

# IDP Working Group

## Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (September 2008)

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NFI Distribution to IDPs in Kirkuk ©UNHCR / 2008.

This IDP Update has been produced by IDP Working Group members (UNHCR, IOM, other UN Agencies and NGOs). It is based on surveillance data gathered by IDP WG members, as well as information provided by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), ICRC and other NGOs.

### Main Issues

- The PM Office issued Order No. 101 which stipulates the establishment of a Return Cell (Centres) as an implementation arm to manage the return and provide the necessary support and assistance to returning IDPs and refugees, including on property recovery and reconstruction. Two Centres are now operational in Baghdad (Al-Resafa – return/property, Al-Karkh - property).
- The Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri Al-Maliki, gave a one month ultimatum, beginning on 1 August, for all individuals occupying the houses of displaced persons, to vacate them. Anyone who does not conform to the order will be evicted. (*See Order No. 101 issued on 01.09.2008*)
- The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers issued Decree No. 262 (17 July 2008) - extending the IDP assistance scheme to the caseload that has not yet received it.
- On 24 June, the Voice of Iraq (Vol) radio station reported that the Iraqi Defence Ministry instructed all parties, political institutions and citizens occupying government buildings in Baghdad's central and southern provinces to vacate the buildings within 72 hours, or otherwise face eviction.
- On 9 June the Iraqi Army made known its intention to clear out the Al-Fedayeen Camp, home to approximately 1,000 families (7,000+ individuals). This was in response to an order issued by the Prime Minister of Iraq which required all government property to be vacated of squatters.
- UNICEF launched an emergency programme in collaboration with 4 international NGOs (Mercy Corps, Relief International, International Rescue Committee and International Medical Corps). The duration of this programme will be one year (with the possibility for extension), with 759, 000 people targeted for assistance. 20,000 to 30,000 persons are expected to be assisted at a time per community. The programme will be responding to education, water/sanitation, health/nutrition and child protection needs.
- The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) established a committee to work on the return of IDPs and refugees. 100 million USD is dedicated to support the return. 1 million ID will be allocated per returnee family (Al-Sabah newspaper, 4 June 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> This report covers the period from 1 June - 30 September 2008.

# 1 IDP Families

## 1.1 Internally Displaced Persons after February 2006<sup>2</sup>

Recent displacement is primarily due to sectarian violence, as well as military operations (carried out by both MNF-I/Iraqi Forces and by Turkey and Iran along their borders), crime and lawlessness.

Governorate of Displacement	Total Displaced Families	Total Displaced Individuals	Percentage of IDPs in Each Governorate
Dahuk <sup>2</sup>	18,706	104,824	7%
Erbil <sup>3</sup>	10,304	52,007	4%
Sulaymaniyah <sup>4</sup>	14,585	80,935	5%
<b>Total North</b>	<b>43,595</b>	<b>237,766</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
Ninewa	19,100	106,623	3.7%
Kirkuk	7,911	43,623	4.8%
Anbar	9,179	55,716	3.6%
Baghdad	90,731	550,099	7.5%
Diyala	22,784	136,891	8.5%
Salah al-Din	7,790	45,614	3.7%
<b>Total Centre</b>	<b>157,495</b>	<b>938,566</b>	<b>6.0 %</b>
Babylon	12,677	77,197	4.5%
Basrah	5,989	35,509	1.8%
Diwaniya	3,858	25,186	2.5%
Kerbala	10,921	70,709	7.7%
Missan	6,792	46,523	5.5%
Muthanna	2,457	18,331	2.9%
Najaf	10,087	57,716	5.2%
Thi-Qar	7,066	47,423	2.8%
Wassit	12,306	75,457	6.9%
<b>Total South</b>	<b>72,153</b>	<b>454,051</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
<b>Grand Total families</b>	<b>273,243</b>		
<b>Grand Total individuals</b>		<b>1,630,383</b>	

Sources: Ministry of Displacement and Migration and Kurdistan Regional Government, July 2008.

**Note:** It is important to note that the IDP figures provided by government authorities do not necessarily reflect the actual number of IDPs in a given governorate at least in part due to restrictive registration policies.

## 1.2 Transferred/Displaced Persons Before 2006

- Cut off date 31 December 2005

The main reasons for displacement over the past several decades during the former regime included human rights abuses, internal conflict along political, religious and ethnic lines, the Iraq-Iran and Gulf Wars, drainage of the marshlands, construction of dams in the centre, suppression of the 1991 uprising in the south, competition over land and natural resources, and the "Arabisation" policies of the former regime. The fall of the former regime, the US-led invasion of Iraq, the counter-insurgency operations, and the secondary displacement of Arabs by returning Kurds, were amongst the causes of internal displacement until the end of December 2005. In addition, while many Iraqis returned both internally and

<sup>2</sup> All figures for Centre and South are from the MoDM report: *Summary Results IDP Registration – February 2006 to July 2008* (published July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008); the number of families and individual IDPs is derived from Table 1, the figures of total population per governorate from Table 13. Figures for the Governorates of Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah are provided by the relevant KRG offices.

<sup>2</sup> Source: General Directorate of Displacement and Migration – Dahuk (22<sup>nd</sup> September 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Source: General Directorate of Displacement and Migration – Erbil (15<sup>th</sup> July 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Source: Sulaymaniyah Governorate Security Offices (13<sup>th</sup> July 2008).

from overseas, a considerable number remained internally displaced, primarily due to a lack/destruction of housing, inadequate employment opportunities and social services, the presence of mines/UXO, and property disputes in their areas of return.

Governorate of Displacement	Pre 2003 (families)	2003-2005 <sup>3</sup> (families)	Total families displaced	Total displaced individuals
Dahuk	22,452	22	22,474	134,844
Erbil	32,737	76	32,813	196,878
Sulaymaniyah	50,430	35	50,465	302,790
<b>Total North<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>105,619</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>105,752</b>	<b>634,512</b>
Ninewa	1,947	4,625	6,572	39,432
Kirkuk	184	1,068	1,252	7,512
Anbar	218	4,685 <sup>5</sup>	4,903	29,418
Baghdad	2,281	1,586	3,867	23,202
Diyala	2,409	6,691	9,100	54,600
Salah al-Din	360	3,006	3,366	20,196
<b>Total Centre<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>7,399</b>	<b>21,661</b>	<b>29,060</b>	<b>174,360</b>
Babylon	654	821	1,475	8,850
Basrah	15,494	284	15,778	94,668
Diwaniya	222	932	1,154	6,924
Kerbala	17,490	1,328	18,818	112,908
Missan	18,465	406	18,871	113,226
Muthanna	424	437	861	5,166
Najaf	3,833	160	3,993	23,958
Thi-Qar	657	3,569	4,226	25,356
Wassit	70	1,960	2,030	12,180
<b>Total South<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>57,309</b>	<b>9,897</b>	<b>67,206</b>	<b>403,236</b>
<b>Total families</b>	<b>170,327</b>	<b>31,691</b>	<b>202,018</b>	
<b>Total individuals</b>	<b>1,021,962</b>	<b>190,146</b>		<b>1,212,108</b>

<sup>3</sup> This figure includes IDPs as well as Iraqi refugees from Iran who returned into internal displacement.

<sup>4</sup> These include persons expelled during the 'De-villagisation' campaign, the Anfal campaign, the 'Arabization' campaign; persons expelled or who fled due to Kurdish in-fighting, as well as those fleeing fighting between the PKK and the Turkish military in Northern Iraq; Kurds expelled to Iran in the 1970s, and who have since returned to Northern Iraq but remain internally displaced; Iraqis of all ethnic and religious backgrounds who fled Government-controlled territory since opposing the Iraqi Government; populations fleeing the Centre of Iraq after the fall of the former regime due to religious/ethnic or political persecution and harassment (e.g. religious minorities, intellectuals, Kurds from Fallujah and Ramadi), as well as ongoing fighting between Coalition Forces/Multinational Forces (MNF-I) and insurgents.

<sup>5</sup> This figure does not include the two hundred thousand who were displaced during military operations in Faluja and Ramadi but returned shortly after the end of military operations and are no longer in displacement.

