

**Completed by:** LWF and HIA

**Date completed:** 10 November 2022

**Forum:** Iraq

**Type of emergency:** Protracted - Conflict and Displacement

**Date of emergency (if rapid onset):** n/a

<p><b>1. The nature of the emergency</b></p> <p>Iraq is facing a protracted humanitarian crises caused by the ISIS conflict that occurred from 2014-2018 and the subsequent forced displacement of over 6 million people. While it has now been four years since the liberation from ISIS, the impacts of the conflict remain significant across the country, with continued displacement, destruction in basic infrastructure, continued violent conflict and insecurity, protection violations, and lack of livelihoods opportunities which has been further exacerbated by the political and economic crisis in Iraq. Moreover, according to the UNEP (2022), Iraq has been ranked at the 5<sup>th</sup> most affected country by climate change in the world. Temperatures are soaring to new extremes as degrees above 50°C are becoming common, compounding the situation further into a complex humanitarian crisis.</p>
<p><b>2. The impact and scale of the emergency</b></p> <p>This is a large-scale emergency affecting a majority of governorates across Iraq. Across the country, 2.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees continue to face humanitarian needs, with approximately 1 million reaching extreme and catastrophic levels (HNO, 2022). Although 5 million people have “returned” to their areas of origin, mainly in Ninewa Governorate, deep inequities persist and the majority of returnees lack access to durable solutions that will allow them to rebuild their lives. In Ninewa, many live in informal settlements with a lack of overall infrastructure and livelihoods opportunities, and for those who returned to their homes, significant destruction remains. Continued insecurity due to violent conflicts among paramilitary forces and other armed groups as well as tension among community members also prevents safe return. This continues to put the population at risk of protection violations, and has continued to cause new displacements from affected areas. Furthermore, in KRI, nearly 1.2 million people remain displaced, both in and out of camps, mainly in Duhok Governorate. With the transition from the humanitarian architecture in Iraq, IDPs who live in camps may be at risk to gaps in services, and those living outside of camps continue to face challenges with social integration due to discrimination from the host community, limited employment opportunities, and access to services with pressure on limited resources. Durable solutions for these populations who have been forcibly displaced remains elusive. Furthermore, food security is also an on-going concern in Iraq; it is estimated that 1.7 million people in Iraq are affected by food insecurity. The loss of agricultural livelihoods (due in part to environmental and climate changes), together with limited agricultural productivity, conflict, displacement and lack of income contribute to food insecurity and nutritional concerns. The poorest populations who rely on government food rations are unable to supplement these rations with fresh, nutritious food and so are at increased risk of health burdens associated with malnutrition. Lastly, with the increasing impacts of climate change, water scarcity has become a significant concern across the country on top of lack of needed WASH infrastructure, and dust storms have caused the security situation to degrade further as they are used as a cover for terrorist activity.</p>
<p><b>3. Local and national capacity</b></p> <p>In recent years the humanitarian context in Iraq has continued to evolve toward a focus on recovery. Despite the still-high numbers of people in need, humanitarian funding has decreased and sustainable solutions are needed beyond humanitarian support. In line with this, humanitarian coordination-initiated discussions began in 2022 to start phasing out humanitarian assistance in Iraq in line with the transitional recovery context. The Clusters and the Working Groups have begun the process of designing the exit strategy to be concluded by the end of 2022, with some activities and programmes planned to be handed over to development and governmental actors.</p>

Although it is yet unclear when a new Iraqi Government will be stabilized and various transition plans are currently in drafting stage, it was decided that the services and facilities will be handed over to government entities. The UN and humanitarian actors have discussed key outputs with a list of priority actions to integrate into the transition plan to be endorsed by the key stakeholders. However, it is estimated that at least a million affected persons in Iraq lack protection needs, job opportunities and civil or legal documentation. This largely affects displaced persons, those residing in camps, minorities, and female-headed households. While humanitarian organizations seek to continue to find ways to attend to those in need, the transition may mean that a majority of those currently receiving assistance will not be part of the lists that are established by the Government. This is especially worrisome for women who are already at higher risk of stigmatization and violence, such as GBV survivors, minority groups, and female heads of household with perceived affiliation to former ISIS soldiers. It is therefore critical to ensure that women and others with intersectional vulnerabilities are able to access their rights to needed services and infrastructure.

As the UN clusters system is transitioning/deactivating, the decision was made that there will be no HNO or HRP for 2023. As alternative to the cluster system, the clusters are in the phase of finalizing ABCs (Area Based Coordination) groups in Ninewa and other governorates. In Duhok, rather than setting up a new ABC, local authorities plan to work through the existing government coordination structure and feed into the general coordination structure that exists. The entire approach is still under discussion. Accordingly, LWF and HIA will continue to coordinate with these structures, local authorities and other actors, including municipalities and directorates, to agree and authorize projects as required, as well as ensure no duplication and identify complementarity and synergies.

#### **4. Key needs and gaps**

Protracted displacement is expected to continue over the next year. Barriers to return, local integration or resettlement remain significant and only about 1 per cent of IDPs have expressed their intention to return over the coming 12 months. Meanwhile, the GoI continues to work towards ending displacement, and through accelerated joint efforts, progress is foreseen over the next year to facilitate return and advance durable solutions for ISIL affected populations. However, it is unlikely that durable solutions will be found for all IDPs and that the situation in most areas of return will recover and stabilize over the coming year. While a few IDP camps may close or consolidate, most camps and the IDPs living in those camps in KRI are expected to remain open in 2022. It is also expected that not all those who depart camps will be able to sustainably return to their areas of origin, as per current trends. Premature camp closures or evictions from informal sites would continue to result in secondary displacement or return of IDPs to areas lacking adequate shelter, basic services, livelihoods opportunities, social cohesion and safety.

