

IRAQ:

Challenges of forced displacement within Iraq

A profile of the internal displacement situation

29 December, 2008

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OVERVIEW

Challenges of forced displacement within Iraq

More than 2.8 million people were estimated to have been internally displaced in Iraq as of November 2008. Approximately 1.6 million were thought to have been displaced by sectarian and generalised violence since the Al Askari mosque bombing of February 2006, and approximately 190,000 more had been displaced by military operations and generalised violence from 2003 to 2005. An estimated 1.2 million were displaced by the policies of the former government of Saddam Hussein. In addition, it is estimated that more than two million Iraqis have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

The magnitude of the population displacements inside Iraq and in the region have prompted UNHCR to refer to the Iraqi displacement crisis as the “largest population movement since 1948 in the Middle East”. Five years after the fall of the former government, the unprecedented violence and rate of displacement of early 2007 has abated somewhat. It has left in its wake several million displaced, and close to 200,000 deaths by conservative estimates. Military operations and ongoing sectarian violence still continue to cause displacement, as witnessed in 2008 in large areas of Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, and Mosul.

The humanitarian situation remains dire for displaced and non-displaced alike with inadequate access to protection, shelter, food, clean water, health and employment opportunities. Though the humanitarian crisis was recognised in March 2007 by the United Nations and the international community, the humanitarian situation still remains precarious for millions of Iraqis. Limited by insecurity and lack of humanitarian space, international efforts to assist the internally displaced have been significant yet insufficient in view of the immensity of the crisis. The humanitarian community continues to face operational limitations and the blurring of the lines between civil and military roles.

Recent improvements in security, albeit far from irreversible, may signal a new chapter to the Iraqi crisis. A small but growing number of people have returned, mainly in Baghdad. However insecurity remains as extensive as between 2004 and 2005, and both the UN and NGOs have cautioned against premature returns of forcibly displaced people, despite pressure from the governments of Iraq and the United States. The humanitarian community has repeatedly warned that large scale return remains premature in view of the prevailing humanitarian situation.

The Iraqi government and international community must address the physical security, protection, and basic needs of returnees and the millions more still displaced, and also the legacy of years of violence and “sectarian cleansing”.

Background

In March 2007, the UN acknowledged the situation in Iraq as a humanitarian emergency (UNSC, 7 March 2007; UN News, 16 March 2007). Military operations and increasing levels of generalised violence following years of sanctions and war had led to a continuing deterioration in the living conditions of Iraqis. This humanitarian crisis continues in November 2008. Five years after the US-led invasion in March 2003, Iraq remains deeply divided and violent, with over 2.8 million internally displaced people (IDPs) within its borders and over two million refugees in neighbouring countries and elsewhere. Public health, water and sanitation infrastructure, services

and supplies remain precarious and do not meet the basic needs of the Iraqi population (OCHA, February 2008; Brookings, August 2008).

The humanitarian crisis follows 15 years of UN-led sanctions, and the growing instability and violence that arose following the invasion in March 2003. The policies of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and subsequent Iraqi governments exacerbated and reinforced sectarian divides within Iraqi society (ICG, 27 February 2006). These included the marginalisation of the Sunni community in the drafting of the constitution in October 2005, and the exclusion of the Sunni community in the January 2005 elections following the gains of Shi'ia Kurdish block (ICG, 27 February 2006). The sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi'ia militias which followed the February 2006 bombing of the Al Askari Shi'ia shrine in Samara marked an unprecedentedly bloody period in which civilians were the main victims. The militant groups' strategy to redraw the map of Iraq's communities was represented in the struggle for many previously mixed neighbourhoods of Baghdad which entailed systematic displacement along sectarian lines.

The sectarian violence of 2006 and 2007 was unprecedented and engendered massive displacement not simply as an accidental by-product of the conflict but equally as a way of consolidating territorial and political control for various sectarian groups, affiliated to political actors and even with the involvement of state institutions (Brookings, August 2008). The US State Department commented that the term civil war "accurately describes key elements of the Iraqi conflict, including the hardening of ethno-sectarian identities, a sea change in the character of violence, ethno-sectarian mobilisation, and population displacements" (USDoS, 2 February 2006).

The Iraqi government adopted a number of initiatives to curb the violence, with mixed results. In February 2007, a new security plan was initiated which entailed an increase in US forces under the surge policy (UNSC, 7 March 2007). The operation contributed to a significant reduction in violence, and encouraged and benefited from a series of realignments of Sunni insurgent groups as "Awakening Councils", as well as the unilateral ceasefire of Muqtada al Sadr's Shi'ia militia in August 2007 (ICG, April 2008). Nonetheless the violence left a society fragmented along sectarian lines, and despite continued improvements in security, the level of violence by early 2008 remained as high as in 2004 and 2005 (ICG, April 2008).

The sectarian violence and displacement have not ended, and the reduction in violence has not entailed national reconciliation but rather attempts to accommodate Shi'ia, Sunni and Kurdish parties and actors (ICG, April 2008). Attempts to modify the "de-Baathification" law of 2003, an amnesty law passed in February 2008, and the integration of Sunni Arabs into political and security structures have all had mixed results. The provincial elections to be held in January 2009, precursors to the parliamentary elections planned for late 2009, remain an important opportunity to ensure a more representative political forum. This may facilitate the resolution of issues regarding the devolution of federal power to regional authorities, the distribution of gas and oil and the management of "disputed areas" such as Kirkuk, all of which remain crucial for some semblance of national consensus, stability, and eventual reconciliation on which sustainable futures for displaced people and other Iraqis depend.

In late November, the Iraqi parliament voted in favour of the draft status of force agreement between the Iraqi government and the US according to which US forces shall withdraw from Iraqi cities by the end of June 2009 and from the entire country by 1 January 2012, three years after the expiry of their mandate under the UN Security Council's Resolutions 1546, 1637 and 1723 (BBC, 27 November 2008). The agreement underlines the government's continued reliance on the support of the multinational force in Iraq (MNF-I) and is a reminder of the fragility of the current situation. The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have been progressively assuming control over provinces which were under the MNF-I authority, and the government is now in charge of security throughout the country's mostly Shi'ia south (UNAMI, November 2008).

Figures, causes and patterns of displacement

By 2008, an estimated 4.3 million Iraqis – 15 per cent of the population – remained forcibly displaced, internally or in other countries. Forced displacement in Iraq is commonly divided into several periods: displacement under the Baath government; from the March 2003 invasion until the February 2006 Samara bombing; and since then. It is common for the international community to distinguish between “old” displacement and “new” displacement since February 2006 (IOM, 24 March 2007).

By combining displacement figures for these periods, over 2.8 million people were believed to be internally displaced in Iraq as of June 2008, according to estimates from the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). This includes an estimated 1,212,000 displaced before 2006, and 1,596,000 since. MoDM figures are based on registration of IDPs in 15 central and southern provinces, while KRG undertakes registration in the northern provinces of Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah (IOM, 30 June 2008). UNHCR and IOM undertake their own monitoring of population movements. Other organisations have published their own estimates, such as the Iraqi Red Crescent Society which in June 2008 estimated that 2.1 million people were internally displaced (IRCO, June 2008).

These figures should be approached with caution. The lack of security and fluctuation in the displacement situation prevents access and regular monitoring, and political parties have interests in putting out their own estimates of IDPs (Brookings, 18 October 2006; NCCI, 25 March 2007). Registration remains voluntary, and contingent on documentation which may be unavailable to victims of displacement. Multiple patterns of displacement also complicate the figures (Brookings, 18 October 2006). Evaluating figures on “old” displacement is also problematic; some observers suggest that the figures are outdated, hard to validate, and highly politicised (particularly with regards to the northern provinces) (Interview conducted by IDMC, November 2008). The current pre-2003 figures are based on data gathered in 2005 by the UN Office for Project Services and UNHCR in three northern provinces, and IOM implementing partners in 15 central and southern provinces (IDP WG, February 2008).

Monitoring and assessments undertaken by the humanitarian community, MoDM and KRG are mainly based on the “new” displacement figures. It is estimated that of the 1.6 million people internally displaced, 60 per cent originate from Baghdad. The majority (58 per cent) are Shi’ia Arab, followed by Sunni Arab (30 per cent), along with small but significant numbers from Iraq’s minorities such as the Shabaks, Christians Assyrians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Faeeli Kurds, Yazidis, and Sabeen Mandeans (IRIN, 3 July 2008).

There are an estimated 1.5 to two million Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries and elsewhere, including between one and 1.5 million in Syria and up to 500,000 in Jordan. These figures have also proved difficult to validate. Many refugees have not registered with either UNHCR or the governments concerned, and no conclusive survey has been undertaken to date (Interview conducted by IDMC, November 2008). There are also about 42,000 refugees located in Iraq, principally of Palestinian, Turkish and Iranian origin (UNHCR, November 2008).

Displacement before 2003

Forced displacement is not a new phenomenon in Iraq. The former government adopted policies of forced displacement against Kurds in northern Iraq, Shi’ia communities in the south and political opponents which caused the displacement of over 1.1 million people.

The policies of the former government included systematic displacement to alter the ethnic composition of regions. The UN estimated around 805,000 individuals had been displaced in the

northern Kurdish region, the majority between 1974 and 1991 (UNHCR, August 2004; UN HABITAT, January 2001). In addition more than 343,000 people were displaced, mainly in the mid 1990s, in the predominately Shi'ia southern provinces (Cluster F, 11 February 2007). Though it has not been possible to evaluate the status of these people, over one million reportedly remain displaced (IDP WG, November 2008).

Displacement in the centre and north of the country followed government "Arabisation" campaigns to neutralise Kurdish aspirations to independence and to strengthen control over large oil reserves principally in and around Kirkuk. Before and also after the 1991 Gulf War, the government forced tens of thousands of non-Arabs from Kirkuk and surrounding areas, resettling Arabs in their place. Turkmen and Assyrians were also forced to flee or to deny their ethnicity (HRW, August 2004). Land and houses belonging to the evicted Kurds were offered as incentives to encourage Arabs to move to the region (RI, 21 November 2003; UNCHR, 26 February 1999).

The end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 saw an intensification of the atrocities committed against the Kurds. In the course of the "Al-Anfal" campaign, over 100,000 were killed, and up to 4,000 Kurdish villages were deliberately destroyed by the government, resulting in massive forced displacements. Most were relocated into "collective settlements" within the three northern provinces and others into detention camps (USCR, 2000; Dammers, 1998; HRW, August 2004).

After the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq was divided into two areas: northern Iraq, comprising the provinces of Dahuk, Arbil and Sulaymaniyah, was put under Kurdish administrative control, supported by a no-fly zone, and separated by the "green line" from the rest of the country. Fighting between the two main Kurdish parties, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) for control of northern Iraq and also in areas south of the "green line" caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in the early 1990s (UNHCR, August 2004; UNCT, March 2005). Incursions and shelling from neighbouring Turkey and Iran, both countries opposed to the creation of a Kurdish state, also caused internal displacement in the north (UNHCR June 2000; USCR 2001).

In southern Iraq, displacement first occurred with the draining of the central marshes to facilitate movement of military units during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. During the 1990s, the Iraqi regime initiated a campaign against Marsh Arabs who were accused by the authorities of supporting a 1991 Shi'ia uprising. The campaign involved the use of chemical weapons, shelling and burning of villages, and large-scale projects to drain the marshes (Fawcett and Tanner, October 2002; USCR, 2001). Between 100,000 and 200,000 people of an estimated population of 250,000 were estimated to be displaced (UNHCR, August 2004; UNOHCI, 30 June 2003). Many thousands more were displaced from the border with Iran during the Iran-Iraq war, of whom 80,000 people were still displaced within Basra province in 2004 (UNCT, August 2004). Political and religious persecution was a further cause of displacement in the south and in Baghdad (UNHCR, August 2004; IRIN, 21 May 2004). In 1998, at least 25,000 people were reportedly expelled from Baghdad (Fawcett and Tanner, October 2002).

Displacement due to military operations from 2003-2006

During the first months of the invasion, thousands of people were displaced by air strikes and urban warfare in Anbar, Thi'Qar, Basra and Baghdad. Across the country, small numbers of people living in areas considered strategically important were forcibly displaced by US led coalition forces (UNCT, August 2004).

Following the fall of Saddam Hussein, MNF-I and Iraqi operations against armed insurgents remained the main source of displacement until 2006, particularly in predominantly Sunni western areas. It is estimated that 190,000 people were displaced between 2003 and the end of 2005 (IOM, January 2008; Cluster F, 2007).

In 2004, fighting between US-led forces and insurgents caused displacement in the cities of Fallujah, Al Najaf, Kufa, Ramadi, Karabala, Tal Afar and Samarra (UNSC, 3 September 2004; IRIN, 26 July 2004, 23 August 2004 and 4 January 2005; DPA, 20 August 2004; UNAMI, 25 April 2004; UNCT, August 2004). In November 2004, almost the entire population of Fallujah fled – an estimated 200,000 people (UNAMI, 13 November 2004; IRIN, 8 November 2004). 70,000 people had already been forced to flee Fallujah in April 2004.

In the following years, MNF-I and Iraqi forces launched regular offensives in cities and towns in Anbar province, including Husbaya, Hit, Rawa, Haditha, Fallujah, Ramadi and Al Qa'im. Most of these urban areas already hosted displaced populations from previous military operations (UNAMI, 27 February 2005; IRIN, 4 July 2006). During the same period, people were displaced by military operations in other parts of the country including in Tal Afar, Karabala, Samarra, Mosul and Kirkuk as well as in areas of Salah al din, Nineveh, Babil. Missan and Diyala (UNAMI, 31 August 2005, 18 May 2005, 27 February 2005; NCCI, 17 May 2006).

Military operations have been accompanied by restrictions in freedom of movement and humanitarian access, disproportionate use of force, destruction of civilian property and facilities. Many instances of displacement caused by operations across the country have been unreported by the media. Resulting displacements have tended to be temporary, but research suggests that people displaced by military operations have been much more likely to be displaced repeatedly (Brookings, 18 October 2006). In many cases ongoing insecurity or a lack of compensation or reconstruction have prolonged displacement. In 2007, three years after the siege, Fallujah remained severely damaged with over 2,000 people still displaced (IRIN, 15 January 2007).

Displacement due to sectarian violence and other causes since 2006

Between February 2006 and December 2007, close to 1.6 million people were estimated to have been displaced by sectarian violence. Those at most risk were Sunni and Shi'ia in locations dominated by the other group, as well as families in Sunni/Shi'ia mixed marriages (HRW, November 2006). In assessments conducted in 2006 and 2007, IDPs reported a range of triggers for displacement including abductions, assassinations of individuals close to them or family members, and threats communicated by telephone, graffiti on buildings, leaflets distributed in their communities, and rumours. Most people stated that attacks specifically targeted them on the basis of their religion or sect (IOM, 2 February 2007; Brookings, 18 October 2006).

Sectarian violence and displacement is widely reported to have started with the bombing of the Al-Askari shrine in Samara at the end of February 2006, which marked a shift in the conflict towards a struggle between Iraqi groups for political and economic power (RFE/RL, 29 November 2006). Some comment that the Office of Muqtada al-Sadr and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution on the Shi'ite side and the Association of Muslim Scholars and the Islamic Party on the Sunni side were the main drivers of sectarian displacement (Brookings, 18 October 2006). In 2006, 80 per cent of sectarian violence occurred within a 55-kilometre radius of Baghdad (UNSC, 11 December 2006). There was already evidence during 2005 of growing numbers fleeing Baghdad's mixed neighbourhoods to places where their community predominated (New York Times, 20 November 2005; IDMC Report, 23 May 2006). The most volatile neighbourhoods included Dora, Hurriyah, Al Adhamiyah, Khadimiyah, Ghazaliyah, Amariya and Qadisiyah (UNAMI, 16 January 2007). Other affected parts of the country include Ba'quba in Diyala Province; Samarra in Salah al Din Province; Abu Ghraib in Anbar Province, and north Babil, Mosul and Basra in the south.

Intra-communal violence has also prompted forced displacement, with clashes reported between some Sunni tribes and among Shi'ia rival militia groups in southern Iraq (UNSC, 5 December 2006). Professionals and intellectuals and also Iraqis associated with the coalition forces have

been targeted and forced to flee (IRIN, 1 May 2006; UNAMI, 16 January 2007; Cluster F, 5 March 2007; MRI, February 2007). Refugees, particularly Palestinians, and minority groups including members of the Christian Chaldean and Assyrian sects, Yazidis, Shabak, Turkmen, Sabean-Mandean, and Roma communities have also faced persecution and displacement. Many of them have sought refuge in Kurdish regions (UNHCR, January 2007; IRIN, 16 September 2007). At the same time, Arab residents have been forcibly displaced from northern areas. At least 2,000 families fled Kirkuk in the latter half of 2007 (IRIN, 16 September 2007).

MNF-I military operations also continued to cause displacement, as did Turkish and Iranian incursions into Iraq to disrupt the activity of Kurdish rebels there. Approximately 200 families (1,500 people) were said to have been temporarily displaced in mid-2006 by Iranian forces shelling (IRIN, 2 May 2006). In late 2007 and early 2008 Turkish forces repeatedly attacked bases of the Kurdish PKK, and in December 2007, between 300 and 700 families fled their homes in the Sangasar sub-district of Sulaymaniah Province and from Doli Shahidan in Erbil Province, 100 kilometres inside Iraq (UNHCR, 18 December 2007; IRIN, 29 February 2008).

Relative decline in rates of displacement 2007-2008

Rates of displacement substantially declined by autumn 2007. Though the sectarian violence and displacement abated, it left a pronounced sectarian divide, most visibly in Baghdad. The partitioning by MNF-I and ISF of certain areas of Baghdad with concrete barriers helped to reduce violence but reinforced sectarian divides. Though some barriers have since been removed, others have been erected while many neighbourhoods remain ethnically homogeneous.

Sectarian and ethnic tensions, fuelled by disputes over provincial borders, have nevertheless continued to cause displacement. Hundreds of families were reportedly displaced in Kirkuk due to ethnic tensions (IOM, September 2008). In October 2008, some 2,000 Christian families fled Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, following sectarian violence and intimidation (UNHCR, 11 November 2008).

The MNF-I and ISF have conducted large-scale counter-insurgency operations in Basra, in the Sadr City area of Baghdad, Amarah, Baquba, Diyala, and Mosul. These operations, particularly in Basra and Baghdad, were marked by heavy fighting in densely populated urban areas, curfews, roadblocks and access difficulties for humanitarian agencies (IRIN, 30 March 2008). Military operations and ongoing violence in heavily populated civilian areas have featured a lack of respect for the principles of proportionality and distinction, they have put civilians at risk and in certain instances led to mass displacement. In April and May 2008 operations against the Mahdi militia in Sadr City led to the temporary displacement of approximately 4,700 families (IOM, June 2008).

Furthermore, there continues to be prolonged and multiple displacement due to insecurity, lack of adequate housing, and access to basic services and employment opportunities. The evolving situation has also entailed risks of new patterns of displacement emerging such as displacement of returnees or secondary displacement of occupants of private and public properties. IDPs in private and public properties increasingly face secondary displacement through evictions (IOM, October 2008). Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, in other cases such as in the former military camp of Taji in Baghdad close to 1,000 IDP families (estimated 7,000 individuals) are under threat of eviction (IDP WG, 27 June 2008).

Protection and assistance needs of IDPs

Despite the decline in violence, the UN and the humanitarian community continue to report human rights abuses against civilians by militias, criminal gangs, and security and military forces (UNAMI, April 2008; UNAMI, December 2008). Perpetrators of human rights abuses continue to

enjoy impunity. (UNAMI, December 2008). Kidnappings, assassinations and generalised criminality and violence are still witnessed by IDPs and host communities daily in the Iraqi capital and in provinces such as Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Missan, Wassit and Najaf (UNAMI, April 2008; IDP WG, November 2008). Military operations have added to the generalised violence as well as inter-ethnic fighting in Kirkuk, Ninewa and Mosul (IDP WG, 27 June 2008). There have also been repeated reports in 2007 and 2008 of forced recruitment of IDPs by armed groups and militias (IDP WG, 27 June 2008; RI, April 2008; IDP WG, November 2008).

Many Iraqis have been forced to flee to areas where public services are limited, overstretched or non-existent. Host communities, extended family and tribes have generally taken in displaced people, often offering help for the displaced in need (IOM, December 2008). However the lack of infrastructure and resources has raised potential tensions between IDPs and host communities (Cluster F, 11 February 2007; IDP WG, November 2008). As displacement has continued, host communities have increasingly found it a burden to share limited resources and means of livelihood. Tense relations have been reported in the provinces of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf and Ninewa (UNHCR, September 2008; IOM December 2008). In certain provinces where IDPs are not of the same ethnic and sectarian group as the host community tensions have arisen, and IDPs face discrimination in access to services. In diverse Kirkuk, strong inter-community tensions have led to reports of harassment and persecution, for example of Yazidi and other displaced minorities there (IOM, June 2008).

Freedom of movement and registration

The freedom of movement of displaced communities has remained restricted. While there was no formal prohibition of movement prior to 2007, movement was limited and made hazardous by numerous military and illegal checkpoints, especially in and around Baghdad. Restrictions were gradually imposed as the security conditions in Iraq worsened (Cluster F, 11 February 2007, 5 March 2007). Dilapidated infrastructure and security measures including checkpoints, curfews, permission requirements, and security fences or walls continue to restrict movement throughout the country (IDP WG, November 2008).

While most provincial authorities allow IDPs to enter, various restrictions bar them from registering on security, economic and demographic grounds. These restrictions limit their capacity to rent or purchase property and access essential basic services and specific welfare assistance for IDPs (IOM, January 2008; UNHCR, August 2008). In northern provinces, refusals usually relate to lack of a sponsor, while in south and central Iraq, IDPs faced difficulties to prove their place of origin or pass security checks (UNHCR, August 2008). Registration has been tightly restricted in areas with high levels of sectarian tensions, such as Kirkuk. In Babylon and Kerbala, only IDPs with origins or relatives in the province may enter. In Basrah, Missan, and Wassit, IDPs can enter but are not allowed to register and remain unless they have been displaced from dangerous areas in Iraq (IOM, 30 June 2008; UNHCR, August 2008). IDPs have also reported that they have not been registered due to sectarian, ethnic, or tribal bias. The number of unregistered IDPs is unknown but certainly significant; in Kerbala alone, between 5,000 and 7,000 families were believed unregistered in mid-2008 (UNHCR, September 2008).

For many displaced people, the lack of legal documentation presents problems of registering as well as accessing services and legal rights. A varying selection of documents are required for registration in each province, including the original residence card, the PDS card to access the public food distribution system, the national ID, and a letter of approval from city council members, the mayor, local police, and/or MoDM (IOM, 30 June 2008; UNHCR, September 2008). Many IDPs face problems to replace lost documents due to lengthy procedures and requirements, high associated costs as well as security risks in travelling to places of issuance (UNHCR, August 2008).

Lack of Adequate Shelter

There has been an overall reduction in the standard of living of all Iraqis since 2003 despite attempts at reconstruction and rehabilitation (UNDP, 2005; OCHA, February 2008). For the majority of IDPs shelter, food and employment remain essential priorities (IOM, September 2008; IDP WG, November 2008). Shelter remains a high priority for all Iraqis with many existing structures extremely dilapidated, structurally unsafe and without access to basic services; conservative figures estimate that over 1.27 million housing units are needed (OCHA, 13 February 2008).

62 per cent of IDPs live in rented housing, 15 per cent with host families, 18 per cent in collective town settlements, tents or former military camps, and 5 per cent in public buildings. Those renting accommodation often endure overcrowded conditions in substandard rental property, but with the substantial increase in rents and a lack of regular income or savings many face eviction and secondary displacement. IDPs in public buildings or on public land live under the threat of eviction by local authorities (IDP WG, 27 June 2008 and November 2008). OCHA estimated in February 2008 that 14,000 internally displaced families were living in public buildings and a further 45,000 in “camp-like settlements” with inadequate access to basic services (OCHA, 13 February 2008); while according to UNHCR’s calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 individuals were living on public property in September (UNHCR, September 2008).

Limits to access to food

Food security has improved but remains difficult. Most IDPs, like many other Iraqis, rely on the public distribution system (PDS) for food. Recent assessments indicate a major improvement in food security, with some 930,000 people without adequate access to food in 2007 compared to around four million in 2005; however around six million people remain dependent on food rations (WFP, November 2008). There has however been a continuing lack of access to food distributions due to insecurity, political manipulation of supplies, limited resources, and logistical difficulties (IDP WG, November 2008; WFP, November 2008). 49 per cent of assessed IDPs only received their PDS rations intermittently in 2008, while 21 per cent reported no access (IOM, 30 June 2008). Of IDPs who did not receive food assistance, 41 per cent had received food assistance from other sources, mostly humanitarian organisation or religious charities (IOM, 30 June 2008).

Displaced people also face problems in accessing food rations in their place of displacement due to difficulties in registering and transferring their ration card (IDP WG, 27 June 2008). Transferring a ration card normally requires a displaced person to complete paperwork in the original registration place, which is unfeasible for displaced people who have fled their homes at short notice. Local authorities in a number of provinces have attempted to ease this requirement by implementing temporary transfer procedures; however these procedures have been slow to take effect (UNHCR, January 2007). In Dohuk, where 93 per cent of IDPs do not have access to PDS rations, temporary procedures were only enacted in August 2008 (IDP WG, November 2008).

Health care

Substandard living conditions, the stress of long periods of displacement, financial problems, insufficient diet, lack of potable water, and poor sanitation are constant sources of health complications for IDPs. The lack of water and sanitation reportedly affect IDPs in all parts of Iraq. Access to essential health care remain a major problem for conflict-affected communities, and its provision has deteriorated greatly due to the exodus of qualified professionals, a severe shortage of medication and equipment, and damage to medical facilities (IDP WG, 27 June 2008; Cluster F, 11 February 2007). Access in November 2008 was reportedly worst in Kirkuk, where 74 per

cent of IDPs surveyed did not have adequate access, followed by Diyala (30 per cent), Salah al-Din (25 per cent), and Muthanna (21 per cent) (IDP WG, November 2008).

Livelihoods

Unemployment particularly affects IDPs, as they leave behind their sources of income and move to areas where their skills might not be marketable (IOM, 30 June 2008; Cluster F, 11 February 2007). Most IDPs have experienced great difficulties finding work (IDP WG November 2008). Those IDPs who do locate work often hold ill-paid and temporary day-labour jobs (IDP WG, June 2008). IOM monitoring surveys in May 2008 identified that between 20 and 30 per cent of IDP families had no members employed (IDP WG, 27 June 2008). In the three northern provinces where employees usually require Kurdish speakers, 66 per cent of IDP families assessed do not have any members employed (RI, March 2007; IOM, 30 June 2008).

Financial assistance is provided by local authorities to displaced people in a number of areas; however, distribution has been ad hoc, insufficient, and uneven among displaced communities. By July 2008, according to the government, some 140,000 families had received around \$120 to cover a six-month period. The government committed in July 2008 to target an additional 80,000 families in central and south Iraq and 35,000 families in KRG (Gol, July 2008).

Displaced women and children

Women and children represent over 70 per cent of the displaced population (IOM, January 2008). Thousands of women and children have been killed, maimed or injured; a large number of children have lost one or both parents, while the violence has left a notably high number of widows (UN SR, April 2008). Female heads of household, women and children show the highest indicators of socio-economic vulnerability amongst the displaced. Attaining employment has been even more difficult for women and widows, especially in increasingly conservative areas (IDP WG, 27 June 2008); a significant number of women have no sources of income (IDP WG, November 2008).

Economic hardship has taken its toll on displaced children. Reports note that children are increasingly forced to work to support themselves or their families. Internally displaced children live in substandard conditions, without proper access to education and health care services, and there is a lack of support available to children with disabilities or suffering from trauma. Absenteeism from schools among IDP children is reportedly high due to financial difficulties and problems accessing and registering in schools. Schools also lack sufficient resources and staff to accommodate the influx of children, while IDPs in the north encounter difficulties finding Arabic-language schools (IDP WG, March 2008 and November 2008).

Sexual and gender-based violence, including against children, has been widespread. This has involved discrimination, intimidation, beatings, mutilations and "honour killings" (UNAMI, March 2008). Among the displaced, early marriages, domestic violence and also prostitution, including of children, has been reported (IDP WG, June 2008; IDP WG, March 2008). Displaced women living in camp or camp-like situations are more likely to be exposed to sexual assault and abductions (IOM, 11 January 2008).

The lack of access of children and pregnant women to primary health and nutritional support has led to increased morbidity as well as child and maternal mortality for displaced and non-displaced alike. Among the displaced, there has been a reported rise in the incidence of unattended births and miscarriages (IOM, 11 January 2008). The mental health of conflict victims including IDPs, and especially women and children, represents another major issue. In 2007, 70 per cent of displaced mothers consulted by IMC reported that their children suffered from psychosocial distress (IOM, 30 June 2008; IMC, January 2007).

Prospects for return

In November 2008, the UN reported that the improving security situation and a lack of access to basic services and assistance in areas of displacement had prompted increasing numbers of internally displaced persons to return in June (12,000), July (18,000) and August (36,000) (UN SC, November 2008). For IOM, UNHCR, and MoDM, a returnee is someone who has returned to his original neighbourhood or home; someone who has returned to the same city or village, but is not able to return to their original neighbourhood or home, is considered secondarily displaced (IOM, August 2008). As of the end of September, based on MoDM's returnee registration, IOM, UNHCR assessments, and other sources, almost 184,000 people had returned, including 167,000 from inside Iraq, and 17,000 from outside. Over 100,000 of them were reported to have returned to Baghdad (IDP WG, November 2008).

Though the rate of return has been increasing, these figures nevertheless represent less than six per cent of all IDPs in Iraq. Iraqis have returned to their homes because of improved security conditions, but also difficulties in their place of displacement (Brookings, August 2008). Returnees are principally of Arab Shi'ia and Arab Sunni sectarian origin. In April 2008, a few Christian returnees were assessed, but no Sabaeen-Mandaeans or Yazidis had been reported to be among the returnees by June 2008 (IDP WG, 23 June 2008).

The Iraqi and US governments have strongly advocated for the return of refugees and IDPs (IDMC, October 2008). The Iraqi government has been implementing a number of measures to encourage returns, and assist and support IDPs wishing to return to their place of origin (IOM, October 2008). These include the establishment of facilitation centres to help returnees register, receive assistance, and to resolve property issues they encounter upon returning (Gol, July 2008). Returnees can receive around \$850 (1,000,000 ID) provided that their displacement status will be written off upon return. Rent assistance worth around \$250 (300,000 ID) per month for six months shall also be provided to registered IDPs in Baghdad who vacate the premises of returnees (Gol, July 2008). However, only two facilitation centres have been established, both in Baghdad, and few returnees and evicted IDPs are reported to have actually received this financial assistance (IOM, November 2008). Other measures include helping Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries with free airline tickets, free shipment of belongings, and compensation for damaged property.

In contrast, members of the humanitarian community remain acutely concerned about the apparent manipulation for political purposes of the question of returns of IDPs and refugees (NCCI, January 2008). The United Nations, including UNHCR, and NGOs have repeatedly warned of the dangers of premature return and the disastrous consequences for both the displaced and for the stability of Iraq (UNHCR, September 2008; RI, July 2008). Failure of the government to take heed of these warnings will affect sustainability of returns, and put at risk the fragile gains acquired to date. UNHCR does not encourage returns to Iraq at the moment, due to the fragile security situation, though they do provide some assistance including cash grants to those voluntarily returning (UNHCR, 23 September 2008). IOM, following a request of the Iraqi government in late 2007, has also worked closely with MoDM to facilitate voluntary returns. (IOM, November 2008)

Insecurity and the lack of adequate housing and services continue to hinder sustainable returns. The former government's widespread destruction of villages in the southern marshland areas, and the lack of public services and infrastructure there, have prevented return and reintegration in these areas (AMAR, December 2006). Others remain displaced because they have not been able to reclaim property and land confiscated under the former government, or because their homes were destroyed in fighting and military operations after 2003. Others cannot return due to secondary occupants in public and private properties, whose eviction without appropriate

mechanisms will probably lead to secondary displacement (IOM, October 2008). Reports of evictions that have taken place in Baghdad and other provinces suggests that this has already taken place. (IOM, September 2008)

The current extent of secondary displacement of returnees is not known. UNHCR has reported that many returning refugees have become internally displaced because of the lack of shelter, property disputes and employment opportunities as well as insecurity (UNHCR, January 2007 and February 2008). More recently some returnees have experienced continued or secondary displacement due to loss of property, occupied housing, insecurity, and the ethnic or religious make up of the return area (IDP WG, November 2008). Of those returnees who have been able to return to their original area, 14 per cent were not able to return to their original homes as these were destroyed or occupied (IDP WG, November 2008). As returnees are reported to have mostly returned to neighbourhoods under control of members of the sect to which they belong, these figures may not reflect the overall risk of secondary displacement (UNHCR, February 2008).

Protection challenges for returnees

Continuing insecurity, destroyed or occupied housing, and the ethnic or religious make-up of return areas are among the leading obstacles to the return of refugees and IDPs. Despite improvement in security within areas of return, targeted attacks, criminality and generalised violence continues to occur (IDP WG, November 2008). There is evidence of returnees being threatened, kidnapped or in a number of cases killed when returning to areas now predominately of another ethnicity (IOM, November 2008). 40 per cent of assessed returnees did not always feel safe, due to general insecurity, continued insurgent activity in their area, sectarian violence and detention campaigns (IOM, August 2008).

Access to basic services such as the PDS food rations, health care, water and sanitation facilities and employment remain central to the sustainability of return process (IOM, August 2008). Approximately 58 per cent of returnees assessed report irregular access to PDS food rations, while 44 per cent report no access to health care due to a lack of health facilities and medications (IOM, August 2008; IDP WG, November 2008). The majority of returnees lost their property, jobs and other livelihoods during displacement. Returnees to urban areas, such as Sadr City, have frequently come home to find their sources of livelihoods destroyed during military operations (IOM, August 2008). Of returnees assessed less than half of returnee heads of households have found employment, while almost no female heads of households have employment (IDP WG, November 2008).

Many returnee children have had their education interrupted due to sectarian discrimination, inaccessibility of schools, or being forced to work to help support their family (IOM, August 2008). The sufficiency of government assistance, and bureaucratic difficulties in accessing it, are continuing concerns for returnees. 68 per cent of returnees surveyed who had registered for the government's grant had not yet received it, while 46 per cent had not registered for the grant (IOM, August 2008).

Problems of secondary occupancy

Though the numbers are unclear, anecdotal evidence suggests that "secondary occupation" of private and public properties remains extensive. In September, MoDM reported that 3,491 properties were illegally occupied, including houses, flats, other buildings and land (MoDM, 8 September 2008). IOM surveys reveal that 26 per cent of IDPs surveyed stated their property had been occupied, controlled, or claimed by private citizens, compared to 15 per cent who said it had been destroyed. 40 per cent did not know the status of their property (IOM, 30 June 2008). In the prevailing situation a peaceful "chain return" of IDPs to occupied private houses is not thought to

be likely: IDPs occupying houses in safe areas will not leave them until their place of origin becomes safe. Surveyed families reported having been threatened by secondary occupiers when they checked on their properties. In areas controlled by another sect, they will not be able to ask the authorities to help recover their homes (UNHCR, February 2008).

The government has implemented a number of important measures to facilitate restitution of returnees' property. These mechanisms nevertheless remain fraught with difficulties, and it is not yet clear if they will meet the needs of returnees or of IDPs living in private and public property. In September, the government began addressing restitution of private property through Prime Minister's Order 101 and the accompanying Council of Ministers' Order 262, according to which secondary occupants are evicted and compensation awarded to returning owners for damages incurred. All evicted registered IDPs are offered \$250 per month for six months to rent other property, while those who refuse to leave face the risk of prosecution under anti-terrorism legislation (IOM, October 2008; IDP WG, November 2008). The orders exclude businesses and other non-residential property, and do not assist returnees who were forced to sell property under threat, or were renting property before they were displaced. In addition these measures do not address the situation of returnees who were displaced prior to 2006 or after January 2008, or of returnees and secondary occupants who were not registered as IDPs during displacement (Interview conducted by IDMC November 2008).

The fate of secondary occupants in public and private properties facing evictions is of increasing concern. Though parliament postponed evictions from public properties in early 2008 until other housing arrangements could be made for IDPs, evictions have since been reported throughout Iraq. Eviction procedures and compensation provided in these instances have reportedly been inconsistently applied and influenced by partisan and sectarian politics; compensation offered has been insufficient to meet the needs of returnees and evicted IDPs. In some provinces such as Muthana and Basrah, the local authorities have ordered all IDPs to vacate public properties. In other areas, only certain properties are designated for eviction (IDP WG, November 2008). Baghdad and Basrah have the highest reported cases of evictions, while northern provinces under KRG there seem to have been fewer evictions but also different compensation schemes (IDP WG, November 2008; Interview conducted by IDMC November 2008). Some of these evictions affect only small number of IDPs whilst others may affect several thousand. NGOs and the UN continue to advocate with Iraqi authorities on the protection of those facing secondary displacement, as well as on the simplification of compensation procedures (UNAMI, November 2008).

National and international responses

Many years of violence have left a society fragmented, marked by sectarianism, underdevelopment and humanitarian crisis. Limited by insecurity and lack of humanitarian space, international efforts to assist the internally displaced have failed to meet the immensity of the crisis. The NGO Coordinating Committee in Iraq (NCCI) reports that humanitarian efforts continue to be constrained by lack of funds, and bureaucratic and politicised funding (Brookings, August 2008; Interview conducted by IDMC, November 2008). The phased withdrawal of the MNF-I, the integration of the Awakening Councils, the increasing role of ISF, the looming questions over Kirkuk and other disputed territories, and provincial elections to take place in 2009, are among several pending issues. The sectarian divisions in Baghdad and the issues of return also reflect ongoing political tensions and competing political agendas.

Inadequate and limited capacity of government response

The government's ability to provide for the welfare of its population, let alone those forcibly displaced, has until recently fallen short due to continued insecurity, lack of institutional capacity, corruption and bureaucratic hurdles, and the politicisation of key line ministries (RI, April 2008;

Brookings, August 2008). Until quite recently the government has been criticised for lacking the political will to address the potential consequences of continued displacement and unsustainable returns (Brookings, August 2008). In late 2007 and 2008, the government took several steps to address the needs of returnees and IDPs. The government continues to advocate for the return of IDPs and refugees, and for UN agencies and NGOs to assume a more proactive role. This stance is reportedly strongly supported by the United States which has wanted to show that the “surge” has worked and that the country has stabilised. The Iraqi and United States governments have been criticised for providing a less than accurate image of the situation in Iraq to justify such returns including that of the humanitarian community (RI, April 2008)

In mid-2008, the Council of Ministers approved a budget of almost \$200 million for returnees, which aims to provide for transportation costs of returnees, reconstruction and return grants, and payments to IDPs as well as secondary occupants of property. This budget is limited in light of the scale and severity of the crisis, and the overall 2008 government budget of over \$70 billion indicates Iraq’s capacity to devote further resources. The Iraqi Parliamentary Committee on Displacement and Migration has appealed for \$4 billion to be allocated for the needs of displaced and refugees in the budget of 2009 (IRIN, September 2008). Though enhancing financial allocation remains essential, additional funds must be matched by improved structural capacities and a firm intent to respond effectively and impartially.

The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) is mandated to address IDP and refugee issues, while a number of other ministries play a relevant part, including the Ministries of Trade, the Interior, Health, and Education. There are serious concerns over the capacity of MoDM and other ministries, and a US General Accounting Office assessment revealed that efforts to build their capacity had not been successful due to a lack of capable, trained and experienced staff, corruption, insecurity and partisan influence (Brookings, August 2008). It has nevertheless extended its presence through branch offices in most provinces, and enhanced local and national registration procedures. MoDM has also played an important role in coordinating a number of humanitarian responses to military operations and involvement in intra-governmental responses to issues of displacement. In July 2008, the National Policy on Displacement was adopted, outlining the basic rights of the displaced and returnee population, and the obligations of the government and the humanitarian community in providing services and durable solutions (MoDM, July 2008). The policy was launched at the First National Conference to Address Displacement held in July 2008 which brought together Iraqi officials, national and international NGOs and UN agencies.

The government has also undertaken important steps to address property disputes, but the absence of national reconciliation continues to mitigate the sustainability of these processes. To date these mechanisms have showed modest results which reflect the difficulty of addressing property issues with limited institutional capacity in such a politically charged, fragmented and insecure environment. As of October 2008, only two returnee centres had been established. In one, out of 227 claims for return of property which led to 208 eviction orders and over 100 actual evictions, no claims for assistance were reportedly received from those evicted (IDP WG, November 2008). The Commission on the Resolution of Real Property Disputes established in 2003 to resolve property claims arising from appropriation and confiscation by the former government, had by 2008 received over 152,000 claims and made decisions on 65,000, but only 988 decisions had actually been enforced (CRRPD, October 2008).

United Nations response

The UN has launched a number of initiatives to review and improve operations in Iraq since it withdrew international staff following the August 2003 bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad. The UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) has since operated from Amman, and has maintained an extremely low profile inside Iraq. Until 2007, UNAMI was heavily criticised for

placing excessive emphasis on reconstruction and development at the expense of an effective response to the deteriorating humanitarian crisis (FIC, January 2007; UNSC 1546). The scale of the crisis was recognised in Security Council Resolution 1770, and in December 2007 the UN established a number of Sector Outcome Teams (SOTs) designed to be more inclusive and consistent with humanitarian, development and reconstruction efforts. Based in Amman, the SOTs are chaired by UN agencies, which coordinate with government ministries through representatives in Baghdad. Questions of displacement are mainstreamed in SOTs, such as in the housing and shelter and protection sectors. In addition the IDP Working Group brings together UNHCR, IOM, other UN agencies and NGOs on questions of displacement. IOM and UNHCR are among the leading organisations addressing the situation of internal displacement through monitoring, needs assessments, provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, and building the capacity of MoDM. UNHCR also addresses the concerns of over 41,000 non-Iraqi refugees, primarily located in the KRG area, Baghdad and Al Anbar (UNHCR, September 2008).

UNAMI and UN agencies have redeployed international representatives in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, and Erbil, and continue to look to expand their presence in Iraq, both in established locations and in new locations including Kirkuk, Najaf, and Ramadi (UN SC, November 2008; UNHCR, November 2008). The deployment of UN staff remains nevertheless limited and controversial. The UN Staff Association has come out strongly against deployment of personnel to Iraq, and UNAMI's ability to undertake meaningful humanitarian work inside Iraq has also been impaired by wide-ranging security guidelines and a mandate defined under Security Council Resolutions 1546 and 1770 which entails full reliance on MNF-I for mobility and security (Brookings, August 2008; NCCI, January 2008). Reliance on MNF-I compromises the UN's neutrality and ability to regain the trust of the Iraqi community. Arguably, it has however facilitated access to both the Iraqi government and MNF-I, and enabled the UN to advocate on behalf of IDPs, and for humanitarian access during military operations such as in Sadr City in March and April 2008 (Interviews conducted by IDMC, November 2008). Though some have applauded the restructuring of the UN response, critics have questioned the inclusiveness of its coordination mechanisms and its ability to accurately assess the situation in Iraq; they continue to warn that its reliance on MNF-I risks undermining NGOs' humanitarian activities (Interviews conducted by IDMC, October 2008). The UN has also been criticised for being overly influenced by the government and donor states in describing the situation in Iraq (Interviews conducted by IDMC, October 2008).

In February 2008, the launch of a Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) underlined the UN's recognition of the need for a comprehensive approach to the situation. The CAP was designed to enable the UN to extend its operations through local partners, and it also represented an attempt to address the needs of all Iraqis based on vulnerability as opposed to status in response to a perceived over-emphasis on the needs of IDPs. As of November, only 72 per cent of the \$271 million requested in the CAP was funded (OCHA, December 2008). Donor responses to the CAP as well as other appeals may reflect continued reluctance to fund what is perceived as the financial burden of the US and increasingly the Iraqi government (Cohen, Fall 2008). The appeal does not however address refugees which shall be included in a regional CAP in December 2008, and it remains separate from funds such as the Iraqi reconstruction fund of \$1.2 billion and other bilateral assistance. Within the donor community, the US government has been the largest single contributor of humanitarian assistance to Iraqis since 2003, giving more than \$500 million in total through international programmes. In contrast, according to the Congressional Research Service, it spends \$2.4 billion per week on the war effort in Iraq (Brookings, August 2008).

NGOs and other non-state actors

National and international NGOs play a significant role in responding to humanitarian needs throughout Iraq. NGOs have often delivered assistance to IDPs at considerable risk to staff, and

continue to face ongoing challenges in a diminished “humanitarian space” (NCCI, February 2007). From 2003 to 2007, over 93 aid workers, national and expatriate, were reported killed (NCCI, January 2008). Since 2004 international staff of most INGOs have relocated to KRG and neighbouring countries, and run the operations directly through national staff or in partnership with national NGOs. There are at present approximately 100 INGOs directly or indirectly operating to varying degrees in Iraq, including INGOs closely affiliated with the MNF-I. In certain locations in southern and central Iraq, some INGOs are tentatively re-deploying international staff on a short-term basis (NCCI, November 2008). Apart from localised exceptions, NGOs continue to operate with a low profile on security grounds.

The scale of assistance fails to reflect the humanitarian needs faced by IDPs in Iraq. In response, some propose that the international community should simultaneously enhance the role of Iraqi government through consultation, advocacy, and capacity building while helping humanitarian actors to provide basic needs and “bridge the gap” until government ministries are capable of delivering sufficient assistance (IMC, May 2008); others remain apprehensive given the government’s perceived partiality and the persistent sectarian divide (Interviews conducted by IDMC, October 2008; RI April 2008). NGOs have nevertheless persistently advocated for the development of a more creative and adaptable operational response and coordination system, as well as more flexible funding structures to address the humanitarian crisis (NCCI, January 2008; FIC, July 2007; Turlan and Mofarah, November 2006).

Over 3,000 national NGOs of various affiliations are believed to be active; though only 50 are partners to international organisations, and many unaffiliated NGOs are providing vital humanitarian assistance with limited means (NCCI, November 2008). Mosques and Islamic charities, churches and informal community groups have organised assistance for displaced families as well as communities forced to remain in areas of conflict (Brookings, 18 October 2006). As of September 2008, 25 per cent of displaced families, surveyed received assistance from religious institutions, 54 per cent from host community and relatives, and 44 per cent from the Iraqi Red Crescent and other humanitarian organisations. 38 per cent reported having not received assistance (IDP WG, November 2008).

Gaps in assistance to IDPs and others have led to an increasing role for sectarian parties (RI, April 2008; FIC, January 2007). Sunni and Shi’ia militias have provided compensation or assistance to displaced communities by providing “resettlement” assistance in areas which they have taken control of (ICG, April 2008). Institutions established by militias or their political wings have sought to mitigate effects of violence and provide assistance as an integral part of their programmes, though some have also channelled and redistributed resources expropriated from other communities (ICG, April 2008). Sadrist Martyr offices throughout Iraq provide extensive assistance to Shi’ia displaced and non-displaced alike; while the Sunni Islamic Party also widely distributes assistance and relief and supports local NGOs (RI, April 2008).

Ensuring “humanitarian space”

Multi-national and Iraqi forces have also engaged in civil humanitarian, relief and reconstruction efforts intended to support “hearts and minds” objectives, sometimes in the aftermath of military operations which caused displacement. US-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) provide an important part of the MNF-I counter-insurgency strategy through assistance, development and reconciliation initiatives (PRT Update, November 2008). These combine with the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP) which, though intended for short-term and small-scale urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction, has also entailed large-scale projects, as well as compensation for victims of military operations. As of January 2008, the US Congress has allocated in excess of \$4.5 billion to the CERP and PRTs (NCCI, January 2008; Washington Post, November 2008). While they have arguably provided important assistance, these

programmes have been criticised for their overt political objectives and lack of transparency and accountability (NCCI, January 2008; Washington Post, November 2008).

USAID and OFDA have also provided funding to the UN, international organisations and NGOs for provision of humanitarian assistance and capacity building of Iraqi ministries. This has also included assistance provided by large humanitarian agencies or private contractors “embedded” with the multinational forces or under armed protection (NCCI, January 2008). The assistance they provide may come at the cost of losing meaningful access to communities in need (NCCI, January 2008). This and the low visibility of the humanitarian and protection efforts of national and other international NGOs has led to misperceptions of humanitarian organisations and the role of the UN (FIC, July 2007). This blurring of military and humanitarian roles has made it very difficult for the international community to establish impartiality and independence (FIC, July 2007; NCCI, January 2008; RI, April 2008).

The Iraqi government and the international and humanitarian communities face numerous challenges. The sustainability of the lull in violence remains far from clear yet it offers an opportunity for the humanitarian community to reaffirm its humanitarian credentials in the unfortunate eventuality that the situation deteriorates. There is an increasing need for a reaffirmation of humanitarian principles as a basis of a new compact between civil society, militias and political non-state actors, MNF-I, ISF and the Iraqi government, to attempt to improve humanitarian access and respond adequately to the needs of displaced and non-displaced people alike.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Background

Fighting between Kurdish militia and Iraqi government, 1960-1975

- 1960-1975: fighting between Kurdish militia and Iraqi government, as well as between militia, caused the displacement (internally and abroad) of about 600,000 and the forced relocation of 300,000
- In 1974, the Iraqi government unilaterally created the Kurdistan Autonomous Region which excluded the oil wealth of Kirkuk and Khanaqin
- Following autonomy decree the 'Arabization' campaign began in the Kirkuk region replacing Kurds with Arabs moved from the South
- The Kurdish revolt in 1974 led to forced relocation of tribesmen linked to the leader of the revolt

Dammers, 1998, p.181:

"In the 1960s, Iraq witnessed several changes of government and fluctuating conflicts in which the Barzani [KDP] and to a lesser extent the Talabani [PUK] militias played a significant role. In 1970, 300,000 people were reported displaced in Kurdistan, the result of fighting between Kurdish militias and the government, as well as between the militias themselves. By 1975, when the government defeated Barzani's KDP, as many as 600,000 were displaced, 250,000 over the border to Iran. The Iraqi government forcibly relocated perhaps 1400 villages and 300,000 people, mainly to 'strategic hamlets' designed to facilitate government containment and control. Along the Iranian border depopulation was almost total, with villages bulldozed to prevent return."

"HRW, 1993, "Introduction":

"In 1970, the Ba'ath Party, anxious to secure its precarious hold on power, did offer the Kurds a considerable measure of self-rule, far greater than that allowed in neighboring Syria, Iran or Turkey. But the regime defined the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in such a way as deliberately to exclude the vast oil wealth that lies beneath the fringes of the Kurdish lands. The Autonomous Region, rejected by the Kurds and imposed unilaterally by Baghdad in 1974, comprised the three northern governorates of Erbil, Suleimaniyeh and Dohuk. Covering some 14,000square miles -- roughly the combined area of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island -- this was only half the territory that the Kurds considered rightfully theirs. Even so, the Autonomous Region had real economic significance, since it accounted for fully half the agricultural output of a largely desert country that is sorely deficient in domestic food production.

In the wake of the autonomy decree, the Ba'ath Party embarked on the "Arabization" of the oil-producing areas of Kirkuk and Khanaqin and other parts of the north, evicting Kurdish farmers and replacing them with poor Arab tribesmen from the south. Northern Iraq did not remain at peace for long. In 1974, the long-simmering Kurdish revolt flared up once more under the leadership of the legendary fighter Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who was supported this time by the governments of Iran, Israel, and the United States. But the revolt collapsed precipitately in 1975, when Iraq and Iran concluded a border agreement and the Shah withdrew his support from Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). After the KDP fled into Iran, tens of thousands of villagers from the Barzani tribe were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to barren sites in the desert south of Iraq. Here, without any form of assistance, they had to rebuild their lives from scratch.

In the mid and late 1970s, the regime again moved against the Kurds, forcibly evacuating at least a quarter of a million people from Iraq's borders with Iran and Turkey, destroying their villages to create a cordon sanitaire along these sensitive frontiers. Most of the displaced Kurds were relocated into mujamma'at, crude new settlements located on the main highways in army-controlled areas of Iraqi Kurdistan. The word literally means "amalgamations" or "collectivities." In their propaganda, the Iraqis commonly refer to them as "modern villages"; in this report, they are generally described as "complexes." Until 1987, villagers relocated to the complexes were generally paid some nominal cash compensation, but were forbidden to move back to their homes. "

The Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) is led by Masoud Barzani and is dominant in the north of the country, while the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) is led by Jalal Talabani and is dominant in the northeast. Barzani is the son of the Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani while Talabani was one of his lieutenants who split.

Iran-Iraq War and the Anfal campaign against the Kurds 1980-1988

- Eight years of war allowed Saddam Hussein to consolidate his rule in Iraq
- 'Anfal policy,' which began towards the end of the war, resulted in between 50,000 and 200,000 Iraqi Kurds being killed and about 500,000 deported to new 'collective settlements' and detention camps

USIP, 17 February 1999, "The Problem":

"The present regime in Baghdad came to power through a coup in 1968. The coup gave prominence to a young officer in the Ba'ath Party intelligence apparatus named Saddam Hussein. Ahma Hassan al-Bakr served as president and maintained titular power until Saddam deposed him and declared himself president on July 16, 1979. Just more than a year after seizing uncontested control over Iraq, Saddam declared war on Iran. While the goals of the war – reclaiming Iraqi territory conceded in 1975 border negotiations, ending Iranian support for Kurdish separatists in the north, and overthrowing a regime in Tehran that was openly calling for an Islamic revolution inside Iraq among others – can be debated, the gruesomeness of the war that followed cannot. The war produced about 1.5 million casualties during eight years of hostilities, ending in a cease-fire that essentially left prewar borders unchanged.

The Iran-Iraq war was the first time since the interwar years that chemical weapons were used in combat. Probably beginning in 1984, and almost certainly by 1986, Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons in the battlefield against Iranian troops. Such use drew the condemnation of the United Nations in 1986, although such condemnation was muted by international antipathy toward the regime in Tehran.

The eight-year-long war exhausted both countries, but it allowed Saddam to further consolidate his rule in Iraq. The constant war footing allowed an already paranoid regime to more ruthlessly root out its opponents and more loudly proclaim the glories of its leader." When the war wound down, Saddam turned to damping internal divisions in his country and began a campaign against a Kurdish insurgency in the north. In that campaign, Saddam again turned to chemical weapons, using a combination of mustard gas and nerve gas that killed some 5,000 civilians in the town of Halabja in August 1988. As in his war with Iran, Saddam's use of chemical weapons (this time against civilian targets) failed to raise outrage [at the international level]."

HRW, 1993, "Introduction":

"After 1980, and the beginning of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, many Iraqi garrisons in Kurdistan were abandoned or reduced in size, and their troops transferred to the front. In the vacuum that was left, the Kurdish peshmerga--"those who face death"--once more began to thrive. The KDP,

now led by one of Barzani's sons, Mas'oud, had revived its alliance with Teheran, and in 1983 KDP units aided Iranian troops in their capture of the border town of Haj Omran. Retribution was swift: in a lightning operation against the complexes that housed the relocated Barzanis, Iraqi troops abducted between five and eight thousand males aged twelve or over. None of them have ever been seen again, and it is believed that after being held prisoner for several months, they were all killed. In many respects, the 1983 Barzani operation foreshadowed the techniques that would be used on a much larger scale during the Anfal campaign."

Dammers, 1998, p.181:

"The Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) completed the displacement of much of Iraq's Kurdish population. Towards the end of the war, following increasing collaboration between Iran and Kurdish guerrilla forces, the Iraqi regime pursued its genocidal Anfal policy, killing between 50,000 and 200,000, and destroying about 3000 Kurdish villages and hamlets. Their inhabitants – over half a million people – were deported to new 'collective settlements' away from border or mountain areas, or to detention camps in south and west Iraq. Others fled to Iran. Many of these people have been displaced more than once since then."

HRW, 1993, "Introduction":

"Anfal—the Spoils—is the name of the eighth sura of the Koran. It is also the name given by the Iraqis to a series of military actions which lasted from February 23 until September 6, 1988. While it is impossible to understand the Anfal campaign without reference to the final phase of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, Anfal was not merely a function of that war. Rather, the winding-up of the conflict on Iraq's terms was the immediate historical circumstance that gave Baghdad the opportunity to bring to a climax its longstanding efforts to bring the Kurds to heel. For the Iraqi regime's anti-Kurdish drive dated back some fifteen years or more, well before the outbreak of hostilities between Iran and Iraq."

To view official Iraqi documents on the Anfal policy, please visit the site of the Iraqi Research and Documentation Project, launched in June 1993 and sponsored by the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) [\[External Link\]](#)

For key dates of Iraq's history, please see BBC News Timeline [\[External Link\]](#)

The invasion of Kuwait and its consequences for Iraq, 1990-1992

- Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990
- Coalition of allied forces intervened in Kuwait in January 1991
- Following the cease-fire agreement, under UN SC Resolution 687, Iraq was supposed to destroy certain weapons and to accept international monitoring
- Northern no-fly zone declared by the U.S., France and Britain in April 1991 to provide safe haven for Kurds
- Southern no-fly zone imposed by U.S., British and French forces in August 1992 in an effort to protect Shi'ite Iraqis

USIP, 17 February 1999, "The Problem":

"With Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the perception that Saddam Hussein was a potential ally against an ideologically expansionist Iran – as well as a potential customer for American grain and other products – gave way to a new consensus. Under the revised thinking, Saddam was seen as threat to stability in the Persian Gulf and to steady oil supplies from that region. [...]

When a coalition of allied forces rolled back the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in January and February 1991, the UN-imposed cease fire agreement bound Iraq to declare fully to the Secretary-General

of the United Nations the 'locations, amounts, and types' of biological and chemical weapons it possessed, as well as similar information regarding ballistic missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometers. Under the agreement, Iraq agreed to destroy such weapons under international supervision, and to accept ongoing international monitoring to ensure that such weapons programs were not revived in the future. Pursuant to that charge, the United Nations created a 'Special Commission,' or UNSCOM, to carry out on-site inspections of declared Iraqi facilities as well as any other sites UNSCOM designated.

The agreement, articulated in United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, established similar conditions for whatever nuclear program Iraq might possess, to be monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Only after Iraq completed its responsibilities to fully disclose its programs to develop weapons of mass destruction, destroy prohibited materiel under international supervision, and dismantle any programs to develop such weapons in the future, all to the Security Council's satisfaction, would the United Nations lift the sanctions it imposed in Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990."

AFSC, 2000:

"In April 1991, the United States, France, and Britain unilaterally declared a 19,000-square-mile area of northern Iraq a safe haven for Kurds and imposed a no-fly zone that prevented Iraqi aircraft from operating above the 36th parallel. U.S. and British warplanes still patrol the skies of northern Iraq, bombing frequently since December 1998. France withdrew from the mission in 1996. No United Nations Resolution supports or calls for a no-fly zone.

A southern no-fly zone was imposed by U.S., British and French forces in August 1992 in an effort to protect Shi'ite Iraqis. President Saddam Hussein's forces had crushed a Shi'ite uprising soon after the end of the Gulf War in February 1991. In 1996, President Clinton extended the zone in response to Iraqi military intervention in northern Iraq in support of one Kurdish faction against another. The zone now covers the southern third of Iraq, reaching the 33rd parallel, and touches the outskirts of Baghdad."

Iraqi political opposition outside of Iraq remains rife with fracture, 2002

- INC has served as an umbrella group for the opposition movement
- INA is made up of Iraqi exiles and former leaders of the Sunni-dominated military
- Constitutional Monarchy Movement seeks to establish "democratic" monarchy
- KDP and PUK are Kurdish parties controlling the north of Iraq
- SCIRI is a Tehran-base Shi'a group

RFE/RL 16 Aug 02:

"[H]istory shows that the Iraqi opposition is rife with fracture. The INC, headed by Chalabi, has served as an umbrella group for the opposition movement. Many U.S. officials, as well as Iraqi opposition leaders have become leery of the INC following rumors of mismanagement in recent years. In addition, Chalabi and Iyad Allawi of the INA have had a tense relationship over the years. The INA is made up of Iraqi exiles and former leaders of the Sunni-dominated military. The INA led the 1996 failed coup attempt against Saddam Hussein and is thought to still have strong connections to the Iraqi military and Ba'th Party. Sharif Ali bin al-Hussein's Constitutional Monarchy Movement seeks to re-establish democratic (and, it hopes, monarchical) rule in Iraq. The PUK and KDP have longstanding rivalries, but have worked together in recent years. They formed a provisional parliament at the beginning of August in an attempt to normalize the situation in northern Iraq and prepare for regional elections. The two Kurdish groups combined have approximately 80,000 militiamen. SCIRI is a Tehran-based Shiite group. Its military wing,

the Badr Corps, is made up of former Iraqi officers, soldiers, refugees, and defectors. The group claims to have 10,000 armed men inside Iraq."

For more information on the relations between the various ethnic and political groups which may shape the future of Iraq, please see International Crisis Group (ICG), Oct 02, Iraq Backgrounder: What Lies Beneath [Reference below]

Vulnerable ethnic groups and their relationship to the previous regime, 1998-2002

- Arab Shi'a Muslims constitute a 60-65% majority
- Sunni Muslims (Kurds, Arabs and Turkomans) make up 27-32% of the population
- Christians and Yazidis represent about 3%
- Part of the Shi'a, Kurdish, Christian, Turkoman, "Marsh Arab", Yazidi and "Bidoon" population has had conflicting relations with the Iraqi regime

US DOS, 5 September 2000, sect.I.

"While a precise statistical breakdown is impossible because of likely inaccuracies in the latest census (taken in 1997), according to conservative estimates, 97 percent of the population of 22 million persons are Muslim. The (predominantly Arab) Shi'a Muslims constitute a 60 to 65 percent majority, while Sunni Muslims make up 32 to 37 percent (approximately 18 to 20 percent are Sunni Kurds, 12 to 15 percent are Sunni Arabs, and the rest are Sunni Turkomans). The remaining approximately 3 percent consist of Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Roman Catholics, and Armenians), Yazidis, and a small number of Jews.

The Shi'a, though predominantly located in the south, also are present in large numbers in Baghdad and have communities in most parts of the country. Sunnis form the majority in the center of the country and in the north."

Cordesman, November 1998, p.4:

"There is no way to know what portions of Iraq's population is loyal to the present regime or loyal to the concept of Iraq as a state – as distinguished from exhibiting primary loyalty to a religious or ethnic group. It is obvious, however, that many Iraqis resent the fact that the present authoritarian regime is controlled by a small group of extended Sunni families. It is obvious that the regime has had to deal with major Kurdish and Shi'ite uprisings, and faces a continuing problem with a separate Kurdish enclave.

It is equally obvious that Saddam's rule on policies designed to divide and paralyze Iraq's ethnic factions while using Iraqi military forces, overlapping and competing Iraqi intelligence and security services, the Ba'ath Party, and paramilitary forces to ensure that they remain under control."

The Shi'ites

US DOS, 5 September 2000:

"Although Shi'a Arabs are the largest religious group, Sunni Arabs traditionally have dominated economic and political life. Sunni Arabs are at a distinct advantage in all areas of secular life. The Government also severely restricts or bans outright many Shi'a religious practices. The Government has for decades conducted a brutal campaign of murder, summary execution, arbitrary arrest, and protracted detention against the religious leaders and followers of the majority Shi'a Muslim population [...]."

Cordesman November 1998, p.5:

However, "The vast majority of Iraq's Shi'ites remained loyal during the Iran-Iraq War, and probably think of themselves primarily as Iraqi and Arab, rather than as Shi'ites. They may want

equality or proportionate political power as Iraqis, but it is far from clear that they have any interest in a separate political entity or any ties to Iran."

The Iraqi Kurds

Cordesman, November 1998, pp.5-6:

"Saddam practiced near-genocide against the Kurdish tribes he felt support Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, and has been ruthless in putting down the Kurdish uprisings of 1991 and threatening the Kurdish security zone. Iraq, however, has a total of roughly 3.2 million to 4.3 million Kurds and it is far from clear that a majority of them would choose independence or autonomy [...] if Saddam was no longer in power or if any Iraqi regime made good on a long series of promises to give them more rights and a larger share of Iraq's oil wealth. [...]"

Most of Iraq's Kurds remained loyal to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War, and only about half of Iraq's Kurds were involved at even the peak of the uprising in 1997. Iraqi Kurdish separatists represent a major force within Iraq, but they do not speak for the Kurds per se. The separatists are also deeply divided into rival factions that are never quite clear as to whether they are seeking rights and faire treatment, autonomy, or nation-hood. Iraqi Kurds also do not share any broad identify with Kurdish groups outside Iraq, and the Talabani faction seems to be the only separatist group that has shown serious past interest in creating a greater 'Kurdistan' that involves Turkish and/or Iranian Kurds."

Al-Qilaa Kurds

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p32:

"This group areis the Kurdish people and their families that fought or supported the Iraqi government during the 1980s destruction of the Kurdish villages and the incarceration of the inhabitants in the collective towns. They left (it's not clear if they fled or were expelled) the North upon the establishment of the Kurdish rule in the North in 1991. To the main population of the Kurds, they are known as the Jash or the Donkeys. Originally from the Aqra area, they fled to the closest city under Baghdad's control, Mosul, where they still reside today. Many of them moved into unoccupied military compounds, (in Arabic al-Qilaa.) Despite having provided such valuable service to the Iraqi authorities in the 1980s, the al-Qilaa Kurds suffer from the same desperate conditions as other displaced in Iraq. They live in overcrowded makeshift accommodations, are discriminated against by official regulations, have little education or health care, and few prospects or hopes for the future. According to Iraqi Red Crescent sources, there are approximately 8,000 displaced families of the al-Qilaa Kurds in Mosul."

The Faili Kurds:

Dammers, 1998, p.184:

"Faili Kurds, most of whom are Shi'a, form a distinctive group of displaced people in Iraq, many of them twice displaced and now back in their country of origin. Unlike most Iraqi Kurds, until the early 1970s they lived mainly in central and southern Iraq, many of them in Baghdad. At that time, perhaps 130,000 Failis were deported to Iran by the government of Iraq on the pretext that they were not Iraqi citizens, though it fact it was because their loyalty was considered suspect. Most had lived in Iraq for generations, but in Ottoman times had not registered as citizens in order to avoid conscription. Since the 1970s, most of the Faili Kurds have lived in Iran. However, since 1981, some have returned to Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, where they are not necessarily welcome."

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp14-5:

"Faili is an Arabic term, given to a group of Kurds from a region of the Zagros Mountains straddling the Iran-Iraq border. Due to the geography of their homeland, the Faili Kurds have family members on both sides of the border. Contrary to the majority of their Kurdish brethren, they are Shi'a. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, many Faili Kurds began migrating westwards to Iraqi cities, primarily Baghdad, where they took on key commercial, social, and cultural roles. During the 1970s and 80s the regime in Baghdad expelled large numbers of Faili Kurds. In one instance, in the autumn of 1971, up to 40,000 Failis were expelled. In April 1980,

shortly after Saddam Hussein seized full powers and just before his invasion of Iran, the 480 wealthiest Baghdadis were summoned to the Chamber of Commerce building. One third of them, found to be Faili Kurds, were swiftly arrested and deported to Iran, with their families following shortly after. Further deportations continued, and the numbers of Faili Kurd refugees estimated to have gone to Iran range from 100,000 up to 300,000. It is not clear how many Faili Kurds remain in Iraq, but according to one account, as of 1997, the expulsions continued."

The Yazidis

UNHCR, June 2000, p.16:

"The Yazidis are a Kurmanji speaking group and are exclusively Kurdish. Yazidi beliefs incorporate aspects of several major religions in the region, including Zoroastrianism, Islam, Nestorian Christianity, Judaism and Manichaeism. There are figures of the Yazidi population in Iraq ranging from 30,000 to 120,000 and they live predominately in the Mosul region of Iraq."

US DOS, 25 February 2000, "Respect for civil liberties, c.":

"The Constitution does not provide for a Yazidi identity. Many Yazidis consider themselves to be ethnically Kurdish, although some would define themselves as both religiously and ethnically distinct from Muslim Kurds. However, the Government, without any historical basis, has defined the Yazidis as Arabs. There is evidence that the Government has compelled this reidentification to encourage Yazidis to join in domestic military action against Iraqi Muslim Kurds. Captured government documents included in the 1998 Human Rights Watch report 'Bureaucracy of Repression: The Iraqi Government in its own words', describe special all-Yazidi military detachments formed during the 1988-89 Anfal campaign to 'pursue and attack' Muslim Kurds. However, the Government does not hesitate to impose the same repressive measures on Yazidis as on other groups. For example, 33 members of the Yazidi community of Mosul, arrested in July 1996, still are unaccounted for.

The 'Marsh Arabs'

Patrow 2001, pp15-16:

"A crucible of civilization, the marshlands have been home to ancient human communities for more than five millennia. The area's inhabitants are commonly known as the Ma'dan or "Marsh Arabs", whose population is estimated to range from 350,000 to 500,000. [...]Ethnically, the population's composition has been heavily influenced by immigrations and intermarriages with the Persians to the east and Arab Bedouins to the west. The Marsh Arabs are Shi'ite Muslims, and their way of life is largely based on the traditions of the Arab Bedouin.[...]

The Marsh Arabs have evolved a unique subsistence lifestyle that is firmly rooted in their aquatic environment. Most of the Ma'dan are semi-nomadic, but some of them are settled in villages. Their settlements are located on the edges of the marshes, or stand on artificial floating islands that are regularly reinforced with reeds and mud."

Out There News, 2000, "Marshes":

"For thousands of years the salt marshes of southern Iraq have been a unique micro-environment. [...] The marshes lie at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. [...] Successive Iraqi governments had already tampered with the marshes in the way that modern governments often do in developing countries, regarding the hunter-gatherer subsistence lifestyle of the tribes there as being primitive and unworthy of a modern state.

But it was with the start of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 that wholesale disaster set in. By 1982, Iran had reversed Iraq's original conquest of Iranian lands and the front line surged back across the border into Iraq - including the marshlands. The marsh Arabs of the region were driven out as the Iraqi army sent massive electric charges through the marshes - thousands of invading Iranians were electrocuted like this as they advanced.

That war ended in 1988 but the devastation continued. After Saddam's second defeat in the Gulf War of 1991, rebels rose up against him in the south of the country. When they were defeated,

many of them hid in the marshes. The government began to drain the marshes systematically in 1992. Three years later, they had almost finished, creating a desert where the marshland had been. Areas where the water was five foot deep are now bone dry with cracked mud. Less than 10,000 marsh Arabs remain, their traditional lifestyle literally drained away. Those who remain barely eke out a living."

The Assyrians and Chaldeans

Dammers 1998, p.181:

"The Assyrian Christian minority of about 250,000 people also lives mainly in Iraqi Kurdistan and has been caught up in the conflict and displacement there, particularly in 1987/8 and 1991."

US DOS, 25 February 2000, Section 5:

"Assyrians and Chaldeans are considered by many to be a distinct ethnic group as well as the descendants of some of the earliest Christian communities. These communities speak a distinct language (Syriac), preserve important traditions of Christianity in the east, and have a rich cultural and historical heritage that they trace back over 2,000 years. Although these groups do not define themselves as Arabs, the Government, without any historical basis, defines Assyrians and Chaldeans as such, evidently to encourage them to identify with the Sunni-Arab dominated regime."

The Turkomans

Library of Congress 2001, Chapter 2:

"The Turkomans, who are believed to constitute somewhat less than 2 percent of the population, are village dwellers in the northeast living along the border between the Kurdish and Arab regions. A number of Turkomans live in the city of Irbil. The Turkomans, who speak a Turkish dialect, have preserved their language but are no longer tribally organized. Most are Sunnis who were brought in by the Ottomans to repel tribal raids. These early Turkomans were settled at the entrances of the valleys that gave access to the Kurdish areas. This historic pacification role has led to strained relations with the Kurds. By 1986 the Turkomans numbered somewhere around 222,000 and were being rapidly assimilated into the general population."

The taba`iyya iraniyya

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p.15:

"Some of the returnees from Iran, expelled just after Iraq's invasion of Iran, are a group of people known as taba`iyya iraniyya, or sometimes, just taba`iyya. According to the scholar Kanan Makiya, after the collapse of Ottoman rule, the inhabitants of the Iraqi mandate were requested by a census to state their 'belonging' (in Arabic taba`iyya) as either Ottoman – uthmaniyya – or Iranian – iraniyya. Many reportedly chose iraniyya as a means to escape military conscription. These two categories made it through to the modern state of Iraq, where they now show up on every Iraqi's citizenship document. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the regime painted those carrying taba`iyya iraniyya as Iranian fifth columnists, and used the concept as a legal pretext to summarily deport thousands of families."

The 'Bidoon'

Dammers 1998, p.184:

"Prior to the Gulf War, the 'Bidoon', most of whom are of Iraqi origin, were stateless residents of Kuwait. Their name is Arabic for 'without' – that is without nationality. They numbered about 250,000 and most had been born in Kuwait, or had lived there for a long time. Since the war around half of them have fled from or been expelled from Kuwait, mostly to Iraq. Though they are refugees, their statelessness, their displacement and their Iraqi connections mean that their status has much in common with that of other 'internally displaced' people. Detailed information on their situation in Iraq is, however unavailable."

Since the Gulf War two Kurdish parties have been controlling northern Iraq, 1991-2004

- In 1991 the cease-fire between Iraqi and Allied forces, which put an end to the Gulf War, was immediately followed by uprisings in the Kurdish north
- Since 1991 regions in the north and northeast of the country have been under the control of Kurdish parties
- The Iraqi government ended the internal economic blockade against northern Iraq in 1996
- The two major Kurdish parties of northern Iraq, KDP and PUK fought intermittently since the Gulf War until 1998 when they agreed to a Washington-brokered peace agreement
- Most of the measures described in the 1998 peace agreement were still not implemented in 2000
- Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is recognised by the Law of Administration for the Transitional Period in 2004
- Regions administered by KRG now defined as those governed by the autonomous Kurdistan authorities since late 1991
- Kurdistan regional government will continue to administer as it has done, throughout the transitional period, except in regards to federal law

Dammers, 1998, p.182:

"The cease-fire between Iraqi and Allied forces [following the Gulf War] was immediately followed by uprisings in the Kurdish north and Shi'a south of Iraq. Kurdish guerrillas briefly occupied the whole of Iraqi Kurdistan, but the reoccupation of most of the region by Iraqi government troops led to as many as two million people fleeing to Iran, Turkey, and those areas still under Kurdish control. These areas soon included the 'safe haven', initially patrolled by Allied troops, comprising those parts of Iraqi Kurdistan adjacent to the Turkish border. Most of the cross-border refugees later returned to areas under Kurdish (and/or Allied) political control, which expanded greatly following the substantial withdrawal of Iraqi troops in October and November 1991."

UN SC, 5 April 1991:

In April 1991, the UN SC Resolution 688 said that the UN SC:

- " 1. Condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish populated areas, the consequences of which threaten international peace and security in the region;
2. Demands that Iraq, as a contribution to remove the threat to international peace and security in the region, immediately end this repression and express the hope in the same context that an open dialogue will take place to ensure that the human and political rights of all Iraqi citizens are respected;
5. Requests further the Secretary-General to use all the resources at his disposal, including those of the relevant United Nations agencies, to address urgently the critical needs of the refugees and displaced Iraqi population."

USCR, 1997, pp.151-152:

"The safe haven zone in northern Iraq, created and maintained by the United States, Britain, and France since 1991 through Operation Provide Comfort, showed signs of collapse throughout the year [1996]. As the two sides fought, the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq each appeared ready and willing to intervene overtly or covertly in an attempt to take advantage of the situation. [...]"

On August 31 [1996], [Iraqi] government forces entered the city of Erbil, located within the Kurdish safe haven zone, after being invited in by the KDP, which hoped that an alliance with the government would tip the balance of power in the north against the PUK. After surrounding Erbil

with tanks, Iraqi troops and government agents entered the town, searching house to house for suspected opponents of President Saddam Hussein, killing some immediately, arresting others and taking them back to Baghdad. Iraqi troops reportedly looted and vandalized the areas they entered, completely looting 500 schools, according to UNICEF, and ransacking hospitals and municipal buildings. [...]

The penetration of the safe zone by Iraqi troops and fighting between the Kurdish factions created widespread hardship and displacement. [...] Ironically, in some respects the collapse of the safe zone had its benefits for many of the other residents of the north. In addition to international sanctions, northern Iraq had been subjected to an internal blockade from Baghdad. Starting in September [1996], that blockade was eased, and Kurds from the north were able to engage in trade with government-controlled Iraq."

US DOS, 25 February 2000, Section 3:

"In northern Iraq, all central government functions have been performed by local administrators, mainly Kurds, since the Government withdrew its military forces and civilian administrative personnel from the area after the 1991 uprising. A regional parliament and local government administrators were elected in 1992. This parliament last met in May 1995. The two major Kurdish parties in de facto control of northern Iraq, the KDP and the PUK, battled one another from 1994 through 1997. In September 1998, they agreed to unify their separate administrations and to hold new elections in July. The cease-fire held throughout the year; however, reunification measures were not implemented and no election was held."

Fawcett & Victor, Oct 02, p.7:

"The areas of the North under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) are the governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, Suleimanyah and a part of the governorate of Kirkuk. As mentioned earlier, the KRG is an uneasy alliance of the two main Iraqi Kurdish parties. Mas'oud Barzani's KDP administers the northwestern half and the Turkish border, while Jalal Talabani's PUK controls the southeastern half and most of the Iranian border."

HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments":

"Despite mediation efforts by U.S. government officials, little progress was made towards the implementation of the provisions of the 1998 Washington Accord. Both sides [KDP and PUK] pledged to normalize relations but continued to maintain separate administrative, legislative and executive structures in areas under their control. On October 22, senior officials from the two parties agreed on a series of measures, including prisoner exchanges, the gradual return of internally displaced people to their homes, and arrangements for the organization of free movement of people and trade between their respective areas. Most of these measures were not implemented."

Iraq Coalition, 8 March, 2004:

"Article 53.

(A) The Kurdistan Regional Government is recognized as the official government of the territories that were administered by that government on 19 March 2003 in the governorates of Dohuk, Arbil, Sulaimaniya, Kirkuk, Diyala and Neneveh. The term "Kurdistan Regional Government" shall refer to the Kurdistan National Assembly, the Kurdistan Council of Ministers, and the regional judicial authority in the Kurdistan region.

(B) The boundaries of the eighteen governorates shall remain without change during the transitional period.

(C) Any group of no more than three governorates outside the Kurdistan region, with the exception of Baghdad and Kirkuk, shall have the right to form regions from amongst themselves. The mechanisms for forming such regions may be proposed by the Iraqi Interim Government, and shall be presented and considered by the elected National Assembly for enactment into law. In

addition to being approved by the National Assembly, any legislation proposing the formation of a particular region must be approved in a referendum of the people of the relevant governorates.

(D) This Law shall guarantee the administrative, cultural, and political rights of the Turcomans, ChaldoAssyrians, and all other citizens.

Article 54.

(A) The Kurdistan Regional Government shall continue to perform its current functions throughout the transitional period, except with regard to those issues which fall within the exclusive competence of the federal government as specified in this Law. Financing for these functions shall come from the federal government, consistent with current practice and in accordance with Article 25(E) of this Law. The Kurdistan Regional Government shall retain regional control over police forces and internal security, and it will have the right to impose taxes and fees within the Kurdistan region.

(B) With regard to the application of federal laws in the Kurdistan region, the Kurdistan National Assembly shall be permitted to amend the application of any such law within the Kurdistan region, but only to the extent that this relates to matters that are not within the provisions of Articles 25 and 43(D) of this Law and that fall within the exclusive competence of the federal government."

Aljazeera, 10 January 2004:

"Iraq's interim Governing Council has agreed to a federal structure for the country and to enshrine Kurdish self-rule in three northern provinces. The US-appointed body will incorporate the pledges into 'a fundamental law' that will precede national elections in late 2005, council member Judge Dara Nur al-Din said on Friday.

The fate of three more provinces over which the Kurds have claims would be decided later, he added. Nur al-Din, a Kurdish independent who is helping to draft the country's law, said lawmakers had already decided on basic principles for Kurdish self-rule.

'In the 'fundamental law', Kurdistan will have the same legal status as it has now,' he said, referring to the region that has enjoyed virtual autonomy since the end of the 1991 Gulf War."

Iraqi security forces increase pressure on Marsh Arabs in Southern Iraq, 1999-2002

- Marsh Arabs displaced because of plans to eliminate a population outside of central governmental control; increase oil production; and the destruction of a habitat that provides a haven for an armed opposition
- Shi'a revolt against the Iraqi regime erupted following Iraq's defeat in Kuwait
- In 1994, the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign it had been directing toward the marsh population since 1989
- Diversion of water from the marshes allowed government forces to penetrate into formerly inaccessible areas
- Iraqi armed forces conducted deliberate artillery attacks against Shi'a civilians and large-scale burning operations in the southern marshes in 1999
- Iraqi security forces reportedly attacked villages in the marshes of Southern Iraq in 2001

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p32:

"The motives behind the Iraqi regime's brutally callous campaign against the Marsh Arabs include the following: the desire to eliminate a population outside of central governmental control; an

interest in producing some great engineering feat that is the equivalent of the monumental statues and palaces built to honor Saddam; the aim to generate economic development and increase oil production; and most importantly, the destruction of a habitat that provides a haven for an armed opposition. All these motives, of course, have one underlying objective: to maintain the current regime in power. The regime also guessed correctly that no one would stop it. In 1992, then Parliamentary Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh justified the action against the Marsh Arabs: "America wiped the Red Indians off the face of the earth and nobody raised an eyebrow."

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p30:

"By 1985, visible signs of the draining of the marshes were noted in the area of Qurna, close to the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, where newly discovered oil fields were ripe for exploitation. In the early 1990s the Iraqi government began an all-out push to finish off the marsh-draining project and, as a consequence, to finish off the Marsh Arabs.

Several events seem to have precipitated the Iraqi government's decision to take these measures at that time. The Iraqis had just come out of two wars, the last of which had left the regime of Saddam Hussein barely holding onto power. One of the clearest threats to his survival were the Shi'a of southern Iraq, who rose against him in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War. Baghdad, resorting to full military force (including the use of helicopters permitted under the US-dictated cease-fire conditions) and extraordinary brutality, succeeded in quashing the rebellion. But the marshes, inaccessible to Iraqi armor, became a haven for the remaining rebels on the run. Also during the uprising, some groups had attacked the incipient oil field infrastructure in the West Qurna oil field, attacks which Baghdad blamed on the Marsh Arabs. Finally, during the early 1990s, very few personnel from international organizations or companies were present to witness the marsh destruction, due to the war-time evacuation and the imposition of sanctions. This not only allowed the regime to avoid being seen but also allowed it to requisition, without opposition and by Presidential decree, foreign company resources, such as bulldozers and other earth-moving equipment, termed 'idle assets,' to accomplish the task. Massive canals, up to a hundred meters wide and hundreds of kilometers long, were dug, using virtual slave labor and the aforementioned foreign-owned machinery."

USCR, 1995, p.116.

"Tensions between the secular, Sunni regime of Saddam Hussein and the Shi'ite populace of southern Iraq erupted into civil war in early 1991, when the Shi'ite revolted in the wake of the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait. The revolt was quickly crushed, with heavy casualties, and many displaced Shi'ites and deserters from the Iraqi army fled into the extensive marshlands between the Tigris and Euphrates river.

The Iraqi government had long viewed the inhabitants of this region, the Marsh Arabs, or Maadan, with hostility. In 1994, the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign that it had been directing toward the marsh population since 1989, diverting water from the marshes and depriving the Shi'ites of food and cover. This allowed government forces to penetrate into formerly inaccessible areas."

Out There News 2000, "Marshes":

"Throughout the marsh areas, dykes as high as six meters have been built to cut off flood waters from replenishing the old marshlands. Between the ancient Tigris and the Euphrates, a manmade river - the Saddam river - now carries the flood waters down to the Gulf. Marsh Arabs used to live by tending buffalo, fishing and hunting in the marshes. With no reeds, there is nothing to feed the water buffalo. There are hardly any fish left in the rivers either. The government claims to be giving land to the Marsh Arabs to cultivate. There is some farming close to the Euphrates and Tigris but many of those farmers are not Marsh Arabs but have come from the towns. The government also seems intent on preventing any rebels entering from Iraq across the water, as they have traditionally been able to do."

UNEP, May 2001:

According to a UNEP study carried out in 2001, "[...] about 90% of the marshlands had disappeared by May 2000, with devastating impacts on wildlife and unique human communities that have lived there for millennia."

AI, 24 November 1999, "Introduction":

"Since the beginning of this year [1999] there have been many clashes between the security forces and armed Islamist opposition groups in the pre-dominantly Shi'a Muslim Southern Iraq, especially in Basra, which have reportedly left dozens dead on both sides and have been followed by arbitrary mass arrests and summary executions. It was not until May that the government acknowledged that unrest had broken out in Basra in mid-March. It accused Iran of instigating the troubles since one of the biggest opposition groups is based in Iran. The unrest was sparked off by the killing in suspicious circumstances of Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr, a prominent Shi'a cleric, in February 1999."

US DOS, 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.":

"As in previous years, the armed forces conducted deliberate artillery attacks against Shi'a civilians and large-scale burning operations in the southern marshes [in 1999]. In 1991 and 1992, the Gulf War allies imposed 'no-fly zones' over northern and southern Iraq respectively. The no-fly zones continued to deter aerial attacks against the marsh dwellers in southern Iraq and the residents of northern Iraq, limiting the Government to ground-based assaults."

CHR, 16 January 2001, para. 37:

"The Special Rapporteur received information that armed raids are still being carried out by the Iraqi security forces against villages in the south of Iraq. Reportedly some of these raids, which are aimed at the capture of armed guerrillas and army deserters, have resulted in loss of life, damage to property and searches and arrests without warrant."

INC, 20 May 2001:

"Iraqi security forces attacked villages in the marshes of southern Iraq on 15 May resulting in many casualties, according to reports received by the INC [Iraqi National Congress]"

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p31:

"To accelerate the process, the military and special police made raids on marsh settlements, ostensibly in pursuit of rebels, criminals and deserters. Iraqi security forces used napalm and other chemical weapons, shelled and burned villages, assassinated local leaders and other prominent community members, and abducted heads of families. Other tactics employed by Iraqi authorities included the deliberate contamination of water supplies, the poisoning of the fishing grounds, commercial blockades, the denial of aid and the refusal of access to aid agencies.

The tactics of earthworks, drainage, and military action worked hand in hand. As one area was drained, new embankments would be built, giving the authorities vantage points to begin actions against the next set of settlements.

By 1999 the drainage of the marshes was largely complete. The only remaining marsh of any size was the al-Hawizeh marsh that straddles the Iraq-Iran border. This marsh is at least partly intact, as the Iraqis do not control all the sources of water, (it also provides a measure of security from a neighbor they do not entirelywater. According to the Iranians, the Iraqi side of the marsh is now under assault. In September 2002 it was alleged that the Iraqis were burning the reeds in a possible attempt to prepare a military assault on the villages."

Difficult relations between the Iraqi regime and the UN following the Gulf War, 1991-2003

- In Oct 98, Iraq ends all forms of cooperation with the UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (UNSCOM)
- In Nov 02, UN weapons inspectors return to Iraq for the first time since 1998, backed by a tough UN Security Council resolution, which is reluctantly accepted by Baghdad. The resolution threatens serious consequences if Iraq is in "material breach" of its terms

BBC, 28 January 2003:

"Ceasefire

1991 3 March - Iraq accepts the terms of a ceasefire.

1991 Mid-March/early April - Iraqi forces suppress rebellions in the south and the north of the country.

1991 8 April - A plan for the establishment of a UN safe-haven in northern Iraq, north of latitude 36 degrees north, for the protection of the Kurds, is approved at a European Union meeting in Luxembourg. On 10 April, the USA orders Iraq to end all military activity in this area.

1992 26 August - A no-fly zone, excluding flights of Iraqi planes, is established in southern Iraq, south of latitude 32 degrees north.

1993 27 June - US forces launch a cruise missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Al-Mansur district, Baghdad in retaliation for the attempted assassination of US President, George Bush, in Kuwait in April.

1994 29 May - Saddam Hussein becomes prime minister.

1994 10 November - The Iraqi National Assembly recognizes Kuwait's borders and its independence.

Oil-for-food

1995 14 April - UNSC Resolution 986 allows the partial resumption of Iraq's oil exports to buy food and medicine (the "oil-for-food programme"). It is not accepted by Iraq until May 1996 and is not implemented until December 1996. [...]

1995 15 October - Saddam Hussein wins a referendum allowing him to remain president for another 7 years. [...]

1996 31 August - In response to a call for aid from the KDP, Iraqi forces launch an offensive into the northern no-fly zone and capture of Arbil.

1996 3 September - The US extends the northern limit of the southern no-fly zone to latitude 33 degrees north, just south of Baghdad.

1996 12 December - Saddam Hussein's elder son, Uday, is seriously wounded in an assassination attempt in Baghdad's Al-Mansur district.

1998 31 October - Iraq ends all forms of cooperation with the UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (Unscm). [...]

Operation Desert Fox

1998 16-19 December - After UN staff are evacuated from Baghdad, the USA and UK launch a bombing campaign, "Operation Desert Fox", to destroy Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes.

1999 4 January - Iraq asks the UN to replace its US and UK staff in Iraq.

1999 19 February - Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, spiritual leader of the Shi'i sect, is assassinated in Najaf.

1999 17 December - UNSC Resolution 1284 creates the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unmovic) to replace Unscm. Iraq rejects the resolution.

2000 1 March - Hans Blix becomes executive chairman of Unmovic.

2000 August - Reopening of Baghdad airport, followed by a stream of international flights organised by countries and organisations to campaign against sanctions. The flights are labelled humanitarian missions to comply with UN sanctions.

2000 October - Iraq resumes domestic passenger flights, the first since the 1991 Gulf War. Commercial air links re-established with Russia, Ireland and Middle East.

2001 - Free-trade zone agreements set up with neighbouring countries. Rail link with Turkey re-opened in May for first time since 1981.

2001 February - Britain, US carry out bombing raids to try to disable Iraq's air defence network. The bombings have little international support.

2001 May - Saddam's son Qusay elected to the leadership of the ruling Ba'th Party, fuelling speculation that he's being groomed to succeed his father.

2002 April - Baghdad suspends oil exports to protest against Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories. Despite calls by Saddam Hussein, no other Arab countries follow suit. Exports resume after 30 days.

2002 May - UN Security Council agrees to overhaul the sanctions regime, replacing a blanket ban on a range of goods with "smart" sanctions targeted at military and dual-use equipment.

Weapons inspectors return

2002 September - US President George Bush tells sceptical world leaders gathered at a UN General Assembly session to confront the "grave and gathering danger" of Iraq - or stand aside as the United States acts. In the same month British Prime Minister Tony Blair publishes a dossier on Iraq's military capability.

2002 November - UN weapons inspectors return to Iraq for the first time since 1998, backed by a tough UN Security Council resolution which is reluctantly accepted by Baghdad. The resolution threatens serious consequences if Iraq is in "material breach" of its terms."

UN SC, 8 Nov 2002:

"Holding Iraq in "material breach" of its obligations under previous resolutions, the Security Council this morning decided to afford it a "final opportunity to comply" with its disarmament obligations, while setting up an enhanced inspection regime for full and verified completion of the disarmament process established by resolution 687 (1991).

By the unanimous adoption of resolution 1441 (2002), the Council instructed the resumed inspections to begin within 45 days, and also decided it would convene immediately upon the receipt of any reports from inspection authorities that Iraq was interfering with their activities. It recalled, in that context, that the Council had repeatedly warned Iraq that it would face "serious consequences" as a result of continued violations."

2003 January - Chief weapons inspector Dr Hans Blix delivers a harsh report to the UN Security Council, accusing Baghdad of failing to come to a "genuine acceptance" of disarmament." (BBC News 28 Jan 2003)

2003 March – the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC reports that Iraq has accelerated its cooperation but says inspectors need more time to verify Iraqi compliance.

2003 17 March – following the failure of intensive deliberations among Security Council members on possible next steps to ensure Iraqi compliance, the UK's ambassador to the UN says the diplomatic process on Iraq has ended; UN Secretary General orders the evacuation of arms inspectors from Iraq; President Bush gives Saddam Hussein 48 hours to leave Iraq or face war.

2003 19 March – UN Secretary General addresses UNSC, expressing regret and disappointment at the imminence of war."

The US-led military campaign in Iraq (2003 -)

UN SC, 22 May 2003:

"2003 20 March – missiles hit targets in Baghdad, marking the start of a US-led campaign to topple the Iraqi regime. In the following days US and British ground troops enter Iraq from the south and numerous targets are struck in Baghdad and other key cities.

2003 24 March – UN Secretary General calls for “urgent measures” to restore electricity and water in Basra.

2003 25 March – coalition forces cross the Euphrates at Nasiriya.

2003 28 March – UNSC adopts resolution 1472 adjusting the oil-for-food programme, authorizing the Secretary General to use limited OFFP funds for the UN Humanitarian Flash Appeal launched the same day.

2003 1 April – coalition forces are within 45 km of Baghdad.

2003 4 April – power is cut to most of Baghdad.

2003 6 April – coalition forces enter Basra, taking control the next day.

2003 7 April – coalition forces take control of key sites in Baghdad.

2003 9 April – coalition forces sweep into central Baghdad. Widespread looting breaks out.

2003 11 April – coalition forces move to secure Kirkuk oil field.

2003 14 April – the Pentagon says that all major combat operations are probably at an end, following the fall of Tikrit, Saddam Hussein’s home town.

2003 22 May - the Security Council decided to: lift trade and financial sanctions on Iraq; extend the "oil-for-food" programme for six months; revisit the mandates of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at a later date; request appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General; and review implementation of those and other matters within 12 months. Adopting resolution 1483 (2003), by a vote of 14 in favour, with Syria not participating in the voting, and acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council supported the formation by the people of Iraq with the help of the Authority (the occupying Powers under unified command) and the Special Representative, of an Iraqi interim administration as a transitional administration run by Iraqis, until an internationally recognized, representative government established by the people of Iraq assumes the responsibilities of the Authority"

Political Developments

US-led Coalition Forces handover sovereignty to Interim Iraqi Government (2004 political developments)

- Iraq was occupied by the US led Coalition forces and governed by the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), a body appointed by the Coalition Provisional Authority
- An interim constitution was agreed to on 8 March by the IGC
- On 1 June 2004, the IGC was dissolved and an interim government was appointed
- The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1546, which declared that Iraq's occupation would end on 30 June and called for National Assembly elections by 31 January 2005 (8 June 2004)
- On 28 June, 2004 the Iraqi interim government replaces the CPA, formally ending the occupation of Iraq, but the US-led multinational force (around 150,000 troops) continued to exercise control over security-related matters
- Iraq's new ministers of justice and human rights announced emergency security laws on 7 July to help restore safety to the country

AI, 25 May 2005:

“At the start of 2004 Iraq was occupied by US-led Coalition forces and governed by the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), which had been appointed in 2003 by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) headed by Paul Bremer.

On 8 March the IGC agreed an interim constitution. Among its main provisions were that the three Kurdish provinces in the north would remain autonomous, freedom of speech and religious

expression would be guaranteed, elections to a National Assembly, mandated to draft a constitution, would be held by January 2005, and at least a quarter of the National Assembly should be women. Many Shi'a clerics, especially Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, expressed reservations about the interim constitution, in particular provisions allowing for US-led multinational forces to remain in Iraq after the formal end of occupation, the right of three provinces to veto a referendum on a permanent constitution and a three-quarter majority requirement to amend the constitution.

On 1 June the IGC was dissolved and an interim government was announced. Iyad 'Allawi, a Shi'a Muslim, was appointed Prime Minister. Shaikh Ghazi al-Yawar, a Sunni Muslim, was appointed President, a largely ceremonial position.

On 8 June the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1546, which declared that Iraq's occupation would end on 30 June and called for National Assembly elections by 31 January 2005. The resolution gave the UN a greater role in helping the Iraqis in the political and human rights fields during the transitional period, including the convening of a national conference, held in August, to select a consultative council to advise the interim government, with the power to veto its orders. Resolution 1546 stated that the US-led multinational force would remain in Iraq until the end of 2005 (unless asked to leave earlier by the Iraqi government) with the authority to 'take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq'.

On 28 June, the Iraqi interim government replaced the CPA, formally ending the occupation of Iraq. However, the US-led multinational force of around 150,000 troops continued to exercise control over security-related matters."

UNSC, 8 June 2004:

"The members of the Security Council welcome the handover of full responsibility and authority for governing Iraq to the fully sovereign and independent Interim Government of Iraq, thus ending the occupation of the country. The members of the Council reaffirm the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq.

The members of the Security Council reiterate fully resolution 1546 (2004), including the proposed timetable for the political transition, the possibility of an international meeting, and the leading role of the United Nations to assist the Interim Government of Iraq in implementing the political process leading, inter alia, to elections no later than 31 January 2005. The members of the Council call on all Iraqis to implement these arrangements peaceably and in full.

The members of the Security Council reiterate their call to all States and relevant international and regional organizations to support the Interim Government of Iraq in the implementation of this process, and in its efforts to bring economic reconstruction, peace, unity and stability to Iraq."

See the "Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period", 8 March 2004 that came into effect in 30 June 2004 and was in effect until the formation of an elected Iraqi government, no later than 31 December 2005"

IRIN, 4 January 2005:

"IRAQ: Team to gauge possibility of elections, security permitting

The United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said on 27 January that the UN would send a team to Iraq to explore the possibility of elections before the transfer of sovereignty as long as the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) provided adequate security arrangements. His decision was in response to a request, on 19 January, from both the CPA and the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) for a UN team to travel to the country to establish whether elections for a transitional national assembly could be held before 30 June, and if not, what alternative arrangement would be acceptable.

IRAQ: UN Secretary-General says elections before 30 June not feasible

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on 19 February that elections could not be organised in Iraq before the 30 June deadline for a transfer of sovereignty, a date he said should be 'respected'. The announcement came after a mission to Iraq, led by Special Adviser Lakhdar Brahimi. The UN team concluded that preparations for elections would take a minimum of eight months, to align all the necessary political and technical conditions, including the creation of an independent electoral commission. Annan recommended that a caretaker government should be established between the handover of power from the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and an election.

IRAQ: Interim Iraqi constitution signed

An interim constitution was signed by Iraq's US-appointed Governing Council (IGC) on 8 March, to be implemented when sovereignty is handed over to Iraqis on 30 June and to help pave the way to elections. Under the US plan, an unelected Iraqi government will take over sovereignty on 30 June. An assembly will be elected by the end of January next year and full democratic elections will be held by the end of 2005.

IRAQ: UN envoy lays out plans for future election

Lakhdar Brahimi on 14 April laid out a new plan for an interim government in Iraq as the volatile security situation continued to restrict movement around the country. A 'caretaker' government, to be formed in May, should be led by a prime minister, a president and two vice-presidents, Brahimi said. A 'consultative assembly' should be elected in July to serve alongside the caretaker government.

IRAQ: New interim government sworn in

On 1 June a new interim government was appointed with Sunni Muslim Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawar as president, Iyad Allawi, a Shi'ite Muslim, as prime minister; two deputy presidents and 26 ministers. Lakhdar Brahimi immediately called for Iraqis to appoint a national assembly in July and prepare for elections in January.

IRAQ: UN Security Council approves revised Iraq resolution

On 8 June, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to adopt a revised US and UK-backed resolution, paving the way for Iraqis to assume 'full responsibility and authority'. Kofi Annan welcomed the vote, describing it as a 'genuine expression of the will of the international community'. He pledged the UN would play its part in the next phase of the country's transition from war and occupation.

IRAQ: Violence spreads in run-up to 30 June handover

The week of 21 June saw a wave of violence across Iraqi cities, killing at least 100 people in the run-up to the handover of sovereignty to Iraqis on 30 June. The worst attack was in the northern city of Mosul, where at least 62 people died and 220 were hurt in a series of car bombings. Other cities targeted included Ramadi and Fallujah west of Baghdad and Baquba northeast of Baghdad along with the capital itself. Iraq's interim prime minister, Iyad Allawi vowed to crush the insurgents responsible for the attacks. The handover of sovereignty came early as Iraq became a sovereign state on 28 June after the scheduled 30 June handover of power took place two days early for security reasons. The handover was initially announced by the Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, speaking after talks with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at a NATO summit in Istanbul on 28 June.

