



Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

Iraq: Droughts



DREF Operation n°	MDRIQ013	Glide n°:	DR-2021-000119-IRQ
Date of issue:	02 September 2021	Expected timeframe:	6 months
		Expected end date:	31 March 2022
Category allocated to the of the disaster or crisis: Orange			
DREF allocated: CHF 680,569			
Total number of people affected:	7 million people	Number of people to be assisted:	43,116 people (7,186 households)
Governorates affected:	Out of the 18 governorates in the country, 7 governorates are severely affected: Ninewa, Basra, Diyala, Erbil, Duhok, Wassit and Thiqr	Governorates targeted:	Ninewa, Diyala and Basra
National Society presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): The Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is a voluntary humanitarian organization; IRCS has a strong branch network in the country, which is well capable in providing relief in times of disasters/emergencies. A number of staff and volunteers are trained in disaster response. National Response Teams (NRT) and Branch Response Teams (BRT) are available at all levels. IRCS has also trained disaster response teams specialized in health, PSS, and hygiene promotion. These members are well-trained on life-saving techniques to assist rescue operations in times of need. Further, trained First Aid (FA) volunteers are also available in all branches, in readiness for immediate deployment at time of disaster for life-saving purposes. IRCS has a pool of Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA) trained persons, who could be deployed to set up and assist in the implementation of the CVA programs. The IRCS will work through its Baghdad branch, supported by the national headquarters and National Disaster Response Teams (NDRTs) will be directly supporting emergency operation activities through 60 volunteers.			
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is actively supporting the IRCS in developing the Emergency Plan of Action (EPOA) for the DREF request and coordinating with IRCS for information sharing with the Movement and external partners. Furthermore, as the Movement partners in-country, IRCS, IFRC, Partner National Societies (PNSs), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are maintaining close coordination.			
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Most of the humanitarian actors such as UN agencies and international NGOs are still working on preparation and planning. No major response operation is commenced yet. UNFAO has just started implementing a small emergency food security and livelihood project. IRCS is collaborating with local government authorities, the ministry of health and environment, the ministry of water resources, and the ministry of agriculture.			

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Iraq is frequently at odds with regional neighbours over water issues. The country depends on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for nearly all of its water. Millions of Iraqis face an intolerably harsh summer, which is causing alarm and creating major water shortages in the country. The rivers, which account for more than 90 per cent of Iraq's freshwater, are at

historically low levels due to a lack of winter rainfall in the region and snowmelt, primarily in the mountains of southern Turkey, which feeds into the rivers.

As summer approaches, upstream water sources have also shrunk the Tigris tributaries, cutting off the flow at the Diyala river and decreasing the flow of the Lower Zaab river by 70 per cent. This has caused a major crisis in the governorates of Diyala, Ninewa, and Basra, and farmers are now counting their losses. According to experts and officials, the effect of this plunge in water levels could destroy the ecology, worsen household water quality, which in most areas is already unsafe to drink and increase soil salinity, leaving barren land that was once fertile. Dropping water levels will have an impact on irrigated agriculture with less water flow, which can have a serious impact on food security, while the drought may also make vegetation more susceptible to wildfires. Climate change has also exacerbated the crisis; evaporation rates are increasing as global temperatures rise. Dams on the Tigris and Euphrates are causing growing water shortages for irrigation, endangering agricultural production; access to drinking water in towns and villages is also jeopardized. According to Iraq's Minister of



Figure 1: Severe drought is killing animals due to shortage of fodder in marshlands of Basra. Photo by: IRCS

Water Resources, Iraq could face a water shortage of up to 10.8 billion cubic meters per year by 2035. The influence of climate change on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers basins is currently being investigated by the countries concerned. One sensitive issue is that more than half of Iraq's water relies on precipitation falling outside its borders, making the water resources management in the country vulnerable to climate change and storage projects in neighbouring countries. To cope with water scarcity, the Agriculture Ministry has prohibited summer planting of rice, corn, and vegetables, allowing only water to reach palm trees and fruit orchards. Mismanagement of water resources in Iraq, such as inefficient flood irrigation methods, rundown water pipe infrastructure, and the cultivation of water-intensive crops like rice, compound the problem. As a result of Iraq's failure to address these issues over years of sanctions and war, the combined reservoir storage capacity of upriver dams has increased. Desertification is a sweeping environmental issue, with far-reaching consequences. Climate change is expected to raise Iraq's mean annual temperature by 2°C, while decreasing its mean annual average rainfall by 9 percent by 2050, leading to frequent heatwaves and droughts. Prolonged droughts have taken a toll on rain-fed crops, while decreased flow of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers in Iraq has deteriorated water quality and further increased salinity in irrigated areas, resulting in a significant decline in crop productivity as well as the net growing area.¹

Iraq's Ministry of Water Resources, WFP, the Global Water Stress Index, and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre on 23 August, the unfolding water crisis will soon become an unprecedented catastrophe across Iraq. The country now faces a complex water crisis that has humanitarian, economic, security, and social implications. These include population movements, losses of agriculture and livelihoods, mass demonstrations, and increased risks of food insecurity and communicable diseases.² Since autumn 2020, unseasonably low levels of rainfall across the eastern region of the Mediterranean Basin, have contributed to drought conditions in Iraq. More than 12 million people in Iraq and Syria are losing access to water, food, and electricity, and urgent action is needed to combat a severe water crisis. Rising temperatures, record low levels of rainfall, and drought are depriving people of drinking and agricultural water. It is also disrupting electricity as dams run out of water, which in turn impacts the operations of essential infrastructure including health facilities. Higher temperatures caused by climate change increase the risks and severity of droughts.³

Iraq's Ministry of Water Resources on 25 May, water flowing into Iraq has dropped from a peak of nearly 80 billion cubic metres per year in the 1970s to less than 50 billion cubic metres today. The ministry expressed concern about the drop in water levels in the country's major rivers and water storage, which was 50 percent lower than the previous year. Due to climatic conditions and the fact that both the Tigris and Euphrates (as well as other major rivers) are vulnerable to upstream water use and damming in other countries, water scarcity is a recurring problem in Iraq. Iraq faces pressures

¹ National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition in Iraq: October 2018

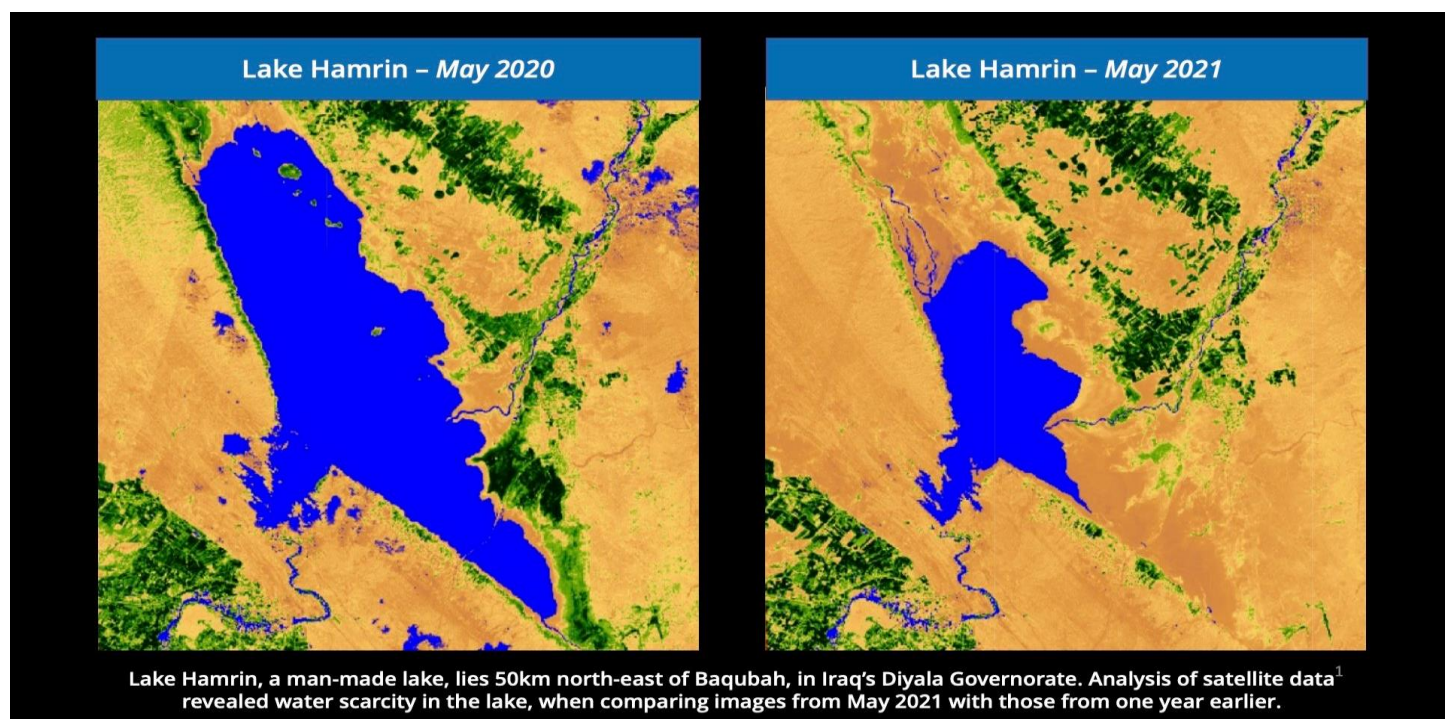
² Mesopotamia Is Drying Up A Worsening Water Crisis Threatens Iraq's Future: By UNAMI's Development Support Office (DSO) and Resident Coordinator Office (RCO), August 2021

³ Al-Jazeera News, Climate Change Water crisis and drought threaten 12 million in Syria, Iraq - 23 Aug 2021

on its water resources following years of conflict and under-investment in infrastructure. Basic services are deteriorating in many places and there is a growing imbalance between water supply and demand.

