

More Than Half Of Iraq's Population At Risk Of Food Insecurity - Government - WFP Analysis

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BAGHDAD – More than half of Iraqi families are at risk of food insecurity and can no longer absorb any further shocks such as conflict or increases in basic food prices, a joint WFP-Iraqi Government food security report said today.

The report, one of the most robust technical food security studies ever conducted in Iraq, warns of unprecedented levels of vulnerability and provides key recommendations to avoid a hunger crisis in the country.

“The Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis should guide the work of the government, policy makers, and humanitarians across the country to improve the food security and nutrition status of every Iraqi so that no one is left behind,” said Sally Haydock, WFP Representative and Country Director in Iraq.

The study, which was conducted prior to the recent offensive in Mosul and does not capture the food security situation among people fleeing these conflict areas, found that 2.5 percent of Iraqis are already food insecure – a level of need that requires support. Almost 75 percent of children under the age of 15 are working to help their families to put food on the table rather than going to school.

Data collection was conducted hand-in-hand with the Government of Iraq and concluded in 2016. More than 20,000 Iraqi families were surveyed in urban and rural areas, including people who were internally displaced and those living in their homes.

The analysis found that 53 percent of residents and 66 percent of internally displaced people are vulnerable to food insecurity. The prevalence of food insecurity was twice as high among internally displaced families compared to those remaining in their homes. The highest concentration of food insecure families was found in the southern portion of the country, particularly in northern Muthanna and portions of Salah al-Deen.

The recommendations of the study, focused on improving nutrition awareness, access to education, especially for girls, social safety nets and livelihoods in rural areas, will be used by WFP and the Government of Iraq to work towards the objective of achieving the Zero Hunger Sustainable Development Goal and will provide the basis for five to ten years of strategic development planning.

WFP has been operating in Iraq since 1968, providing emergency food assistance during crises as well as investing in development such as school meals, nutrition support for babies, pregnant and nursing mothers, tree planting, and assisting the government with technical capacity building and reform of the Public Distribution System.

Since June 2014, more than three million Iraqis have been displaced by conflict. In coordination with the government, WFP provides monthly food assistance to 1.5 million of the most vulnerable displaced people in all 18 governorates through a cash assistance programme and monthly family rations.

WFP urgently requires US\$113 million to provide full monthly food rations and cash-based assistance to cover the needs of 1.5 million vulnerable Iraqis until the end of September 2017.



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