IRAQ: Emergency security laws announced

Iraq's new ministers of justice and human rights announced emergency security laws on 7 July to help restore safety to the country. An unspecified curfew period, transport controls, restrictions on the assets of suspected terrorists and on licences for weapons are necessary to create peace in the country, Human Rights Minister Baktiar Amin said. Emergency measures approved by Iraq's new interim government would still respect the rights of citizens, he added. With increasing

violence in parts of the country, the law was welcomed. Two US-based think tanks estimate that as of 16 June, more than 11,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed by Coalition forces and militant attacks during and since the March 2003 war.

IRAQ: Massive efforts needed on reconstruction

With the passing of the 100th day since Iraq's interim government came to power, officials acknowledged the scale of the task of reconstructing the country but say that some progress is being made. Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi told the national assembly in Baghdad on 12 October that Coalition forces would remain in Iraq, offering security until the country's own forces were fully trained. He confirmed that elections would be held as scheduled in January 2005, despite the continuing insurgency.

IRAQ: Elections preparations move ahead

Iraq's election preparations continued in early December despite ongoing attacks by insurgents, with an escalation in violence on the 4-5 December killing at least 68 Iraqis. On 6 December interim President Ghazi al-Yawar reaffirmed his support for the planned 30 January election date. Speaking ahead of talks with US President George Bush, Yawar said any delay would prolong Iraqis' agony and increase resentment inside the country. On 8 December, UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said that more than 5,000 candidates had already registered for the elections from 241 parties."

Overview January 30 elections (2005)

- Under the Transitional Administrative Law several elections had to be held simultaneously: the election of 275 representatives to the Transitional National Assembly, 18 governorate councils and the Kurdistan Assembly, by no later than 31 January 2005
- The elections were organized and conducted by Iraqis under the oversight of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq
- The Commission was supported by an international electoral assistance team of 43 United Nations experts — 22 in Baghdad, 16 in Amman and 5 at UN Headquarters who provided technical, logistical, financial and administrative assistance
- The Commission accredited 33,141 national observers, 622 international observers and 61,725 agents of political parties and entities to observe the electoral process
- The Commission undertook some special measures due to the security situation including allowing voters from several locations where military operations were conducted, or where security conditions were deemed problematic, to cast their votes in the national election at any polling station in the country
- Also, voters from the Ninewa and Anbar governorates were able to register and vote at any polling station in the country.
- Security measures included the closure of borders and a ban on vehicle movements
- Of the planned 5,243 polling centres, 5,199 were able to open and operate on polling day
- Voter turnout of voters to be 8,550,571, of whom 263,685 voted from abroad of which 94,305 (1.1 per cent of the total) were determined to be invalid
- An open process of complaints and resolutions was formulated and implemented by the Commission
- There were 111 competing political entities and coalitions
- 275 representatives were elected to the National Assembly from a total of 7,785 candidates
- The electoral system resulted in over 31 per cent of seats being awarded to female candidates

UNSG, 7 March, pp. 4-6:

"The Transitional Administrative Law required 20 elections to be held simultaneously, for the Transitional National Assembly, 18 governorate councils and the Kurdistan Assembly, by no later than 31 January 2005. The period of December 2004 and January 2005 was therefore critical for making final preparations. The elections were organized and conducted by Iraqis under the oversight of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq. In implementing its mandate, the Commission oversaw and directed the work of 1,000 Iraqi core staff and over 20,000 Iraqi temporary electoral workers. The Commission was able to complete all the necessary technical preparations for credible and genuine elections against the background of a fragile political environment and continuing concerns about the security situation.

In fulfilling its task, the Commission was supported by an international electoral assistance team led by the United Nations, which, in addition to 43 United Nations experts — 22 in Baghdad, 16 in Amman and 5 at United Nations Headquarters — included three experts from the European Union, two from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, one from Chile, and nine from the International Foundation for Election Systems. The international team provided technical, logistical, financial and administrative assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission throughout the electoral process.

Throughout its work, the Independent Electoral Commission's guiding principles were transparency and inclusiveness. The Commission accredited more than 2,000 media personnel throughout the country, half of whom were Iraqi, the remainder being international and Arabic media representatives. The Commission also established a media centre in the Iraqi National Convention Centre located within the international zone. The media centre operated from 25 January to 6 February. In addition, the Commission accredited 33,141 national observers, 622 international observers and 61,725 agents of political parties and entities to observe the electoral process. The United Nations actively encouraged the development of election observer groups and established a dedicated project for this purpose.

The uncertain political environment and security conditions necessitated a range of contingencies and special measures. Within the limits of its mandate, the Independent Electoral Commission implemented several special measures to enhance inclusiveness and participation. Voters from several locations where military operations were conducted, or where security conditions were deemed problematic, were able to cast their votes in the national election at any polling station in the country. Also, voters from the Ninewa and Anbar governorates were able to register and vote at any polling station in the country. A final special measure was implemented in the course of polling day, which permitted selected polling centres to remain open longer, if the Commission determined that access had been obstructed or the period of operation affected.

The Independent Electoral Commission worked extensively with national and international security forces. This cooperation allowed for the establishment of a close network and the coordination of resources, which provided a viable security framework for the elections. The security plan put in place, including the closure of borders and a ban on vehicle movements, created a security environment that permitted electoral staff to carry out their work before, during and following election day. Of the planned 5,243 polling centres, 5,199 were able to open and operate on polling day. Available statistical data do not provide conclusive evidence on the impact of security concerns on voter turnout, especially in the light of some political calls for boycotts.

As planned, counting took place immediately after the close of the polls, with the exception of a few centres where security required counting to be undertaken at the governorate level. In the weeks prior to polling day, the Independent Electoral Commission set up a tally centre, assisted by a team of international advisers. Its setting up included the physical arrangement of the centre, hiring of staff, arrangements made with the multinational force for living quarters, work-flow strategies, security management, storage and retrieval of forms, database development and quality-control measures. This process was prepared and conducted in a manner that was transparent and open to observers and the media.

The Independent Electoral Commission provisionally reported the turnout of voters to be 8,550,571, of whom 263,685 voted from abroad. Of all these votes cast, only 94,305 (1.1 per cent of the total) were determined to be invalid. There was a continuous flow of agents and observers, who monitored the tally centre. Observers and agents were also present during the recount process, which included opening and counting a mixed sample of ballot boxes from various governorates at the national headquarters.

The Board of Commissioners of the Independent Electoral Commission has the authority to make determinations on complaints and disputes arising from the elections. An open process of complaints and resolutions was formulated and implemented by the Commission, supported by both Iraqi lawyers and international specialists. The official certification of the vote by the Commission took place on 17 February 2005, after all major complaints had been dealt with; the complaints outstanding that would be decided upon after the certification were assessed to be of such a nature that they could not affect the result. The elections met recognized international standards in terms of organization, regulations and procedures. This demonstrates the professionalism and effectiveness with which the Commission and the thousands of Iraqi election workers, trainers and monitors carried out their work.

From 111 competing political entities and coalitions, the election of 275 representatives to the National Assembly from a total of 7,785 candidates is testimony to the vibrant political environment emerging in Iraq. Moreover, the electoral system resulted in over 31 per cent of seats being awarded to female candidates — surpassing the goal established in the Transitional Administrative Law. The following period of constitutional, legislative and governmental activity will have a strong formative influence on the evolution of political groupings in Iraq and their approach towards the future elections of the transition.”

Further resources:

Iraqi Interim Government

Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq

The Iraqi Election Information Network

HRW, "Iraqi Elections: Human Rights Concerns"

IWPR "Iraq Election Focus"

Transitional government and Transitional National Assembly to draft new Constitution (2005)

- The January elections swore in Jalal Talabani as President of Iraq, and Vice Presidents Ghazi al-Yawar and Adel Abdul Mehdi
- The Transitional National Assembly (TNA) was formally inaugurated on 16 March 2005
- The TNA has 275 members, with the United Iraqi Alliance being the political party with the most seats
- One of the key issues facing the political process in Iraq concerns how to ensure adequate and legitimate representation of Arab Sunnis in the Transitional government, a majority of whom did not participate in the elections and who by consequence are under-represented in the TNA
- The transitional government is expected to serve until elections for a new constitutionally elected government by 31 December 2005 (in accordance with the timetable set by UN Security Council Resolution 1546 (2004))
- A Constitution Drafting Committee was established in May 2005 and is expected to draft a permanent constitution by 15 August, although a six-month extension period under the Transitional Administrative Law (timetable of UN Security Council Resolution 1546 (2004))

- The draft Constitution will be voted publically in a general referendum that is to be held no later than 15 October 2005 (timetable of UNSC Res. 1546 (2004))
- The security situation has yet to show any sign of improvement despite political developments

UNSC, 7 June 2005:

"During the period under review, the transitional process was focused on the convening of the Transitional National Assembly and its proceedings as well as on the formation of the Transitional Government of Iraq.

Due to delays in reaching agreement on the composition of the Government, it was decided to proceed with convening the Transitional National Assembly on the understanding that efforts for government formation would continue. On 16 March 2005, the Transitional National Assembly was formally inaugurated. After further negotiations, the Transitional National Assembly, on 6 April, elected Hajim Al-Hasani as its President. Hussain Sharistani and Aref Taifour were elected as Vice-Presidents.

The Transitional National Assembly is composed of 275 members and includes the following political entities: United Iraqi Alliance (140 seats), the Kurdistan Alliance List (75 seats), the Iraqi List (40 seats), the Iraqis (five seats), Turkman Iraqi Front (three seats), National Independent Cadres and Elites (three seats), National Union (two seats), Islamic Group of Kurdistan/Iraq (two seats), Islamic Action Organization in Iraq (two seats), National Democratic Alliance (one seat), Al Rafideen National List (one seat), Liberation and Reconciliation Gathering (one seat).

As a result of negotiations on the formation of the Presidency Council, Jalal Talabani was sworn in as President of Iraq on 7 April. Ghazi al-Yawar and Adel Abdul Mehdi were sworn in as Vice-Presidents on the same day.

During the reporting period, one of the key issues between the main political stakeholders was how to ensure adequate and legitimate representation of Arab Sunnis in the Transitional Government, many of whom did not participate in the elections. As a consequence, Sunni Arabs were under-represented in the Transitional National Assembly. Prolonged negotiations between the Kurdistan Alliance and the United Iraqi Alliance, the two political groupings with the largest number of seats in the new Assembly, resulted in a memorandum of understanding that laid the basis for government formation.

On 28 April 2005, the Transitional National Assembly endorsed the Transitional Government under the premiership of Ibrahim Ja'afari. The Government comprises 32 ministerial and 4 deputy ministerial posts.

The time taken to form the Government presented many opportunities to debate key political and constitutional issues. This was the first occasion for Iraq's political parties to have in-depth discussions and engage in negotiations on critical issues facing the new administration. As the attempts at government formation became protracted, many Iraqis expressed concern about the extent to which the process was focusing on ethnic and sectarian considerations. By contrast, other observers focused on the implications of the ongoing negotiations for the transitional timetable, notably the drafting of the constitution and the manner in which inter- and intra-party agreements might prejudice the Government's necessary freedom to manoeuvre.

The difficulties experienced in allocating posts to satisfy all ethnic and confessional groups in Iraq points to the considerable challenges ahead, particularly with regard to the constitution-making process. Under the timetable established by resolution 1546 (2004), the Transitional Government is expected to serve until elections under a new permanent constitution leading to a constitutionally elected Government by 31 December 2005.

On 10 May 2005, the Transitional National Assembly established the Constitution Drafting Committee. Under the timetable for the political transition, the Committee is expected to write the draft of a permanent constitution by 15 August, unless the six-month extension provided for in the Transitional Administrative Law is invoked. The draft permanent Constitution would then be presented to the Iraqi people for approval in a general referendum to be held no later than 15 October.

The Constitution Drafting Committee is chaired by Sheikh Humaam Al-Hammoudi of the United Iraqi Alliance. Fouad Ma'suum of the Kurdistan Alliance List and Adnan Janabi of the Iraqi List serve as deputy chairs. Fifty-five members of the Transitional National Assembly drawn from the various lists are members of the Constitution Committee. The United Iraqi Alliance has 28 members, the Kurdistan Alliance 15 members and the Iraqi List 8 members. Smaller groups have four members on the Committee. These groupings represent Turkman, Assyrian Christians and Yezidis. In addition to the Constitution Drafting Committee, the Assembly has established 27 standing committees to assist it in exercising its legislative and oversight functions.

On 25 May the Constitution Drafting Committee established a subcommittee tasked with identifying mechanisms for making the Constitution-making process more inclusive. The subcommittee is expected to complete its task soon. The Constitution Drafting Committee has also established subcommittees on federalism and human rights. Meanwhile, the Government has formed an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Constitutional Affairs consisting of six Ministers (Justice, Governorate Affairs, Women's Affairs, Culture, Municipalities and Public Works) to be chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister. The Inter-Ministerial Committee has been tasked with supporting the Constitution-making process.

This new phase of Iraq's political transition takes place in a security environment that has yet to show any signs of improvement."

Iraqis adopt new constitution and elect new Parliament (October and December 2005)

- Iraqis adopted a new constitution by referendum on 15 October 2005 and in December 2005, Iraqis voted for a new Parliament, the third national election during the year
- 43 Iraqi political parties formed a group to protest against intimidation, ballot stuffing, over-registration, improper apportionment of seats to governorates
- An international monitoring team declared the elections to meet international standards--fair, genuine and transparent compared to the January 2005 election, Sunni Arab voters participated in significantly greater numbers. (UN SC, March 2006)
- The election resulted in 12 political entities and coalitions with the United Iraqi Alliance as the largest political bloc in the Parliament with 128 seats (UN SC, March 2006)
- Results of the parliamentary elections in January 2006 confirmed the victory of parties representing the far more numerous Shia, leaving Iraq's formerly dominant Sunni minority with the prospect of being excluded from power. (Independent, 22 January 2006)
- The elections that bracketed the year, in January and December 2005, underscored the newly acquired prominence of religion, perhaps the most significant development since the regime's ouster. (ICG, February 2006)
- After five months of negotiations following December's general elections Iraq's parliament has approved a new government, including members of the main Shia, Kurd and Sunni parties (BBC, May 2006)

The Independent, 22 January 2006:

Both the Iraqi government and the Americans have been bracing for a bout of Sunni militancy after the final results of the parliamentary elections confirmed the victory of parties representing the far more numerous Shia, leaving Iraq's formerly dominant Sunni minority with the prospect of being excluded from power. The results awarded the Shia-led United Iraqi Alliance 128 of the 275 seats in the Iraqi assembly, only 10 short of an absolute majority, while their probable future coalition partners among the various Kurdish parties won 53 seats. Sunni parties took only around 50 seats, leaving their participation in government open to question. Foreign governments, led by the US, have urged Iraqis to form a broad-based government including all three of Iraq's main communities, in the hope of undercutting the grounds for Sunni anger over the election results. Many of them claim the results are fraudulent.

ICG, 27 February 2006 :

2005 will be remembered as the year Iraq's latent sectarianism took wings, permeating the political discourse and precipitating incidents of appalling violence and sectarian "cleansing". The elections that bracketed the year, in January and December, underscored the newly acquired prominence of religion, perhaps the most significant development since the regime's ouster. With mosques turned into party headquarters and clerics outfitting themselves as politicians, Iraqis searching for leadership and stability in profoundly uncertain times essentially turned the elections into confessional exercises. Insurgents have exploited the post-war free-for-all; regrettably, their brutal efforts to jumpstart civil war have been met imprudently with ill-tempered acts of revenge. [...] If Iraq falls apart, historians may seek to identify years from now what was the decisive moment. The ratification of the constitution in October 2005, a sectarian document that both marginalised and alienated the Sunni Arab community? The flawed January 2005 elections that handed victory to a Shiite-Kurdish alliance, which drafted the constitution and established a government that countered outrages against Shiites with indiscriminate attacks against Sunnis? Establishment of the Interim Governing Council in July 2003, a body that in its composition prized communal identities over national-political platforms? Or, even earlier, in the nature of the ousted regime and its consistent and brutal suppression of political stirrings in the Shiite and Kurdish communities that it saw as threatening its survival? Most likely it is a combination of all four, as this report argues.

UNSC, 3 March 2006, pp.1-3:

"Following the adoption of the new Constitution by the Iraqi people in the referendum held on 15 October 2005, the December election for a new Parliament, the Council of Representatives, marked the beginning of the last phase of the political transition process set forth in the Transitional Administrative Law and endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1546 (2004). The election held on 15 December 2005 was the third major national electoral event in Iraq during the past year. Overall, election day was calm and no major incidents were reported. A total of 307 political entities and 19 coalitions encompassing more than 7,500 candidates representing almost all Iraqi communities and political affiliations entered the contest for the 275 seats in the Council of Representatives. Despite security concerns, voter turnout was high throughout the country. A total of 12,191,133 valid votes were cast in approximately 6,300 polling centres that accommodated over 30,000 polling stations. Of the valid votes, 295,377 were cast abroad and 203,856 were cast in 255 special polling centres for detainees, hospital patients and members of Iraq's security forces. These figures translate into turnout in the January 2005 election, which amounted to approximately 58 per cent.

Compared to the January 2005 election, Sunni Arab voters in the governorates of Ninewa, Salahaddin, Tamim and Al Anbar — the governorates with the lowest turnouts in the January election — participated in significantly greater numbers in the December 2005 election. Several Sunni Arab and tribal leaders encouraged local populations to support the electoral process and in some areas provided protection to polling centres. Campaigning was robust across the country particularly through the use of television, radio, the press and street posters. While overall levels of violence did not increase in the pre-election period, there were several acts of campaign violence. The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq received 190 complaints during the

period leading up to polling day. The large majority of the complaints related to poster damage, intimidation and aggressive conduct by supporters of political entities. However, some of the complaints referred to acts of a criminal nature including violent attacks resulting in the death of candidates and electoral staff. The Electoral Commission and my Special Representative repeatedly called upon all concerned to refrain from violence and to ensure an environment conducive to full participation in the electoral process. ...

Numerous safeguards were established to ensure a fair, genuine and transparent electoral exercise and to discourage attempts at fraud. The Electoral Commission deployed pre-election and post-election auditors as well as field monitors. Audit teams, which included members of the International Electoral Assistance Team, visited Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Baghdad, Hilla and Babil. Field monitors were deployed in most governorates to assess the implementation and conduct of operations on polling day.The Electoral Commission received a total of 1,980 complaints concerning the December election, of which 58 carried the potential to affect the outcome at a specific polling station. As a result of investigations into these complaints, the Electoral Commission annulled the results of 227 polling stations, issued penalties in 27 cases and dismissed polling staff involved in acts associated with attempts at fraud. The Electoral Commission also fined several political entities and coalitions for breaching electoral regulations.

On 19 and 20 December 2005, the Electoral Commission announced partial election results. In response, 43 parties — mainly belonging to the Iraqi National Front, the Iraqi Accord Front and the National Dialogue Front — formed a group to protest against intimidation, ballot stuffing, over-registration, improper apportionment of seats to governorates and other election-related practices and to lodge complaints against the Electoral Commission. Amid growing protests over the announced partial results, and calls by political parties for an external investigation, the Electoral Commission welcomed the decision of the International Mission for Iraq Elections, an international non-governmental body composed mainly of independent electoral management bodies, to deploy a monitoring team as part of its observation mandate. ... The International Mission issued its post-election assessment report on 19 January and concluded that the election "generally met international standards", thus paving the way for the announcement of uncertified results on 20 January.The election resulted in 12 political entities and coalitions, representing a broad political, ethnic and religious spectrum, winning seats in the Council of Representatives. According to the final certified results, the United Iraqi Alliance will remain the largest political bloc in the Parliament with 128 seats. The Kurdish Gathering won 53 seats. The Tawafiq Iraqi Front, an alliance of several parties including the General Conference for the People of Iraq, the Iraqi Islamic Party and the Iraqi National Dialogue, obtained 44 seats. The Iraqi National List won 25 seats, and the Sunni-dominated National Iraqi Dialogue Front gained 11 seats. The Islamic Union of Kurdistan secured 5 seats, and the Liberation and Reconciliation Gathering won 3 seats. The Progressives List gained 2 seats. Finally, the Al-Rafedeen List, the Iraqi Turkoman Front, the Mithal al-Aloosi List for the Iraqi Nation and Al Ezediah Movement for Progress and Reform won 1 seat each.In conclusion, the election was conducted transparently and credibly. It was an inclusive exercise that succeeded in incorporating all of Iraq's numerous communities and political parties. ."

BBC, 22 May 2006:

"After five months of negotiations following December's general elections Iraq's parliament has approved a new government, including members of the main Shia, Kurd and Sunni parties."

See a draft of the Iraqi Constitution

See also, IRIN, Constitution approved despite rejections, 1 September 2005

Iraq forms first constitutionally elected government (May 2006)

- Results of the parliamentary elections in January 2006 confirmed the victory of parties representing the far more numerous Shia, leaving Iraq's formerly dominant Sunni minority with the prospect of being excluded from power. (Independent, 22 January 2006)
- The elections that bracketed the year, in January and December, underscored the newly acquired prominence of religion, perhaps the most significant development since the regime's ouster.

The Independent, 22 January 2006:

"Both the Iraqi government and the Americans have been bracing for a bout of Sunni militancy after the final results of the parliamentary elections confirmed the victory of parties representing the far more numerous Shia, leaving Iraq's formerly dominant Sunni minority with the prospect of being excluded from power. The results awarded the Shia-led United Iraqi Alliance 128 of the 275 seats in the Iraqi assembly, only 10 short of an absolute majority, while their probable future coalition partners among the various Kurdish parties won 53 seats. Sunni parties took only around 50 seats, leaving their participation in government open to question. Foreign governments, led by the US, have urged Iraqis to form a broad-based government including all three of Iraq's main communities, in the hope of undercutting the grounds for Sunni anger over the election results. Many of them claim the results are fraudulent."

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ICG, 27 February 2006:

"2005 will be remembered as the year Iraq's latent sectarianism took wings, permeating the political discourse and precipitating incidents of appalling violence and sectarian "cleansing". The elections that bracketed the year, in January and December, underscored the newly acquired prominence of religion, perhaps the most significant development since the regime's ouster. With mosques turned into party headquarters and clerics outfitting themselves as politicians, Iraqis searching for leadership and stability in profoundly uncertain times essentially turned the elections into confessional exercises. Insurgents have exploited the post-war free-for-all; regrettably, their brutal efforts to jumpstart civil war have been met imprudently with ill-tempered acts of revenge. [...] If Iraq falls apart, historians may seek to identify years from now what was the decisive moment. The ratification of the constitution in October 2005, a sectarian document that both marginalised and alienated the Sunni Arab community? The flawed January 2005 elections that handed victory to a Shiite-Kurdish alliance, which drafted the constitution and established a government that countered outrages against Shiites with indiscriminate attacks against Sunnis? Establishment of the Interim Governing Council in July 2003, a body that in its composition prized communal identities over national-political platforms? Or, even earlier, in the nature of the ousted regime and its consistent and brutal suppression of political stirrings in the Shiite and Kurdish communities that it saw as threatening its survival? Most likely it is a combination of all four, as this report argues."

Provincial Council Elections (2008)

- Under Provisional powers law of 13 February 2008, next council elections were to take place not beyond 1/10/08. The elections have since been scheduled to take place on 31 January 2009. The elections shall not include the KRG.
- The Provisional Council Elections are crucial in light of limitations of the elections of 2005 in which Sunni Arab boycotts and violence and intimidation led to skewed results.

- The stakes in the elections are quite high for both the ISCI which may stand to loose in front of popular grassroots support for Sadrists, and for Kurds whose dominance may wane in governorates in which Sunni Arabs have been underrepresented.
- Provincial elections are seen as a way of recalibrating the political balance, and as such has been seen as US priority.
- The eligibility criteria approved by the High Electoral Commission gives internally displaced persons the opportunity to register to vote in absentia.

UNSG, 28 July 2008:

"21. UNAMI has continued intensive consultations with the Independent High Electoral Commission, the Government of Iraq and members of the Iraq Council of Representatives to ensure the timely passage of a new election law. Passage of the law has been delayed owing to continuing discussions with political leaders on the status of Kirkuk, the election formula and provisions for the inclusion of women candidates on the ballot. In lieu of a new election law, the Independent High Electoral Commission approved voter registration eligibility criteria to ensure that the voter registration update could proceed as planned. The eligibility criteria give internally displaced persons the opportunity to register to vote in absentia. However, the Council of Representatives must adopt the new election law by the end of July in order to hold governorate council elections in 2008. Further slippage in the political timelines for passing key legislation will have a direct impact on electoral preparations."

ICG, 30 April 2008:

"On 30 January 2005, Iraq held its first post-Saddam elections, including for provincial councils. A Sunni Arab boycott, as well as violence and intimidation in areas with heavy Sunni Arab populations, led to skewed results that disfavoured that community. This set the stage for Sunni Arabs' institutional exclusion from power: unrepresented in the new legislature, they could not join the drafting of a permanent constitution. And although some Sadrists participated in the polls, often as members of other parties, the Sadrist movement as such did not Today, with the changed political landscape, fresh provincial elections could redistribute power consistent with proven representativeness in most governorates and create non-violent channels for exercising power in previously ungovernable ones, such as Anbar. Holding provincial elections as a way of recalibrating the political balance, therefore, has become a U.S. priority and an important marker of political progress.....

The stakes are very high. ISCI in particular (along with other parties that have a high proportion of former exiles) would stand to lose significant ground, as the new provincial powers law states (Art. 5(4)) that a candidate for council membership must have been a resident of the pertinent governorate for a period not less than ten years. Moreover, ISCI will face the grassroots popularity in Shiite areas of the Sadrists, who may benefit from widespread discontent at poor governance over the past three years. The Sadr movement's formal absence from the January 2005 polls was felt mainly in predominantly Shiite governorates.... The Kurds may see their dominance clipped by resurgent Sunni Arabs, who are now better organised and highly motivated to run. Generally, Sunni Arabs have been under-represented in mixed-population governorates (Baghdad, Ninewa, Diyala and Salah al-Din), with the exception of Kirkuk, where the electoral boycott was not widely observed. For example, in Ninewa a council comprising mostly Kurds and Shiite Turkmens has sought to govern a governorate that has a majority Sunni Arab population. If Sunni Arabs make significant electoral gains, the Kurds could suffer a painful blow to their ambition to bring parts of Ninewa, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and Diyala into the Kurdistan region, as they have used their local power as elected officials in these four governorates to create conditions favourable to accession to the KRG.

A central question is whether and how these parties, which control state levers of power, will seek to turn the elections in their favour.... Many steps still need to be taken to enable the elections; each could become a point of dispute and individually or jointly could force a delay.⁹⁰ The council

of representatives must pass an elections law within 90 days of approving the provincial powers law, in other words by 13 May. Such a law normally includes rules for, inter alia, the type of electoral system, voting district boundaries as well as voter eligibility and registration. None of these is without controversy; settling them will require time. Among these, one of the more critical and controversial issues is the type of electoral system..... Other issues that must be settled include the appointment of directors of governorate elections offices (out of nineteen, only eleven have been appointed; the remaining eight concern heavily populated governorates where political disputes can be expected to be fierce); a delimitation of governorate boundaries (given disputes originating during the era of Baath rule, including Arabisation in and around Kirkuk); voter registration... (based either, as last time, on food ration cards or on an entirely new system); a decision on whether and how to include refugees and the internally displaced; rules governing use of the media; and independent oversight. Some parties have called for a political parties law as well."

Extension of Multinational Force mandate and Status of Force Agreements (2004-2008)

- The presence of the multinational force in Iraq is currently authorized by the Security Council at the request of the Government of Iraq, and, as stated in resolutions 1546 (2004), 1637 (2005) and 1723 (2006). Resolution 1770 (2007) extends the term until end of 2008. (UNSG, July 2008)
- In 2008, bilateral negotiations would take place between the Government of Iraq and the United States regarding the status of force agreement between the two parties while Iraqi Government has assumed the control of 13 out of a total of 18 provinces from the MNF-I by November 2008. (UNAMI, November 2008)
- In November 2008, Status of Force Agreement drafted between the two Governments was approved by the Iraqi Parliament. According to the SFA, U.S. military forces will withdraw from urban areas by June 2009, and from Iraq as a whole by 2011. A referendum on the pact is to be held mid next year. (BBC, November 2008)
- A pledge was also made by the Government to reform the constitution and the political system of the country more generally, as well as committing to revisit the laws relating to the general amnesty law and the treatment of former Baathists and to work for the reintegration of the awakening councils (al-sahwat) in the Iraqi security forces (Viser, November 2008)

UNSC, 28 November 2006:

"Responding to a request by the Iraqi Prime Minister, the Security Council today extended the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq until the end of next year, deciding that it should be reviewed at the request of that country's Government or no later than 15 June 2007. The Council also declared that it would terminate the mandate earlier if requested by the Government of Iraq. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1723 (2006) -- submitted by Denmark, Japan, Slovakia, United Kingdom and United States -- which also extended through the end of 2007 the arrangements for depositing proceeds from export sales of petroleum, petroleum products, and natural gas into the Development Fund of Iraq, as well as the arrangements for monitoring the Fund by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. Also by the text, the arrangements for the monitoring of the Development Fund by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board would be reviewed at the request of the Government or no later than 15 June 2007."

UNSG, 28 July 2008:

55. The presence of the multinational force in Iraq is currently authorized by the Security Council at the request of the Government of Iraq, and, as stated in resolutions 1546 (2004), 1637 (2005) and 1723 (2006), the Council will review the mandate at the request of the Government. Bilateral

discussions between the Governments of Iraq and of the United States are currently taking place with regard to a status-of-forces agreement. It should be recalled that in accordance with resolutions 1546 (2004), 1637 (2005), 1723 (2006) and 1770 (2007), security is essential in order for the United Nations to be able to function in Iraq. It is therefore necessary that any new arrangements beyond 31 December 2008 take into account the security of the United Nations presence in Iraq.

BBC, 27 November 2008:

The Iraqi parliament has voted to accept a deal on the future presence of US troops in the country. The decision, praised by US President George Bush, means US troops will leave Iraqi streets by mid-2009 and will quit Iraq entirely by the end of 2011. After last-minute negotiations that had delayed the vote for a day, MPs passed it on one significant condition: that a referendum is held on the pact in the middle of next year. If that fails to endorse the withdrawal plan, US troops may have to leave earlier, possibly by the middle of 2010, our correspondent says.

Viser, 27 November 2008:

Today's vote in the Iraqi parliament related to the bilateral relationship between the United States and Iraq is likely to be reported in the Western media as a case of "Shiites" giving certain concessions to "Sunnis" in exchange for their support for a deal on the withdrawal of US forces. That is not an accurate account of what has been going on in the Iraqi parliament over the past few days. What has taken place is that various Iraqi opposition forces inside the parliament have discovered the concept of leverage. Since 25 November there have been persistent reports that groups often critical of the Maliki government such as Tawafuq (Sunni Islamist), al-Hiwar al-Watani, al-Iraqiyya (secularist) and Fadila (Shiite Islamist) were demanding a "reform charter" (wathiqat al-islah) in return for their support of the government regarding the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with the US. Among the key demands was a pledge by the government to work to reform the constitution and the political system of the country more generally, as well as committing to revisit the laws relating to the general amnesty law and the treatment of former Baathists and to work for the reintegration of the awakening councils (al-sahwat) in the Iraqi security forces

UNAMI, 6 November 2008:

49. On 23 October, the multinational force relinquished control of Babil Governorate to the Government, and on 29 October, it handed over control of Wasit to the Iraqi authorities. Babil and Wasit are the twelfth and thirteenth Iraqi provinces (out of a total of 18) to be handed over. The Government of Iraq is now in charge of security throughout the country's mostly Shiite south.

See: Resolution 1770 (2007), Resolution 1723 (2006) and Resolution 1637 (2005) adopted by the Security Council.

Peace Efforts

Selected national and regional peace and reconciliation efforts (2006-2008)

- The passage of key laws in 2008 will help mitigate rifts and continue to reduce violence, such as amnesty law, amendments to debathification, and inclusion of Sunni militias into ISF.
- Others see the schisms widening as Iraqi leaders wrangle over unresolved issues including the situation of disputed territories including Kirkuk, devolution of powers of regional and federations, distribution of oil and gasses.
- In August 2008, Congressional Research reported that Iraq's political system, the result of a U.S.-supported election process, continues to be riven by sectarianism and ethnic and factional infighting.

- Previous initiatives have included the National Reconciliation Plan adopted by the Prime Minister, a four-point Ramadan accord and the Mecca Declaration, adopted by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference

Congressional Research Service, 4 August 2008:

"Iraq's political system, the result of a U.S.-supported election process, continues to be riven by sectarianism and ethnic and factional infighting. The Administration asserts that the passage of key laws in 2008 will help heal remaining rifts and continue to reduce violence. Others see the schisms widening as Iraqi leaders wrangle over unresolved issues that are complicating the holding of provincial elections."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"On 16 and 17 December 2006, Prime Minister Al-Maliki hosted a conference of political parties and entities as part of the Government's national reconciliation plan. The event was largely attended by political parties within the national unity government, while those with ties to the Ba'ath Party, the Sadrist bloc, the Iraqiya list of Ayad Allawi, and the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue led by Saleh al-Mutlak did not officially attend. However, numerous members of each group participated in their own personal capacity. The conference concluded with a statement recommending, among other items, the dissolution of militias, the expedited withdrawal of the multinational force, and the re-incorporation of veteran army personnel."

UNSC, 5 December 2006:

"The succession of various initiatives to promote national reconciliation both inside and outside Iraq does not appear to have had a significant impact on the scale and nature of the violence in the country. The proliferation of initiatives has led to widespread scepticism about their viability both inside and outside Iraq. The Government has also been unable to supplement its security initiatives with the implementation of projects to improve the delivery of essential services, provide jobs and rebuild socio-economic infrastructure. Institutional capacity limitations have also impeded the ability of the Government to implement the 2006 budget. [...] During the period under review, Prime Minister Al-Maliki pushed forward the implementation of his National Reconciliation Plan. Following a conference of tribal leaders in August 2006, he held a meeting with a spectrum of civil society figures and institutions on 16 September. The conference with political leaders, originally scheduled for October, has been postponed several times.

On 2 October, Prime Minister Al-Maliki announced a four-point Ramadan accord, which was supported by major political parties. A key element of the agreement included the establishment of local security committees composed of political, religious, police and army figures. The Prime Minister also initiated direct contacts through his personal representatives with Iraqi opposition groups within Iraq and in Jordan, Egypt and other neighbouring countries. Reconciliation initiatives in Iraq have been complemented by the efforts of regional actors. On 20 October 2006, Iraqi Shiite and Sunni religious leaders, in a meeting sponsored by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, issued in Mecca a declaration calling for an end to sectarian bloodshed in Iraq. The agreement was welcomed by political and religious leaders both inside and outside of Iraq."

UNSC, 1 September 2006:

"On 25 June 2006, the Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, unveiled the National Reconciliation Plan. The 24-point Plan called for a qualified amnesty, the release of detainees, the reform of the legal and judicial systems, the provision of assistance to areas that are prone to violence, the facilitation of dialogue on constitutional and related matters, and the resolution of the problem of militias. The Plan also acknowledged the idea of an Iraqi-led Baghdad peace initiative, emphasized the need for regional support to achieve peace and stability in Iraq, and recognized the efforts of the League of Arab States to convene a conference on Iraqi national accord. The Plan also provided for the establishment of the High Committee for National Reconciliation, which

held its first session on 22 July 2006. The composition of the Committee has not yet been finalized owing to a difference in views concerning membership criteria."

Peace initiatives by local communities and local/religious leaders (2006)

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"On 7 February 2007, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani released a statement that listed commonalities between Shiite and Sunni Muslims, called for unity and coexistence based on mutual respect, and asserted the sanctity of Muslim blood. In addition to denouncing false fatwas made in his name, the Grand Ayatollah declared that it was the duty of all Muslims to reduce tensions caused by political disputes and focus on strengthening ties between the children of the nation of Iraq. On 10 February 2007, dozens of Shia and Sunnis gathered for the re-opening of a Sunni mosque in Shiitedominated Sadr City. A month earlier, on 10 January 2007, a senior Sadrist official concluded an agreement with the Sunni Iraqi Islamic Party to form joint committees in mixed neighbourhoods in Baghdad to cooperate on security and returns of internally displaced persons. In Basra, joint Sunni and Shiite committees were formed in February 2007 to reopen and protect Sunni mosques closed in the aftermath of the attack on the Samarra shrine in February 2006."

Continued Efforts at Reconciliation and Accommodation (2008)

- In 2007, the Al Maliki government failed to meaningfully reach out to its adversaries. The national reconciliation plan has given way to attempts at accommodation promoted by US. (ICG, April 2008)
- In context of surge, attempts at accommodation entailed modification of de-Baathification law of 2003, an amnesty law, and intergration of Sunni Arabs into state's political and security structures – all of which has had mixed results to date. (ICG, April 2008)
- Review process of the constitution to redress Sunni Arab's absence in drafting the constitution and therefore endow it with a semblance of national consensus. The process has been stalled, and delayed. (ICG, April 2008)
- Core issues reveal an ongoing competition between Sunni Arab politicians which have sought to review constitution to gain grounds lost in boycott and curbing ambitions of Kurdish or Shia parties.
- Issues under debate include religious law over personal status, powers of the president and presidency council, concerns over natural gass and oil, and resolution of disputed areas. (ICG, April 2008)
- Without serious endeavours, or by some analysts pressure from US, to break the deadlock, the parliamentary elections in late 2009 could change the political equation enough to break the deadlock. (ICG, April 2008)
- In August 2008, Congressional Research reported that Iraq's political system, the result of a U.S.-supported election process, continues to be riven by sectarianism and ethnic and factional infighting.
- The passage of key laws in 2008 will help heal remaining rifts and continue to reduce violence. Others see the schisms widening as Iraqi leaders wrangle over unresolved issues that are complicating the holding of provincial elections.
- Previous initiatives have included the National Reconciliation Plan adopted by the Prime Minster, a four-point Ramadan accord and the Mecca Declaration, adopted by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference

UNSG, 28 July 2008:

56. Thanks to concerted political and military efforts over the past three months, there has been continued improvement in the security situation across Iraq. However, the gains made so far need to be sustained through meaningful political dialogue and national reconciliation. Time is of the essence, and Iraq can no longer afford continued delays in finding viable political solutions. Long-term stability will require significant political buy-in from all segments of the population, many of which are not yet fully engaged in the political process.

ICG, 30 April 2008:

The Kurds have become key players as protagonists in both the nationalist and the winners-vs.-losers contests. Their principal goal, and the reason they willingly play the political game in Baghdad, is to expand both territory (and thereby resources) under their control and the powers they enjoy within that territory, hoping to maximise their chances of future independence. The constitution survived a massive Sunni Arab “no” vote that failed to clear the required threshold; today, subject to review, it in effect cannot be amended without the approval of ISCI and the Kurds, who oppose any major change.

This means that a breakthrough in negotiations on the essential concerns outlined above is extremely difficult. Having gained central power, the ruling alliance is blocking any attempt to roll back regions’ authority accorded in the constitution; sparring with other factions inside and outside the federal government over a comprehensive oil and gas law; using the constitution in its quest to incorporate oil-rich territory into powerful regions only nominally linked to the federal government; and resisting provincial council elections, the outcome of which could curb its federal and territorial ambitions. By linking implementation of the constitution on the status of disputed territories (Art. 140), in particular, to its cooperation on other issues, including the oil law and constitutional review, it has intertwined and locked up all the key concerns that must be settled if Iraq is to regain its footing.

Two things are becoming increasingly clear: The interlocking nature of these issues means they cannot be solved individually or sequentially. And this government, these politicians – in the current power balance produced by the 2005 elections – do not want, nor are able, to take advantage of the surge to produce agreement on fundamentals. As an Iraqi official put it, progress on political reform has been slow because the parties that control the system benefit from it and therefore resist changing it. This suggests that the current piecemeal approach toward deal-making should be replaced with efforts to bring about a package deal that goes to the very heart of questions about power and resources, and therefore about federalism, oil and internal boundaries; encourages reconciliation/accommodation; and ensures provincial and national elections....

Despite the breathing space provided by the surge, no meaningful progress toward reconciliation/accommodation has yet occurred. Instead, politicians with varying degrees of representativeness and a ruling alliance whose power and agendas have stood in the way of compromise have rendered a breakthrough unlikely. While some legislation has made it past the council of representatives, negotiations on key deals are stalled or sputtering, little has been carried out, and disputes over the content of laws are being reconfigured as disputes over their implementation. A principal reason for this disappointing lack of progress is that the process itself has not enjoyed broad support. The U.S. was the driving force in late 2005 after it realised that its state-building project was becoming unhinged because of a constitution-drafting process that lacked national consensus. Recognising in particular the need to appease Sunni Arabs, it concluded a compromise agreement to recalibrate power, which it imposed on a reluctant ruling alliance. This agreement’s subsequent non-implementation fed growing sectarian violence, which soon overtook politics. The surge brought relative and welcome calm. But there is reason to fear this is only a temporary salve and that underlying issues will again come to the fore. Security gains could well be imperilled by a plethora of residual threats (from remnants of al-Qaeda in Iraq; intensifying intra-Shiite conflict; the proliferation of militias and armed gangs; a government push-

back against, or deepening frustration by, the Sons of Iraq; territorial disputes; and, more broadly, the inability to establish legitimate, functional state institutions). Whatever political space the surge tore open thus is likely to narrow once again.

Congressional Research Service, 4 August 2008:

Iraq's political system, the result of a U.S.-supported election process, continues to be riven by sectarianism and ethnic and factional infighting. The Administration asserts that the passage of key laws in 2008 will help heal remaining rifts and continue to reduce violence. Others see the schisms widening as Iraqi leaders wrangle over unresolved issues that are complicating the holding of provincial elections.

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On 2 October, Prime Minister Al-Maliki announced a four-point Ramadan accord, which was supported by major political parties. A key element of the agreement included the establishment of local security committees composed of political, religious, police and army figures. The Prime Minister also initiated direct contacts through his personal representatives with Iraqi opposition groups within Iraq and in Jordan, Egypt and other neighbouring countries. Reconciliation initiatives in Iraq have been complemented by the efforts of regional actors. On 20 October 2006, Iraqi Shiite and Sunni religious leaders, in a meeting sponsored by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, issued in Mecca a declaration calling for an end to sectarian bloodshed in Iraq. The agreement was welcomed by political and religious leaders both inside and outside of Iraq."

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the efforts of the League of Arab States to convene a conference on Iraqi national accord. The Plan also provided for the establishment of the High Committee for National Reconciliation, which held its first session on 22 July 2006. The composition of the Committee has not yet been finalized owing to a difference in views concerning membership criteria.”

Efforts at Reconciliation: Question of Disputed Areas including Kirkuk

- Article 140 of Constitution relates to resolution of the disputed areas providing several steps including normalisation, census and referendum to be held by 31st December 2007
- In a controversial decision in end 2007, the deadline was extended to 30 June 2008, and subsequently extended. The Iraqi government has failed to date to make any significant progress on this question.
- In mid 2007, US placed its support behind UNAMI to involve itself in the debate over Kirkuk and implementation of Article 140.
- In June 2008, UNAMI presented its initial analysis on first four of several disputed areas, which was met with scepticism and reservations by parties concerned.

ICG, 30 April 2008:

"This article relates to resolution of the status of so-called disputed areas, including oil-rich Kirkuk, many of which have heavily mixed populations of Kurds, Arabs, Turkomans and smaller minorities.¹⁵⁴ Art. 140 provides for various steps: normalisation, census and a referendum in disputed areas to be held by 31 December 2007.¹⁵⁵ In a controversial decision in that month, when it became evident that the deadline would not be met, the prime minister, presidency council and prime minister of the Kurdistan region jointly decided to extend it until 30 June 2008, without consulting the council of representatives.¹⁵⁶ Parties that oppose the Kurds' bid to incorporate these territories into the Kurdistan region claimed that the constitutional provision had become null and void; they have taken the dispute to the federal supreme court and are currently awaiting its ruling. Kurdish parties take a very different view.¹⁵⁷ More generally, having failed to make any significant progress in implementing any of the Art. 140 provisions, the parties must decide whether to speed up the process and impose a referendum that few besides the Kurds desire or chart an alternative process that could lead to a peaceful resolution of these areas' status..... In Resolution 1770 of 10 August 2007, the UN Security Council decided that UNAMI, "at the request of the Government of Iraq, shall (a) advise, support, and assist: ... (iii) The Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives on Constitutional review and the implementation of constitutional provisions, as well as on the development of processes acceptable to the Government of Iraq to resolve disputed internal boundaries".

UNSG, 28 July 2008:

"7. UNAMI has been working to establish a process for addressing disputed internal boundaries. On 5 June, UNAMI presented to the Government of Iraq its initial analysis on the first four of several disputed areas in northern Iraq. In keeping with the Mission's advisory and assistance mandate under resolution 1770 (2007), the initial analysis examined a variety of considerations, including the administrative history of the district, changes since 2003, information obtained during visits to the districts and many additional factors. The findings pointed to a series of specific confidence-building measures that could contribute to the balanced administration of the districts under dispute. Working with the general agreement of the Presidency Council, the Prime Minister of Iraq and the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan regional government, UNAMI continued to underscore that the Government of Iraq alone has the sovereign responsibility to decide on the disputed areas.

8. Reactions to the Mission's first analysis reflected the sensitive nature of the issue. While some members of the Sunni Arab and Turkmen communities maintained a sceptical attitude towards

addressing disputed territories at this time, Shiite political parties have chosen not to comment publicly to date. The Kurdish National Assembly and the Kurdistan regional government presidency issued official statements with reservations to the Mission's findings, and a Kurdistan regional government committee was formed to liaise with UNAMI on the issue. UNAMI has recently established a presence in Kirkuk and will continue to engage with all communities there. The Mission is committed to promoting a political and constitutional process that would be acceptable to the major stakeholders to resolve disputed internal boundaries, including the status of Kirkuk."

Sectarian and Communal Violence

Sectarian violence cause of displacement (2006-2008)

- Sectarian violence has been the leading cause of violence between 2006-2007. Sectarian violence is said to have dramatically increased following attacks on the shrine of Samarra on 22 February 2006.
- By October 2008, more than 1,600,000 people are estimated to have fled their homes due to direct or indirect attacks or violence by insurgents, militias and other armed groups
- The sectarian conflict of 2006-2007 which was leading cause of displacement has given way to shifting mosaic of alliances and partisan politics. Sectarian violence has still entailed displacement as Mosul
- There are two primary intersecting fault lines confronting former regime with Shi'ia and Kurds, and second Kurdish nationalism against Arab nationalism defined as Kurd vs Arabs, and Sunni Arabs vs Shiites and Kurds. Mindful that such communities are heterogenous, internally divided and overlapping the post 2003 period.

IDMC Note - March 2007: Sectarian violence is the largest cause of internal displacement in Iraq. The main affected groups are Shiite and Sunni, however all minorities in Iraq and professional groups, such as doctors and academics have been affected. Refugees, in particular the large Palestinian community in Iraq have faced attacks, causing them to flee their homes, seeking safety within Iraq or outside. A number of extracts from reports documenting sectarian induced displacement are included below. Further reports documenting sectarian-induced displacement can be accessed in the sources below.

See also, "Iraqis on the Move" a report by the International Medical Corps (January 2007)

ICG, 30 April 2008:

"The 2005-2007 sectarian war has given way, for now, to a battle that has seen constantly shifting alliances among political parties that represent, in addition to their own narrow partisan interests, population groups than cannot easily be pigeonholed: Sunni tribal elements, organised in so-called Awakening councils or *sahwat*, are pushing back al-Qaeda in Iraq, a group with a partially foreign leadership but an almost entirely Iraqi base; these tribal elements have little relation to former insurgent groups that established "concerned local citizen" councils in Baghdad neighbourhoods; both sets of actors, collectively known as "Sons of Iraq", maintain only tenuous links to Sunni Arab parties that have played a largely ineffective role in government since standing in parliamentary elections in December 2005; a major struggle is shaping up between Shiite Islamist parties that represent different strata in the Shiite community: the Sadr movement, which has mobilised slum dwellers in Baghdad and towns in the south, and the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) and Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Islamic Daawa Party, which derive their

support from the country's Shiite middle class (even if impoverished); their rivalry is at heart a class struggle; both the Sadr movement and ISCI and its Badr militia have alienated (through their sectarian role in government since 2005 and in the street during the worst violence in 2006) not only Sunnis but also large segments of the Shiite population, including secular as well as religious Shiites who reject clerical rule; and the Kurdish parties, although strategically aligned after several years of internecine conflict, de facto are still administering separate parts of the Kurdistan region⁴ and face a population increasingly disaffected by deprivation, corruption and mismanagement.

These conflicts have arisen in addition to, not instead of, inter-communal strife. The sectarian war over Baghdad, suspended at best, could re-ignite suddenly and swiftly, especially once the surge comes to an end. Moreover, inter-ethnic conflicts between Kurds, Arabs and Turkomans are looming in Kirkuk and Ninewa (Mosul), with other minorities also playing a role. Politically, each of the major disputes today has tended to bring a different ad hoc and cross-communal coalition of parties to the table and, at times, into the street:

The Kurdistan Alliance's and ISCI's push for extreme decentralisation the former to cement Kurdistan's separate status and, eventually, promote independence; the latter to push its own agenda of creating a Shiite "super" region in the south⁵ – has been opposed by a loose and fragile counter-alliance of Sunni, Shiite and secular parties, in which each propounds a different view on the acceptable degree of decentralisation or how and when it should be effected. The ISCI-Kurdish alliance bore fruit in an important backroom deal on federalism and the status of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, in 2005 negotiations over the new constitution and has held ever since. Progress in negotiations over a hydrocarbons law has been blocked by a fundamental Arab- Kurdish divide that is compounded by deep Sunni Arab unease over the fact that the vast majority of Arab Iraq's oil wealth is located in predominantly Shiite areas.

The boundary question is another example of primarily Arab-Kurdish enmity, but in this case the debate is complicated by a boundary dispute among the (Arab) governorates of Anbar, Karbala and Najaf. In seeking to reverse the most offensive aspects of post-2003 de-Baathification, Sunni Arab and secular parties encountered strong resistance from Shiite Islamist parties who faced heavy repression under the former regime, while finding unlikely allies in the Kurds, who suffered similarly but successfully integrated former Baathists into their own society after they gained de facto autonomy in late 1991 – a model they seek to emulate in all of Iraq. Resistance may prove even stronger when the issue is absorption of erstwhile insurgents into the security forces and state institutions. Finally, the prospect of provincial council elections later this year has brought a spasm of intra- Shiite violence between the Sadrist and ISCI; the latter, backed by the Maliki government in which it is a dominant partner, has little interest in such elections or in the Sadrist participation in them, as it would stand to lose significant ground given its poor governance record of the past three years."

Chatham House and University of Exeter, 18 May 2007:

"The social fabric of Iraq has been torn apart. There is not 'one' civil war, nor 'one' insurgency, but several civil wars and insurgencies between different communities and organizations; there is also a range of actors seeking to undermine, overthrow or take control of the Iraqi government. Iraqi nationalisms exist, but one distinct 'Iraqi' nationalism does not. Iraq has fractured into regions dominated by sectarian, ethnic or tribal political groupings that have gained further strength from their control of informal local economies.

- Al-Qaeda has a very real presence in Iraq that has spread to the major cities of the centre and north of the country, including Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul. Although Al-Qaeda's position is challenged by local actors, it is a mistake to exaggerate the ability of tribal groups and other insurgents to stop the momentum building behind its operations in Iraq.
- Regional powers have a greater capacity than either the US or the UK to influence events in Iraq. This arises from a historical legacy of social interaction and religious association that exists irrespective of modern international state boundaries.
- The Iraqi government is not able to exert authority evenly or effectively over the country.

Across huge swathes of territory, it is largely irrelevant in terms of ordering social, economic, and political life. At best, it is merely one of several 'state-like actors' that now exist in Iraq.

- Security in Iraq cannot be 'normalized' in a matter of months but instead should be considered within a timeframe of many years. If the Multinational Force is withdrawn, Iraq's nascent security services would not be able to cope with the current levels of insecurity."

Brookings Institution – University of Bern, October 2006:

"I will never believe in differences between people. I am a Sunni and my wife is a Shi'a. I received threats to divorce her or be killed. We left Dora [a once-mixed neighborhood in Baghdad] now. My wife is staying with her family in Sha'b [a Shi'a neighborhood] and I am staying with my friends in Mansur [a Sunni neighborhood]. I am trying to find a different house but it's difficult now to find a place that accepts both of us in Baghdad. A young Iraqi artist, Baghdad, June 2006"

"A sharp rise in sectarian attacks, abductions and killings followed the bombing of the holy Shi'a al-Askari shrine in Samarra in February 2006. On 20 July 2006, as reported by Reuters and other Western media, a spokesman for the Iraq Ministry of Displacement and Migration declared that, in the five months since the Samarra attack, approximately 27,000 families, or 162,000 people, had registered with the Iraqi government for assistance.[...] More recent figures from the Ministry speak of nearly 39,000 families displaced – 234,000 people – since Samarra.[...] Organized bands of armed thugs are targeting people because of the community they belong to, and forcing them to flee.

But the problem did not start with the attack on Samarra. Sectarian strife had been increasing steadily since the beginning of the US occupation of Iraq. Well before 2003, violence against the Shi'a and the Kurds was a central tenet of Ba'thi policies. Internal displacement was a major feature of the Iraq of Saddam Hussein. Because of the Ba'thi regime's uniquely repressive nature, the outside world made little effort to find out what was happening inside. The US-led invasion that overthrew that regime was supposed to bring better things. Instead, displacement is again on the rise in Iraq. And again, little is known about it. [...]

But sectarian-induced displacement carries special significance. In a country as diverse as Iraq, and as large, it could take on truly appalling proportions were the situation to worsen. Also, as displacement increases and hardens, it in turn further jeopardizes the political process. Finally, the manner in which both the new Iraqi authorities and those nations who maintain significant military forces in Iraq address the problem of sectarian displacement says much about their commitment to pluralism and human rights. Indeed it is an important indicator of whether Iraqis can expect a better future.

NOTE: In Iraq today, the term 'sectarian violence' is a euphemism for Shi'a-Sunni violence. The Kurds are not part of the current explosion in sectarian strife. And while past and future problems involving sectarian violence in Kurdish areas – as well as sectarian violence against Kurds in South and Central Iraq – are not to be discounted, the main source of sectarian displacement are attacks on Sunnis and Shi'a by Shi'a and Sunni radical groups respectively. Thus, the focus of this paper, which is based on both direct and remote research, is the violence between Sunni and Shi'a radical armed groups and the ensuing displacement."

[Click here for the full report by Brookings](#)

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"Increasing numbers of Iraqis are fleeing their homes since the destruction of Al- Askari Shrine in Samarra, on 22 February, unleashed a wave of sectarian violence across many regions in the country. Approximately 150,000 persons have been displaced by 30 June 2006, according to estimates by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration and partners of the United Nations. The main reasons for such displacement are direct or indirect threats received by individuals, or following attacks to family members or the community in the neighbourhood of origin. Displaced

persons find themselves in a condition of vulnerability, lacking many basic rights and competing for limited services, which increase inter-communal animosity in their points of arrival. In turn, this can generate further displacement."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

" "As a result of the pervasive violence, Iraqis continue to leave their areas of residence, either voluntarily or as a result of violence or threats by insurgents, militias and other armed groups. According to figures from the International Organization of Migration (IOM), the number of displaced persons since 22 February 2006 reached 14,307 families, or 85,842 persons. The IOM further reported that most of the Shi'a families are leaving central areas of Iraq (Baghdad, Anbar and Salah al Din) towards southern Governorates (Najaf, Qadissya, Wassit and Kerbala). Sunni families are leaving southern areas and moving towards the Governorates of Baghdad, Diyala and Anbar.

HRO received reports illustrating the dynamics of displacement. Approximately 80 families are now living in tents inside Kut stadium - out of a total of 1,300 displaced families living in Kut originally from Abu Ghraib area in Baghdad. Reportedly, 400 Shi'a families have been displaced from the same area after they received threats through mobile phone calls, letters, written notes left at their homes and direct threats by armed individuals. Similar methods have been used in most parts of the country intimidating Shi'a and Sunni neighbours into leaving their homes. Over 370 Sunni families left since February this year to Fallujah, Ramadi, and other places in Anbar, as well as Salah al Governorate. The Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration has recorded the arrival of over 500 Shi'a families from Al Anbar, Baghdad and other provinces to Basra in the past few months. Internal displacement is accompanied by increasing displacement of Iraqis seeking refuge outside the country."

UNAMI, 1 January - 28 February 2006, p.4:

"[T]he Human Rights Office received reports that a number of Sunni and Shi'a families living in mixed neighborhoods were forcibly evicted from their homes or left voluntarily because of threats of violence from militias, insurgents and other armed groups. Indiscriminate mortar attacks reportedly targeted civilian neighborhoods. Real concerns for their safety prompted some residents to move to areas where they constitute a majority."

IRIN, 17 April 2006:

"Up to 35,000 more individuals have been displaced in the past two weeks due to ongoing sectarian violence, said officials from the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. "Nearly 70,000 displaced Iraqis, especially from the capital, are living in deteriorating conditions," said ministry spokesman Sattar Nawruz. According to ministry officials, the government is providing displaced families with essential materials, including food and medical supplies. Nevertheless, officials express alarm over a rising rate of displacement in recent weeks. "Families are leaving their homes every day because they're afraid of becoming the next victims of violence," Nawruz pointed out.[...] Many Shi'ite Muslims, recently displaced from the western Anbar governorate and Baghdad, have taken refuge in southern areas, such as Basra, Najaf and Nassriyah. Numerous Sunni Muslim families, meanwhile, from Baghdad and the country's south, have fled to the cities and villages of Anbar, such as Fallujah, Rawa and Ramadi.

Displaced families complain that sectarian threats are increasing daily. "I have to leave because I received a letter saying that if I don't leave my district - where I've lived for more than 20 years - my family will end up in a cemetery," said Ahmed Shamari, a Sunni Muslim teacher who resides in a majority-Shi'ite district in the capital. Some of those fleeing violence have avoided the refugee camps being set up for them, fearing that they, too, could become targets of violence. "These displaced people would rather seek shelter with relatives in safe areas or in abandoned schools or government buildings," said a volunteer with the IRCS."

Some reports of inter communal violence causing displacement (2003-2005)

- Reports from Baghdad's neighbourhoods of Al-Hurriya, Al-Adhamiya, Al-Amriya, Al-Khadhraa, Abu Dsheer, Baghdad Aljedeeda and Al-Dura portray ongoing violence resulting in displacement of individuals and families to other neighbourhoods following threats and killings (2005)
- Similar displacements were reported to and from Basra, Baghdad, Ninewa and Al Anbar (2005)
- Voluntary displacements were also reported, as families expressed that sectarian pressures are too intense to permit them to remain in their neighborhood in Tal Afar, Tarmiya, Basra and other cities in the country (2005)
- AFP reported Shiite Muslims fleeing some areas of the South due to fear of violence by Sunni insurgents (2005)
- IRIN also reported around 350 Assyrian Christians expressing a wish to move to Northern Iraq following attacks on churches (2004)
- The Roma were well treated under the former regime, but since April 2003, around 2000 Roma were forced out of their homes (2003)

UNAMI, 31 October 2005:

"The proliferation of armed militias, criminal and terrorist organizations acting with impunity constitutes a major challenge to law and order and a threat to the security of the civilian population. Militias have been accused of kidnappings, extra-judicial executions and carrying out illegal policing and sectarian attacks. It is extremely worrying that some of these crimes are committed by individuals wearing police and military uniforms and using police or military equipment. In some areas, including Baghdad, sectarian violence increasingly seems to aim at disrupting the traditionally peaceful coexistence of communities. Reports from Baghdad's neighbourhoods of Al-Hurriya, Al-Adhamiya, Al-Amriya, Al-Khadhraa, Abu Dsheer, Baghdad Aljedeeda and Al-Dura portray ongoing violence resulting in displacement of individuals and families to other neighbourhoods following threats and killings. Similar displacements were reported to and from Basra, Baghdad, Ninewa and Al Anbar. There are also voluntary displacements, as families have shared the concern with the Human Rights Office that sectarian pressures are too intense to permit them to remain in their neighborhood. Such displacements have been reported in Tal Afar, Tarmiya, Basra and other cities in the country. There are continuous first hand reports that long term Arab residents are still victims of stigmatization, harassment and arbitrary detention because of their perceived association with "foreign fighters.""

IRIN, 3 March 2005:

"During Saddam Hussein's rule, gypsies were reasonably well treated and given shelter. But after the 2003 conflict, as people returned to the village, many were forced out and are living in tents or have built mud homes.[...]In general, the gypsies are looked down upon by the rest of society and are often found selling alcohol. Some are forced to turn to commercial sex work to earn a living, according to local people.[...]In 2003, after the fall of the previous regime, the Medhi army attacked the houses of the gypsies in Diwanya and they cut off the electricity and destroyed the only school there."

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 16:

"It is reported that sectarian violence is causing the displacement of hundreds of Shiite Muslims from the 'Triangle of Death' south of Baghdad which includes Sunni-Shiite mixed towns such as Latifiyah, Mahmoudiyah and Yusufiyah and other traditionally mixed areas such as the Dora neighbourhood in Baghdad Governorate, Salman Pak and Al-Madaen in the Governorate of Babil."

AFP, 20 May 2005:

"Hundreds of Shiite Muslims are fleeing towns in lawless areas south of the Iraqi capital where killings and kidnappings by a ragtag army of Sunni extremists and tribal gangs have torn mixed communities."

IRIN, 22 November 2004:

"[A]n estimated 350 Assyrian Christians families are ready to take matters into their own hands. After two coordinated attacks on Christian churches, one in August against five churches, four in Baghdad, one in Mosul, and another attack in October on up to seven churches, they want to move back to homes in northern Iraq out of fear of further attacks. Relations between Christians and Muslims in Iraq have been peaceful in the past, although many Christians remained on the edge of Iraqi society. But now, in what is becoming an increasingly segregated Iraq, some feel the Christians, many of whom speak English in the predominantly Arabic-speaking country, are supporting the Coalition forces. As a result, some Christians are keeping their children home this school year, worried that increasing animosity against them makes them a target. [...] Some Christians were resettled from the region by former president Saddam Hussein while many others fled during the 1991 Gulf war. There are Christians living throughout Iraq, including a sizeable community in Baghdad - accurate figures are hard to find but various estimates put the number in the capital at somewhere between 20,000 and 50,000. [...] There's just one problem: Kurdish Muslims living on the land and in the homes the Christians once occupied in the north, don't want to leave, William Warda, leader of the Assyrian Christian political movement in Baghdad, told IRIN. [...] 'Saddam destroyed 200 of our villages in the north and deported the inhabitants,' Warda said. 'We are asking the Kurdish authorities to remove these people. They are pleading that they need more time.' Al Barwari, a security adviser and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (PDK) director in Germany, who is currently living in Iraq, said Christians were talking to PDK officials about moving to land in and around Dahuk where Kurds currently live. [...] An estimated 60,000 Christians have fled Iraq for Syria and Jordan in recent months because of the unstable security situation, Warda said. About 1.3 million Christians registered for a 1987 census, he said, a number that has now dropped to about 70,000. However, without an official census accurate numbers are difficult to assess. There appears to have been a gradual reduction in the number of Christians in the country over the years as many left for economic reasons. But this has now been accelerated with the recent attacks. However, other Christians in Baghdad are defiant about the threats, saying Iraq is their home, even if they are a minority."

Further reports documenting sectarian induced displacement prior to 2006 are included in the sources below.

Military Operations and Conflict

Between 2003 and 2006, displacements primarily due to military operations and fighting (2003-2007)

- As of March 2007, some 22,400 people were estimated to remain displaced from military operations and fighting
- An estimated 15,240 people were displaced as a result of military operations between February and November 2006 according to some reports
- In 2005, thousands of people have been displaced by military raids conducted by the multinational and Iraqi forces, including in al-Qaim, Karabilah, and Haditha
- Also 2005, forced displacement occurred in Ramadi, Mosul and Kirkuk which continue to be monitored by the UN
- Skirmishes with Coalition forces in 2004, particularly in Fallujah, Najaf, Kufa, Karbala and Samarra caused displacement

- In November 2004, over 200,000 people were displaced from Fallujah as a result of a US air strike and fierce fighting in the city
- In April 2004, some 70,000 people fled Fallujah as a result of the siege of the city by Coalition forces
- From March to May 2003, the governorates of Al-Anbar, Thi-Qar and Basra witnessed displacement due to the threat of air strikes and urban war-fare
- Displacements have often been of temporary nature with exceptions, in particular the siege of Fallujah in November 2004 which has resulted in more prolonged displacement
- A small number of people across the country remain have been displaced by Coalition forces for reasons of national security

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Some 418,392 people have been displaced due to sectarian violence and 15,240 due to military operations since the attack on the Samarra Al-Askari Shrine on 22 February 2006."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.16:

"Military raids are routinely conducted by the MNF/ISF in an attempt to put an end to insurgent activities. They have taken place in Fallujah, Ramadi and Mosul, and more recently in Al-Qaim, Karabilah and Haditha in Western Iraq. These raids, which aim to root out foreign fighters and insurgent support systems, often cause the death and displacement of civilians and the destruction of infrastructure and property."

Selected reports of displacement caused primarily by military operations 2003-2006

Anbar province (2005 - 2006)

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"Military operations continued in Al Anbar Governorate, in particular Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet. Ramadi and Fallujah have seen relatively constant fighting between MNF-I and insurgents in some districts, completely disrupting the functioning of social services and resulting in a high degree of displacement and casualties."

UNAMI, July 2005, p.1:

"The Governorate of Anbar in the west of the country was the principle focus of emergency humanitarian interventions in July, as a result of fighting shifting first from the city of Al Qa'im to Karabla and then towards the towns of Rawa, Haditha and Heet. Many of the towns and villages in Anbar affected by this recent fighting are recipient locations of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who moved as a result of previous clashes. [...] A recent UNCT NGO partner assessment estimated that over 6,200 families were displaced to over 30 locations in Anbar Governorate in July."

UNAMI, November 2005, p.1:

"Anbar: The western province of Anbar remained a focus of insecurity and humanitarian need throughout the period. An estimated 7,000 families in the Al Qa'im area were displaced in November due to military operations. Many were temporarily housed in tented camps or in public buildings in neighbouring locations. [...] NGO monitors estimated that the total number of displaced families in Anbar exceeds 11,000. The affected populations require both short term emergency relief but also longer term care and maintenance assistance as a result of successive waves of displacement."

UNAMI, September 2005,p.2:

"Anbar Update: Insecurity continued to affect the western districts of Anbar Governorate, where according to IOM monitors, over 11,000 families are currently living in displacement. At the beginning of the month, 800 families were displaced from Huseeba, Karabla and Ubaidi. Towards the end of the month, reports suggested an increase in humanitarian displacement around locations such as Sadah near the Syrian border."

UNAMI, August 2005 Update, p.2:

"Anbar Update: Military operations continued to affect the western districts of Anbar Governorate with approximately 800 families displaced to 21 different locations."

Ninewa province (2005)

UNAMI, July 2005, p.1:

"Further north in the Governorate of Ninewa, the city of Tal Afar and its environs recently experienced significant displacement due to operations in the area."

Husbaya (2005-2006)

IRIN, 9 January 2006:

[June 2005:] "US-led offensive "Operation Spear" is launched, the second in the western Anbar governorate, resulting in over 7,000 families being displaced in surrounding areas"

BBC, 6 November 2005:

"About 3,500 US and Iraqi troops, backed by tanks and fighter aircraft, moved into Husayba two days ago.

A US military official said 36 insurgents and one US marine had been killed in the operation so far.

Medics working in the area said a similar number of civilians had died, and thousands had fled their homes. [...]

There were reports that cluster bombs had been used, and that 4,000 people had fled the area. On Sunday the US said there were 450 civilian evacuees. [...]The Husayba offensive, known as Operation Steel Curtain, is aimed at blocking what American and Iraqi officials say is a major infiltration route for militants crossing into Iraq."

Hit (2006)

IRIN, 19 January 2006:

"Nearly 200 families have been displaced in the western governorate of Anbar as a result of a military offensive launched by US troops backed by the Iraqi Army on 15 December.

The operation, dubbed "Koa Canyon," is ostensibly aimed at rooting out insurgents in the Jubbah/Baghdadi region and the city of Hit, 130 km west of the capital, Baghdad."

Haditha (2005)

IRIN, 6 October 2005:

"Nearly 1,000 families have fled their homes in Haditha in western Iraq following the launch of a US-led military operation to hunt down insurgents in the town in the Euphrates river valley, according to residents in the area.

[...]

The combined military operation by 2,500 US and Iraqi government troops backed by warplanes began in Hadithi on Tuesday and followed on from a similar offensive against Islamic insurgents in villages near al-Qaim on the Syrian border which began on 1 October.

[...]

The military operation in Haditha, code-named "River Gate," is a much larger affair and is shaping up to be the biggest military push by US-led forces in the Anbar governorate of western Iraq so far this year.

Residents in the district, which is mainly inhabited by Sunni Muslims opposed to the US-backed government in Baghdad, said people had been fleeing from Haditha and the nearby towns of Haqlaniyah and Barwana, following repeated air strikes."

Karabila (2005)

IRIN, 28 June 2005:

"Thousands of residents are gradually returning to the town of Karabila, 325 km west of the capital, Baghdad, after fleeing a heavy US-led attack two weeks ago but for many there is little to go back to.

Nearly 7,000 residents were displaced to the desert near the Syrian border during the fighting, according to the Iraq Red Crescent Society (IRCS). The town, which is home to 60,000 people, showed signs of extensive devastation following the battle, a five day operation which ended on 22 June. Nearly 1,000 residents are still displaced and living in the desert.

[...]

The offensive, named "Operation Spear", was designed to root out insurgent strongholds. According to US forces, about 90 insurgents were killed and others detained for interrogation and they are calling the operation a complete success."

Al Qa'im (2005)

UNAMI, 3 January 2006, p.1:

"An estimated 7,000 families in the Al Qa'im area were displaced in November due to military operations."

IRIN, 9 January 2006:

"1 October [2005]: A US offensive in the city of al-Qaim, western Iraq leaves more than 3,000 families displaced.

5 October [2005]: Nearly 1,000 families flee their homes in Haditha, 220 km west of Baghdad, following the launch of an offensive against insurgents."

IRIN, 4 October 2005:

"More than 900 Iraqi families have fled from the al-Qaim district near the Syrian border to escape a US military offensive against Islamic militants and the exodus is continuing, humanitarian workers in al-Qaim said.

Most of those running to escape the five day-old offensive by 1,000 US troops backed by warplanes have remained within Iraq.

[...]

Residents contacted by telephone said the fighting had been most intense around the villages of Romanna and Karabila. They said US troops were conducting house-to-house searches to hunt down insurgents and dozens of houses and shops had been damaged or destroyed."

IRIN, 2 October 2005:

"Thousands of civilians have fled the Iraqi town of al-Qaim near the Syrian border following the start of a fresh US military offensive against insurgents in nearby villages, local government officials said on Sunday.

They told IRIN that about 600 families had abandoned al-Qaim, a small town in the Euphrates river valley, since the offensive began on Saturday. The number of people displaced by the fighting was expected to increase rapidly, they added.[...] The current military operation is code-named "Operation Iron Fist".

ICS, 13 May 2005:

"Six month after the last dramatic crisis in Fallujah, the situation is again rapidly worsening in the Al-Anbar governorate, in the region of Qa'im near the Syrian border.

Clashes in Qa'im have started at the end of April, between the Arab fighters of Al-Zarqawi group Al-Tawheed Wal Jihad and the main local tribe of Albu Mahal. The fighting exploded after the killing of a prominent police officer by the Arab fighters: according to different sources, the violent reaction of the local communities would have been triggered by their willingness to avoid the replication of a Fallujah-like crisis, with the presence of foreign combatants in a town put under siege by the MNF and the Iraqi army.

Nevertheless the phantom of Fallujah seems to emerge again in the difficult context of the Iraqi crisis», states Daunia Pavone, ICS humanitarian coordinator in Iraq. 'From last Tuesday, the city

of Al-Qa'im is surrounded by the US troops and bombings are currently underway in the neighborhoods of Al-Jazeera, Al-Rumana, Al-Obaidi and Al-Karbala'."

UNAMI, 17 May 2005:

"Over the past week, the military offensive 'Operation Matador' has resulted in the beginnings of a humanitarian situation requiring immediate response. Although it has been announced that the Operation is concluded, an estimated 2000 families have fled the city, seeking refuge in neighboring towns such as Anah, Rawa, and Al-Ubaydi, or into the surrounding desert in order to escape the fighting. Some Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are said to have sought refuge as far away as Fallujah and Baghdad. While some families were able to flee into Syria in the earlier stages of the Operation, the border has now been closed, forcing these families to find a second place of refuge."

Al Jazeera, 17 May 2005:

"Thousands of people fled al-Qaim after US warplanes and helicopter gunships pounded the region earlier this week, flattening homes and buildings"

IRIN, 31 May 2005:

"More families are reportedly leaving the western Iraqi town of al-Qaim in fear because of fighting, according to local aid agencies.

Hundreds of families remain displaced on the outskirts of the town, 320 km west of the capital, Baghdad, following clashes between US forces and insurgents in the second week of May.

According to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) nearly a thousand families were displaced and living in the desert of al-Jazera'a, west of al-Qaim but were returning when the offensive ended, leaving only 100 families there.

However, aid workers now say that hundreds more have started to flee the town again because of the possibility of another conflict starting in coming days.

'We have indications that fighting might start again in the town of al-Qaim. Maybe it's just a psychological response from the people in the town but many reports from volunteers are saying the same thing,' general secretary of the IRCS, Mazeen Sallon told IRIN in Baghdad."

Ramadi (2005 - 2007)

UNAMI, 17 January 2007:

"In Ramadi, about 200 families were reported to have left their houses in November. According to the Ramadi General Hospital, during the first week of November, MNF-I snipers were reported as having allegedly killed 13 civilians. The General Hospital staff reported a severe shortage of medicines, staff and equipment. For several months now, patients have refrained from using the hospital for fear of snipers allegedly placed on the hospital roof, in addition to the military occupation of the hospital garden."

IRIN, 4 July 2006:

"Hundreds of families returned to the city of Ramadi, some 110km west of the capital, Baghdad, two weeks after the US military launched an unusually restrained offensive there.

[W]hile about 1,500 families fled Ramadi in advance of the attack, more than 1,000 families have since returned."

IRIN, 18 June 2006:

"Nearly 1,500 families [about 10,000 people] have fled the city of Ramadi, some 115km west of Baghdad, as the newly-appointed government and US-led multinational forces vow to restore stability to the volatile city."

IWPR, 15 June 2006:

"People in Ramadi, capital of the western Iraqi province of Anbar, estimate that about 70 per cent of the city's population has fled in the last week, many of them holding white flags for fear of being shot at by Marine snipers.

Residents reported that US troops blasted messages through loudspeakers on June 13, telling them to leave and warning of house-to-house searches for weapons and militants.

The ongoing violence between US Marines and the insurgents, air strikes, and outages in the water, electricity and phone networks have already made life untenable. Ramadi residents say US troops regularly take over houses to fight the insurgents, and combatants on both sides have been seen using rooftops as sniper positions."

IRIN, 18 October 2005:

"Two days of US air strikes against insurgents in the western city of Ramadi have caused heavy casualties among the city's civilian population, a doctor and a senior Iraqi government official in Ramadi said. [...] Iraqi officials in Ramadi said more than 1,700 families had fled from the city since US air and ground forces began a big push against insurgents there last week."

IRIN, 24 February 2005:

"Residents of Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province some 100 km east of Baghdad, have started to flee the city following the latest offensive launched by US Marines and the Iraqi army.

The military have carried out raids in the province over the past few days in an attempt to crack down on insurgents, with the main focus of operations being Ramadi, a rebel stronghold.

Worried that the offensive could proceed as it did in nearby Fallujah, where the majority of the city's population was forced to flee during a near three-month long campaign, many Ramadi families are taking personal effects and food supplies and heading to relatives' houses in the capital, or to the same camps where residents from Fallujah fled."

UNAMI, 27 February 2005:

"The situation in the vicinity of Ramadi was also closely monitored as some families reportedly became displaced as a result of armed conflict along the Euphrates River. In particular, concerns were raised about the impact of military operations and road closures on humanitarian access and the protection of civilians."

UNAMI, 27 February 2005:

"Population movement from Ramadi into the surrounding villages was reported by monitors throughout the last two weeks."

Mosul and Kirkuk (2005)

UNAMI, 27 February 2005:

"In other parts of the country, insecurity in the areas of Mosul and Kirkuk also led to internal displacements as families reportedly left these areas amidst growing violence and tensions."

UNAMI, 30 January 2005:

"Internal displacements throughout the rest of the country, whether due to military operations or ethno-religious tensions, remain a major concern, especially in the areas of Mosul and Kirkuk."

Baghdad and surroundings (2005)

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"On 13 May 2006 the MNF-I, accompanied by the Iraqi Army, reportedly carried out a military operation in Shakha 1 area, in Al-Latifiya district south of Baghdad. The operation was said to have taken place following an earlier downing of an MNF helicopter in the same area. Seven (7) civilians are said to have been killed while the private vehicle they were traveling in was hit by an air strike."

AFP, 20 May 2005:

"Hundreds of Shiite Muslims are fleeing towns in lawless areas south of the Iraqi capital where killings and kidnappings by a ragtag army of Sunni extremists and tribal gangs have torn mixed communities.[...]

The Triangle of Death, which includes flashpoint towns such as Latifiyah, Mahmudiyah and Yusufiyah, is according to unofficial estimates almost evenly split between Shiites and Sunnis."

Najaf (2004)

UN SC, 3 September 2004:

"While fighting has been ongoing in several localities in Iraq, the crisis in Najaf was particularly serious in scope and nature and attracted significant attention. The past weeks witnessed an escalation of fighting between an armed militia loyal to Moqtada al-Sadr, Iraqi security forces and the multinational force. Fighting was concentrated in and around Najaf, close to the Imam Ali Shrine and other areas. Several attempts by the Interim Government of Iraq and a delegation from the National Conference to mediate the crisis were unsuccessful. Regional initiatives by Iraq's neighbours to urgently discuss approaches to the resolution of the Najaf crisis were not pursued.

[...]

Of 300,000 persons living in the centre of Najaf, an estimated 25,000 have been displaced during the hostilities, seeking shelter with host families on the outskirts of the city, in mosques or public buildings on peripheral roads north and south of Najaf."

IRIN, 23 August 2004:

"Fighting in the holy city of Najaf, about 160 km south of Baghdad has raged for more than two weeks between US forces and Mehdi Army forces loyal to anti-US cleric Moqtada Sadr.

[...]

At least 10,000 families have been displaced by fighting, according to figures from families staying at nearby religious sites. The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) said the number could be as high as 50,000. At least 5,000 people are staying in tents or with relatives in the holy city of Kerbala, 100 km south of Baghdad and 80 km north of Najaf, to escape the fighting, according to the ICRC."

DPA, 20 August 2004:

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Friday expressed concern over the situation facing ordinary Iraqi citizens caught in fighting between U.S. and Iraqi forces and 'Mahdi Army' insurgents in the holy city of Najaf.

[...]

Hundreds of families are understood to have fled from the centre of Najaf, where U.S. and Iraqi forces have for two weeks been fighting militia forces loyal to renegade Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr; the so-called Mahdi Army."

IRIN, 4 January 2005:

"Residents in the southern holy city of Najaf, told to leave the besieged city by US troops, appeared to be staying with relatives in the nearby city of Karbala, an International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) spokesman told IRIN on 11 August. ICRC officials and other aid agencies are sending medical kits and food to the region for civilians trapped in the fighting, said Ahmed al-Rawi, the ICRC spokesman. Fighting intensified after almost a week of clashes between the Mehdi army and US-led Coalition troops in the southern city and in Sadr City, a northeast suburb of Baghdad. Mehdi army fighters are loyal to radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada Sadr, who was wanted in connection with the murder of a rival. The latest fighting ended a truce brokered to end previous fighting with Mehdi forces in May and June. It appears to have started after US and Iraqi forces surrounded Sadr's home in Najaf.

[...]

Unconfirmed reports suggest between 25,000 and 50,000 people may have been displaced by fighting in Najaf, some 170 km from the capital, Baghdad."

Tal 'Afar (2004-2005)

IRIN, 9 January 2006:

"10 September: US and Iraqi forces launch an offensive in the northern city of Talafar, causing over 10,000 families to flee the city.
[...]17 September: The number of displaced from Talafar rises from an estimated 10,000 to 20,000."

IRIN, 11 September 2005:

"Thousands of families are fleeing the northern Iraqi city of Talafar, aid workers confirmed, as Coalition forces conduct a military operation against insurgents.

[...]

Heavy bombardment and artillery by gun-ship helicopters as well as street fighting could be seen in the al-Saray area of the city, Iraqi officials said.

The operation in the city, some 80 km east of Mosul city, and near the Syrian border, started on 10 September.

[...]

Based on the last humanitarian report on 10 September, the IRCS said nearly 3,000 families were already displaced in the area between Mosul and Talafar in a village called Abu Maria (Al-Nakhwa)."

UNAMI, September 2005,p.2:

"NGO monitors reported that as of 18th September an estimated 5,579 families fled due to fighting in the city with some families moving to locations as far away as Najaf, Karbala and Sadr City in Baghdad."

Aljazeera, 11 September 2005:

"Operation Restoring Rights is being conducted to remove terrorists and foreign fighters operating in Tal Afar. This operation is in support of the Iraqi governments efforts to bring safety and security to the citizens of the city," Colonel Billy J Buckner, a military spokesman, said on Sunday."

UNAMI, August 2005, p.2:

"The city and surrounding districts of Tal Afar in the northern Governorate of Ninewa were the principle focus of emergency humanitarian interventions in August, as a result of sustained military operations throughout the month. The fighting resulted in significant displacement of civilians, and some reports suggested between 5,000 and 7,000 families were recently displaced from Tal Afar city to surrounding locations."

IRIN, 4 January 2005:

"Fighting in the northern city of Tal Afar, thought to be a haven for insurgents, has displaced tens of thousands of people, aid agencies told IRIN on 13 September. At least 40 people have been killed in the city, which has fallen under insurgent control and is considered a 'no-go' area for US troops, according to news reports. The US Army says the city of 350,000 has become a haven for fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria. Iraqi Red Crescent (IRC) workers have set up 250 tents on the outskirts of the city to help the fleeing residents, Annas al-Azawi, director of the IRC, told IRIN. Many of the city's residents have moved into the tents, while others have moved to relatives' houses in nearby cities, he said."

Al Mahmoudya (2004)

IRIN, 4 January 2005:

"Al-Mahmoudya city, about 20 km southeast of Baghdad and the base for British troops recently deployed in the area, is facing medical, food and water needs amid a deteriorating security situation. Some families have begun to leave the city and say that those who remain are risking their lives. Dr Mustafa Aydany from the local hospital told IRIN on 2 November that if serious fighting began they could offer little treatment for the injured. He said a shortage of medicines and emergency materials would mean that most of those injured in any fighting in the city would probably have to be sent to Baghdad. Leaflets have been distributed, forbidding women from leaving their homes without covering their heads with scarves and wearing traditional clothing,

and threatening those who ignored such instructions. According to medical officials in the city, two women have been killed because they ignored such instructions. Other orders issued by the insurgents are that no families should leave their homes and that shops, schools and government offices should remain closed. The insurgents warn of a 'new Fallujah' in the city."

Samarrah (2004 - 2006)

IRIN, 19 March 2006:

"Hundreds of families have fled the city of Samarra, some 120 km northwest of the capital, Baghdad, after US coalition and Iraqi forces launched the biggest air offensive in the country since 2003.

[...]

Launched on 16 March, the offensive named 'Operation Swarmer' is the largest air assault since the US invasion of Iraq, involving 650 US troops and some 900 Iraqis with the aim of rooting out insurgents believed to have taken refuge in the area."

IRIN, 9 January 2006:

"26 September: Hundreds of families are reported fleeing the city of Samara, some 120 km north of the capital, following a defence ministry announcement that preparations are underway for a coalition offensive against insurgents there."

IRIN, 27 September 2005:

"Hundreds of families have started to flee the Iraqi city of Samara, some 120km north of the capital, Baghdad, following a recent Ministry of Defense announcement that preparations had started for an offensive by Coalition forces against insurgents holed up there, officials said.

Hamad al-Kashty, governor of Salah al-Din province, said on Monday that nearly 500 families had so far fled the city. Many were presently in the outskirts, particularly around al-Dur, al-Salam, Baghdad and within empty schools and government buildings near the city of Tikrit"

IRIN, 26 July 2004:

"Families started leaving the predominantly Sunni Muslim city [Smarrah] two weeks ago in fear that US forces were about to attack, Sheikh Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor al-Samarraie, a Muslim religious leader based in Baghdad, told IRIN. Samarrah residents are known for their loyalty to former President Saddam Hussein. The city is in an area northwest of Baghdad known as the 'Sunni Triangle' where attacks against US troops have been common."

Fallujah (April and November 2004)

IRIN, 4 January 2004:

"On 8 November it was reported that thousands of US troops had positioned themselves on the outskirts of Fallujah as Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi gave the go-ahead for a major attack to flush out insurgents. Out of a population of 290,000 people the city is now home to around 30,000, Fadhel Youssef, a spokesman for the local governorate, told IRIN. Most of those left are men who have sent women and children to places of safety. Families in the town told IRIN they had no food or clean water and did not have time to store enough to hold out through the impending battle. The city is deserted, shops are closed and there are no people on the streets. As fighting began, agencies started to raise humanitarian concerns. On 11 November Amnesty International (AI) issued a statement saying it was seeking assurances from both the US and Iraqi governments that they will comply with their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. It also called on the armed groups in Fallujah to comply with the rules of international law."

UNHCR, 9 November 2004:

"UNHCR is extremely concerned at the fate of tens of thousands of people who have fled the city of Fallujah to escape the fierce fighting there.[...] The majority of civilians appear to have left the city, although it is difficult to establish numbers with any certainty."

IRIN, 18 February 2005:

"Before and during the battles, two-thirds of the city's population was said to have fled, according to aid agencies."

UNAMI Emergency Working Group, 11 November 2004:

The total population of Falluja (pre crisis) is estimated at 300,000 persons. In addition to the identified 249,200 IDPs above, there are an estimated 35,000 IDPs in Baghdad and other areas, with the balance (approx. 50,000 persons, probably mostly men) remaining in Falluja. Please note that the displacement figures above are preliminary estimates. The general profile of IDPs is reported as families."

UNAMI, 25 April 2004:

"A lull in fighting in Falluja permitted the MoH to assess the humanitarian situation in the city. As a result of its investigations the MoH adjusted their figures for the number of people killed in the city since April 5th downward from 750 to approximately 360 (there are no official figures recognised by all parties). The MoH also confirmed over 1,000 other casualties. The displacement of Falluja's population remains an issue of concern. NGOs confirm that at least 40% of Falluja's population (estimated between 100,000-150,000 people) may have previously left the city. Many families took refuge in the neighbouring villages, where conditions are often poor and with little or no water, food and essential cooking items. The Iraqi Red Crescent, International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are providing assistance to two IDP camps outside Falluja city."

IRIN, 26 July 2004:

"International and local aid agencies launched a massive aid campaign for Fallujah residents in April as fighting caught some residents unaware. At one point, up to 100,000 people were estimated to have fled their homes. Many stayed in a refugee camp in west Baghdad."

IRIN, 22 July 2004:

"Following recent air strikes in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, some 30 km west of Baghdad, aid workers are still trying to provide aid and carry out repair work."

A truce was declared there late in April, after weeks of fighting that killed up to 1,000 Iraq insurgents and more than 100 US soldiers, according to statistics from NGOs.

Families who had fled the fighting to stay with relatives, or in a camp in al-Hadhra district in western Baghdad, went home to assess the damage. Aid agencies at the time thought that up to 100,000 people might have been temporarily displaced. Human Relief Foundation, a local aid agency, estimates that up to 140 homes that were destroyed have still not been repaired."

Overview

UNCT, August 2004 :

"Over the last four decades, human rights abuses and various periods of conflict have resulted in many cases of protracted displacement in Iraq, the total number of displaced peaking at over one million persons. The expulsion of people along ethnic lines from their homes has long been a state policy. The 2003 conflict resulting in the fall of the former Government of Iraq and subsequent periodic fighting have resulted in further population movements throughout the country.

[...]

From March to May 2003, the governorates of Al-Anbar, Thi-Qar and Basra witnessed displacement due to the threat of air strikes and urban war-fare. Most moved to near-by rural towns where they lived with host communities or in public buildings. The vast majority returned to their homes immediately after the air strikes to protect their property from looting and squatters. However, a small number of people remain displaced. They are awaiting an improvement of the security situation and the reconstruction of or compensation for their destroyed houses. In addition, a small number of people throughout the country were forcibly displaced by Coalition

forces for reasons of national security. In most cases, these IDP families resided in or close to strategic buildings or locations such as airports or military bases.

[...]

Skirmishes with Coalition forces have continued into 2004, escalating into battles in the cities of Fallujah, Najaf, Kufa, and Karbala leading to similar patterns of displacement to those in the 2003 conflict. In April 2004, over 70,000 persons were reported to have fled Fallujah to neighbouring towns as a result of the siege by Coalition forces on the city. Following the end of the fighting, as previously observed, families quickly returned to their homes in Fallujah.

In addition, a group of Kurdish families was displaced during the Falluja crisis."

UNAMI, 1 March 2005:

"Post-election violence sparked an increasing number of 'hotspots' throughout central Iraq with implications for further internal displacements as a result of military operations or ethno-religious tensions. In particular, the situations in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Ramadi were monitored for potential outbreaks of conflict and concerns regarding civilian protection."

"Baghdad security plan" adopted in attempt to end ongoing violence (March 2007)

- The joint efforts by the Government of Iraq and the multinational force to stem the rising level of violence under the Baghdad security plan appears to have had very limited success. (UNSC December 2006)
- On 13 February 2007 the Baghdad security plan was formally launched in a live televised address by General Qanbar, Commander of Baghdad security plan operations. (UNSC, March 2007)

UNSC, 5 December 2006:

"Across many parts of the country an increasing number of Iraqis have been affected by growing violence and insecurity. A joint effort by the Government of Iraq and the multinational force to stem the rising level of violence under the Baghdad security plan appears to have had very limited success. Control of access to and from Baghdad, curfew extensions and house-to-house cordon and search operations were some of the additional security measures employed to stabilize the capital. Despite those efforts, in large areas of Baghdad and other parts of the country, insurgent and militia activities remain uncontrolled. The most serious recent incidents, such as the mass abduction of some 100 employees of and visitors at the Ministry of Higher Education in Baghdad and the heinous terrorist attacks in Sadr City on 23 November, which left over 200 people dead and scores injured, have deepened public concerns over the ability of the Government to control the security environment."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"The Baghdad security plan was formally launched on 13 February 2007 in a live televised address by General Qanbar, Commander of Baghdad security plan operations. General Qanbar announced that the launch of the Baghdad security plans would be accompanied by closure of the borders with the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran for a period of 72 hours and the extension of curfew hours in Baghdad. Illegal occupants of real estate property belonging to displaced persons were given 15 days to vacate and return such properties with their assets to their legal owners. Prime Minister Al-Maliki distinguished the new plan from past efforts by highlighting Iraqi control of security operations with United States troop support, the decision to confront all armed groups regardless of religious or political affiliation, and the combination of reconciliation and economic measures."

ICJ,

Against the odds, the U.S. military surge contributed to a significant reduction in violence. Its achievements should not be understated. But in the absence of the fundamental political changes in Iraq the surge was meant to facilitate, its successes will remain insufficient, fragile and reversible.Many factors account for the reduction in violence: the surge in some cases benefited from, in others encouraged, and in the remainder produced, a series of politico-military shifts affecting the Sunni and Shiite communities. But there is little doubt that U.S. field commanders displayed sophistication and knowledge of local dynamics without precedent during a conflict characterised from the outset by U.S. policy misguided in its assumptions and flawed in its execution. A conceptual revolution within the military leadership gave U.S. forces the ability to carry out new policies and take advantage of new dynamics..... One of the more remarkable changes has been the realignment of tribal elements in Anbar, known as the *sahwat*, and of former insurgents, collectively known as the “Sons of Iraq”. This was largely due to increased friction over al-Qaeda in Iraq’s brutal tactics, proclamation of an Islamic state and escalating assaults on ordinary citizens. But the tribal and insurgent decisions also were aided by enhanced military pressure on the jihadi movement resulting from augmented U.S. troops: in both instances U.S. forces demonstrated more subtle understanding of existing tensions and intra-Sunni fault lines. Overall, the military campaign calmed areas that had become particularly violent and inaccessible, such as Anbar and several Baghdad neighbourhoods, and essentially halted sectarian warfare.

See also further documents related to the security plan in sources below

Military Surge Operation and key security developments (2007-2008)

- US military surge operation contributes to significant reduction in violence by benefiting from, as well as encouraging or producing a series of developments which has resulted in reducing the violence. (ICG, 30 April 2008)
- This has included the realignment of tribal elements, starting in Anbar, known as *sahwat*, and former insurgents, collectively known as “Sons of Iraq” as result of increasing friction with Al Qaeda and augmentation of US troops.
- The divisions were to become more pronounced as it became evident that Sunni militias and al Qaeda failed to effectively counter Shi’ia militia expanding control of Baghdad. (ICG, 30 April 2008)
- Dramatic decline in bloodshed in Iraq is large due to Muqtada al Sadr’s unilateral ceasefire in August 2007. The ceasefire, extended indefinitely in August 2008, together with large US presence helps account for decline in violence.
- Arguably though there exists no reliable data, as much as two thirds of insurgency as it existed at its height is currently inactive (ICG, 30 April 2008)
- A combination of political and military efforts has contributed to continued improvements in security across Iraq in early 2008. There have been several large scale operations namely in Basra, Sadr City area of Baghdad, Amarah, and Mosul. (UNSG, 28 July 2008)
- Such operations have entailed heavy fighting in densely populated urban areas. There has been reported failure of adherence to distinction between combatants and civilians and accusations of disproportionate attacks on civilian areas.
- A number of major operations have placed civilians at risk and lead to displacement of thousands. Particularly in Sadr City, operations in April and May would lead to the displacement of approximately 4,700 families. (UNSG, 28 July 2008)

UNSG, 28 July 2008:

"3. A combination of political and military efforts has contributed to continued improvements in security across Iraq during the past three months. Although civilian casualties as a result of violence remain unacceptably high, both the frequency of violent incidents and casualty figures

have continued to decline and there has been increased cooperation from local communities in preventing acts of violence. The Iraqi Security Forces appear to be gaining in confidence and capability, and the number of units capable of taking the lead in operations is increasing. Following an operation in Basra, the Iraqi Security Forces commenced several major operations concurrently: Operation Peace began in May against renegade groups in the Sadr City area of Baghdad; Operation Promise of Peace started in June in the southern town of Amarah in Missan Province; and Operation Lion's Roar was launched against insurgent groups in Mosul and other parts of Ninawa Province. The ceasefire declared by Moqtada al-Sadr on 11 May for Sadr City continues to be in effect, and State authority and basic services are being restored in coordination with Sadr movement leaders....

26. The human rights situation in Iraq remains serious, although violations were less widely reported. Despite improved security conditions in Baghdad, Amarah and Mosul after operations against armed militias, UNAMI remained concerned about the physical safety and legal protection of hundreds of suspects arrested, as well as detention conditions and lack of due process following detention. Those apparently rounded up as suspects included a number of children.

27. During the military crackdown by Iraq and the multinational force in Iraq against militias in Sadr City in April and May, there was heavy fighting in this densely populated urban environment. According to several estimates, more than half of the 1,000 reportedly killed may have been civilians. Yet the real scale of civilian casualties was difficult to assess in the aftermath of the conflict, as most casualty data were not made available. UNAMI continued to investigate reports of incidents in which civilians were apparently targeted or where all sides to the conflict may have failed to make the distinction between combatants and civilians. This includes possible disproportionate attacks on civilian areas.

38. Major security operations in Sadr City, Mosul and Amarah during the period under review prompted the United Nations country team to work closely on contingency plans for humanitarian emergency response. Access to basic commodities was at risk, particularly in Sadr City, where violence led to the temporary displacement of approximately 4,700 families. UNAMI engaged in targeted advocacy with the Government, the multinational force, Iraqi Security Forces and other actors to ensure humanitarian access prior to and during security operations. The coordination of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations was important for unified country team monitoring and analysis. During the immediate response phase in the most acute of the three crises, the United Nations delivered water and sanitation assistance for an estimated 120,000 families in Sadr City. Sanitation agencies supplied 10 million litres of safe water to residents and hospitals, as well as water hygiene/purification kits. UNHCR provided non-food items to internally displaced persons and supported the repair of some 300 conflict-affected houses and shops in the Sadr City and Shula districts of Baghdad. WFP delivered 296 tons of emergency food to 38,500 residents of Sadr City, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) delivered 2,000 food baskets to hospitals in Sadr City and Shula. In addition, 1,500 food baskets were delivered to hospitals in Basra, Wassit, Babylon and Qadisiyah. In other interventions throughout the country WFP, together with non-governmental organization partners, reached 480,000 persons with food assistance during the reporting period. A further 42,500 persons were assisted in partnership with IOM. Currently, the United Nations country team has 15 water and sanitation rehabilitation projects in nine governorates at various stages of completion, benefiting approximately 3.5 million persons.

At the time the surge was first announced, U.S. forces in Iraq faced a determined and increasingly dangerous insurgency. By the U.S. military's count, attacks – excluding those targeting civilians – reached a peak in mid-2007 of some 1,500 per week. Although the civilian toll dropped slightly as of late 2006, U.S. and Iraqi military casualties only began their sharp decline after July 2007.¹ Key to this phenomenon were the sweeping changes affecting a Sunni Arab population that had unequivocally rejected both the occupation and the political process it spawned. By year's end, al-Qaeda in Iraq, which not long before had felt sufficiently confident to

try to rally all insurgent groups under its banner, had been driven out of nearly all its strongholds. Numerous tribes were openly cooperating with the U.S., engaging in economic activity and local politics. Armed groups and insurgent leaders that had eschewed all forms of collaboration with the US joined its fight against al-Qaeda in Iraq, assumed policing functions and considered participating in upcoming local elections. An insurgency that seemed on the verge of strategic victory today appears splintered and in disarray. It would be just as simplistic to attribute these facts to the surge alone as it would be to deny any causation between the two. Without a doubt, supplementary troops helped increase security, alter the balance of power and embolden those opposed to al-Qaeda in Iraq to switch sides. But the addition of some 35,000 troops to the 130,000 already there could have only a marginal direct impact; indeed, some of these changes occurred in areas that saw no increase in U.S. military presence. The developments that took place could have come about neither as swiftly nor as massively without concurrent, profound internal transformations. The U.S. did not generate them; rather, and importantly, it showed the subtlety and flexibility necessary to turn them to its advantage. The surge is one element in a set of mutually reinforcing dynamics, the complexities and ambiguities of which must be understood if the current window of opportunity is to be transformed into more sustainable progress."

ICG, 7 February 2008:

"The Sadrists appeared on a steady rise in 2006 and early 2007. They controlled new territory, particularly in and around Baghdad, attracted new recruits, accumulated vast resources and infiltrated the police. But as the civil war engulfed much of the country, Iraqis witnessed the Sadrists' most brutal and thuggish side. Their increasingly violent and undisciplined militia, the Mahdi Army, engaged in abhorrent sectarian killings and resorted to plunder and theft. Militants claiming to be Mahdi Army members executed untold numbers of Sunnis, allegedly in response to al-Qaeda's ruthless attacks, but more often than not merely because they were Sunnis. The Sadrists were victims of their own success. Their movement's vastly increased wealth, membership and range of action led to greater corruption, weaker internal cohesion and a popular backlash. Divisions within the movement deepened; splinter groups – often little more than criminal offshoots – proliferated. As a result, anti-Sadrist sentiment grew, including among Muqtada's Shiite constituency. The U.S. surge, which saw the injection of thousands of additional troops, particularly in Baghdad, worsened the Sadrists' situation, checking and, in some instances, reversing the Mahdi Army's territorial expansion. Finally, in August 2007, major clashes erupted in the holy city of Karbala between members of Muqtada's movement and the rival Shiite Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), which further eroded the Sadrists' standing.

