



World Food Programme

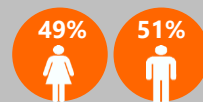
SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief November 2020

In Numbers

366,517 people assisted
in November 2020



953 mt of in-kind assistance distributed

USD 3.64 million distributed through cash-based transfers

USD 11.1 million six months net funding requirements (January – June 2021)

WFP
SAYS
NO to
GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE

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 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.



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

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

2019 Human Development Index:
123 of 189 (lowest)

1.28 million IDPs (IOM)
241,682 Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

Operational Update & COVID-19 Response

- In November, WFP reached 246,004 IDPs and 74,601 refugees; and 45,912 returnees and people from vulnerable communities through Food for Assets (FFA), Urban Livelihoods, EMPACT, and monthly food and cash assistance programmes, in 12 governorates.
- WFP concluded distributions of a "hybrid" combination of cash-based transfers (CBT) and in-kind food, using a variety of CBT delivery mechanisms including mobile money transfers and electronic vouchers (e-vouchers). Alongside livelihoods projects in Sinjar, WFP supported returnees from camps in Duhok who returned in October with one-month Family Food Rations (over 28,000 returnees).
- As of 30 November, up to 13 IDP camps and informal sites were closed, consolidated or re-classified as informal settlements, with 33,990 individuals departing from these sites. Four IDP camps remained open in federal Iraq at the end of November; in Anbar, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din, in addition to the IDP camps in Kurdistan Region. WFP is closely monitoring the closure of camps and working in coordination with partners including the government, to ensure continued support to IDPs and returnees during the closure phases.
- WFP has locally procured a contingency stock of ready-to-eat food packages (Immediate Response Rations) to help respond to families' emergency food needs when required. The stock will be on hand in WFP's Erbil warehouse for use when required.
- Urban livelihoods projects, responding to the loss of employment caused by the COVID-19 crisis, concluded in Baghdad, Basra, Ninewa and Wassit. The interventions included activities that helped generate temporary income opportunities such as cleaning streets, renovating schools, planting trees and more. More than 70,000 people were reached through the projects, which quickly responded to people's needs during the crisis.
- WFP's rural livelihoods Food for Assets (FFA) projects are ongoing, such as the rehabilitation of irrigation canals and systems, reforestation and capacity strengthening of smallholder farmers, in Anbar, Basra, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Thi-Qar. WFP is working to expand these programmes in 2021, towards helping create sustainable incomes for returnees and vulnerable host communities.

Photo Caption: Training session with staff from the Muthanna Directorate of Education, part of a wider series helping strengthen capacity on the School Feeding Handover Strategy and Policy. As the training coincided with the 16 Days of Activism, the opportunity was taken to discuss WFP's commitment to ending violence against women and girls. WFP/Photo Library

Contact: Sharon Rapose (sharon.rapose@wfp.org)
Representative: Abdirahman Meygag
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/iraq

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
473 m	158 m
Total Requirements for 2021	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (January – June 2021)
95 m	11.1 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.

- To help respond to the challenges of climate change in southern Iraq, WFP continued working with the Ministries of Health, Environment and other partners on community consultations and data collection, for an upcoming climate change focused proposal to the Green Climate Fund.
- The second stage of 'Empowerment in Action' (EMPACT) digital skills and English training is ongoing, including advanced and 'Microwork' (small scale online freelancing) courses. Participants in Anbar and Baghdad have already started taking on and practising Microwork.
- As part of the ongoing digitalisation of the Public Distribution System (PDS, the national food ration programme), including rolling out the "Tamwini" ("My Food Ration") smartphone application across the country, WFP continues coordinating with

the Ministry of Trade (MoT), Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Council of Ministers towards integrating the MoT and MoI databases, starting with Najaf governorate. As discussed in a meeting with the Minister of Trade which was also attended by social protection network officials, WFP is exploring the possibility of linking the digitalised 'ePDS' data with the Social Security Network database.

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) decided to reopen the schools from 29 November, with different grades rotating to attend class one day a week. Based on this new system, WFP and MoE are exploring the most effective and safe way to implement the National School Feeding Programme. In addition, WFP continued capacity strengthening work with MoE, training staff from local Directorates of Education and schools, on the development of the School Feeding Handover Strategy and Policy. In the last week of November, training on data collection and reporting was also conducted in all governorates and districts where the School Feeding Programme will be implemented.
- As part of joint efforts to improve education, learning, health and nutrition, WFP and UNICEF signed a Joint Work Plan. Under this partnership, the two agencies recently conducted a parents' survey with around 300 interviewees, to understand the perception of parents regarding distance learning modalities and concerns over the return to school. The two agencies also signed an agreement for a new joint initiative to incentivise around 2,000 primary school girls to continue with secondary education in the south of Iraq. The project, which will commence in January 2021, is piloting cash transfers to the girls' households, aiming to enhance enrolment, attendance, completion, and reduce dropouts of girls.

Monitoring and Assessments

- WFP's Hunger Monitoring System found that around 2.6 million people, representing 7 percent of the total population, had insufficient levels of food consumption (30 November), a decrease of around 400,000 individuals compared to the previous month. Meanwhile, the number of households using crisis or above crisis-level food-based coping mechanisms increased, reaching 12 percent in comparison to 9 percent on 31 October. The most common coping strategies remained relying on less expensive food or borrowing to meet food needs.

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP requires an additional USD 11.1 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through June 2021.

Donors

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