

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

للإصدار الفوري



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



## **FAO Iraq calls for urgent funding to assist 1.6 million people through the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme 2018-2019**

*At the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, FAO Iraq calls for urgent funding to assist 1.6 million people through the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme 2018-2019*

**Baghdad - Kuwait, 12 February 2018** – About 12 million Iraqis – almost a third of the country’s population - reside in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Restoring the crucial agriculture sector that has been severely damaged by ISIL’s takeover of vast areas of Iraq is critical to the country’s recovery from years of conflict and to its long-term prosperity. To achieve that, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has put forward a wide-ranging programme of assistance that ranges from rehabilitating irrigation systems to veterinary services, and is seeking urgent funding to assist 1.6 million rural inhabitants in 2018-2019.

It is estimated that Iraq has lost 40 percent of agricultural production over the past four years that ISIL controlled vast areas of northern and northwestern Iraq. The violence forced people to abandon farms, destroying or damaging harvests. Infrastructure such as water supply for drinking and agricultural production was damaged or destroyed. Agricultural equipment, seeds, crops, stored harvests and livestock were looted. Farmers were unable to plant for the next agricultural season due to conflict and contamination of land with unexploded ordnance. Food production and supply was disrupted, and food prices at markets increased.

With the destruction of ISIL's structure at the end of 2017 and Iraq transitioning towards recovery and resilience, it is imperative to restore the agriculture sector, which is the second largest contributor to the country's gross domestic product and is critical to improving food production, generating livelihoods and restoring the resilience of Iraq's rural population.

Mr. Fadel El Zubi, FAO Representative in Iraq said " Under the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme 2018–2019, (FAO) is calling for urgent funding to assist 1.6 million people in Iraq". He added that FAO will work with partners through two components to restore the crucial agriculture sector and water system, and revitalizing communities. The first component includes three lines of efforts, rehabilitating the irrigation systems, water treatment plants and pumping stations, rehabilitating the storage and processing facilities, and preventing the spread of crop and livestock diseases. While the second component focuses on revitalizing communities through providing multi-purpose cash assistance, agricultural inputs and cash for work for returnee farmers, rehabilitating the agricultural infrastructure, veterinary facilities and water resource assets, and providing veterinary services.

*For more information, please contact:*

FAO Communication Officer Mowaffaq Al-Refai

E-mail: [mowaffaq.alrefai@fao.org](mailto:mowaffaq.alrefai@fao.org)

+9647801627585