



NINEWA PLAINS AND WESTERN NINEWA SUSTAINABLE RETURNS AND STABILIZATION EFFORTS

Current Initiatives and Trends

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
ASFL	Azidi Fraternity & Solidarity League
AoO	Area of Origin
BCF	Barzani Charity Foundation
C4W	Cash for Work
CNSF	Critical Needs Support Foundation
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAMA	Doctors Aid for Medical Activities
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DCA	DanChurchAid
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DOE	Department of Education
DOH	Department of Health
DoLSA	Department of Labour and Social Affairs
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EU	European Union
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
FAO	Farm and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFES	Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization
FFS	Funding Facility for Stabilization
FFIS	Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSD	Fondation Suisse de Deminage
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBVIM	Gender-Based Violence Information Management System
Gol	Government of Iraq
GRC	Governorate Returns Committee
GW	GardaWorld
HA	Human Appeal
HLP	Housing, Land and Property
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICRC	International Committee for the Red Cross
ICRRP	Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme
ID	Identification
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IEC	Iraq Education Cluster
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IHAO	Iraq Health Access Organization
IHF	Iraq Humanitarian Fund
IIC	IDP Information Centre
IKMAA	Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency
IMC	International Medical Corps
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
IS	Islamic State
JDA	Joint Development Associates International
KII	Key Informant Interview
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government

KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
LADP	Local Area Development Programme
LHSF	Local, Hybrid and Sub-state Force
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MCNA	Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment
MDM	Médecins du Monde
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NAP	National Action Plan
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NCCI	NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NPWG	Ninewa Protection Working Group
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSS	National Security Service
PAO	Public Aid Organization
PHCC	Primary Health Care Centre
PIN	People In Need
PPP	Private Public Partnership
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PUI	Première Urgence Internationale
PWJ	Peace Winds Japan
QRC	Qatar Red Crescent
REACH	Rehabilitation, Education and Community Health
RIRP	Rebuild Iraq Recruitment Program
RNVDO	Representative of Ninewa Voluntary for IDPs
SCI	Save the Children Iraq
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Assault
SEDO	Sahara Economic Development Organization
SFHH	Single Female Headed Households
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SP	Samaritans Purse
TAD	Al-Tahreer Association for Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPP	Un Ponte Per
U.S.	United States
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WHH	Welthungerhilfe
WHO	World Health Organization
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WVI	World Vision International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stabilization initiatives in Iraq require specialized efforts in each of its diverse districts, which should be based on an in-depth understanding of their history and population compositions. Although coordination between stakeholders continues to improve, subject to various agendas and donor expectations, international and national organizations working on stabilization efforts are dealing with historically deep structural and social cohesion challenges (See *Barriers to Stability and Return: A Meta-Analysis report*).

Following the liberation of Mosul from the Islamic State (IS) in 2017, Ninewa governorate and its districts have had the most severe living conditions for returnees. This is largely due to the significant housing and infrastructure destruction in many areas, combined with slow reconstruction and compensation processes. In Ninewa's post-war context, concerns continue to rise with the prolonged mode of displacement, particularly in the areas of protection, infrastructure, demining, livelihood, housing-land-property, social wellbeing, basic services, social cohesion and reconciliation.

Through an analysis of the current initiatives in Ninewa, this report highlights critical challenges relating to stabilization and the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The areas of concern are as follows:

- a) Unmet humanitarian needs critical for the return of IDPs;
- b) Changing trends in donor priorities which impact initiatives on the ground;
- c) Poor attention to the cultural and historical contextualization of displacement in Ninewa when implementing projects;
- d) Lack of appropriate government policies in dealing with IDP returns and managing numerous implementing partners;
- e) Bureaucracy and a lack of coordination between local and central governments and international donors;
- f) Poor communication between the national and local governments and inadequate access to information on processes, plans and structures to ensure IDP protection throughout the region;
- g) Clear discrepancies between the different definitions of what constitutes stabilization, affecting the selection of indicators, the stated conditions for stabilization, and the programming designed to achieve it;
- h) Inconsistency in the length of the stabilization period and where it intersects with peace between security factions, which is an important factor in accessing areas to operate stabilization projects.

In order to understand IDP needs and interventions for their return, this “initiatives mapping” explores the following six (6) relevant themes in addition to stabilization:

1. Protection
2. Infrastructure and Demining
3. Housing, Land and Property (HLP)
4. Livelihood
5. Social Wellbeing and Basic Services
6. Social Cohesion and Reconciliation

This report identifies existing needs, initiatives & services, and actors within each thematic area. It also highlights critical failures, shortcomings, and gaps that are impeding stabilization and IDP return. This “initiatives mapping” is therefore created with a view to determine cross-cutting challenges, destabilizing factors and process failures in order to better inform stabilization programming.

The study's recommendations include:

- 1) As the role of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) has become critical in providing mixed services in different sectors, tailoring projects in a realistic, flexible, and locally-sensitive manner is a priority.
- 2) Donors need to continue to fund protection initiatives and services inside camps and be prepared for a slow return of the most vulnerable individuals inside these camps.
- 3) A better process to identify beneficiaries is required based solely upon humanitarian need (principle of impartiality) and through clearly established vulnerability criteria.
- 4) There is a need for improved monitoring during and after the execution of work, as well as evaluation by technical experts upon expiration of the liability period.
- 5) Building capacity in local authorities to regulate markets is urgently required, as are reforms that revive agriculture as a platform for land cultivation and livelihood for returnees.
- 6) Regarding social wellbeing and basic services, building capacity in Ninewa's Departments of Health and Education will be central to providing equitable, high-quality services to IDPs in areas of origin and displacement.
- 7) Social cohesion and reconciliation initiatives should be embedded within the wider population they aim to represent. They should be inclusive of religion, ethnic identity, and gender. Existing efforts must be augmented by a transparent and accountable justice process.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this report is based on participation in cluster meetings and working groups in Erbil, including the Peace and Reconciliation Working Group and the Returns Working Group, as well as interviews with cluster coordinators, representatives of INGOs, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs) and subject matter experts during the time period of January through June 2019. Augmenting data was collected in February 2020.

I. INTRODUCTION

Current Humanitarian Return Needs and Dynamics

The aim of this report is to map previous and current initiatives undertaken by local, provincial and national governments, civil society organizations, international NGOs and other actors to address barriers to stabilization and the return of displaced persons from Ninewa governorate, particularly Ninewa Plains and Western Ninewa. The report also identifies shortcomings, failures and gaps that constrain return processes and long-term stabilization.

The next section explains the context in which stabilization efforts have taken place in Ninewa and the challenges to implementing stabilization projects in districts of concern. The subsequent sections are dedicated to addressing stabilization and return concerns across six different sectors. Each section provides an assessment of needs, initiatives, gaps, main implementing actors and budgeting and donor trends. It is important to emphasize that this report is complementary to the meta-analysis study (See *Barriers to Stability and Return: A Meta-Analysis* report), and the analyses should be collectively considered.

Through an analysis of the current initiatives in Ninewa in the sectors of protection, infrastructure, demining, livelihood, HLP, basic services, social cohesion and reconciliation, this report highlights critical areas of concern related to stabilization and IDP return. To achieve the objectives of the study, we have explored and mapped the initiatives undertaken by various local and international implementing actors who are addressing the barriers to stabilization and IDP return in Ninewa, and have localized the definition of stabilization in the Ninewa context. This is done through the use of frameworks and definitions of stabilization from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Funding Facility for Stabilization. Eight (8) meetings with clusters and working groups, including the Peace and Reconciliation Working Group and the Returns Working Group, provided an understanding of common issues experienced by implementing actors on the ground. In addition, 21 interviews were conducted with cluster coordinators, INGOs, local NGOs, CSOs and subject matter experts to provide further information on critical concerns related to the six themes explored in this report.

This report finds that there are varying definitions of what constitutes “stabilization.” Additionally, in international humanitarian fora, there is a focus on IDPs returning to Ninewa as both an indicator and pre-condition for stabilization; these terms are used interchangeably to indicate success. In this way, apart from the murkiness of the definition, stabilization is seen as both a precondition for IDP return and as a factor that conditions IDP return. Moreover, there is inconsistency between different actors in their understanding of the length of the socioeconomic stabilization period and how it intersects with military stabilization, which is a primary factor in gaining the necessary access to operate stabilization projects.

Meanwhile, with donor priorities changing from humanitarian response (primarily rendered in camp settings) toward development initiatives for stabilization in IDP Areas of Origin (AoO), IDPs who are unable to follow this shift and settle in their AoO are left increasingly vulnerable. This donor reorientation and the prospect of eventual humanitarian exit could further destabilize Ninewa if capacity-building efforts and exit plans are not adequately secured (INGO KII:2019). The robust involvement of the Government of Iraq (GoI) and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) are therefore central in ensuring that the transition to development becomes a nationally owned project. In order for this outcome to be secured, expectations regarding return and stabilization need to be realistic, and grounded in the needs and wants of IDPs rather than in donor preferences alone.

2. STABILIZATION

Stabilization is becoming increasingly central as a paradigm in international development policy. Despite the multitude of actors involved in implementing stabilization initiatives in Ninewa, the definition of what constitutes “stabilization” remains unclear between stakeholders (Meininghaus, Mielke & Mutschler:2019). This affects project indicators, ideas around the premise for stabilization, and the programming designed and implemented to cultivate it. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines four windows of opportunity for stabilization, which include: infrastructure and rehabilitation, livelihood, capacity support and reconciliation (UNDP:2018a). According to a UNDP internal study, “stabilization is a time bound, localized, and integrated civilian program of activities, in areas cleared and held through military action.” These activities are intended “to create confidence in, and provide support to, an ongoing peace process, while laying the building blocks for longer-term peacebuilding and development by delivering a peace dividend to local communities and seeking to extend legitimate political authority” (van der Hoeven:2017).

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has created a list of principles and a corresponding framework to measure long-term stability, called the Strategic Framework for Stabilization and Reconstruction. Listed principles include: host nation ownership, political primacy, legitimacy and accountability, unity of effort, security, conflict transformation, and regional engagement (USIP:2009). The framework delineates the precise conditions of desirable end states, which include the rule of law, a safe and secure environment, social wellbeing, stable governance, and a sustainable economy (USIP:2009).

Central to USIP’s stabilization principles is upholding the rule of law. However, various security forces in Iraq have been accused of conducting arbitrary arrests and detentions of IDPs both inside and outside their camp residences, while public defendants have reportedly been bribed and arrested. A current accountability concern is the high level of human rights violations, often involving security actors and other authorities, within IDP camp settings. From January to March 2019, the camps of Qayyarah Jed’ah (1 to 6), Airstrip, Hajj Ali and Hammam Al Ali (1 and 2) recorded 42 incidents involving a total of 51 human rights violations; 31% of these involved incursions by armed security actors into camps (NPC:2019b). These incidents included the arbitrary detention, arrest, and mistreatment of IDPs, various forms of verbal and physical assault, and acts of gender-based violence (GBV) such as sexual exploitation and abuse. Women, in particular, suffer from these crimes as they build fundamentally upon a protection dependency on men, rather than on the rule of law.

As of September 2018, the UNDP’s Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) constituted 2,870 projects (UNDP:2019a). These projects have mainly focused on reconstruction, rehabilitation, infrastructure, sanitation and livelihood. The FFS’s work on the rehabilitation of large public service institutions (predominantly those for education and health), which provide employment for thousands, should incentivize sustainable family return. More recently, UNDP’s Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization (FFES) has received more funding aimed at a rapid consolidation of immediate stabilization gains through the generation of jobs in newly liberated cities and the stabilization of passageways between liberated areas. UNDP’s Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS) was used to establish short-term livelihoods for youth and repair infrastructure to facilitate transport, electricity, sanitation provisions, and the development of agricultural corridors between liberated cities.

The UNDP’s focus on stabilization has been predominantly low-risk, and has targeted liberated areas to implement visible projects, rather than reconstruction projects, in Iraq’s more sensitive districts (UNDP:2018b). However, by the first quarter of 2019, through the FFS, UNDP started prioritizing areas with the most severe return conditions (UNDP:2018a). Over 95% of the work is contracted

through the local private sector, which reduces costs and is designed to help local companies rebuild their own cities with local labor (UNDP:2018a). In 2018, discussions were initiated on the Gol’s own contribution to stabilization efforts through the FFS. Meanwhile, the European Union (EU), UNDP, and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) work together to focus on similar stabilization efforts based on the principles of empowering civil society and local authorities to tackle specific needs learned through their Local Area Development Programme (LADP) assessments. In addition, these initiatives are designed and branded to help Iraq reach national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 (LADP:2018, UNDP:2019a).

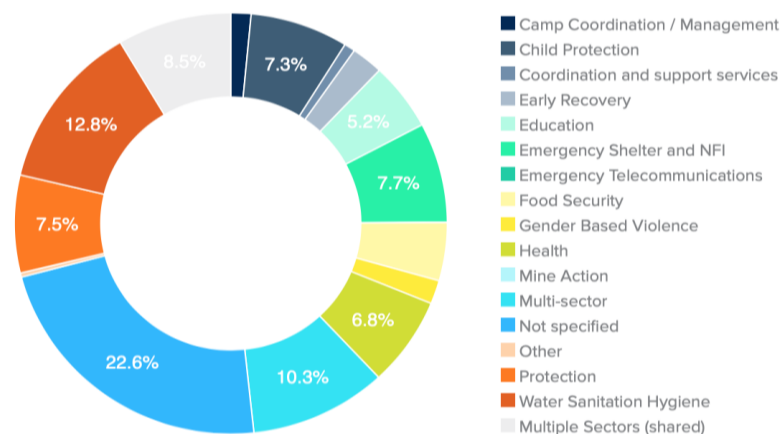


Figure 1: Iraq funding allocation for 2019 for UN OCHA’s Humanitarian Response Plan or appeal by technical area/sector (Financial Tracking Service:2019).

