

4 million Iraqis displaced since war began: Oxfam

Last Updated: Sunday, July 29, 2007 | 8:08 PM ET

[CBC News](#)

At least four million Iraqis have been forced to flee either to another part of Iraq or abroad since the war began in 2003, according to a new report by Oxfam and the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq.

More than two million people, mostly women and children, have been displaced in Iraq, and another two million are now refugees in Syria and Jordan, according to the groups' report, *Rising to the Humanitarian Challenge in Iraq*.

"Many of those are living in dire poverty," Barbara Stocking, director of Oxfam GB in Britain, said in a news release Monday.

Furthermore, she said that the violence in Iraq has masked the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the country, where nearly one in three Iraqis, or eight million people, require emergency aid.

The report by Oxfam and NCCI, a network of aid organizations working in Iraq, also highlighted other dire statistics:

- Four million Iraqis regularly cannot buy enough food.
- 70 per cent are without adequate water supplies, compared to 50 per cent in 2003.
- 28 per cent of children are malnourished, compared to 19 per cent before the 2003 invasion.
- 92 per cent of Iraqi children suffer learning problems, mostly due to the climate of fear.



A young child looks out at the refugee camp in Najaf, Iraq, on Thursday. (Alaa al-Marjani/Associated Press)

The aid groups urged the Iraqi government, the United Nations and the international community to do more to meet Iraqi needs by supporting local aid organizations and extending food parcel distribution and cash payments to the vulnerable.

They also said that ending the conflict must be the top priority for everyone involved in Iraq.

Oxfam said it had staff working in Iraq, but it withdrew aid workers in 2003 because of chronic security problems.

- This story is now closed to commenting.