



World Food Programme

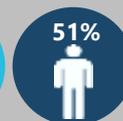
SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP Iraq Country Brief January 2021

### In Numbers

548,206 people assisted  
in January 2021



USD 4.38 million distributed through  
cash-based transfers

USD 33.2 million six months net funding  
requirements (February – July 2021)

### 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 in February 2020. Given the ongoing 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 January, WFP delivered cash and food assistance to 190,660 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 71,088 refugees; 255,000 school children; and 31,458 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through Food for Assets (FFA) and Urban Livelihoods.
- As of 31 January 2021, 16 IDP camps and informal sites were closed, consolidated or re-classified as informal settlements, with 46,998 individuals departing from these sites. In the last week of January, WFP launched rapid assessments targeting IDPs returned, relocated, or secondarily displaced since October 2020 to ascertain the vulnerabilities of these IDPs households with a view to explore temporary support to the households in need, or to support the integration of households into WFP resilience or durable solutions programming where these activities are in place in areas of return. The assessments aim to better understand the vulnerabilities and resettlement patterns of returnees, and design programmes to support the returnees and secondarily displaced persons.
- In preparation for the culmination of the 2020 EMPACT training programme, WFP and its partners facilitated the transfer of cash allowances to participants who met two out of the three qualifying criteria: 90 percent attendance; passing the final test, and demonstration of soft skills. In total, 13,404 participants attended the EMPACT training programme and received the second instalment of allowance of IQD 500,000 per participant in January 2021. As the course will be completed by the end of January 2021 as per the Field Level Agreements (FLAs) with four of WFP’s cooperating partners, WFP has already commenced engaging CPs for the 2021 program implementation.
- WFP continued the implementation of community-based interventions aimed at addressing the immediate household food needs of women and men smallholder farmers in areas affected by conflict and areas vulnerable to the adverse impacts to climate change. Through close coordination with local authorities, WFP asset creation/rehabilitation and capacity strengthening activities were implemented to promote rural livelihoods in Anbar, Basra, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Thi-Qar.

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

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

2019 Human Development Index:  
**123 of 189** (lowest)

**1.22 million** IDPs (IOM)  
**243,121** Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

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Photo Caption: In January 2021, WFP resumed the National School feeding programme targeting 255,000 school children in 11 governorates with meals at the beginning of the school day in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. WFP/Photo Library

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
<b>473 m</b>	<b>158 m</b>
Total Requirements for 2021	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (February – July 2021)
<b>95 m*</b>	<b>33.2 m</b>

**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 January 2021, WFP continued the completion process for interventions undertaken in 2020, while commencing partner selection for 2021 to complement and scale interventions, towards helping create sustainable incomes for returnees and vulnerable host communities and smallholder farmers across Iraq.
- Discussions are ongoing between WFP and the Ministry of Trade, and the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs to explore opportunities of integrated collaboration that improves the efficiency of services delivery to vulnerable citizens. Discussions with the Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Interior and Council of Ministers continued as part of the planning for the creation of a streamlined verification service.

- Following the reopening of schools at the end of November 2020, WFP and the Ministry of Education successfully re-launched the National School Feeding Programme in all the 11 targeted districts for around 255,000 primary school children and hundreds of headmasters. For this academic year, the district of Al Ba’aj has been prioritized in Ninawa. This district has been recognised as critically underserved and with high number of returnees. Prior to the launch of the programme, trainings were conducted with headmasters and teachers to strengthen the hygiene and food safety around the school feeding programme in response to the COVID19 pandemic.

- Throughout January, WFP has continued its focus on ensuring that conflict sensitivity is integrated throughout programming and operations. Cooperating partners who submitted concept notes for the SO2 call for proposals were provided with specific feedback on conflict sensitivity, as well as social cohesion, to support project design. Separately, data collection was finalised for an innovative new research into how School Feeding could support social cohesion at the community level. Findings are expected to be shared in March.

**Monitoring and Assessments**

- WFP’s Hunger Monitoring System found that around 2.5 million people, representing 6.5 percent of the total population, had insufficient levels of food consumption (31 January), a decrease of around 500,000 individuals compared to the previous month. Meanwhile, the number of households using crisis or above crisis-level food-based coping mechanisms decreased, reaching 10.5 percent in comparison to 11.2 percent on 31 December. The most common remaining coping strategies rely on less expensive food or borrowing to meet food needs.

- Following the decision by the Central Bank of Iraq to devalue the Iraqi Dinar against the US Dollar in December, WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Monitoring carried out market price monitoring and assessments with a view to ascertain the impact of the devaluation on prices of food baskets and to observe potential implications on WFP assistance to vulnerable populations. A report on the outcomes of the analyses will be finalised in February 2021.

**Funding and Pipeline update**

WFP requires an additional USD 33.2 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through July 2021.

**Donors**

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