CROSS-SECTORAL GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

Throughout this study of initiatives related to stabilization and IDP return, a number of cross-cutting challenges, shortcomings, and programmatic gaps became evident. Across sectors, for example, stabilization actors highlight serious structural impediments rooted in existing governance paradigms. In this highly politicized environment, shaped by weak state structures and ethno-sectarian interests, humanitarian actors often struggle to identify “viable and reliable government counterparts” at the federal and local levels (OCHA:2019, p. 11). Widespread governmental corruption, mismanagement, and the prevalence of patron-client relations compromise the consistency and standardization of interventions. Meanwhile, the high rate of turn-over in official positions, along with stagnation around election time and a lack of transitional mechanisms to ensure the transfer of critical priorities, negatively impacts program continuity (KRG KII:2019, Local Authority KII:2020). These difficulties reflect the absence of a systematic, comprehensive, and coherent federal policy toward the displacement crisis, as well as toward the reconstruction and stabilization of Ninewa (KRG KII:2019, OCHA:2019). Without cohesive and unified policies from the Gol, KRG, and Ninewa governorate, poor coordination and communication between the numerous implementing partners can reduce the efficacy of existing initiatives and render project impact more symbolic than substantive (INGO FGD:2019, KRG KII:2019).

At the same time, the efforts of many INGOs and implementing partners are constrained by the priorities, parameters, and protocols established by international donors. Ninewa has become a pilot project for the stabilization initiatives of many INGOs and larger bilateral and multilateral agencies.

However, the donor priorities that shape these initiatives do not always match the greatest needs or complexities identified by recipient communities (INGO FGD:2019, KRG KII:2019).

“A specific NGO implemented a project with a budget of \$200,000 USD, providing psychosocial support to women. But after the training, these women go back home, they see a destroyed street, a destroyed house and a husband with no job. How such project (just words) can have an impact. If the objective is to provide a safe return, therefore they should consult local governments, or local governments should propose projects. I know compensation and reconstruction is the responsibility of the Iraqi government, it is not the responsibility of the U.S. or INGOs, but as there is a budget, it should be spent in a better way. INGOs are working on secondary priorities not primary ones.”

Local Authority KII, 2019

This critical mismatch results in interventions that can be perceived as both discriminatory and redundant, as they frequently concentrate on certain demographics or geographical areas to the exclusion of others (KIIs:2019, OCHA:2019). Additionally, although the design of these programs may adequately account for contextual complexities in the inception stage, extensive timeframes between design, funding, and implementation can compromise their resonance and efficacy in the face of Ninewa’s highly volatile conditions and rapidly shifting dynamics (INGO KII:2020, OCHA:2019). Many intervening actors also complain that donor cycles are far too short to allow for the development of robust and sustainable community-based solutions, while a deficient humanitarian budget and decrease in donor interest across the board limit their capacity to actualize an adequate response to widespread, critical need (Figure 2, INGO KIIs:2019-2020, OCHA:2019).

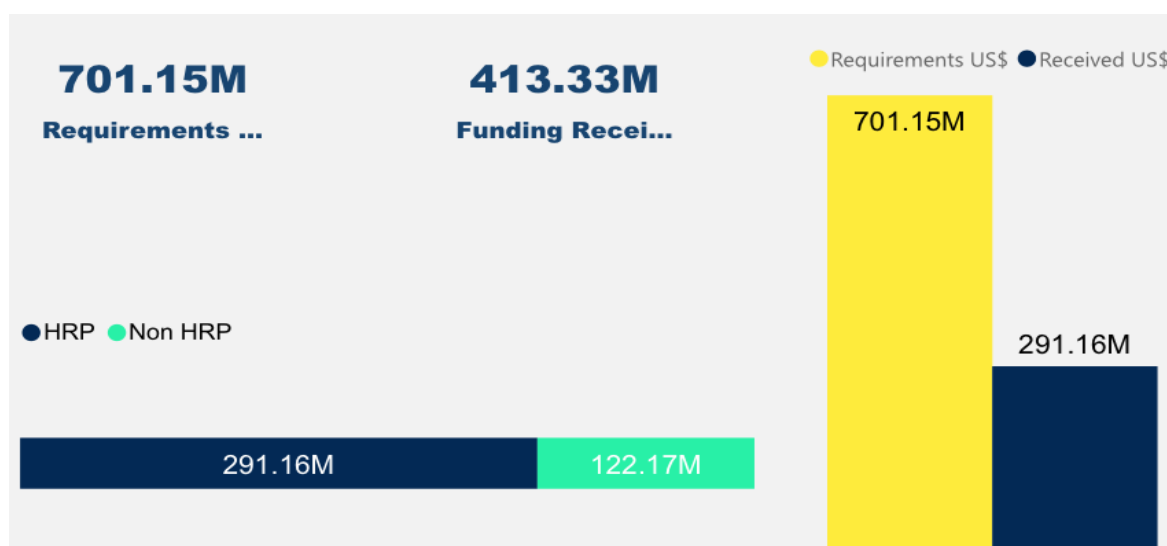


Figure 2: Funding coverage and requirements for interventions in the UN OCHA’s Humanitarian Response Plan for 2019 (UN OCHA:2019a). Currently, the funding received falls \$287.82m short of the \$701.15m required for a robust humanitarian response.

Meanwhile, the risk of INGO dependency, increasing difficulties with humanitarian access, diminishing donor interest, and the gradual transition to long-term development have elucidated the need to secure robust national investment in – and ownership of – existing interventions in Ninewa.

However, a number of factors within the local context complicate the prospect of handover. For instance, there are still critical shortages in Iraq's national capacity to manage existing stabilization projects, particularly when those projects involve costly or highly specialized services like Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) assistance, demining, or Psychosocial Support (PSS) services (INGO KIIs:2020). Consistent problems with inadequate or delayed budget allocations on the part of the federal government have also signaled a lack of viable political will toward stabilization objectives (INGO KIIs:2020, Local Authority KII:2020). Furthermore, the convoluted administration of Ninewa's disputed territories continues to disincentivize investment and impede service delivery (INGO FGD:2019, OCHA:2019). In light of these complexities, new gaps may emerge if emergency response mechanisms scale down but nationally-led processes do not scale up in a commensurate fashion (INGO KII:2020, OCHA:2019). Therefore, in addition to facilitating robust capacity-building programs for national and local partners, humanitarian INGOs must build critical linkages with development actors to ensure the continuity of essential stabilization programming in the event of a humanitarian exit (INGO KIIs:2020).

In the interim, a number of programmatic gaps, shortcomings, and failures in existing initiatives must be addressed:

- Given the complexity and volatility of Ninewa, there is a need for better data collection and dissemination mechanisms to ensure that stabilization programming remains responsive and relevant as dynamics change (INGO KIIs:2020, KRG KII:2019, OCHA:2019). To ensure sustainable solutions, research activities must better attend to pertinent differentials in location (as context and conflict considerations vary significantly by district) and population (as women, those with disabilities, and persons with perceived affiliation consistently register among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged demographics in sectoral analyses).
- Ongoing stabilization programming must incorporate components designed to address the unmet needs and exacerbated vulnerabilities of IDPs with perceived affiliation. Governmental procedures to determine Islamic State (IS) affiliation remain opaque (Revkin:2018). In the absence of a cohesive national approach to this issue and viable justice mechanisms to secure accountability, persons with perceived affiliations to extremist groups are at a heightened risk of being ostracized, discriminated against, deprived of access to basic services, subjected to collective punishment, and forced to suffer human rights violations. These risks place them among the most vulnerable caseload of remaining IDPs (OCHA:2019). There is a need to better understand and address the particular barriers faced by this demographic, and to advocate for a cohesive, transparent, and just approach to determining IS affiliation.
- There is a need for more comprehensive and robust gender programming in existing stabilization and IDP return efforts. While considerable attention has been given to women's protection needs, a greater percentage of available governmental and INGO budgets should be allocated toward empowering and equipping women to navigate outside of existing dependency relations (INGO KIIs:2019). Women, particularly those from Single Female Headed Households (SFHHs), currently face greater difficulty in procuring missing civil documentation, accessing their HLP rights, securing viable livelihoods, and being included in national reconciliation programs than their male counterparts (INGO KIIs:2020). As a result, they require additional support in stabilization initiatives across sectors. However, without sufficient local consultation and community preparation, INGO projects can negatively affect gender dynamics within households and place women at greater risk. Approaches to women's empowerment should therefore be complemented with careful and conflict-sensitive advocacy and education programs.

- There is a general consensus, across numerous sectors, that PSS is a critical frontier in ongoing stabilization programming. Protracted displacement continues to intensify the need for effective PSS programs. Unfortunately, however, there is little consistency in how these programs are executed by implementing partners. To ensure a unified standard of quality across PSS interventions, existing initiatives need to be analyzed and restructured to comply with established metrics and best practices (INGO KIIs:2020).
- Across sectoral initiatives, deficiencies have been noted in recipient communities' awareness of the existing programs and services available to them (INGO FGD:2019, NPC:2019c, OCHA:2019, RWG:2020). Awareness campaigns and educational activities should be assessed and bolstered to improve efficacy (NPC:2019c, OCHA:2019). Further improvements to the Iraq Internally Displaced Persons Information Centre (Iraq IIC) are also required, as are robust accountability mechanisms at both governmental and non-governmental levels for exchanging data, streamlining messaging, and ensuring the accessibility of critical information to recipients (OCHA:2019, RWG:2020).
- Finally, the remits of many INGOs are constrained by social rather than political mandates. However, many of Iraq's social issues cannot be rectified without significant political movement. Therefore, diverse components have cautioned against allowing humanitarian needs to obscure the necessity of political transformation, and have emphasized the importance of international effort and investment in anti-corruption programs and other initiatives that are essential for long-term stabilization and durable return (INGO FGD:2019, INGO KIIs:2019, KRG KIIs:2019).

While these broad gaps, shortcomings, and failures have reverberations across the various initiatives designed to facilitate stabilization and IDP return, additional sector-specific gaps will be identified in each of the following six sections:

- Protection
- Infrastructure and Demining
- Housing, Land and Property
- Livelihood
- Social Wellbeing and Basic Services
- Social Cohesion and Reconciliation

Each section will also unpack relevant IDP needs, the humanitarian and development initiatives designed to rectify them, and the actors implementing these interventions. This comprehensive mapping will elucidate current trends and challenges in stabilization and IDP return.

3. PROTECTION

NEEDS

Protection concerns in Ninewa remain high during prolonged displacement and waves of IDP return. The main concerns for protection actors include: social marginalization; victimization of people with perceived IS affiliation; sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV); sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA); conflict-affected children; forced returns and abrupt camp closures and consolidations; the presence of armed security actors in camps; and the inability of IDPs to obtain identity documentation. The transition from humanitarian response to development increasingly relocates funds from humanitarian sites, such as camps, to urban sites of development. This can increase protection needs for populations unable to return to their areas of origin. A successful transition will require statutory service sectors to formulate plans with humanitarian organizations on capacity building, enhance response structures, and ensure resource allocations for a smooth and safe transition into development (UN OCHA: 2018).

As of December 2019, the total number of IDP returns to Ninewa levelled at 1,766,334 (IOM Iraq DTM Dashboard:2020). Protection of these returnees is dependent on a number of factors, including housing reconstruction. Due to the significant destruction in some areas inside Ninewa, as well as the slow reconstruction and compensation in affected areas, the governorate has the most severe living conditions for returnees. Ba'aj District has the highest severity score at the national level, followed by Tooz and Sinjar districts. Within Ninewa, the districts that host the largest number of returnees living in very severe conditions are Tel Afar (102,762 individuals) and Mosul (48,630 individuals) (IOM Iraq DTM Dashboard:2020).

For IDPs who choose to return, housing in some areas has been destroyed or taken for military use, particularly within the disputed areas. Ninewa returnees coming from Duhok flag protection concerns as a main barrier to return, particularly the lack of alignment between security forces and administrative authorities. In order to obtain protection upon return, IDPs often need to tap into informal security networks such as their community leaders, tribal leaders, or religious authorities. For single women and mothers, informal security networks are key to protection inside and outside of camp settings, as well as during the process of return to their AoO. Similarly, Yazidi repatriates from Syria obtained protection through the informal mobilization of their community and religious networks. Upon reaching Sinjar, they have been reportedly staying at local mukhtars' residences before moving on to camps in Duhok (NPC:2019b).

For IDPs in displacement camps, humanitarian actors continuously report violations of human rights. From January to March 2019, both protection and non-protection partners in the camps of Qayyarah Jed'ah (1 to 6) Airstrip, Haj Ali and Hammam Al Alil (1 and 2) recorded 42 incidents involving a total of 51 violations. Of these, 31% involved incursions by armed security actors in camps. Other violations included SGBV, SEA, arbitrary arrest or detention, mistreatment and the verbal abuse of IDPs. Of the 51 violations, 42 were committed as a result of increased militarization and detention, and particularly affected women and children (NPC:2019a, 2019b).

An estimated 2.1 million girls and boys are made vulnerable by displacement and war, and face rights violations that include violence, sexual exploitation, psychological distress, child labor, lack of access to services and forced child marriages (UN OCHA:2018).

In order for IDPs to claim their rights and entitlements, they must obtain identity documentation. Within the Gol and KRG, the issuance of identity documentation is conditioned upon receipt of a successful security clearance. According to research conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council

(NRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Danish Refugee Council (DRC), 8% of IDPs living outside of camps and 10% of those in camps have no documentation; 58% of those IDPs without documentation were hindered by the documentation fee and the bureaucracy of the process, while remaining IDPs cited extreme crowding of the offices (NRC, IRC & DRC, as presented in NPC:2019b). Over half of the women felt uncomfortable going to documentation offices due to the heavy male presence and were generally less likely to embark on the process due to limited access to childcare. It was also reported that if the security clearance was unsuccessful or ambiguous because they had names similar to IS-affiliated persons, their files could be pending for years without other procedures to obtain documentation (NRC, IRC & DRC, as presented in NPC:2019b). As national entitlements and access to social services (including education, health care, and housing) require identification (ID), undocumented people are often deprived of basic rights, especially for services related to protection. This process disproportionately affects women who generally have higher needs for healthcare (such as reproductive health services). An increasing number of women been turned away from hospital delivery rooms during labor due to their lack of ID documentation. Undocumented children are frequently denied access or conditionally admitted to schools despite the KRG's decision to provide education regardless of documentation status (NRC, IRC & DRC, as presented in NPC:2019b).

