

IRAQ | IDPs - CIVIL AND IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION (JUNE - JULY 2021)

IN BRIEF

Civil documentation is vital to one's enjoyment of fundamental rights. Despite this, lack of civil documentation remains one of the main protection issues facing internally displaced persons (IDPs)¹ and returnees who may 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 programmes 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.

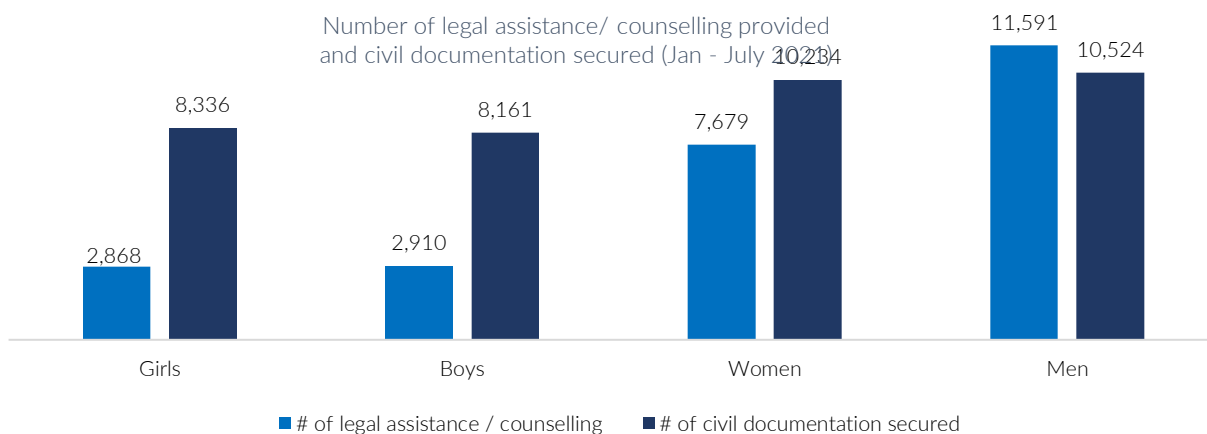


Applicants waiting during Mol mobile missions in Dohuk June 2021 © UNHCR

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 faced by IDPs in accessing civil documentation, making such assistance critical.

In June and July 2021, UNHCR and partners provided legal assistance and/or counselling to 8,531 individuals resulting in the issuance of 13,981 civil documents. Civil documents were also secured for cases that received legal assistance in the previous months. Between January to July 2021, a total of 25,048 individuals were provided with legal assistance, and 37,255 civil documents were issued. Some of the ongoing COVID-19 situation related restrictions were lifted during this period. For example, authorities resumed processing of new applications for Unified ID cards during the reporting period. Generally, courts and Civil Affairs Directorate (CAD) offices functioned at near full capacities (generally up to 80%) in most locations. The exact working modalities and degree of functionality varied by location. However, partners employed a combination of face-to-face (using precautionary measures) and remote approaches in the provision of legal assistance.



¹ According to the Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment VIII (2020), more than 2.1m individuals are in households reporting that they miss one or more core documents, while more than 800,000 persons are in households reporting that they miss 3 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 to issue civil documentation without the need for IDPs to travel to their area of origin.

In June and July, UNHCR supported two missions to Mamrashan, Esian, Dawoodia and Sharia IDP camps in Dohuk, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Federal Government of Iraq as well as the Kurdistan Regional Government. The first mission was concluded in June, while the second mission began on 28 June and was concluded on 4 July. During both months, a total of 8,630 Iraqi Nationality Certificates (INCs) and 3,206 Civil Status IDs (CSIDs) were issued. This brings the total number of documents issued so far this year through the MoI mobile missions to 28,748 out of 29,593 applications processed (see table).



An applicant being processed during MoI mobile missions in Dohuk July 2021 © UNHCR

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Missions	Date	Nationality				Civil Status Identity Card			
		Processed	Issued	Returned	Pending	Processed	Issued	Returned	Pending
1 st	4-12 Apr	4,090	4,072	18	0	1,214	1,096	118	0
2 nd	19-28 Apr	3,971	3,971	0	0	911	861	50	0
3 rd	23-30 May	5,521	5,421	100	0	1,692	1,491	118	83
4 th	12-21 Jun	5,778	5,717	61	0	2,370	2,167	82	121
5 th	28 Jun - 4 Jul	2,948	2,913	26	9	1,098	1,039	59	0
Total		22,308	22,094	205	9	7,285	6,654	427	204
Percentage			99.04%	0.92%	0.04%		91.34%	5.86%	2.80%

UNHCR and partners also supported mobile missions undertaken by local CADs. In Ninewa, UNHCR coordinated a CAD mission to Jeda'a 5 camp to process CSIDs and previously rejected INC applications. A total of 39 INC applications and 17 CSIDs were submitted and successfully processed. Additional advocacy is being undertaken, and missions planned to process the remaining rejected cases. The first CAD mission to Jeda'a 1 camp was also coordinated by UNHCR in mid-June, during which 45 INC and CSID applications were submitted, out of which 38 INCs and CSIDs were issued in July. These cases originate from Ninewa governorate and advocacy is ongoing for households in Jeda'a 1 originally from governorates other than Ninewa to find solutions for the issuance of their documentation. In coordination with the Civil Affairs Office in Anbar, 73 Civil IDs were issued to IDPs in Bezibiz informal site following a mission.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

UNHCR is supporting the rehabilitation of the offices of the CAD with projects ongoing in Shirqat, Salah al Din. In Mosul, six of the 11 rehabilitated CAD offices are functional while the remaining five recently rehabilitated and furnished CAD/Unified ID offices in Hamam Al-Alil, Qayarah, Tal Abta, Shimal/Sinuni, and Qahtaniya are yet to be officially operational, and await the recruitment of additional staffing by the authorities in order to become fully functional.

ADVOCACY AND OTHER INITIATIVES

UNHCR and partners engage in regular advocacy at various levels to resolve obstacles faced by IDPs and returnees in accessing civil documentation and provide outcomes favourable to them. During the reporting period, in Sulaymaniah, UNHCR and its partner coordinated with the Personal Status Courts to facilitate the process for IDPs to obtain birth and marriage certificates, without having to visit the Civil Affairs Offices in their areas of origin for records of marriage or approval of birth certificates. Positive developments also occurred for those originating from districts in Ninewa governorate where the unified ID card has been adopted and the Unified ID department has agreed to undertake a specialized mission to process these cases.

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