<sup>6</sup> These include Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians displaced to other areas in the Centre during the 1980s as a result of the Iran / Iraq war; Arabs displaced to the Centre since 1991 following the drainage of the Marshes; Arabs displaced from their places of residence in the Centre as part of the 'Arabization' campaign from the 1960s through to the 1990s; Kurds/Turkmen IDPs returning to the Governorates below the 'Green Line' after the fall of the former government in April 2003; 'Secondary displaced' Arabs fleeing in fear of harassment following the return of Kurds and Turkmen from the North to their places of origin below the former 'Green Line'; Populations displaced due to periodic fighting between Coalition Forces/MNF-I and Iraqi Forces and insurgents (e.g. Fallujah, Ramadi, Samara, Tal Afar, Al Qaim).

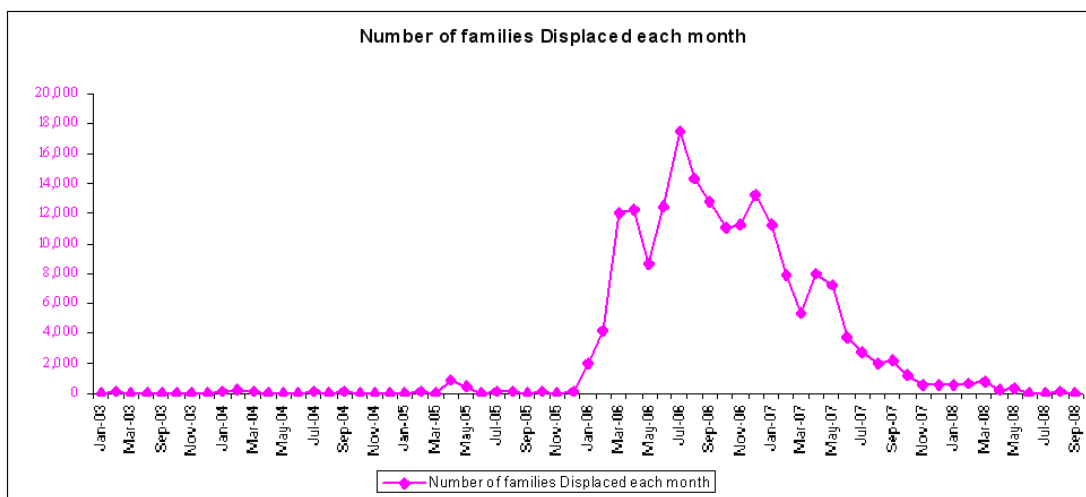
<sup>7</sup> These include persons displaced as a result of previous wars, specifically the Iran/Iraq war during the 1980s; Shiites displaced due to political/religious persecution (e.g. the 1991 uprising); Marsh Arabs displaced since 1991 following the draining of the marshes; Smaller numbers of Arabs displaced from their places of residence in the Centre (mainly in April/May 2003); people displaced as a result of tribal and other conflicts in the South; people displaced as a result of natural disasters, specifically floods; populations displaced due to periodic fighting between Coalition Forces/MNF-I and Iraqi Forces, and insurgents or armed militias (e.g. Fallujah, Ramadi, Najaf).

## 2 Post-February 2006 Displaced Persons

### 2.1 Trends of Displacement: Community Relations

- In some areas of Al-Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk and Ninewa Governorates, IDPs feel they are treated worse than the host community and in six locations within these governorates, relations among the host community and IDPs are tense primarily due to material and social issues.<sup>11</sup>
- Tense relations between the host community and the displaced population were indicated in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf and Ninewa, mostly due to overburdened services, house/land disputes and rising prices and, to a lesser degree, the (perceived) behaviour of the group and employment. In other locations, the host community complains about the behaviour of the displaced population (e.g., women not respecting customs/traditions, women and children begging and street children).<sup>12</sup>

### 2.2 Post-February 2006 IDP Families by Date of Displacement



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

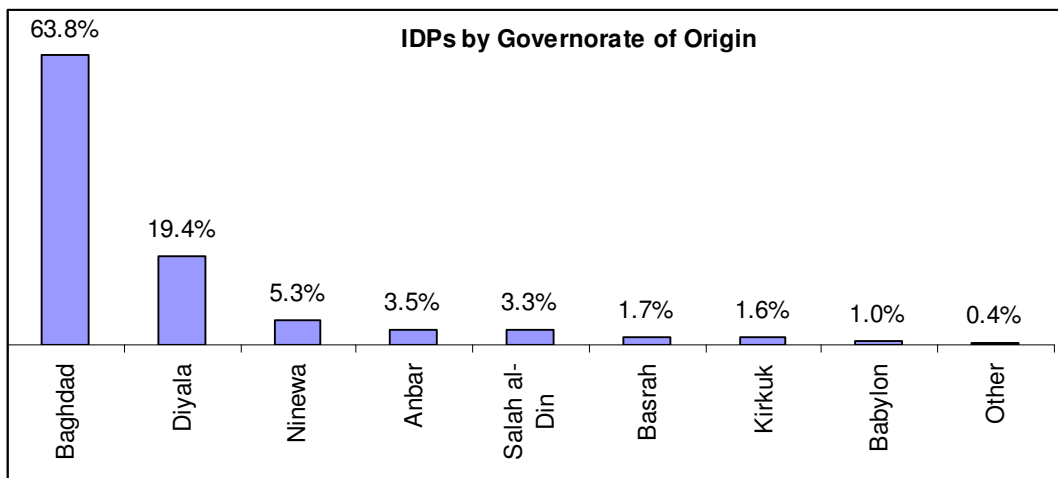
- The chart “Number of Families Displaced Each Month” above indicates the number of IDP families displaced each month (from February 2006 to August 2008). The peak of displacement was between June and September 2006. In October 2007, still nearly a thousand new families were displaced, while from October on, a few hundred families were displaced each month.

### 2.3 Post-February 2006 IDPs by Place of Origin

- By far the majority of IDPs were displaced from (or within) Baghdad and to a lesser extent Diyala. Less than 1% was displaced from Dahuk, Diwaniya, Erbil, Kerbala, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, Thi-Qar and Wassit,

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February – August 2008.

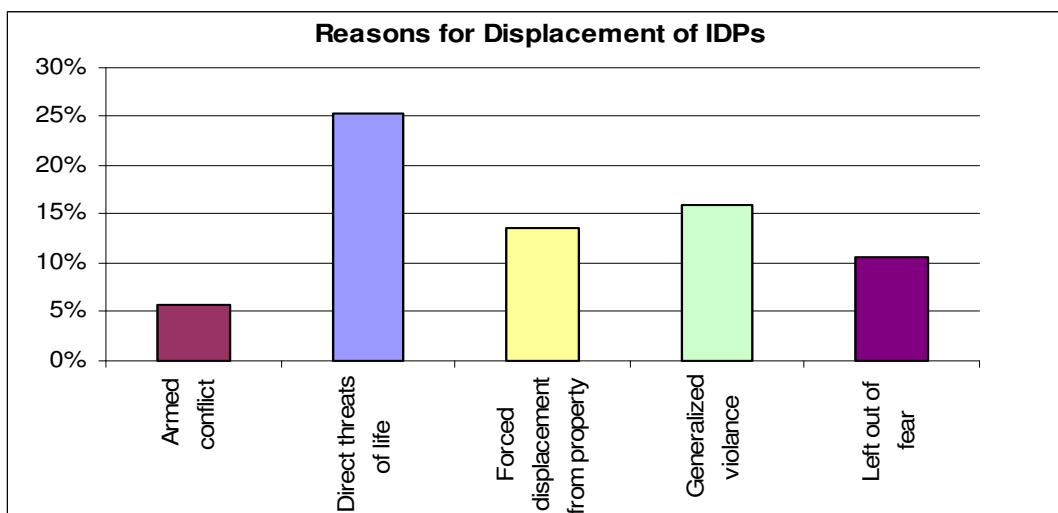
<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

## 2.4 Reasons for Displacement for Post-February 2006 IDPs

- The majority of IDPs report direct threats to life, generalized violence, and fear as their reasons for fleeing:<sup>13</sup>