In reaction, Muqtada announced a six-month freeze on all Mahdi Army activities. It applies to all groups affiliated (loosely or otherwise) with the Mahdi Army, and Muqtada reportedly dispatched his most loyal fighters to tame holdouts. Most importantly, his order removed the veil of legitimacy and lifted the impunity that many groups – criminal gangs operating in the Mahdi Army's name and Sadrist units gone astray – had enjoyed. The ceasefire largely has held and, together with bolstered U.S. and Iraqi military presence in Baghdad, helps account for a dramatic drop in violence. But the respite, although welcome, is both slightly misleading and exceedingly frail. Muqtada's decision likely reflected a pragmatic calculation: that a halt in hostilities would help restore his credibility and allow him to reorganise his forces and wait out the U.S. presence. Their retreat notwithstanding, the Sadrists remain deeply entrenched and extremely powerful in a number of regions. Fleeing military pressure in Baghdad, Mahdi Army fighters redeployed to the south, thereby setting up the potential for an escalation of the class-based confrontation with the U.S.-backed ISCI. Among Sadrist rank and file, impatience with the ceasefire is high and growing. They equate it with a loss of power and resources, believe the U.S. and ISCI are conspiring to weaken the movement and eagerly await Muqtada's permission to resume the fight. The Sadrist leadership has resisted the pressure, but this may not last. Critics accuse Muqtada of passivity or worse, and he soon may conclude that the costs of his current strategy outweigh its benefits. In early February 2008, senior Sadrist officials called upon their leader not to prolong the ceasefire, due to expire later in the month."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"The Baghdad security plan was formally launched on 13 February 2007 in a live televised address by General Qanbar, Commander of Baghdad security plan operations. General Qanbar announced that the launch of the Baghdad security plans would be accompanied by closure of the borders with the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran for a period of 72 hours and the extension of curfew hours in Baghdad. Illegal occupants of real estate property belonging to displaced persons were given 15 days to vacate and return such properties with their assets to their legal owners. Prime Minister Al-Maliki distinguished the new plan from past efforts by highlighting Iraqi control of security operations with United States troop support, the decision to confront all armed groups regardless of religious or political affiliation, and the combination of reconciliation and economic measures."

UNSC, 5 December 2006:

"Across many parts of the country an increasing number of Iraqis have been affected by growing violence and insecurity. A joint effort by the Government of Iraq and the multinational force to stem the rising level of violence under the Baghdad security plan appears to have had very limited success. Control of access to and from Baghdad, curfew extensions and house-to-house cordon and search operations were some of the additional security measures employed to stabilize the capital. Despite those efforts, in large areas of Baghdad and other parts of the country, insurgent and militia activities remain uncontrolled. The most serious recent incidents, such as the mass abduction of some 100 employees of and visitors at the Ministry of Higher Education in Baghdad and the heinous terrorist attacks in Sadr City on 23 November, which left over 200 people dead and scores injured, have deepened public concerns over the ability of the Government to control the security environment."

Alleged shelling from Iran causes Kurdish families to flee (2006)

- IRIN reported 200 families were forced to flee
- AFP reported dozens of families fled
- Iran neither denied nor confirmed having shelled areas in Iraq
- Reports suggest that all families were able to return to their homes

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

"In Sulaymaniya, approximately 200 families were said to have fled their shelters after skirmishes, on 1 May, between Iranian troops and Iranian Kurdish elements allegedly operating from the Iraqi territory. It is reported that all families have subsequently returned to their homes."

IRIN, 2 May 2006

"About 200 families fled their homes on the Iraq-Iran border on Monday as Iranian forces shelled areas used by Iranian-Kurdish rebels, according to Kurdish officials.

"The shelling began on Sunday and continued until Monday morning," said Azad Waso Hassan, member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which controls the area. [...]

Hassan added that about 1,500 people from several villages in and around Sulaimaniyah, some 260km north-east of Baghdad, had been forced to flee as a result of the violence.

"Bombs shook our houses that night; we thought we wouldn't see the sun again," said Qader Ali, a 43 year-old farmer forced to flee his home along with five family members. "We suffered under Saddam, and continue to suffer now – the government must do something to help us," added Ali, who is currently staying at his brother's house in a nearby village.

According to Hassan, more than 180 artillery rounds were fired into the area, many of which landed near the Iraqi village of Haj Umran outside of Erbil, roughly 5km inside Iraqi territory. No casualties were reported in either attack. Iranian forces reportedly launched a similar artillery barrage in the area on 21 April.

Kurdish rebels have recently staged attacks against Iranian army and Revolutionary Guard positions from territory in Iraq. In response, Teheran has reportedly massed troops on the border, near the mountainous areas close to Haj Umran, which has been used in the past by anti-Iranian fighters thought to be linked to the militant Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK.

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS), meanwhile, has said it has no specific reports about those displaced by the shelling. "But we have sent blankets, food and other things to help these families," said IRCS Director Dr Saad Haqi.

AFP, 1 May 2006

"Iranian forces shelled Kurdish rebel positions in Iraq for the second day, forcing dozens of Kurdish families to flee.

"The Iranians shelled PKK positions from 9 pm (1700 GMT) on Sunday until 5 am (0100 GMT) on Monday," Rustom Judi, a leader of the rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Iraq's northern province of Sulaimaniyah, told AFP.

"Dozens of families were forced to leave their homes," he said Monday.

"We have casualties," he added, but did not provide further details. Iranian troops targeted positions around the villages of Laradu, Rushga and Qalaa Tuka about 190 kilometers (118 miles) north of Sulaimaniyah in the region's rugged mountains, Judi said.

On Sunday, Iraq's defence ministry said Iranian forces had entered Iraqi territory and shelled PKK positions over a period of 24 hours. Iran on Monday refused to confirm or deny its troops had crossed into Iraqi soil.

"I do not confirm the entry of our forces into the territory of neighbouring countries, notably Iraq," government spokesman Gholam Hossein Elham told reporters.

"We have security cooperation accords with neighbouring countries and we act within the framework of these accords. There is no cause for concern over this kind of thing with neighbouring countries," he said.

On April 20, Iranian shelling killed at least two people and injured 10 others in Iraq, the PKK said, while a group linked to the rebels, Pejak, killed four fighters inside Iran in weekend violence.

Iran is bound by treaty with Turkey to fight the outlawed PKK, which has waged a 15-year insurgency against Ankara for self rule in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast.

In return, Turkey has pledged to fight the Iranian armed opposition group, the Iraq-based People's Mujahedeen."

Difficult to assess extent of internal displacement caused by US and British bombing raids (2000)

- Since the end of 1998 US and UK forces have been carrying out regular strikes on Iraqi targets inside the no-fly zones

- The extent of internal displacement caused by U.S. and British bombing raids could not be determined

Al 24 November 1999, "Background"

Since the end of December 1998 US and UK forces have been carrying out regular strikes on Iraqi targets inside the two air exclusion zones in northern and southern Iraq. These zones, north of the 36th parallel and south of the 33rd parallel, were imposed by allied forces at the end of the Gulf War in 1991 and were intended to protect Iraq's Kurdish and Shi'a Muslim population. These strikes have reportedly resulted in the deaths of dozens of civilians and the destruction of civilian property and left many more injured."

Reuters, 17 December 1998

"The United States and Britain said the attacks were launched after Baghdad refused to cooperate with the inspectors, who are charged with ridding Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction."

USCR 2000, "Southern Iraq"

"The extent of internal displacement caused by U.S. and British bombing raids could not be determined, but such raids continued in the skies over southern Iraq throughout 1999. By mid-August, 134 Iraqis had reportedly been killed by bombing raids. Press reports indicated that this figure includes civilians, such as 11 members of one family who were killed in Jassan, 125 miles southeast of Baghdad on August 17."

Turkish, Iraqi and Iranian incursions all caused internal displacement in the north (1998-2002)

- Turkey incursions against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party, based in Turkey) and fighting between the PKK and the KDP (Kurdish Democratic Party, based in northern Iraq)
- On a smaller scale, guerrillas of the KDPI (Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran) have been bombarded by Iranian troops, generating displacement of both Iranian and Iraqi Kurds
- Iraqi incursions into northern Iraq despite no-fly zone reported in 2000 and 2001

Graham-Brown, April 1998, "Conflicts Intersect"

"In northern Iraq the causes of internal displacement are complex: they include Turkish military incursions, PKK activity, internal conflict between Iraqi Kurdish political parties, and deportations of Kurds and Turcomans from government-controlled areas of Iraq. "

Turkish incursions against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party)

Dammers, 1998, p.183

"Despite increasing hostility for the KDP [Kurdish Democratic Party], guerrillas of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), which pursues a separatist guerrilla war in Turkey, have established bases in northern Iraq. These have been the target of frequent Turkish bombardments and incursions, with major invasions taking place in October 1992, March 1995, June 1996, May 1997 and September/October 1997. Fighting between the PKK and KDP has continued intermittently since 1995, and was a significant factor in the displacement of late 1997."

UNHCR June 2000, p.5

"The Turkish army signed an agreement with the KDP in May 1997, reportedly to use its forces as a border police. The truce of 1998 between the PUK and the KDP further came under strain since several thousand PKK fighters moved back into Northern Iraq in 1999, after withdrawing from South-Eastern Turkey, disestablishing the political and military balance in the area. However, there are no reports of renewed alliance between the PUK and the PKK. A prominent member of the KDP has referred to the PKK as a terrorist organization who is responsible for the massacre of Kurdish villagers along the border with Turkey.

Turkey continues raids into Iraqi Kurdistan in search of Kurdish rebels and this in turn has led to Iran to search for Kurdish organizations in Northern Iraq to use as proxies. Iran, Turkey, Syria and the Government of Iraq are all opposed to the creation of a Kurdish state."

HRW, December 2000, "Human Rights Developments"

"Further incursions [by Turkey's armed forces into northern Iraq] were carried out in April, May, and August 2000, resulting in one case in the killing of thirty-eight Iraqi Kurdish civilians."

Iranian incursions and the KDPI

Dammers, 1998, p.183

"A parallel situation, though on a smaller scale, has existed on the Iranian border, with guerrillas of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) being bombarded by Iranian troops, generating displacement of both Iranian and Iraqi Kurds. Iranian conflict with its own Kurdish separatists has not, however, precluded cooperation between Iran and the PUK, especially when the rival KDP has allied itself with the Iraqi or Turkish governments. Indeed, the events of 1997 generated common interest between the KDP, Iraq and Turkey on the one hand and the PKK, PUK and Iran on the other, which proved quite capable of translating into unlikely alliances on the ground."

Iraqi troops incursions into Northern Iraq

RFE/RL 8 December 2000

"Iraqi military forces have entered areas lying north of the 36th parallel, a reliable Kurdish source in Irbil has told London's 'Al-Sharq Al-Awsat' on 10 November [2000]. The paper noted that Iraqi forces are forbidden from entering these regions which have been subject to British and American patrols of the no-fly zone for the past nine years. This latest encroachment reportedly took place in a village in the Irbil plain close to the area which separates the governorate of Ninaweh from the Kurdish regions outside of Baghdad's control.

The Kurdish source said government forces 'came to the edge of the village where they dug trenches and set up fortifications. The soldiers began intimidating the people of the village to force them to abandon it.' In the preceding year, Iraqi forces had crossed the demarcation line at the village of Unwaynah, between Irbil and Ninawah, and also shelled the villages and areas along the line."

HRW, 2002

"Iraqi troops were deployed to the northern region on several occasions, apparently with the aim of launching armed attacks on Kurdish-controlled territory. In mid-June, the government deployed tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery and infantry units south of Arbil, coinciding with efforts by the U.K. and the U.S. to restructure the economic embargo imposed on Iraq and to impose "smart sanctions." Government troops clashed with PUK forces in the Kifri region on September 9 [2001], and in early October they reportedly entered and occupied the village of Sadawa, south-west of Arbil. The KDP said that repeated artillery bombardment of some thirty front-line villages by government troops had resulted in the displacement of their inhabitants."

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global figures

Internally displaced population is estimated to be more than 2.8 million (as of July 2008)

- Estimated 2,842,491 people are believed to be internally displaced in Iraq today (figure as of July 2008) provided by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and Kurdistan Regional Government, and surveillance and data gathering by IDP Working Group. (IDP WG, November 2008)
- The IDP Working Group includes the UNHCR, IOM other UN Agencies and NGOs. Figures of displacement are provided by MoMD and KRG and data gathering and monitoring by IDP Working Group.
- The figure is an accumulated figure. Over 1 million of the total displaced population were displaced over 20 years, in addition to an estimated 190,000 who were displaced in 2003-2005. Since February 2006, an additional 1,63 million Iraqis have been displaced.
- All figures should be approached with caution given that monitoring is complicated by ongoing insecurity and displacement. Figures do vary due to improved entry of previously registered IDPs in MoDM database, elimination of duplication, and continuing displacement of persons.
- Estimates provided by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society note of 2,1 million people believed to be internally displaced as of June 2008. More than 82 percent of displaced people were women and children under the age of 12. (IRCS, June 2008)

IDMC/NRC Note:

The overall figure of internally displaced people in Iraq is estimated to be over 2,8 million. Over 1 million of the total displaced population were displaced over 20 years prior to 2003. In 2003 to 2005, an estimated 190,000 were displaced due to generalised violence and military operations. In 2006 to 2007 sectarian violence has become the main cause of internal displacement in Iraq. It is estimated that more than 1,6 million people have been displaced by sectarian violence since February 2006. Registration and monitoring is complicated by the poor security situation.

Figures cited for July 2008 differ significantly from figures cited by IDP Working Group in March 2008 and IOM in September 2008, due to improved entry of previously registered IDPs in MoDM database, elimination of duplication, and continuing displacement of persons. The IDP Working Group includes the UNHCR, IOM, other UN Agencies and NGOs). Figures of displacement are based on surveillance data gathered by IDP WG members, as well as information provided by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), ICRC and other NGOs.

Estimated total figure for end 2007 based on UNHCR, IOM, IDP Working Group: 2,480,000 (Source: IDP Working Group, February 2008). 1,024,000 people are estimated to have been displaced prior to 2003. Approximately 150,000 were displaced from 2003 to 2005. Inter-communal violence from since February 2006 led to an additional 1,268,000 people being displaced as of December 2007.

Estimated total figure for end 2006 based on UNHCR: 1,884,000 Iraqis displaced by end 2006. The rate of displacement was estimated at 40,000 to 50,000 a month by January 2007. (Source: UNHCR, 8 January 2007; Cluster F, 5 March 2007). 1,024,000 people are estimated to have been

displaced prior to 2003. Approximately 150,000 were displaced from 2003 to 2005. Inter-communal violence from since February 2006 led to an additional 710,000 people being displaced as of end 2006.

Estimated total figure for end 2005 based on IOM and UNOPS monitoring: 1,210,000-1,300,000 Internally Displaced Persons (Source: UNHCR, April 2006; IDP WG, November 2008) The total figure is an accumulated figure based on 1,024,000 people estimated displaced prior to 2003, and an estimated 190,000 displaced in 2003-2005. UNHCR, IOM and UNOPS monitor IDP and returnee movements, however monitoring activities are restrained by ongoing insecurity and ongoing displacement.

Internally Displaced Persons Pre-2003 to July 2008 (Number and Locations)*

| | Pre-2003 to December 2005 | February 2006 to July 2008 | Regional Sub-Totals |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Northern Provinces | 634512 | 237766 | 872278 |
| Central Provinces | 174360 | 938566 | 1112926 |
| Southern Governorates | 403236 | 454051 | 857287 |
| Grand Total | 1212108 | 1630383 | 2842491 |

*IDP Working Group, November 2008; Ministry of Migration and Displacement and Kurdistan Regional Government, July 2008.

IDP Working Group, November 2008

Internally Displaced Persons from February 2006 to July 2008

Internally Displaced Persons pre 2003 until end 2005

RCS, June 2008

In May 2008, the total cumulative number of IDP was 2,169,920 people- a decrease by 3,234 people compared to April 2008. There were changes in the numbers of IDP in three governorates- Kirkuk, Kerbala and Saladin (see table 3 for details). More than 82 percent of displaced people were women and children under the age of 12. (See table 1 and chart 1 for 2008 cumulative monthly numbers of IDP and table 2 for distribution of IDP by governorate.)

Total internally displaced population is estimated to be close to 1.9 million (as of March 2007)

- It is estimated that there are over 1,884,048 million internally displaced people in Iraq as of February 2007
- All figures should be approached with caution given that monitoring is complicated by ongoing insecurity and displacement. The figure is an accumulated figure

IDMC/NRC Note: The overall figure of internally displaced people in Iraq is estimated to be over 2.8 million. Over 1 million of the total displaced population were displaced over 20 years prior to 2003. In 2003 to 2005, an estimated 190,000 were displaced due to generalised violence and military operations. In 2006 to 2007 sectarian violence has become the main cause of internal displacement in Iraq. It is estimated that more than 1.6 million people have been displaced by sectarian violence since February 2006 to July 2008. As of March 2007 this figure came to 1,884,048. Registration and monitoring is complicated by the poor security situation. Delays in registration also need to be taken into account.

Cluster F, 5 March 2007

UNHCR, January 2007

"UNHCR projects that the number of internally displaced Iraqis now totals over 1.7 million, with 500,000 of the total displaced since the Samarra bombings in February 2006"

UNHCR, November 2006

"UNHCR estimates that there are at least 1.6 million Iraqis internally displaced with at least another 1.6 – 1.8 million in neighbouring states. The figures in the immediate neighbouring countries are still imprecise but UNHCR estimates that there are some 700,000 Iraqis in Jordan, 500,000 – 600,000 in Syria, 100,000 in Egypt, 20,000 to 40,000 in Lebanon, 54,000 in Iran and tens of thousands more within the region and further a field. Beyond the mass exodus, which has already occurred, population movements show no sign of abating."

Internally displaced population is estimated to be in excess of 1,2 million (as of September 2005)

- In period 2003-2005 an estimated 190,000 persons were displaced as result of military operations, and generalised violence. In addition to 1,021,962 displaced pre-dating 2003. (IDP WG, November 2008)
- UNCT reported in 2005, that IOM and UNOPS estimated the total figure to be 1,330,476 individuals as of September 2005 including displaced following US led invasion and subsequent violence (UNOPS/IOM, September 2005).
- In June 2003, preliminary numbers indicated 40,000 IDPs as result of US led invasion. Other sources reported as many as 56,000 to 80,000 new displaced. (IOM, June 2003; IRIN, May 2003)

UNOPS/IOM, September 2005:

based on monitoring by IOM and UNOPS the total figure was estimated to be 1,330,476 individuals (221,746 families) see chart below

UNHCR, August 2004:

"In the North, there are, among others, the Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians who were victims of both the "Arabization" and Anfal campaigns, the Kurds who were displaced as a result of the war between the main two Kurdish parties (the PUK and KDP), and Iraqis of different ethnic and religious backgrounds who opposed the former regime and had to flee their governorates. The UN estimates that a total of 805,505 individuals (141,234 families) were displaced in the three northern governorates over a thirty- year period. The majority of this group (approximately 74%) were displaced between 1974 and 1990, while the remaining (approximately 26%) were displaced post 1990. 42% of the IDPs originate from former Government of Iraq controlled areas and were primarily displaced as a result of expulsions carried out by the former regime that aimed to change the ethnic balance of the population in resource-rich regions such as Kirkuk.[4] The remaining 58% originate from within the three semi-autonomous Kurdish areas (Dahuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah), displaced primarily as a result of inter-Kurdish fighting.

[Footnote 4] This campaign has commonly become known as the Arabization campaign in which the GOI expelled Kurds, Turkomen and Assyrian populations from areas rich in resources and resettled Arabs from the south to the same areas."

UNHCHR, 9 June 2004:

"The pre-conflict estimate that as many as 800,000 persons were internally displaced throughout Northern Iraq and an additional 100,000 to 300,000 persons were displaced in the center and south. However these are estimates and obtaining reliable figures has not been possible in the post-conflict climate."

UN OCHA, 5 January 2004

" While there are no current accurate statistics at present, based on pre-war figures, the largest population of between 600,000 and 800,000 IDPs are living in the north with up to an estimated 100,000 in the south and centre, many with limited access to basic facilities. Prior to the second Gulf War a UN Habitat survey found that 40 percent of the displaced had no access to health care and that only some 57,000 people were living in adequate housing. With some signs of IDPs returning following the fall of Saddam Hussein, as of the beginning of June 2003, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has confirmed up to 40,000 registered IDPs in the south and central governorates, with other sources suggesting up to 75,000. Aid agencies say that although some IDPs have returned home it is very difficult to establish exact figures due to a lack of staff on the ground because of insecurity."

IOM, June 2003:

IOM reported numbers of new IDPs per district by NGO governorate focal points (GFP), 2 June 2003:

| Governorate | GFP | No of IDPs | Total population |
|-----------------|---------|------------|------------------|
| Al Anbar | LWF | 1,747 | 1,271,000 |
| Ninawa WVI | 3,383 | 2,521,000 | |
| Al-Ta'meem | NRC | 15,600 | 881,000 |
| Salahadin | CONCERN | 50 | 976,000 |
| Diyala DRC | 1,922 | 1,271,000 | |
| Baghdad | PU | 96 | 6,500,000 |
| Babylon | NRC | 0 | 1,409,000 |
| Al-Muthanna | ACTED | 0 | 570,000 |
| Al-Basrah | SCUS | 2,808 | 570,000 |
| Maysan Ockenden | | 12,000 | 848,000 |
| Wasit MCI | 2,350 | 939,000 | |
| TOTAL NO IDPs: | | | 39,956 |

IRIN, 23 May 2003:

"[T]he exact number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) continues to elude aid workers. This week, however, a clearer picture of the situation in southern and central Iraq shed some light on the scope of the problem. Chris Petch, the deputy programme manager for IDPs in Iraq for the International Organisation for Migration said initial reports from 12 of the 92 southern and central districts identified 58,000 IDPs, but other unconfirmed reports could mean that this number was actually over 80,000. Those IDPs who had been identified were in real need of assistance, he added. Ongoing uncertainty over the number and needs of the IDP population have been attributed to ongoing displacement in some places and confusion among the local population of what constituted an IDP."

UNOPS-IDP SitRep 5 May 2003:

"The old caseloads of IDP, who predate the recent conflict, are continuing to return to their places of origin in the centre and south but this return is going on at a very slow pace. In this regard, UNOPS-IDP is launching a survey on the trend for the old IDP to return to their places of origin in the centre and south. [...] Virtually all the caseload of new IDP, who resulted from the recent conflict, have returned to their places of origin whether they originated from the northern governorates or from the centre and south."

IOM 13 May 2003:

“As humanitarian workers begin to gain access to Iraq, IOM is starting to build up a picture of the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the south and center of the country, based on assessment missions carried out by NGO partners. Reports from the Lutheran World Federation, ACTED, Save the Children, the Danish Refugee Council, Ockenden International and Mercy Corps have already identified some 58,000 IDPs in just 12 districts partially assessed. To date the NGOs have visited only 40 of 4,082 settlements identified in the south and center of the country. Of the IDPs they have identified, about half are living in abandoned public buildings, a quarter are staying with host families and a quarter living rough in tents or in the open. Unconfirmed media and other reports that have already identified a further 82,000 IDPs in various locations are under investigation. World Vision International, IOM's partner in the northwestern governorate of Ninewa, is currently investigating media reports of another 10,500 IDPs in public buildings in Mosul.

The task of identifying and assessing the needs of IDP populations throughout Iraq - a country the size of France - is labour intensive and time consuming, and with the ongoing lack of security, can be dangerous. [...]. IOM, at the request of the UN and under the overall responsibility of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, is coordinating the efforts of NGOs and others in registering IDPs, managing camps, distributing non-food items, and eventually helping people to return to their homes. Its network of 15 governorate focal point (GFP) NGOs use a standardized, IOM-designed framework, database and reporting structure to target assistance at the most vulnerable IDPs. Under the programme, which is supported by USAID's OFDA, IOM also provides limited funding to GFP NGOs to support their activities.”

Estimated 800,000 to 1.2 million internally displaced persons prior to 2003

- Estimated number of internally displaced persons is very difficult to assess because of lack of reliable sources. Preliminary assessments have indicated various estimates. IDP Working Group estimates that approximately 1,021,692 were displaced prior to 2003. (IDP WG, November 2008)
- UNOPS/IOM surveys of pre 2003 displaced estimated total figure to be 179,778 families (1,078,668 individuals) . The figures were collected from IOM implementing partners in Southern and Central Iraq, and by UNOPS for governorates in northern Iraq. (UNOPS/IOM, September 2005)
- A survey by UN Habitat estimated the number of IDPs in northern Iraq at 805,000 in Oct 2000, while UNEP estimated that 200,000-250,000 in southern marsh lands may have been displaced. (UNEP, 2001; UN Habitat, 2000)
- USCR estimated the total number of displaced at 800,000 for 2001, consisting of an estimated 600,000 from northern governorates, in addition to 100,000 in Kirkuk area and in excess of 100,000 in march arab areas in southern Iraq (USCR, 2002)

UNOPS/IOM, September 2005:
See chart below

UNHCR, August 2004:

“In the North, there are, among others, the Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians who were victims of both the “Arabization” and Anfal campaigns, the Kurds who were displaced as a result of the war between the main two Kurdish parties (the PUK and KDP), and Iraqis of different ethnic and religious backgrounds who opposed the former regime and had to flee their governorates. The UN estimates that a total of 805,505 individuals (141,234 families) were displaced in the three northern governorates over a thirty- year period. The majority of this group (approximately 74%)

were displaced between 1974 and 1990, while the remaining (approximately 26%) were displaced post 1990. 42% of the IDPs originate from former Government of Iraq controlled areas and were primarily displaced as a result of expulsions carried out by the former regime that aimed to change the ethnic balance of the population in resource-rich regions such as Kirkuk.[4] The remaining 58% originate from within the three semi-autonomous Kurdish areas (Dahuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah), displaced primarily as a result of inter-Kurdish fighting.

[Footnote 4] This campaign has commonly become known as the Arabization campaign in which the GOI expelled Kurds, Turkomen and Assyrian populations from areas rich in resources and resettled Arabs from the south to the same areas."

HRW, Dec 1999:

"A preliminary survey carried out in northern Iraq by the U.N. Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) estimated the number of internally displaced persons at 805,000 by the end of October 2000, comprising 23 percent of the population. [...] A major factor in the rising number of internally displaced persons was the government's continued expulsion of Kurds and Turkmen from their homes in Kirkuk, Tuz Khormatu, Khaniqin, and other districts as part of its "Arabization" program. Most were expelled to areas controlled by Kurdish opposition forces and a smaller number to central and southern Iraq. According to PUK officials, those expelled between January 1991 and December 2000 and resettled in areas under its control totaled 93,888, while some 25,000 others expelled during the same period were resettled in KDP-controlled areas. Scores more were reportedly expelled between January and March, particularly from the Tuz Khormatu area. In August and September, Kurdish opposition sources said the government was intensifying the rate of resettlement of Arab families in areas from which Kurds and Turkmen had been expelled, including the Lailan, Shwan, and Qara Hanjir districts of Kirkuk." See the UN-Habitat Survey

IRIN, 7 February 2005:

"'Iraq and accurate statistics,' said one senior Iraqi official in Kirkuk, 'are two entirely different things.' Nowhere is this truer than when it comes to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Iraq. Officially, 20 years of village clearances, Arabisation campaigns in ethnically mixed areas and a Kurdish civil war have forced around 800,000 people - out of a total population of four million - to leave their homes. A UN-Habitat survey of October 2000 put the total at 805,505, not including IDPs who had fended for themselves and disappeared into the general population. However, some experts suggest that such figures need to be viewed with skepticism, for several reasons. The word IDP summons up images of dire poverty and tarpaulin. While living conditions in the collective towns built by Saddam Hussein at Binaslaw near Arbil or Shorj near Sulaymaniyah are far from good, they are not significantly worse than in towns under central government control until 2003 that were left untouched by the former regime."

USCR, 2002:

"The estimated 600,000 internally displaced persons in the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, and Suleymaniya included not only long-term internally displaced persons and persons displaced by Kurdish factional infighting, but also more than 100,000 persons, mostly Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkomans, more recently expelled from central-government-controlled Kirkuk and surrounding districts in the oil-rich region bordering the Kurdish-controlled north. At least another 100,000 persons were internally displaced elsewhere in Iraq, mostly in the southeastern marshlands."

Patrow, 2001, pp 33-34:

"According to the UN Environment Program, "Of the 95,000 southern Iraqis who sought refuge in Iran since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, an estimated 40,000 are Marsh Arabs. The fate of those who stayed inside Iraq remains poorly documented, but an estimated 200,000-250,000 are considered to be internally displaced."

| End of Year | Conservative estimated number of IDPs | Source |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2001 | 700,000 | USCR 2002 |
| 2000 | 700,000 | USCR 2001, p.6 |
| 1999 | 900,000 | USCR 2000, p.6 |
| 1998 | 1,000,000 | USCR 1999, p.6 |
| 1997 | 900,000 | USCR 1998, p.6 |
| 1996 | 900,000 | USCR 1997, p.6 |
| 1995 | 1,000,000 | USCR 1996, p.112 |
| 1994 | 640,000 | USCR 1995, pp.115-116 |

Figures of refugees located in Iraq and facing secondary displacement (as of September 2008)

- There are 41,673 refugees inside Iraq: 14,428 Palestinians, 15,700 Turkish Kurds, 10,815 Iranians (Kurds & Arabs), 589 Syrians (Kurds and Arabs), 141 Sudanese. (UNHCR, September 2008)
- Physical security and meeting basic survival needs are the primordial concerns of the Palestinian community in Baghdad and in the camps of Al Waleed Camp (1,367), and Al Tanf camp (729 persons) located near Iraqi Syrian border (AI, December 2008; UNHCR, September 2008)
- At least 729 Palestinian refugees who have fled Iraq are stranded in appalling conditions in al-Tanf camp in the no-man's land on the Iraq-Syria border. UNHCR considers Palestinians, especially those at al-Tanf, to be among the most vulnerable among the 2 million refugees who have fled Iraq. (AI, December 2008)
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UNHCR, September 2008:

"Currently there are 41,6733 refugees inside Iraq: 14,428 Palestinians, 15,700 Turkish Kurds, 10,815. Iranians (Kurds & Arabs), 589 Syrians (Kurds and Arabs), 141 Sudanese. Their protection and assistance needs vary according to the specific nature of each group as follows: 14,428 Palestinians: Physical security and meeting basic survival needs are the primordial concerns of the Palestinian community in Baghdad and in Al Waleed Camp (1,367). Until temporary relocation to safety and resettlement are secured, this group is in need of life-saving protection and assistance. 15,700 Turkish Kurds: Basic assistance to vulnerable camp population in Makhmour and other settlements as well as camp coordination and camp management are the requirements for this group while pursuing durable solutions through Voluntary Repatriation to Turkey and local settlement in Iraq."

AI, April 2008:

"Palestinian refugees in Iraq have been targeted for gross human rights abuses since the US-led invasion in March 2003. They have been threatened, abducted, tortured and killed mainly by Shi'a armed militia groups, in particular the Mahdi Army, followers of the Shi'a cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, but also by Iraqi government forces. The bodies of those abducted and killed are often found mutilated or with clear marks of torture. Palestinians have been targeted because of their ethnicity and because they are reputed to have received preferential treatment under the former

Ba'ath government headed by Saddam Hussain. As a result of the persecution, thousands have fled their homes, mostly in Baghdad, after they or their relatives suffered abuses or received death threats. According to UNHCR, since 2003 the number of Palestinians in Iraq has fallen from 34,000 to around 15,000. UNHCR considers Palestinians, especially those at al-Tanf, to be among the most vulnerable among the 2 million refugees who have fled Iraq."

Profile of Displaced Communities

Trends in Displacement 2006-2008

- The majority (71%) of IDPs assessed by IOM were displaced during 2006. According to analysis of IOM date of displacement data from 2006 through the first half of 2008, there is a trend of significant decline in new displacements, starting in 2007 (IOM, June 2008)
- During the first half of 2008, trends of decreased violence and a declining rate of displacement continued throughout the country (IOM, June 2008)
- Although the rate of newly displaced Iraqis has slowed during the past year, the number of displaced in Iraq remains high.
- It is estimated that approximately 20% of the country's population are internally or externally displaced. In addition, many displaced families are facing secondary displacement from eviction threats (IOM, June 2008)
- IDP and refugee returns to Iraq have been gradually increasing throughout 2007 and the beginning of 2008, with small spikes from March – April 2007 and late 2007 – early 2008. (IOM, June 2008) This was particularly seen in Baghdad. (IDP WG, June 2008)

IOM, 30 June 2008:

During the first half of 2008, trends of decreased violence and a declining rate of displacement continued throughout the country. Yet the deteriorating conditions facing the 2.8 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), as well as the limited returnee population, remain one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. In addition, over two million Iraqis are refugees, mostly in neighboring Syria and Jordan, resulting in a total of 5 million internally and externally displaced. On 22 February 2006, the bombing of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra triggered escalating sectarian violence that drastically changed the cause and scale of displacement in Iraq. Although military operations, crime, and general insecurity remained factors, sectarian violence became the primary driver for population displacement. Since February 2006, almost 1,600,000 Iraqis have been displaced. Of these, IOM's assessments cover 179,595 families throughout Iraq (an estimated 1,077,570 individuals).

Although the rate of newly displaced Iraqis has slowed during the past year, the number of displaced in Iraq remains high. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the country's population are internally or externally displaced. In addition, many displaced families are facing secondary displacement from eviction threats. The majority (71%) of IDPs assessed by IOM were displaced during 2006. According to analysis of IOM date of displacement data from 2006 through the first half of 2008, there is a trend of significant decline in new displacements, starting in 2007:

The March 2007 displacement spike represents a large number of IDPs arriving to Wassit from Baghdad and Diyala due to increased violence and military operations in these governorates. The overall decrease in new displacements may result from a combination of improved security and

the homogenization of previously mixed neighborhoods due to sectarian violence....IDP and refugee returns to Iraq have been gradually increasing throughout 2007 and the beginning of 2008, with small spikes from March – April 2007 and late 2007 – early 2008, as seen below:

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

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

Geographical Distribution of IDPs

- Majority of displaced before 2006 can be found in three northern Governorates, followed by substantial numbers in southern provinces with remaining in the Centre. (IDP WG, June 2008)
- The majority of displaced after 2006 are displaced in the central Governorates and mostly originate from the central governorates, followed by the south and northern governorates. (IDPW WG, June 2008)
- By far the majority of IDPs were displaced from (or within) Baghdad and to a lesser extent Diyala. (IDP WG, June 2008) The majority (64%) of IDPs [post-February 2006] assessed by IOM were displaced either from or within Baghdad governorate. (IOM, June 2008)

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

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

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

The majority (64%) of IDPs [post-February 2006] assessed by IOM were displaced either from or within Baghdad governorate. The two graphs below show IDP origins in Baghdad compared with the rest of the country and then a breakdown of the remaining IDPs' origins (36%) in all governorates excluding Baghdad:

Reasons for Displacement (Post February 2006)

- IDPs have fled their homes for a variety of reasons, all related to security. The most commonly cited reasons for displacement among those assessed are direct threats to life (37%) and generalized violence (23%) (IOM June 2008)
- When asked why they were targeted, 85% of those assessed attributed it to their sectarian identity. Another 10% said that they did not feel specifically targeted, while 6% cited political opinion and 4% cited ethnic identity. Answers do not vary significantly among those displaced in 2006, 2007, and 2008. (IOM June 2008)
- Reasons for displacement amongst IDPs surveyed include direct threats of life (55%), generalised violence (47%), forced displacement from property (27%), fear (38%) and due to armed conflict (16%). (IDP WG June 2008)

IOM, 30 June 2008:

"IDPs have fled their homes for a variety of reasons, all related to security. The most commonly cited reasons for displacement among those assessed are direct threats to life (37%) and generalized violence (23%):

When asked why they were targeted, 85% of those assessed attributed it to their sectarian identity. Another 10% said that they did not feel specifically targeted, while 6% cited political opinion and 4% cited ethnic identity. Answers do not vary significantly among those displaced in 2006, 2007, and 2008."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

Religion & Ethnicity of Displaced Communities (Post February 2006).

- The majority of the displaced (58%) are Shia Arab, followed by Sunni Arab (30%), along with small but significant numbers of Sunni Kurds, Assyrian Christians, Chaldean Christians, Turkmen, and others. (IOM, 30 June 2008)

IOM, 30 June 2008:

"The majority of the displaced (58%) are Shia Arab, followed by Sunni Arab (30%), along with small but significant numbers of Sunni Kurds, Assyrian Christians, Chaldean Christians, Turkmen, and others. The following chart and graph show the religious and ethnic profile of the IDP population:"

Gender & Children Distribution in Displaced Communities (Post February 2006).

- There are few estimates of the number of children and women displaced. Estimates suggest that women and children make in excess of 70% of the displaced in Iraq.

Iraqi Red Crescent Organization, 30 June 2008:

Intentions of Displaced Communities (Post February 2006)

- The majority (61%) of assessed IDPs intend to return to their place of origin, while 21% intend to integrate locally, and 17% plan to resettle in a third location. (IOM 30 June 2008)
- 82% of IDPs displaced within their home governorate intend to return to their original location, compared with 50% of those displaced to another governorate who wish to do the same (IOM 30 June 2008)

IOM, 30 June 2008:

The majority (61%) of assessed IDPs intend to return to their place of origin, while 21% intend to integrate locally, and 17% plan to resettle in a third location. Specifically, IDPs displaced close to their place of origin are more interested in returning home than those who fled to a different governorate. 82% of IDPs displaced within their home governorate intend to return to their original location, compared with 50% of those displaced to another governorate who wish to do the same:

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

Patterns of Displacement: General Situation

- Forced displacement in Iraq is complex, spanning several decades, immense in terms of numbers involved
- For decades preceeding 2003 invasion, displacement was caused by Iraqi government policies aimed to quell opposition to its regime.
- This took the form of forced Arabisation of northern regions, including Anfal campaign against Kurdish communities, depopulation of Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq as well as relocation of those in opposition to the regime.
- Following the end of the war in 2003, MNF-I operations against rising insurgency would be a main catalyst for displacement until rising sectarian violence became the predominate cause for displacement since 2006.
- The situation has been aggravated by incursions by neighbours including Iran and to a much greater extent Turkey. Such incursions have remained limited to particular areas and time.
- In 2007, displacement based on sectarian grounds has declined, however there remains reoccurring sectarian tensions, and ramifications to sectarian homogenisation that has taken place.
- Fewer displacements are now occurring, though military operations in Sadr City, Basrah, and along the borders with Iran and Turkey continue to displace Iraqis.

UNHCR, September 2008:

"Fresh displacement is still occurring but at a lower pace than the past two years; secondary displacement has been also reported mainly in Baghdad and other central governorates. Most of the Post-2006 IDPs come from Baghdad (64%) and Diyala (19%). All Iraq's Governorates have been affected by displacement. New displacement to the northern region (15%) is lower compared to the Southern (27%) and Central (58%) regions. Except for the three northern governorates, Iraq's governorates are both receiving as well as generating IDPs. In Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah displacement is predominately *to* rather than *from* the governorate except in situations resulting from Turkish and Iranian military operations affecting KRG territory. Sunnis have been moving from the Shi'a-dominated South to the central and western governorates while Shi'as are leaving Sunni dominated governorates in central and western Iraq to the Shi'a-controlled South. Sunnis and Shi'as, Arabs and Kurds, Christians and other minorities have been moving to KRG-controlled areas, providing they have the necessary documentation and support of relatives and friends or independent financial means to enter and stay. A similar mixed pattern of displacement from groups of different ethno-religious affiliations concerns movements across international borders, mainly into Jordan and Syria.

As at June 2008, **1,596,448** persons were recorded as having entered into displacement after February 2006, in addition to 190,146 displaced between 2003 and 2005. The increase in number of IDPs figures is due to the figures provided by Erbil Governorate while MoDM appears to not have entered new arrivals since March 2008. Although the rate of displacement is slowing and more Iraqis are attempting to return to their homes, the conditions of both the displaced and returnees remain precarious. Lack of access to food, adequate shelter, clean water and

sanitation, health and employment, especially for the vulnerable groups such as women, continue to create humanitarian needs to the 2.8 million IDPs. An increase in evictions from public buildings is being witnessed throughout the country threatening to force even more from their places of shelter during 2008. The Government policy targets political parties and people squatting in public buildings for personal convenience which is seemingly affecting IDPs. UNHCR estimates that up to 250,000 are living in public buildings that are under threat of eviction.

Due to a combination of push and pull factors (partial security improvements in some parts of central Iraq, gradual emergence of homogeneous areas, restrictive visa and admission regimes in neighboring countries and governorates of displacement inside Iraq, depletion of savings and copying mechanisms, persistence of high instability areas and hot spots due to terrorist activities, security operations and persistent interfactional violence) population movements within and from/to Iraq have entered into a more composite and complex stage featuring at the same time: fresh displacement, secondary displacement, voluntary relocation or settlement mainly based on consolidation along ethno-religious or tribal lines, returns either to original homes or to other areas and populations affected by conflict and seclusion into enclaves, who are unable to move in search of safety and access to basic services. "

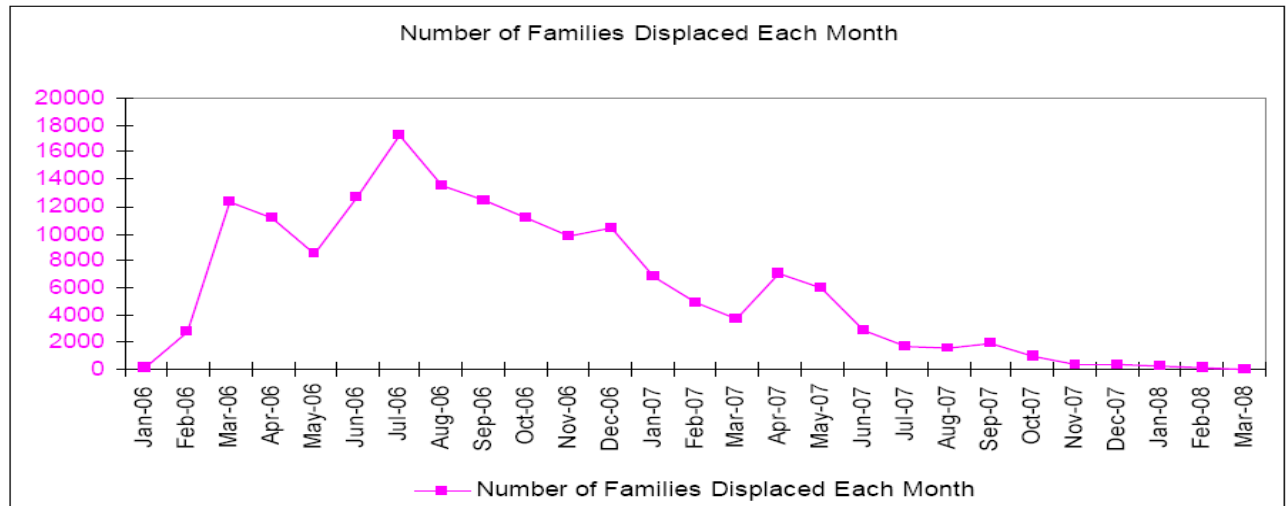
IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"[A] bout one million Iraqis were displaced by the time of the U.S.-led invasion in March 2003—the product of the Saddam Hussein regime's policies of forcibly displacing Iraqis for political ends. In the months preceding the war, the international humanitarian community predicted that a massive outpouring of refugees could result and engaged in significant contingency planning. But the invasion did not produce an immediate flow of refugees.⁴³ In fact, most Iraqis stayed where they were. Between 2003 and 2005, "only" 190,000 Iraqis were displaced.⁴⁴ The situation changed dramatically with the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque in Samarra in February 2006. Displacement mushroomed between February 2006 and August 2007, as evidenced in the table below.⁴⁵ At the height of the crisis, over 60,000 Iraqis fled their homes every month ... From September 2007 to January 2008, while people continued to leave their homes, the rate of displacement decreased.

The main reasons for displacement over the past several decades during the former regime included human rights abuses, internal conflict along political, religious and ethnic lines, the Iraq-Iran and Gulf Wars, drainage of the marshlands, construction of dams in the centre, suppression of the 1991 uprising in the south, competition over land and natural resources, and the "Arabization" policies of the former regime. The fall of the former regime, the US-led invasion of Iraq, the counter-insurgency operations, and the secondary displacement of Arabs by returning Kurds, were amongst the causes of internal displacement until the end of December 2005. In addition, while many Iraqis returned both internally and from overseas, a considerable number remained internally displaced, primarily due to a lack/destruction of housing, inadequate employment opportunities and social services, the presence of mines/UXO, and property disputes in their areas of return.[...]

Recent displacement is primarily due to sectarian violence, as well as military operations (carried out by both MNF-I/Iraqi Forces and by Turkey and Iran along their borders), crime and lawlessness. [...] The peak of displacement was between June and September 2006; less than 1% was displaced in 2008. Fewer new displacements are occurring, although military operations in as Sadr City, Basrah, and along the borders with Iran and Turkey continue to displace Iraqis.... Military operations in Sadr City led to the displacement of some 4000 families, of which most have returned. During military operations in Basra, Mosul and al-Amarah, there was only limited displacement. [...]

Returnees mostly return to neighbourhoods/districts/governorates under control of members of the sect they belong to. To date, only a few families have returned to areas under control of another sect. Very few members of minority groups (e.g., Christians, Sabaeen-Mandaeans and Yazidis) have been reported to be among the returnees.... Over the past few months, humanitarian organizations have seen threats of evictions of IDPs living in public buildings or in illegally erected buildings on public land. So far only small scale evictions have taken place.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, 2008

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

See Also:

[Refugees in their own land: 2m Iraqis forced to flee their homes](#), **The Guardian**, 20 September 2007

[Summary results IDP registration – February 2006 to July 2007](#), **Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM)**, 19 September 2007

[Iraq's Refugee and IDP crisis: Human Toll and Implications](#), **Middle East Institute**, July 2008

[Internally Displaced People in Iraq: Update 35](#), **Iraqi Red Crescent Organization**, 30 June 2008

[The Future of Kirkuk: The Referendum and Its Potential Impact on Displacement](#), **Brookings Institution**, 3 March 2008

[Networks \(IRIN\)](#), 27 January 2008

[The Real Challenge of Internal Displacement in Iraq: The Future](#), **Brookings Institution**, 25 January 2008

[Preparing for the Future Iraqi Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons](#), **Brookings, Human Rights First**, 25 January 2008

[Parliament allocates more money for IDPs](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 24 January 2008

[Authorities destroy Kerbala farms, displacing peasants](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 16 January 2008

[Turkish jets bomb Kurdish rebel hide-outs in northern Iraq](#), **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 15 January 2008

[Distributions underway for displaced in northern Iraq](#), **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, 15 January 2008

[Iraq Displacement 2007 Year in Review](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 11 January 2008

[Yearender: Iraq enjoys more security but reconciliation still a dream](#), Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), 17 December 2007

[The Kurdish Policy Imperative](#), Chatham House and University of Exeter, December 2007

[Cluster F: Internally Displaced in Iraq November 2007](#), Cluster F: Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Durable Solutions, UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 21 November 2007

[IOM emergency needs assessments \(post Feb 2006 displacement\)](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), October 2007

[IOM emergency needs assessments \(post Feb 2006 displacement\) Central and Southern 15 governorates](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2007

[Karbala fighting raises specter of broader Shi'ite clashes](#), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 29 August 2007

[Sectarian violence and displacement follow Samarra attack](#), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 13 June 2007

[Number of Iraqi displaced tops 4.2 million; shanty towns mushroom](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 5 June 2007

[War and Occupation in Iraq](#), Global Policy Forum (GPF), June 2007

[UNHCR Iraq Update on IDP Emergency Assistance - August 2007](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 11 September 2007

[Plight Of Displaced Worsens](#), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 7 September 2007

[Rate of displacement rising](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 28 July 2007

[Iraq: Displacement 2007 mid-year review](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 17 July 2007

[Cluster F Update July 2007](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 16 July 2007

[IOM emergency needs assessments \(post 22 Feb 2006 displacement\) Central and Southern 15 governorates](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 17 May 2007

Sectarian violence post-2003

General: Sectarian violence has been leading cause of displacement (2006-2008)

- Sectarian violence is said to have dramatically increased following attacks on the shrine of Samarra on 22 February 2006
- The peak of displacement was between June and September 2006. In October 2007, still nearly a thousand new families were displaced, while from October on, a few hundred families were displaced each month.
- The sectarian violence is the main cause of displacement for the majority of IDPs (corresponding to approximately 60% of figures of internal displacement as of July 2008 - 2,8million IDPs).
- This has left sectarian homogeneity in various urban areas most particularly in Baghdad which accounts for the decline in sectarian violence.
- Sectarian and ethnic tensions persist nonetheless. Ethnic tensions fuelled by dispute over certain governorate borders has caused displacement of Arabs, Kurds and Turkomen in Kurdish area.

Brookings Institution – University of Bern, October 2006:

“A sharp rise in sectarian attacks, abductions and killings followed the bombing of the holy Shi’a al-Askari shrine in Samarra in February 2006. On 20 July 2006, as reported by Reuters and other Western media, a spokesman for the Iraq Ministry of Displacement and Migration declared that, in the five months since the Samarra attack, approximately 27,000 families, or 162,000 people, had registered with the Iraqi government for assistance.[...] More recent figures from the Ministry speak of nearly 39,000 families displaced – 234,000 people – since Samarra.[...] Organized bands of armed thugs are targeting people because of the community they belong to, and forcing them to flee.

But the problem did not start with the attack on Samarra. Sectarian strife had been increasing steadily since the beginning of the US occupation of Iraq. Well before 2003, violence against the Shi’a and the Kurds was a central tenet of Ba’thi policies. Internal displacement was a major feature of the Iraq of Saddam Hussein. Because of the Ba’thi regime’s uniquely repressive nature, the outside world made little effort to find out what was happening inside. The US-led invasion that overthrew that regime was supposed to bring better things. Instead, displacement is again on the rise in Iraq. And again, little is known about it. [...]

But sectarian-induced displacement carries special significance. In a country as diverse as Iraq, and as large, it could take on truly appalling proportions were the situation to worsen. Also, as displacement increases and hardens, it in turn further jeopardizes the political process. Finally, the manner in which both the new Iraqi authorities and those nations who maintain significant military forces in Iraq address the problem of sectarian displacement says much about their commitment to pluralism and human rights. Indeed it is an important indicator of whether Iraqis can expect a better future.

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

“Increasing numbers of Iraqis are fleeing their homes since the destruction of Al- Askari Shrine in Samarra, on 22 February, unleashed a wave of sectarian violence across many regions in the country. Approximately 150,000 persons have been displaced by 30 June 2006, according to estimates by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration and partners of the United Nations. The main reasons for such displacement are direct or indirect threats received by individuals, or following attacks to family members or the community in the neighbourhood of origin. Displaced persons find themselves in a condition of vulnerability, lacking many basic rights and competing for limited services, which increase inter-communal animosity in their points of arrival. In turn, this can generate further displacement.”

IRIN, 17 April 2006:

“Up to 35,000 more individuals have been displaced in the past two weeks due to ongoing sectarian violence, said officials from the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. “Nearly 70,000 displaced Iraqis, especially from the capital, are living in deteriorating conditions,” said ministry spokesman Sattar Nawruz... According to ministry officials, the government is providing displaced families with essential materials, including food and medical supplies. Nevertheless, officials express alarm over a rising rate of displacement in recent weeks. “Families are leaving their homes every day because they’re afraid of becoming the next victims of violence,” Nawruz pointed out. [...] Many Shi’ite Muslims, recently displaced from the western Anbar governorate and Baghdad, have taken refuge in southern areas, such as Basra, Najaf and Nassriyah. Numerous Sunni Muslim families, meanwhile, from Baghdad and the country’s south, have fled to the cities and villages of Anbar, such as Fallujah, Rawa and Ramadi..... Some of those fleeing violence have avoided the refugee camps being set up for them, fearing that they, too, could become targets of violence. “These displaced people would rather seek shelter with relatives in safe areas or in abandoned schools or government buildings,” said a volunteer with the IRCS.”

IRIN, 16 March 2006:

"Dozens of families in the capital, Baghdad, have been displaced from their neighbourhoods due to the sectarian violence that has come in the wake of the Samarra shrine bombing in February and subsequent attacks.... According to the IRCS, more than 300 families from different areas of the capital have been displaced, many of them Sunni residents of majority Shi'ite neighbourhoods.... Sunnis are not the only ones to have fled their homes in fear of reprisal. There are also numerous Shi'ite families who prefer to live in deteriorating conditions rather than risk being killed in their majority-Sunni neighbourhoods."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 30 July 2007:

Militants in southern areas of Iraq are reportedly targeting former members of the Baath Party in a bid to exterminate them, causing new displacements, according to local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). At least 200 ex-members of the Baath Party of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein have been killed so far. According to local police, hundreds of families have been forced to flee their homes. "Militias are conducting a campaign to exterminate over 4,000 members of the Baath Party," said Hassan Dureid, spokesperson for Iraqi Brothers Relief, a local NGO working in southern Iraq. "Most of these people didn't have a choice and were obliged to join the party during the ex-regime." "Dozens of new widows of ex-members of the Baath Party have reported [the deaths of their husbands] in the past three weeks to southern governorates, and their numbers could increase, according to experts," Dureid added. Militants affiliated with Shia groups refused to give detailed information about the campaign but said their action was to guarantee the "cleansing of any remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime".

See Also

For a recent assessment, see ["Iraqis on the Move"](#) a report by the International Medical Corps (January 2007)

UNAMI, 1 January - 28 February 2006, p.4

UNAMI, 23 May 2006

IRIN, 21 March 2006

[Kurds drawn into Iraq's firing line](#), **Asia Times Online**, 31 May 2007

[Uprooted and Unstable](#), **Refugees International (RI)**, April 2008

[Bombers kill 175 in attacks on minority sect in Iraq](#), **The Guardian**, 15 August 2007

[Bombings strike Baghdad and area to the north and south; U.S. reports 5 troops killed](#), **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 25 July 2007

[Bombers kill 175 in attacks on minority sect in Iraq](#), **The Guardian**, 15 August 2007

[In town split in two by al-Qaida, a ray of hope for the country](#), **The Guardian**, 14 July 2007

[Accepting realities in Iraq](#), **Chatham House and University of Exeter**, 18 May 2007

Ethnic tensions in Kirkuk & Disputed Areas causing displacement (2003 to 2008)

- The disputed territories include Kirkuk through to Sinjar – failure to reconcile competing interests and property claims in the region could lead to further displacement. (Brookings Institution, 3 March 2008)
- Hundreds of families are reported displaced in Kirkuk fleeing their homes as result of heightening ethnic tensions, while others face continued ethnic discrimination (IOM, September 2008)
- Iraqi Arab residents having been fleeing the city as ethnic violence increased in 2007. Sources note of at least 2,000 families having fled Kirkuk in latter half of 2007. (IRIN, 16 September 2007)
- Though many IDPs in late 2006 and 2007 have sought refuge in Kurdish regions because of relative safety in comparison to Central Governorates. (UNHCR, January 2007)

- Human rights groups say hundreds of Arabs have been driven out of Kirkuk during and after 2003 asserting to rising ethnic tension.

Brookings Institution, 3 March 2008:

"The disputed territories, stretching from Khanaqin in the east – through Kirkuk and Mosul – all the way to Sinjar in the west, are sites of untold violence and human rights abuses. This "mixed-population belt"¹ was a target of Saddam Hussein's Arabization campaigns and Operation Anfal, both of which sought to permanently alter the ethnic demographics of these oil-rich lands. During the Arabization campaigns, some 250,000 Kurds and other non-Arab minorities were displaced from this territory and replaced by Arabs from central and southern Iraq. The Operation Anfal of 1988 was an ethnic cleansing campaign in which 100,000 Kurds were killed and other hundreds of thousands were rendered homeless.² The program of Arabization continued in Kirkuk until the eve of the Ba'ath regime's toppling; throughout the 1990s, Kurds and other non-Arab Kirkukis continued to face harassment and pressure to change their ethnic identity and join the Ba'ath party.³ During this period, 120,000 persons were driven out of Kirkuk and other territory under Baghdad's control.⁴

The status of Kirkuk is significant in that Kirkuk is a heavily populated, multiethnic region, teetering on the brink of turmoil, and straddling the country's ethno-linguistic fault line. Failing to reconcile the competing interests and property claims in Kirkuk and other disputed territories and failing to establish a system of compensation for expelled Kurds, Turkmen, and Christians, could lead to further destruction and chaos in a country where one out of six people has already fled his or her home.⁵ If hostilities continue to intensify in Kirkuk, massive displacement and ethnic homogenization could materialize, along the lines of what occurred in Baghdad post-February 2006. This is an area with a violent history of dislocations, settlements, and returns, in a governorate that has been redrawn to facilitate gerrymandering and ethnic exclusion. The politics of demographics is not a new phenomenon to Kirkuk, but it continues to impact conditions on the ground and political developments at the highest level. The on-going struggle for Kirkuk cannot be understood except in the context of the country's human security and historic patterns of displacement."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

Hundreds of families are currently being displaced in Kirkuk as a result of the ethnic tensions fuelled by the dispute over the governorate's future. Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmen are all fleeing their homes, and they are faced with high rent prices and poor access to basic services or employment in their places of displacement. In some cases families suffer continued ethnic discrimination, while others do not know the whereabouts of arrested family members.

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 September 2007:

Iraqi Arab residents of the northern oil-rich city of [Kirkuk](#), some 250km from Baghdad, say scores of Arab families are fleeing the city as ethnic violence increases there.... A local Iraq Red Crescent senior official, who prefers anonymity for security reasons, said since June 2007 at least 2,000 Arab families had fled Kirkuk. "Hundreds of families are fleeing the city without their belongings." They had been forced to search for displacement camps and many had joined the nearly one million displaced families in southern governorates, whilst others were staying on roadsides or in poor areas, he said. In a local police station IRIN witnessed dozens of families begging for help from police after being forced from their homes by Kurdish militias. They were all told the same thing - that they could not be given individual protection and that they would be best advised to find more secure accommodation in southern Iraq. The city, a multi-ethnic mix of Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, Turkomans and Armenians, has plenty of oil, but may not have much time left to avoid being dragged into sectarian bloodshed.

International Herald Tribune (IHT), 30 May 2007:

While the American military is trying to tamp down the vicious fighting between rival Arab sects in Baghdad, conflict between Arabs and Kurds is intensifying here, adding another dimension to Iraq's civil war. Sunni Arab militants, reinforced by insurgents fleeing the new security plan in Baghdad, are trying to rid Mosul of its Kurdish population through violence and intimidation, Kurdish officials said. Iraq's third largest city, with a population of 1.8 million, straddles the Tigris River on a grassy, windswept plain in the country's north. It was recently estimated to be about a quarter Kurdish, but Sunni Arabs have already driven out at least 70,000 Kurds and virtually erased the Kurdish presence from the city's western half, said Khasro Goran, the deputy governor of surrounding Nineveh Province and a Kurd. Nineveh is Iraq's most diverse province, with a dizzying array of ethnic and religious groups woven into an area about the size of Maryland. For centuries, Arabs, Kurds, Christians, Turkmens, Yezidis and Shabaks lived side by side in these verdant hills, going to the same schools, bartering in the same markets, even intermarrying on occasion. But what took generations to build is starting to unravel in the shadow of the Sunni Arab insurgency, which is tapping into several wells of ethnic resentment.

Already embittered at the toppling of the Sunni Arab government of Saddam Hussein, insurgents here have been further enraged by their current political disenfranchisement, a result of their boycotting the 2005 elections. The main Kurdish coalition now holds 31 of 41 seats on the provincial council and all the top executive positions, even though Kurds make up only 35 percent of the province. Most Kurds are of the Sunni sect, but they have little in common with the Arabs....Sunni Arabs have asked for new provincial elections and are growing frustrated that the Shiite- and Kurdish-dominated national government seems to be ignoring their requests. Just as worrisome for the Arabs is a growing push by the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan to annex large swaths of eastern and northern Nineveh. A contentious measure in the Constitution gives the regional Kurdish government the right to take the land by the end of 2007 through a popular referendum....The parts of the province that Iraqi Kurdistan wants are called the "disputed territories" along its border, areas that were historically Kurdish until Saddam Hussein moved in Arabs and forced out half a million Kurds to strengthen Arab control, Kurdish officials say. To ensure control of the lands, the Kurdish parties are encouraging settlers to move to eastern Nineveh, just as they have been doing in disputed areas in Diyala Province and around the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. Kurdish militias have also been operating in Nineveh and the streets of Mosul, stoking Sunni Arab fears of Kurdish domination, Twitty said....Khabat, just inside Iraqi Kurdistan, has become a place of refuge. Rents have skyrocketed, said the mayor, Rizgar Mustafa Muhammad. At least 1,300 families have moved there from Mosul. More than 120 came in April alone, the most of any month, he said. Soon, he said, tent camps will be needed.

UNHCR, January 2007:

"Many IDPs are seeking refuge in the region of Kurdistan, on which this report focuses. In part due to its relative security, the region of Kurdistan has witnessed a steady movement of families into the area since 2003. In 2006, this flow increased dramatically as families continued to relocate due to threats and generalized violence. This population influx has placed additional pressure on the real estate market and public service sector in Kurdistan and has led to increased concerns about security and demographic shifts. At the same time the KRG has also benefited from the migration of professionals who have brought with them skills and disposable incomes that boost the local economy."

Reuters, 23 June 2005:

The city, whose old sections are a charming if crumbling collection of tightly knotted alleyways filled with market stalls, is claimed by three ethnic groups -- Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen, a Turkish-speaking minority. During Saddam Hussein's rule, Kurds and Turkmen were forcefully removed from the city and its outlying areas to make way for poor Arabs from the south, who were promised land and other incentives as part of a process called "Arabisation". Since

Saddam's overthrow in April 2003, displaced Kurds and Turkmen have flooded back to the city, hoping to reclaim property and land. Human rights groups say hundreds of Arabs have been driven out during the same period and some Turkmen who stayed under Saddam have also left for outlying areas, although security has made it difficult to catalogue the exact number. Political parties keen to increase their presence in the city have encouraged returns in some cases, although Fattah denied any deliberate policy: "If there was a plan, then all the Kurds who were forced to leave would have been back by now." Kurds are clear that they would like to make Kirkuk, which lies about 25 km (15 miles) outside the present boundaries of the Kurdish region, the capital of Kurdistan, a goal strongly, even violently, opposed by Arabs and Turkmen.

Earlier this month, Arabs and Turkmen in the city said the police force, which is majority Kurdish, and other Kurdish security forces had arrested hundreds of Arabs and Turkmen on the streets and removed them to jails in the Kurdish region. The police denied it but U.S. officials said around 200 people had been detained and imprisoned in Kurdistan. They said they were concerned about rising ethnic tensions in the city and had raised the issue with the Kurdish authorities. The tensions have risen since January, when local elections saw Kurds tighten their political hold. Many Arabs and Turkmen boycotted the vote, accusing Kurds of bringing more Kurds into Kirkuk to increase their support. In the event, a Kurdish list secured 26 of the council's 40 seats, Turkmen took eight and Arabs and others the remainder. Disputes over the outcome, which delayed forming the provincial council, were settled this week, even though some Arabs and Turkmen again boycotted. The head of the provincial council is now a Kurd, while the deputy's post is open. Governor Fattah was elected as part of the same process.

See also "[Number of displaced increases in Arbil](#)", IRIN, 26 February 2007

Sectarian Displacement in Baghdad (2006 to 2008)

- Forced displacement from Baghdad constitutes the majority of displaced. Estimated that 60% of Iraqis displaced originate from Baghdad. Sectarian violence and forced displacement have made many neighbourhoods in Baghdad largely Sunni or Shi'ia ethnically cleansed of the other ethnicity.
- The struggle for Baghdad has been one of the factors that has resulted in significant change in the political landscape of Iraq. The struggle for the capital was reportedly won by the Shia militias, controlling at least three-quarters of Baghdad leading to reallignment of anti-US Sunni insurgency
- The security improvements in most neighborhoods are considerable entailing a reduction in sectarian violence and based displacement.

New York Times, 27 November 2007:

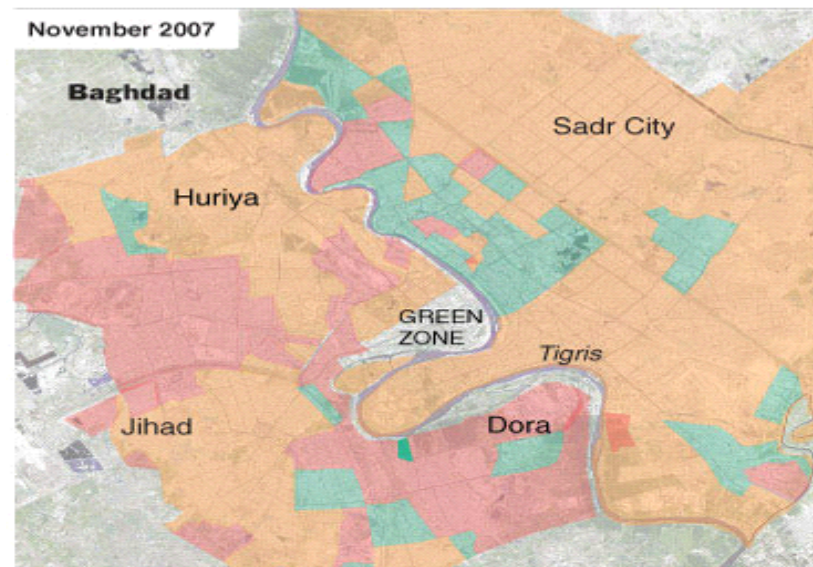
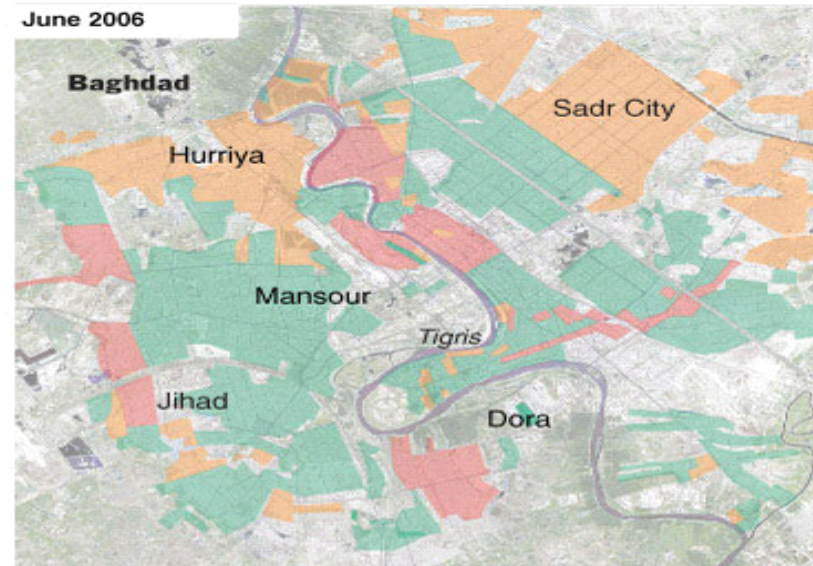
"Many neighborhoods in Baghdad have become largely Shiite or Sunni, as one group drove the other out in calculated sectarian cleansing. Sunnis have moved into Shiite homes, and Shiites into Sunni ones. This segregation has contributed to the decline in violence. But what would happen if the original residents insisted on moving back into their homes?While there is no question that large numbers of Iraqis have left their homes, American officials said that the exact number is not available. The International Organization for Migration has reported that the number of internally "displaced" Iraqis — those who have fled their homes but still live in Iraq — has grown to more than one million since the February 2006 bombing of a Shiite shrine in Samarra. Among those displaced Iraqis, more than 350,000 live in Baghdad Province, according to estimates by humanitarian organizations.

A New, Sectarian Map

The sectarian makeup of some neighborhoods in Baghdad has changed, leading to concerns about clashes if displaced Iraqis try to move back.

RELIGIOUS MAJORITY AREAS IN BAGHDAD

Sunni Shiite Mixed



Sources: United States military (2007 map); Zeyad, *HealingIraq.blogspot.com* (2006 map, based on interviews with residents and local news reports)

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Independent, 5 February 2008:

"There was always going to be friction between Sunni and Shia in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein. But what turned sectarian tension into a bloodbath were the massive al-Qa'ida suicide bombs, often a ton of explosive in a vehicle, detonated in crowded Shia markets and religious gatherings. Though the Shia were patient for two years, they struck back massively after the destruction of the Shia shrine in Samarra on 22 February 2006....It is the outcome of this battle for Baghdad which still determines the political landscape of Iraq and makes reconciliation

between the communities so difficult. The struggle for the capital was won by the Shia, who now control at least three-quarters of it.... Pressured by al-Qa'ida and the Shia, many anti-US Sunni guerrillas switched sides, seeking US protection, but they intend to renew the battle for Baghdad whenever they think they can win it."

New York Times, 20 November 2007:

"The security improvements in most neighborhoods are real. Days now pass without a car bomb, after a high of 44 in the city in February. The number of bodies appearing on Baghdad's streets has plummeted to about 5 a day, from as many as 35 eight months ago, and suicide bombings across [Iraq](#) fell to 16 in October, half the number of last summer and down sharply from a recent peak of 59 in March, the American military says. ...As a result, for the first time in nearly two years, people are moving with freedom around much of this city. In more than 50 interviews across Baghdad, it became clear that while there were still no-go zones, more Iraqis now drive between Sunni and Shiite areas for work, shopping or school, a few even after dark. In the most stable neighborhoods of Baghdad, some secular women are also dressing as they wish. Wedding bands are playing in public again, and at a handful of once shuttered liquor stores customers now line up outside in a collective rebuke to religious vigilantes from the Shiite Mahdi Army. ...Iraqis are clearly surprised and relieved to see commerce and movement finally increase, five months after an extra 30,000 American troops arrived in the country. But the depth and sustainability of the changes remain open to question. "

Times Online, 14 December 2006:

"More and more, Baghdad is splintering into Shia and Sunni enclaves that are increasingly no-go areas for anyone from outside. The trend is fuelled by the ugliest sectarianism. It also reflects a crude power grab, with both sides egged on by political parties aiming to maximise their clout in the Iraqi Government by dominating as much of the capital as possible. The result is that since February, when Sunnis bombed the golden-domed mosque in Samarra, a Shia shrine, 146,322 individuals have been displaced in Baghdad, according to the International Organisation for Migration. The pattern is so pronounced that the US military has drawn up a new map of Baghdad to reflect its ethno-sectarian fault lines. Published here for the first time, it lists the mixed neighbourhoods considered to be most explosive. Four of the five are on the western bank of the Tigris, called Karkh, where mixed neighbourhoods are still prevalent. Predominantly Shia Kadhamiya and the largely Sunni areas of Qadisiya, Amariya and Ghazaliya have become the deadliest battlegrounds, according to US forces.

The violent struggle for neighbourhoods goes well beyond a fight among outlaws. Armed groups belonging to the parliament's two main Sunni and Shia political blocs fuel much of the violence, according to senior Iraqi officials. "There is a very clear connection between some of the displacements caused by armed groups in some neighbourhoods in and around Baghdad and the political parties that are in the Council of Representatives," Mowaffak al-Rubaie, the Iraqi National Security Adviser, told *The Times*. "The violence is neither spontaneous nor popular. Displaced people view the most extreme religious fronts – the office of Moqtada al-Sadr and SCIRI on the Shia side and the MSA and the Islamic Party on the Sunni side — as the main drivers of sectarian displacement," the October report said. "The displacements clearly help further the political agenda of these extremist groups."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 27 August 2007:

"Residents of Dora District in Baghdad have been fleeing after gunmen imposed a strict interpretation of Islamic Shariah law there. "We have reports of more than 300 families fleeing the area over the past two weeks and this number is increasing daily," Fatah Ahmed, vice-president

of the Iraq Aid Association (IAA), said. The gunmen are particularly stringent when it comes to Christian families, who are forced to convert to Islam or pay huge taxes. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 13 June 2007:

"Civilians are defying a curfew to flee their homes in fear of an increase in sectarian violence after insurgents blew up two minarets at a revered Shia shrine in Samarra on 13 June. Partial destruction of the shrine last year sparked spiralling sectarian bloodshed. "The curfew is preventing everyone from moving but some families insist on leaving their homes trying to save themselves. We have been informed that many people have been killed while trying to flee and others have been killed in their homes by militias," said Fatah Ahmed, an Iraq Aid Association spokesman. "Some displacement camps on the outskirts of Baghdad have received a huge number of people since yesterday and cannot cope. Also, NGOs, because of the curfew and violence, are unable to reach families in need," Ahmed added. Since 13 June, Mahdi army militants have been targeting Sunni mosques and families. At least six Sunni mosques have been burned in the capital and many civilians killed, said some observers. "

See also:

"Areas of Baghdad fall to militias as Iraqi Army falters in Basra", **Times Online, 27 March 2008:** [Iraqi leaders pledge reconciliation effort](#), **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**, 27 August 2007

[Bombings strike Baghdad and area to the north and south; U.S. reports 5 troops killed](#), **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 25 July 2007

[Families fleeing violence set up improvised camps](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 22 July 2007

Intra-sectarian violence cause of displacement (2006-2008)

- Sectarian conflict has also given way to intra-sectarian violence causing displacement.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 29 August 2007:

"Fighting among rival Shi'ite militias and police in the Iraqi city of Karbala has killed some 50 people, forcing authorities to curtail a major pilgrimage and order a curfew. Reports say the clashes involved gunmen loyal to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and those connected to the Badr Brigades of the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council (SIIC). Clashes between powerful Shi'ite militias in Iraq may mark the beginning of a new phase of fighting in the southern part of the country."

Conflict related displacement post-2003

Conflict related displacement during and following surge (February 2007-July 2008)

- Through 2007 to 2008, military operations continued in Al Anbar Governorate, in particular Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet. Ramadi and Fallujah, as well as Basra, Diyala and Baghdad. These areas have seen relatively constant fighting between MNF-I and insurgents, completely disrupting the functioning of social services and resulting in a high degree of displacement and casualties

- Effects of surge would see by late 2007 a reduction in violence through a combination of political and military efforts which has contributed to continued improvements in security across Iraq. The implementation of US 'surge strategy' combined with establishment of Sahwas alliance and the ceasefire of the Mahdi army has resulted in reduction in the nature of the violence faced.
- There have been several large scale operations in early to mid 2008 namely in Basra, Sadr City area of Baghdad, Missan, Amarah, and Mosul. Such operations have entailed heavy fighting in densely populated urban areas. There has been reported failure of adherence to distinction between combatants and civilians and accusations of disproportionate attacks on civilian areas.
- A number of major operations have placed civilians at risk and lead to displacement of thousands. The number of displaced as result of operations remains difficult to identify. In Sadr City, operations in April and May 2008 would lead to the displacement of approximately 4,700 families.

UN Secretary General (UNSG), 28 July 2008:

"3. A combination of political and military efforts has contributed to continued improvements in security across Iraq during the past three months. Although civilian casualties as a result of violence remain unacceptably high, both the frequency of violent incidents and casualty figures have continued to decline and there has been increased cooperation from local communities in preventing acts of violence. The Iraqi Security Forces appear to be gaining in confidence and capability, and the number of units capable of taking the lead in operations is increasing. Following an operation in Basra, the Iraqi Security Forces commenced several major operations concurrently: Operation Peace began in May against renegade groups in the Sadr City area of Baghdad; Operation Promise of Peace started in June in the southern town of Amarah in Missan Province; and Operation Lion's Roar was launched against insurgent groups in Mosul and other parts of Ninawa Province. The ceasefire declared by Moqtada al-Sadr on 11 May for Sadr City continues to be in effect, and State authority and basic services are being restored in coordination with Sadr movement leaders....

26. The human rights situation in Iraq remains serious, although violations were less widely reported. Despite improved security conditions in Baghdad, Amarah and Mosul after operations against armed militias, UNAMI remained concerned about the physical safety and legal protection of hundreds of suspects arrested, as well as detention conditions and lack of due process following detention. Those apparently rounded up as suspects included a number of children.....

27. During the military crackdown by Iraq and the multinational force in Iraq against militias in Sadr City in April and May, there was heavy fighting in this densely populated urban environment. According to several estimates, more than half of the 1,000 reportedly killed may have been civilians. Yet the real scale of civilian casualties was difficult to assess in the aftermath of the conflict, as most casualty data were not made available. UNAMI continued to investigate reports of incidents in which civilians were apparently targeted or where all sides to the conflict may have failed to make the distinction between combatants and civilians. This includes possible disproportionate attacks on civilian areas.....

38. Major security operations in Sadr City, Mosul and Amarah during the period under review prompted the United Nations country team to work closely on contingency plans for humanitarian emergency response. Access to basic commodities was at risk, particularly in Sadr City, where violence led to the temporary displacement of approximately 4,700 families. UNAMI engaged in targeted advocacy with the Government, the multinational force, Iraqi Security Forces and other actors to ensure humanitarian access prior to and during security operations. The coordination of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with the International Committee of the

Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations was important for unified country team monitoring and analysis. During the immediate response phase in the most acute of the three crises, the United Nations delivered water and sanitation assistance for an estimated 120,000 families in Sadr City. Sanitation agencies supplied 10 million litres of safe water to residents and hospitals, as well as water hygiene/purification kits. UNHCR provided non-food items to internally displaced persons and supported the repair of some 300 conflict-affected houses and shops in the Sadr City and Shula districts of Baghdad. WFP delivered 296 tons of emergency food to 38,500 residents of Sadr City, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) delivered 2,000 food baskets to hospitals in Sadr City and Shula. In addition, 1,500 food baskets were delivered to hospitals in Basra, Wassit, Babylon and Qadisiyah. In other interventions throughout the country WFP, together with non-governmental organization partners, reached 480,000 persons with food assistance during the reporting period. A further 42,500 persons were assisted in partnership with IOM. Currently, the United Nations country team has 15 water and sanitation rehabilitation projects in nine governorates at various stages of completion, benefiting approximately 3.5 million persons."

BBC News, 7 May 2008:

"The authorities in Baghdad say they are preparing for an exodus of thousands of people from eastern parts of the city. Fighting between government and US troops on one side, and Shia militia on the other, has intensified recently. Two football stadiums are on stand-by to receive residents from two neighbourhoods in the Sadr City area. The government has warned of an imminent push to clear the areas of members of the Mehdi Army, loyal to the anti-American cleric, Moqtada Sadr. In the last seven weeks around 1,000 people have died, and more than 2,500 others have been injured, most of them civilians."

Reuters, 21 April 2008:

"Maliki's crackdown has led to Iraq's worst fighting in nearly a year, spreading through the south and Shi'ite parts of Baghdad. Although fighting in the south has mainly died down, the Baghdad clashes have continued unabated."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 14 May 2007:

"Thousands of Iraqis have been fleeing their homes in Diyala province over the past week after an increase in attacks by armed groups and a major offensive by US and Iraqi troops. Diyala province is a volatile but religiously mixed governorate to the northeast of Baghdad. In the past six days more than 900 families, about 5,000 individuals, have fled Diyala governorate. Some of them were forced out by militants and others were scared of the clashes, said Faris Abdallah, media officer for Diyala governorate office. The villages of Khalis and Ambugiya have seen considerable sectarian violence and the number of internally displaced people is greatest there, Abdallah said, adding that most are Shi'a. Most of the families which have fled Diyala have headed for the southern provinces of Najaf, Kerbala or Basra. Some have moved to the outskirts of Baghdad where camps for the Diyala displaced have been set up. A few families have also been internally displaced within the province."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 7 May 2007:

"Dozens of families started to flee Sadr City, the main Shi'a district of Baghdad, on Sunday following raids by US-led forces against suspected militants. "The raids were unexpected and, as Sadr City is a violent neighbourhood, some families are fleeing the area looking for displacement camps in the outskirts of the capital. Many of them have travelled to Najaf and Kerbala in the south," said Hussam al-Din, president of the Baghdad-based Iraqi Humanitarian Association for the Displaced (IHAD). "Local NGOs are desperate because we cannot reach the area for security reasons and fleeing families are leaving their homes without enough money to support themselves," al-Din said. "

UNAMI, 16 January 2007

“Military operations continued in Al Anbar Governorate, in particular Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet. Ramadi and Fallujah have seen relatively constant fighting between MNF-I and insurgents in some districts, completely disrupting the functioning of social services and resulting in a high degree of displacement and casualties.”

See Also:

[Baghdad suburb residents flee after US raids](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 3 July 2007

[Iraq braces for offensive on militias, blasts in Baghdad](#), **Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)**, 8 May 2008

[Iraq prepares for Baghdad exodus](#), **BBC News**, 7 May 2008

[Iraq to confront militias after Sadr threat](#), **Reuters**, 21 April 2008

[Baghdad's Sadr City](#), **Christian Science Monitor (CSM)**, 18 April 2008

[Iraq After the Surge I: The New Sunni Landscape](#), **International Crisis Group (ICG)**, 30 April 2008

[Iraq's Civil War, the Sadrist and the Surge](#), **International Crisis Group (ICG)**, 7 February 2008

[Dozens of families flee clashes in Sadr City](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 8 April 2008

[Uprooted and Unstable](#), **Refugees International (RI)**, April 2008

[IDP Working Group Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update \(24 March 2008\)](#), **IDP Working Group**, 24 March 2008

Between 2003 and 2007, displacements due to military operations and fighting (2003-2007)

- Displacements have often been of temporary nature though prolonged displacement has also resulted due to ongoing military operations, as well as due to damages incurred as result of military operations such as siege of Fallujah in November 2004 which has resulted in more prolonged displacement due to the devastation incurred.
- Initial estimates by the UN prior to the war in 2003 suggested that 900,000-1,100,000 could be displaced due to the war, particularly from areas such as Kirkuk, Mosul as well as Southern Iraq, and as result of usage of WMD.
- Displacements as result of military operations and conflict were lower than initial estimates. Estimated 190,000 remain displaced as result of military operations and genrealised violence during 2003-2005. From March to May 2003, the governorates of Al-Anbar, Thi-Qar and Basra witnessed displacement due to the threat of air strikes and urban warfare.
- Further ilitary operations in 2004, particularly in Fallujah, Najaf, Kufa, Karbala and Samarrah caused displacement. In November 2004, over 200,000 people were temporarily displaced from Falljuah as result of MNF siege and fierce fighting in the city.
- In 2005, thousands of people have been displaced by military raids conducted by the multinational and Iraqi forces, including in al-Qaim, Karabilah, Haditha, Ramadi, Mosul and Kirkuk.
- Between February to November 2006, an estimated 15,420 were displaced as result of military operations. As of March 2007, some 22,400 people were estimated to remain displaced from military operations and fighting. These figures should be viewed in addition to the estimated 190,000 displaced during 2003-2005 though no clear estimates are provided.

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"Military operations continued in Al Anbar Governorate, in particular Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet. Ramadi and Fallujah have seen relatively constant fighting between MNF-I and insurgents in some districts, completely disrupting the functioning of social services and resulting in a high degree of displacement and casualties."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Some 418,392 people have been displaced due to sectarian violence and 15,240 due to military operations since the attack on the Samarra Al-Askari Shrine on 22 February 2006."

IWPR, 15 June 2006:

"People in Ramadi, capital of the western Iraqi province of Anbar, estimate that about 70 per cent of the city's population has fled in the last week, many of them holding white flags for fear of being shot at by Marine snipers. Residents reported that US troops blasted messages through loudspeakers on June 13, telling them to leave and warning of house-to-house searches for weapons and militants. The ongoing violence between US Marines and the insurgents, air strikes, and outages in the water, electricity and phone networks have already made life untenable. Ramadi residents say US troops regularly take over houses to fight the insurgents, and combatants on both sides have been seen using rooftops as sniper positions."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.16:

"Military raids are routinely conducted by the MNF/ISF in an attempt to put an end to insurgent activities. They have taken place in Fallujah, Ramadi and Mosul, and more recently in Al-Qaim, Karabilah and Haditha in Western Iraq. These raids, which aim to root out foreign fighters and insurgent support systems, often cause the death and displacement of civilians and the destruction of infrastructure and property."

UNAMI, 1 March 2005:

"Post-election violence sparked an increasing number of 'hotspots' throughout central Iraq with implications for further internal displacements as a result of military operations or ethno-religious tensions. In particular, the situations in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Ramadi were monitored for potential outbreaks of conflict and concerns regarding civilian protection."

UNCT, August 2004 :

"Over the last four decades, human rights abuses and various periods of conflict have resulted in many cases of protracted displacement in Iraq, the total number of displaced peaking at over one million persons. The expulsion of people along ethnic lines from their homes has long been a state policy. The 2003 conflict resulting in the fall of the former Government of Iraq and subsequent periodic fighting have resulted in further population movements throughout the country. [...] From March to May 2003, the governorates of Al-Anbar, Thi-Qar and Basra witnessed displacement due to the threat of air strikes and urban war-fare. Most moved to nearby rural towns where they lived with host communities or in public buildings. The vast majority returned to their homes immediately after the air strikes to protect their property from looting and squatters. However, a small number of people remain displaced. They are awaiting an improvement of the security situation and the reconstruction of or compensation for their destroyed houses. In addition, a small number of people throughout the country were forcibly displaced by Coalition forces for reasons of national security. In most cases, these IDP families resided in or close to strategic buildings or locations such as airports or military bases. [...] Skirmishes with Coalition forces have continued into 2004, escalating into battles in the cities of Fallujah, Najaf, Kufa, and Karbala leading to similar patterns of displacement to those in the 2003 conflict. In April 2004, over 70,000 persons were reported to have fled Fallujah to neighbouring towns as a result of the siege by Coalition forces on the city. Following the end of the fighting, as previously observed, families quickly returned to their homes in Fallujah. In addition, a group of Kurdish families was displaced during the Falluja crisis."

UN OCHA Jan 03, p10:

"Up to 900,000 people may be displaced in addition to the 900,000-1,000,000 existing IDPs." *U.N. agencies predicted in December 2002 that war could displace an additional 1.1 million people inside Iraq and 900,000 would become refugees outside the country.* To view the UN confidential report mentioning this information, please see: UN 10 Dec 2002, Likely Humanitarian Scenarios [reference and link below]

See also:

CHC, 23 Dec 02

Bacon, Jan 03

UNAMI, 17 January 2007

IRIN, 9 January 2006

Turkish and Iranian military operations in northern Iraq causes displacement (2006-2008)

- Turkey and Iran have dispatched tanks, artillery and thousands of troops to their frontiers with Iraq in mid 2006 what appears to be a coordinated effort to disrupt the activities of Kurdish rebel bases. (Guardian, 18 August 2006)
- Iran and Turkey are bound by treaty to fight the outlawed PKK, which has waged a 15-year insurgency against Ankara for self rule in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast. In return, Turkey has pledged to fight the Iranian armed opposition group, the Iraq-based People's Mujahedeen." (AFP, 1 May 2006)
- Turkish military forces have repeatedly in late 2007 to early 2008 attacked bases of Turkish-Kurdish rebels - Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, - in mountainous area of Kurdistan. In February 21 2008, Turkish military forces launched land incursion into northern Iraq, targeting Turkish-Kurdish separatist rebels.
- In December 2007, more than 300 to 700 families fled their homes in the Sangasar sub district of Sulaymaniah Governorate and from Doli Shahidan in Erbil Governorate, 100 km inside Iraq. (UNHCR, 18 December 2007; IRIN, 29 February 2008)
- In October 2007, the Turkish parliament authorized the military to strike at the rebels across the border. (IHT, 15 January 2008) Turkish military amassed over 60,000 troops at the Iraqi-Turkish border.
- Approximately 200 families (1,500 persons) were said to be temporarily displaced after shelling by Iranian forces against areas used by the Iranian Kurdish region (UNAMI, 18 July 2006) In August 2007, an upsurge in fighting between Kurdish guerrillas and Iranian Government forces in north-east Iraq would lead to destruction of property and livestock and the displacement of about 1,000 people from their homes. (Guardian, 20 August 2007)

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 29 February 2008:

"An ongoing Turkish military offensive into Iraq targeting Turkish-Kurdish separatist rebels has forced at least 12 Kurdish families to flee their homes and has destroyed four bridges, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) said on 24 February..... Since 21 February, Turkish military forces have launched ground attacks on Iraqi territory supported by aircraft, helicopters and artillery to bomb the suspected hideouts of Turkish-Kurdish rebels in the remote, mountainous terrain of Kurdistan. ... The incursion is the first confirmed Turkish military ground operation in Iraq since the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, the late former president, in 2003..... Renewed fighting in December 2007 forced at least 700 families to flee their border villages, the

IRCS [Iraqi Red Crescent Society] said. Nearly half of them returned in January to damaged infrastructure and homes.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 18 December 2007:

We are very concerned about the displacement of people in northern Iraq caused by the ongoing shelling by Turkey and have urgently dispatched supplies to help those who fled, leaving everything behind. The relief supplies will be distributed today, Tuesday. Last weekend more than 1,800 people (300 families), fled their homes in the Sangasar sub district of Sulaymaniah Governorate and from Doli Shahidan in Erbil Governorate, 100 km inside Iraq. They have moved to safer areas of both Governorates. The displaced people told us that ten villages had been affected by the shelling.

The Guardian, 20 October 2007:

Ankara has deployed about 60,000 troops on its side of the border with Iraq, and has demanded that Iraq's Kurdish leaders, whom it accuses of aiding the PKK, cooperate with Baghdad in eradicating the rebel bases and extraditing PKK leaders. Turkey also accuses the US and the government in Baghdad of not doing enough to crack down on the rebels in Iraqi territory. But that is of little comfort to the villagers. They are particularly alarmed by reports that Turkey's generals have drawn up plans to establish a 15-mile buffer zone along the Iraqi side of the border that would include many places where refugees have settled.

Yet the Turks are already here - and have been for over a decade, with the tacit agreement of the Kurdish authorities. At one end of the Sabna valley, a garrison of Turkish soldiers occupies the Barmani airbase. To the east, in the hilltop town of Amediya, a Turkish tank watches from a small outpost. Their role is to monitor the PKK fighters, though the guerrillas are actually far away. "We don't like them to be here, but what can we do?" said Mohsen Qatani, a local tribal chief. "We ignore them and hope they ignore us. It is not our fight."

Bishop Shlimon said an estimated 6,000 Assyrian Christians who have been uprooted by violence elsewhere have found homes along Iraq's northern border with Turkey. The influx has breathed new life into many semi-abandoned rural communities, he said. This week in Anishky, for example, a Christian from Baghdad opened a hall where 1,000 people could gather for weddings. Local authorities in the Kurdistan region said they feared 30,000 people may be displaced if Turkish troops enter across the border. The UN's high commissioner for refugees, Antonio Guterres, also warned of the danger of a refugee crisis in northern Iraq if Turkey attacks.

Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), 6 January 2008:

British lawyers are taking Turkey to the European court of human rights in pursuit of compensation for deaths and damage allegedly inflicted by repeated bombardments of northern Iraq. The test cases, lodged in Strasbourg, will force one of Nato's largest military powers to justify incursions aimed at destroying Kurdish rebel bases in mountains beyond its borders.

The Guardian, 20 August 2007, 18 August 2006:

Iraqi Kurdish officials expressed deepening concern yesterday at an upsurge in fierce clashes between Kurdish guerrillas and Iranian forces in the remote border area of north-east Iraq, where Tehran has recently deployed thousands of Revolutionary Guards. Jabar Yawar, a deputy minister in the Kurdistan regional government, said four days of intermittent shelling by Iranian forces had hit mountain villages high up on the Iraqi side of the border, wounding two women, destroying livestock and property, and displacing about 1,000 people from their homes. Mr Yawar said there had also been intense fighting on the Iraqi border between Iranian forces and guerrillas of the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK), an armed Iranian Kurdish group that is stepping up its campaign for Kurdish rights against the theocratic regime in Tehran.

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

“ In Sulaymaniya, approximately 200 families were said to have fled their shelters after skirmishes, on 1 May, between Iranian troops and Iranian Kurdish elements allegedly operating from the Iraqi territory. It is reported that all families have subsequently returned to their homes.”

IRIN, 2 May 2006:

“About 200 families fled their homes on the Iraq-Iran border on Monday as Iranian forces shelled areas used by Iranian-Kurdish rebels, according to Kurdish officials. “The shelling began on Sunday and continued until Monday morning,” said Azad Waso Hassan, member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which controls the area. [...] Hassan added that about 1,500 people from several villages in and around Sulaimaniyah, some 260km north-east of Baghdad, had been forced to flee as a result of the violence. [...] Iranian forces reportedly launched a similar artillery barrage in the area on 21 April. Kurdish rebels have recently staged attacks against Iranian army and Revolutionary Guard positions from territory in Iraq. In response, Teheran has reportedly massed troops on the border, near the mountainous areas close to Haj Umran, which has been used in the past by anti-Iranian fighters thought to be linked to the militant Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. The Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS), meanwhile, has said it has no specific reports about those displaced by the shelling. “But we have sent blankets, food and other things to help these families,” said IRCS Director Dr Saad Haqi.”

AFP, 1 May 2006:

"Iranian forces shelled Kurdish rebel positions in Iraq for the second day, forcing dozens of Kurdish families to flee. "The Iranians shelled PKK positions from 9 pm (1700 GMT) on Sunday until 5 am (0100 GMT) on Monday," Rustom Judi, a leader of the rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Iraq's northern province of Sulaimaniyah, told AFP. "Dozens of families were forced to leave their homes," he said Monday. [...] On April 20, Iranian shelling killed at least two people and injured 10 others in Iraq, the PKK said, while a group linked to the rebels, Pejak, killed four fighters inside Iran in weekend violence. Iran is bound by treaty with Turkey to fight the outlawed PKK, which has waged a 15-year insurgency against Ankara for self rule in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast. In return, Turkey has pledged to fight the Iranian armed opposition group, the Iraq-based People's Mujahedeen."

See Also :

Fighting in northern Iraq enters fifth day:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/feb/25/turkish.campaign>
Families seek redress for Turkish incursions:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jun/09/humanrights.turkey>
[Turkey army says launched land offensive into Iraq](#), **Reuters**, 22 February 2008
[Turkish jets bomb Kurdish rebel hide-outs in northern Iraq](#), **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 15 January 2008

Secondary displacement post-2003

General: Secondary displacement of returnees and displaced communities following on policies

- Multiple movements of displaced persons combined with government policies has resulted in secondary displacement of returnees as well as of displaced.

- The significance of the population concerned entails that this category remains a pattern of concern. This is quite apart to multiple displacement faced as result of sectarian civil war, or MNF-I and Iraqi government military actions.
- In 2004 and 2005, UNHCR and UNAMI would note many returnees from abroad ended up in internal displacement, largely because of the lack of absorption capacities, ongoing conflicts and property disputes.
- In 2008, UNHCR and IOM note that similarly returnees finding their residences occupied or destroyed have been secondarily displaced.
- Iraqi government has through 2007 to 2008 began addressing situation of IDPs who are second occupants of private and public property. These ad hoc measures have entailed secondary displacement.

International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

"Evictions are a serious concern throughout the country, particularly in Baghdad. The Prime Minister's office has issued an eviction order for all Baghdad squatters, beginning 2 September 2008. This measure is intended to empty out occupied houses so that displaced owners of these houses may return. Although some of these houses are illegally occupied by militant groups, a significant number of squatters are IDP families who could become secondarily displaced. Newly displaced families will be entitled to the government rental subsidy of 300,000 Iraqi Dinar (approximately US\$253) for six months. In addition, it is reported that several thousand IDP families in Tikrit district of Salah al-Din governorate are in danger of eviction because they are squatting on land that belongs to the municipality. The families are mostly from Kirkuk and Erbil. Another 370 families are in danger of eviction from Al Rasheed hospital in Baghdad, and 210 families were evicted from former intelligence headquarters in Baghdad."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

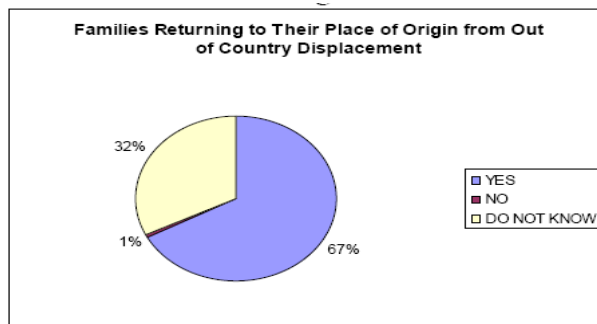
"68% of surveyed IDP returnees went back to their place of origin, while others might have been displaced again to a different neighbourhood or governorate. The Governorates of Dahuk, Kerbala, Baghdad and Basrah appear to have been particularly affected by "returns" into displacement: All families surveyed in the Governorates of Dahuk and Kerbala had moved into secondary displacement as they could not return to their place of origin. The same is true for 28% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Basrah and 10% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Baghdad.

In addition, some families in Missan Governorate have not returned to their place of origin in other governorates due to ongoing insecurity and presence of armed groups. They are living with relatives. Some families surveyed the Governorate of Kerbala cited security concerns to return to their places of origin in Baghdad, saying that they had heard of returnees having been killed in their area. Most families in Kerbala said they were unable to return to their place of origin because the groups who had previously threatened them were still in control of their areas. In addition, they mentioned that the general security situation had not yet completely stabilized. Some of these families are now living with relatives in the Governorate of Kerbala.

Of the surveyed families who had returned to Baghdad in December 2007, only 37% had returned to their home. The main reasons for not returning were damaged houses and the unstable security situation. ***Families, who returned to their place of origin but were subsequently displaced again, were not captured by this survey.*** UNHCR became aware of these cases only through narrative accounts and therefore does not have a clear number. The fact that some returnees were displaced again was also confirmed by other sources.

67% of surveyed returnees from abroad seem to have returned to their place of origin. However, many families, in particular in the Governorates of Missan and Kerbala, may not have come back

to their place of origin and may again move. Local authorities indicated that for 67% of the surveyed returnees they assume they will stay in their current location, while in 31% of the cases they are not able to indicate whether they will stay in their current location or not. In 1% of the surveyed cases, they clearly stated that the families will move again. "



Data Source: UNHCR PACs

Secondary Occupants under threat of Eviction (September 2008)

- As of September 2nd Iraqi government has began implementing a government decision to address second occupants of properties belonging to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.
- In July 20th, Iraqi government announced measure to encourage more than 4 million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes. This included a one month grace period for second occupants occupying properties belonging to IDPs or refugees to vacate properties.
- The Ministry of Migration and Displacement has reported that number of occupied properties includes 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties include houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad has the highest number at 2,369.
- Though there is no clear idea of the figures involved, UN assessments indicate that there are 230,000 secondary occupants in public properties throughout Iraq. IOM survey has noted that of the 1,6 million displaced between 2006 to 2008 5% reside in public buildings, 0,4% military camps, or 9,8% other.

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 8 September 2008:

"Our security forces, in cooperation with local officials in Baghdad neighbourhoods, have begun implementing the government decision to check on these houses and force those who illegally occupy them out," Brig Gen Qassim al-Mousawi said. If these families fail to produce legal papers showing they are occupying the house according to an agreement with the owner they will face legal action, al-Mousawi told IRIN.

The government has not yet released any data of how many houses belonging to displaced families have been cleared of squatters. But on 3 September, the Migration and Displacement Ministry released [its first report](#) on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties included houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad had the highest number of squatter-occupied properties at 2,369, followed by Diyala with 963 and Anbar with 63. The rest were in the provinces of Salaheddin, Taamim, Babil, Kut, Nineveh and Muthana.

On 20 July, the Iraqi government announced measures to encourage the more than four million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes, including a one-month grace period for squatters to

vacate properties. The measures also included a one-off payment of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$1,500) to squatters to help them rent other properties. In addition, it was stipulated that IDPs willing to return to their houses would be paid one million dinars (\$840). Each internally displaced family that has not yet returned home qualifies for a monthly payment of 150,000 dinars (\$145) for three months while still displaced."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

"Evictions are a serious concern throughout the country, particularly in Baghdad. The Prime Minister's office has issued an eviction order for all Baghdad squatters, beginning 2 September 2008. This measure is intended to empty out occupied houses so that displaced owners of these houses may return. Although some of these houses are illegally occupied by militant groups, a significant number of squatters are IDP families who could become secondarily displaced. Newly displaced families will be entitled to the government rental subsidy of 300,000 Iraqi Dinar (approximately US\$253) for six months. In addition, it is reported that several thousand IDP families in Tikrit district of Salah al-Din governorate are in danger of eviction because they are squatting on land that belongs to the municipality. The families are mostly from Kirkuk and Erbil. Another 370 families are in danger of eviction from Al Rasheed hospital in Baghdad, and 210 families were evicted from former intelligence headquarters in Baghdad."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 27 January 2008:

"The Iraqi Ministry of Defence has given about 300 internally displaced persons (IDPs) one week to evacuate a former military compound in Babil Province, about 100km south of the capital, Baghdad, officials said on 25 January. "Representatives of about 45 displaced families last week appealed to the Iraqi parliament for help to persuade the defence ministry to postpone its decision," Abdul-Khaleq Zankana, head of parliament's displacement committee, told IRIN, adding that the Iraqi army intended to reuse the compound as a military base....