WOMEN

Regardless of displacement status, certain factors were found to be associated with higher unmet protection needs. The most central one relates to gender. Over half of all IDPs are women; when combined with their dependent children, they amount to 75% of the total IDP population (UN OCHA:2018). This population faces a multitude of challenges, including restriction of movement, disproportionate targeting for SEA and SGBV, harassment from various displacement actors, and much higher protection needs due to the inherently patriarchal environment of displacement camp settings (Wojnicka & Pustułka:2017). In addition, women from minority subgroups and Single Female Headed Households (SFHHs) face additional protection barriers by virtue of community discrimination. Between 14-21% of all IDPs and returnees are SFHHs, and are therefore largely considered 'in need' in every single sector in the UN OCHA's 2019 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan (REACH:2018a, 2018b, 2018c; UN OCHA:2018).

When women face discrimination and higher protection needs, it is specific to their role in society during peacetime. Our study showed how the resilience of women is widely overlooked, and their 'vulnerability' is maintained through traditional structures that have created a dependency on men for every single decision in, of, and about their lives, as well as any life they create, under the idea of protecting the family 'honor'. This dependency is currently upheld by pervasive, conservative structures in and outside of IDP camps, which are stricter in times of social disorder. In Ninewa districts, women reported feeling better protected inside IDP camps, under the provision of INGOs, but cannot move freely without male patronage. They often face harassment or SEA in camp settings or at checkpoints in the absence of a male guardian (Women Focus Group Discussion [FGD]:2019, INGO KII:2019). Women within towns and villages have reportedly been harder to reach during INGO assessments and restricted by male guardians if they wish to respond (UNFPA:2016, INGO KII:2019). Due to protracted displacement, the scarcity of services and food provision, coupled with the lack of livelihood opportunities for women inside the camps, has periodically forced women to engage in exploitative male dependency structures (INGO KII:2019).

According to the Iraqi National Action Plan for women, their protection, political participation and promotion are perceived to be stabilizing and peacekeeping factors for Iraq's post-conflict development (Aref & Alzameli:2018). INGOs report that women have a deeper local access to flag protection concerns, such as extremism, within their communities. Moreover, INGOs have reported

that women speak more openly and honestly about community dynamics across sectarian and religious divides in focus group settings (INGO KIIs:2019).

DO YOU THINK WOMEN HAVE GAINED MORE OPPORTUNITIES SINCE BEING DISPLACED?		
GENDER	YEZIDI & CHRISTIAN MEN	YEZIDI & CHRISTIAN WOMEN
Yes	61%	67%
No	23%	16%
I Don't Know	16%	17%

Figure 3: IDP perceptions of women's gained opportunities since displacement (Women Focus Group Discussion [FGD]:2019)

During protracted displacement, INGOs have worked to empower women and increase their voices and aspirations; this perception was confirmed by both Yazidi and Christian men and women in a survey (see Figure 4). As a result, many women prefer to stay in their new camp community because reintegration into their old roles in AoOs is either too difficult or unfavorable (INGO KIIs:2019).

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

SGBV affects women disproportionately, particularly during the vulnerability of displacement. The psychosocial consequences and the gaps in reporting and accountability hamper both advocacy for change at a structural level as well as preventative response mechanisms.

In the perceived absence of trustworthy security enforcement, women are less free to move and find livelihood opportunities to sustain themselves and their dependents. This vulnerability has been reported by INGOs to often correlate with the sexual or financial exploitation of women (INGO KIIs:2019).

Of conflict-affected households, 16% are SFHHs and 21% live within IDP camps, which is an increase of 10% since the years 2010-2011 (REACH:2018a). Women in IDP camps are often not able to access the new livelihood opportunities generated through development initiatives in urban settings, due to restriction of movement and child care responsibilities. The livelihood methods used by an increasing number of SFHHs reportedly include 'survival sex.' INGOs report that this development is not exclusive to camp settings; Mosul also has a significant SFHH population engaging in the same negative coping mechanism (INGO KIIs:2019).

IDP women and SFHHs can face SEA from their landlords and risk possible forced eviction upon return to their AoO. Women do not usually file complaints or open a court case against these perpetrators, due to fears of SGBV, exclusion from their inheritance, or transfer of possession (INGO KIIs:2019, UNFPA:2016). Although there has been an increase in the filing of compensation claims in 2018 compared to previous years, budgetary allocations to reward compensation have yet

to materialize. SFHHs rarely challenge illegal occupation due to fear of GBV and are often excluded from their inheritance and transfer of possession claims.

A central and immediate need, identified by subject matter experts, is the lack of women's shelters. Furthermore, the wives of ex-IS fighters or women with assumed IS affiliation have issues with obtaining ID documentation and are thus hindered in their access to justice and SGBV accountability. Legal actors and INGOs that work on the issue of identity documentation blame the Gol for not regulating or streamlining security clearance procedures, which are carried out by multiple security actors. In addition, some men along checkpoints and within the identity documentation authorities have named women IDPs (in particular, SFHHs) as 'IS wives' and have used the accusation as leverage for exploitation or detention over this assumed affiliation (INGO KII:2019). Some women are therefore too afraid to apply for identification due to the perceived risk of being noted on a list of IS affiliates and subsequently abused (INGO KII:2019, subject matter expert KII:2019, RWG:2019).

High and rising levels of SGBV, SEA and harassment have demonstrated the need for an increase in specialized protection services for women, as well as advocacy for women's access to those services. Needs for GBV awareness, women's shelters and psychosocial support are very high. Going through family and tribal relations for mediation, protection and conflict resolution remains the most common pathway selected by IDP women and girls to address the issue of SGBV (UNFPA:2016).

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

Governorate Returns Committees (GRCs): The GRCs are Gol-endorsed committees composed of local authority and humanitarian actors established in Baghdad, Anbar, Salahaddin, Kirkuk, Diyala and Ninewa in 2018. They focus on plans for camp consolidation and closure processes and advocate for safe, voluntary returns or relocations to alternative camps (UN OCHA:2018). The meetings in Ninewa have slowed down and have been affected by the change in local authority. The Ninewa authorities have outwardly proclaimed that there will be no forced returns.

Principled Returns Framework: The humanitarian community developed a Principled Returns Framework which was endorsed by the Gol in September 2018. It states the minimum standards for a return to be considered principled. If returns or relocations fall below minimum standards for being principled, the United Nations (UN) will trigger 'immediate advocacy interventions' which are undertaken at the local and/or national level (UN OCHA:2018). Concerns about Al-Anbar's forced returns and lack of communication about camp closure initiated this process, while alternative return mechanisms are being scrutinized by humanitarian actors, such as UN OCHA (NPC:2019b).

The Gol previously signed the *National Action Plan (NAP)* for the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda's UNSCR 1325 in Iraq. However, the budget was never signed off on due to financial constraints during the IS invasion. Despite some uptake from the Gol and the KRG for a change in momentum, both governments have been criticized for their lack of strategic implementation and monitoring, which has raised suspicion about their motivation being merely decorative (NGO KII:2019).

There are a handful of shelters and centers (both official and unofficial) for survivors of SGBV, but huge needs have been reported in and around Mosul (subject matter expert KII:2019). Another shelter, which allows women to be admitted without the precondition of opening a file against the perpetrator, has been established. At the time of writing, Mosul had one unofficial shelter. For displaced women within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), there are shelters but these can only be accessed by opening a court case. According to women's groups, a new statutory women's shelter is

in the pipeline through high level advocacy and pressure that builds on the momentum of UNSCR 1325.

Issues of dependency and stigmatization seriously affect the *livelihood opportunities* of a large proportion of women, particularly SFHHs in urban areas, as reported by local NGOs. NGOs are attempting to fill these gaps by providing training courses, during which PSS services are also offered, which can override partner suspicion over GBV support. In addition, an NGO in Mosul is entering into contracts with the Ministry of Education and large corporations to offer women livelihood opportunities by offering flexible work placements.

Local NGOs are conducting *awareness sessions* about SGBV reported inside and outside of IDP camps. Smaller NGOs engage local communities to teach community development which covers SGBV awareness for audiences including men and boys. Much of the programming for SGBV survivors involves PSS, casework, and livelihood trainings to enhance women's economic resilience and independence.

As part of *Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)*, the humanitarian community has established a dedicated hotline, the Iraq IDP Information Centre (IIC), to relay specific queries, including concerns about PSEA, from beneficiaries to responding agencies and clusters. A PSEA network was established to coordinate and support the implementation of the UN's strategy to combat sexual exploitation and abuse. Under the Humanitarian Coordinator's leadership, the network will be revitalized in 2019 to include NGOs and improve its referral pathways to address reported issues. Appropriate mechanisms will be put in place with respect to the investigation of SEA incidents, including accountability measures. In 2019, the PSEA network will be co-chaired by the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Operational and reporting initiatives have come about to enhance the response to GBV in Iraq including the government-endorsed Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) and Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS). A group of NGOs report to the GBVIMS with detailed numbers and locations of incidents. GBVIMS is not available for everyone, and there is a protocol for information sharing. Capacity building, including the training and certification of staff up to international GBV standards through the SOP, is taking place.

In order to build capacity in the GBV sector, the UN OCHA-managed Iraq Humanitarian Fund (IHF) has integrated key PSEA messages and standard indicators through collaborative training, which targeted all cluster leads, co-leads, and 102 staff members from 59 IHF partner organizations. All UN OCHA-managed, country-based, pooled funds' grant agreements include PSEA-specific clauses (UN OCHA:2018).

In addition to these specific initiatives, the member organizations and implementing partners of the Ninewa Protection Working Group (NPWG) conduct a variety of protection interventions. Relevant activities include awareness-raising campaigns, trainings on district-specific challenges, case management, community-based programs designed to address protection issues in areas of displacement, quick impact projects and structural interventions to improve conditions that heighten protection concerns, and capacity building for government officials.

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

The federal and local governments have struggled to implement unified and formalized processes, plans, and structures to ensure protection throughout the displacement cycle. As a result,

humanitarian actors continue to register human and civil rights violations inside IDP camps where no proper reporting and accountability measures have been enacted. These protection failures are often compounded during transitions, such as camp consolidations and closures (the repatriation of Iraqi nationals from the Al-Hol camp into Ninewa provides a recent example). Without guiding mechanisms for securing protection, many “returnees” become secondarily displaced or are funneled into critical shelter (KRG KII:2019, RWG:2020).

Legal assistance for missing civil documentation is projected to be the single biggest protection concern moving forward, and the main component of future protection initiatives. This is a critical priority for protection actors, as the lack of legal documentation impacts the ability of vulnerable populations – such as women, children, and persons with perceived affiliation – to access vital services, including recourse to justice and SGBV accountability. It also renders them more vulnerable to human rights violations, abuse, and discrimination (INGO KII:2019, NPC:2019c, OCHA:2019).

Unfortunately, the ability of protection actors to render legal assistance continues to be hampered by constraints on humanitarian access and the difficulty of procuring security clearances for areas of high need (INGO KII:2020). Ad-hoc checkpoints have been erected by diverse security actors along the main northern routes in Ninewa where various provincial or military authorities periodically refuse to accept access letters issued to the humanitarian community by the federal government. In addition, protection actors see initiatives delayed or suspended in some areas due to numerous requests for secondary authorizations from local or regional actors (UN OCHA:2018, NPC:2019b).

The design of the system itself also prevents IDPs from easily accessing these services, as multiple time-intensive procedures are required per missing document and help must be sought in areas of origin rather than the closest civil affairs office in areas of displacement. The development of mobile assistance units has helped, but this initiative is limited in scope and must be expanded or replaced by the issuance of unified civil IDs (INGO KII:2020). Overall, due to these various complexities, better support for legal actors and an overarching coordination mechanism will be required to ensure the success of documentation interventions in the future (INGO KII:2020, NPC:2019c, OCHA:2019).

Significant barriers to tackling SGBV remain. While the Iraqi government did develop a national strategy for combatting violence against women (2018-2030), the absence of a national mechanism, weak tools for implementation, insufficient resources, and a lack of indicators have thus far impacted its efficacy (INGO KII:2019). Women’s vulnerability continues to be compounded by a dearth of viable women’s shelters; the limited resources and capacity of national protection systems; a critical shortage of GBV trainers and inadequate retention strategies; and a poor understanding of what constitutes gendered violence among local communities (INGO KIIs:2019-2020, NPC:2019c, OCHA:2019).

The failure to effectively combat SGBV is particularly apparent when it comes to prevention and reporting. SGBV survivors do not trust security actors (police, armed forces), the local authorities, or service providers, and fear that their complaints will not be adequately addressed; that they will face harassment and stigmatization for reporting; or that they may face further violence and abuse from staff (INGO KII:2019). Unfortunately, these fears are often confirmed, which further intimidates SGBV survivors, disincentivizes reporting, and causes them to refuse referral to specialized services (INGO KIIs:2019, OCHA:2019). Existing national systems need to be enhanced to ensure victim-centered reporting and safeguarding.

MAIN ACTORS

Al-Masala, Action Against Hunger, Azidi Fraternity & Solidarity League (ASFL), Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI), DanChurchAid, Danish Demining Group, Department of Labour & Social Affairs (DoLSA) Dohuk, Dorcas, Danish Refugee Council, GardaWorld (GW), Human Appeal (HA), Handicap International, Harikar, Humanity & Inclusion, Hope, Humanity, International Committee for the Red Cross, Iraqi Health Access Organization, International Medical Corps, InterSOS, International Organization for Migration, International Rescue Committee, Legal Clinic Network, Lutheran World Federation, Mercy Hands, Mission East, Norwegian People Aid, Norwegian Refugee Council, Qandil, REACH, Save the Children Iraq, Sonahi Organization For Social Development, Terre Des Hommes-Italy, Terre Des Hommes-Lausanne, War Child UK, Women Rehabilitation Organization, World Vision International, ZOA International and Justice Centre Iraq.

