

Targeted support, reconstruction needed as displaced Iraqis return and rebuild their lives, urges UN agency

Iraqi civilians, driven from their homes in fear by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, Da'esh), are now starting to make their way back home after the terrorist group has been uprooted from its bastions in the country, the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) has reported.

According to [data](#) as of 31 January, more than 3.3 million Iraqis have returned to their areas of origin, with most coming back to their homes in the governorates of Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk and Anbar. In all, some six million Iraqis were displaced due to ISIL and the subsequent military operation to drive the group away.

“As Iraq enters the recovery phase after three years of conflict, we should remember that real reconstruction of the country will not only be based on rebuilding infrastructure,” said the head of the IOM operations in the country, Gerard Waite, in a [news release](#) Tuesday.

“Provision of specialized support to all who survived the conflict is also needed, alongside reconstruction of infrastructure.”

At the recent Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, the UN system launched a two-year [Recovery and Resilience Programme](#), as part of which IOM will assist the Government of Iraq in addressing the multiple needs for rebuilding and reconstruction in the country.

The UN migration agency is also working on assistance efforts in areas of return, specific programmes include mobile community information centres, light infrastructure projects, housing rehabilitation, strengthening health facilities, relief kit distribution and livelihood support.

As of the some 2.5 million Iraqis yet to return to their origins, about half (51 per cent) are reportedly living in private settings – such as with families or friends – and about a quarter (26 per cent) in camps.