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

## 2.5 Security Issues for IDPs

- The risks that surveyed IDPs face are more varying than the other caseloads. IDPs indicated that they face general violence (Governorates of Baghdad, Diyala, Missan, Najaf, Salah Al-Din and Wassit), general criminality, detentions, kidnappings, murder/killings, large explosions, military operations as well as inter-ethnic/religious fighting (Governorates of Kirkuk and Ninewa). It was reported that IDPs are enduring forced recruitment by some armed groups (Muthanna Governorate). Others are reportedly subjected to abuse and harassment (Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Najaf and Salah Al-Din Governorates). The three Northern Governorates also experience occasional cross-border attacks from Turkey and Iran, which has caused minor displacement.<sup>14</sup>
- Among the main dangers and concerns for returnees are detention and kidnappings, reported from all over the country, but reported frequently in Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Wassit Governorates.<sup>15</sup>

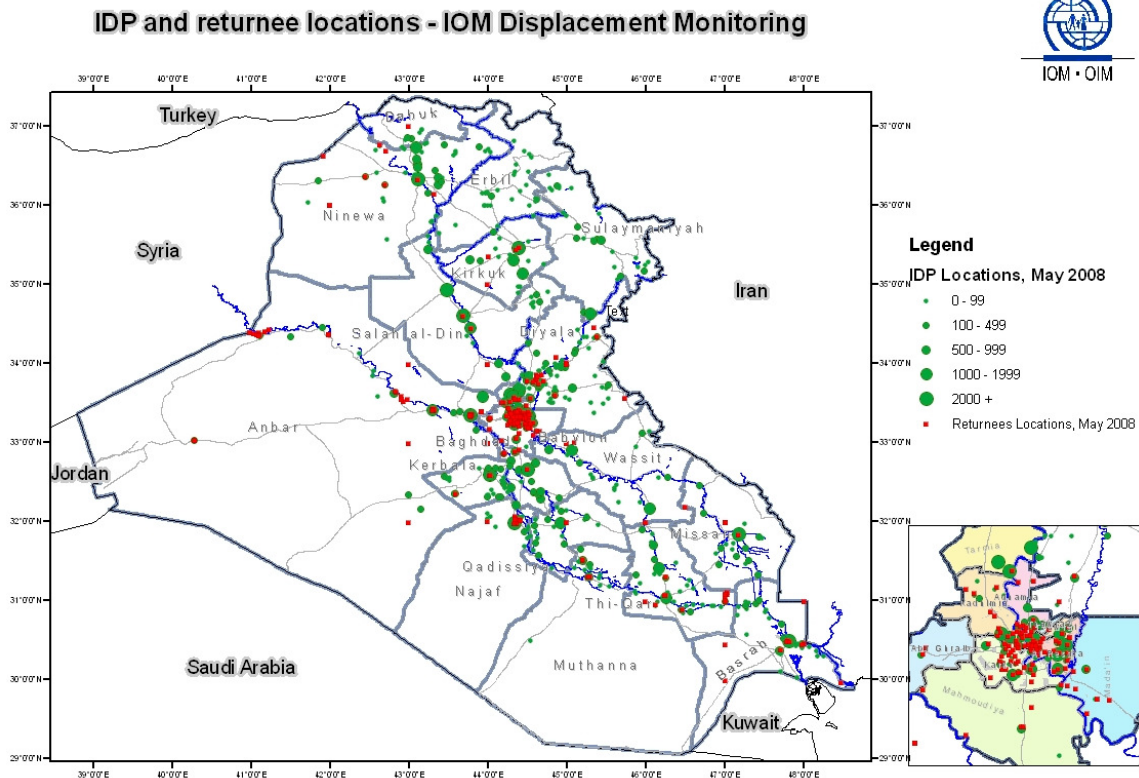
<sup>13</sup> IOM, *Displacement Assessment and Statistics (Emergency Needs Assessments)*, September 2008.

<sup>14</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February – August 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

- Factors that made persons feel less safe were living in mixed areas (ethnic/religious), belonging to a minority group (e.g. Christians), occurrence of large explosions, mine contamination or the presence of armed groups.<sup>16</sup>
- Recent developments:
  - On 25 June, a security/military operation was carried out in Al-Amarah City, Missan.
  - On 30 July, a major security/military operation was performed in Diyala Governorate, in order to track down gunmen linked to Al-Qaeda network.
  - There has been an increase in the number of assassination attempts in the Basrah area.
  - The last months have seen an increase in targeted killings, often by adhesive bombs attached under vehicles or as well as guns equipped with silencers, of Government officials. Such targeted killings are likely to increase in the run-up of provincial elections in January 2009.
  - The military campaign in Diyala also led to confrontations with the Kurdish Peshmerga in the disputed District of Khanaqeen. The confrontation with the Kurdish Peshmerga, which held de facto control over Khanaqeen District since the fall of the former regime in 2003, led to increasing tensions among the Kurdish parties and the Shi'ite coalition, both in the district and on the national level.
  - Al-Anbar Governorate, a long-time stronghold of AQI until local tribes established the Anbar Salvation Council in late 2006, became the 11th of Iraq's 18 Governorates to be handed over to the ISF by the MNF-I on 1 September 2008.

### 3 Return



- The map above shows the locations of both IDP and returnee locations, with an inset for Baghdad, the site of most returns.
- While the number of returns is still a fraction of the number displaced, the rate of return is increasing, and the Government of Iraq is working to encourage returns through monetary grants, rental subsidies, and restitution of property for the displaced. Some of the displaced

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

are not able to return because their homes were destroyed or occupied. Through recent Orders 101 and 262, the Iraqi Government intends to provide a means for property restitution and eviction of squatters. Some of these evicted squatters may be IDPs who become secondarily displaced.

- While IDPs or refugees may be returning to areas where their religious/ethnic group is now in the majority and state and/or accepted non-state actors are in control of the area, they are not always returning to their former communities or homes. Furthermore, despite improved security in those areas, targeted attacks, generalized violence and criminality continue to occur.
- According to information collected by UNHCR and its partners from various sources (MoDM Branch Offices, DDM, municipal councils and other local authorities), a total of 183,907 have returned by end of September 2008, of which 166,796 from inside Iraq (91%) and 17,111 from outside (9%). The numbers resulting from IOM's returnee monitoring in 440 locations range within the same scale.<sup>17</sup>
- According to NGO reports, most IDPs and returnees receive information about their former neighbourhoods from friends and relatives.<sup>18</sup>
- Some returnees are therefore experiencing continued or secondary displacement in areas of return, mainly due to:
  1. Loss of property (as is the case for some refugee returnees in their governorate of origin, e.g. in Kerbala and Thi-Qar Governorates);
  2. Ongoing insecurity;
  3. Occupied housing; or
  4. Ethnic/religious make-up of the return area (e.g. the returnees belong to a minority in their place of origin, e.g. in some areas of Baghdad).<sup>19</sup>
- Of those who are able to return to their original neighbourhood, not all are able to return to their original home. 14% were able to return to their original neighbourhood but not to their original home.<sup>20</sup>

Governorate	To Original House	Not to Original House But Original Neighbourhood
All Iraq	86%	14%
Anbar	97%	3%
Babylon	91%	9%
Baghdad	91%	9%
Basrah	40%	60%
Diyala	96%	4%
Kerbala	100%	0%
Missan	0%	100%
Kirkuk	43%	57%
Muthanna	65%	35%
Najaf	66%	34%
Ninewa	86%	14%
Salah al-Din	40%	60%

Source: MoDM/IOM, Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, September 2008

- 34% of assessed returnees report regular access to Public Distribution System (PDS) food rations, while 58% report that they do not have regular access to food rations and 8% report

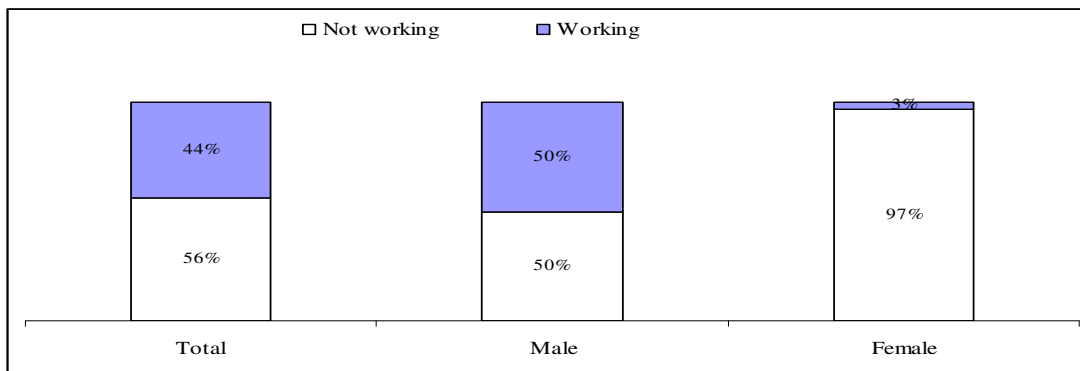
<sup>17</sup> According to IOM returnee monitoring, through end of September 2008, 28,835 returnee families (estimated 173,010 individuals) were identified, of them 2,729 (9%) are returnees from abroad and the other 26,106 (91%) are returnee families from internal displacement in Iraq

<sup>18</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - August 2008.