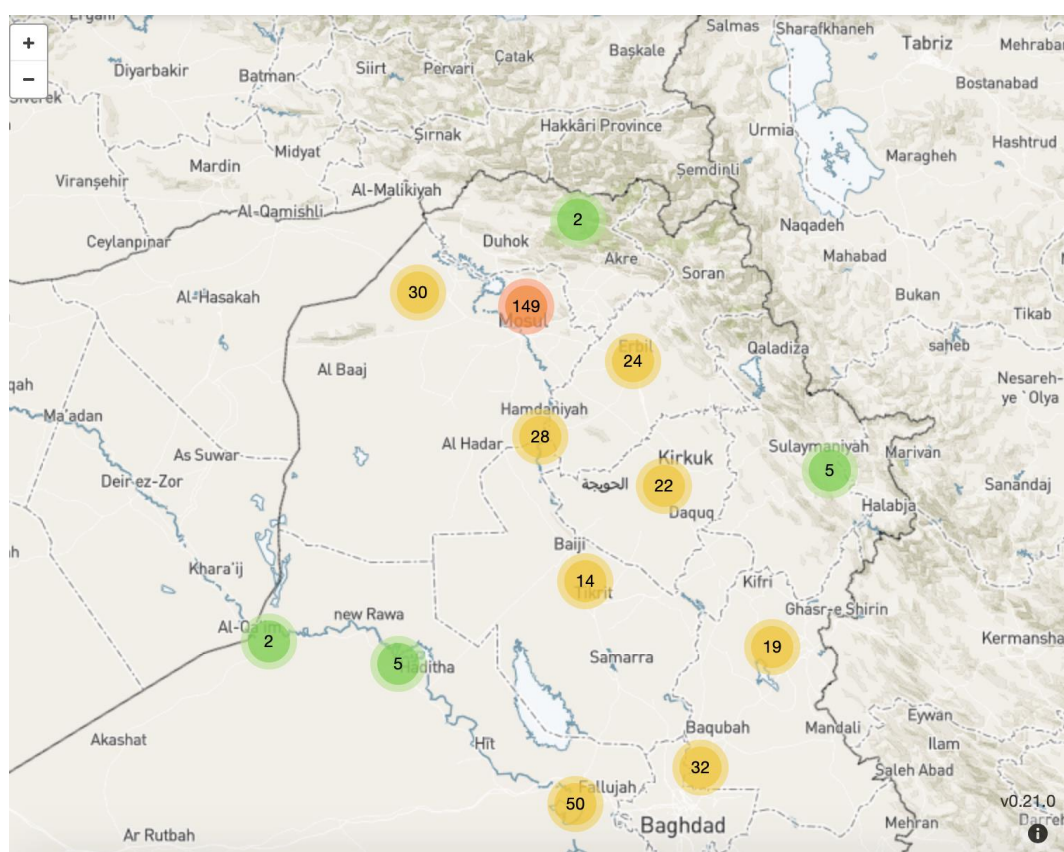


Figure 4: Map of Iraq Protection Services: level of protection response coverage indicated by green (light), yellow (medium) and red (high) (UNHCR:2019).

GBV-specific protection actors: Al Mesalla, Mercy Hands, United Iraq Medical Society for Relief and Development, Women Rehabilitation Organization, International Medical Corps, Women’s Empowerment Organization, Iraq Health Access Organization, International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Church Aid, DAD for Human Rights and Civil Society Affairs, Jiyan, Harikar, Sewan, World Vision UK, Mission East, Mediciens Sans Frontiers, Human Appeal (HA), Barzani Charity Foundation, Care International, Tearfund, Dorcas Aid International, International Organization for Migration, Medair, Tajdid Iraq Foundation for Economic Development, Lutheran World Federation, Zhian Health Organization and Seed Foundation.

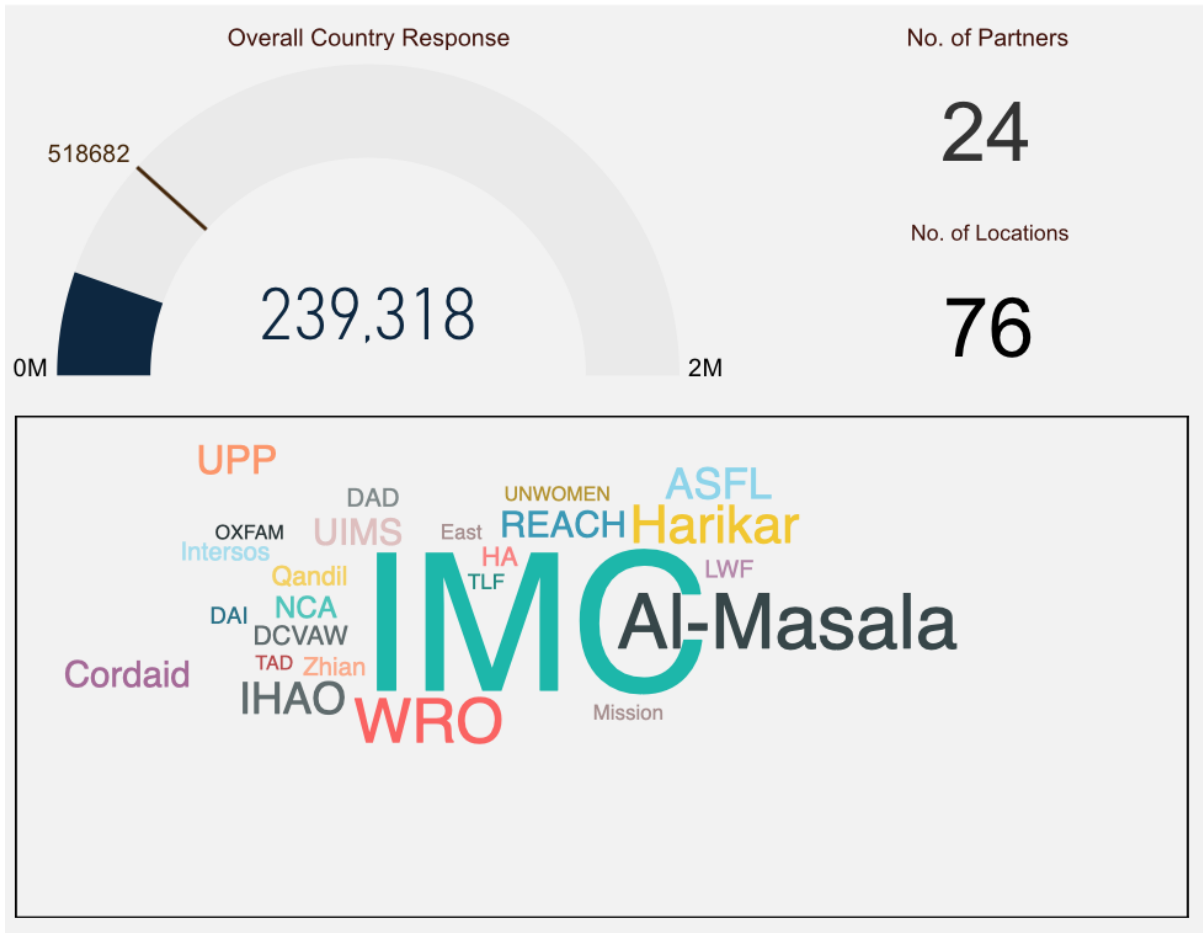


Figure 5: Humanitarian Response Map of GBV response in Ninewa Iraq in 2019 (UN OCHA:2019a).

BUDGET & DONORS

The protection budget figures at \$5,191,676 (Financial Tracking Service:2019) and falls \$87,655,519 short of its pledge, excluding donor requirements for specialized GBV and child protection responses. Meanwhile, the GBV budget is \$1.4M funded out of its \$33.2M pledge (Financial Tracking Service:2019). For Ninewa in particular, the budget shortfall amounts to \$288M.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEMINING

NEEDS

After several cycles of conflict, including the Iran-Iraq war, the Anfal campaign, the Kurdish internal war, and the war that toppled the Ba'athist regime, Iraq became one of the most heavily mined countries in the world with significant legacy contamination. With 59 mines per square-mile (equivalent to 23 per square-kilometer), demining has become a significant protection concern (Edwards:2018, figure 6). Such extensive contamination poses a risk to IDPs' safety and security both during and after their return. According to the latest Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment (MCNA), 6% of returnee households have members disabled from mine explosions (REACH:2018c).

IS contributed to this contamination and laid additional booby-traps and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to delay or hinder any actors entering cities or territories, many of which persist or have destroyed Ninewa's infrastructure. IS also incorporated IEDs into irrigation systems in farmlands around Ninewa, which currently prevents farmers from making a living and shepherds from moving freely with their livestock (see Section 6: Livelihood). The effects of extensive contamination on the agricultural sector are of significant concern, as the accessibility of viable livelihoods is a precondition of return for many IDPs.

Throughout the IS occupation and the battle against IS, many roads and bridges were also destroyed. Destroyed roads not only decrease the accessibility of post-conflict areas, but also affect the provision of health care, and the transport of goods like food items and produce to be sold in shops. Widespread destruction of roadways simultaneously affects livelihood prospects by excluding an area from trade networks and limiting opportunities for IDPs and refugees alike to leave camps and return back to their AoOs.

De-mining is essential to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of critical infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals, water treatment plants, power plants, bridges, and roads. The successful repair of this infrastructure, in turn, is imperative to support stabilization and facilitate the safe return of IDPs. However, mapping IEDs and demining Ninewa is a long-term project and a complex one, as devices can shift as a result of variable weather and flooding (UN OCHA:2019b). Therefore, successful demining and IED initiatives require long-term state commitment and the allocation of significant financial resources.

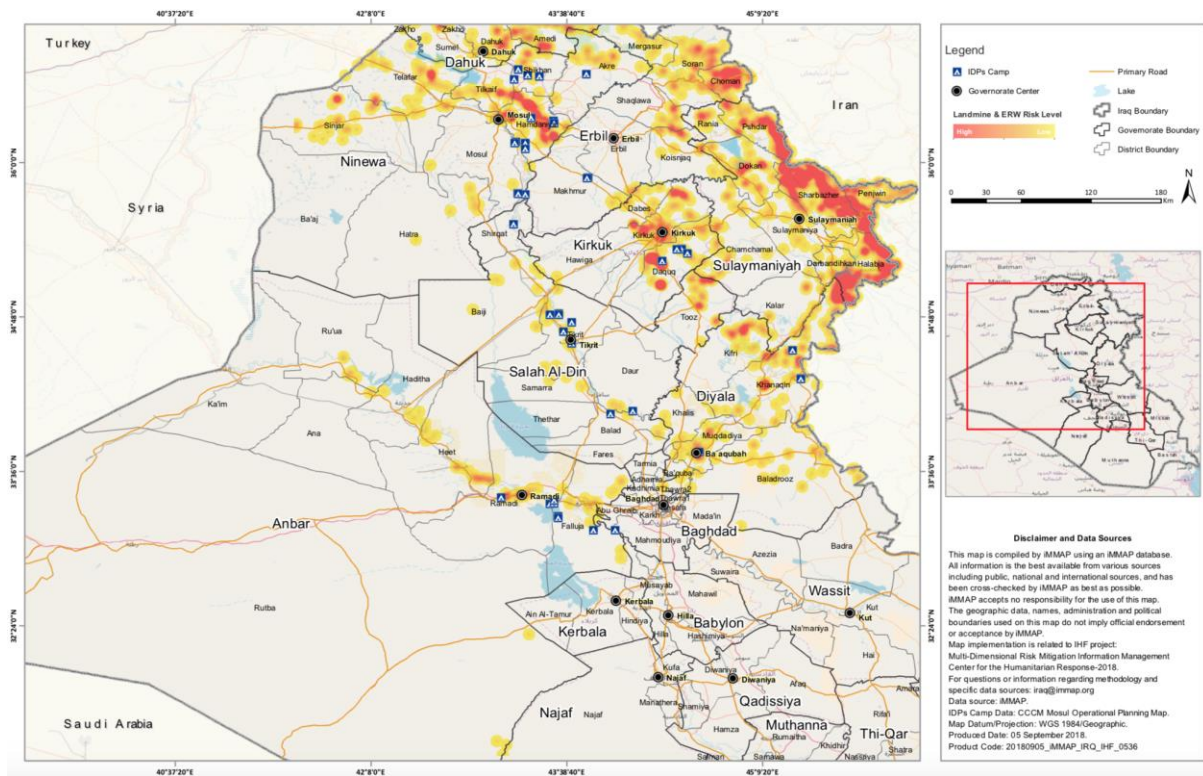


Figure 6: Humanitarian Access Response for landmines and ERW [explosive remnants of war] contamination areas as of August 2018 (iMMAP-IHP:2018).

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

Infrastructure initiatives are being undertaken. The main road around Hamdaniya (Talal Wardk, which links Kakai villages) has reopened. The Rabi'a-Duhok road is open with a view to facilitate the return of Yazidi IDPs in Duhok to Sinjar. With the assistance of peace committees in the area, Al Qosh to Tal Kaif road is open through Batna village, as are the roads from Al-Sheikhan to Mosul. The Kurdish Peshmerga and the Iraqi forces have agreed to re-open the main road connecting Zumar and Duhok (also known as the Sihela-Zummar road) more than one year after its closure, following clashes between the two groups in 2017. Despite the roads being opened to traffic, some barriers remain. For example, registration is required at the border between territories controlled by the Peshmerga and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), and procedures remain bureaucratic (PRWG:2019b).

In Mosul, there are plans to reconstruct four suburban centers, measuring 70,000 hectares, in areas close to Hamdaniya. According to Mosul officials, the plan for the suburban centers makes good use of the empty spaces in Mosul district. However, it has also caused unrest and resistance among locals who fear demographic change. In response, an official letter has been sent to Gol decision-makers regarding objections to the construction of these suburban centers (PRWG:2019a).

The repatriation of 31,000 Iraqi citizens from Syria's Al-Hol camp into existing camps in Ninewa is expected in 2019. The international community is preparing for this and has currently pledged \$27.9M to implement the necessary Iraqi Operation Plan. However, information about the time, infrastructural needs and logistics from the national authorities has not been clarified nor circulated among accessible channels at the time of writing (Inter-Cluster Coordination Group [ICCG]:2019).

