

IDP Working Group

Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (June 2008)



IDP children in Sulaymaniyah NFI distribution @UNHCR partner / 2008



Baghdad IDP child ©IOM Partner / 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

- It is estimated that over 2.8 million people are currently displaced inside Iraq and that over 5% of Iraqis are IDPs. Of these, 1.2 million were displaced before 2006 and almost 1.6 million were displaced from 2006 to 2008.
- The peak of displacement was between June and September 2006; less than 1% was displaced in 2008. Fewer new displacements are occurring, although military operations in as Sadr City, Basrah, and along the borders with Iran and Turkey continue to displace Iraqis.
- Military operations in Sadr City led to the displacement of some 4000 families, of which most have returned. During military operations in Basra, Mosul and al-Amarah, there was only limited displacement.
- The security and material situation on the ground in Iraq has not improved sufficiently to promote the return of refugees and IDPs.
- Returnees mostly return to neighbourhoods/districts/governorates under control of members of the sect they belong to. To date, only a few families have returned to areas under control of another sect. Very few members of minority groups (e.g., Christians, Sabaeen-Mandaeans and Yazidis) have been reported to be among the returnees.
- Access to income/employment is consistently mentioned as a priority for IDPs in Iraq, in addition to food and shelter.
- The majority of IDPs consider the PDS as their main source of food; however not all IDPs have access to PDS due to delays in transferring ration cards or because they are not eligible to register in their area of displacement.
- For both IDPs and returnees, access to food is also hindered by a lack of familial income and a lack of security impeding access to markets for both suppliers and customers. Road and neighborhood closures, checkpoints, curfews, and military attacks also hinder access to markets.
- Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food and 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.
- Over the past few months, humanitarian organizations have seen threats of evictions of IDPs living in public buildings or in illegally erected buildings on public land. So far only small scale evictions have taken place.

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1 IDP Families

1.1 Internally Displaced Persons after February 2006¹

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 ²	18,733	104,948	7%
Erbil ³	10,339	62,034	4%
Sulaymaniyah ⁴	14,254	79,672	5%
Total North	43,326	246,654	16%
Ninewa	19,126	106,750	7%
Kirkuk	6,594	36,202	2%
Anbar	8,876	51,487	3%
Baghdad	92,936	563,771	35%
Diyala	17,198	103,426	6%
Salah al-Din	7,817	45,762	3%
Total Centre	152,547	907,398	57%
Babylon	12,799	77,914	5%
Basrah	6,031	35,718	2%
Diwaniya	4,111	26,320	2%
Kerbala	8,617	55,962	3%
Missan	6,858	46,948	3%
Muthanna	2,461	18,351	1%
Najaf	10,140	58,032	4%
Thi-Qar	7,138	47,825	3%
Wassit	12,259	75,326	5%
Total South	70,414	442,396	26%
Grand Total families	266,287		
Grand Total individuals		1,596,448	

Sources: Ministry of Displacement and Migration and Kurdistan Regional Government. Cut off date: 20 March 2008

Note: The IDP figures provided by MoDM and DDM to the IDP WG do not differ from those provided in the March 2008 Update as no new figures have been issued by government authorities, except in Erbil. 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 All figures for Centre and South are from the MoDM report: *Summary Results IDP Registration – February 2006 to March 2008* (issued in March 2008). Figures for the Governorates of Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah are provided by the relevant KRG offices.

² Source: Directorate of Displacement and Migration (DDM) - Dahuk, January 2008.

³ Source: General Directorate of Displacement and Migration - Erbil, June 2008. 370 families reported as displaced by Turkish shelling in December 2007 returned home (UNHCR reports).

⁴ Source: Governorate Security Office - Sulaymaniyah, 31 December 2007. This figure include 355 families reported as displaced by Turkish shelling in Sanagsar in 31 December 2007 (UNHCR reports).

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 "Arabization" 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 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 ⁵ (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
Total North⁶	105,619	133	105,752	634,512
Ninewa	1,947	4,625	6,572	39,432
Kirkuk	184	1,068	1,252	7,512
Anbar	218	4,685 ⁷	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
Total Centre⁸	7,399	21,661	29,060	174,360
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
Total South⁹	57,309	9,897	67,206	403,236
Total families	170,327	31,691	202,018	
Total individuals	1,021,962	190,146		1,212,108

⁵ This figure includes IDPs as well as Iraqi refugees from Iran who returned into internal displacement.

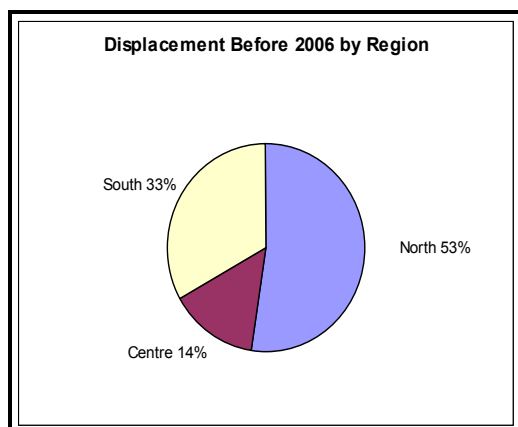
⁶ These include persons expelled during the 'De-villagisation' campaign, the Anfal campaign, the 'Arabization' campaign; persons expelled or who fled due to Kurdish in-fighting, as well as those fleeing fighting between the PKK and the Turkish military in Northern Iraq; Kurds expelled to Iran in the 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.

⁷ 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.

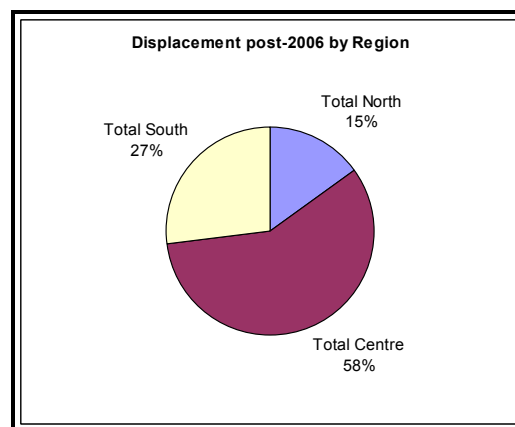
⁸ These include Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians displaced to other areas in the Centre during the 1980s as a result of the Iran / Iraq war; Arabs displaced to the Centre since 1991 following the drainage of the Marshes; Arabs displaced from their places of residence in the Centre as part of the 'Arabization' 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).

