

Iraq – Complex Emergency

December 16, 2020

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- The Gol announced in mid-October the rapid closure of IDP camps across federal Iraq; as of mid-December, the Gol had closed or consolidated 15 IDP camps and reclassified two IDP camps as informal sites.
- The Gol and KRG signed an agreement in October facilitating returns of displaced people to Sinjar following improved coordination on security, reconstruction, and other issues.
- IDP and refugee households face heightened protection risks following recent camp closures and ongoing COVID-19-related restrictions.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the Iraq Response in FY 2020

USAID/BHA ^{1,2}	\$120,728,219
State/PRM ³	\$224,455,134
Total	\$345,183,353⁴

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

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

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

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

⁴ This total includes \$47,005,000 in supplemental funding through USAID/BHA and State/PRM for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) preparedness and response activities

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Gol Rapidly Closes IDP Camps Despite Continued Obstacles to Return

In mid-October, the Government of Iraq (GoI) Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) announced plans to close all remaining internally displaced person (IDP) camps in Iraq. At the time of the announcement, approximately 1.3 million people remained displaced across the country, including nearly 246,000 people sheltering in formal IDP camps, according to the UN. As of December 8, the GoI had closed or consolidated 15 camps and informal sites in federal Iraq and reclassified two camps—Habbaniya Tourist City in Anbar Governorate and Zayona in Baghdad Governorate—as informal sites, causing nearly 34,000 people to depart the affected sites, according to the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster.⁵ The MoDM has not announced any immediate closure plans for the three remaining camps—Anbar’s Amriyat al-Fallujah camp and Ninewa Governorate’s Jed’dah 5 and Salamiyah camps—in federal Iraq, which host an estimated 31,000 people. Approximately 25 IDP camps also remain open in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR), with an estimated population of 186,400 people.

More than 90 percent of households that have left IDP camps since October identified camp consolidation, camp closure, or forced return as their reason for departing, according to the CCCM Cluster, Iraq Information Center, and the Protection Cluster. Many IDPs face significant obstacles to returning to areas of origin, including a lack of required documentation to travel within Iraq or access public services, inadequate shelter, and safety and security concerns, according to the UN. The UN estimates that approximately one-third of all IDPs seeking to return to their districts of origin following camp closures were unable to do so as of late November, resulting in secondary displacement. Nearly one-half of IDPs departing camps in Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, and Karbala governorates in mid-to-late October sought shelter on the outskirts of cities or in unsafe structures without basic necessities due to barriers to return. A State/PRM partner reports that the displaced households include thousands of children who face heightened protection risks while returning to damaged housing without access to basic services such as electricity, food, or safe drinking water. Relief actors have also expressed concern about camp closures in the midst of the country’s ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, with camp closures proceeding despite GoI COVID-19 protocols, and the coming winter. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society groups have called on the GoI to provide IDPs more time to make arrangements prior to closures and enhance coordination across regions to ensure returning IDPs can reach their destinations across checkpoints and receive assistance, and the UN has stressed that returns must be dignified, durable, informed, non-discriminatory, safe, and voluntary. USAID/BHA partners continue to provide services in recently reclassified informal sites, conduct rapid needs assessments with IDPs and recently displaced individuals in Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates, and provide mobile money transfers and cash vouchers to support households departing IDP camps. A State/PRM partner is assisting displaced Iraqis by providing livelihoods support, training, and job placement to build household resilience and reduce reliance on negative coping mechanisms.

GoI and KRG Sign Agreement Facilitating Returns to Sinjar

On October 9, the GoI and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) signed an agreement to facilitate the return of displaced populations to northwestern Ninewa’s Sinjar District, according to the UN. The agreement seeks to support returns by restoring security and stability in the district through improved coordination on administrative, security, and reconstruction issues. Displaced households have been gradually returning to Sinjar since June 2020 due to economic pressures associated with COVID-19 restrictions and difficulty finding livelihood opportunities in other regions, as well as camp closures,

⁵ The coordinating body for CCCM humanitarian activities, comprising UN agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). In addition, IDPs cited the desire to return home, improving security conditions, and local support as driving returns to Sinjar, IOM DTM reports. However, the Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS)—an independent information provider specializing in humanitarian needs—reports that approximately 50 percent of the Yezidi population originally displaced from Sinjar, or nearly 200,000 people, had not yet returned as of October. The ACAPS review also identified education, health, livelihoods, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance as needs among IDPs returning to Sinjar. Yezidis comprised more than 97 percent of the approximately 5,900 individuals returning to Sinjar between October 30 and November 21, according to IOM DTM.