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR monitoring, IOM and NGO reports, February – August 2008; quoted in IOM Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, September 2008.

<sup>20</sup> Iraqis who were not able to return to their own home or neighbourhood are not considered returnees but secondary displaced persons (i.e. returnees into internal displacement).

no access. 44% report no access to health care. In addition, of those assessed, less than half of returnee heads of household (43.4%), and almost no female heads of household, became employed once they returned.<sup>21</sup>

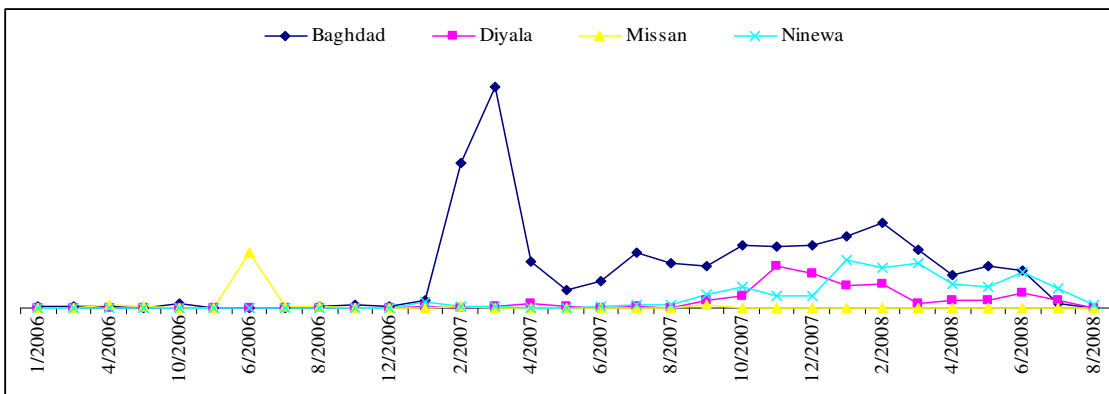


Source: MoDM/IOM, Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, September 2008

- There are concerns regarding the sustainability of the improved security situation, given that it depends on international security presence (the Multinational Forces in Iraq - [MNF-I]) and local arrangements (Awakening Councils, Mehdi Army ceasefire). In addition, access and provision of services remains limited and an increase of the population could strain the absorption capacity of areas of return.<sup>22</sup>
- After several months of violence, destruction of infrastructure and displacement due to military operations in Sadr City, Baghdad is experiencing relative stability and increased returns. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) report that the majority of the city is under their control, although intermittent clashes continue. The area experiences partial closures as ISF continue to conduct search campaigns in buildings for weapons and insurgents. According to MoDM's estimation, about 4,073 IDP families have returned to Sadr City, due to improved security.<sup>23</sup>
- The renewed displacement in Mosul will be reflected in the next Update.

### 3.1 Main Trends of Return

- Increased returns were expected after the end of the school year, but no significant numbers of return have been reported.
- Of those assessed through IOM's returnee monitoring, Baghdad, Diyala, Missan and Ninewa presented the highest number of interviewed returnee families<sup>24</sup>, and their date of return can be tracked as follows:



Source: MoDM/IOM, Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, September 2008

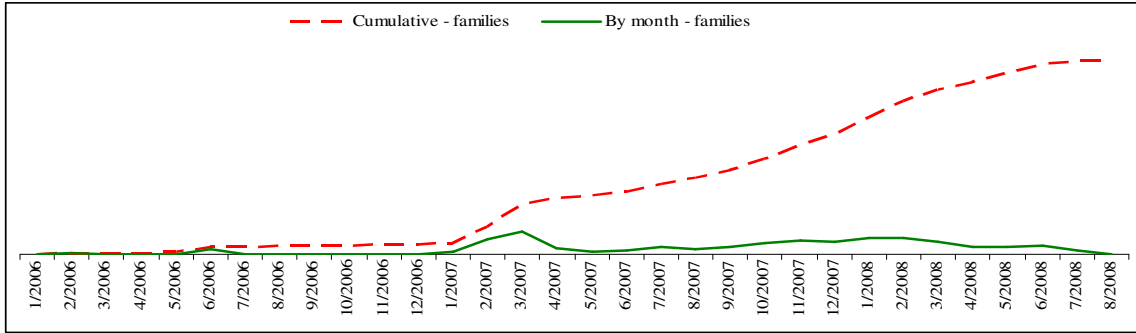
<sup>21</sup> MoDM/IOM Returnee Monitoring Tabulation Report, September 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Based on information received by UNHCR.

<sup>23</sup> Meeting of the Emergency Operations Cell, MoDM offices, 21 May.

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR's returnee statistics based on various sources show the same Governorates as key destinations.

- For all of Iraq, the number of registered returnee families per month and cumulative number to date is as follows:



Source: MoDM/IOM, Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, September 2008

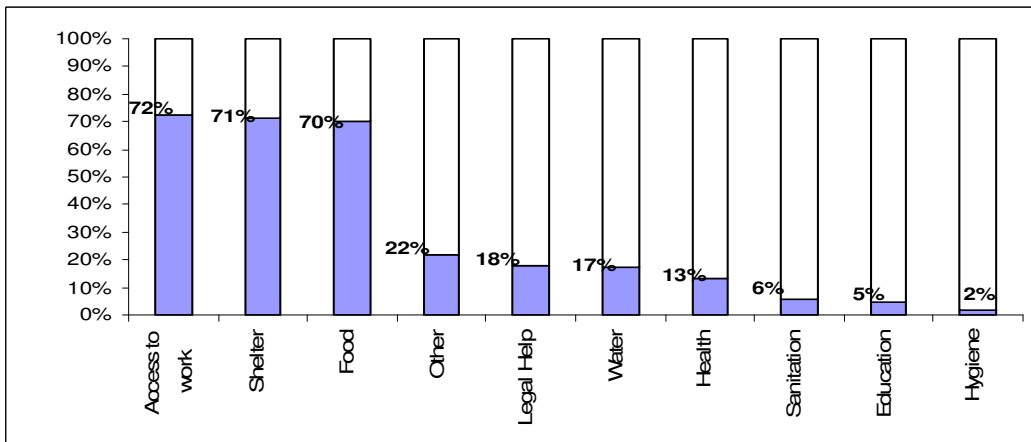
- A few Christian returnees have been assessed, but no Sabaeen-Mandaeans or Yazidis have been reported to be among the returnees.<sup>25</sup>

#### 4 Stated Needs of Post-February 2006 IDPs by Governorate

##### 4.1 An Overview of Priority Needs stated by surveyed IDP population

- The majority of IDPs report their priority needs are employment, shelter and food:

Priority Needs, As Stated by Assessed IDPs



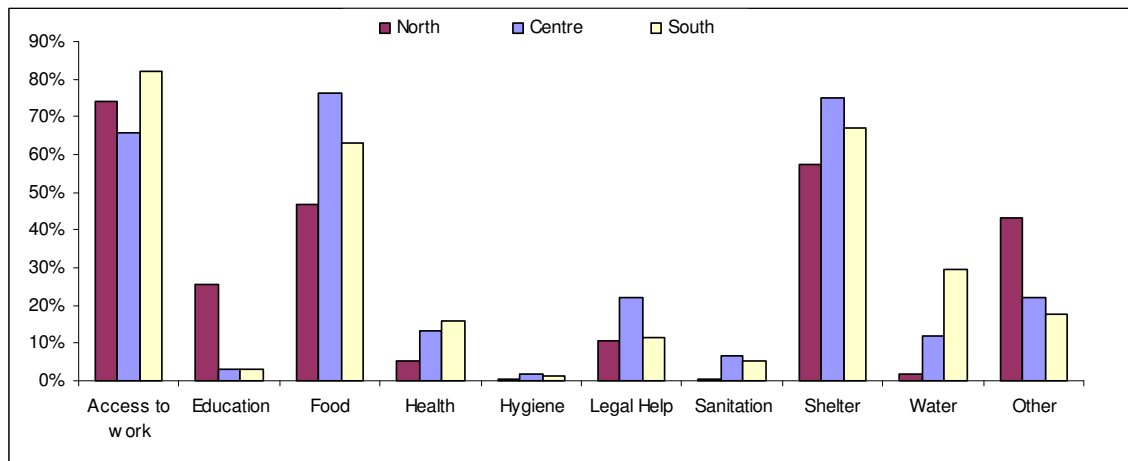
Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008, and MoDM/IOM Baghdad Returnee Assessment, January 2008.

