

# UNHCR IRAQ FACTSHEET



Quarter 3  
2013

## UNHCR in Iraq

UNHCR has been present in Iraq since the 1980s. Working with the Government of Iraq (GoI), UNHCR protects and assists, as appropriate, refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in all 18 governorates. Iraq is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. However, the country has hosted and assisted, with UNHCR's support, refugees of Palestinian, Iranian, Turkish, and Syrian origin.

## Refugees /Asylum Seekers

The number of (non-Syrian) registered refugees and asylum seekers is now 42,683. Between June and August, a total of 871 refugees and asylum seekers mainly from Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran were registered with UNHCR Iraq. A large number (29,550) are in the KR, while 12,640 are in the centre and 493 are in southern Iraq. UNHCR provides protection and assistance to the refugees while seeking durable solutions to their situation, through voluntary repatriation, resettlement or local integration.

As of the end of September, the total number of registered Syrian refugees in Iraq reached 192,020 and another 30,152 awaiting registration. More than 95 per cent are hosted in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. *For further details please visit:*

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103>.

UNHCR continues to process the applications of the residents who have been transferred voluntarily to Hurriya Temporary Transit Location and who engage with UNHCR. UNHCR has interviewed 2,047 cases to assess their International Protection Needs. 1,617 individuals are recognized as being in need of International Protection. UNHCR and UNAMI are continuing their combined efforts to find solutions, including relocation opportunities. To date a total of 227 residents have departed to other countries.

## Stateless Persons

UNHCR is working with the GoI to document the number of stateless persons in Iraq. Many thousands of previously stateless individuals have reacquired Iraqi citizenship in recent years; the total caseload is likely less than the cited figure of 120,000. Considerable attention for the stateless Faily Kurds, Syrian Kurds and Palestinians is warranted. Several other populations at risk of statelessness include Iraq's gypsy community, the Bedouins and inhabitants of the marshlands. UNHCR undertakes research and advocacy, directly assists vulnerable communities, and supports the stateless to obtain documentation and access their rights.

## Returnees

UNHCR supports the return of refugees / IDPs who have voluntarily returned to their places of origin. MoMD recorded 1,106,730 Iraqi refugee and IDP returnees between 2008 and December 2012. IDPs constitute some 77 per cent of the returnee population, and 91 per cent of them have returned to Baghdad and Diyala areas. In Iraq, returnees receive assistance from MoMD in addition to support provided by UNHCR through its Return, Integration and Community Centres (RICCs). Due to the unrest in Syria, around 50,000 Iraqi returnees from Syria have registered with the MoMD since July 2012. UNHCR is providing a cash grant to Iraqis returning from Syria, to support their reintegration into Iraq.

Populations of Concern	Individuals
Refugees & asylum Seekers, non-Syrian (September)	42,683
Registered Syrian refugees fleeing Syria (August)	171,984
Stateless persons ( <i>GoI source</i> )	120,000
Iraqi refugee returnees registered - 2003 to 2012	609,446
Iraqi refugee returnees registered - June 2013	35,150
IDPs ( <i>MoMD source</i> )	1,131,810
IDP returns - 2003 to 2012	1,250,520
IDP returns - June 2013	24,100

## Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

According to the latest government statistics, there are an estimated 1,131,810 IDPs in Iraq, mostly in Baghdad, Diyala and Ninewa governorates. Most IDPs fled their homes owing to fear in connection with sectarian in February 2006.

Recent waves of sectarian violence are creating new internal displacement of Iraqis. Since the beginning of the year, bombings and rising sectarian tensions have displaced some 4,934 Iraqis, with people mostly fleeing from Baghdad into Anbar and Salah Al Din governorates, as well as causing displacement within Diyala and Ninewa governorates; over 100 families from Basra and Thi Qar were displaced into Salah al Din and Anbar and 57 families from Baghdad arrived in Babylon. A smaller number of families have also fled from various governorates into Kerbala, Najaf and Wassit.

UNHCR and its partners conducted needs assessments of the newly displaced people and is advocating with the GoI for their registration. In coordination with the government, UNHCR and partners ensure that food, core relief items, education and adequate accommodation are provided and that relevant identity and residency cards are also given. In collaboration with the IDPs working group, UNHCR has been working with the government, particularly with the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, on a comprehensive plan to end displacement that incorporates the development of policies on integration as well as livelihood and employment opportunities as well as shelter programmes.

### UNHCR's PARCs (protection assistance)

UNHCR, through its partners, manages a network of 15 Protection Assistance and Reintegration Centres (PARCs) across Iraq as well as six Return Integration and Community Centres (RICCs) in Baghdad to ensure that IDPs, refugees, returnees and stateless persons are able to enjoy their fundamental rights. Lawyers in the Centres as well as 43 mobile teams provide legal assistance, interventions and referrals on behalf of the persons of concern.

