

Annual Results Report

2025

Iraq

Acknowledgements

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Contact us

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Note:

The baseline values presented in this document reflect previous year's progress when available. If such data is not available, strategy baseline values are used instead.

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Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

As of end 2025, Iraq hosted around 346,000 refugees and asylum seekers, including 308,000 Syrians, nearly 80% of whom lived in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The country also hosted about 102,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) across 20 camps.

Following the fall of the Syrian regime in late 2024, approximately 7,000 Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR returned in 2025, while the majority remained reluctant to do so. Intentions to return within 12 months declined from 12% in January to 4% in June and 2% in December, according to UNHCR regional intention surveys, highlighting the continued need to support Syrian refugees and advance their inclusion in national systems and public services.

UNHCR operations in 2025 were significantly affected by funding reductions. Several protection activities were phased out mid-year, including child protection, gender-based violence prevention and response, community centres, and mental health and psychosocial support, earlier than planned under UNHCR's 2025–2029 strategy. Basic needs cash assistance was paused in December pending new funding, and UNHCR consolidated its footprint to the country office and four registration centres.

Progress on refugee inclusion continued through preparatory work on the UNHCR–World Bank Dohuk cash pilot and the planned inclusion of a refugee module in the Iraqi Household Socioeconomic Survey in 2026. National elections were held in November 2025, following Kurdistan Region elections in October 2024, with government formation ongoing at year end. Durable solutions for IDPs remained limited, with only 1,500 families returning from camps, while the UNSDCF (2025–2029) was signed by the Government.

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

Refugees and asylum seekers have access to and enjoy protection in Iraq.

Population Type	Indicator	
	Baseline	Actual (2025)
1.1 Proportion of people seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	87.12%	89.02%
1.2 Proportion of people who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0.00%	2.98%

UNHCR supported Iraqi authorities in strengthening their asylum policies and legal frameworks. UNHCR provided technical support on the draft refugee law, aiming to set the foundation for a quality asylum system aligned with international standards. Additionally, UNHCR offered technical assistance on the implementation of the Administrative Instructions (AIs) to regulate the management of asylum affairs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, while advocating at governorate and regional levels to promote effective and harmonized implementation of procedures and right.

UNHCR continued registering refugees and asylum-seekers in Iraq, recording a total of 29,676 new asylum-seekers and issuing UNHCR certificates, which enabled refugees and asylum-seekers to obtain or renew government-issued documents. With UNHCR's technical support, the federal Ministry of Interior issued 8,839 PC-MOI cards, bringing refugees and asylum seekers with government issued documentation in Central, South, Kirkuk and Ninewa Governorates to 35% of those registered with UNHCR. Following 2024 advocacy, PC-MOI started registering Syrian asylum-seekers who entered Iraq after 2019 and Sudanese asylum seekers who had long resided in Iraq or recently arrived due to conflict. This improved access to asylum resulted in the highest rate of government registration since the UNHCR PC-MOI partnership began in 2017.

UNHCR continued legal interventions to secure the release of asylum-seekers detained for residency-related violations with advocacy toward courts and administrative bodies, reinforcing protection principles and contributing to reduced risks of refoulement. These interventions were complemented by broader advocacy to strengthen laws, policies, and institutional practices in line with international standards. UNHCR also provided protection services to vulnerable refugees, including children at risk and survivors of violence, until June 2026, with a focus on refugee inclusion in public services from mid-year

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to solutions primarily through inclusion in public services and access to economic opportunities.

Population Type	Indicator	
	Baseline	Actual (2025)
4.1 Number of refugees who voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	2,749	6,976
4.2a Number of people who departed on resettlement		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	1,082	1,254
4.2b Number of people who departed through complementary pathways		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	267	165
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed		

Refugees and Asylum-seekers	17,673	29,066
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UNHCR continued to support refugee access to public services in Iraq. Access to public health services remained inclusive and on par with Iraqi nationals. Support to the Kurdistan Regional Government's refugee education integration policy continued, including school construction. Over 50,000 refugee children were enrolled in public primary schools (Grades 1–7) in the 2025–26 academic year, maintaining the 70% enrolment rate achieved in 2024. Due to funding constraints, language classes and informal education ended mid-year, while 700 refugee teachers remained employed in public schools.

Although refugees and asylum-seekers are permitted to work, unemployment remained high, particularly among women, with most engaged in informal employment under low wages and limited protection. UNHCR supported policy dialogue on employment and financial inclusion with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), GiZ and ILO. In collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), UNHCR supported an aggregation hub in Faida, Dohuk, now managed by the Directorate of Agriculture to improve access to higher-value markets.

Under the PROSPECTS partnership, UNHCR worked with MoLSA, UNICEF and the World Bank to advance refugee inclusion in social protection systems in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In 2025, inclusive guidelines accommodating refugee documentation were adopted, and partners agreed on registration and eligibility. The initiative aims to include up to 600 refugee households in Dohuk in the Social Safety Net (SSN). UNHCR also supported a refugee annex to the Iraqi Household Socio-Economic Survey with the World Bank and the Kurdistan Regional Statistical Office.

