

HIGHLIGHTS

- Water scarcity prompts displacement and health concerns in southern Iraq
- Protection remains at the core of Iraq's humanitarian response
- World Humanitarian Day remembers the Canal Hotel bombing victims
- Iraq HRP 61 per cent funded but funding gaps threaten halt to urgent humanitarian projects
- Iraq Humanitarian Fund allocates US\$5 million to support measles response
- Iraq's NGO forum selects its new Executive Board

FIGURES

# of people in need	8.7m
# of people targeted for assistance	3.4m
# of internally displaced persons (IDPs)	1.9m
# of IDPs who live outside camps	1.4m
# of affected ppl within host communities	3.8m
# of returnees	4.0m
# of Syrian refugees	0.25m

Source: 2018 Iraq HRP, IOM DTM

FUNDING

Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan

\$569 million
requested for 2018

\$349.5 million
funding received
(as of 31 August 2018)

Source: <http://fts.unocha.org>



Photo: OCHA/Bahaa Elias

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Water scarcity prompts displacement and health concerns in southern Iraq

Halt to agricultural livelihoods displaced 630 families while contamination of water sent hundreds of people to health facilities.

Iraq is currently facing water shortage that is expected to worsen in the short-to-medium term. Southern governorates, especially Basra, have been particularly affected. Climate change is one factor, but major dam projects upstream in Turkey and Iran are also impacting the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and contributing to the scarcity.

Low water levels are contributing to an increase in salinity, making what limited water available unsuitable for agricultural usage, triggering the migration of approximately 630 families (3,780 people) who are unable to continue their livelihoods. In parallel, aging pipes and infrastructure have contributed to contamination of water supplies, prompting several hundred residents of Basra to seek hospitalization during August. Health practitioners are reporting shortages of both funding and supplies, and concerns exist over a possible cholera outbreak.

Relevant government ministries are coordinating their response to the prospective water crisis. A scoping mission involving the WASH Cluster, UNICEF, WHO and IOM visited four governorates in southern Iraq to determine how the United Nations and NGO partners can best assist national and local authorities in responding to this burgeoning emergency.



Photo: IOM/Rafal Abdulateef

On 5 August, IOM's field mission team visited drought-affected Dujaili village of Wassit governorate.

Protection remains at the core of Iraq's humanitarian response

Humanitarian partners reached 1.3 million people with assistance in the first five months of 2018, with varying progress across sectors and geographical locations.

Despite government-imposed bureaucratic impediments and persistent access constraints affecting parts of the country, humanitarian partners have expanded their operational presence including in some newly accessible areas. Together, 105 humanitarian partners reached 1.3 million (38 per cent) of 3.4 million people targeted under the [Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#) in the first five months of 2018. Response progress varied across clusters and geographical locations. Over 65 per cent of activities reported were in Ninewa governorate, where assessed needs were the most severe, while beneficiary reach and programmatic deliverables in other governorates were limited. Further, delayed donor contributions and unmet funding requirements have put off the commencement of some key humanitarian projects and are threatening the closure of those that have started.



IDP woman from Sinjar district, Ninewa governorate, sits in front of her tent at Khanki IDP camp, Dahuk governorate. Returns of IDPs in camps have been slower than expected, raising concerns over their protracted displacement.

A joint workshop organized by the Iraq Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group on 30 August recognized that protection remained at the core of humanitarian concerns. Forced returns, evictions and presence of armed actors in displacement camps were continuously reported. The humanitarian community revised the Principled Returns Framework, setting the minimum standards for principled returns in accordance with international and domestic laws. People with perceived affiliations with extremist groups were found facing significant barriers in accessing humanitarian aid, a priority concern for the HCT.

Return movements of displaced people continued steadily but at a slower-than-expected pace. Only 600,000 people have returned by the end of May while some new and secondary displacements were reported. The majority (86 per cent) of returns have occurred from out-of-camp locations, raising concerns over protracted displacement of a large number of people in camps which may have to remain open longer than earlier planned. Damaged infrastructure, lack of basic services and livelihood opportunities, insecurity, explosive hazard contamination and challenges with social cohesion have been noted as key deterrents to returns. The Government of Iraq has operationalized Governorate Return Committees, supported by humanitarian partners, to facilitate principled and sustainable returns.

