qar.
- WFP's Urban Livelihoods projects continue. Initially designed in response to the pandemic to provide people who lost incomes with work opportunities, this year the focus is on participants acquiring the necessary vocation skills and training to support themselves and their families. The projects are prioritising 3,170 individuals in the current phase that targets Basra, Thi-Qar, Maysan and Ninewa. WFP is working to expand its efforts to more vulnerable communities, based on the availability of funding.

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**Photo Caption:** WFP Iraq Representative, Ally-Raza Qureshi signs a Memorandum of Understanding alongside representatives of UNICEF, ILO and Government of Iraq on the reform of the country's social protection system, supported by the European Union.



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

Total Requirements (in USD)		Allocated Contributions 2020-2024 (in USD)
522 m		210 m
Total Requirements for 2021**	Total Requirements for 2022**	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (In USD) (October 2021 – March 2022)**
135 m	77.3 m	14.0 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's EMPACT – 'Empowerment in Action!' – programme continues, providing young students with digital skills and English language training to assist them in creating employment opportunities for themselves. WFP has highlighted the need for installing solar panels at the training site in Sulaymaniyah, to provide ample power in events of electricity outages, ensuring that classes are not interrupted.

- Regarding WFP's School-Based Programming, WFP successfully concluded its cycle of assistance to school children for the outgoing school year. This includes the Girls Education project in Basra together with UNICEF, Mercy Hands and local partners. To complement the assistance provided, WFP and partners are running a Social Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) campaign, which is in its final stages. WFP is coordinating with Iraqi influencers, local radio stations and schools to spread awareness messages for young girls and their families to advocate for continued education.

- WFP is working closely with the Ministry of Education (MoE) on the programme of assistance to schoolchildren in the 2021-2022 academic year. The School Feeding Programme will be delivered, in partnership with the Government of Iraq in 11 governorates: Basra, Thi-Qar, Muthanna, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Anbar, Diyala, Missan, Wassit, and Qadissiya. MoE will begin taking responsibility of monitoring and implementing the programme gradually in Iraq, starting with Baghdad and Babil governorates this year.

- WFP is also supporting key members of MoE with capacity building activities on technical aspects of their work, including supply chain, data collection, documentation, monitoring, and reporting, and more.

- As part of the digitalization of Iraq's major social protection programme known as the Public Distribution System for food rations (PDS), WFP is working with the Ministry of Trade on facilitating people's ability when using the 'Tamwini' (My Food Ration) mobile app to make digital payments through a range of major financial service providers, contracted by the Ministry.

- WFP Iraq organized a two-day workshop alongside the Iraqi Joint Centre for Monitoring and Coordination (JCMC) and the Global Logistics Cluster on Logistics Preparedness Gaps Analysis that was attended by more than 70 representatives from the Government of Iraq, UN agencies, NGOs and the private sector. The group worked on highlighting the main obstacles facing humanitarian action with an aim to improve preparedness plans in times of crises.

**Monitoring and Assessments**

- In September, WFP conducted 164 monitoring visits, including 79 cash-out points for IDPs and Syrian refugees, 26 livelihood and resilience sites, 19 EMPACT locations, 26 e-voucher points and 12 shops in camps. In addition, 46 monitoring interviews were carried out with people assisted.

- WFP's Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) conducted at the end of August revealed that compared to the previous round in December 2020, the food security situation of Syrian refugees assisted had stabilised. The food security situation also improved among IDP households headed by men and remained stable for women-headed IDP households. However, in times of limited access to food (e.g. lockdowns), both Syrian refugee and IDP households used food consumption coping strategies (e.g. eating less food). It was also found that PDS, WFP, NGO, and Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) assistance all played a vital role in improving people's food security situation, including a reduction in using consumption-based coping strategies among IDP households assisted.

**Funding and Pipeline update**

WFP requires US\$14 million to ensure operations continue without interruption through March 2022.\*\*

**Donors**

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

\*\*WFP will initiate a Budget Revision (BR) in the last quarter of 2021 to factor in continuing IDP needs expected in 2022.