UNHCR continued to manage nine refugee camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, hosting 27% of refugees, through the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre under the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of Interior, and supported 20 IDP camps while advocating durable solutions

Other Core Impact Indicators

Country	Population Type	Baseline	Actual(2025)
2.2 Proportion of people residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities			
Iraq	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	69.44%	69.44%
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services			
Iraq	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%
3.1 Proportion of people who have the right to decent work			
Iraq	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	83.10%	91.22%
3.2a Proportion of children and young people enrolled in primary education			
Iraq	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	84.63%	70.00%
3.2b Proportion of children and young people enrolled in secondary education			
Iraq	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	45.49%	31.00%

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

Refugees and asylum seekers in 2025 continued to face movement restrictions, as government documentation issued in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq was not recognized by federal authorities. Holders of KRI issued documentation (PIC cards) remained at risk of detention, return to KRI, or deportation when travelling to central and southern governorates, including Kirkuk and Ninewa, requiring sustained UNHCR

legal assistance. Some nationalities, notably Afghans, also continued to face barriers to registration with UNHCR or local authorities in KRI.

Significant funding reductions resulted in the mid-year phase out of child protection, GBV, MHPSS, and community-based services delivered through UNHCR funded partners. UNHCR prioritized advocacy for refugee access to public services. While refugees are, in principle, entitled to these services access and quality varied considerably depending on local availability. Fiscal disputes between federal and regional authorities, combined with insufficient allocations to key ministries, further constrained service delivery. UNHCR engaged extensively with federal and regional counterparts to establish coordinated procedures for the voluntary return of Syrian refugees. Progress remained slow due to complex administrative requirements, with implementation expected in 2026.

Progress on durable solutions for IDPs remained limited, with only approximately 1,500 families departing camps to return to their areas of origin. Persistent safety and security concerns—particularly for Ezidi communities in Sinjar—alongside limited services and assistance, remained major barriers. Some previously returned IDPs undertook reverse movements for the same reasons. Political decisions required to address core obstacles remained outstanding. Concurrently, increased returns of Iraqi nationals from northeast Syria placed additional strain on civil documentation systems, leading some individuals to leave Al Amal Centre without documentation.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

UNHCR strengthened strategic partnerships to advance refugee inclusion and core protection objectives in Iraq. In Baghdad, engagement with the Permanent Committee of the Ministry of Interior remained central to improving the protection environment through policy and legal dialogue and expanded access to government-issued registration and documentation, alongside increased recognition of UNHCR's mandate by the Ministry of Planning. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, cooperation with the Ministry of Education continued under the refugee education integration policy, while collaboration with the Ministry of Planning expanded through preparatory work on a joint socioeconomic survey with the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office and the World Bank. Engagement with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs focused on inclusive access to protection and social protection systems, including progress toward a pilot for refugee inclusion in the Social Safety Net. Partnerships with GIZ and ILO supported policy dialogue on employment and financial inclusion. Cooperation with the KRG Mol and the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre remained critical for camp management, complemented by outreach to municipalities on camp transition.

UNHCR reinforced collaboration under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2025–2029, including leadership on implementing the UN Common Pledge 2.0 on refugee inclusion. Through the Prospects partnership with UNICEF, UNHCR supported the shift toward government-led protection systems, while work with ILO advanced financial inclusion engagement with the Central Bank of Iraq. Partnerships with the International Trade Centre and the World Bank focused on livelihoods, social protection, and economic opportunities, particularly for women. UNHCR remained active in durable solutions coordination and, through joint reporting with IOM, strengthened engagement with bilateral partners, providing reliable analysis on IDP conditions and return trends.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

Quality registration and documentation is accessible to asylum-seekers and refugees in Iraq.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
1.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum seekers registered on an individual basis			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	96.34%	100.00%	89.02%
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	88.31%	100.00%	86.46%
1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	88.60%	100.00%	79.07%

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator	
	Actual (2025)	
01.1.1 Number of people registered on an individual basis		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	29,676	
01.2.1 Number of people supported to obtain civil status, identity or legal status documentation		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	29,066	

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, UNHCR registered 29,676 individuals in Iraq, providing them documents that facilitate identification, protection against arbitrary arrest, detention, and refoulement and enable them to apply for government asylum procedures. The majority (70%) were Syrians (21,036), followed by Afghans (7,316), Iranians (335), Sudanese (269), Turkish nationals (263), Palestinians (256). UNHCR also renewed the registration for 144,456 individuals, verifying their data, updating it and issuing new certificates. Of the new UNHCR certificates issued, 85 per cent were valid for two years and 15 per cent for one year.