⁹ 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).

1.3 Displacement by Region



The majority of transferred/displaced persons before 2006 can be found in the three Northern Governorates, followed by substantial numbers in the nine Southern Governorates, with the remaining IDPs in the Centre.



58% of Post-February 2006 IDPs in Iraq are displaced in the Central Governorates (mostly originating from other areas in the same governorates), 27% are in the South and 15% in the North. An increase of registered IDPs is visible in the Central Governorates.

2 Post-February 2006 Displaced Persons

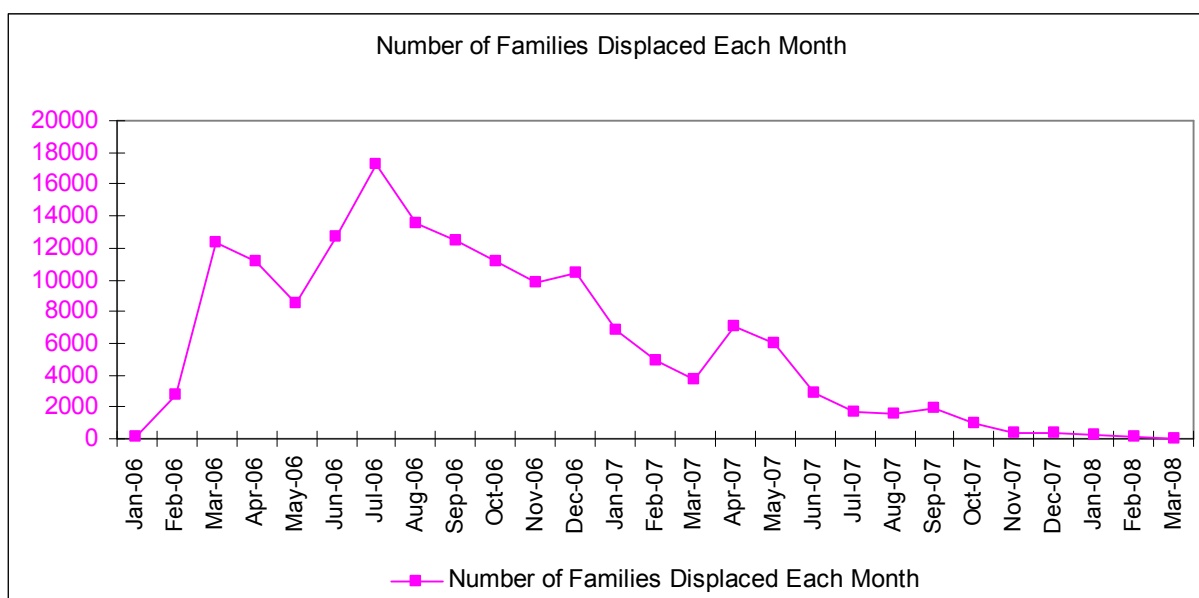
2.1 Trends of Displacement: Community Relations

- 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.¹⁰
- 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).¹¹

¹⁰ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

¹¹ Ibid.

2.2 Post-February 2006 IDP Families by Date of Displacement

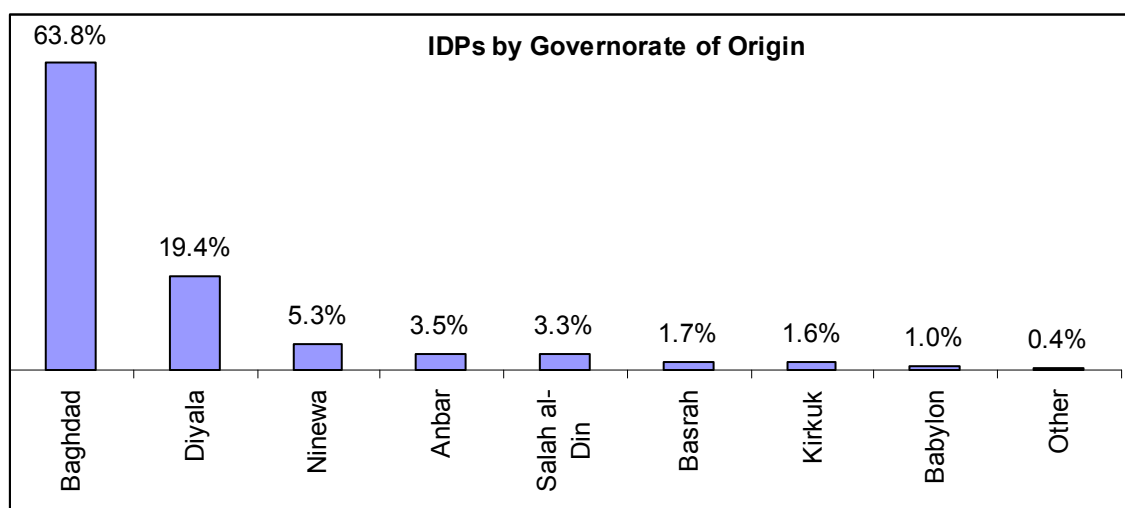


Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, 2008

- The chart “Number of Families Displaced Each Month” above indicates the number of IDP families displaced each month (from February 2006 to March 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 Wassit, Thi-Qar, Diwaniya, Erbil, Kerbala, Muthanna, Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, Missan, and Dahuk.