The workshop also underlined a challenge of complementary between HRP and Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP). Implementation of the HRP and the RRP must be better synchronized to ensure coherence and complementarity in collective international support to the Government's response and recovery efforts.

World Humanitarian Day remembers the Canal Hotel bombing victims

UN staff based in Baghdad and Erbil, including survivors of the attack, observed the 15th anniversary of the bombing.

Despite steady progress in reaching people in need, especially in Ninewa governorate, access constraints and delayed funding continue to challenge humanitarian operations. Further, damaged infrastructure, security and protection concerns, and the lack of basic services and livelihood opportunities are delaying principled and sustainable returns.

In 2017, Iraq recorded over 8,000 civilian deaths and injuries due to attacks in conflict, among the highest reported in the world.

On 19 August, the United Nations community in Iraq and around the world commemorated World Humanitarian Day (WHD). Observed annually, WHD commemorates the 2003 bombing of the United Nations headquarters at the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, in which 22 people lost their lives, including the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Sérgio Vieira de Mello. Each year, the humanitarian community remembers aid workers who lost their lives in the line of duty and pays tribute to those who deliver aid to vulnerable communities in some of the world's most dangerous crises.

As in 2017, the theme of WHD was #NotATarget, which urges global leaders to do a better job of protecting civilians and aid workers in armed conflict. Last year, 139 aid workers were killed, while 102 were wounded and 72 kidnapped in the line of duty around the world. This marked the fifth consecutive year in which more than 100 humanitarians lost their lives on the job. The toll for civilians is even greater; the Secretary-General's

Protection of Civilians report noted that over 26,000

civilians were killed or injured in attacks in just six countries in 2017. Reversing the high numbers of civilian casualties in conflicts requires sustained effort and advocacy.

The #NotATarget campaign has special resonance for Iraq, which still hosts nearly 2 million IDPs after four years of conflict. In Mosul alone, nearly 1 million Iraqis were displaced by the nine-month military operation to retake the city. Their homes, schools and hospitals were destroyed, and it will cost billions to rebuild. Another 4 million people have returned home to find their living spaces littered with explosive contamination of an unprecedented scale that will take years to clear. UN humanitarian agencies and their NGO partners are working to ensure vulnerable populations in Iraq have access to protection and basic necessities while development actors work to stabilize and reconstruct the country.

IHF allocates \$5 million to support measles response

With pockets of measles outbreaks affecting both IDP and host communities beginning in early 2018, and considering the current epidemiological situation, the Federal Ministry of Health has declared an outbreak of measles and requested support from UNICEF and WHO for an emergency measles vaccination campaign across the country. The [Iraq Humanitarian Fund \(IHF\)](#) has launched a Reserve Allocation to channel up to \$5 million for the nation-wide campaign to vaccinate 5 million children of 9-59 months.

Aside from timely and strategic allocation of funds and regular partner outreach, risk management activities – including field project monitoring, financial spot checks and audits – are imperative to ensure the Fund's effective and accountable management. Since its inception in 2015, the Fund has disbursed some \$221 million to support 388 humanitarian projects of 93 partner organizations. Audits of the first batch of 75 completed projects, which received IHF funding through 2015 and 2016 allocations, commenced in 2017 and 49 have so far been completed. The second batch of 58 projects will undergo audits in the coming months with audit reports to be finalized in early 2019, while the auditor for the third batch of another 62 projects has been procured and the auditing timeline is being developed. For projects with suspicions of fraud identified either by the auditor or OCHA's compliance measures, forensic audits have been triggered to further investigate the partners in concern.



Photo: UNAMI

Alice Walpole, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, along with UN staff paid tribute to colleagues and civilians who were killed by the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad 15 years ago.

Auditing of 195 IHF-funded projects underway to ensure effective and accountable management of the pooled fund and to better inform future funding decisions and strategies.

