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Inter-agency Mission to Diyala
(February 2022) [Credit: OCHA]

2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response Plan Published



The [2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview \(HNO\)](#) and [2022 Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#) for Iraq were published in March 2022. The 2022 Iraq HNO focuses on the humanitarian needs of the people displaced by the 2014-2017 attacks by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and subsequent military operations to defeat them. The analysis covers all districts in Iraq that were either directly impacted by the crisis or which host internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees, namely in the governorates of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Duhok, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Al-Sulaymaniyah. The HNO found 2.5 million people in Iraq remain in need of humanitarian assistance, a decrease of the 4.1 million assessed to be in need in 2021.

It has been eight years since the first emergence of ISIL. The intervening years have been filled with suffering, destruction, the fraying of a diverse social tapestry, and the internal displacement of some 6 million Iraqis. More recently, these years have given way to a new – albeit tenuous – hope for the future, as the country progresses towards recovery. Since the conclusion of formal military operations against ISIL in 2017, significant reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts have restored roads, reopened local markets, restarted public water and electricity, and rebuilt housing, health facilities and schools. Approximately 4.9 million previously displaced Iraqis have returned to their home districts.

Given the accelerated efforts towards durable solutions, including the development of a durable solutions framework and nexus coordination architecture, and cognizant that many of the remaining challenges require long-term structural solutions beyond the humanitarian response, the humanitarian community in Iraq revised its approach to humanitarian needs analysis for the 2022 HNO. The definition and measurement of humanitarian needs was revised and tightened to better identify those with the highest levels of vulnerability. Specific attention was paid to those whose lives remain uprooted, who live in critical emergency shelter, who lost their civil documentation during the crisis, or for whom access to essential services or livelihoods opportunities remains compromised due to the large-scale destruction and displacement that took place between 2014 and 2017.

This tightened analysis reveals that an estimated 2.5 million people remain vulnerable and require some form of humanitarian or similar assistance. For them, the situation has not improved over the past year, and many continue to face a range of issues that prevent them from fully recovering, regaining self-sufficiency and achieving long-term stability. However, the underlying causes of these challenges – such as lack of social cohesion, high levels of poverty, and inadequate social services in areas of origin – are better assisted through longer-term engagement and investments by the

government and development actors. A smaller number of people, with deep and multiple needs that require life-saving and life-sustaining assistance, are prioritized for humanitarian assistance in 2022 to ensure maximum impact.

Addressing the continuing humanitarian consequences of the 2014-2017 crisis and related displacement is the central priority for humanitarian action in Iraq in 2022. Based on the tighter humanitarian needs analysis and the agreed targeting criteria, the 2022 Iraq HRP will prioritize life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian assistance for 991,000 Iraqi IDPs and returnees, including 180,000 IDPs in formal camps, 234,000 IDPs living in out-of-camp areas, and 577,000 returnees. The total cost of the response, as outlined in the HRP, amounts to US\$400 million. The 2022 HRP focuses on providing safe and dignified living conditions, protecting IDPs and returnees from physical and mental harm related to the impact of the ISIL crisis.

Humanitarian actors seek to improve unsafe living environments for people living in camps, informal sites or other critical shelter—or in areas with EO contamination—while also providing specialized protection services to the people most at risk of rights violations, violence, abuse and other serious protection risks. Humanitarian partners will provide support to vulnerable IDPs and returnees to access essential services that they are otherwise unable to access, either because they face specific barriers or because they live in areas where services and infrastructure have not yet been rehabilitated. The most acutely vulnerable IDPs and returnees will be supported with emergency food assistance, emergency livelihoods support and temporary cash to meet their most basic needs and avoid reliance on harmful negative coping mechanisms for their survival.

The 991,000 acutely vulnerable people who will be the focused target of this HRP, are located across 14 of the 18 governorates of Iraq. The six governorates with the highest target populations are Ninewa (356,000 people), Al-Anbar (166,000), Duhok (155,000), Salah Al-Din (92,000), Kirkuk (66,000) and Diyala (55,000). The largest numbers of in-camp IDPs targeted through the HRP are in Duhok (110,000), Ninewa (45,000), Erbil (14,000) and Al-Sulaymaniyah (11,000), while the governorates hosting the most out-of-camp IDPs are Ninewa (60,000), Duhok (46,000), Erbil (34,000) and Al-Anbar (24,000). For returnees, the largest number is also in Ninewa (249,000), followed by Al-Anbar (141,000), Salah Al-Din (73,000), Kirkuk (54,000) and Diyala (45,000).