## 4.2 Priority Needs Identified by Post-February 2006 IDPs by Region

- Access to education is reported as a priority more frequently in the three Northern Governorates, while employment and access to water are more frequently reported in the Southern Governorates. Legal assistance and food were more frequently reported as priority needs in the Central Governorates:

Percentage of IDPs stating their Priority Needs by North, Centre and South



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

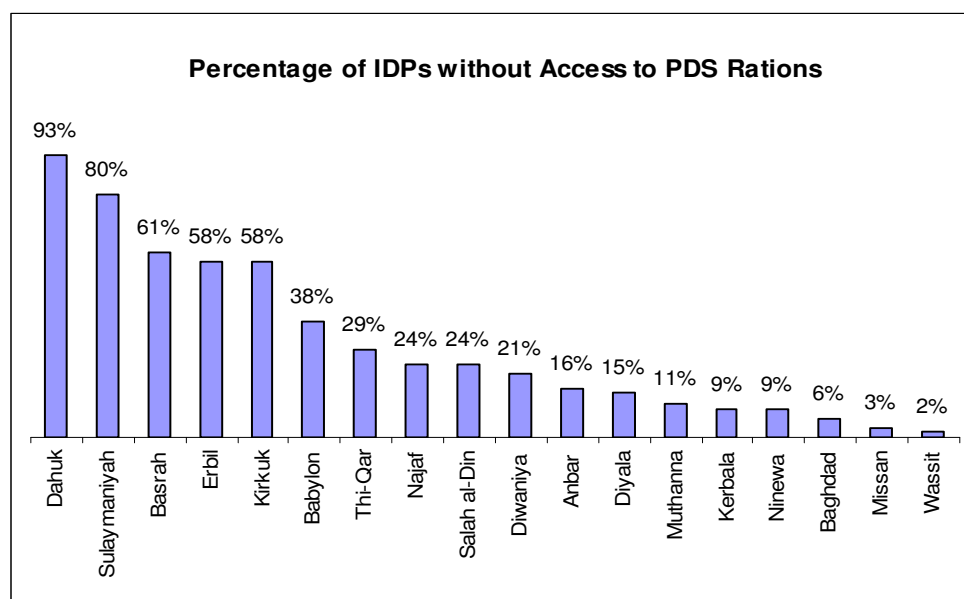
Stated Needs of Displaced Population by Governorate

Governorate	Access to work	Education	Food	Health	Hygiene	Legal Help	Sanitation	Shelter	Water	Other
Center	65.9%	3.1%	76.3%	13.1%	1.9%	22.1%	6.8%	75.1%	12.1%	21.9%
Anbar	57.0%	19.4%	92.9%	12.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	67.3%	46.3%	3.5%
Baghdad	71.9%	1.4%	73.5%	11.7%	1.2%	4.6%	12.6%	86.0%	4.3%	30.3%
Diyala	34.1%	0.4%	97.3%	18.2%	0.6%	58.6%	0.0%	45.5%	29.4%	15.3%
Ninewa	88.3%	1.2%	25.8%	7.0%	3.9%	88.5%	1.1%	64.7%	5.3%	11.9%
Salah al-Din	68.8%	5.0%	88.5%	21.9%	6.2%	6.0%	0.7%	62.1%	12.3%	27.5%
Kirkuk	52.7%	3.5%	95.9%	10.0%	0.2%	25.9%	3.9%	92.2%	11.6%	2.7%
North	74.2%	25.7%	46.8%	5.4%	0.3%	10.5%	0.6%	57.4%	1.6%	43.0%
Dahuk	94.4%	10.1%	51.2%	19.8%	0.3%	0.8%	0.8%	58.5%	5.2%	48.4%
Erbil	91.2%	28.4%	2.8%	0.1%	0.0%	25.3%	0.0%	97.9%	0.0%	0.7%
Sulaymaniyah	44.4%	33.2%	87.0%	1.3%	0.5%	2.3%	1.0%	17.1%	0.7%	81.0%
South	82.1%	3.2%	63.3%	15.8%	1.3%	11.3%	5.1%	67.2%	29.7%	17.7%
Babylon	70.9%	6.9%	71.3%	23.7%	0.1%	29.2%	3.1%	50.4%	30.8%	13.4%
Basrah	97.9%	0.6%	67.5%	0.8%	0.0%	25.0%	0.2%	99.0%	2.7%	6.2%
Kerbala	87.6%	6.0%	52.6%	5.9%	0.4%	3.6%	18.0%	73.0%	22.1%	12.8%
Missan	68.7%	0.3%	32.3%	10.5%	2.5%	1.7%	6.5%	72.5%	36.6%	68.3%
Muthanna	55.5%	13.0%	60.0%	24.6%	5.0%	5.7%	4.6%	78.6%	33.2%	19.3%
Najaf	81.4%	1.8%	91.2%	9.9%	0.5%	5.0%	2.1%	86.4%	19.7%	5.8%
Diwaniya	92.2%	0.6%	62.8%	4.0%	0.0%	9.2%	0.3%	90.0%	18.5%	22.4%
Thi-Qar	95.8%	1.2%	67.4%	6.6%	1.4%	6.0%	0.0%	92.9%	3.6%	23.7%
Wassit	83.0%	0.5%	67.7%	36.7%	3.0%	11.2%	1.0%	28.6%	64.0%	4.2%

Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

### 4.3 Access to Food

- There is a need for emergency food distributions to vulnerable IDPs and host communities unable to access PDS rations.
- Access to food is also hindered by a lack of familial income and a lack of security. This lack of security impedes access to markets in some areas of the country and makes these markets dangerous for both suppliers and customers. Road and neighbourhood closures, checkpoints, curfews, and military attacks also hinder access to markets.<sup>26</sup>
- The majority consider food rations through the PDS as a main source of food; however, reliance on food rations varies among them due to the following reasons:
  1. Not all families have a PDS card, either due to delays in transferring rations cards or because they are not eligible to register where they have settled.
  2. Food rations are insufficient, incomplete and received irregularly for almost half of the caseloads.<sup>27</sup>



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

- Unlike in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah Governorates, Dahuk Governorate until recently did not allow the temporary transfer of food rations. In early August 2008, the Dahuk Governor's Office approved the temporary transfer of food rations for IDPs from the Centre and South to Dahuk Governorate (while they remain registered in their place of origin in the Centre/South). IDPs in Dahuk Governorate can apply for the transferral at the local mayor's office. The application will then be sent to the Ministry of Trade (MoT) in Baghdad, from where it will be forwarded to the governorate of origin in order to temporarily suspend the distribution of food rations to the applicant there. Once the suspension confirmation is received in Dahuk through MoT in Baghdad, the applicant can receive his/her food rations in Dahuk Governorate. By 18 August 2008, only 1,600 IDP families, a small portion of the IDPs in Dahuk Governorate, have applied for the temporary transferral of their food rations. The new procedure seems to be rather cumbersome and slow.

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - August 2008.