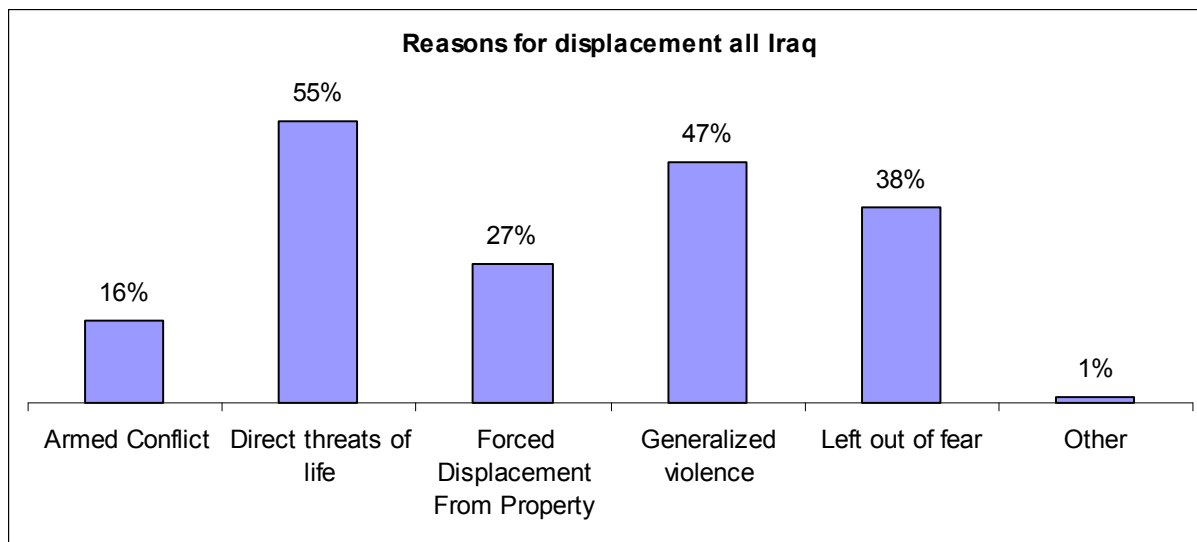


Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

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 fleeing¹²:

¹² IOM, *Displacement Assessment and Statistics (Emergency Needs Assessments)*, May 2008.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

2.5 Security Issues for IDPs

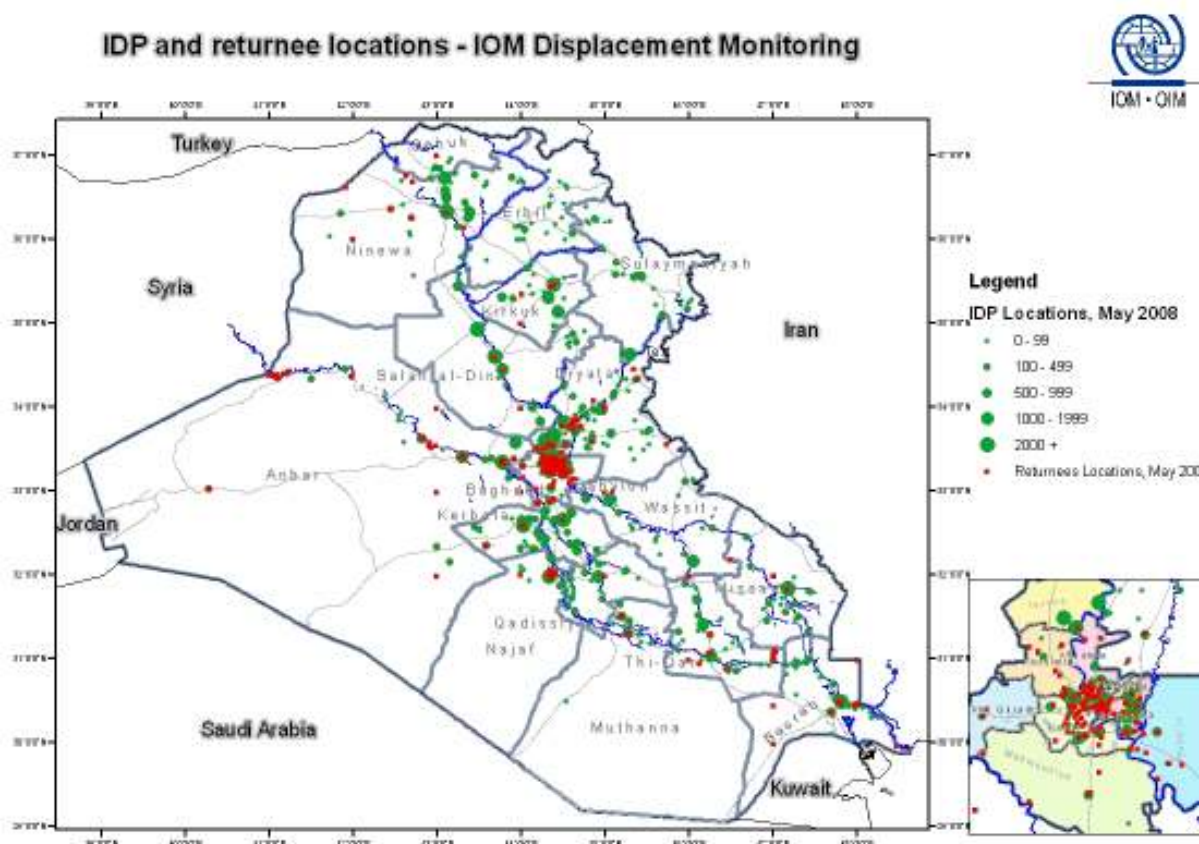
- The risks that surveyed IDPs face are more varying than the other caseloads. IDPs indicated that they face general violence (Governorates of Baghdad, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Missan and Wassit and Najaf), general criminality, detentions, kidnappings, murder/killings, large explosions, military operations 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-boarder attacks from Turkey and Iran, which has caused minor displacement.¹³
- 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.¹⁴
- Reasons that made persons feel less safe were living in mixed areas (ethnic/religious), belonging to the minority group (e.g. Assyrian Christians), occurrence of large explosions, mine contamination or the presence of armed groups.¹⁵

¹³ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

3 Return



- Returns continue at a slow pace throughout the country, with most returns concentrated in Baghdad (the place of origin for most displaced internally or abroad). While people may be returning to areas where their religious/ethnic group is now in the majority and they are accepted state and/or non-state actors 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. In some neighbourhoods and cities, returnees cannot return to their originally home because it was destroyed or is occupied.
- According to IOM returnee monitoring, through end of May 2008 a total of 285 locations with 16,451 returnee families (estimated 98,706 individuals) were identified. Of them 2,581 (16%) are returnee from abroad and the other 13,870 (84%) are returnee families from internal displacement in Iraq.¹⁶
- According to NGO reports, most IDPs and returnees receive information about their former neighborhoods from friends and relatives.¹⁷
- 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;
 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).¹⁸

¹⁶ Based on available information from MoDM's returnee registration, IOM and MoDM monitors' field visits, UNHCR Rapid assessments (snapshot) and other sources, IOM maintains a list of locations with estimated numbers of returnee families.