The UNHCR certificate enabled refugees and asylum-seekers to obtain or renew government-issued residency documents, namely the card issued by the Permanent Committee on Asylum Affairs (PC-MOI Card) and the Personal Identification Card (PIC) issued in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

UNHCR continued its partnership with the Ministry of Interior's Permanent Committee for Refugees (PC-MOI) to issue this documentation. The issuance of new PC-MOI ID cards was carried out for refugees and asylum-seekers of all nationalities. UNHCR's technical support contributed to PC-MOI issuing ID

documents for 8,839 refugees and asylum-seekers across Iraq, representing a 75% increase compared with the number of ID cards issued in 2024 (5,041). Within this, PC-MOI newly registered 4,745 new asylum-seekers and refugees. Furthermore, consultation with PC-MOI toward the full government owned registration and documentation system started in 2025, which led to the agreement on joint registration procedure which is expected to further facilitate access to PC-MOI registration and documentation.

UNHCR through its legal partners provided legal assistance covering overall 14,851 individuals. Legal awareness sessions were held through the first six months and reached 3,219 individuals while other 11,632 benefited from legal counselling and representation. During the year, UNHCR and partners were made aware of the arrest and detention of 3,134 refugees and asylum-seekers on immigration-related charges, mostly Syrians. In response, UNHCR and partners provided targeted legal assistance and engaged with relevant authorities to advocate for their release and to prevent refoulement. As a result, 1,867 of detained refugees and asylum-seekers were released upon UNHCR and partners' interventions. Throughout 2025, UNHCR was made aware of 51 incidents of deportation, affecting 249 individuals across Iraq, which is less number of people deported comparing to 2024. Due to the advocacy and legal support provided by UNHCR and its legal partners, successful interventions in 1,647 cases led to prevention of deportation.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

In Iraq, legislation, policies, and procedures on refugees and asylum-seekers are in accordance with international norms and standards.

National identification documents are accessible and issued to Iraqi nationals returning from NES

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
3.1 Extent national legal framework is in line with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol			
None	Not yet aligned	Broadly aligned	Not yet aligned
3.2 Extent national legal framework is in line with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness			
None	Not yet aligned	Broadly aligned	Not yet aligned

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
03.1.1 UNHCR has engaged in legislative and judicial processes to strengthen laws and policies for the protection of refugees, IDPs, returnees and stateless people and/or the reduction and prevention of statelessness	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Yes

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, UNHCR continued to play a pivotal role in supporting the Government of Iraq to strengthen its national asylum system and protection framework in line with international refugee law and standards. UNHCR engaged with the State Council and the Refugee Law Drafting Committee with the objective that the draft legislation reflects international refugee law principles and is operationally viable within the Iraqi legal system. UNHCR's engagement aimed to strengthen the Refugee Law with the objective that key

protection considerations were reflected in the version submitted to the State Council. Inputs gathered during a high-level workshop in September 2025, along with subsequent discussions involving federal and KRG counterparts, resulted in several recommendations being incorporated and the draft law further refined ahead of its finalization.

UNHCR participated in inter-ministerial dialogue on Iraq's potential accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention. These discussions reflect a growing openness among Iraqi authorities to engage with international refugee instruments and to explore pathways for gradual alignment with global protection frameworks.

Judicial engagement and technical support remained a strategic priority in 2025, aiming at protection from refoulement and safeguarding due process for refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR maintained bilateral engagement with the Supreme Judicial Council and local courts throughout the year. In December, UNHCR and PCMOI conducted comprehensive training for Judicial Institute students. One achievement in 2025 was the advancement of use of the Verify+ through the endorsement of a referral mechanism to prevent the detention and deportation of refugees and asylum-seekers arrested on immigration-related charges. Working closely with PCMOI, Residency Directorates, and law enforcement authorities, UNHCR promoted the use of Verify+, a tool enabling real-time verification of UNHCR documentation through a series of workshops.

UNHCR, through its implementing partner, provided legal assistance for civil documentation for Iraqi nationals in Al Amal. UNHCR conducted legal assessments to assess civil documentation needs and to facilitate case referral amongst the legal actors. Out of the total of 9,416 individuals assessed in 2025, almost all were missing at least one core civil document, primarily the National Unified ID Card (UID). UNHCR prioritized advocacy at the levels of Ninewa Civil Affairs Directorate and at national level jointly through the Technical Working Group to address barriers to issuance. As a result, 2025 saw a significant increase in total NUID issuance in 2025 (3,773) compared to 2024 (0) (out of which 2,450 of which were secured through UNHCR and INTERSOS's support). In addition, UNHCR has helped secure 108 marriage certificates, 239 proofs of kinship, three proof of births, and one birth certificate for complex returnee cases, the majority of which require legal assistance with court procedures

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

Protection services in the public system are accessible to refugees and asylum seekers with specific needs.