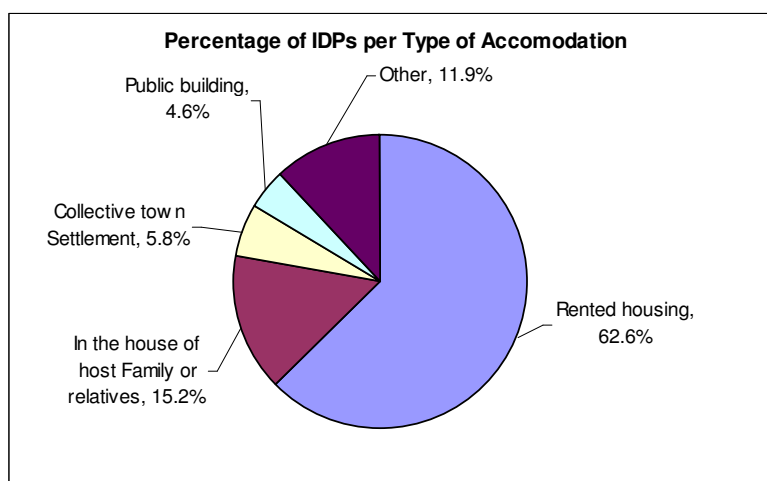
<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

## 4.4 Access to Shelter



### 4.4.1 IDP Distribution by Shelter Type

- The majority of IDPs are renting housing, although they often live in overcrowded conditions in substandard rental property. IDPs in some governorates are being asked to pay exorbitant rental fees; while others must pay a year's rent upfront. Evictions are also a major concern, as IDPs living in public buildings or squatting in the homes of others are being forced to leave, and many do not have another place to go.<sup>28</sup>



Source: IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

### 4.4.2 Evictions of IDPs

- Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, and in some cases evictions have taken place. In May, the Government of Iraq (GoI) issued an eviction order for IDPs living on public property. In early June, the Iraqi Parliament voted on a draft resolution to postpone the eviction order.<sup>29</sup> In July, the MoDM Minister opened the MoDM Registration Centre for returning IDPs and refugees (also referred to as Return Cell). The Centre will also be in charge of receiving claims for the return of occupied property. In September, the GoI began a large-scale eviction and property restitution campaign in Baghdad, applying the Eviction Order and Order 101 (currently applicable only for Baghdad). Local authorities

<sup>28</sup> IOM IDP Monitoring.

<sup>29</sup> Iraqi Parliament homepage.

throughout the country have responded in an ad-hoc manner; in some governorates, such as Basrah and Muthanna, authorities have ordered all IDPs and squatters to leave public property. In other governorates, local authorities are applying the Eviction Order only to certain areas or land. Currently, all evicted IDP families are offered a six-month monthly rent subsidy of 300,000 ID (as long as they are not squatters) applicable only in Baghdad<sup>30</sup>.

- A report released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in June 2008 indicates that all governorates are affected by the Prime Minister's Eviction Order. According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction. The Southern Governorates of Baghdad and Basrah have the highest concentration of evictions; in contrast, the Northern Governorates appear to be experiencing lower concentrations of evictions.
- Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, such as 15 families in Al-Nasir, Najaf who were threatened with eviction by the government because they are on public land, at other times hundreds of families, such as in the case of Farah village in Kerbala, where the Provincial Council and Governor recently removed all IDPs (160 families) illegally squatting on public property.<sup>31</sup>
- Following the issuance of the Eviction Order, UNHCR was approached by MoDM to assist with its implementation. UNHCR responded requesting that the eviction order be postponed until alternative accommodation and solutions were identified. Importantly also, UNHCR requested that the most important public buildings be identified so that evacuations could take place gradually and in an organized manner, according to the priority of the building to be vacated. In most cases, evictions have not been carried out as IDPs have often had nowhere else to go and would have ended up in secondary displacement.
- On 21 September 2008, a UNHCR PAC mobile team of 2 lawyers and one information officer started its work in the Return Cell providing legal advice and offering legal representation for returnees in order to be registered as a returnee or to assist with the claim for return of property.
- While previously squatters were given a time limit of 72 hours to vacate occupied property, they are currently only given a 24 hour-notice. As of 20 October, the Al-Resafa Property Committee received 227 claims for return of property, of which 208 cases were sent to Al-Resafa Commandment Center for their implementation. In 116 cases, squatters were evicted from the properties without any casualties. At that time, the Committee has not received any claims for the payment of six months' rent following an eviction.

#### **4.4.3 Workshops**

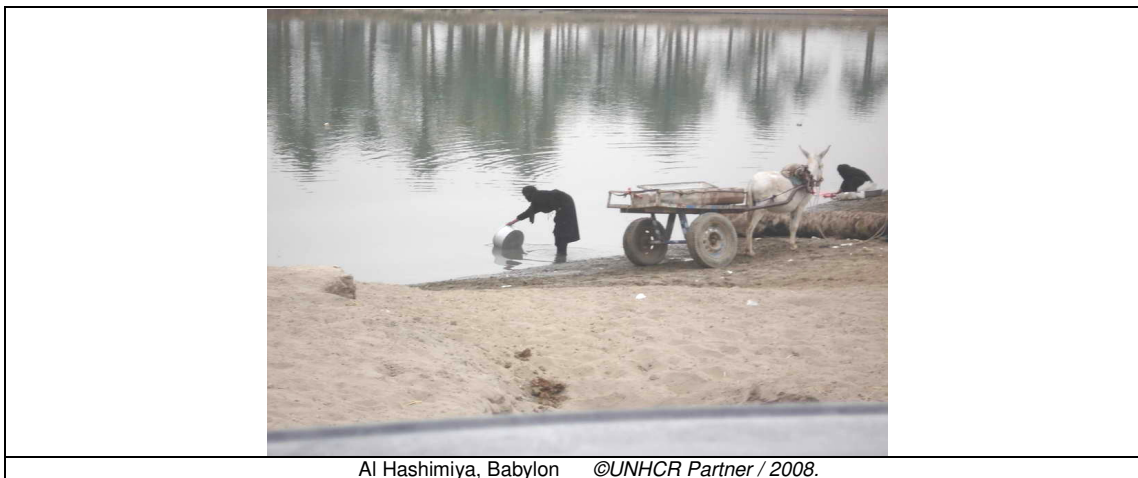
- Between 13 and 15 July, the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) together with the World Bank held a conference regarding property issues, in coordination with UNHCR, IOM and UN Habitat. This conference focused on the recovery of properties lost post April 2003.

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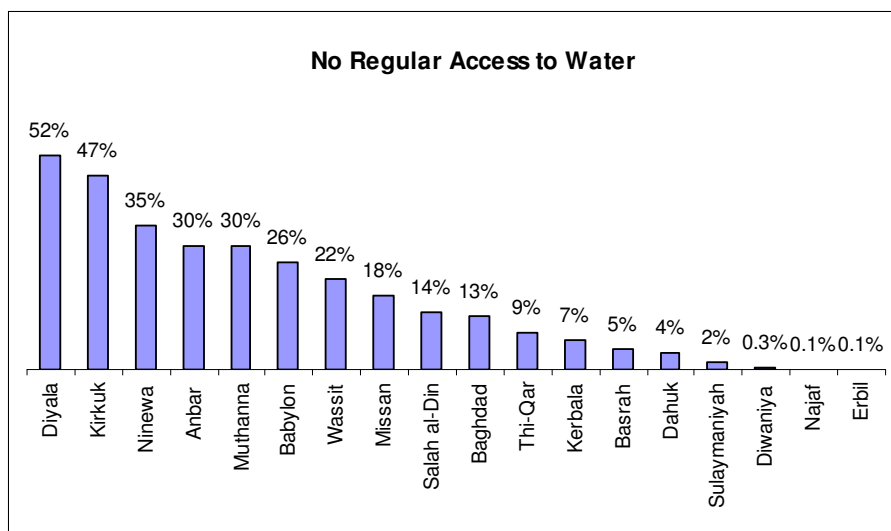
<sup>30</sup> Decree number 262 council of Ministers, July 17th

<sup>31</sup> IOM and UNHCR IDP Monitoring, June 2008. For an update on evictions and eviction orders affecting IDPs, see IOM's Eviction Reports, 4 June.

