WFP News Release

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WFP AND THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RELAUNCH SCHOOL FEEDING

BAGHDAD – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and its implementing partners in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE), WFP have relaunched its school feeding programme, following the successful 2018 pilot in West Mosul.

Under the School Feeding Programme, WFP is distributing fresh meals to 330,000 children, in 1,200 primary schools across the country during the academic year. The simple meal provided ensures the children have enough energy to start the school day. The schools were selected in coordination with the Ministry of Planning. The programme covers 11 governorates across the country including Mosul, Basra, Anbar and Diyala.

Although over two years have passed since the areas controlled by the Islamic State were retaken, the education system in Iraq is still recovering from decades of underinvestment and instability.

“The school feeding programme for 2019-2020 is the start of a new, comprehensive, and long-term initiative which reflects the value we place on our dear students and helps us fulfil our obligation to provide students with a suitable school environment, especially in the context of the current situation that the country is experiencing,” said Senior Chief of Research, Ministry of Education Dr. Ali Salman Hassan.

“Education is a powerful tool for young generations. It can help them develop their country and the world. By providing children with fresh, nutritious meals at school, WFP supports their growth and nutritional intake, as well as encouraging their families to send them to school regularly,” said WFP Country Director in Iraq Abdirahman Meygag.
The school meal includes a bottle of water or fruit juice, fresh Iraqi bread, cheese and a piece of fruit. This balanced meal provides the energy that school children need to focus during classes. In addition, all the food is purchased from local suppliers, bakeries, fruit markets and small businesses. This strengthens the capacity of small business owners, facilitates the creation of hundreds of livelihood opportunities in areas where the programme is implemented, and invigorates national and local food systems.

“The school feeding programme is the cornerstone of the education and health system in any country. There is no education without health, and no health without nutrition. To complete this cycle and achieve this goal, there should be a rich, nutritious and balanced food basket, appropriate for Iraqi students. School feeding is a natural right, that should be fulfilled by the state,” said Head of Environmental Awareness and School Health Dr Fawzi Rajab Tawfeeq.

WFP continues to work in coordination with sister UN agencies and partners to ensure that education and learning have a lasting impact on the future of Iraq’s children, improving their opportunities, health and wellbeing, and boosting equality.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies, building prosperity and supporting a sustainable future for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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