In 2022, the humanitarian response will be delivered and coordinated through eight operational clusters, including three protection Areas of Responsibility (AoR), Coordination and Common Services (CCS) and the CWG. The 141 partners, clusters, CCS and the CWG will require \$400 million to implement 93 activities. Each activity was designed to support vulnerable IDPs in camps and acutely vulnerable out-of-camp IDPs and returnees to live in safety and dignity, access essential services or meet their basic needs. Planning for cash-based interventions has been recommended where cash is the preferred response modality of the affected population, where it is feasible to provide cash, and where such assistance has proved effective in the past.

Planning for a Transition of the International Humanitarian Response Begins

In parallel to implementation of the 2022 HRP, and in recognition of the burgeoning durable solutions architecture in Iraq and recovered national capacities, the humanitarian community in Iraq has also begun to ramp up joint efforts to transition and scale down the collective, whole-of-system, international humanitarian response in Iraq. Between January 2014 to December 2021, the UN and its humanitarian partners provided life-saving assistance to nearly 7 million Iraqi citizens, across nine governorates, in dozens of IDP camps and in thousands of other locations across the country. International donors provided an estimated US\$8 billion towards this emergency effort. In parallel, many more billions in development, reconstruction and stabilization funding have assisted the Government of Iraq in restoring electricity and public water systems, rebuilding roads, and reconstructing schools, health facilities and housing.

Despite the remaining challenges outlined above, five years on from the defeat of ISIL, the Government and people of Iraq are in a substantially improved position as compared to 2014. Oil prices have significantly increased since the last budget, and in 2021, the Government of Iraq issued a National Plan on Internal Displacement, co-launched the United Nations Strategic Development and Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and successfully conducted democratic elections. Accordingly, through the course of 2022, the UN and its partners will work with the Government of Iraq, and the Kurdistan Regional Government, to handover humanitarian operations and to support Government in assuming the responsibility for the provision of life-saving services that people still displaced or otherwise not yet recovered from the ISIL crisis need to survive.



Solutions Advance for Salah al-Din Displacement in Sulaymaniyah



On 28 March 2022, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, attended a high-level meeting on displacement in Sulaymaniyah governorate with the governors of Sulaymaniyah and Salah Al-Din. The two governorates are connected in the context of Iraq's displaced population as the largest proportion of the IDPs living in Sulaymaniyah are originally from Salah Al-Din. Sulaymaniyah hosts approximately 140,000 IDPs, the vast majority of whom live in out-of-camp locations.

The Governor of Sulaymaniyah, Dr. Haval Abu Bakr, opened the meeting by stating his continued support for hosting IDPs in Sulaymaniyah. However, he noted that the financial implications of accommodating large numbers of displaced Iraqis put a strain on local resources and infrastructure. He thanked UN agencies and their humanitarian partners for all the support they had provided since 2014 and expressed that the focus should now shift from the provision of humanitarian aid to establishing optimal conditions for returns.

The Governor of Salah Al-Din, Dr. Ammar Jabr Khalil Al Jubouri, noted that people fled Salah Al-Din during the conflict with ISIL, and had been unable or unwilling to return due to ethno-sectarian tensions, security concerns, social cohesion issues, and questions of land confiscation. He pledged his government's support to address such obstacles and asked the international community to consider giving additional support to the construction of low-cost housing for displaced people, and the establishment of additional local coordination mechanisms.

The HC noted that finding durable solutions for IDPs in Sulaymaniyah and elsewhere was a priority for the United Nations and highlighted to participants the expected reduction in international humanitarian assistance that was expected in the coming years, as well as the increase in durable solutions and development assistance that is better suited to support the government in resolving residual underlying issues. She encouraged attendees to work together to evolve the provision of assistance from one reliant on international donors and short-term life-saving approaches to one where the government, religious endowments, civil society, and development and stabilization organization are in the lead; she also urged all parties to engage meaningfully with the relevant humanitarian/development nexus coordination groups (aka. Area-Based Coordination).