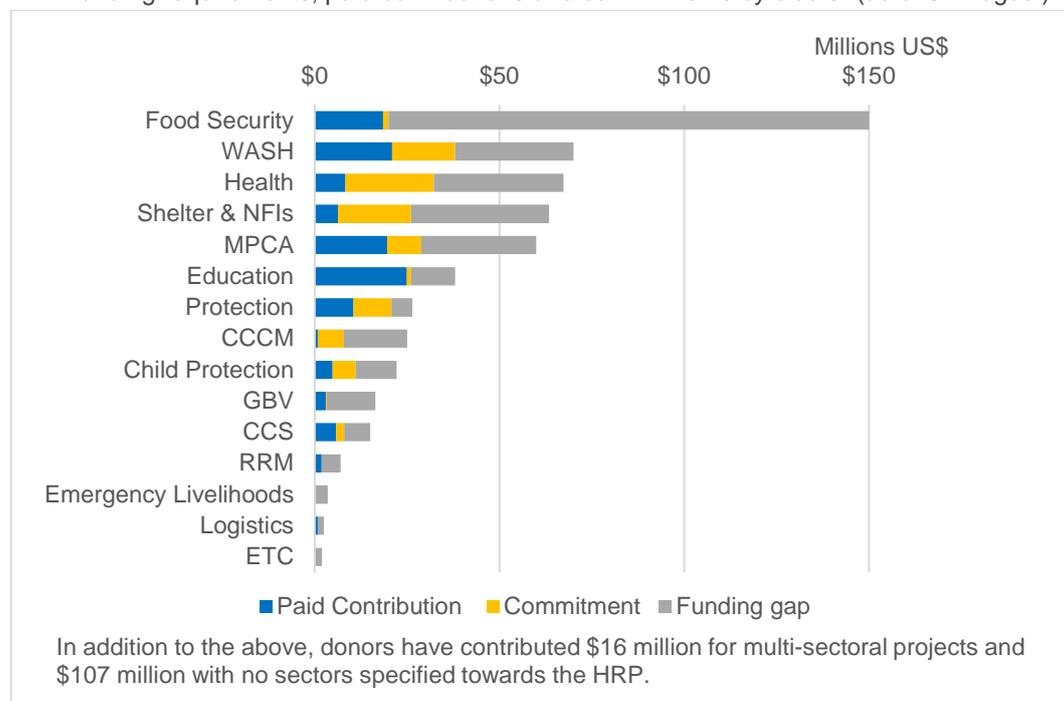
Iraq HRP 61 per cent funded but funding gaps threat halt to urgent humanitarian projects

Donor contributions to the HRP have reached \$349.5 million (61.5 per cent) of the required \$569 million, including \$229.5 million (40.5 per cent of the total funding requirements) in paid contributions and \$120 million (21 per cent) committed contributions pending payment.

Critical funding gaps remain for food security, health, shelter and NFIs, and WASH sectors.

Funding requirements and levels vary across clusters. Education and protection activities are relatively well funded while critical gaps remain for food security, health, shelter and non-food items (NFIs), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors. Further, some sectors including camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), emergency telecommunications (ETC), and shelter and NFIs have received less than 10 per cent of their sectoral funding requirements. With many life-saving and life-sustaining projects on the verge of being halted without further funding, humanitarian partners urgently need timely disbursement of committed funds and an additional \$219.2 million to fulfil unmet funding requirements in order to reach the most vulnerable 3.4 million people targeted under the HRP.

HRP funding requirements, paid contributions and commitments by cluster (as of 31 August)



Iraq's NGO forum selects its new Executive Board

The [National Coordination Committee for Iraq \(NCCI\)](#), which coordinates over 170 international and national NGOs operating in Iraq, announced six members of its new Executive Board: Deepmala Mahala, Mercy Corps (Chairperson); Scott Bohlinger, INSO (Deputy-Chairperson); Wolfgang Gressmann, NRC (Treasurer); Elise Madouche, Mercy Hands (Secretary); Vicente Selles, ACF (Member); and Des Clark, ZOA (Member). The new Board will meet regularly to set strategy, monitor implementation, and guide decisions made by the NCCI team, while the Executive Director Aaron Moore will continue to lead NCCI's day-to-day activities.

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OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at www.unocha.org/iraq | www.unocha.org | www.reliefweb.int