Al-Zubaidi added that a provincial committee had been formed to find a solution for these families; either by re-housing them in an abandoned government building or by erecting a new camp for them. "But most probably we will get a piece of land in the suburbs [of Hilla] from the city's municipality to erect more than 100 tents for them and supply them with food and non-food items," al-Zubaidi said. "It is indeed a problem. It will be difficult for us to erect a camp in four or five days as we are in winter and it is raining nowadays. Because of that we need more time."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 January 2008:

"Local authorities in Kerbala, a southern province of Iraq about 120km south of the capital, Baghdad, have destroyed thousands of hectares of agricultural land, putting dozens of peasant families at risk of being displaced, according to residents. "The farmers had been warned since last September to leave their farmland as plans have been drawn up by local authorities to turn the area into a residential one for the families of victims of the previous regime," Amal al-Hir, head of Kerbala Agricultural Directorate, said. According to al-Hir, the late former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in 1991 granted 10-year contracts to peasant farmers in a desert area that he designated as a new green belt for Kerbala."

See Also:

[Iraq Situation Update - August 2008](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), September 2008

[IOM Monitoring and Needs Assessments: Assessments of Iraqi Return](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008

Many refugees return to a situation of displacement (2005-2008)

- Most refugees that returned from neighbouring countries including Iran, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia in 2003 to 2005 were spontaneous and unassisted. It is assumed that many of these returnees ended up internally displaced. (UNHCR, October 2005)
- Recently in late 2007 and 2008, many of the returnees have possibly faced internal displacement upon return according to the IOM and UNHCR assessments.
- MoDM estimated that approximately 40,000 families had returned from abroad, and 6,000 families from within Iraq in 2007. (UNHCR, February 2008)
- It is estimated that around 30% might have been displaced again to a different governorate or neighbourhood within affected urban areas. Governorates of Dahuk, Kerbala, Baghdad, and Basra appear to have been particularly affected by returns into displacement. (UNHCR, February 2008)

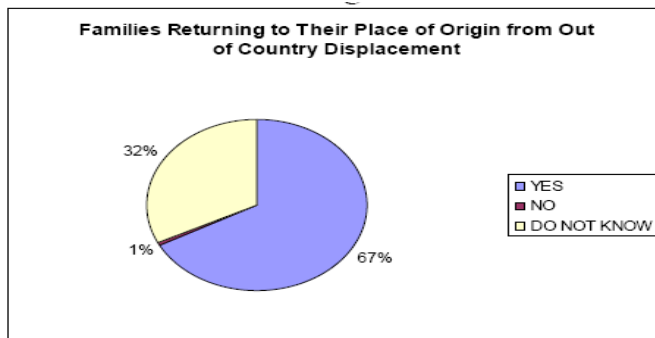
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

"68% of surveyed IDP returnees went back to their place of origin, while others might have been displaced again to a different neighbourhood or governorate. The Governorates of Dahuk, Kerbala, Baghdad and Basrah appear to have been particularly affected by "returns" into displacement: All families surveyed in the Governorates of Dahuk and Kerbala had moved into secondary displacement as they could not return to their place of origin. The same is true for 28% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Basrah and 10% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Baghdad.

In addition, some families in Missan Governorate have not returned to their place of origin in other governorates due to ongoing insecurity and presence of armed groups. They are living with relatives. Some families surveyed the Governorate of Kerbala cited security concerns to return to their places of origin in Baghdad, saying that they had heard of returnees having been killed in their area. Most families in Kerbala said they were unable to return to their place of origin because the groups who had previously threatened them were still in control of their areas. In addition, they mentioned that the general security situation had not yet completely stabilized. Some of these families are now living with relatives in the Governorate of Kerbala.

Of the surveyed families who had returned to Baghdad in December 2007, only 37% had returned to their home. The main reasons for not returning were damaged houses and the unstable security situation. ***Families, who returned to their place of origin but were subsequently displaced again, were not captured by this survey.*** UNHCR became aware of these cases only through narrative accounts and therefore does not have a clear number. The fact that some returnees were displaced again was also confirmed by other sources.

67% of surveyed returnees from abroad seem to have returned to their place of origin. However, many families, in particular in the Governorates of Missan and Kerbala, may not have come back to their place of origin and may again move. Local authorities indicated that for 67% of the surveyed returnees they assume they will stay in their current location, while in 31% of the cases they are not able to indicate whether they will stay in their current location or not. In 1% of the surveyed cases, they clearly stated that the families will move again. "



Data Source: UNHCR PACs

UNHCR, October 2005, p.24:

"In addition, many returnees from abroad ended up in internal displacement, largely because of the lack of absorption capacities, ongoing conflicts and property disputes."

OHCHR, 9 June 2004, p.21:

"[B]y April 2004, an estimated 80,000-120,000 persons had returned from, inter alia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Most of the returns have been unassisted and spontaneous. It is assumed that many of those who have returned did so to a situation of displacement."

Returnees and displacement in and around Kirkuk (2003-2004)

- Thousands of displaced Kurds, Turkomans and others began returning to Kirkuk and some other Arabised regions in April 2003 to reclaim their land and homes, most of whom were expelled during Saddam Hussein's regime in the 1980s and 1990s
- Their return caused the displacement of Arab families brought to the region. Refugees International estimates that around 100,000 Arabs were displaced following the fall of the former regime (RI, November 2003)
- Local authorities say that nearly 16,830 Kurdish families have moved to the city since March 2004 and were living in old government buildings or were camping on the outskirts of Kirkuk, waiting to return to homes they said they had been evicted (May 2005)
- Local sources estimate the number of displaced Arab families to be around 4000. Many displaced Arabs continue to refuge in military camps around Kirkuk, whereas others have fled to the outskirts of the Southern provinces, also remaining in a situation of displacement
- Turkomen are reported to be leaving the city due to fear of discrimination by the predominantly Kurdish population (May 2005) Reports indicate that Arabs continue to be displaced from Kirkuk (IRIN, 16 September 2007)

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 76:

"After the fall of the former regime, Kurdish parties seized control of key positions within Kirkuk's security forces and enabled the return of thousands of displaced Kurds and Turkmen to Kirkuk, thereby causing the displacement of Arabs, who fled out of fear or because of harassment and threats."

Refugee International, 21 November 2003:

"The return of Kurds to their former homes has in turn displaced the Arabs living in them. About 100,000 displaced Arabs are living in poor conditions in public buildings or in military camps. The UN reports that inadequate water, sanitation, and shelter, and the presence of unexploded bombs are the main problems they face."

HRW, 3 August 2004:

"Since April 2003, thousands of internally displaced Kurds, Turkomans and others have returned to Kirkuk and other Arabized regions to reclaim their homes and lands which have since been occupied by Arabs from central and southern Iraq. These returnees were forcibly expelled from their homes by the government of Saddam Hussein during the 1980s and 1990s. 'Kurds are flocking back to Kirkuk, but the city has little capacity to absorb them,' said Whitson. 'They are living in abandoned buildings and tent camps without running water or electricity supplies, and they face precarious security conditions.' At the same time, little effort has gone into finding just and durable solutions for the so-called Arabization Arabs who, in their turn, have become the latest victims of internal displacement. Many such families fled their homes during the U.S.-led invasion or were forced to do so subsequently, particularly in rural areas, but have remained in the vicinity in makeshift shelters and without basic amenities. Others living in urban areas, notably Kirkuk, never left and are waiting for their own property claims to be resolved."

HRW, August 2004:

"Human Rights Watch researchers who were present in northern Iraq at the time of the fall of Kirkuk found looting and expulsions taking place in rural villages built for Arab settlers just south of Kirkuk. In early April 2003, about 2,000 members of the al-Shummar tribe had been evicted by force from the villages of al-Muntasir, Khalid, al-Wahda, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and Sa'ad, where they had been resettled in 1973 on agricultural land seized from Kurds. A PUK official in the nearby town of Daquq explained that his party had adopted the policy that all persons resettled by the government in the north should return to their original homes.¹²¹ Senior PUK leaders denied that they were implementing a forced expulsions policy and said they would take measures to prevent further abuses."

IRIN, 23 September 2004:

Many of the displaced Arabs have gone to live with relatives in southern Iraq, particularly Nasiriyah and Basra, but others who don't have a place to go are living in unused or damaged buildings, according to some humanitarian organisations. Their living conditions are said to be bad due to the absence of sanitation and potable water. Some Arabs claim they didn't have time to move their belongings as the Kurds pushed them out. 'Saddam forced us to go in and now the Kurds have forced us to leave, and we didn't get anything but suffering for our family,' Ahmad Abo-Abdu, 55, whose displaced family now lives at the military base near Kirkuk city, told IRIN. Arab leaders in Kirkuk claim that some people refusing to vacate their houses have been abducted by Kurds. 'The [political] parties are pushing the population back and trying to kick out the Arabs,' Mohammed Khalil al-Jaboury, 38, an Arab city council member, told IRIN. He added that the local authorities in Kirkuk were not doing anything to help them and had made false promises."

See Also:

[Ethnic violence forces more Arabs to flee Kirkuk](#), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 September 2007

Forced displacement pre-2003

Efficient forced displacement: a policy of the Iraqi Government (2002)

- Expulsions from homes has been used as a punishment, to obtain economic resources or undermine political opposition

- Overwhelming force used to achieve expulsions and destroy villages, but more bureaucratic methods used if villages used for Arab inhabitants

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p1:

"In Iraq, the expulsion of people from their homes has long been state policy. Expulsions have been undertaken to punish and subdue recalcitrant populations. To this end, genocidal acts have taken place against the Kurds in the 1980s and against the Marsh Arabs in the 1990s. On other occasions, expulsions have been part of a strategy to secure valuable economic resources, as with the on-going 'Arabization' campaign against the Turkmen, Kurds, and Assyrians. Expulsions have also been used to undermine the growth of political opposition as with the Shi'a in the south, or to forestall a fifth column as with the taba'iyya, those thought to be sympathetic to Iran, at the beginning of the war in 1980. In Iraq, over the last thirty years, there has never been a time when one group or another was not being expelled from their homes.

The tactics used to accomplish the expulsions have included the use of overwhelming force, with the full-fledged deployment of infantry, armor and weapons of mass destruction, backed up by village demolition crews. In cases where the regime wished to retain physical infrastructure and merely change the identity of the inhabitants, more bureaucratic processes were used and continue to be used, such as regulations imposing national or religious restrictions on land ownership, employment, access to health and education, and humanitarian assistance. Carefully planned and executed expulsion operations sometimes occurred virtually overnight, with large numbers of people on the run, with only the clothes on their backs. Another method of expulsion, a slower, albeit surer, one which we will examine more closely below, were large-scale construction projects that radically altered the environment – the draining of the southern marshes is the prime example – in order to accomplish military, political, or even economic goals. Indeed, the expulsion of the Marsh Arabs can be viewed as a form of development-induced displacement – beneath what used to be marshland lie some of the world's largest untapped oil fields."

Multiple displacements in northern Iraq (1990s - 2001)

- In 1998 UN-Habitat estimated that out of 3 million people in northern Iraq, 1 million had been internally displaced at one time or another
- The displaced include victims of the Anfal campaign, people expelled from government-controlled regions, people displaced by Kurdish in-fighting, or people close to the border

USCR, 2000:

"Many residents of northern Iraq have been displaced multiple times. In 1998, the UN Center for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat) estimated that more than 1 million people (out of a population of 3 million) were internally displaced in the three northern governorates at one time or another. At least 100,000 of the displaced in the north are people from the government-controlled regions of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Sinjar bordering the north who have been expelled into the north in recent years, including 1999.

Those displaced in northern Iraq also include people previously displaced from government-controlled Iraq; about half of the displaced were forced out before 1991, many during the 'Anfal' campaign in the late 1980s when Baghdad forces wiped out about 4,500 Kurdish villages, including virtually all villages near the borders of Turkey and Iran. The rest of the displaced have been uprooted from one part of northern Iraq to another by factional Kurdish in-fighting or, for people living in border areas, by incursions or shelling from outside the Kurdish-controlled region by Turkish, Iranian, or Iraqi government forces."

Habitat Jan 2001, p1:

"At 1999 Sulaimaniyah Conference the following category definition was produced:

Those from Kirkuk (old and new caseload). Khanaqin, Kifri, Makhmour, Sinjar, Tala'far, Mosul and other areas.

Those displaced as a result of conflict between the two major factions in Iraqi Kurdistan.

People affected by conflict involving the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).[...]

Others in collective towns including widows and children, who would like to return to places of origin if given the opportunity to do so.

All other citizens of Iraq displaced/expelled for political reasons."

UN SC, 19 November 1998, Sect. IV:

"The composition of the displaced population now includes: (a) those in collective towns who are unable to return; (b) those who do not wish to return; and (c) those displaced persons who have taken refuge in urban and semi-urban areas and who, because of their vulnerable position, require water and sewage and other infrastructure services. [...] These two groups [(a) and (c) make up 0.8 million persons."

Aquilla Lawrence, Summer 2000:

"About 900,000 internal refugees – as much as a third of the region's population – are scattered across Iraqi Kurdistan. Some of them have been displaced several times in the last twenty years by violence between the Kurds here and Turkey. Some are unable to return home because the soil is still strewn with landmines. About 200 people each month are killed or maimed by mines, according to the UN de-miners."

UNHCR/ACCORD, 14 November 2000:

"The other kind of displacement happened in Northern Iraq after the conflict between the PUK and the KDP, especially after the KDP gained the control over Arbil City, which had been in the hands of the PUK since 1995. A forcible exchange of population took place from Arbil City to Sulaymaniyah City and vice versa, affecting around 50,000-55,000 people respectively (100,000-110,000 all in all). These people were sent to the other town just because they were accused of being affiliated with the other party. They lost their social status and support as well as their property: houses, cars, land."

Eviction of Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians from the Kirkuk area (1997-2002)

- Since 1997, Iraqi government forced Kurds, as well as a number of Turkmen and Assyrians to leave the Kirkuk area as part of its policy of 'arabization'
- Most of the people expelled from Kirkuk decided to go north, despite government decree that doing so would cause them to lose their property and food rationing cards
- Families perceived to be opposed to the regime, families who have relatives outside Iraq or in southern Iraq and those who have relatives in detention or executed are said to be the first targeted in the process of forced displacement
- Baath Party members are responsible for ordering the eviction of families viewed as opponents of the Iraqi regime
- Kurdish sources reported acceleration of forced displacement of non-Arab citizens in 2001 and 2002

AI, 24 November 2000:

"Since mid-1997 thousands of Kurds and a number of other non-Arabs, including Turkmen and Assyrians, who have lived all their lives in the Kirkuk region, which is about 260 kilometers north of Baghdad, have been expelled to the Kurdish provinces in the north controlled by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) because of their ethnic origin and because of Kirkuk's strategic location as well as its oil fields. The authorities have given Kurdish families targeted the choice of either going to Southern Iraq or to the Kurdish provinces. If the families choose Southern Iraq then they are allowed to take some of their possessions with them. However, if they choose to go to the north their properties, as well as their food rationing cards are confiscated by the authorities. The majority of the families have reportedly chosen to go north. [...]"

Once in Northern Iraq some of the families expelled tried to live with relatives. The majority, however, have been resettled in camps such as the al-Salam camp near Chamchamal and Benislawa camp near Erbil. The KDP, PUK and UN agencies have provided them with basic food, tents, blankets and other items. Their empty properties in the Kirkuk region and in Khanaqeen are given by the authorities to pro-government Arabs brought from other regions in Iraq. Thus far thousands of Arabs from other regions in Iraq have been resettled in the Kirkuk governorate."

UNHCR, June 2000, p.12:

"Forced displacement of the Turkomen was reported to have resumed in the last months of 1998, particularly in the Kirkuk area. The head of the coalition of the Turkoman parties stated that about 5,000 evicted Turkomans were living in 'sub-human conditions in Northern Iraq.'"

HRW, December 2000:

"In 2000 "The government continued its forced expulsion of Kurds and Turkmen from Kirkuk, Khaniqin, Makhmour, Sinjar, Tuz Khormatu, and other districts as part of its 'Arabization' program.[...] Over 800 people were reportedly expelled between January and June, bringing the total number of those expelled since 1991 to over 94,000, according to Kurdish opposition sources."

Kurdistan Observer, 26 March 2001:

In 2001 "Iraqi authorities have forcefully deported five Kurdish families in Tuze Khurmatoo south of Kirkuk city. Their documents were ceased and their houses were expropriated and given to Arab families. The families were asked to register as Arabs or face deportation to the areas controlled by the Kurdish authorities. The deportees who arrived in Kurdistan asked UN to pressure Iraqi government to allow them back to their land and to halt further deportation activities. The deportees numbered 33 persons, all from the farm lands near Tuze Khurmatoo."

RFE/RL, 15 February 2002:

"Emanuel Khoshaba, an official with the Assyrian Democratic Movement, said that '10 Assyrian families have been forced to move to...Baghdad since the beginning of the year,' according to 'Zinda' on 12 February. The deportation of these families is part of the arabization campaign spearheaded by the ruling Iraqi Ba'th Party."

RFE/RL, 26 April 2002:

"The Iraqi government's ethnic-cleansing campaign against the country's non-Arab citizens has accelerated, according to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Kurdish-language daily "Kurdistan Nuwe" on 17 April [2002]. "Daily, the Iraqi government further intensifies the policy of ethnic cleansing and deportation of Kurds in the regions under its own control," reported "Kurdistan Nuwe." The article continues, "Whenever the global problems become more intricate and more threatening, the Iraqi government finds it an opportune time to further implement its schemes against the Iraqi people in general and the Kurdish people in particular.[...]"

'On 5 January 2002, [Saddam Hussein's] Presidency Council issued a directive through the Interior Ministry, to the Kirkuk Governorate in which it called for probing into the causes of death of all the Kurdish citizens from 1991 to 1996 in Kirkuk, for the purpose of expelling...the families and relatives of the Kurds who were martyred in the battles for liberating Kirkuk..., ' the report said. The battles for liberating Kirkuk refer to the brief seizure of Kirkuk by Iraqi Kurdish forces during the abortive March 1991 Kurdish uprising."

For more information on forced displacement from Kirkuk, please see Zanger, Maggy, April 2002, "Refugees in Their Own Country, War Without Borders", Middle East Report 222, Spring 2002, [[External Link](#)]

The "Arabization" policy of the former regime (1970s-1990s)

- Mainly from the 1970s and onward, Iraqi administrations displaced hundreds of thousands of ethnic Kurds, Turkomans, and Assyrians from Northern Iraq, repopulating the region with Arabs from central and southern Iraq, a policy known as "Arabisation"
- Arabisation was carried out to gain government control of valuable oil resources
- By the late 1970s, the Iraqi government had forcibly evacuated as least a quarter of a million Kurds from areas bordering Iran and Turkey and the inhabitants relocated to settlements in army-controlled areas of Iraq Kurdistan
- The majority of the displaced Kurdish population were expelled or fled to the Kurdish Autonomous Region,
- Others were resettled in the large-scale 'complexes' or 'collective villages' built by the Iraqi government
- Some were forcibly settled far away in central and southern Iraq
- The government used military force and intimidation primarily but also legal means, invalidating property deeds of the displaced Kurds
- The government nationalized the agricultural lands, making them the property of the Iraqi state
- Arab farmers and their families were resettled in the formerly Kurdish areas
- The majority of Sunni Arabs from the al-Jazeera desert seem to have moved to the north voluntarily or with minimal coercion
- A small number of Shi'a tribes who were moved to the north appear to have been largely forced
- In the 1990s the Iraqi government focused its Arabization efforts on the oil-rich city of Kirkuk and its surrounding area
- Kurds, Turkomans, and Assyrians came under constant pressure to sign 'ethnic identity correction' forms relinquishing their ethnicity and registering officially as Arabs

See also Noori Talabany, [Iraq's Policy of Ethnic Cleansing: Onslaught to Change National/Demographic Characteristics of the Kirkuk Region](#) (1999) .

HRW, August 2004:

"Since the 1930s, but particularly from the 1970s onwards, successive Iraqi administrations have forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of ethnic Kurds, Turkomans (a Turkish-speaking Iraqi minority), and Assyrians from northern Iraq, and repopulated the area with Arabs moved from central and southern Iraq.[2] This policy, known as 'Arabization' (*ta'rib*) was conducted in order to consolidate government control over the valuable oil resources and arable lands located in

northern Iraq. The massive forced displacement of Kurdish families from northern Iraq is not synonymous with Arabization, as armed conflict and the genocidal Anfal campaign of 1988 also accounted for large numbers of displaced Kurds. But even when Kurds were displaced by armed conflict or the Anfal campaign, the Iraqi government often ensured that their displacement became permanent and brought in Arab settlers to take over their homes. For the hundreds of thousands of Kurds displaced from their homes by Arabization, armed conflict, and genocide in Iraq, their continued displacement represents a crime that must be redressed.

The first massive wave of forced displacement in northern Iraq followed the 1974 unilateral declaration by the Iraqi government of a Kurdistan Autonomous Region covering the northern governorates of Arbil, Sulaimaniyya, and Dohuk. The area comprised some 14,000 square miles but included only half of the land area claimed by Iraq's Kurds, and excluded the oil-rich lands around the city of Kirkuk. In the wake of the 1974 autonomy decree, the Ba'th Party embarked on the Arabization of the oilproducing areas around Khanaqin, evicting Kurdish farmers and replacing them with Arab tribal families from southern Iraq. Tens of thousands of villagers from the Barzani tribe were also forcibly removed from their homes following the collapse in 1975 of the Kurdish revolt, led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani. The villagers were relocated to barren sites in the southern deserts, where they had to rebuild their lives from scratch. By the late 1970s, the Iraqi government had forcibly evacuated as least a quarter of a million Kurdish men, women, and children from areas bordering Iran and Turkey. Their villages were destroyed to create a *cordon sanitaire* along these sensitive frontiers, and the inhabitants relocated to settlements built for that purpose located on the main highways in army-controlled areas of Iraq Kurdistan.[3]

The scale of the displacement of Kurds in the north during the mid-1970s was immense, displacing the entire Kurdish population from an area reaching from the town of Khanaqin, close to the Iranian border, to the Syrian and Turkish border areas around Sinjar. Many Kurdish villages were bulldozed, and new Arab settlements were built nearby. The bureaucratic nature of the Iraqi state makes it possible to reconstruct the scale of the displacement, as many of the landownership records of the pre-Arabization period still exist. The decrees passed by the Ba'th government in implementation of its Arabization policy also exist, as do detailed records of the Arab families that were brought to inhabit the vacated areas. An official of the Agricultural Department in Shaikhan district, located in Mosul governorate (renamed Nineveh by the Iraqi government), listed forty-six originally Kurdish and Yazidi villages that had been Arabized in the 1970s.[4]

Tens of thousands of displaced men, women, and children fled into Iran. Most returned to Iraqi Kurdistan after the establishment of Kurdish self-rule in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, but were unable to return to their original villages located outside Kurdish-controlled areas. The majority of the displaced Kurdish population were expelled or fled to the Kurdish Autonomous Region, or were resettled in the large-scale 'complexes' or 'collective villages' built by the Iraqi government. Others were forcibly settled far away in central and southern Iraq, often in majority Sunni towns that formed the backbone of support for Ba'th Party rule. When Human Rights Watch researchers visited the Sunni towns of al-Ramadi and al-Falluja in April and May 2003 respectively, they found entire neighborhoods of desperately poor Kurds who had been forcefully displaced from their homes in the north since the mid-1970s, and had never been allowed to return home.

[...]

The Repopulation of the North with Arab Tribes

The methods used by the Iraqi government to effect the forced displacements of the 1970s and 1980s involved first and foremost military force and intimidation: entire Kurdish villages were completely depopulated and bulldozed by Iraqi forces. But the Iraqi government followed up the brutality with legal decrees aimed at consolidating the displacement. First, the property deeds of the displaced Kurds were invalidated by legal decree, most frequently without compensation or with nominal compensation. The

Iraqi government nationalized the agricultural lands, making them the property of the Iraqi state.

The Iraqi government simultaneously embarked on a massive campaign to resettle the formerly Kurdish areas with Arab farmers and their families, thus completing the Arabization process. The Iraqi government did not have to look far for eager recruits for its Arabization campaign: located southwest of Mosul was the large al-Jazeera desert, home to hundreds of thousands of loyalist nomadic Sunni Arab tribesmen. Enticed with free, irrigated land, and encouraged by their tribal shaikhs, the al-Jazeera tribesmen abandoned their hard lives in the desert and moved north en masse.

One elderly Arab tribesman from the al-Hadidi tribe recounted how his family and other tribesmen had moved north in late 1974 to be resettled in an emptied Kurdish village:

We went to Hin Djok at the end of 1974, October or November. Before this, we used to live like shepherds with our sheep, south of Mosul. We had no lands, and we used to take our sheep [grazing in the desert.] In 1974, the government came and asked if we wanted lands in the north. We were very grateful and voluntarily went to the north. We built our own houses, all of our families built new houses, and we also dug water wells. Each farmer got sixty dunums⁵ of irrigated land.[6]

Another elderly Arab tribesman from the al-Hadidi tribe explained how forty-seven families from his tribe went to the Kurdish village of Khani Siddiq in 1975:

We went to Khani Siddiq in 1975. Before, we were living from place to place in the al-Jazeera desert, in our tents. We owned no land. The government came to us and said they would take us to villages in the north. The government kicked out the Kurds and gave them compensation, and then brought us. The government didn't force us to go to the north. They came and asked us if we had lands and we said no. They said that if anyone wanted to the north, they would take us. We were very happy to go to the north because we had no irrigated lands in the south. There were little houses in the village. We reconstructed those houses and built some new ones. They gave us sixty dunums each, but this was different in each village.[7]

The process by which Arabs came to the north was remarkably similar throughout the vast region the Iraqi government repopulated with Arabs, stretching from Khanaqin near the Iranian border to Sinjar near the Syrian border. 'Alaiwi Sanur Hamid al-Sayeh, an elderly Arab farmer who moved with about thirty Arab families to the village of Suhaila near the Syrian border in 1974, described his move in nearly identical terms to the version given by the al-Hadidi tribesmen above, who settled in Shaikhan district hundreds of miles away:

We came to Suhaila in 1974. We came from Salahuddin governorate, from the al-Jazeera desert. The government and the Ba'th moved us from al-Jazeera to this village. The government came to us, and announced that there were lands in these villages, and if we wanted to register [for land], we could. We registered, and one day they brought vehicles to transport us. Before this, we were living like bedouin in tents. They assigned each farmer 100 dunums.[8]

The shaikhs of the Arab tribes of the al-Jazeera desert—the area from which the largest number of Arab settlers came—confirmed this version of events in interviews with Human Rights Watch. According to Shaikh Nawwaf Hawwaz al-'Atmi al-Shummari, a leader of the al-Shummar tribe in the north, Iraqi government representatives came to the al-Jazeera desert in 1974, asking them to move north: 'The government came to us and told us to go live there [in the north], saying they would give us some land, just to protect the oil fields. We went to live in seven villages, each with 100 to 150 families.' [9] Shaikh Mustafa Ahmad al-Warsan, the head of the large al-Hadidi tribe that settled dozens of Kurdish villages in the north, gave a similar explanation:

Prior to the 1970s, the Arabs of our tribes used to live in the al-Jazeera desert, and none of them used to own any land. Or they lived in villages that belonged to other people and worked their land [as sharecroppers]. The people who lived in the al-Jazeera desert lived in temporary settlements [i.e. tents] because there was no water there, so their life depended on the rain. The land in the al-Jazeera doesn't belong to anyone [individually], so some people used 500 dunums, others 1,000 dunums. ...The government announced [in the mid-1970s] to all the tribes in the al-Jazeera that there were irrigated lands in the north. Most of the people went north because of these lands. It was different from village to village—some farmers received twenty dunums, others thirty. This depended on the size of the village and the number of people who went to the village. ...The agreement they gave us was that we had rental contracts with the government. Each farmer had a contract and we used to pay a rent rate every year. This contract was renewed annually.[10]

Shaikh Mustafa made a point of crucial relevance to the resolution of the property disputes in the north, namely that the majority of Arabs who came to the north to resettle rural villages were not given title to the land they farmed, but rather worked under annual rental contracts. While the rights of these Arab farmers, who built their homes on the land and often lived there for decades, should not be minimized, at the same time it is of legal relevance that most Arabs were never made the actual owners of the land taken from the Kurds—a situation different from the urban Arabization of Kirkuk, where the Arabs who came to the area were given full title to the land.

Human Rights Watch interviewed dozens of Arab families and Arab tribal leaders who ventured to the north under the Arabization campaign, and the majority of those interviewed clearly stated that they had come to the north by choice, after being offered lucrative irrigated land by the government. Some stressed, however, that their desperate economic situation in the al-Jazeera desert gave them little choice. Shaikh Hamdi Idbis Hussain, head of the al-Luhaib tribe, explained why he decided to accept a government offer to settle formerly Kurdish villages in the Makhmour district in the mid-1990's: 'We went there because the members of my tribe are very poor and had no land. Most of them used to live on just one meal a day.'[11] An Arab farmer who had resettled from the al-Jazeera desert to the village of Shamarash in Shaikhan district stressed that he had little choice in the move: 'We moved because there was an order from the government to move to this village. Whether I was happy or unhappy, I had to obey that order. During the last regime, if the government gave an order to the people to do something, they had to obey.'[12]

While the majority of Sunni Arabs from the al-Jazeera desert appear to have moved to the north either voluntarily or with minimal coercion, a small number of Shi'a tribes who were moved to the north appear to have come under much greater pressure to do so. For example, the government in 1975 ordered some 150 families from the Shi'a al-Shuraifi tribe to leave their ancestral home in al-Nassiriyya and to resettle in Khanaqin. Their ancestral lands were then given away to other tribes, and they were registered as residents of Khanaqin. The al-Shuraifi leadership claims they were moved against their will and lost their ancestral lands because they refused to join the Ba'th Party and were suspected of being sympathetic to the outlawed Islamic Da'wa and Iraqi Communist parties.[13]

Another Shi'a tribe from the south, the Albu Mahmoud tribe from Kut, also claimed to have been similarly forced to resettle in Khanaqin in 1975: 'We were displaced by the government in 1975 to Khanaqin, because they wanted to take us to the Kurdish areas. We were forced to go to the north: They displaced us to replace the Kurds.'[14] A third Shi'a tribe, the al-Fahd from Kut, also claimed to have been forced to go north, 'because of the ethnic cleansing of the Kurds.'[15] Altogether, Human Rights Watch found about 450 Shi'a families who claimed to have been forcefully resettled by the Iraqi government to Khanaqin. Following the March 2003 war, they were evicted by the original Kurdish owners and were living in abandoned government buildings when Human Rights Watch met them.

The Arabization of the Kirkuk Region

Following the failed 1991 uprisings, the Iraqi government focused its Arabization efforts on the oil-rich city of Kirkuk and its surrounding area. Kurds, Turkomans, and Assyrians came under constant pressure to sign 'ethnic identity correction' forms relinquishing their ethnicity and registering officially as Arabs. [20] Non-Arabs were also required to become members of the Ba`th Party, and to serve in 'volunteer' militias such as *Jaysh al-Quds* (Jerusalem Army) or the *Fida'iyyi Saddam* (Saddam's Martyrs, often referred to in Western media as the Fedayeen). Families that refused to comply were issued formal expulsion orders requiring them to leave their homes and move to Kurdish-controlled areas. The government of Iraq displaced approximately 120,000 persons from Kirkuk and other areas under government control from 1991 to 2000 in furtherance of its Arabization campaign. [21] Arab families were given financial incentives to move north, and the Iraqi government embarked on housing construction projects to bring more Arab families north in order to change the demographic make-up of the north."

[Footnotes]

2 For a historic overview of Iraq's Arabization policies, see Noori Talabany, *Iraq's Policy of Ethnic Cleansing: Onslaught to Change National/Demographic Characteristics of the Kirkuk Region* (1999) [...].

3 Human Rights Watch, *Iraq's Crime of Genocide: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds*, New Haven and London, 1995.

4 Human Rights Watch interview with Haji Muhammad Ya'qub Hussain, assistant to the director of the

Agriculture Department of Shaikhan, June 10, 2003.

5 The dunum is a Middle Eastern unit used for measuring land areas, dating back to the Ottoman period. The actual size of a dunum varies among Middle Eastern countries. An Iraqi dunum is equivalent to 2,500 square meters.

6 Human Rights Watch interview with Sulaiman Muhammad Ibrahim al-Hadidi, June 6, 2003.

7 Human Rights Watch interview with Muhammad Hassan 'Alawi al-Hadidi, June 7, 2003.

8 Human Rights Watch interview with 'Alawi Sanur Hamid al-Sayeh, June 21, 2003.

9 Human Rights Watch interview with Shaikh Nawwaf Hawwaz al-'Atmi al-Shummari, June 7, 2003.

10 Human Rights Watch Shaikh Mustafa Ahmad al-Warsan, June 8, 2003.

11 Human Rights Watch interview with Shaikh Hamdi Idbis Hussain, June 7, 2003.

12 Human Rights Watch interview with 'Ali Dabas Ibrahim al-Hadidi, June 6, 2003.

13 Human Rights Watch interview with Shaikh 'Ali 'Aziz al-Shuraifi, May 11, 2003; Human Rights Watch

interview with Muhsin Murshid Shulfat, May 9, 2003; Human Rights Watch interview with Karim Khudair

Buwajid, May 9, 2003.

14 Human Rights Watch interview with Sayyid Bashir Saleh Taher, May 11, 2003.

15 Human Rights Watch interview with 'Ali Tajir, May 10, 2003.

20 *Tashih al-qawmiyya* has frequently been referred to as "nationality correction" but "ethnic identity correction" is more accurate.

21 See Human Rights Watch, *Iraq: Forcible Expulsion of Ethnic Minorities* (New York: Human Rights Watch, March 2003). See also, The Iraq Foundation, "Ethnic Cleansing in Kirkuk," January 26, 2001, (concluding that "the deportation of Kurds and Turkomans from areas under government control, and particularly from the Kirkuk governorate, has left over 100,000 people from northern areas homeless and destitute."); UNHCR/ACCORD, 6th European Country of Origin Information Seminar, November 14, 2000, p. 57 (stating that "an estimated 100,000 people...were deported from government-controlled areas, especially from Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Mosul. They were sent to Northern Iraq for several reasons, yet the majority of them were accused of having affiliations with the opposition parties in the north or abroad. Being a Kurd or Turkmen also sufficed as a reason.").

Local officials in Kirkuk are granted impunity to carry out expulsion process described in government decree (2000)

- Procedures during the expulsion process included confiscation of property, of ration cards and of membership cards to government agencies
- One member of each Kurdish family expelled was often detained and had to sign a note acknowledging to move voluntarily
- Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq observes that the Baath Party and its members are effectively granted impunity in carrying out forced displacement policy
- To prevent the return of displaced persons the government would mine the area, set-up military checkpoints and demolish Kurdish sites
- Other measures included sealing off entire districts and taking children from families of minority groups hostage to intimidate their families into leaving their home regions

AI, 24 November 1999:

"The Kirkuk Governorate was renamed 'Al-Ta'mim' which means in arabic 'nationalization'. On 12 January 1998 a decree was issued by the Governorate of al-Ta'mim ordering the expulsion of 1468 families from the governorate because of its 'very important security status and geographical location'. The decree was based on directives issued by the office of the President of Iraq. It sets a date, between 15 April 1998 and 15 June 1998, for the deportation of the 1468 families. The decree gives details of the number of families to be expelled from different neighbourhoods in the Kirkuk governorate. It also includes details of the procedure to be followed by the security forces, it states:

1. One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern provinces should be detained;
2. Confiscation of property belonging to the expelled;
3. Confiscation of ration cards;
4. Confiscation of membership cards to government agencies;
5. Notification of the decree to: the head of security of each district; the Ba'ath party official of each district, the chief of each village. [...]

The expulsion of Kurdish families and other non-Arabs continued throughout 1998 and 1999. The same procedure described above is followed on each occasion."

CHR, 10 March 1998:

"According to several persons interviewed, Baath Party members from the local offices of the Baath Party in the city of Kirkuk are responsible for implementing the decision to forcibly remove the targeted families. They are in possession of lists of people living in the neighbourhood under their 'jurisdiction'. These lists contain information on each household of the neighbourhood. Baath Party members are responsible for implementation of the decisions. Aside from the various human rights which are violated in the process of forced displacement (e.g. the rights to privacy, property, movement and personal integrity), the Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq] observes that the practice of forced displacement as carried out by the Baath Party is an extralegal use of self-ascribed authority; to the extent that the ostensible authorities permit the practice to occur, the Baath Party and its members are effectively granted impunity.

According to testimony received, the following is the typical experience of those families subjected to forced displacement. Once the decision is taken to expel a family, Baath Party

members present themselves at the residence of that particular family and order them to leave the area within 24 to 48 hours. In order to ensure that the family will effectively move, Baath Party members usually withhold the identification cards of the members of the family. In some cases a member of the family is put in detention in order to accelerate the process. Once the family is ready to leave their home, they need to pass by the local police station and fill in a form stating that they are voluntarily changing their residence. Their identification cards are only then returned to them and if a member of the family was detained, only then is he or she released.

[...]

Iraqi authorities used to issue a 'displacement order' to families who were required to leave. However, it was reported that the Government of Iraq stopped this practice when they learned that the document was being used by asylum seekers outside Iraq as proof of their claims."

US DOS, 25 February 2000:

"In Kirkuk the regime periodically sealed off entire districts and conducted day-long, house-to-house searches, evidently as part of its 'Arabization' campaign to harass, and expel ethnic Kurds and Turkomen from the region. Government officials also take hostage children from families of minority groups to intimidate their families into leaving their home regions. [...] As part of its policy, the authorities demolished the houses and detained and executed family members of Shi'a who protested government actions."

CHR, 26 February 1999, para.24-28:

"The Government of Iraq has reportedly been using other measures aimed at encouraging departures and preventing displaced persons from returning. The Government has reportedly declared the area around Kirkuk, including the oil-fields and production facilities, a military and security zone and has mined the area to impede transit. The roads into the area have been heavily fortified with military checkpoints. The regime has also changed the administrative composition of Kirkuk governorate, eliminating four predominantly Kurdish districts and effectively reducing the Kurdish population to minority status. Most recently, the Iraqi Government has reportedly evicted the residents of Kirkuk's citadel and begun the demolition of this ancient Kurdish site, claiming that the envisioned new construction will generate considerable tourist revenue."

Forced displacement and ethnic cleansing of Kurdish communities - 1988 Anfal Campaign

- The Anfal campaign followed the 1980 Iran/Iraq war
- Under the direction of Ali Hassan al-Majid, a cousin of Saddam Hussein, chemical weapons were used against Kurds in northern Iraq
- The Anfal campaign reached genocidal proportions, around 100,000 Kurds were murdered
- Also in the context of Anfal, the Iraqi government destroyed between 3000 and 4000 Kurdish villages and towns displacing hundreds of thousands of Kurds
- It is believed that some were settled in government controlled settlements while others were deported to southern Iraq or fled to neighboring countries

HRW, August 2004:

"During the 1980-88 war between Iraq and Iran, the Kurdish *Peshmerga* reconstituted itself, with backing from Iran. Towards the end of the Iran-Iraq war, from February 23 until September 6, 1988, the Iraqi government launched its Anfal campaign against the Kurds, under the direction of 'Ali Hassan al-Majid, a cousin of Saddam Hussein who earned the nickname 'Chemical Ali' for his use of chemical weapons against Kurds in northern Iraq. The Anfal campaign reached genocidal

proportions, resulting in the 'disappearance' of some 100,000 Kurds, whose bodies are now being recovered in mass graves located across Iraq. During the Anfal campaign, the Iraqi government destroyed between 3,000 and 4,000 Kurdish villages and towns, displacing hundreds of thousands of Kurds. Some of the displaced Kurds were settled in army-guarded 'collective settlements,' while others were deported to southern Iraq or fled to neighboring states, notably Iran. The Anfal operation devastated Iraqi Kurdistan, leaving the entire region in ruin and a large proportion of the population displaced.

The genocidal nature of the Anfal campaign made it drastically different from the earlier and later Arabization campaigns. However, for the displaced Kurds, the impact of the Anfal campaign was similar. After the 1991 Gulf War (see below), Kurdish villagers displaced during the Anfal campaign were able to return to many destroyed villages that were within the zone controlled by Kurdish forces. However, some villages destroyed during the Anfal fell outside that zone – for example parts of Makhmour district – and displaced Kurds were unable to return to those areas."

See also, [Ali Hassan al-Majid and the Basra Massacre of 1999, HRW, February 2005](#) and the ["Anfal Campaign" maps](#)

Marsh Arabs forcibly displaced from the traditional marshlands (1980-1990s)

- During the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, many Marsh Arabs were forced to flee due to military operations and the presence of Iranian soldiers in the marsh area
- Others were forced to flee in the 1990s for political reasons, many Marsh Arabs perceived to be allied with Shi'a opponents of the former regime
- Since 1992, the government forcibly resettled some 4,000 Marsh Arabs to houses along the highway between Basra and Al-Qurna
- In 1991, it was believed that some 250,000 people were living in the Marsh area, today it is estimated only 10,000-20,000 remain
- Human Rights Watch believes that many of the acts of the Iraqi government's systematic repression of the Marsh Arabs constitute a crime against humanity
- Displacement was used as a strategy to punish and subdue recalcitrant populations, to secure valuable economic resources and to undermine the growth of political opposition
- In the Marsh area, government forces have burned and shelled villages, and built dams to divert water from the marshes to depopulate the area
- Population in the Marsh area had to submit to compulsory resettlement within Iraq, leave the country, or remain in the drained marshlands, deprived of their water-based means of livelihood
- UNEP study: experts predict that unless urgent action is taken to reverse the trend and rehabilitate the marshlands, the entire wetland system is likely to be lost within three to five years

UN Cluster 8 on IDPs and Refugees and UNCT August 2004:

"Tensions between the former Government (largely Sunni) and the majority Shi'a population often mirrored the events in the north. There were numerous confrontations between the Government and the Shi'a population culminating in the 1991 Shi'a uprising following the Gulf War. The military crushed the revolt forcing many Shi'a to flee to the northern protected areas, into Iran, or deep the southern marshlands. In 1992 the Government implemented a housing programme to move some 4,000 Marsh Arabs to houses along the highway between Basra and Al-Qurna. The forced resettlement policy allowed the marsh drainage programme to begin. The

Government ordered the destruction of the southern villages and had dams built to divert water from the marshes allowing the army to infiltrate areas where many Shi'a had found refuge.

Over ninety percent of the Marshlands were destroyed by the project creating a socio-environmental catastrophe of epic proportions. Along with the destruction of the marshes, the livelihood and homes of the people were destroyed. In 1991, it was believed there were 250,000 people living in the Marshes. Today it is estimated a mere 10,000-20,000 remain. Most have established makeshift settlements at or near their original marsh locations and a minority have resettled in and around the towns. Marsh Arab IDPs have been located as far north as Baghdad, however the numbers decline significantly as distance increases from the marshlands.

Differing opinions exist regarding durable solutions for the Marsh Arabs. The older generation want to see the marshes re-flooded to allow a return to their traditional way of life. The younger generation wants to have stable employment, secure agriculture and better access to services, and question a return to their traditional lifestyle. This remains to be a major national challenge which requires a comprehensive policy and national strategy led by the Iraqis and supported by the international community including the United Nations.”

HRW, January 2003, p2:
“Population & Tribes

With an estimated population of 200,000 – 300,000 persons the Marsh Arabs are divided into a large number of tribes and further sub-divided into clans [...]. For the areas visited during this assessment, information on the tribe concentrations and an estimate of number of families was collected. The average family size was found to be 10 persons. It is worthy of note as the marsh dwellers live in extended family structures, a household often includes two to four families.

The Destruction of the Mesopotamian Marshlands [1]

Historically the Mesopotamian marshlands have constituted an integral part of south-west Asia's largest river system, which is centered on the Tigris and the Euphrates. However, since the 1950's the basin's ecology has been fundamentally altered by the construction of dams and drainage schemes (including major projects in Turkey, where the Tigris rises), which have substantially reduced the water supply and eliminated the flood pulses that have historically sustained the wetland ecosystems in the lower basin. Following the end of the Iran-Iraq War, the diking and diversion of Euphrates waters into the canal originally intended solely for saline irrigation waters greatly accelerated the drying out of the Al Hammar marshes to the north-west of Al Basrah [...]. A large swathe of the Central Marshes was drained to facilitate the movement of military units during the Iran-Iraq War and in 1992 a major drainage project was initiated in this region. In parallel, the marshlands hold almost 50% of the total proven oil reserves in Iraq. According to UNEP both the Al Hammar and the Central Marshes no longer exist. By 1994, following the canalization of the two main Tigris tributaries replenishing the Al Hawizeh marshes, these were drying out quite rapidly – the same year the Iraqi government intensified its campaign against the Marsh Arabs and dissidents who had been taking refuge in the inaccessible marshlands. The above drainage projects and the coincidental impoundment of the Ataturk Dam (which reduced the flow of the Euphrates to an all-time low) caused extensive areas of the marshlands to disappear completely, to be replaced by bare land and salt crusts which are incapable of supporting traditional Marsh Arab society, the existence of which has, from time immemorial, been entirely dependent on the wetland ecosystem. In 1973 the marshlands covered an area of 8,926 km², extending to 20,000 km² during seasonal inundation of land. By the year 2000 this had been reduced to just 1,297km². Although they are regarded as a semi-nomadic people, many Marsh Arabs had settled in villages located on the edges of the marshes or on artificial floating islands in the wetlands themselves. Their main income-generating activities were fisheries, livestock breeding, hunting and woven reed mats which were sold in markets throughout Iraq.

Displacement of the Marsh Arabs

During the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) the marshes, particularly the Al Hawizeh Marshes (lying to the south-east of Al Amarah) became a front-line combat zone and many of the Marsh Arabs were forced to flee both the encroaching Iranian soldiers and the military operations of their own troops, which included the electrification of the marsh waters. In 1991, in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War, some Marsh Arabs joined in an uprising by southern Shi'a against the Iraqi regime. This uprising was brutally suppressed, many Marsh Arabs, and other Shi'a who had taken refuge amongst them were killed and their villages destroyed. As the marshlands began to dry out in the early 1990's the Marsh Arabs began to flee in even greater numbers. During the 1990's the government also instituted a policy of forced resettlement, moving many Shi'a from the southern marshlands to replace the Kurds, Turkomen and Assyrians who had been expelled from the major northern cities.

Current Situation

Whether the traditional marshland environment and society can ever be recreated is the subject of some debate. In the meantime, the most Marsh Arabs continue to endure the privations suffered by all vulnerable peoples within this desperately poor country. Today few Marsh Arabs (perhaps only 10,000) are living in their traditional marshlands, less than 10% of which can now sustain their traditional way of life. Estimates of the number of internally displaced Marsh Arabs range from 100,000 to 200,000 and up to 100,000 are believed to have left the country as refugees, of which 40,000 are currently in Iran and have been known to cross back and forth over the border." (UNOCHI, June 2003)

"Human Rights Watch believes that many of the acts of the Iraqi government's systematic repression of the Marsh Arabs constitute a crime against humanity. The crimes were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of the Marsh Arabs during the decade of the 1990s. The attack involved the multiple commissions of acts in furtherance of state policy. The underlying crimes include:

- Murder of thousands of unarmed civilians following the abortive March 1991 uprising, through summary execution and the indiscriminate bombardment and shelling of residential areas in towns and villages in the vicinity of Basra, al-Nasiriyya, al-'Amara and across the marshes region;
- Forcible population transfer—coercive expulsion of part of the Marsh Arab population from their native villages to settlements on dry land on the outskirts of the marshes and along major highways to facilitate government control over them;
- Arbitrary and prolonged imprisonment of thousands who had been arrested during and in the aftermath of military bombardment of residential areas in the marshes, including civilians and others suspected of anti- government activities;
- Torture of Marsh Arab detainees held in government custody, in order to extract information from them, as punishment, and as a means to spread fear among the local population;
- Enforced disappearances of many of the Marsh Arabs arrested during the 1990s, whose fate and whereabouts remain unresolved to date;
- Persecution of the Marsh Arabs through the intentional and severe deprivation of their fundamental rights on the basis of their religious and political identity as a group."

Footnote

[1] Information in this section was paraphrased from the UNEP Report 2001: The Mesopotamian Marshlands; The Demise of an Ecosystem. Oil comment: Human Rights Watch, "The Iraqi Government Assault on the Marsh Arabs." January, 2003.

UNEP, April 2003:

"The entire Marsh Arab community has suffered huge social and economic upheaval as a result of the marshlands' destruction, with about 40,000 people forced to flee to southwest Iran and hundreds of thousands internally displaced within Iraq. The impact on biodiversity has also been

catastrophic. A new study conducted by UNEP indicates that, of the remnant wetlands surviving in 2000, one-third had disappeared by 2002. UNEP experts predict that unless urgent action is taken to reverse the trend and rehabilitate the marshlands, the entire wetland system is likely to be lost within three to five years. This will only be feasible through regional cooperation."

USCR 2000, p.188:

"The Iraqi government has long been openly hostile to the Marsh Arabs, or *Maadan*, people living in the marshlands between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in a triangle-shaped region formed by the cities of Amarah, Basra, and Nasiriyah. Following the suppression of the 1991 Shi'a uprising in southern Iraq, many opponents of the Baghdad regime fled to the marshes, and the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign it had been directing toward the *Maadan* since 1989.

Since 1991, government forces have burned and shelled villages, and built dams to divert water from the marshes to depopulate the area. Repressive policies in 1999 included diverting water from the marshes and denying food rations to thousands of people allegedly associated with opposition groups."

AMAR, 21 May 2001, p.6:

"The construction of dams, forcible migration of communities, the draining of the Marshlands that was carried out in the 1990s was an extension of earlier trends. However an obsession for security drove the agenda. By depopulating the Marshlands, by reducing the area to desert, the region was no longer able to provide a sustainable refuge for dissidents. Saddam Hussein was able to impose his own will on the refractory people of the Marshlands. The drainage was carried out with no regard to international obligations concerning water rights or the environment. [...] The Marsh Dwellers had limited options. Like hundreds of thousands of other Iraqis they could submit to compulsory resettlement in an environment not their own. Or they could leave the country as refugees, as about 200,000 did. Or they could remain in the drained Marshlands, deprived of their inherited water-based means of livelihood."

See also:

[The AMAR International Case Study: The Marsh Arabs of Southern Iraq Conference, May 2006 Crimes of War Project, "The Iraqi Marshlands: A Pre-war perspective"](#)

Most Marsh Arabs have been displaced or had to give up their traditional way of living (2003)

- To escape government repression aimed at Shi'a uprising in 1991, many insurgents fled to the marsh areas in central and southern Iraq
- Government drained the marshes to regain control of the region and most of an estimated 200,000 'Marsh Arabs' (1993 estimate) have been displaced, or have had to abandon their traditional livelihoods
- Iraqi government adopted a compulsory resettlement program for the Marsh Arabs in 1992
- The Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights Iraq has received lists of allegedly destroyed villages and houses, located in the marsh area and in Baghdad
- The government has also reportedly forced the Shi'a population from the marshlands to relocate in the Kirkuk area

Refugee International, 21 November 2003:

"In southern Iraq, the displaced are primarily Marsh Arabs, forced off their lands by politically motivated reclamation projects in the 1990s. In addition to tens of thousands of Marsh Arabs who are refugees in Iran, tens of thousands more are displaced in Iraq. USAID has begun a project to restore at least part of the 20,000 square kilometers the marshes previously covered."

HRW, Jan 03, p6:

"In 1993, Human Rights Watch estimated the rural population of the marshlands to be around 200,000, which took into account the huge amount of army deserters and political opponents seeking shelter in the region after 1991. Today, there may be as few as 20,000 of the original inhabitants remaining, the rest having fled or migrated to Iran and elsewhere, while an estimated minimum of 100,000 have become internally displaced in Iraq."

HRW, Jan 03:

"In April 1992 (as part of the plan to "regroup the marsh villages on dry land" [...]), the Iraqi National Assembly approved a new housing program for the Ma'dan. According to then speaker of the Iraqi parliament, Sa'di Mahdi Saleh, the government's intention was to relocate some 3,000-4,000 inhabitants of the marshes to houses constructed along the highway between Basra and al-Qurna, to "provide them with electricity, clean water, schools and medical care," and to "make them good citizens." Saleh told the media that the plan approved by parliament "does not specify [whether the families to be relocated] will be given a choice to move or stay ... whether we say it is compulsory or optional is of no significance to them". The initiative was widely understood as a means through which the government could force political and military fugitives out of hiding, enable its program of drainage of the marshes to proceed without hindrance, and subjugate the local population once and for all.

Moreover, the forced relocation served as a means of depriving the marsh villagers of all sources of economic livelihood—mirroring precisely what had happened to the Kurds when they were forcibly relocated to resettlement camps in the 1980s as a prelude to the Anfal campaign.

The parallel between the Kurds and the Ma'dan was not lost on the speaker of the parliament. Referring to the Kurds, Saleh told the Reuters news agency: 'At the time we evacuated those people and put them in complexes and provided them with amenities, [but] for political reasons there was a row against us in the West. Concerning the marsh people the West should help us to move their homes, build schools for them, improve their health conditions, instead of criticizing. America wiped the Red Indians off the face of the earth and nobody raised an eyebrow.'

The forced resettlement program in the marshes was accompanied by a counterinsurgency campaign that included indiscriminate attacks by artillery, helicopter gunships and fixed-wing aircraft on villages. The attacks were reportedly accompanied by the arrest and execution of civilians, including tribal leaders, the destruction of property and livestock, and the razing of entire villages. Those targeted included whole families that had refused to vacate their homes. The waves of arrests were soon followed by reports of mass summary executions. Among the reports received by Human Rights Watch at the time was one incident involving the execution of some 2,500 villagers in August 1992. The victims, among them women and children, were rounded up in the marshes of al-Chibayish (west of al-Qurna) together with captured fighters of the opposition SCIRI. According to testimony obtained by Human Rights Watch, including that of a survivor, they were taken to an army camp in northern Iraq, where they were executed over a period of about two weeks. The UN special rapporteur on Iraq detailed similar reports he had received."

Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p31:

"As to where the Marsh Arabs went, little is known. The British NGO AMAR says some 40,000 people made it into refugee camps in Iran. Some tens of thousands may still be trying to scratch a

living out of whatever remains of the marshes. Some were certainly killed by the Iraqi security forces during the 'drainage' operations. But upwards of 100,000 (see numbers section below) must be displaced. Neighboring urban centers such as an-Nasiriyah and al-Amara are thought to hold some people. Larger centers like Baghdad and Basra may provide havens as family members had been migrating there for decades. Finally, it is thought that some Marsh Arabs may be part of the people being sent north to inhabit former Kurd and Turkmen properties, under the Arabization campaign, although it is unclear how the necessary selection process unfolds."

US DOS, 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.":

"The practice of the security services to force large numbers of Shi'a inhabitants of the southern marshes to relocate to major southern cities and to areas along the Iranian border probably is connected to the destruction of villages. Special Rapporteur van der Stoep described this practice in his February report, and added that many other persons were transferred to detention centers and prisons in central Iraq, primarily in Baghdad."

US DOS, 5 September 2000, Sect.I:

"Security forces also have forced Shi'a inhabitants of the southern marshes to relocate to major southern cities and to areas along the Iranian border. [...] The Government reportedly also continued to move forcibly Shi'a populations from the south to the north to replace Kurds, Turkomen, and Assyrians, who had been expelled forcibly from major cities."

UN GA, 14 October 1999, para.15-19:

"Reports of the destruction of civilian settlements have been received by the Special Rapporteur on an intermittent basis since 1991. The Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq] has received lists of allegedly destroyed villages and houses, located in many parts of the vast marsh area (now mainly drained), as well as in Baghdad."

It was reported that, in late March 1999, Armoured Division Six carried out operations surrounding and bombarding a number of residential areas of some of the tribes living in the Governorate of Basra. Such operations reportedly took place in the areas of Al-Ghameigh, Bait Wafi and Bait Sayed Noor.

Since the beginning of 1999, the Special Rapporteur has regularly received reports indicating that the Government of Iraq has been destroying the houses of opponents with bulldozers, operating during the daytime in full view of the occupants. [...]

The Special Rapporteur has received a list of names of hundreds of people so affected, indicating their addresses, the date of destruction of their homes and the action taken against the families (arrests, executions, expulsions etc.)."

Other displacements include flight of political opponents and forced relocation of people who had found refuge in Baghdad (2000)

Dammers, 1998, p.184:

"Thousands of non-Kurdish opponents of the Saddam Hussein regime have also sought refuge, or a base for continuing their opposition, in the Kurdish-controlled regions of Iraq, particularly since the Gulf War. The entry of Iraqi government troops and agents into these regions in 1996 left them particularly vulnerable - many were captured or killed, particularly in Arbil. In late 1997, the Iraqi National Congress reported that around 2000 non-Kurdish political displaced were still sheltering in PUK-controlled regions, mainly in Suleimaniyeh. Many reportedly had difficulty

finding work, and were often regarded with suspicion (as potential government agents) by the PUK authorities."

US DOS, 25 February 2000:

"Thousands of Gulf War refugees who sought haven in Baghdad were relocated forcibly to their home provinces."

Kurdish in-fighting has caused internal displacement in the North (1998-2002)

- Displacement of Kurdish families in northern Iraq due to clashes between PUK and Islamic opposition (2001-2002)

Dammers 1998, p.182:

"Since 1994, displacement has most commonly followed conflict between the two main Kurdish parties, the KDP and the PUK, usually along the border between their respective territories: in and around the city of Arbil and along a fluctuating front line from Arbil to the Iranian border. People identified with one party (an identification generally based on clan loyalty rather than ideology) living in territory controlled by the other feel highly vulnerable and have frequently been displaced."

Non-conflict induced displacement

Flooding has also caused displacement (2004-2006)

- More than 5,000 people displaced in March 2004 by flooding in the Marshlands area
- Around 36,000 people (6,000 families) displaced due to flooding in the south in February 2006
- 100 families were displaced by floods in January 2006

UNAMI, December and January 2006, p.2:

"In mid January approximately 100 families were displaced from their houses in Basrah Governorate as a result of floods"

IRIN, 21 February 2006:

"Nearly 6,000 families forced to leave their homes in the wake of heavy flooding in northern and southeastern Iraq earlier this month remain displaced, mostly due to the destruction of their houses.

"The devastation by heavy rains of hundreds of houses countrywide has worsened the situation and prevented families from going back, forcing them to stay in improvised camps or with relatives in safe areas," said Ferdous al-Abadi, spokeswoman for the Iraq Red Crescent Society (IRCS).

Nearly 150 houses in Missan governorate and 75 in Salahuddine and Diala governorates have been totally destroyed by the flooding, while more than 900 homes have been partially damaged

countrywide, according to the IRCS. Continuous rains, which fell for over two weeks in the first half of February, finally stopped last week.

According to al-Abadi, a total of 7,500 families were displaced in different areas of the country when flooding began on 5 February, with some 1,500 returning to their homes in northern areas where the fall was less heavy. "Around 1,000 families are still staying in camps improvised by the IRCS," she said, adding that the relief effort had been facilitated by the "good relationship between tribes" in the north of the country.

The IRCS has received supplies – including medicines, food parcels, blankets and heaters – from a number of aid organisations, which are expected to last for a month. Nevertheless, the organisation is also calling on the government to find a speedy solution for people whose homes were destroyed. "We call on the Iraqi government to address the problems of the displaced and offer help," al-Abadi said."

UNCT, August 2004:

"Floods in the lower southern Governorates of Missan, Thi'Qar and Muthana are an almost annual occurrence when the waters of the Euphrates rise. The former Marshlands would normally expand in size during the flood season absorbing most of the floodwaters. However, since the drainage of the marshes, populations now settled on dry marsh lands often find themselves displaced by the rising waters.

In March 2004, the grid of dykes set up to drain the marshes broke in several locations resulting in the displacement of over 5,000 persons and threatened to displace a further 10,000 people."

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Physical Security

Evolving security environment in Iraq (2003-2008)

- Insecurity as result of generalised violence and military operations central and south predominated in 2003-2005, then to lead to sectarian violence in 2006-2007. Though the level of sectarian violence and general insecurity has abated since 2007, the level of insecurity through 2008 would remain high.
- In early 2007, a new strategy was outlined consisting to sending more than 20,000 extra troops, setting economic and political benchmarks including the holding of provincial elections, finalizing laws and easing de-Ba'athification. (ICG, April 2008)
- In mid 2007, the violence continued albeit less intensively. In August 2007, Moqtada al Sadr announced a freeze in activities, subsequently extended indefinitely in mid 2008. (ICG, April 2008) Further starting in end 2006, Awakening Councils (Majmales al Sahwa) were established representing sunni armed militia trained. (ICG, April 2008)
- The level of violence remains high however equivalent to violence levels in 2004-2005 attesting to pervasive impunity to human rights violations and limited Government capacity to ensure protection. This is witnessed throughout Iraq, including the north. (AI, March 2008)

Amnesty International (AI), March 2008:

"At the beginning of 2007 many districts in Baghdad and many towns were no-go areas for government forces, with armed groups in almost total control. In January alone, according to Iraqi government estimates, 1,971 people died violently.⁷ This situation prompted President Bush to outline a new strategy for Iraq which involved sending more than 20,000 extra US troops to Iraq, a plan known as the "surge", and setting economic and political benchmarks. These included the holding of provincial elections in 2007, finalizing important laws, such as the oil law, and easing the de-Ba'athification policies. The US government committed US\$1.2 billion for rebuilding and development, especially the creation of jobs, and the Iraqi government committed US\$10 billion of its funds for reconstruction. The US troops were deployed mostly in and around Baghdad and al-Anbar province. Despite the massive military deployment, the violence continued, albeit less intensively than in the previous years. By the end of June 2007, about 28,000 additional US troops had been deployed, bringing the total to more than 160,000.

Two factors have contributed to the slight improvement in the security situation in recent months. First, at the end of August 2007 Moqtada al-Sadr announced a sixmonth freeze in the activities of the Mahdi Army. He called on his offices to co-operate with the Iraqi security forces and exercise self-control. In February 2008, he extended the truce for a further six months. However, the truce did not stop members of the Mahdi Army fighting other Shi'a armed militia, in particular their arch rivals, the Badr Organization, in southern Iraq, especially in Basra in recent months. With the December 2007 withdrawal of British troops from central Basra to the airport, outside the city, and with the Iraqi government lacking capacity to assert control over the city, clashes between militia groups, who are vying for control, seem likely to increase. Second, starting from the end of 2006 US military authorities in Iraq started to encourage the setting up of Awakening Councils (Majmales al-Sahwa), armed militia that first appeared in al-Anbar governorate to fight against al-Qa'ida and drive it out of western Iraq. These militia were armed and trained by the MNF and

Iraqi forces. Their members are said to be paid US\$300 a month, considerably more than what most people earn. Their success in al-Anbar led to the mushrooming of these militia in many other areas. Reportedly, up to 76,000 people, the vast majority Sunni Muslim, have joined Awakening Councils. The US military authorities are said to be putting pressure on the Shi'a-led Iraqi government to incorporate these forces in the regular army and the police, but the government is reluctant to do so. On the political front, little progress has been achieved and attempts at fostering national reconciliation among Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities have not been successful. On the contrary, both the Iraqi government and the Council of Representatives have been hampered by a boycott by several government ministers and many members of parliament who represent political parties opposed to the current government.....

In the past five years Iraqi security forces have committed gross human rights violations, including killings of civilians and torture and other ill-treatment. On many occasions, the government has announced investigations into specific cases, but to Amnesty International's knowledge the outcomes of such investigations, if indeed they have been carried out, have not been disclosed. This has sharpened concern that Iraqi security forces can and do commit grave human rights abuses with impunity. For example, no findings were made public of investigations launched in 2005 into alleged human rights violations in an Interior Ministry detention centre in al-Jadiriya district of Baghdad. US military forces reportedly found at least 168 detainees in appalling conditions, many of whom had been tortured. The Iraqi government said that it would mount an investigation, but if it did, the findings have yet to be published. In July 2006, a report published in a US newspaper stated that the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior had carried out investigations which had revealed more than 400 incidents of police misconduct. These included "the rape of female prisoners, the release of terrorism suspects in exchange for bribes, assassinations of police officers and participation in insurgents' bombings". According to the report, most of those involved in the incidents were not punished.⁵³ Members of the MNF have also committed gross human rights violations, including unlawful killings. In some cases, investigations were conducted and charges were brought against soldiers. Some US troops have been prosecuted for abuses committed in Iraq, although others have had charges against them dropped or reduced. In such cases, investigations were conducted by the military and were not independent. In a number of cases, there have been attempts to cover up specific violations.

The largely autonomous Kurdistan region in the north, which is under the control of the KRG,⁵⁹ has been more stable than the rest of Iraq and there have been fewer acts of violence. The region is the most prosperous in Iraq and the KRG has signed a number of investment contracts with foreign companies, including for oil exploration. Despite the relative stability and prosperity, the Kurdistan region remains vulnerable to pressure and even military intervention from neighbouring countries. Turkish government forces recently launched military attacks across the northern Iraqi border in pursuit of members of the armed opposition Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Serious human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests, torture and the use of the death penalty, continue in the Kurdistan region. Political opponents of the Kurdish authorities are subject to arrest, and sometimes torture, by the Asayish, the KRG security forces. Two people were killed when members of Asayish opened fire on protesters in the towns of Darbandikhan and Kalar on 7 and 9 August 2006. Journalists are muzzled and often risk arrest and torture in their daily work. Scores of women have been killed in "honour crimes" and only a few of the culprits have been brought to justice."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"Serious security incidents continue at a high rate, with a daily average of 160. There has been a corresponding rise in the level of casualties among civilians, the multinational force and Iraqi security forces. The conflict continues to be characterized by attacks against the multinational force and sectarian violence by insurgents and militias. They use suicide bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and indiscriminate indirect fire attacks, using both rockets and

mortars. Incidents against the multinational force are particularly intense in Ramadi and Falluja, with frequent roadside ambushes and sustained attacks against police and military bases. The alleged presence of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, in Diyala and al-Anbar provinces, has been a factor in sustaining and widening the conflict. Despite the focus on the security situation in Baghdad, it is not always apparent that violent incidents take place in almost all areas of Iraq.....While the Kurdish region remains relatively calm, a series of incidents have caused concern. Following the raid on the Iranian office in Erbil by the multinational force, there was a period of tension and friction between the multinational force and the local security forces. In February 2007, Kirkuk also suffered waves of car bombings. Also in the north, Mosul and Tal Afar witnessed multiple bomb attacks."

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"HRO has received several consistent reports from various NGOs and other sources on the deteriorating human rights situation in Kirkuk and is particularly concerned by such developments. Key concerns include the rights of minorities living in Kirkuk and their ability to effectively participate in its political, economic and social development. Additional concerns relate to the use of security forces and the power of detention, including in KRG facilities by the authorities so as to intimidate and prevent minority groups from playing a significant role in the city's affairs. Such violations may well be the prelude of a looming crisis in Kirkuk in the coming months."

UNSC, 5 December 2006:

"Although the Government of Iraq has resolved to promote the protection of human rights and the rule of law, human rights violations continue to rise. Abuses continue to be committed by terrorists, insurgents, militias and criminal armed groups. The excessive use of force by the multinational force and the Iraqi security forces in responding to these elements is also a matter of concern. Ongoing military operations also continue to challenge the principles of international humanitarian law as civilian casualties mount and access to public services by the affected populations is limited or obstructed. The sectarian carnage has resulted in a vicious cycle of violence fuelled by revenge killings. The end result is an environment of lawlessness and insecurity."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"It is of grave concern that numerous cases of assassinations, torture, abuse of detainees, and intimidations are frequently inadequately investigated and therefore unpunished. [...] It is however often reported that neither the Iraqi judiciary nor the police yield much success investigating crimes perpetrated by numerous well established militias. The investigative capacity of the State remains limited because of security conditions as well as for lack of adequate resources and the limited number of investigative judges. Allegations made that some sectors of the security forces are colluding with armed militias or other armed groups risk eroding support for the security forces and increase the perception that the impunity gap in Iraq is growing. Existing mechanism for redressing violations are insufficient. Many individuals and organizations reported their distrust to contact authorities whenever there is a security risk. "

See Also:

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=74454>

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/11/19/071119fa_fact_anderson

[Iraq's Civil War, the Sadrists and the Surge](#), International Crisis Group (ICG), 7 February 2008

[Civilian deaths rise in February but still lower than in 2007](#), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 3 March 2008

[Protests mount over insecurity in Basra](#), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 12 March 2008

[Shia call on Mehdi Army to take up arms again in Iraq](#), The Independent, 7 February 2008

[Five years on, more people displaced than ever before](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 21 March 2008

[Ministry plans to build houses to ease plight of displaced](#), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 6 February 2008

Physical security situation in Baghdad

- Violence and insecurity has lessened significantly in 2008 following on surge strategy and other developments. The level of violence remains high equivalent to violence levels in 2004.
- The decline in violence is also largely attributed to the general homogenisation on sectarian basis of Baghdad where most of the violence was situation. This has also followed the establishment of protected enclaves through construction of cement walls partitioning certain areas of Baghdad.
- In face of sectarian violence, MNF-I and Iraqi forces have erected concrete barriers for protection of neighbourhoods. The establishment of protected enclaves has seemed to provide additional security however at the cost of reinforcing sectarianism.
- Most violence in 2006-2007 has centred around Baghdad. Large movements of populations have occurred within the city because of kidnappings, extra-judicial killings, dropping of threatening leaflets, destruction of properties, and intimidation
- Fighting between Sunni and Shiite armed groups were primarily recorded in 2006-2007 in Baghdad's neighbourhoods of Dora, Hurriyah, Al Adhamiyah, Khadimiyah, Ghazaliyah, Amariya and Qadisiyah
- Many victims were kidnapped by militias at improvised checkpoints and then extra-judicially executed. Numerous attacks killed and maimed civilians. This also included attacks against minorities and Palestinian refugees as well as cultural symbols, mosques and churches of different denominations

Christian Science Monitor (CSM), 18 April 2008:

"In the face of ongoing confrontations between US-Iraqi forces and Shiite militias in Baghdad's Sadr City neighborhood, US forces began work this week on a concrete barrier to protect against militia intrusions. Other neighborhoods with such walls have seen marked improvement in the security situation, though some residents credit anti-Al Qaeda groups, which have been targeted by suicide bombers this week. **The New York Times** reports that US forces hope that the huge concrete wall will slow the southward spread of militia fighters from the heart of the heavily Shiite neighborhood, which has been a combat zone for the past several weeks as US and Iraqi forces fight members of Moqtada al Sadr's Mahdi Army. The construction, which began Tuesday night, is intended to turn the southern quarter of Sadr City near the international Green Zone into a protected enclave, secured by Iraqi and American forces, where the Iraqi government can undertake reconstruction efforts. [...] The barriers were implanted on Al Quds Street, a major thoroughfare that separates the Tharwa and Jamilla districts to the south from the heart of Sadr City to the north. ... Many of the Shiite militias that the American and Iraqi forces have been battling in the Tharwa area of Sadr City in the past several weeks have been infiltrating from the north. Al Quds Street has become a porous demarcation line between the American- and Iraqi-protected area to the south and the militia-controlled area to the north. US forces hope that the Iraqi government will be able to restore basic utilities such as water, electricity, and garbage

collection to the neighborhood if the wall fulfills its purpose. **The Times** notes that the US has built other such walls in Baghdad, including around the Sunni neighborhood of Adhamiyah last April, and while initially controversial, they have met with some success. French international news channel **France 24** reported last month that life for civilians in Adhamiyah has indeed improved from a year ago, according to one of France 24's civilian-journalist "observers." But the anonymous civilian journalist credits a different US initiative: anti-Al Qaeda "sahwas," or Awakening Councils – Sunnis united against Al Qaeda. He writes that where in March 2007 the streets of Adhamiyah were bullet-riddled and empty, security has improved so much that just a few weeks ago the neighborhood was holding public religious celebrations and people were freely moving about. "

Christian Science Monitor (CSM), 20 April 2007:

"The US military is building a three-mile-long wall around Baghdad's Sunni neighborhood of Adhamiyah in order to isolate it from the surrounding Shiite areas, and prevent sectarian attacks. Stars and Stripes, a newspaper published for the US military community serving abroad, reported Thursday that according to a military press release, personnel began construction on the wall on April 10, and will continue work "almost nightly" until it is complete. "The area the wall will protect is the largest predominately Sunni neighborhood in East Baghdad. Majority-Shiite neighborhoods surround it on three sides. Like other religiously divided regions in the city, the area has been trapped in a spiral of sectarian violence and retaliation," according to the release. In January, when the new Baghdad security plan and troop "surge" were announced, the "gated community" concept was reported by several news agencies as one tactic to be used. The Los Angeles Times indicates that the plan, which it notes is "the first [barrier in Baghdad] to be based in essence on sectarian considerations," is a local decision made by US military operating in the neighborhood.... The Times writes that US commanders say the wall is meant to prevent suicide bombers and death squads from launching attacks across sectarian lines. But the Times adds that both Sunnis and Shiites in the affected neighborhood "were united in their contempt for the imposing new structure." The Associated Press reports, however, that some Sunnis approve of the plan, though they fear it will deepen the city's sectarian divides. "

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"Baghdad is at the centre of the sectarian violence. Sunni and Shiite armed groups are attempting to establish territorial control of Baghdad's many predominately mixed neighbourhoods by intimidating and killing civilian populations and forcing them into displacements to parts of the city inhabited or controlled by members of their ethnic group. Reports suggest the existence of large movements of populations primarily within the city boundaries, as the neighbourhoods become increasingly divided among Sunni and Shi'a armed groups, and are consequently grouped together based on their sect and ethnicity. This forced displacement has been achieved by means of large scale attacks targeting civilians, kidnappings, extra-judicial killings, dropping of threatening leaflets, destruction of properties, and intimidation. For instance, fighting between Sunni and Shiite armed groups were primarily recorded in December in Baghdad's neighbourhoods of Dora, Hurriyah, Al Adhamiyah, Khadimiyah, Ghazaliyah, Amariya and Qadisiyah."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Violence in Iraq has been increasingly acquiring a sectarian nature, with each attack generating a surge of revenge attacks in Baghdad and around the country. Sunni and Shi'a mosques have been attacked by rival factions, while mixed neighbourhoods, such as Dora, have been increasingly polarized along the Sunni-Shi'a lines. Many of the death squads and rival militias have direct links with or are supported by influential political parties belonging to the Government and are not hiding their affiliation. There have also been frequent cases of mass kidnappings in which the victims appear extra-judicially executed, bearing signs of torture before death. In other cases, the fate or the whereabouts of the kidnapped remained unknown. Much of this violence is

carried out by militias and other armed gangs, some purporting to grant the community protection that cannot be guaranteed by the state law enforcement agencies. Militias and other armed groups are said to be in control of whole areas in the east and west of Baghdad and continue to carry out illegal policing, manning of checkpoints and “dispensation of justice” through illegal trials and extra-judicial executions. They operate with almost total impunity. Attacks against minorities, Palestinian refugees and women are often allegedly carried out by such groups. Many victims are kidnapped by militias at improvised checkpoints and then extra-judicially executed. These tactics have been employed by both Sunni and Shi’a armed groups or militias to various degrees. [...]

See also (below):

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

UNAMI, 23 May 2006

UNSC, 5 December 2006

UNSC, 7 March 2007

International Herald Tribune, 23 September 2008

Reuters, 6 February 2008

Insecurity as main cause of flight and continues to affect displaced (2003-2008)

- Displacement remains mainly attributed to violence. IDPs have fled their homes for a variety of reasons, all related to security. The most commonly cited reasons for displacement among those assessed are direct threats to life (37%) and generalized violence (23%) (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Displaced communities surveyed by IOM in all provinces with the exception of the Kurdish areas cited direct attacks to their lives as the primary reason for displacement. Secondary reasons included generalised violence and military operations
- In 2007, displaced people reported loss of family members, detentions, deaths and disappearances. Some 6 per cent of displaced people had been detained and 5 per cent had unaccounted for family members. Displaced people reported some restrictions in their daily movements, including checkpoints and inability to leave their homes freely due to violence.
- Continuing the trend from 2007, violence appears to have decreased overall throughout the country during the first half of 2008. Several Governorates saw brief increases in instability during military operations which did not result in large scale permanent displacement.
- IDPs face general violence (Governorates of Baghdad, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Missan and Wassit and Najaf), general criminality, detentions, kidnappings, murder/killings, large explosions, military operations as well as inter-ethnic/religious fighting (Governorates of Kirkuk and Ninewa) This includes forced recruitment by some groups. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
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International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

"Continuing the trend from 2007, violence appears to have decreased overall throughout the country during the first half of 2008. As the Iraqi army and police play a more prominent role in security operations, they are also suffering an increase in casualties. In addition, several governorates, including Baghdad, Basrah, Ninewa, and Missan, saw brief increases in instability and violence during military operations launched over the past few months by the Multi-National Forces in Iraq and Iraqi Forces (MNF-I/IF) against local insurgents. In these cases Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosions, artillery exchanges, inter-tribal fighting, search-and-arrest

campaigns, and curfews erupted, though were generally followed by a period of calmer security and did not result in largescale displacement.

In recent months, "awakening forces" (sahwa) or inter-tribal, local power-sharing coalitions, have aided stability and security in several governorates, namely Anbar, Diyala, and Salah al-Din, with plans to continue reproducing this model elsewhere in the country. However, power disputes among the awakening forces and other political parties in Anbar have been the cause of a recent spike in violence there. Security in Anbar was supposed to be transferred to the IF in late June after a progressive MNF-I handover, however this has been postponed. The three northern governorates of Kurdistan continue to be significantly more stable than the rest of the country with the exception of those areas bordering both Turkey and Iran. Bombings and land incursions in border villages by Turkish forces continue, and there is periodic Iranian cross-border shelling along the edges of Sulaymaniyah."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"The risks that surveyed IDPs face are more varying than the other caseloads. IDPs indicated that they face general violence (Governorates of Baghdad, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Missan and Wassit and Najaf), general criminality, detentions, kidnappings, murder/killings, large explosions, military operations as well as inter-ethnic/religious fighting (Governorates of Kirkuk and Ninewa). It was reported that IDPs are enduring forced recruitment by some armed groups (Muthanna Governorate). Others are reportedly subjected to abuse and harassment (Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Najaf and Salah Al-Din Governorates). The three northern governorates also experience occasional cross-boarder attacks from Turkey and Iran, which has caused minor displacement. Among the main dangers and concerns for returnees are detention and kidnappings, reported from all over the country, but reported frequently in Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Muthanna, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Wassit Governorates. Reasons that made persons feel less safe were living in mixed areas (ethnic/religious), belonging to the minority group (e.g. Assyrian Christians), occurrence of large explosions, mine contamination or the presence of armed groups.

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

"IDPs have fled their homes for a variety of reasons, all related to security. The most commonly cited reasons for displacement among those assessed are direct threats to life (37%) and generalized violence (23%):

| REASON FOR DISPLACEMENT | % of assessed IDPs |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Direct threats of life | 36.8% |
| Generalized violence | 23.0% |
| Forced displacement from property | 18.0% |
| Left out of fear | 14.1% |
| Armed conflict | 7.4% |
| Other | 0.7% |

When asked why they were targeted, 85% of those assessed attributed it to their sectarian identity. Another 10% said that they did not feel specifically targeted, while 6% cited political opinion and 4% cited ethnic identity. Answers do not vary significantly among those displaced in 2006, 2007, and 2008."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Almost all Iraqis are fleeing their homes because they fear for their lives, due to direct personal threats, general armed violence or increasing local criminal activity. All the IDPs' motives to flee were based on the fact that Iraqis do not feel safe where they live and believe that they must leave or face dire, or even fatal, consequences. When asked why they left their place of origin, a

majority of respondents reported that they left due to direct threats to their lives. These threats take the form of abductions, assassinations of individuals or their families, or other threats communicated through mobile telephone calls or texts, graffiti on buildings or walls, or leaflets distributed throughout the community.

The second most popular reason for flight was generalized fear. Fear is generated in an environment that lacks security and a sense of law and order, which describes most of Iraq. Sectarian violence, tribal infighting, armed violence between military and militias or insurgents, military offensives, and criminal activity all contribute to a general sense of fear in Iraq that forced many to flee their homes. A less popular response was flight due to armed conflict. This response was most common in Anbar. Anbar is considered a hotbed of insurgent activity and suffers from frequent clashes between MNF-I/IF and other armed groups. This response was also given by IDPs in Diyala and Missan. Respondents were asked if they thought IDP group or family members were specifically targeted. The vast majority (86%) responded positively, and stated it was because they belonged to a certain religion or sect. A smaller percentage thought they were a target because of certain political beliefs (6%), belonging to a certain ethnic group (1%), or belonging to a certain social or professional group, such as doctors or professors (less than 1%)."

"Despite persistent instability and violence in Iraq, the majority of IDPs report that they felt relatively safe in their current location, or at least safer than in their place of origin. Only 1% of families did not feel safe in their current location. Iraqis are facing a dramatic increase in deaths, detentions, injuries, and disappearances, and the displaced are not exempt. When asked if someone in the group or family had been injured or killed since displacement, 2% had members killed by militants, the Multi- National Forces in Iraq, or Iraqi Forces; 2% had group members killed by another citizen; less than 1% reported injuries due to mine accidents; 4% suffered other types of deaths; and 3% suffered other injuries. When asked if anyone had been detained since they were displaced, 6% responded that someone had. In addition, over 5% reported that family members were still unaccounted for. However, IDP monitors and international officials believe the numbers to be much higher, as interviewees tended to underestimate when responding on behalf of more than one family.

See Also (in sources below):
UNHCR, January 2007

None State Actors & Insecurity (2003 - 2008)

- Armed groups in Iraq have committed serious violations of international humanitarian law and grave human rights abuses, some of which amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The sunni and shi'ia militias have 'emptied the designated areas of other sectarian presence, while groudning presence on protection afforded in endless spiral of violence.
- There numerous reports of militia and death squads were operating within the police ranks or in complicity with them. The Iraqi security forces were frequently accused of violations including torture, kidnappings, and extortion. Mosques and other religious sites are allegedly being used as secret prisons and even operating as illegal courts
- By mid 2007, with the militai's brutality and corrupoint increasingly number of Shiites and Sunnies turned against them, and pressure increased as US forces reached full deployment. Baghdad's most intense period of sectarian fighting gradually came to an end by mid-2007. It is estimated up to 2/3rds of militias were inactive by mid 2008 (ICG, April 2008)
- There remain numerous reports of intimidation, and violence. Though sectarian violence has abatted, kidnappings, targeted assassinations and other forms of violence continues involving militias or former insurgents now members of Awakening Councils.

Amnesty International (AI), March 2008:

"Armed groups in Iraq have committed serious violations of international humanitarian law and grave human rights abuses, some of which amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. These groups include:

Sunni Islamist and nationalist groups fighting against the US-led forces and the Iraqi government and who operate mainly in central and north-western Iraq;

Shi'a militia groups such as the Mahdi Army, followers of Moqtada al-Sadr, and the Badr Organization, which is linked to the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI);⁹

Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, which is made up of radical Iraqi Sunni Islamists as well as foreign nationals, many of them from other countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

Many of the abuses have taken place in the context of the ongoing sectarian violence triggered by the February 2006 bombing of al-'Askari mosque. Sunni Muslims living in predominantly Shi'a districts and Shi'a Muslims living in predominantly Sunni neighbourhoods in Baghdad and other towns and cities have been forced by armed groups to leave their homes in a process akin to "ethnic cleansing". Some of the armed groups, in particular al-Qa'ida, have also carried out numerous attacks, such as bombings and suicide attacks, in heavily crowded areas, including markets, checkpoints or in places where people queue to buy food or petrol. The intention has been to kill as many civilians as possible. In recent months, al-Qa'ida has reportedly recruited women as volunteer suicide bombers and is said to be recruiting children and training them in secret camps in Iraq.

Many of those killed were abducted from their homes or in the streets by the armed groups. Days later their bodies were found in a street or had been taken to morgues by the police. The bodies invariably bore marks of torture, including the use of electric shocks and drills. Some Iraqi newspapers carry daily reports of the discovery of unidentified bodies, most mutilated, and daily incidents of killings by armed groups. Some people perceived to be wealthy, including children, have been kidnapped by armed gangs for ransom. Once ransoms have been paid, those held have generally been released. Other civilians targeted have included members of religious and ethnic minorities, such as Yezidis, Christians, Mandaean-Sabeans and Palestinians;¹⁰ members of professional associations, such as medical doctors and judges; and human rights defenders, including journalists and lawyers. The following examples illustrate a pattern of targeted assassinations and mass attacks on civilians, including on people belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, in recent months.

On 13 February 2008, the Council of Representatives passed a law that apparently offers a general amnesty to thousands of detainees currently held. The law should come into effect after ratification by the Presidential Council. At the time of writing, Amnesty International does not have details of the law. Amnesty International considers the MNF system of security internment in Iraq to be arbitrary – in violation of fundamental human rights. All detainees, including security internees, are protected by Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by both Iraq and the USA, which provides that no one should be arbitrarily detained and that deprivation of liberty must be based on grounds and procedures established by law. Detainees must also have access to a court empowered to rule without delay on the lawfulness of their detention and to order their release if the detention is found to be unlawful. These requirements apply to "anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention" and therefore apply fully to those interned by the MNF.... At the end of 2005, the former Deputy Commanding General, Major General Gardner, pledged that no detainees being held by the MNF would be transferred to the Iraqi authorities until the necessary safeguards were in place to guarantee detainees' safety in Iraqi custody."

International Crisis Group (ICG), 7 February 2008:

"Despite intensified U.S. raids and arrests, the Mahdi Army bolstered its influence and role, largely thanks to its limitless sources of income. It took over numerous Sunni possessions, including houses, villas and stores that belonged to the Baghdad bourgeoisie that prospered from the time of the Ottoman Empire. The Mahdi Army offered security by protecting the perimeter of neighbourhoods and emptying some of all Sunni presence; as a result, its popularity grew well beyond its natural social constituency (chiefly composed of young and more disadvantaged Shiites).⁴⁴ Shiites of all backgrounds experienced fear, hatred and a powerful desire for sectarian revenge and were thus drawn to the Sadrists. This included both members of the middle class and fighters from the Badr Corps who were loyal to ISCI, the Sadrists' principal rival.⁴⁵ Baghdad's most intense period of sectarian fighting gradually came to an end by mid-2007. The process was incremental and did not affect all neighbourhoods at once; in many instances, it simply reflected completion of sectarian cleansing. But it placed the Mahdi Army in a relatively awkward position. The sectarian confrontation had provided it with important material and symbolic resources; these began to dry up precisely at a time when the Sadrists' territorial reach had extended far beyond its natural boundaries (Sadr City and a handful of neighbourhoods of relatively similar social makeup, such as Shu'la and Washshash). Pressure on the Mahdi Army also was stepped up as U.S. forces reached full deployment and, angered at the militia's brutality and corruption, increasing numbers of Shiites turned against it."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"The Iraqi security forces face formidable challenges to its professional integrity and reputation as a result of its inability to defend the Iraqi population from terrorist, sectarian or revenge attacks. Its officers and forces are frequently accused of engaging in kidnapping, torture, murder, bribery, excessive use of force, extortion and theft, which have in turn, undermined public confidence in the police. There are increasing reports of militias and death squads operating from within the police ranks or in collusion with them. There are also numerous credible reports of police officials requiring payment from would-be recruits to join the police, with the intention of payroll fraud. Consequently, absenteeism is widespread and there are reports that in Kirkuk alone, half of the 5,000 police force and 13,000 Army soldiers, are not reporting to duty at any given time, and many fail to return to duty.

HRO continues to receive reports alleging that the police forces and, to a lesser extent, the Army are infiltrated by sectarian militias. Factional divisions among militia groups have led to violent clashes over control of areas or even cities. Faced with a credibility issue, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has recently announced that it has taken action against individuals suspected of collusion with militias and has instituted reforms to discourage corruption. Some measures were also reportedly taken to increase the ethnic and sectarian diversity of the Public Order Division (e.g. the recruitment of Christians and Turkomans in the Ninawa Province, resulting in 8,000 potential new recruits). At a press conference on 17 October, MoI Spokesperson stated that 3,000 police members were laid off since last May for human rights violation and corruption charges. Of these, 1,228 were dismissed for "breaking the law", while nearly 2,000 more were dismissed for "dereliction of duty". There is no indication whether these former officers will be further prosecuted for their alleged misconducts.

In response to mounting outcry relating to the operation of death squads with the support of or in collusion with security forces, the Iraqi authorities announced on 4 October that the 8th Police Brigade, composed of about 700 policemen, was relieved of its duties. Reportedly, the brigade commander was relieved of his duties while a battalion commander was arrested. The brigade was accused of collusion in the 1 October kidnapping and subsequent killing of 26 workers "by men wearing police uniforms" in the area of Hay al-Amil, Baghdad, which the brigade was supposed to be protecting. Again, there is no indication as to whether the officers and forces allegedly involved in this mass kidnapping and killing will be further prosecuted. On 17 October, 2 generals, Rasheed Fleyah and Mahdi Sabeh, the country's two most senior police commanders, were removed from their posts in the first broad move against the top leadership of Iraq's special

police forces. In a restructuring that has been applied to the leadership of the National Police, all brigades were brought directly under the commander of the National Police. It is yet to be seen whether the above measures will have a tangible impact on improving the state of conduct and discipline in the police force."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"HRO continues to receive reports of kidnappings and killings carried out by militias, alone or allegedly in association with forces of the Ministry of Interior. Most of the cases relate to actions by armed individuals wearing black clothes abducting young men, who are executed and then left at the morgue or on the streets. Some of the extra-judicial executions are said to be a form of "setting of scores" or revenge killings.

A new brand of violence has emerged, a mix of organized crime and sectarian killings, increasingly attacking businesses. Gunmen often wearing police uniforms have stormed numerous businesses since the beginning of March resulting in workers being kidnapped or killed and money being stolen. On 29 March, 8 people working in a trading company in Baghdad, were lined-up against a wall and murdered. In other cases, armed groups wearing police uniforms have arrested individuals who have later appeared murdered although the Ministry of Interior later denied that its forces were involved in the crime. The Ministry of Interior denied its involvement in the abduction of 50 employees of the Al-Rafiden security company in east Baghdad on 9 March although the operation was carried out by individuals wearing police commando uniforms. The fate of the men remains unresolved.

[T]he actions of militias, armed and vigilante groups, and their alleged implication in human rights violations, remain a cause of great concern. Reports indicate that such groups have increased their activity in central and southern areas of the country. Allegations that sectors of the new security forces have been infiltrated by militias responding to parallel structures have continued to be voiced by Iraqi NGOs, politicians, including members of the Government, and the international community. During the reporting period, there has apparently been no action taken to effectively address this problem thus increasing a perception of growing impunity. As a result, many continue to express the view that new militias need to be created in order to guarantee personal or group safety. [...]

HRO receives increasing reports about mosques and other religious sites allegedly being used as secret prisons and even operating as illegal courts. On 22 March, HRO received information that three men may have been detained inside Almuhsin mosque, allegedly used by Al-Mahdi militia to "investigate and try" individuals. The three men worked in a vegetable market next to Sadr-city and were allegedly executed after being tortured. Summary trials and execution-style have been reported as being used by Sunni groups."

International Herald Tribune, 23 September 2008:

"The American military credits the [Awakening] councils — whose 99,000 members are mostly Sunni Muslims, many of them former insurgents — with helping to greatly reduce violence around the country. But in Adhamiya [Sunni neighbourhood in Baghdad] and in some other areas of Iraq, the patrols, hailed by many as heroic for making the streets safer, have posed increasing problems. Commanders quarrel and jockey for power and territory. Finger-pointing and threats are common. Some residents complain that the men, not a few of them swaggering street toughs, use their power to intimidate people. Sometimes violence erupts."

See also (in sources, below):

Baghdad residents call for protection of homes from militant raids, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 13 September 2007

People flee Baghdad district as gunmen impose Shariah law, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 27 August 2007

Iraq After the Surge I: The New Sunni Landscape, **International Crisis Group (ICG)**, 30 April 2008

Conflict and Military operations in 2007-2008

- Large military operations would take place in Basra, and Sadr City of Baghdad, in early 2008. Subsequent military operations, in 2008 in Mosul, Amara and most recently in Baquba, would take place in part of strategic manoeuvre to confront militias. Military operations have been extensive in various parts of Iraq including in Baghdad, and in Anbar and Diyala province, Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet amongst other locations since 2003.
- Military operations remain marred by serious fighting, curfews, roadblocks and access difficulties for humanitarian assistance. These are accompanied with restrictions on freedom of movement, excessive use of force, theft and raid of homes, evictions and demolitions. Claims relate to death, injury and displacement of non-combatants as well as damage to civilian property and facilities
- Schools and hospitals have been occupied by MNF-I and ISF forces, and non-state actors. The impediment of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to areas and individuals affected remains a key point of concern.
- The conflict has also witnessed military operations by Turkish and Iranian military in border areas entailing insecurity for civilian populations and entailing displacement.

Amnesty International (AI), March 2008:

"US forces have killed scores of civilians in recent months. On many occasions US troops have fired at unarmed civilians seen as a threat because they came too close to a convoy or patrol or approached checkpoints too quickly. As early as 2003, Amnesty International raised such cases with US authorities, but necessary changes to rules of engagement apparently were never made and the killings continue. US military officials often blame armed groups, in particular al-Qa'ida, for causing civilian killings by US forces. They accuse the groups of deliberately launching attacks against Iraqi and MNF forces from inhabited civilian areas, so that civilians are likely to be killed or injured when the MNF returns fire. Until now the US government has not published any statistics about civilian casualties caused by US forces. The following cases are a few recent examples of such killings..... Iraqi security forces, in particular special forces under the control of the Ministry of the Interior, are reported to have extrajudicially executed dozens of people. Some members of these forces have reportedly continued to maintain close links with Shi'a militia groups, in particular the Badr Organization.¹⁹ In fact, many members of these special forces were recruited from the militia. Allegations of Iraqi security forces' involvement in sectarian killings continue. Foreign armed guards employed by private military and security firms have killed dozens of civilians. Such firms have been immune from prosecution thanks to Order 17 issued in 2004 by Paul Bremer, former head of the CPA.

Since the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, tens of thousands of people have been detained by the MNF and Iraqi forces. The majority of detainees held by the MNF are security internees who have been held without charge or trial and without the right to challenge their detention before a judicial body. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), around 60,000 people were held by the MNF and the Iraqi security forces as of November 2007.³³ In February 2008, the US military stated that the MNF was holding 23,900 people – 3,500 in Camp Cropper near Baghdad Airport and 20,400 in Camp Bucca near Basra in the south. This number includes 300 foreign nationals, mostly from Arab countries, and 620 children. The oldest detainee is said to be

80 and the youngest 10.³⁴ In January 2007, the UK military were holding 117 people in the south, but by December 2007 they had released the vast majority and were holding only five security internees. The MNF says UN Security Council Resolution 1546, passed in June 2004, authorizes it to detain people in Iraq. The Resolution provides for "internment where this is necessary for imperative reasons of security". In addition, internment policies are governed by CPA Memorandum No.3 (revised) of June 2004, which sets out the process of arrest and detention of criminal suspects as well as procedures relating to "security internees" held by the MNF after June 2004. The Memorandum provides that anyone who is interned for more than 72 hours is entitled to have the decision to intern them reviewed within seven days and thereafter at intervals of no more than six months.³⁵ These procedures deprive detainees of human rights guaranteed in international human rights norms. There is no time limit for the detention of security detainees, who also have no right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention before a court.³⁶ Up to 35,000 detainees are held in prisons and detention centres under the control of the Iraqi authorities, where torture and other ill-treatment are widespread. Under Iraqi legislation, a detainee must be brought before an investigating judge within 24 hours of arrest.³⁷ In reality, however, some detainees are held for many months before they are brought before an investigating judge. The majority of those currently held in Iraq are Sunni Muslims, from the predominantly Sunni areas of Iraq, suspected of being insurgents or of supporting and helping insurgent groups. Many are held simply because they are Sunni Iraqis and happened to be in the wrong place. According to the US military, 80 per cent of those held by the MNF are Sunni Muslims."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"The multinational force continued intensive operations in the Diyala province, with extensive cordon-and-search operations in Balad Ruz and Baqubah. Numerous suspects were detained and weapons caches discovered. Despite these operations, the insurgency continues in Diyala and al-Anbar provinces. Major routes through Falluja and Ramadi are persistently ambushed by armed opposition groups employing increasingly effective explosive devices and improved tactics."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Military operations by MNF-I and Iraqi Security Forces continue to affect the rights of the local population. In Ramadi, military clashes between MNF-I and Iraqi Security forces on one side, and insurgents on the other, continued to be reported in late September and throughout October, especially in the districts of Aziziya, Soufiya and Al- Mala'ab, and the surrounding streets such as Al-Eshreen and 17 Tammouz. MNF-I reportedly occupied three public schools in Al-Eskan district, close to Aziziya, while the Iraqi forces occupied the garden of the local hospital and used it as a recruitment centre. Adjacent residents, fearing being caught in cross-fire, had to evacuate their homes. In Fallujah, following a series of renewed bombings on 17 September, the MNF-I implemented a complete siege of the city. Those who were outside the city at the time have not been allowed to return to their homes. All the roads driving to the city were blocked for days and access became extremely difficult. On 25 October, MNF-I and Iraqi security forces carried out several targeted cordon and search operations in various parts of Baghdad, including inside the Al-Sadr City, and launched air raids on certain areas when MNF-I soldiers were attacked. In one such operation, four civilians were reportedly killed and 18 others wounded."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"In Baghdad and central areas of the country, where military operations have continued by the MNF and Iraqi forces, severe disruption to civilian life continues to take place. In Ramadi, where clashes are reported daily between insurgents and Iraqi and MNF, civilian casualties, damage to civilian property and extreme hardship to civilians are commonplace also due to the actions of the insurgency and the resulting use of force by the military. In the outskirts of Al-Iss Haqi District in Balad (Salah-EI-Din Governorate), during the early morning of 15 March, an MNF raid caused the death of several civilians, including women and children. The MNF has announced that it is

investigating the incident. Medical and other sources from Ramadi reported that 11 civilians, including children, were killed in the city following aerial bombings on 22 April. HRO could not independently verify this allegation. In March, the MNF announced that they were opening an inquiry into the incidents occurred in November 2005 in western town of Haditha. Residents accused US marines of killing 15 civilians after a marine was killed by a roadside bomb. The MNF had originally reported that the civilians had been killed by the bomb blast but a film produced by a local NGO suggested that the civilians died of gunfire and in their homes."

UNAMI, 22 March 2006, p.3:

"Military operations conducted by the Multinational Force and Iraqi security forces, especially in the al-Anbar Governorate, have raised a number of human rights concerns as allegations of restrictions to freedom of movement, excessive use of force, mistreatment and theft during raids of private homes, evictions and demolitions of houses have been received by UNAMI. Such reports were reiterated during visits by UNAMI to Ramadi and Fallujah on 20 and 21 February 2006. UNAMI is following up on these allegations with the MNF-I and the relevant Iraqi authorities."

UNAMI, 31 October 2005, p.2:

"Ongoing military and security operations by MNF-I and Iraqi forces with the stated aim of restoring law and order, including the resort to aerial bombardment, also had a negative impact on human rights. The United Nations has been unable to obtain accurate figures concerning civilian losses following such operations but reports received from civil society organizations, medical sources and other monitors indicate that they are significant and include women and children. According to figures released by the MNF-I and NGOs, more than 10,000 families have been displaced due to ongoing military operations in Al Anbar and Ninewa Governorates. Displaced persons' access to basic services has been severely hampered. Similarly, the impediment of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to areas and individuals affected remains a key point of concern, as is the growing number of humanitarian actors detained or imprisoned while attempting to carry out their work. According to reports from the World Health Organization, during military operations in Al Anbar Governorate in October, medical doctors were detained and medical facilities occupied by armed forces. The UN has repeatedly raised this issue with the Ministry of Health. Such actions are contrary to international law governing armed conflict and in any event they constitute a denial of the protection of international human rights law. Many homes have been damaged or destroyed and restrictions on freedom of movement have added to civilian hardship. The price paid by civilians, including women and children, during military activity currently underway calls for further reflection on the nature and conduct of the conflict and on the proportionality of the use of force."

