

Iraq CRISIS

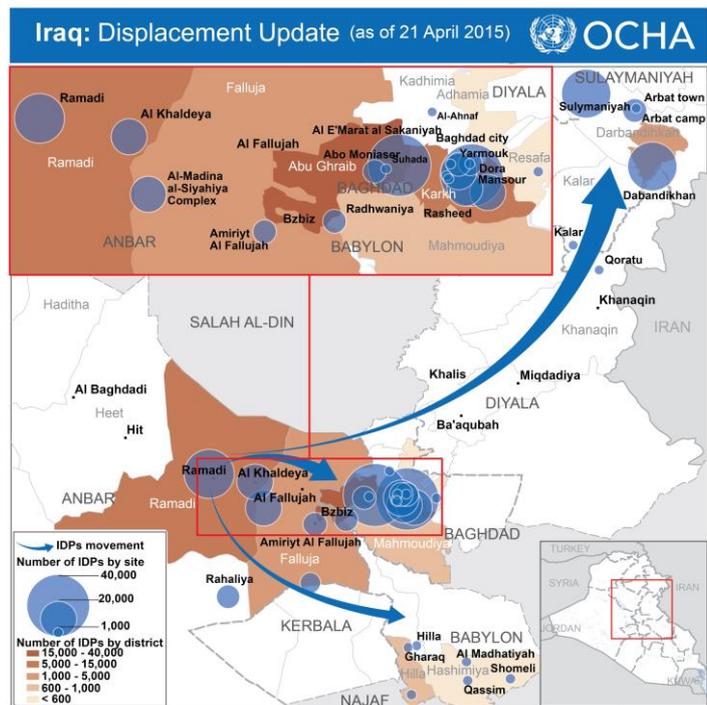
Situation Report No. 40 (15 – 21 April 2015)



This report is produced by OCHA Iraq in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 15 – 21 April. Due to the rapidly changing situation it is possible that the numbers and locations listed in this report may no longer be accurate. The next report will be issued on or around 1 May.

Highlights

- More than 100,000 people flee fighting in Ramadi
- Baghdad hosts 13,251 newly displaced families
- Humanitarian agencies step up response efforts
- WFP providing Immediate Response Rations to 60,000 people



Map Source(s): IOM DTM 226 March 2015, Clusters, CODs. The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created on 21 April 2015.

Situation Overview

Over 100,000 people have fled Iraq's central Ramadi District since Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the launch of military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Anbar Governorate on 8 April.

As of 21 April, the Government estimated 19,058 families (about 114,000 people) had fled Ramadi, including the areas of Albu Farraj and Albu Aetha, while humanitarian partners put their actual number at closer to 20,000 families (about 120,000 people) based on ongoing field assessments. Approximately 2,000 families were displaced within Anbar, 13,251 to Baghdad, 1,000 to Babylon, and 2,807 Sulaymaniyah governorates, according to the Government.

Humanitarian agencies have moved quickly to provide assistance, citing food, water and shelter as priority needs. The upsurge in displacement out of Ramadi has resulted in immediate emergency WASH services (water trucking, latrines, showers, and hygiene items). Over 30,000 IDPs on the move are in urgent need of drinking water.

As of 21 April, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) distributed core relief items (CRIs) to more than 13,500 people (2,257 families) in Anbar and Baghdad governorates and is developing three collective centres in Baghdad, with four additional locations under consideration.

[+ For more information, see "background on the crisis" at the end of the report](#)

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The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

Coordination Saves Lives

The World Food Programme (WFP) is assisting up to 60,000 people fleeing Ramadi with immediate response rations (IRRs) sufficient for three days. Between 16 and 19 April, partners provided assistance to around 41,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in government-controlled areas of eastern Anbar Governorate. Distributions took place in the Khalidiya and Habbaniya sub-districts, approximately 30km east of Ramadi, and Amiriyat Al-Fallujah Sub-district, some 40km west of Baghdad.

Thousands of people have been queuing at checkpoints to gain entry to the Iraqi capital. Many who have reached safety in the city have been assisted through an interagency distribution that included staple foods and other humanitarian essentials. While the number of newly people previously blocked at the Bzbiz Bridge, situated between Anbar and Baghdad governorates, has reduced significantly, there are differing reports on whether a requirement for a local sponsor to gain entry into Baghdad Governorate has been fully lifted.