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
04.1.1 Number of people who benefitted from specialized GBV programmes	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	1,870

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Between January and June 2025, prior to the accelerated phase-out of UNHCR supported services to respond to and prevent gender-based violence (GBV), 555 individuals received GBV case management support. During the same period, 29 GBV cases were formally referred to government services and 175 cases were referred to legal service providers. UNHCR and partners also trained 131 government staff to help strengthen their ability to respond to GBV. With the objective that people could continue accessing help after UNHCR's phase-out of direct/parallel GBV service provision, referral pathways to public protection services were established in the first half of the year.

In June 2025, UNHCR completed an accelerated transition from direct GBV case management to refugee inclusion approach into public protection systems, consistent with the 2025–2029 strategic direction. This

included ending partner-led protection service delivery and phasing out parallel humanitarian case management, reinforcing the goal of building sustainable and government owned response mechanism.

In a similar manner, child protection services were delivered through partners during January-June prior to the accelerated phase out and transition to refugee inclusion approach. Up to June 2025, 675 children and caregivers received child protection services in 2025, including 326 girls and boys supported through individual case management. A total of 1,704 children participated in structured child protection activities, while 50 cases were referred to specialized services. One Best Interests Determination (BID) was conducted during the reporting period. Capacity strengthening included training 24 government staff and providing coaching to 34 personnel to support the gradual transfer of responsibilities to public authorities.

While gaps in access to protection services both for child protection and response to gender-based violence remained at the end of 2025, these challenges were systemic and affected all populations rather than disproportionately impacting refugees and asylum-seekers. As a result, UNHCR refocused its efforts on joint advocacy and system strengthening with key UN partners, including UNICEF and UNFPA.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment

Refugee communities are supported to proactively engage in addressing matters of their concern.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Extensive	Limited	Limited

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
07.1.1 Number of people consulted through Participatory Assessments	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	379
07.2.1 Number of people who used UNHCR- supported feedback & response mechanisms to voice their needs/ concerns/feedback	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	21,682
07.3.1 Number of people who received protection services	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	174,132

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, following the phase-out of Community-Based Protection (CBP) partners in June, UNHCR restructured its community engagement approach by consolidating communication into a centralized model combining one-way and two-way channels to maintain accountability to affected populations. During this transition, 16 Community Support Centres (7 in refugee camps, 3 in IDP camps, and 6 in urban areas) were closed.

In July 2025, UNHCR introduced WhatsApp groups to complement the existing Help Page and “Yalla

Sawa” Facebook page. The WhatsApp groups were established to provide direct, verified updates to refugees in a context of reduced field presence and increased reliance on digital communication.

The UNHCR Unified Helpline, launched in July 2025, became the primary two-way communication channel between refugees and UNHCR. Between January and December 2025, 21,682 individuals used UNHCR-supported feedback and response mechanisms across previous mechanisms (Jan-Jun 2025) and newly centralized platforms (from July 2025). Helpline usage increased steadily after the launch of the UNHCR Unified Helpline in July, with 1,757 users in July, 2,092 in August, 2,266 in September, and 3,402 in October, indicating growing community reliance on this centralized communication platform.

The Helpline provides orientation on UNHCR procedures and services, identifies protection cases, refers legal cases to legal partners, guides refugees toward available public services, and receives feedback and complaints. It serves as the main entry point for individualized counselling and referral.

In addition, 379 refugees were consulted in 2025 through participatory discussions to inform protection analysis and operational positioning. Between January and June, 972 community members were reached through GBV prevention awareness initiatives.

In December 2025, UNHCR rolled out My Services portal, a new corporate tool piloted in Iraq, aiming to improve refugees’ access to UNHCR and its services, have more control of their personal data, request and manage their appointments and share feedback with UNHCR or submit complaints. Preparatory work included user testing by refugees utilizing an age, gender and diversity approach with overall positive feedback received from refugees highlighting the ease of utilizing the tool, access to their UNHCR records and direct communication with UNHCR. In parallel, UNHCR established a mechanism through the existing help line operated by an UNHCR partner for those who might face accessibility issues to ensure they have timely access to registration services.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

Vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers are supported to cover their basic needs.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	46.91%	55.00%	17.75%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	98.96%	100.00%	100.00%

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
08.1.1 Number of people who received cash assistance	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	46,820

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, UNHCR continued providing Cash for Basic Needs to assist the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers living outside the refugee camps in Iraq to meet their basic needs, such as paying rent, buying food, and meeting other essential household expenses. A total of 8,712 households (46,066 individuals) received Cash for Basic Needs in 2025, of which 5,215 households (29,455 individuals) received it for 6 months or 8 months in 2025, while others received it for a shorter period due to funding and budget reductions, with amounts ranging from IQD 120,000 to 325,000 per month (approximately USD90-250) based on the family size. UNHCR was only able to target 15% of the urban refugees who are below the poverty line as a result of limited funding for the cash programme. Around 30% per cent of the recipients were female-headed households.