## 4.5 Access to Clean Water and Adequate Sanitation



- Water and sewage systems in the country are generally poorly functioning and dilapidated. In places where water networks/sewage systems exist or connect to areas, they are either overstretched (almost all assessments in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Dahuk Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa and Wassit, and some in Missan and Basrah) or deficient (nearly all assessments in Baghdad [Resafa, Mada'in], Dahuk, Erbil and the Southern Governorates and the majority of assessments in Diyala and Sulaymaniyah Governorates).<sup>32</sup>
- Lack of sufficient potable water for drinking and cooking was reported to be most common among IDPs and IDP returnees and has been reported in all parts of Iraq.
- Following is the percentage of IDPs per governorate who report no regular access to water:



*Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008*

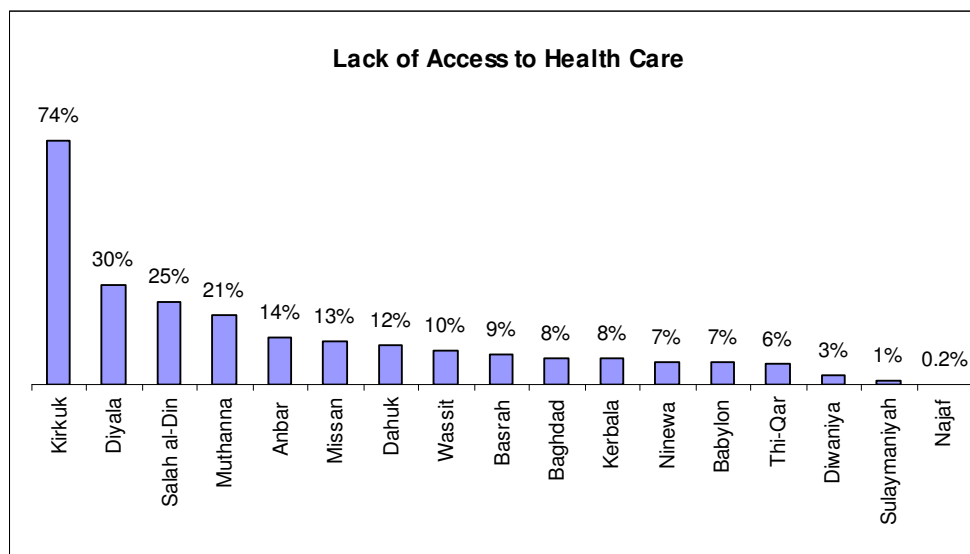
- Lack of regular access to water is most notable in Diyala (52%), Kirkuk (47%) and Ninewa (35%).<sup>33</sup>
- Hygiene issues along with lack of water<sup>34</sup> or sewage system<sup>35</sup> seem to be more severe in rural areas than in urban settings.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - August 2008.

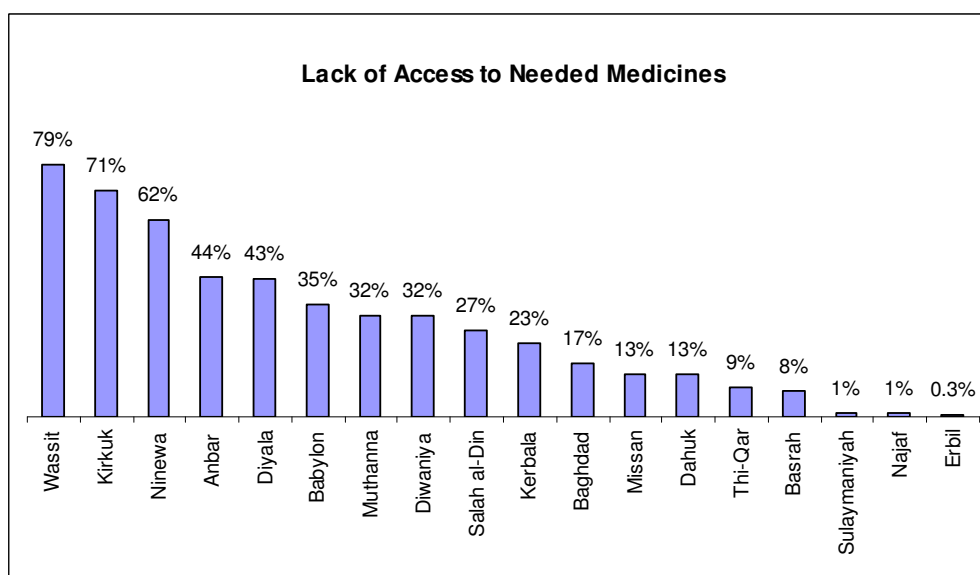
<sup>33</sup> IOM, *Displacement Assessment and Statistics (Emergency Needs Assessments)*, 15 March 2008. WHY MARCH??????

## 4.6 Access to Health

- Health care in Iraq has deteriorated greatly due to the exodus of qualified professionals, a severe shortage of medication and equipment, and damage to medical facilities. Many of the displaced live in substandard conditions and lack basic services, increasing their risk of disease. Lack of access to health care is especially problematic in Kirkuk and Diyala.<sup>37</sup>



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

<sup>34</sup> Lack of water network was indicated in Sulaymaniyah/Qalawa Camp, Baghdad/Al-Resafa, Diyala, Al-Anbar, Missan and Najaf Governorates.

<sup>35</sup> This is very problematic in the Governorates of Baghdad [Mada'in], Al-Anbar and Diyala.

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - August 2008.

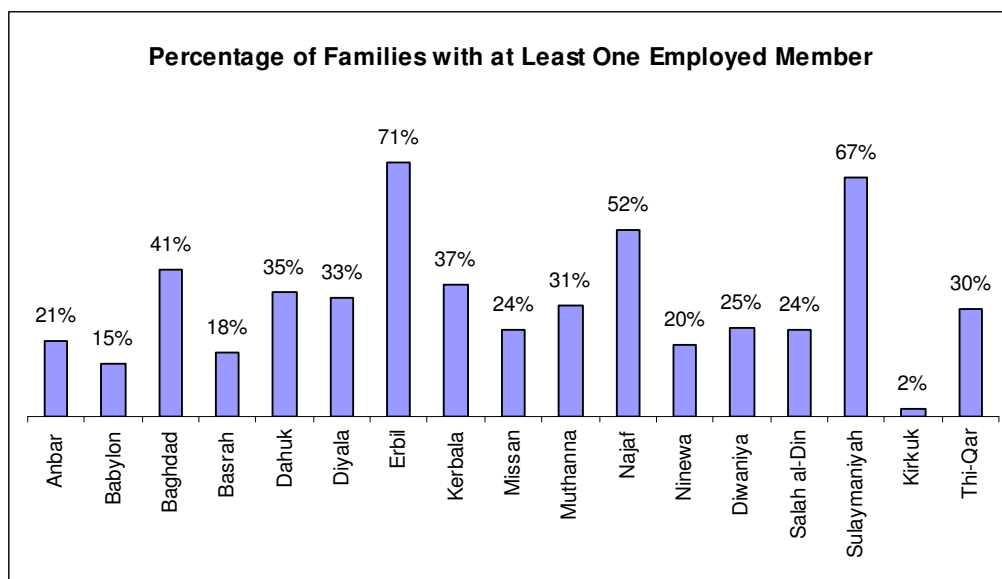
<sup>37</sup> IOM IDP monitoring, June 2008.

## 4.7 Elections<sup>38</sup>

- For the upcoming provincial elections at the beginning of next year, IDPs will be able to vote for their governorate of origin, by either returning there or by casting an absentee vote in the governorate where they are currently displaced.
- To vote, all eligible voters must be registered. According to the Electoral Law, in order to be registered one has to be an Iraqi citizen, be legally competent and be 18 years of age in the month of election.
- IDPs were able to register as voters from 15 July to 15 August 2008 in the location where they were displaced at one of the 549 country wide voter registration centres. However, only people displaced after 9 April 2003 and registered as IDPs with MoDM or DDM were entitled to register. The Protection Assistance Centres (PACs) contributed to the dissemination of information on the upcoming elections.
- The general turnout for voter registration is thought to be relatively low, largely because no specific date has been set for the elections at that time.
- On 5 August, around 15,000 IDPs registered for absentee voting, more than 75% of whom are currently situated in Dahuk and Erbil.