In a nation of 40 million people, seven million Iraqis have already been affected by drought and the risk of displacement that it entails. Based on Iraq's high population growth rate, estimates suggest that the country's population will grow from 38 million today to 80 million by 2050, heightening the economic and social risks of climate change is left unaddressed.⁴

On 9 May, Diyala governorate authorities issued a drought and water shortage alert, as inflow from the Diyala river is dramatically reduced and the main water storage, the Hamrin and Darbandikhan lakes is depleted. This river begins downstream of the Darbandikhan Dam and has several tributaries, including Tanjero in Iraq and Sirwan in Iran, which is the main tributary in terms of discharges. Diyala governorate has experienced several floods and droughts over the last century, depending on rainfall and water management. A chronic water shortage has developed in recent years. While population and water demand have increased, average rainfall has decreased by approx. 50% over the last two decades, attributed to climate change. Water flows from neighbouring countries have been reduced, resulting in the loss of 77 percent of the Diyala river's catchment area outside of Iraq. The recent storage capacity of more than a dozen of dams in the area is approximately 1.9 billion cubic meters, with 1 billion cubic meters diverted annually by newly constructed diversion tunnels outside the river basin. Furthermore, the limited water resources and irrigation are mismanaged in Iraq.



The water levels of lake Hamrin have been dropping since 2019, and the area covered by water has been shrinking by about half. The Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) is located in the north of Iraq, which has also suffered from extreme drought. Iraq is a semi-arid country that suffers from recurrent droughts. Climate change is continuously increasing the frequency and severity of the drought phenomenon in Iraq over the past years. In addition to pollution and climate change, Iraq's water resources face the threat of mega water projects. Prolonged heat waves, erratic precipitation, higher than average temperatures, and increased disaster intensity are putting additional strain on Iraq's post-war environment.

Across the country, the first substantial rainfall of the season in November 2020 facilitated sowing activities that were completed by mid-December and early crop prospects were relatively promising. In central and southern parts of the country, where crops require supplementary irrigation, the season proceeded under reasonably favourable conditions, and the development of cereal crops, despite above-average temperatures, was satisfactory. In northern parts of the country, sporadic and insufficient precipitation in Ninewa Governorate as well as portions of north-eastern Dahuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Salah Al Din provinces, affected conditions of mainly rainfed winter cereals. Rainfall in March and early April, which would have been critical to saving the crops, did not materialize. In May, extreme temperatures (35-40°C) further reduced the already meagre yield prospects for winter grains in drought-affected areas.

⁴ For war-scarred Iraq, climate crisis the next great threat - President Barham Saleh, 08/07/2021

Currently, around two million Iraqis face food insecurity. With water depletion, there are security risks associated with water depletion, which could be exacerbated by drought and climate change.⁵ Iraq is struggling how to deal with dwindling upstream water flows. Balancing the needs of the environment and agriculture in Iraq is a challenge, and the Iraqi government lacks a clear management plan for the future. Despite the fact that water is used for human consumption, agriculture, and marshland supply, Iraq has no water distribution plan, even though water from upstream is less. The Iraqi government needs to ensure that all Iraqis have access to clean water and basic services.⁶ Drought is one of the most complex natural disasters; it is still challenging to identify its cause and range of development. Drought has been a severe recurring phenomenon in Iraq over the last two decades due to climate change, although Iraq has historically been one of the most water-rich countries in the Middle East.

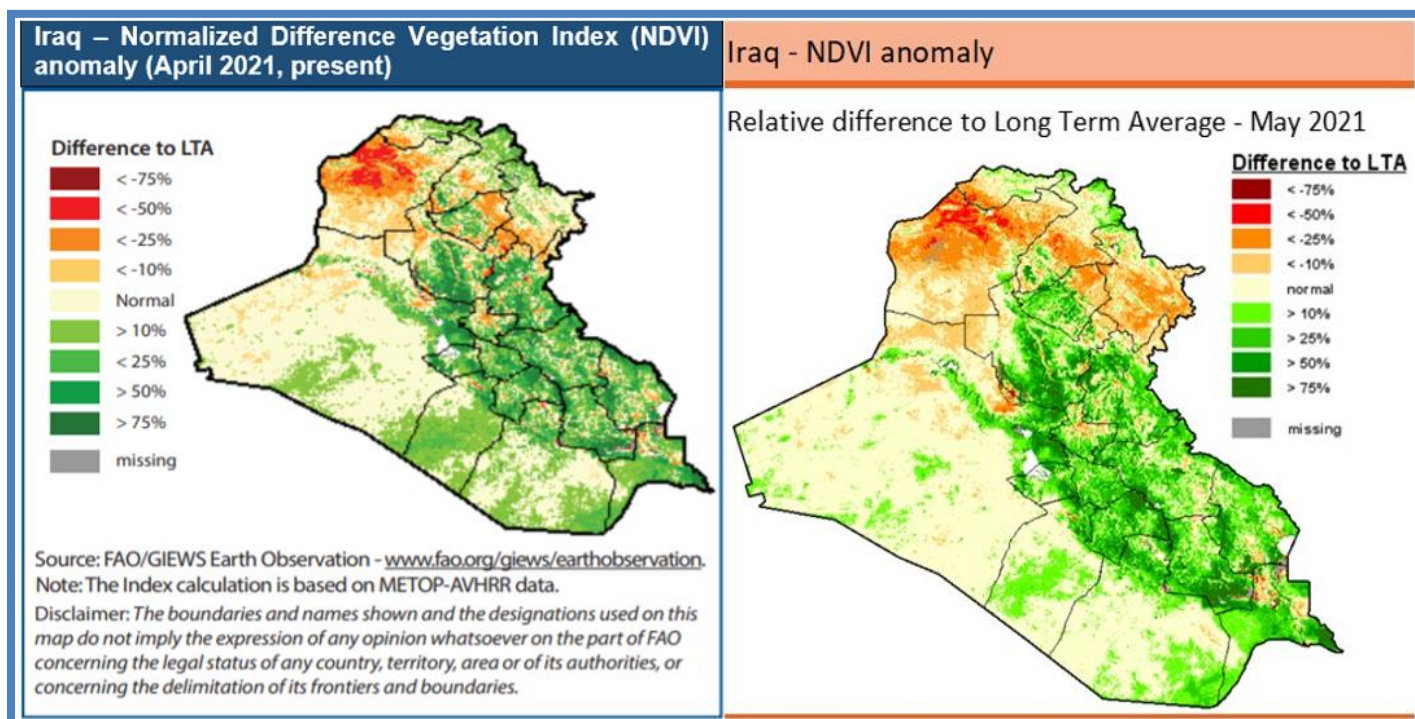


Figure 2: Source FAO/Earth Observation System

The recent drought trend analysis in a semi-arid area of Iraq is based on Normalized Difference Vegetation Index. The lack of precipitation exacerbated already-existing regional tensions over water resources management. The major rivers in the area (Tigris and Euphrates), provide the majority of irrigation water. It is estimated that a reduced amount of water streams into the country due to the construction of dams upstream outside of Iraqi territory. Upstream countries also increased water withdrawals to meet their increased needs as a result of population growth and increased water consumption. In northern parts of the country, sporadic and insufficient precipitation in Ninewa Governorate as well as portions of north-eastern Dahuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Salah Al Din provinces, affected conditions of mainly rainfed winter cereals and production is expected to be significantly lower than last year. On 25 May 2021 at the Humanitarian Country Team meeting, UNFAO presented a worsening drought that is threatening agriculture and livelihoods in the Dhi Qar Governorate of Iraq, 300 kilometres south of Baghdad. Other southern agricultural governorates, including Al-Qādisiyah, Muthanna, and Missan, are also suffering under the effects of the drought. The southern agricultural provinces of Iraq are home to nearly a quarter of the total population of the country. The drought is placing increasing pressure on agricultural families, with dozens of families moving out of at least 20 villages in the area.⁷

Iraq faces a unique set of environmental challenges, the impacts of changing weather patterns have already been felt in recent years, with increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and rising environmental degradation throughout the country. As demographic growth puts further strain on natural resources that are becoming increasingly scarce, the government's capacity to devise and implement the necessary adaptation and mitigation policies is hampered by a daunting context of post-conflict reconstruction. The water crisis in the country is expected to persist and may have humanitarian, economic, security, and social ramifications, including population movements. The most serious long-term threat to the country, however, is the potential economic impact and environmental devastation caused by climate change. According to the UN Environment Program, Iraq is the fifth most vulnerable country in the

⁵ UNDRR: Special Report on Drought 2021

⁶ Ensuring Iraqis' access to clean water in times of scarcity: Submission to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review 34th Session, 4-15 November 2019

⁷ OCHA Iraq Humanitarian Bulletin May 2021

world to the effects of climate change. Evidence of growing climate risks is all around us. Extreme heat is becoming more common, drought is becoming more frequent, and dust storms are becoming more intense. affects 39 percent of Iraq's territory, and increased salination threatens agriculture on 54 percent of the land.⁸ Dam construction on the headwaters and tributaries of the historic Tigris and Euphrates rivers - the lifeblood for the country - has reduced water flow, causing the salt wedge from the Gulf to migrate upstream into the Shatt al-Arab.



Figure 3: Hamrin Lake Diyala before and after depleted the water. Photo by: IRCS

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society Response Action

IRCS has a long-term record of providing life-saving assistance to people in need in Iraq. IRCS presence and local networks are exceptionally well established across the country, allowing IRCS to also reach vulnerable populations who are not served by other humanitarian actors, such as in remote areas. IRCS has extensive expertise with various types of programming through multilateral projects supported by the IFRC, ICRC, and Movement partners. This includes youth development, disaster risk management, cash, and voucher assistance (CVA), community-based health and first aid (CBHFA), restoring family links, community resilience (including WASH and livelihoods, etc.), dissemination of international humanitarian law (IHL), humanitarian values, and Red Cross/Red Crescent principles, and rehabilitation for physically disabled people for internally displaced people (IDP).

IRCS volunteers play a critical role at all stages of the organization's programmes. This includes assessment, identification, and registration of target communities and internally displaced populations. Since, IRCS is dealing with disaster response, health services, volunteerism, community-based disaster risk reduction, organizational development, and dissemination of humanitarian values. The IRCS disaster management is capable of the implementation of large-scale and long-term preparedness and response programs due to its nationwide coverage through 18 governorates branches and a national network of volunteers. Through all the years of conflict, it has consistently provided assistance to a multitude of vulnerable Iraqis all over the country. The branches in targeted areas have teams of trained volunteers in disaster preparedness and response such as the National/Branch Response Team (N/BRT), Community Based Health & First Aid (CBHFA), health and hygiene promotion, etc., and being involved in operation activities through the governorate's branches. Specifically in June, IRCS NRT members, as part of preparedness for effective response, were trained on conducting Emergency Needs Assessment including multi-sectorial assessments and have obtained skills, templates, and forms on such exercise, with clear standard operating procedures on activation of the NRT members. In addition, volunteers service to carry out hygiene promotion and community mobilization.

