

Iraq Crisis

July 2016



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: 3.3 mio, of which 930'000 are in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (source: IOM)
- 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 3 experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid unit to United Nations agencies
- Delivery of 170 tons of 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)

World Food programme (WFP)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Save the Children Switzerland

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI)

Waterkeepers Iraq

Switzerland's allocation since 2014

CHF 34.6 Mio



Child Friendly Space © SC

Current humanitarian situation

- An estimated 10 million people across Iraq are in need of humanitarian assistance, including Internally Displaced People (IDP), Syrian refugees, returnees and host communities, as well as affected populations in Armed Opposition Group (AOG) held areas.
- More than 3.3 million people have been displaced across Iraq since January 2014 as a result of ongoing armed conflict. 1.5 million Iraqis in host communities are in need of assistance due to the increasingly deficient essential public services.
- In addition to about 250'000 Syrian refugees who fled to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), 930'000 IDPs have sought refuge there, exerting additional pressure on the host communities and basic services.
- On 23 May 2016, Iraqi forces launched large-scale military operations to retake Fallujah from the so-called "Islamic State". Since then, around 87'000 civilians have escaped the city of Fallujah, some 50 kilometres west of Baghdad. On 21 June, Switzerland announced an additional support of USD 200,000 to help the Norwegian Refugee Council provide urgent life-saving assistance for people having fled Fallujah and currently living in displacement camps in Anbar Governorate.
- In July, Switzerland allocated an additional CHF 1 million to support a better access to potable water and reinforce protection in Anbar governorate while also anticipating the humanitarian consequences of the expected battle for Mosul. Humanitarian access and protection remain the main challenges for humanitarian assistance 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.
- The Iraq crisis has been classified as a Level 3 Emergency by the United Nations since August 2014.
- The Humanitarian Response Plan 2016, a UN-led fundraising mechanism, was launched in January 2016 in Baghdad with the aim to address the most pressing humanitarian concerns in Iraq until the end of the year. The support requested by the HRP amounts to USD 861 million. As of 17 July, USD 329 million (38%) had been received against the response 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 3.3 million Iraqis, of which 930'000 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 to strengthen 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

At the 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), the World Food programme (WFP), Save the Children Switzerland, the Norwegian Refugee Council, 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. Three SHA experts are currently deployed to UN agencies in Iraq.

Support to Partners

SDC supports the following programmes and projects:

- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) - *Community driven and emergency WASH intervention for displacement-affected people in Iraq*: Through this contribution, NRC provides a comprehensive WASH response to improve the public health of an estimated

25'200 conflict affected people in South and Central Iraq. In the previous phase, NRC was able to reach 2'913 families through distribution of winterization kits and 14'677 participants were targeted through community centre activities.

- Save the Children Switzerland (SC) - *Integrated Protection, Education and WASH assistance to vulnerable children and their families affected by the IDP crisis*: SC helps more than 20'000 conflict-affected children and their families have better access to protective education, safe drinking water and sanitation in the governorate of Diyala, Central Iraq.

- Contribution to ICRC operations: support to ICRC operations covers the basic needs of the most vulnerable population on a national scale, including 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.

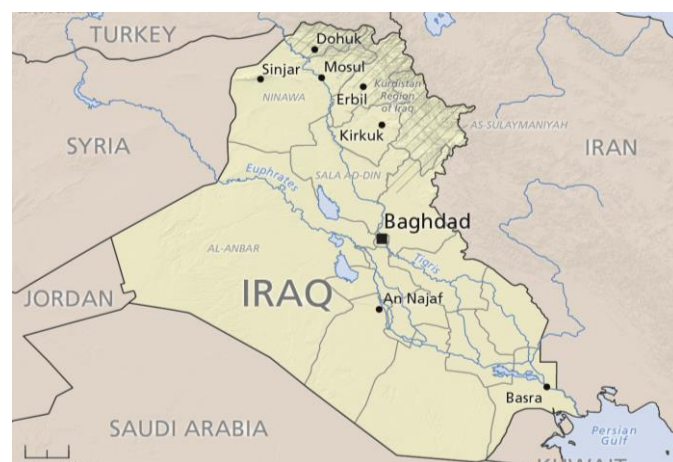
- NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) - *Empowerment of civil society*: SDC is contributing to the empowerment of civil society as well as local and national NGOs as these are essential in supporting the government's efforts for the current humanitarian response. NCCI further provides a coordination 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.

- Waterkeepers Iraq: SDC supports this NGO which aims at increasing environmental awareness by using films, social media and community outreach programs.

- UNHCR: SDC deployed one WASH expert, based in Dohuk (KR-I) and one Protection expert, based in Sulaymaniyah (KR-I).

- UNICEF: SDC deployed a WASH expert, based in Erbil, to support the coordination of the WASH Cluster's response to the crisis.

- WFP: SDC funding to WFP operations allows the UN agency to respond proactively and provide immediate food assistance in life-threatening situations.



Further information

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