

# Iraq – Complex Emergency

MARCH 11, 2021

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<b>4.1</b> MILLION	<b>2.4</b> MILLION	<b>1.2</b> MILLION	<b>243,121</b>	<b>4.8</b> MILLION
Number of People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance	Number of People in Acute Need	Number of IDPs	Number of Syrian Refugees Sheltering in Iraq	Number of IDP Returns Since 2014
<i>UN – February 2021</i>	<i>UN – March 2021</i>	<i>IOM – February 2021</i>	<i>UNHCR – January 2021</i>	<i>IOM – February 2021</i>

- The UN launched the 2021 Iraq HRP on March 9, requesting \$607 million to support conflict-affected populations in Iraq.
- Following robust humanitarian advocacy efforts by the USG, the UN, and other relief actors, the GoI has delayed the closure of Jed'dah 5 IDP camp.
- Confirmed COVID-19 cases rose sharply in February, straining Iraq's already overburdened health care system.



<b>TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING</b> For the Iraq Response in FYs 2020–2021	USAID/BHA <sup>1,2</sup>	\$123,758,519
	State/PRM <sup>3</sup>	\$224,455,134
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$348,213,653<sup>4</sup></b>

*For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6*

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

<sup>2</sup> USAID/BHA FY 2020 funding includes emergency food assistance from the former Office of Food for Peace and non-food humanitarian assistance from the former Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

<sup>4</sup> This total includes approximately \$47,005,000 in supplemental FY 2020 funding through USAID/BHA and State/PRM for COVID-19 preparedness and response activities.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### **2021 Iraq HRP Requests \$607 Million to Assist 1.5 Million People**

On March 9, the UN—in coordination with the Government of Iraq (GoI)—launched the Iraq 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), requesting \$607 million to address the humanitarian needs of conflict-affected populations in Iraq. The UN projects that 4.1 million people will require humanitarian assistance in Iraq in 2021, including 2.4 million people in acute need. While the number of people in need in 2021 remains similar to 2020, the number of people in acute need has increased by 35 percent, primarily due to the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the UN reports. In addition, the HRP calls for increased assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) sheltering in host communities following GoI-led IDP camp closures starting in October 2020, which exacerbated humanitarian needs among former camp residents. Under the 2021 HRP, relief actors aim to reach approximately 1.5 million people—comprising 295,000 IDPs residing outside of IDP camps, 221,000 IDPs sheltering in formal IDP camps, and 966,000 returnees living in areas of origin or host communities—with humanitarian assistance. Priority assistance activities include supporting IDPs and returnees to meet basic food, livelihoods, and shelter needs; expanding access to health care, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services; and increasing protection support to at-risk populations, including legal assistance to enable safe and voluntary returns. In 2021, U.S. Government (USG) partners continue to provide life-saving health, food, protection, shelter and settlements, and WASH assistance to conflict-affected populations in Iraq, as well as multipurpose cash assistance to help the most vulnerable meet their basic needs.

### **GoI Pauses Jed'dah 5 Camp Closure, Agrees to Joint Planning Process**

On January 21, the GoI announced plans to close Ninewa Governorate's Jed'dah 5 camp, one of two remaining IDP camps—along with Anbar Governorate's Amriyat al-Fallujah camp—in GoI-administered federal Iraq; the two camps collectively host nearly 9,300 people. Another 25 IDP camps hosting nearly 178,000 people remain open in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)-administered areas of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR), with KRG authorities stating they have no plans for imminent closures.

The USG, UN agencies, and other international relief actors responded to the GoI's Jed'dah 5 closure announcement by reiterating concerns that perceived ties to extremist groups in receiving communities and a lack of essential civil documentation—as well as inadequate shelter and livelihoods opportunities in areas of origin—would increase humanitarian protection risks and the prospect of secondary displacement for departing IDPs, including the 6,500 residents sheltering at Jed'dah 5. Since GoI camp closures resumed in mid-October, nearly 30 percent of the 46,800 people that departed IDP sites have been unable to return to areas of origin and are now considered secondarily displaced, according to the International Organization of Migration (IOM). The GoI subsequently agreed to delay Jed'dah 5's closure and establish a joint planning process alongside IOM and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to coordinate future closure efforts and support sustainable returns. The USG continues to advocate for safe, voluntary, and sustainable returns for the more than 187,000 IDPs residing in Iraq's remaining camps.