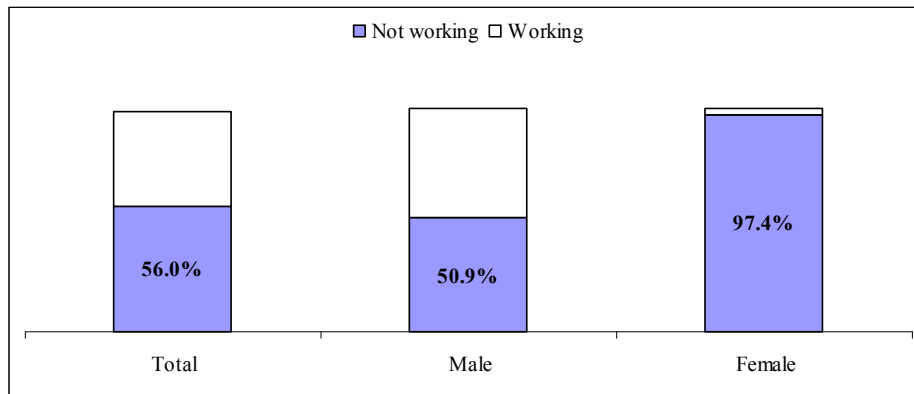
¹⁷ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

- Of those who are able to return to their original neighborhood, not all are able to return to their original home. 16% were able to return to their original neighborhood but not to their original home¹⁹:

Governorate	Total	Their original house	Not the original house but the original neighborhood
Iraq	100%	84%	16%
Anbar	100%	98%	2%
Babylon	100%	90%	10%
Baghdad	100%	89%	11%
Basrah	100%	40%	60%
Diyala	100%	98%	2%
Missan	100%		100%
Muthanna	100%	59%	41%
Najaf	100%	60%	40%
Ninewa	100%	91%	9%
Salah al-Din	100%	25%	75%
Kirkuk	100%	55%	45%

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

- 41% of assessed returnees report regular access to Public Distribution System (PDS) food rations, while 57% report that they do not have regular access to food rations and 2% report no access. 51% report no access to health care. Only 58% report that they feel safe “all of the time”. In addition, of those assessed, few returnees (especially women) became employed once they returned²⁰:



Source: MoDM/IOM, Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, May 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 the areas of return.²¹

¹⁸ UNHCR monitoring, IOM and NGO reports, February - April 2008 and IOM Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, May 2008.

¹⁹ Iraqis who were not able to return to their own home or neighborhood are not considered returnees but are secondarily displaced.

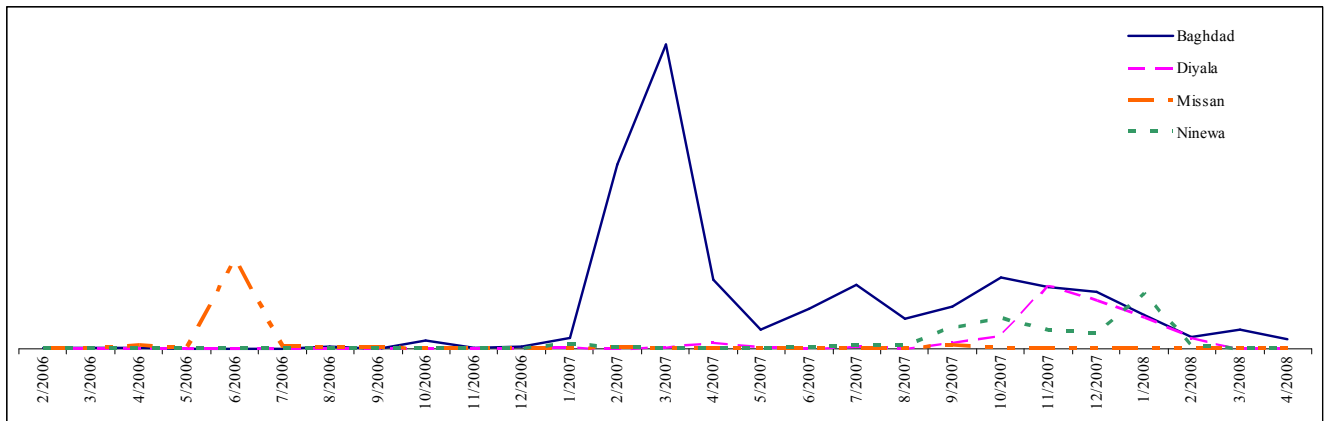
²⁰ MoDM/IOM Returnee Monitoring/Needs Assessments, May 2008.

²¹ UNHCR.

- 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 improvement in security.²² All IDP families (about 35 in total) have left the camp at Al-Sha'ab Stadium, set up by MoDM to host families fleeing Sadr City.