See Also:

[Basra gains revive talk of British exit](#), **Christian Science Monitor (CSM)**, 25 August 2008
[Families begin to flee Baghdad suburb as US-led forces strike](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 7 May 2007
[Turkish offensive displaces villagers, damages bridges](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 29 February 2008
[Turkey army says launched land offensive into Iraq](#), **Reuters**, 22 February 2008
[Northern Iraq: Turkish shelling causing displacement](#), **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, 18 December 2007
[Baghdad, Iraqi Kurds protest alleged Iranian shelling](#), **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**, 29 August 2007
Human Rights Report November - December 2005, **UNAMI, December 2005, p.5**
UN Human Rights Report May - June 2006, **UNAMI, 18 July 2006**
UN Human Rights Report November - December 2006, **UNAMI, 16 January 2007**
[Anbar province plagued by violence](#), **IRIN, 15 January 2007**
[US air strikes isolate Baqubah villagers](#), **IRIN, 16 March 2007**

[Bombings strike Baghdad and area to the north and south; U.S. reports 5 troops killed](#), **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 25 July 2007
[Families fleeing violence set up improvised camps](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 22 July 2007
[Baghdad suburb residents flee after US raids](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 3 July 2007
[U.S. doubles air attacks in Iraq](#), **Associated Press**, 5 June 2007
[ICRC steps up humanitarian response](#), **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**, 7 May 2007

Estimates on civilian casualties since March 2003 (2003-2008)

- According to the latest and largest survey of civilian deaths in Iraq, published in early January 2008, 151,000 people were killed between March 2003 and June 2006. The survey was carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Iraq's Health Ministry.
- Until the end of 2007, figures published on civilian casualties had ranged from 601,027 deaths, reported by US researchers in 2006 in the medical Lancet publication in 2006, to 47,668 by the Iraq Body Count which tracks civilian deaths since the beginning of the conflict in 2003. The governments of Iraq and the United States denied the validity of the Lancet study

Amnesty International (AI), March 2008:

"No one knows the exact number of civilian casualties in Iraq since the US-led invasion in March 2003. According to the latest and largest survey of civilian deaths in Iraq, published in early January 2008, 151,000 people were killed between March 2003 and June 2006. The survey was carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Iraq's Health Ministry.⁵ The Iraqi government, led by Prime Minister Nuri al- Maliki, apparently accepts this estimate. Until the end of 2007, figures published on civilian casualties had ranged from 601,027 deaths, reported by US researchers in 2006 in the medical Lancet publication, to 47,668 by the Iraq Body Count."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"In its September 2006 issue, the "Lancet," an independent and authoritative journal, published a study on mortality rates in Iraq. The study estimated that 654,965 excess Iraqi deaths, including 601,027 due to violence, have occurred in Iraq since the invasion of the country in March 2003. The "confidence range" for the number of excess Iraqi deaths due to violence has been estimated between 426,369 and 793,663 with the figure of 601,027 as the median number. The study is based on interviews of 1,849 households containing 12,801 persons. The Government of the United States and Iraq as well as others, including the Iraq Body Count, an organization which has conducted other type of surveys, denied the validity of the study's findings. The Iraqi Minister of Health, in a statement made in Vienna, in early November, indicated that up to 150,000 Iraqi civilians might have been violently killed since 2003."

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"On 25 June, the Ministry of Health publicly acknowledged information stating that since 2003 at least 50,000 persons have been killed violently. The Baghdad morgue reportedly received 30,204 bodies from 2003 to mid-2006. Death numbering 18,933 occurred from "military clashes" and "terrorist attacks" between 5 April 2004 and 1 June 2006. The Ministry further indicated that the number of deaths is probably underreported." [Footnote] The Region of Kurdistan is not included in these statistics."

Mines and unexploded ordnances pose physical threat to displaced and non displaced (2004-2008)

- Iraq is one of the most mine/uxo affected countries in the world. There are approximately 10 million mines in Iraq, some dating as far back as WWII. A landmine survey conducted by the Iraqi authorities in June 2005 found a higher prevalence of contaminated areas in the North but more landmine victims in the South
- Invasion and subsequent insurgency and sectarian civil war has significantly increased the presence of mines in urban areas including disused abandoned residences. There is however no effective casualty surveillance in Iraq.
- A 2006 Handicap International report indicated that at least 55 million cluster bombs were dropped, which would make Iraq the world's most contaminated country with this lethal UXO.
- Spontaneous returnees are particularly vulnerable because they are unaware of recently laid mines, and are particularly at risk as they are often unfamiliar with the areas where they are in. Displaced people often find shelter in public buildings where UXOs are left. Mine and unexploded ordnance were reported as a major problem to return to Fallujah (January 2005)
- There is a lack of rehabilitation and reintegration of persons with disabilities and shortage of rehabilitation equipment Iraq's national mine authority under the Ministry of Environment as of June 2007 and has declared in early 2008 plans for demining. In 2004 the Kurdish Regional Government assumed responsibility for mine action in the three northern governorates of Erbil, Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah. Iraq acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty on 15 August 2007

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 4 February 2008:

"Iraq is planning a huge mine clearance operation in a bid to rid itself of some 25 million unexploded mines in some 4,000 minefields, Environment Minister Narmin Othman said on 3 February. She said a detailed report on mine clearance plans would be presented to the government by September 2008. According to global statistics, Iraq has about 25 percent of the world's unexploded landmines due to the wars it was involved in, Narmin told IRIN in a telephone interview. The mines were laid during the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, the first Gulf War following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991, and the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq which toppled Saddam Hussein. The majority of these landmines are concentrated in the border areas that stretch from the north with Turkey and Iran to the border with Kuwait in the south, Narmin said. Narmin said many aspects of life had been affected by the mines. "Because of these landmines, Iraq has lost access to thousands of hectares of farmland and has been unable to invest properly in its oil fields," she said."

UNHCR, October 2005:

"After decades of war and internal conflicts, Iraq is one of the most mine/UXO-affected countries in the world. Most affected are border areas, in particular the Iran-Iraq border. Approximately one out of every five Iraqis lives within one kilometre of areas highly contaminated by the explosive remnants of war. Children are exposed to a particular risk and are injured or killed on a daily basis, such as when working in the street or living in abandoned buildings. The Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), which was undertaken by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC)/National Mine Action Authority through the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, found that by 20 June 2005, 26 percent of the communities in the three Northern and 11 percent of the communities in the four Southern Governorates were contaminated (a total of 1,464 communities). Despite the higher prevalence of contaminated areas in the three Northern Governorates, the survey found many more victims in the South. The LIS established that all in all, an estimated 2400 km² is suspected mine or UXO contaminated, mostly in the South near the Iranian border. There are some 1,777 km² of contaminated area in the Governorate of Basrah alone, as it was one of the main battlegrounds during the eight-year long Iraq-Iran War.

Mines and UXO represent major obstacles to reconstruction and development in certain areas. They prevent people from having access to fields for grazing, land for cultivation and water for irrigation. The LIS found that in 60 percent of the accidents, the victims had been herding or farming. While local communities are often aware of the approximate whereabouts of mined areas in their environment, IDPs and returnees are at particular risk as they are often not familiar with the areas they are in. In addition, they are exposed to such risks when returning to Iraq through mined border areas or upon return when they live in vacated public buildings (such as former military sites) due to a lack of housing. Many cannot return because their villages of origin have been destroyed and mined: many villages in the North were depopulated during the *Anfal* campaign and villages along the border with Iran were heavily mined during the Iraq-Iran War. The UN/World Bank estimated that under the strategy and funding scenario outlined in the Joint Iraq Needs Assessment of October 2003, 'freeing northern Iraq from the impact of landmines and UXO will take eighteen years'. In addition to the general dire state of the health system, [...] rehabilitation and reintegration of persons with disabilities, including mine victims, is hampered by the following factors: shortage of raw materials for prosthetic and orthotic manufacturing workshops, a lack of rehabilitation equipment and aids such as wheelchairs and crutches, a lack of transport to existing facilities, a lack of psychosocial support programmes, insufficient knowledge, training and skill among rehabilitation specialists and a lack of vocational training programmes and income generation opportunities."

UNAMI EWG, 18 January 2005:

Fallujah: "According to an NGO assessment, the presence of mines and UXOs remains a major concern, as reports suggest that homes and public buildings have not been systematically cleared and demarcated and that public information campaigns have not been effectively disseminated to returnees"

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

"There are approximately 10 million mines in Iraq. The mines date from various conflicts as far back as World War II. As a result of the Iraq-Iran war in the 1980s, a great deal of the approximately 1200 Km border between Iraq and Iran, including the hydro dams, is littered with mines and UXOs (unexploded ordinances). This situation is particularly hazardous for spontaneous returnees who generally use illegal border crossing points and has already resulted in a number of deaths. While demining activity is currently on-going, it is far from completed and the presence of mines will continue to pose a serious threat to physical safety for many years to come. Also, new mines were planted in areas of return before and during the Coalition Forces intervention. Returnees are generally not aware of the existence of these sites. As for those Iraqi refugees who find themselves displaced upon return, they often find shelter in public buildings where UXOs have been left as a result of the last war."

See also (in sources, below):

"Desk Study on the environment in Iraq", **UNEP**, May 2003

"UXO poses great problem in the south", **IRIN**, May 2003

Landmine Monitor, 2007

Landmine Monitor, 2006

UNHCR, 9 August 2004

[Iraq Mine and UXO Clearance Organization](#), **Journal of Mine Action**, Summer 2008

UNSC, 7 June 2005, para. 56

IOM, September 2004

Vulnerable groups

Intimidation and displacement of Palestinians inside Iraq (2007)

- There has been a significant Palestinian community living in Iraq for many years
- 23,000 Palestinians were registered by UNHCR in 2003
- Estimates of the current number of Palestinians range between 15,000 and 34,000 people
- Following the US invasion of 2003, Palestinians were perceived as supporters of the regime or the insurgency
- Palestinians have faced discrimination and attacks, others have been illegally detained, tortured or disappeared
- Several hundred Palestinian, particularly those from the Al Baladiyat and Al Hurriya neighborhoods left Baghdad in fear for their safety
- UNHCR reported that 350 Palestinians remain stranded near the Al Tanf border crossing between Iraq and Syria in a makeshift refugee camp (January 2007)
- For many Iraqis, leaving the country is not an option because they do not have documentation recognised in neighboring countries

For an indepth report, see [Nowhere to Flee: The Perilous Situation of Palestinians in Iraq](#), HRW, September 2006

UNSC, 7 March 2007

"The Palestinian community in Iraq, currently estimated at more than 15,000 persons, suffers from regular intimidation, kidnappings and assassinations. On 23 January 2007, unidentified men, some of whom were in police uniforms, abducted 60 Palestinians from their homes in three Baghdad neighbourhoods. When released, some victims showed signs of physical abuse. UNAMI records indicate that 186 Palestinians were killed between April 2004 and mid-January 2007. Approximately 700 Palestinians have sought refuge on the border between Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and at the Al-Waleed Camp on the Iraqi side of the border. UNHCR and its NGO partners are providing food, water, supplies and medicine, while ICRC is supplying tents and other essential relief items. On 8 February 2007, a senior representative of the Palestinian Authority visited Iraq, after several failed attempts. He sought assurances from President Talabani and Prime Minister Al-Maliki that Palestinians in Iraq will be protected."

UNAMI, 16 January 2007

"Killings, threats, intimidations, and kidnappings are becoming the norm for Palestinians in Iraq. Many of these actions are reportedly carried out by the militias wearing police or special forces uniform. Most of the victims are found dead or simply disappear. Sixteen Palestinians were kidnapped and 9 killed during the reporting period. HRO received unconfirmed reports that many victims were interrogated and killed in illegal detention centres run by militias. Many residents have reported receiving threatening letters demanding they evacuate their houses and many of the abandoned houses were later occupied allegedly by members of militias or their affiliates.

On 2 November, two individuals were killed in front of their parents by the Iraqi National Guard in Al Fadil area in Baghdad. On 27 November, the body of 72-year-old Tawfiq Abdul Khaliq was found bearing signs of torture. On 13 November, unidentified gunmen killed a female Palestinian in Al Mashtel area in Baghdad. Her house was occupied by militias and when she asked MNF-I for help, the militia torched her house before departing. Other Palestinians were targeted and kidnapped for ransom and then released or killed. On 30 November, a taxi driver, was kidnapped at the Al Habibia area and then released. A shopkeeper was taken from his shop in Al Mashtel

area on 2 December. The kidnappers came in one police and three civilian cars. His body was found on 7 December at the Baghdad morgue.

Attacks on the Palestinian compound in Baladiyat in Baghdad for instance are frequent in order to compel Palestinians to leave their dwellings and their belongings. Baladiyat is located in the midst of a Shiite area and threats are usually followed by small arms fire and mortar attacks. In the past two months, at least six incidents of organized attacks on the Palestinian compound have been recorded, such as on 26 November, when a group of gunmen stormed the quarter and demanded Palestinians leave or be shot. On 9 December, three mortar shells landed in Al Baladiyat wounding ten. On 13 December, mortar attacks continued to rain on the compound for three hours, killing up to 11 and injuring more. There were reports that the area was cordoned off by police, according to some accounts, and by militias according to others, thus preventing injured Palestinians to reach hospitals.

[...]

On at least two occasions in December, UNAMI had to call upon MNF-I to intervene while the Palestinian compound was being attacked. The police and MNF-I were reported to have arrived after the attacks had ended, and briefly patrolled the area. UNHCR reported that 350 Palestinians from Iraq (who recently left Baghdad) remain near the Al Tanf border crossing between Iraq and Syria in a makeshift refugee camp located in the no man's land between both borders. They have been denied entry by the Syrian government and they refused to return to Iraq. As a result, they have been living in increasingly desperate circumstances for the past six months. There are 131 Palestinians still within Iraq near Al Tanf border. Similarly, at the border with Jordan, 7 Palestinians remain between the Jordanian and the Iraqi border."

UNHCR, 30 November 2006

"Palestinian refugees came to Iraq in successive waves. The first group originating from the northern part of today's Israel reached Iraq in 1948. They were followed by another group who fled the Occupied Territories, mainly in 1967, as a result of the third Arab-Israeli war and later by a third group who moved from the Gulf countries in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war. Following the 2003 war in Iraq, 23,000 Palestinians have been registered by UNHCR before the evacuation of the UN staff from Iraq and the interruption of the registration campaign in August 2003. It is believed that at present less than 15,000 Palestinians continue to live in Iraq.

The Palestinian refugees in Iraq were never recognized formally as refugees by the Iraqi government. However, they were protected by the Iraqi authorities based on pertinent resolutions of the League of Arab States and, in particular, the 1965 Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States, the Casablanca Protocol. They enjoyed a relatively high standard of treatment and were granted residence permits, benefited from the right to work, access to social services and were provided with government-owned housing or fixed, subsidized rent in privately-owned dwellings. Iraq could thus be considered as the habitual place of residence of these Palestinians.

Since the fall of the former regime in Baghdad in April 2003, members of the Palestinian community in Baghdad have raised concerns that their status and their security in Iraq are at risk. They have expressed concerns regarding the renewal of their residency permits and the confiscation of their documents.

Palestinians in Iraq have become a target of arbitrary arrest, detention, false accusations in the media, abduction, kidnapping, torture and even extra-judicial killings. UNHCR received credible reports that many have been harassed by segments of the Iraqi population and armed militias who resent their perceived close affiliation with the former regime and accuse them of acts of terrorism. Palestinians complained about the increasingly difficult and sometimes humiliating process of renewing their residence documents on a two months basis.

Hundreds of Palestinian families were evicted from their homes by landlords resentful that they had been forced to house subsidized Palestinian tenants. Some of the reported acts of violence against Palestinians have been allegedly carried out with the connivance and, possibly the participation of some elements associated with the Iraqi security forces or that the security forces have shown little effort to stop these acts. This climate of hostility against Palestinians has continued unabated until the present, and many Palestinians, given their insecurity, have limited their movements and have stopped sending their children to schools.

In early October 2006, the Al Hurriya district in Baghdad was the scene for an incursion by the members of an Iraqi militia who threatened the Palestinian inhabitants of the area and evicted at least one Palestinian family from their home. UNHCR received reports that the incident forced around 300 families to leave the Al Hurriya district and to head for other areas. On 19 October 2006, a mortar attack in Baghdad's Palestinian neighbourhood of Al Baladiya left four Palestinians dead, a dozen wounded and many people displaced. Ambulances trying to reach the area right after the attack were reportedly turned away by armed militia. There had been previous warnings by militia groups that Palestinians should leave the neighbourhood. The Al Baladiya area used to house some 8,000 Palestinians. Reports by Palestinian sources now say that there are only about 4,000 remaining there."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006

"The Palestinian refugees in Baghdad have continued to be harassed and targeted by militias using light weapons and mortars to force them out of their homes in Baghdad, particularly the Al-Baladiyat and Al-Hurriya neighbourhoods. The Palestinian Embassy in Baghdad reported that Palestinians have received constant verbal threats and abuses. Further, the Embassy has reported incidents of random shooting at their buildings from moving vehicles, which the Palestinians have described as a daily occurrence. Several have been killed or injured in these incidents. As a result, many families living in Al-Hurriya and a majority of the 2,200 Palestinian families residing in Al Baladiyat have reportedly left their homes, which they had rented or bought after having been forcibly evicted from other neighbourhoods in Baghdad. For many Palestinians, leaving Iraq is not an option, as the only documents they have are either Iraqi Travel Documents or Palestinian passports. Neither document is accepted by neighbouring countries.

Following threats delivered through leaflets at the end of September, militias reportedly raided Palestinian neighbourhood of Al-Hurriya on 7 October at 22:00 hours and ordered the residents to vacate their houses by 10:00 the following day or they would be killed. UNHCR, MNF-I and the US Embassy were alerted and it appears that the Iraqi Army visited the area. During the same militia raid of 7 October, at least one individual and his family were forcibly evicted from their home. The militias confiscated the keys to their home, and up to 20 families have relocated from the area out of fear.

On 20 October, 6 mortars were fired at the Baladiyat complex, used as a sewing training centre and currently occupied by about 20 Palestinian families evicted from their homes in 2003. The complex is situated close to a mosque and a residential area. Three Palestinian men were killed and 21 sustained light or critical injuries. According to witnesses along the main road to Baladiyat, the attackers were dressed in black outfits. The witnesses, who were shop owners, were asked to get inside their shops during the attack."

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

"The situation of Palestinians in Iraq continues to be of serious concern. Some 34,000 Palestinians have been living in Iraq for years but are currently victims to various types of human rights violations because they are perceived as supporters of the previous regime or the insurgency. After serious attacks against the Palestinian community following the destruction of Al-Askari Shrine in Samarra on 22 February 2006, their security situation has varied.[...]

In the morning of 26 June the apartment building complex where many Palestinians reside in Baghdad, in Al-Baladiyat neighbourhood, was attacked by armed individuals identified as militias. Some accounts indicated that among the aggressors there were allegedly members of the Special Forces of the Ministry of Interior. At least 4 Palestinians died and many others were wounded when the militias reportedly opened fire in a local market. Among the attackers, 7 were reportedly killed in the ensuing clashes. After the initial assault, the armed men entered several apartments and detained at least 12 young men. The situation was brought under control after the intervention of the MNF-I but Palestinians remain fearful and requested that the MNF-I continue frequent patrols to dissuade further attacks.

The Human Rights Office received several reports that, following the attack in Al- Baladiyat, family members of one Palestinian killed during the clashes was also murdered outside the Medico-Legal Institute in Baghdad, when they tried to recover the body of their relative. UNAMI HRO also received reports that two Palestinians wounded during the 26 June clashes were kidnapped from Al-Kindy and Habibiya hospitals by unidentified armed men.

The approximately 175 Palestinian refugees who are stranded in no-man's land, on the border to Syria, recently reported that, on 18 June, Iraqi Security Forces arrived in several vehicles in front of the camp and told a man standing there that the Palestinians were terrorists and threatened to take him back to Iraq with them. The man started shouting and calling a Syrian security officer who happened to be in the camp. The officer called for a Syrian Patrol to assist, but the Iraqi Security Forces left in their vehicles towards Iraq."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006

"UNAMI HRO has been in contact with Palestinian representatives over the past months. Some 34,000 Palestinians have been living in Iraq for years but are currently victims to various types of human rights violations because they are perceived supporters of the insurgency. In this sense, they are victims of the same discrimination, labelling, stigmatization and profiling affecting other communities of foreign residents of Arab extraction in Iraq (e.g. Syrian Arabs, Sudanese, Yemenis, Egyptians, Somalis). On 22 February 2006, following the events in Samarra, militias attacked Palestinians living in the neighbourhood of Baladiyat in Baghdad with mortars and indiscriminate fire. Up to 10 Palestinians have been reported killed since 22 February; others have been illegally detained and tortured or have disappeared.

Since 19 March 2006, approximately 240 members of the Palestinian community, who have lived in Iraq for many years, have left Baghdad in fear for their safety and were stranded near the border with Jordan as of 30 April.."

General: Vulnerable groups and Categories among displaced communities (2007-2008)

- IDP Female heads of household, and children in all Governorates show indications of social and economic vulnerability. This includes, female headed households, child-heads of households, streetchildren, children working or begging, children not attending schools and early marriages.
- Over 8% of the displaced population assessed suffered from illness, pregnancy, or advanced age in the communities monitored by IOM. However, IOM monitors believe the percentage is higher. (IOM, 2 February 2007)
- Minorities including cultural symbols have been targetted based on their identity such as the Shabaks, Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Orthodox, Catholics, Anglicans), the Faeeli Kurds, Yazidis, and Sabeen Mandeans. (see section below)

- Sunni and Shi'a communities are being persecuted in areas where they are a minority, and mixed families vulnerable to displacement. Iraq does not have a history of violence based on religious differences. With the current sectarian violence, mixed families are particularly vulnerable to separation.
- In addition there has increasingly been concern for communities however who have been compelled to remain within highly insecure environments. In early 2007, it was suggested that conditions facing the "internally stuck", those who have opted to stay in their homes or are unable to move and are therefore mostly hidden from view, are perhaps much more worrisome as access to essential needs and services are limited.

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Female heads of household's income comes from employment, relatives/friends, charities and children working. A significant number of women have no income whatsoever. Many IDP children are reported to be working in order to support themselves or their families. In all Governorates, indications of economic and social vulnerability in relation to children were found, e.g. children working or begging, street children, children not attending school, child heads of households and early marriages. Girls appear to be more at risk of domestic violence than boys. A considerable number of IDPs report that their primary school-aged children do not attend school. Among groups assessed, 31% of the boys and 40% of the girls are not attending primary school."

Emergency Needs Assessment Displacement in Iraq: Monthly Report, September, International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

"Information below is based on in-depth assessments of **189,788** families (estimated **1,138,728** individuals) displaced throughout Iraq since 22 February 2006. (Please note that this figure represents the total number that IOM monitors have assessed, not the total number of displaced in Iraq since 22 February 2006.)"

How many group members have the following vulnerabilities?

| Governorate | Female Head of Household | Person with Mental Disability | Pregnant Women | Elderly Persons | Persons With Serious Illnesses | Other Vulnerabilities |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| All Iraq | 1.90% | 0.40% | 2.20% | 4.20% | 0.60% | 0.90% |
| Anbar | 1.00% | 0.10% | 1.20% | 3.70% | 0.20% | 0.20% |
| Babylon | 3.10% | 0.30% | 2.30% | 6.70% | 0.30% | 0.40% |
| Baghdad | 0.50% | 0.10% | 2.20% | 2.70% | 0.10% | 0.00% |
| Basrah | 2.50% | 0.10% | 2.00% | 2.60% | 0.40% | 0.40% |
| Dahuk | 1.00% | 1.20% | 2.50% | 5.60% | 0.90% | 6.00% |
| Diyala | 4.20% | 0.30% | 1.70% | 10.30% | 1.20% | 6.10% |
| Erbil | 0.00% | 7.00% | 2.10% | 1.80% | 0.10% | 0.00% |
| Kerbala | 3.40% | 1.00% | 1.90% | 4.70% | 1.20% | 0.30% |
| Missan | 3.60% | 0.30% | 3.50% | 4.80% | 0.50% | 0.30% |
| Muthanna | 2.20% | 0.40% | 4.00% | 7.30% | 0.30% | 0.10% |
| Najaf | 1.60% | 0.70% | 0.80% | 3.50% | 1.10% | 0.60% |
| Ninewa | 1.20% | 0.30% | 1.40% | 2.80% | 0.90% | 0.50% |
| Qadissiya | 7.30% | 0.00% | 0.90% | 3.80% | 1.70% | 0.10% |
| Salah al-Din | 1.80% | 0.50% | 1.80% | 3.60% | 2.30% | 2.10% |
| Sulaymaniyah | 1.20% | 0.50% | 4.00% | 4.50% | 0.40% | 3.10% |
| Kirkuk | 2.20% | 0.30% | 2.50% | 3.50% | 0.60% | 0.30% |
| Thi-Qar | 3.00% | 0.20% | 4.30% | 6.10% | 0.60% | 0.00% |
| Wassit | 1.40% | 0.00% | 2.10% | 2.30% | 0.20% | 0.00% |

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Over 8% of the displaced population assessed suffered from vulnerabilities or risks, such as illness, pregnancy, or advanced age. (However, monitors and international officials believe that this percentage is higher. When interviewees provided information for several families, numbers tended to be underestimated.) IDPs must often leave behind their possessions, their source of income, and their social safety net, placing them at risk. In addition, a lack of food or water has a greater impact on the already vulnerable, such as pregnant women or the elderly. Mental disabilities can be exacerbated by an unfamiliar environment experienced in displacement. Stress due to violence and displacement exacerbates all of these conditions. Out of over 247,134 individuals, 4,957 women (2% of individuals) were reported female heads-of-households, 8,491 individuals (3%) were considered elderly, 3,633 women (2%) were pregnant, 383 individuals (less than 1%) reported a family member with a mental disability, 648 individuals (less than 1%) have serious illnesses, and 375 individuals (less than 1%) reported "other vulnerabilities". Again, the actual number of vulnerable IDPs is probably higher."

Taking Sides or Saving Lives: Existential Choices for the Humanitarian Enterprise in Iraq, Humanitarian Agenda 2015 Iraq Country Study, By Greg Hansen, Independent Researcher, Feinstein International Center (FIC), 2 July 2007:

"In political circles and within the international humanitarian apparatus itself, there is an emerging disproportionate focus on Iraqis who have fled as IDPs or refugees.⁷ Many IDPs and all refugees are relatively more accessible to current assistance and protection efforts than those who have remained in the worst-stricken areas. Little attention is so far being paid to preventing forced migration from occurring. Conditions facing the "internally stuck", those who have opted to stay in their homes or are unable to move and are therefore mostly hidden from view, are perhaps much

more worrisome as access to essential needs and services becomes increasingly difficult in much of the country, and as social supports such as the Public Distribution System (PDS) for food rations collapse."

IRIN, 6 April 2006:

"According to estimates, two million out of Iraq's 6.5 million marriages are unions between Arab Sunnis and Shi'ites. [...] Many of the doctrinal differences between Sunnis and Shi'ites are minor enough to be dismissed, except by puritans of both sects. Mixed marriages between Arab Sunnis and Shi'ites – and also between the predominantly Sunni Kurds and Arabs of both sects – have been common, even in the days of former president Saddam Hussein, when Shi'ites were heavily discriminated against.[...] According to sociologists, one of the major problems facing mixed families is displacement. "When these families are being displaced, their main concern is where to go, because each one has a particular sectarian area to run to," said Marouf Abbas, a sociologist in Baghdad. "Usually the wives follow their husbands so as to keep their families intact." More than 40,000 families have been displaced in Iraq due to ongoing sectarian violence, according to estimates by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. Millions of Iraqi children are the products of Sunni-Shi'ite unions, brought up in homes where different beliefs coexist peacefully. In today's Iraq, however, they are being forced to think differently[...] Local NGOs working with children say that sectarian violence has seriously affected the psychology of children, especially those born of mixed marriages.

See also (in sources, below):

[Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 \(2007\), UN Secretary General \(UNSG\)](#), 28 July 2008

Minority groups targeted by violence and intimidation are forcibly displaced (2003-2008)

- Ten per cent of Iraq's population is made up of minority communities. They include Armenian and Chaldo- Assyrian Christians, Bahá'ís, Faili Kurds, Jews, Mandeans, Palestinians, Shabaks, Turkomans and Yazidis.
- Minorities including cultural symbols have been targetted based on their identity many have fled their homes or have been victims of violence and discrimination, others have been detained, tortured or have disappeared. In October 2008, nearly 750 Christian families fled their homes in Mosul as extremists increased attacks against religious minority. (IRIN, 12 October 2008)
- This also includes Sunni and Shi'a communities being persecuted in areas where they are a minority, as well as inter-ethnic tensions between Arab, Turkoman and Kurdish communities. predominantly Kurdish areas.
- Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights has reported that number of deaths due to direct or indirect attacks between 2003 and end of 2007 – entailing 528 fatalities and over 16,000 displaced for the Shabak minority, second Yazidi community with over 335 fatalities; third Iraqi Christians with 172 fatalities and estimated 9,000 displaced; fourth Sabis minority with 127 killed. (IRIN, 3 July 2008)
- The Iraqi Ministry for Migration and Displacement in Iraq has estimated that nearly half of the minority communities have left the country. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, minorities make up approximately 30 per cent of the 1.8m Iraqi refugees now seeking sanctuary in Jordan, Syria and across the world. (MRI, February 2007)

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 12 October 2008:

"Nearly 750 Christian families, about 3,750 individuals, have fled their homes in Mosul, a city about 400km north of Baghdad, as Sunni Muslim extremists have increased attacks against this religious minority since 4 October, a local official said on 11 October. "We have registered so far 744 Christian families who left their houses in Mosul due to the recent attacks. Most have ended up either in relatives' houses or churches or monasteries in nearby towns and villages where there are many Christians," said Jawdat Ismaiel, provincial director of the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. Ismaiel said these new internally displaced persons (IDPs) are distributed in seven towns and villages to the north and east of Mosul, the provincial capital of Nineveh province. He said there were about 200 families in Qaraqoush, 187 families in Tal Skouf, 145 families in Bartila, 96 families in Baashiq, 47 families in Karam Less, 37 families in Tilkaif and 32 families in Alqoush."

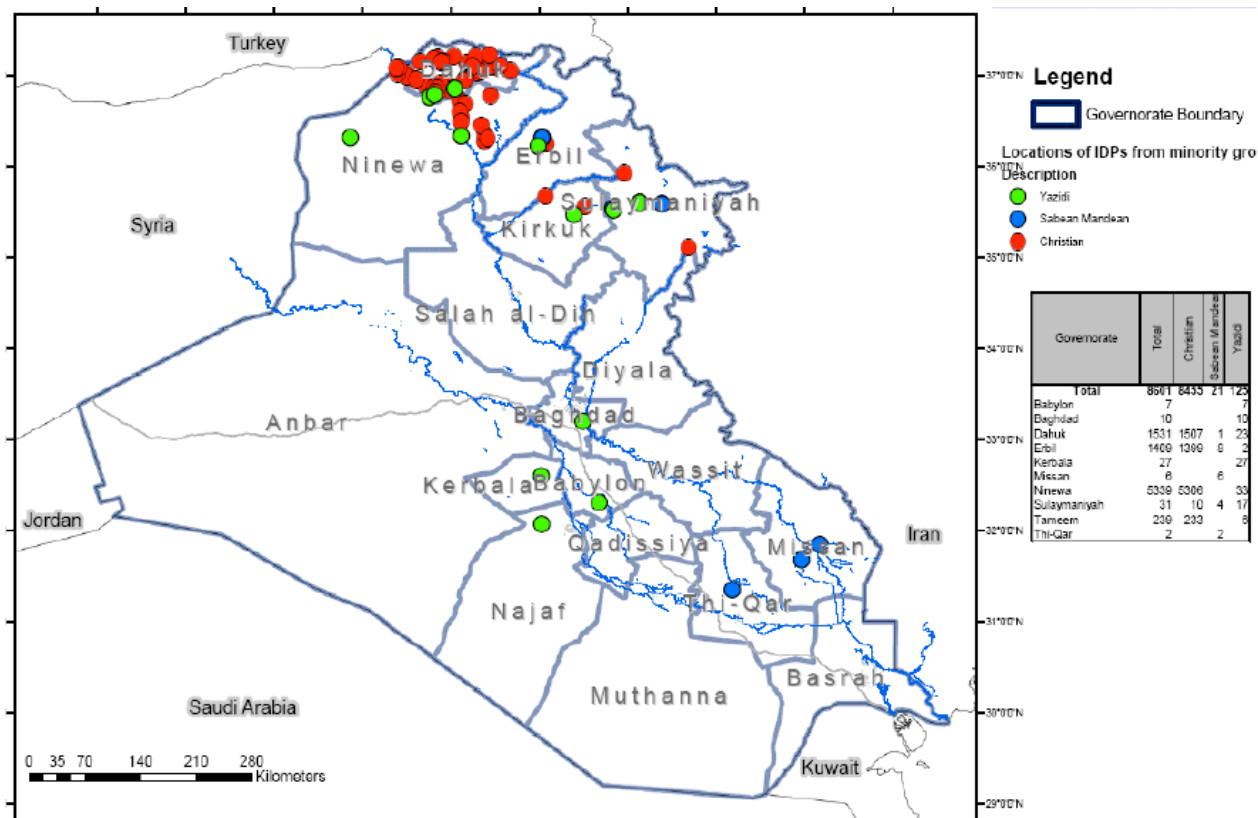
Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 3 July 2008:

"A new report by Iraq's Ministry of Human Rights sets out the number of deaths in different ethnic communities caused by direct or indirect attacks in Iraq between 2003 and the end of 2007, and the numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) for each minority. The report, released on 1 July, said the Shabak minority in the northern province of Nineveh topped the list with 529 fatalities and 3,078 families (about 16,000 individuals) displaced. Shabaks, whose numbers are estimated at 300,000-400,000, have a religion containing elements of Islam, Christianity and other religions, according to theologians. Some see them as a sub-group of the Kurds, while others say they are a distinct ethnic group. Second on the list is the Yazidi community, which also lives in Nineveh Province and worships Melek Taus, the Peacock Angel. The report said 335 Yazidis had been killed, but gave no data on the number of IDPs. The Yazidis were hit in August 2007 by four simultaneous suicide car bombings in a suburb of the provincial capital, killing 215. In third place with 172 fatalities were Iraq's Christians: 107 Chaldeans, 33 Orthodox, 24 Catholics, four Assyrians, three Anglicans and one Armenian. It said 1,752 Christian families, about 9,000 persons, were living as IDPs. In fourth place were the Sabis, who live in different parts of Iraq but mainly in the south, with 127 killed; 62 families were living as IDPs. A further 3,500 families had sought refuge in Jordan and 10,000 in Syria. "

IDP Working Group, 24 March 2008:

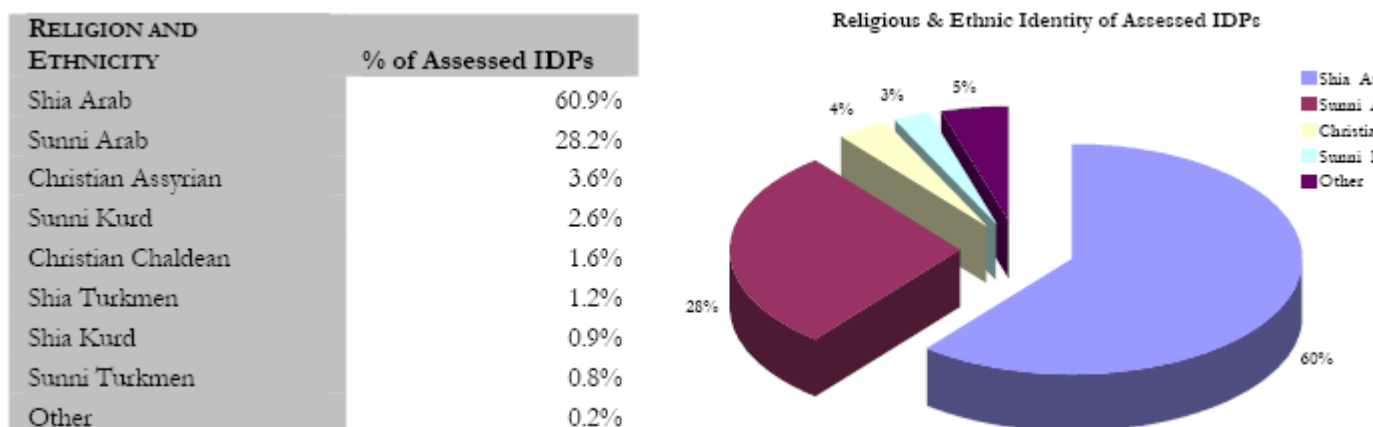
"Christians assessed by IOM are concentrated in the north, most of them in Dahuk. Sabean Mandeans were identified in the North and some Southern Governorates, while Yazidis were identified throughout the country. Yazidis mainly fled Diyala (22%) and Ninewa (65%). Most Christians fled from Baghdad (77%) and Ninewa (19%). 90% of assessed Sabean Mandeans fled from Baghdad. Most of the Christians and Sabean Mandeans were displaced in mid-to-late 2006, but for Yazidis the largest spikes in displacement occurred in March 2003 and in August 2007. Nearly all assessed Christians and Sabean Mandeans are living in rented housing or with a host family or relatives. In contrast, only 24% of assessed Yazidis are renting – 29% live in collective settlements, 20% are in tents near houses of hosts, and 17% share a house with host families or relatives. "

International Organization for Migration (IOM), March 2008:



International Organization for Migration (IOM), 11 January 2008:

"The following graph shows the religious and ethnic profile of the IDP population: When comparing IDPs displaced in 2006 with those displaced in 2007, the ethno-religious profile does not vary significantly. For the major groups, displacement rates dropped in 2007 (reflecting the overall trend), while displacement rates for some very small IDP minorities (Turkmen and Sunni Kurds) did not change significantly from 2006 to 2007."



MRG, February 2007:

"Ten per cent of Iraq's population is made up of minority communities. They include Armenian and Chaldo-

Assyrian Christians, Bahá'ís, Faili Kurds, Jews, Mandaean, Palestinians, Shabaks, Turkomans and Yazidis. Some of these groups have lived in Iraq for two millennia or more. There is now a real fear that they will not survive the current conflict and their unique culture and heritage in Iraq may be extinguished forever. A huge exodus of these communities is now taking place. The Iraqi Ministry for Migration and Displacement in Iraq has estimated that nearly half of the minority communities have left the country. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, minorities make up approximately 30 per cent of the 1.8m Iraqi refugees now seeking sanctuary in Jordan, Syria and across the world. Minorities are specifically targeted for eradication because of their faith and ethnicity. Christians are at risk because their faith associates them with the West and with the MNF-I (Multi National Force in Iraq). The traditional trade of this community as alcohol-sellers also makes them a target. Islamist groups have dubbed the Yazidi religion 'impure' and called for their destruction. For Mandaean, the carrying of weapons is a direct violation of their religious laws, thus making it difficult for them to defend themselves.

All of Iraq's minority communities have suffered violations since 2003 which include:

- destruction and defacement of religious buildings
- mass murder of congregations gathered in and around them
- abduction, ransoming and murder of religious and civic leaders and individuals including children
- forced conversion to Islam using tactics such as death threats, rape and forced marriage.

Minority communities also face assimilation because the areas they live in, such as Mosul, Basra and Kirkuk, put them at the centre of power struggles between Kurds, Sunni Arabs and Shia Arabs, fighting over historical claims and – crucially – Iraq's great oil wealth. Ironically, many from these groups felt life might improve for them at the collapse of the Ba'ath regime. But as well as the current lack of security, discriminatory laws still active from the time of Saddam Hussein's rule continue to make life almost impossible. The Bahá'í community remains without the right to citizenship and their freedom of movement and to practise their religion is still curtailed. Iraq's Palestinian community, once given special treatment to suit the political will of the Ba'ath Party, now find themselves under siege in Baghdad, the constant target of violence and threats. With neighbouring countries unwilling to give them refuge, they remain trapped in increasing numbers on the borders of Iraq. So far Iraq's fledgling democratic processes have presented problems for minorities. During the 2005 elections, members of minority groups reported violence, intimidation and lack of access to polling booths. The new Constitution – approved in a 2005 referendum – was drafted with little participation from minority groups. Though it is progressive in many respects, it is alarmingly vague on the role Islam will play in the future Iraqi state – placing a question-mark over issues of religious freedom. It could also have offered stronger protections for minority and women's rights."

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"Minorities in Iraq remain severely affected by the overall security situation, economic and social degradation and the existence of organized armed groups, militias and insurgents, all operating with near complete impunity. Minority groups feel marginalized from political participation and decision-making at the local and national levels. The Shabaks and Assyrians in the Nineveh Plains in particular have been pressured to convert to Islam. Of the 1.5 million Assyrians living in Iraq before 2003, half have left the country and the remaining 750,000 are said to be moving into "safe areas" in Zakho and North Nineveh. Considered to be foreign, non-Arab and of non-Iraqi origin, religious minorities, such as Sabeen-Mandean, frequently encounter intimidation by public and religious officials.

In November, there were significant attacks against the Christian community in Mosul and in December, 14 Kurdish farmers were killed by insurgent groups in the Sinjar area of the Ninewah

plain. Inter-ethnic tensions between Arab, Turkoman and Kurdish communities are escalating in Kirkuk. The ethnic divide in Kirkuk was underscored when the Sunni Mosque of Ahmad Thiab al-Nu'aymi in the Terklan area was blown up by extremists on 16 November. HRO received a video evidently showing the abuse and killing of an Arab, who was in the custody of local security officers, in the streets of Kirkuk. Kirkuk authorities have agreed to investigate the case upon HRO's request.

On 19 November the KRG Parliament Speaker, Adnan Mufti, received a delegation from the Syrian Assyrian Democratic Organization to discuss Christian rights in Kurdistan and their demands for an autonomous region in the Ninewah Plains in response to the heightened violence against Christians. Four days later, gunmen brutally gunned down the leader of Iraq's Christian Syrian community, Yashoo'a Majid Hadaya in an attack in Qaraqosh, northeast of Mosul.

See also (in [sources page](#)):

UNAMI, 22 November 2006

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

UNAMI, 1 January - 28 February 2005

Iraq to confront militias after Sadr threat, **Reuters**, 21 April 2008

Iraqi Christians cling to last, waning refugees, **Christian Science Monitor (CSM)**, 6 March 2008

The Future of Kirkuk: The Referendum and Its Potential Impact on Displacement, **Brookings Institution**, 3 March 2008

Minority Religious Groups in Iraq, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, March 2008

UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report: 1 July – 31 December 2007, **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, March 2008

No solution in sight for Palestinian refugees stranded at border, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 18 February 2008

Time for Kurdish Realism, **Brookings Institution**, 9 February 2008

Sunni vs Shia: the real bloody battle for Baghdad, **The Independent**, 5 February 2008

Iraq's Turkmen Of Kirkuk Appeal For Government Protection, **Agence France-Presse (AFP)**, 31 January 2008

Ministry report details impact of violence on minorities, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 3 July 2008

Iraq's Refugee and IDP crisis: Human Toll and Implications, **Middle East Institute**, July 2008

Bombers kill 175 in attacks on minority sect in Iraq, **The Guardian**, 15 August 2007

Baghdad squatters told to leave occupied homes, **Reuters**, 22 June 2008

Al Tanf Camp Trauma Continues for Palestinians Fleeing Iraq, **Amnesty International (AI)**, May 2008

Life After the "Islamic State", **Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)**, 4 January 2008

Government to give financial aid to displaced in north, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 31 December 2007

More aid needed for the displaced in Anbar Province, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 3 December 2007

The Kurdish Policy Imperative, **Chatham House and University of Exeter**, December 2007

Ethnic violence forces more Arabs to flee Kirkuk, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 16 September 2007

Baghdad residents call for protection of homes from militant raids, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 13 September 2007

Kirkuk Referendum Likely To Be Delayed, **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**, 13 September 2007

Baghdad, Iraqi Kurds protest alleged Iranian shelling, **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**, 29 August 2007

Karbala fighting raises specter of broader Shi'ite clashes, **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**, 29 August 2007

People flee Baghdad district as gunmen impose Shariah law, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 27 August 2007

Kurds flee homes as Iran shells villages in Iraq, **The Guardian**, 20 August 2007

Militants using water to extort "favours" from displaced, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 7 August 2007

In town split in two by al-Qaida, a ray of hope for the country, **The Guardian**, 14 July 2007

Sectarian violence and displacement follow Samarra attack, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 13 June 2007

Sunni Arabs driving out Kurds in northern Iraq, **International Herald Tribune (IHT)**, 30 May 2007

Reports of violence, discrimination against women, and increasing vulnerability (2008)

- There has been a developing pattern of sexual and gender based violence since 2003 – gender based violence are reported in many locations in Baghdad, other governorates like Basra and Dhi Qar and also in Kurdistan. This involves discrimination, intimidation, beatings, mutilations, killings (stoning, shootings, etc) and includes minors amongst the victims.
- Violations of women's right to life and liberty continued to be perpetrated, many of them classified as 'honor crimes', as well as instances of domestic and communal violence such as forced marriages and domestic abuse. The rise in sectarian and generalised violence has also restricted women's freedom of movement and expression (UNAMI, March 2008)
- Female-headed households are an extremely vulnerable group augmenting vulnerability while diminishing access to health care and other services.: it is difficult for women to find employment, face conservative customs in place of displacement, and there is a reported rise in unattended births, miscarriages, and prostitution. (IOM, 11 January 2008) Displaced women, in camp or camp-like situations are more likely to be exposed to sexual assault and abductions.
- According to UNICEF, at least 40,000 children were born to displaced families in 2006-2007 - many living in unsanitary conditions in camps. Figures by Save the Children show that in 1990 the mortality rate for under-fives was 50 per 1,000 live births. In 2005 it was 125. UNICEF has said Iraq's maternal mortality rates have increased up by 65 per cent. (IRIN, 14 August 2007)
- The UN special representative for Iraq declared Iraqi women are the "forgotten and silent victims of the ongoing violence". He said 70,000 had been widowed in the past 4-5 years. In the south, over 100 women had been killed, and their bodies mutilated. In the north, at least 300 women and girls were victims of honour crimes last year, including being shot, strangled and beaten to death. (IRIN, 20 March 2008)
- There are various estimates on number of divorcees or widows, or single headed female households as result of Saddam Hussein's regime, the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, the 1991 Gulf War and sectarian conflict. Estimates put the number of divorcees and widows close to 1-2 million of a total of 8.5 million women aged between 15 and 80. (Reuters, 31 January 2008)
- At the political level, women's organisations have raised the concern that women's participation in the government has dropped. A survey undertaken in 2006 by NGOs found that women were able to exercise their rights more freely prior to 2003. Draft legislation on domestic violence proposes prohibiting underage and forced marriages, honor crimes, physical and other forms of violence, as well as the use of women in resolving tribal conflicts. (UNAMI, March 2008)

UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report: 1 July – 31 December 2007, **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, March 2008:

"Ongoing violence and general security conditions in Iraq continued to hamper efforts to research and reliably assess the situation of women, both in terms of gender-based violence and other violations. Efforts by UNAMI to track the numbers of those killed and injured in violent attacks against civilians by insurgents or other armed groups show that ongoing violence continues to claim the lives of many women as well as children. Some of the victims died as a result of indiscriminate targeting of civilians in locations such as crowded markets, educational establishments and other public places, others as a result of roadside explosive devices, while in some cases they were apparently targeted. During the reporting period, several women were also reportedly killed during military operations involving air raids.

While gender-based violence continued to be reported in many locations in Baghdad and other governorates including Basra and Diyala, UNAMI was unable to follow up on many of these reported cases given the limitations imposed by the security situation. In November and December, further reports emerged of scores of so-called 'honor crimes' being perpetrated with regularity in Basra by armed groups or militia. In Basra city, a higher incidence of such cases emanated from poorer districts such as al-Hayyaniyya, al-Qibla, al-Muhandiseen, al-Tannuma, al-Jumhuriyya and al-Hussein. Notes were reportedly found next to some victims' bodies, accusing them of adultery or of "un-Islamic" conduct, such as failure to follow certain dress codes or to veil appropriately. Several of these notes were allegedly 'signed' by groups operating under the banner of *al-Amr bil-Ma'ruf wal-Nahi 'an al-Munkar* (The Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice), while others contained only references to orders having been issued to carry out the killings, reportedly by armed militia.

In the Region of Kurdistan, violations of women's right to life and liberty continued to be perpetrated during the reporting period, many of them classified as so-called 'honor crimes', as well as instances of domestic and communal violence such as forced marriages and domestic abuse. Linked to these crimes were attempted or actual suicides among women, apparently to escape or protest violence and oppression in the home or the wider community. [...], both women's rights activists and victims expressed little faith in the ability of the judicial system to protect the lives and rights of abused women. Gender-based violence is also grossly under-reported or remains without investigation. Problems of under-reporting are also linked to the victims' reluctance to claim abuse or other violence against them. Problems of under-reporting are also exacerbated by the fact that the majority of violent crimes against women are committed in rural areas, where police presence and authority are weaker and tribal rules and traditional social mores prevail.Draft legislation on domestic violence proposes prohibiting underage and forced marriages, honor crimes, physical and other forms of violence, as well as the use of women in resolving tribal conflicts. It also provides for the creation of specialized courts and protection mechanisms for witnesses wishing to file complaints. Another draft law under consideration prohibits female genital mutilation, which to date has received little attention. The Women's Committee has also recommended major amendments to the Personal Status Law addressing issues related to matrimonial entitlements, grounds for divorce, inheritance and social status."

[Iraq Displacement 2007 Year in Review](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 11 January 2008:

"Displacement presents particular challenges for women, children, elderly, and the ill. Specialized health care (such as surgery or gynecology) is difficult to obtain in Iraq. Female-headed households are an extremely vulnerable group: many of these families displaced after their husbands were violently killed. In many areas it is especially difficult for women to find employment and protect their families. Some IDP women and girls reported discomfort with the conservative customs they encountered in their place of displacement, restricting their dress and in some cases preventing girls from attending school. Health workers, IOM monitors, and IDPs themselves reported a rise in unattended births, miscarriages, and prostitution. Many IDPs,

especially children, have experienced brutal psychological trauma during their displacement. Few IDPs have access to psychosocial assistance."

IDP Working Group Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (24 March 2008), IDP Working Group, 24 March 2008:

"Over the last 14 months, several single or widowed women were reported as having become head of households due to killing of males as well as divorces (sometimes a mixed Shia-Sunni couple is forced to divorce due to the different religious background⁶⁸) and partial displacement (only women and children flee). A significant number of pregnant women, persons of old age and persons with disabilities are also reported among the caseload and are in need of special care. Cases of prostitution as well as begging in the streets have been reported, involving women IDPs."

Carnage and Despair Five Years on, Amnesty International (AI), March 2008:

"Violence against women and girls has increased dramatically in the past five years. Many have been forced to leave their jobs or schools for fear of being killed; others have fled the country. In most governorates, women are being threatened by armed groups that they will be targeted if they do not observe strict Islamic dress. Women and girls are also at risk of rape by armed groups and members of the Iraqi security forces. Domestic violence and "honour killings" are on the rise too. A WHO survey conducted in 2006/2007 in Iraq found that 21.2 per cent of Iraqi women had experienced physical violence. There were marked differences between Kurdistan and the rest of Iraq. In central and southern Iraq 22.7 per cent of women reported at least one form of physical abuse, whereas in Kurdistan the figure was 10.9 per cent.⁴⁸ The sectarian violence has forced some women to marry within their own sect. In some cases women have been forced by their relatives to divorce because their husband is from a different sect. In Basra, scores of women were killed in 2007 by Shi'a militia groups vying for control of the city. According to the head of the police force in Basra, Major-General 'Abdul-Jalil Khalaf, the police are often too scared to investigate the killings, and relatives are reluctant to report them for fear of a scandal or simply because they doubt that the police will investigate."

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"The plight of women in the northern governorates continues to be widely covered by the media and is a matter of great concern to human rights NGOs. The latest monthly report by the KRG Human Rights Ministry stated that 239 women had burned themselves in the first eight months of 2006. Authorities in Sulaimaniya have documented the highest number of monthly traumatic burn cases in November, with 13 cases of burns by fire and 24 cases of scalding involving women. A Sulaimaniya hospital source suspected that such cases are underreported because of fear of the social stigma, shame and culpable involvement of family members that are associated with honor crimes. Most cases have been investigated as "accidents" or suicide attempts. [...]"

In the central and southern regions, women remain particularly vulnerable and their enjoyment of basic rights is being rapidly eroded. As previously reported, [...] the security situation and the militancy of intolerant groups are increasingly limiting women's ability to move freely outside their homes while progressively restricting their access to health services and education as well as their ability to participate in public life. November and December witnessed an alarming shift towards more violent episodes. It is a challenge to obtain accurate female mortality rate and the cause(s) of death. Female corpses are usually abandoned at the morgue and remain unclaimed for fear of damaging the family honour. More than 140 bodies were unclaimed and buried in Najaf by the morgue during the reporting period.

Women are reportedly living with heightened levels of threats to their lives and physical integrity, and forced to conform to strict, arbitrarily imposed morality codes. HRO has received cases of young women abducted by armed militia and found days later sexually abused, tortured and murdered. HRO has also charted an increase in kidnapping and killing of women. [...] HRO has

received information of children abducted and sold to armed militias and forced to become supporters. Children are also trafficked outside Iraq to work as sex slaves, labourers, or unlawfully adopted by families abroad. Dozens of children are currently seeking shelter and protection in safe houses managed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and civil society organizations across the country.”

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

“Many women have complained to the Human Rights Office that their freedoms are being restricted due to extremist Sunni and Shi’a elements operating at neighbourhood level, who proffered threats and intimidations both verbally and through flyers. There are reports that, in some Baghdad neighborhoods, women are now prevented from going to the markets alone. In other cases, women have been warned not to drive cars or have faced harassment if they wear trousers. Women have also reported that wearing a headscarf is becoming not a matter of religious choice but one of survival in many parts of Iraq, a fact which is particularly resented by non-Muslim women. Female university students are also facing constant pressure in university campuses. Furthermore, UNAMI HRO learned that girls are also facing similar pressures to wear a headscarf in schools. Equally disturbing are reports that in some public offices, including Ministries, women have been warned that they must wear a headscarf at all times. [...] Displacement is increasing women vulnerability by augmenting health risks while diminishing access to health care and to other services. The situation of women is significantly different in the Region of Kurdistan. The Women Affairs Committee in the Kurdistan Regional Assembly has worked significantly to ensure that women enjoy their rights in the Region.

UNHCR, October 2005, pp.34-40:

“Continuing violence and high criminality, slow reconstruction, low living standards and the increasing tendency to apply strict Islamic behavioural and dress codes have taken a toll on women in Iraq. Indiscriminate attacks by insurgents have resulted in the death and injury of scores of civilians, many of them women.[...] Women of all religions risk being targeted if they do not comply with strict Islamic dress codes (e.g. not covering their hair or wearing Western style fashions). [...] According to police officials, dozens of women have been attacked with acid by religious conservatives in Baghdad[...] and many others have been killed outright. [...] Furthermore, the IWCP reports that unveiled women are frequently denied governmental jobs. [...] Lack of both security and proper law enforcement has led to high rates of crime against women, in particular in the months after the 2003 conflict. A survey undertaken by the ‘Organisation of Women’s Freedom in Iraq’ recorded that 400 women that were raped in Baghdad between April and August 2003. [...] Human Rights Watch has documented reports from Iraqi police officers that ‘the number of (rape) cases reported [now is] substantially higher than before the war’. [...] Fear of harassment, abduction and rape prevents women from moving freely, thereby restricting their personal freedom, access to schools and universities, [...] opportunity to work[...] and access to health services.[...]”

The ILCS revealed that 40 percent of surveyed women identified criminals as a direct threat to their safety, while 12 percent say that the MNF represents the main threat. There are significant differences in safety for women among the different Governorates. [...] Domestic violence (including ‘honour killings’) continues to take place in Iraq, and some observers believe it has increased since the fall of the former regime, given the corresponding rise in conservative attitudes. [...] No exact figures on the extent of the practice [honour killings] are available and many cases undoubtedly go unreported. ‘Honour killings’ occur mainly in conservative Muslim families (both Shiite and Sunni, of both Arab and Kurdish backgrounds), in all areas of Iraq. ‘Honour killings’ cannot be justified by Islam or Sharia law, but are a ‘tribal custom stemming from the patriarchal and patrilineal society’s interest in keeping strict control over familial power structures’. [...] A study done by Rewan Women’s Information and Cultural Centre (RWICC), based in Sulaymaniyah, recorded 3,979 cases of women killed as the result of domestic violence in the North in the 1980s. [...] According to Kurdish Women’s Action Against Honour Killings

(KWAHK), [...] between 1991 and 2000 more than 4,000 women were killed in the North in the name of honour, with the authorities failing to punish the perpetrators. [...] There are no figures available for the Centre and the South, however NGOs believe that the situation there may be even worse as cultural values and traditions remain very strong. [...]

CEDAW, 26 July 2005:

"As Iraq has been a State party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women since 1986, the Committee has, on previous occasions, expressed concern about the situation of women in Iraq and has called on the interim Government to do its utmost to ensure equal participation of women in the reconstruction process and full compliance with all provisions of the Convention in the development of Iraqi society. The Committee now urges the Government of Iraq to ensure that the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination, as they are enshrined in the Convention, are fully reflected in the new Constitution of Iraq which will become the basis for the entire legal framework of the country, including the family and personal status laws. The Committee further emphasizes once again the urgent need to take special measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate women and children victims of war. The Committee calls on the Government of Iraq to ensure that full attention is given to the Committee's concerns and to the country's obligations as a State party to the Convention."

AI, 22 February 2005:

"Women and girls in Iraq live in fear of violence as the conflict intensifies and insecurity spirals. [...] The lawlessness and increased killings, abductions and rapes that followed the overthrow of the government of Saddam Hussain have restricted women's freedom of movement and their ability to go to school or to work. Women face discriminatory laws and practices that deny them equal justice or protection from violence in the family and community. A backlash from conservative social and political forces threatens to stifle their attempts to gain new freedoms. The general lack of security has forced many women out of public life, and constitutes a major obstacle to the advancement of women's rights. [...] Under the government of Saddam Hussain, women were subjected to gender-specific abuses, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, as political activists, relatives of activists or members of certain ethnic or religious groups. War and economic sanctions had a particular effect on women. They left women and households headed by women, many of them war widows, among the poorest sectors of the population. In the 1990s the mortality rate for pregnant women and mothers increased, and became one of the worst in the world for children under the age of five. Since the 2003 war, women's rights activists and political leaders have been threatened by armed groups and a number have been killed. Women have been subjected to sexual threats by members of the US-led forces [1], and some women detained by US forces have been sexually abused, possibly raped."

See also (in [sources page](#)):

UNAMI, 22 November 2006

IRIN, 21 May 2004

UN Cluster 8/UNCT, August 2004

UNHCR, 12 August 2004

IRIN, 20 May 2004

OHCHR, 9 June 2004, p.24

UNAMI, 23 May 2006

IRIN, 13 April 2006

"Violence against women in Iraqi-Kurdistan", **Wadi e V.**, 18 May 2005,

"Focus on women's rights", **IRIN**, 6 June 2005

"Carnage and Despair, Iraq five years on", **Amnesty International**, March 2008

"Climate of Fear: Sexual violence and abduction of women and girls in Baghdad", **Human Rights Watch**, 2003.

"Islamic extremists target women in Basra", **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 2 January 2008

"Violence taking toll on pregnant mothers, infants", **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 14 August 2007

"Iraq has million-woman social time-bomb", **Reuters**, 31 January 2008

"Minister leads call to end violence against women", **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 20 March 2008

Children gravely affected by the situation (2003-2008)

- The situation of children in the on-going violence in Iraq has been the subject of the attention of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG) since 2005 and has been reported upon in the Secretary General's annual reports on children and armed conflict in 2006 (S/2006/826) and 2007 (S/2007/757).
- Precise data is not available and children continue to be caught in the cross-fire. Evidence shows that thousands of children have been killed, maimed or injured as a result of military operations, insurgent violence, terrorist acts or mass casualty bombings. Schools and health centers have also been both unintended and deliberate targets of strikes.
- Displaced Iraqis, whether they be Arabs, Kurds or other minority communities, are rarely displaced as family units. The vast majority are widows or women separated from their husbands and extended families. (UNSR, May 2008)
- Internally displaced children live in substandard conditions, without access to education and health care services, trauma counseling, available support to children with disabilities. Surveys suggest that a large number of children have lost one or both parents (UNSR, May 2008)
- Many IDP children have been reported as orphans without escort, as well as forced into prostitution. Drug abuse is an increasing phenomenon among children as reported in the North and lower South. Psychological trauma symptoms among children in unstable areas have been often reported. (IDP WG, March 2008)
- Early marriages amongst Iraqi girls have been increasingly reported in 2007. Students are still encountering difficulties in transferring documentation needed for school in their place of displacement. In particular, in Kirkuk and in Baghdad were reported. (IDP WG, March 2008)
- An estimated 600,000 children had been displaced since 2006, the vast majority unable to return home. By the end of the year, approximately 75,000 children and their families were living in temporary shelters. Many of the 220,000 school-aged internally displaced children had their education interrupted, adding to the estimated 760,000 children out of primary school in 2006. (UNICEF, February 2008)

UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, 25 May 2008:

"The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, in concluding her visit to Iraq of 20-25 April, stated that children of Iraq are the silent victims of the on-going violence. "Many of them no longer go to school, many are recruited for violent activities or detained in custody, they lack access to the most basic services and manifest a wide range of psychological symptoms from the violence in their everyday lives".

Increasing cases of gender based violence are also reported. “It is an intolerable situation” she said. She called on religious, political, military and community leaders to send one clear message to Iraqi children: “Stay out of the violence and go back to school”. Ms. Coomaraswamy noted that only 50% of primary school children are attending school, down from 80% in 2005. Only 40% have access to clean drinking water and there is a continuing possibility of outbreaks of cholera. Since 2004, an increasing number of children have been recruited into various militias and insurgent groups, including as suicide bombers, and approximately 1,500 are known to be held in detention facilities. Humanitarian access to communities is severely hindered in many parts of the country, depriving children of humanitarian assistance. More than half of Iraqi IDPs and refugees are children and also face a great deal of difficulties in their new places of settlement whether in Iraq or in neighbouring countries. The international community should assist the host countries in ensuring that the rights of children are protected and that they have access to basic services such as education and health care.

Over the past years, due to the sanctions that were imposed on the country, and the violence of the last few years, the humanitarian situation of children has dramatically worsened, and one of the most striking consequences of the continued violence in Iraq is the degradation of basic services. Although Iraq has sizeable revenue, in many parts of the territory, access to education, health, water, food and sanitation is lacking. According to UNICEF, 60% of Iraqis lack access to at least one critical social service, and more than half of the population does not have access to safe drinking water, which may have contributed to several outbreaks of cholera in 2007. Iraqi children are the primary victims, both because they have to face the violence of the conflict on a daily basis, and also because it deprives them of essential goods and services to survive.

Global statistical picture¹

- 29 million Iraqis
- Half of the population is below the age of 18
- 4.9 million IDPs and refugees: 2.7 million are internal displaced, 2.2 million are external displaced
- 40% of IDP and refugee populations are children, 60% of whom are in the Kurdistan region
- 70.000 women have been widowed since 2003
- 870.000 children are orphaned by the death of one or both parents

Children’s access to social services is systematically undermined by violence, politicization of aid delivery by all parties, criminality, an exodus of service providers, destructive military operations, insecurity and chronic underinvestment. Outreach services for the underserved have stopped in many areas due to fear and lack of staff. Displacement has also eroded local service capacity by burdening already weakened social services with additional demands from IDPs. The major challenges for children’s health throughout Iraq remain lack of full access for vaccination as well as the risks of other outbreaks of cholera. The psychological effects of violence must also be noted with school drop out and drug addiction increasingly reported. According to WHO sources, in Baghdad, one out of two Iraqis has been exposed to a major traumatic event and other surveys, such as in Basra, show that civilians suffer from a very high stress level.

Basic services in Iraq figures³

- School attendance has dropped from 83% in 2005 to 53% in 2007
- 417 schools were attacked in 2006⁴
- 300 teachers were killed in 2006⁵
- 70% of schools throughout Iraq are damaged by war or lack of maintenance
- Reliable access to safe water is available to only 40% of the population and sewage treatment capacity under 17%
- 1% of children are orphaned by both parents and 6% by one parent
- 30% of children show signs of high stress due to violence and armed conflict

Iraqi girls in general have suffered from school exclusion more than boys mostly because of fear of violence and an increasing climate of social and religious conservatism. In many areas, and especially in remote ones, girls may not be encouraged to go to school.

Since 2004, and more so in the aftermath of the 2006 Samarra bombing and the ensuing inter-communal violence, children have been recruited and utilized by an array of parties to the conflict in Iraq. It has been reported that hundreds of children, some as young as 10 years of age, have been used in a varying array of tasks [...] However, AQI is not the only group that has been alleged to recruit and utilize children under the age of 18 years. Other groups who have been cited for use of children are Sunni Militias, such as the new Awakening Councils and Shiite militias, including the Mahdi Army. The Security Forces of the Government of Iraq are not known to use children under the age of 18 years. Iraq has just ratified the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.There are currently approximately 1,500 children in detention in Iraq, the youngest of which is 10 years old.

The issue of displaced persons is becoming one of greater concern and is the direct result of violence and conflict of past years. The larger incidence of Iraqis currently displaced is due to the outbreak of war in 2003, with a massive outflow after the bombing of the Samarra shrine in February 2006. Today, more than 4.5 million Iraqis are IDPs or refugees, 40% of whom are children. Although Iraqis are displaced throughout the territory of Iraq, the phenomenon is aggravated in the KRG, which hosts approximately 800,000 IDPs, 60% of whom are children. The IDP population is not homogenous, has arrived in different waves and consists of diverse groups. In Kurdistan, for example, IDPs are of Arab or Kurdish origins, and may belong to three different categories: those who fled because of armed conflict, because they felt discriminated against as a minority or because they lived in disputed areas.Displaced Iraqis, whether they be Arabs, Kurds or other minority communities, are rarely displaced as family units. The vast majority are widows or women separated from their husbands and extended families.

The protracted violence in Iraq has had negative effects on children in general and on girls in particular, especially concerning access to education. Most girls, especially in rural areas, are not aware that they have a right to education. Lack of attention is given to the girl child and peace education should be opportunity to allow gender awareness programs to be included in schools. Gender based violence has been exacerbated by the continuing violence in the country and the lack of specific attention to the needs of girls is of grave and immediate concern. The conflict allows crimes to go unpunished and impunity now prevails in many parts of the country for crimes such as rape, honor killings, forced early marriages and domestic violence. This is especially true in rural areas where there is no formal judicial process and where women and girls are not aware of their rights or are too fearful to exercise them. Rape and other grave sexual violence are also a major and increasing concern in IDP and refugee populations.

Iraq is one of the most landmine and ERW-contaminated areas in the world. More than 55 million cluster sub-munitions were also dropped during the last two wars, making Iraq the most affected country. Although the entire country is affected, 3000 hazardous areas have been identified in the Kurdistan region alone (766 km²). Children amount for one fourth of mine victims and one third of victims of ERWs. The majority of children who encounter them die; the remainder of them are maimed. Three Mine Awareness Committees exist in Iraq, two at the KRG level (Erbil and Suleimaniah) and one regional Mine Action Centre in Basra. They support mine education and clear contaminated lands that are obstacles for energy and infrastructure projects. No records or maps of mines and ERWs remain. With the current capacity and equipment, it is estimated that it will take more than a century to clear the KRG area alone."

IDP Working Group, 24 March 2008:

"Early marriages amongst Iraqi girls have been increasingly reported in 2007. In January, the early marriage of a young boy (13 years old) was reported in Thi-Qar. Students are still encountering difficulties in transferring documentation needed for school in their place of displacement. In particular, in January, cases in Kirkuk and in Baghdad were reported. Many IDP children have been reported as orphans without escort, as well as forced into prostitution. Drug abuse is an increasing phenomenon among children as reported in the North and lower South. Psychological trauma symptoms among children in unstable areas have been often reported."

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 15 February 2008:

"2007 condemned a growing number of Iraqi children to a more lonely life. Many struggled with fear and loss, as well as very real threats to their safety. While little hard statistics are available on abuses against children, far too many were stripped of their protective environment of family support, fundamental legal protections and access to school and health care. An unacceptably large number of children and women fell victim to military operations, insurgency, criminal and random violence during the year. Mass casualty attacks affecting hundreds of people became more frequent. The UN estimates 19,500 violent civilian deaths in 2007. Other estimates are higher (up to 24,000 according to Iraq Body Count), but still fall below 2006 figures. The majority of casualties were men; however hundreds of women and children are certainly among the dead. Many thousands more became widows and orphans after losing their main family wage-earner to violence, exposing them to poverty.

High levels of displacement in the first months of 2007 created additional threats to children. Some were separated from their families in the move. Others felt unable to fit in after arriving in their new areas, particularly if their families had to struggle to find work and enroll them in school. Instability also took a growing toll on children's behaviour. A report by the WHO in March 2007 said that 30% of Iraqi children were showing classic signs of anxiety and distress: including bedwetting, poor concentration and violence. Economic hardship affected millions in 2007, with unemployment rates at over 15% in many governorates and food prices rising. Many parents were forced to ask children to work to earn money. Local NGOs reported a rise in the number of children visibly working on the street. Reports also emerged that some children were being recruited to work for non-state armed groups. Of the thousands of Iraqi children in need of special care, a few found support through a Child Re-integration Programme in Baghdad, developed by UNICEF and local partners. In 2007, these centres enabled 154 children to be restored to family care. But too many children are still living without help – or hope – on Iraq's dangerous streets. As the number of children without caregivers increased, capacity to support them in communities and institutions dwindled. In August 2007, several children were discovered being kept in appalling conditions in Baghdad's Dar El-Hanan home for severely disabled patients. The images laid bare the risks facing Iraqi children living without a family's protection. UNICEF and other organizations pushed for a nationwide assessment of Iraq's orphanages, which will be conducted through an international NGO in 2008.

Arrest and detention rates for children also increased over the summer, as a result of increased security measures in Iraq's central governorates. By year end, the Multi-National Forces-Iraq announced that over 950 children aged between 10 and 17 years old were being detained in their facilities for alleged security violations, in addition to at least 400 in Iraqi facilities. Ensuring these most vulnerable children receive treatment in line with international human rights law and standards for juvenile justice is a major UNICEF priority for 2008. The rise of extremism has added extra burdens for women and girls. Many women living in the highly conservative central provinces of Anbar and Diyala feared to step outside, even in full Islamic dress. Reports from Basra now suggest that women are also being targeted there. Basra police reported in December that 113 women were been killed in such attacks during the year. Women interviewed after displacement also reported sexual violence and forced "temporary marriages". Honor-killings were also consistently reported, particularly in the Kurdistan Region – including more than 300 cases of burned women last year according to the KRG. These cases are mostly presented as suicide attempts or accidents, which hampers data collection. As 2008 starts, children and women are as vulnerable as ever – if not more so. It is not clear how many children in Iraq's institutions are in poor living conditions and are susceptible to abuse and exploitation. And despite security improvements in some areas, many women still live in fear with few lifelines for support. Iraq is a State Party to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women –which obligates the State to protect the rights of children and women under any and all circumstances. Turning these rights into a reality will be a major challenge for 2008 – and essential to Iraq's ultimate recover."

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"Children remained victims in Iraq in many ways. Although not necessarily targeted, they are killed or maimed in sectarian-motivated attacks and in terrorist and insurgency acts. They are civilian casualties in MNF-I and Iraqi security forces-led raids against insurgents or militias, and suffer the most from other political, social and economic consequences of Iraq's violent daily reality. The extent of violence in areas other than the Region of Kurdistan is such that likely every child, to some degree, has been exposed to it. Children suffering disabilities have also been unable to access adequate care and education. [...] Minors are often witnesses of extreme violence, killings and scene of carnage and dead and mutilated bodies. [...] Violence, corruption, inefficiency of state organs to exert control over security, establish the rule of law and protect individual and collective rights all lead to inability of both the state and the family to meet the needs of children. [...] According to the joint UN and Iraqi government food security and vulnerability analysis, children are the primary victims of food insecurity, with every one in ten child suffering from malnutrition. [...] UNAMI HRO is also aware of the extreme hardship of the children of internally displaced families, whose numbers are growing every day. The living conditions are substandard, without access to education and health care services, trauma counseling, available support to children with disabilities, to mention a few examples. Additional hardship for families and children is caused by the lack of adequate places to socialize, play and learn as would be necessary for their healthy development. Many Iraqis complain of having to keep their children at home for prolonged periods of time."

See also:

Former children's camp in south in urgent need of assistance, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 23 August 2007

Militias 'recruit child bombers', **BBC News**, 25 April 2008

Move to prevent children being exploited by militants, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 29 July 2008

Internally displaced children in Erbil ask SRSG Coomaraswamy for 'security', **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, 30 April 2008

Internally displaced children in Erbil ask SRSG Coomaraswamy for 'security', **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, 30 April 2008

Iraqi children share their experience in film about friends separated by conflict, **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, 3 January 2008

Update for partners on the situation of children in Iraq - Aug 2007, **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, 27 August 2007

UNAMI, November - December 2005, p.2-3

See also "Increased protection of children following attacks", **IRIN**, 5 March 2006

Professionals and academics, and other social groups specifically targeted, many forced to flee (2007-2008)

- Since 2003, professionals and academics have been specifically targeted. These attacks are typically perpetrated by extremists practising conformist ideology and by militant/terror groups intent on spreading fear and intimidation. Journalists and media workers are among the most frequently targeted group (UNAMI, 16 January 2007)
- There has been a mass departure of professionals from areas of conflict to more peaceful areas or abroad. Judges, in particular those working on criminal cases have faced particular threats. There have been reports of violence in Diyala, Hillah, Karbala and Wassit affecting court proceedings. Individuals are also being targeted because of their sexual orientation.

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"HRO documented a worrying increase in targeted attacks and assassinations of professionals such as teachers, religious figures, barbers, police officers, artists, lawyers, exmilitary officers, and politicians across Iraq including the northern cities of Mosul and Kirkuk. These attacks are typically perpetrated by extremists practising conformist ideology and by militant/terror groups intent on spreading fear and intimidation. Journalists and media workers are among the most frequently targeted group with at least 12 killed from November to December."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"HRO has recorded a trend of mass departure of Iraqi professionals from areas of conflict to more peaceful parts of Iraq, such as Iraqi Kurdistan region or abroad. The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has registered 154 assassinated professors from 2003 to August 2006. In the last 3 months, 15 more academics and university staff were assassinated. Dr. Isam Al-Rawi, Professor in the Geology Department of the University of Baghdad and the Head of the League of the University Professors was assassinated on 30 October.

The highest rate of assassinations, i.e., 44% of all assassinations of Iraqi academics, was recorded in Baghdad; Anbar, Mosul and Basra each accounted for 10% of the total number of assassinated academics, while in Diyala this figure was 5%. To circumvent some of the obstacles faced by professors and students, MoHE introduced more flexible measures for the attendance at the examinations held in September this year, allowing both academics and students to meet at convenient hours and in convenient locations."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"The killing of professionals, including doctors and academics, is another cause for concern. At least 100 professors have been reportedly killed since 2003. HRO has received no figures concerning the number of students killed. A large number of lecturers, teachers and other intellectuals have reportedly stopped their work or left the country. HRO has received numerous reports that sectarian divisions have engulfed universities; some students appeared to be backed by different political factions. Lack of security in campuses has led to reports of clashes between students as well as intimidation against students and professors. Since 22 February 2006, thousands of students have reportedly requested to be transferred to other universities. [...]

The targeting of judicial professionals is particularly worrisome in the context of the deterioration of law and order. In Baghdad, an investigative judge was killed on 5 April and the president of the Tribunal of First Instance was killed on 25 April. There are reports that many judges, especially those working on terrorism or serious criminal cases, are facing intimidations or threats, including in the provinces. According to various sources, judicial professionals are said to be considering resignation, have requested to be transferred or are reluctant to sit on sensitive cases. There have also been reports of violence in Diyala, Hillah, Karbala and Wassit affecting court functions. Concerns have been expressed by judicial authorities that, because of constant cases of torture reportedly committed by the police, the investigative powers should be squarely kept with the judiciary."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"HRO is particularly concerned about the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities in the country, as well as individuals because of their sexual orientation. The alarming trend of militias turning to systematic intimidation and killing of ethnic and religious minorities has already been reported. Many individuals have left and continue to leave their homes and are seeking refuge among the members of the same ethnic/religious group as a result of threat letters or other forms of intimidation [...]"

Freedom of movement

State of Emergency extended on monthly basis (2007)

- Emergency laws were adopted in July 2004 by Prime Minister Allawi
- Under the emergency law, measures including searches, arrest and detention and restrictions on freedom of movement can be taken
- On 28 November the state of emergency was extended in all parts of Iraq with the exception of Kurdistan
- The Government of Iraq declared a state of emergency in June in Baghdad and a state of emergency in May in Basra

UNAMI, 16 January 2007

"On 28 November, the state of emergency was extended in all parts of Iraq, except Kurdistan, for another 30 days. Emergency laws were adopted by Prime Minister Allawi on 6 July 2004. Under these provisions, curfews, cordon off towns and cities, search operations, can be imposed. The latest example was the curfew imposed by the Government after the multiple attacks on Sadr city on 23 November. The state of emergency has been extended by the Council of Representatives (CoR) on a monthly basis yet CoR must act again in order to continue it beyond 31 December."

UNSC, 5 December 2006

"On 8 October 2006, the Council of Representatives renewed for another 30 days the state of emergency that has been in place across the country since November 2004, with the exception of the Kurdistan region."

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

"On 31 May a state of emergency was declared in Basra and a ban on vehicle movements imposed for four hours around Friday midday prayers. Following street battles in Baghdad between Shi'a militias, insurgents, Iraqi forces and the MNF-I, the Government of Iraq declared a

state of emergency on 23 June and a curfew in the capital. Emergency laws were adopted by former Prime Minister Allawi on 6 July 2004. Under these provisions, curfews, cordon off towns and cities, search operations, etc could be imposed. On 7 November 2004, the Government declared the state of emergency for a period of sixty days. It was never officially extended."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.3

"On 7 July, 2004, the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) passed the *Order for Safeguarding National Security* (Order 1 of 2004) which consists of 13 articles referring to the state of emergency, and measures that can be taken during such a state. These include searches, arrest and detention, interference with correspondence, the confiscation of property and weapons, and restrictions on freedom of movement, association and commercial activities. The Order gives the interim Prime Minister the power to declare martial law for up to sixty days, beyond which period such a state can only be prolonged with the approval of the Presidency Council. The Order also empowers the Prime Minister to impose curfews, order the closure of roads, sea-lanes and airspace, declare restrictions or bans on public gatherings, order the surveillance of electronic and other communications, and gives him wide powers to search property and detain suspects. The Order stipulates that no person can be arrested except upon the issuance of arrest warrants from the judicial authorities, and that the persons in question should be brought before an investigative judge within twenty four hours. Only in 'extreme exigent circumstances' does the law permit arrests or searches without a warrant, although the parameters of this clause have not been elaborated upon in the law.

Article 1 of the *Public Safety Law* allows for the declaration of a state of emergency 'upon exposure of the people of Iraq to a danger of grave proportions, threatening the lives of individuals and emanating from an ongoing campaign of violence by any number of people, for the purpose of preventing the establishment of a broad-based government in Iraq, or to hinder the peaceful participation of all Iraqis in the political process or for any other purpose'. On 7 November 2004, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency for a period of sixty days ahead of the military intervention in Fallujah. This state of emergency was extended during the elections which took place in January 2005. To date, the Emergency law is still in place."

Freedom of Movement a problem for all Iraqis (2004-2008)

- Following 2003, most legal restrictions to freedom of movement disappeared as a result of the fall of the former regime. Nevertheless, freedom of movement in all parts of Iraq became severely restricted due to the security situation as result of ongoing conflicts, hijacking and other restrictions. (UNHCR, October 2005)
- Movements and road travel were increasingly hazardous due to military restrictions, numerous military checkpoints which were gradually set up, and by illegal checkpoints, which have been set up by criminal groups and militias, especially in and around Baghdad. Restrictions were arose also due to presence of mines and uxos.
- Emergency laws were adopted in July 2004 by Prime Minister Allawi. Under the emergency law, measures including searches, arrest and detention and restrictions on freedom of movement can be taken The state of emergency has been repeatedly extended in all parts of Iraq since 2004.
- State of emergencies have also been declared in response to risks of cholera epidemic restricting all movements. In September 2008, a state of emergency was declared in Hilla following raising cases of cholera in the governorate. (Alertnet, September 2008)
- Though restrictions in movements have abated by late 2007-2008, military operations - often entailing the imposition of curfews, and cordoning of towns and cities - insurgency, and criminality have continued to limit movements . Military checkpoints remain pervasive particularly in Baghdad but equally so throughout Iraq

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"On 28 November, the state of emergency was extended in all parts of Iraq, except Kurdistan, for another 30 days. Emergency laws were adopted by Prime Minister Allawi on 6 July 2004. Under these provisions, curfews, cordon off towns and cities, search operations, can be imposed. The latest example was the curfew imposed by the Government after the multiple attacks on Sadr city on 23 November. The state of emergency has been extended by the Council of Representatives (CoR) on a monthly basis yet CoR must act again in order to continue it beyond 31 December."

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"On 31 May a state of emergency was declared in Basra and a ban on vehicle movements imposed for four hours around Friday midday prayers. Following street battles in Baghdad between Shi'a militias, insurgents, Iraqi forces and the MNF-I, the Government of Iraq declared a state of emergency on 23 June and a curfew in the capital.."

UNHCR, October 2005:

"On 7 July, 2004, the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) passed the *Order for Safeguarding National Security* (Order 1 of 2004) which consists of 13 articles referring to the state of emergency, and measures that can be taken during such a state. These include searches, arrest and detention, interference with correspondence, the confiscation of property and weapons, and restrictions on freedom of movement, association and commercial activities. The Order gives the interim Prime Minister the power to declare martial law for up to sixty days, beyond which period such a state can only be prolonged with the approval of the Presidency Council. The Order also empowers the Prime Minister to impose curfews, order the closure of roads, sea-lanes and airspace, declare restrictions or bans on public gatherings, order the surveillance of electronic and other communications, and gives him wide powers to search property and detain suspects. On 7 November 2004, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency for a period of sixty days ahead of the military intervention in Fallujah. This state of emergency was extended during the elections which took place in January 2005. To date, the Emergency law is still in place."...

"All vehicular travel in Iraq is extremely dangerous and there have been numerous attacks on civilian vehicles as well as military convoys. Attacks occur throughout the day, but travel at night is exceptionally dangerous. Travel in or through Ramadi and Fallujah, travel between Hilla and Baghdad and between the International Zone and Baghdad International Airport is particularly dangerous, however, no major route into Iraq is to be considered safe. Main risks include:

- *Ongoing armed conflict between MNF/ISF and insurgents*, mainly near Fallujah and Ramadi (highway to Jordan/Syria) and near the Syrian border, but also on the roads to Samarra, Tikrit and Mosul, as well as on the roads leading South;
- *Ambushes/hostage taking by insurgents/criminals*, mainly on the road from Baghdad to Fallujah as well as South of Baghdad ('Triangle of death'). The kidnappers often demand money but have also carried out kidnappings for political/religious reasons;
- *Highway robbery/car-jacking* by armed thieves are very common, even during daylight hours, and particularly on the highways from Baghdad to Jordan and Kuwait;
- *Roadside bombs*, in particular near Baghdad, mainly targeting MNF/ISF, but often causing civilian deaths;
- *Mines/UXO*, in particular near Iraqi-Iranian border and along the former 'green line';
- *'Friendly fire'*: there have been a number of incidents in which civilians were killed at MNF/ISF checkpoints or when getting close to a military convoy.[...]

Freedom of movement is further restricted due to the numerous military checkpoints which have been set up, especially in and around Baghdad as well as at the former 'green line', which separates the Northern Governorates from Central Iraq.[...] In addition, there are illegal

checkpoints set up by armed groups and militias. For security reasons, airports and border crossings may be closed, for example on religious holidays or political. At times however, such closures are imposed without prior notice.”

See also:

[Cholera prompts state of emergency in Iraq province](#), Reuters, 8 September 2008

UNSC, 5 December 2006 (in sources, below)

Restrictions on Movement and Registration of IDPs (2003-2008)

- Governorate-level authorities across the country continue to restrict IDP entry and registration due to security, economic, and even demographic concerns. IDPs have faced harassment and restrictions on freedom of movements and registration affecting access to basic services. The restrictions serve to cement the sectarian divide.
- Following 2003, most legal restrictions to freedom of movement disappeared as a result of the fall of the former regime. Nevertheless, freedom of movement in all parts of Iraq became severely restricted due to the rising security situation as well as affected by presence of mines and UXOs.
- While there was no formal prohibition of movement prior to 2007, road travel was hazardous due to the possibility of mined areas, and by illegal checkpoints, which have been set up by armed groups linked to various political parties. It was further restricted due to the numerous military checkpoints which have been set up, especially in and around Baghdad.
- Restrictions were gradually imposed in northern governorates as the security conditions in south and central Iraq progressively worsened, and the influx of IDPs into the northern region continued to swell. Various entry restrictions were affecting 10 to 11 Governorates by end of 2007 such as in Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Kirkuk, Najaf, Qadisiya, Wasit, Babylon, Thi-Qar, Basrah, and Muthanna. (Guardian, September 2007)
- In 2007, a directive was issued by the central Government to lift restrictions on IDPs' entry and registration and, as a consequence, restrictions eased to some extent. Though the majority of Governorates have no formal entry restrictions as of mid 2008, registration requirements are imposed varying from Governorates, affecting IDPs access to basic necessities and rights. (UNHCR, August 2008)
- Furthermore security measures (checkpoints, curfews, permission required by the authorities, fences/walls/barriers) in addition to dilapidated infrastructure (broken and flooded roads) restrict movement throughout the country. Groups of IDPs reported pressure to return or resettle elsewhere from authorities, armed elements and host communities. However no pressure was reported in the three Northern Governorates. (IDP WG, June 2008)

Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq: Registration and documentation issues. UNHCR, August 2008:

The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) is the responsible government body for registering IDPs in the all 15 southern and central governorates. Registration practices are not uniform and vary from place to place depending on local conditions. Therefore, registration can be bureaucratic and/or discriminatory, for example in some areas MoDM is registering only IDPs originating from “hot spot” areas. As for Kurdistan Region, the registration is undertaken by the respective Security /Residency Directorates, and lately also by the Department of Displacement in the respective Governorates. In 2007, a directive was issued by the central Government to lift restrictions on IDPs' entry and registration and, as a consequence, restrictions eased to some extent. Still, the registration process with MoDM remains often bureaucratic as IDP families are required to produce a range of documents: PDS card, nationality certificate and

photograph of the head of household, civil ID card for all family members, housing card from the place of origin and letter of approval from the local mayor or *mukhtar*, the city council and/or the police.

Monitoring undertaken by UNHCR in March 2008 revealed that three quarters or more of the IDPs in south and central Iraq have registered with MoDM or other local authorities. In the three Northern Governorates, most IDPs are registered with the General Directorate of Security (Governorates of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil) or the local authorities (Governorate of Dahuk), who forward the information to the General Directorate of Security.

While monitoring showed that most IDPs appear to be registered, there is an undetermined number of IDPs. For example, the number of unregistered IDPs in the Governorate of Thi-Qar totals 968 families (cut-off date 30 June 2008). that did not register for various reasons, as explained below. Restrictions as well as entry/registration requirements in the different governorates are presented in the following table:

| Governorates | Restrictions/entry requirements | Restrictions/registration requirements |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| <u>Southern Governorates</u> | | |
| Babylon | As of 12 May 2008, authorities do not allow IDPs to enter unless they originate from the Governorate or are professionals. | Anyone can register once they have entered Babylon. |
| Basrah | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. IDPs need to pass a security check and write a declaration taking full responsibility for him/herself. |
| Diwaniya | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Kerbala | No restrictions of entry; cannot bring furniture without approval. | Registration only of IDPs who (alternatively): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> originate from Kerbala; are eligible to transfer public service job; own property in Kerbala; are skilled; are able to invest a certain sum of money; or are considered a severe humanitarian case. In addition, a guarantee letter is required from a Kerbala resident. |
| Missan | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. |
| Muthanna | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions, but MoDM asked all IDPs to renew their registration due to incomplete or "questionable" registration. |
| Najaf | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Thi-Qar | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. In addition, a sponsor is required. |
| Wassit | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. Previous registrations are in the process of being cancelled and IDPs need to re-register. This is done due to rather random |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| | | registrations done previously. Several IDPs may face difficulties to re-register due to the lack of documents. |
| <u>Central Governorates</u> | | |
| Anbar | Access to the Governorate or relocation within the Governorate requires a sponsor, who bears the responsibility that they do not pose a security risk. IDPs must also bring documents proving that they are from a "hot area". To enter Fallujah, a special ID from the Iraqi Security Forces is required. | No registration restrictions, but MoDM works only in Ramadi, making the office inaccessible to many due to restrictions on the freedom of movement and distance; hence, most IDPs do not register. |
| Baghdad | No entry restrictions issued by local authorities. | No registration restrictions, but no registration of IDPs has have taken place since November 2007. |
| Diyala | No entry restrictions to most districts in Diyala. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" may register. In Khanaqin District, non-Kurd IDPs only get registered if they can prove that they originate from the area. |
| Kirkuk | No entry restrictions but border checkpoints control IDPs and investigate their reasons for relocation. | Both DDM and MoDM carry out registration in Kirkuk, but only IDPs providing proof of a threat may be registered. MoDM also asks to prove that the IDP originates from Kirkuk. Kurds fleeing "disputed areas" face difficulties to register. |
| Mosul | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Salah Al-Din | No restrictions except Shurqat District where a special permission from the police is required. | Registration is restricted for IDPs coming from Samarra District as well as Anbar and Diyala Governorates for security reasons. IDPs from these areas need a sponsor to register. |
| <u>Northern Governorates</u> | | |
| Dahuk | Arab IDPs single men not originating from the Kurdistan Region need a Dahuk resident to sponsor them at the border. No sponsor is required for Kurds and Christians. Families do not need a sponsor. | A security clearance is needed if the sponsor is not a relative. |
| Erbil | All IDPs not originating from the area need an Erbil resident to sponsor them at the border. | A sponsor is needed to obtain a permission to remain in the Governorate. |
| Sulaymaniyah | Admission is generally not restricted and does not require a sponsor. There are special procedures applicable to persons wishing to relocate to the District of Kalar. An IDP | A sponsor is required to obtain a permission to remain. Persons originating from Kirkuk or Khanaqin in Diyala, including Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen and members of other ethnic or religious groups, are not able to stay for demographic and political reasons. Exceptions are made for Christian families |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>first has to approach the security office in person and submit a petition requesting permission to relocate. The applicant needs a Kurdish sponsor who resides in Kalar. The sponsorship letter needs to be ratified by the Notary Public Office in Kalar. Only after these conditions have been met, the security officer will provide the permission to relocate and to bring family members and belongings. Any applicant without a sponsor from Kalar will be denied permission to relocate. Once the IDP has moved to Kalar and rented a house, a letter from the Mukhtar (neighbourhood representative) needs to be submitted to the security office to confirm the IDP's address in Kalar. However, persons from "disputed areas" claimed by the PUK, i.e. Kirkuk and Khanaqin in the Governorate of Diyala, are generally denied entry to the Governorate for political and demographic reasons, unless they wish to come for a visit only. While Kurds are not permitted entry in order to maintain a Kurdish presence in these formerly arabized areas, Arabs, Turkmen, Yazidis and members of other religious or ethnic groups from disputed areas are also denied entry as the authorities do not want to be confronted with the accusation of changing the demographics by relocating non-Kurds from these areas. In that case, they are allowed entry but are not able to bring their belongings or a large amount of luggage with them.</p> | <p>with a recommendation from the church.</p> |
|--|---|---|

International Organization for Migration (IOM), July 2008:

Governorate-level authorities across the country restrict IDP entry and registration due to security, economic, and even demographic concerns. In general, IDPs must go through a great deal of bureaucracy to register, sometimes traveling to five different offices. A varying selection of documents are required in each governorate, including the original residence card, PDS card, the national ID, and a letter of approval from city council members, the mayor, local police, and/or MoDM. Registration is tightly restricted in areas with high levels of ethno-religious tensions, such as Kirkuk. In addition, proper documentation is often difficult to obtain from the governorate of origin, and sometimes registration is restricted to those with an advanced degree or professional qualifications. Many are not allowed to bring furniture with them, if they are allowed to enter. In Babylon and Kerbala, only IDPs with origins or relatives from the governorate may enter. In Basrah, Missan, and Wassit, IDPs can enter but are not allowed to register and remain unless they are displaced from "hot spots," or particularly dangerous and volatile areas, in Iraq. In Salah al-Din, the governor has ordered that IDPs from Samarra district and Anbar and Diyala governorates leave the governorate due to concern that they are security risks. IDPs who do not originate from Dahuk, Erbil, or Sulaymaniyah must be sponsored by a resident from these governorates. The borders of Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah continue to be tightly controlled to maintain the relatively high level of stable security in the region. In some cases IDPs may be turned away, and they are generally not permitted to bring furniture into Dahuk with them.

IDP Working Group Internal ly Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (June 2008), IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

Restrictions on IDPs' freedom of movement varied between men, women and children. Generally, men leave the home more than women and children leave the home more regularly than women. This may be due to the social-religious constraints that women face as well as the fact that most working children are working in public places. Security measures (checkpoints, curfews, permission required by the authorities, fences/walls/barriers) in addition to dilapidated infrastructure (broken and flooded roads) restrict movement throughout the country. Groups of IDPs reported pressure to return or resettle elsewhere from authorities, armed elements and host communities. However no pressure was reported in the three Northern Governorates.

Most governorates restrict entry to internally displaced persons, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 7 September 2007:

Governorate authorities are now restricting IDP entry and registration in Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Kerbala, Najaf, Qadissiya, Wassit, Babylon, Thi-Qar, Basrah, and Muthanna. In the northern three governorates, IDPs must either originate from the governorate or be sponsored by someone who does in order to obtain residency cards. In the southern governorates, entry is increasingly restricted due to security concerns and the strain displacement is placing on local capacities. IDPs entering these governorates are frequently only registered if they originate from the governorate or can prove familial ties to the area. Non-registration prevents IDPs from transferring their PDS cards and accessing other basic services. In Anbar, although governorate authorities have no official restrictions, the intensity of intertribal conflict requires IDPs to have tribal ties to an area in order to stay there.

Iraqi provinces shut out internal refugees, The Guardian, 11 October 2007:

Most of Iraq's provinces have closed their doors to people fleeing conflict elsewhere in the country, cutting off a vital escape route for people threatened by sectarian violence. According to aid officials, 10 out of 18 of Iraq's governorates are denying entry to civilians trying to escape the fighting or denying them aid once they have arrived, or both. An 11th, Babylon, also tried to shut out displaced families in recent months but was persuaded by the central government in Baghdad to relent for the time being....Iraq's neighbours and its relatively safe provinces have now exhausted their capacity to absorb more refugees, said Dana Graber Ladak, of the International Office for Migration (IOM). "They are trying to restrict the flow at checkpoints, and they are asking

the local branches of the ministry of displacement and migration not to register any more IDPs [internally displaced people]," Ms Ladek said. But staying at home is often not an option either

UNHCR, January 2007:

"Throughout most of 2006, IDPs in Dahuk were not required by the local authorities to obtain entry documents and did not require sponsorship for residence. Since November at least, the local authorities have required a sponsor for both Arab IDPs and single men for both entry and residence. In practice however, the local authorities in Dahuk Governorate have admitted single IDPs without a sponsor, providing that i) the person's background can be thoroughly checked by KDP offices in the person's place of origin and he/she does not pose a security risk; and ii) the person could establish that he/she feared for his/her life. Otherwise, the person will not be admitted to / allowed to remain in the Governorate of Dahuk. While most IDP families are living in rented housing, IDPs are also living in tents, public buildings, and former military camps or with relatives.

"While persons originating from the Governorate have generally been able to enter, reside and move freely within the Governorate, all non-Kurds relocating to the Governorate need to have a sponsor to enter the Governorate and to legalize their stay through registration with the Directorate of Residence. IDPs legally resident in Erbil receive an identification card which is valid for three to six months and can be renewed. IDPs in the Governorate are also required to register with the local security office in the village/sub-district of their residence. Kurdish IDPs, provided they originate from the Erbil Governorate, do not face official obstacles to the purchase of homes, while other IDPs are officially prohibited from the purchase of real property in KRG territory. However, provided they have regularized their stay, IDPs are generally free to rent accommodation and live with relatives. While most IDP families live in rented housing, some are also living in private homes and with host families or relatives."

"All IDPs entering Sulaymaniyah Governorate must register at entry checkpoints established by the authorities. However, Kurds from Kirkuk and Khanaqeen (Governorate of Diyala) are generally denied entry to the Governorate for political and demographic reasons, unless they are visiting only. Sponsorship is not required for entry but is required in order to reside and remain in Sulaymaniyah. IDPs with residence are allowed to remain in Sulaymaniyah and integrate into the community;⁶ there are no official barriers to employment. After registering with the local authorities and obtaining a residency permit, IDPs may rent homes or live with relatives, while non-Kurds are not allowed to purchase immovable property. At the time of the survey, the government did not provide shelter for IDPs in public buildings or tents, although one family surveyed did report living in a public building."

UNHCR, October 2005, pp. 90-91:

"All vehicular travel in Iraq is extremely dangerous and there have been numerous attacks on civilian vehicles as well as military convoys. Attacks occur throughout the day, but travel at night is exceptionally dangerous. Travel in or through Ramadi and Fallujah, travel between Hilla and Baghdad and between the International Zone and Baghdad International Airport is particularly dangerous, however, no major route into Iraq is to be considered safe. Main risks include:

- *Ongoing armed conflict between MNF/ISF and insurgents*, mainly near Fallujah and Ramadi (highway to Jordan/Syria) and near the Syrian border, but also on the roads to Samarra, Tikrit and Mosul, as well as on the roads leading South;
- *Ambushes/hostage taking by insurgents/criminals*, mainly on the road from Baghdad to Fallujah as well as South of Baghdad ('Triangle of death'). The kidnappers often demand money but have also carried out kidnappings for political/religious reasons;
- *Highway robbery/car-jacking* by armed thieves are very common, even during daylight hours, and particularly on the highways from Baghdad to Jordan and Kuwait;

- *Roadside bombs*, in particular near Baghdad, mainly targeting MNF/ISF, but often causing civilian deaths;
- *Mines/UXO*, in particular near Iraqi-Iranian border and along the former 'green line';
- *'Friendly fire'*: there have been a number of incidents in which civilians were killed at MNF/ISF checkpoints or when getting close to a military convoy.[...]

Freedom of movement is further restricted due to the numerous military checkpoints which have been set up, especially in and around Baghdad as well as at the former 'green line', which separates the Northern Governorates from Central Iraq.[...] In addition, there are illegal checkpoints set up by armed groups and militias. For security reasons, airports and border crossings may be closed, for example on religious holidays or political. At times however, such closures are imposed without prior notice."

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

"Most legal restrictions to freedom of movement disappeared as a result of the fall of the former regime. Nevertheless, freedom of movement in all parts of Iraq is severely restricted due to the security situation. While there is no formal prohibition of movement, many people have chosen to 'self impose' a curfew and do not venture out in the evening. Road travel is hazardous due to the possibility of mined areas, and is further restricted due to the numerous military checkpoints which have been set up, especially in and around Baghdad as well as at the 'green line', which separates the northern governorates from central Iraq. Freedom of movement is further hindered by the additional illegal checkpoints, which have been set up by armed groups linked to various political parties. As the security conditions in south and central Iraq progressively worsen, the influx of IDPs into the northern region continues to swell. Although the KRG authorities have received IDPs of all ethnicities in all three Governorates, recent entry regulations have restricted the movement of IDPs to reside and seek employment in the region. The lack of a unified approach in all three Governorates has led to inconsistent policies and practices regarding IDPs. The assistance provided by KRG authorities favours Kurdish IDPs, while Arab IDPs have been given the least support because of security fears."