UNHCR and its partner Harikar, conducted a post-distribution monitoring (PDM) on 3 out of 4 cycles of Cash for Basic Needs in 2025, with a randomly selected sample of recipients to monitor performance and gauge the efficiency of cash delivery, impact of cash assistance on refugee families, and utilization of cash for basic needs and coping strategies. As revealed through the PDM surveys, cash assistance helped reduce stress among refugee families (40% significantly and 37% moderately reduced stress) and improved their living conditions (22% significantly and 50% moderately improved living conditions). The top spending priorities continued to be rent, food, and healthcare, followed by clothes. All respondents preferred cash over in-kind or combination of cash and in-kind assistance. Despite this, only 6% of respondents reported being able to meet more than half their basic needs, while 71% and 23% of them were able to meet half and less than half of their basic needs respectively.

As elaborated under Outcome Area 16 below, UNHCR continued to advance the Dohuk Cash Pilot, where 600 refugee households will benefit from the Social Safety Net (SSN) programme under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2026.

WFP also provided cash-based food assistance to refugees residing in camps in 2025, while UNHCR supported vulnerable refugee households living in urban areas through its Cash for Basic Needs programme. In 2025, WFP provided Cash for Food to 6,929 households (38,622 individuals), covering 35% of the total camp residents, with 30,000 IQD (USD23) per person, equivalent to 1.5 month of household's need to address the gap in ensuring food security.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

Employment and financial policies support sustainable economic inclusion for refugees and asylum seekers.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
13.1. Proportion of people with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Data not available	10.00%	0.00%
13.2. Proportion of people who self-report positive changes in their income compared to previous year			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Data not available	20.00%	0.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Across 2025 UNHCR's continued to support access to employment through advocacy and partnership building. The key exception to this was the completion of the Faida Aggregation Hub, in Dohuk, which was a project undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, the International Trade centre (ITC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The hub was inaugurated in October 2025. This new facility will support farmers from Iraqi, refugee, and internally displaced communities, developing the local agricultural sector by connecting the farmers to high-value markets, boosting quality crop production and strengthening livelihoods. The project was developed and implemented in partnership with the Dohuk Directorate of Agriculture, ensuring Government leadership across all stages. Now operational, the hub provides farmers with the tools and space to clean, sort, grade, package, and prepare produce to meet buyer standards — helping reduce post-harvest losses and ensuring fair, stable income.

Through engagement with both the Danish Refugee Council and ILO, UNHCR was able to support referral to employment opportunities for vulnerable refugees, offering a more sustainable solution than cash assistance and building more resilient households. UNHCR also continue to engage with both MoLSA KRI and GiZ on the Inclusive Employment platform, supporting detailed discussions on access to employment for refugees and highlighting opportunities for inclusive policy development. Working with UNHCR's legal unit, discussion commended with relevant Baghdad Ministries, to support a broader understanding of the rights of refugees in relation to current employment law and practice. Through the PROSPECTs partnership, UNHCR worked with partners to support access to labour market relevant skills development, boosting the employment opportunities for refugee youth.

In collaboration with ILO, UNHCR also strengthened their engagement on financial inclusion, joining several meetings with the Central Bank of Iraq to discuss inclusive policy that would support refugee access to bank accounts and to eWallets.

14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

Refugees from Syria return home voluntarily in safety and with dignity

Refugees from Syria return home voluntarily, in safety, and with dignity.

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
14.1.1 Number of people who received counselling and/or information on voluntary repatriation	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	6,976

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, 6,976 asylum-seekers and refugees spontaneously returned to Syria. Following the change of regime in Syria in December 2024, UNHCR Iraq enhanced information available to refugees on procedures and support available for those willing to return. UNHCR further continued to provide counselling, identify refugees with specific needs and close registration records at the Derabon center for those departing through Peshkhabour border (6,656). UNHCR continued to liaise with Peshkhabour border authorities on individual cases and return trends, while further coordinating with UNHCR's office in Qamishli, Syria on procedures on the Syria side of the border.

In parallel, UNHCR engaged with the Kurdistan Regional Government and PC-MoI in developing joint procedures and lifting administrative barriers to further support the return of Syrians. In June, the Kurdistan Regional Government decided to implement a 60-day waiver period for those who had accumulated overstay fines, which had been cited as one of the major barriers for Syrians who were willing to return but could not afford to pay the overstay fines. Agreement on joint procedures with PC-MoI was reached in October, while consultation with the Kurdistan Regional Government continued throughout the year.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Third country solutions are available to refugees with specific profiles.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	1,512	1,500	300

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
15.1.1 Country issues machine-readable travel documents	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	No

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the Iraq operation maintained strong resettlement delivery despite operational constraints. A total of 300 individuals (100 cases) were submitted for resettlement during the year, reflecting a balanced caseload of 158 adults and 142 minors and demonstrating consistent attention to child protection needs. The caseload remained overwhelmingly composed of Syrian refugees (95%), alongside smaller numbers of Iranians, Palestinians, and Afghans, reflecting the protection profile of refugees with the highest identified needs. Submissions under allocated quota were made to Australia, Canada, and unallocated submissions were made to Finland, New Zealand, and Norway.