UNHCR staff and partners continue to follow up closely on protection issues faced by persons of concern, including evictions of IDPs from informal settlements, and issues relating to child protection, and gender based violence.

UNHCR Iraq 2013 current budget: \$162,000,000

## Highlights from Quarter 3

### Northern Governorates

- At Sheladize returnee camp, Dohuk Governorate, 27 families continued building their homes after the distribution of cement, blocks, doors, windows and electrical fittings by partner KURDS. 123 families also received air coolers and fans;
- 45 vulnerable families were provided with Cash Assistance in Balqos, Miserik, Gregewre, Zakho, Duhok and Hussaniya;
- Hygiene sessions were conducted for 30 refugees in Mesrike, 30 in Gre Gawre, and 30 in Zakho Badare, Dohuk Governorate where the participants were provided with hygiene kits;
- 16 small business grants have been disbursed to refugees and work has begun setting up shops (hairdressing, butcher, groceries, blacksmith etc) in Barika settlement and Nasser neighbourhood, Sulaymaniyah Governorate; and,
- Renovations on fifty shelters to benefit 270 individuals IDPs were completed in Kirkuk.



### Central Governorates

- UNHCR started the verification exercise for the Palestinian refugees in Baghdad in the reporting period. As of 24 August, a total of 1,885 cases/6,796 individuals were verified;
- UNHCR/IRC is verifying the presence of 4,500 to 6,000 Iranian refugees in Khanaqeen, Diyala;
- The distribution of one-time cash assistance for returnees started on 31 July 2013; a total of 344 Households/1,249 individuals received the grant in Baghdad, Babil, Kut, Najaf, Diyala, Salah al Din, Anbar and Kerbala;
- UNHCR signed a sub-agreement with IRC to pilot a new initiative in Baghdad, Diyala and Wassit on the prevention of statelessness by providing people who have been 'durably undocumented' with essential legal documentation;
- UNHCR's partner ISHO completed the construction of 100 new shelters in Fahama, Baghdad; the construction of another 725 shelters in Baghdad, Diyala and Wassit by RIRP and Qandil is on-going with 40 per cent progress; and,
- Four training courses (2 English and 2 IT) were completed by IRW for Palestinian refugees at Al Baladiyat Haifa club in Baghdad. 100 participants attended the trainings.

### Southern Governorates

- 46 refugee women have been identified and trained by REACH on sewing in the first six months of 2013;
- 440 individuals attended Vocational Training Courses;
- 11 of 16 Quick Impact Projects were implemented including theatre for child education, bridge construction, school desks, shops construction, water purification system, and a bakery;
- 79 of 82 persons of concern benefitted from the Business Enterprise Establishment programme and learned the basics of running a business, book keeping, marketing, and sales;
- 50 greenhouses were built in the 5 governorates;
- 49 of 53 school sanitation systems were rehabilitated;
- 6 communal water RO units were rehabilitated or built; and,



Sewing course in the southern region @ UNHCR

### Country Wide

- According to PARCs reports, 1,390 persons of concern to UNHCR requested legal assistance in order to obtain civil status documentations, legalize marriages and divorces and obtain custody over children.
- The degradation of security and escalation of political/sectarian tensions in Iraq has forced 4,934 individuals into new displacement since January 2013 (as at 11 September). The rapidly expanding internal displacements include Sunni Arabs, Kurds, Shia Shabak, Turkmen and Shia Arabs.

### UNHCR coordination and partnerships:

**Government of Iraq & Kurdistan Regional Government:** Bureau of Displacement and Migration (BDM), Department of Displacement and Migration (DDM), Development and Modification Centre (DMC), Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Human Rights, Implementation and Follow up Committee for National Reconciliation (IFCNR).

**UN agencies and other entities:** UNAMI, WFP, UNICEF, UNOPS, UN-Habitat, UNWomen, IOM, WHO, OCHA, ICRC, MSB.

**National and INGOs:** ACTED, AlKhair, Association for Human Rights, Association for Development for Civil Society, Association for Cultural Development for Civil Society, CDO, Consulting Bureau of Iraqi Engineering Union, DRC, Fuad, HADYA, Happy Family Organization for Relief and Development, HARIKAR, IMC, IRD, IRC, InterSOS, Iraq Board for Human Rights, Iraqi Humanitarian League for Human Rights, IKL, Iraqi Salvation Humanitarian Organization, Iraqi Youth League, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Kurds, Kurdish Human Rights Watch, Mercy Corps, Millennium Relief and Development Services, Muslim Aid, NRC, Public Aid Organization, Qandil, Rafha Organization for Relief and Development, REACH, Rebuild Iraq Recruitment Programme, Resurrecting Iraqi People Centre, Save the Children, UPP, Uruk, Women Development and Support Organization.