The majority of IDPs at the bridge proceeded to Sulaymaniyah or Baghdad governorates. As of 20 April, 2,500 families had taken refuge in Sulaymaniah, an increase of 995 families from the day before. The new arrivals from Ramadi are primarily moving to urban locations. UNHCR is working to obtain government approval for the opening of Quarato and Tazar De IDP camps.

5,000 immediate response rations and 5,000 Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) kits were delivered to Al-Alam Sub District in Salah al-Din Governorate, with distributions planned to continue based on prevailing need.

On 20 April, the Governor of Babylon confirmed that the governorate would continue to accept new IDP families, except for men between 18 and 50 years of age. The Governor apparently urged men in this age group to fight to regain control of their cities in Anbar under the control of ISIL, emphasizing the need to maintain security in Babylon.

The majority of Ramadi's newly displaced are spread across numerous unidentified locations, hampering rapid response efforts by both Government and humanitarian agencies, aid workers reported.

To cope with the huge influx of IDPs, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) has identified seven locations for additional collective centres in Baghdad. UNHCR has assessed four of the locations, of which two to three are in the process of being prepared for immediate use. UN agencies are already coordinating and discussing the installation of WASH facilities, shelter and other services to ensure rapid assistance is available upon finalization of the assessments.



Shelter and Non-Food Items

Needs:

- Shelter and NFI assistance continues to be a significant need for Ramadi's newly displaced population.
- Cluster partners are exploring options for expanding their coverage into Kirkuk Governorate in response to a recent call for action. The announcement highlighted the immediate need for a camp to provide shelter for approximately 10,000 newly displaced DPs.

Response:

- In Baghdad, the Al-Waqaf Al-Sunni collective centre remains empty due to a lack of WASH services.
- The TWIG on Summerisation has produced a draft overview of summerisation activities. This will be finalised this week to standardise the cluster's response to the needs of IDPs this summer.
- To date, 2,607 NFI kits have been distributed to newly displaced populations, mainly in Anbar and Baghdad governorates.
- One transitional camp of 29 tents, and a camp of 71 tents, have been set up in Baghdad to accommodate new arrivals.
- In Anbar Governorate, 300 tents have been distributed to new arrivals.
- At the request of the Baghdad Provincial Council, a collective centre for about 400 families will be established at the Scout Camp in Ghazaliya.
- Over 207 IDP families received NFI support in Muthanna and Kirkuk.
- Over 1,215 tents have been distributed in Kerbala, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk and Baghdad, providing shelter for 1,215 IDP families.

Gaps and Constraints:

- In Baghdad, the Al-Waqaf Al-Sunni collective centre remains empty due to a lack of WASH services.



Needs:

Movement and Access Restrictions:

- Families are being deterred from entering Baghdad Governorate at checkpoints due to a sponsorship requirement. They are being forced to seek alternative routes out of Anbar Governorate or to seek safety within Anbar. Single men in particular face barriers to entry despite having documentation and a sponsor. The need to have a local sponsor to enter appears to be arbitrarily applied. An instruction to lift the sponsorship requirement to enter Baghdad Governorate by the Government does not appear to have been uniformly enforced yet.
- IDPs in Baghdad Governorate report having limited freedom of movement. Some families have been asked multiple times for proof of sponsor at checkpoints inside Baghdad or in areas where they intended to reside. These requirements have pushed some IDPs to return to other safe locations within Anbar such as al-Khaldiya and Al-Habaniya.
- According to new instructions issued on 19 April by the Governor of Babylon and the Head of the Supreme Security Committee, male IDPs from Anbar aged between 18-50 years old will not be admitted into Babylon Governorate as authorities are concerned that ISIL members might infiltrate the area with IDP families. Sponsorship is still required for all other IDPs from Anbar trying to enter Babylon. Baghdad authorities are considering establishing a camp for men from Anbar who will not be admitted into Babylon Governorate.
- On 19 April, Najaf Governorate authorities announced that they would not allow additional IDPs entry as the governorate had reached full capacity.
- In Kerbala Governorate, entry restrictions had earlier been in place, but were lifted as of 20 April. New IDPs have not been permitted to enter Wassit Governorate and the sponsorship system was not activated.
- An estimated 2,000 IDP and returnee families were recorded in Muqdadiyah District, Diyala Governorate. These IDPs cannot move freely due to fear of possible detention, killing or kidnap by armed group, either for money or sectarian reasons. Most IDP households are considering relocation to safer districts in Diyala.
- Until 19 April, IDPs were mainly entering the KR-I through Kalar in southern Sulaymaniyah Governorate without sponsorship requirements.

