



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief August 2020

In Numbers



354,741 people assisted
in August 2020*

0.41 mt of in-kind assistance distributed

USD 2.54 million distributed through
cash-based transfers

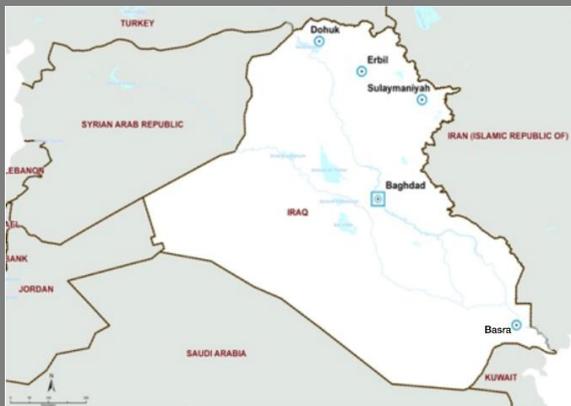
USD 31 million six months net funding
requirements (September 2020 – February 2021)

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 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)

1.35 million IDPs (IOM)
243,011 Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

Operational Update & COVID-19 Response

- In August, WFP delivered cash and food assistance to 266,805 IDPs, 69,090 refugees, and 18,846 returnees and people from vulnerable communities, through Food for Assets (FFA) and Urban Livelihoods programmes, reaching 91 percent of the operational plan in 11 governorates. This included an additional 38,000 refugees and IDPs as part of WFP's scale-up to meet increased humanitarian needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. WFP continues to consider appeals from families via special helpdesks in camps, to be included in the next cycle of assistance.
- Around 155,000 people in the Duhok and Kirkuk IDP camps received Family Food Rations (FFRs) as part of WFP's contingency plan. This is part of WFP's "hybrid" food/cash assistance to these camps between now and November, until the new Financial Service Providers in these areas are able to deliver cash assistance. For the third month, ready-to-eat food packages with Immediate Response Rations were again distributed to some 101 quarantined people in camps.
- Alongside COVID-19 concerns, the security situation remains precarious. On the morning of 26 August, an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated on the road between Erbil and Mosul. WFP's vehicles on a field mission were impacted; staff were examined in hospital and were cleared to return home. A full enquiry is being carried out jointly by WFP, UNAMI and Iraqi police.
- Movement restrictions continued across the country, and ongoing liquidity issues again resulted in some delays in WFP's assistance to IDPs and refugees. WFP continued to coordinate with all partners and suppliers to deliver as efficiently as possible to people assisted.
- WFP is continuing to pioneer new digital solutions to avoid people needing to redeem physical cash entitlements and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. These include "cashless transactions" whereby people shop directly from their mobile phones in camps, virtual prepaid cards which even work without a smartphone variety of mobile phone, and e-voucher assistance delivery enabled by SMS.
- The government continued to facilitate and support the return of willing families to Sinjar, Ninewa – where communities were severely affected during the conflict

Photo: New Urban Livelihoods projects launched in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and Wassit, helping people who lost their livelihoods earn an income and put food on the table during the pandemic. Projects include useful community activities such as planting trees, cleaning streets, recycling and renovating schools. WFP/Photo Library

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
473 m	105 m
Total Requirements for 2020 (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (September 2020 – February 2021)
178.8 m	31 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 from page 1) with ISIL. More than 10,103 people returned from camps in Duhok, in addition to 5,799 individuals from out-of-camp locations, in the past few weeks. Returns to Sinjar are on hold, due to movement restrictions. WFP is monitoring and assessing the situation, and will be supporting around 5,770 returnee families with food assistance in Sinjar. A livelihoods / resilience project in Sinjar is also being developed.
- WFP is continuing to work with the UNOPS Iraq Information Centre (IIC) hotline to ensure that people receive the right information on their assistance, including the temporary in-kind food rations from August to November, by phone and via their Facebook page. Furthermore, monthly training sessions for call centre staff continue, on programmatic developments. Key messages continue to be shared with the call centre, cooperating partners, Camp Coordination

and Camp Management (CCCM) and clusters, for the widest dissemination possible, to inform people assisted and authorities about operational changes in select camps. Furthermore, an animated video is being developed, to raise awareness about fake fees that some agents impose when “cashing out” outside camps.

- Having resumed in July, livelihoods / “Food for Assets” activities continued in rural areas, maintaining precautionary measures. WFP Iraq’s pioneering EMPACT project provides coaching and training in IT and digital skills to vulnerable Syrian refugees and Iraqi youth. Training recommenced in August via new virtual classrooms run by implementing partners, in Baghdad, Anbar, Sulaymaniyah, Ninewa, Erbil and Duhok.
- In response to COVID-19 and the loss of day work and income, urban livelihoods activities began in August, to reach up to 300,000 vulnerable people. The objective is to provide immediate economic support to people who lost their jobs, in peri-urban areas. Projects commenced in Basra, Wassit, Baghdad and Mosul. Additional projects are also under consideration, depending on funding.
- Under the School Feeding Programme, WFP is continuing to augment its capacity strengthening work with the Ministry of Education (MoE). An agreement was reached to use take-home rations in case schools remain partially or fully closed. Follow up discussions will take place during the next coordination meeting with MoE. Meanwhile, WFP and UNICEF are collaborating on a concept note to pilot cash transfers to incentivise 2,000 primary school girls to continue with secondary education. The project aims to enhance enrolment, attendance and completion, and reduce dropouts.
- WFP air passenger flights ran in Iraq from 15 June – 19 August, to and from Sharjah (UAE) and Baghdad/Erbil, to support humanitarian and other partners while commercial flights were interrupted. WFP Aviation continues to closely follow all commercial aviation operations in the region and may reinstate Global Passenger Service Flights to Iraq should commercial flights be disrupted again.

Monitoring and Assessments

- WFP’s Hunger Monitoring System data revealed that around 3.3 million people, representing 8.6 percent of the total population, had insufficient levels of food consumption (31 August).
- Activities continue to be monitored remotely via the new Monitoring & Evaluation guidelines and tools, and in-person during field missions.

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP requires an additional USD 31 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through February 2021.

Donors

WFP would like to thank all donors for their contributions including: Belgium, Canada, ECHO, 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.*