**Situation update**

On 14 February, UN Secretary General Guterres launched the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP) at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq. The two-year programme is designed to help ensure that people see tangible improvements in their daily lives at the start of the reconstruction process. The UN is seeking USD 482 million for the first year of the RRP and an additional USD 568 million to help stabilize high-risk areas. Separately, partners are seeking USD 569 million to provide life-saving assistance to 3.4 million highly vulnerable people across Iraq through the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan.

UNHCR and UNHABITAT are leading the *promoting sustainable returns* component of the RRP. During the conference, UNHCR reiterated the importance of the voluntary, safe and sustainable return of IDPs and raising resources to support the government’s efforts towards this goal.

**Population movements**

The risk of the premature return of internally displaced people (IDPs) to their areas of origin remains high. On 10 February, 243 families were transported from Awaireej camp in Baghdad to their area of origin in Al Qa’im, Anbar. Another 940 IDP families from Anbar, Salah al-Din and Nineveh governorates are currently sheltering in camps in Baghdad, which are likely to be emptied shortly. 240 families recently returned to their area of origin in Balad district, Salah al-Din, but 104 of the families left their homes once again due to the lack of basic services. A further 51 families were notified to vacate an unfinished school building in Tikrit and return to Baiji. UNHCR is advocating with authorities to suspend the eviction as Baiji is not yet cleared of explosive remnants.

**Response update**

As part of its winterization programme, UNHCR provided cash support to some 90,000 vulnerable households in need of winter support. As this was the first time to introduce cash for winter support in camps, UNHCR field teams closely monitored distributions. The majority of recipients reported spending the funds on fuel to heat their homes, warm clothes, and to cover medical costs. Preliminary feedback received from the beneficiaries indicates that cash is preferred to in-kind assistance, as it allows families to prioritize their most urgent needs.

UNHCR’s protection partner interviewed 107 families using the Comprehensive Household Assessment Tool (CHAT) in Hasansham, Khazer, and Chamakor camps east of Mosul: 86 per cent of the assessed families intend to remain in the camps. Findings include: 33 per cent have damaged or destroyed houses and are unable to rent houses due to financial constraints; 14 per cent are female headed households, who arrived to the camps due to economic vulnerability and hence do not plan to return to Mosul. Families from disputed areas, where returns are not authorized, are left with little option but to remain in the camps.

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**Key figures**

- **2.42 million** IDPs remain displaced since January 2014
- **280,014** Iraqi refugees hosted in countries in the region, with 11,873 Iraqis in camps in Al-Hassakeh Governorate, Syria
- **754,410** IDPs in Ninewa (including as a result of the Mosul military operation)
- **79,662** IDPs currently displaced due to military operations in Hawija (Kirkuk) and Shirqat (Salah al-Din)
- **55,596** IDPs currently displaced due to military operations in west Anbar
- **652,873** Individuals (137,265 households) currently enrolled in ASSIST, UNHCR’s assistance tracking tool

**Funding**

USD 578 million requested for IDPs and Iraqi refugees in the region in 2018

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1 IOM-DTM as of 15 February 2018
2 IOM-DTM Emergency Tracking

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