Humanitarian Challenges and Priorities within Salah al-Din Given Spotlight

In early April 2022, Lt. Gen. Abdul Ameer Al-Shammari, Deputy Head of Joint Operations Command for Iraq, chaired the monthly high-level Joint Civil Affairs Forum (JCAF) meeting with the United Nations and a range of Iraqi civilian government officials, in Tikrit, Salah al-Din. The agenda focused on the situation in Salah al-Din, reviewing issues related to civil affairs, internal displacement and returns. Participants reviewed displacement and return figures, and carried out in-depth discussions on the factors blocking returns, especially in southern Salah al-Din. The Governorate hosts approximately 57,000 IDPs, the majority of whom originate from within Salah al-Din. An additional 86,000 IDPs from Salah al-Din are displaced in other governorates in Iraq. Over 730,000 people have returned to Salah Al-Din after being displaced during the conflict against ISIL. The majority returned to habitual residences, but approximately 8 per cent (62,000 people) live in critical shelter.

Participants highlighted the need for social cohesion programming to resolve ethno-sectarian disputes; tribal issues, destroyed shelter in return areas; and project coordination. The Governor of Salah al-Din noted that security factors complicate returns in certain areas; he also requested federal government budgetary support to address incomplete recovery in the governorate. Participants noted ongoing access challenges that limit the ability of humanitarian organizations to reach vulnerable people. General Al-Shammari reiterated that the federally-issued National Operations Command letter approving humanitarian movements (aka. access letter) is all that is required for humanitarian partners to be given passage through checkpoints and noted support to resolve issues where the letter is not being respected. The Samarra Operations Command representative asked for more project activities in Samarra district, while the representative from the Salah al-Din MOMD office noted social cohesion and low-cost housing in return areas as priorities.

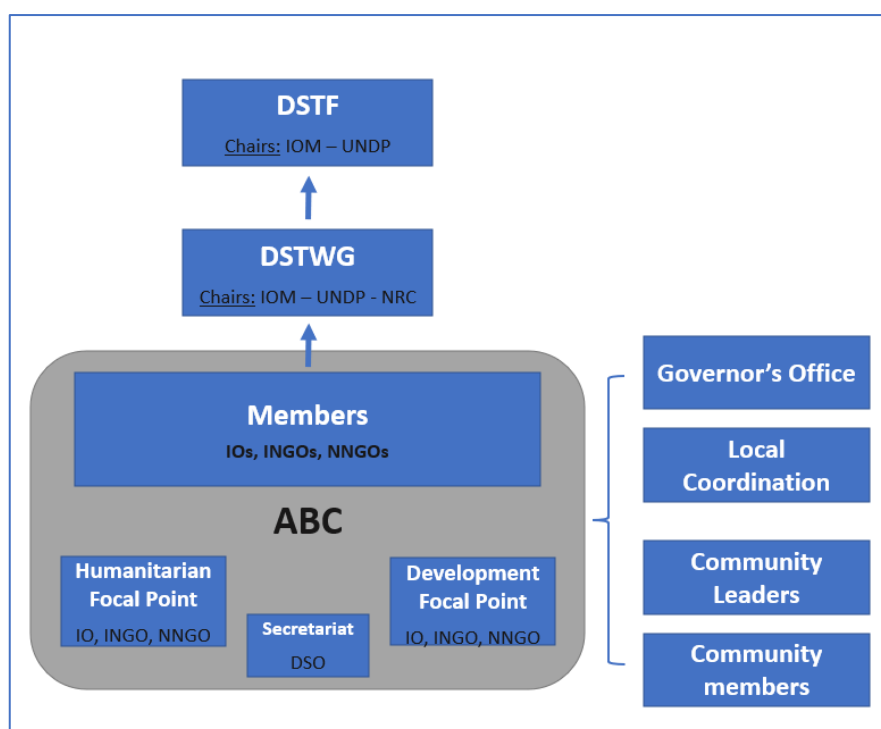
The Humanitarian Coordinator provided an overview of the humanitarian needs in the governorate, referred to the humanitarian/development/durable solutions nexus coordination (aka. ABC groups) that has been launched, with government, and encouraged stakeholders to participate in joint planning. In support of civil documentation gaps, UNHCR will share information with the Salah al-Din Civil Affairs ID Office.