IRCS on June 20, has organized a meeting with the IFRC Iraq country delegation, MENA, and with other Movement partners on the current drought situation in Iraq and how to address the needs of the affected population. This meeting has several positive results and mainly looking into the development of the IRCS response plan together with the

⁸ Climate change in Iraq: June 2021

technical leads. The work plan initial outlines have the following sectors: i) Food & Economic security ii) WASH and iii) Health. While ensuring DRR and capacity-strengthening are mainstreamed across all sectors and also all activities to be COVID-19 sensitive. Drought planning Working Group from IRCS, IFRC, German Red Cross (GRC), and French Red Cross (FRC) can be established to support IRCS planning efforts.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Actions in-country

The IFRC is having regular coordination and communication with the IRCS. The IRCS disaster management teams and volunteers in the governorates are engaged to collect the information and to conduct rapid need assessments. Based on the completion of rapid assessment IRCS will convene a meeting with in-country Movement partners, the IFRC, and the ICRC to discuss the drought situation and the IRCS response plan. The IFRC Iraq country delegation is supporting IRCS in disseminating updates to the MENA regional office. The IFRC delegation is supporting to Iraq Red Crescent Society in implementing the COVID-19 Emergency Appeal which focuses on i) health, ii) WASH and iii) food security as well as National Society Development initiatives.

IRCS Headquarters maintains daily communication with the IFRC Iraq delegation in Baghdad. Monthly Task Force meetings with Movement partners in-country are taking place to discuss and plan activities that will improve the collective capacity and impact. To avoid duplication of support, the DREF operation was launched with coordination and consultation with Movement partners in the country. The Movement partners present in Iraq include ICRC, German, Norwegian, Danish, Turkish, Qatar, and Swedish Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. Since the drought situation is exacerbating, the IFRC country delegation in Iraq has contacted the IRCS leadership and technical departments and the IFRC regional office to share information about the drought, its impact, and response plans, as well as to provide technical support for the DREF.

The in-country PNSs in Iraq are supporting the IRCS with health interventions; water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion (WASH); psychosocial support (PSS); cash and voucher assistance (CVA), community-based health and first aid (CBHFA), volunteer management, and youth mobilization operations throughout the governorates, in collaboration with the IFRC and other Movement partners. ICRC supports the civilians in improving livelihood and water and sanitation, health, Restoring Family Links (RFL), and tracing activities. The ICRC supports the IRCS in its development and operations, as a primary partner with a focus on the “Safer Access” approach that promotes safer access to people affected by conflict and other forms of violence, whilst minimizing risks to staff and volunteers.

There is a strong need for all Movement partners to prioritize Strengthening of Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) to provide effective and coherent support to the National Society, such as a coordinated approach to organizational development and capacity building.

Overview of non-RCRC actors' actions in-country

The Iraqi Government is closely monitoring the drought situation in the country. According to the HCT and UNFAO, a worsening drought is threatening agriculture and livelihoods in the Ninewa, Basra, and Diyala governorates. The Ministry of Health and environment of Iraq working together with the WHO and other stakeholders to effectively improve the public health situation in the country with special emphasis on; (i) health security and prevention and control of communicable diseases; (ii) non-communicable diseases, mental health, violence and injuries, and nutrition; (iii) promoting health through the life-course; (iv) health systems strengthening; and (v) preparedness, surveillance and response. Cluster meetings occur monthly at the national level and are coordinated by the respective cluster lead agencies through Cluster Coordinators. Meetings are attended by cluster partners, members, and observers and aim to strategize and coordinate humanitarian activities at the cluster or sector level, as well as to share information on challenges and bottlenecks faced at the operational level. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) serves as a strategic, policy level, and decision-making forum that guides principled humanitarian action in Iraq. The Iraq Humanitarian Forum (AHF) is composed of all heads of International and National humanitarian NGOs and feeds into the HCT. The Iraq Humanitarian Fund (IHF) meets monthly and focuses on the coordination of NGO activities at the national and sub-national levels, advocacy on issues affecting the work of NGOs, representation/communication on the interests of NGOs to other humanitarian stakeholders and the government, and promotion of high ethical and professional standards amongst the NGO community. Other agencies implementing humanitarian activities related to the drought response includes UN Agencies: WFP, UNDP, UNOCHA, FAO, WHO, UNICEF, IOM, and other INGOs implementing water and sanitation activities while Save the Children, OXFAM, ACF, ACTED, Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils are implementing nutritional support projects through health centres and food assistance through Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA).

The Iraq Humanitarian Fund announced the first Standard Allocation in April 2021, which will grant up to \$13.5 million to address the key response gaps identified in the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan. This allocation specifically targets out-of-camp IDPs in underserved locations and vulnerable returnees living in critical shelters, supporting these groups with targeted protection assistance, improved access to essential health and WASH services, and emergency livelihood support. In line with the IHF's continued commitment to promoting localization since 2019, the Humanitarian Coordinator

and the Advisory Board endorsed the consortium approach for the first Standard Allocation, whereby funds are allocated to multiple humanitarian actors through a single lead agency working in equal partnership with consortium members.⁹

Needs analysis, targeting, scenario planning, and risk assessment

Needs analysis

Iraq has experienced multiple crises in recent years as a result of a series of natural disasters that have exacerbated the country's humanitarian needs. The protracted humanitarian crisis in Iraq remains one of the largest and most volatile in the world. After years of armed conflict and instability, the health sector in Iraq is struggling to meet the dire needs. The humanitarian needs in Iraq continue to be extremely high. Iraq is a diverse country with highly complex and multidimensional social divides spanning generations, religions, rural and urban groups, internally displaced people and host communities, and political interests. Despite this, sectarian identities continue to harm social cohesion in specific locations. COVID-19 effects on these tensions appear to be mixed. The COVID-19 outbreak hit a country already in the grip of a humanitarian crisis, further deepening vulnerabilities, and disrupting ongoing efforts to deliver aid to the most vulnerable people in acute need of humanitarian assistance. The people most in need of such assistance continue to be those directly affected by the conflicts and recently affected by the pandemic compromising of IDPs, refugees, returnees, and host communities in and out of camps. The political, economic, and social instability in Iraq is challenging the humanitarian response. The country was still recovering from the massive conflict that resulted in population movement in 2014 when the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020. These circumstances have had a significant impact on livelihoods and have exacerbated food insecurity. Current high-security alerts and potential escalation of demonstrations over the ever-rising hardship, in addition to the potential for violence to accompany the election process, may pose additional challenges to those who rely on a daily irregular income. After one year with COVID-19, with the passage of time and current economic deterioration, many families have limited and low income in the country. The number of poor and needy families grows as a result of these multiple crises.

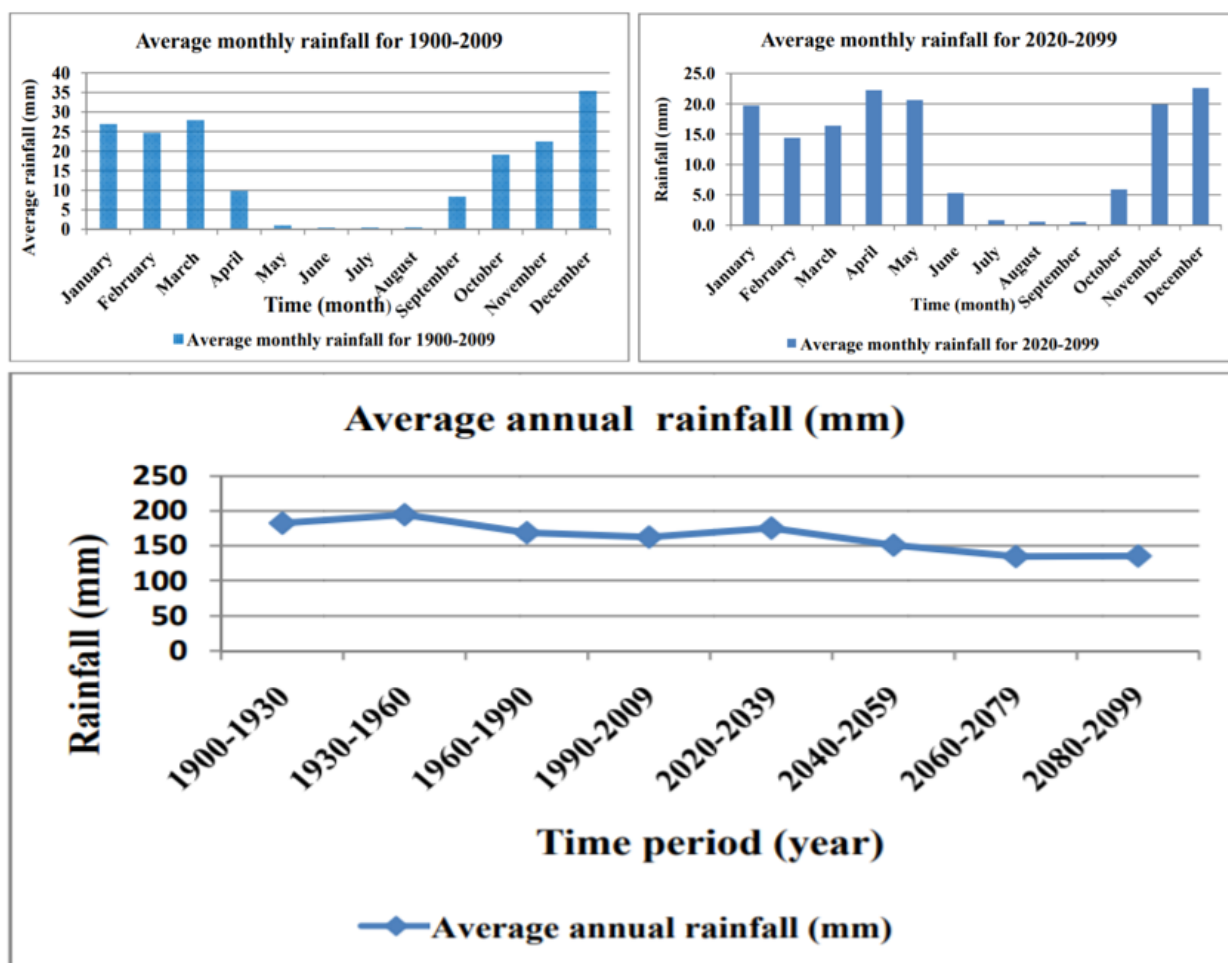
Across the region, rising temperatures, record low levels of rainfall, and drought are depriving people of drinking and agricultural water. It is also disrupting electricity as dams run out of water, which in turn impacts the operations of essential infrastructure including health facilities. Higher temperatures caused by climate change increase the risks and severity of droughts. In Iraq, the loss of access to water from the river, and drought, threaten more than seven million people. Some 400 square kilometres of agricultural land risk total drought. In Iraq, the loss of access to water from the river, and drought, impacted more than seven million people. The large swathes of farmland, fisheries, power production, and drinking water sources have been depleted of water. In the region, Tigris and Euphrates rivers are currently experiencing drought conditions, resulting in lower river flow, and affecting dam storage. The current season is the second driest in 40 years. Iraq is anticipating a serious drought this summer following a particularly dry winter and reduced river flow caused by upstream damming programs by riparian countries. Climate change has potential impacts on food security such as reduction in wheat production, decrease in surface water storage, drying of shallower wells due to insufficient groundwater recharge, and an increase in the cost of water. If the dry conditions continue, and the water reservoirs are not replenished, the population will face an acute water shortage for irrigation of the next cropping season. The country depends on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for nearly all its water, has been frequently at odds over water issues.

