



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Iraq Country Brief January 2020

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, demobilizing militias, creating jobs, 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.

A Zero Hunger Strategic Review was carried out in 2018 with participation of key Government partners and stakeholders. WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP, 2020-2024) in Iraq has been informed by the findings and recommendations of this review and 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 a context that is transitioning away from immediate crisis response to greater resilience, and a longer-term transition to peace and development. Mainstreaming gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive programming is also key.



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

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

2019 Human Development Index:
120 of 188 (lowest)

1.41 million IDPs (IOM)
245,810 Syrian refugees in Iraq (UNHCR)

In Numbers



375,346 people assisted
in January 2020

267.5 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 5.26 million distributed through
cash-based transfers

USD 62.8 million six months net funding
requirements (March – August 2020)

Operational Updates

- In January, WFP delivered food assistance to 375,346 people in 11 governorates, reaching 56 percent of the monthly target of 665,782 people. This was mainly due to delays in the start of school feeding in some locations, because of the civil unrest.
- Protests continue in Iraq (except in the Kurdistan Region and some northern areas), spurred by disenfranchised people because of a lack of employment opportunities, perceived corruption and a lack of basic services.
- In early January, the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guards was killed in Baghdad in a US air raid, along with the deputy commander of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) militias, which since created a more tense security situation in Iraq.
- In January, the roll-out of the e-voucher modality (conditional cash transfers, made through the SCOPE card system), continued in camps across Anbar and Ninewa governorates. Sensitization materials and key messages are being disseminated throughout the camps, as part of ongoing Communication with Communities work. This has resulted in over 96 percent of all WFP assistance being provided in cash in Iraq.
- Coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) continued in January for the IDP response. In the locations that MoMD distributed food parcels (Dohuk, Baghdad, Ninewa, Erbil and Anbar governorates), WFP provided a complementary "top-up" ration to cover the gap. As in 2019, this is expected to result in significant savings during the year.
- By the end of January, over 20,000 people had fled from northeast Syria into Duhok in the Kurdistan Region, following the Turkish operations that started in October, and WFP has delivered food assistance for over 18,400 refugees in Bardarash and Gawilan camps. In both camps, WFP is continuing to distribute ready-to-eat food packages (IRR) for new arrivals, and one-month rations (FFR) after two days. Arrivals slowed to 40-60 per day.
- Obtaining approvals for the movement of food trucks continues to be challenging, because of new processes between the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) and the National Operations Center (NOC). WFP is liaising with government counterparts accordingly, to be able to move forward with distributions.

Photo: Planting as a symbol of new beginnings, at the primary school in Zummar, Ninewa, for the International Day of Education. WFP, UNICEF, UNESCO and UNAMI renewed their commitment to education for all. ©WFP / Sharon Rapose

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Country Strategic Plan (CSP, 01 January 2020–31 December 2024)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
473 m	40.0 m
Total Requirements for 2020 (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March – August 2020)
179 m	62.8 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.

- A Budget Revision to WFP Iraq's new Country Strategic Plan (CSP) has been approved, to include up to three months of in-kind food assistance as a contingency under the CSP.
- As WFP Iraq's Resilience Team continues implementation of complementary activities to 2019's resilience projects, under the CSP, medium-term economy recovery activities are being supported. These are to broaden income earning opportunities through crop diversification, food processing and marketing value chain development.
- The resilience proposal review process for 2020 programming is ongoing; an engineering consulting firm is contracted to support the engineering assessment of projects. The programme priorities identified in the pilot

Seasonal Livelihood Programming Telkaif and Mosul workshops held in 2019 are going to be the main basis for programming in these two districts.

- Since its relaunch in December 2019, the school feeding programme continues to expand across Iraq. In January, the programme started in Ninewa and Qadisiya governorates, reaching 264,586 primary school children in nine governorates. Three additional targeted governorates (Wasit, Thi-Qar and Maysan) are set to start in February, expanding the reach to 330,000 children in 1,200 schools.
- Under the testing phase of the digitalization of Iraq's social protection programme, the Public Distribution System (PDS) of food rations, the iris registration across 12 governorates continued to progress, reaching 70,000 who have been collecting their government food entitlements through iris-protected PDS smart cards. Additionally, development of the "Tamwini" mobile application is ongoing, with inputs from the Ministry of Trade. By using this app, people will be able to update and access their data, and digitally pay for PDS services via "mobile money." Initial engagements with the mobile network operators have started to identify partnership opportunities that enable citizens to update their information for mobile payments. Discussions with the Ministry of Interior have started around linking the PDS functional identity with the national unified foundational ID document. A work plan will be designed by the end of the first quarter of 2020.

Monitoring and Assessments

- In January 2020, WFP and its partner on Mobile Money Transfers (MMT) conducted 60 site visits, including five in-kind distribution sites, 21 cash-out points for internally displaced people (IDPs) and Syrian refugees, 20 e-voucher points and 14 shops.
- The Food Security Outcomes Monitoring (FSOM) for IDPs in the regions coordinated out of the Kurdistan Region for second half of 2019 stated that food consumption clearly recovered after resuming monthly distributions. Due to funding gaps, from March to June 2019, WFP had been forced to reduce the frequency of monthly distributions to IDPs to every six weeks. In the second half of the year, 90 percent of households were shown as having an acceptable category of Food Consumption Score, which had increased by 15 percentage points from last round (April 2019).

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP needs an additional USD 62.8 million to ensure that operations can continue without interruption through August 2020.

Donors

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