

Iraq Crisis

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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Facts & Figures

Context

Iraq Population: 36 mio

Refugee and internally displaced populations:

- Iraq internally displaced persons: 3.2 mio (source: IOM), of which 1.2 mio in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq
- Syrian refugees: 250'000 (source: UNHCR)

Activities of Switzerland

- Financial support to international NGOs for protection and assistance activities (food, water, health, shelter) in Central Iraq and Kurdistan Region of Iraq
- Deployment of experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit to United Nations agencies
- Delivery of 170 tons winter relief material to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, including 1'300 winterized tents

Switzerland's main partners

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Save the Children Switzerland

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI)

Switzerland's allocation since 2014

CHF 17.8 mio



An internally displaced person receiving a space heater from NRC in Baghdad © NRC

Current humanitarian situation

- An estimated 8.2 million people – nearly a quarter of the population – require immediate humanitarian support as a direct consequence of violence and conflict linked to the take-over of Iraqi territory by the group "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL).
- More than 3 million people have been displaced across Iraq since January 2014 as a result of ongoing armed conflict. Many fled their homes with very few possessions. What's more, 1.5 million Iraqis in host communities are in need of assistance due to the increased demand for essential public services and livelihood support.
- In addition to the 250'000 Syrian refugees who fled to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), 1.2 mio internally displaced persons (IDPs) have sought safety there, exerting an additional pressure on the host communities and basic services.
- Access and protection remain the main challenges for humanitarian action in Iraq. Ongoing violence and insecurity are greatly affecting the ability of humanitarian actors to access people in need trapped in many parts of northern and Central Iraq.
- With Iraqi Security Forces reclaiming control over conflict zones, IDPs are increasingly facing pressure to return to their area of origin, even when conditions for safe and voluntary return are not guaranteed. Additionally, civilians fleeing conflict zones are often restricted in their ability to access safe areas.
- The Iraq crisis was qualified a Level 3 emergency by the United Nations in August 2014.
- The Humanitarian Response Plan, a UN-led fundraising mechanism, was launched in June 2015 with the aim to address the most pressing humanitarian concerns in Iraq until the end of the year. To date, out of the USD 498 mio requested, the United Nations have received 34 percent of the funding needed for this plan.

Context

The humanitarian and security situation in Iraq grew in complexity since late 2013, with the effects of the conflict in Central Iraq resulting in the displacement of more than three million Iraqis, of which 1.2 mio have fled to the KR-I. The country is now contending with the third-largest internally displaced population in the world.

The capacities of both the central Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to respond to the escalating needs have been overwhelmed and overstretched. They have both requested assistance from the international community. International and local partners continue strengthening collaboration in an effort to widen the areas of operation and reach the largest possible number of vulnerable people.

Swiss Cooperation Strategy Middle East 2015-2018

The overall goal of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy Middle East 2015-2018 for Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria is to contribute to safe, viable and peaceful living conditions for conflict-affected and vulnerable people, reducing fragility, preventing and transforming conflicts. Based on a "whole-of-government" approach, this strategy has been jointly developed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Directorate of Political Affairs (DP), the Swiss Embassies in the region and the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM).

In order to achieve its overall goal, Switzerland focuses on three domains of interventions: Basic Needs and Services, Protection and Water. To contribute both to the transformation of relationships and the promotion of inclusive mechanisms within the region's societies, the transversal themes Gender Equality, Good Governance and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) are inherent parts of the strategy.

Switzerland's Response to the Iraq Crisis

End of 2014 and upon the request of UNHCR Erbil, SDC dispatched 170 tons of relief material to Erbil, including 1'300 winterized tents, 5'000 blankets, 1'700 mattresses, 300 tent heaters and 300 kitchen sets. At the request of the local health ministry, the donation also contained two kits of medical equipment that can each provide basic medical care for 10'000 people for three months.

Besides such direct actions, SDC financially supports the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Save the Children Switzerland, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In addition to these in-kind donations and financial support, SDC deploys experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit to the United Nations in order to strengthen the humanitarian response. One expert is currently deployed to UNHCR in Dohuk, further deployments are under examination.

Support to Partners

SDC supports the following programmes and projects:

- Save the Children Switzerland (SC) - *Immediate Assistance to IDPs from Anbar in Kirkuk and Salah Al-Din provinces*: Through an SDC grant of CHF 1.6 million, SC has been able to reach

8'000 families and distribute 8'700 hygiene kits and 8'314 Food Parcels, in addition to 898 children who received non-formal education supplies.

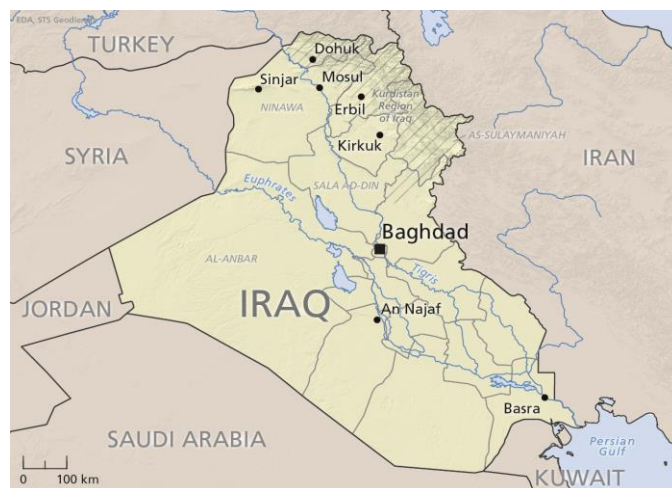
- Norwegian Refugees Council (NRC) - *Assistance to internally displaced people in Baghdad*: NRC was able to conduct 108 training workshops and outreach sessions on the situation of IDPs; these workshops were attended by governmental officials, Members of Parliament and NGOs. By July 20105, NRC reached 9,617 individuals through winterization assistance, cash and NFI (non-food items) distributions.

- Contribution to ICRC operations: SDC funds the ICRC who covers the basic needs of the most vulnerable population on a national scale, including the civilians trapped in the conflict zones of Central Iraq. ICRC activities also include advocacy and training of armed forces on the respect of international humanitarian law and other applicable laws to protect civilians.

- NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) - *Empowerment of civil society*: SDC is contributing to the empowerment of civil society, local and national NGOs as these are essential in supporting the government's efforts for the current humanitarian response. NCCI further provides a coordination platform to link national NGOs with UN-agencies and international NGOs. Particularly national NGOs play a vital role in providing assistance in hard-to-reach areas, where international humanitarian actors have little or no access.

- UNHCR: SDC sponsors the secondment of a water and sanitation expert in Dohuk to help improve access to water and sanitation facilities.

- OCHA: OCHA is responsible for the coordination of the humanitarian response in Iraq. SDC supports OCHA's efforts towards ameliorating the coordination and ultimately the delivery of humanitarian assistance on the ground.



Further information

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