The historical period covered 1900-2009, is divided into four sub-periods as follows: first 1900-1930, second 1930-1960, third 1960-1990, and fourth 1990-2009. The future period covered (2020-2099), was also divided into four sub-periods as follows: first 2020-2039, second 2040-2059, third 2060-2079, and fourth 2080-2099. In recent decades the important feature of the climatic in Iraq is the increase of temperature by 0.2 - 0.30 °C per decade, rainfall less, loss of winter precipitation. Strong in snow mass including summer drought. The future expectation is that Iraq will be warmer, drier, and more global average in the MENA region.

Concerning the humanitarian situation - the high number of people living under extremely precarious conditions, it can be assumed a high risk of impacts on their livelihoods, and access to sufficient and safe water. The drought has lasted for 9 months in Iraq. Drought indicators suggest anomalies typical of severe to extreme events. The most severe food insecurity conditions among IDPs living out-of-camps are reported in the governorates of Ninewa, Duhok, Erbil, and Salah Al Din, while the majority of the returnees are concentrated in the governorates of Ninewa, Salah Al Din, Anbar, and Kirkuk. According to the KRI authorities, crop production of 2021 is 50 percent lower than the exceptional harvest of 2020. Department of Agriculture of Ninewa Governorate forecasted the crop production in 2021 is over 70 percent less than the harvested in 2020 and over 50 percent lower than harvested in 2019. The other southern agricultural governorates are also suffering under the effects of the drought. The drought has greatly harmed Ninawa's grain production, especially wheat, with production decreasing from one million tonnes last season to about 395,000 tonnes in the current season. Government grain silos are now purchasing wheat from farmers.

⁹ OCHA Iraq Humanitarian Bulletin, May 2021

The below graph shows the historical and future climate change scenarios for temperature and rainfall for Iraq.¹⁰



According to the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI) authorities, production of the 2021 wheat crop is forecast at about 750,000 tonnes, 50 percent lower than the exceptional harvest of 2020. In May 2021, the local Department of Agriculture of Ninewa Governorate forecasted the 2021 wheat output at 394,000 tonnes, over 70 percent less than the 1.4 million tonnes harvested in 2020 and over 50 percent lower than the 850,000 tonnes harvested in 2019. The 2021 barley crop failed, and production is forecast at a negligible level of 11,510 tonnes, down from the 1.36 million tonnes harvested in 2020 and the 1.3 million tonnes harvested in 2019. The livelihoods of livestock producers are likely to be severely affected by the decline in barley production. By mid-April 2021, when widespread crop failure in northern areas was confirmed, feed prices steeply increased at a rate much faster than seasonally justified. The affected farmers may consider reducing the size of their herds, selling some animals in order to improve their cash flow and be able to feed the remaining livestock. A large number of livestock keepers started moving to western and northern regions of Ninewa and Kurdistan areas looking after pastures and grazing areas.¹¹ Most of the governorates are already affected by the protracted conflict and recently drought, people are living without enough basic service. Around 2 million Iraqis are currently food insecure.¹²

IRCS local branches carried out a rapid assessment from 27 July to 5 August in three drought-affected governorates: Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra. In the Ninewa governorate, IRCS teams organized a meeting with the relevant authorities to collect information on the current drought's impact on people. Teams also visited the three most affected districts in Ninewa; i) Al-Ba'aj, ii) Tel Afar and Al-Hadar districts. IRCS teams identified the over 1,936 families are severely impacted by water shortages due to the current drought in three districts. The dry weather conditions present another

¹⁰ Historical and Future Climatic Change Scenarios for Temperature and Rainfall for Iraq: Department of Civil, Environmental and Natural Resources Engineering, Lulea University of Technology, Lulea 971 87, Sweden
Department of Water Resources Engineering, University of Mosul, Mosul 41002, Iraq

¹¹ GIEWS country brief the republic of Iraq, 11 June 2021

¹² UNDRR: Special Report on Drought 2021

potential risk going forward, which could have a destabilizing impact on already vulnerable communities, who rely on rainfed agriculture for their food and livelihood sources and who may not be able to absorb potential commodity price increases. Having said by the governorate authorities, if the situation continues, the dry weather and reduced water supplies are already impacting the food security, livelihoods, and access to water of already vulnerable populations, primarily of communities residing in the Ninewa governorate, which recorded up to 40 per cent below normal precipitation.



Figure 4: IRCS Ninewa branch team field visit and interviews with local farmers. Photo by: IRCS

Diyala is another governorate at risk of drought and water shortage, due to its reliance on Lake Hamrin, fed by the Diyala river, which originates as the Sirwan River. The water levels in Lake Hamrin have dropped significantly over the past year, with the surface area covered with water shrinking by half, affecting irrigation and agriculture, and impacting potential returns. Diyala governorate administration conducted a meeting on 20th June at General Secretariat of the Council Ministers - Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre with the Department of Water Resources, Environment, Agriculture, and Civil Defense. According to authorities, Diyala lost more than 70% of its water revenues due to the scarcity of rain and the absence of projects and plans for control and storage over the past years. Despite efforts to provide water, the lack of rainfall has had a huge impact on the agricultural sector, especially wheat and barley yields which have decreased by 35%. The vegetable and fruit products have decreased by about 50%, and the effect of drought on orchards gardens in the summer will be similarly bad compared to 2020. The production of abandoned lands has become zero.

According to the local communities, 15 villages in Al-Mansouriyah district might be forced to displace due to drought and potable water shortage. Water projects in several villages in al-Mansouriyah district (45 km northeast of Baquba) had been suspended due to the dryness of rivers (Sharween and al-Shawhani) and the water resources department's refusal to release water for unknown reasons. People are called on the concerned authorities to find urgent solutions to the tragedy of villages suffering from thirst and drought. Otherwise, 13 to 15 villages will be forced to leave their homes. Miqdadiyah, Bald Ruz, Mandali, Qazan, and Kanaan will be the most affected by the coming drought crisis this summer due to the lack of water revenues and the drought of all channels and irrigation streams, which prompted many farmers to migrate the agricultural profession and head towards cities. Diyala governorate is suffering from drought which has caused significant damage to farmers and the agricultural sector, as well as a severe shortage of drinking water. A lack of rainfall and water shortages throughout the winter have led many farmers to abandon their lands. The severe rainfall shortage has affected agricultural products and contributed to the further deterioration of the economic situation of farmers in Diyala compared to previous years.



Figure 5: Diyala river and its tributaries in 2021 after depleted the water. Photo by: IRCS

More than one million dunams of farmland have become barren in the provinces of Dhi Qar, Maysan, Karbala, Najaf, and Basra, according to the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture. The levels of the Tigris River in Baghdad have also noticeably reduced. The Ministry of Water has stated the river's water level has decreased by 47 percent since 2003. The decrease in water levels is from natural sources, primarily a lack of rainfall. Before 2003, there were 500 cubic meters of water flowing, this has now been reduced to only 320 cubic meters. In southern Iraq, where the two big streams merge into the Shatt al-Arab, the reduced flow has caused saltwater intrusion from the Gulf, degrading the waterway that is shaded by lush palm groves on its banks. The primary water source for Basra is the Shatt al-Arab river and its freshwater canals, though for decades water infrastructure has been neglected and laws against dumping waste into the river have not been enforced. As Iraq bakes in the blistering summer heat, its hardscrabble farmers and livestock herders are battling severe water shortages that are killing their animals, fields, and way of life. Drought has hit the Mesopotamian marshes, said to be the site of the biblical Garden of Eden, where water buffalos and their owners once found respite from summer heat above 50 degrees Celsius.

According to the United Nations, only 3.5 percent of Iraq's farmlands are watered with irrigation systems. The UN has warned about the effects of climate changes in many countries, including Iraq, which loses about 100,000 acres of agricultural land per year and still primarily uses outdated irrigation systems which have caused the salinization of soil. The potential human costs of climate change are immense.

The Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq identified 4.1 million people in need, of which 2.4 million people have acute humanitarian needs. COVID-19 pandemic compounded with protracted displacement - resulted in increased protection needs and vulnerabilities. While the number of people in need remained similar to the previous year, the severity of those needs increased, largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on top of an existing humanitarian crisis, leading to a 35 percent increase in the number of people in acute need. Extreme poverty and inequality have meant that significant portions of the population are in urgent need of employment, health care, education, sanitation, hygiene, and access to justice. Shortfalls have worsened with the oil price drop, which has had a major effect on government revenues and fiscal space. Thousands of jobs are at risk, and while food prices have remained relatively stable, continued reliance on imported food makes the country vulnerable to shortages or major price increases.



Figure 6: Water buffaloes in the central marshland of Basra. Photo by: **Photo by: IRCS**

The main challenges and needs facing the communities of the Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra governorates are:

Livelihoods and food security: In most of the area agricultural land is completely affected by the current drought spell and left people with more vulnerability. The sharp reduction in agricultural production and the depletion of food reserves are increasing the dependence of families on the purchase of food in the market. Normally most people's food sources come from their own agricultural or livestock production in Iraq. Native communities get their food mainly from sources provided by the fields and nature. The drought has negatively impacted the access to and availability of food sources due to crop losses (wheat, corn, soybeans, among others). Faced with this situation, families are using negative coping strategies, reducing the number and size of meals, mainly affecting vulnerable groups such as children under five, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with acute and chronic illnesses.