### **Relief Actors Highlight Lack of Documentation as Barrier to Return**

Lack of civil documentation, such as identity cards or birth certificates, among many IDPs and returnees remains a primary obstacle to returns and reintegration in Iraq, relief actors report. According to a REACH assessment, lack of civil documentation affected 2.1 million people in Iraq in 2020, with an estimated 55 percent of IDPs in camps, nearly 50 percent of IDPs in out-of-camp settings, and approximately 60 percent of returnees lacking at least one key identity document. Approximately

824,000 people, meanwhile, lack three or more core documents, according to the assessment. Lack of civil documentation limits access to formal employment and opportunities to own or rent property, and hinders the ability to utilize basic service such as education and health care. Many IDPs lost their documents fleeing from conflict, while parties to the conflict confiscated some households' documentation, and others possess invalid Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-issued documentation, humanitarian organizations report. Meanwhile, UNHCR identified cost barriers—including high transportation costs to physically access the courts or civil affairs directorates and the administrative fees to obtain new civil documentation—and complex court procedures as challenges involved in obtaining civil documentation. In response, USG implementing partners are providing legal support to IDPs to acquire civil documentation as a core focus of humanitarian programming. During 2020, State/PRM partner UNHCR provided legal assistance to 46,400 people across Iraq, helping more than 14,000 individuals secure vital civil documents.

### **Challenges Remain Despite Decline in Humanitarian Access Incidents**

The humanitarian operating environment in Iraq improved slightly in January, with humanitarian organizations reporting 32 incidents that obstructed the delivery of humanitarian assistance during the month, representing a 40 percent decrease from the monthly average reported during 2020, the UN reports. Relief actors credit the launch of a digital humanitarian access letter authorization platform for the modest improvement. Nonetheless, humanitarian organizations continue to report access challenges, including incidents of interference by subnational authorities. In Kirkuk Governorate, the Kirkuk Operations Command continues to require non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with valid national access authorization letters to obtain additional governorate-level approvals to operate in the governorate's Daquq and Hawija districts; four such interference incidents in Hawija adversely affected the operations of nearly 20 relief organization in December, the UN reports. Overall, obstructions to the movement of personnel and humanitarian goods comprised 31 of the 32 reported incidents in January, disrupting assistance to an estimated 345,000 people, according to the UN. Despite such constraints, USG partners continue to provide life-saving assistance across both the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and federal Iraq.

### **Gol Imposes New Restrictions as COVID-19 Cases Surge**

While the number of new daily COVID-19 cases declined sharply between November and January, the number of new cases began to increase in early February, doubling every 12 days between February 1 and February 23, according to the Gol Ministry of Health. Furthermore, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) reports that severe COVID-19 cases are rising, stretching health care capacity, and COVID-19-related deaths are also increasing. In response, the Gol imposed additional movement and commercial activity restrictions in Gol-administered areas on February 18, including partial weekday curfews and full weekend lockdowns. According to a February report from the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)-supported NGO Ground Truth Solutions, the restrictions are likely to negatively affect vulnerable populations in Iraq. More than 80 percent of IDPs and refugees surveyed in October and November reported significant concerns regarding their ability to meet health care, education, and other basic needs amid COVID-19-related movement restrictions. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, USAID/BHA partners are largely able to continue to implement humanitarian programming throughout Iraq, with COVID-19 mitigation measures in place to protect the health and safety of all staff and aid recipients. During January, one USAID/BHA partner distributed more than 9,000 COVID-19 prevention kits and reached more than 11,000 people through door-to-door hygiene promotion activities in Ninewa, Salah al-Din, and Sulaimaniya governorates. In addition, IOM supported COVID-19 screening and triage processes at 24 community clinics across Anbar, Baghdad, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, and Ninewa during the month.