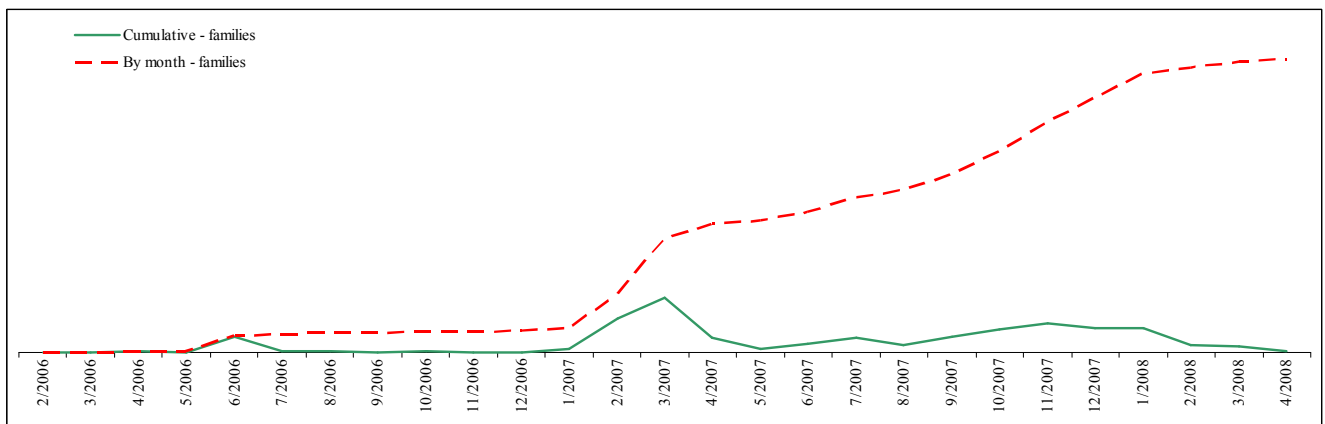
3.1 Main Trends of Return

- Of those assessed through IOM's returnee monitoring, Baghdad, Diyala, Missan, and Ninewa presented the highest number of interviewed returnee families, and their date of return can be tracked as follows:



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

- 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, May 2008

- A few Christian returnees have been assessed, but no Sabaeen-Mandaeans or Yazidis have been reported to be among the returnees.²³

²² Meeting of the Emergency Operations Cell, MoDM offices, 21 May.

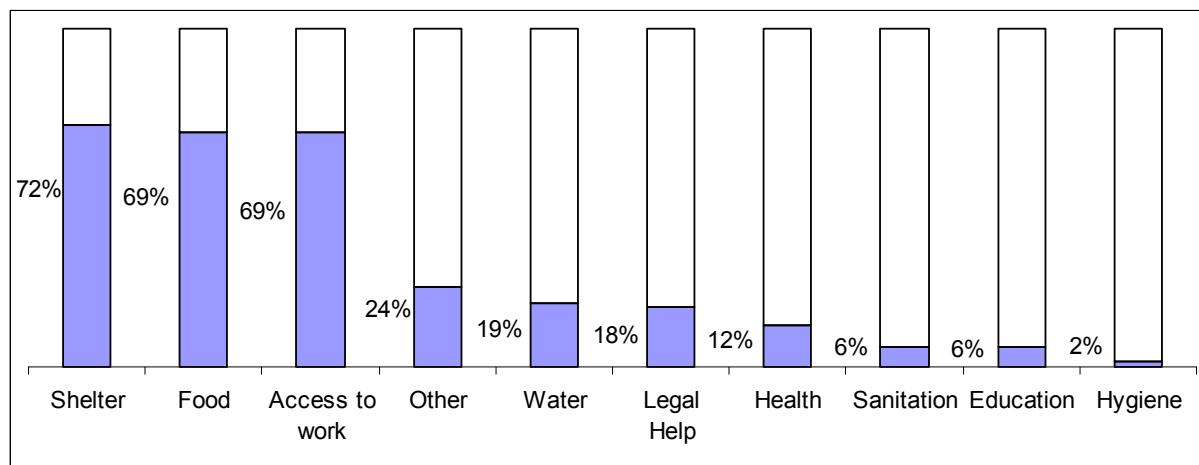
²³ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008, and MoDM/IOM *Baghdad Returnee Assessment*, January 2008.

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 shelter, food and employment:

Percentage of IDPs Stating Their Priority Needs

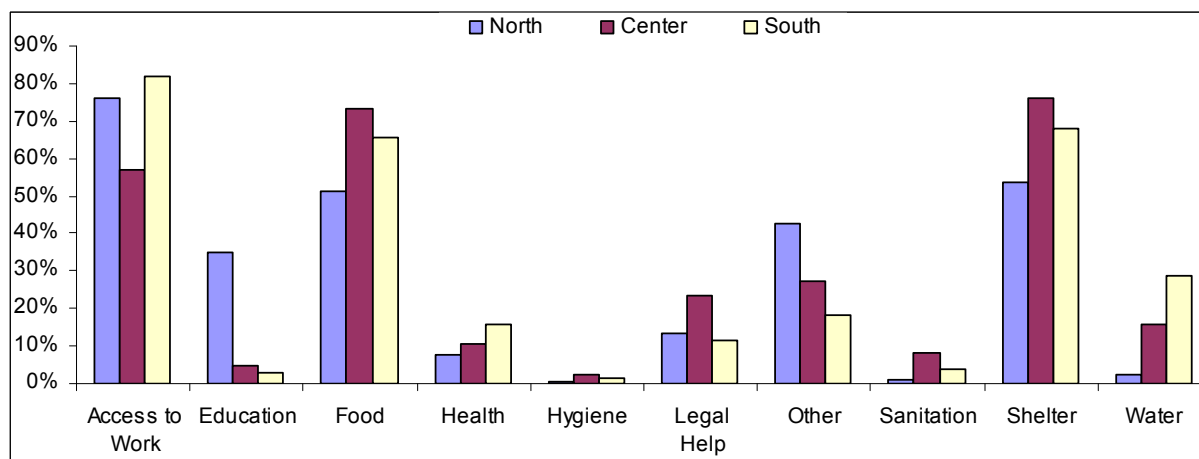


Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

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 work are more frequently reported in the southern governorates, while legal help and food was more frequently reported in the central governorates:

Percentage of IDPs stating their priority needs by North, Centre and South



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

Stated Needs of Displaced Population by Governorate

Governorate	Access to work	Education	Food	Health	Hygiene	Legal Help	Other	Sanitation	Shelter	Water
North Total	74.9%	29.4%	50.3%	6.3%	0.3%	11.7%	43.4%	0.7%	54.2%	1.8%
Dahuk	93.7%	11.5%	55.6%	23.2%	0.3%	0.9%	41.9%	1.0%	53.0%	6.1%
Erbil	93.9%	33.8%	3.1%	0.1%	0.0%	29.6%	0.9%	0.0%	97.6%	0.0%
Sulaymaniyah	46.8%	36.3%	88.6%	1.5%	0.6%	2.4%	81.6%	1.1%	16.7%	0.8%
Center Total	60.4%	4.6%	74.7%	10.9%	1.9%	22.5%	25.0%	7.6%	76.4%	14.9%
Anbar	37.7%	27.0%	95.1%	11.1%	0.1%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	62.6%	64.2%
Baghdad	65.2%	1.6%	70.5%	9.8%	1.4%	5.7%	38.3%	15.1%	86.6%	4.9%
Diyala	32.0%	0.5%	96.7%	11.5%	0.7%	59.8%	18.9%	0.0%	53.7%	25.6%
Ninewa	87.1%	1.3%	23.9%	7.1%	3.2%	89.5%	12.1%	0.9%	69.4%	3.8%
Salah al-Din	70.8%	3.4%	87.5%	19.9%	7.2%	2.4%	27.5%	0.2%	68.4%	11.3%
Tameem	52.2%	4.1%	94.7%	9.4%	0.2%	26.9%	3.1%	4.5%	90.2%	11.8%
South Total	82.4%	3.2%	64.4%	15.5%	1.3%	11.7%	18.0%	4.7%	67.2%	28.1%
Babylon	69.7%	7.1%	71.3%	23.8%	0.1%	29.2%	14.0%	2.9%	51.4%	29.9%
Basrah	97.9%	0.6%	67.3%	0.8%	0.0%	25.3%	6.1%	0.2%	99.1%	2.7%
Kerbala	87.1%	7.0%	55.0%	4.3%	0.4%	4.6%	15.7%	20.0%	69.5%	15.7%
Missan	67.0%	0.3%	33.4%	11.1%	2.6%	1.8%	67.2%	6.6%	70.7%	39.0%
Muthanna	53.4%	13.7%	59.4%	25.8%	5.1%	6.0%	19.4%	4.4%	77.6%	34.8%
Najaf	91.0%	0.0%	91.8%	3.1%	0.1%	3.3%	6.7%	0.0%	95.4%	8.4%
Qadissiya	92.1%	0.7%	63.3%	3.9%	0.0%	10.0%	22.0%	0.3%	89.3%	18.2%
Thi-Qar	95.6%	1.2%	68.7%	6.9%	1.4%	6.1%	22.2%	0.0%	93.6%	3.8%
Wassit	83.0%	0.5%	67.7%	36.7%	3.0%	11.2%	4.2%	1.0%	28.6%	64.0%

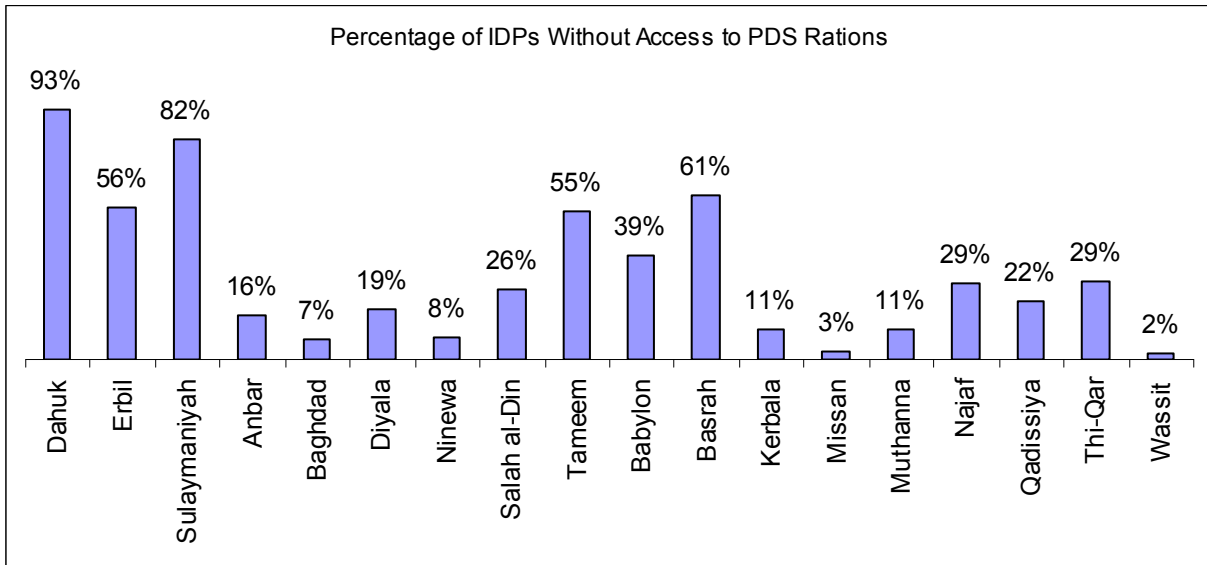
Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments (May 2008)

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.²⁴
- 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.²⁵