UN Identifies Heightened Protection Risks Amid COVID-19 Restrictions

Many households across the country, including IDPs and refugees, have lost livelihoods due to the economic effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and face economic pressures that may increase the risk of exploitation or abuse, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Displaced populations experience a heightened risk of gender-based violence (GBV) in Iraq—with women and girls disproportionately affected—and limited economic resources due to COVID-19 restrictions, according to UNHCR. GBV incidents in Iraq have increased significantly in 2020, according to the GBV Information Management System, an inter-agency partnership between the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), International Rescue Committee, and UNHCR. Additionally, UNHCR found a more than 40 percent increase in early marriage and a nearly 20 percent increase in child labor among refugees, including Syrian refugee households, across all governorates in Iraq between August and October. In November, several UN agencies issued a joint statement asserting that COVID-19 measures had reduced the ability of GBV survivors to protect themselves from their abusers or access support mechanisms. Ongoing camp closures and reclassifications may also increase protection issues and secondary displacement risks for the approximately 40 percent of female-headed households in formal camps within federal Iraq if these households lack civil documentation or face potential marginalization due to perceived affiliations, according to IOM. In response to protection concerns, State/PRM is providing \$4 million to support UNHCR's survivor-centered GBV prevention and response activities for IDPs, returnees, and refugees in Iraq, including awareness campaigns, capacity-building among specialized government and local service providers, individual case management, legal services, and psychosocial care, in addition to other support for UNHCR's activities in Iraq. Additionally, in FY 2020, USAID/BHA provided more than \$6 million to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to conduct protection activities, including child protection services for 95,000 people and GBV prevention and response services for 37,000 individuals.

Nearly 3 Million People Estimated to Face Insufficient Food Consumption

An estimated 2.9 million people faced insufficient food consumption levels throughout Iraq as of November, representing a nearly 20 percent decrease from the estimated 3.5 million people who were facing insufficient food consumption in September, according to USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP). The estimated number of people utilizing negative coping strategies—including purchasing less expensive food, borrowing food or money, or reducing food consumption—to meet their food needs also decreased, from about 910,000 people in September to 850,000 people in October, according to WFP; response agencies continue to analyze food consumption figures. To address ongoing humanitarian food needs, WFP—with USAID/BHA and other donor funding—provided emergency food assistance to more than 240,000 IDPs, nearly 69,200 refugees, and more than 46,000 returnees across 12 governorates in October. The assistance included more than \$4 million in cash-based transfers for food and small amounts of in-kind food for people displaced by camp closures.

KEY FIGURES



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Number of
USG partners
providing essential
WASH services



\$27 Million

In dedicated FY 2020
USG support for life-
saving health care
programming



\$26.7 Million

In dedicated FY 2020
USG support for critical
protection initiatives

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

WASH

With USAID/BHA support to IOM and NGO partners and State/PRM support to UNHCR and implementing partners (IPs), the U.S. Government (USG) is supporting essential WASH services for vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas of Iraq, particularly people residing in IDP camps and informal settlements. With a focus on the delivery of water, the operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure in camps, and the rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure out of camps, USAID/BHA partners are providing safe drinking water and enabling sanitary and hygienic living conditions that protect communities, promote dignity, and limit the spread of communicable diseases. To mitigate COVID-19 transmission risks, USG partners are 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

Working with USAID/BHA NGO and longstanding UN partners, including IOM, UNHCR, and the UN World Health Organization (WHO), the USG aims to support primary health care services for Iraqis in camps and in 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 training, staff salaries, and medical supplies and equipment, both in camps and in out-of-camp settings. 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.

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, 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 UNICEF, as well as NGO partners, to provide protection services, including case management support, 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 strengthen protection of Syrian refugee women through activities to prevent and respond to GBV.



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Number of USG implementing partners providing shelter and settlements services

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USG funding supports IOM, UNHCR, and USAID/BHA 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 using cash assistance, 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 its social safety net program 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, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria 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 MoDM 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 October 22, 2019, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Matthew H. Tueller redeclared a disaster in Iraq for FY 2020 due to the ongoing complex emergency and humanitarian crisis.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2020^{1,2}

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
FUNDING FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN IRAQ			
USAID/BHA			
Non-Food Assistance			
	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management (HCIM)	Countrywide	\$1,800,000
IPs	HCIM	Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Basrah, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Maysan, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadisiya, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya, Wasit	\$553,187
	HCIM	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
UNICEF	Protection	Anbar, Baghdad, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya	\$6,000,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIM	Countrywide	\$1,300,000
	Program Support		\$1,597,528
TOTAL NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING			\$69,680,715
Food Assistance			
WFP	Cash-Based Transfers for Food, Complimentary Services	Countrywide	\$18,547,504
TOTAL FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING			\$18,547,504

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$88,228,219
STATE/PRM			
IPs	Durable Solutions, Education, Emergency Response, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, WASH	Countrywide	\$63,270,220
	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
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$209,950,134
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN IRAQ IN FY 2020			\$298,178,353

FUNDING IN IRAQ FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE³			
USAID/BHA			
Non-Food Assistance			
IPs	Health, Multipurpose Cash Assistance (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
TOTAL NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING			\$26,250,000
Food Assistance			
WFP	Cash Transfers for Food	Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniya	\$6,250,000
TOTAL FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING			\$6,250,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$32,500,000
STATE/PRM			
IPs	Health, MPCA, Protection, WASH	Countrywide	\$5,605,000
UNHCR	CCCM, Health, MPCA, Protection, Refugee Response, WASH	Countrywide	\$8,900,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$14,505,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE IN IRAQ IN FY 2020			\$47,005,000

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2020	\$120,728,219
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2020	\$224,455,134
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ RESPONSE IN FY 2020	\$345,183,353

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of September 30, 2020.

² This total does not include USAID/BHA and State/PRM funding for refugee response activities in Iraq. Please see the latest USAID/BHA Syria Complex Emergency Fact Sheet for refugee response contributions.

³ Figures represent supplemental 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)