



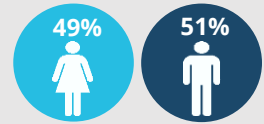
World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief March 2023

In Numbers



637,571 people assisted

in March 2023

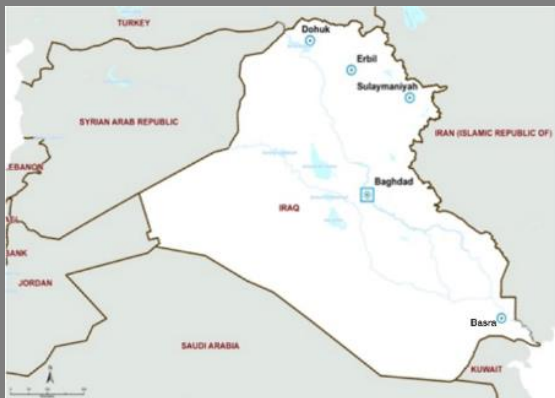
US\$ 1.96 million cash-based transfers made

US\$ 21 million six months (April-September 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: 123 out of 189 (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 March, WFP delivered cash assistance to some 135,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) across 27 camps and over 38,000 Syrian refugees in ten camps through its crisis response programme.
- Under the resilience portfolio, particularly the economic empowerment component, WFP supported more than 10,000 young men and women in 13 governorates with technical vocational training, in-kind support, and creation of market linkages. During March, graduation ceremonies for more than 4,000 participants were held in those governorates with the presence of representatives from MoLSA, the Governor's Office, and the private sector. Additionally, WFP strengthened the capacity of more than 2,000 people under the rural livelihoods project with tools and assets to support their resilience and food security.
- The Jousour programme supported over 700 participants in Sulaymaniyah through online courses and entrepreneurship classes. Additionally, the programme partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Vision under the No Lost Generation (NLG) initiative to support children and youth affected by the Syrian crisis. An NLG Youth Group will be created to include Syrian adolescents' and youth's voices in advocacy materials. Four members from the Jousour programme were accepted in the Youth Group and will participate online in this initiative for the next six months.
- WFP continues to work on climate change mitigation and adaptation projects throughout the country with initiatives including enhancing agro-met capacities, water irrigation systems in Anbar, providing training on desertification countermeasures in Salahaddin, rehabilitation of water regulators in Anbar and Diwaniya, and implementing hydroponics, aquaponics systems, beekeeping, and training 100 participants on ornamental projects in Basra. In addition, six greenhouses were installed in Duhok governorate. A first aid training was offered to 133 participants under the Sarchnar nursery project. These efforts aim to empower local communities through agricultural advancements and sustainable practices across various regions.

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Photo Caption: The WFP-Iraq Country Director, Mr. Ally Riza Qureshi, signs agreement with the Iraqi Ministry of Trade for collaboration on Public Distribution System (PDS) reforms.

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

Total Requirements (In US\$)	Total Received (In US\$)	Percentage Funded
601 m	315 m	55%
2023 Requirements (In US\$)		Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (In US\$) (April – September 2023)
80 m		21 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.

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the School Feeding programme operates in 13 districts across Iraq, reaching around 455,000 school-aged children with daily nutritious meals. WFP and the MoE held meetings to address operational gaps and improve coordination, Both collected monitoring data, and initiated policy discussions regarding the Social Behaviour and Communication Change (SBCC) campaign and the System Approach for better Education Results (SABER) assessment. A [video](#) about the programme was also produced and shared on the relevant WFP and government channels.
- As part of the Social Protection reform activities, In March, WFP signed an agreement with the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Trade and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) to formalize their collaboration to reform the Public Distribution

System (PDS). The partnerships will focus on ensuring that vulnerable communities benefit from fair access to the social protection system in a manner that is comprehensive and sensitive to children, age, food security, gender, and disability considerations.

- In March, WFP partnered with the International Trade Centre (ITC) to enhance the performance and competitiveness of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Iraq. This collaboration will utilize ITC's technical expertise alongside WFP's community presence and operational capabilities to provide smallholder farmers with climate adaptation tools. This will increase competitiveness, foster agribusiness alliances in selected value chains, and fortify Iraq's food system.
- The Government of Iraq, along with WFP and other UN organizations, hosted the Basra Climate Conference on 12 and 13 March. The event focused on addressing climate change and water scarcity through discussions on environmental challenges and solutions, funding, and stakeholder engagement. Key outcomes of the conference included an agreement to allocate resources in the 2023 budget for combating climate change, a national fund proposal, and the implementation of nationally determined contributions (NDC).

Monitoring

- In March, WFP conducted 298 monitoring visits across WFP programmes and collected baseline data for rural livelihood and VTC activities. The Country Strategic Plan (CSP) Mid-Term review data collection is ongoing. The resilience activities decentralized evaluation report draft is currently being finalized.

Challenges

- Given funding shortfalls, WFP is forced to halt assistance for IDPs in camps and sent notifications to all recipients and relevant authorities such as the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), Joint Crisis Coordination (JCC), camp managers, and community leaders. The cash assistance will continue for IDPs in Jada'a 1 camp until June and for Syrian refugees until August as they will not be included in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) Social Security Network reform and are, as such, particularly vulnerable
- WFP is currently ongoing a transition from humanitarian to development assistance in Iraq. Planned resilience activities require consistent, sufficient, multi-year and flexible funding to strengthen people ability to cope with stressors and shocks.

Donors

WFP thanks all partners for their direct and multilateral contributions including Canada, Denmark, European Union, Germany, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, UN Agencies, United States, the World Bank, PepsiCo Foundation, and individual donors through #ShareTheMeal.