

NRC's operations in Iraq

Humanitarian overview

Since the end of the conflict between Iraq and the Islamic State and the Levant (ISIL) in 2017, programming in Iraq has gradually transitioned from humanitarian assistance to recovery and stabilisation efforts. After decades of conflict and instability, Iraq's economic situation in 2025 shows marked improvement, with GDP per capita projected at approximately \$5,668, ranking Iraq 9th in the Arab world and reflecting its most stable period since 2003. The country has benefited from improved security since 2018 and governance efforts under the current government since 2022, contributing to relative political stability and some economic recovery.

Some 1,031,475 IDPs remain displaced in Iraq. This includes 101,886 people living in the 20 IDP camps located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Of this population, 19,329 IDP families (92,616 individuals) continue to reside in 15 camps across Dohuk Governorate and Zakho Administration, 1,063 families (5,367 individuals) remain in two camps in Erbil Governorate, and 777 families (3,903 individuals) remain in the three East Mosul Camps (source: [Update on Internal Displacement in Iraq](#)). Despite moving to a post-conflict context, significant humanitarian and protection needs remain. Since 2019, the government's policy of closing IDP camps has led to forced evictions, hindering sustainable reintegration and recovery for displaced individuals. Of the 1 million internally displaced people, 295,602 live in difficult conditions, most having been displaced for over seven years.



Photo: Yasameen Mohammed/NRC

Our core activities



Information, counselling
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Livelihoods
and economic inclusion



Protection
from violence

NRC Iraq

Established	2010
International staff	4
National staff	72

Our areas of operation

- Anbar
- Baghdad
- Ninewa
- Basra



Humanitarian overview (continued)

Returnees in Iraq face significant barriers to reestablishing normal lives. Barriers such as limited access to services, stigmatisation, harassment, and limited livelihood opportunities heighten protection risks for women, girls, persons with disabilities, and marginalised groups, leading to negative coping mechanisms.

Furthermore, the Government of Iraq (GoI) continues to repatriate Iraqi nationals from Al Hol displacement camp in north-eastern Syria to the Jeddah One transit camp (J1) in Iraq. Meanwhile, prospects for returning or relocating after leaving the camp are further complicated by numerous barriers, such as limited access to documentation, lack of opportunities for income generation, and social stigma and discrimination.

NRC's exit from Iraq

Established in 2010, NRC currently works in Ninewa, Anbar, and Baghdad governorates, targeting displacement-affected women, men, girls, and boys in urban and rural areas, including IDPs in camps and informal settlements, returnees, Syrian refugees, and vulnerable host communities. NRC prioritises addressing lingering humanitarian needs, particularly among displaced groups that are not yet receiving government-led social services.

Through integrated programming, NRC Iraq provides a holistic response to magnify the impact on households and communities, thus achieving self-reliance and contributing to long-term solutions. Following the internal process to assess its presence and added value as a displacement-specialised actor, and in line with the NRC response policy, NRC has concluded to cease direct implementation in Iraq. Displacement-affected populations are increasingly integrated and their needs are declining, with a contributing factor being the challenges of securing sufficient resources for operations to continue assisting the remaining humanitarian caseload beyond mid-2026.

All direct implementations will cease by June 2026. A minimal presence may be maintained until August 2026 to manage final grants, financial reporting, and the resolution of pending tax and social security matters. All core activities will be phased out, with Education and Shelter & Settlements closed by the end of 2025. The only remaining activities in 2026 will be Livelihoods and Food Security, Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA), and Protection from Violence. The reduction of NRC's operational footprint, which began in 2025, will continue in a phased manner. In 2026, active direct programming will be limited to Ninewa (including Sinjar), Anbar and Baghdad, while activities in Duhok, Erbil, Salah al-Din and Basra concluded at the end of 2025.



3,574 people reached in 2025 ▼

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

Under the ICLA programme, NRC's team of lawyers and paralegals works directly with ministries, line directorates, and the Iraqi judiciary to increase access to legal identity and civil documentation; housing, land, and property (HLP) rights; as well as employment rights of IDPs, returnees, and vulnerable local community members in Iraq.

NRC disseminates tailored information on legal issues to help foster community awareness, provides one-on-one legal counselling and legal representation before authorities and courts in complex and/or vulnerable cases integrating use of cash modality for legal fees, supports the inclusion of people within available state-managed social protection systems, and analyses legal barriers facing Syrian refugee communities in Iraq specifically as they relate to access to decent work.



190 people reached in 2025 ▼

Livelihoods and economic inclusion

Under the Livelihoods programme, NRC works on strengthening skills and connecting individuals to market-driven systems and solutions.



1,832 people reached in 2025 ▼

Protection from violence

Under the PfV programme, NRC provides protection case management services, including tailored support for individuals recovering from or exposed to protection risks.

It works closely with ICLA teams to address protection-related issues, particularly those associated with the lack of legal documentation, prioritising assistance for complex cases involving both legal and protection-related risks. NRC also employs community-based solutions and civilian self-protection strategies to address challenges and support behavioural change that proactively minimises and eliminates protection issues.

The Protection Consortium of Iraq

NRC leads the Protection Consortium of Iraq, partnering with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The consortium provides integrated protection and legal assistance, and collective support on protection issues.

We work in coordination with:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Water Resources
- Ministry of Displacement and Migration
- Ministerial and judicial wings of the Government of Iraq
- Camp management bodies
- Communities and national and international organisations in the areas of operation

We are grateful for the generous support from our donors:

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