Meanwhile, partner organizations within the Mine Action sub-cluster have been implementing explosive asset management projects – including identification, assessment, and removal – in mainly liberated areas. These initiatives have enabled other sector actors, such as UNDP, to successfully

complete the rehabilitation and reconstruction of critical infrastructure sites and render them operational (INGO KII:2020). Mine Action sub-cluster members are also conducting risk education activities for IDPs and returnees in order to provide life-saving messages that enhance their capacity to recognize and respond to danger.

An additional mine action initiative, entitled ‘Know Before You Go,’ investigates IDPs’ AoOs to ensure a safe and mine-free return. However, it is risky to certify the completion of demining, as it is largely a localized effort. Demining actors are also requesting transparency in the accreditation process, and more advocacy on accessibility is needed. Relevant developments on the issue include a telephone hotline serving people who have identified mines in their areas and trainings for women from minority groups to become deminers.

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

At present, due to slow and inadequate efforts across liberated areas, the majority of Ninewa’s recipient communities have a negative view of governmental reconstruction initiatives, with 73% of National Democratic Institute’s survey respondents claiming that reconstruction is “getting worse” (NDI:2019). Moreover, current de-mining and infrastructure initiatives are not equitably implemented across Ninewa’s districts, heightening perceptions of discrimination and marginalization among recipient communities (KII:2019). These inequities stem, in part, from stabilization directives established by the federal government in consultation with UNDP, which prioritize particular areas for reconstruction (INGO KII:2020). The prioritization of certain areas within the liberated territories – such as Mosul, specific locations in western Ninewa, and Sinjar – is also, to some extent, determined by the constraints of donor funding (INGO KII:2019-2020).

Additionally, infrastructure and demining activities within the liberated territories are, at times, limited due to the difficulty of securing humanitarian access to specific areas. This is largely a result of the complicated security situation within Ninewa (INGO KII:2019-2020). Checkpoints along the roads are manned by a range of different security forces. Key informants complain that each security force demands different documentation or approval procedures before granting NGOs access to operational sites (INGO KII:2019).

For the success and sustainability of demining initiatives, specifically, there is an increasing need for INGO actors to promote national ownership of existing projects. Given the scope of the project, the severity of national need, and constraints with INGO access, the federal government and its relevant organizations – including the Ministry of Interior and Mine Action Authorities – must be better equipped to address widespread explosive hazard contamination (INGO KII:2020). This is a challenging prospect, however, as official entities currently lack operational capacity due to losses sustained in qualified personnel (INGO KII:2020). Additionally, while national organizations are adept at clearing traditional mines, they reportedly lack the specialized competence that is required to clear improvised explosive devices. Further training is necessary to build national capacity.

Finally, current infrastructure and demining initiatives fail to meet existing demand due to the difficulty of securing sufficient funding. International donor funding continues to diminish following the ostensible defeat of the IS (INGO KII:2019-2020). Meanwhile, the 2019 GoI budget has failed to meaningfully or adequately address the need for reconstruction in devastated parts of the country. Nearly half of the 2019 budget was allocated to public sector subsidies, while reconstruction efforts remain slow or non-existent in some areas. The KRG is also unable to cover the cost of demining in areas under its control. The Kurdistan Region’s Peshmerga is struggling to respond to high demining needs in the face of limited resources to detect and dismantle the mines. National entities and actors

must therefore be encouraged to seek funding independently, both from the government and external donors, in order to address this limitation.

MAIN ACTORS

The Federal Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, UNDP, Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), DanChurchAid (DCA), Danish Demining Group (DDG), Humanity and Inclusion, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Fondation Suisse de Deminage (FSD), and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

BUDGET & DONORS

The Gol's lack of spending on reconstruction projects raises concerns because only about \$65 million of the nearly \$265 million needed for various UNMAS-backed projects in the country in 2019 has been allocated, according to the announcement of the 22nd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (Rudaw:2019). The current humanitarian coverage of Mine Action initiatives in Iraq totals \$3,141,196 (Financial Tracking Service:2019).

5. HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

“For me, I wish I could. I have a piece of land in Dora that I bought 5 years ago for 106 million (IQD) after I sold my house. Now, I want to build a house on my land, but I cannot because the person whom I bought the land from has apparently sold it another time to another person. Now, I have lost my land. Someone has already built a house on it. Neither I nor the other person who claims ownership could build a house on it. He threatens us if we build something on it, and we have done the same. Where should I go back to?”

IDP FGD Participant, 2019

NEEDS

Property damage, destruction, and looting, as well as second-occupation of residences, have all been cited as factors hindering the return of IDPs (Aymerich & Zeyneloglu:2019, p. 67). Although the overall number of IDPs decreased between 2017 and 2018 due to an increased number of returns, the needs for housing rehabilitation are still very high and are considered a key barrier to return in some areas of Ninewa, such as the sub-district of Sinuni (Sinjar) where 4600 houses were damaged by the war. Initial satellite damage assessments suggest that the distribution of damage between governorates is approximately as follows: Ninewa 65%; Anbar 20%; Salah al Din 10%; Diyala, Baghdad and Kirkuk 5% (UN-Habitat & Shelter Cluster:2019). Anbar has the highest targeted war-damaged shelter interventions, followed by Ninewa.

Among IDPs, almost 30% are residing in Ninewa governorate where some of the highest country-wide poverty rates exist. In 2018, Ninewa projects accounted for 59% of UNDP’s Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) projects. Under current housing rehabilitation efforts, the governorate is second in the country, after Anbar, with 22,208 targeted houses (UN-Habitat & Shelter Cluster:2019).

Although Ninewa governorate and Mosul City have received significant housing rehabilitation support, critical needs still remain in specific districts. The total number of rehabilitated houses in Tel Afar, for example, amounts to less than 3% of all the projects in Ninewa. With all the current projects being completed, no additional planned or ongoing projects in this area have been reported to the official housing rehabilitation portal. Tel Afar local government representatives not only see this as a deficiency in the housing rehabilitation sector overall, but also as a sign that humanitarian and stabilization aid do not equally target the areas in need.

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

Though the housing rehabilitation process is mostly led by INGOs, the number of completed and ongoing projects in Ninewa has significantly increased. More than half of the projects reported in Ninewa are in Mosul City, due to the level of damage and the population density. Among the larger initiatives, two are of noticeable importance:

- a. UNDP is rehabilitating 15,000 houses in West Mosul, bringing the total number of houses in its stabilization portfolio to over 30,000, the largest of its kind in Iraq.
- b. On 25 April 2019, UN-Habitat and UNDP handed over 502 rehabilitated houses and occupancy certificates to returnees in Ninewa’s Sinjar District. Extensively damaged during the IS

occupation, these houses were rehabilitated as part of a larger project funded by the government of Germany through UNDP's Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP). A total of 1,064 houses were rehabilitated in Sinjar over a two-year period with 1,501 occupancy certificates distributed to Yazidi returnees.

A critical component of existing efforts has been the inclusion of local communities, including women, in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process. For example, in UN-Habitat and UNDP housing rehabilitation projects in Sinjar, 684 members of the Yazidi community (44% women) were employed under the project, encouraging the social and economic empowerment of conflict-affected communities.

International agencies, such as World Bank, IOM, UNDP, UN-Habitat, DRC, and NRC, hope that the rehabilitation of damaged houses in Ninewa will contribute to a process of durable return where highly vulnerable families are able to reside in minimum shelter conditions while they re-establish their lives in areas affected by the recent conflict in order to avoid secondary displacement. Programs that include emergency repair of war-damaged shelter, or the provision of transitional shelter, have a high financial implication. They are also covered by other funding mechanisms in 2019 (i.e. the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience Programme through the World Bank and other initiatives from bilateral donors). As a result, emergency repairs of war-damaged shelters under the humanitarian scope can only target extremely vulnerable people who are living in war-damaged shelters and are at risk of secondary displacement.

Meanwhile, land cooperatives have increasingly been allocating land through private market principles, particularly in districts emptied by displacement in Ninewa Plains. Ninewa's General Directorate of Urban Planning proposed new construction and settlement projects and allowed companies to create new cities. According to interviews, however, this has fortified demographic changes, hardening a central barrier to IDP return and arguably violating the 'special status of area' for minorities. Based on Article 23 of the Iraq Constitution, the Federal Supreme Court of Iraq issued a decree in July 2013 which prohibited the distribution of property 'for the purpose of population change' (Federal Supreme Court of Iraq:2013). In an attempt to regulate this market and secure the Ninewa Plains, the head of cooperatives is planning to establish principles to regulate the process of selling land, which will be followed up by the Gol in collaboration with specialized courts (Gol update, presented by Mr. Adnan Sameer at PRWG:2019b).

In the interim, Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) sub-cluster partners have been offering legal assistance to affected populations. This specialized assistance helps IDPs and returnees navigate a variety of complicated issues, including forced evictions, missing or damaged ownership documentation, HLP disputes, inheritance deeds, and property compensation claims. Partners have also conducted registration sessions with recipient communities, as well as advocacy campaigns and capacity building activities with key stakeholders, to enhance public awareness of HLP rights and resources.

Increased advocacy on the compensation scheme for lost housing, land and property has led to the development of compensation sub-committees to mitigate issues. In Ninewa, INGO actors are currently assessing how to support this activity, in particular regarding logistics and the absorption of property compensation claims. The land registry office is also meeting to understand how to restore HLP documentation in Ninewa. However, interviews with Ninewa leaders and officials indicate that the governorate has submitted 20,000 files (one file per family) to the central authorities in Baghdad. Of these, only 500 files have been reviewed, and no compensation funds have been released despite Baghdad's approval of requested compensation. At this rate, the rest of the files, and those that still await submission, will take a decade to implement. Most of these compensation files are related to housing damages in the governorate.

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

There are critical shortages in Iraq's national capacity to address HLP issues. Because HLP assistance is a very costly and highly specialized service, requiring deep legal knowledge, very few national NGOs are currently capable of implementing HLP programs (INGO KII:2020). The consequent dearth of specialized HLP actors across Iraq translates into an inadequate partner presence in specific geographical areas, which makes it impossible for HLP services to be offered in each district and municipality where those services are necessary (INGO KII:2020). According to sub-cluster coordinators, this is the primary gap in existing HLP initiatives.

Meanwhile, although the need for rehabilitated housing among affected populations remains high, there are a number of obstacles preventing IDPs from receiving adequate compensation to facilitate reconstruction and durable return. As of 2018, less than half of IDPs knew about the claims process and had applied for damaged or destroyed property compensation; under 2% had applied for non-property compensation, such as educational disruptions, disability, or the loss of family members (IOM:2019a). This deficiency in IDPs' knowledge of the compensation process is only the tip of the iceberg, however. Around 97% of filed claims are still being processed (IOM:2019a). Out of the 1% of applications that have been approved, much of the promised compensation has yet to materialize due to federal budgetary constraints and the limited capacity of the implementing courts (IOM:2019a, OCHA:2019). The already daunting and sometimes prohibitive compensation process, combined with an overall dearth in positive outcomes, has disincentivized applications.

Furthermore, compensation applications are frequently rejected based on deficiencies in essential Category 1 and Category 2 documentation (INGO KII:2020, RWG:2020). This is particularly true for applicants from Ninewa, where official ownership documents, such as housing titles, are necessary for property compensation (INGO KII:2020, RWG:2020). Divorced or widowed women (constituting SFHHs) and IDPs with perceived affiliation are disproportionately disadvantaged by these requirements, as it is often more difficult for them to procure essential documentation (INGO KII:2020, OCHA:2019, RWG:2020). Therefore, not all IDPs have equal access to existing HLP services.

Minority IDPs and recipient communities have identified the need for a more robust process to address and rectify demographic change. Greater legal assistance is required to help affected populations to pursue the enforcement of court determinations; secure removal of property restitution; and resolve HLP disputes through mediation and other alternative dispute resolution methods (INGO KII:2020, KIIs:2019).

The federal government must increase its investment in the compensation scheme and in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the housing sector, as humanitarian partners are not mandated to address projects of this scope, notable gaps persist in specific districts, and the efforts of individual Iraqis to reconstruct their homes will take decades (OCHA:2019). In the interim, advocacy campaigns are essential to ensure that compensation continues to move forward; that its allocation under the federal budget is increased; that IDP and returnee communities have access to adequate information about the compensation process; and that the capacity to manage HLP issues is sufficiently enhanced among national actors (i.e. local NGOs, governmental officials, and other stakeholders).

MAIN ACTORS

The Federal Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Although there is cooperation with local government directorates and the municipality in Ninewa, and

recognition of the inclusion of local people in project implementation, housing rehabilitation actors are mostly international. These actors include ACTED, Critical Needs Support Foundation (CNSF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Human Appeal (HA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Local Churches of Hamdaniya, Malteser International, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), Rebuild Iraq Recruitment Program (RIRP), UNDP, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, and ZOA International.