Displacements and Returns:

- According to UNHCR, 350 new IDP families arrived into Babylon Governorate as of 20 April. IDPs are staying with relatives, in one school and in unfinished buildings.
- As of 20 April, 9,000 newly displaced families were recorded within Baghdad Governorate.
- An estimated 340 IDP households from three villages (Alabassiyah, Hinbis, and Chumarky) in Diyala Governorate have returned to their villages. The majority of IDPs have refused to return due to security concerns or fear that their names would be blacklisted by armed groups and the police. According to an agreement between IDP community leaders and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), additional IDP households are expected to return to their places of origin.
- As of 20 April, 2,515 families from Ramadi had arrived in Sulaymaniyah Governorate. Since transport to Sulaymaniyah remains costly, only families with the necessary financial resources have been able to make the journey. New arrivals are seeking commercial accommodation humanitarian partners report.

Response:

- Iraqi authorities are establishing three transit centres at Sadar al-Yousifiya, Bzebiz Bridge and Checkpoint 75 on the highway between Falluja and Mahmoudiya districts in Anbar Governorate. UNHCR has conducted protection monitoring at Bzebiz Bridge and checkpoints, as well as advocated for the lifting of the sponsorship requirement.
- Protection monitors completed rapid needs assessments in Babylon Governorate for 150 IDP families, and 1,130 families in Baghdad Governorate, to identify those who were vulnerable for targeted assistance.
- Families approaching Returnee Integration Community Centres for information and assistance were identified for assistance, including CRIs.
- The Bureau of Displacement and Migration, supported by UNHCR, is conducting household-level registration of new IDP families from Ramadi arriving at checkpoints in the south of Sulaymaniyah Governorate.

- The Dahuk SGBV Working Group (WG) is mapping all psycho-social service providers to improve response coordination for displaced Yazidi women. Efforts are underway to assess the capacity of personnel and to identify those who can provide psycho-social services to survivors in various locations.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Restriction of movement and access to safety remains a challenge. Access restrictions into Baghdad, Babylon, Najaf, Wassit and Kerbala governorates have been reported.
- Inadequate shelter and lack of accommodation remain the key challenges for Anbar IDPs arriving in Baghdad.
- Upon return to their places of origin, IDPs in Muqdadiya District in Diyala Governorate reported to have found their homes looted and destroyed. IDPs also faced difficulty accessing basic services, and feared for their safety due to threats by armed groups. Conditions in the district are not favorable for return at this stage.
- Dahuk SGBV WG members reported a weak referral system, a lack of mental health services, absence of psychosocial support (MHPSS) for families, communities, men and boys, as well as overwhelmed local MHPSS services in general.
- Interventions by Handicap International have been suspended on 16 April until further notice in Erbil Governorate, and reduced in Dahuk Governorate, due to funding gaps. This interruption of services, including the transportation of people with chronic diseases to specialized health services, represents a serious health concern.
- The civilian character of IDP camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) remains difficult to maintain given the broad circulation of weapons and the fact that many IDPs are directly involved in the military campaign against ISIL.



Food Security

Needs:

- The supply of food is a priority need in parts of Anbar, Salah al-Din, Diyala, and Baghdad governorates.
- Food supplies are needed in the southern governorates: Diwaniya District and Najaf (Diwaniya's Nfir sub-district, Shamiya District and Afak District), along with Missan Governorate. Many IDPs are not listed with the Ministry of Trade's Public Distribution System (PDS) and they cannot receive food packs.
- Food assistance needs continue in KR-I in both Dahuk and Erbil (Baharka and Harshsm IDP camps).
- An assessment by partners has flagged that the conflict in Anbar has dramatically affected agricultural livelihoods, particularly decreasing vegetable, wheat and barley production and increasing the cost of agricultural inputs. There is an urgent need for agricultural input assistance such as seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, and livestock.