At the same time, climate change is a growing threat in Iraq. Water scarcity is forecasted to significantly impact this season's crop production and prevent meeting basic daily water usage needs, which could impact people's livelihoods and food security status as well as increase the risk of cholera or other diseases. Climate-induced migration has already been witnessed in the worst-hit part of the country. Iraq needs to address several issues regarding climate resilience, the management of natural resources, and environmental protection, including risk and disaster management. The country's agricultural sector relies on a network of outdated and degraded canals and irrigation systems, which leads to water waste through inefficient irrigation techniques, evaporation, and leaky infrastructure.

Even though living conditions in the areas of displacement are not ideal, most IDPs both in and out of camps, do not envisage returning to their areas of origin within the next year. IDPs are not returning to their areas of origin primarily because of damaged or destroyed shelters and other infrastructure, fear and trauma, and lack of livelihoods and financial means. Moreover, lack of livelihoods opportunities is one of the most pervasive challenges to durable solutions in Iraq; IDPs and returnees consistently report to humanitarian actors that in addition to lack of shelter, services and security, the absence of available income-generating activities is a major factor hampering their sustainable return to areas of origin. Infrastructure remains damaged or destroyed, particularly in less prioritized and remote areas formerly under ISIL control. Additionally, protection and social cohesion needs remain critical in most of the districts in Iraq. Women and girls, people living with disabilities (PWDs), female-headed households (FHH), and

families perceived to be affiliated with extremist groups are at heightened risk of GBV. For example, women and girls experience targeted kidnappings, rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage more often than men and boys. This is due in part to limited economic opportunities, barriers in accessing services, and weak social protection systems for those living in vulnerable situations. Psychological trauma, stress, and anxiety resulting from protection violations are often reported as concerns among these groups, followed by lack of specialized services including for women and girls.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund ( <i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i> )	
Appeal ( <i>intended for large scale emergencies</i> )	<b>X</b>

If you indicate an intention to launch an appeal, the secretariat will activate an Emergency Steering Committee meeting within two working days on receipt of this alert.

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond are given below.

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
LWF Iraq	Duhok and Ninewa Governorates	WASH, Livelihoods, Protection and Social Cohesion	Financial support is needed to rehabilitate WASH infrastructure and promote sustainable water use, create new livelihoods opportunities, address protection violations, and rebuild the social fabric.	USD 1 million/yr (2 years appeal)
HIA	Iraq - Nineveh	WASH, Health, Livelihood	Financial support is needed to support food security and local food production.	USD 600,000

## 5. Potential responses

The requesting members LWF and HIA have been implementing projects in the Duhok governorate and Nineveh Plains since the start of 2015. Their main focus areas are in the sectors of WASH, Livelihoods (food security and agriculture), Protection, Social Cohesion, Education, and Health.

Since 2014, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Iraq has built up a track record in three programmatic areas: Livelihoods, Quality Services (WASH), and Protection & Social Cohesion. With the active conflict being over, LWF Iraq is moving from relief to early recovery and development to be able to support IDPs, returnees and affected host communities in rebuilding their lives. LWF Iraq also takes a rights-based approach towards its work particularly in protection and social cohesion, combining mainstreaming and specific measures to enable individuals and communities to live safe, dignified and empowered lives, free from all forms of discrimination, abuse and exploitation. With the risks related to ensuring quality services during the transition, LWF Iraq plans to continue to deliver quality protection services in IDP camps in KRI, along with providing capacity building for local entities to ensure continuation of quality WASH services. Further, LWF Iraq will promote increased livelihoods opportunities in Duhok and Nineveh, including different districts in Mosul, including enhancement of capacity through vocational skills trainings and linkages with local job market, the support and creation of micro and small enterprises and increased capacity of local farmers through training in climate smart technologies and the provision of productive assets. Importantly, activities will be based on a gender analysis and linked to protection needs and rights, especially of GBV survivors, PWD, and FHH. Moreover, LWF Iraq aims to link the WASH programmatic area with other areas, particularly targeting the impact of climate change on water scarcity, including efforts to promote sustainable water use and water conservation. LWF Iraq will also support enhancement of waste management methods, aiming to increase recycling opportunities and culture in the targeted areas of

intervention. Finally, building on the need to promote durable solutions, LWF will bring an RBA into its programming along with increase advocacy efforts as part of the Appeal activities.

On the other hand, Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) has been implementing projects in the Nineveh Plains since 2018 in the sectors WASH, Livelihood (food security and agriculture), Education, and Health. Since 2021, focusing on food security and emergency livelihoods, HIA launched two permaculture training centres and developed permaculture projects to address the issues of food security and climate crisis by increasing the resilience of local communities against climate change and mitigating the human-made and natural events' effects on food supplies and prices. Planned responses would include the support of increased local food production by re-cultivating degraded lands on small holder and larger scale in the Nineveh Plains, through provision of theoretical and practical trainings on the most advanced permaculture production methods as well as providing agricultural tool kits that allow for fast return on investment.