

PROSPECTS Partnership

Iraq: Building Pathways to Inclusion and Opportunity for Forcibly Displaced People

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Country Context

Iraq continues to navigate complex displacement challenges. As of mid-2026, the country hosted more than 340,000 refugees and asylum-seekers – 88% from Syria – with 80% of this population in the Kurdistan Region. Over 70% of refugees live in urban areas, while the remaining displaced population lives in nine refugee camps. Iraq also faces significant internal displacement, with 97,000 people living in 18 camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Efforts are underway to advance a comprehensive refugee law. Refugees with government-issued documentation can access key public services including health, education, protection, and employment opportunities. Challenges remain for IDPs to attain durable solutions, with many remaining in displacement because of concerns related to security, limited access to housing, essential services, and employment in their areas of origin.



Tojan and Jana, two Syrian refugee students in Erbil, attend catch-up classes alongside other refugee and local children. © UNHCR/ Rasheed Hussein Rasheed

This fact sheet covers cumulative results from March 2019-April 2026.

PROSPECTS in Iraq

Since 2019, the PROSPECTS Partnership has united IFC, ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the World Bank under the leadership of the Netherlands, helping expand access to national systems for refugees, IDPs and host communities.

Guided by joint analysis of Iraq's legal, policy and institutional frameworks, PROSPECTS supports national partners in Iraq in promoting inclusive education and learning, access to decent jobs, documentation, and inclusive financial and social protection systems. At the same time, it provides technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of national actors and the private sector to deliver jobs and services on the ground. This dual approach ensures that both policy change and service delivery reinforce one another, maximizing long-term impact for displaced and host populations.



Strengthening Protection and Social Protection to enhance child protection, improve access to psychosocial support and ensure services for survivors of gender-based violence. PROSPECTS also works to extend Iraq's national social protection schemes to refugees and supports the government in issuing civil documentation to IDPs and returnees, enabling them to access services. PROSPECTS is also supporting the drafting and development of an updated refugee law.



Promoting Employment and Livelihoods to help create sustainable economic opportunities through institutional capacity building for national partners in developing inclusive employment policies, employment services, entrepreneurship support, financial inclusion, and job placement programmes. PROSPECTS works with the private sector to stimulate investment and expand access to decent work opportunities, and also supports social dialogue among government, employers' and workers' organizations to promote inclusive labour market governance.



Expanding Inclusive Education and Training. PROSPECTS supports the Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) launched by the Kurdistan Regional Government in 2022. The policy aims to gradually integrate Syrian refugee children into public schools. In support of this policy, PROSPECTS has facilitated the construction of new classrooms, school maintenance, teacher training, and support to non-formal education programmes. Vocational training is also linked to labour market demand, providing young people with practical skills for employment by supporting both public and private training providers.



Investing in Critical Infrastructure to rehabilitate and upgrade essential services in displacement-affected areas, including water, sanitation, schools, and health facilities. PROSPECTS also supports the management of IDP camps while continuing to advocate with authorities to find dignified and lasting solutions for those still living in camps. Outside camps, PROSPECTS is introducing the Public Works Programme (PWP), both at the federal and regional level, based on successful piloting in phase one.

Outcomes and Impact

In a country still navigating the legacies of conflict and economic fragility, PROSPECTS has shown what is possible when humanitarian and development actors work with the government. By linking protection, education, employment and infrastructure, the Partnership has helped strengthen inclusive government services in displacement-affected areas, enabling both refugees and host communities can access services, build skills and find pathways to decent jobs.

Protection and Social Protection

- **243,645 individuals** benefiting from legal support and case management services, including mental health and psychosocial support
- **3,200 households** included in a pilot of an inclusive social protection system in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Education and Training

- **573,613 children** enrolled in primary or secondary education programs
- **410,269 children** completed primary or secondary education programs
- **5,230 teachers, facilitators and TVET** trainers completed professional development training programmes
- **8,302 individuals** enrolled in technical or vocational education or skills training programs

Economic Inclusion

- **4,607 individuals** gained entrepreneurship, financial and business skills
- **6,426 new jobs** or self-employment opportunities
- **80,931 workdays** created for displaced people/host-community members through labour-intensive investments

Critical Infrastructure

- **32,250 individuals** gained access to clean water
- **97,000 IDPs** supported to live in camps while solutions are found

Note: Some activities have relied on multi-donor contributions.

Kawergosk Community Centre



Trained social workers at Kawergosk Centre lead various sessions for children in a safe and trusting environment. © UNHCR/Rasheed Hussein Rasheed

“Our main goal is to lower risks, earn the trust of families and help children grow up in a safe and stable environment. The centre is open to everyone, and we make no distinction between refugees, displaced Iraqis, or members of the host community.” – Hiwa Hussein, Head of the Kawergosk Community Centre

Hiwa oversees programmes that support vulnerable children and their families through counselling, psychosocial support and referrals to specialised services. The centre, built by UNHCR and now managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, represents an important step towards sustainable, government-led services for refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR trained government child protection workers to support the needs of refugees, while UNICEF continues to strengthen the capacity of social workers providing services to children and families. Since opening in September 2025, more than 500 women and girls and over 900 children have accessed support through the centre.