



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Iraq  
Country Brief  
August 2023



## In Numbers



45,028 people assisted in August 2023

USD 811,600 cash-based transfers made

USD 61.2 m six months (September 2023 - February 2024) 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 1.2 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 continued shifting its role from emergency response to resilience building and long-term sustainable development. This paradigm shift is critical as Iraq is experiencing the 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: **44 million**  
(UNFPA 2023)

2021 Human Development Index: 121  
out of 191 (lowest)

Poverty rate: **24.8%** (Ministry of  
Planning, World Bank, 2021)

**1.15 million** IDPs (IOM)  
**262,218** Syrian refugees in Iraq

### Operational Updates

#### General Food Assistance

- In August 2023, WFP provided cash assistance to more than 2,200 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Jada'a 1 camp to meet food security needs. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KS Relief) of Saudi Arabia donated almost 92 mt of dates, which were distributed to over 37,000 Syrian refugees in ten camps across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).
- To address funding constraints, the food assistance distribution cycle for Syrian refugees was extended from a four-week to a six-week cycle, with a transfer value reduced by almost 15 percent to IQD 20,500 (USD 15) per person in August 2023 to ensure uninterrupted assistance.
- WFP distributed multi-purpose cash assistance to more than 3,440 returnees, who do not have civil documentation in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Ninawa governorates. Additionally, in collaboration with UN-Women, 1,700 breastfeeding women and girls in Muthana Governorate received cash assistance to meet their basic food and nutrition needs.

#### Economic Empowerment, Livelihoods Support and Climate Change

- As part of its climate action and livelihood activities, WFP supported smallholder farmers in the Ninawa, Salahaddin, and Anbar Governorates by providing them with drip irrigation systems. This new system assisted farmers in growing non-traditional crops such as sweet chilli and selling them at the local market, helping them ensure food security while being part of climate action.
- To support youth economic empowerment and livelihoods, WFP engaged in various partnerships, including with Riyadh, an initiative that educates youth in entrepreneurship and business skills, and the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI), which formed a technical workgroup chaired by them to facilitate access to finances. These partnerships also involved resource mobilization for project support, including proposal revisions, budget development, and implementation planning with WFP field offices. Furthermore, a project outcome evaluation plan was devised to assess the impact of projects on beneficiaries' lives and livelihoods.

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Photo Capture: Farms that utilized a drip irrigation system to grow sweet chilli in Anbar Governorate ©WFP.

## Country Strategic Plan (January 2020 – December 2024)

Total Requirements (In USD)	Total Received (In USD)	Percentage Funded
<b>601 m</b>	<b>323 m</b>	<b>18%</b>
2023 Requirements (In USD)		Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (September 2023 – February 2024)
<b>80 m</b>		<b>61.2m</b>

**Strategic Outcome 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 Outcome 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.
- Implement climate resilience projects for targeted individuals and communities for and on behalf of the Government and other actors.

**Strategic Outcome 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.

- Under the national Jousour programme, WFP collaborated with UNICEF to conduct Life Skills and Civic Education training for over 300 participants in Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Duhok, and Anbar Governorates. The training equipped Jousour participants with civic engagement skills to enable them to be more involved in their communities and identify social issues in their respective governorates. Additionally, in collaboration with WFP Innovation Accelerator team, a focus group discussion (FGD) took place to gain a comprehensive understanding of the global job placement standards and identify the employment challenges for Iraqi youth. FGD findings will help to establish a job Placement Platform, which will ultimately be transferred to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) as part of WFP Economic Empowerment activities in partnership with the Government.
- As part of the climate change activities, WFP conducted a field study on financial inclusion and climate risks insurance. The study intended to explore the possibility of implementing financial inclusion and climate risk

initiatives with the participation of several farmers, local government departments, and ministries. In addition, WFP completed the planning phase of various nature-based solutions across Iraq, including wetland construction, agricultural support, and food and wastewater management. Additionally, in collaboration with the University of Basrah, WFP established a laboratory dedicated to aquaponics and hydroponics studies for students specializing in agronomy and agriculture engineering. This innovative initiative creates a new avenue for young individuals to actively participate in climate action and engage in smart agricultural practices.

### School Feeding

- WFP and the Ministry of Education (MoE) conducted a comprehensive Social Behaviour and Communication Change (SBCC) training for approximately 50 participants from MoE, the Ministry of Health, and 13 targeted Directorates of Education, selected by the governmental Higher School Feeding Committee. This training engaged participants in effectively implementing a campaign promoting healthier diets, hygiene, and public health among school children in Iraq. Additionally, WFP and MoE completed a series of training sessions focusing on enhancing the soft skills of the Ministry staff in programme and data management.

### Social Protection

- WFP continues to support the Ministry of Trade (MoT) with the registration activities for the Public Distribution System (PDS). The registration rates in Dohuk, Kirkuk, Muthanna, and Governorates have reached 94, 92 and 91 percent, respectively. MoT plans to expand and implement the project countrywide. Furthermore, WFP conducted capacity-building activities as part of the digital transformation plan of the system in Muthanna Governorate. Staff members from MoT participated in a series of Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions aimed at enhancing their digital and technical skills to manage online PDS applications.
- WFP concluded the Single Registry Project design phase through a series of policy discussions and consultation workshops under the technical committee for single registry and digitization, chaired by the Ministry of Planning (MoP) and the Council of Ministers Secretariat (COMSEC). Documentation of the Single Registry process was completed and shared with the relevant stakeholders for final review and endorsement.

### Monitoring

In August 2023, WFP conducted 108 monitoring visits to cash distribution points, economic empowerment sites, rural livelihood initiatives, Jousour activities, e-voucher points, and shops. Additionally, 64 monitoring interviews were conducted with beneficiaries.

### Challenges

Iraq's transition from humanitarian to development assistance requires consistent, sufficient, multi-year and flexible funding for WFP's strategic work in-country.

### Donors

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