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## National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition in Iraq



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 **ICARDA**  
Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas





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**FOREWORD BY Dr MEHDI AL-ALAK**  
**SECRETARY GENERAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**  
**GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ**

The Government of Iraq has committed to the 17 agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These SDGs will provide the foundation of the Government's development efforts up to the year 2030.

One of the key SDGs is SDG 2 which aims to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture". This National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition in Iraq, was undertaken under the overall guidance of an Inter-ministerial Advisory Committee comprising relevant Government institutions, with the strong help and support of our key development partners led by the World Food Programme. I would like to place on record the appreciation of the Government of Iraq for their efforts.

The five action pillars proposed by the Review have been endorsed by the Government at a meeting held at the Office of the Council of Ministers on 10 May 2018. These pillars are:

- ⇒ Improving safety net instruments
- ⇒ Enhancing sustainable agricultural production
- ⇒ Addressing the double burden of poor nutrition
- ⇒ Increasing employment especially among youth and women
- ⇒ Reforming marketing, trade and pricing policies

The implementation of the recommendations of the Review will be overseen by specific Ministries in line with their mandates. The overall coordination, as well as budgetary and financial aspects, will be the responsibility of the Council of Ministers. The Advisory Committee, set up to guide the preparation on of this Strategic Review, will continue to meet to assess progress and address issues.

The Government of Iraq looks forward to strong support from its development partners. In particular, we look forward to assistance in ensuring that the design of various interventions draws on international best practices and uses the latest technologies and management methods. The Government would also request that institutions and agencies preparing their strategies, programmes and projects give due attention to the findings and recommended actions set out in this Review.



**FOREWORD BY Ms SALLY HAYDOCK**  
**REPRESENTATIVE AND COUNTRY DIRECTOR**  
**WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME - IRAQ**

As part of its corporate efforts to help countries achieve the SDGs, the World Food Programme, along with other development partners, is supporting the preparation of Strategic Reviews of Food Security and Nutrition around the world.

Iraq has been a major country of operation for WFP and much of this past assistance has been directed to meeting the emergency food needs of those affected by conflict and economic crises. However, conditions are rapidly returning to normal, and the Government of Iraq is taking the lead in setting medium to long term development policies, programmes and projects. Given this situation, discussions were initiated with the Government about a strategic review to assess issues related to food security and nutrition in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, an Advisory Committee comprising key ministries and institutions was set up with Dr. Mehdi al-Alak, Secretary General of the Council of Ministers as the Chair to guide and oversee the preparation of the review. The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) provided technical support to the preparation of the Review.

During the preparation of the Review, various consultative workshops and meetings were undertaken with stakeholders as well as development partners, including FAO, UNDP and the World Bank. These consultations were critical in formulating the Review and in building consensus regarding the proposed actions.

It is expected that the findings and recommendations of the Review will guide government policies and actions, as well as the programmes and projects of development partners. In particular, the Review would provide a sound basis for the preparation of the Agriculture and Food Security Policy by the National Food Security Committee, which was set up in February 2017 under the guidance of the Minister of Agriculture.

The WFP stands ready to continue its close collaboration with the Government of Iraq to address food security and nutrition in order to end hunger in the country by 2030.



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to either WFP or the institutions with which the authors are affiliated.

AOAD	Arab Organization for Agricultural Development	NPRS	National Poverty Reduction Strategy
BC	Before Christ	PDS	Public distribution system
BMI	Body mass index	PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis	RCP	Representative Concentration Pathway
Eta	Evapotranspiration	SCAR	State Company for Animal Resources
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
FGD	Focus Groups Discussion	SSN	Social safety net
FNS	Food and nutrition security	MT	Metric Tonne
FSC	National Food Security Committee	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
G	Gram	UN	United Nations
GDP	Gross domestic product	UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
GDVE	General Directorate of Vocational Education	UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
GOAM	General Organization for Agricultural Marketing	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GOI	Government of Iraq	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
Ha	Hectare	USD	United States dollar
GEM	Global Environmental Multiscale Model	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas	VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
IDP	Internally displaced persons	WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
IKN	Iraq Knowledge Network	WB	World Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization	WFP	World Food Programme
IMPACT	International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade	WHO	World Health Organization
IQD	Iraqi dinar	ZHSR	Zero Hunger Strategic Review
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria		
Kg	Kilogram		
MEC	Middle East Center		
MENA	Middle East and North Africa region		
MFI	Microfinance institution		
MNAR	Micronutrient Assessment and Response		
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture		
MOH	Ministry of Health		
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs		
MOP	Ministry of Planning		
MOT	Ministry of Trade		
MOWR	Ministry of Water Resources		
NDP	National Development Plan		
NFSC	National Food Security Committee		
NGO	Non-governmental organization		
NHDR	National Human Development Report		
NPRS	National Poverty Reduction Strategy		
PDS	Public distribution system		

## Definition of terms

**Food security.** This situation exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

**Child stunting.** This indicates low height for age, reflecting a past episode or episodes of sustained undernutrition. It is analysed as the proportion of children under age 5 years who are stunted (that is, have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition).

**Child wasting.** This is low weight for height in children, which is generally the result of weight loss associated with a recent period of starvation or disease. In this report, child wasting refers to the proportion of children under age 5 years who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.

**Undernourishment.** This state, lasting for at least one year, is typified by the inability to acquire sufficient food and is defined as a level of food intake that is insufficient for meeting dietary energy requirements. For the purposes of this report, hunger is defined as being synonymous with chronic undernourishment. The report presents the proportion of undernourished people as a percentage of the population (reflecting the share of the population with insufficient caloric intake).

**Undernutrition.** This is the outcome of undernourishment and/or poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed, as a result of repeated infectious disease. It includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin for one's height (wasted), and deficient in vitamins and minerals (micronutrient malnutrition).

**Underweight.** This is represented by low weight for age in children and a BMI of less than 18.5 in adults, reflecting a current condition resulting from inadequate food intake, past episodes of undernutrition or poor health conditions.

**Public distribution system.** Government- sponsored programme used to make transfers of basic food and non-food (fuel) commodities to the entire Iraq population.

**Social safety nets.** These are essentially projects or programmes that transfer support to vulnerable groups facing exceptional circumstances and dangers such as economic crises, natural disasters and wars.

**Triple burden of poor nutrition.** The triple burden of malnutrition is characterized by the coexistence of

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