



Iraq

Strengthening the Capacity of National, Regional and Local Actors to Respond to Climate-Related Security Risks

Background information

Iraq faces growing pressures on its natural resources due to intensified droughts, soil degradation, and population growth, contributing to rural-to-urban migration and increasing demand for water and land. This has put strain on basic services and governance, particularly in urban areas adjusting to displaced populations. Vulnerable groups, including women and youth, face increased challenges, such as limited economic opportunities and social instability. While climate adaptation efforts are underway, there remain opportunities to strengthen approaches to mobility, displacement, and conflict sensitivity in policy and planning. A comprehensive, collaborative strategy can support national and local stakeholders to navigate the interconnected challenges of climate change, development, and stability, fostering more resilient communities.

Goals and objectives

The programme's main objective is to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Iraq, regional authorities, and local communities to effectively address climate-related security risks through a human-security approach, fostering the integration of climate-displaced persons. Key objectives include: (i) conducting a human security risk assessment on climate change to inform a national framework; (ii) translating this framework into localized action plans for sustainable integration; and (iii) improving conditions in affected communities through community-led planning, enhanced livelihoods, and infrastructure rehabilitation.



DURATION

February 2023– April 2025



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

IOM, WFP



OTHER KEY PARTNERS

Government of Iraq (GoI) and regional authorities



BENEFICIARIES

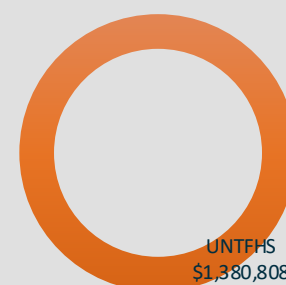
Community members, the Government of Iraq, provincial and municipal authorities, and other key actors



TOTAL BUDGET

US\$ 1,380,808

POOLING OF RESOURCES



Beneficiaries

The programme directly benefits over 1,700 individuals, the Government of Iraq, provincial and municipal authorities, CSOs, community leaders, vulnerable populations, and private sector actors. Additionally, it indirectly supports local community members in Thi-Qar and other governorates, with a particular focus on those displaced by climate-related factors.

Applying the Human Security approach

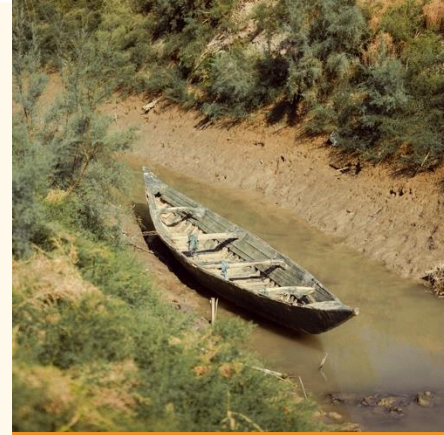
The human security approach provides a powerful framework for analyzing interconnected risks, addressing both immediate challenges and their underlying causes. Through the human security lens, the programme examines the complex links between climate change, water scarcity, displacement, and social tensions in Iraq. By combining diverse datasets with insights from community consultations, it identifies vulnerabilities at multiple levels, helping to shape proactive solutions that foster long-term stability in Iraq's dynamic context.

By working closely with local partners, the programme conducts perception surveys and workshops with displaced and host communities to explore stigmatization, vulnerabilities, gender dynamics, and access to services. This direct engagement fosters a deeper understanding of the realities on the ground, ensuring that community priorities are reflected in policymaking. The outcome is the development of localized action plans that enhance social cohesion, strengthen conflict resolution, and address policy gaps related to displacement at both national and local levels. This approach ensures that all dimensions of vulnerability are considered, creating a more holistic and sustainable response to Iraq's climate and displacement challenges.

The programme places a strong emphasis on building the capacity of national and local officials to respond effectively to climate-related risks. Through targeted workshops and training sessions, it enhances technical expertise and raises awareness of the broader climate-security-migration nexus. At the national level, working groups enable government actors to analyze and respond to climate-induced threats. At the regional level, authorities are trained to develop strategies for sustainably integrating displaced populations into local communities. This multi-level approach strengthens both technical capabilities and decision-making, ensuring that leaders are prepared to address complex, multifaceted challenges.

Achievements Phase I

- The programme successfully developed and implemented a climate-informed and migration-sensitive Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Directorate of Health in Thi-Qar. Through training approximately 200 health workers, the programme enhanced local capacity to address climate-related health risks, such as outbreaks of Congo Crimean Hemorrhagic Fever. These health workers received training in outbreak detection and response strategies, strengthening the region's ability to prevent and manage climate-related health challenges. In addition, the programme supported the distribution of essential medical and non-medical supplies, bolstering community resilience and reinforcing public health security in vulnerable areas, while helping to reduce health-related displacement risks.
- The programme also played a key role in identifying climate-related conflict vulnerabilities and strengthening local mediation mechanisms. By engaging community leaders, tribal representatives, and local authorities in conflict resolution dialogues, the programme supported the development of a Climate Mediation Handbook, which outlines practical strategies for addressing disputes, particularly those related to scarce resources such as water. Community-based mediation groups were also established to help manage climate-induced resource competition, enhancing local capacities for conflict prevention, reducing displacement pressures, and promoting social cohesion through inclusive, participatory governance.
- In parallel, the programme advanced climate adaptation by implementing sustainable livelihood initiatives and rehabilitating critical community infrastructure. Through Business Support Packages, cash-for-work activities, and the promotion of climate-smart agricultural practices, it created economic opportunities for at-risk communities. The rehabilitation of water infrastructure further ensured reliable access to clean water, easing migration pressures linked to resource scarcity. Taken together, these efforts have strengthened both economic and environmental resilience, while enabling communities to adapt to climate change in a sustainable way, reducing the need for forced migration.



www.un.org/humansecurity



humansecurity@un.org



[@UNHumanSecurity](https://twitter.com/UNHumanSecurity)



[@UNTFHS](https://www.facebook.com/UNTFHS)



United Nations Trust Fund
for Human Security

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.