See Also:

[Doors closing on Iraqi displaced](#), **BBC News**, 10 October 2007

[Difficult to access the needy in Diyala Province, say aid workers](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 3 October 2007

["Karbala says it will not host additional displaced families"](#), **IRIN**, 13 November 2006

UNAMI, 16 January 2007

UNHCR, 8 August 2004

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

IDP needs in Baghdad and Anbar province

Anbar: IDP needs (2007)

- Assessments among displaced people in Anbar province indicate a range of different needs among displaced people, including water, food, shelter and non food items (November 2006)
- Assessments indicate priority needs among IDPs in this province are shelter, employment opportunities and fresh food (January 2006)

IOM, 20 November 2006

"Unlike in other governorates, IDPs in Anbar did not strongly indicate top three needs. The various IDP families and groups all had different needs, depending on their locations and vulnerabilities. However, the most frequently listed needs were water, food, shelter, and non-food items.

Water and Food: Many IDPs in Anbar must travel long distances to access water and do not have access to potable water. Many IDPs reported that this basic, life-saving assistance is a priority. In addition, 74% of IDPs (2,511 families) do not have access to PDS rations and receive little food from other sources, so this was another frequently-listed need.

Water trucking, providing bottled water and the construction of better water networks can assist with the shortage of water. Chlorine tablets can also be provided for water treatment.

Food distributions to the most vulnerable can help alleviate their food deprivation. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially those nutritional needs of children and women, and should compliment and not duplicate what has been provided by other entities.

Many families hosting IDPs have access to arable land, so providing agriculture materials (food, tools and equipment) can increase the food production for both the IDPs and host families. For those IDPs who cannot access PDS rations due to security and violence, the best method for food access is the stabilization of the security situation in Anbar. This is a complicated issue that, at the time, must be the responsibility of local authorities, tribal leaders, the MNF-I, and the Iraqi forces.

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in public buildings, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

One suggestion provided by IDPs was building simple, inexpensive houses for the IDPs living in public buildings. This would have to be coordinated closely with the local authorities and Iraqi Ministries and should target only those families who plan on staying long-term.

As is happening in some parts of Anbar, the local authorities should put a cap on the inflation of rent prices, as this can help IDPs manage the weekly or monthly rent. Building more costefficient homes to rent, as mentioned above, is another option but must be coordination with all relevant stakeholders.

Many of the host families that are sharing their homes with recently-arrived IDPs suffer from the same vulnerabilities and poverty as the IDPs. Therefore, expanding their homes or providing electricity and sanitation services can help these families' situation. For those families who have been evicted, a short-term solution can be the provision of tents. The setting up of camps should be avoided. Permanent or semi-permanent camps could create a pull factor and can be costly to maintain, put the IDPs' security at risk, and create dependency once services are established.

Non-food items: There were various other items that IDPs in Anbar require that fall under the category of "non-food items". These include hygiene kits, which are in high demand in those locations that lack sanitation facilities or are not in close proximity to health facilities. In addition, fuel for heaters and heaters was requested by IDPs, due to the high cost of fuel and oncoming winter months. Other non-food items needed are mattresses, blankets, water buckets, jerry cans, cooking sets."

IOM, October 2005 - January 2006

"The IDPs in Anbar communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Shelter
2. Income Generating Programs
3. Fresh Food

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water & Sanitation:

Water:

1. Extension/Rehabilitation of water network
2. Compact Unit
3. Maintenance

Training Sanitation:

1. Hygiene Campaign
2. Garbage Containers
3. Construction of Latrines

The need for water is now minor in winter. The higher levels of water consumption during summer were due to the warmer climate.

Water quality is still very bad in all locations of Anbar governorate. Both IDPs and the hosting community are frequently using river water for domestic uses. River water represents the main source of drinking water for more than 65% of the population of the governorate. About 80% of the governorate is not served by a functioning sanitation system. Water is most often directly pumped from rivers to the beneficiaries, causing diseases like severe diarrhea.

Rutba experiences the largest shortage of water and is totally dependant on water trucking. Its major source of water provision is the trucking from Al-Thaba'a area (20km from Rutba center).

The water pipe supplying Akashat (where many IDP families are hosted) is currently out of order, due to misuse and the large presence of people hosted in the area. Currently there is ongoing trucking of water, but the water tank capacity of the families is not sufficient.

Food:

1. Transfer of PDS Ration Cards
2. Fresh Food
3. Adding items on PDS Ration Card

Food is still a priority need for the displaced, as for the whole population, since the Public Distribution System is not working properly. Food ration distributions are ongoing with some exceptions. Distributions are missing sugar, vegetable oil and rice and the quantity of some other items, like detergent and soap, is insufficient.

It is reported that the reason for the PDS distribution problem is that the transporting agents contracted by MoT are refusing to carry the food ration if the Ministry does not pay more than before for the transportation. MoT started paying the missed items in the PDS ration with compensating bank checks, estimating different prices from one governorate to another, according to the local prices. Local banks are generally refusing to liquidize these checks. MoT is still trying to convince the banks to accept the checks, and it seems that in some cases banks have started accepting the compensating checks. Markets are functioning except for in some areas of tension like Baghdadi, sometimes Ramadi and Hadetha. The access to markets is almost impossible in cases of military operations.

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Rehabilitation of primary health center
3. Increase the number of the medical staff

Most of the hospitals and health clinics in Anbar are affected by the military conflicts and some have been seriously damaged or partially destroyed. Health facilities are generally functioning, but they have a limited capability of meeting the needs of patients and lack winter-related medication. Medical treatment is inappropriate in many locations hosting IDPs, especially in Heet, Ana and Al Qaim. All hospitals and other health facilities are in need of assistance due to the deteriorated security situation and the big number of injuries and wounded people.

Education: 1. Rehabilitation of schools

2. Furniture for schools
3. Increase the number of teachers

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry/Construction
2. Sewing
3. Metal works

Unemployment is still one of the major concerns for the displaced in Anbar. Much economic infrastructure has been destroyed and people cannot afford the rehabilitation expenses. The problem applies also to farmers, especially in Qaim, who cannot transport goods during military clashes. Implementing income-generation projects was a consistent request of IDPs.

Access to Legal Documents

1. Legal/Information center
2. Registering children at school
3. Filling claims on Iraqi Property Claims Commission- IPCC"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Baghdad : IDP Needs (2007)

- Priority needs identified among displaced people in Baghdad are shelter and food and access to work (September 2006)

- Priority needs identified among displaced communities in Baghdad include garbage collection, rehabilitation of schools and the water network (December 2005)

IOM, 15 May - 30 September 2006

"In the case of Baghdad, the IDPs listed their priority needs as 1) shelter and food (these two were equally listed by IDPs as the first priority), 2) access to work, and 3) shelter and food (these two were also equally listed by IDPs as the third priority).

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

While shelter is important, it is also important to remember that the majority of IDPs in Baghdad plan to return to their place of origin, so other needs should be addressed before long-term, permanent shelter is provided.

However, for those IDPs who plan to stay in their current place of displacement, there are several options. One option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes where IDPs are present, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Another option is to support the purchase of land and/or the construction of small cement homes. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the purchase of land.

In severe cases where immediate, short-term shelter is needed, another intervention is to purchase tents for temporary residence. This will be a provisional solution, as the use of tents can result in the creation of informal camps, which can cause numerous problems, including the extremely high costs they entail, the security issues they pose and the dependence they create.

Access to Work: Some would assume that Baghdad Governorate, where the Iraqi capital is located, should have more job opportunities. However, the influx of IDPs and economic migrants has created a stronger competition for employment, and IDPs from rural areas often have skills in areas, such as agriculture, that are not appropriate in the urban context.

IDPs have suggested training in carpentry, mechanics, or other skills that would make them eligible for jobs in Baghdad. Providing loans to open small businesses or factories is another suggestion. The economic growth and therefore employment opportunities in Baghdad are directly dependent on the security situation, and until this can be contained, economic opportunities will be thwarted.

Food: Some organizations have provided food to IDPs in Baghdad, but clearly it is not sufficient. Many IDPs do not have access to the PDS rations, so facilitating the transfer of documentations so that the IDPs are registered in their place of displacement is one possible intervention. In addition, organizations can provide food baskets, especially those that target the nutritional needs of women and children."

IOM, October - December 2005

"Priority Needs per Sector:

The IDPs in Baghdad communicated that their top three needs are:

1. Garbage containers
2. Rehabilitation of schools
3. Rehabilitation of water network

Water and Sanitation:

Water:

1. Extend the water network
2. Maintenance training

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Hygiene campaigns
3. Construction of latrines

A large number of IDP locations suffer from a shortage of water, due to the lack of rehabilitation of damaged water infrastructure. Water is being stored improperly in many of these areas, leading to disease.

Health:

1. Medical awareness for women
2. Rehabilitation of health center

As most of the IDP locations are within Baghdad governorate, with a small number of locations outside, access to health services is not a major problem despite the fact that families claim inaccessibility to health facilities due to long distances. Generally, the health sector in Iraq suffers from shortages of medical supplies and medications provided to health facilities which can cause severe shortages and inability to provide health services.

Education:

1. Rehabilitation of schools
2. Furniture for schools
3. Registering children at school

Access to education for the Marsh Arabs and Roma community is difficult due to unavailability of documentations necessary for schools and social rejection of the Roma by the surrounding communities. In addition, refugee returnee families who were in asylum in Iran are also unable to gain access to education for their children for the same aforementioned reasons.

Food:

1. Provide the missing items in the PDS Ration Card
2. Fresh Food

In general, the displaced families in Baghdad have access to food through the PDS Ration Card distributed by Ministry of Trade or access to local markets.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. Registering children at school

Income Generation:

1. Metal works
2. Carpentry
3. Sewing"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

IDP needs in central Iraq

Salah Al-Din: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in the province identified their main needs as food, shelter and access to work (November 2006)
- Priority needs identified by IDPs in Salah al-Din are rehabilitation of primary health centres and schools as well as employment opportunities (January 2006)

IOM, November 2006

"IDPs in Salah al-Din listed their priority needs as 1) food, 2) shelter, and 3) access to work.

Food: Many IDPs in Salah al-Din do not have access to the PDS rations (623 of those families interviewed) and are not receiving it from other sources, so providing additional food assistance is essential. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially those nutritional needs of children and women.

In addition, since so many IDPs do not have access to the PDS rations, organizations can lobby the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, and the local government to help bring food items to these populations.

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

One option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes where IDPs are present, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Another option is to support the purchase of land and/or the construction of small cement homes. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the purchase of land. The Iraqi government could also be encouraged to provide allocations of land to the displaced. In severe cases, if immediate, short-term shelter is needed, another intervention is to purchase tents for temporary residence. This will be a provisional solution, as the use of tents can result in the creation of informal camps, which can cause numerous problems, including the extremely high costs they entail, the security issues they pose and the dependence they create. Setting up a camp should be considered as a last resort.

Whatever shelter provided, or any other service, it should never be contingent on the IDPs' ethnicity or religion. In addition, all shelter will need to have the appropriate sanitation facilities provided. Also, long-term, permanent shelter should focus on those IDPs planning to stay in Salah al-Din.

Employment: IDPs often must leave behind employment and income-generating activities when they are displaced, and access to work was third among IDPs' priorities in Salah al-Din. For those IDPs who do have work, the series of curfews that the governorate has experienced has been especially difficult, since they cannot go to their day jobs.

Projects to improve water and sanitation infrastructure, build homes, or other construction projects could also employ IDPs while providing much-needed services. One suggestion by IDPs was the construction of health centers, which would create employment both through the construction phase and staffing the centers with health care professionals, and it would assuage

IDPs' problems accessing adequate health care.

Agencies can create vocational training programs in areas such as carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade, or on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the IDP for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete.

In addition to food, shelter, and access to work, IDPs requested assistance accessing information about the property they left and the legal procedures to reclaim it if necessary."

IOM, October 2005-January 2006

"The IDPs in Salah al-Din communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Rehabilitation of the Primary Health Center.
2. Rehabilitation of schools
3. Employment opportunities

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water:

1. Installing a compact unit
2. Extend the water network
3. Maintenance training

IDPs in Salah al-Din generally have potable water but request increased amounts.

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Hygiene campaign
3. Construction of latrines

The IDPs requested garbage collection campaigns and latrines.

Health:

1. Provision of medication
2. Rehabilitation of the Primary Health Center
3. Increase in the number of the medical staff

An increase in the quality and quantity of medications is necessary.

Education:

1. Rehabilitation of schools
2. Furniture for the school
3. Increase the number of teachers

The groups monitored cited an increase in school material and the rehabilitation of schools as their primary needs.

Food:

1. Fresh Food
2. Provide the missing items on the PDS Ration Card
3. Transfer of the PDS Ration Card

The biggest complaint was the absence of food items in the Public Distribution System.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. Registering children at school
3. Filing claims in the Iraqi Property Claims Commission- IPCC

There did not seem to be a great need for legal assistance, although some IDPs expressed a wish for better understanding of their rights.

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry
2. Sewing
3. Metal works

The most popular requests for skills training were in metal works, mechanics, and carpentry.

Type of information needs:

IDPs would like to be better informed of the security situation in their areas."

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Diyala: IDP needs (2007)

- Priority needs identified by displaced people in Diyala are shelter, employment and food (December 2006)
- Priority needs identified by IDPs in Diyala were housing, food and non food items (December 2005)

IOM, December 2006

"IDPs in Diyala were very clear on their priority needs. They overwhelmingly listed the following as their top three priorities: 1) shelter, 2) access to work, 3) food. These three priorities are common for recently-displaced IDPs throughout Iraq.

Shelter: As mentioned above, the majority of IDPs in Diyala (62%) rent shelter. Those who can afford it when they arrive find a space to rent, but several factors make this unsustainable. Many IDPs did not think they would be displaced for long and do not have the savings to continue to afford rent. IDPs left behind employment and income-generation activities, and they are finding it difficult to find another job in their place of displacement. Without income, covering rental costs is difficult. Finally, rental costs are increasing with the demand, also making renting impossible for some families.

A couple of options could help alleviate the housing problems for IDPs. Building simple, affordable houses to rent would have to be coordinated closely with the local authorities and Iraqi Ministries and should target only those families who plan on staying long-term. Local authorities could cap the inflation of rent prices, which would allow more families to continue to rent. 24% of IDPs live with a host family or relative, and these host families often suffer from the same lack of basic services or income as the IDPs. If the IDPs plan to share the house for the longterm, expanding their hosts' homes could be beneficial and less costly than new housing.

For the 12% of IDPs who live in public buildings, on unused land or in collective towns or settlements that lack facilities, improved sanitation and cooking facilities, insulation, and reconstruction of their shelter could be undertaken. However, this can only be done if these locations will not be reclaimed and the IDPs will be living there permanently. If IDPs have access to land, providing grants or interest-free loans would allow them to build inexpensive housing on their property.

If property owners of the aforementioned buildings or land decide to evict the IDPs, which is a growing possibility as more IDPs move into these areas, a short-term solution can be the provision of tents. The setting up of an IDP camp should be avoided. Permanent or

semipermanent camps could create a pull factor and can be costly to maintain, put the IDPs' security at risk, and create dependency once services are established.

Employment: IDPs must often leave behind employment and income-generating activities when they are displaced, and access to work was ranked second among IDPs' top priorities in Diyala. IDPs provided numerous suggestions for employment opportunities. Many suggestions focused on construction projects that would improve water and sanitation infrastructure, build homes, or other construction projects that would employ IDPs while providing much-needed services. Some IDPs suggested a partial rehabilitation on an unused primary school located nearby their location so that it could be used for classes. IDPs also suggested water purification units and water pipe extensions for accessible, clean drinking water.

Another suggestion was allocating portions of public land where the IDPs are currently living to be used for farming, especially for those IDPs who have experience in agriculture. This would have to be closely coordinated with local authorities. Another recommendation was establishing chicken farms for those who have experience in raising poultry and livestock. IDPs also suggested providing them with micro-loans so that they could begin their own small business.

Finally, agencies could create vocational training programs in areas such as carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade, or on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the IDP for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete. These trainings should target IDPs with little work or skills experience. Food: Food distributions to the most vulnerable can help alleviate their food deprivation. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially the nutritional needs of children and women, and should compliment and not duplicate what has been provided by other entities.

If families hosting IDPs have access to arable land, providing agriculture materials (food, tools and equipment) can increase the food production for both the IDPs and host families. For those IDPs who cannot access PDS rations due to security and inability to transport food, the best method for food access is obviously the stabilization of the security situation, a complicated challenge in Iraq. For those IDPs who are having trouble transferring their PDS ration cards, MoDM and the Ministry of Trade will need to help facilitate this process. All Iraqis must renew their PDS cards for 2007, which could be further complicated due to displacement."

IOM, October-December 2005

"The IDPs in Diyala communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Housing
2. Non-Food Items
3. Food items

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water:

1. Extension network
2. Compact unit
3. Water tanks/ containers

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Construction of latrines
3. Hygiene campaign

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/ medicine
2. Increase the number of the medical staff
3. Rehabilitation of a Primary Health Center

Education:

1. Furniture for schools
2. Rehabilitation of schools
3. Increase the number of teachers

Food:

1. Adding more items in PDS Ration Card
2. Fresh food

Legal Assistance:

1. Filing claims in Iraqi Property Claims Commission- IPCC
2. Legal/Information center
3. Registering children at school

Skills Training Needs:

1. Metal works
2. Carpentry/Construction
3. Sewing

Type of information Needs:

1. Security
2. Housing
3. Jobs"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Tameem/Kirkuk: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in Kirkuk have identified their priority needs as shelter, access to work, food, and legal help

IOM, November 2006

"IDPs in Kirkuk listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work and food were both most frequently mentioned, and 3) food and legal help were most frequently given. Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

One option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes where IDPs are present, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Another option is to support the purchase of land and/or the construction of small cement homes. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the purchase of land. The Iraqi government could also be encouraged to provide allocations of land to the displaced. IDPs in Kirkuk also recommended building simple housing units for families living in public buildings or where they face potential eviction. However, any long-term or permanent settlement in Kirkuk might meet resistance by the local authorities, due to political sensitivities over altering the ethnic makeup of the governorate.

In severe cases, if immediate, short-term shelter is needed, another intervention is to purchase tents for temporary residence. This will be a provisional solution, as the use of tents can result in the creation of informal camps, which can cause numerous problems, including the extremely

high costs they entail, the security issues they pose and the dependence they create. Setting up a camp should be considered as a last resort.

Whatever shelter provided, or any other service, it should never be contingent on the IDPs' ethnicity or religion. In addition, all shelter will need to have the appropriate sanitation facilities provided.

In Kirkuk, where political issues of ownership make the permanent settlement of any population a contentious issue, any shelter and settlement issue will have to be done in a sensitive manner and in collaboration with all government entities in the governorate.

Employment: IDPs often must leave behind employment and income-generating activities when they are displaced, and access to work was ranked high among IDPs' top priorities in Kirkuk. IDPs interviewed in Kirkuk had many suggestions for employment generating opportunities. Projects to improve water and sanitation infrastructure, build homes, or other construction projects could also employ IDPs while providing much-needed services. One suggestion by IDPs was the construction of health centers, which would create employment both through the construction phase and staffing the centers with health care professionals, and it would assuage IDPs' problems accessing adequate health care.

Another suggestion was establishing a manual block factory. This would provide IDPs with blocks to build their houses, instead of using mud, and also would provide job opportunities for those who could be employed to work at the factory and to build the factory. Another option would be to provide the grant so that individuals could create a small brick making business. Agencies can create vocational training programs in areas such as carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade, or on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the IDP for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete.

Food: Most IDPs in Kirkuk do not have access to the PDS rations, so providing additional food assistance is essential. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially those nutritional needs of children and women.

In addition, since so many IDPs do not have access to the PDS rations, organizations can lobby the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, and the local government to help bring food items to these populations.

Legal Assistance: While not listed as frequently as the aforementioned needs, IDPs in Kirkuk still see legal assistance as a priority. IDPs throughout Iraq need assistance with a wide variety of legal issues, such as access to property they left behind, especially if it has been occupied since they left. Often they need assistance transferring their documents, such as the PDS ration card, to their new locations or obtaining lost, left, or stolen documents.

Many organizations have found that legal centers are a constructive method of assisting IDPs with legal help. In addition to assisting the IDPs with the aforementioned issues, legal centers can provide accurate information about IDPs' rights, access to services, resources, and IDPs' options when it comes to their left property or documents."

IOM, October-December 2005

"The IDPs in Tameem/Kirkuk communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Midwives training
2. Employment opportunities
3. Skills training centers for the youth

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water

1. Extend the water network

2. Water pumps
3. Water network

IDPs requested the rehabilitation of water networks or installing new networks. Another request was increased purification stations and tanks. In Busharya specifically, IDPs are in need of purified water.

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Construction of latrines
3. Hygiene campaign

IDPs suggested garbage collection campaigns, garbage containers, latrines. Latrines are especially needed in the Hawija district; defecation near rivers is leading to intestinal diseases.

Health:

1. Drugs provision
2. Rehabilitation of the Primary Health Center

Due to insecurity, IDPs need health clinics that are located within a safe distance. An increase in the quality and quantity of medications was also requested.

Education:

1. Stationary
2. Rehabilitation of schools
3. Increase the number of teachers

Many schools in the area are in need of rehabilitation (estimated number of schools is 499). Noteworthy is the lack of schools in camps. Most IDP families send their children to schools in towns, causing congestion in classrooms. In addition, access to schools was reported to be problematic for girls. An increase of teachers and housing nearby schools for teachers who live far away are needed. Children are missing school to work and families do not have the funds for school supplies.

Food:

1. Fresh Food
2. Provide missing items on the PDS Ration Card

The increasing absence of food items in the Public Distribution System is a primary concern of IDPs.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. Registering children at school
3. Arab staff employment in these areas

IDPs require assistance in obtaining legal documents.

Income Generation:

1. Sewing
2. Metal works
3. Midwives training

Any income-generating project is highly needed in IDP communities, as lack of employment opportunities is leading to looting and recruitment by insurgents."

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Ninewa: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people list shelter, access to work and legal help as their priority needs (November 2006)
- Priority needs identified by displaced people in Ninewa province include employment opportunities, non food items and extension/rehabilitation of the water network (January 2006)

IOM, November 2006

"When asked to list their top three priorities, IDPs in Ninewa listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) legal help.

Shelter: As mentioned above, 75% of IDPs rent housing, 24% are living in the house of a host family or relative, and 2% live in public buildings or a tent near a host family's house. IDPs who are renting have voiced repeatedly that without adequate income, they cannot continue to cover rental costs. For those who are renting, creating a cap on the increase in rent will prevent inflated rental costs and allow IDPs to stay longer in their current housing. In coordination with local officials and relevant Ministries, building affordable housing complexes will assist both IDPs who are renting and those living with other families or in public buildings. Improving the structures where IDPs currently reside, whether that is with host families or in public buildings, can also assist IDPs with their housing needs.

Any of the aforementioned recommendations must take into consideration that post-February IDPs interviewed do not plan on staying in their current location, and therefore long-term, permanent shelter assistance is not appropriate. If the IDP families plan to follow through with their intentions to leave, the most appropriate assistance will be assistance for rent (funds paid directly to property owners), food and non-food items.

Employment: IDPs often must leave behind employment and income-generating activities when they are displaced, and access to work was the second highest priority among IDPs in Ninewa. The series of curfews that have been enforced over the past few months have made the situation difficult even for those IDPs who do have employment, since they cannot go to their day jobs. IDPs in Ninewa had numerous suggestions for employment opportunities. For youth in Tilkaif and Al Hamdaniya districts, which are a bit more stable, IDPs recommended trainings, especially for the youth. They recommended training in carpentry or sewing. Some IDPs near agricultural areas recommended facilitating negotiations with local farmers in which those that have experience in agriculture can work their land either in trade for food or income.

Any projects that improve infrastructure could employ IDPs while providing much-needed services. Construction of roads, bridges, or health facilities where security permits would assist both IDPs and the local community with employment opportunities.

Again, any training or employment assistance would need to take into consideration the intentions of IDPs and focus on those who most require the income and who plan to stay in their current location, at least for the near future.

Legal Assistance: IDPs in Ninewa listed legal assistance as their third priority. The majority seeking legal assistance requested assistance with compensation for the damage or destruction of their property, or repossession or restitution of their property in cases where this property is illegally occupied by private parties, the government or the army.

Since the Commission for Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD) does not cover property issues incurred after April 9, 2003, the Iraq governorate could be encouraged to

establish a special purpose commission or body to handle these claims.

IDPs could also try to file their claims with the Iraqi civil courts. Entities who work in this field could assist the IDPs with this process, including helping them to collect evidence of their property rights prior to displacement, the subsequent violation of those rights and/or the damage and destruction of their property.

Providing legal advice about their rights and providing possible legal representation should they file a claim would be additional suggestions for responding to IDPs' request for legal assistance."

IOM, October 2005 - January 2006

"The IDPs in Ninewa communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Employment opportunities
2. Non-Food Items
3. Extension/rehabilitation of water network

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water:

1. Water tanks/containers
2. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
3. Jerry cans

Most IDP sites are reported far from water sources and access to these sources is made even more difficult as the road conditions are poor.

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Hygiene campaign
3. Construction of latrines

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/ medicine
2. Medical instruments
3. Ambulance

The main problem seems to be lack of access to the health centres for the families and an improvement of the coverage is requested.

Education:

1. School supplies for the children (books, bags, etc...)
2. Clothes
3. School furniture (desks, chairs, etc...)

There is also a need for school renovation in numerous districts.

Food:

1. Adding more items on the PDS Ration Card
2. Fresh food
3. Milk

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/information center
2. Transferring of documents

Income Generation

1. Carpentry/construction
2. Metal works
3. Handicrafts"

Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province

IDP needs in the lower south region

Thi-Qar: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people list shelter, access to work and food as their primary needs (September 2006)
- Primary needs identified among IDPs in Thi Qar province include non food items, water and sanitation and social assistance (January 2006)

IOM September 2006

"In the case of Thi-Qar, the IDPs listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) food.

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

One option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes where IDPs are present, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Another option is to support the purchase of land and/or the construction of small cement homes. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the purchase of land. In severe cases where immediate, short-term shelter is needed, another intervention is to purchase tents for temporary residence. This will be a provisional solution, as the use of tents can result in the creation of informal camps, which can cause numerous problems, including the extremely high costs they entail, the security issues they pose and the dependence they create. Access to Work: Whether the IDPs plan on settling in Thi-Qar or elsewhere or eventually plan to return to their place of origin, access to employment is a priority. As mentioned above, IDPs in Thi-Qar requested assistance gaining employment in brick-making, road building, and government jobs.

Thi-Qar has more rural areas and offers more opportunities for agricultural employment and income-generation, so providing the means, such as tools and equipment or loans to purchase land and seeds, could provide income-generating activities to IDPs in Thi-Qar.

In addition, IDPs who have skills in or experience owning a business could benefit from loans that allow them to open a small business in Thi-Qar. Other ideas to improve IDPs' access to work could be vocational training in areas such as carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade; and on-the-job training that allows IDPs to learn a new skill while being paid a stipend.

Food: Some organizations have provided food in Thi-Qar since February 22, but clearly it is not sufficient. Many IDPs do not have access to the PDS rations, so facilitating the transfer of documentations so that the IDPs are registered in their place of displacement is one possible

intervention. In addition, organizations can provide food baskets, especially those that target the nutritional needs of women and children."

IOM, October 2005-January 2006

"The IDPs in Thi-Qar communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Non-Food Items
2. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
3. Social assistance

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water & Sanitation:

Water:

1. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
2. More than one water tanker
3. Water tanks/containers

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Construction of latrines
3. Hygiene campaign

This sector is the main concern for those IDPs living in marshes, rural areas and public buildings (Al-Food, Tar, Alokeaka, and Al-Esakrah). Due to the increasing number of population in the governorate, IDPs face a lack of water access. The main sources of drinkable water are the water tank trucks and the river.

Health:

1. Construction of hospital/clinic
2. Rehabilitation of Primary Health Center

There is a high demand for health services due to the high rates of malaria, cholera and typhoid, which are reported to be common among the population. The hospitals face a lack of equipment such as surgical tools, ambulances and laboratory equipment.

Education:

1. Rehabilitation of schools
2. Furniture for the school (desks, chairs, etc.)
3. Increase number of school teachers

Most of the IDPs living in camps and destroyed villages do not have access to schools. Many schools in the area are in need of rehabilitation (the estimated number of schools is 499). The lack of schools in camps is noteworthy. Most IDPs families send their children to schools in towns, causing congestion in classrooms. In addition, access to schools was reported to be difficult for girls. 40% of 'non-school attendance' is in the age group of 13 -18 year olds. Also, a lack of furniture and teachers has been reported.

Child labor is reported to be a common practice.

Food:

1. Fresh food
2. Adding items in PDS Ration Card
3. Assistance with transfer of the PDS Ration Card

All families have a PDS food ration card, but the food items supplied by the food ration are not sufficient to satisfy their needs. Therefore the residents have to buy some items from the markets, especially rice and sugar, to cover their daily needs.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/information center
2. Assistance with filling claims with the Iraqi Property Claim Commission- IPCC
3. Nationality certificates

The main legal problem facing the IDPs families is the threats of being evicted from the buildings where they are settled.

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry/Construction
2. Metal works
3. Sewing

The rate of unemployment is very high (around 85 %). The main income resource is agriculture, but there are many problems that the farmers face, such as the lack of agricultural kits, especially tools, fertilizers and seeds. The other problem is the presence of swamps, which cover agricultural lands.

Type of Information needs:

1. Housing
2. Jobs
3. General services"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)
[Click here for an indepth assessment of Thi Qar province, UNHCR, 31 October 2006](#)

Missan: IDP needs (2007)

- Priority needs among displaced people in Missan are water, food and non food items (December 2006)
- Priority needs among displaced people in Missan province include shelter and employment opportunities (December 2005)

IOM, December 2006

"Although Missan is one of the most stable governorates, it is also very poor and lacks many basic services. The IDPs displaced there also tend to suffer from poverty, so their reported priority needs are basic and immediate. IDPs assessed in Missan listed their top three priority needs as water, 2) food, and 3) non-food items.

Water: Missan is the only governorate where recently-displaced IDPs have listed water as their number one priority. According to assessments, 30% of IDPs interviewed do not have regular access to water. Some of those that do have access find that the water is not suitable for drinking. Water trucking, providing bottled water and the construction of better water networks can assist with the shortage of water. Chlorine tablets can also be provided for water treatment, and IDPs recommended establishing reverse osmosis systems for water purification.

Food: Despite relatively good access to PDS food rations and additional assistance from humanitarian organizations, IDPs in Missan most frequently reported food as their second priority. High levels of poverty are preventing these IDPs from accessing adequate food.

Needs assessments should be conducted to identify the most vulnerable IDPs and their food needs. Comprehensive food distributions should be based on these assessments and implemented in coordination with other food assistance agencies to avoid duplication. Those few IDPs who do not have access to PDS food rations might need assistance to transfer their PDS ration cards to their area of displacement.

Some IDPs mentioned that they have access to agricultural land, so long-term food assistance could focus on providing agricultural production inputs, such as seeds, tools and fertilizers, to these IDPs. Providing land to cultivate produce is an option, although it would need to be lead by or closely coordinated with the local authorities and the Ministry of Agriculture. This long-term solution should be provided to those IDPs who do not intend to return home or move to a third location.

Non-food items: There were various other items that IDPs in Missan require that fall under the category of “non-food items”. These include hygiene kits, which are in high demand in those locations that lack sanitation facilities or are not in close proximity to health facilities. In addition, fuel for heaters and propane heaters were requested by IDPs, due to the high cost of fuel and oncoming winter months. Other non-food items needed are mattresses, blankets, water buckets, jerry cans, and cooking sets.

In addition, IDPs in Missan gave numerous recommendations for basic services, employment and income generation:

- Al-Husain Al Qadeem is a poor area that lacks a sewage system, negatively affecting the health of both IDPs and host families. Therefore, they recommended installation of a new sewage system.
- Al Ezair sub-district is not served with a proper municipal water system. The subdistrict is dependent on river water so is in need of a water purification project to serve both the host community and IDP families.
- In Hay Al Askary in Amarah, IDPs suggested the construction of a sewage network for proper disposal of waste. IDP families on this location are also in need of health services in the form of vaccinations and medications.
- IDPs in Bin Hashim sub-district requested various services, including a health center and new water treatment plants, and the construction of two schools and expanding and rehabilitation the existing schools, which are made out of mud.

More generally, IDPs in Missan suggested:

- Helping families with access to land to launch projects for the purpose of raising livestock or equipment for producing dairy products to be sold in the market.
- Opening training centres to develop the skills of the unskilled youths.
- Road paving, especially for those living in the remote villages, in order to connect their villages with the neighbouring villages and to improve access and movement for IDPs.
- Employment in the governmental sector, while others suggested establishing a brick factory to employ those who worked in brick factories in Baghdad suburbs."

IOM, October-December 2005

"The IDPs in Missan communicated that their top priority needs are:

1. Shelter
2. Employment opportunities

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water:

1. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
2. Desalination of water
3. Compact unit

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Construction of latrines
3. Sewage network

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Construct public clinic
3. Providing instruments and medical staff

Education:

1. School furniture (desks, chairs, etc.)
2. Construction of schools

Food:

1. Adding more items in PDS ration card
2. Distribution of food items

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal representation
2. Legal consultations

Income Generation:

1. Sewing
2. Metal works
3. Carpentry/ Construction

Type of information needs

1. Shelter
2. Employment opportunities
3. Public services"

Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province
Click here for an indepth assessment of Missan province, UNHCR, 5 February 2007

Basrah: IDP needs (2007)

- Priority needs identified by displaced people in Barah include shelter, access to work, food and legal help (May - October 2006)
- Displaced people in Basrah have identified access to schooling and medical clinics as well as water and sanitation among their primary needs (October - December 2006)

IOM, May - October 2006

"In the case of Basrah, the IDPs listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) food and legal help.

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

One option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes where IDPs are present, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Another option is to support the purchase of land and/or the construction of small cement homes. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the purchase of land. In severe cases where immediate, short-term shelter is needed, another intervention is to purchase tents for temporary residence. This will be a provisional solution, as the use of tents can result in the creation of informal camps, which can cause numerous problems, including the extremely high costs they entail, the security issues they pose and the dependence they create.

Access to Work: IDPs often must leave behind employment and income-generating activities when they are displaced, and access to work was ranked high among IDPs top priorities in Basrah. Some IDPs in Basrah who had an agricultural background requested either donations of land or loans to purchase land to begin agricultural activities. Some IDPs who have backgrounds in mechanics or another trade requested loans or funds to help them set up small businesses. Other options for employment opportunities are creating vocational training in areas such as in carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade, or on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the IDP for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire the IDP after the training is complete.

Food: Some organizations have provided food in Basrah since February 22, but clearly it is not sufficient. Many IDPs do not have access to the PDS rations, so facilitating the transfer of documentations so that the IDPs are registered in their place of displacement is one possible intervention. In addition, organizations can provide food baskets, especially those that target the nutritional needs of women and children.

Legal Help: IDPs in Basrah requested legal help as a priority, which was not as frequently requested as a priority in other governorates. IDPs need assistance with a wide variety of legal issues, such as access to property they left behind, especially if it has been occupied since they left. Often they need assistance transferring their documents, such as the PDS ration card, to their new locations. Some IDPs must leave quickly and leave behind legal documentation and identity cards, which they need assistance obtaining.

Many organizations have found that legal centers are a constructive method of assisting IDPs with legal help. In addition to assisting the IDPs with the aforementioned issues, legal centers can provide accurate information about IDPs' rights, access to services, resources, and IDPs options when it comes to their left property or documents."

IOM, October-December 2006

"The IDPs in Basra communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Constructing a secondary school in the area
2. Adding a delivery room to the clinic
3. Extension/rehabilitation of water network

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water and Sanitation:

Water:

1. Water tanks/containers
2. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
3. Water pumps

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Hygiene campaign
3. Sewage system

The water and sanitation system remains critical. IDPs locations do not have a specific place to collect this garbage, so it collects in public areas, presenting a health risk.

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Ambulance
3. Increase the number of the medical staff

Access to medical facilities it is not always available. Many IDPs families are not able to be assisted by primary health centers for many reasons, such as their long distance from IDP communities, lack of birthing facilities, lack of doctors, and lack of medication.

Education:

1. Furniture for schools
2. Increase the number of teachers
3. Additional classrooms

IDP children who live in the rural areas are not attending school (primary and secondary) for many reasons, such as distance and lack of rooms.

Food:

1. Meat
2. Legumes
3. Milk for children

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. ID documents, especially for girls and women

Income Generation:

1. Sewing
2. Metal works
3. Carpentry/construction

The unemployment level is very high, as much as 70-80% in some IDP locations."

Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province
See also an indepth assessment of Basra province by UNHCR, 31 August 2006

Muthanna: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in Muthanna list primary needs as water, shelter and food

IOM, November 2006

"IDPs in Muthanna listed their priority needs as 1) water, 2) shelter, and 3) food.

Water: Water is clearly the number one priority for IDPs in Muthanna, and 60% report that they do not have regular access to water. Water assistance will greatly depend on the IDPs' location. For IDPs living in rural areas but with access to lakes, rivers, or streams, chlorine tablets and family-size filtration systems are most appropriate. In rural areas with untapped underground water, wells could be created. However, this would require professional assessments and coordination with the local authorities.

For families living in public buildings or in homes without basic water services, existing water networks (piping in the building or home) could be rehabilitated (or built) and connected to the

municipal water networks system. Another option is to provide water trucking that is delivered to tanks.

Humanitarian organizations who have the capacity to respond to IDPs' need for water should make this a priority, as water is an essential, life-sustaining need that must be available to everyone.

Shelter: Many displaced persons live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

Those IDPs living in public buildings (2%, or 124 families) suggested rehabilitating the buildings, especially the crucial services (water, electricity, sanitation, etc.) to make them more suitable for living. While this is a good suggestion on behalf of the IDPs, it is essential to ensure that the Iraqi government will allow the IDPs to stay in the buildings for the long-term, before permanent facilities are added.

For the 19% who are living with relatives and plan on staying long-term, an option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

IDPs also recommended building settlements of low-cost housing. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the use of land and construction of homes.

Food: Although IDPs in Muthanna have access to the PDS rations, very few receive any additional food assistance, and poverty and heightened vulnerabilities result in the urgent need for food assistance. Food can be provided as food baskets through emergency distributions. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially those nutritional needs of children and women. Long-term food assistance could be in the form of agricultural assistance. This would need to be coordinated with the local authorities and provided to those IDPs who meet several requirements, such as access to suitable land and long-term intentions of residence."

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

IDP needs in the north

Sulaymaniyah: IDP needs (2007)

- Shelter was identified as a priority need followed by employment and food/healthcare

UNHCR, January 2007

"Shelter was overwhelmingly identified as the main priority need across all districts; 73-100% of families selected housing as their principal need despite IDPs immediate housing needs having been met. 90% of families live in rented housing, 6% with a host family, less than 1% in public buildings and none in tents. Families may be concerned about the sustainability of their current shelter solutions as the cause of their displacement shows little sign of abating and the length of their displacement extends. Continuing rent payments as savings are depleted and work opportunities remaining scarce is likely to be a major challenge, particularly in the face of price increases caused by the steady influx of IDPs. Those staying with host families may also be concerned about over-stay. After shelter, the next priority needs were work, health and food. The second priority need was overwhelmingly employment. Only families in Sulaymaniyah City selected a third choice, evenly split between healthcare and access to food."

Dahuk: IDP needs (2007)

- Shelter was reported by displaced people to be their top priority followed by employment and health care among some districts

UNHCR, January 2007

“Shelter was identified as the top priority need in all districts with the exception of Zakho, where shelter was identified as the second priority after employment. Between 92 -96% of IDP families surveyed in Shekhan and Dahuk City, where 65-68% live in rented housing, selected shelter as their first priority. In Dahuk, the remaining 32% live with host families (23%) or in public buildings, tents, former military camps and in other shelter arrangements. In Shekhan, the remaining 35% live with host families (24%) or in collective towns, tents near host families, public buildings and in other shelter arrangements. In Amedi and Zakho, only 4-16% of families surveyed are renting houses. Those unable to rent have serious cause to feel insecure about their shelter; the emphasis on shelter reflects concerns about their ongoing ability to maintain payment and secure their own shelter as the length of their displacement extends. Most families are having difficulties finding jobs and are therefore living off savings. As the influx of IDPs continues, rental rates have risen sharply, and high rents underlie many IDPs’ housing concerns. Together with their lack of regular income, rental market pressure means that families will find it difficult to continue to afford housing as the length of their displacement extends.

Employment was identified as the second priority need by all families, except those in Zakho which listed it as the first priority. While the KRG is experiencing less unemployment than other governorates in Iraq, unemployment is still a problem for both local residents and IDPs who face additional obstacles due to language barriers, problems obtaining references and a lack of familial and general connections. Families surveyed in Amedi and Zakho listed health as their third priority but no third priority was listed in Dahuk City or Shekhan.”

Erbil: IDP needs (2007)

- Shelter followed by employment, health and food were identified as priority needs by displaced people surveyed in Erbil province

UNHCR, January 2007

“Shelter was overwhelmingly identified as a priority need across all sub-districts, ranging from 59-94%. Overall, 83% of IDP families surveyed rated shelter as their principal need despite the apparent absence of a housing crisis of the surveyed IDP population. 74% of families live in rented housing, 14% (other) live in private homes or hotels, 9% with a host family and 3% in tents near a host family home (mainly in Khabat). Families may be concerned about the sustainability of their current shelter solutions as the cause of their displacement shows little sign of abating and the length of their displacement extends. Continuing rent payments as savings are depleted and work opportunities remain scarce is likely to be a major challenge, particularly in the face of price increases caused by the steady influx of IDPs. Those staying with host families may also be concerned about over-stay. After shelter, the next priority needs were work, health and food.”

IDP needs in the upper south

Kerbala: IDP needs (2007)

- Key needs among displaced people in Kerbala are food, access to work and shelter (November 2006)
- Key needs among displaced people in Kerbala province are water, sanitation and employment (December 2005)

IOM, November 2006

"When asked to rank their top three priority needs, IDPs in Kerbala ranked them as follows: 1) food, 2) access to work, and 3) shelter.

Food: Many IDP families do not access to the PDS rations, and additional food assistance is sporadic and temporarily. Food assistance was the number one priority listed by IDPs in Kerbala. Food can be provided as food baskets through emergency distributions. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially the nutritional needs of children and women.

Long-term food assistance could focus on providing agricultural production inputs, such as seeds, tools and fertilizers. This would need to be coordinated with the local authorities and the Ministry of Agriculture and should be provided to those IDPs who meet several requirements, such as access to suitable land and long-term intentions of residence.

Assisting the IDPs with transferring their PDS ration cards to their area of displacement in Kerbala could help them access the distributions, where they are available. Lobbying the various ministries in charge of transferring PDS ration cards and distributing the rations, such as MoDM and the Ministry of Trade, could also help these IDPs access the PDS.

Shelter: Many displaced persons throughout Iraq live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or face pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

The majority of IDPs in Kerbala rent space, but they report that they have difficulty meeting their rental expenses and the space is often inadequate. Agencies or the Iraqi government could provide grants so that IDPs can pay for their rent or find more permanent, adequate or less expensive shelter. Some IDPs suggested building small, low-rent homes. IDPs could assist with the construction of these homes, providing income-generating opportunities that would also help IDPs pay rent (see more employment suggestions below).

13% live in the house of a host family or relative, but as mentioned, families are increasingly unable to provide for both their families and the newly-displaced families. For those who are living with relatives and plan on staying long-term, an option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families. This could also help those 81 families who live in a tent near the house of a host family or relative.

For the 13% who live in public buildings and the 14% who live in collective towns, bringing services such as water, electricity, and proper sanitation facilities to these IDPs will improve their overall standard of living. Before such services are provided in public buildings, agencies will need to coordinate with the local government or any other entity who might try to reclaim them to ensure that they will allow the IDPs to stay in the buildings for the long-term.

IDPs also suggested paving roads to connect isolated IDP communities, sanitation projects to improve sewage systems, and water projects such as wells, pipelines, and water tanks, as appropriate.

Access to Work: IDPs throughout Iraq lack employment and income-generating activities. Displacement especially affects Iraqis' income sources, as they must leave behind their work, and finding work in their areas of displacement and sector of expedience is challenging. Monitors asked IDPs to share their suggestions for employment opportunities. IDPs recommended establishing small factories in Kerbala, such as clothing factories, that would provide employment, especially to females who are heads-of-households.

Another option is training IDPs in new areas of service or imparting new skills. This could include carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade. Feasibility and economic opportunity assessments would need to be conducted to find out what type of skills are in most demand in Kerbala. Another option is on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the individual for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete.

Projects in construction create work while simultaneously providing much-needed infrastructure development. IDPs recommended health facilities and school construction, as these are facing problems due to the large influx of new IDPs.

Also, as one of the holiest cities in Iraq, Kerbala city experiences some religious tourism, which provides employment and reconstruction. If stability can be attained, especially in Kerbala, this field could provide a growing number of economic opportunities for IDPs in Kerbala."

IOM, October – December 2005

"The IDPs in Kerbala communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Network maintenance
2. Promote awareness about environmental cleanness
3. Income generating programs

Priority Needs per sector:

Water:

1. Maintenance training
2. Network maintenance
3. Extension/ Rehabilitation of water network

Shortage of potable water is a concern, especially since most displaced have settled in areas with little services. Many communities have no source of potable water.

Sanitation:

1. Refuse sacks and sewage system
2. Hygiene campaign

Health:

1. Increase medical staff
2. Provision of drugs/ medicine
3. Promote the awareness of women towards hygiene

Doctors in Kerbala complain that they are confronted daily by numerous cases of IDP children suffering from intestinal and urinary tract infections from drinking polluted water, leading to malnutrition and even death. Doctors say they can give the children needed medication but these children return to unsanitary living. Most areas where the displaced are found lack health clinics,

and there is only one major hospital serving the entire governorate. There is also a shortage of medical equipment and supplies throughout the governorate.

Education:

1. Furniture for the school
2. Stationary for the school
3. Secondary school

Schools are often crowded or located great distances from the IDPs. Many IDP youth must leave school to work and help support the family. In addition, due to systematic looting and the destruction of public property, most schools lack plumbing, wiring, lighting, desks, windows, and doors.

Food:

1. Adding items on PDS Ration Card
2. Fresh food
3. Transfer of PDS Ration Card

According to the IDP monitors, the PDS system is the main source of food; however, it only reaches about 60% of the IDPs. Many IDPs sell their food ration to cover other costs. In addition, some IDPs have no ration cards to obtain their PDS ration.

Legal Assistance:

Legal/ Information center

Most displaced people are in need of legal help to obtain necessary documents, such as civil status cards, marriage contracts and ration cards. These documents help the displaced be recognized as citizens and enable them to receive government services.

Income Generation:

1. Sewing
2. Carpentry
3. Farming and handicraft making"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Najaf: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in Najaf have identified shelter, access to employment and food as their primary needs (November 2006)
- Primary needs in Najaf for displaced people include water and sanitation and vocational training (December 2005)

IOM, November 2006

"IDPs in Najaf listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) food. Shelter: Many displaced persons throughout Iraq live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or are facing pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

A large number of IDPs in Najaf live in collective towns, and these areas tend to lack basic services. Bringing services such as water, electricity, and proper sanitation facilities to these IDPs will improve their overall standard of living.

Since the majority of families live in rented homes, providing grants so that they can pay for their rent or finding more permanent or less expensive shelter would assist this population.

Those IDPs living in public buildings (24 families) suggested rehabilitating the buildings, especially the crucial services (water, electricity, sanitation, etc.) to make them more suitable for living. While this is a good suggestion on behalf of the IDPs, it is essential to ensure that the Iraqi government will allow the IDPs to stay in the buildings for the long-term, before permanent facilities are added.

For the 7% who are living with relatives and plan on staying long-term, an option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

IDPs also recommended building settlements of low-cost housing. This would need to be closely coordinated with the relevant Iraqi Ministries in regards to land tenure and legal implications so that no future problems would arise from the use of land and construction of homes.

Access to Work: IDPs throughout Iraq lack employment and income-generating activities, a problem experienced by all Iraqis. Displacement especially affects IDPs, as they must leave behind employment, and finding work in their areas of displacement and sector of expedience is challenging.

Several options exist to improve IDPs' access to employment. One is training IDPs in new areas of service or skills. This could include carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade. Feasibility and economic opportunity assessments would need to be conducted to find out what type of skills are in most demand in Najaf. In addition, vocational training, which can take time, is most appropriate for IDPs who wish to stay in Najaf. Another option is on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the IDP for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete.

Projects in construction create work while simultaneously providing much-needed infrastructure development. Micro-credit loans for small business start-up or purchasing land for agriculture are additional options.

Food: Since a very high percentage of IDPs in Najaf do not have access to the PDS rations upon which many families rely, access to food is a priority and should be addressed.

Food can be provided as food baskets through emergency distributions. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially the nutritional needs of children and women.

Long-term food assistance could focus on providing agricultural production inputs, such as seeds, tools and fertilizers. This would need to be coordinated with the local authorities and the Ministry of Agriculture and should be provided to those IDPs who meet several requirements, such as access to suitable land and long-term intentions of residence.

Assisting the IDPs with transferring their PDS ration cards to their area of displacement could help them access the distributions, where they are available. Lobbying the various ministries in charge of transferring PDS ration cards and distributing the rations, such as MoDM and the Ministry of Trade, could also help these IDPs access the PDS."

IOM, October – December 2005

"The IDPs in Najaf communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
2. Support vocational training
3. Legal place for permanent living

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water & Sanitation:

Water:

1. Awareness campaign
2. Rehabilitation of network
3. Compact unit

Sanitation:

1. Hygiene campaign
2. Garbage containers
3. Construction of latrines

Owing to the fact that the displaced are settling in isolated areas characterized by a shortage of services, they suffer from lack of or shortage of potable water. Some IDPs obtain water from rivers while in other locations they must purchase water.

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Rehabilitation of a Primary Health Center
3. Training midwives

There are numerous cases of IDP children suffering from gastroenteritis and urinary tract infections due to polluted drinking water. Many are also suffering from tuberculosis, skin infections and respiratory problems because they are living in unsanitary locations.

Education:

1. Furniture for the schools
2. Support adult literacy
3. Extension of school

Most displaced people, especially children, require better access to education. There are few suitable schools and some IDP children encounter difficulty studying in Arabic. Some children and adolescents leave school to work and support their families. Many women who have little education and desire to learn have no access to education.

Food:

1. Adding more items in the PDS Ration Card
2. Preserved food

The Public Distribution System food rations are the only source of food for about 70% of the IDPs in Najaf. Many of the PDS rations are missing items, forcing the IDPs to purchase these items, although their income generally does not cover these items. The IDPs generally rely on food assistance from the religious community and local and international organizations.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. Registering children at school

Most displaced people report that they are in need of legal assistance to obtain the necessary documents to obtain ration cards.

Income Generation:

1. Metal works
2. Sewing
3. Carpentry/Construction"

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

Babylon: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in Babylon listed shelter, access to work and food as their primary needs
- Main needs for displaced people in Babylon are shelter/housing, employment and water and sanitation (December 2005)

IOM, December 2006

"IDPs in Babylon listed their top three needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) food.

Shelter: The majority of IDPs in Babylon are renting housing, and high unemployment is making meeting rental costs difficult, and prices continue to rise. Local authorities could put a cap on the inflation of rental prices, as is done in some other governorates. Also, financial assistance that directly helps pay rent would be useful for this population.

13% of those interviewed live in collective towns or settlements and 6% live in public buildings. These structures often lack water, sanitation, and electrical services. Bringing services to these locations would greatly improve the IDPs' standard of living.

7% are living with family or friends in Babylon. For these families, expanding the host families' homes, building simple concrete block homes, or providing electricity and sanitation services would help both the hosting families and IDPs. This is a long-term solution and should therefore target IDPs who plan on staying in Babylon and must be coordinated with the relevant government ministries and local authorities.

Employment Opportunities: IDPs throughout Iraq lack employment or a source of income, a problem shared by many people throughout Iraq and frequently listed as the top priority need by IDPs. Displacement especially affects employment, as IDPs must leave behind jobs and income-generating opportunities. Finding work in their areas of displacement and sector of experience is challenging.

IDPs in Babylon provided monitors with numerous options for income-generating activities. One suggestion was infrastructure development, such as low-cost houses, paving roads, water system installation, construction or rehabilitation of health centers, etc. Projects in construction create work while simultaneously providing much-needed infrastructure development for IDPs and the host community.

IDPs suggested micro-credit loans to help them establish a small business. These loans could have little or no interest, making the repayment less burdensome. Skills training for IDPs or on-the-job training are additional options, and would need to target the IDPs' interests and the market demands.

Food: Food distributions to the most vulnerable can help alleviate their food deficit. Food should target the IDPs' needs, especially those nutritional needs of children and women, and should complement and not duplicate what has been provided by other entities. Food needs assessments should be conducted to identify the most vulnerable beneficiaries and IDPs' specific food requirements.

If any families have access to arable land, providing agriculture materials (food, tools and equipment) can increase the food production for both the IDPs and host families. Projects and assistance that targets both IDPs and host communities will facilitate acceptance of the newly-arrived and provide assistance to all vulnerable populations."

IOM, October - December 2005

"The IDPs in Babylon communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Improve shelter/housing
2. Provide opportunities of employment
3. Extension/Rehabilitation of water network

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water & Sanitation:

Water:

1. Extension/Rehabilitation of water network
2. Compact unit
3. Training community on maintenance

Sanitation:

1. Construction of latrines
2. Garbage containers
3. Hygiene campaign

In the IDP locations, the water supply is considered the main problem due to a lack of basic services, including water networks. The families must bring water from long distances and which lack minimal standards for safely carrying and storing the water. This is best seen in Al Mahawil and Al Mahmoudiya districts where the families must bring water from long distances.

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Increase the number of medical staff
3. Rehabilitation of the health center

Access to the health facilities is a primary concern the IDPs residing in the center of the governorate. However, for those who live in rural areas, there is a lack of hospitals and public health clinics. Those that do exist lack medicine, medical equipment and staff.

Education:

1. Rehabilitation of school
2. Increase number of teachers for the school
3. School furniture (desks, chairs, etc.)

Lack of access to education is not a concern for most IDPs in Babylon.

Food:

1. Adding items in PDS Ration
2. Fresh food
3. Assistance with transfer of the PDS Ration Card

In general, the IDP families in Babylon have access to food either from the monthly Public Distribution System food ration or through the market. However, many food items are missing in the monthly ration, which in turn increases the families' hardships.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/Information center
2. Assistance with filing claims with the Iraq Property Claims Commission - IPCC
3. Assistance registering children

Type of Information needs:

1. General public services

2. Employment opportunities
3. Increased security

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry/Construction
2. Sewing
3. Metal works"

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Qadissiya: IDP needs (2007)

- The most urgent needs identified by displaced people in the province are shelter and employment opportunities (November 2006)
- Priority needs among displaced people in Qadissiya are housing, jobs and non food items (December 2005)

IOM, November 2006

"By far the IDPs' most urgent needs in Qadissiya are shelter and access to employment. Shelter: Many displaced persons throughout Iraq live in inadequate shelter, cannot meet their monthly rental expenses, or face pressure and tension due to overcrowded conditions with family or friends.

A very high percentage of IDPs in Qadissiya live in public buildings, and these areas tend to lack basic services. Bringing services such as water, electricity, and proper sanitation facilities to these IDPs will improve their overall standard of living. Before such services are provided, agencies will need to coordinate with the local government or any other entity who might try to reclaim the building to ensure that they will allow the IDPs to stay in the buildings for the longterm.

IDPs in Hathaeb village in Al-Bdeer suggested providing a sewage system and paving the roads, which would improve the living conditions in this town.

Many IDPs who are renting do not have access to income or live in poor conditions, so providing grants so that they can pay for their rent or find more permanent, adequate or less expensive shelter would assist this population. Some IDPs suggested building small, low-rent homes. For those who are living with relatives and plan on staying long-term, an option for intervention is to expand host communities' homes, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Access to Work: IDPs throughout Iraq lack employment and income-generating activities, a problem experienced by all Iraqis. Displacement especially affects Iraqis' income sources, as they must leave behind employment, and finding work in their areas of displacement and sector of expedience is challenging.

IDPs in Qadissiya voiced numerous suggestions for employment opportunities. IDPs in the Shanafiya sub-district of Al-Hamza suggested building a chicken butchery or a farm for egg production, as many have experience in this field and there is suitable land to build such a factory. IDPs in Shamiya suggested building a furniture factory to hire local IDPs.

Another option is training IDPs in new areas of service or imparting new skills. This could include carpentry, masonry, metalwork, tailoring and the auto mechanic trade. Feasibility and economic opportunity assessments would need to be conducted to find out what type of skills are in most demand in Qadissiya. In addition, vocational training, which can take time, is most appropriate for

IDPs who wish to stay in Qadissiya. Another option is on-the-job training, where employees are paid to train the individual for a certain amount of time and then agree to hire him or her after the training is complete.

Projects in construction create work while simultaneously providing much-needed infrastructure development. Micro-credit loans for small business start-up or purchasing land for agriculture are additional options.

In addition to shelter and employment, IDPs requested non-food item distributions. Specifically, IDPs need furniture, mattresses, electrical equipment, and clothes. A much smaller number requested assistance with services such as legal help, education, water and food."

IOM, October-December 2005

"The IDPs in Qadissiyyah communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Housing
2. Jobs
3. Non-Food Items

As most of the IDPs settled two or more years ago and do not foresee leaving in the near future, they are looking for durable solutions for their families, such as schools, playgrounds, and workshops for females to learn hand crafts. Another priority is income generation, especially for youth to prevent their search of other economic means, such as looting or joining the insurgency.

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water:

1. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
2. Building water station
3. Maintenance training

The majority of people would like to see rehabilitation of water networks, reinstallation of new networks, and purification systems and tanks.

Sanitation:

1. Construction of latrines
2. Sewage network
3. Hygiene campaign

Garbage collection campaigns, garbage containers, and latrines are also priorities.

Health:

1. Provision of drugs/medicine
2. Construction of hospital/clinic
3. Primary health clinic

Most IDPs requested an increase in the quality and quantity of medication and health services.

The villages with no primary healthcare clinic asked for this.

Education:

1. Construction of schools
2. Increase the number of teachers

IDPs requested more teaching staff. They also explained that children are not attending school because they need to work to support the family or because they could not cover school costs.

Food:

1. Adding items in PDS Ration Card
2. Providing money along with PDS Ration Card
3. Providing money instead of PDS Ration Cards

The primary concern was with the Public Distribution System and a lack of items. They also requested the availability of fresh food.

Legal Assistance:

1. Registering children at schools
2. IDPs requested assistance with obtaining legal documents.

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry/Construction
2. Sewing
3. Driving

Since the majority of IDPs rely on agriculture for income generation, they also requested training in metal works and mechanics, especially training for youth."

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Wassit: IDP needs (2007)

- Displaced people in Wassit province identify shelter, access to work and food as their primary needs (November 2006)

IOM, November 2006

"IDPs in Wassit most commonly listed their priority needs as 1) shelter, 2) access to work, and 3) food.

Shelter: As mentioned above, IDPs in Wassit generally live in inadequate shelter. Those in the camp, public buildings, and collective settlements do not have access to basic services, such as electricity, water, and sanitation facilities. The housing is not properly insulated and is extremely hot in summer and cold in winter. Families who live with relatives or friends only see it as a temporary solution.

For IDPs living in public buildings or collective towns, providing services such as water pipes or water trucking, electricity or benzene, and proper sanitation facilities to these IDPs will improve their overall standard of living. This must be closely coordinated with the proper local authorities. The majority live in rented homes, so providing funds to cover the rent or locating less expensive shelter would assist this population. If the IDPs plan to stay in Wassit, identifying more permanent housing is another alternative.

For the 33% who are living with relatives and plan on staying long-term, an option for intervention is to expand host family's homes, since this is a more cost-effective measure than building completely new homes, and this method will support both IDPs and host families.

Access to Work: IDPs throughout Iraq lack employment and income-generating activities, a problem experienced by all Iraqis. Displacement especially affects IDPs' income, as they must leave behind employment, and finding work in their areas of displacement and sector of expedience is challenging. As more and more IDPs arrive in Wassit, there is greater competition for work.

IDPs were concerned about the lack of activities for youth and the potential for them to become involved in the conflict and violence. Therefore, they suggested trainings for youth. Training in employable areas allows the IDPs to be more competitive for work and expands their employment options. They also suggested establishing production factories to employ youth. IDPs had numerous additional suggestions for employment options. One was infrastructure development, such as installing water piping, providing waste facilities, building health clinics, construction of primary schools and expansion of existing schools, paving of roads, and filling swamps and lakes to construct recreational sites or playgrounds for children. All of these construction and infrastructure development projects would create jobs upon implementation. In addition, once constructed, facilities such as health clinics and schools would require staffing, further providing employment options.

Micro-credit loans were also recommended. These could be provided for small business start-up or purchasing land for agriculture.

Food: Due to the high number of IDPs who do not have regular access to PDS rations and the low amount of food assistance available, the majority of IDPs placed food as their second-highest priority.

Humanitarian organizations should assess the specific food needs of IDPs in Wassit and, based on these assessments, provide food emergency distributions. Food should target the most vulnerable IDPs. As powdered milk and appropriate food for women and children were requested, their special nutritional needs should be taken into consideration.

Some IDPs will have access to PDS food rations if they transfer their PDS ration cards to their area of displacement, so assistance can facilitate this. Lobbying the various ministries in charge of transferring PDS ration cards and distributing the rations, such as MoDM and the Ministry of Trade, could also help these IDPs access the PDS.

Some IDPs might have access to agricultural land, so long-term food assistance could focus on providing agricultural production inputs, such as seeds, tools and fertilizers, to these IDPs. Providing land to cultivate produce is an option, although it would need to be lead by or closely coordinate with the local authorities and the Ministry of Agriculture. This long-term solution should be provided to those IDPs who do not intend to return home or move to a third location. In addition to the top three priority needs, IDPs in Qadissiya mentioned that they would like legal assistance to help them better understand their rights regarding their property in their place of origin, especially where it was confiscated by another citizen or by insurgents."

[Click here for further information, see IOM's assessments and monitoring reports by province](#)

General

General: Overall Subsistence Needs

- The majority of IDPs report their priority needs are shelter, food and employment. Such needs were identified as priorities in 2007 and continue to be reported as priority areas in 2008. (IOM, September 2008; IDP Working Group, June 2008)
- Conflict since 2003 has resulted in reduction in the standard of living of all Iraqis (2003) Comprehensive survey on living conditions in Iraq undertaken by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation in collaboration with the UNDP revealed grave deterioration in living standards in the country over the past 25 years with Iraq (UNDP, 12 May 2005)

- Recent Food Security analysis however has shown an amelioration of the situation.
- Conditions facing the “internally stuck”, those who have opted to stay in their homes or are unable to move and are therefore mostly hidden from view, are perhaps much more worrisome as access to essential needs

Emergency Needs Assessment Displacement in Iraq: Monthly Report, September, International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

"Information below is based on in-depth assessments of 189,788 families (estimated 1,138,728 individuals) displaced throughout Iraq since 22 February 2006. (Please note that this figure represents the total number that IOM monitors have assessed, not the total number of displaced in Iraq since 22 February 2006.)"

IDP Working Group Internal ly Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (June 2008), IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"An Overview of Priority Needs stated by surveyed IDP Population The majority of IDPs report their priority needs are shelter, food and employment:

Access to education is reported as a priority more frequently in the three northern governorates while employment and access to work are more frequently reported in the southern governorates, while legal help and food was more frequently reported in the central governorates:"

UNDP, 12 May 2005:

"A comprehensive survey on living conditions in Iraq released here today by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme reveals grave deterioration in living standards in the country over the past 25 years, with Iraq now suffering from some of the region's highest rates of joblessness and child malnutrition and continuing severe deficiencies in sewage systems, electric power supplies and other essential public services. The survey, conducted from a representative sampling of 22,000 households in 2004, provides one of the largest and most comprehensive statistical portraits of the country in recent years. The survey [...] found that:

- Unemployment among young men with secondary or higher education stands at 37 percent
- Even though most Iraqis are now connected to water, electricity or sewage networks, supplies remain unstable and unreliable
- Almost a quarter of children between the ages of six months and five years suffer from malnutrition
- More young people today are illiterate than in previous generations
- Just 83 percent of boys and 79 percent of girls of school age are enrolled in primary school.

'This survey shows a rather tragic situation of the quality of life in Iraq,' Iraqi Minister of Planning Barham Salih said at the news conference where the report was released in Baghdad today. Also speaking at the launch of the survey, Staffan de Mistura, the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative in Iraq, said the study would serve as an important tool for policy makers, development planners and experts. 'It not only provides a better understanding of socio-economic conditions in Iraq,' he said, 'but it will certainly benefit the development and reconstruction processes in Iraq. The survey will help us address the grave disparities, between urban and rural and between governorates, in a more targeted fashion.'"

Capacity and resources of host communities to support displaced people is limited (2007-2008)

- In general displaced people have been well received by host communities. However the lack of infrastructure and resources has raised potential tensions between IDPs and host communities. (IOM, 2 February 2007)
- Tense relations between the host community and the displaced population were indicated in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf and Ninewa (UNHCR, September 2008)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), September 2008:

"Tense relations between the host community and the displaced population were indicated in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf and Ninewa, mostly due to overburdened services, house/land disputes and rising prices and, to a lesser degree, the (perceived) behaviour of the group and employment. "

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Despite instability throughout the country, the majority of the displaced reported that they were well received by their host communities. In general, IDPs moved from religiously and ethnically mixed to more homogenous communities, so the host community often had the same cultural background as the IDPs, and good relations were maintained. However, at the end of 2006, monitors reported increased tension between host communities and the displaced. Local authorities in Kerbala, for example, decided to close the governorate's borders to all IDPs except those who were originally from Kerbala, and even most of these were restricted from entering. Najaf also reportedly restricted settlement in Najaf city. These restrictions were attributed to a strain on the health sector, overcrowding of schools, and a lack of infrastructure to accommodate the influx of IDPs.

In some governorates, the recently-displaced were blamed for an increase in violence. Local authorities in many governorates required security checks for any Iraqi who arrived and registered with MoDM, IRCS, or other entities."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"Implications of this situation are far-reaching. An increasing number of children are unable to attend school, particularly in the Baghdad area. Brain drain continues, as professionals and skilled workers leave the country. Unemployment and inflation rates are escalating. The standard of living of all Iraqis has fallen, despite ongoing initiatives to reconstruct infrastructure and capacities to deliver basic services such as electricity, health, drinking water and sanitation. Food security is tenuous, with more than a third of the population dependent on a rapidly deteriorating food ration distribution system (public distribution system). The impact of this situation on children in particular is leading to increased chronic and acute malnutrition rates, school dropout rates and truancy rates. Access to health services is weakening, as insecurity jeopardizes efforts to maintain even the most basic services."

Food

General: Food Security for Iraqis, displaced or not, 2003-2008

- The last large scale assessment of food security and vulnerability took place immediately before the sharp increase in conflict precipitated by the Samarra bombing in 2006. Trends

from 2003 to 2007 indicated that food insecurity in Iraq was rising leading to high dependence on the Public distribution system.

- Recent food security analysis reports that food insecurity is declining.
- In 2006, WFP reported that just over four million people (15.4 percent of the surveyed population) are food insecure. The current also indicates that a further 8.3 million people (31.8 percent of the surveyed population) would be rendered food insecure if they were not provided with a PDS ration.
- The joint UN-government survey suggests that one in ten children is suffering from malnutrition. Pre-2007 figures indicate that approximately one quarter of Iraqi children are stunted (a consequence of long-term under-nourishment).
- In 2005, the UN 60th Human Rights Commission, Special Rapporteur on food, Ziegler reported that increasing numbers of Iraqi children do not have enough food to eat and more than a quarter are chronically undernourished (BBC, 30 March 2005)
- IDPs have also been recognised as particularly vulnerable to food insecurity, as they are often unable to access their food rations through the PDS. A rapid assessment conducted in April by the Interagency Food Sub-Group showed that 47% of IDPs were unable to access the PDS food ration in their place of displacement. (OCHA, February 2008) A further assessment by IOM in 2007 indicated that only 22% of IDPs had regular access to PDS.
- Continued shortages in PDS commodities have been witnessed across Iraq. This situation, combined with the steady rise in market prices, is expected to have a negative impact on the overall food security of those families who are fully reliant on the PDS. (OCHA, 8 July 2008)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 12 February 2008:

"The last large scale assessment of food security and vulnerability took place immediately before the sharp increase in conflict precipitated by the Samarra bombing in 2006. At that time, it was assessed that over 15% of the Iraqi population is food-insecure and a further 32% would be rendered food-insecure if the Iraqi Government PDS were disrupted. Trends since 2003 indicate that food insecurity in Iraq is rising. Reports⁴⁶ have identified chronic factors such as weak infrastructure, inadequate labour market capacity and poor education levels as root causes of food insecurity in Iraq, leading to high dependence on the PDS.

These chronic factors are now being greatly exacerbated by conflict, undermining both local markets and food distribution. Shortfalls and disruptions in the distribution of PDS commodities (wheat, rice, sugar, tea, vegetable oil, pulses, adult milk and weaning cereals) are increasing due to insecurity which affects supply lines and undermines the reliability of local PDS management. In July 2005, an estimated 55% of households indicated that they had not received rice in their PDS ration of May and 41% did not receive rice in April⁴⁷. The situation has certainly worsened since then. Shortfalls impact disproportionately and dramatically on poorer households who have a higher dependence on the PDS. Existing data shows that food insecurity has contributed to a rise in malnutrition rates since 2003. Pre-2007 figures indicate that approximately one quarter of Iraqi children are stunted (a consequence of long-term under-nourishment). Between eight to 16% are underweight and up to 9% are wasted, compared to 4.4% in 2003⁴⁸. This indicates that acute malnutrition is growing at an alarming rate, with the highest prevalence occurring in young children.

Stunting rates above the national average have been identified in Basrah, Diyala, Najaf, Qadissia, Salah Al Din and Wassit governorates. Wasting rates above the national average have been identified in Basrah, Muthanna, Najaf, Qadissia, Kirkuk, Thiqr, Wassit, Salah al-Din and Ninewa.

Also, it was found that there were alarming rates of stunting, underweight and wasting among children under five (stunting peaked at 34%) of children in the extremely poor districts. Malnutrition is

significantly higher among children living with “food-insecure” families compared to those living with “food secure” families. A sizable proportion of the Iraqi food-insecure population lives in low-income households in rural areas characterised by poor or borderline dietary diversity. Heads of households are either unemployed or are engaged in part-time agricultural activities either as marginal farmers (25%), non-skilled labourers (15%) or agricultural wage earners (5%). IDPs have also been recognised as particularly vulnerable to food insecurity, as they are often unable to access their food rations through the PDS. A rapid assessment conducted in April by the Interagency Food Sub-Group showed that 47% of IDPs were unable to access the PDS food ration in their place of displacement⁴⁹. A further assessment by IOM in 2007 indicated that only 22% of IDPs had regular access to PDS⁵⁰.

Simultaneously, as the security situation slightly improves in some areas and IDPs and refugees are starting to return home, many of them find it impossible to return to their original home or community and end up in secondary displacement, thereby increasing their vulnerability. Refugee populations are also one of the most vulnerable groups in Iraq⁵¹. Emergency assistance is an important stop-gap measure to address the immediate food needs of the food-insecure population and reduce the prevalence of malnutrition particularly in children, women and IDPs. Addressing the root causes of food insecurity, however, requires sustained investment in the Iraqi infrastructure, labour market and education that cannot be fully tackled within the framework of this CAP, but require urgent attention and investments. This response strategy prioritises the provision of emergency assistance to the most food-insecure populations. It does not intend to replace the PDS, but rather, act as a stop-gap measure to help meet the immediate food needs of the most affected population before the government can fulfil its responsibility of ensuring the food security of its entire population. WFP is concurrently planning a training programme with the Ministry of Trade to support the Government’s implementation of the PDS. In order to accurately identify the current food needs, WFP, in partnership with the Government of Iraq and the KRG, has started a follow-up survey. The results will be launched in April/May 2008, which is expected to further clarify needs and improve the targeting of a response.”

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 9 July 2008:

“Iraq is highly dependent on food imports and is therefore vulnerable to increases in international food and fuel prices. The blanket distribution of food items to the Iraqi population through the Public

Distribution System (PDS) to a certain extent buffers the Iraqi population from food price increases when considering dietary energy requirements, but is not adequate for all micronutrient requirements. Moreover, food and transport price increases have a significant implication on the budget of the Government of Iraq, specifically the budget allocation to PDS. Many poor families, or around 12 million individuals, rely heavily on Iraq’s PDS⁵. Without the PDS, the nutritional welfare of the bulk of the population would be compromised. Continued shortages in PDS commodities have been witnessed across Iraq. This situation, combined with the steady rise in market prices, is expected to have a negative impact on the overall food security of those families who are fully reliant on the PDS. Indeed, as a result of rising food prices, the Ministry of Trade (MoT) requested a budget of \$7.3 billion to cover the PDS costs for 2008 – representing an increase of over 200% from the 2007 budget, which stood at \$3.2 billion. However, despite the request of the MoT, the Government of Iraq allocated only \$3.6 billion (8.6%) of the 2008 annual national budget for PDS. Continued increase in market prices for food will certainly affect the government plan to provide PDS commodities regularly.

WFP’s project under the Iraq CAP was originally budgeted at \$87.5 million. With rising food, fuel and

other costs, \$91.4 million is now required to supply the targeted 750,000 beneficiaries with the planned 69,750 MTs of food. As prices are expected to continue rising, this budget may have to be revised again before the end of 2008. As soaring food prices promise farmers greater financial returns for agricultural produce, Iraq experienced heightened agricultural activity as many small-

scale farmers ventured to expand their cultivation. However, severe drought conditions and inopportune timing of rainfall has negatively affected agricultural production. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that Iraqi wheat and barley production will drop by a minimum of 35% and 55%, respectively. As a consequence, it is expected that a significant proportion of Iraqi small-scale farmers, especially in northern Iraq, are at risk of losing their livelihoods. WFP food distribution to IDPs in Qalawa camp in Sulaymaniyah, February 2008. The emergency food operation targets up to 750,000 vulnerable IDPs inside Iraq who cannot access their food rations through the PDS. WFP/GoI, Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis in Iraq (2006)."

WFP, 11 May 2006:

In general, the food insecure in Iraq can be found in those families with low incomes living in rural areas (69 percent of the food insecure in Iraq) who have poor or borderline dietary diversity. The heads of such food insecure households in Iraq are either unemployed (26 percent) or parttime workers engaged in agriculture either as marginal farmers (25 percent), non-skilled labourers (15 percent) or agricultural wage earners (5 percent). Women constitute a low percentage (14 percent) of those employed within the 16 to 60 years old age group. Children are also major victims of food insecurity. The chronic malnutrition rate of children in food insecure households was estimated as 33 percent. Chronic malnutrition affects the youngest children aged 12 months to 23 months most severely. Acute malnutrition in Iraq is also alarming with 9 percent of Iraqi children being acutely malnourished. The highest rate (13 percent) of wasting was found in children aged 6 to <12 months old followed by 12 percent for those aged 12 months to 23 months.

Why are they food insecure?

Decades of conflict and economic sanctions have had serious effects on Iraqis. Their consequences have been rising unemployment, illiteracy and, for some families, the loss of wageearners. Iraq's food insecurity is not simply due to a lack of production of sufficient food at the national level, but also a failure of livelihoods to guarantee access to sufficient food at the household level. The results of this study suggest that food insecurity in Iraq is a result of many chronic factors and their complicated interactions, amongst which are the following:

Weak infrastructure: as a result of conflict, which has destroyed much of Iraq's infrastructure in many sectors. Water and sanitation in particular continue to undermine the community's ability to recover. An estimated 22 percent in extremely poor districts are dependant on water tankers and vehicles as a main source of drinking water compared to 4 percent in the better-off districts. In addition 18 percent depend on streams, rivers and lakes for their water supplies in the poorer areas compared to 8 percent in the better-off districts.

Unemployment: is a major problem in Iraq. Human capital and skills of the poor are very low and there are serious problems for the poor to enter into the current labour market where prevailing security conditions do not necessarily make it an attractive proposition. Job creation is key to reducing vulnerability to food insecurity in Iraq. Private and public sector job creation activities could serve the dual purpose of improving infrastructure and transferring cash to Iraq's poorest households.

Education: The educational levels of a population have an impact on accessibility to food. The more educated generally have greater ability to cope with a variety of difficult situations, and are likely to have a higher probability of finding employment.

It is clear that the Public Distribution System (PDS) is still a major indicator in stabilizing food security in Iraq where 15 percent of the total population are living in extreme poverty and spending less than US\$0.50 per day. The value of the food commodities in the PDS ration when the data was collected in July 2005 equalled US\$15, a threefold increase on the market price that existed during the previous survey in 2003. For the poor and food insecure population, the PDS

ration represents by far the single most important food source in the diet. Social protection mechanisms targeting these groups should be carefully considered. Monitoring of market prices also enhances the policymaker's capacity to take timely, remedial actions that would reduce the potential risks of price-related shocks.

How many are food insecure?

The survey found that just over four million people (15.4 percent of the surveyed population) are food insecure and in dire need of different types of humanitarian assistance including food despite the PDS rations they are receiving. This is an increase from the estimated 11 percent which were found to be 'extremely poor' in WFP's 2003 Baseline Survey.

The current survey also indicates that a further 8.3 million people (31.8 percent of the surveyed population) would be rendered food insecure if they were not provided with a PDS ration. Thus, if the PDS is discontinued without a careful assessment of the needs of the population, an estimated 47 percent of the total population will face real difficulties in ensuring their food security."

See the full report, "Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis"

See also "Baseline Food Security Analysis in Iraq", WFP, September 2004

BBC, 30 March 2005:

"Increasing numbers of children in Iraq do not have enough food to eat and more than a quarter are chronically undernourished, a UN report says. Malnutrition rates in children under five have almost doubled since the US-led invasion - to nearly 8% by the end of last year, it says. The report was prepared for the annual meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva. [...] Jean Ziegler, a UN specialist on hunger who prepared the report, blamed the worsening situation in Iraq on the war led by coalition forces. He was addressing a meeting of the 53-nation commission, the top UN rights watchdog, which is halfway through its annual six-week session. When Saddam Hussein was overthrown, about 4% of Iraqi children under five were going hungry; now that figure has almost doubled to 8%, his report says. [...] That point is aimed clearly at the US, but Washington, which has sent a large delegation to the Human Rights Commission, declined to respond to the charges, says the BBC's Imogen Foulkes in Geneva."

UNDP, 12 May 2005:

"Malnutrition may be the result of too few calories, lack of particular elements in the food, or inadequate uptake by the body, for instance, during diarrhea. The indicator of malnutrition chosen to monitor the first MDG is underweight-for-age ('general malnutrition'). Preferably, however, to be able to interpret the combination of acute and chronic malnutrition, the height-for-age ('stunting'), and weight-for-height ('wasting') is also monitored. While 'stunting' reflects chronic malnutrition and shows little seasonal variance, 'wasting' is a measure of acute malnutrition and has large seasonal variance.

-12% of the Iraqi children in the age group 6 months – 5 years suffer from general malnutrition.

-8% of children suffer from acute malnutrition.

-23% of children suffer from chronic malnutrition.

-Acute malnutrition in the South reaches 9%, compared to 4% in the North.

-Chronic malnutrition mostly occurs in the Centre, where it reaches 26%, where 9% also suffer from stunting.

-The highest occurrence of acute stunting was in Erbil and Dahouk, where it reached 13%

-The levels of acute malnutrition are the same across the five quintile income groups, whereas general and chronic malnutrition is more prevalent among the poor.

-Levels of chronic and general malnutrition are found to be much more closely related to the caretaker's levels of education than to family income. Stunting was found to decrease to 17% for children whose caretakers have attained secondary or higher education, where general malnutrition also goes down to 8%. However, the situation is different with acute malnutrition, where no relation was found to the educational level of the children's caretakers."

See also (in sources, below):

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

IRIN, 4 January 2005

IRIN, 30 November 2004

Security measures affect distribution of food by slowing down delivery to Iraqis, see for example, "Food supplies affected by security checks at Syrian border", IRIN, 7 March 2005

For specific information on the needs related to the Marsh people, see, "UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UN OHCI), 30 June 2003, United Nations Inter-Agency Assessment of Vulnerable Groups Part I: Marsh Arabs"

Limited Access to Food for Internally Displaced (2004-2008)

- Most IDPs, like other Iraqis, rely on the food distribution system to obtain food. The Public Distribution System (PDS) was set up in the mid 1990s and up to 40 per cent of Iraqis are estimated to be highly dependent on food rations
- Much of the Iraqi population depends upon the government's PDS food rations, but there is a widespread lack of access to these distributions due to insecurity, political manipulations, limited resources, and logistical difficulties. (IOM, January 2008)
- IDP families who do receive their PDS rations find that they are insufficient, late, and missing key items. Displaced people face problems in accessing food rations in their place of displacement due to difficulties in transferring ration card and or registration. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- Most families receive food rations only intermittently or not at all: 49% of assessed IDPs sometimes receive their PDS rations, while 21% report no access. (IOM, 30 June 2008) In 2006, 32% reported no access to PDS food rations
- Insecurity of transportation routes and trouble transferring the necessary documents for PDS registration in places of displacement are the most commonly cited reasons for non-delivery. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Of those who did receive food assistance, 41% of IDPs have received food assistance from other sources, mostly humanitarian organization or religious charities.
- 97% of assessed returnees reported having a current PDS card. 38% of returnees reported regular access to PDS rations, 59% said they have intermittent access, and 3% said they have no access at all. (IOM, August 2008)

IOM, 30 June 2008

IDP families who do receive their PDS rations find that they are insufficient, late, and missing key items. Many IDPs complain that the transferring of PDS ration cards to the location of displacement continues to be difficult because of lacking or lost documents and a slow bureaucratic process. Only 29% of assessed IDPs reported consistent access to PDS rations. Most families receive food rations only intermittently or not at all: 49% of assessed IDPs sometimes receive their PDS rations, while 21% report no access. Insecurity of transportation routes and trouble transferring the necessary documents for PDS registration in places of

displacement are the most commonly cited reasons for non-delivery. 41% of IDPs have received food assistance from other sources, mostly humanitarian organization or religious charities.

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008

There is a need for emergency food distributions to vulnerable IDPs and host communities unable to access PDS rations. Access to food is also hindered by a lack of familial income and a lack of security. This lack of security impedes access to markets in some areas of the country and makes these markets dangerous for both suppliers and customers. Road and neighbourhood closures, checkpoints, curfews, and military attacks also hinder access to markets. The majority consider food rations through the PDS as a main source of food; however, reliance on food rations varies among them due to the following reasons:

1. Not all families have a PDS card, either due to delays in transferring rations cards or because they are not eligible to register where they have settled.
2. Food rations are insufficient, incomplete and received irregularly for almost half of the caseloads.

IOM, 11 January 2008

Much of the Iraqi population depends upon the government's PDS food rations, but there is a widespread lack of access to these distributions due to insecurity, political manipulations, limited resources, and logistical difficulties. The situation is especially dire among the displaced: of all IDPs assessed by IOM, only 22% said that they had regular access to PDS food rations. Another 22% said that they had no access at all, while the remaining 56% said they could access rations sometimes. Non-access to PDS rations was worst in Dahuk (91%), Sulaymaniyah (88%), Basrah (61%), Erbil (55%), Kirkuk (42%), and Babylon (42%). The most frequently cited reasons for non-access were insecurity along food transportation routes and delay in the transfer of PDS registration. Only 29% of IDPs assessed by IOM said that they had received food assistance from a source other than the PDS. Nearly all of this was provided by humanitarian organizations or religious charities. In some cases, IDPs reported receiving food assistance from armed groups.

IOM, August 2008

97% of assessed returnees reported having a current PDS card. 38% of returnees reported regular access to PDS rations, 59% said they have intermittent access, and 3% said they have no access at all. Access to PDS rations is especially infrequent in Diyala, Ninewa and Anbar, with more than 90% of returnees in each governorate reporting irregular access to rations. 32% of assessed families reported that they had registered and received the Government of Iraq's financial grant for returnees. Of the total assessed, another 68% said that they had registered for the grant but had not yet received it. The remaining 46% had not registered for the grant. Nearly all families who actually received the grant are in Baghdad, Babylon and Anbar. Families throughout Baghdad have suffered shortages and delayed deliveries of PDS rations and materials. This is especially detrimental to low-income families, who rely food items such as rice, flour, tomato paste, legumes and oil provided by the PDS packs. In addition, deliveries are frequently delayed for more than two months. Rations in Al Wardiya, Baghdad have been delayed some six months. Many families have complained of receiving compromised PDS ration packs that are missing food items. Some report only having received tea, sugar and flour. Al Saheroon and Al A'aboss neighbourhoods have not received rations since their return, as the area is too dangerous to effectively distribute food. Albo-Aitha has not received flour for several months, and now returnees are reporting that drivers are refusing to bring PDS rations into the area due to security concerns. Returnees must walk 9km in order to receive rations. During military operations in Sadr City in early summer, returnees reported not receiving PDS rations for more than three months, despite the GoI announcing that it would double rations throughout military operations. In Hameedat Village, returnee families have not received any form of support and are urgently in need of food assistance.

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MoDM, July 2008

7. Meeting the Needs of IDPs and Returnees¹¹

The needs of IDPs and returnees should be addressed based on the international "Sphere" standards¹² that emphasize the need to meet the basic needs of life according to the minimum level of assistance that the Government or civil society actors can offer to Iraqis who are displaced inside or outside Iraq. These basic needs include the following: food, shelter, potable water, sanitation, health care and education. What follows is a description of the nature of the needs of Iraqi IDPs:

7.1 Food

Given the nature of displacement and the adverse impact on the IDPs' economic conditions in terms of having to leave work, becoming unemployed and losing the monthly income, people's diets are disrupted and important nutritional sources are lost. Likewise, even the food ration system (PDS) that guarantees every person a specific ration becomes almost absent as a monthly source of food due to displacement. Activating the food ration card system (PDS card) for IDPs faces many obstacles; losing the card itself and difficulty in accessing areas where eligible PDS beneficiaries are staying due to violence and deterioration of the security situation as well as fear of being endangered if IDPs return to their places of origin. Many IDPs who moved from one governorate to another were not able to transfer their PDS food ration card registration to their new areas of displacement. Administrative requirements such as having to return to one's place of origin to obtain required documentation make it difficult for IDPs to return and transfer the registration of their cards knowing that they originally had to leave the area due to security conditions. The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning food outlined above:

- Work towards providing the necessary facilitation needed to transfer the PDS food ration card from one governorate to another and upon return.
- Coordinate the work of MoDM and the Ministry of Trade to ensure that IDPs receive their PDS rations in their places of displacement.
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to provide adequate funding to meet key food items and other needs.
- Have government actors or bodies establish official relief centers that provide specific and regular food rations.
- The Government to take feasible measures to ensure delivering such services in a timely fashion and through secure means by facilitating free exchange of products.
- Coordination between government bodies and humanitarian agencies capable of distributing food items as a stop-gap measure to displaced persons before they are enrolled in the PDS in their place of displacement.

UNAMI, 16 January 2007

"One of the primary concerns for IDPs, beside that of access to sanitation and shelter, is food. The food distribution system seems to have deteriorated due to the security situation, especially

in Al Anbar, causing many displaced persons to receive either only a portion of the food rations or not receive any rations at all.”

IMC, January 2007

“Prior to June 2006, when the MoT changed its policy, IDPs fleeing their homes for other governorates were not allowed to claim food rations in their new locations. Thus, dependent on religious groups and on the generosity of host families often poor themselves, many IDP families had inadequate access to food. Their lack of money made it difficult, if not impossible, to supplement rations with goods from the prohibitively expensive open market, where inflation, transport difficulties, and power outages at food storage facilities have sharply driven up the price of food over the course of the conflict. Already suffering a food shortage due to the inadequate and irregular government rations, strained host populations as well as IDPs have run through their meager stores of food, and resource-sharing is becoming more difficult.”

IOM, 2 February 2007

“Food was one of the top priority needs identified by many displaced throughout Iraq in 2006. Accessing the Public Distribution System (PDS) was hampered because documents must be transferred or renewed, and PDS rations were not always available. Lack of income prevented families from meeting their nutritional requirements. In addition, humanitarian organizations sometimes could not access highly instable areas, where the displaced needed food most. For years, people throughout Iraq have relied on the PDS to supplement their daily food intake. It is estimated that between 25% and 40% of Iraqis are highly dependent upon PDS rations. The Ministry of Trade manages transportation and warehousing of food items, but lack of items, insecure transportation routes, and a lack of documentation prevent access to food rations. Of those interviewed in 2006, 32% reported no access to PDS food rations. Anbar (76%), Najaf (72%), and Thi-Qar (60%) had the highest percentage of displaced without access. Fifty-one percent reported receiving food rations sometimes and only 17% reported that they always received them. Muthanna had the highest percentage (82%) of IDPs who always received PDS food rations. In addition, those who received food rations found that they were incomplete; 34% reported that their last PDS distribution was missing items. Missing items have been attributed in part to corruption, mismanagement, and stealing of food items.

For those IDPs who had no access to PDS rations or had not received them lately, 54% blamed it on food transportation routes being insecure, and 15% blamed it on lack of transportation. Fourteen percent of families blamed it on a delay in transferring their PDS registration card to a new location or a lack of documentation. Twenty families even believed that there simply was no food to distribute.[...] Of those who did receive food assistance, 32% received it from humanitarian organizations, 25% received it from religious charities, 8% from regional authorities, and 2% received it from national authorities. These entities usually provided dried or canned food, rarely fresh food. In addition, the food distributions usually only lasted for a few weeks at most, so assistance was temporary and barely met the expanding need for food.”

See Also;

UNHCR, October 2005, p.93

UNSC, 7 Sept 2005, p.9

IRIN, 8 June 2004

IRIN, 22 August 2005

Health

General: Health Situation for displaced and non displaced alike (2004-2008)

- In February 2008, OCHA would report that the humanitarian health and nutrition situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate.
- Recent estimates indicate around 151,000 violence-related deaths in three years through 2006, which translates into 137 deaths per day, although other sources provide higher estimates.
- Access to essential health services is a major problem for the conflict-affected communities. Children and pregnant women are among the most affected by lack of access to primary services health and nutritional support, leading to increased risks of morbidity as well as child and maternal mortality.
- The mental health and psychosocial effect of the conflict on the victims and their communities, especially women and children, represents another major health issue.
- Iraq is still facing a range of immediate and severe environmental problems. Hospital waste represents a hazard that promotes the spread of communicable diseases. Moreover, diseases associated with unsafe water have increased at alarming rates.

UN OCHA, 12 February 2008:

"The humanitarian health and nutrition situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate. Health and nutrition humanitarian needs result from a combination of vulnerabilities (weakness of access, poverty, inflation, food insecurity) and crisis-related factors (military activities, human rights violations, displacement and ethnic tensions). 55 Recent estimates⁵⁶ indicate around 151,000 violence-related deaths in three years through 2006, which translates into 137 deaths per day, although other sources provide higher estimates. Additionally, several hundreds of Iraqis suffered injuries, many requiring specialised hospital care, severely burdening Iraq's health care delivery system. This is further compounded by displacement, which poses an extra strain to the health system in some areas. Violence contributed to one out of every eight deaths and was mainly reported in the Centre/South (0.70-0.05 per 1,000 persons per year respectively). The average crude mortality rate for all Iraq is 4.97. The Centre/South region's crude mortality rate is 50% higher than in the Kurdistan region (5.21 and 3.4 per 1,000 person year, respectively)⁵⁷. Access to essential health services is a major problem for the conflict-affected communities. Various aspects of conflict are limiting populations' access to health services, as well as affecting public health programmes including immunisation, maternal and child health (MCH) and nutrition programmes. Routine immunisation services continued to suffer in 2007. Twenty-eight out of 117 districts reported Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT) 1 coverage below 80% and a drop-out rate between DPT1 and DPT3 more than 10%. Health providers have been reluctant to do outreach activities due to the security situation.

Children and pregnant women are among the most affected by lack of access to primary services health and nutritional support, leading to increased risks of morbidity as well as child and maternal mortality. Child mortality rates (46 per 1,000)⁵⁸ and maternal mortality rates (84 per 100,000) are already high for the region. Diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections still account for about two-thirds

of deaths amongst the under five years of age population, which is further compounded by the increase in malnutrition levels; from 4% in 2002 to 9% in 2005, affecting the youngest, up to 17% in six- to 11-months-old and most prevalent in the south, averaging from 10% to 17%. It is estimated that early childhood IMR stands around 44 per 1,000 live births in the south/centre and 26 per 1,000 for Kurdistan.

The mental health and psychosocial effect of the conflict on the victims and their communities, especially women and children, represents another major health issue. It is estimated that 4% of the population is suffering from severe mental disorders and approximately 20% from common mental health problems⁶¹. A much wider portion of the population suffers from mental health problems linked to the stress of living in conflict. Approximately 36% of Iraqis claimed emotional

stress as a result of conflict (40% female and 30% male). Drug shortages prevent treatment of chronic diseases. Around four million Iraqis suffer from hypertension and one million have diabetes. Despite recent improvements, Iraq's medical institutions still experience shortage of at least 10 medicines out of a list of 32 standard chronic drugs. This problem is more severe in the conflict-affected areas, due to hindered distribution of pharmaceuticals from Baghdad to these areas.

Iraq is still facing a range of immediate and severe environmental problems. Hospital waste represents a hazard that promotes the spread of communicable diseases. Moreover, diseases associated with unsafe water have increased at alarming rates. In the second half of August 2007 a cholera outbreak was reported from Iraq, due to poor quality of drinking water and poor sanitation. As of January 13, 2008, 4,697 confirmed cases were reported in 46 districts in 11 governorates. A major concern is the impact of the "brain drain" on the Iraqi health care delivery system. Available figures on health providers leaving their jobs in the MoH indicate that this trend is persisting⁶³. In addition, the frequent change of MoH leadership reaching to the directors' level is undermining the ability of MoH to carry out its functions, especially in the worst affected areas. This is compounded by security restrictions on movement of the international humanitarian community (UN and NGOs)."

IMC, January 2007:

"While the collection of certain types of data from displaced populations is neither possible nor practical in the current environment, the Iraqi Ministry of Health, with the assistance of outside organizations such as UNICEF and WHO, has compiled some figures that allow a big-picture look at general health indicators. For example, the overall crude death rate in 2002 was 8 per 1,000, and the infant mortality rate was 108 per 1,000. Now, out of 1,000 children, an estimated 131 did not reach the age of 5, and the maternal mortality rate was 294 per 100,000 live births¹. At the same time, the most recent data show that malnutrition in Iraq is around 26% for stunting, 16% underweight, and 9% for wasting; compared to 28% stunting, 12% underweight and 4.4% wasting in 2003. The numbers indicate that acute malnutrition is growing at an alarming rate."

UNDP, 12 May 2005:

"In the 1980s, Iraq was widely considered to have one of the region's best health care systems, with advanced, technological specialist care, and an extensive net of primary health care. However, after years of war and sanctions, this situation has changed completely. Among the current major problems are lack of health personnel, lack of medicines, non-functioning medical equipment and destroyed hospitals and health centers. The health services are also heavily affected by infrastructure problems, including degraded or disrupted electricity supply, sanitation, and communications. "

IRIN, 15 February 2005:

"One of the most affected areas after the US-led war in Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein was the health system, according to government officials. Doctors throughout hospitals in the capital complained of a lack in electricity and clean water. They also added that many foreign companies which started working in hospitals had pulled out and new equipment promised had yet to reach them. [...] A shortage of medicine is still the main problem throughout the country. Doctors and pharmacists claim that simple medication such as pain killers and antibiotics are unavailable and sometimes they run out of needles and syringes. [...] The International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) in a press statement in January also complained of a shortage of medicines in all Iraqi hospitals and problems caused by the lack of water and electricity."

Lack of access to basic services raises health risks of displaced populations (2003-2008)

- Health care in Iraq has deteriorated greatly due to the exodus of qualified professionals, a severe shortage of medication and equipment, and damage to medical facilities. Health services are also heavily affected by infrastructure problems, including infrequent electricity supply, clean water, and communications. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- 14% of IDPs reported that they had no access to health care services, and 30% cannot access the medications they need. Non-access to health care services is worst in Kirkuk (71%), followed by Diyala (30%), Muthanna (22%), and Salah al-Din (21%). In 2007, some 55 per cent of displaced people had not been involved in vaccination campaigns (IOM, 30 June 2008; IOM 2 February 2007)
- The situation of access is amplified in conflict areas, to which NGOs and Ministry of Health have often noted of difficulties in accessing and are often prevented from delivering aid due to insecurity as result of ongoing operations 2003 onwards.
- Substandard living conditions, the stress of long periods of displacement, financial problems, insufficient diet, and poor sanitation are constant sources of health complications for IDPs. Disease is more common among IDPs who live in these conditions.
- Because many IDPs live in poor or rural neighborhoods, access to health care is particularly difficult to attain. The number of health care centers is often insufficient, and the ones that are present are not equipped with necessary equipment and medicine. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Health problems have a higher occurrence in women and children. In addition, due to witnessing violence and conflict, displaced children often suffer psychological trauma. 70 per cent of displaced mothers consulted by IMC reported that their children suffered from psychosocial distress. ((IOM, 30 June 2008; IMC, January 2007)

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

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

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

"Substandard living conditions, the stress of long periods of displacement, financial problems, insufficient diet, and poor sanitation are constant sources of health complications for IDPs. Disease is more common among IDPs who live in these conditions, and once present, it spreads more quickly. It is common for IDPs to suffer from diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, skin and intestinal infections, and anemia, along with ailments due to malnutrition. These problems have a higher occurrence in women and children. In addition, due to witnessing violence and conflict, displaced children often suffer psychological trauma. Yet, there are few programs which assist with these problems, creating a new generation of Iraqis who suffer from unaddressed psychosocial stresses.

Because many IDPs live in poor or rural neighborhoods, access to health care is particularly difficult to attain. The number of health care centers is often insufficient, and the ones that are present are not equipped with necessary equipment and medicine. 14% of IDPs reported that they had no access to health care services, and 30% cannot access the medications they need. Non-access to health care services is worst in Kirkuk (71%), followed by Diyala (30%), Muthanna (22%), and Salah al-Din (21%). Those who cannot access health care report financial constraints and unavailability of services as the most common reasons for non-access. In addition, there is a serious need for women's health care and health awareness education to avert miscarriages and pregnancy complications among IDPs. Because it is often difficult for women to travel, especially at night, it is harder for them to obtain proper care, and specialized health care is unavailable. Access to health care is somewhat better in the three northern governorates, especially in cities."

IOM, August 2008:

"Of assessed returnee families, only 51% have access to health care. When asked why they could not access health care, returnees cited lack of health facilities and a shortage of medications. Access to health care is worst in the centre; 67% of returnees assessed in Baghdad said they have no access to health care. In Kirkuk, 91% of returnees assessed said that they have no access to health care, and in Basrah, 60% of returnees assessed have no access to health care. More than 90% of interviewees in governorates such as Anbar, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewa and Salah al-Din report access to health care. Access to medications is also worse in the centre. Of returnees assessed there, 52% said that they cannot access medications they need. A shortage of medication in Sadr City is forcing a large number of returnees to resort to buying from private pharmacies, where the prices are much higher. In Basrah, 60% of returnees assessed have no access to medications and all the families assessed in Kirkuk cannot access medications. Returnee families reported a complete absence of health care in Al-Latifayah, Al-Mada'in, Qariat Nabisheet, A'rab jboor, Al Forat and Al Akhtal, Baghdad, nor in Momniyah, Awereej, Mahmodiyah, and Al Entisar. Similarly, in Rikiyah village, Al-Ahnaf, northern Kadhimiyah, Baghdad, the closest health care is 8km distant. Infant deaths have been reported due to a lack of skilled midwives. Isolated and rural communities (such as Kargoliyah and Madain) frequently lack health centres altogether because their population density does not meet Ministry of Health requirements. Returnees must often travel long distances (30km in the case of Al Entisar) in order to seek out basic health facilities (even pharmacies in some cases); often an expensive and dangerous journey. Health care centres are frequently either destroyed (such as in Al Hardanih), closed down due to violence (in Badran and Saidiya), understaffed (as in Al Saheroon and Al A'aboss) or do not provide adequate services in case of emergency such as Saba al-Boor."