The most immediate effect on income and livelihoods stems from a decision on 11 June by the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) and the Department for Agriculture (DoA) to prohibit the planting of summer crops in Diyala, except for Khalis district.¹³ Irrigation focuses only on the perennial orchards. Communities with war-damaged irrigation channels or irrigation channels that are dried out with the lower water levels rely on municipal water supply. This has first effects on production and food prices, daily labour opportunities, and communities' competition for water sources.¹⁴

There is a need to implement the interventions for the collection and storage of water from natural sources, dig wells and conduct food distributions. The main needs are related to securing basic food sources, especially for the population at risk, supporting the early recovery of farming-related livelihoods, risk, and recovery of animal production, which will be important for the food security of the population. The drought jeopardizes household food, nutrition, and economic security, calling into question their ability to meet their basic needs in the coming months and invest in their livelihoods to recover from the last failed agricultural season. Thus, the priority needs of affected households lie in the coverage of immediate food needs, and livelihood restoration intervention.

Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA): IRCS has an experience in CVA, Cash transfers in Iraq are a well-established response modality for the delivery of humanitarian aid with experienced humanitarian actors, financial service providers (FSPs), a good policy environment, and a dynamic country Cash Working Group. Additionally, the mobile money companies operating in Iraq provide practical pieces of training to affected people who have not used mobile money services before. Under this operation, a one-off multipurpose cash transfer will be distributed to 1,500 households for basic needs and restoring livelihoods respectively. The proposed transfer value of USD 100 per household has been calculated based on the market price of items using the Iraq minimum household of 6 persons. The IRCS will engage and contract a mobile money company to support the mobile money transfer services to the targeted people. IFRC Iraq country delegation through MENA cash and procurement team will provide the technical support to IRCS for this process. After validation of the file by IFRC, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be prepared and signed by both parties; IRCS and financial service providers before the services commence. IRCS will ensure data protection and clarify the roles and responsibilities when dealing with beneficiary data with financial service providers. For IRCS monthly reconciliation, mobile money operators will also provide electronic and printed reports for all transactions made in a

¹³ Reference Date: GIEWS Country Brief, The Republic of Iraq, 11-June-2021

¹⁴ Water Scarcity and Drought Risk - Diyala ICCG update 17 June 2021

given month. The cost of mobile money transfers is estimated to be 2.5 to 3% of the transfer amount. Apart from CVA interventions, IRCS will procure 3,000 food packages for drought-affected families, which will be distributed across three governorates.

Health and care: The protracted humanitarian crisis, compounded by COVID-19, took its toll on Iraq in 2020. The unstable security situation, lack of employment, and basic services experiencing distressing events, uncertainty also continued to fuel large-scale population displacement and have a negative impact on their lives. These factors, together with the closure of camps for internally displaced people (IDPs), meant that the most vulnerable people are in acute need of food and livelihoods assistance, WASH, and health, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Support in the country. The capacity of the national health system became severely overstretched and had difficulties in meeting the health needs of the country. The limited availability of primary healthcare services, the lack of sufficient trained health personnel, the destroyed or inadequate healthcare infrastructure, shortages of medicines and medical supplies, and the struggle to cope with such life events having additional pressure due to different critical incidence and violent crackdowns in the country, which requires more Community Health interventions through the well-trained, community health volunteers that can play a key role in ensuring that these challenges are met in an effective, efficient and timely manner. especially that many health facilities that are still operating lack much-needed medical services and supplies and suffer a shortage of healthcare specialists.

In response to the **health** needs, the Iraqi Ministry of Health (MoH) needs support to ensure health coverage for all vulnerable populations and mitigate the impact of the conflict and COVID-19 on the public health system. The situation is currently exacerbated by specific vulnerabilities and challenges related to COVID-19, putting more strain on the people and services provided to support them. Health facilities in camps are also stretched with only basic equipment and with intensive care units are often a significant distance away, heightening the risk for those experiencing severe symptoms. COVID-19 exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities among conflict-affected populations, resulting in increased use of negative coping mechanisms. The situation in Iraq is extremely volatile due to COVID-19 and the political and security context. The humanitarian community plans for a flexible humanitarian response, adapting to the changing circumstances throughout the year.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH): In May 2021, several water treatments plants (WTP) stopped production due to decreased water levels. According to the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), surface wells with less than 20m depth dried out in most of the governorates in Iraq. The Diyala Government raised a potential need for water trucking to hospitals and other critical infrastructure. In many locations, basic services are in a state of decline and there is a growing imbalance between water supply and demand. The local communities affected by the drought usually obtain water regularly from natural sources, mainly from the rivers and surface wells. Due to the severe drought happening since September 2020, the wells are not producing enough water for the families and in many cases, the water resources have dried up. Basra governorate has been adversely affected by increased water salinity, largely bringing crop production to a halt. The significant decrease in access to natural water sources and the combination with proper methods of purification and storage has put at risk access to drinking water, causing dehydration, impairing hygiene, and leading to water-borne diseases such as gastrointestinal diseases, including diarrhea, in many cases related to lack of hygiene and improper use of water. In Iraq, the quality of water used for drinking and agriculture is poor and violates both Iraqi National Standards and World Health Organization guidelines. Practices and knowledge of hygiene are limited, and it has been observed in the rapid need assessment, a significant increase of acute diarrheal diseases. The main priority needs are focused on drinking water supply, safe water storage, and improved hygiene measures, noting that several communities are lacking access to drinking water due to war damage.

IRCS has chosen the three governorates based on the latest information available from the ministries and governorates administration, which showed that they had recorded the vast majority of population movements associated with water shortages due to the current drought impact on natural water resources in Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra. In three governorates water scarcity, high salinity and pollution levels are some of the major factors. Drought and the related loss of income are pushing many households to move from dry zones to areas with improved water availability such as cities, a shift that leads to the abandoning of rural areas and worsening of living conditions in urban zones. Scaling up WASH interventions is necessary to ensure access to clean water, access to basic sanitation, and improved hygiene in the target population. Communities need basic life-sustaining access to WASH services in communities and support to harness community-based organizations to take actions aimed to improve hygiene practices, soil and water management for improved livelihoods and adaptation. As open water sources dry up in many parts of the governorates, the pressure on permanent sources, such as boreholes increases, leading to longer waiting times and the risk of breakdown. There is a decrease in water availability and quality in the livelihood zones due to poor or no recharge of water bodies. Water levels in the rivers and small streams had already reduced significantly by the end of May 2021. So far, no repair of wells and boreholes/handpumps has been undertaken by the IRCS in any governorate. The protracted crisis and the security situation have caused the displacement of people in many parts of the country.

There is a need to support communities to take charge of basic hygiene management in their areas and increase interventions in social mobilization and community education on water treatment and storage and effective handwashing

and sanitation practices. Schools are also a key area where WASH services need to be provided, to both retain current students and to enable children to attend school in a safe and dignified environment and to reduce the risk of transmission.

Humanitarian agency assessments throughout Iraq, including those of IRCS, consistently demonstrate that the priority needs requested by the affected population (whether in rural areas or IDPs settlements) are food, water, and health care in response to the acute humanitarian needs brought about by years of protracted drought in Iraq. In addition, there is a need to ensure that rural livelihoods are supported in the recovery and longer-term phases.

Protection, gender, and inclusion: In Iraq, the native families have a level of community organization, determined by one or more community leaders whose responsibility is to lead and make decisions on behalf of the entire community. Heads of the household are also male, and women's representation and decision-making are limited. The affected communities are culturally diverse and require a differentiated approach in the implementation of activities that considers the needs of the different ethnic groups. This will be worked on through a community engagement and accountability (CEA) approach to detect the needs of different social groups, especially women, children, and adolescents. Risk assessments will be carried out and coordination mechanisms established to ensure that security and protection measures are implemented for the affected population and the National Society's volunteers.

Targeting

Under this DREF operation, IRCS with the technical assistance of the IFRC Iraq delegation intends to start with supporting the drought-affected population from three governorates: Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra. The total target population for this operation will be **43,116 people (7,186 households)**. These three governorates are amongst the hotspot governorates affected by the current drought. The rural and hard-to-reach areas in these governorates are currently not covered by any other actors for food security, health, and WASH programming. IRCS is, therefore, well-positioned to carry out its humanitarian intervention and provide food security assistance to those in need in these areas. In addition, considering the amount allocated from DREF, focusing on just three governorates will allow more households per province to be covered rather than spreading out across a larger geographical area. This approach will also assure operational efficiency, allowing for greater financial resources to be allocated to direct delivery assistance to affected households.

The targeting process and criteria are designed to include vulnerability and drought-specific indicators. During the initial phase, IRCS will prioritize the poorest and poor households with rain-fed lands and whose primary livelihoods means are being significantly impacted by the current drought. IRCS, through a community-based targeting approach, will also identify the most vulnerable such as landless labourers who are affected by the drought. Considering the absolute vulnerability of the poorest households, IRCS will focus on mitigating the ongoing risk of the use of destructive coping strategies by ensuring minimum food and income security. To ensure no duplication, IRCS regularly participates in the Interagency Cash, WASH, and Health coordination working groups during which agencies share information on their areas of focus and gaps.

Summary table of geographic targeting:

S. No	Governorate	Livelihoods and basic need	WASH	Health
1.	Ninewa	1,936 HHs	2,230 HHs	2,117 HHs
2.	Diyala	2,000 HHs	24,431 HHs	2,215 HHs
3.	Basra	2,064 HHs	2,526 HHs	2,465 HHs

Given the high mobility of pastoralist communities, as well as the overall adverse impact of the affected population, the selection criteria are flexible based on needs. The selection of people to be assisted will be based on their level of vulnerability, including households that have lost their source of livelihoods (loss of crops and animals, etc.), the chronically ill, elderly, female-headed households, lactating mothers, and under-five children (malnourished), pregnant women, and/or people with disabilities, availability, and access to potable water by households in the affected areas.

Scenario planning

The planned response reflects the current situation and information available at this point of the evolving situation and will be adjusted based on further developments and context changes. This might however change due to the prolonged drought situation. The interventions in this plan have taken into account the risk factors that have been identified. Under this DREF, IRCS intends to provide short-term emergency food assistance, multipurpose cash with WASH, and health care services to the most vulnerable and those pastoral households that are at the greatest risks due to the current dry spell. Implementation of the proposed emergency food assistance activities will be a start.