Response:

- WFP is assisting up to 60,000 people fleeing Ramadi with 3-day rations.
- Iraqi Salvation Humanitarian Organization (ISHO) and WFP assisted 41,000 displaced people in Anbar Governorate.
- Cluster partners have assisted 5,750 newly displaced people across Baghdad.
- On 16 April, WFP and Muslim Aid provided ready-to-eat rations to 850 displaced students from Anbar University evacuated to Abu Ghraib District. ISHO and WFP assisted 5,000 people with food in Bzbiz bridge area, 65km west of Baghdad.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Thousands of people continue to queue at checkpoints in an attempt to enter Baghdad City. Vulnerable people have been fleeing the partially besieged city of Haditha, also in Anbar Governorate, to safe districts within Anbar, Baghdad City and Abu Ghraib District in Baghdad Governorate.
- Intense conflict and blocked supply routes has resulted in a spike in food prices and driven down wages in Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Anbar governorates. This will likely negatively affect food security for the whole population.
- A lack of job opportunities and low wages is severely compromising purchasing power of individuals in Ninewa Governorate.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Needs:

- The upsurge in displacement out of Ramadi has required the provision of emergency WASH services, including water trucking, latrines, showers, and hygiene items.
- There is a need to increase capacity to respond to the immediate needs of newly displaced people.
- Additional contingency stocks are required to respond to the needs of the affected population.
- Over 30,000 IDPs on the move are in urgent need of drinking water.
- At least 385 newly displaced Ramadi families, to be located in Quarato IDP Camp in Sulaymaniyah, will need continuous provision of WASH services.
- Over 13,800 displaced families in Najaf Governorate are in urgent need of basic WASH services.
- IDPs at the Al-Cibaish Camp in Thi-Qar Governorate have no access to safe water.
- Toilets, showers and drinking water are needed at the Missan Al-Rahma IDP Camp.
- IDP camps in Dahuk Governorate continue to face WASH challenges, primarily camp-infrastructure. The level of investment to improve infrastructure and reduce operating costs is significant. Waste-water desludging and garbage removal remain constant issues of concern.
- Accessible return areas require urgent infrastructure rehabilitation and support to ensure sufficient service provision.
- The need and demand for safe water will increase during the summer.

Response:

- WASH partners responded in the first 24 hours with bottled water, WASH non-food items (NFIs), mobile latrines and showers, along with water tanks to around 10,000 IDPs coming from Ramadi to Baghdad.
- Provision of water trucking services for 130,000 IDPs in newly accessible areas of displacement in Anbar continues.
- In Salah al-Din Governorate, distribution of hygiene kits and other WASH NFIs was completed at three sites.
- Sanitation facilities were installed and WASH NFIs distributed at new displacement sites in Diyala Governorate.
- Partners in Dahuk provided WASH services for IDPs in informal settlements and unfinished buildings. Water trucking is being scaled back with the construction of sustainable water networks in some areas.
- Sufficient water for IDPs in Dahuk camps is currently being provided by WASH partners through water network distribution and is being supplemented by water trucking where required. Operations and maintenance of WASH facilities in 17 camps continues.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Funding constraints for essential WASH remains a major challenge.
- Insecurity in certain areas (eg. Heet City) has led to a discontinuation of WASH activities.
- An inefficient supply of chlorine in country has challenged partners' ability to support emergency water trucking.
- Operations and maintenance continue to be substantial challenges for WASH partners due to differences in designs of infrastructure.



Health

Needs:

- Essential primary and secondary health care services for IDPs and refugees, along with host and non-host affected communities, continue to be priorities.
- Supporting fixed health facilities as well as deployment of mobile teams in areas of emerging conflict and non-camp IDPs, in Samarra District and Anbar, is essential.
- Early detection and investigation of disease alerts and timely response to outbreaks will continue to be a focus.

Response:

- In response to the situation in Anbar, partners launched two mobile health clinics at each end of the Bzbiz Bridge from Anbar Governorate into Baghdad Governorate. Two new primary health centres (PHCs): one at Amiriya Falluja Sub-District and another at Al Nakheeb Sub-district were also established.
- Basic primary health care interventions, inclusive of non-communicable disease and MHPSS, were provided. Disease surveillance will also be strengthened and sustained.
- Antenatal care services were provided through public health centres in areas of IDP concentration. 1,464 births were assisted by skilled attendants and another 676 babies were delivered by Cesarean section.
- Health partners deployed six ambulances, each with one medical doctor and two paramedics and life-saving medicines, providing medical consultation and vaccination services.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Health services in the KR-I continue to be overburdened by the high number of IDPs in the region.
- Hard-to-reach areas remain a health concern, particularly in areas with limited capacities left within the local health service's delivery system.
- Challenges exist in recruiting local staff for health service provision.