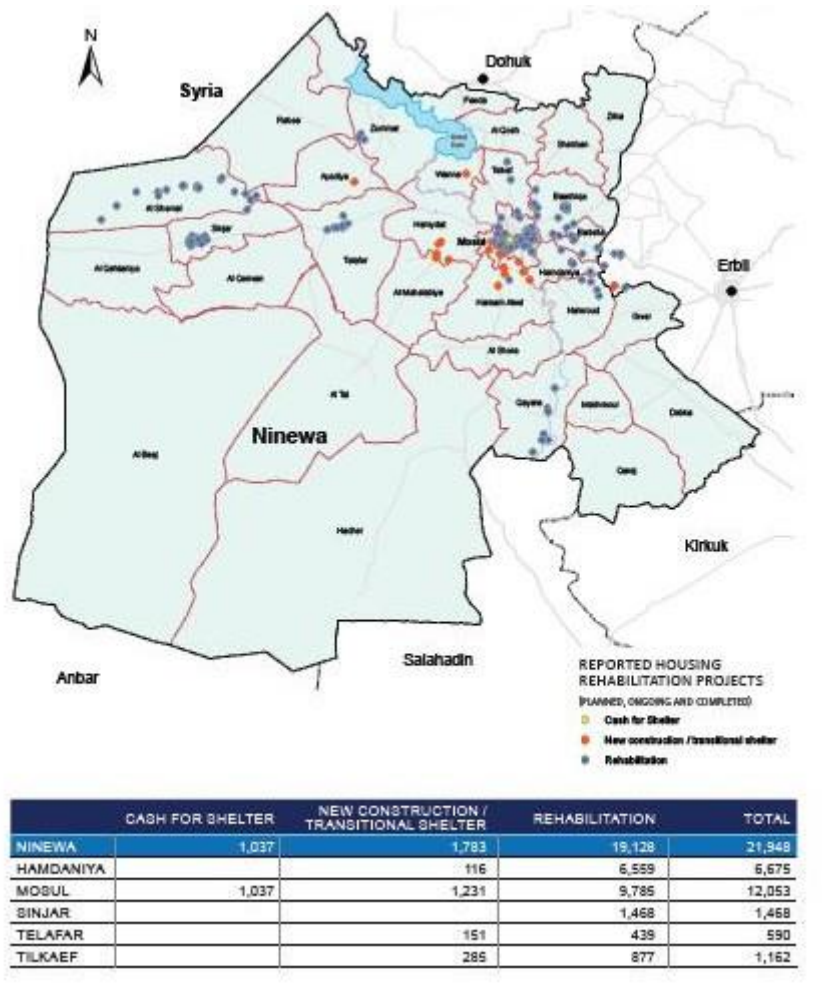


Figure 7: Housing Rehabilitation Overview Response Map of GBV response in Ninewa, Iraq in 2019 (UN OCHA:2019a).

BUDGET & DONORS

The budget for housing, land and rehabilitation falls under the funding provided for shelter in the Iraq Financial Tracking Service with \$28.4 million allocated for shelter and non-food items (Financial Tracking Service:2019). According to UN-Habitat and the Shelter Cluster, there are still noticeable gaps in housing rehabilitation projects in parts of Ninewa, particularly in the Tel Afar district, and currently there are no ongoing or planned projects which have been reported to the housing rehabilitation portal (UN-Habitat & Shelter Cluster:2019).

6. LIVELIHOOD

NEEDS

Ninewa's markets continue to be severely obstructed by the remnants of war and displacement. The breakdown of vital infrastructure affects access for production (particularly around Sinjar) and the development of commercial relations. Furthermore, the disputed status of large areas within Ninewa in conjunction with the weakness of state policies and institutions to regulate the value chain, has limited the ability to grow sustainable markets and safeguard small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Security risks and the presence of myriad security factions also negatively affects the operations of value chain actors (Social Inquiry, Welt Hunger Hilfe, & GiZ:2019, Livelihood Cluster Meeting:2019). Meanwhile, embargoes and illegal taxation by third parties (e.g., by Local, Hybrid and Sub-state Forces (LHSFs)) have hampered the ability of market actors to operate and bring products to market effectively.



Figure 8: Yazidi IDPs at their auto repair business outside the camp they reside in.

Following the IS invasion of Ninewa, the relationship between different social groups changed and with the growing uncertainty, sentiments of distrust infiltrated market dynamics. For example, the relationship between the Yazidis and Arabs in Sinjar suffered greatly during and following the IS invasion. Feelings of distrust hampered market relations and community collaboration due to the violence faced by Yazidis, and were subsequently revived by new concerns, such as land disputes (Social Inquiry et al.:2019). Checkpoints and a lack of access to certain areas from disputed territories in Ninewa constitute central elements in the politicization of the markets. Combined with the federal government's disenfranchisement of the territories in terms of protection, this leaves these areas reliant on imports and at the mercy of large corporations and small INGO initiatives for livelihood (Social Inquiry et al.:2019).

Women are largely dependent on men in Ninewa, have lower literacy rates than in other areas of the country, marry younger, have larger families, and have low participation in the labor market (LADP:2018; IOM Iraq:2013). Ninewa has the highest protection needs in all of Iraq due to the large proportion of displaced women and children. This is especially the case for SFHHs, who struggle due to the lack of livelihood opportunities inside camp settings, the pressure of child care responsibilities, the restrictions placed on their participation in labor markets, and their overall lack of qualifications. If women want to navigate the socially and culturally restricted spaces for independent survival, they are often forced to engage in negative coping strategies including survival sex (UN OCHA:2018).

Ninewa has historically been seen as the 'breadbasket' of Iraq, with its northern districts providing 22% of Iraq's wheat production and 51% of its barley, as recorded in 2014 (UNESCO:2019). During the IS occupation, however, production was cut by 40%, and IS confiscated one million tons of grain en route to Syria, looted farming equipment, transformed irrigation pipes into mines, and denied payment to 400,000 farmers 'as punishment' (UNESCO:2019). Following the IS invasion, agricultural value went from 13 trillion IQD in 2013 to 9.1 trillion IQD in 2015 (UNESCO:2019). This agricultural recession severely affected livelihoods, as agriculture is Iraq's second highest employment sector, the largest employer of women, and the largest sector of unwaged work. Traditionally, women and youth have been well represented in the agricultural workforce, mainly as harvesters, dairy milkers, and factory workers. According to the Republic of Iraq's Central Statistical Organization data in 2011, the agricultural sector employed a notably inclusive workforce comprised of 63% men and 37% women.

According to the Gol, the high levels of rainfall across the Ninewa region will likely fortify the agricultural sector again. However, many farmers have been victims of IED explosions and are reluctant to return to work until the lands have been successfully de-mined (NPC:2019a, 2019b). In this way, work in the agricultural sector has been hampered by explosive hazards on agricultural and grazing land, as well as by a lack of agricultural equipment.

As an important economic sector for Ninewa, the revitalization of the agricultural industry could meet the increasing need for food security and reduce dependence on imported goods. In addition, it could generate inclusive job opportunities for rural youth and women. However, in order to bolster this sector, there is a need for government support, regulation, and protection. For example, the sector needs changes in policy regarding farmland equipment, mines, crops, and support for displaced farmers.

In collaboration with the Farm and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the Gol's strategic plan for agriculture has three pillars; one pillar focuses on building the capacity of public institutions and initiating policy reforms to facilitate local market-based agriculture (including irrigation systems, farm inputs, extension and animal health services) (UNESCO:2019). However, due to the financial crisis, the federal support has seen less agriculture subsistence, and this has resulted in poor protection of local products and logistics. This strategy also faces other challenges, such as politics and climate change, which have led to despair among farmers. Needless to say, as farming enterprises diminish, the sector and its livelihood potential deteriorates; this leads to unemployment and an increased reliance on imported goods (UNESCO:2019). Subsequently, these developments cause IDPs and returnees to migrate towards cities for work, or to rely on financial or in-kind support from family or community members (UNESCO:2019).

The potential of livelihoods to achieve both IDP return and stabilization is significant. In addition to economic replenishment, livelihood initiatives also create new opportunities for women and youth empowerment which is documented to be a peacebuilding and stabilizing factor (Sanad for Peacebuilding & Social Inquiry:2018). Young people who need sufficient capital to get married and start their own lives are particularly desperate for livelihood opportunities. When the current

climate across Ninewa's districts offers scarce opportunity for youth, they are sometimes driven into armed groups. In this way, adequate investment in durable livelihood initiatives can avoid further destabilization by preventing or disincentivizing the militarization of youth. Interventions related to inclusive capacity building, recapitalization of SMEs, and the replacement of lost assets are central in this regard.

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

Existing livelihood initiatives include, among other things, asset replacement programs; cash for work (C4W) programs; subsidized job placements and paid apprenticeships; vocational, employability, and entrepreneurship trainings; programs designed to facilitate literacy in English, computer skills, and financial management; and agricultural support to reactivate productive resources.

Initiatives vary depending on the challenges and opportunities presented across different contexts, and programming is therefore district-specific. In Sinjar, for example, the issues often revolve around the market and the ways in which displacement and security factors continue to affect it. Although there are functioning livelihood channels in Sinjar, the central issue has been militia checkpoints between major market points, e.g. from Mosul to Sinjar (INGO KII:2019, Livelihood Cluster Meeting:2019).

UNDP's livelihood partners operate programs that help to replace lost assets (also called 'Assets Recovery'), with a particular focus on the income-generating assets of IDPs, host communities, returnees, and non-displaced persons who lost their productive assets due to the recent conflict. In Ninewa, the Emergency Livelihood cluster operates in Sinjar and Tel Afar, as well as in areas of displacement for IDPs in the KRI with a special focus on needs response for returnees depending on their specific situation and the local context. The Assets Recovery programs support small business skills training, business literacy, mentoring, and protection components. With a view to create sustainable returns, in-kind business grants for asset revitalization are relatively small (generally capped at \$600 - \$1,000) to ensure mobility. These activities deliver support to newly established businesses or to businesses which previously lost their assets (INGO KII:2019).

In the view of humanitarian actors, the move from emergency response to development has been met with an increasing reconfiguration of livelihood programming and new frameworks that promote market sustainability. Cash for work (C4W) programs have increasingly been replaced by more locally rooted, evidence-based, targeted approaches to incubating SMEs that provide opportunities for women (including SFHHs). Due to the fundamentally communal nature of local economic markets, this involves community cohesion and dialogue initiatives. Components of Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) are also being incorporated into emergency livelihood initiatives wherever appropriate and possible, as these are likely to sustain projects following a humanitarian exit (INGO KII:2019).

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

The prospect of securing sustainable livelihoods is challenged by the broader economic context within Iraq. A weak private sector, deficient public sector, and lack of robust social welfare programs leave large swaths of the populace unable to afford their basic subsistence needs (INGO KII:2020, OCHA:2019). The consequent prevalence of debt and negative coping strategies among recipient communities complicates the transition from cash assistance programs to more sustainable long-term employment and provision models (OCHA:2019). Meanwhile, a high reliance on imports, limited market regulations and accountability, and patronage conceptualizations of employment

impact the ability of livelihood actors to implement successful programs (INGO KII:2020, OCHA:2019).

A number of critical gaps remain in existing livelihood initiatives. First, areas with a high density and severity of reported need, such as Mosul, remain underserved (INGO KII:2020). Livelihood actors must coordinate their efforts in order to better meet existing need. Second, initiatives designed to promote women's economic empowerment and independence require more attention and support, as women still lack equitable access to the market as business holders and traders (INGO KII:2020). The dearth of investment and inclusion of women in various livelihood sectors is a key concern, as many women who became heads of households during the invasion are also the primary caretakers for their children, which heightens their need for income while simultaneously restricting their ability to access livelihood opportunities. Additionally, a stronger channel of mutual referral between PSS and GBV protection programs and activities in the economic market sector would be beneficial (INGO KII:2020). Third, there is a need for a graduated model of empowerment for all marginalized demographics – including women, minorities, and persons with perceived affiliation – to ensure that they are fully integrated into their communities and markets upon return.

In the future, livelihood actors will need to transition toward the solicitation of greater private sector support while promoting a culture of entrepreneurship within their areas of operation (INGO KII:2020). Simultaneously, they must build capacity in farming cooperatives, as well as microfinance and banking systems, to encourage the flourishing of local small and medium enterprises (INGO KII:2020). Such strategies will need to be augmented by robust advocacy for the implementation of better pensions and social safety nets for disadvantaged demographics.

Meanwhile, cross-sharing of lessons learned by the GoI will be central to enhancing livelihood projects in Ninewa and ensuring that existing interventions are achieving stability and sustainability. There is a need for the government to support PPPs in order to create healthy regulatory frameworks and secure investment for the upscaling of small businesses. PPPs should take over at the end of projects to better integrate and stabilize markets (INGO KIIs:2019).

MAIN ACTORS

Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Caritas-Iraq, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), GOAL Global, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Joint Development Associates International (JDA), Mission East, People In Need (PIN), Representative of Ninewa Voluntary for IDPs (RNVDO), Sahara Economic Development Organization (SEDO), Al-Tahreer Association for Development (TAD), Tearfund, Welthungerhilfe (WHH), World Vision International (WVI), ZOA International.

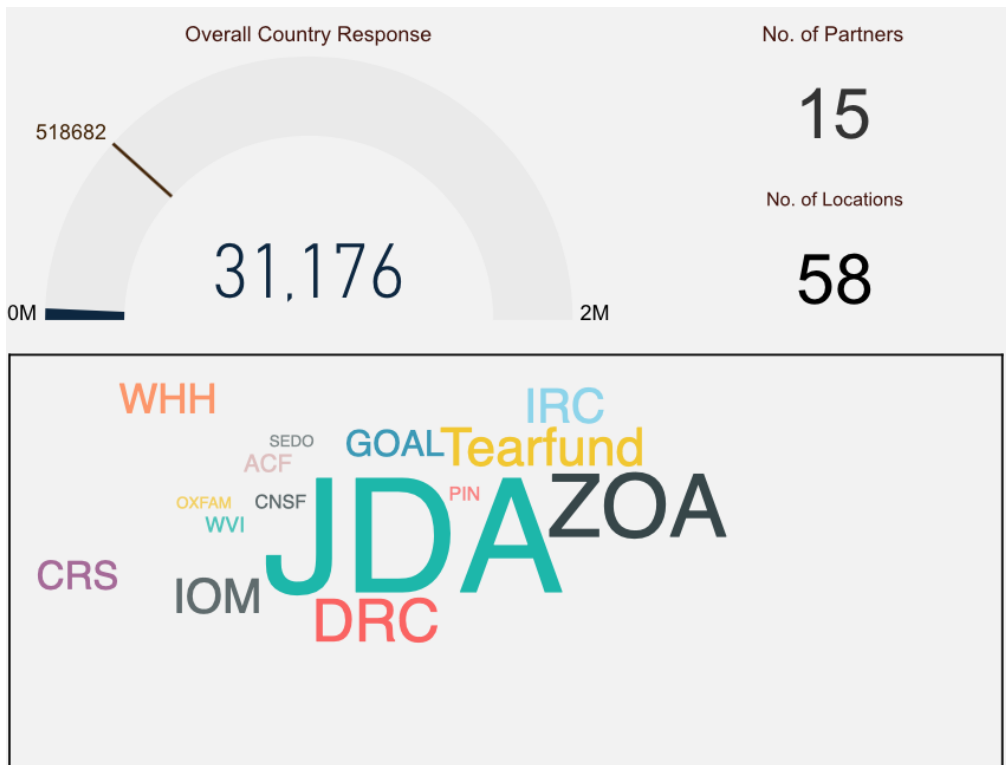


Figure 9: Humanitarian Response Map of emergency livelihood response actors in Ninewa, Iraq in 2019 (UN OCHA:2019a).