In addition, IRCS is also planning to conduct a multi-sectoral needs assessment in governorates that are impacted the most by the current dry conditions, to have a clearer understanding of the impacts of a dry spell on agriculture, livelihood conditions, and food security amongst the most vulnerable. The findings of the multi-sectoral needs assessment will

inform a full Emergency Appeal that IRCS, in collaboration with the IFRC Iraq delegation, is intending to have for the ongoing dry spell. Through the Emergency Appeal, IRCS intends to implement rehabilitation and restoration activities supporting the impacted households to strengthen their resilience and cope with the impacts of drought/dry conditions. The exact types of rehabilitation and restoration activities will be defined later at the Emergency Appeal stage.

Possible scenarios are all associated with the possibility of worsening weather conditions, forecasts of high temperatures and low rainfall, or sudden seasonal rainfall causing flooding in the country. This could trigger a possible more complex scenario associated with a protracted situation and such.

Scenario	Humanitarian consequence	Potential Response
Most likely scenario for drought	<p>Below-average rainfall in the country like last few years.</p> <p>Increase in the number of people already affected by the complex humanitarian crisis in the country with large needs.</p> <p>Low resource mobilization in the short-term leading to delayed humanitarian response to needs. Short-term action not sufficiently meeting sustainable needs of the affected population.</p>	<p>IFRC on the behalf of IRCS, launching the DREF operation to cater to the pressing needs of the affected population for six months.</p> <p>IRCS NHQ through local branch teams and with trained youth and volunteers will implement the DREF operation to address the immediate needs of affected people.</p> <p>IRCS in close coordination with the local community defining the selection for affected HHs for DREF operation activities.</p> <p>Clear communication strategy with the local communities on selection criteria to avoid any conflict as need is very high in the country due to complex crisis and more resources need to address the critical gaps.</p>
Drought conditions worsen	<p>Food shortage: Increase in the number of serious health concerns/deaths due to acute malnutrition and not being able to provide sustained treatment to the population.</p> <p>Drought: Prolonged dry spell, shortage of rains, crop failure, and elevated livestock death are expected, depleting completely livelihoods, and public authorities seeking humanitarian actions support to respond at mega-scale. Increase in the number of affected families.</p> <p>Addressing humanitarian needs: IRCS as the largest humanitarian organization in the country with its auxiliary role continues to support in addressing the humanitarian needs long-term in multiple areas. COVID-19 compounded the situation in-country and affected the livelihoods opportunities, IRCS mandate to keep scaled-up operation continued.</p>	<p>Emphasis on safe water, livelihoods, and food security action lines.</p> <p>IRCS seeks large-scale intervention and external/international assistance, adapting DREF to Emergency Appeal for medium to long-term early recovery and rehabilitation interventions in Livelihoods and basic needs, WASH, Health and DRR/CCA.</p> <p>Define criteria for the selection of HHs, advocacy, media communication strategy to be accountable to beneficiaries, to avoid any community conflicts. A regular coordination mechanism should be defined by the IRCS to engage with other stakeholders to avoid any duplication and smooth implementation of operational activities.</p>
Scenario of social tension / Civil unrest	With the history of operations in the area, access and action by humanitarian organizations in communities can be hampered	Actions of mediation with the community, the opening of spaces for evaluation of problems, psychosocial support, humanitarian diplomacy, support with other organizations working in the field.

The deterioration of the situation with COVID-19	<p>Curfew situation in the governorates and main cities to stabilize the epidemiological situation and the inability to reach the affected population. The limitation of supplies is due to the restrictions of movement and access between the governorates.</p> <p>Possible displacement might trigger the infection to spread due to harsh weather. In possible shelters, the COVID-19 new variant can be transmitted and scale-up.</p>	<p>The Iraqi Red Crescent Society will gain access to the affected governorates through special permission and cooperation agreements with local authorities.</p> <p>IRCS to continue risk awareness education action, following safety protocols, scaling up response including vaccination advocacy and promotion with preparedness actions to limit spread.</p>
Force majeure	<p>A natural disaster like an earthquake, flood impact already affected populations, refugees, IDPs, and host communities in need of basic assistance.</p> <p>Lack of resources to provide timely assistance to the affected population.</p>	<p>IRCS will seek the possible funding streams to scale up the DREF operation to Emergency Appeal and to mobilize the resources from external donors etc.</p>

Operation Risk Assessment

IRCS has good access in all three target governorates even to the hard-to-reach areas in these governorates. Good access for IRCS is based on wide acceptance from all stakeholders and the organizational structure of IRCS - a high number of volunteers from affected communities. This high level of access resulted in numerous operations successfully finished or still ongoing in these governorates. More specifically, IRCS has already been supporting the disaster-affected people providing them with humanitarian relief assistance in the target governorates for many years.

In order to mitigate the safety and security risks to organizational staff and volunteers, IFRC and IRCS continue to work on a clear approach to ensure ongoing community acceptance through engagement with all parties and stakeholders. In addition, clear and appropriate security protocols and procedures have been established in line with the IFRC's Minimum Security Requirements, including with respect to responding to critical incidents, to ensure continued engagement and capacity to fulfill all project activity obligations. This approach is supplemented by continued analysis of the context. IRCS has dedicated trained security staff regularly who visit IRCS impact areas to provide briefing and support to field staff to enable them to safely deliver project activities. Timely sharing of security information is ensured among all staff. All staff is trained on personal security (Stay Safe and Safer Access) and oriented on RC/RC security management systems, and actions in emergencies. IFRC and IRCS staff are trained on culture sensitivity and staff respect to local norms and culture and build positive relationships with community members and beneficiaries.

- IFRC and IRCS will ensure that the design, planning, operations, and implementation of the IRCS programme incorporate acceptance as our core approach to gain safe access in the communities in both development and emergency humanitarian relief contexts.
- All components of IFRC's Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance are fully integrated into the programme design and implementation and adopted by all staff.
- A community mobilization will be conducted in the target areas by having regular consultancy meetings, gatherings with key influential stakeholders explaining the impartiality, neutrality, and transparency of IFRC and IRCS before starting the programme.
- The inclusion of a compliant feedback mechanism in the IFRC and IRCS Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) system, allows the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to give direct feedback and make complaints about the delivery of programme interventions.

B. Operational strategy

Overall operational objective

The overall objective is to provide humanitarian food assistance to the financially poor and most vulnerable (7,186 households – 43,116 people) whose primary livelihood means are affected by drought in Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra

governorates. IRCS intends to provide emergency food security support, cash assistance, WASH, and health care services to drought-affected households from September 2021 to March 2022.

The planned humanitarian food security activities will be implemented in two phases. The initial phase, which covers the period from 1 September to 31 October 2021, will be providing life-saving assistance to address the immediate food needs of the most vulnerable households affected by the drought. During the initial phase, IRCS will also conduct a multi-sectoral needs assessment in drought-affected governorates to seek an in-depth understanding of the impacts of drought on food security and the livelihoods of the households. In addition to the three targeted governorates, IRCS will expand the geographical target for the multi-sectoral needs assessment. The list of governorates for this assessment will be finalized in coordination and consultation with Government ministries and departments, Food Security Cluster, and other humanitarian actors who will also plan to have food security and livelihood programmes for drought-affected populations. The findings of the multi-sectoral needs assessment will also support IRCS to understand what types of livelihood restoration, WASH, health, migration, and PGI interventions are most suitable and sustainable for the affected population.

There are high possibilities that this DREF operation will scale up into an Emergency Appeal based on the revised EPOA guided by multi-sectoral needs assessment in the coming months. At the end of the initial phase, when emergency food assistance is distributed and a multi-sectoral needs assessment is conducted, IRCS with IFRC support plans to launch an Emergency Appeal and will request the second funding allocation to implement livelihood restoration activities as outlined in the second specific objective.

Based on the overall response strategy, this DREF will provide funding to the procurement of food parcels, conduct a multi-sectoral needs assessment in drought-affected governorates, and overall operational support to IRCS for effective and efficient drought response.

Operational support services

Human Resources

As part of the implementation of this DREF, the IFRC and IRCS will mobilize the following resources:

IFRC:

- The Head of the IFRC Iraq delegation will be ultimately accountable for timely implementation, compliance, financial management, and reporting of the operation.
- During the operation, IFRC will continue the technical support to IRCS through its staff from the Iraq delegation with the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Delegates and MENA team.
- The IFRC Iraq delegation/MENA will provide technical support through its logistics, procurement, finance, and admin departments.

IRCS:

- At the governorates, the National Society will mobilize a branch staff designated for the implementation of the DREF operation activities.
- The National Society will engage the trained NRTs to implement and supervise the DREF operation with volunteers in target areas.

Logistics and Procurement:

The acquisition of the goods and services will be done according to the IRCS procedures, aligned with IFRC standards, in close coordination with IFRC Secretariat's Global Humanitarian Services & Supply Chain Management (GHS & SCM) and utilizing if required IFRC GHS & SCM structures and existing regional arrangements. The IFRC GHS & SCM Department in Beirut will continue to provide technical support as required by the National Society for all the procurement. GHS & SCM will also provide technical validation (quality assurance) of the procurement process according to the IFRC established rules and regulations. All project files exceeding CHF threshold of 50,000 are subject to technical validation, whereby for CVA activities service procurement technical approval must be sought from the relevant regional GHS & SCM as follows: for Commodity vouchers – based on the value of goods and fees to be charged by Suppliers; for Value vouchers – based on the value of Service fees to be charged by Suppliers; for Third-party cash distribution- based on the value of Service fees to be charged by Suppliers, irrespective of the value of service fees, procurement technical approval must be sought from the relevant regional GHS & SCM.

Communication and visibility

To support volunteers for operation as well as the visibility of RCRC actions on the ground, IRCS will provide its volunteers with protection and visibility material from their existing stock. IRCS and IFRC will collaborate to implement a communication strategy that will support the positioning of IRCS as a credible humanitarian responder with a network of volunteers and expertise in disaster management and unique access to people in need:

- manage reputational risks;
- provide accountability to donors on the impact of the Red Cross Red Crescent response;
- maximize opportunities to build IRCS communications capacity;

The audiences are the news media, social media audiences, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, partners, peer organizations, and donors. Materials will be developed and shared, including high-quality photos, videos, stories, key messages to guide partner communications and social media posts. Spokespeople will be identified, supported, and pitched to the media. Coverage will be monitored. Where possible, journalists and others will be supported to visit Red Crescent activities.