Area-Based Coordination Groups in Practice

Considering diminishing humanitarian capacity and funding in 2022, the Government of Iraq, the United Nations and its partners are increasing efforts to achieve durable solutions for Iraq's IDPs and returnees. A key component of the durable solutions architecture in Iraq are the Area-Based Coordination (ABC) groups, which are comprised of representatives of humanitarian, development, stabilization, and peacebuilding actors, who work with local authorities to jointly identify priority locations and define key interventions to facilitate joint analysis and response planning across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus with the aim of solving Iraq's displacement crisis.

As outlined in the 2022 HRP, the boundaries of humanitarian action in Iraq have been further tightened in 2022 to ensure highly prioritized programming focusing on provision of life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian interventions for the most acutely vulnerable. As a result, the humanitarian response does not include longer-term recovery and rehabilitation in conflict-affected areas, such as infrastructure and housing reconstruction, social cohesion or facilitated returns programmes. However, under the overall leadership of the RC/HC, durable solutions will be pursued in support of and in close coordination with the Government.

To this end, a nexus/durable solutions architecture has been established, which includes the strategic-level Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), including involved members of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT); the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG), which works closely with the humanitarian Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG); and the ABC groups, which lead on programmatic and operational coordination. To date, ABCs have been established in eight key return locations to facilitate support for a government-led response to durable solutions, based on local dynamics and community needs. It is expected that ABC groups will be expanded to more locations in the future.



The ABCs meet monthly, and have led on the development of localized Plans of Action (PoA), detailing locally-determined priority humanitarian and development activities for joint partner response in agreed locations, based on the collective commitments and contributions of governmental, international, and national partners. These PoAs will be jointly implemented and monitored with the Government through the ABC groups. In addition to delivering life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian aid, humanitarian partners are increasingly engaged in the durable solutions process at both the strategic and the technical and operational levels. To that end the 2022 HRP and the fifth strategic priority of the 2020-2024 UNSDCF—which focuses particularly on durable solutions—have been designed to complement each other, while avoiding overlaps in response.

In February 2022, durable solutions partners in Iraq outlined the current activities of ABC groups in Iraq, which include:

- 8 ABCs (Baaj, Diyala, East Anbar, Hawija, Mosul, Salah al Din, Sinjar, West Anbar)
- \$520 million in Durable Solutions (humanitarian and development) programming currently implemented
- 1542 Durable Solutions projects (humanitarian and development) currently implemented
- 59 partners coordinating activities under the ABCs (12 UN Agencies and 47 partners from the humanitarian, stabilization, development and social cohesion sectors)

Launch of Strategic Plan to Address Gender-Based Violence in Iraq

On 31 January 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO), together with the Iraq Ministry of Health, [launched the Gender-Based Violence \(GBV\) Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#). The plan aims to integrate comprehensive and well-coordinated GBV services into health facilities at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, and to ensure that adequate physical and mental care is available and accessible for all GBV survivors. The plan also seeks to increase community awareness on the prevention of GBV, and to fight stigmatization surrounding this sensitive topic. In Iraq, some 1.32 million people are estimated to be at risk of different forms of GBV and more than 75% of them are women and adolescent girls; 77% of GBV incidents are linked to domestic violence.

The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." Gender-based violence worsens during humanitarian crises as vulnerability increases and accountability mechanisms are suspended. Pre-existing gender and social inequalities affecting women and girls in Iraq were further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic and increased different forms of GBV, particularly domestic violence.

According to the GBV sub-cluster,¹ reported types of gender-based violence in Iraq include psychological and emotional abuse, denial of resources (including opportunities for work and education), intimate partner violence, and forced marriage. Prolonged displacement, especially within tents and other critical shelter, can increase the risk of GBV and other forms of harassment and intimidation due to crowded living conditions and lack of alternatives for accessing services or livelihoods. In the 2022 HNO, the GBV subcluster assessed 919,000 people (of which 11 per cent are in-camp IDPs/29 per cent out-of-camp IDPs/60 per cent returnees) as needing GBV programming, with 27 per cent of those evaluated estimated to be in severe, extreme or catastrophic need. The GBV sub-cluster notes that structural and legal obstacles have contributed to the marginalization and social exclusion of women, with serious consequences for their well-being.

