



SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

## WFP Iraq Country Brief January 2019



## In Numbers

**264,295 people assisted**  
in January 2019



**2492.6 mt** of food assistance distributed

**US\$ 1.46m** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 53 m** six months (February-July 2019) net funding requirements

## Operational Context

Intermittent conflict continues to aggravate the poverty rate and threaten livelihoods. As the situation and needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees remain precarious following the return process that began in 2018, WFP Iraq's assistance focuses on saving lives and protecting livelihoods – supporting the Government of Iraq's social safety nets towards zero hunger. Through emergency assistance to IDPs and refugees, and recovery and reconstruction activities for returnees, WFP is helping the Iraqi government reduce vulnerability and build people's resilience and food security - especially for IDPs, refugees, women, girls and boys.

Working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – in particular SDG 2 “Zero Hunger” & SDG 17 “Partnerships for the Goals” – WFP is collaborating with partners to support Iraq in achieving food security and improved nutrition, promoting an inclusive society and strengthening cooperation. WFP's assistance is aligned with the Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan, the UN Recovery and Resilience Programme framework, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for the Syria crisis, the General Framework of the National Plan for Reconstruction and Development, and Iraq's National Poverty Reduction Strategy. In line with the corporate Integrated Road Map process, WFP Iraq transitioned to a Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) from 01 January 2018 until 31 December 2019.



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

2018 Human Development Index:  
**120 out of 188**

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

Malnutrition: **5-8% of children < 5**  
(CFSVA, 2016)

## Operational Updates

- In January, WFP delivered food assistance for 264,295 people in 7 governorates, reaching 94.3 percent of the monthly target of 280,375 people.
- On 9 Jan 2019, the Ministry of Trade (MoT) & WFP launched a new initiative to test digital solutions to modernise Iraq's Public Distribution System (PDS). WFP is providing technical expertise and support to MoT, with the goal of improving the management and transparency of the PDS operations, and more efficient services to citizens, prioritising those most in need. In the past, the PDS could only provide information on citizens in their place of origin; a digitised database would be able to provide lists of active citizens claiming rations in their current locations. This first phase is rolling out to over 30,000 people in the Baghdad, Duhok, Misan, Al-Basrah, Al-Anbar & Al-Muthanna governorates, testing in rural and urban environments. WFP is seeking donor support for the scale-up of the project.
- The movement of IDPs in and out of camps continues to be closely monitored, in coordination with cooperating partners (CPs) and camp management partners. No significant numbers of returnees were reported. WFP's Erbil office registered 156 new arrivals in IDP camps in the region, against 97 returnees.
- Work on cleaning irrigation canals in Ramadi was completed by 171 participants in resilience programmes. 60 participants are working on the rehabilitation of Ramadi water pump stations. 89 km of canals have been cleaned to date.
- Due to banking and financial regulations and sanctions, the CO faced problems in transferring funds to its Mobile Money Transfers (MMT) provider, Asia Hawala. CBT were delayed but as a workaround, WFP transferred via UNDP's account. MMT are now planned to take place in March.

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**Photo Caption:** Citizens register their details in the first phase of the digitisation of the PDS.  
*WFP / Anas Ali*

## Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (01 January 2018 - 31 December 2019)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
<b>270 m</b>	<b>203 m</b>
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (February – July 2019)
<b>91.3 m</b>	<b>53 m</b>

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Food insecure households of IDPs in affected areas have access to life-saving and nutritious food throughout 2018.

**Focus area:** *Crisis Response*

**Activities:**

- Provision of general food assistance in the form of regular cash-based transfers or in-kind monthly food entitlements and ready-to-eat rations in the initial phase of displacement.
- Provision of assistance in schools newly reclaimed and rehabilitated.

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Food insecure Syrian refugees have access to life-saving and nutritious food throughout the year.

**Focus area:** *Crisis Response*

**Activities:**

- Provision of general food assistance to vulnerable refugees.
- Provision of support for resilience and livelihoods activities for Syrian refugees.

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable returnees and conflict-affected communities rebuild their assets, recover livelihoods and improve their food security across the country by the end of 2018.

**Focus area:** *Resilience Building*

**Activities:**

- Resilience building through livelihoods activities and social protection to support the food insecure.

### Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Vulnerable groups, including children, adolescents, and pregnant and lactating women and girls have improved nutritional awareness through IYCF, and the government capacity is strengthened.

**Focus area:** *Nutrition capacity strengthening for Government partners*

**Activities:**

- Iraqi institutions receive capacity strengthening training in order to improve nutrition of children, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women and girls across the country.

### Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology

**Strategic Outcome 5:** Effective coordination for humanitarian support in Iraq

**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

**Activities:**

- Provision of cluster services and common platforms for the humanitarian community.

## Monitoring

- In January 2019, WFP conducted 137 site visits. These included 49 in-kind distribution sites, 45 e-voucher distributions, 18 shops, 9 cash-out points for IDPs, 15 cash-for-work visits and 1 cash-out point for refugees. In addition, 56 beneficiary monitoring interviews were carried out.

## Challenges

- There are ongoing security issues around the Hamrin Mountains, Ninewa, Kirkuk, Diyala and Salah-al-Din; and reported gunfire in Baghdad. Despite security incidents within WFP's areas of work, the impact on operations has been experienced mainly in the delay of movement of commodities through checkpoints.

## Capacity building and planning for 2019

- A 3-day Resilience workshop was held with CPs from 14-16 January. The workshop documented challenges, lessons learned, opportunities and key directives to include in future resilience programming.
- The Gender Results Network (GRN) conducted a gender session on 17 January. WFP Staff, Mercy Hands and retailers participated in the session, which focused on WFP Gender Policy goals and objectives, plus Gender Norms.
- The Regional Durable Solutions Working Group (RDSWG) facilitated an Iraq Returns Taskforce workshop with stakeholders on 29 January. The taskforce will work in harmony to clear obstacles and make way for a three-phase return process. The priority is to ensure dignity and safety in voluntary returns. An action plan addressing key challenges and including mitigating measures across all sectors was drafted.
- UNHCR and WFP held a joint workshop on Mitigating the Risks of Abuse of Power in Cash Assistance on 30 January. The event was well attended by Government, representatives from the financial services industry and other stakeholders. Participants pledged to take action against those who had abused their positions, and moreover to further empower the vulnerable being assisted.

## Donors

(in alphabetical order)

Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund (IHPF), Japan, Kuwait, Multilateral Funds, Norway, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, UN Funds excl. CERF.