

IRAQ | IDPs - CIVIL & IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION (September-October 2021)

IN BRIEF

Lack of civil documentation is one of the main protection issues facing internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees, who face numerous barriers seeking to obtain and/or renew civil documentation. Missing civil documentation impedes one's ability to access basic services, education, healthcare, and social security benefits and can lead to restricted freedom of movement, increased risk of arrest and detention, exclusion from restitution and/or reconstruction programs, and the inability to participate in the public affairs of the country. In response, in 2021, UNHCR, in cooperation with the government and civil society partners, continues to implement and support projects and initiatives to enable IDPs and returnees to access civil documentation.

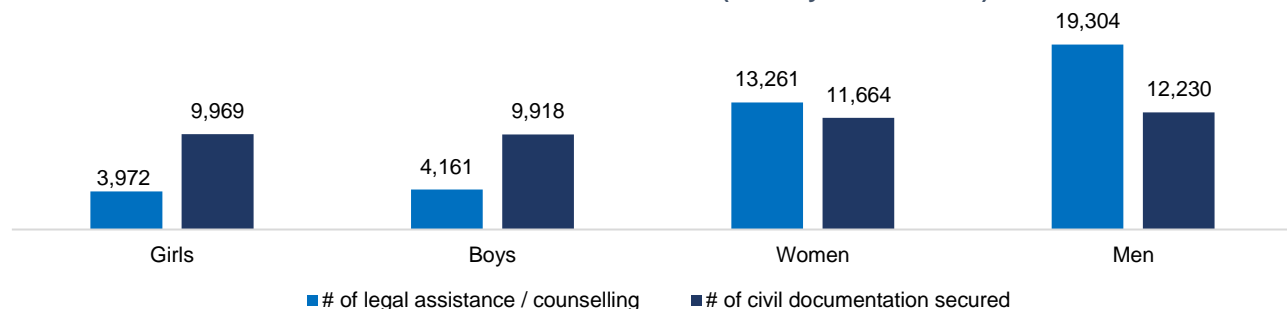
LEGAL ASSISTANCE

In 2021, UNHCR continues to mobilize legal assistance partners so that IDPs and returnees have access to accurate information and quality legal advice and representation on obtaining civil documentation. Lack of awareness and the complexity of procedures remain key barriers IDPs face in accessing civil documentation, making such assistance critical.

In September and October 2021, UNHCR and partners provided legal assistance and/or counselling to 10,938 individuals resulting in the issuance of 5,497 civil documents. Civil documents were also secured for cases that received legal assistance in the previous months. Between January and October 2021, a total of 40,616 individuals were provided with legal assistance, and 43,781 civil documents were issued.

Technical glitches in the online appointments system for Unified ID cards persisted in Anbar, Diyala, Salah al-Din, Ninewa and Kirkuk governorates, making it challenging for IDPs/returnees and legal partners to continue to file submissions at Unified ID card offices. Access to reliable internet services remained limited among the affected population. Those without internet access often rely on the services of private offices to book their online appointment with the local Civil Affairs Directorate offices. Reportedly some private agents charge up to 50,000 IQDs per person for this service, a cost that the majority of IDPs/returnees cannot afford.

Number of legal assistance/ counselling provided
and civil documentation secured (January-October 2021)



1 According to the Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment IX (2021), more than 1m individuals reported that they miss one core document, more than 500,000 individuals lack at least two core documents, and more than 250,000 miss three or more core documents. Core documents as defined by the National Protection Cluster include ID card (Civil ID and Unified ID), Nationality Certificate, birth certificates and Public Distribution System (PDS) cards.

MOBILE APPROACHES

As a key part of addressing IDPs' civil documentation needs, UNHCR continues to support mobile missions by government officials to IDP camps to receive and process applications for civil documents and issue civil documentation, removing the need for IDPs to travel to their area of origin.

In September and October, UNHCR supported the mobile missions of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to Harsham, Hasansham U2, Hasansham U3, Bahrka, Khazir M1, and Debaga camps, and urban locations with a high population of IDPs in Erbil governorate. As a result, 2,940 Iraqi Nationality Certificates and 674 Civil Status IDs were processed, out of which 2,455 Nationality Certificates and 419 Civil Status IDs were issued. 1,651 Civil IDs and nationality certificates are still pending due to the lack of required documents and other issues such as security reasons. The legal partner will follow up with those cases lacking supporting documents to resubmit the applications.

UNHCR and its partners also supported mobile missions undertaken by the local Civil Affairs Directorate (CAD). In coordination with the Civil Affairs Office in Ninewa, four missions were conducted to Al Ba'aj camp during the reporting period. A total of 498 Iraqi National Certificate applications were submitted and successfully processed. Similarly, in coordination with the Civil Affairs Office in Anbar, 195 Iraq National Certificates were issued to IDPs in Kilo7 and Kilo18 housing complexes.



Mol Mobile Missions to issue documents for the IDPs, September 2021

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

UNHCR continues to support the rehabilitation of the various offices of the CAD and Unified ID Card Directorates. The rehabilitation of the CAD and UID offices in Tel Abta, Sinuni, and Al Qahtaniya has been completed while the offices are not yet officially operational, awaiting the authorities' recruitment and training of additional staffing. Similar projects are ongoing in Hawija (Kirkuk), and the rehabilitation of the Al-Shora CAD centre in Ninewa is also planned.

ADVOCACY AND OTHER INITIATIVES

UNHCR and partners continue to engage in regular advocacy at various levels to resolve obstacles faced by IDPs and returnees in accessing civil documentation and see outcomes which are favourable provided to them. During the reporting period, UNHCR and partners in Erbil coordinated with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Federal Government of Iraq/representatives of the Ad-hoc Committee on civil documentation to discuss lessons learned from the September mission. UNHCR also coordinated with the Head of the Sharqat Civil Affairs Directorate, in Ninewa, on the process of issuing Unified ID cards for returnees in Sharqat.

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