

A young girl with a bright smile is peeking through a hole in a makeshift shelter. The shelter is constructed from a grey, textured material on the left and a yellow, woven fabric on the right. The girl is wearing a red patterned garment. The background is dark, suggesting an interior space.

NRC

NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

IRAQ

NRC 2022-2025

STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent humanitarian organization that works to ensure those forced to flee are safer and can exercise their rights. NRC works in new and protracted crises across 35 countries and specializes in six areas, including food security, education, shelter, legal assistance, camp management, and WASH.

Four years from the end of active armed conflict, Iraq continues on the path to post-conflict recovery. 1.19 million Iraqis remain internally displaced with many in protracted or secondary displacement due to barriers to return or reintegration. Displacement-affected communities continue to face issues related to documentation, shelter, livelihoods, education, security, and access to basic services. In addition, 250,000 Syrian refugees reside in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq that face specific barriers to accessing decent work and education opportunities. While humanitarian needs are still present, improving self-reliance, developing resilience to future shocks, and achieving durable solutions are key priorities for NRC throughout the country.

In 2021 NRC reached

245,641 Individuals

In 2021, NRC reached 245,641 with programmes spanning Education, Shelter and Settlement, Urban Displacement and Out of Camp (UDOC), Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA), Cash Assistance and Livelihoods.

International staff: 27

National staff: 340

Budget 2021: USD 30 million

Donors: UNHCR, GIZ, UNOPS, ECHO, USAID/BHA, USAID/BPRM, DFID, DFAT, OCHA IHF, RDPP, DEVCO, EUTF, ECW, NMFA, SIDA, GAC, UNDP, SDC, KFW, BMFA, ITC

Through the following **eight objectives** for 2022 to 2025, NRC Iraq's strategy will focus on supporting both conflict and non-conflict induced displacement-affected communities, as well as those at risk of displacement:

1. Humanitarian assistance to hard-to-reach and at-risk populations

NRC will continue to work to ensure displacement affected people in Iraq receive integrated, safe, and inclusive humanitarian assistance. We will provide assistance to Iraqis and refugees experiencing protracted and secondary displacement, while also ensuring our capacity to respond to new displacement caused by localised conflict and climate change. NRC will work to provide an integrated package of assistance to address overlapping needs faced by hard-to-reach communities, namely through legal assistance, education, food security, and livelihoods.

2. Durable solutions and self-reliance for displacement-affected communities

NRC will support displacement-affected people to become self-reliant and achieve durable solutions through safe and dignified returns to areas of origin, local integration, or resettlement. Through an integrated programming approach, NRC will facilitate communities' access to civil documentation, education, and livelihoods to support in their journey towards self-reliance. We will also continue to prioritise durable solutions for hard-to-reach populations who are often underserved due to stigmatisation or located in distant villages or towns.

3. Community resilience and longer-term programming

NRC will prioritise that displacement-affected communities can both recover and be more resilient to shocks through longer-term, system-level assistance. We will ensure conflict-sensitive, community-level engagement to further develop resilience and reduce multiple overlapping vulnerabilities. This not only will build on humanitarian and durable solutions programming, but also will prioritise economic recovery and community resilience as interlinked outcomes. NRC will support the recovery of rural communities through market development approaches related to agriculture, strengthen infrastructure, and support job creation initiatives in rural and urban areas.

4. Mitigating impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities

NRC will support displacement-affected communities experiencing the impact of climate change and ineffective resource governance to adapt and minimise risks. To support durable solutions, resilience, and increase climate-change awareness and response, NRC will develop a climate-change risk mitigation plan and work with communities, government stakeholders, climate change experts, and policy makers to effect sustainable outcomes. We will focus on supporting local authorities to regulate and allocate community and national water resources in the immediate term, as well as promoting the use of sustainable energy solutions in our programming the in longer-term.

5. Youth empowerment and employment

NRC will prioritise support to female and male youth to improve their skills and knowledge through access to education and sustainable employment pathways of their choice. We will prioritise displacement-affected and at-risk youth with secondary and tertiary education, life- skills and market-driven technical vocational and on-the-job training. To complement education, youth will be supported to access and transition into employment through job placement and enhanced access to inclusive financial and business development services. NRC will also advocate with duty-bearers, such as key government, civil society, and private sector entities, to recognise and empower youth.

6. Principled advocacy and communications

NRC will play a strong and influential role in national and international advocacy to support the rights and realisation of durable solutions for displacement-affected Iraqis and Syrian refugees. Advocacy and communications initiatives will continue to highlight the challenges of people who are unable or unwilling to return; advocate for safe, dignified returns; and promote durable solutions. NRC will prioritise evidence-based advocacy to enact policy change by highlighting the necessity of continuing the humanitarian response to ensure the most vulnerable are not exposed to further risk. Advocacy and communications initiatives will remain rooted in NRC programming and elevate the need for a comprehensive response across humanitarian, development, and stabilisation actors.

7. Partnerships and localisation

NRC Iraq will continue to collaborate with a range of Iraqi and international partners at strategic and operational levels to support localisation and improve impact, programme quality, and accountability to the people we serve. NRC will invest resources towards improved engagement with local and national partners with the goal of supporting increased localisation. We will expand the current partnership portfolio to include diverse partners with strong links to communities, as well as relationships with academic institutions, think tanks, and civil society.

8. Effective and efficient people, policy, and systems

NRC will prioritise and continue investing in staff to develop strong teams across the organisation. Capacity building of national staff will be a priority, especially in the advancement within senior leadership. The NRC Iraq gender initiatives will be supported by annual action plans to improve overall gender awareness, parity, and equality. Staff care will be another priority to work towards through integration of Duty of Care in all aspects of employment, as well through more intentional performance management and improvement. Lastly, NRC will invest in improving resource mobilization and business development processes and utilise evidence-based communications materials to be more visible within the donor community and NRC globally.