Case quality and prioritization remained strong. Emergency and urgent submissions (144 individuals) represented a significant share of the total, demonstrating effective identification of acute protection risks. Women and Girls at Risk was the most common submission category (37% of cases), providing solutions to vulnerable profiles and families. Other profiles include Legal and Physical Protection Needs, Medical Needs, and Survivors of Violence and Torture.

Due to a smaller quota in 2025, pre-assessment was recalibrated to ensure thorough screening and identification of those most in need, while minimizing cases which may not have proceeded after resettlement interview. In 2025, 110 cases (321 individuals) underwent preassessment, of which 44% were able to proceed to RRF interview.

Departures increased in 2025 as resettlement countries focused on legacy processing. A total of 1,254 individuals departed to a broad range of resettlement countries, including Australia, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, France, and Norway. At end-December, 386 individuals were pending departure.

The complementary pathways programme sustained strong impact despite the absence of dedicated identification projects and reduced staffing capacity. A total of 124 cases (302 individuals) were identified.

Syrians represented the majority of identified cases (65%). Importantly, 52% of cases had active specific protection needs, demonstrating impact and solutions for vulnerable individuals. Interventions focused primarily on advocacy with multiple stakeholders, addressing logistical challenges, documentation constraints, and prioritized processing for vulnerable profiles.

Departures continued throughout 2025, with 165 individuals departing through all pathways—primarily family reunification—to 11 destination countries. With reduced capacity, focus was made on prioritizing the most vulnerable with the highest prospects of success.

In 2025, UNHCR Iraq was able to meet all annual targets despite operational staffing constraints and transitions within the team. Resettlement submissions were made throughout the year. Identified cases continued to be well received by resettlement countries, securing ongoing partnerships in 2026

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

Public services for education, health, mental health and psychosocial support are accessible for refugees and asylum-seekers.

Public services, including protection services, and employment are accessible to refugees and asylum-seekers.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
16.2 Proportion of people covered by national social protection systems			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Data not available	10.00%	0.00%

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
16.1.1. Government Social protection system is inclusive of forcibly displaced and stateless people	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Partially

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the integration of refugees into Iraqi national systems continued on a positive trajectory. UNHCR's long-standing contributions to public health and education were brought to completion, amounting to USD 2 million in public health and USD 15 million in education. During the year, UNHCR completed eight education infrastructure projects (school and classroom construction) supporting implementation of the Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) and supported the procurement of 2,000 school desks. Through education partners, 3,336 children completed non-formal education classes; 5,033 children received Kurdish language support to facilitate transition into public education; and 152 children with disabilities accessed tailored learning opportunities.

In the context of significant funding reductions in 2025, UNHCR accelerated its planned transition away from parallel mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services towards service delivery through national systems. Prior to transition in June 2025, UNHCR-supported MHPSS partners delivered 6,047 consultations, including individual counselling, psychiatric follow-up and structured psychosocial support in camp and urban settings. In addition, 293 individuals in need were referred to specialised mental health services through established referral pathways.

Advocacy to advance inclusive access to social protection was a key priority in 2025. In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (KRG), the World Bank and UNICEF, UNHCR continued engagement

on the Dohuk Cash Pilot under the PROSPECTS partnership, designed to unlock access to the social safety net system in the Kurdistan Region for up to 600 refugee households, from which refugees have been excluded since 2014. A major milestone was the development and ratification of refugee-inclusive guidelines to operationalise the system. UNHCR also engaged with UNICEF, ILO and WFP on implementation of the EU-funded USD 50 million social protection programme, advocating for refugee inclusion as an integral part of planning and implementation across Iraq.

UNHCR further strengthened multilateral partnerships to advance refugee inclusion. Commitments under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2025–2029 were updated to reflect evolving priorities and funding. Engagement with the Resident Coordinator’s Office supported promotion of the UN Common Pledge 2.0. Collaboration with ILO and GiZ advanced refugee inclusion in employment and financial policy dialogue. To support long-term access to public services, UNHCR deepened engagement with key ministries, including the Ministry of Planning in Erbil and Baghdad. Together with the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office and the World Bank, UNHCR initiated a refugee socioeconomic assessment to generate updated data for policymaking and comparative poverty analysis with the Iraqi Household Socio-Economic Survey.

