



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



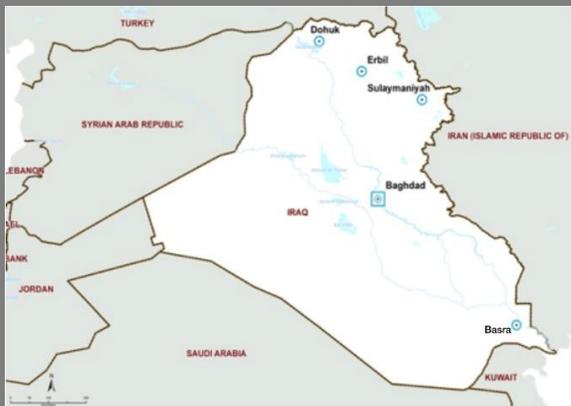
WFP Iraq Country Brief May 2020

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.



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

Poverty rate: **22.5%**
(World Bank, 2017)

2019 Human Development Index:
120 of 188 (lowest)

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

In Numbers

334,752 people assisted
in May 2020*



17.9 mt of in-kind assistance distributed

USD 3.8 million distributed through
cash-based transfers

USD 78.5 million six months net funding
requirements (July – December 2020)

Operational Update & COVID-19 Response

- In May, WFP delivered in-kind and predominantly cash-based assistance to 334,752 people in nine governorates. This included an additional 26,000 refugees and 2,000 IDPs, who required support due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through partner helpdesks in camps, WFP has been receiving new appeals from refugees and IDPs to be included in June's cycle of assistance. An additional 5,352 new refugees have been confirmed, and other cases are being considered.
- To help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, curfews continued across the country, with a comprehensive movement ban around Eid. Some demonstrations have also continued. Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has worked to form a government. Meanwhile, the fall in global oil prices is impacting upon the revenue of oil-based economies such as Iraq's. This could affect the government's ability to sustain social protection. The Iraqi dinar has also fallen in value against the US dollar. The security situation remains uncertain; incidents involving the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continue.
- On May 20, the government started the first "Minha" one-off cash allocation for families affected by COVID-19; many people are unable to work. More than 13 million people self-registered online in April, and the government approved a total of 11.5 million eligible people to be reached in batches. Disbursing "Minha" has been the priority of financial service providers and points of service, who, due to the sheer scale of assistance, have been delaying other transactions including WFP's.
- The Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) reached more than 94 percent of the IDP camp population in the period January – May 2020, with a monthly emergency package of 20.3 kg. WFP's coordination has continued, providing smaller, complementary "top-ups" of assistance accordingly. This has resulted in significant savings of USD 6.3 million over the five-month period.
- WFP continues to pioneer new "cashless transactions" for people to shop directly from their mobile phones in camps, eliminating the need to redeem physical cash

Photo: In Arbat camp in Sulaymaniyah, a Syrian refugee family cooks an *iftar* meal with ingredients purchased using WFP's monthly assistance. A [ShareTheMeal](#) campaign launched in May, to raise funds for WFP's work to support Syrian refugees in Iraq.

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
473 m	95 m
Total Requirements for 2020 (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (July – December 2020)
179 m	78.5 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.

- *(cont'd)* entitlements. A “mobile shop” has been piloted in Salamiya camp in Ninewa governorate, and WFP is expanding to work with existing shops in camps, so they can begin accepting cashless payments as well.
- Due to the lockdown, resilience programmes remain on hold. Two cooperating partners so far have obtained approvals from local authorities to resume Food for Assets (FFA) projects in Anbar and Ninewa, however except for project preparations, the implementation has paused due to rising cases of infection and renewed lockdowns. WFP has developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on COVID-19 prevention measures, on which resilience partners were oriented on compliance and working safely.
- WFP has adjusted its resilience/livelihood programme to encompass emergency livelihoods, to provide income

opportunities for vulnerable populations in affected peri-urban areas. Projects in Mosul are planned to start first, as soon as it is safe. The focus will be on daily wage labourers and seasonal workers who lost their job due to the crisis, to stimulate local economies and employment opportunities among the informal sectors.

- The School Feeding programme remains suspended until October, but WFP is continuing to invest in its capacity strengthening work with the Ministry of Education. WFP is currently working on the COVID-19 Education response plan with the UN Country Team, in preparation for the next academic year. WFP is also advocating for improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools via the WASH cluster, developing WASH factsheet to use in the primary schools reached this past academic year.
- As part of WFP’s collaboration with the Ministry of Trade (MoT) to digitalize the Public Distribution System of food rations (ePDS), the Tamwini “My Food Ration” smartphone app will be piloted in June. It will enable citizens to update and access their data and pay for services digitally, without visiting the PDS branch offices, which will also help mitigate COVID-19 and unnecessary movement. WFP is also working with both MoT and the Ministry of Interior to define the requirements for the integration of the ePDS with the national identity system, for the purpose of automated ePDS identity verification and data exchange.
- UNHAS is running flights in Iraq from 15 June, to support humanitarian and other partners. The route is to and from Sharjah (UAE) and Baghdad/Erbil. The service is managed by WFP’s HQ, with support from the Iraq Country Office.

Monitoring and Assessments

- According to WFP’s latest mobile Vulnerability Analysis & Mapping (mVAM) data, around 2.2 million people have insufficient levels of food consumption. Normally, during Ramadan, consumption patterns improve. This is indicated as there were previously around 2.7 million people with insufficient food consumption levels in April. Charitable organisations help improve food consumption and access during Ramadan. However, the level readjusts in the following months. People with poor food consumption scores (FCS) are hence expected to increase.

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP needs an additional USD 78.5 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through December 2020.

Donors

WFP would like to thank all donors for their contributions including: Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Government of Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United States.

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