IOM, 11 January 2008:

"Health care in Iraq has deteriorated greatly due to the exodus of qualified professionals, a severe shortage of medication and equipment, and damage to medical facilities. Many of the displaced live in substandard conditions and lack basic services, increasing their risk of disease. Of IDPs assessed by IOM, 14% reported that they have no access to health care services. Non-access is worst in Kirkuk (57%), Diyala (35%), Muthanna (22%), and Dahuk (22%). Access to services is no guarantee of adequate health care. One-third (33%) of those assessed said that they cannot access medications that they need. Specialized care (e.g. surgery or gynecology) is also difficult to obtain in Iraq, since many specialists have fled the country. Inadequate shelter and poor services (lack of sanitation and potable water) are major causes of IDP health problems. Some IDP groups must rely on lakes, rivers, or drainage and irrigation ditches for drinking water. Monitors frequently observe malnutrition and gastrointestinal and dermatological diseases among IDPs, especially children. IDP groups living in overcrowded neighborhoods or far from essential services are particularly vulnerable."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Increased instability and violence is taking a toll on the health sector, possibly more than any other sector in Iraq. In addition to health facilities occasionally suffering collateral damage during military operations or armed conflict, many doctors and other health professionals have fled the country due to threats to their lives, they no longer can travel to work, or they have found work in other professions. Medical equipment and medications are also dwindling. Fewer Iraqis are able to obtain the health care they once received."

Ten percent of the displaced assessed reported that there were no health care services in their area of displacement or if they are available, they could not access them. Of those with no access, 4% blamed inaccessibility on financial constraints, 5% reported that facilities were too distant, less than 1% reported a lack of female staff and less than 1% refusal of service as reasons for not being able to get adequate health care services. In addition, 37% reported that they did not have access to most of the medications they needed.

IDPs were also asked if they had been visited by a health care worker in the last 45 days (from the date of the assessment). The majority (70%) had not, Ninewa having the highest percentage with 96% who had not been visited. Of those 30% who had been visited in 2006, 25% received vaccinations, 4% received medical examinations, less than 1% received consultations or educational information, and 3% received medications. [T]he lack of proper sanitation facilities and clean water, lack of proper nutrition, and inadequate living arrangements often found in IDP communities can contribute to disease and sickness. Of those families assessed, 13% had members who had suffered from infectious diseases or epidemics in the last 45 days (from the date of the interview).

In addition, a high number of the displaced, 55% total, had not been involved in vaccination campaigns, which could further prevent disease and epidemics. The highest percentage of these was found in Ninewa (99%) and Kerbala (81%). Of those who had been involved in a vaccination campaign, 3% of families were vaccinated within the last week (from the date of the interview), 13% received vaccinations within the last month, 21% received them one to three months prior, 8% received them four to six months prior, and less than 1% received them seven or more months prior to the interview. Qadissiya and Missan had the highest percentages of displaced who had been involved in a vaccination campaign (86% and 77%, respectively)."

IMC, January 2007:

"In focus groups conducted by IMC in various IDP communities, nearly 70 percent of the mothers reported that their children suffer intense psychological distress when they hear sounds of helicopters, gunfire, or explosions. About 60 percent of them report that their children suffer pervasive feelings of sadness, cry often, and seem to cling to their parents a great deal more than they did before. About 17 percent of the mothers reported their children also showed signs of pervasive anxiety and fear. An equal number of mothers said their children seemed constantly tired and lacked energy. Over a third experienced repeated sleep disturbances and nightmares. About 25 percent of the mothers observe that their children were falling ill frequently, particularly with respiratory and skin infections. While this might be a result of poor living conditions, frequent illness could also be stress-related. Several mothers also reported that their children are irritable and easily angry; many appear unable to concentrate (.day-dreaming.) or to be interested in daily activities, even play. [...] Turkmen IDP children in Karbala said that their major problem is inability to speak Arabic. Such inability to communicate not only leads to anger and frustration, but also creates learning problems at school and integration into local communities."

IRIN, 4 January 2005:

"The three cities of Ramadi, Fallujah and Samarra, west of Baghdad, in the 'Sunni triangle' where US troops are fighting insurgents, are in desperate need of medical supplies and other aid, hospital staff said on 18 October. The Ministry of Health (MoH) and NGOs around Baghdad add that the situation is critical as they are having difficulties in accessing the area and are prevented from delivering aid due to insecurity. Medical officials in the cities have warned that the delay in the arrival of aid is affecting life-saving treatment. They are calling on government officials to take urgent action in a critical situation."

See Also:

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 105

Water and sanitation

Displaced and host communities face difficulties to access clean water (2003-2008)

- Conflict and population movement prevailing in Iraq places enormous stress on water/sanitation facilities, resulting in the further deterioration of services. As a result, large segments of the population have either inadequate or no access to safe water. (OCHA, 13 February 2008; UNDP, 12 May 2005)
- The situation is has been reported critical in the governorates of Basra, Dhi Qar, Qadisiya, Wasit, and Babil that are nearby the southern parts of the Tigris and Euphrates, where a large percentage of the population rely on water from the rivers and streams. (UNDP, 12 May 2005)
- The increasing influx of displaced people since early 2006 places additional burdens on already deficient water and sanitation systems, making the host communities even more vulnerable. (OCHA, 13 February 2008)
- IDPs obtain their water from multiples sources, the most common being municipal pipe networks (90%), nearby rivers, lakes, and streams (53%), and an open or broken pipe (52%). (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Lack of regular access to water is most notable in Diyala (42%), Kirkuk (36%) and Ninewa (34%). Hygiene issues along with lack of water or sewage system seem to be more severe in rural areas than in urban settings. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- In 2007, monitoring by IOM indicates that the greatest numbers of IDPs who did not have regular access water live in Babylon (61%) and Muthanna (54%) (IOM, 2 February 2007)

UN OCHA, 13 February 2008:

"Conflict and population movement prevailing in Iraq places enormous stress on water/sanitation facilities, resulting in the further deterioration of services. As a result, large segments of the population have either inadequate or no access to safe water. Approximately 40%⁸² of the Iraqi population continues to suffer from poor quality of services resulting from dysfunctional systems, network breakdowns, ageing infrastructure and frequent power supply interruptions. An average 81% of the population report problems with their daily supply. Furthermore, there are wide disparities in access to safe water between regions / urban and rural areas. Families without access to safe water often resort to tapping into working mains lines, further damaging networks and increasing the likelihood of water contamination. Only 20% of families outside of Baghdad have access to working sewage facilities, due to lack of electricity and insecurity-related damage to sewage treatment plants⁸⁴. Existing treatment plants operate at only 17% capacity, discharging large volumes of untreated waste into Iraq's waterways. Sewage is a common sight in many neighbourhoods⁸⁵. Solid waste management at the family level is severely curtailed. Piles of garbage littered in public places pose a severe threat to public health, not to mention the environment.

The increasing influx of displaced people since early 2006 places additional burdens on already deficient water and sanitation systems, making the host communities even more vulnerable. Approximately 41% of the displaced are sharing accommodation with families in host communities or else living in temporary shelters; their access to water and sanitation is likely to be extremely constrained. The Unmet Basic Needs survey has uncovered enormous shortfalls in basic infrastructure across all the governorates. IDPs in Anbar, Babylon, Dohuk, Muthanna, Salah al-Din, Wassit, Kirkuk, Missan, Baghdad and vulnerable populations in other governorates have listed water as one of their top priority needs. Availability of clean water, encouraging personal hygiene and a cleaner environment, represent priority needs for these populations whose lives are threatened by their living conditions. Diarrhoea as a result of poor hygiene and contaminated water is one of the two main causes of death for young children in Iraq. Due to these deteriorating conditions, the Wat/San sector plans to target those most likely to be without access, targeting the most vulnerable among Iraq's 1.2 million recently-displaced IDPs and those communities hosting them as well as families in communities where services have been damaged or are inaccessible because of violence or insecurity-related neglect."

IOM, August 2008:

"Access to potable water is a major concern of IDPs, returnees, and host community members alike because of the wider implications for health and disease prevention associated with clean water. 84.4% of those assessed have access to municipal water networks, although this does not guarantee that the water is potable: Places such as Alhardaniya in Al Mada'in district, Al Entisar in Istiqlal district, and Sadr City Sector 12 in Baghdad, as well as Adwaniya in Rasheed City, Baghdad all lack adequate sewage networks, with waste often flowing in the street, contaminating water supplies and posing an immediate health risk. Saheroon and Al 'Aboos lack sewage systems completely and suffer shortages of drinking water, while Malhaniya's sewage system was destroyed by insurgents. Drainage moreover is an issue in many neighbourhoods, with water accumulating in streets and alleys and restricting movement in many areas. There is a lack of municipal water or drinking water in many neighbourhoods as well. For example, inhabitants of Adwaniya are dependent on wells as their only source of water and lack water resources for agricultural purposes, while villagers in Al Hamedat and Nahrawan, in Mada'in district, Baghdad, must travel several kilometres to access water provided by trucking. In Momniyah, Mahmoudiya district, Baghdad, returnees have to travel twenty kilometres to access water from a neighbouring village. The water system in Albo Aitha has deteriorated to the point where pipes have become contaminated by foreign bodies and water access is limited. Families in the area have now resorted to obtaining their water supplies directly from the river. In neighbourhood of Saidiya, in the Karkh/Rasheed district, families only have intermittent access to water supplies. They are compensating by using water pumps."

IOM, 30 June 2008:

"Access to potable water is often at the root of serious health problems among IDP populations who are already more likely to live in poor quality housing with few or no basic services. Although 80% of IDPs assessed by IOM reported access to water, this does not guarantee that this water is clean enough to use or drink. IDPs obtain their water from multiples sources, the most common being municipal pipe networks (90%), nearby rivers, lakes, and streams (53%), and an open or broken pipe (52%). Even when there is some infrastructure available, water is often mixed with dirt and even sewage. In some locations sewage runs through the streets. In other towns, trash dumps contaminate the water and living environment, causing diseases such as typhoid and cholera. Although water provision is relatively better in the three northern governorates, the recent drought in this area is forcing some farmers and herders to relocate in search of water."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

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

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

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"A significant problem the displaced faced in 2006 was access to clean water. Fourteen percent of the displaced assessed did not have regular access to water. The greatest percentages of IDPs who did not have regular access water were found in Babylon (61%) and Muthanna (54%).

Almost all families in Anbar and Qadissiya reported regular access. Those families who could access water sometimes had to travel great distances to obtain it, or relied on water from streams or lakes, which increased the spread of disease and infection. The displaced reported water access through various sources: municipal underground pipes (90%); water tanks or trucks (40%); rivers, streams, or lakes (16%); public wells (13%); and/or open or broken pipes (8%). Almost 10% of families had to travel over 500 meters to obtain their water. IDPs fared better with their access to toilets; only 2% reported that they did not have access to toilets. However, considering that this represents over 800 families, this is a concern, especially in preventing disease."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.95:

"Returnees and IDPs living in camps/settlements, public buildings or tents face major problems to obtain adequate amounts of drinking water. In addition, large numbers of newly arriving returnees and IDPs put an additional strain on already weak water networks. In the Governorate of Erbil, 43 percent of the IDP families have to share one tap between five families and 25 percent share two taps between 2-4 families, often for short duration due to unstable supply. [...] Public buildings and camps/settlements often have no sanitation facilities. For example, among the 1,519 IDP families (8,267 persons) living in public buildings in Erbil, 56 percent have no latrines, 61 percent have no bathrooms, 31 percent have bad or very bad latrines and 28 percent have bad or very bad bathrooms.[...]"

UNDP, 12 May 2005:

"The intensive use of the infrastructure in Iraq combined with three wars, sanctions, and improper policies of the former regime, contributed to the deterioration of the infrastructure, services, and maintenance. Infrastructure and services provided to the families were administered by the government and funded by the general budget, which led to the provision of electrical, water, and sanitation services to most of the families. However, the bigger challenge was to maintain the stability of the services, as opposed to mere connection. Despite the violence in the country and the deliberate destruction of the infrastructure, there are noticeable changes in the level of these services, as the Government of Iraq, UN and other International Organizations, in addition to the Coalition Forces in Iraq are putting effort into improving the infrastructure in the country.

[...] Most families in Iraq get electricity from the national grid in both urban and rural areas. However, there is an exception to this norm in the rural areas in the Northern Region[...] Stability of electrical supply is a major challenge in Iraq today. Families in the country have suffered for a long time from the low quality and instability of electricity supply. This is clearly evident in the urban areas, where the supply was more stable. The instability has led to the use of alternate sources. [...] The results of the Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004 have shown that [...] 54% of families in Iraq have access to drinking water [...] 60% of families in urban areas and 33% of those in rural areas receive stable safe water. [...] Many problems have been reported about the old and war-destructed sewage network from which sewage seeps to the ground and contaminates drinking water systems.

See also (in sources, below):

IRIN, "Water shortages leads people to drink from rivers", 18 February 2007

Shelter

Shelter is reported as the priority need for displaced people and host population across the country (2003-2008)

- Shelter remains a high priority in Iraq. Nearly 300,000 housing units inhabited by vulnerable families are extremely dilapidated, structurally unsafe and lack access to basic services. These figures represent just a small proportion of Iraq's overall need for improved housing, amounting to 1.27 million units. (OCHA, 13 February 2008)
- Shelter is considered the first priority need across IDP groups. The majority of IDPs are renting housing, although they often live in overcrowded conditions in substandard rental property, and as rental prices continue to rise and IDPs' financial resources dwindle (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- Some 18,000 IDP families are living in public buildings and are constantly threatened with eviction by local authorities. In addition, a further 45,000 families are living in 'camp-like settlements' with inadequate access to basic services. (OCHA, 13 February 2008)
- Monitoring reports indicate 60.9% of IDPs assessed live in rental housing, 16.3% in host families or relatives, 9.8% in other locations, 6.4% in collective town settlements, 5% in public buildings, 1.2 % in tents in camp or near house, and 0.4% in former military camp. (IDP Working Group, June 2008)
- Of those IDPs assessed by IOM monitors, almost 26% say that their property is occupied, controlled, or claimed by private citizens, and 15% say their property is destroyed. Another 40% do not know the status of their property. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- In end 2006, shelter was listed as a priority need. A number of factors have contributed to lack of shelter among IDPs, including lack of income and limited homes or support networks. 57 % but most saw this as a temporary solution 22% lived with families and friends but reported overcrowding and a strain on host families. Less than 1% lived in tents. 7% lived in temporary settlements
- In end 2006, low percentage of displaced people reported facing pressure to leave from relatives, neighbors, militants, and court-ordered eviction (IOM, 2 February 2007) Shelter is consistently among the highest-priority needs cited by IDPs, and eviction threats coupled with rapidly rising rental prices have created an even more precarious housing situation in recent months.

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 13 February 2008:

"Shelter remains a high priority in Iraq. Nearly 300,000 housing units inhabited by vulnerable families are extremely dilapidated, structurally unsafe and lack access to basic services. These figures represent just a small proportion of Iraq's overall need for improved housing, amounting to 1.27 million units. At least 10% of families (30,000 families) have unsustainable or unsubstantial income which limits their access to adequate and safe shelter. Another 5 to 7% of the vulnerable families (15,000 – 21,000 families) live in extremely overcrowded conditions where exposure to serious health and hygiene problems is commonplace. This constitutes an immediate requirement of approximately 50,000 new/improved housing units. National and local response capacity is limited and further compromised by short-term, narrow political considerations. The situation is further exacerbated by the incessant flows of displaced population groups⁷⁸. According to the IOM 2007 Displacement in Review, shelter is considered the first priority need across IDP groups. The majority of the IDPs are living with host families, either as family guests or as tenants, invariably in conditions that are extremely poor as a result of overcrowding. Some 18,000 families are living in public buildings and are constantly threatened with eviction by local authorities. In addition, a further 45,000 families are living in 'camp-like settlements' with inadequate access to basic services. Prospects of return are not only affected by the ongoing security situation, but also by the lack of legal protection of abandoned properties and alternative shelter options. Although this represents a generalisation at the national level, it is clear that there is no single 'fit all' solution for appropriately and adequately sheltering vulnerable households. The nature of humanitarian needs vary depending on the specific socio-economic situation and patterns of population displacement prevailing in the region, governorate and district levels. Therefore, an array of diverse and localised interventions will need to be devised within an overall

national policy that provides for quick shelter solutions and guarantees a degree of security of tenure for the households that are vulnerable."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"The majority of IDPs are renting housing, although they often live in overcrowded conditions in substandard rental property, and as rental prices continue to rise and IDPs' financial resources dwindle, more and more IDPs are reportedly being evicted from their homes.²⁶"

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

"Shelter is consistently among the highest-priority needs cited by IDPs, and eviction threats coupled with rapidly rising rental prices have created an even more precarious housing situation in recent months. Earlier this year the Government of Iraq (GoI) issued an eviction order for all IDPs squatting in public buildings. Although the Iraqi Parliament later voted to postpone the order until other housing arrangements could be made for IDPs that would be again displaced, individual governorates are in some cases continuing with threats and even actual evictions. For example, 150 families were recently forced to leave public land in Farah village of Kerbala governorate. Stifling summer temperatures of up to 45 degrees worsen already-difficult living conditions during the summer months. Many IDP families do not have the funds for generators nor fuel. 35% of assessed IDPs report not having access to fuel due to unavailability or financial constraints.

The majority of IDPs (63%) are renting, which means that the increase in rental costs across the country badly affects the dwindling finances of IDP families, the majority of whom have no source of income. In Babylon, for example, rental costs have risen more than 50% since the beginning of 2006. Of those IDPs assessed by IOM monitors, almost 26% say that their property is occupied, controlled, or claimed by private citizens, and 15% say their property is destroyed. Another 40% do not know the status of their property. Recently, the GoI announced that it will provide 300,000 ID per month for six months (a total of \$1500) to any IDP family squatting in another IDP family's home, enabling the house owner's return and providing rent costs for the family who has to leave. The problem of occupied and destroyed housing, occupied public buildings, and increased evictions is a great challenge facing the Iraqi Government.

The camp situation in Iraq is unique, as less than 1% of displaced live in tent camps. This is primarily

due to the fact that camps are set up in desolate areas, have very few services, and are considered a last resort due to cultural concerns which make people reluctant to live among unfamiliar families."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Shelter was overwhelmingly listed as the priority need of people displaced in 2006. Lack of income, increased competition for limited homes or apartments, lack of families or friends who could provide shelter, overcrowded conditions in relatives' or friends' homes in places of displacement, and inadequate shelter all contributed to this need. Families who could move in with family or friends did so, but the majority (57%) rented a place to stay. Many families thought their displacement would be temporary or that they would be able to find employment in their current location. As their displacement became more protracted, renting became increasingly difficult. In addition, in many areas the swell in demand for rental property increased rental prices, so some families who could originally afford to rent were forced to find other shelter. Some even had to move into abandoned buildings or build makeshift shelter on unused land. Twenty-two percent of those interviewed said that they lived with friends and family. However, this led to overcrowding and put added strain on the host family. Almost 5% of IDPs living with family said that they received pressure from their hosts to find another means of shelter.

Less than 1% was reported to live in tents near the house of a host family or relative. This living arrangement is unsustainable, especially in winter months. Iraqis who could not afford to rent or did not have family or friends with whom they could live had to find other means of shelter, often in public buildings. Ten percent of IDPs in Iraq reported that they lived in public buildings. These public buildings, often unoccupied or abandoned, frequently lack services such as electricity, running water, sanitation facilities, and proper insulation. In addition, these buildings can be reclaimed by the government or private entities, rendering the IDPs homeless once again. Seven percent lived in collective settlements or towns. These settlements are marked by provisional housing set up by IDPs. The housing is makeshift, sometimes made of mud bricks or local material. Collective settlements also frequently lack electricity, running water, sanitation facilities, and proper insulation.

Military camps that once belonged to the Ba'ath party were abandoned after its overthrow in 2006, so the displaced sometimes move into these empty facilities. There is concern that these areas will be invaded by militias or insurgents, who would then use them as recruiting grounds. However, no reports have confirmed this yet. Less than 1% of those interviewed moved into former military camps. Three percent reported other living arrangements. In addition to pressure to leave from relatives, 1% faces pressure to leave from neighbors, 1% face pressure to leave from militants, 2% have received a court-ordered eviction, and 1% faces "other threats". This pressure to leave or threat of eviction could cause secondary displacement, further exacerbating the lack of adequate shelter. "

UNHCR, 19 August 2004:

"Housing is one of the biggest challenges facing all Iraqi people, and especially those who have just returned to the country or have been internally displaced. In the north of Iraq alone, where over 20 percent of the people are reported to be lacking adequate housing, "

Many displaced people shelter in empty public buildings, camps and other informal settlements (2003-2008)

- Monitoring surveys indicate that 6,4% of IDPs live in collective town settlements, 5% in public buildings, 1,2 % in tents in camp or near house, and 0.4% in former military camp. 9,8% in other locations (IDP Working Group, June 2008)
- Public buildings and camps/settlements are often overcrowded and lack sanitation services and drinkable water, and often do not have electricity.
- Due to a lack of services, remote locations, and the cultural sensitivities to these living arrangements, moving to camps is a last resort for internally displaced persons. In some areas, IDPs are reported to be using tent camps as a transitory shelter (IOM, August 2008)
- Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, and in some cases evictions have taken place. According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008; UNHCR September 2008)
- Local authorities in some parts of the country have allocated families land or provided reconstruction grants however assistance has been limited. In one such illustration, local municipality of would provide makeshift shelters to accommodate IDPs in western Baghdad. (IRIN, 21 October 2008)
- In January 2004, it was estimated around 400,000 IDPs lived in collective towns and 300,000 displaced lived in homes. Over 80,000 IDP and returnee families live in camps and public buildings according to the MoDM. (OCHA, 5 January 2004; MoDM, September 2004)

- In 2003, UNOP survey indicated that 69 per cent of IDPs (from pre 2003 displacement) living in public buildings and camps in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah wish to return. 66% of the whole IDP population, who intend to return to their place of origin, regard 'shelter' as a pre-condition for return. Many IDPs in public buildings and transit camps have been displaced on more than one occasion in the last 10 years and many originated from villages close to the Turkish border in Dahuk and the Arabized villages in Kirkuk which were completely destroyed
- The survey found that property claims (land 3.4% & house 4.7%) account only for 8% of IDPs living in public buildings and transit camps. Most of the IDP population living in public buildings and transit camps were vulnerable and destitute before displacement and therefore had never been the owners of extensive agricultural lands or houses

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, and in some cases evictions have taken place. In May, the GoI issued an eviction order for IDPs living on public property. In early June the Iraqi Parliament voted on a draft resolution to postpone the eviction order.²⁷ Local authorities are responding in an ad-hoc manner; in some governorates, such as Basrah and Muthanna, authorities have ordered all IDPs and squatters to leave public property. In other governorates, local authorities are applying the order only to certain areas or land. Regardless, the IDPs are given no other option for shelter, forcing them into secondary displacement.

In June, several statements have been made in the media from GoI officials calling for evictions: Baghdad and Al-Amara, Missan have been specifically mentioned.

Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, such as 15 families in mAl-Nasir, Najaf who have been threatened with eviction by the government because they are on public land, and sometimes hundreds of families, such as in Farah village in Kerbala, where the provincial council and governor recently removed all IDPs (160 families) illegally squatting on public property in this village.

In a former military camp in Taji, Baghdad, close to 1,000 IDP families (estimated 7,000 individuals) have settled. There is an imminent threat of eviction of these families from the camp. According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Camp residents generally do not have access to basic services, cannot protect themselves against the elements or extreme weather, and are located far away from medical care, education, and other needs. These harsh conditions, combined with a cultural aversion to living without familial privacy and personal dignity, make tent camps a last resort for Iraqi IDPs. As a result, the number of camps and the size of camp populations vary periodically."

IRIN, 21 October 2008:

"In a bid to alleviate the suffering of internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in tent camps, the local authorities have built a makeshift camp in western Baghdad to house 150 families in wooden caravans, an official said on 20 October.

Local council official Mazin al-Shihan said another 150-caravan camp would be completed in a few days in eastern Baghdad. "These new camps will not erase the suffering of these families but at least they are better than living in tents, which are terribly hot during summer and very cold during winter," al-Shihan told IRIN. "These new camps are also intended to reduce the humiliation and embarrassment these families feel living in tents," he said. Each 40-square-metre

caravan - which contains two bedrooms, a living room, toilet and kitchen - is valued at 18 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$15,500), he said, adding that the measure was "temporary, until these families return to their areas".

IOM, 19 March 2007:

"In many governorates, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), through the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) or local authorities, has set up camps for the displaced families who do not have an established place to stay. However, due to a lack of services, remote locations, and the cultural sensitivities to these living arrangements, moving to camps is a last resort for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and less than 1% of the recently-displaced population is currently living in camps. "

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Most IDPs continue to seek shelter with their relatives and extended family, as well as in empty public buildings. At the beginning of the school year in September, IDPs were asked to leave the schools they had occupied in parts of Baghdad, Basra and Missan, and the authorities offered displacement camps as an alternative. One of the UN concerns has been to ensure that the camps are located in a secure area away from military and other targets and in proximity to services as well as education and health facilities. In at least some locations, IDPs are reported to be using tent camps as a transitory shelter."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.97-100:

"IDP and returnee monitoring has revealed that shelter is one of the most pressing concerns for IDPs and returnees. Large numbers of Iraqis cannot return to their places of origin as their villages were either destroyed by the former regime, either as part of the De-villagization and Anfal campaigns in Northern Iraq [...] or the drainage of the Marshes in Southern Iraq. In addition, Iraqis' financial resources are often limited, impeding them from reconstructing or rehabilitating their houses or paying rents. A lack of shelter is one of the major reasons for returnees and IDPs not being able to return to their places of origin and instead returning into a situation of internal displacement. Many are hosted with relatives, in public buildings or even in tents. Public buildings housing returnees and IDPs are usually overcrowded and lack hygienic facilities and potable water. Their residents are at risk of being evicted by the authorities that wish to use such buildings for their original purposes. [...] Most public buildings will almost certainly be repossessed by the Government in the future, and also remain at risk from mines and unexploded ordinance." [...] "Apart from damaged and illegally occupied property, the UN Development Group/World Bank estimate that there are currently 1-1.5 million housing units missing, affecting up to 9 million people, thereby representing a housing 'crisis'."

UN OCHA, 5 January 2004:

"With an estimated 900,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Iraq, humanitarian organisations are putting the emphasis on providing proper shelter in the coming year for homeless people uprooted by the troubles that have plagued the country not only over the past year but the past few decades. Of this figure the majority, some 400,000 live in what are called 'collective towns' or purpose built settlements. Another 300,000 live in homes and the rest are in government or other types of accommodation. Prior to the second Gulf War a UN Habitat survey found that 40 percent of the displaced had no access to health care and that only some 57,000 people were living in adequate housing."

MoDM, September 2004:

"Over 80,000 IDP and returnee families currently live in camps or public buildings"

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 113:

"Electricity is a major problem for IDPs and returnees living in public buildings and camps/settlements. In the Governorate of Ninewa, electricity has been identified as a major problem for IDPs residing in Sinjar, Tal Afar and Mosul. The whole community of Sinjar lives in a

camp where electricity is completely unavailable.[...] Increases in kerosene costs have affected poor families the most, as it is they who cannot afford required amounts of kerosene for heating."

IRIN, 16 February 2005:

"[K]urds too who have returned to Kirkuk are living in temporary accommodation while awaiting a solution from the government. According to a government official from Kirkuk, nearly 16,000 Kurdish families have moved back to the city and are living in tents in a very distressing situation. Nearly 1,558 Turkmen, 1,804 Arab and 16,714 Kurdish families have moved to Kirkuk and are living in old government buildings or schools, or are camped on the outskirts of the city, local authorities said."

UNOPS, 26 May 2003:

"The survey among IDPs living in Public Buildings and Transit Camps in the Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates indicates a high level of intention to return to their places of origin (69%). The percentages intending to return vary when looking at each governorate separately but are still high throughout the north (58%-Dahuk; 68%-Erbil & 89%-Sulaymaniyah). The very high percentage in Sulaymaniyah (89%) can be attributed to the fact that the majority of the IDPs living in the public buildings in Sulaymaniyah are from Kirkuk. The current situation in Iraq is encouraging the returning process of these IDPs. In Erbil, the high percentage of IDPs in public buildings is a mixture of IDPs from those areas previously under the control of the former regime such as Kirkuk and Makhmur and those IDP resulting from internal fighting in the region. While change circumstances, following the recent conflict, is encouraging people to return, there have not been major changes yet in the KDP-PUK peace process, which might lead to the returning process of those IDPs created by the internal Kurdish conflict.

It is important to notice that 12% of IDP would rather resettle in a place other than their present location or their place of origin, while 19% of the whole IDP population intend to remain in their current location. In Dahuk the latter represents 27% of the IDP population. This high percentage is a result of 4 factors:

IDPs in this governorate belong to the 'PKK-Turkey' conflict. The security situation in those areas is still unstable;

Life conditions (low level of economic activities) are very difficult in those border areas with Turkey and the villages have not yet been rehabilitated;

The new geopolitical developments in Iraq do not affect in a positive way the returning process of this group;

This group of IDPs has over the years most probably developed livelihood strategies, which ensure their ability to cope in their present location.

In Erbil, 19% of IDPs intend to remain at their present location. The main reasons behind this might be attributed to the economic prosperity of this region due to the 'oil for food program', employment, the provision of basic services and enjoyment of social life. IDPs who intend to resettle in a different place than their place of origin or their present location represent 12% of the whole IDP population. The highest percentages in this respect are in Erbil (13%) and Dahuk (15%). [...] It is also important to notice that the history of displacement of this specific sector of the IDP population (those in public buildings and transit camps) have been displaced on more than one occasion in the last 10 years. This can be also an important factor when understanding their 'pre-condition' for returning or resettlement. In addition, the complete destruction of those villages of origin close to the Turkish border in Dahuk and the Arabized villages in Kirkuk, allow us understand the concern on the part of these IDP about being assisted with the provision of shelters as a pre-condition to return.

Property claims (land 3.4% & house 4.7%) account only for 8% of IDPs living in public buildings and transit camps. Looking at the general IDP population living in public buildings and transit camps it seems that these IDPs were vulnerable and destitute before displacement and therefore had never been the owners of extensive agricultural lands or houses. On the contrary, many of

these IDP had been living in simple shelters in villages, which had been destroyed when they were displaced. On the other hand, the IDPs who were displaced due to the PKK conflict do not have any property claims since nobody had occupied their houses or lands. Finally, the majority of the property claims for those IDP, resulting from the internal fighting category, has been solved by a joint KDP and PUK committee in 2002 within the ongoing peace process between the two parties."

See also (in sources, below):

"UN Humanitarian Update February 2006", UNAMI, 29 March 2006, p.1 (Anbar province)

UNAMI, July 2005, p.2 [Tal Afar]

For further details, see IOM

"Displaced Iraqis find unusual shelter", Al Jazeera, 3 May 2005

"Housing Problems increase as conflict hits hearth and home", IRIN, 4 Aug 2005

Evictions from public buildings and private properties (2004-2008)

- Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, with evictions having taken place. Most recently Government policies to address property restitution for returnees is also giving rising to evictions of secondary occupants (IDP Working Group, June 2008)
- In May 2008, the Government issued an eviction order for IDPs living on public property, though the Iraqi Parliament voted to postpone the eviction order in early June.
- In 3 September, MoDM released its first report on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. Baghdad had the highest number of squatter-occupied properties at 2,369, followed by Diyala with 963 and Anbar with 63. The rest were in the provinces of Salaheddin, Taâ€™mim, Babil, Kut, Nineveh and Muthana
- Current Prime Ministerial order 101 and 237 address private property restitution for returnees. This entails evictions of secondary occupants and provides for one-month grace period for registered IDPs to vacate properties. The measures also includes rental subsidy to help them rent other properties.
- The threat of eviction is also on many displaced residing in rented accomdation who cannot afford current market prices – under previous regime rents were heavily subsidized by the government. This phenoma was increasingly reported since 2003. Eviction threats coupled with rapidly rising rental prices have created an even more precarious housing situation.
- Displaced people have reported facing pressure to leave from relatives, neighbors, militants, and court-ordered eviction (IOM, 2 February 2007) Lack of financial means for many displaced has rendered the situation more difficult.
- There are no clear numbers of the number of displaced evicted over the last few years, nor on the current number of evictions taking place and the number of IDPs at risks. Anacdotal information suggests that the number at risk is in excess of 250,000 families in public places excluding the number of private residences being occupied.
- Evictions of IDPs from public buildings without provision of alternative shelter has been reported a pressing issue in the country since 2003. Evictions in 2004 have been pronounced in Baghdad, Mosul and Kirkuk but are imminent in all urban areas. Evictions from public buildidngs continued in 2005 across the country.
- New housing projects (promised by the US administration) and compensation (promised by the interim Iraqi government) were promised but neither have been implemented efficiently. UN in response (under UN Cluster 8) had developed a policy paper and guidelines for humanitarian community

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 8 September 2008:

"The Iraqi government is cracking down on squatters occupying properties belonging to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees as the one-month grace period expired at the end of August, a government spokesman said. The government has not yet released any data of how many houses belonging to displaced families have been cleared of squatters. But on 3 September, the Migration and Displacement Ministry released its first report on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties included houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad had the highest number of squatter-occupied properties at 2,369, followed by Diyala with 963 and Anbar with 63. The rest were in the provinces of Salaheddin, Taâ€™mim, Babil, Kut, Nineveh and Muthana. On 20 July, the Iraqi government announced measures to encourage the more than four million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes, including a one-month grace period for squatters to vacate properties. The measures also included a one-off payment of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$1,500) to squatters to help them rent other properties. In addition, it was stipulated that IDPs willing to return to their houses would be paid one million dinars (\$840). Each internally displaced family that has not yet returned home qualifies for a monthly payment of 150,000 dinars (\$145) for three months while still displaced. Other measures include helping Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries with free air transport if they choose to return home, the free shipment of their belongings and compensation for damaged property."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Shelter is a priority concern for the majority of IDPs in Iraq. Although those living in tent camps represent a small percentage of IDPs (only 568 families), residents of tent camps are particularly vulnerable because they have no protection from the elements and often no access to food, water, sanitation, health care, or other basic services. In addition to tent camps, a similar precarity of housing is found among IDPs who settle (or squat) in collective settlements, public buildings, or former military camps. These types of shelter are particularly vulnerable to eviction. Included in this report are the statistics for IDPs living in such housing (highlighted in blue in all charts), as well as the remaining IDP housing arrangements. Apart from tent camp residents, approximately 11% of Iraqi IDPs live in collective settlements, public buildings, or former military camps:"

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), September 2008:

"Tense relations between the host community and the displaced population were indicated in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf and Ninewa, mostly due to overburdened services, house/land disputes and rising prices and, to a lesser degree, the (perceived) behaviour of the group and employment. The majority of IDPs are renting housing, although they often live in overcrowded conditions in substandard rental property, and, as rental prices continue to rise and IDPs' financial resources dwindle, more and more IDPs are reportedly being evicted from their homes. The IDP Working Group notes that eviction from public property is a widespread concern amongst IDPs.¹³ Although a May GoI eviction order for IDPs living on public property was postponed in early June, local authorities are reported to be responding in an ad-hoc manner; in some governorates, such as Basrah and Muthanna, authorities have ordered all IDPs and squatters to leave public property. In other governorates, local authorities are applying the order only to certain areas or land. Regardless, the IDPs are given no other option for shelter, often forcing them into secondary displacement."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, and in some cases evictions have taken place. In May, the GoI issued an eviction order for IDPs living on public property. In early June the Iraqi Parliament voted on a draft resolution to postpone the eviction order.²⁷ Local authorities are responding in an ad-hoc

manner; in some governorates, such as Basrah and Muthanna, authorities have ordered all IDPs and squatters to leave public property. In other governorates, local authorities are applying the order only to certain areas or land. Regardless, the IDPs are given no other option for shelter, forcing them into secondary displacement.

In June, several statements have been made in the media from GoI officials calling for evictions: Baghdad and Al-Amara, Missan have been specifically mentioned.

Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, such as 15 families in Al-Nasir, Najaf who have been threatened with eviction by the government because they are on public land, and sometimes hundreds of families, such as in Farah village in Kerbala, where the provincial council and governor recently removed all IDPs (160 families) illegally squatting on public property in this village.

In a former military camp in Taji, Baghdad, close to 1,000 IDP families (estimated 7,000 individuals) have settled. There is an imminent threat of eviction of these families from the camp. According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Many returnees have found their houses destroyed or damaged, placing them in need of shelter assistance. Furthermore, of IDPs assessed nationwide by IOM, 32% report that the property they left behind has been occupied by others. Even among returnees assessed, 6% still report that their property is occupied. Monitors report most disputes over property ownership are in Baghdad. Resettlement and property occupation is currently being handled on an ad hoc basis by various authorities in Baghdad. In the event of future large-scale returns, a comprehensive policy and mechanism will be essential to prevent renewed tensions. The Iraqi government is now implementing a number of measures aimed at encouraging the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes, such as payments of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (approx. US\$1,500) to families who are illegally occupying the houses of other displaced families and who want to return to their homes, so that they may rent their own homes lawfully. IDPs or refugees willing to return to their houses will be paid one million Iraqi dinars (about \$840). Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries are being offered free airline tickets, free shipment of their belongings, and compensation for damaged property. Of returnees assessed, 85% had returned to their original house and the remaining 15% are living in their original neighbourhood but not their original house.⁶ 89% of returnees in Ninewa are living in their own house, albeit in poor condition. In Missan conversely, more than 80% of returnees are living in rented houses. Muthanna and Najaf also have a significant proportion of returnees renting, with 44% and 38% respectively. A large percentage of returnees in Muthanna (39%) are also living with neighbours, friends or relatives."

UNAMI, 31 August 2005, p.3:

"Police evicted 20 families including 18 IDP families from a military building in Diyala Governorate before a suitable solution was found for alternative accommodation. The local Ministry of Displacement and Migration office was aware of this development and IOM was assessing the immediate needs of the evicted families. Evictions also affected IDP families temporarily residing in public buildings such schools across other areas of Iraq, including Tal Afar and western Anbar."

IOM, September 2004:

"Evictions from public buildings without the provision of alternative shelter for IDPs and the vulnerable communities remains a major concern throughout the country. This has most recently become more pronounced in Baghdad."

UNHCR, 8 August 2004:

"Evictions continue to be a primary protection issue for all groups residing in public buildings throughout the country. Reports have been received from every urban town in Iraq that evictions are imminent. While some evictions have been conducted, it has mostly been a case of threats rather than action. In response, Cluster 8 has developed a policy paper and guidelines for the

humanitarian community. These have been provided to national authorities who are considering incorporating elements into a national response."

IRIN, 20 May 2004:

"Protection concerns of displaced people in the north include the threat of eviction of those living in public buildings by the authorities reclaiming the public building or by individuals returning to their homes.. Substantial numbers of IDPs in both the north and the centre/south are in need of adequate shelter. In the Kirkuk area in the north, tens of thousands of returning Kurds are staying with host families, while thousands more have been living in public buildings, including squatting in a sports stadium. Kurdish IDPs in 'collective centres' also need improved shelter, as many of these are decaying. Moreover, newly displaced Arabs from Kirkuk, whether in the north or centre/south, require adequate shelter, as do tens of thousands of returning Shi'ites from Iran, many of whom have taken refuge in public buildings or former military barracks. At least 10,000 of the women and children who fled Fallujah are in camps outside Fallujah and in and around Baghdad."

IRIN, 6 September 2004:

"[A]rmed Iraqi police moved the families' furniture and other belongings out of government houses where they had been living illegally since US-led forces began fighting to topple Saddam Hussein in March 2003. The government housing complex near new Interior Ministry offices used to be used to house visiting foreign delegations. [...] It was the first time the police have cracked down on the large number of people who illegally occupy numerous government buildings around the country, including many former government buildings in Baghdad. [...] Families with no place to live taking over former government buildings is a pressing issue [...]. Many of the families were forced to leave rented accommodation when landlords raised the rent drastically last year. Others are victims of Saddam Hussein's 'Arabisation' programme, in which he gave houses in northern Iraq to Arabs. After the regime fell last spring, original owners of the houses often came back to reclaim their houses. There are about a million internally displaced people (IDPs) in Iraq today with the majority, some 800,000, in the north of the country. US administrators catalogued the displaced and pledged new housing costing millions of dollars, but so far no new housing projects have been finished. Other displaced people live in former army barracks around Iraq; some live along the Tigris River in former army officer houses and in damaged buildings in the capital. In the meantime, police said they would help people they were throwing out of the houses in Jadriyah with up to 600,000 Iraq dinars, or about US \$400, in compensation. Families on the street said they heard they would receive less than \$200 and that they hadn't seen any money from the police. [...] Under the former regime, their rents were heavily subsidised by the government. It was unclear if UNHCR would be involved in helping find places for the newly displaced people. By Monday, most families had gone to stay with relatives in Baghdad."

IRIN, 19 March 2004:

Reconstruction experts believe up to 84,000 families may be without houses in Iraq, said Andy Bearpark, CPA director of operations and infrastructure. In an effort to address this Bremer recently signed seven housing contracts worth more than US \$100 million to start building new homes for people. The homes will be built mostly in the southern Iraqi towns of Basra, Muthanna, Najaf, Diyala, Karbala, Maysan and Ninawa. When completed, the new construction is expected to put a permanent roof over the heads of 18,000 people, or more than 3,500 families. Each housing development will also include a mosque, a recreational area, a medical clinic, a shopping mall and schools. The first construction project will start in Basra in coming days. Thousands of refugees who fled oppression under the former Saddam Hussein regime continue to return from Iran and Saudi Arabia to southern Iraq. Even though many stay with relatives, many towns near the border are bursting with new people. Displaced people in Baghdad also often come from southern Iraq.

See also (in sources, below):

IRIN, 7 March 2005

Examples of evictions from various Iraqi Governorates (2008)

- In Kirkuk, 9% of those assessed reported eviction pressure to leave from neighbours, militants, relatives, or others, while in Ninewa the figure is only 2%. In Salah al-Din, 3% reported eviction pressure specifically from militants. (IOM, June 2008)
- In Babylon, Kerbala and Najaf many IDP families face insecure housing situations as they live illegally in government or private properties with the ever-looming possibility of eviction. Monitors identified in excess of 140 families evicted with hundreds under threat of eviction. (IOM, June 2008)
- In Basrah and Muthanna demonstrate a high level of evictions compared to other governorates in the country. In Basrah issued a warning to IDP and resident squatters in public properties to evacuate them within seven days or risk incarceration (up to three months) and/or fines. (IOM, June 2008)
- Overall, in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulayminya, there are not as many reported evictions or threats of eviction compared to the central and southern governorates. (IOM, June 2008)
- In Diyala, Anbar and particularly Baghdad, IDPs are increasingly experiencing eviction threats and/or struggle to pay increasing rental prices, especially as displacement becomes prolonged. (IOM, June 2008)
- In Qadissiya, Missan, and Wasit, IDP families live with the constant stress of precarious living arrangements. In Missan governorate rental costs have increased dramatically, and many IDP families are being evicted from extra-legal housing. In Qadissiya, IDPs residing in schools are under threat of eviction. (IOM, June 2008)

Anbar Diyala & Baghdad Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008

"IDPs are increasingly experiencing eviction threats and/or struggle to pay increasing rental prices, especially as displacement becomes prolonged. In Ramadi district of Anbar governorate, returnees have found houses and shops destroyed, and no access to basic services. In turn, the returnee movement there has driven up rental prices for those who cannot live in their original homes. In Diyala monitors identified 89 IDP families who will not return to their village of Al-Meriya because their homes have been destroyed and there is no electricity or access to health care. 38 IDP families in Kan'an sub-district of Diyala are living in skeletons of houses without doors or windows, crowded into small rooms. Another group of families in the Diyala village of Um Al-Hawaly are living in mud and reed one-room houses. Pressure or threat of evictions (on behalf of militia, neighbors, relatives, court-ordered eviction, etc.) was highest in Anbar (8%) and Diyala (7%) but was only mentioned by 2% of IDPs in Baghdad. However, evictions are evident in the capital. Baghdad has been the site of IDP evictions by various military and government authorities. 530 families, among them 123 post-February 2006 IDPs, were evicted from Al-Batool neighbourhood and have scattered to an old warehouse, with rooms separated only by clothes or wooden plates. In June, the Iraqi Army reported that it intends to clear the Fedayeen Camp outside of Baghdad City to turn the camp into an Emergency Response Unit Operation area. This will affect 1,000 families. In addition, recently the Baghdad Operations Centre created an evictions plan for several sites throughout the governorate. Families who have property elsewhere are expected to return; those who do not will be provided up to three million dinar to find shelter elsewhere. In Diyala, a group of IDP families were given an eviction order from Sa'ad camp, where they had been living since the 1980's. Reportedly, recently Kurdish security forces are creating very difficult conditions for non-Kurds in the areas such as Delli Abbas sub-district and villages in Kifri district, forcing people to flee to Kirkuk. IDPs throughout Iraq tend to rent

housing, although often inadequate or overcrowded. A significant minority in the reporting area also live with a host community family or relatives:"

Babylon, Karbala & Najaf Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008

"In Babylon, many IDP families face insecure housing situations as they live illegally in government or private properties with the ever-looming possibility of eviction. Rental costs in this governorate have risen an estimated 50% since the February 2006 Samarra bombings. Monitors identified a number of IDP groups under threat of eviction. In Bekat (Askandariya) there are 15 IDP families who are forced by their landlord to work for extremely low wages. In Ghabat (Jebela, Al-Mahawil) and Intesar (Haswa, Askandariya) there are 12 IDP families under threat of eviction for sectarian reasons. In Jurf Al-Sakher (Haweja) there are 4 families who have been harassed by security forces. In Abu Luka, Askandariya there are 23 families under pressure for sectarian reasons. In Jawadeya, Shumaly there are 37 families who can no longer afford their increased rent. In Qazawena, Abu Gharaq there are 42 IDP families who have been issued an eviction order because they are living in a collective settlement on government property. Insecure, illegally inhabited housing is also common for IDPs in Najaf and rising rental houses are forcing more and more IDP families to be evicted from their shelter. 30 families displaced from Baghdad to Al-Qadissiya are being threatened with eviction, while 35 IDP families from Baghdad and Diyala are being evicted from their one-room houses with palm-leaf roofs in Al-Makrama neighborhood. In Missan neighborhood 10 IDP families living in houses and 20 IDP families inhabiting old tents have been told by the local authorities to leave. There are 25 families in Taraf Al- Saray who have been threatened with eviction by the government because they are in a public building. Some IDP families in Kerbala have been transferred from illegally-inhabited houses to renting government-owned apartments. The local council in Farah village reported that the provincial council and governor in Farah village recently evicted all IDPs illegally squatting on public property there so that they can implement an unspecified project. 150 families were affected."

Basrah, Muthanna, & Thi Qar Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008:

"Basrah and Muthanna demonstrate a high level of evictions compared to other governorates in the country. The third week in May, the provincial council of Basrah issued a warning to IDP and resident squatters in public properties to evacuate them within seven days or risk incarceration (up to three months) and/or fines. This follows the Iraqi government's eviction order for IDPs living in governmental buildings. The official notice, which gave IDPs 48 hours to clear their locations, ended on Saturday 26 April. Many IDPs are being affected. Ten IDP families living in a public building in a former military intelligence building in Door Al-Dhubbat neighbourhood were among the families involved in the eviction order. 20 families have been asked to leave a government building in Hay Al- Sa'ee (Al Ashaar), while in Hay Al-Janaina 15 families have been asked to leave another such building and three families have been evicted from the Youth League building there. Eight families have been asked to leave former Qudis army buildings – four from one in Hay Al-Hussein and four from on in Khor Al-Zubair. One IDP family must leave the Al-Zubair sports club, and two families must leave the Al-Fao sports club. Additionally, six families are being evicted from a provincial council building in Basrah, and 17 IDP families must leave an area owned by the Ministry of Industry in Hay Al- Muhandeseen/Qibla. No alternatives have been provided and few of these families have evacuated their residences. Local authorities in Muthanna have clarified that their order to remove all illegal collective settlements within two weeks, regardless of whether the squatting families are IDPs or host community, will apply to Al-Samawa and Al-Rumaitha districts only. Many IDPs live in these settlements because they cannot afford to rent and do not have family to host them. In Thi-Qar, six IDP families occupying an old police station in Nassriya center of Al-Sidinawiya subdistrict ordered to leave their temporary home."

Dahuk, Erbil & Sulaymaniya Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008:

"Overall, there are not as many reported evictions or threats of eviction compared to the central and southern governorates. However, 11% of those assessed in Erbil report that they face a threat of court-ordered eviction, and only 73% in the region state that they do not face any pressure of evictions from militants, neighbors, relatives, the courts, etc."

Missan Wassit, & Qadissiya Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008:

"IDP families live with the constant stress of precarious living arrangements. In Missan governorate rental costs have increased dramatically, and many IDP families are being evicted from extra-legal housing. The Missan Education Directorate has ordered IDP families to evacuate public schools. The first phase only affects 13 families who live in two primary schools and one kindergarten, but the order could affect more IDP families in the future. In the Hay Ramadan area of Al-i Al- Sharqi subdistrict in Al-Gharbi district, ten families received a written eviction notice from the district manager, while three families living in an unfinished school in Hay Al-Shuhada' sub-district of Al-Maimouna district were told to leave as soon as possible after living there for more than a year. In Qadissiya there are IDP families living in substandard housing under constant fear of eviction.

Monitors identified 226 IDP families living in Ghammas, of whom approximately 30% are squatting in collective settlements. This group is constantly under threat of eviction by local authorities. Six IDP families from Baghdad are now living in Al-Shammiya in old structures owned by the Ministry of Education. Local authorities have ordered these families to leave because they intend to turn the structures into a secondary school. These families are in urgent need of shelter assistance because they cannot afford to rent housing or even to buy materials to construct mud shelters in a collective settlement. There are no recent reports of evictions in Wassit. The majority of IDPs are renting, often in substandard conditions. In this area, however, a high percentage lives with a host family or relatives compared to the rest of Iraq."

Kirkuk Ninewa & Salah Al Din Governorate Profiles: Post February 2006 IDP Needs Assessments, International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2008:

"This area suffers from numerous threats of evictions. Hay Al-Orooba, one of the largest neighbourhoods in Kirkuk City, is a poor neighbourhood with over 20 illegally squatting IDP and local families. The provincial council plans to demolish these houses and have threatened the families with eviction. 95 families are reportedly displaced from Mosul, Ninewa to Kirkuk due to the military offensive. These families were not able to bring any furniture or major belongings with them due to prevention of passage of furniture at checkpoints. They are living in overcrowded conditions with families, putting a strain on these families. In Hay Al-Himat, Ninewa, IDPs suffer from poor living conditions; they do not have flowing potable water and store their water in unsanitary containers. There is no electricity network there, nor is there a school. The closest school is 7-10 kilometres away and none of the IDP children are attending. In addition, monitors recently reported 36 Arab families who were forced from Krana village in Fayda sub-district by Kurdish local forces who claimed that they were supporting militias, although questions remain as to whether these local forces are removing all non-Kurds from this area. These families were forced to flee to a former military building in Mosul. In Tal Jumaily sub-district, Al-Shirqat district, Salah al-Din, there are 23 families displaced from Al- Dora, Baghdad (many widow-headed households) who are renting inadequate shelter without basic services. Due to dwindling savings, some of them have removed their children from school to work or beg. Upon an order by the provincial council in Salah al-Din, police continue to search for and evict IDPs coming to Salah al-Din from Samara district and Diyala and Anbar governorates, due to accusations that IDPs from these areas present a security threat. In Kirkuk, 9% of those assessed reported eviction pressure to leave from neighbours, militants, relatives, or others, while in Ninewa the figure is only 2%. In Salah al-Din, 3% reported eviction pressure specifically from militants."

Camps and informal settlements

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

General: Marked decline in quality and access to education (2005-2008)

- Access to regular schooling has been limited by security, school closures and a large-scale exodus of teaching staff, particularly in central Iraq. Schools have also been targets of violence, discouraging attendance (OCHA, 13 February 2008)
- School enrolment rates suggests high percentage of non-attendance. In academic year, 2006/2007, school enrolment in primary and secondary schooling is noted at 46%. Dropout rates were highest in Ninewa, certain areas of Baghdad, Anbar, Erbil and Missan. (OCHA, 13 February 2008) In 2007, a report by Save the Children suggests that 22 per cent of Iraqi children are not attending school
- Access to regular schooling has been limited by security, school closures and a large-scale exodus of teaching staff, particularly in central Iraq. Schools have also been targets of violence, discouraging attendance. (OCHA, 13 February 2008)
- A study by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF found that the majority of those who do not attend school are female. Gender differences in illiteracy are also present: 35 percent of women are illiterate compared to 17 percent of men

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 13 February 2008:

"Conflict has led to an education crisis in Iraq. Access to regular schooling has been limited by security, school closures and a large-scale exodus of teaching staff, particularly in central Iraq. Schools have also been targets of violence, discouraging attendance. Preliminary reports from the MoE on enrolment in the 2006/2007 academic year indicate low enrolment and a significant drop compared with previous years. Dropout rates were highest in Ninewa, certain areas of Baghdad, Anbar, Erbil and Missan.

| Level | School Enrolment Rate | Drop-Out Rates |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Kindergarten | 0.06% | |
| Primary School (grade 1-6) | 46% (NER) | Range of 1.1% to 5.1% |
| Secondary School | 46% (male 53%, female 34%) (GER) | 5% and trend declines at the end of the cycle |

The current critical needs in education are:

Immediate access to schools. The MoE's figures demonstrate that only 28% of Iraq's graduation-aged population sat exams in 2007. In many areas, safe access to school is hampered by continued violence, roadblocks, etc.;

Alternative learning opportunities for those unable to attend regular classes because of conflict;

Expansion of/additional learning zones. Areas hosting large numbers of IDPs or areas where schools are used for other purposes (schools occupied by the military forces), lack sufficient numbers of classrooms, resulting in multiple shifts. Reduced school hours and large student populations have affected the quality of education and effective classroom management leading to increased risk of violence at school;

Trained and capable teachers. A large group of professionally qualified teachers have been displaced, left the country or have been killed in targeted attacks;

Psychosocial support. Current psychosocial support is not adequate for children and youth exposed to violence;

Increased enrolment of female students. In southern provinces, the ratio of girls to boys in primary school has dropped from 2:3 in 2005/6 to 1:4 in 2006/7;

Improvement of school facilities. A large number of schools are damaged and not functioning;

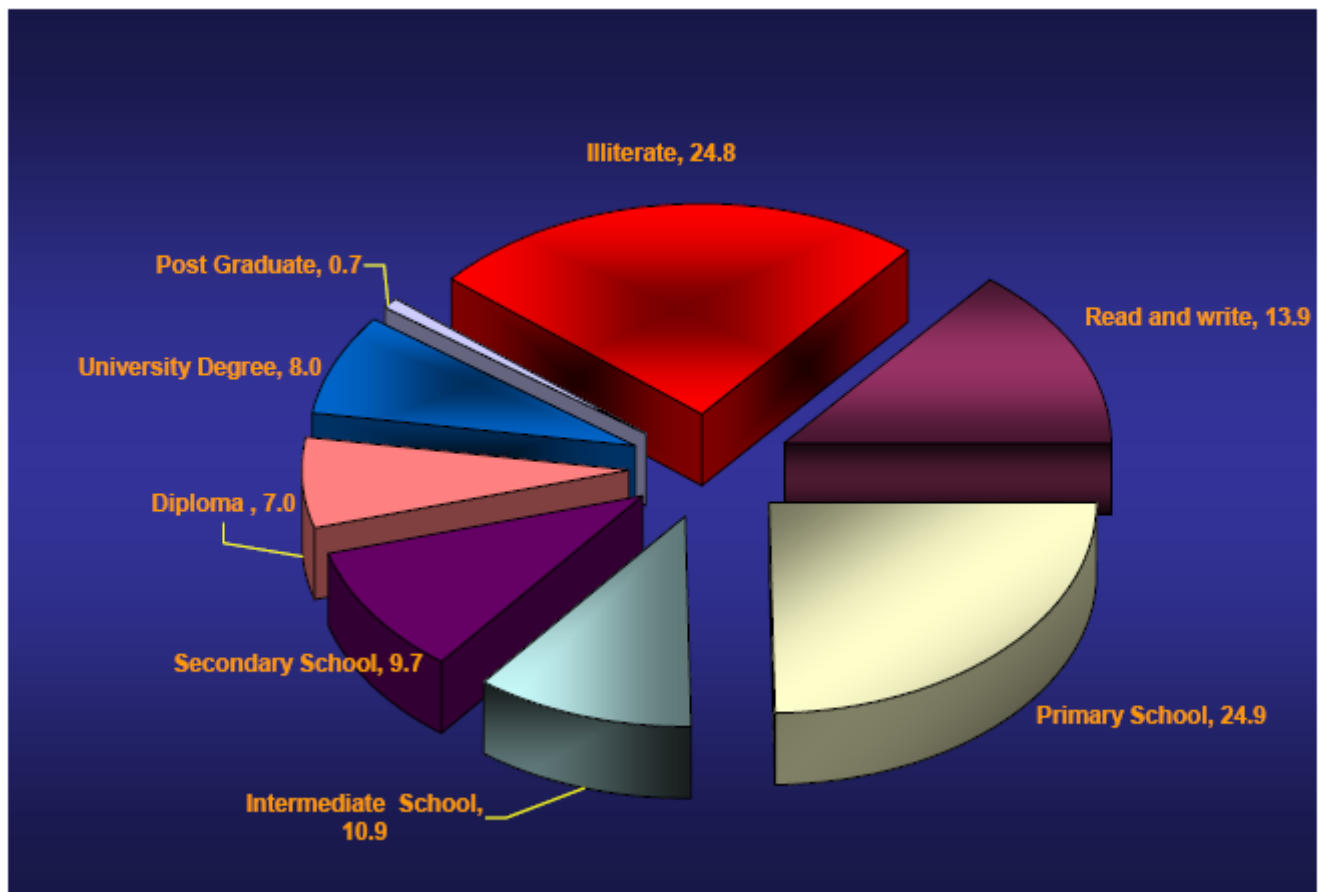
Appropriate language taught in schools. There are not enough schools in the north providing Arabic language instruction;

Education access to particularly vulnerable children, including street and working children. There are reports of increased numbers of street children in cities throughout Iraq, especially Baghdad and Erbil. "

World Food Programme (WFP), 13 February 2008:

"The illiteracy rate among Iraqi adults was estimated to be 21 percent and 21 percent of the population can read and write despite not having attended school. The illiteracy rate in rural areas is a serious problem with 35 percent illiterate adults compared to 19 percent in the urban population. Heads of households tended to have a higher illiteracy rate (averaged 24.8 percent), with a higher rate in rural areas (39 percent) than in urban areas (23 percent). It should be recalled that this was the generation that lived through nearly three decades of conflicts when education was disrupted and the economy was in a tailspin.

Chart 13: Percentage of heads of households by education level in Iraq



In urban areas the percentage of heads of household who graduated from secondary school and university (10.6 percent and 8.2 percent, respectively) are nearly double those in rural areas (6 percent and 4 percent, respectively). Those households where the heads have no education are more concentrated in the western part of Iraq, which is densely populated and could lack accessibility to schools. Education is markedly associated with gender. Female-headed households are less likely to be educated and to have only some primary or secondary education. An estimated 32 percent of adult women are illiterate compared to 14 percent for men. It is clear that there is a high degree of illiteracy and poor education among women heading-up households, especially in rural areas where 54 percent of them are illiterate, a significantly higher proportion than the 28 percent in the urban areas."

IRIN, 14 March 2007:

"According to a report released last year by NGO Save the Children, 818,000 primary school-aged children, representing 22 percent of Iraq's student population, were not attending school. A joint study by the Iraqi Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that of those who do not attend school, 74 percent are female. Aid agencies estimate that thousands of Iraqi parents do not send their daughters to school for cultural reasons and because of the general insecurity in the country. [...] They add that schools and universities are likely to continue emptying throughout 2007 if there is no let up to current levels of violence and the displacement it causes. [...]

Last September, the Ministry of Education increased teachers' salaries by 20 to 50 percent in an attempt to entice teachers to stay in their jobs. More recently, the government hired 13,000 guards to protect schools and universities. However, specialists say these measures have had little impact on the rate of teachers leaving their profession and children continue to be deprived of both an education and social support system."

UNDP, 12 May 2005, p.80:

"Two thirds of the adult Iraqi population, 65 percent, claims to read and write without difficulty, and an additional 10 percent can read and write everyday material with some difficulty. In the younger age groups (aged 15-24), literacy rates are only somewhat higher than for the population at large: 71 percent claim to read and write without difficulty. It is worth noting that the literacy level is somewhat lower among those aged 15-24 compared with the age group 25-34, a difference that is particularly marked for men. There are large regional differences in illiteracy. Illiteracy among the urban population is lower, 21 percent, than among the rural population, 39 percent. Illiteracy is highest in Duhok and Al-Muthanna. Gender differences in illiteracy are also marked: 35 percent of women are illiterate compared to 17 percent of men. The gender gap is higher in rural than in urban areas, and is also higher in older than in younger age groups. [...]

The North has the lowest educational levels where 55 percent of the adult population never completed elementary school, and only six percent started or completed higher education. On the other hand, educational levels are highest in Baghdad where 25 percent of the population never completed elementary school, and 16 percent started or completed higher education. [...] Of the children in primary school age, 79 percent are enrolled in primary school: 83 percent of boys and 75 percent of girls. The net enrolment rate in intermediate school is 41 percent: 47 percent for boys and 36 percent for girls. Out of all the children enrolled in school, 98 percent attended school most of last month. There is no gender difference in attendance, but significant differences between governorates. Al-Anbar and Najaf have lower attendance rates, which is most likely due to the difficult security situation during part of the interview."

UNHCR, October 2005, pp.106-107

The School Survey 2003-2004 shows that one-third of all primary schools in Iraq lack a water supply, almost one-fourth have no electricity and almost half are without sanitation facilities.[...] It further reveals that out of 11,368 school buildings, only 1,271 sustained no damage, whereas 529

were completely destroyed and more than 9,500 need minor or major rehabilitation. In the Northern Governorates of Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, there are no schools that do not need rehabilitation and Sulaymaniyah has the highest rate of completely destroyed school buildings (171 out of 1,381 school buildings).[...] Iraq has 2,753 secondary schools, of which 36 are completely destroyed and 2,408 need minor or major rehabilitation. Again, the three Northern Governorates as well as the Governorate of Najaf do not have one school building that does not require rehabilitation. [...] Half of the school buildings have no functioning latrines, one fifth has no electricity and sufficient water is available in only half of them [...] The availability of secondary schools is lower than that of primary schools, but in most governorates the majority of children need less than 30 minutes to get a secondary school, which is considered to be within a reasonable distance. Again, the lowest availability of secondary schools can be found in the Governorates of Babil and Muthanna."

Obstacles to education

Insecurity, military operations, attacks and threats on children and schools, has devastating impact on children access (2007-2008)

- A Ministry of Education survey found high numbers of children were killed or injured during 417 attacks on educational institutions since November 2005. According to the Ministry of Education, over 300 teachers and employees in the Ministry were killed and more than 1,000 wounded
- UNICEF notes that ongoing conflict in Iraq continues to have a devastating impact on children and schools there. Insecurity and violence have forced teachers to flee, kept students at home and, in some cases, closed schools completely. (UNICEF, September 2008)
- Several schools have closed as a result of threats and violence and have been inaccessible due to military operations. In 2007, the situation was particularly difficult in Ramadi where all schools remained closed at the start of the school year due to threat and in Diyala where 90 per cent of schools were closed due to threats. In many areas, safe access to school is hampered by continued violence, roadblocks,
- In some areas of Iraq, primary and secondary schools did not open with the start of the school year because of attacks and were occupied by Multi National and Iraqi forces allegedly occupied 11 public schools in Ramadi. Schools are also being used as temporary shelters by displaced.
- In the aftermath of military operations in Fallujah, around 100,000 children from Fallujah and the surrounding communities were at risk of losing their entire academic year
- Thousands of schools continue to need rehabilitation and repairs. For many of these have been damaged or destroyed by insurgency and military operations, as well as pre-dating the conflict in 2003. The northern provinces have particularly high rates of destroyed school buildings (2004 UNICEF/MOE Survey)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 15 September 2008:

"The ongoing conflict in Iraq continues to have a devastating impact on children and schools there. Insecurity and violence have forced teachers to flee, kept students at home and, in some cases, closed schools completely. An education system that was once one of the best in the region is now struggling to provide basic services and keep students safe. Many young people have watched fellow classmates either leave the country or simply stop coming to school."

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"The MNF-I and Iraqi Forces had allegedly occupied 11 public schools in Katana, Aziziya, Al-Mu'alimeen and Al-Jameea districts [*Ramadi province*]. In addition, Anbar University was not functioning due to threats by insurgents."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"Schools have become increasingly a target for sectarian and other criminal attacks and parents are worried about the safety of their children, girls in particular. According to the Ministry of Education statistics, over 300 teachers and employees in the Ministry of Education (MoE) were killed and additional 1,158 wounded in 2006 alone, with several schools closed as a result of threats and violence. . [...] In Diyala, the situation is extremely grave in relation to education. A statement issued at the end of October by the Governorate Council of Diyala, indicated that 90% of schools in the province are entirely closed due to the deteriorating security conditions, threats and terrorist acts. This was also confirmed by the MoE Spokesperson. Fearful of killing or kidnapping, the Director General of Directorate of Education in Diyala has abandoned the Education Department building and is now running his day-to-day office work from a room provided by the Governorate Council."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"Children and schools have also become victims of the sectarian conflict. With crimes against children and attacks against schools on the rise and a high level of general violence, school attendance levels have decreased."

IRIN, 5 March 2006:

"The Ministry of Interior has announced it will increase security measures to protect children from ongoing violence after a recent report cited shocking figures for children killed and injured in the past four months. [...] The report, issued on 1 March by the Ministry of Education, also appealed for better security for children. "The report showed that children in our country are being innocently killed," said Kamal Muhammad, a senior education ministry official. . [...] According to Muhammad, the report states that 64 children were killed and 57 injured in a total of 417 attacks on educational institutions since November 2005. Additionally, more than 47 youngsters were kidnapped on their way to or from school for the same period. The report also noted that 311 teachers and government employees had been killed and another 158 wounded in attacks."

See also (in sources, below):

IWPR, Iraqi Schools Hit by Insurgency, May 2006

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The Situation of Children in Iraq: An Assessment Based on United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, March 2003

Council on Foreign Relations, Iraq, Education, and Children of Conflict [Rush Transcript; Federal News Service], 8 April 2008

Consortium for Street Children, State of the World's Street Children: Violence, 2007

Lack of infrastructure, high rates of damaged schools, and overcrowding contributes to worsening access to education, especially for girls (2005-2008)

- A UN-government survey suggests that the main reason for a high dropout rate among students of 15-25 years old is the inability of the families to afford to pay for the schooling and schools being located too far away from home. War and sanctions have caused a significant decline in the quality of education (UNAMI, 18 July 2006)
- Overcrowding, insecurity, lack of water and sanitation are among the main causes of lower enrolment among girls. Children are kept out of school, in particular girls, to support the family

income. In southern provinces, the ratio of girls to boys in primary school has dropped from 2:3 in 2005/6 to 1:4 in 2006/2007. (UNAMI, 13 February 2008)

- Overcrowded schools are reluctant to admit returnee and IDP children. Lack of number of schools or high rates of damaged schools, or schools used for other purposes (schools occupied by the military forces), has resulted in lack sufficient numbers of classrooms, resulting in multiple shifts. (UNAMI, 13 February 2008)
- A large group of professionally qualified teachers have been displaced, left the country or have been killed in targeted attacks; while specific urgent needs to address children and youth in need of psychosocial support, and vulnerable children including street children is absent. (UNAMI, 13 February 2008;

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 13 February 2008:

"The current critical needs in education are:

Immediate access to schools. The MoE's figures demonstrate that only 28% of Iraq's graduation-aged population sat exams in 2007. In many areas, safe access to school is hampered by continued violence, roadblocks, etc.;

Alternative learning opportunities for those unable to attend regular classes because of conflict;

Expansion of/additional learning zones. Areas hosting large numbers of IDPs or areas where schools are used for other purposes (schools occupied by the military forces), lack sufficient numbers of classrooms, resulting in multiple shifts. Reduced school hours and large student populations have affected the quality of education and effective classroom management leading to increased risk of violence at school;

Trained and capable teachers. A large group of professionally qualified teachers have been displaced, left the country or have been killed in targeted attacks;

Psychosocial support. Current psychosocial support is not adequate for children and youth exposed to violence;

Increased enrolment of female students. In southern provinces, the ratio of girls to boys in primary school has dropped from 2:3 in 2005/6 to 1:4 in 2006/7;

Improvement of school facilities. A large number of schools are damaged and not functioning;

Appropriate language taught in schools. There are not enough schools in the north providing Arabic language instruction;

Education access to particularly vulnerable children, including street and working children. There are reports of increased numbers of street children in cities throughout Iraq, especially Baghdad and Erbil. "

UNAMI, 18 July 2006:

"According to the joint UN and Iraqi government food security and vulnerability analysis, children are the primary victims of food insecurity [...] The survey also records the growing drop-out rate among pupils less than 15 years of age – 25 percent of students under the age of 15 lived mostly in rural areas and were identified as extremely poor. The main reason given for the dropout rate is the inability of the families to afford to pay for the schooling and schools being located too far away from home."

IRIN, 3 April 2006:

"Children's education is being severely affected by ongoing sectarian violence, say officials at the Ministry of Education. 'Teachers have informed us that a high percentage of students aren't attending class, especially primary schools students,' said senior ministry official Sarah Obeid. 'The main reason for this is their families' fears due to the increase of sectarian violence.' According to Obeid, at least 30 percent of Iraqi students are not attending school, with the situation much worse in districts of the capital, Baghdad, where violence has been most in evidence. [...] Some parents have also noted growing discrimination in schools along sectarian lines."

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 106:

The first comprehensive study on the condition of schools in post-conflict Iraq, the School Survey 2003-2004 in Iraq, [...] was released in October 2004 by the Iraqi Ministry of Education (and produced with in collaboration with UNICEF). It shows that overall enrolment surged in the 2003/2004 school year despite the fact that school facilities are not nearly adequate. Some 4.3 million children (2.4 million boys, 1.9 million girls) are currently enrolled in primary schools (compared to 3.6 million in 2000). [...] Furthermore, 1.57 million children (950,000 boys and 620,000 girls) are enrolled in secondary schools. [...] The enrolment of girls is lower than boys in every grade and in every governorate. Overcrowding (many schools have up to three shifts per day), insecurity and the lack of water and sanitation facilities in schools are three main causes of lower enrolment of girls. On a daily basis, teachers, children and their families in Baghdad and other flash-points of conflict and criminality have to overcome a fear of bombings, explosions and kidnappings. Nevertheless, and especially in a situation of insecurity and conflict, regular attendance at school is one of the best ways a child can regain sense of normalcy in his or her life."

UNAMI EWG, 18 January 2005:

"UNICEF notes that an estimated 100,000 children from Fallujah and the surrounding host communities are at risk of losing the entire academic year as a result of schools being occupied, damaged, or overcrowded. None of the 95 schools inside Fallujah are currently open, and only 125 out of 362 schools in the surrounding areas are reported as functioning by the IIG. The Ministry of Education is reportedly considering setting up 11 tented schools in Amiriya with support from NGOs."

See also (in sources, below):

UNAMI, July 2005, p.2

IRIN, "Insecurity threatens to leave students with a late start", 10 August 2005

IDP children remain disproportionately absent from schools, and face significant obstacles (2005-2008)

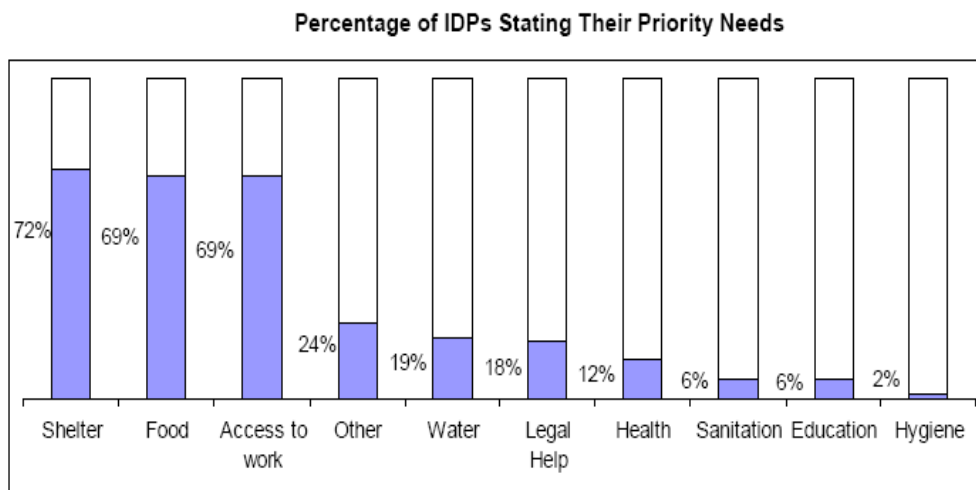
- IDP children across the reporting area are disproportionately absent from school for a variety of reasons, including economic difficulties, travel distance to school, staying home to care for the family while parents work, having to work themselves due to no family income, and lack of proper documents and difficulties in registration process (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Of assessed families with male and female children, only one third (33%) report that all of their boys are in school, and only 22% report that all of their girls are in school. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- IOM monitoring identifies education as a priority for only 6% of displaced population. Access to education is reported as a priority more frequently in the three northern governorates. Shelter, food, access to work, water, legal assistance, health and sanitation precede education as a priority needs. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- Primary and secondary education are free in Iraq but displaced families often do not send children to school because they cannot afford books and other school supplies. Transport is also an issue for IDPs living in remote locations. Schools are overcrowded and unable to accommodate IDP communities
- The IDP children who do attend school often have difficulties resolving social and cultural differences, such as the move from urban to rural or moderate to conservative areas. In the three northern governorates, many IDP children lack education opportunities because there are few Arabic-language schools. (IOM, 30 June 2008)

- In more violent areas, displaced families did not send their children to school because it was too dangerous (Anbar, Diyala and Baghdad) Accessing schools that are located in areas dominated by the opposing sect is nearly impossible for students and teachers. (IMC, January 2007)
- IDPs in camps have no access to education, for example, in the Governorate of Kirkuk, most IDP camps have no schools. Illiteracy rates among IDPs are particularly high. In the Governorate of Thi-Qar for example, illiteracy rates among the general population stand at 25 percent but reach more than 50 percent among IDPs (UNHCR, January 2005)
- Many returnee children have had their education interrupted. Reasons include sectarian discrimination, displacement to a location too remote to attend school, or being forced to work to help support their family. (IOM, August 2008)

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

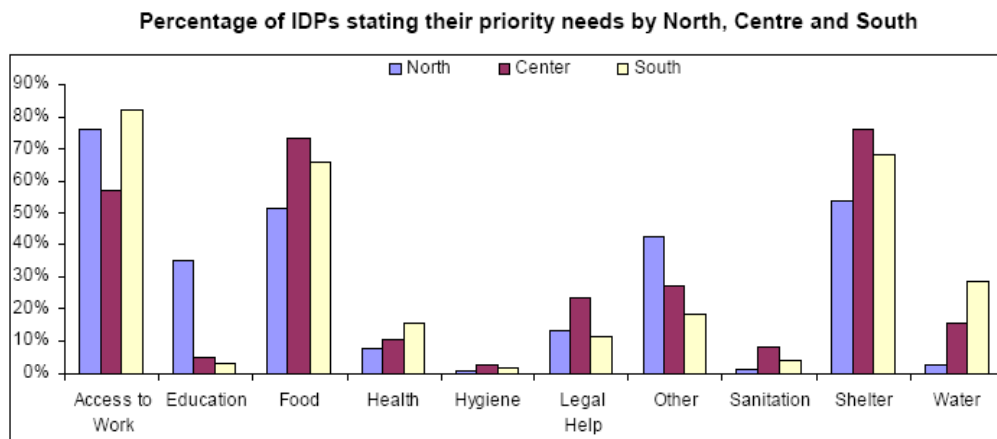
"IDP children across the reporting area are disproportionately absent from school for a variety of reasons, including economic difficulties, travel distance to school, staying home to care for the family while parents work, having to work themselves due to no family income, and lack of proper documents. Many host community schools are ill-equipped, lacking reading materials, furniture, and teaching staff. In locations with high concentrations of IDP families, schools are often doing three to four shifts in order to accommodate as many displaced children as possible. The IDP children who do attend school often have difficulties resolving social and cultural differences, such as the move from urban to rural or moderate to conservative areas. In the three northern governorates, many IDP children lack education opportunities because there are few Arabic-language schools. Monitors observe that when boys leave school, it is often to help the family's financial situation, while girls are often absent from school because of a lack of emphasis upon female education in conservative communities. Other children lack documents from their place of origin and cannot register for school. Of assessed families with male and female children, only one third (33%) report that all of their boys are in school, and only 22% report that all of their girls are in school."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

"Access to education is reported as a priority more frequently in the three northern governorates while employment and access to work are more frequently reported in the southern governorates, while legal help and food was more frequently reported in the central governorates:"



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Of families with school-age children in Iraq, 80% reported having access to schooling and that their children were attending. A further 9% report only some access, and 11% report having no access. Many returnee children have had their education interrupted. Reasons include sectarian discrimination, displacement to a location too remote to attend school, or being forced to work to help support their family. In some locations, monitors have noted that returning families have left their children in an area of displacement to continue studying for the remainder of the year. Military operations have destroyed the only schools in Al A'aboss, Al Hamdeet and Momniya. Studies have since been suspended. Similarly, Al Saheroon neighbourhood's only primary school was destroyed by insurgents. The community has tried to compensate by teaching students in a local house, but it is ill-suited to the educational needs of the community. While there is a school in Adwaniya, the number of pupils is high and the school in need of extension. Sectarian violence has not only destroyed schools, but also displaced teaching staff. Returnees are not content with government efforts to rebuild schools or provide incentives for teaching staff to return to communities."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Due to the high level of children being displaced with their families, before the beginning of the school year, the Ministry of Education issued a requirement that schools accept these children in their new location. However, displaced children were not always warmly welcomed at schools that were already overcrowded and did not have enough materials, desks, and chairs to support the new pupils. Some families also could not afford the clothing and school materials required. In more violent areas, families simply did not send their children to school because it was too dangerous. Many schools and colleges in areas such as Anbar, Diyala, and Baghdad temporarily closed due to violence, thwarting this generation's access to education."

IMC, January 2007:

"Both children in Baghdad as well as those displaced to other governorates face problems with continuing education. In the case of children displaced to other governorates, families may obtain letters of authorization from the Directorate of Education through the MoDM and have their children admitted to schools in their new locations. This, however, is a slow process and much time is lost; sometimes an entire academic year is wasted as children are unable to take requisite examinations. While primary and secondary education are free in Iraq, lack of income hinders

IDP families from sending children to school as they are unable to afford books and other school supplies. Due to the often remote locations of these IDPs, lack of transport is the greatest problem children and families face in trying to continue schooling. Also, schools receiving IDP children are over-crowded. The lack of space and materials and poor teacher-student ratios adversely affect the quality of education and learning. Further, while some IDP children manage to settle into their new schools, others are simply unable to adjust to their new environments, mostly because of language problems. For instance, Turkmen children from Tel Afar now settled in Karbala speak no Arabic; as a result, communication with teachers, and consequently learning, is impossible. The capacity of those schools that remain open to accommodate newly registered IDPs has diminished greatly. In addition many children are being sent to work instead of to school to assist in income-generation to support their families.

In Baghdad, the daily insecurity arising from the sectarian conflict prevents children from regularly attending school. Indeed, one of the tragic decisions parents in Baghdad make daily is whether it is safe enough to send their children to school. Accessing schools that are located in areas dominated by the opposing sect is nearly impossible, for students and teachers alike. Parents who still remain within mixed areas do not send their children to schools and teachers have similarly declined to teach in schools located in areas dominated by sects to which they do not belong. Clearly, this is leading to the disruption of education and generations of children will have poor basic education. One option for parents in Baghdad has been to shift children to schools nearer to their homes and many displaced and other families have resorted to change of school. However, what is likely to happen here is that a school, due to its location and depending on the pre-dominant sect of the residents in that area, may receive most children from that particular sect. While this may be the only way for children to continue schooling in Baghdad, the divide may only serve to increase the fear and hatred, thus exacerbating the already widening crevices of sectarian violence.”

UNHCR, October 2005, p.108

“Refugees, returnees and IDPs in principle have access to education on par with the general population. However, they face a number of particular problems. Due to a lack of documentation, returnee families often face difficulties enrolling their children in schools, in particular in Southern Iraq. School attendance is further fraught by the lack of Arabic language skills, as many returnee children were born abroad and Arabic has not been their primary language of education. Already overcrowded schools suffer from additional pressure by returnees and headmasters are often reluctant to accept new pupils. Returnee children that do not speak the language properly rarely receive the attention required to integrate into a class, leading to quick dropouts and a high dropout rate overall. In addition, returnee children usually lack grade equivalency papers and are therefore often placed in grades several years below their same-age peers.[...]

IDPs in camps often have no access to education and rates of non-attendance at schools are particularly high among IDP children. In the Governorate of Kirkuk for example, it is reported that most IDP camps (one quarter of IDPs in that governorate live in camps) have no schools. IDP children need to go to school in towns, where they add to the already existing overcrowding.[...] In the Governorate of Babil, most schools operate in two or three shifts to accommodate large numbers of students, but this is still insufficient to meet needs.[...].Accordingly, illiteracy rates among IDPs are particularly high. In the Governorate of Thi-Qar for example, illiteracy rates among the general population stand at 25 percent but reach more than 50 percent among IDPs.[...] Children that live in overcrowded or sub-standard accommodation often face problems at school as they have no space to read or sleep quietly. In addition, many do not have access to recreational activities.”

See Also:

International Organization for Migration (IOM), Iraq Displacement 2007 Year in Review, 11 January 2008

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Self-reliance

Issues of Livelihoods and Employment opportunities rank as top priority needs by displaced people (2006-2008)

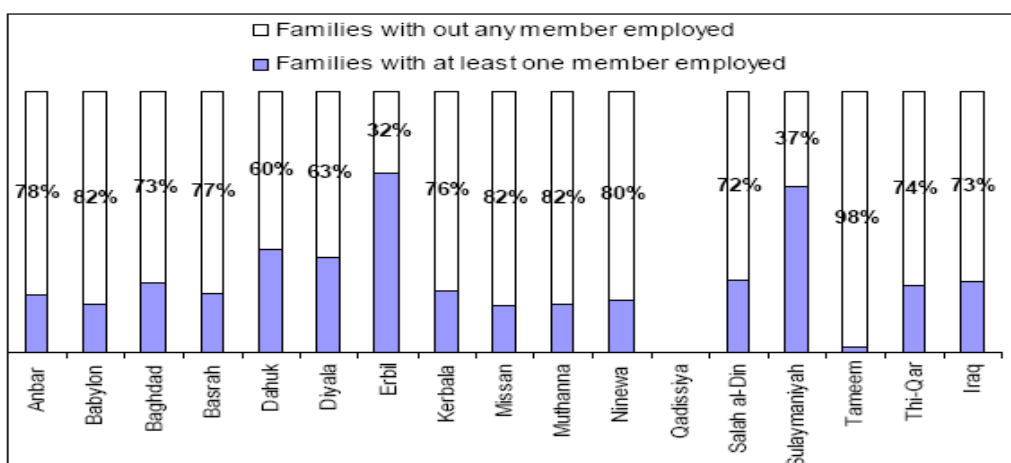
- Access to work is listed as the top priority need of assessed IDPs. The need for employment is high for all Iraqis but affects IDPs even more, as they leave behind their sources of income and move to areas where their skills might not be marketable. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food and high levels of unemployment are causing deteriorating conditions for IDPs (and host communities) throughout the country. Attaining employment is even more difficult for women and widows, especially in increasingly conservative areas. (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- In 2006, around 40 to 50 per cent of Iraqis were estimated to be unemployed. In 2008, IOM monitoring surveys in 2008 identifies that 73% of IDP families have 1 members of their family employed. (IDP Working Group, 27 2008)
- A mission by RI suggests that in the more stable Kurdish areas, the biggest concern among IDPs is economic. In the three northern governorates, employees usually require Kurdish speakers. 66% of assessed IDP families do not have any members employed. (RI, March 2007; IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Livelihoods of Marsh Arabs displaced have been reported to lack supplies, support and the poor quality of the land reduces their output and therefore living standards. Women particularly affected by displacement with harder lives and lower education levels. (OCHA, 30 June 2003)
- Many of the Marsh Arabs who have returned to a life that is incredibly hard. Basic services are still lacking in what is one of the poorest parts of the country. Older generation wish to return, but younger generation wish for better services found outside marsh areas. (BBC, 26 June 2006)

IOM, 30 June 2008

Access to work is consistently listed as the top priority need of assessed IDPs. The need for employment is high for all Iraqis but affects IDPs even more, as they leave behind their sources of income and move to areas where their skills might not be marketable. In addition, some host communities discriminate against IDPs, either thinking they are not trustworthy to hire or hiring them for reduced salaries. Those IDPs who do locate work often hold day-labor jobs that pay poorly and are temporary. In the three northern governorates, employees usually require Kurdish speakers. 66% of assessed IDP families do not have any members employed. Access to a steady income could assuage the problems many IDPs face, enabling them to pay for rent, food, health care, and school expenses.

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008

Access to income/employment is consistently mentioned as the first priority for IDPs in Iraq. Rising costs of fuel, rent, and food and high levels of unemployment are causing deteriorating conditions for IDPs (and host communities) throughout the country. Attaining employment is even more difficult for women and widows, especially in increasingly conservative areas. Of 28,320 families interviewed by IOM in 2008, the following stated that at least one member within the family has a job.



Source: IOM IDP Monitoring and Needs Assessments, May 2008

IOM, 2 February 2007

"Unemployment was cited at between 40-60% in Iraq in 2006, and in addition to the high competition for very few jobs, the displaced often find themselves in areas where there is no demand for their skills or experience. In addition, the displaced report that employers do not want to hire them because they see them as a security risk. It is not surprising that employment opportunities joined shelter and food as the top priority needs of people displaced in 2006. The displaced who were assessed provided numerous suggestions to improve employment opportunities. Many suggestions focused on construction projects that would improve infrastructure while simultaneously providing much-needed services

RI, March 2007

"Whereas many Iraqis worry most about security, in the stable Kurdish area, the biggest concerns are economic. Those who reach the Kurdish governorates must surmount difficulties in finding housing, shelter, employment and education for their children. Most internal refugees can't find work, except for professionals such as doctors or engineers, who are welcomed and sometimes even sought by the Kurdish authorities. Some of the displaced are staying with host families, and others are staying in public buildings, depending entirely on the host community's willingness to help.

UN OCHI, 30 June 2003

"Prior to the forced displacement of the Marsh Arabs in 1991, the main livelihood activities engaging populations were fishing, agriculture, livestock herding (especially water buffalo), hunting and handicraft making. Wheat, barley, rice and vegetables were grown for household consumption. The significance of the water based economic activity of the Marsh dwellers reaches far beyond their homeland, as it was the subsistence for over one million residents of the region. Remnants of destroyed houses, schools and clinics in the original wetland settlements were noted, supporting the notion that services were much more accessible in the past.

The forced displacement caused a severe drop in the living standard for the majority of the marsh populations. With the continuous population movement livelihood patterns shifted. Communities that are currently settled in proximity to the marshes, seasonal agriculture as well as some livestock rearing were adopted. Fishing for communities close to water bodies is also practised in a small scale. Most Marsh Arabs who have moved in closer to urban areas are engaged in a wide range of activities including casual labour in cities. Unemployment was sited as a major concern for most of the communities visited.

Accordingly, income levels were drastically reduced, as was access to health, education, water and electricity. The situation of women across the Marsh population merits special mention. Women noted that life was much harder for them now than in the marshes, and expressed a desperate need for access to clean water and health facilities. Literacy rates appear to have deteriorated as most of the women interviewed were not able to read or write..(...) Displaced farmers are now part time arable farmers with most of the men out of work and dependant on food aid. The most interesting observation was the age difference view of the future with the older generation (40+) wishing to return the known life of the marshes and its stable food security compared with the younger people (17-30) who know a different life and wish to have improved services found outside of the marsh.

See Also:

[Iraq's Refugee and IDP crisis: Human Toll and Implications](#), Middle East Institute, July 2008
[Update on IDP and USAID mission activities in Iraq](#), U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS), 27 June 2008

Particular livelihood issues related to the Marsh Arabs (2003)

- Before being displaced Marsh Arabs relied on fishing, agriculture, livestock and crafts
- Women particularly affected by displacement with harder lives and lower education levels
- Older generation wish to return, but younger generation wish for better services found outside marsh areas
- Marsh Arabs now farming say they lack supplies, support and the poor quality of the land reduces their output and therefore living standards

UN OCHI, 30 June 2003

"Prior to the forced displacement of the Marsh Arabs in 1991, the main livelihood activities engaging populations were fishing, agriculture, livestock herding (especially water buffalo), hunting and handicraft making. Wheat, barley, rice and vegetables were grown for household consumption. The significance of the water based economic activity of the Marsh dwellers reaches far beyond their homeland, as it was the subsistence for over one million residents of the region. Remnants of destroyed houses, schools and clinics in the original wetland settlements were noted, supporting the notion that services were much more accessible in the past.

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Accordingly, income levels were drastically reduced, as was access to health, education, water and electricity. The situation of women across the Marsh population merits special mention. Most women/girls engage in running the households (which is normally extended family structures), house building, collection of water and working in the farmlands. Women noted that life was much harder for them now than in the marshes, and expressed a desperate need for access to clean water and health facilities. Literacy rates appear to have deteriorated as most of the women interviewed were not able to read or write.

Absence of surfaced main, arterial and feeder roads was noted as a major hindrance to economic activities and access to services. Large areas were reported impassable during the wet season November to April due to the loosely compacted earth roads. The border with Iran where Marsh Arab concentrations are currently living is infested with land mines and UXOs.

(...)

General observations from the one-day visit to the Al Hawezieh marsh in the Al Salem district of Missian and previous visits to the Central Marsh confirm the agricultural imbalance and unsustainability of current livelihoods of the Marsh Arabs. Displaced farmers who once depended on buffalo meat and milk, fish, wildfowl, the sale of reed products and seasonal rice, are now part time arable farmers with most of the men out of work and dependant on food aid. The most interesting observation was the age difference view of the future with the older generation (40+) wishing to return the known life of the marshes and its stable food security compared with the younger people (17-30) who know a different life and wish to have improved services found outside of the marsh.

In the assessment area the situation is difficult in many respects. Crop production and income generation of farmers has suffered significant drawbacks. Salinity of the soil and poor quality of the irrigation water is the main problem affecting crop yields. It also affects drinking water for the population and their livestock. As a result, milk yield and buffalo meat growth rates are reduced and further, taste and flavor are affected. Finally, it reduces the amount of fodder and reed grazing for buffaloes and sheep. This water problem is worsened by the deterioration and deficient functioning of irrigation infrastructures and pumping stations and general fuel shortages. Of the three main pumping stations visited, all are out of order. The water availability problem is worsened by the increase in dam construction in the Tigris watershed which has reduced the overall water flow.

Fields were also affected by frequent movement of the Iraqi Army in the region, UXO and weaponry left in the fields and connecting roads. The region never had priority support from the previous regime and the embargo on agricultural and veterinary inputs worsened the situation. At present with the disruption of government services, the farmers main difficulties are: lack of support in agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticide and a lack of veterinary support and vaccination. The farmers also mentioned the poor quality of seed for wheat and barley, and the lack of communication concerning the procurement of the 2003 cereal production. Further, farmers reported they made more income from the traditional marsh livelihood activities including: meat and milk production (buffaloes), wild birds hunting, rice cultivation on receding water and some wheat and sorghum cultivation.”

Public Participation

Factors including lack of documentation prevent displaced from voting (2005)

- Around 6,000 IDPs from areas around Fallujah are said to have cast their vote according to local election officials
- A representative of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq informed IRIN that only 2 percent of eligible voters in the central al-Anbar province cast ballots and only 30 percent in the Salahdine province
- Numerous observers raised concerns that IDPs would not have been able to vote due to lost documentation
- IRIN reported a reluctance to vote among Fallujah's population

- IRIN reported candidates hadn't done any campaigning in the area due to insecurity and residents say they even don't know how the elections will proceed
- Sunni parties who dominate the area also called for a boycott of the election
- IRIN reports also that insurgents sent out leaflets in the area around Fallujah saying that residents are prohibited to vote and those who do will be targeted
- Brookings Institute Project on internal displacement raised a number of concerns in a letter to the New York Times including lack of documentation for IDPs

IRIN, 15 February 2005

"IECI [*Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq*] officials told IRIN that internally displaced people (IDPs) from the cities of Fallujah, some 60 km from Baghdad, and Kirkuk and Mosul in the north were able to participate due to the improvised polling stations in the areas in the capital or in temporary camps. Around 6,000 IDPs from areas around Fallujah are said to have cast their vote.

Farid Ayar of the IECI told IRIN that only 2 percent of eligible voters in the central al-Anbar province cast ballots and only 30 percent in the Salahdine province, some 180 km from Baghdad.

Around 100,000 Kurdish IDPs uprooted from the Kirkuk area were permitted to vote locally following a decision by the Iraqi authorities in mid-January.

Exceptional arrangements were also made for over 200,000 people displaced from Fallujah, he said.

Numerous observers had raised concerns that many IDPs would not have been able to vote because they had lost the required personal documentation, either while fleeing or as a result of destruction of their homes.

'I wish that I had voted in the election and helped to give a vote to my Iraqi brothers, but all my documents were in Fallujah and my home was destroyed. I couldn't do anything,' Sinan al-Abbas, a Fallujah resident camped outside the city, told IRIN."

IRIN, 28 January 2005

"Some residents in the destroyed city told IRIN that they were not going to vote, especially after what happened in Fallujah.

They said the election is going to play into the hands of the authorities who they believe don't care about their needs. [...]

[Situation prior to elections]

The deafening hum of planes can still be heard over Fallujah with a heavy presence of US troops. Children can be seen peering out from behind the few doorways that still exist and some can be seen playing with rubbish left before and after the conflict started. Families said they need basic supplies and are suffering in the cold weather due to a lack of power and kerosene to fuel heating systems.

Candidates haven't done any campaigning in the area due to insecurity and residents say they even don't know how the elections will proceed.

In addition, Sunni parties who dominate the area have called for a boycott of the election. Insurgents have sent out leaflets in the area around Fallujah saying that residents are prohibited to vote and those who do will be targeted.

'I believe that [many] people from Fallujah aren't going to vote because they haven't received anything from the government yet and this has increased their anger. We will guarantee security and hope they come to vote, but I doubt it,' Sabah Kadham, deputy minister of interior, told IRIN.

Residents from the damaged city claim that the elections are too early in a place where they haven't seen any improvements."

Letter to the editor of the New York Times

Brookings Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 25 January 2005

"To the Editor:

In addition to arranging out-of-country voting for Iraqi expatriates ("Iraq Expatriates Sign Up to Vote in 5 Cities in U.S.," front page, Jan. 18), it is critical to ensure that the one million Iraqis displaced within the country are able to vote on Jan. 30.

Though voters are entitled to cast their ballots in the national assembly election regardless of where they are in Iraq, internally displaced voters face a number of practical obstacles. Many of the more than 200,000 people recently displaced from Falluja were unable to register to vote before the deadline.

Other internally displaced persons have lost personal documentation while fleeing or as a result of destruction to their homes.

Additional problems arise in the governorate elections, which lack provisions for absentee voting.

The disenfranchisement of Iraq's displaced persons will pose challenges to their return and also raises questions about the legitimacy of the electoral process over all. Both of these consequences could have significant repercussions for long-term stability in Iraq."

Election participation for IDPs in Provincial Elections scheduled for early 2009 (2008)

- Though sectarian violence in Baghdad and elsewhere has lessened, ensuring the participation of IDPs in Provincial elections to be held in January 2009, will remain a significant challenge. In January 2005 in national elections, there were not yet significant refugee and internally displaced populations. By current estimates, some four million Iraqis are either refugees or internally displaced. (ICG, April 2008)
- Provincial elections are an important step toward national reconciliation in Iraq, and precursor for parliamentary elections to be held late in 2009. As of October 2008, provides for elections in 31 January 2009 in 14 of the country's 18 governorates while elections in three Kurdish-controlled provinces and Kirkuk, is postponed. (Brookings, October 2008)
- For the upcoming governorate elections in January 2009, IDPs will be able to vote for their governorate of origin, by either returning to their governorate or by casting an absentee vote in the governorate where they are currently displaced. Those residing outside the country will not be allowed to vote. (Brookings, October 2008)
- Only 100,000 IDPs have registered to vote in the provincial elections as of October 2008 raising concern to the extent of participation of IDPs in the provincial elections. Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons together represent around 20% of the country's population. (Brookings, October 2008)
- IDPs can register as voters where they are displaced at one of the 549 voter registration centres country wide from 1 July to 31 July. However, only people displaced after 9 April 2003 and registered as IDPs with the MoDM or the DDM will be entitled to register. There are no clear estimates on the number of IDPs not registered by MoDM. (IDP WG, June 2008)

[IDP Working Group Internal ly Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update \(June 2008\)](#), **IDP Working Group**, 27 June 2008

For the upcoming governorate elections later this year, IDPs will be able to vote for their governorate of origin, by either returning to their governorate or by casting an absentee vote in the governorate where they are currently displaced.

- To vote, all eligible voters must be registered. According to the Electoral Law, in order to be registered one has to be an Iraqi citizen, be legally competent, and be 18 years of age in the month of election.

- IDPs can register as voters where they are displaced at one of the 549 voter registration centres country wide from 1 July to 31 July. However, only people displaced after 9 April 2003 and registered as IDPs with the MoDM or the DDM will be entitled to register.

[Iraqi Elections and Displacement](#), **Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement**, 2 October 2008

Provincial elections are an important step toward national reconciliation in Iraq, but steps must be taken to ensure that the displaced – both refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) – are able to participate. A significant milestone was reached on 24 September when Iraq's Parliament adopted a provincial elections law. The agreement provides for elections before 31 January 2009 in 14 of the country's 18 governorates while elections in Kirkuk, the key sticking point in previous negotiations, along with the three Kurdish-controlled provinces, will be postponed..... This year the situation has been reversed: those living outside the country are not allowed to vote while provisions have been made for internally displaced Iraqis (those displaced by the violence after April 2003) to participate. Iraqis overseas – particularly those displaced since the start of the war – should be able to vote in the upcoming elections. And IDPs should be encouraged to register and to turn out to vote. While mechanisms are in place this time around to ensure IDP voting rights, the *Wall Street Journal* reports that only 100,000 IDPs have registered to vote in the provincial elections while other sources put the figure even lower. M Participation of Iraq's refugees and IDPs in the provincial elections is critical to a legitimate electoral process, national reconciliation, and regional stability.. Earlier this year, after all, the Iraqi government allocated just \$200 million – out of a \$70 billion budget -- for Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons who together represent around 20% of the country's population It is not only important that IDPs vote and are able to hold their leaders accountable. This is also a test of Iraq's democracy. It is vital that those most marginalized, and most affected by violence, are included in this process. It's important for the legitimacy of the elections and is a crucial step in moving toward national reconciliation.

[Iraq After the Surge II: The Need for A New Political Strategy](#), **International Crisis Group (ICG)**, 30 April 2008

This would be a departure from the past, as in January 2005 there were not yet significant refugee and internally displaced populations. The problem could be enormous: By current estimates, some four million Iraqis are either refugees or internally displaced. One challenge will be to organise provincial council elections for refugees. The other will be to encourage internally displaced Iraqis to vote. Although the surge has reduced sectarian violence in Baghdad and some other areas, it is unlikely that they could or would register in their original town or neighbourhood if these continue to be controlled by an enemy group (for example, a Sunni would be loath to register in a neighbourhood controlled by the Sadr movement). But to register in their new abode, they would have to de-register in their old one, which would present the same threat to their safety. A decision would, therefore, need to be taken to allow them to register in their safe haven without first de-registering in their original town or neighbourhood.

