Humanitarian overview

Iraq, with a long history of displacement, has seen an unprecedented rise in recent years. Of the more than 5.8 million Iraqis who fled their homes since 2014, more than two million remain displaced. Over three million Iraqis have returned to their area of origin. Humanitarian organisations believe that many of these returns have been premature, unsafe, or involuntary.

Many Iraqis have returned to areas that lack basic infrastructure, utility services and livelihood opportunities, or where explosive devices have not adequately been cleared. Other challenges include: lack of security, community rejection, housing, property and civil documentation issues and lack educational opportunities.

In 2018, more than eight million people in Iraq are still expected to need humanitarian aid according to the most recent Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). With military operations against the IS group having ended, the Iraqi government faces new challenges to ensure an inclusive reconstruction and reconciliation that will sustain peace.

NRC’s operation

We assisted internally displaced Iraqis, Syrian refugees, and host communities in Ninewa, Dohuk, Erbil, Salah Al-Din, Kirkuk, Baghdad, Sulaymaniyah and Anbar. We focused on assisting the newly displaced, those in lengthy displacement in camps and those in hard-to-reach places.

In 2017, we scaled-up our programmes across Iraq to respond to the large-scale displacements, especially in Anbar governorate, around Kirkuk and in Mosul using our water and sanitation, education, camp management, legal assistance and Rapid Response activities.

NRC Iraq

Established 2010
International staff 65
National staff 500
2017 budget USD 55 million
Total number in need 11 million people
Total assisted in 2017 1.2 million people
Camp Management
We provide camp management support in several camps in Anbar and Ninewa governorates. This includes operational backstopping to locally appointed camp managers, to ensure that camps in Iraq meet basic humanitarian standards. Our teams:

- support partners, including local authorities, with camp site setup, structure and oversight
- oversee the maintenance of communal facilities and monitor for service gaps in the camp
- collect data and manage information
- focus on upholding governance and community participation
- monitor returns and advocate for dignified, safe and long-term solutions for the displaced

Education
We ensure that children and youth have access to quality education. This is an urgent need in Iraq, critical for people to rebuild their lives. Our education teams:

- create additional learning spaces
- provide catch-up classes, recreational activities and safe spaces to conflict-affected children and youth
- provide teacher trainings
- establish school support centres, where we educate in areas needing emergency assistance as well as in places where long-term displacement is becoming a reality
- support the integration of Syrian refugee children into formal state schools in Iraq
- provide psychosocial support and stress management to children and teachers
- advocate for unimpeded access to education for the millions of out-of-school children in Iraq

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)
Our ICLA experts disseminate information about civil documentation, registration, access to available services and housing, land and property rights along with providing individual counselling and assistance. Our programmes:

- undertake group-information sessions and mobile counselling
- participate in radio shows and produce public information materials
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**Cash Assistance and Livelihoods**

We have been one of the major cash providers, including through our membership in the cash consortium bringing together five of the largest NGOs operational in Iraq, shifting from first line assistance to the displaced, where access to markets was guaranteed, towards assisting returnee families in their efforts to re-establish their lives. To facilitate reintegration of returnees in their home areas, we complement our cash efforts with a variety of livelihood activities that aim to support returnees’ resilience and self-sufficiency. Our livelihoods and cash programming:

- provide multi-purpose cash assistance, which offers one-time or repeated cash transfers to displaced and returnee families, depending on their vulnerability
- provide people with cash grants that help promote self-employment opportunities and contribute to local market development
- provide skills training that focuses on improved capacity for economic self-reliance and knowledge, skill-sets, and social capital to support the recovery process

**Shelter**

In the harsh and varied climates of Iraq, shelter is essential for people to live safely and securely while a lack of adequate shelter in many areas features among the key obstacles to sustainable return. Our teams:

- provide materials, training and/or financial resources so internally displaced, refugee and returnee families can repair homes
- improve shelter accessibility for people with special needs
- rehabilitate and upgrade shelters
- distribute emergency shelter (tents, shelter sealing-off kits) and basic household items such as blankets, mattresses and heaters
- advocate for improved access to adequate housing and the governmental property compensation programme

**Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH)**

Our WASH teams work to protect people from public health risks and to restore the water and sanitation capacity in highly damaged returnee areas. We work to:

- rehabilitate water networks and water treatment plants
- provide safe and sufficient water supply, either through water trucking or by setting up water supply systems
- provide sanitation facilities, like latrines
- support solid waste management processes in neighbourhoods with high destruction rates
- distribute hygiene kits, water storage kits, sanitation kits and latrine cleaning kits along with hygiene promotion

NRC Iraq is grateful for the generous support from our donors:

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)
U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)

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