According to the 2022 HNO, displaced women experience economic insecurity, have limited access to employment opportunities – despite expressing a desire to work – and experience challenges accessing aid. Mental stress and anxiety are some of the key causes of the reported increase in GBV. Women and girls—in particular members of female-headed households, women living with disabilities and those perceived to be affiliated with extremist groups—are at heightened risk of GBV. Women and girls are more socio-economically vulnerable than the male population, resulting in higher food insecurity and more frequent use of harmful coping strategies, including child marriage and transactional sex, compromising women and girls' mental, sexual, and reproductive health. Moreover, 16 per cent of female-headed households reported missing at least one core legal document, which is a barrier to accessing basic services. Women continued to report limited/restricted access to protection, cash, livelihood, shelter, education, specialized mental health and legal assistance. The lack of, or barriers to accessing, these essential services increase women's exposure to certain types of GBV risks, and negatively impact GBV survivors' recovery and reintegration efforts.

In 2021, the GBV sub-cluster reached 310,000 beneficiaries with some form of humanitarian assistance; per the 2022 HRP, in 2022, the sub-cluster seeks \$36.2 million to target 353,000 people at risk of GBV, including 59,000 IDPs in camps, 111,000 out-of-camp IDPs and 182,800 returnees. Special attention and focus will be given to people living with disabilities, and cash and voucher assistance will address immediate protection risks and exposure to GBV in view of acute survival needs. The sub-cluster will seek to strengthen existing service delivery in underserved locations that will improve survivor access to specialized GBV and multisector services; address the root causes of GBV; and reinforce GBV prevention and risk mitigation measures in collaboration with other relevant clusters, including the Health cluster. A summary of the GBV sub-cluster's programming objectives for 2022 is below.

Gender-Based Violence													
PIN	TARGET	REQUIREMENTS	CASH OR VOUCHER	PARTNERS	ACTIVITIES								
919K	353K	36.2M	5%	39	11								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>FEMALE</th> <th>MALE</th> <th>CHILDREN</th> <th>WITH DISABILITY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>307K</td> <td>46K</td> <td>162K</td> <td>53K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						FEMALE	MALE	CHILDREN	WITH DISABILITY	307K	46K	162K	53K
FEMALE	MALE	CHILDREN	WITH DISABILITY										
307K	46K	162K	53K										

¹ Data taken from the GBVIMS Q1 report, 2021

Overview of Iraq Humanitarian Fund 2021 Allocations

Throughout 2021—despite significant achievements in reducing the humanitarian needs resulting from the 2014-2017 military operations against ISIL—a range of protracted needs remained for a number of highly vulnerable people in Iraq, due to limited recovery, reconstruction and reconciliation activities. Under the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), humanitarian organizations focused on providing highly targeted assistance to 1.5 million IDPs and returnees with complex and overlapping needs. Since its inception in 2015, the Iraq Humanitarian Fund (IHF) has supported humanitarian partners in responding to the dynamic crisis in Iraq, including through direct and indirect funding to national partners.

In 2021, the IHF allocated \$25.4 million through a Standard Allocation in April and a Reserve Allocation in November. Both allocations aimed to address critical unmet humanitarian needs among out-of-camp IDPs and vulnerable returnees in underserved locations. Together, these allocations supported priority HRP interventions in protection, essential health services, WASH infrastructure, and emergency livelihoods.

In line with the Fund’s continued commitment to localization, both allocations promoted the participation and capacity-building of national partners through multi-NGO consortia. As a result, 33 per cent of the net funding through 2021 allocations were channeled to national NGOs, the highest in the Fund’s history. In addition, particular consideration was given to projects that mainstreamed gender (especially women and girls), worked to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and addressed the specific needs of persons with disabilities. These allocations supported 24 projects being implemented by 46 partners (including 19 national NGOs), targeting at least 642,000 people across nine governorates of Iraq.

In 2021, the IHF received US\$25.0 million in contributions from eight donors, in addition to the \$9.1 million carry forward from 2020. After the 2021 allocations and HFU management costs, the Fund has an approximate programmable balance of \$6.3 million¹. The IHF urgently requires additional funding to effectively support the continuing humanitarian response in Iraq in 2022.

