



Imminent DREF Operation

IRAQ / Population Movement



Iraqi citizens return through border crossings amid rising regional tensions and ongoing Israeli airstrikes on Iran. (Source: Shafaq News)

Appeal: MDRIQ018	DREF Allocated: CHF 75,000	Hazard: Population Movement	Country: Iraq
People at risk: (if applicable) NA	Start Date 25/06/2025	End Date 31/08/2025	
Event Onset: Sudden	Forecasted day of event (or peak): 25/06/2025	Operation Timeframe: 45-days 45 days	
Targeted Areas:	Baghdad, Basra, Missan, Thi Qar, Muthanna, Wasit, Diyala and Anbar		

Scenario analysis

When and where is the hazard expected to happen?

Since June 14, 2025, the conflict between Israel and Iran has intensified considerably, involving a series of military actions targeting strategic military and scientific facilities, followed by missile strikes impacting urban areas. Concerns remain regarding Iran's nuclear capabilities, particularly at fortified sites such as Natanz and Fordow. Recent missile activity has increasingly tested Israeli defense systems, with casualties reported on both sides exceeding 600 on one side and 24 on the other. External actors have adopted a cautious and measured approach, while deploying defensive resources in the region. Amid the escalating hostilities, there is growing concern regarding Iraq's vulnerability to spillover effects from the regional conflict. An overview of the current conflict dynamics, humanitarian implications, and potential future developments. Iraq faces a significantly heightened risk of abrupt internal displacement alongside severe public health and environmental challenges. These risks primarily arise from two critical factors:

1. Military strikes on Iraqi territory: Iraq's strategic geographic location, combined with the presence of both foreign and domestic armed factions, particularly around military installations raise the probability of Iraq becoming directly or indirectly involved in the conflict. Targeted attacks within Iraqi borders, especially in conflict-prone areas, could trigger sudden mass population movements, placing substantial strain on local infrastructure and humanitarian resources.
2. Radioactive contamination from regional nuclear sites: In the event of military strikes on nuclear facilities in the region, such as Iran's Natanz site or Israel's Dimona complex, the potential release of radioactive materials into the atmosphere poses a serious threat. Prevailing wind patterns could carry radioactive particles across borders, particularly into the eastern and southern governorates of Iraq, including Maysan, Wasit, and Basra. This scenario would significantly increase the risk of large-scale public health issues and cause enduring environmental degradation. The resulting contamination would not only endanger civilian populations but also severely hinder humanitarian response efforts and complicate long-term recovery and reconstruction initiatives.

These scenarios highlight the need for robust contingency planning and proactive, anticipatory measures to address potential crises. Strengthening cross-border coordination mechanisms is essential to effectively mitigate the humanitarian and environmental consequences that could impact Iraq. A coordinated regional approach will be critical to ensuring timely response, minimizing harm to civilian populations, and supporting long-term resilience in the face of transboundary threats.

Explain the underlying vulnerabilities and risks the hazard poses for at-risk communities?

Iraq faces considerable humanitarian challenges, including sudden mass displacement, public health crises, and lasting environmental damage. These pressures threaten to overwhelm the country's already strained response capacities, underscoring the urgent needs. The escalating Israel-Iran hostilities exacerbate these risks, particularly for communities grappling with systemic vulnerabilities such as fragile infrastructure, inadequate public services, and proximity to conflict zones. The compounded dangers of direct military strikes and potential radioactive contamination are intensified by Iraq's limited healthcare resources, high susceptibility to displacement, and environmental sensitivities.

Drawing on lessons from previous regional crises such as the 2018 missile strikes near Baghdad, which displaced thousands of people and overwhelmed local medical facilities, humanitarian impacts could be severe. Iraq's fragile healthcare system lacks capacity to manage sudden casualties or complex emergencies like CBRN incidents. This

exposure raises the likelihood of civilian casualties, widespread property damage, and forced displacement. The country's limited protective infrastructure and underdeveloped civil defense systems, particularly in rural and conflict-prone regions, further exacerbate these risks. Consequently, vulnerable populations face heightened insecurity and humanitarian challenges amid ongoing hostilities.

Sources of information

Source	Link
Al Jazeera News	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/23/how-extensive-are-israels-intelligence-operations-inside-iran?utm_source=chatgpt.com
The Times	https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/israel-iran/article/ceasefire-latest-news-war-trump-slvh7tzt5?utm_source=chatgpt.com&region=global
ISW Press	https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/iran-update-special-report-june-23-2025-evening-edition?utm_source=chatgpt.com
AP News	https://apnews.com/article/israel-iran-trump-ceasefire-attacks-continue-f1e60190722cc3410b69f21717872ffa
Crisis24	https://www.crisis24.com/articles/critical-alert-iran-israel-armed-conflict

Plan

In light of the escalating Israel-Iran conflict and the associated regional risks, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is proactively advancing its contingency planning to strengthen preparedness and ensure a timely, effective response to potential humanitarian impacts. Acknowledging the fragility of Iraq's healthcare system and existing logistical challenges—particularly in high-risk governorates—IRCS is enhancing its capacity to deliver rapid medical assistance, implement targeted community awareness campaigns on radiation-related risks, and establish efficient evacuation protocols. By leveraging its extensive network of local volunteers, IRCS aims to build community resilience and mitigate potential humanitarian consequences before the situation escalates further.

Which of the expected severe humanitarian impacts of the hazard are your actions addressing? Why were these impacts chosen?

Based on thorough field analysis, the IRCS has identified several critical humanitarian risks that its anticipatory interventions aim to mitigate. These include the potential internal displacement of up to 25,000 families from conflict-affected provinces, driven by escalating hostilities and security concerns. Additionally, large population groups across multiple governorates face significant risks of exposure to radioactive contamination, which could have severe and long-lasting health consequences. Additionally, essential services such as water supply, sanitation, healthcare, and access to food are at serious risk due to damage to infrastructure and limited resources. These issues are prioritized because they are vital for saving lives and supporting community strength. By addressing these needs early, the IRCS aims to reduce the humanitarian impact that displacement will have on people, prevent health crises, and ensure that basic services continue before the situation worsens.

Will surge personnel be deployed?

At this stage, the deployment of surge personnel is not anticipated. The IFRC Iraq Country Delegation will continue to support the IRCS through close coordination, with additional technical and operational assistance provided as needed by the IFRC regional team.

Proposed actions

Procurement will focus on replenishing essential items used during anticipatory actions, in line with the 45-day implementation timeframe. Planned activities also involve conducting targeted awareness sessions on CBRN risks and protocols, alongside the continued mobilization and deployment of trained IRCS volunteers to strengthen community preparedness and early action. In addition, the intervention will prioritize protection measures by establishing safe spaces for women and children, ensuring privacy and dignity setting up emergency shelter centres, and providing psychological first aid.

		Activities	Budget (CHF)
	Early actions	- Mobilization of volunteers and deployment - rapid mobilization and targeted training of IRCS volunteers in high-risk areas to support early warning dissemination, community guidance, and emergency readiness. - CBRN risk awareness campaigns - delivery of clear, actionable messaging on radiation and chemical exposure prevention, including protective behaviours, sheltering protocols, and safe evacuation steps. - Community-based risk communication – use of trusted community channels, mobile teams, local media, and digital platforms to deliver timely, verified health and safety information and counter misinformation.	26,250
		Distribution of First Aid kits to support immediate medical needs in high-risk areas, enabling rapid response to injuries during the early phase of the emergency.	30,000
		Provision of food baskets to vulnerable households to ensure immediate food security during the initial phase of the emergency.	18,750
	Early Response		
Total			CHF 75,000

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