

PRESS RELEASE

Addressing needs of Iraq's most vulnerable critical for inclusive and sustainable recovery from COVID-19, new UNDP reports say

Baghdad, 7 June 2021 – Recovery strategies targeting Iraq's vulnerable populations – including women, youth and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – must be prioritized to ensure inclusive and sustainable recovery from COVID-19 in Iraq, according to two new complementary reports released today by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Both reports emanate from a study that explores the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on socio-economic status and livelihoods at the household level, with a focus on its impact on vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, and displaced communities. It compares urban and rural settings and considers impacts in both Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Original data collected and presented in the first report, *Findings of the Assessment of COVID-19's Socioeconomic Impact on Iraq's Vulnerable Populations* forms the basis for the subsequent policy report: [Impact of COVID-19 on Iraq's Vulnerable Populations](#). The latter examines policy implications of the data findings and argues that building an inclusive path forward will require establishing sustainable systems and structures, listening and responding to the voices of the vulnerable, and laying out realistic goals to enable attainment of the 2030 Agenda.

Key findings include:

- Income losses were widespread, with differences between Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, displaced vs non-displaced populations, and women and men employees.
- Daily workers were most affected by the economic downturn
- COVID-19 led to high food costs and the need for coping strategies
- While community insecurity and gender-based violence increased, community level tensions were low.
- Delayed income and loss of employment opportunities impacted households

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- Women and female-headed households reported greater impacts in some areas, such as a reduction in household income.

The reports are the sixth and seventh papers in a series released by UNDP on the impact of COVID-19 in Iraq.

“COVID-19 has, and will continue to have, long-term consequences for vulnerable Iraqis in accessing sustainable livelihoods, food security, health and education – particularly women, youth, the elderly, people living with disabilities and the displaced,” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

“As the report clearly suggests, without sufficient attention to these vulnerable communities, Iraq may not achieve long-term, equitable sustainable development and recovery, and risks undoing the progress made towards achieving Agenda 2030. This could further undermine the social contract between the State and its citizens at a time where this is of critical importance. We urge the Government of Iraq, Kurdistan Regional Government, local actors and the international community to consider the policy recommendations outlined in the report and band together and tackle this issue. As always, UNDP Iraq stands ready to support these efforts to improve the lives of all Iraqis,” adds Ms Ali Ahmad.

UNDP Iraq is grateful to UN-Habitat and IOM for its partnership and important contributions to [Findings of the Assessment of COVID-19’s Socioeconomic Impact on Iraq’s Vulnerable Population](#) and [Impact of COVID-19 on Iraq’s Vulnerable Populations](#).

Previously released papers in UNDP’s socioeconomic impact assessment series:

[Impact of COVID-19 and the Oil Crisis on Iraq’s Fragility](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 on the Iraqi Economy](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 on Social Cohesion in Iraq](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 on Social Protection in Iraq](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 on Environmental Sustainability in Iraq](#)

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