Other Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Baseline	Target(2025)	Actual(2025)
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	15.63%	50.00%	3.22%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	8.30%	50.00%	1.58%

Other Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Actual (2025)
02.1.1 UNHCR has provided capacity development support to strengthen the national status determination system(s), in accordance with international standards	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Yes
05.1.1 Number of children and caregivers who received child protection services	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	2,799
06.1.1 Number of people who received legal assistance	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	14,851
10.2.1 Number of consultations in UNHCR supported mental health and psychosocial support services	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	6,047
11.1.1 Number of people who benefitted from education programming	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	60,490

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

In 2025, AGD principles were integrated across protection activities, community engagement, and the transition toward public service systems during a year of structural change. Registration data remained age and gender disaggregated, with specific needs codes—including disability, women at risk, and children at risk—supporting AGD sensitive planning.

Before the phase out of direct services in June, 555 individuals received GBV case management, and 972 community members participated in GBV prevention activities. UNHCR held structured consultations with 379 refugees to inform protection analysis, while 423 GBV survivors provided service satisfaction feedback. To strengthen child protection, UNHCR developed Iraq specific Best Interests Procedures, prioritizing child marriage and cross border referrals. Before phase out, 675 children and caregivers received support, including 326 children through individual case management; 1,704 children joined structured activities, and 50 cases were referred to specialized services.

AGD considerations guided resettlement: 49% of submissions were children, and Women and Girls at Risk represented 37% of cases. Centralized communication channels such as the UNHCR's Unified Helpline supported individualized counselling, risk identification, and community feedback

Section 3: Resources

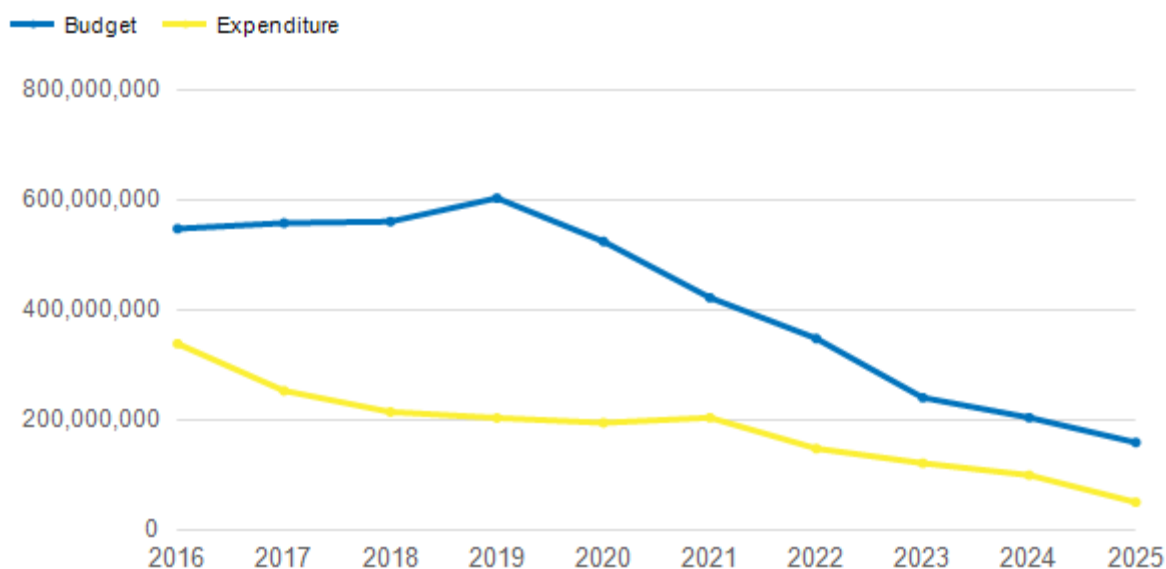
3.1 Financial Data

(Financial figures in USD)

