



# Iraq and FAO

*Partnering to strengthen recovery and resilience*

FAO and Iraq have had a significant history of cooperation since the country joined the Organization in 1945. Assistance has targeted a wide range of areas, including emergency and rehabilitation, and has proved to be very successful in establishing agricultural research and extension institutes. Support has also included the provision of technical expertise and capacity building, as well as essential food and agricultural inputs, especially during difficult years marked by economic sanctions and war.

## **40** CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN IRAQ

Established in 1979, the FAO Representation in Iraq is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary.

### Working to end hunger

FAO-Iraq has conducted a number of workshops for the Iraqi National Food Security Committee with the objective to achieve food security and improve nutrition.

The trainings focused on strengthening the members' understanding of food security concepts, approaches, methodologies, survey instruments and indicators to measure food insecurity in the country. Additionally, the workshops covered theory and practice of national early warning systems and its implications for future needs in capacity development. As a result, the Committee adopted a Road Map as a plan for collaborative action for improving coordination among main stakeholders to address hunger and malnutrition to end hunger in Iraq.

### Matching FAO's expertise to Iraq's development priorities

FAO assistance in Iraq is shaped by the 2018-2022 Country Programming Framework (CPF), which is centred on three priority areas:

- Resilience and restoration of agricultural livelihoods in regained areas of the country
- Restoration of degraded agricultural land and higher productivity of water resources
- Increased, sustainable agricultural productivity by smallholders for higher food security and nutrition levels

The new CPF for Iraq (2018-2022) is guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations common system programming in Iraq and is fully in line with the FAO's Regional priorities outlined in the three Regional Initiatives for the Near East and North Africa Region.

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Photo: The National Food Security Committee (NFSC) training for representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Water resources, Planning, Health and environment, and Trade. Baghdad, Iraq, December 2017.

## Recovery and resilience following liberation

The Recovery and Resilience Plan strategy is based on objectives set out in Iraq's National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2022. The Strategy will support the Government to strengthen the policy and regulatory frameworks for private investment, public services reforms in the banking sector and anti-corruption mechanisms.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Iraq is providing technical assistance to support the revitalization of the agriculture sector, promote effective management of natural resources, and clear munitions and mines in arable land. In addition, the UNCT helps revitalize small-scale industries and encourages new sectors that meet market demand and create job opportunities. It works to engage the local community and local authorities to ensure local ownership and sustainable results.

FAO will provide the necessary support to improve the agriculture sector by restoring agricultural systems, increasing agricultural growth and generating employment opportunities. Moreover, FAO will support the Government in reforming the sector, through the restoration and replacement of infrastructure and equipment in rural areas, the rehabilitation of water networks for human and livestock consumption, and irrigation water for grain, vegetable and fruit production.

## Reviving the agriculture sector in the Kurdistan Region

The Kurdistan Region is indirectly affected by the conflict due to the influx of internally displaced people (IDPs) from the conflict areas and a significant number of Syrian refugees, putting more pressure on existing resources. The current instability in the region thus makes it even more important to increase levels of self-sufficiency. While the region might be self-sufficient in some commodities, or even producing surpluses, the agriculture sector lacks diversity and production is not competitive.

FAO is currently leading a large-scale macro-economic assessment of the region's agricultural sector. The results of the study will provide useful information for planning and policy-making. By examining the needs at the regional level, FAO can support the formulation of a comprehensive development programme and promote resource mobilization.

This study will also help to assess the status of the agricultural livelihood subsectors, including crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, as well as forestry resources in rural communities. Additionally, it will highlight the necessary value chains for agricultural products, together with constraints and needs, and propose relevant interventions. The study is expected to lead to programmes designed to diversify the local economy and increase communities' resilience to threats and crises, while also creating employment.

## Providing humanitarian assistance while promoting food security

Today, Iraq's food security challenges are multifaceted. The conflict has created localized and transient food shortages. There is also a growing set of longer-term issues such as unfavourable agro-climatic conditions, uneven domestic cereals production, disruptions in Iraq's Public Distribution System, and adverse agricultural investment policies. Much of this has contributed to an increase in migration, food prices and unemployment, as well as food insecurity for households.

*"We will not improve nutrition without food security. We will not improve food security without improved diets."*

**José Graziano da Silva**  
FAO Director-General

In newly liberated areas, people continue to rely upon humanitarian aid, but markets have once again become the main source of food. While markets in accessible areas have resumed operation and prices have decreased and stabilized, people have limited purchasing power. This leads to the widespread use of negative coping mechanisms, including the purchasing of food on credit.

In order to address these challenges, FAO is focusing on resilience-building activities for vulnerable households. The objective is to promote the recovery of livelihood, diversify food production and contribute to restoring the functionality of markets. Support is provided for the adoption of improved production systems and access to markets for the crop, livestock and fisheries sectors, in addition to assistance to households to enhance nutrition knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, FAO is supporting animal husbandry and health services through the training of extension service practitioners and the provision of essential vaccines, restocking of animals and improved processing of animal products. This is achieved through awareness-raising.