**Education****Needs:**

- Of the estimated 2.7 million IDP children across Iraq, over 760,000 are of school age between 6 -17 and a further 125,000 are pre-primary children 4 - 5 years old.
- Current estimates indicate that only just over 31 percent of these children are currently attending formal education. Close to 70 percent of IDP children have missed over a year of formal education.
- Over 1.2 million children from host communities have been affected by the crisis across Iraq, putting additional strain on an already overburdened education system.

Response:

- Education partners have facilitated access to education for over 120,000 children through the provision of tented schools and pre-fabricated classrooms.
- Psychosocial support through recreational and other supporting activities has been provided to over 36,000 children. Training of educational personnel to enhance quality education is ongoing.
- A new school has been completed and is now providing formal education to IDP children in Chamisku IDP Camp, Dahuk Governorate. The school has registered 2,214 students thus far with numbers expected to increase.
- 11 tents have been installed to benefit 400 children in Baghdad Governorate. Four tents have been provided to four schools in Baghdad for use in psychosocial activities. Over 20,000 children are benefitting from the cleaning of 44 schools in Diyala Governorate.
- Education Cluster partners, in collaboration with the Iraq Ministry of Education and the Kurdistan Ministry of Education are currently meeting to contextualise the International Network for Education in Emergencies Minimum Standards. The agreed Iraqi minimum standards will provide guidance on how to prepare for, and respond to, current emergencies.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Additional resources are needed to increase access to education opportunities targeting children who risk dropping out of school.
- IDP students require transportation to access functioning schools in towns and cities. Distance to school and lack of transportation is a barrier to education for many IDPs who have relocated to areas far from schools or learning centres.
- Additional education supplies, such as text books, stationery and equipment, including desks, are required to provide quality education to children.



Logistics

Needs:

- The Logistics Cluster is addressing the need for regular and updated logistical information on road conditions and the availability of assets.
- Information is also being collected for contingency planning purposes and the Humanitarian Response Plan.
- The Cluster is coordinating with the Humanitarian Operations Centre (HOPs) for logistics information and planning.

Response:

- Items have been prepositioned in Baghdad from IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA and WHO for a second response to Haditha and Al Baghdadi. The Logistics Cluster was requested by UNICEF to coordinate a RRM with WFP and other interested agencies. Planning continues in anticipation of this activity.
- The Cluster is reinforcing information sharing between partners to optimize the use of available resources and the provision of logistics coordination platforms. This includes the website mentioned below along with maps, and other information products. Please visit: <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/irq14a>



Emergency Telecommunications Cluster

Response:

- The ETC has continued to program OCHA vehicles ensuring that radios are configured with the new country-wide code-plugs for enhanced security of humanitarian staff.
- A new radio operator for the Erbil Communications Centre has commenced duty, ensuring 24/7 service.

General Coordination

OCHA is also working closely with the JCMC in Baghdad to strengthen the exchange of information on the movement and location of displaced families, as well as to coordinate timely and effective assistance through the delivery of relief items and provision of services. Through humanitarian staff embedded within the JCMC, the Humanitarian Coordinator has reported on UN and humanitarian partners' support to Government's efforts in the five camp locations established by the latter.

In response to the Ramadi crisis, OCHA released its first Flash Update on 16 April and continues to consolidate situation reports from UN agencies and partners on the humanitarian response. Further updates will be released as the situation dictates.

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Background on the crisis

Since the fall of Mosul on 9 June 2014, armed groups (AGs), including Ba'athists, tribal militias and members of the former regime/military, along with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), have taken control of large swathes of Iraq's provinces of Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Diyala. The cities of Mosul, Tikrit, Telafar, Beiji, Quayyara, Suleiman Bek, Heet, Rashad, Hawiga, Riyadh, Falluja and Saqlawiyah, are currently under armed group control. Since January 2014 much of Anbar has been under ISIL control. This has led to massive internal displacement. Iraq is now contending with one of the largest internally displaced populations in the world; around 2.7 million have been displaced since January 2014.