



**UNHCR**  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

# UNHCR - IRAQ Fact Sheet

## June - July 2011

### Background

UNHCR has been present in Iraq since the 1980s protecting refugees and asylum seekers. While Iraq is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol it has hosted, with UNHCR's assistance, Palestinian, Iranian, Turkish and Syrian refugees. Following the fall of the previous regime, UNHCR's programme included assistance to returning refugees and IDPs. After the Samara Shrine bombing in February 2006, UNHCR's responsibility expanded to assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs). UNHCR works closely with governmental partners, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), the Bureau of Displacement and Migration (BDM) and the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

UNHCR facilitates the return of people who have decided to repatriate on an individual basis. UNHCR has recorded 622,000 Iraqi refugee and IDP returnees from 2008 until the end of June 2011. The majority of returnees are from the IDP community, who form around 85% of the returnee population. 90% of those returnee IDPs have gone back to Baghdad and Diyala areas. The remaining 15% of returnees are refugees who were exiled mainly in neighbouring countries. UNHCR has registered some 189,534 refugees Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and in other countries neighbouring Iraq.

An estimated 1.3 million IDPs are in Iraq. 467,565 IDPs and destitute persons reside in 382 settlements countrywide. The conditions in the settlements are extremely poor. As a result, these settlements are in desperate need of emergency assistance, as well as of protection and advocacy interventions. UNHCR is working closely with the Government of Iraq to find solutions for this population of concern.

UNHCR has well-established Protection and Assistance Centres (PACs) as well as Return, Integration and Community Centres (RICCs). Both increase the outreach to the communities through provision of legal advice, protection monitoring, coordination, needs assessments, and social and information assistance. To improve service delivery and to ensure that persons of concern receive appropriate support, the PACs and RICCs are in the process of being merged and being renamed Protection Assistance and Reintegration Centres (PARCs).



### Objectives

In cooperation with international and national partners, UNHCR will continue to provide assistance to improve the protection environment and will ensure that protection procedures are strengthened through legal assistance, counselling and assistance in accessing documentation, as well as through improving status determination procedures.

### Assistance and services

- **728** shelters have been completed as part of a 1063 shelter-plan for rehabilitation and/or reconstruction in 2011 for returnees, IDPs and for some host community members, across Iraq.
- **650** families are assisted with water and sanitation projects in benefiting 3,820 internally displaced persons and host communities.
- Reintegration support through Protection service centres which are complemented with some **40** mobile outreach teams.
- Diyala Initiative implemented under the Government of Iraq's leadership. UNHCR coordinates with other actors to assist the return and reintegration of returnees to the Diyala Governorate which has severely been affected by sectarian violence in 2006-2007.
- **5,613** non-food items (NFI) kits distributed in 2011 to the most vulnerable families among IDPs, refugees, IDP and refugee returnees, and asylum seekers.
- **125** identified IDP settlements in Baghdad. UNHCR has been assisting 15 priority locations with short-term assistance in 2011 and plans to assist 26 additional vulnerable settlements by the end of the year (in 2010, the refugee agency assisted IDPs in 59 settlements). The assistance includes water, sanitation and minor shelter support. UNHCR is also following up on cases of evictions and advocates for durable solutions. Support is given to IDPs, as well as to destitute persons residing in the same settlements.
- Development of a global stockpile of NFIs in Jordan for approximately 150,000 persons is still ongoing. The stockpile has been operational since May 2011. In Iraq, UNHCR currently has enough stocks to support 12,000 families (60,000 individuals), while stocks in the pipeline will add another 15-20,000 families who can be supported with family kits.
- Community-based support via multi-sector micro-projects directly targeting returnee and IDP-hosting communities through the national UNHCR-NGO Partnership Empowerment Scheme. In 2010, the scheme provided training, support and funding for 148 national NGOs. In 2011 has been supporting 61 National NGOs.

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### Durable solutions

#### Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Pending durable solutions through voluntary returns, resettlement to third countries or local integration, protection and material assistance for some 34,195 refugees will continue to be provided in camps, settlements and individual urban refugees. UNHCR takes care of 13 refugee camps and settlements in Iraq. The major ones are in Western Anbar Governorate (Al Waleed camp for Palestinians, Iranian Kurds and Ahwazis); in Ninewa Governorate (Makhmour for Turkish refugees); in Erbil (Kawa for Iranians); and in Sulaymaniyah (Barika settlement for Iranians). Targeted assistance is provided to scattered urban refugees Iraq-wide including to Ahwazis in the South.

UNHCR continues to search for durable solutions for refugees who do not have potential for return nor for local integration inside Iraq. At the same time, UNHCR Iraq is reviewing the resettlement needs of several hundreds individuals.

Population of Concern	Individuals
Refugees	34,195
Asylum Seekers	3,839
Number of refugees in Al Waleed camp	449
Iraqi refugees return (2003 – 2010)	460,106
Iraqi refugees return (2011)	23,410
IDPs in Baghdad	358,457
IDP return (2003 – 2010)	838,110
IDP return (2011)	53,610
Stateless persons (estimation)	120,000
Departed for resettlement in 2011	66

### Coordination and Partnership

#### UNHCR works closely with several entities

##### UN organizations:

UNAMI  
WFP  
UNICEF  
OCHA  
IOM

##### Government of Iraq Government & Kurdistan

##### Regional Government :

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)  
Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM)  
Ministry of Interior (MoI)  
Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation (IFCNR)  
Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR)  
Bureau of Displacement and Migration (BDM)

International NGOs	11
National NGOs Direct Partnership	15
National NGOs Indirect Partnership	61

#### UNHCR Presence: offices in Baghdad, Erbil, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Basra. Presence of a liaison office in Amman.

Number of UNHCR international staff	26
Number of UNHCR local staff	134
<b>Total number of staff (160)</b>	

#### UNHCR Outreach

5 Protection and Assistance Centres (**PACs**) in Baghdad, Dahuk, Erbil, Najaf and Sulaimaniya  
Return, Integration and Community Centres (**RICCs**) in Baghdad  
14 Protection Assistance and Reintegration Centres (**PARCs**) in Anbar, Salah Aldin, Babylon, Kerbala, Wassit, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Thi Qar and Thi Qar Chibayesh District, Muthanna, Qadisiya, Missan and Basra.

**UNHCR Iraq Country Budget: \$ 210,598,246**

#### For more information:

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