BUDGET & DONORS

For livelihood project cycles, sustainable initiatives require at least 6 to 8 months to realize durable solutions that promote stabilization. Currently, grants typically cover a 4 to 6 month period of intervention, and this timeframe is not optimal to create and implement certain types of projects, such as work placements and capacity building. Donors seem to be able to negotiate between 6 and 8 month implementation periods in order to realize long-term, durable solutions (INGO KII:2019). Emergency livelihood is a part of UNDP’s Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) with a budget of \$129,6688,216.

7. SOCIAL WELLBEING AND BASIC SERVICES

NEEDS

For many IDPs, a central barrier to return and stabilization is the lack of basic services available in areas of origin, which has a profound impact on their prospects for social and physical well-being. Among the essential services required for viable and durable return, IDPs list the provision of potable water, sanitation facilities, and waste management; educational resources and opportunities; and health facilities and supplies. Across all three sectors, the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure in vulnerable or underserved districts and the provision of remedial or emergent services in areas of displacement remain critical needs. Cross-cutting considerations include improving the quality and quantity of available services, as well as enhancing access to them.

Within the health sector, specifically, there is need for an improved understanding of mental health issues, as well as a clearer focus on this topic. Mental health remains severely underreported by both men and women. Interestingly, women report post-traumatic stress disorder or depression more often than men, yet suicide rates are much higher among men. REACH (Rehabilitation, Education and Community Health) concluded that underreporting is much higher among men than women when it comes to mental health (REACH:2018d). With that disclaimer, however, 31% of all IDPs report mental health issues, and this is considered a high figure (IOM, RWG & Social Inquiry:2018). REACH also found correlations between mental health issues and factors related to displacement. Location and time of displacement have an impact, with the latter being linked to the specific conflict phase when the displacement took place. Different conflict phases in Iraq brought different experiences with them, which subsequently influenced people's mental health outcomes. For this reason, it is essential to understand the conflict history that led to the various waves of displacement. Other important and influential factors include separation from family members (whether through disappearance or death), being a single female head of household, and feelings of collective blame such as judgment or being labelled by others. Despite mental health being such a profound need, however, there is barely any insight into who is working on this topic. Underreporting complicates the picture further (RWG:2019).

The need for investment in mental health and psychosocial support is likely to increase with protracted displacement. There have also been cases of Yazidi women returning to Sinjar sporadically who are in dire need of mental health support. Cases like these are referred to camps in Duhok, which in turn signals the need for more capacity building and training to deal with such cases (NPC:2019b).

Additionally, however, there is a need to ensure equitable access to essential health services. There is evidence that persons with perceived affiliation are not treated properly, while people without civil documentation are often denied health care. One study notes that, in 23% of cases, health services were denied to undocumented persons (Saieh, Brown & McCluskey:2018). Ninewa has an even higher figure with 36% of undocumented persons being denied access to healthcare during the research period (NPC:2019b). In addition to being a severe violation of human rights, denial of healthcare also poses a serious risk for further health issues. Denying vaccinations or proper treatment for transferable diseases increases the risk of outbreaks. Denying women an opportunity to deliver their babies in a hospital may lead to an unnecessary loss of life. Instances like these have been reported by Protection Cluster partners and highlight the severe need for equitable and non-discriminatory access (NPC:2019b).

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster has two main areas of coordination: a camp-level response and an out-of-camp level response. Within camps, WASH activities focus on the operation and maintenance of water services, including provision, sanitation, hygiene promotion, and waste management. In out-of-camp settings, the WASH cluster coordinates with local authorities in the Directorate of Water and Directorate of Municipalities to prioritize the rehabilitation of water networks, plants, and infrastructure in vulnerable districts. These interventions include the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in schools, clinics, and hospitals.

The Iraq Education Cluster (IEC) partner organizations operate primarily in the field of non-formal education, where remedial services are offered to children in displacement to facilitate their eventual mainstreaming into the formal education system. However, a number of formal schools in Ninewa have also been built to augment these informal schooling interventions. Partner activities include the provision of temporary learning spaces; the distribution of learning and teaching materials; capacity building initiatives for teachers, Department of Education (DOE) and Ministry of Education (MOE) personnel, school management committees, and PTAs; and the implementation of PSS programs.

The Health Cluster consists of four working groups, organized as follows:

- 1) physical rehabilitation (chaired by the World Health Organization [WHO])
- 2) nutrition (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF])
- 3) reproductive health (UNFPA)
- 4) mental health (WHO, International Medical Corps [IMC], and linked to GBV and Clinical Management of Rape)

An additional working group with a focus on trauma was dissolved because it became less relevant after the battle of Mosul ended and there were not enough cases referred. Instead, the Health Cluster has transitioned to offer mental health and psychosocial services, and is investing in training modules to improve the response to mental health issues (KIIs:2019-2020).

The Health Cluster is primarily concerned with in-camp IDPs and refugees. Out-of-camp IDPs and refugees are catered for via UN OCHA guidelines. UN OCHA indicates 20 prioritized districts with regards to returns, and this is where the Health cluster operates for out-of-camp IDPs. Both in-camp and out-of-camp target groups are treated with the same system, centered around Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs), which are equipped to provide out-patient consultations for general health issues, reproductive health services, immunizations, and essential medicines. The Health cluster has installed one PHCC per 5,000 individuals. If a health center was already present, it was upgraded to the desired standards. Otherwise, PHCCs are built by UNDP in accordance to the HRP. In a situation where there are less than 5,000 persons in a camp or settlement, the Health Cluster partners send mobile teams to address health concerns.

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

Mirroring trends that have emerged in other sectors, health, education, and WASH actors have all reported difficulty securing humanitarian access letters, which inhibits their ability to render services in areas of need. According to relevant organizations and their implementing partners, many chronic gaps and shortcomings in current initiatives can be mapped back to these access issues (INGO KIIs:2020).

Another gap identified by health, education, and WASH actors relates to deficient funding structures and strategies. For example, key stakeholders in the health sector have noted that WHO and other

international partners do not have the requisite capacity to meet the existing demand for primary healthcare in Ninewa, while financial limitations in the Department of Health (DOH) and Ministry of Health (MOH) leave critical gaps in secondary health services (INGO KII:2020). The Health Cluster continues to receive calls, via the Iraq IIC, requesting emergency cash assistance; these calls reflect unmet public health needs that cannot be addressed by humanitarian actors and must be channeled back to the central government (INGO KII:2020). In the education sector, education in emergency (EiE) initiatives generally receive short-term funding, often spanning 3-6 months. However, the implementation of full literacy and numeracy program cycles, with periodic evaluations and assessments to substantiate efficacy, require long-term funding of at least two years (INGO KII:2020). In the WASH sector, the cost and timeline of many necessary rehabilitation projects, including the repair of aging water infrastructure, mean that they cannot be adequately be addressed by humanitarian actors. Therefore, funding at the governmental level must be optimized to sufficiently cover WASH strategies with a long-term time horizon (INGO KII:2020).

In the healthcare sector, specifically, a number of initiative gaps persist in Ninewa. Many existing health facilities within the province still need to be rehabilitated, while others need to be deconstructed and rebuilt due to the extensive damage incurred during liberation. Secondary health services remain limited by the lack of technical and material capacity in Iraqi health organizations, such as the DOH and MOH (KIIs:2019-2020). Capacity-building efforts are therefore necessary to secure better management of existing hospitals; integrate the early warning and alert response network (eWARN); identify mental health needs and refer patients to appropriate service providers; and ensure equal accessibility of care to persons with perceived affiliation or without civil documentation (INGO KII:2020).

While access to education has greatly improved within the EiE sector, existing education initiatives leave much to be desired in terms of quality. There is a critical shortage of qualified teachers, so many formal and informal learning spaces currently rely on the services of inexperienced volunteers (INGO KII:2020). Textbooks are provided, but little pedagogical innovation exists. Such limitations have clear repercussions in educational attainment. Recently, in Ninewa's IDP camps, only 15% of children who sat for the 6th grade exam passed (INGO KII:2020).

Ultimately, the absence of a cohesive and comprehensive national system to ensure the delivery of basic services continues to impact the efficacy of interventions. Health actors have called for the development of a "common framework" to rectify this deficiency and secure durable solutions (INGO KII:2020). Education experts argue that the central government needs to develop proper policy frameworks in order to redistribute qualified teachers across areas of need; provide incentives to ensure that rural locations have adequate coverage; standardize the quality of educational programs; and prevent discrimination against children without civil documentation (INGO KII:2020). Actors across all sectors emphasize the promotion of local ownership as the key to a successful and sustainable stabilization process.

MAIN ACTORS

The Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Local and international NGOs include: Al-Masalla, HELP - Germany, Danish Refugee Council, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, Mercy Corps, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Public Aid Organization (PAO), Doctors Aid for Medical Activities (DAMA), Dary Human Organization, Heevie, Samaritan's Purse (SP), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), Save the Children Iraq (SCI), Peace Winds Japan (PWJ), Oxfam, Qatar Red Crescent (QRC), Tearfund, PIN, Medair, Barzani Charity Foundation (BCF), Cordaid, Médecins du Monde (MDM), Heevi, Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO), IOM, IMC, and NRC. Main funding agencies include IOM, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

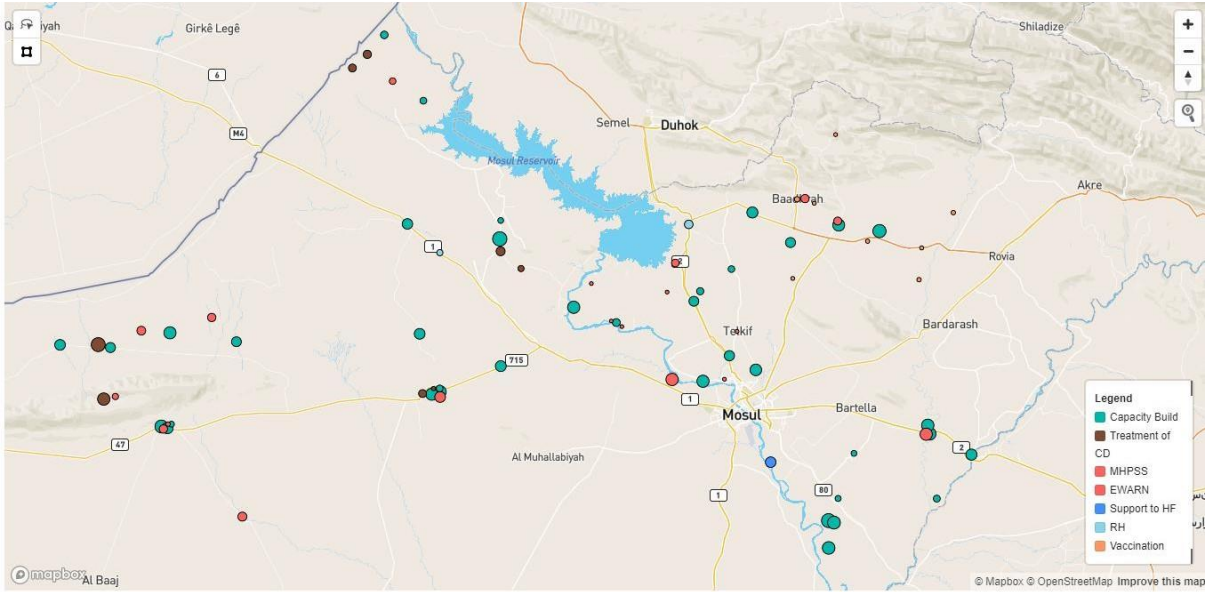


Figure 10: Health service providers in Ninewa, Iraq (Health Cluster Iraq:2019).

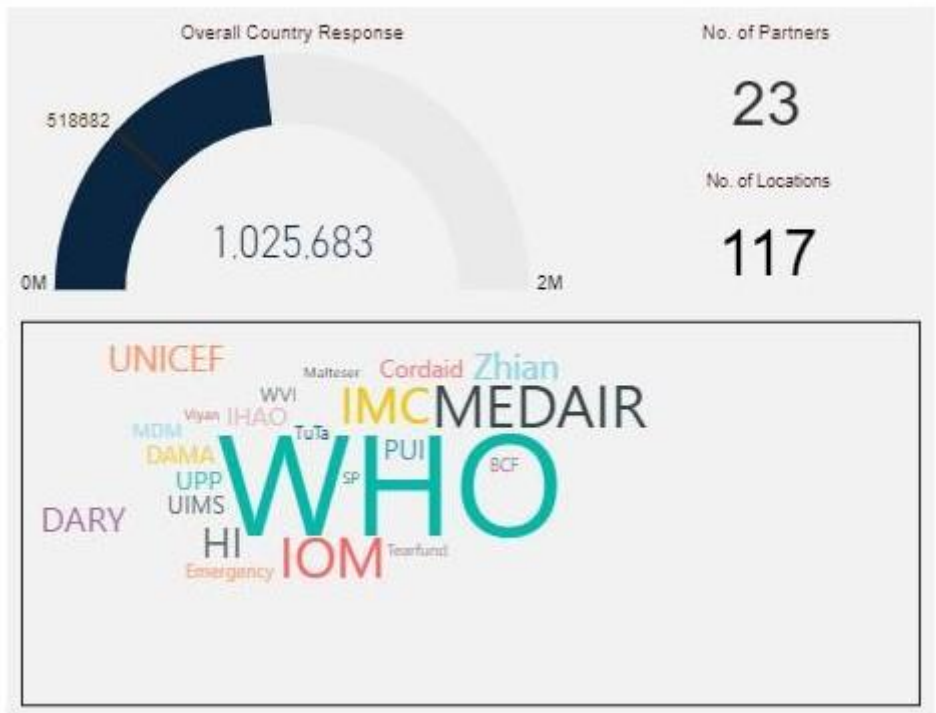


Figure 11: Humanitarian Response map of health response actors in Ninewa, Iraq in 2019 (UN OCHA:2019a).