## 4.8 Income, Employment and Other Financial Assistance

- Access to income/employment is consistently mentioned as the first priority for IDPs in Iraq. Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food along with high levels of unemployment are causing deteriorating conditions for IDPs (and host communities) throughout the country. Attaining employment is even more difficult for women and widows, especially in increasingly conservative areas.<sup>39</sup>
- Of 53,104 families interviewed by IOM in 2008, the following stated that at least one member within the family has a job.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

- The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers issued Decree No. 262 (17 July 2008) - extending the IDP assistance scheme to the caseload that has not yet received it. (i.e. some 80,000 IDPs in Central /South and some 35,000 in KRG); issuing the return grant to returning IDPs and refugees; and granting 300,000 IDs to IDPs in Baghdad who are vacating occupied houses).

<sup>38</sup> Based on information received from the UNAMI elections team.

<sup>39</sup> IOM IDP monitoring, 2006-2008.

## 5 Vulnerable Groups

### 5.1 Women Heads of Households and Children

- Female heads of household's income comes from employment, relatives/friends, charities and children working. A significant number of women have no income whatsoever, making them extremely vulnerable.<sup>40</sup> Many IDP children are reported to be working in order to support themselves or their families.<sup>41</sup>
- In all Governorates, indications of economic and social vulnerability in relation to children were found, e.g. children working or begging, street children, children not attending school, child heads of households and early marriages.<sup>42</sup>
- It has also been reported that stress related to economic hardship has resulted in high physical and mental abuse of children. This economic hardship can be linked to the high rate of unemployment throughout the governorates. Girls appear to be more at risk of domestic violence than boys.<sup>43</sup>
- The often precarious security situation in some of the governorates (for example Baghdad, Basrah and Thi Qar) has had an adverse impact upon the percentage of boys and girls attending school. A considerable number of IDPs report that their primary school-aged children do not attend school. Among groups assessed, 31% of the boys and 40% of the girls are not attending primary school.<sup>44</sup> The women's main vulnerability is their lack of financial support.

## 6 Freedom of Movement, Access of IDPs to Governorates

- Large numbers of IDPs have experienced pressure to leave or flee their place of residence mainly due to general violence, direct threats to life, or due to them having been forcibly displaced from their property.
- Restrictions on IDPs' freedom of movement varied between men, women and children. Generally, men leave the home more than women and children leave the home more regularly than women. This may be due to the social-religious constraints that women face as well as the fact that most working children are working in public places.
- Security measures (checkpoints, curfews, permission required by the authorities, fences/walls/barriers) in addition to dilapidated infrastructure (broken and flooded roads) restrict movement throughout the country.<sup>45</sup>
- Groups of IDPs reported pressure to return or resettle elsewhere from authorities, armed elements and host communities.<sup>46</sup> However no pressure was reported in the three Northern Governorates.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - August 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> UNHCR monitoring, February-August 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Reported in the assessments from the Centre and South.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

## 7 Humanitarian Access to IDPs by Aid Agencies

- Humanitarian access is limited by armed conflict, general insecurity and crime, restrictions on movement, and in some cases deliberate obstruction by authorities. Humanitarian workers must operate cautiously as in many cases they are deliberately targeted by armed groups. The situation is complicated by a blurring of roles between military and humanitarian actors. As a result, humanitarian actors in some locations adopt a "low-profile" approach, hiding their identity as international or humanitarian organizations.

### IDPs report that they have received assistance from the following:<sup>48</sup>

Governorate	Has not received assistance	MoDM	Relatives	Iraq Red Crescent	Host community	Other Iraqi government body	Religious group	Humanitarian Organization	Other
<b>All Iraq</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Anbar	6%	1%	25%	18%	60%	0%	56%	67%	1%
Babylon	27%	57%	13%	62%	26%	1%	27%	30%	0%
Baghdad	55%	11%	29%	16%	21%	3%	27%	14%	0%
Basrah	47%	21%	23%	33%	14%	2%	13%	4%	1%
Dahuk	46%	0%	11%	19%	3%	18%	19%	4%	0%
Diyala	21%	21%	42%	35%	58%	2%	17%	18%	3%
Erbil	93%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%
Kerbala	24%	52%	11%	17%	47%	2%	48%	41%	0%
Missan	28%	52%	38%	23%	28%	3%	14%	3%	0%
Muthanna	28%	29%	19%	41%	5%	0%	5%	2%	0%
Najaf	12%	70%	2%	28%	2%	0%	13%	22%	0%
	23%	43%	29%	34%	34%	2%	31%	15%	7%
Diwaniya	16%	37%	46%	41%	30%	2%	54%	18%	0%
Salah al-Din	56%	4%	11%	17%	25%	1%	11%	0%	1%
Sulaymaniyah	84%	0%	0%	7%	5%	2%	1%	6%	0%
Kirkuk	59%	14%	15%	2%	6%	0%	6%	5%	16%
Thi-Qar	25%	34%	47%	42%	37%	1%	43%	19%	2%
Wassit	11%	85%	47%	44%	54%	41%	19%	29%	0%

Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, September 2008

## 8 The National Policy on Displacement

- The *First National Conference to Address Displacement* took place in Baghdad from 8 to 9 July 2008. The Conference was chaired by the Minister of Displacement and Migration and was supported by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), through funding by the Australian Government.
- The event brought together a large number of different stakeholders including: high-ranking officials, representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the Government of Iraq (GoI), the Iraqi Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the various diplomatic missions accredited to Baghdad and those from the numerous national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the region, Governors, Governorate Councils, religious and tribal leaders, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the media.
- The main purpose of the Conference was to launch the *National Policy on Internal Displacement* which was prepared by the MoDM and the KRG, with the support of UNHCR, International Medical Corps (IMC) and other agencies and non-governmental organizations, including Sector Outcome Teams. The Policy was also previously endorsed by the Council of Ministers with the request of incorporating more Iraqi-related technical and legal aspects. Together with the National Policy, a draft work plan was prepared and distributed to all Conference participants to guide the implementation of the National Policy.

<sup>48</sup> IOM IDP Monitoring, May, 2008. Low figures for assistance, especially from humanitarian organizations, could be due to several factors: humanitarian organizations must work under very low profile due to security, so IDPs are not aware from whom they receive assistance or IDPs could be under representing the assistance they receive in order to receive more assistance.

- The National Policy itself describes the rights and the needs of the newly displaced families inside Iraq and together with the draft work plan provides a framework to respond to their needs during emergencies, displacement and durable solutions phase, It also outlines the need for coordination and cooperation between the different Ministries and the international community to facilitate their durable solutions.
- Participants from different quarters highlighted the need for more resources for IDPs, not only for those displaced post-February 2006, access to assistance for unregistered IDPs, access to PDS during displacement; some stressed the need for increased security and the creation of employment opportunities for IDPs.
- To further advance the implementation of the National Policy, four Working Groups were established and were tasked to come up with recommendations on the following four topics:
  - *Working Group 1: Internally displaced persons post 2003 – Emergency preparedness and responses*
  - *Working Group 2: Loss of property, assets and damaged housing (post 2003)*
  - *Working Group 3: Looking for durable solutions of IDPs*
  - *Working Group 4: Iraqis abroad*
- There was agreement that the National Policy and the draft work plan provide the basis for addressing the needs of IDPs and returnees and that they now need to be implemented through the various Ministries and institutions at central, regional and local levels. The next steps will include the follow-up of issues to be addressed at central level as well as the development of concrete work plans at Governorate level.<sup>49</sup>

## 9 Conclusion

Although the rate of displacement has slowed down considerably and a number of Iraqis returned to their homes, the conditions of IDPs and returnees need urgent attention. In certain areas, humanitarian conditions are dire with a lack of access to food, adequate shelter, clean water and sanitation, health and employment, particularly affecting vulnerable groups such as women and children. In addition, rising costs of fuel, rent and food further strain IDPs' and returnees' limited resources. An increase in evictions, affecting many of the most vulnerable, is not yet met with adequate measures to avoid homelessness or secondary displacement. Insecurity and limited access to affected populations in certain areas and the lack of sufficient funding are factors hampering the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

### **IDP Working Group**

Amman, October 2008

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<sup>49</sup> For further details, please see: MoDM, *National Policy on Internal Displacement*, July 2008. MoDM/UNHCR, *Report of the First National Conference to Address Displacement - 8 and 9 July 2008, Baghdad*, July 2008.