All communications products will preserve the dignity of people and promote diversity, gender inclusion, and respect.

IFRC will support the IRCS communications team to communicate with external audiences with a focus on the drought and the Red Cross and Red Crescent humanitarian actions assisting the affected people. The communications will generate visibility and support for the humanitarian needs and the Red Cross Red Crescent response. Close collaboration will be maintained between the MENA regional communications unit, IFRC Country Delegation, and the National Society to ensure a coherent and coordinated communications approach. Communications content will be promoted on national, regional, and global IFRC channels and shared with National Societies in the IFRC network. Media and social media scanning will aim to increase effectiveness and contribute to assessing and managing risks.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (PMER)

The IRCS with the support of the IFRC country delegation and regional office will lead on reporting, monitoring, and evaluation of this operation. Reporting on the operation will be carried out in accordance with the IFRC DREF reporting standards. Regular updates will be issued during the operation's timeframe with a final report issued within three months after the end of the operation.

Technical PMER capacity and technical support will be provided through IFRC MENA Regional office PMER team and the IFRC country delegation. This will help identify and, where possible and necessary, resolve any issues. An end-of-operation lessons learned exercise will take place to capture the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the operation. It will also be used to measure qualitative outcome indicators and to ensure that the best practices are captured to inform the planning and designing of the long-term projects towards improved ways of working and increasing effectiveness and efficiency to the communities.

The IRCS has progressively innovated, streamlined, and enriched its PMER system, with the support of the IFRC, to improve the quality of any emergency operation delivery. In addition to regular monitoring and evaluation, the PMER system of IRCS promotes accountability by ensuring access of target communities to detailed information on the quality standards of operation activities. IRCS implements the Community Engagement and Accountability approach in its all-humanitarian programme which ensures the participation of project beneficiaries and wider communities in programme.

Community Engagement and Accountability

Guided by the IFRC CEA guide, the project approach will also integrate CEA minimum actions that help ensuring the community is an integral part of the whole appeal, by integrating communication and participation throughout the program cycle. Starting from the needs assessment, community perceptions had been captured to support the design of a relevant appeal related to the impact of drought on Iraq. The IFRC CEA unit at the regional office will be working closely with the technical sectors (Health, WASH, Protection, and livelihoods), the IFRC country office, and the partner national societies who supports PMER and CEA operational efforts of IRCS to backup IRCS in the necessary CEA related work that may include the provision of technical support in setting or scaling up feedback mechanisms including at least one language-appropriate Feedback channel to ensure a community-centred approach to the design and delivery of the project. Satisfaction surveys will be conducted either as stand-alone or as part of the regular monitoring to ensure that solicited feedback is being captured throughout the implementation and to ensure course correction on activities once required. The IFRC together with IRCS will capture best practices and lessons learned in CEA to further improve IRCS capacities through this appeal and integrate best practices and learnings in other projects in the future.

Administration and Finance

A Project Grant Agreement will be signed between the IFRC Iraq delegation and the IRCS. The operation will rely on existing financial management and administration systems in IRCS and IFRC. The IFRC, through the finance department, provides the necessary operational support for review, validation of budgets, bank transfers, and technical assistance to the National Society on procedures for justification of expenditures, including the review and validation of invoices.

C. Detailed Operational Plan



Livelihoods and basic needs

People targeted: 36,000

Male: 18,072

Female: 17,928

Requirements (CHF): 287,669

Needs analysis: The drought-affected population in Iraq, mostly rural community livelihoods, particularly small-scale agricultural producers, whose limited production negatively impacted their access and the availability of resources to cover their basic needs. The quick overview by the UNFAO revealed that drought hampered affected people's ability, these complex disasters also increased the need of affected people including WASH, health, and food needs. In many drought-affected governorates, the population does not have the necessary resources to purchase farm supplies, which affected their ability to earn a living. Households and communities need support to recover their livelihoods with dignity. According to the KRI government, ministry of agriculture and UNFAO report for 2021 for drought in the country the most pressing humanitarian needs in 2021 are: (i) immediate access to food and nutrition; (ii) WASH; and (iii) health and rural livelihood support to restore own food access and prevent displacement. In order to assess the drought impact across the governorates in-country, FAO participated in a rapid assessment in June 2021. The rapid assessments showed a progressively deteriorating situation with 4.1 million people now facing severe food insecurity and in need of urgent action. Iraq is experiencing a major livelihood crisis - primarily caused by severe drought, which limits food production and depletes farmers' and livestock keepers' assets and livelihoods. Years of civil conflict and instability as well as the severely degraded condition of much of the land have compounded the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and now drought is leading to the food security crisis we are witnessing today.

The current intervention in the provision of food parcels (4,500 HHs) and cash assistance (1,500 HHs) is only able to cover the needs for a month, continuously monitoring on the food security situation will be conducted with close coordination with local government, Cash Working Group and other humanitarian actors in-country who are also providing food and Cash and Vouchers assistance. Additional assistance might be considered and provided based on the situation and multi-sectoral needs assessment.

Risk analysis: The drought emergency intensifies, and communities are taking negative coping strategies. The country's population relies on the natural resource base to meet daily needs, but serious environmental issues such as desertification, climate change, aquifer depletion, ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, and pollution all negatively impact the resilience of the rural livelihoods that form the country's foundation.

Population to be assisted: Food and livelihoods assistance will be provided to 6,000 HHs (food parcels: 4,500 HHs and cash assistance: 1,500) drought-affected families (36,000 people) in Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra where a critical gap has been identified by the IRCS initial assessment and Food Security Cluster.

Programme standards/benchmarks: IFRC country delegation will engage the MENA CVA coordinator for technical support to ensure smooth implementation of the cash interventions. IFRC will also support the IRCS to ensure effective participation of affected communities and accountability throughout the project cycle by setting up feedback and complaints platforms as guided by the IFRC community engagement and accountability (CEA) standards and Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS). The guidelines from the cash working group as well as the IFRC Cash in emergency toolkit will be instrumental as a reference during implementation.

P&B Output Code	Livelihoods and basic needs Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis-affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods	# of households that have enough food, cash or income to meet their survival threshold (Target: 6,000)															
	Livelihoods and basic needs Output 1.2: Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security including food is provided to the most affected communities	# of households reached with food assistance for (basic needs) (Target: 4,500)															
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6										
AP008	Identification, registration, and verification of people to be assisted																
AP008	Procurement of food package																
AP008	Distribution of food package among 4,500 households																
AP008	Post distribution monitoring, including regular measurement of Food Security indicators																
P&B Output Code	Livelihoods and basic needs Output 1.5: Households are provided with unconditional/multipurpose cash grants to address their basic needs	# of households reached with multipurpose cash assistance for (basic needs) (Target: 1,500)															
		Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6									
AP081	Identification, registration, verification, and orientation of people to be provided with cash assistance																
AP081	Preparation of baseline assessment for Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA)																
AP081	Orientation on the selection of people to be assisted and use of mobile money transfer system for the target population																
AP081	Distribution of multipurpose cash assistance to 1,500 households (USD 100)																
AP081	Establishment of the CEA activities such as setting up targeting committees as well as feedback and complaints mechanism and training of volunteers/beneficiary satisfaction survey																
AP081	Conduct post-distribution monitoring																
AP081	Consultation with financial service providers in the country																



Health

People targeted: 40,780

Male: 20,472

Female: 20,308

Requirements (CHF): 158,336

Needs analysis: In drought-affected governorates, local communities are facing the issues of water shortage, existing water sources, and dry agricultural land. The high risks of consequent health emergencies and lack of medical supplies due to the COVID-19 pandemic leave millions vulnerable to diseases. A priority of the national society is to immediately deploy mobile health teams in severe drought-affected governorates to meet the most basic needs of the affected populations. Furthermore, as the national society continues to care for those left vulnerable by the drought. This DREF operation seeks to provide the national society, and thus vulnerable populations, with essential medical supplies as well as provide hygiene promotion and health education to prevent the further spread of disease during the dry spell and manage and track rumours and spreading the right messages through the relevant communities' communication channels.

Risk analysis: It will be fundamental to capture the interest of the people and to implement a simple and didactic way to explain activities, considering the great diversity of communities in Iraq's governorates.

Population to be assisted: A total of 40,780 people will be targeted by health interventions in three governorates (Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra affected by drought in Iraq).

Programme standards/benchmarks: IRCS teams in three drought-affected governorates of Iraq will coordinate and harmonize the health interventions with humanitarian actors. For each activity, the minimum standards indicated in the Sphere handbook, the IFRC Health Guides will be used.

P&B Output Code	Health Outcome 2: The immediate risks to the health of the affected populations are reduced through improved access to medical treatment							# of people reached by NS with services to reduce relevant health risk factors (Target: 40,780)														
	Health Output 2.1: Improved access to health care and emergency health care for the targeted population and communities.							# of Mobile Health Units deployed to provide health services support (Target: 3) # of people reached through NS emergency health management programme (Target: 40,780)														
	Activities planned Month							1	2	3	4	5	6									
AP022	Deployment of Mobile Health Units (MHU) for 5 months																					
AP022	Deployment of health teams																					
AP022	Operation cost for the MHU																					
AP022	Awareness-raising sessions at the community level																					
AP022	Monitor the impact of mobile medical services on the targeted population																					

P&B Output Code	Health Outcome 6: The psychosocial impacts of the emergency are lessened							# of people reached with psychosocial support (Target: 4,800)											
	Health Output 6.1: Psychosocial support provided to the target population as well as to RCRC volunteers and staff							# of people, IRCS staff and volunteers reached through PSS activities (Target: 4,800)											
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6												
AP023	Identification of and training for volunteers in psychosocial support in emergency																		
AP023	Assessment of PSS needs and resources available in the community																		
AP023	Provide PSS to people affected by the crisis/disaster																		
AP023	Provide PSS to staff and volunteers																		



Water, sanitation, and hygiene

People targeted: 43,116

Male: 21,644

Female: 21,472

Requirements (CHF): 187,534

Needs analysis: The population to be assisted does not usually have access to good and safe water for consumption. Based on the assessments carried out by the IRCS three governorate branches, the population of three targeted governorates and surrounding communities have unmet basic needs, especially in terms of availability of drinking water and excreta disposal. Many of the water wells in the area are not adequately treated and are difficult to access and RO units need to be rehabilitated to provide clean drinking water in three drought-affected governorates: Ninewa, Diyala, and Basra.