²⁴ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

²⁵ Ibid.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

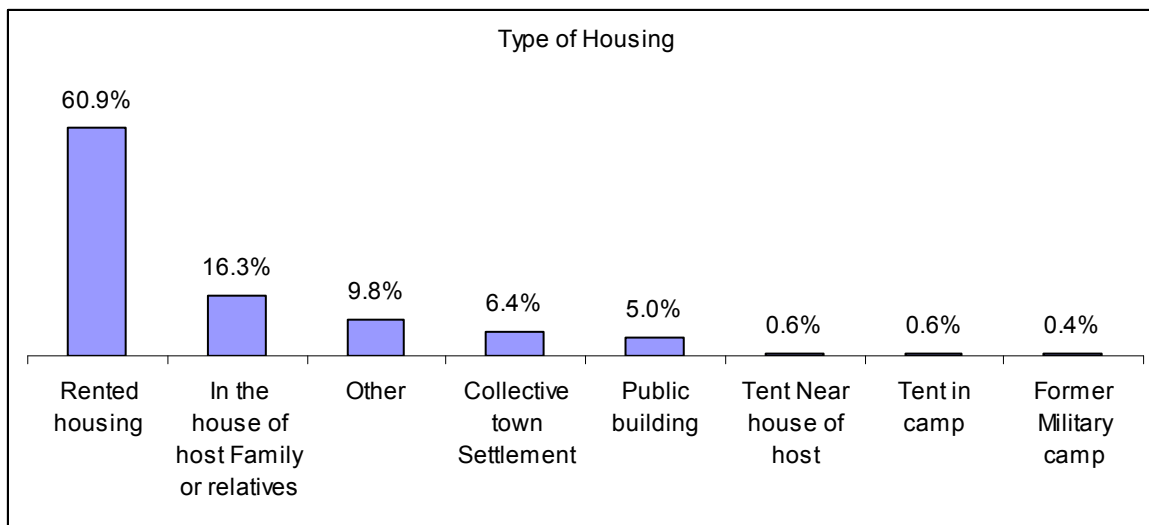
4.4 Access to Shelter

<p><i>IDP home in Anbar ©IOM Partner / 2008</i></p>	<p><i>Post-February 2006 IDPs living in a small settlement in Chibayish district (Thi-Qar) ©UNHCR Partner /2008</i></p>

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, and as rental prices continue to rise and IDPs' financial resources dwindle, more and more IDPs are reportedly being evicted from their homes.²⁶

²⁶ IOM IDP Monitoring.



Source: IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 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 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.²⁷ Local authorities are responding 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 order only to certain areas or land. Regardless, the IDPs are given no other option for shelter, forcing them into secondary displacement.
- In June, several statements have been made in the media from GoI officials calling for evictions: Baghdad and Al-Amara, Missan have been specifically mentioned.
- Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, such as 15 families in Al-Nasir, Najaf who have been threatened with eviction by the government because they are on public land, and sometimes hundreds of families, such as in Farah village in Kerbala, where the provincial council and governor recently removed all IDPs (160 families) illegally squatting on public property in this village.²⁸
- In a former military camp in Taji, Baghdad, close to 1,000 IDP families (estimated 7,000 individuals) have settled. There is an imminent threat of eviction of these families from the camp.
- According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction.

4.5 Access to Clean Water and Adequate Sanitation

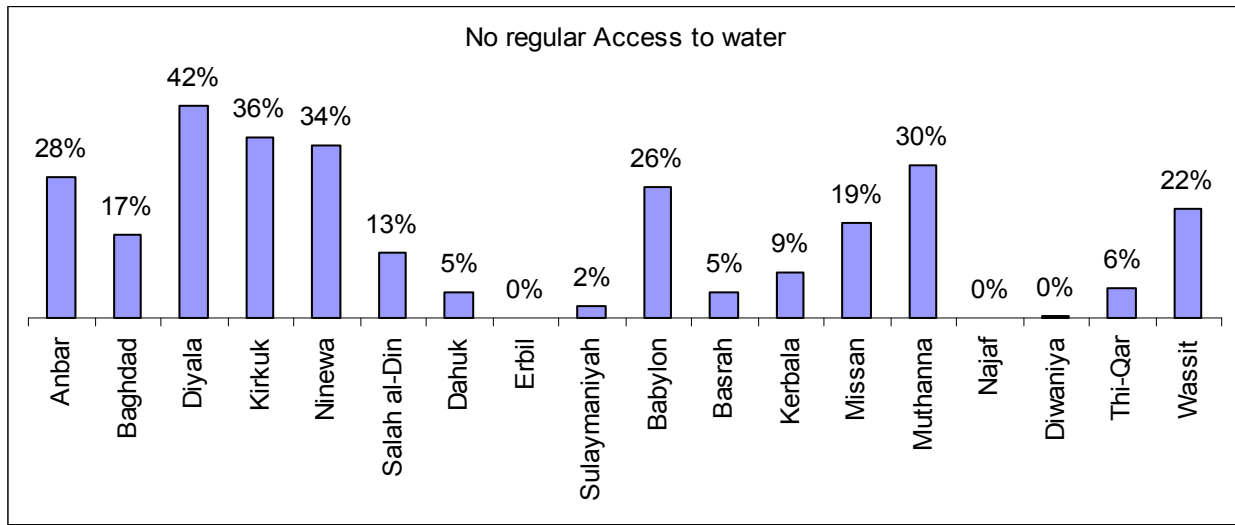
- Water and sewage systems in the country are generally poorly functioning and dilapidated. In places where water networks/sewage systems exist or connect to areas, they are either overstretched (almost all assessments in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Dahuk Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa 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).²⁹

²⁷ Iraqi Parliament homepage

²⁸ IOM and UNHCR IDP Monitoring, June 2008. For an update on evictions and eviction orders affecting IDPs, see IOM's Eviction Reports, 4 June.

²⁹ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

- 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, May 2008

- Lack of regular access to water is most notable in Diyala (42%), Kirkuk (36%) and Ninewa (34%).³⁰
- Hygiene issues along with lack of water³¹ or sewage system³² seem to be more severe in rural areas than in urban settings.³³



Sewage water flooding a street in Basra
©UNHCR Partner / 2008.



Distribution of water and jerry cans in Basra
©UNHCR Partner / 2008.