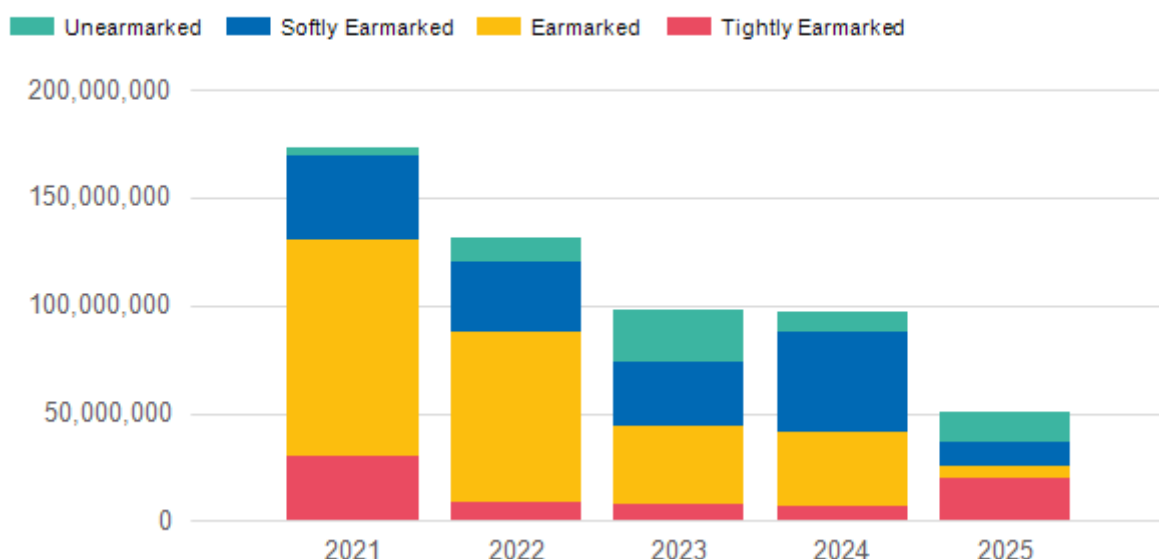
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	27,773,210	17,417,102	62.71%	17,417,101	100.00%
IA4: Solve	130,726,492	32,543,798	24.89%	32,543,798	100.00%
Total	158,499,701	49,960,900	31.52%	49,960,900	100.00%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	20,278,036	13,900,487	68.55%	13,900,487	100.00%
OA3: Policy/Law	6,450,777	2,478,991	38.43%	2,478,991	100.00%
OA4: GBV	8,205,686	3,034,366	36.98%	3,034,366	100.00%
OA7: Community	4,171,890	2,460,389	58.98%	2,460,389	100.00%
OA8: Wellbeing	75,798,929	17,287,910	22.81%	17,287,910	100.00%
OA13: Livelihood	4,251,818	183,701	4.32%	183,701	100.00%
OA14: Return	1,044,397	1,037,623	99.35%	1,037,623	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	1,672,824	577,055	34.50%	577,055	100.00%
OA16: Integrate	36,625,344	9,000,378	24.57%	9,000,378	100.00%
Total	158,499,701	49,960,900	31.52%	49,960,900	100.00%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

UNHCR Iraq was only 29 per cent funded at the end of 2025, continuing a multiyear trend of declining resources driven by both reduced humanitarian needs in Iraq and a contraction in global humanitarian financing. The sharp drop in funding between 2024 and 2025 (from over USD 100 million to USD 45 million), however, was the primary factor behind the significant mid-year cuts to UNHCR's programmes in Iraq. In light of these constraints, UNHCR Iraq remained highly reliant on unearmarked funds, with over USD 17.5 million in flexible funding enabling the operation to meet key protection needs of refugees and to continue advancing solutions-focused work.

With the adoption of the UNSDCF, Iraq continues to position itself on a development trajectory, although some humanitarian needs persist. As an upper-middle-income country with substantial oil revenues, Iraq is also perceived as having the financial capacity to meet its own obligations, despite budget allocation challenges. Combined, these factors have heightened expectations from the international community for the Government of Iraq to assume a greater role in service delivery and protection for forcibly displaced populations and has meant less funding available to UNHCR. In this context, UNHCR continued to highlight ongoing needs to the international community while simultaneously engaging with development actors.

In 2025, following a global review of priorities and reduced resources, UNHCR Iraq streamlined its presence to focus on the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national systems. Field offices were consolidated into units linked to registration centres, and staffing costs were reduced by about one third while maintaining core protection activities. UNHCR continues to prioritize technical support for law and policy, legal assistance, registration, communication with communities/community engagement and durable solutions.

Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

4.1 Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

The 2025 Annual Review and Strategic Moment of Reflection highlighted crosscutting lessons shaped by severe funding uncertainty and budget reductions. Key priorities included strengthening donor communication to better demonstrate alignment with donor agendas, expanding outreach to international organizations, and increasingly framing engagement around government-led structures. The operation emphasized the importance of maintaining strong regional analysis despite resource constraints and recommended assessing the impact of 2025 funding decisions on displaced populations. Donor trends reflected a shift away from country-specific humanitarian funding toward stabilization, returns, and migration management, requiring UNHCR to reframe core protection activities to show their relevance to these agendas, while continuing complementary engagement with traditional humanitarian donors. Operational priorities will focus on system strengthening and government-owned protection mechanisms, particularly expanding access to government-led registration and documentation, alongside continued technical support and gap-filling such as legal assistance. In camp management, progress toward local authority oversight and settlement-based approaches will be supported through camp versus non-camp analysis to strengthen advocacy for municipal inclusion and attention to urban refugees. With reduced direct engagement, Communication with Communities will become more proactive. Contingency planning for potential refugee movements from North-East Syria or Iran will be government-led, avoid parallel systems, and support urban settlement aligned with the out-of-camp policy. Delivering strategic objectives will depend on strong partnerships across the KRI and Baghdad, including engagement with PC MOI, line ministries, and MoLSA, and leveraging new survey data to advance refugee-inclusive social protection and policy reform.



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