BUDGET & DONORS

For war-affected governorates, the World Bank estimates that the health and education sectors were two of the most critically impacted, as they endured substantial damage totaling USD \$2.3 billion and US \$2.4 billion, respectively (World Bank Group:2018). This damage has severely affected health care service delivery and caused spikes in morbidity and mortality. Recovery for the health and education sectors is estimated to cost US \$4.6 billion and US \$4.3 billion, respectively (World Bank Group:2018). However, the health budget for Iraq figures at \$28,511,404 (Financial Tracking

Service:2019). Meanwhile, the Water Sanitation and Hygiene sector is one of the best funded, with a budget of \$53,150,178 (Financial Tracking Service:2019).

8. SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION

NEEDS

Social cohesion is an essential component of sustainable relationship networks, and can be a step toward reconciliation both within and between communities. During interviews, key informants emphasized the importance of social cohesion after conflict and the need to raise awareness for it. REACH reports that a well-coordinated and comprehensive response plan is necessary and that social cohesion programs must be a central part of this (REACH:2018c). This is vital to ‘ensure safe, equitable, and sustainable rebuilding efforts across returnee and non-displaced populations’ (REACH:2018c). There are still districts in Ninewa governorate where many out-of-camp IDPs face unmet needs. Even though there has been a shift in focus toward these areas, it remains essential that the high level of unmet needs is adequately addressed, and that any viable approach emphasizes the centrality of social cohesion programs in areas of return (REACH:2018b).

Although seen as a difficult task, trust needs to be rebuilt between minorities and other groups. At present, minority communities do not feel heard nor catered for when it comes to reconciliation. Many minority components are attempting to move on from the horrors that took away their family members, friends or neighbors, yet still feel neglected by the authorities. The main barrier to the return of minority IDPs seems to be a deep lack of trust, stemming not only from the IS occupation but also from a much longer timeframe in which minorities have suffered from marginalization and fear over their collective future. For the Yazidis, this lack of trust has led to prolonged displacement in inhumane circumstances. Large segments of the Christian community have left Iraq and migrated elsewhere to build up a more secure existence. This has compounded the fear of losing Christianity and Christian culture in the Middle East.

Ruptures in social cohesion and unmet needs for reconciliation register across multiple dimensions in Ninewa. For example, there are reportedly fourteen different armed groups operating in Mosul city alone, which is both a symptom of social fragmentation and a factor that complicates the process of restoring cohesion (CSO KII:2019). Similarly, a recent presentation of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)’s Protracted Displacement study revealed that ‘locations with ethno-religious diversity and severe social cohesion and safety issues are more likely to have more housing destruction than those with homogeneous populations or less severe social cohesion and safety issues’ (RWG:2019). Along with acts of revenge and the illegal occupation of private residences, these phenomena both reflect and compound social cohesion needs.

Currently, reconciliation constitutes the single most critical and impactful indicator on Scale 2 of the Return Index, which measures perceptions of safety and social cohesion (IOM:2019b). In other words, unmet reconciliation needs constitute a key factor impeding the return of IDPs to their areas of origin. Notably and concerningly, there has been a deterioration of Scale 2 in 2019, although more information is needed to elucidate the precise reasons behind this deterioration (RWG:2020).

INITIATIVES & SERVICES

On March 14, 2018, the Social Cohesion Road Map for the Ninewa Plains was launched during a conference in Bartella. This was done by the Council of Ministers and National Reconciliation Committee, supported by UNDP (UNDP:2019a).

There is progress being made in the area of social cohesion, particularly through the efforts of INGOs and their implementing partners. Relevant initiatives include community dialogues, the development of local peace committees, capacity-building in conflict management for local leaders,

shared resource programs, advocacy campaigns, and the integration of cohesion components into social service and livelihood projects.

For example, the Danish Demining Group works on social cohesion projects and tries to get local communities to see the importance of this concept. There appears to be a positive trend with local communities expressing a desire to move forward; however, the challenge is to do this in a sustainable manner that adequately addresses underlying tensions (INGO KII:2019).

'The Day After' program is an initiative developed by PAX for Peace and its partners. The aim of the program is to 'realize representative and legitimate governance, sound security provisions and increased social cohesion, ultimately leading to an inclusive post-ISIS reconstruction of Ninewa Governorate' (PAX for Peace-Iraq:n.d.). As part of this program, a dialogue between citizens and local governments is facilitated and stimulated. By conversing with each other, communities begin the process of rebuilding trust (PAX for Peace-Iraq:n.d.). Furthermore, PAX has been implementing the program 'Kulluna Muwatineen' (We Are All Citizens) since 2013. By focusing on youth, this program works to promote respect for diversity and freedom of religion by means of cross-sectarian dialogue and solidarity (PAX for Peace-Iraq:n.d.).

With the support of USIP, Sanad for Peacebuilding is also active with social cohesion projects in the Ninewa governorate. By bringing community leaders and officials together, they try to find solutions for peaceful coexistence. For example, in the summer of 2018, USIP and Sanad began a dialogue process with tribal and community leaders, including both Sunni and Shia Turkmen, in Ayadiya, a town near the city of Tel Afar. This process culminated in a peaceful coexistence pact in August 2018, which laid the foundation for the return of IDPs to the area. USIP is currently coordinating with GIZ and their grantee, Nonviolent Peaceforce, on the implementation of the pact and a monitoring framework that enables relevant actors to respond to any violations of the agreement.

Additionally, USIP and GIZ are coordinating dialogue processes in Tel Afar district aimed at addressing barriers to return and allaying tensions; GIZ is focused on the sub-district of Zummar while USIP concentrates on Tel Afar center. USIP and Sanad are also engaged in Hamdaniya district, where tensions between Christians and Shabaks around the issues of security, cultural identity, land and administrative units are being examined.

In Sinjar, PAX for Peace is cooperating with Al-Masalla to establish and organize a local peace committee with Yazidi representatives. This committee focuses on engaging tribal and religious leaders to organize activities and dialogues in the community. Although the committee is seen as active, it does not include members from communities with whom ongoing disputes exist, such as the Sunni Arabs who were accused of helping IS in 2014. The Shammar tribe, however, is perceived to have been successful in mitigating and negotiating disputes between communities (Sanad for Peacebuilding & Social Inquiry:2018).

Additionally, IOM is creating a Rapid Conflict Assessment to look at the impact of PSS issues arising from displacement on the capacity to achieve social cohesion.

At the governmental level, the National Reconciliation Committee in the Prime Minister's office formed partnerships with UNDP, USIP and other organizations to support local peace processes. The partnership with UNDP led to the formation of 8 reconciliation subcommittees in Ninewa Province. However, key challenges to the Committee's success have clustered around its resources and mandate. On the former, the Committee did not have funds allocated from the government's budget; with regards to the latter, the mandate of the committee was not well defined and often caused friction with sub-national authorities who had similar mandates, such as the provincial council. In Ninewa, this was exacerbated by the fact that the local peace committees, comprised of

local elites and community leaders, were formed without clarifying the relationship of these committees to other local-level entities. The Committee was replaced in early 2019 with the Higher Standing Committee for Social Peace and Coexistence, which was also tied to the Prime Minister's office. More recently, this committee underwent an additional transformation, and became the Coexistence and Communal Peace Committee.

The new committee has a mandate made-up of the following points:

1. Carrying out activities and procedures related to national reconciliation in a manner that enhances coexistence and community peace;
2. Following-up on the political files for national reconciliation and dialogue with Iraqi political parties;
3. Addressing the consequences of terrorism in all aspects;
4. Following-up on the affairs of Iraqis refugees abroad and arranging their voluntary return to Iraq;
5. Following-up on the return of IDPs to their area of origin and addressing the security, tribal and services-related barriers to their return;
6. Concluding the issue of the dissolved entities;
7. Working to restore properties to their owners following the unlawful occupation of IDPs houses;
8. Working to make national reconciliation a social project for all to adopt;
9. Promoting and fostering a culture of dialogue, tolerance, respect for other opinions, diversity, citizenship, rule of law and other values supporting long-term peaceful coexistence;
10. Following-up on minorities' affairs and their legitimate rights in accordance with the constitution and existing laws;
11. Following-up on the lack of services in the liberated areas and speeding up service delivery when necessary;
12. Following-up on the Tribal file.

In consultation and cooperation with UNDP, this committee has developed a number of smaller "peace teams," comprised of women, to complement the work of its subcommittees.

GAPS, SHORTCOMINGS, AND FAILURES

In a recent collaborative study by IOM, Social Inquiry, and RWG, Ninewa Governorate reported the highest number of locations in need of reconciliation (IOM:2019b). However, of the 158 locations identified as requiring reconciliation, 117 (or roughly 74%) also reported that commensurate efforts are not currently taking place (IOM:2019b). This discrepancy between need and activity is indicative of a significant gap.

As with other initiatives, the success of social cohesion and reconciliation programs is challenged by the transition to development-oriented objectives; donor cycles that are too short to ensure durable solutions to protracted conflict; inadequate political will, at the federal level, to appropriately prioritize reconciliation; the convoluted administrative structure in Ninewa; rapidly changing dynamics resulting from camp consolidations and closures; duplications and redundancies in the efforts of governmental organizations and NGOs; a lack of consensus on how to manage IDPs with perceived affiliation; and, at times, a deficient awareness, among recipient communities, of the specific programs and services available to them.

Additionally, a number of process gaps and shortcomings have been identified, as detailed below.

- A cohesive and formalized national reconciliation framework, including guiding policies and monitoring mechanisms, has yet to be actualized at the governmental level. In the absence of a centralized framework, the impact and sustainability of INGO programs for social cohesion and reconciliation are limited (INGO FGD:2019, INGO KII:2020). In the interim, stronger

evaluation metrics and monitoring processes are required to measure the success of tribal peace agreements and the efficacy of other INGO programming (INGO KII:2020, PRWG 2019a).

- Current government-sponsored reconciliation initiatives lack appropriate inclusivity and representation (INGO KIIs:2019-2020, NPC KII:2019, PRWG:2019a). Women remain critically under-represented in the national reconciliation program and its formal committees, and their exclusion is compounded by other categories of marginalization, such as minority status, age, and the urban-rural divide. This is a deeply troubling gap, as experts observe that the participation of women is essential in establishing any chance of sustainable peace (KIIs:2019).
- Justice has been identified by numerous community stakeholders as being part and parcel of a successful reconciliation and trust-building process (KIIs:2019). In the absence of a transparent justice process, clear mechanisms for accountability, and a functioning court system, however, critical failures of justice abound. Persons with perceived but unproven affiliation languish in prisons and detention centers; Yazidis have no viable recourse for addressing their grievances; and collective punishment continues to disrupt communal stabilization (INGO KIIs:2019-2020, Revkin:2018). In light of these failures, INGOs and their partner organizations must integrate greater advocacy for justice into their reconciliation and social cohesion programming.
- Recipient communities have also identified a need for the robust integration of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), deradicalization, and tolerance education components into existing social cohesion programming (INGO FGD:2019, KIIs:2019). Many affected populations believe that the prevailing sectarian mentality in Iraq, if not corrected, will continue to foster radicalization and ideologically-motivated violence in the future (KIIs:2019).
- There is a perception, among some components of INGOs and target communities alike, that social cohesion and reconciliation initiatives often focus the bulk of their programming on addressing intercommunal tensions. Disruptions in social cohesion can register across many dimensions, however, and can create rifts both within communities and between disenfranchised constituents and their leaders. While many sector actors do incorporate or even prioritize intracommunal issues, greater attention to this topic is still needed in order to mitigate intragroup revenge; resolve internal disputes that can compromise the implementation and longevity of peace agreements; and enable fragmented groups, such as the Yazidis, to advocate for their needs and interests in a cohesive and unified way (INGO FGD:2019, KIIs:2019-2020, PRWG:2019a).
- Some recipient communities feel a profound distrust toward the various actors tasked with implementing social cohesion and reconciliation programs, including governmental and non-governmental institutions, local authorities, and their own tribal or religious leaders (INGO FGD:2019, KIIs:2019-2020). Trust-building activities are necessary to repair the social contract between recipient communities and implementing actors.
- There is a need for more community-led peace and reconciliation programs, rather than those imposed externally by national or international entities (Local Leader KIIs:2019). When these initiatives are not sufficiently grounded in the local context, recipient communities are less likely to trust in the process or invest in the outcome (INGO KII:2020, Local Leader KIIs:2019).

MAIN ACTORS

The Peace and Reconciliation Working Group (PRWG), formed in 2018, is a coordination platform designed to streamline information sharing and address deficiencies and duplications in the efforts of

local and international NGOs, donor agencies, and the central and local governments in Ninewa. While there is a plethora of projects aimed at promoting reconciliation and social cohesion in Ninewa Plains, the specific focus and mechanisms of these initiatives vary considerably. At the governmental level, main actors include the Coexistence and Communal Peace Committee, along with its subcommittees. INGOs working in this area include: IOM, UNDP, USIP, Mercy Corps, Social Inquiry, PAX, Cordaid, Un Ponte Per (UPP), Nonviolent Peaceforce, and others. Local civil society actors include Sanad for Peacebuilding, Al Messala, Peace and Freedom Organization, and Peace Paradigms Organization.

BUDGET & DONORS

For social cohesion and reconciliation projects, there is not a specific budget or cluster identified within the Iraqi Financial Tracking Service. Due to the complex nature of Ninewa's social fabric, as well as new divisions and tensions emerging within communities in the post-conflict setting, social cohesion and reconciliation efforts require sustainable support from both new and existing initiatives in Ninewa. Currently, the UNDP Support for Integrated Reconciliation Project, in partnership with the GoI, is the largest fund for reconciliation projects with an estimated budget of US \$50 million over a period of 5 years. The main donors for the program are the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Germany's Federal Foreign Office (UNDP:2019b).

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