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 Salah al Din and Diyala.³⁴

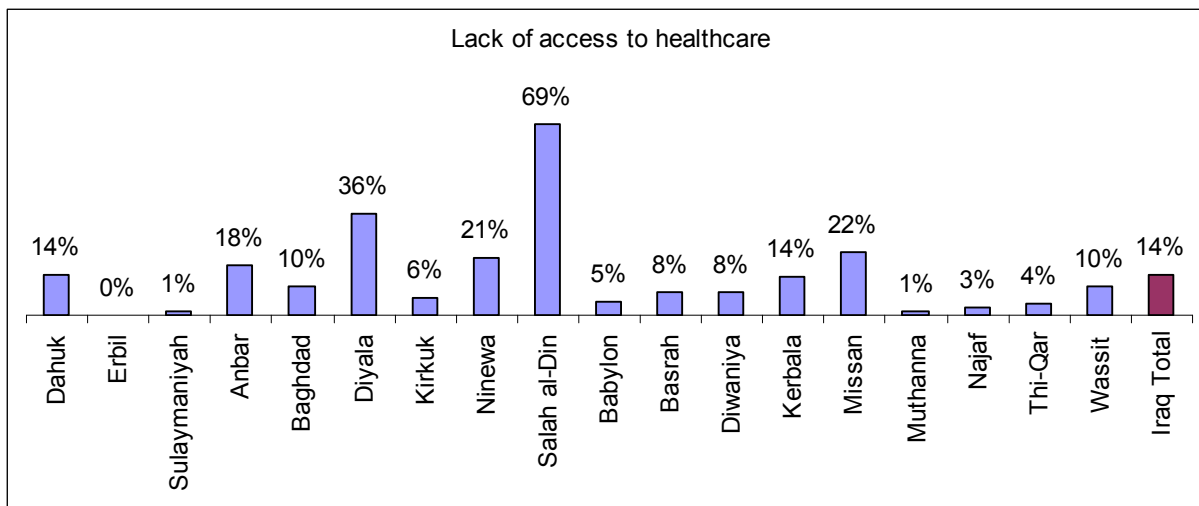
³⁰ IOM, *Displacement Assessment and Statistics (Emergency Needs Assessments)*, 15 March 2008.

³¹ Lack of water network was indicated in Sulaymaniyah/Qalawa Camp, Baghdad/Al-Resafa, Diyala, Al-Anbar, Missan and Najaf Governorates.

³² This is very problematic in the Governorates of Baghdad [Mada'in], Al-Anbar and Diyala.

³³ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

³⁴ IOM IDP monitoring, June 2008.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

4.7 Elections³⁵

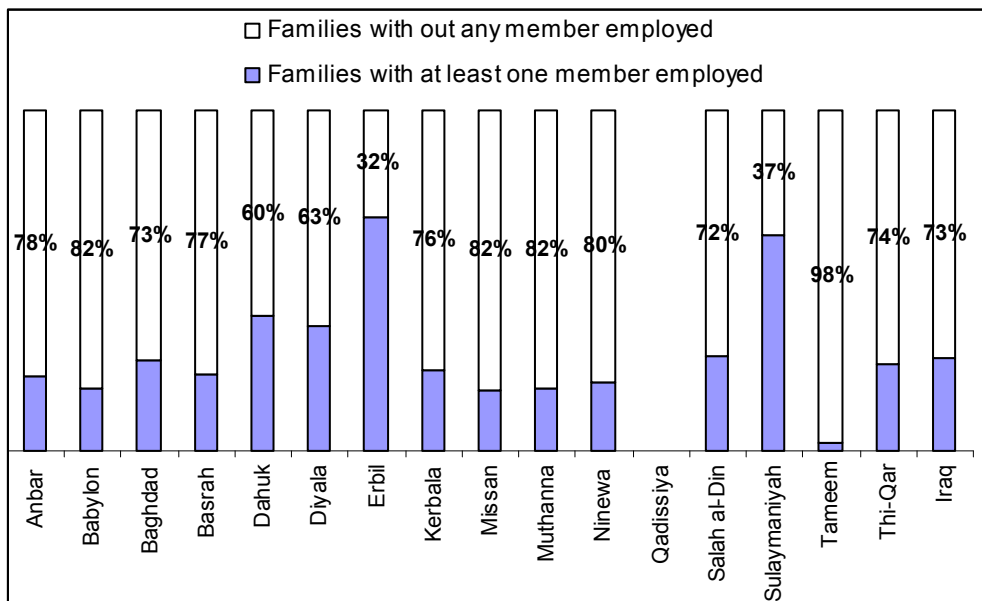
- For the upcoming governorate elections later this year, IDPs will be able to vote for their governorate of origin, by either returning to their governorate or by casting an absentee vote in the governorate where they are currently displaced.
- To vote, all eligible voters must be registered. According 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 can register as voters where they are displaced at one of the 549 voter registration centres country wide from 1 July to 31 July. However, only people displaced after 9 April 2003 and registered as IDPs with the MoDM or the DDM will be entitled to register.

4.8 Income and Employment

- Access to income/employment is consistently mentioned as the first priority for IDPs in Iraq. Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food and 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.³⁶
- Of 28,320 families interviewed by IOM in 2008, the following stated that at least one member within the family has a job.

³⁵ Based on information received from the UNAMI elections team.

³⁶ IOM IDP monitoring, 2006-2008.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 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.³⁷ Many IDP children are reported to be working in order to support themselves or their families.³⁸
- 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.³⁹
- Girls appear to be more at risk of domestic violence than boys.⁴⁰
- 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.⁴¹

6 Freedom of Movement, Access of IDPs to Governorates

- 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.⁴²

³⁷ UNHCR monitoring and NGO reports, February - April 2008.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² UNHCR monitoring, February-April 2008.

- Groups of IDPs reported pressure to return or resettle elsewhere from authorities, armed elements and host communities.⁴³ However no pressure was reported in the three Northern Governorates.⁴⁴

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:⁴⁵

Governorate	Has not received assistance	MoDM	Relatives	Iraq Red Crescent	Host community	Other Iraqi government body	Religious group	Humanitarian Organization	Other
All Iraq	38%	28%	26%	25%	29%	5%	25%	19%	2%
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%
Ninewa	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, May 2008

8 Conclusion

Although the rate of displacement is slowing and more Iraqis are attempting to return to their homes, the conditions of both the displaced and returnees continues to deteriorate. Lack of access to food, adequate shelter, clean water and sanitation, health and employment, especially for vulnerable groups such as women and children, create conditions of desperation among many of the 2.8 million IDPs throughout the country. Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food and high levels of unemployment

⁴³ Ibid. Reported in the assessments from the Centre and South.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ 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.

exacerbate the situation. An increase in evictions is being witnessed throughout the country, threatening to force even more from their places of shelter. While humanitarian organizations strive to respond to the many needs of IDPs, returnees, and vulnerable populations, insecurity, lack of funding, and military operations make assistance difficult and at times impossible.

IDP Working Group,
Amman, June 2008