## KEY FIGURES



14

Number of  
USG partners  
providing essential  
WASH services



28

Health care facilities  
supported by IOM in  
January



14,300

Individuals secured a vital  
civil document through  
UNHCR in 2020

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### WASH

With USAID/BHA and State/PRM support to IOM, UNHCR, and implementing partners (IPs), the USG is supporting the provision of essential WASH services for vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas of Iraq. USAID/BHA partners are providing safe drinking water, including trucking water where necessary; operating and maintaining WASH infrastructure in IDP camps; rehabilitating WASH infrastructure outside of camps; and promoting sanitary and hygienic living conditions that protect communities, promote dignity, and limit the spread of communicable diseases. In addition, USG partners are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by conducting hygiene awareness campaigns; distributing hygiene kits; installing handwashing stations at informal settlements, camps, and public areas in out-of-camp locations; and rehabilitating WASH facilities in primary health care centers across eight Iraqi governorates.

### HEALTH

With USG support, NGOs and UN partners—including IOM, UNHCR, and WHO—provide primary health care services for IDPs in camp and out-of-camp locations across conflict-affected areas of Iraq. USG partners are improving the quality and accessibility of primary health care services, including mental health care services, through the provision of staff capacity-building, staff salaries, and medical supplies and equipment. In addition, USG partners are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by training medical professionals on screening, identification, triage, and treatment of suspected cases; strengthening disease surveillance systems; implementing risk communication and community engagement activities; and providing critical medicines, medical equipment, and other supplies. In addition, a State/PRM NGO partner provides health and psychosocial support services to IDPs in Dohuk, Erbil, and Ninewa.

### PROTECTION

Addressing protection concerns remains a top priority for the humanitarian response in Iraq, with USG partners supporting a range of critical protection initiatives for IDPs, returnees, Syrian refugees, and host communities. With funding to IOM, UNHCR, and other partners, State/PRM promotes durable solutions to the ongoing conflict in Iraq by facilitating the sustainable integration of displaced Iraqis, helping provide accurate information on security conditions and livelihood opportunities in host communities and areas of origin. In addition, USAID/BHA supports IOM and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as NGO partners, to provide protection services, including case management support, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response services, increased access to psychosocial support services, legal assistance for civil documentation, and mine risk education. A State/PRM partner also works to mitigate protection risks for Syrian refugee women through activities to prevent and respond to GBV.



7

Number of USG implementing partners providing shelter and settlements services

## SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USG funding supports IOM, UNHCR, and NGO partners to provide critical shelter services for displaced Iraqis, primarily in conflict-affected areas. USG partners distribute shelter kits and other relief commodities; provide coordination and management services at camps and informal settlements; and support the rehabilitation of conflict-damaged houses, upgrades to unfinished or abandoned buildings, and improvements to camp infrastructure to provide safe and dignified living conditions that align with humanitarian standards. A State/PRM NGO partner also provides support to Syrian refugees to upgrade shelters in refugee camps.



**\$34.3 Million**

In dedicated FY 2020 food assistance funding provided through WFP

## FOOD SECURITY

Through WFP, USAID/BHA continues to deliver emergency food assistance in the form of cash transfers to populations in need in Iraq, providing critical assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs and Syrian refugees living in camp settings while also supporting local markets. WFP is also supporting the Gol's efforts to modernize one of its social safety net programs to improve the delivery of food assistance for IDPs and support the transition of emergency food assistance programming to Gol-managed safety net activities.

## CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- In January 2014, ISIS forces began seizing control of parts of northern and central Iraq, generating significant population displacement as civilians fled to areas of relative safety, such as the IKR, to escape fighting.
- On August 11, 2014, USAID deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to Iraq to coordinate USG efforts to address the urgent humanitarian needs of newly displaced populations throughout the country. USAID also established a Response Management Team (RMT) based in Washington, D.C., to support the DART. On August 31, 2019, USAID demobilized the DART and RMT. USAID/BHA staff based in the region and in Washington, D.C., continue to coordinate with USG, UN, and other humanitarian partners to provide life-saving assistance in Iraq.
- Approximately 4.1 million people require humanitarian assistance in Iraq, according to the UN. Prolonged displacement is exhausting the resources of IDPs and host community members alike at a time when the capacity of both the GoI and KRG to respond to humanitarian needs remains challenged by budgetary constraints. Meanwhile, UN agencies, NGOs, and other relief actors face funding shortages, logistical challenges, and security constraints that complicate efforts to meet critical needs.
- On October 15, 2020, the GoI Ministry of Migration and Displacement resumed efforts to consolidate and close IDP camps across Iraq, an effort that had been paused since late 2019 due to civil unrest and then the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On December 23, 2020, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Matthew H. Tueller redeclared a disaster in Iraq for FY 2021 due to the ongoing complex emergency and humanitarian crisis.

### USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2021<sup>1</sup>

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
Implementing Partners	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Basrah, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Maysan, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadisiya, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya, Wasit	\$775,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,050,000
UNOPS	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,180,000
	Program Costs	Countrywide	\$25,300
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2021</b>			<b>\$3,030,300</b>
<b>TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN IRAQ IN FY 2021</b>			<b>\$3,030,300</b>

**USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2020<sup>1</sup>**

<b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNER</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>FUNDING FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN IRAQ</b>			
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,800,000
Implementing Partners (IPs)	HCIMA	Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Basrah, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Maysan, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadisiya, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya, Wasit	\$553,187
	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$413,624
	Health, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Anbar, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din	\$45,016,376
IOM	Health, Protection, Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide	\$13,000,000
UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Protection	Anbar, Baghdad, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya	\$6,000,000
OCHA	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,300,000
WFP	Cash-Based Transfers for Food	Countrywide	\$18,547,504
	Program Support	Countrywide	\$1,597,528
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$88,228,219</b>
<b>STATE/PRM</b>			
IPs	Durable Solutions, Education, Emergency Response, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, WASH	Countrywide	\$63,270,220
	Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Education, Health, Non-Food Items, Protection, Refugee Response, Shelter and Settlements	Jordan, Lebanon, Syria	\$10,850,000
International Labor Organization (ILO)	Livelihoods	Turkey	\$429,914
IOM	Durable Solutions, Displacement Tracking Matrix, Livelihoods	Countrywide	\$34,000,000
UNHCR	CCCM, Non-Food Items, Protection, Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide	\$79,100,000
UNHCR	Multi-Sector Assistance, Refugee Response	Jordan, Lebanon, Syria	\$20,800,000
UNICEF	Education	Countrywide	\$1,500,000
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING</b>			<b>\$209,950,134</b>
<b>TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN IRAQ IN FY 2020</b>			<b>\$298,178,353</b>

**FUNDING IN IRAQ FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE<sup>2</sup>**

<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
IPs	Health, MPCA, Protection, WASH	Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya	\$18,650,000

IOM	Health, Protection, WASH	Anbar, Baghdad, Dohuk, Erbil, Ninewa, Salah al-Din	\$7,600,000
WFP	Cash Transfers for Food	Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya	\$6,250,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$32,500,000</b>
<b>STATE/PRM</b>			
IPs	Health, MPCA, Protection, WASH	Countrywide	\$5,605,000
UNHCR	CCCM, Health, MPCA, Protection, Refugee Response, WASH	Countrywide	\$8,900,000
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING</b>			<b>\$14,505,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS &amp; RESPONSE IN IRAQ IN FY 2020</b>			<b>\$47,005,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FYs 20–21</b>			<b>\$123,758,519</b>
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FYs 20–21</b>			<b>\$224,455,134</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FYs 20–21</b>			<b>\$348,213,653</b>

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of March 11, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Figures represent supplemental FY 2020 International Disaster Assistance (IDA) and Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) funding committed for COVID-19 preparedness and response activities as of September 30, 2020.

## PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)