Risk analysis: Accurate data measurement and subsequent evaluation will be essential, as well as achieving a simple and thorough transmission of knowledge to communities in each of the activities.

Population to be assisted: A total of 7,186 households - 43,116 people in three governorates of Iraq will be targeted by WASH interventions during the DREF operation period.

High-risk communities:

- Drought affected communities
- IDPs living in camps
- IDPs and host communities accommodating IDPs/returnees
- School children in the affected communities – hygiene promotion sessions in 20 targeted schools

Programme standards/benchmarks: The aim of WASH interventions to promote good personal and environmental hygiene to protect the health, with protecting the environment, promoting health, and facilitate access to resources. The activities included in the DREF operation will be implemented in drought-affected governorates in

collaboration with other humanitarian actors. The IRCS bases its WASH activities on the Sphere minimum standard and the Humanitarian Charter to ensure good management of the entire water chain - water sourcing, treatment, distribution, collection, household storage, and consumption.

P&B Output Code	WASH Outcome1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water-related diseases in targeted communities	% of the targeted population has access to clean water, sanitation, and increased knowledge of personal hygiene according to Sphere standards (Target: 80%)															
	WASH Output 1.2: Daily access to safe water which meets Sphere and WHO standards in terms of quantity and quality is provided to target population	# of site assessments carried out and shared (Target: 8) % of people provided with safe water (according to WHO standards) (Target: 80%) # of water points rehabilitated/repared (Target: 6) # of mobile/HHs water treatment plants rehabilitated/repared (Target: 2)															
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6										
AP026	Conduct assessment of the water and hygiene situation in targeted communities																
AP026	Repair/rehabilitation of existing water sources/water points in targeted drought-affected areas																
AP026	Repair/rehabilitation of mobile water treatment plant, or household water treatment																
P&B Output Code	WASH Output 1.4: Hygiene promotion activities which meet Sphere standards in terms of the identification and use of hygiene items provided to target population	# of IRCS staff/volunteers trained on hygiene communication plan (Target: 60) % of the targeted population reached with hygiene promotion activities (Target: 80%) # of hygiene kits distributed to target communities (Target: 1,500) # of school children reached with hygiene promotion sessions (Target: 80%)															
		Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6									
AP030	Develop a hygiene communication plan																
AP030	Train volunteers to implement activities from hygiene communication plan																
AP030	Design/Print IEC materials – drought-related																
AP030	Distribute hygiene kits among the target communities																
AP030	Train targeted communities in the use of distributed hygiene kits																
AP030	Conduct hygiene promotion sessions in 20 schools																



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People targeted: 15,000

Male: 6,000

Female: 9,000

Requirements (CHF): 2,939

Needs analysis: IRCS all assessment tools are incorporated to capture the gender-disaggregated data for their programme and operations. Balance teams will be deployed by IRCS staff and volunteers during all stages of the operation including assessments, distributions, awareness activities, and post-distribution monitoring in the target communities.

Risk analysis: Women and children are the vulnerable segments of society (person with disability, pregnant and lactating women, elderly head of households, and widows) in target governorates might have limited access to information related to food security and livelihood support due to the conservative environment. IRCS will therefore ensure that female staff and volunteers are part of the assessment, relief distribution teams so that women and girls are included in the response activities. In addition to the physical safety risks to civilians living in conflict and drought-affected areas and the increasing pressures facing those living in displacement, people have had to endure significant interruptions to vital services as a result of the closure of IDPs camps in many parts of the country. Stronger linkages with protection clusters are also sought on relevant issues of common interest, such as the development of a comprehensive disability and survivor support strategy and response; enhanced operational and planning integration around protection, and GBV prevention and response. IRCS and IFRC will coordinate with protection and gender-based violence clusters in governorates. Stronger linkages with protection clusters are also sought on relevant issues of common interest, such as the development of a comprehensive disability and victim assistance strategy and response; enhanced operational and planning integration around protection, and GBV response.

Population to be assisted: 15,000 people (male: 6,000 and female: 9,000) will be targeted for PGI interventions in three governorates.

Program standards/benchmarks: PGI approaches will be aligned with the IFRC Minimum Standard to Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergency Programming, the IASC Gender-Based Violence Guidelines. The IFRC MSs have been developed based on (but not limited to) the Sphere handbook and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

P&B Output Code	Protection, Gender & Inclusion Outcome 1: Communities become more peaceful, safe and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.							Operation demonstrates evidence of addressing the specific needs to ensure equitable access to disaster response (Target: Yes)														
	Protection, Gender & Inclusion Output 1.1: Programmes and operations ensure safe and equitable provision of basic services, considering different needs based on gender and other diversity factors.							# of assessment of specific needs conducted as per minimum standards commitments (Target: 1)														
	Activities planned Month							1	2	3	4	5	6									
AP031	Support sectoral teams to include measures to address vulnerabilities specific to gender and diversity factors (including people with disabilities) in their planning																					

AP031	Sensitization of all staff and volunteers in sector-specific minimum standards for PGI in emergencies																	
AP031	Ensure collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated data																	
AP031	Sensitization of response teams on code of conduct, child protection policy, and PSEA policy																	

	<p>Migration</p> <p>People targeted: 43,116</p> <p>Male: 21,645</p> <p>Female: 21,471</p> <p>Requirements (CHF): 2,939</p>
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Needs analysis: The IRCS will be supported by the IFRC MENA in analyzing and assessing the influence and the consequences of the drought and climate change as a driver of internal and external population movement. At the same time, the IFRC and the IRCS will work on a report for sharing lessons learned and best practices related to the response activities. The report will be shared with global fora such as the RCRC Migration Lab and the Global Migration Taskforce.

Population to be assisted: Drought and climate change affected populations will be assessed in three targeted governorates I) Ninwa, ii) Diyala and iii) Basra.

Program standards/benchmarks: The activities will seek to meet Sphere standards and will be aligned with the IFRC Global Migration Strategy 2018-2022 and the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement (2009).

P&B Output Code	Migration Outcome 1: National Societies are able to engage with migrants, displaced persons and host communities to more effectively assess, understand and respond to their priority needs.	<i>The operation demonstrates the needs analysis of migrants, displaced persons, and host communities to identify their priorities (Target: Yes)</i>																
	Migration Output 1.1: The IFRC coordinates, facilitates and provides National Societies with support, appropriate training, advice, and clear direction to guide their engagement in the field of migration and displacement, including in line with the targets and commitments of the IFRC Global Migration Strategy and other Movement frameworks.	<i># of assessment conducted to identify the drought and climate change affected population (Target: 1)</i>																
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6											
AP036	IFRC supporting IRCS in analyzing and assessing consequences of drought in terms of internal and external population movements related to climate change																	

Strategies for Implementation

Requirements (CHF): 41,152

P&B Output Code	S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform	# of NS governorates branches that are well functioning (in the operation) (Target: 3)															
	Output S1.1.4: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected	# of insured volunteers engaged in the operation (Target: 60)															
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6										
AP040	Ensure that volunteers are insured																
P&B Output Code	Output S3.1.2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.	# of post-distribution monitoring exercise (Target: 3) # of a multi-sectoral needs assessment conducted for drought (Target: 1) # of lessons learned workshop conducted (Target: 1)															
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6										
AP055	Conduct post-distribution monitoring																
AP055	Conduct multi-sectoral needs assessment in drought-affected governorates																
AP055	Conduct an end-of-operation lesson learned workshop																
P&B Output Code	Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders	% of compliance to IFRC financial standards (Target: 100%)															
	Activities planned Month	1	2	3	4	5	6										
AP064	Compliance with financial procedures and reporting requirements and standards																
P&B Output Code	Outcome S2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured	Effective and coordinated international disaster response ensured. (Target: Yes)															
	Output S2.1.1: Effective and respected surge capacity mechanism is maintained.	# of expert members deployed (Target: 1) # of surge missions (Target: 1)															
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP046	Deployment to support the DREF operation																

Funding Requirements

The overall budget allocated for this DREF operation is CHF **680,569** as detailed in below budget.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

*all amounts in
Swiss Francs
(CHF)*

DREF OPERATION

MDRIQ013-Iraq Droughts

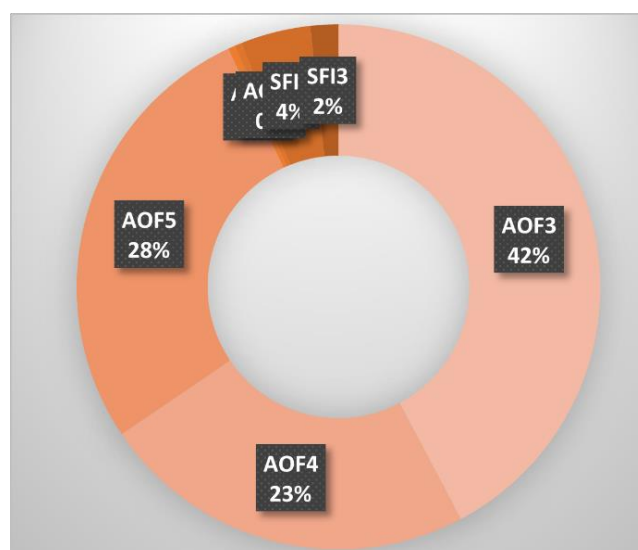
29/08/2021

Budget by Resource

Budget Group	Budget
Food	124,200
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	151,800
Medical & First Aid	115,000
Cash Disbursement	126,960
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	517,960
Distribution & Monitoring	8,280
Logistics, Transport & Storage	8,280
National Society Staff	18,400
Volunteers	9,200
Personnel	27,600
Workshops & Training	77,280
Workshops & Training	77,280
Travel	3,312
Information & Public Relations	2,760
Financial Charges	1,840
General Expenditure	7,912
DIRECT COSTS	639,032
INDIRECT COSTS	41,537
TOTAL BUDGET	680,569

Budget by Area of Intervention

AOF1	Disaster Risk Reduction	
AOF2	Shelter	
AOF3	Livelihoods and Basic Needs	287,669
AOF4	Health	158,336
AOF5	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	187,534
AOF6	Protection, Gender and Inclusion	2,939
AOF7	Migration	2,939
SFI1	Strengthen National Societies	29,394
SFI2	Effective International Disaster Management	
SFI3	Influence others as leading strategic partners	11,758
SFI4	Ensure a strong IFRC	
TOTAL		680,569



Reference documents

Click here for:

- Previous Appeals and updates
- Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote social inclusion
and a culture of
non-violence and peace.