Special polling booths provided for IDPs around Fallujah (2005)

- Insecurity in a number of cities, including Baghdad, Mosul, al Fallujah and al Ramadi made verification of voter lists nearly impossible
- In other areas, including Mosul and Tikrit, registration centres were attacked
- Due to these acts of violence the Iraqi Electoral Commission allowed voters in Ninewa and Al Anbar to register and vote on election day
- According to the Commission, over 200,000 of Al Fallujah's IDPs will be allowed to register and vote at special polling places near the camps and villages where they sought refuge
- Locations of polling stations in areas where violence was high, including Fallujah, Ramadi and Samarra, were kept secret until voting day
- According to a representative of the Electoral Commission, a specialised group on elections would be sent to the camps where Fallujah's displaced were staying

HRW, 23 January 2005

"In many parts of the country the process has gone smoothly given the limited time, although citizens born in 1986 were accidentally left off the preliminary lists. In cities like Baghdad, Mosul, al-Falluja, and al-Ramadi, however, threats and violence by insurgents have made verification of the voter lists virtually impossible. In November, insurgents set fire to a Mosul warehouse with election registration papers. On January 2 unknown assailants destroyed two registration centers in eastern Tikrit with mortar fire. As Iraq's interim president Ghazi al-Yawir explained: 'There are areas where no one has been able to give out even one voter registration sheet.' [19]

In response, the Commission has decided to allow voters in Nineveh province, where Mosul is located, and in al-Anbar province, both to register and vote on election day. According to commission spokesman `Ayyar, the more than 200,000 residents of al-Falluja who were displaced during the U.S. offensive in November will be allowed to register and vote at special polling places established near the displacement camps and villages where many of them currently live. As of January 12, approximately 6,000 al-Falluja residents had returned to the town[20] and, according to a U.S. general, they will be able to vote there. [21]
[...]

On January 15 the electoral commission announced that voters must vote in the province where they are registered. [49] The one exception is the estimated 200,000 al-Falluja residents who were expelled from the town before and during the U.S. assault in November 2004. For them, the electoral commission is setting up special polling places in the villages and displacement camps where many of them live, such as in Abu Ghraib and al-`Amiriyya."

Endnotes

[19]"Electoral Process Faces Difficulty in Iraq," by Hamza Hendawi, Associated Press, December 2, 2004.

[20]Emergency Working Group, Fallujah Bulletin Update, January 18, 2005.

[21]"Battle-hit Falluja Set to Vote," BBC, January 19, 2005. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4186231.stm, accessed January 19, 2005.

[49]"New Steps Set For Security Around Iraq Vote," by Jeffrey Gettleman, New York Times, January 16, 2005

IRIN, 28 January 2005

"The Iraqi government said that the displaced would have the right to vote no matter where, they were along with those who had returned to Fallujah recently at polling stations under tight security from US troops and the Iraqi army.

Farid Ayar, deputy for the Higher Independent Electoral Commission (HIEC), told IRIN that elections would be held in Fallujah, Ramadi and Samarra, east of the capital, and Mosul, north of Baghdad, but the location of polling stations in these areas would be kept secret until the day, to prevent attacks.

A specialised group on elections would be sent early morning to the camps where Fallujah residents are staying to speed up the process, he added. There are some 18,000 candidates running for election on 256 political party lists.

Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, in a press conference in Salahdine city, 180 km from the capital, on Wednesday said that differences between Sunni and Shi'ites shouldn't be present in the country and called on people from Fallujah to participate in the election to show that they were part of Iraq."

Displaced in Kirkuk given right to vote locally (2005)

- Kurdish political parties threatened to boycott the elections because Kurdish residents of Kirkuk, expelled by the former regime in the 1980s and 1990s were not allowed to vote in the province
- Under pressure, the Iraqi Electoral Commission announced its decision that around 100,000 displaced Kurds could vote locally
- The decision was condemned by Arab and Turkmen leaders

HRW, 23 January 2005

"Until mid-January, Kurdish political parties were threatening to boycott the elections because Kurdish residents of Kirkuk who had been expelled from the area during Saddam Hussein's 'Arabization' program in the 1980s and 1990s were forbidden to vote in the provincial election. On January 14 the Electoral Commission announced that displaced Kurds from the area could vote locally. The decision allows an estimated 100,000 Kurds to vote for the al-Tamim provincial government. [45]

Arab and Turkmen leaders in Kirkuk condemned the decision, and one of the main Turkmen parties, the Iraqi Turkmen Front, threatened to boycott the elections. The decision, they say, will put Kurds in charge of the al-Tamim government during the coming year, when Kirkuk's territorial status in Iraq is scheduled to be determined. [46]"

[Footnote 45]"Kurds Reach Tentative Deal to End Boycott of Kirkuk Elections," *Agence France-Presse*, January 14, 2005, and "Kirkuk Election Deal Tips Power to Kurds, Angers Arabs, Turkmen," *Agence France-Presse*, January 15, 2005.

[Footnote 46]According to Article 58 of Iraq's Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), the resolution of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, will be deferred until after a new constitution is in effect and a census has been held.

Daily Star, 25 January 2005

"Saleh and other Kurdish leaders have aggressively pushed their case in Baghdad, playing brinkmanship politics to guarantee their new stature in Iraq. The Kurds played hardball in December and January over the issue of the multi-ethnic city of Kirkuk which the Kurds want to claim for their northern self-rule enclave. Saleh and other leading lights of the PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic party threatened an election boycott over the Iraqi government's failure to award the vote to those thousands of Kurds expelled from Kirkuk under Saddam.

But faced with growing Kurdish anger, the Iraqi government finally buckled and allowed an estimated 100,00 displaced Kurds from Kirkuk to vote in the city, effectively handing power in the community to the Kurds."

Kurdish Media, 25 January 2005

"The issue has a broader political significance since Kirkuk – which lies just outside the three provinces that make the Kurdish region - is something of a prize because of its oil resources. Both Kurds and Arabs would like to claim it as their own, while the Turkoman, a significant local minority, tries to secure their own position."

Displaced are particularly vulnerable to political manipulation (2004)

- IDPs are being pressured on a number of levels including being promised housing and money at the place of return, gangs charging IDPs for 'spots' in public buildings promising that high levels of compensation would be paid on eviction

UNHCR, 12 August 2004

"Due to the general political insecurity, IDPs are particularly vulnerable to political manipulation. IDP populations have in general been displaced due to ethnical or religious discrimination and at times to alter the ethnic balance in certain areas. With elections planned there is a high risk that displaced populations will again face push or pull factors for similar purposes. Examples that have already occurred range from cutting services to camps, promising housing and money at the place of return, to gangs charging IDPs for 'spots' in public buildings promising that high levels of compensation would be paid on eviction, or that buildings would be rehabilitated and provided for superior accommodation."

Displaced people form their own networks (2004)

- IDP groups have organised themselves and developed their own protection networks through community watch programs
- Baghdad's IDPs march on CPA offices in protest alleged order to leave abandoned government buildings in which they have been living for months
- Huge reconstruction efforts are planned to provide housing but could take up to 3 years
- IDPs tired of waiting believe this protest to be the 'beginning of [their] rights'
- Marsh Arabs organise council to participate in decisions of future of Wetlands and convene conference
- Conference provides the first opportunity for Marsh Arabs to present their ideas

UN Cluster 8/UNCT, August 2004

"The general insecurity faced by the population of Iraq as a whole, affects IDPs more due to their particular vulnerabilities and lack of community protection.

[...]

Increasingly, IDP groups have organised themselves and developed their own protection networks through community watch programs"

IRIN, 19 March 2004

"It looks like a peace rally or a spring celebration: green flags fluttering in the breeze, children running around, and posters calling for housing for all.

But talk to some of the 500 people who gathered on Wednesday in front of gates leading to US administrator Paul Bremer's office, and their protest is quite desperate. They say Iraqi police and US-led troops have told them to leave the abandoned government buildings around the city where they have been living for almost a year.

[...]

A Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) spokesman says there is no coalition policy requiring internally displaced people in Iraq to leave government buildings.

Illegal squatters in government buildings are addressed on a "case-by-case" basis, Dan Senior, a spokesman for the US-led CPA, told IRIN.

US troops asked some people to move out of a ministry building for security reasons, said Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, a spokesman for coalition troops. In general, troops leave displaced people living in government buildings alone, however, Kimmitt said.

'We don't want to continue to live in these places anyway. We believe that the (Iraqi) Governing Council should find a place for us,' said Najim Kalum, 40. 'But we don't trust the Governing Council to help us, so we came to talk to Bremer. All we want is a safe place to educate our children.'

However, with bigger issues to deal with, including the scheduled June 30 handover of sovereignty to Iraqis, the de facto government, the appointed Governing Council, apparently has not had time to address the issue of rapidly rising rents in some parts of the country. Meanwhile UN agencies that most commonly deal with internally displaced people in post-conflict situations are working on Iraqi issues from outside of the country.

Reconstruction experts believe up to 84,000 families may be without houses in Iraq, said Andy Bearpark, CPA director of operations and infrastructure. In an effort to address this Bremer recently signed seven housing contracts worth more than US \$100 million to start building new homes for people. The homes will be built mostly in the southern Iraqi towns of Basra, Muthanna, Najaf, Diyala, Karbala, Maysan and Ninawa.

When completed, the new construction is expected to put a permanent roof over the heads of 18,000 people, or more than 3,500 families. Each housing development will also include a mosque, a recreational area, a medical clinic, a shopping mall and schools.

The first construction project will start in Basra in coming days. Thousands of refugees who fled oppression under the former Saddam Hussein regime continue to return from Iran and Saudi Arabia to southern Iraq. Even though many stay with relatives, many towns near the border are bursting with new people. Displaced people in Baghdad also often come from southern Iraq.

[...]

However, people still living in temporary accommodations and shelters don't want to wait. They say if nothing is done soon, they'll create even more political problems. Housing projects just signed by Bremer could take as long as three years to complete.

'This is the beginning of our rights,' Kalum said. 'If they don't respond to us, we'll make a bigger demonstration, and things could be worse for them.'

Coalition Provisional Authority, 22 March 2004

"The founding conference of the Maysan Marsh Arab Council marked the first time that Iraq's Marsh Arabs publicly expressed their wishes and concerns for the future of their marshland environment. According to a report from the Maysan Province office of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), several hundred marshland residents gathered in the city of Amarah, Iraq, on

March 20 to meet with scientific experts and government officials regarding projects to restore portions of Iraq's wetlands.

'If you are going to talk about the marshes, you must talk about the people, the villages there,' said Iraqi Governing Council member Abdul Karim Al Muhammadawi. Al Muhammadawi earned the moniker 'Prince of the Marshes' for his role in leading the resistance against Saddam Hussein's regime within Iraq's southern provinces for 17 years.

The conference provided a forum for marshland residents to discuss numerous issues surrounding proposed plans to re-flood parts of the vast network of wetlands along the Tigris River basin in southern Iraq. These included not only environmental issues but also concerns regarding health, education and agricultural and cultural matters relevant to the historically marginalized Marsh Arab population.

According to the CPA report, conference participants discussed strategies for managing returning refugee populations, the allocation of arable land and the provision of basic utilities, health care and education. In recent testimony before the U.S. Congress, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) officials studying the feasibility of marshland restoration observed that the residents 'ask for social services that have never been accessible to them in the past but ought to be expected of any representative civil society in the future.'

The Maysan Conference marked the first opportunity for local marsh residents to articulate these wishes in an official public forum. According to the CPA report, the purpose of the newly founded Marsh Arab Council is 'to provide a voice for the Marsh Arabs of Maysan so their interests and concerns will be factored into national and international plans that affect the marshes.'

The report indicated that this was only the first in a series of meetings aimed at bringing local residents into the dialogue regarding the future of their region. Most of the marshlands were drained by the former regime during the 1990s in order to deprive opposition Shi'a forces of safe havens. Azzam Alwash, manager of the Iraq Foundation's New Eden project, said in recent hearings before the U.S. Congress, 'In a few short years, Saddam drained them to allow access for his tanks to establish control in the area. After they were dried, the marshes were burned and villages were destroyed.'

Alwash estimated that as many as 300,000 residents died or fled their homes during the period."

Obstacles and Issues faced by IDPs in participation of National elections (2005)

- Though voters are entitled to cast their ballots in the national assembly election regardless of where they are in Iraq, internally displaced voters face a number of practical obstacles.
- Numerous observers raised concerns that IDPs would not have been able to vote due to lost documentation. Additional problems arise in the governorate elections, which lack provisions for absentee voting.
- Under pressure, the Iraqi Electoral Commission announced its decision that around 100,000 displaced Kurds expelled in the 1980s and 1990s could vote locally. The decision was condemned by Arab and Turkmen leaders
- Sunni parties called for a boycott of national assembly elections. In Fallajuh, IRIN reported that insurgents prohibited persons from voting and threatened those who do will be targeted.
- Only 2% of eligible voters in central Al Anbar province cast ballots and only 30% in Salah al Dine province. Insecurity also significantly marred the campaign of election candidates.

- Insecurity in a number of cities, including Baghdad, Mosul, al Fallujah and al Ramadi made verification of voter lists nearly impossible. In other areas, including Mosul and Tikrit, registration centres were attacked
- Many of the more than 200,000 people recently displaced from Falluja were unable to register to vote before the deadline.

IRIN, 15 February 2005

"IECI [*Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq*] officials told IRIN that internally displaced people (IDPs) from the cities of Fallujah, some 60 km from Baghdad, and Kirkuk and Mosul in the north were able to participate due to the improvised polling stations in the areas in the capital or in temporary camps. Around 6,000 IDPs from areas around Fallujah are said to have cast their vote. Farid Ayar of the IECI told IRIN that only 2 percent of eligible voters in the central al-Anbar province cast ballots and only 30 percent in the Salahdine province, some 180 km from Baghdad. Around 100,000 Kurdish IDPs uprooted from the Kirkuk area were permitted to vote locally following a decision by the Iraqi authorities in mid-January. Exceptional arrangements were also made for over 200,000 people displaced from Fallujah, he said. Numerous observers had raised concerns that many IDPs would not have been able to vote because they had lost the required personal documentation, either while fleeing or as a result of destruction of their homes.

Brookings Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 25 January 2005

In addition to arranging out-of-country voting for Iraqi expatriates ("Iraq Expatriates Sign Up to Vote in 5 Cities in U.S.," front page, Jan. 18), it is critical to ensure that the one million Iraqis displaced within the country are able to vote on Jan. 30. Though voters are entitled to cast their ballots in the national assembly election regardless of where they are in Iraq, internally displaced voters face a number of practical obstacles. Many of the more than 200,000 people recently displaced from Falluja were unable to register to vote before the deadline. Other internally displaced persons have lost personal documentation while fleeing or as a result of destruction to their homes. Additional problems arise in the governorate elections, which lack provisions for absentee voting. The disenfranchisement of Iraq's displaced persons will pose challenges to their return and also raises questions about the legitimacy of the electoral process over all. Both of these consequences could have significant repercussions for long-term stability in Iraq."

HRW, 23 January 2005

"In many parts of the country the process has gone smoothly given the limited time, although citizens born in 1986 were accidentally left off the preliminary lists. In cities like Baghdad, Mosul, al-Falluja, and al-Ramadi, however, threats and violence by insurgents have made verification of the voter lists virtually impossible. In November, insurgents set fire to a Mosul warehouse with election registration papers. On January 2 unknown assailants destroyed two registration centers in eastern Tikrit with mortar fire. As Iraq's interim president Ghazi al-Yawir explained: 'There are areas where no one has been able to give out even one voter registration sheet.'

In response, the Commission has decided to allow voters in Nineveh province, where Mosul is located, and in al-Anbar province, both to register and vote on election day. According to commission spokesman `Ayyar, the more than 200,000 residents of al-Falluja who were displaced during the U.S. offensive in November will be allowed to register and vote at special polling places established near the displacement camps and villages where many of them currently live. As of January 12, approximately 6,000 al-Falluja residents had returned to the town and, according to a U.S. general, they will be able to vote there. [...] On January 15 the electoral commission announced that voters must vote in the province where they are registered. The one exception is the estimated 200,000 al-Falluja residents who were expelled from the town before and during the U.S. assault in November 2004. For them, the electoral commission is setting up special polling places in the villages and displacement camps where many of them live,....."

"Until mid-January, Kurdish political parties were threatening to boycott the elections because Kurdish residents of Kirkuk who had been expelled from the area during Saddam Hussein's 'Arabization' program in the 1980s and 1990s were forbidden to vote in the provincial election. On January 14 the Electoral Commission announced that displaced Kurds from the area could vote locally. The decision allows an estimated 100,000 Kurds to vote for the al-Tamim provincial government. Arab and Turkmen leaders in Kirkuk condemned the decision, and one of the main Turkmen parties, the Iraqi Turkmen Front, threatened to boycott the elections. The decision, they say, will put Kurds in charge of the al-Tamim government during the coming year, when Kirkuk's territorial status in Iraq is scheduled to be determined."

See Also:

Daily Star, 25 January 2005

Kurdish Media, 25 January 2005

IRIN, 28 January 2005

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

General

Registration of IDPs across the country undertaken by MoDM and Kurdistan Regional Government yet difficulties and obstacles persist (2004-2008)

- Governorate-level authorities across the country restrict IDP entry and registration due to security, economic, and even demographic concerns. A varying selection of documents are required in each governorate, including the original residence card, PDS card, the national ID, and a letter of approval from city council members, the mayor, local police, and/or MoDM. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Registration is tightly restricted in areas with high levels of ethno-religious tensions, such as Kirkuk. In addition, proper documentation is often difficult to obtain from the governorate of origin, and sometimes registration is restricted to those with an advanced degree or professional qualifications. (IOM, 30 June 2008; UNHCR, August 2008)
- In Babylon and Kerbala, only IDPs with origins or relatives from the governorate may enter. In Basrah, Missan, and Wassit, IDPs can enter but are not allowed to register and remain unless they are displaced from crisis areas, or particularly dangerous in Iraq. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- MoDM registration continues in all the fifteen central and southern governorates. The Kurdistan Regional Government registers IDPs in Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. (IOM, 30 June 2008)
- Some IDPs also reported that they were not registered due to sectarian, ethnic, or tribal bias. Non-registration of IDPs is a humanitarian concern because it limits their access to basic services and legal documentation for PDS food rations. (IOM, 11 January 2008)
- As of 2004, reports underlined that the biggest challenge for IDPs in terms of documentation was related to ration cards to access food. Newly displaced persons face delays in registering with the public distribution centre as food cards are tied to one location (UN Cluster 8/UNCT, August 2004)
- In January 2007, surveys of the IDP communities revealed that 97% hold nationality certificates, 97% have identification cards, 74% of families hold marriage documents, 47% have birth certificates, and 18% have death certificates. (IOM, 2 February 2007)

UNHCR, August 2008:

"The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) is the responsible government body for registering IDPs in the all 15 southern and central governorates. Registration practices are not uniform and vary from place to place depending on local conditions. Therefore, registration can be bureaucratic and/or discriminatory, for example in some areas MoDM is registering only IDPs originating from "hot spot" areas. As for Kurdistan Region, the registration is undertaken by the respective Security /Residency Directorates, and lately also by the Department of Displacement in the respective Governorates. In 2007, a directive was issued by the central Government to lift restrictions on IDPs' entry and registration and, as a consequence, restrictions eased to some extent. Still, the registration process with MoDM remains often bureaucratic as IDP families are required to produce a range of documents: PDS card, nationality certificate and photograph of the head of household, civil ID card for all family members, housing card from the

place of origin and letter of approval from the local mayor or *mukhtar*, the city council and/or the police.

Monitoring undertaken by UNHCR in March 2008 revealed that three quarters or more of the IDPs in south and central Iraq have registered with MoDM or other local authorities. In the three Northern Governorates, most IDPs are registered with the General Directorate of Security (Governorates of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil) or the local authorities (Governorate of Dahuk), who forward the information to the General Directorate of Security.

While monitoring showed that most IDPs appear to be registered, there is an undetermined number of IDPs. For example, the number of unregistered IDPs in the Governorate of Thi-Qar totals 968 families (cut-off date 30 June 2008). that did not register for various reasons, as explained below. Restrictions as well as entry/registration requirements in the different governorates are presented in the following table:"

| Governorates | Restrictions/entry requirements | Restrictions/registration requirements |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| <u>Southern Governorates</u> | | |
| Babylon | As of 12 May 2008, authorities do not allow IDPs to enter unless they originate from the Governorate or are professionals. | Anyone can register once they have entered Babylon. |
| Basrah | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. IDPs need to pass a security check and write a declaration taking full responsibility for him/herself. |
| Diwaniya | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Kerbala | No restrictions of entry; cannot bring furniture without approval. | Registration only of IDPs who (alternatively): -originate from Kerbala; -are eligible to transfer public service job; -own property in Kerbala; -are skilled; -are able to invest a certain sum of money; or -are considered a severe humanitarian case. In addition, a guarantee letter is required from a Kerbala resident. |
| Missan | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. |
| Muthanna | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions, but MoDM asked all IDPs to renew their registration due to incomplete or "questionable" registration. |
| Najaf | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Thi-Qar | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" can be registered. In addition, a sponsor is required. |
| Wassit | No entry restrictions. | Only IDPs coming from a "hot spot" |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| | | can be registered. Previous registrations are in the process of being cancelled and IDPs need to re-register. This is done due to rather random registrations done previously. Several IDPs may face difficulties to re-register due to the lack of documents. |
| <u>Central Governorates</u> | | |
| Anbar | Access to the Governorate or relocation within the Governorate requires a sponsor, who bears the responsibility that they do not pose a security risk. IDPs must also bring documents proving that they are from a “hot area”. To enter Fallujah, a special ID from the Iraqi Security Forces is required. | No registration restrictions, but MoDM works only in Ramadi, making the office inaccessible to many due to restrictions on the freedom of movement and distance; hence, most IDPs do not register. |
| Baghdad | No entry restrictions issued by local authorities. | No registration restrictions, but no registration of IDPs has taken place since November 2007. |
| Diyala | No entry restrictions to most districts in Diyala. | Only IDPs coming from a “hot spot” may register. In Khanaqin District, non-Kurd IDPs only get registered if they can prove that they originate from the area. |
| Kirkuk | No entry restrictions but border checkpoints control IDPs and investigate their reasons for relocation. | Both DDM and MoDM carry out registration in Kirkuk, but only IDPs providing proof of a threat may be registered. MoDM also asks to prove that the IDP originates from Kirkuk. Kurds fleeing “disputed areas” face difficulties to register. |
| Mosul | No entry restrictions. | No registration restrictions. |
| Salah Al-Din | No restrictions except Shurqat District where a special permission from the police is required. | Registration is restricted for IDPs coming from Samarra District as well as Anbar and Diyala Governorates for security reasons. IDPs from these areas need a sponsor to register. |
| <u>Northern Governorates</u> | | |
| Dahuk | Arab IDPs single men not originating from the Kurdistan Region need a Dahuk resident to sponsor them at the border. No sponsor is required for Kurds and Christians. Families do not need a sponsor. | A security clearance is needed if the sponsor is not a relative. |
| Erbil | All IDPs not originating from the area need an Erbil resident to sponsor them at the border. | A sponsor is needed to obtain a permission to remain in the Governorate. |
| Sulaymaniyah | Admission is generally not restricted and does not require a sponsor. There are special procedures applicable to persons wishing to relocate to the District of Kalar. | A sponsor is required to obtain a permission to remain. Persons originating from Kirkuk or Khanaqin in Diyala, including Kurds, Arabs, |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>An IDP first has to approach the security office in person and submit a petition requesting permission to relocate. The applicant needs a Kurdish sponsor who resides in Kalar. The sponsorship letter needs to be ratified by the Notary Public Office in Kalar. Only after these conditions have been met, the security officer will provide the permission to relocate and to bring family members and belongings. Any applicant without a sponsor from Kalar will be denied permission to relocate. Once the IDP has moved to Kalar and rented a house, a letter from the Mukhtar (neighbourhood representative) needs to be submitted to the security office to confirm the IDP's address in Kalar. However, persons from "disputed areas" claimed by the PUK, i.e. Kirkuk and Khanaqin in the Governorate of Diyala, are generally denied entry to the Governorate for political and demographic reasons, unless they wish to come for a visit only. While Kurds are not permitted entry in order to maintain a Kurdish presence in these formerly arabized areas, Arabs, Turkmen, Yazidis and members of other religious or ethnic groups from disputed areas are also denied entry as the authorities do not want to be confronted with the accusation of changing the demographics by relocating non-Kurds from these areas. In that case, they are allowed entry but are not able to bring their belongings or a large amount of luggage with them.</p> | <p>Turkmen and members of other ethnic or religious groups, are not able to stay for demographic and political reasons. Exceptions are made for Christian families with a recommendation from the church.</p> |
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International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008:

"Governorate-level authorities across the country restrict IDP entry and registration due to security, economic, and even demographic concerns. In general, IDPs must go through a great deal of bureaucracy to register, sometimes traveling to five different offices. A varying selection of documents are required in each governorate, including the original residence card, PDS card, the national ID, and a letter of approval from city council members, the mayor, local police, and/or MoDM. Registration is tightly restricted in areas with high levels of ethno-religious tensions, such as Kirkuk. In addition, proper documentation is often difficult to obtain from the governorate of origin, and sometimes registration is restricted to those with an advanced degree or professional qualifications. Many are not allowed to bring furniture with them, if they are allowed to enter. In Babylon and Kerbala, only IDPs with origins or relatives from the governorate may enter. In Basrah, Missan, and Wassit, IDPs can enter but are not allowed to register and remain unless they are displaced from "hot spots," or particularly dangerous and volatile areas, in Iraq. In Salah al-Din, the governor has ordered that IDPs from Samarra district and Anbar and Diyala

governorates leave the governorate due to concern that they are security risks. IDPs who do not originate from Dahuk, Erbil, or Sulaymaniyah must be sponsored by a resident from these governorates. The borders of Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah continue to be tightly controlled to maintain the relatively high level of stable security in the region. In some cases IDPs may be turned away, and they are generally not permitted to bring furniture into Dahuk with them."

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 12 February 2008:

"Restriction on freedom of movement is imposed by all parties to the conflict, including MNF-I (during Security Operations including sieges of neighborhoods, checkpoints, etc.), Government of Iraq, insurgents/militias and non-state actors. To date, 11 governorates have imposed measures restricting entry for those seeking refuge and registration procedures for displaced;"

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 11 January 2008:

"In response to security concerns or strained resources, authorities in some governorates restrict IDP entry or registration. In 2007 restrictions did ease somewhat as some authorities responded to a directive from the central Baghdad government to lift restrictions. MoDM registration continues in all the fifteen central and southern governorates. The Kurdistan Regional Government registers IDPs in Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. In some areas, MoDM is limiting the scope of its registration, registering only those IDPs from "hot spot" areas. Some IDPs also reported that they were not registered due to sectarian, ethnic, or tribal bias. Non-registration of IDPs is a humanitarian concern because it limits their access to basic services and legal documentation for PDS food rations."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"The majority consider food rations through the PDS as a main source of food; however, reliance on food rations varies among them due to the following reasons:

1. Not all families have a PDS card, either due to delays in transferring rations cards or because they are not eligible to register where they have settled.
2. Food rations are insufficient, incomplete and received irregularly for almost half of the caseloads."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"Ninety-seven percent hold nationality certificates, 97% have identification cards, 74% of families hold marriage documents, 47% have birth certificates, and 18% have death certificates. Fifteen percent also hold Iraqi passports. The biggest challenge the displaced faced in 2006 regarding documentation was transferring their PDS ration cards to their new locations. Requirements varied throughout the governorates, but many were required to return to their place of origin to de-register, an impossibility for the majority, who fled from highly unstable areas."

UN Cluster 8/UNCT, August 2004, p.9

"In recent years, **documentation** in Iraq has been closely linked to the monthly food ration. Many IDPs were excluded from the monthly food ration at their place of displacement because their documentation stated their distribution place was elsewhere. Others were reluctant to hand in their old cards since it serves as evidence of previous residence. While the majority of the registration problems have been solved with the intervention of Cluster 8, there are still cases where IDPs are not registered. Advocacy and consultations to address this are on-going with the relevant ministries."

See also (in sources, below):

UNHCR, 12 August 2004

IOM, September 2004

IDPs and returnees reported to have faced difficulties in obtaining documentation required (2005-2008)

- IDPs face problems to replace lost documents due to difficulties as result of security access to government issuing bodies, direct and indirect financial costs associated with documentation, and lengthy procedures and requirements. Access due to security concerns has been a problem in Governorates of Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala and Wassit. (UNHCR, August 2008)
- IDPs may also face problems or delays when applying for documents since civil status departments and nationality departments often lack employees, experience and training and have limited or no access to relevant legislation and instructions. Bureaucracy and, slow legal procedures leads to considerable delays in issuance of documents. (UNHCR August 2008)
- Among the most important legal documents are the civil status identification document and the Iraqi nationality certificate. The civil status identification document is the personal identification card and is used in official transactions to obtain any other documents or record. It is a requisite document to obtain passports and PDS cards and to access health care, employment, education, housing and social welfare. (UNHCR August 2008)
- In order to obtain this document, many documents need to be submitted, including a standard application form, the PDS card, birth certificate or deed, copy of family registration entry or civil status identification document for any registered relative (e.g. father or grandfather), testimony by the local mayor, personal photographs and fiscal stamps. (UNHCR August 2008)
- Another obstacle that in particular displaced persons face with regard to obtaining the civil status identification document and the nationality certificate is that they must show up in person as it is not permitted by law to appoint a third parties, even if they were issued a power of attorney. (UNHCR August 2008)
- In 2005, UNHCR underlined that returnees face difficulty in obtaining documentation required upon return despite the existence of legal advice centres and may have difficulty to do to costs related to transportation and application fees
- Legal services are unable to cope with the large numbers of people returning in the south. UNHCR monitoring indicates that lack of documentation has created serious problems for returnees, like inability to access food and education. Foreign spouses may also face problems obtaining documentation

Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq: Registration and Documentation Issues, UNHCR, August 2008:

"In practice however, many IDPs face problems to replace lost documents. For example, in several Governorates in the Centre and the South, the difficult security situation prevented IDPs from accessing government offices to have new documents issued. On the other hand, the security situation often also had a bearing on government offices' functioning. In five of the nine Southern Governorates, high costs are reported to be an obstacle for IDPs' access to legal documentation. Obtaining documents does not only involve the fees for the documents but also indirect costs such as transportation costs in order to access the place of issuance. In most cases, documents can only be obtained if other documents are already available or otherwise be obtained first, which can involve lengthy (and costly) procedures. This is in particular a problem for IDPs, who have often lost documents.

Among the most important legal documents are the civil status identification document and the Iraqi nationality certificate. The civil status identification document is the personal identification card for every Iraqi citizen and it is most frequently used in official transactions to obtain any other specific document or extract of record. It is a requisite document to obtain passports and PDS cards and to access medicine/health care, employment (in certain areas), education, housing and social welfare. The Civil Status Law No. 65 of 1972, as amended by Law No. 9 of 1974, and the Civil Status Regulation No. 32 of 1974 regulate the issuance of the civil status identification document in Iraq. In order to obtain this document, many documents need to be submitted, including a standard application form, the PDS card, birth certificate or deed, copy of family registration entry or civil status identification document for any registered relative (e.g. father or grandfather), testimony by the local mayor, personal photographs and fiscal stamps.

The nationality certificate is a document proving nationality of a natural person as a citizen of the state. The issuance of the nationality certificate is regulated by the Iraqi Nationality Law No. 27 of 2006. In order to obtain a nationality certificate, the procedures and documents required are mostly the same as described for the civil status identification document. In addition, the applicant needs to produce the nationality certificate for his/her father, brother, paternal grandfather or uncle. If this is not possible, the nationality officer will record the testimony and confirmation of the applicant's clan members to verify information and documents provided by the applicant. It is crucial to hold a nationality certificate in order to access legal, economic, civil, political, social and cultural rights. Also, the nationality certificate is a prerequisite document to obtain birth, death and marriage certificates.

Another obstacle that in particular displaced persons face with regard to obtaining the civil status identification document and the nationality certificate is that they must show up in person as it is not permitted by law to appoint a third parties, even if they were issued a power of attorney. In addition, persons that have been denaturalized due to the former government's policies and who do not have extracts of records proving their status as Iraqi nationals are required to apply in Baghdad, thus incurring financial costs and security risks due to transportation costs and the unstable security situation in Central Iraq.

IDPs may also face problems or delays when applying for these documents as civil status departments and nationality departments often lack employees, experience and training (e.g. there is a lack of employees with a legal background) and have limited or no access to relevant legislation and instructions. Bureaucracy and, slow legal procedures involved in processing applications in some civil status/nationality departments may lead to considerable delays in issuance of documents.

In addition, there is no common electronic database or registry for civil ID documents, nationality certificates or other basic documentation like birth certificates, marriage contracts and death certificates. Only manual records are kept, which makes it difficult to obtain information when registered in another governorate. Also, many records are incomplete or damaged. Documents relating to birth, marriage and death are essential, *inter alia*, to obtain/access passports, nationality certificates, PDS cards, alimony for divorcees, custody, social welfare and inheritance.

Given the many obstacles and lengthy procedures involved in getting legal documents, there is a market for forged documents and most legal documents are easy to forge because of poor printing quality and technical specifications. Passports are particularly prone to forgery as there are not sufficient plain passports to meet the high demand. PDS cards have also reportedly been forged as for many the public food distribution is their main source of food. However, the main problems faced by IDPs in relation to PDS cards are delays or inability to transfer their PDS cards from one governorate to another. A problem faced by IDPs in relation to passports is that these can exclusively be issued in the governorate of origin.

In the absence of a current and reliable voter registry, the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC), responsible for conducting all elections and referendums in Iraq, has begun to convert data from the PDS into a voter registry. In order for post-2003 IDPs to be entitled to vote in absentia in the forthcoming provincial elections (to be held in 2009), they must be registered with MoDM and the Ministry of Trade (in the Centre and South) or provide their PDS card from the governorate of origin or a special certificate from the governorate office of the Ministry of Trade of the Kurdistan Region."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.132-133:

"Returnees often face difficulties in obtaining necessary the documentation upon return, though there are regional differences with the authorities in the three Northern Governorates having efficient mechanisms in place, supported by legal advice centres operated by the authorities. Returnees may face difficulties to afford the costs related to transportation and application fees to obtain necessary documentation, in particular as several visits in a given Directorate may be required. Also in the South, independently-run Legal Aid and Information Centres (LAICs) play a crucial role in facilitating the process of obtaining necessary documentation; however, in view of large numbers of returnees in Southern Iraq, the existing network of LAICs is insufficient. UNHCR Returnee Monitoring showed that lack of documentation is the basis for a series of other problems such as access to food rations, education and employment, thereby seriously hampering the reintegration process of returnees. Foreign spouses of returnees, mainly from Iran, at times face problems obtaining the necessary documentation (e.g. residency permit, food ration card) as it takes considerable time and effort to register the marriage, in particular in the South and Centre. This leaves foreign spouses and children with no access to public services. Newly displaced persons may face delays in registering with the PDS centre in the place of displacement as the food ration card allows food rations only in a particular location. The transfer of food ration cards is often delayed by bureaucratic procedures, sometimes leaving families without food for months. It has been reported that the Ministry of Trade has now addressed this issue."

See Also:

The Independent High Electoral Commission, [FACT SHEET: Registration for Absentee Voting for Internally Displaced Persons in the Governorates of the Kurdistan Region](#)

Statelessness and Arabisation: many Iraqis stripped of their nationality and ethnicity also face difficulties in obtaining documentation (2004-2008)

- Up to half a million Iraqis (including Farsi Kurds and Arab Shi'ites) were stripped of their nationality by the previous government and expelled to Iran. Bidouns (stateless nomads) live on either side of the Iraq/Kuwait border. (UNHCR, August 2004)
- Former government also called upon all non-Arab Iraqis over 18 the right to change their ethnic identity to that of Arab or face displacement according to legislation passed in 2001. Many Kurds and Turkoman families in Mosul and Kirkuk who refused were consequently expelled from areas under its control.
- For stateless Iraqis to obtain a nationality certificate, difficulties are said to remain. Nationality certificates remain vital in order to access legal, economic, civil, political, social and cultural rights. Also, the nationality certificate is a prerequisite document to obtain birth, death and marriage certificates.
- The issuance of the nationality certificate is regulated by the Iraqi Nationality Law No. 27 of 2006. In order to obtain it, many documents need to be submitted, procedures remain lengthy, and entails indirect and direct costs. In addition, denaturalized persons who do not

have extracts of records proving their status as Iraqi nationals are required to apply in Baghdad. (UNHCR August 2008)

- In the PUK-area, a committee assesses cases comprised of representatives of the Governor's Office, the Ministry of Interior and prominent Faili Kurds, while in the KDP-administered areas an interview at the Ministry of Interior will be conducted. In 2005, persons that would de jure recover their nationality because of the retroactive cancelling of Decision No. 666 have, at this stage only received Interim Civil Status Identity Cards. (UNHCR, October 2005)

UNHCR, August 2008:

"The nationality certificate is a document proving nationality of a natural person as a citizen of the state. The issuance of the nationality certificate is regulated by the Iraqi Nationality Law No. 27 of 2006. In order to obtain a nationality certificate, the procedures and documents required are mostly the same as described for the civil status identification document. In addition, the applicant needs to produce the nationality certificate for his/her father, brother, paternal grandfather or uncle. If this is not possible, the nationality officer will record the testimony and confirmation of the applicant's clan members to verify information and documents provided by the applicant. It is crucial to hold a nationality certificate in order to access legal, economic, civil, political, social and cultural rights. Also, the nationality certificate is a prerequisite document to obtain birth, death and marriage certificates.

Another obstacle that in particular displaced persons face with regard to obtaining the civil status identification document and the nationality certificate is that they must show up in person as it is not permitted by law to appoint a third parties, even if they were issued a power of attorney. In addition, persons that have been denaturalized due to the former government's policies and who do not have extracts of records proving their status as Iraqi nationals are required to apply in Baghdad, thus incurring financial costs and security risks due to transportation costs and the unstable security situation in Central Iraq. IDPs may also face problems or delays when applying for these documents as civil status departments and nationality departments often lack employees, experience and training (e.g. there is a lack of employees with a legal background) and have limited or no access to relevant legislation and instructions. Bureaucracy and, slow legal procedures involved in processing applications in some civil status/nationality departments may lead to considerable delays in issuance of documents.

In addition, there is no common electronic database or registry for civil ID documents, nationality certificates or other basic documentation like birth certificates, marriage contracts and death certificates. Only manual records are kept, which makes it difficult to obtain information when registered in another governorate. Also, many records are incomplete or damaged. Documents relating to birth, marriage and death are essential, *inter alia*, to obtain/access passports, nationality certificates, PDS cards, alimony for divorcees, custody, social welfare and inheritance."

UNHCR, October 2005:

"Stateless persons originating from the three Northern Governorates have to provide documents showing their first degree relatives' Iraqi nationality in order to recover their nationality. As it is well known that Faili Kurds have often been stripped of all documentation and may therefore not be able to present the requested documents, local authorities have established mechanisms to review such cases. In the PUK-area, a committee comprised of representatives of the Governor's Office, the Ministry of Interior and prominent Faili Kurds has been established, while in the KDP-administered areas an interview at the Ministry of Interior will be conducted. Based on these interviews, a stateless person will be reinstated with his/her nationality if Iraqi origin can be confirmed.[...] Persons that would de jure recover their nationality because of the retroactive

cancelling of Decision No. 666 have, at this stage only received Interim Civil Status Identity Cards from the Civil Status Offices after having provided proof of their former Iraqi nationality (e.g. through the presentation of old Iraqi IDs, birth registration certificates or after the authorities' checking of the nationality registries in coordination with the Nationality Directorate within the Ministry of Interior). Furthermore, because the central authorities have not been providing sufficient blank certificates to the different governorates, the issuance of these documents is delayed. Iraqis whose Iraqi nationality was withdrawn for political, religious, racial or sectarian reasons and who have, according to Article 11(d) TAL the right to reclaim their nationality, are currently not able to do so due to the lack of any procedures in this regard."

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

"Statelessness is a major issue in Iraq. Up to half a million Iraqis (including Faily Kurds and Arab Shi'ites) were stripped of their nationality by the previous government and expelled to Iran. Meanwhile, Bidouns (stateless nomads) live on either side of the Iraq/Kuwait border. In addition, children of mixed marriages (particularly in cases where the mother is Iraqi and the father of another nationality) may face problems if they wish to return to Iraq, while women (such as those who have married men of another nationality) may face particular obstacles when they wish to return. In the recent past, nationality issues have not been decided in courts, and nationality laws frequently revised, with the result that indigenous expertise on the subject has declined."

KTRS, 27 Jan 2002:

"On the 6th September 2001, in an unprecedented move, the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council – which ranks higher than the so-called Iraqi Parliament – passed Resolution No. 199 giving all non-Arab Iraqis over 18 the right to change their ethnic identity to that of Arab. Such a decision is contrary to all the principles of human rights and is politically motivated. Its purpose is to compel all non-Arabs in Iraq to adopt an Arab ethnic identity. This law legalizes the regime's policy of ethnic cleansing directed against all Kurds, Turkmen and Assyro-Chaldeans. For decades, the Iraqi regime has continued to deport tens of thousands of Kurdish families from that part of Kurdistan still under its control to either the Kurdish controlled area of Kurdistan or to southern Iraq and has confiscated their properties and belongings, including their identity cards. The choice facing these people was deportation or the enforced change of ethnic identity. This law, which legalizes such acts, is in direct violation even of the Iraqi Provisional Constitution of 1970, Article 19/A of which states that all Iraqis are equal, regardless of ethnic language, religion or social class. "

RFE/RL, 14 September 2001:

"[...] in August 2001, the Ministry of the Interior sent a document to the Department of Statistics demanding that during the expulsion of any family from Kirkuk, false names and numbers should be written on the documents that are usually issued for them by the governorate office to the checkpoints, and that the documents should not be registered in their records.[The Sulaymaniyah Kurdish newspaper] 'Kurdistani Nuwe' believes that the intention behind these measures is to destroy any evidence that the Iraqi government has expelled Kurdish families from Kirkuk in case of accountability by official sides, particularly the United Nations. In this way, Iraq could easily deny the allegation."

USCR, 2000:

"In 1999, Baghdad continued its systematic efforts to 'Arabize' the predominantly Kurdish districts of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Sinjar at the edge of government-controlled Iraq near the Kurdish-controlled zone. To solidify control of this strategically and economically vital oil-rich region, the government expelled Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkomans—at times, entire communities—from these cities and surrounding areas. At the same time, the government offered financial and housing incentives to Sunni Arabs to persuade them to move to Kirkuk and other cities targeted for Arabization. New Arab settlements were constructed on expropriated Kurdish land holdings. In 1999, Baghdad gave a name to its Arabization program: 'nationality correction.' The government

began requiring ethnic minority civil servants to sign a form correcting their nationality. Persons refusing to sign the forms—for example, a Kurd refusing to 'correct' his nationality and list himself as an Arab rather than a Kurd—would be subject to expulsion to northern Iraq or the no-fly zone in the south. During the year, Kurds and Turkoman families in Mosul and Kirkuk were reportedly expelled to northern Iraq for failure to sign the forms. Although the Arabization campaign was not publicized, sources in northern Iraq reported that more than 2,000 people were expelled to the northern region between January and November."

See Also:

Home Office Border and Immigration Agency, [Country of Origin Information Report](#), 30 April 2007

ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

General

Sectarian nature of conflict affecting mixed communities, family unity, and identity. (2006-2008)

- The sectarian nature of the conflict has profoundly affected the ethnic, sectarian and social structure of Iraqi society, straining a society rooted in extended family, tribal and communal connections. (Middle East Institute, July 2008)
- The steady fragmentation of Iraq into religiously divided zones is presenting thousands of mixed couples and extended families of different sectarian denominations with considerable strain. (Telegraph, 12 November 2006; Iraq Update, 24 March 2006)
- These strains, fueled by displacement, separation and fear, are beginning to tear apart such families, weakening bonds that for many Iraqis hold the hope of sectarian reconciliation. In the absence of security, Iraqis are protecting themselves by turning to their sects and their tribes (Telegraph, 12 November 2006)
- There are no official statistics available on number of mixed marriages. Some report estimate that nearly a third of Iraqi marriages are unions between members of different sectarian or ethnic communities. (The Washington Post, 4 March 2007)

Middle East Institute, July 2008:

"Introduction *Phebe Marr*: ... The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is even more difficult to track, but is estimated at over two million. Much of this recent displacement has taken place in mixed areas such as Baghdad and in central provinces like Diyala where, traditionally, Arabs and Kurds, Shi'a and Sunnis often lived in the same neighborhood or in close proximity. This population has probably shifted to areas where family members or those of a similar sect or ethnic group can provide protection. Were this population not to return to its original location — a highly likely prospect — Iraq's ethnic and sectarian map, and hence the country's political and social structure, would be profoundly affected.

Forcible Eviction in Iraq: Past Practices and Current Crisis, *Nasir Ahmed Al-Samaraie*... The *status quo* in Iraq today is marked by communal terrorization, threats to adhere and submit or to risk becoming a "legitimate" target, and non-willingness to accept and tolerate others as equals. Thus the current eviction phenomenon is but a continuation of the previous tragic experiences that have been widely reported and condemned. The ethnic and sectarian ghettos that have been established to control violence hamper the possibility of return. It is also hampered by the apparent absence of a workable arrangement for a long-lasting solution. The current situation in Iraq — that of a divided society — compels the evictees to stay away, a bitter choice. The continuation of this trend will eventually threaten the breakdown of society, which is rooted in the extended family and tribal and communal connections."

The Telegraph, 12 November 2006:

"The steady fragmentation of Iraq into religiously divided zones is presenting thousands of mixed Sunni-Shia couples with an impossible dilemma: where can they safely live together? As formal partition of the country becomes a more likely prospect by the day, moving up the political agenda as a way of stemming the bloodshed, people like Mustapha and Zeinab face a stark

choice. Mustapha, 42, an engineer, is a Sunni Muslim while his wife, Zeinab, 36, is Shia, and together they have three young children. The family has already been forced to move from Sunni-dominated west Baghdad to the relatively mixed centre of the Iraqi capital. Now Zeinab's parents have told her that if a segregated Shia region is formed, they will move there from Baghdad, afraid of living in a Sunni zone. "It is a bitter feeling, to have to choose between my husband and my parents," she said. Mustapha foresees the capital splitting between Sunni west and Shia east, and has prepared the family's passports, ready to leave if the country divides.

As U.S. and Iraqi forces attempt to pacify the capital, mixed couples who symbolize Iraq's once famous tolerance are increasingly entangled by hate. Forced by militias or insurgents to leave their homes because one partner is from the wrong sect, they find few havens because of the other partner's affiliation. These strains, fueled by displacement, separation and fear, are beginning to tear apart such families, weakening bonds that for many Iraqis hold the hope of sectarian reconciliation.... "In the absence of security, Iraqis are protecting themselves by turning to their sects and their tribes," said Zina Abdul Rasul, a U.N. human rights worker who herself is a product of a mixed marriage. "It is becoming normal to hear about mixed families breaking down.".... Nowadays, even in a climate of deep suspicions, Iraqis of different sects mix when they can. But anecdotal evidence from interviews with social workers, U.N. officials and everyday Iraqis suggests that the strife is breeding mistrust within mixed families. Iraqis tell stories about family members being betrayed by relatives of a different sect."

The Washington Post, 4 March 2007

"While there are no official statistics, sociologists estimate that nearly a third of Iraqi marriages are unions between members of different sectarian or ethnic communities. In the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, many Iraqis argued that the prevalence of such unions showed that Iraqis cared more about their Arab or national identity than their sect, which would spare the country a civil war.... But Iraq's sectarian strife has risen sharply since the bombing of a revered Shiite shrine in Samarra by Sunni militants a year ago. Since then, more than 500,000 Iraqis have fled their homes, a number that is growing by 50,000 every month, according to the United Nations. The vast majority have left mixed areas, the main battlefields of the sectarian war."

See also (in sources, below):

Iraq Update, Iraqi marriages defy civil war spectre, 24 March 2006

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Refugees Magazine Issue 146 : "Iraq Bleeds: Millions displaced by conflict, persecution and violence - Refugee testimonies: Qais & Layla, April 2007

National Centre for Missing Persons to be established (2006)

- In April 2006, the Iraqi government approves the draft law on the protection of mass graves
- The centre is being set up by the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights in Baghdad to help relatives find out what has happened to loved ones
- The Centre will examine bones from mass graves as well as establish a list of those missing since 1978
- Around one million Iraqis are believed to have disappeared during the former regime, of which many are believed to be buried in 228 mass graves discovered thus far
- The majority of disappearances occurred during the Gulf war in 1991 and the subsequent Shi'ite uprising in South Iraq
- Hundreds of people also remain unidentified and missing during and after the 2003 conflict
- The Iraqi Red Crescent Society has been approached on a daily basis by families searching for missing loved ones, especially from Fallujah

UNAMI, 23 May 2006

"On 27 April, the Presidency Council of Iraq approved the draft law on the protection of mass graves, one of the legal documents necessary for the strategy of establishing a National Centre for Missing and Disappeared Persons."

UNAMI, February 2005

"On 17 January 2005, the Policy Group adopted the draft resolution proposed by the Working Group, which called upon the Government of Iraq to establish a **National Centre for Missing and Disappeared Persons in Iraq**, for Iraqis and other nationalities, and to take the appropriate measures under the law by enacting the required legislation. The resolution also called upon Iraqi society, institutions and individuals to cooperate fully with the National Centre to ensure that the fate of those who are missing or who have involuntarily disappeared is determined. The resolution also appealed to the international community to extend its support to the National Centre by assisting with the provision of the expertise and resources that it will require for the successful pursuit of its humanitarian objective."

UNAMI, 27 February 2005

"On 20 February, the Interim Government of Iraq issued decree no.18 by which it officially authorized the establishment of the "National Centre for Missing Persons" in Iraq, consistent with the recommendations of the Policy Group meeting convened by UNAMI/HRO for the Ministry of Human Rights, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in mid-January. The decree requires the Ministry of Human Rights to work with UNAMI to follow up on the realization of the project objectives."

IRIN, 7 February 2005

"Iraq's Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) in Baghdad is setting up a National Centre for Missing and Disappeared Persons (NCMDP) to help relatives find out what has happened to their loved ones.

The new programme being developed by the MoHR, will examine bones samples recovered from mass graves, as well as establishing a register of names of those reported missing since 1978 in Iraq.

Families will be given the opportunity to provide blood for DNA testing to check against samples taken from bodies found in mass graves.

According to the MoHR officials, nearly one million Iraqis are believed to have disappeared during Saddam Hussein's regime and a large number are believed to be buried in the 228 mass graves discovered so far. The majority disappeared during the Gulf war in 1991 and the subsequent Shi'ite uprising in the south of Iraq, officials said.

[...]

But the identification issues are not only centred on mass graves. Hundreds of people remain unidentified and missing during and after the conflict in 2003.

Officials from the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) office, responsible for the problem of identification, told IRIN that every day many families come to them searching for their missing loved ones, particularly those from Fallujah, where intense fighting between US forces and insurgents took place.

They added that after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) closed its office in the capital, because of the lack of security, the search for missing people had become even more difficult and would take even longer than expected."

For further information, see also "[Iraq: State of Evidence](#)" HRW, November 2004 [Internet]

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

Challenges of illegal occupancy of private and public property, restitution, and compensation, and return of forcibly displaced. (2008)

- The Ministry of Migration and Displacement has reported that number of illegally occupied properties includes 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties include houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad has the highest number at 2,369. (MoDM, September 2008)
- Though there is no clear idea of the figures involved, UN assessments indicate that there are 230,000 secondary occupants in public properties throughout Iraq. IOM has noted that of the 1,6 million displaced between 2006 to 2008 5% reside in public buildings, 0,4% military camps, or 9,8% other. (IOM, August 2008; IDP Working Group, 21 June, 2008)
- Iraqi government's efforts to address second occupancy has been halphazard and ad hoc since 2004. Policies have also varied from Governorate to Governorate. With reduction in violence in first half of 2008, the Government has announced the implementation of policies which sought to evict illegal occupation in Baghdad. (IOM, September 2008; IRIN, 27 January 2008)
- In July 20th 2008, Iraqi government announced measure to encourage more than 4 million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes. This included a one month grace period for second occupants occupying properties belonging to IDPs or refugees to vacate properties. As of September 2nd, Iraqi government began implementing a government decision to address second occupants of properties belonging to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. (IRIN, 8 September 2008)
- While evictions have been taking place affecting thousands of families throughout Iraq, it remains unclear the extent to which this shall be crystalised in a clear national policy. Evictions have been witnessed in numerous Governorates, but have not been consistently or systematically applied.

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"Resolving property disputes resulting from the war and the large-scale displacement will be a major issue in Iraq for years, perhaps decades. Property has become not only one of the spoils of war, but also a means of enriching and paying militia forces. And frequently it is a major cause of displacement. According to IOM and UNHCR, about 25 percent of Iraq's IDPs cite a main reason for their displacement as "forced displacement from property."¹²⁷ In some cases, militias and sectarian groups have forced people from their homes and given it to IDPs from their own sect or to their supporters. There are reports of people selling their homes under duress. In many cases, houses have been destroyed or damaged to the point that they are no longer habitable. Although over half of Iraq's IDPs said they did not know the status of their property left behind, about 17 percent indicated it had been destroyed and about 34 percent said that it was being occupied by others. ¹²⁸ In fact, it has been reported that 70 percent of those who returned to Iraq were unable to return to their homes.¹²⁹ In some cases, Iraqi refugees returned to their communities, found their homes occupied by others, and went back to Syria.¹³⁰ If refugees cannot return to their property, they will either become IDPs or they will go back into exile. Neither solution bodes well for Iraq or the region. If these results are typical, the issue of property rights is a ticking time bomb. Even in the best case scenario —that refugees and IDPs are able to return home in

security and dignity—it is likely that property restitution and compensation will be on Iraq's agenda for decades. In fact, if less than half of the refugees and IDPs return home—say two million—and a third of those find their lands destroyed or occupied by others—that is a potential caseload of over 650,000 property claims."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 8 September 2008:

"Our security forces, in cooperation with local officials in Baghdad neighbourhoods, have begun implementing the government decision to check on these houses and force those who illegally occupy them out," Brig Gen Qassim al-Mousawi said. If these families fail to produce legal papers showing they are occupying the house according to an agreement with the owner they will face legal action, al-Mousawi told IRIN. The government has not yet released any data of how many houses belonging to displaced families have been cleared of squatters. But on 3 September, the Migration and Displacement Ministry released its first report on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties included houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad had the highest number of squatter-occupied properties at 2,369, followed by Diyala with 963 and Anbar with 63. The rest were in the provinces of Salaheddin, Taamim, Babil, Kut, Nineveh and Muthana. On 20 July, the Iraqi government announced measures to encourage the more than four million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes, including a one-month grace period for squatters to vacate properties. The measures also included a one-off payment of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$1,500) to squatters to help them rent other properties. In addition, it was stipulated that IDPs willing to return to their houses would be paid one million dinars (\$840). Each internally displaced family that has not yet returned home qualifies for a monthly payment of 150,000 dinars (\$145) for three months while still displaced. "

International Organization for Migration (IOM), September 2008:

"Evictions are a serious concern throughout the country, particularly in Baghdad. The Prime Minister's office has issued an eviction order for all Baghdad squatters, beginning 2 September 2008. This measure is intended to empty out occupied houses so that displaced owners of these houses may return. Although some of these houses are illegally occupied by militant groups, a significant number of squatters are IDP families who could become secondarily displaced. Newly displaced families will be entitled to the government rental subsidy of 300,000 Iraqi Dinar (approximately US\$253) for six months. In addition, it is reported that several thousand IDP families in Tikrit district of Salah al-Din governorate are in danger of eviction because they are squatting on land that belongs to the municipality. The families are mostly from Kirkuk and Erbil. Another 370 families are in danger of eviction from Al Rasheed hospital in Baghdad, and 210 families were evicted from former intelligence headquarters in Baghdad."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Increasingly, IDPs living in public buildings or on public land are being threatened with eviction from their homes, and in some cases evictions have taken place. In May, the GoI issued an eviction order for IDPs living on public property. In early June the Iraqi Parliament voted on a draft resolution to postpone the eviction order. Local authorities are responding in an ad-hoc manner; in some governorates, such as Basrah and Muthanna, authorities have ordered all IDPs and squatters to leave public property. In other governorates, local authorities are applying the order only to certain areas or land. Regardless, the IDPs are given no other option for shelter, forcing them into secondary displacement.

In June, several statements have been made in the media from GoI officials calling for evictions: Baghdad and Al-Amara, Missan have been specifically mentioned.

Sometimes these eviction orders only affect a small group of families, such as 15 families in mAl-Nasir, Najaf who have been threatened with eviction by the government because they are on public land, and sometimes hundreds of families, such as in Farah village in Kerbala, where the provincial council and governor recently removed all IDPs (160 families) illegally squatting on public property in this village.

In a former military camp in Taji, Baghdad, close to 1,000 IDP families (estimated 7,000 individuals) have settled. There is an imminent threat of eviction of these families from the camp. According to UNHCR calculations based on various sources, up to 250,000 people are living in public buildings which are under threat of eviction.

Integrated Regional Information (IRIN), 27 January 2008:

"The Iraqi Ministry of Defence has given about 300 internally displaced persons (IDPs) one week to evacuate a former military compound in Babil Province, about 100km south of the capital, Baghdad, officials said on 25 January. "Representatives of about 45 displaced families last week appealed to the Iraqi parliament for help to persuade the defence ministry to postpone its decision," Abdul-Khaleq Zankana, head of parliament's displacement committee, told IRIN, adding that the Iraqi army intended to reuse the compound as a military base.... Al-Zubaidi added that a provincial committee had been formed to find a solution for these families; either by re-housing them in an abandoned government building or by erecting a new camp for them. "But most probably we will get a piece of land in the suburbs [of Hilla] from the city's municipality to erect more than 100 tents for them and supply them with food and non-food items," al-Zubaidi said. "It is indeed a problem. It will be difficult for us to erect a camp in four or five days as we are in winter and it is raining nowadays. Because of that we need more time."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 January 2008:

"Local authorities in Kerbala, a southern province of Iraq about 120km south of the capital, Baghdad, have destroyed thousands of hectares of agricultural land, putting dozens of peasant families at risk of being displaced, according to residents. "The farmers had been warned since last September to leave their farmland as plans have been drawn up by local authorities to turn the area into a residential one for the families of victims of the previous regime," Amal al-Hir, head of Kerbala Agricultural Directorate, said. According to al-Hir, the late former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in 1991 granted 10-year contracts to peasant farmers in a desert area that he designated as a new green belt for Kerbala."

See Also (in sources, below):

Iraq Situation Update - August 2008, **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, September 2008

IOM Monitoring and Needs Assessments: Assessments of Iraqi Return, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, August 2008

Baghdad squatters told to leave occupied homes, **Reuters**, 22 June 2008

Exchanges in property, evictions and illegal occupation of homes with background of heightened sectarian violence and forced displacement since February 2006 (2006-2007)

- In February 2007, displaced families surveyed by IOM, 24 per cent reported that their property was being occupied and 16 per cent that their property had been destroyed, and 5 per cent that it was currently in military use. (IOM, 2 February, 2007)
- Because of sectarian tensions and direct most displaced families were unable to sell their properties. Thousands of people were regularly forced to leave their homes within a matter of hours. In mixed-sect dominated areas, the abandoned houses of one sects expelled families are being given to newly arrived displaced families fleeing the violence from the opposite sect. (IMC, January 2007)
- In several areas of the capital, the controlling militias and religious parties occasionally offer displaced families from the opposite sect the ability to rent their properties - at a reasonable rate, or free of charge in exchange for maintenance - to an arriving displaced tenant from the militia or religious party's own sect. (IMC, January 2007)

- A few relatively stable areas, like Kadmeia and Karrada in Baghdad, were considered attractive for IDPs to settle, but this relative stability caused property prices to triple significantly impacting on vulnerables. (IMC, January 2007)
- Controlling militias took over numerous possessions of the families expelled, and channelled and redistributed these resources, such as managing and renting assets to displaced families from other neighbourhoods or governorates providing temporary resettlement. (ICG, 7 February 2008)

International Crisis Group (ICG), 7 February 2008:

"Despite intensified U.S. raids and arrests, the Mahdi Army bolstered its influence and role, largely thanks to its limitless sources of income. It took over numerous Sunni possessions, including houses, villas and stores that belonged to the Baghdad bourgeoisie that prospered from the time of the Ottoman Empire. Sadrist offices [*Makatib al-Sayyid al-Shahid*] manage and rent these assets, thus generating colossal fortunes. By channelling and then redistributing resources, they gave Muqtada al-Sadr's movement a central economic role in neighbourhoods falling under its sway..... In a city virtually abandoned by the state, Sadrist offices in several neighbourhoods became the last and only resort for Shiite residents in need of help. Shiites living in remote areas requested military support; 41 displaced families asked for resettlement assistance."

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"The majority (67%) of families do not know the status of their property or whether they are able to access it. Lack of communication with neighbors in places of origin, lack of reported information, and instability prevented the displaced from obtaining information about their property. For those who did know, 24% reported that their property was occupied by another citizen, 16% of people said their property had been destroyed, 5% said it was currently in military use, and less than 1% said it was occupied by the government. There have also been reports of individuals looting and stealing possessions from abandoned property."

IMC, January 2007:

"Because of sectarian tensions and direct threats that have followed the February 2006 Samara mosque bombing, most displaced families now are unable to sell their properties. In the Sunni- or Shi'a-dominated areas where thousands of people are regularly forced to leave their homes within a matter of hours, families are given no time to rent or sell their houses, and they are not allowed to return to make arrangements for disposing of their property and belongings. Those who try to sell their houses in anticipation of fleeing, are stopped by insurgents posting not for sale or wanted signs on their properties.

Even though houses previously valued at around 14 million ID (9,500 USD) had dropped to as low as 2 million ID (1,400USD), there are no interested buyers. Several Sunni families displaced from Shia-dominated areas moved into houses deserted by displaced Shi'a families. This was the case of 479 IDP families from Hurria, Shuala, Hay Al Amel (Baghdad), and Al Shaab and Hay Aur (near Al Sadr City) who settled into houses in Abu Ghraib. In mixed-sect dominated areas, the abandoned houses of one sects expelled families are being given to newly arrived displaced families fleeing the violence from the opposite sect either for free, or at cheap rental fixed fees usually collected by local mosques.

In several areas of the capital, the controlling militias and religious parties occasionally offer displaced families from the opposite sect the ability to rent their properties - at a reasonable rate, or free of charge in exchange for maintenance - to an arriving displaced tenant from the militia or religious party's own sect. Although announcing houses for sale is still allowed, poor economic conditions force many displaced families from the sect suddenly a minority in their once evenly mixed neighborhood to enter into agreements to swap houses at no cost through trusted agents

or mosque officials. A few relatively stable areas, like Kadmeia and Karrada in Baghdad, are considered attractive for IDPs to settle, but this relative stability has caused property prices to triple. And wealthy families living in these either predominantly Shia or Sunni areas have no desire to sell or let their houses."

UNAMI, 22 November 2006:

"With the intensification of sectarian violence, there has been an increase in the number of reports on sectarian militias forcibly evicting people from houses and shops in order to rent them to incoming IDPs from other areas. In other cases, sectarian militias are forcing people who abandoned their houses in the area to rent them out to IDPs at a very low cost. [...] Others reported having their houses in the places of origin illegally occupied, further complicating the prospects of their return."

See also (in sources, below):

International Crisis Group (ICG), Iraq After the Surge I: The New Sunni Landscape, 30 April 2008

Forced evictions and displacement and irregular occupation of abandoned private and public land, housing and property following end of previous regime in 2003-2005

- There are numerous reports of land, housing and property being taken over, (sometimes by force), by those seeking either basic housing or to gain economically. The CPA estimates that 65,000-75,000 displaced persons and 55 Palestinian families are occupying public buildings. While the CPA has adopted Order No. 6 to enable it to evict persons illegally occupying public buildings, this alone is not a sufficient policy response to this reality. (Leckie, 30 July 2003)
- Various types of forced evictions have been evident in Iraq since the beginning of the present occupation. In Northern Iraq, an unknown number (but thought to be thousands) of Arab Iraqis have faced eviction by formerly displaced Kurds seeking to reclaim their former homes and lands. Kirkuk has been particularly affected. The US military has been reluctant to intervene in these acts of violence in a concerted manner, and as a result, evictions and resultant displacement of Arabs has been widespread throughout northern Iraq (Leckie, 30 July 2003; HRW, August 2004)
- In Southern Iraq, growing numbers of Iranian refugees have also faced forced eviction from their homes in recent months. These appear to have been carried out by local communities. (Leckie, 30 July 2003)
- In Baghdad, thousands of people have been evicted since the beginning of the US Occupation. Ba'ath party officials, Republican Guards and other favored government bureaucrats under the Saddam regime and large numbers of ordinary poor Iraqis have been evicted in large numbers from their homes. (Leckie, 30 July 2003)
- Mass forced evictions of Palestinian refugees resident in Baghdad have also been reported. UNHCR has said that some 1,000 Palestinian refugees had been evicted by early May 2003, and that as many as 60-90,000 more refugees may also face forced eviction as private landlords seek to reclaim apartments they were forced to rent to the refugees for very small sums (Leckie, 30 July 2003)

Leckie, 30 July 2003:

"In the aftermath of conflicts throughout the world, the unauthorized occupation of abandoned public and private housing, land and property is common. Iraq is no different, with numerous reports of land, housing and property being taken over, (sometimes by force), by those seeking either basic housing or to gain economically. The CPA estimates that 65,000-75,000 displaced

persons and 55 Palestinian families are occupying public buildings. In the capital, for instance, innumerable private and public buildings have been informally occupied by homeless families, without official authorization, but who have little or no other housing option available to them in the lawless environment of Baghdad. While the CPA has adopted Order No. 6 to enable it to evict persons illegally occupying public buildings, this alone is not a sufficient policy response to this reality. The Competent Authorities will eventually need to find a means of formally recognizing the ownership or tenancy rights over such premises and lands or to find equitable ways to return such properties to the legitimate owners or former tenants. While many of those currently resident in such premises may be doing so purely for humanitarian reasons, with no other possible means available to them, an effort will need to be made to provide some form of security of tenure to persons and families in these groups, and to determine when such unauthorized occupation has been carried out by large-scale criminal or other groups seeking illegitimate economic gain, as opposed to those who have done so out of economic necessity.....

[In relation to pre-2003 forcibly displaced yet applicable to current refugees and IDPs] Widespread housing, land and property disputes stemming from returning refugees and IDPs seeking to recover their former homes and lands or to reassert rights over these places of habitual residence, the unauthorized occupation of land, housing or property and irregular transactions of these assets have been reported throughout Iraq. These disputes will grow with more than one million refugees and internally displaced persons contemplating returning to their original homes and villages. Some have already done so, and have returned to the ruins of their former homes. Other returnees have sought to reclaim their former homes, despite the fact that these homes are currently occupied by others.[...] In Kirkuk and Mosul, for instance, the process was particularly widespread. [...] The types of disputes that have arisen and are anticipated to arise with the return of greater numbers of IDPs and refugees include:

- Attempts by displaced persons and refugees to reclaim their former homes, which are now occupied by members of other ethnic groups;
- Unauthorized occupation of land, housing and property by secondary occupants since the end of the recent conflict;
- Housing, land and property claims by claimants without documentation to prove their claims;
- Determining rights in instances where current occupants hold 'lawful titles', but where returnees do not;
- Determining rights following the unregistered transfers of property;
- Claims by bona fide purchasers of property after it was initially expropriated;
- Claims for improvements made on homes, lands and property legally owned by returning refugees and IDPs;
- Claims on the determination of boundaries;
- Claims of tenancy rights and cultivation rights;
- Land occupied by various political or military groups; and
- Disputes between tribes and villages.

Forced evictions and displacement have continued beyond the end of the Saddam era. Various types of forced evictions have been evident in Iraq since the beginning of the present occupation. These acts do not appear to have been treated sufficiently as a human rights issue thus far, despite the clear human rights implications of the practice and the requirements stemming from Article 27(1) of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Northern Iraq: In Northern Iraq, an unknown number (but generally thought to be thousands) of Arab Iraqis have faced eviction by formerly displaced Kurds seeking to reclaim their former homes and lands. Kirkuk has been particularly affected. These evictions, carried out without regard for the rule of law or the human rights of those evicted, have resulted in considerable hardship for the Arab families affected, and have created deep-seated animosities among the ethnic groups, threatening security in the area. While historical imperatives may lie behind the current eviction wave throughout the Kurdish areas, it remains vital that the rights of *all* Iraqis are

protected and respected. All told, tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of families may eventually be affected by these processes. The US military has been reluctant to intervene in these acts of violence in a concerted manner, and as a result, evictions and resultant displacement of Arabs has been widespread throughout northern Iraq.[1]

Southern Iraq: In Southern Iraq, growing numbers of Iranian refugees have also faced forced eviction from their homes in recent months. These appear to have been carried out by local communities. That only a small number of CPA staff are employed in Southern Iraq indicates the practical difficulties involved in monitoring and preventing such acts in this area of the country. In Basra, over 400 persons are living in a reception center after having been forced to flee their homes in Al Dual by the local population, which in turn confiscated their land and other assets.

Baghdad: In Baghdad, thousands of people have been evicted since the beginning of the US Occupation. Ba'ath party officials, Republican Guards and other favored government bureaucrats under the Saddam regime and large numbers of ordinary poor Iraqis have been evicted in large numbers from their homes. Hundreds of up-market apartments along the Tigris River have been seized by angry mobs, and the occupants evicted. Hundreds, and probably thousands of additional Iraqis have been evicted in recent weeks after falling behind in their rent, or simply because landlords, unconstrained by law or officialdom, believe they can obtain substantially higher rents from new tenants.

Mass forced evictions of Palestinian refugees resident in Baghdad have also been reported. UNHCR has said that some 1,000 Palestinian refugees had been evicted by early May 2003, and that as many as 60-90,000 more refugees may also face forced eviction as private landlords seek to reclaim apartments they were forced to rent to the refugees for very small sums, and to cash in on new arrivals from the international community with considerably larger sums of cash to be spent on rent. [2]

Unless action is taken promptly by the Competent Authorities to halt these forced evictions, it is likely that further violent displacement will ensue once refugees beginning returning in larger numbers. This will only fuel the already insecure and unstable situation in the region. As of July 2003, available information does not indicate that those carrying out these evictions are being held accountable under law, nor that comprehensive measures based on law have been taken to halt such evictions. Equally, it remains unclear under which legal regime these arbitrary evictions are ostensibly justified, if any. It appears that there has been no effort by the Competent Authorities to attempt to confer even informal security of tenure (let alone formal) rights to dwellers in all tenure categories in Iraq (eg. Owner-occupied, private sector tenancies, public sector tenancies, etc) as a concrete means of discouraging and preventing further forced evictions.[...]"

HRW, 3 August 2004:

"In northern Iraq, the authorities' failure to resolve property disputes between returning Kurds and Arab settlers threatens to undermine security in the region, Human Rights Watch said today in a new report. Iraq's interim government urgently needs to implement the judicial means to resolve these disputes, which stem from decades of Arabization policies that uprooted hundreds of thousands of Kurds and other non-Arabs. The 78-page report, 'Claims in Conflict: Reversing Ethnic Cleansing in Northern Iraq,' documents the increasing frustration of thousands of displaced Kurds, as well as Turkomans and Assyrians, who are living in desperate conditions as they await a resolution of their property claims. Human Rights Watch details how the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority failed to act even as the situation grew more volatile. As well as implementing the judicial means to resolve these claims, the Iraqi interim government must take urgent measures to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of thousands of internally displaced Kurds and other non-Arabs living in dire conditions in and around the northern city of Kirkuk. It

should also find durable solutions for Arab families who were in turn forced from their homes after the fall of the former Iraqi government in April 2003. ...

HRW, August 2004

"A crisis of serious proportions is brewing in northern Iraq, and may soon explode into open violence. Since 1975, the former Iraqi government forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of Kurds, Turkomans, and Assyrians from their homes, and brought in Arab settlers to replace them, under a policy known as 'Arabization.' With the overthrow of that government in April 2003, the Kurds and other non-Arabs began returning to their former homes and farms. Ethnic tensions between returning Kurds and others and the Arab settlers escalated rapidly and have continued to do so, along with tensions between the different returning communities—particularly between Kurds and Turkomans—over control of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. In the absence of a speedy implementation of plans to address the conflicting land and property claims and the needs of the different communities, ownership disputes may soon be settled through force.[...][T]he law fails to address the burning issue of what is to become of the so-called Arabization Arabs, in particular whether they will have the right to choose their place of residence following the resolution of property disputes. They, in a real sense, have become the latest victims of internal displacement."

HRW, 22 October 2003:

"The donor community should also support the establishment of a post-conflict property dispute mechanism to provide fair and efficient settlement procedures a top priority. A broad-ranging restitution and property reform process is an urgent necessity for Iraq in order to avoid inter-ethnic violence. Victims of forced displacement—a crime against humanity—have a right to reclaim their former property, but this right must be balanced against the rights and humanitarian needs of the secondary occupants, many of whom have lived in expropriated homes for decades. "

See also (in sources, below):

HRW, "Claims in Conflict: Reversing Ethnic Cleansing in Northern Iraq," August 2004

Displacement and land and property rights issues resulting from the Baathist Regime policies (1960s to 2003)

- The regime routinely used policies of forced displacement, which were usually accompanied by the confiscation, expropriation and destruction of homes, businesses and agricultural land, to maintain and expand its control over Iraq. The principal targets of those policies were always the same: the Shiite, Kurdish, Turkmen and Assyrian communities as well as anyone perceived to be an opponent or a danger to the regime. (Leckie, June 2003; P. V. Auweraert, September 2007)
- Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis were forcefully evicted from their homes and lands since the 1960s. Today, attempts by displaced persons and refugees to reclaim their former homes are complicated because they are now occupied by members of other ethnic groups;. This adds to additional illegally occupying land, housing and property since the end of the 2003 conflict (Leckie, June 2003; P. V. Auweraert, September 2007)
- The establishment of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission in 2004 by CPA was to address property issues resulting from Baathist regime policies on the recognition of the need to find a peaceful way to settle the property disputes that a large-scale return would bring with it. In March 2006, the IPCC was replaced with the Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD). (P. V. Auweraert, September 2007)
- Many property restitution cases fall outside the scope of the property commission including claims related to the Anfal campaign in the North and the burning of the villages as part of the drainage programme of the Marshes in the South

- Modalities and guidelines continue to be limited.(See Institutions) The limitations of the commission and politicisation of property issues – particularly in Kirkuk – has raised concern that property disputes particularly between returning Kurds and Arab settlers may destabilise the security situation in the North (UNHCR, October 2005)
- Compensation guidelines and measures to ensure that persons who are must return a property to the original property owner do not become homeless have not yet been put into place. Stateless persons may have particular difficulties in claiming their property (UNHCR, October 2005)

Van der Auweraert, Peter, 7 September 2007:

"The regime routinely used these policies [of forced displacement, which were usually accompanied by the confiscation, expropriation and destruction of homes, businesses and agricultural land, to maintain and expand its control over Iraq. The principal targets of those policies were always the same: the Shi'ite, Kurdish, Turkmen and Assyrian communities as well as anyone perceived to be an opponent or a danger to the regime. In brief, there were three particular contexts in which the regime resorted to forced displacement and property rights violations: (a) the so-called .Arabisation policies. which entailed the replacement of non-Arab communities in the North with (mostly poor) Sunni Arabs from the South e.g. in the Kirkuk area; (b) the punishment for real or perceived opposition to the regime (e.g. the 1980-1988 Anfal campaign against the Kurds during which hundreds of Kurdish villages were destroyed and the mass expulsion of Iraqi Shi'ites to Iran at the start of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980); and (c) in connection with the prevailing economic system of .crony capitalism. that left regime strongmen and their supporters free to seize desirable land and businesses and thus expand their personal wealth and influence. No undisputed figures exist of just how many Iraqis became internally displaced, fled or left the country, but there can be little doubt that displacement was a mass phenomenon during the Baathist era. Similarly, it is unknown how many of those who were displaced also saw their lands, homes and businesses destroyed or taken away from them. The fact that the IPCC and the CRRPD have so far received well over 130,000 property claims from inside Iraq alone, suggests that their number is more than significant.

The discussions preceding the invasion of Iraq widely assumed that the Baathist regime's overthrow would almost immediately result in a large-scale return of those that had been displaced by the regime. It was to be expected that the returnees would be eager to repossess the lands, homes and businesses that they had lost, sometimes decades earlier. Unfortunately, however, simple repossession would be rarely an option: more often than not those properties were now occupied by others with nowhere else to go. Hence the perceived danger that the disputes over those properties would quickly become a principal source of post-invasion instability and conflict, unless a mechanism could be found to resolve them peacefully. In this context, one particular problem stood out: Kirkuk. With the largest oil field in Iraq, its traditional role as the .breadbasket of Iraq. and the mass forced displacement that had taken place as a consequence of Saddam Hussein's .Arabisation policies., Kirkuk was seen as the most likely flashpoint in case an uncontrolled return movement would take place. Repeated claims by Kurdish politicians that Kirkuk was indeed Kurdish . a claim unlikely to be accepted by Iraq's other communities . and that the Kurds should be allowed to return and resettle as soon as possible did little to ease anxieties in this respect. The complex property situation in Kirkuk further underscored the need to find a peaceful way to settle the property disputes that a large-scale return would bring with it. It was against this backdrop that the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) decided in January, 2004, to establish a special-purpose commission to review and resolve all property disputes related to the Baathist era, i.e. the Iraq Property Claims Commission (IPCC)."

Leckie, 30 July 2003:

"Since Saddam captured power in 1968, hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of Iraqis faced forced eviction, the confiscation of their traditional homes and lands, and widespread involuntary displacement designed to socially engineer an Iraq more favorable to the Saddam regime. Throughout the Saddam era, the Arab population was encouraged through financial, land and other incentives to settle in Kurdish areas, with a view to establishing central Government control over the Kurds and diluting the Kurdish demographic majority in the area. Many of the settlers received formal legal title to the lands they acquired during this shift of population. During this process of 'Arabization', hundreds of thousands of Kurds were ethnically cleansed from their traditional homes and lands, and as far as is known, were provided with no legal recourse, compensation or alternative land or housing. Many of the displaced now wish to reclaim their former homes and lands.

Widespread housing, land and property disputes stemming from returning refugees and IDPs seeking to recover their former homes and lands or to reassert rights over these places of habitual residence, the unauthorized occupation of land, housing or property and irregular transactions of these assets have been reported throughout Iraq. These disputes will grow with more than one million refugees and internally displaced persons contemplating returning to their original homes and villages. Some have already done so, and have returned to the ruins of their former homes. Other returnees have sought to reclaim their former homes, despite the fact that these homes are currently occupied by others.[...]In Kirkuk and Mosul, for instance, the process was particularly widespread. [...] The types of disputes that have arisen and are anticipated to arise with the return of greater numbers of IDPs and refugees include:

- Attempts by displaced persons and refugees to reclaim their former homes, which are now occupied by members of other ethnic groups;
- Unauthorized occupation of land, housing and property by secondary occupants since the end of the recent conflict;
- Housing, land and property claims by claimants without documentation to prove their claims;
- Determining rights in instances where current occupants hold 'lawful titles', but where returnees do not;
- Determining rights following the unregistered transfers of property;
- Claims by bona fide purchasers of property after it was initially expropriated;
- Claims for improvements made on homes, lands and property legally owned by returning refugees and IDPs;
- Claims on the determination of boundaries;
- Claims of tenancy rights and cultivation rights;
- Land occupied by various political or military groups; and
- Disputes between tribes and villages.

In addition to these types of disputes, those affected by the various land re-distribution efforts during the past several decades may yield restitution claims and possible disputes. While some of these land reform programs were clearly legal and involved the payment of compensation to those who faced the expropriation of their lands, in instances where this was not the case, legitimate claims may emerge."

HRW, 3 August 2004:

"Arabization first occurred on a massive scale in the second half of the 1970s as the Iraqi government sought to alter the demographic make-up of northern Iraq in order to reduce the political power and presence of ethnic minorities and consolidate control over this oil-rich region. In northern Iraq, probably as many as 250,000 Kurds and other non-Arabs were forcibly expelled from their homes, including an estimated 120,000 among them during the 1990s. Simultaneously, the Iraqi government brought in landless Arabs from the nearby Al-Jazeera desert and others from central and southern Iraq to settle in their place. Land titles to the rich agricultural lands seized from the Kurds and other non-Arabs were invalidated upon their expulsion, and the land was then leased on annual contracts to Arab farmers. Many of those

expelled have since been living in camps for the internally displaced in the northern Kurdish-controlled governorates for over a decade.”

UNHCR, October 2005:

"While legitimate property rights holders have a right to return to their homes and lands, it is important that this right is implemented in a manner that does not cause additional human rights violations. In cases where the current occupant is forced to return a property to the original rights holder, adequate measures must ensure that fair compensation is paid for accumulated rights and homelessness is avoided; this could be achieved through the provision of temporary alternative accommodation, reconstruction assistance or allocation of land/housing. To date, compensation guidelines and arrangements to avoid homelessness have not been set in place by the national authorities. There is also concern that the unresolved nationality law complicates the reinstatement of property rights of those who have not yet reacquired their nationality, since only Iraqi nationals (with some exceptions) can own property or have a right of use. Another constraint negatively impacting the restitution and return process is the politicization of property issues, in particular in formerly 'arabized' areas. IDPs returning from Northern Iraq to Kirkuk are allocated a piece of land (200m2) in Kirkuk Governorate by the Kirkuk authorities with the assistance of the Kurdish authorities. In addition, they receive non-food items such as tents, house goods and kitchen appliances. [...] There is a need for clear legal guidance by the Iraqi authorities with regard to land allocation in order to avoid future problems. The non-resolution of land, housing and property issues presents a serious obstacle to the return of refugees and IDPs and is a major cause for ethnic/religious tensions."

RI, 25 August 2003:

"One of the most complex effects of displacement in Iraq is the issue of settling property claims. Whatever the reason for displacement, it resulted in the widespread involuntary abandonment of property that was, ultimately, confiscated by others. Houses built by Kurds on land that they once owned, for example, were destroyed by Iraqi forces. In their place, Arabs built new homes. Who, then, is the rightful owner of the 'new' house? While it is justified for Kurds to return to their former homelands to reclaim what is rightfully theirs, what sort of remuneration should be provided to Arab farmers who built homes and farmed these lands at the behest of the former regime? What sort of compensation should be provided to Arabs who legally purchased the property of Kurds forced to move? These are just a few of the issues that need to be resolved before people can resettle and begin new lives with the assurance that their efforts will be recognized as both legal and just."

See also (in sources, below):

HIC, "Restoring Values: Institutional Challenges to Providing Restitution and Compensation for Iraqi Housing and Land Rights Victims", August 2005

There are some concerns that the property restitution process has been too slow

(See for example, **IRIN**, Compensation for wartime losses going slow, 10 October 2006)

and that there is a special need to resolve property claims related to Kirkuk in the north,

See **IRIN**, Increased Violence over Kirkuk land claims, 14 August 2006

Institutions

Commission for Resolution of Real Property Disputes (formerly the Iraq Property Claims Commission) (2004-2008)

- The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) established the Iraqi Property Claims Commission with little Iraqi involvement. The experience of the national property commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina indicates the importance of involving national authorities in the process
- IPCC was created through the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) and agreed to by the Iraqi Governing Council. The Commission was signed into law in January 2004 and the first offices opened at the beginning of March. In March 2006, the IPCC was replaced with the Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD).
- The Commission is intended to redress injustices owing to misappropriation and distribution of properties during the former regime. The Commission is composed of a National Secretariat and regional commissions based in each governorate as well as an Appellate division
- The CRRPD is competent for three types of land and property rights violations: (1) confiscation for .political, religious or ethnic reasons, (e.g. in frame of .Arabisation policies.); (2) unlawful appropriation or seizure of property; and (3) state property allocated to the members of the previous regime. (Van der Auweraert, 7 September 2007)
- The CRRPD, nor its predecessor emerged as part of larger transitional justice effort to address questions for all victims of the former regime. The CRRPD is competent only for the areas outlined, and with the time frame determined (17 July 1968 and 9 April 2003). The CRRPD does not cover destroyed properties. (Van der Auweraert, 7 September 2007)
- The CRRPD also marked by lack of coherence with other Government institutions particularly as there is lack of broad approach across the Government to addressing transitional justice. There are also concerns as to the financial viability of the process functioning in isolation without taking into account other concerns. (Van der Auweraert, 7 September 2007)
- The CRRPD and preceeding organisations function in highly competitive political context with general poor infrastructure. Property issues are of most concern in Kirkuk and the surrounding areas. In this context, reports that KDP and PUK authorities in 2004 started re-distributing land located in Kirkuk confiscated during the Arabization process to residents from Erbil and Sulaymaniah underlines sensitive political implications of the process. (UNHCR, September 2004; FMR September 2004)

Van der Auweraert, Peter, 7 September 2007:

"It was against this backdrop that the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) decided in January, 2004, to establish a special-purpose commission to review and resolve all property disputes related to the Ba'athist era, i.e. the Iraq Property Claims Commission (IPCC). Subsequent to the CPA's disbandment and the transfer of sovereignty to an Iraqi interim government, the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly decided in early 2006 to replace the IPCC with the Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD). While the CRRPD has essentially the same mandate as the IPCC, the CRRPD Law introduced a number of important changes e.g. in respect of the treatment of the current occupant of the disputed property, the valuation of compensation and the composition of the Judicial Committees reviewing and deciding the claims. The CRRPD essentially took over the entire organizational structure and staff from the IPCC. All claims submitted with the IPCC automatically became claims with the CRRPD. IPCC claimants were not required to take any particular action in this respect . their claims were from then on simply reviewed and decided under the CRRPD statute. Like the IPCC, the CRRPD remained a purely Iraqi institution, staffed exclusively by Iraqi nationals. The international involvement is limited to a very small group of IOM reparations experts providing technical advice to the senior management and staff of the CRRPD.

The CRRPD is competent for three types of land and property rights violations: (1) confiscation or seizure of property for .political, religious or ethnic reasons. or in relation to .ethnic, sectarian or nationalistic displacement. (Art. 4, I, CRRPD Law) (e.g. in frame of .Arabisation policies.); (2) appropriation or seizure of property without consideration, with manifest injustice or in violation of

the applicable legal rules (Art. 4, II, CRRPD Law); and (3) state property allocated to the members of the previous regime without consideration (Art. 4, III, CRRPD Law). As was mentioned earlier, the CRPD is not competent to provide redress for the destruction of property. While victims whose homes or businesses were destroyed may get back the land on which the destroyed property used to stand, they will not receive compensation for loss caused by the destruction itself. This is especially problematic in the Kirkuk area, where the seizure and confiscation of agricultural land was often accompanied by the wholesale destruction of local villages and farms. Here, additional efforts outside the CRRPD may be required to render return to the lost properties a real and feasible option.

The CRRPD can only rule on land and property rights violations that took place in the period between 17 July 1968 and 9 April 2003, i.e. between the date on which the Ba'athist party definitely seized power in Iraq and the date on which Baghdad fell to the US-led invasion forces. Claims that relate to violations outside this period have to be submitted to the ordinary Iraqi courts. This means, for example, that Arabisation Arabs, who were forcibly expelled from their homes in Northern Iraq by Kurdish or other returnees after 9 April 2003 can only go to the Iraqi courts for redress, even though the returnees themselves would have had access to the CRRPD. [...]

It is very difficult to make any sensible predictions about the future of the CRRPD in a situation that is as volatile and unsettled as Iraq is today. So instead, I will end with a few open questions which, I think, capture the magnitude of the challenges the CRRPD faces in the coming months and years. Will the CRRPD be able to resist the politicization and sectarian fragmentation that increasingly appear to affect the Iraqi state and its institutions? How long can the CRRPD continue to carry-out its daily operations in a context where in many regions of Iraq law and order have all but broken down and where more and more people are literally scrambling to survive? What is the impact of the largescale displacement that continues to take place in Iraq today on the work of the CRRPD and the situation of its claimants? Do the losers in the property restitution process consider the CRRPD to be engaged in a legitimate effort to redress past wrongs or do they see the CRRPD as simply one more manifestation that the Iraqi state is out to take revenge on the Sunni community? And finally, how long will there be sustained political will to fund a property restitution effort that may well take more than one decade to finish its work and that addresses crimes that are rapidly being overshadowed by the staggering scale of violence and atrocities inflicted on the Iraqi population on a daily basis?"

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"One of the lessons drawn from the CRRPD is that a judicial or quasi-judicial process is unlikely to be successful in dealing with large numbers of claims. The CRRPD which has been a quasi-judicial process has been bogged down with bureaucratic processes, including provision for valuation by multiple experts to assess the value of claims, extensive formal requirements for documentation and application of Iraqi civil and procedural law in some areas. Administrative processes are generally easier than judicial processes to implement and should be the predominant mechanism for future reparation mechanisms.¹³⁴ Otherwise, the whole judicial system could be clogged up with property compensation/reparation cases, with lengthy delays not just for those seeking recovery of their property but many other legal issues as well. Some of the other lessons Peter Van der Auweraert draws from the CRRPD's experience are also relevant here. He argues that large-scale property restitution should be addressed within a larger transitional justice framework. Compensating property owners in isolation from other victims of the regime raises issues of basic justice and equity which might make durable reconciliation more difficult.

Past experience with property restitution in Iraq thus raises questions about whether the current government is ready and able to implement a new mechanism to resolve the many property disputes which are likely to emerge. If such a mechanism is not instituted, either property will

remain in the hands of those who physically possess it, or disputes will be settled by other means, likely including violence. But these are not just issues to be resolved at some point in the future. As Brookings consultant Rhodri Williams has argued, the Iraqi government's ad hoc efforts to address property issues have been inconsistent and counterproductive. Early in the surge campaign, for example, the government simply decreed the return of all property by an arbitrary deadline but did not back this up with sufficient resources to work. In fact, this decree may have exposed displaced families to risk by encouraging them to return to their homes when it was not safe to do so. As he states, "with violent displacement ongoing, the rights of the uprooted to their homes and lands cannot currently be enforced but should not be traded away." Williams proposes a number of concrete steps which could be put into place immediately which would defuse some of the future tension around property claims."

UNHCR, October 2005, pp.128-129:

"The IPCC consists of a National Secretariat which oversees all operational and management activities, Regional Secretariats and local offices in each Governorate of Iraq which receive claims and prepare them for adjudication (currently 30), Regional Commissions in each Governorate which issue first instance decisions (currently 38) and an Appellate Division in Baghdad which issues second instance decisions. The IPCC process is open to all persons or their heirs who have been wrongfully deprived of real property (e.g. house, apartment or land) or an interest in real property (e.g. right to use land) because of actions taken by or attributed to former Iraqi Governments between 17 July 1968 and 9 April 2003. [...] The deadline to file claims was initially 30 June 2005, but it was subsequently extended to 30 June 2007. The IPCC Statute envisages that certain persons who lose possession of real property as a consequence of an IPCC decision may also receive compensation, assistance with resettlement and/or new property from the state. [...]"

IPCC, 7-9 September 2004:

"IPCC was give life through the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) agreed by the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). It was signed into law on January 15th 2004. The IPCC was seen as the way to redress injustices created from wrongful appropriation and distribution of properties due to the actions or policies of the former Baathist regime. This national problem is of prime concern in Kirkuk and the surrounding areas due to Baathist policies of ethnic redistribution, which have displaced Kurds. The first of the IPCC offices were opened at the beginning of March with the sole focus of distributing claims forms. There were offices open in the north, middle and south of Iraq by the end of May. Since the claims hand out the organisation has worked to put systems in place necessary to running a mass claims system such as Regional Commissions to make decisions on claims and the financial ability to pay organizational salaries. [...] All governorates in Iraq have IPCC offices. Kirkuk has the largest number with four offices. Diyala and Saladin have two each governorate. All have Regional Commissions which have been established with adjudicators trained and appointed to be able to decide claims. The Commission is reviewing cases in order to start making decisions once a compensation plan has been established. 19,000 claims have been filed."

FMR, September 2004:

"Lessons learned in BiH [Bosnia and Herzegovina] appear not to be heeded in Iraq where it is estimated that up to a million people were displaced as a result of expulsion policies that the former regime used to remove opponents and gain valuable land in the southern marshes and in the north. A worrying start was made when the occupation authorities established the Iraq Property Claims Commission (IPCC) in January 2004 with little Iraqi involvement. Experts working for the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) drafted a document and required the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) to implement its provisions without paying sufficient attention to realistic enforcement mechanisms.

BiH experience shows that national institutions have to be instrumental in reallocating housing to those displaced by a returning owner or rights holder, since they are the ones in control of the

municipality housing stock and able to mobilise the police to enforce evictions if necessary. Yet in Iraq national institutions will be hard-pressed to resettle the new 'displacees', as they are bound to under the terms of the IPCC. Those likely to be first in line for eviction by returning owners or legal rights holders- mostly Arabs allocated housing by the Baathist regime in areas populated by Kurds and Turkomen – will probably wish to be resettled in areas where they constitute a majority.[1] It is not clear either whether the newly-trained Iraqi police force will have the requisite will or ability to carry out contentious evictions. Had more attention been paid to the Bosnian experience it would have been readily apparent to the architects of the IPCC that national involvement from the start is vital to successful implementation of the scheme."

This is an excerpt of "Restitution of land and property rights", by Anne Davies. For the full article, see Forced Migration Review, September 2004 [in sources, below]

See also (in sources, below):

UNHCR, August 2004

"US advances Bosnian solution to ethnic cleansing in Iraq", The Guardian, " 24 April 2003 [in sources, below]

UNHCR, September 2004

See the IPCC website launched in June 2005 and for background Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation 12

IPCC, April 2006

Claims received by CRRPD (2004-2008)

- The CRRPD can only rule on land and property rights violations that took place in the period between 17 July 1968 and 9 April 2003. The CRPD is not competent to provide redress for the destruction of property.
- As of January 2008, CRRPD has received close to 139,631 claims, out of which more than 55,000 concern properties located in the Kirkuk area. The total number of claims that have so far been decided amounts to little over 40,760, i.e. about one forth of all claims. (IOM, January 2008)
- The total number of decisions numbering 40,760, contains final decisions as well decisions which are still susceptible to appeal or re-review according to Art. 34 of the CRRPD Statute or where the appeal is still pending. The total number of final and enforceable decisions is estimated at 6000. (IOM, January 2008)
- As of January 2008, only 382 decisions had been enforced. This involved 1004 beneficiaries to whom a total of 94 million, or 110,300,000,000 billion dinars had been disbursed. (IOM, January 2008)
- The CRRPD initially extended deadline to file claims to 30 June 2007, but has since been subsequently extended indefinitely. (CRRPD, June 2007)

Van der Auweraert, Peter, 7 September 2007:

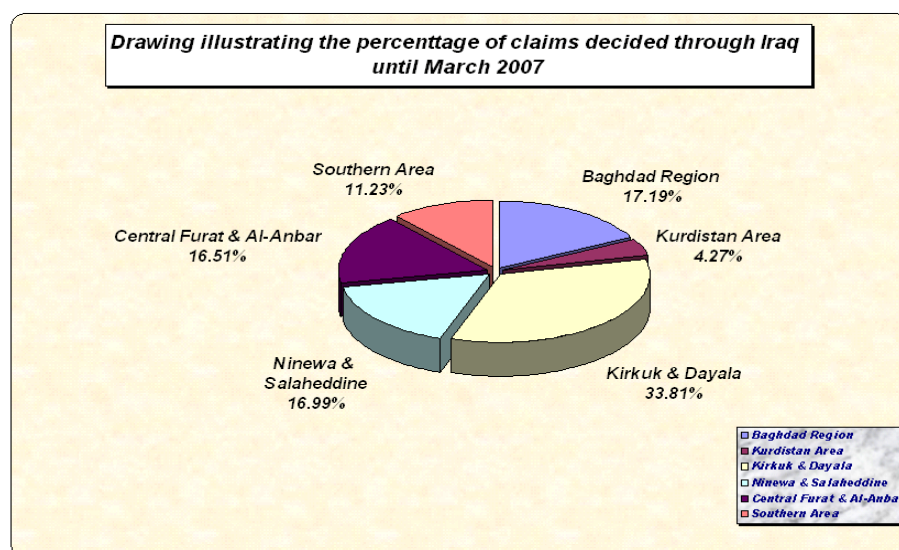
"Today, the CRRPD has received close to 135,000 claims, out of which more than 55,000 concern properties located in the Kirkuk area. The total number of claims that have so far been decided amounts to little over 37,000, i.e. about one forth of all claims. On its face, the latter figure is quite impressive, giving the complexity of the CRRPD procedures and, especially, the situation in Iraq over the past few years. In terms of the actual outcome of the CRRPD the situation is, however, slightly less positive then the figures may lead one to believe and this for a number of reasons.

The first reason is that, according to the CRRPD, approximately 9000 decisions will have to be rereviewed as a consequence of the changes introduced by the CRRPD Law. As the Law changed the valuation criteria for compensation, all compensation decisions that were decided in application of the IPCC statute now have to be reconsidered as to the awarded amount. At the same time, also restitution decisions involving a secondary occupant will have to be re-reviewed, as the CRRPD introduced the formal right of the secondary occupant to receive compensation in case the property is returned to the original owner. It is unclear at the moment how long this re-review will take. The second reason is that a significant number of successful claimants face difficulties in having their CRRPD restitution decisions enforced. While accurate figures regarding the enforcement rate are lacking and likely to differ from region to region, it is generally assumed that a considerable proportion of final restitution decisions have remained un-enforced. Anecdotal evidence suggests that until recently this was at least in part due to the unwillingness of certain Property Registration Offices to re-register property in name of the original owner on the basis of a CRRPD decision. Of late, this situation appears to have improved after repeated interventions by the Head of the CRRPD. A continuing problem, however, appears to be the difficulties faced by the Enforcement Department of the Ministry of Justice to evict unwilling current occupants due to the prevailing security situation and the lack of capacity. Especially in areas with high rates of violence, the Department and the Police are said to lack either willingness or capacity to enforce CRRPD restitution decisions against unwilling occupants.

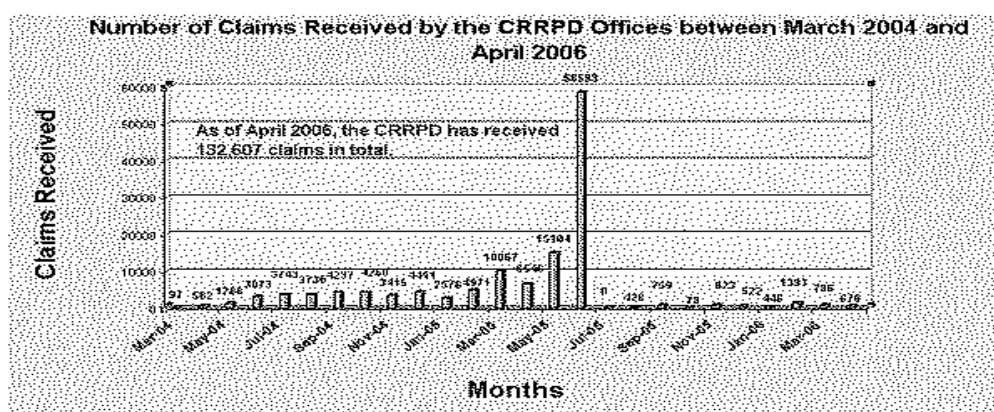
A third reason why the situation is less positive than the decision rate appears to suggest is the low rate of enforcement for compensation decisions. It was not until December 2006 that the CRRPD and the Ministry of Finance agreed on a procedure to pay compensation to successful claimants and this despite the fact that the Iraqi State Budget for 2006 had specially allocated \$200 million for CRRPD compensation payments. Initially reluctant to get directly involved with the payment of compensation, a responsibility which the CRRPD Law lays with the Ministry of Finance, the CRRPD is now itself paying out compensation to the claimants with funds drawn from an account funded by the Ministry of Finance based on groups of position compensation decisions presented to it. So far, four groups of claims have been compensated, in total amounting to little more than one hundred cases. It is clear that the compensation rate will need to increase drastically for the CRRPD to live up to the promise of its statute. "

CPRRD, March 2007:

CRRPD ORGANISATIONAL STATISTICS



CRRPD, April 2006:



AFP, 3 September, 2004:

"Iraq's property claims commission for disputed land in oil-rich northern Iraq has failed to process a single claim, despite more than 167,400 Kurds re-settling in dozens of refugee camps since March alone, a US commander said. Of those tens of thousands of Iraqis tracked by the US military and classified as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the last six months, more than 153,000 are Kurds. For Major General John Batiste, the brewing crisis is the biggest problem facing the 1st Infantry Division (1st ID), outweighing the threats of foreign fighters and insurgents in Sunni Muslim trouble spots north of Baghdad. Since early 2004, 77,000 Kurds have re-settled in the province of Tamin, home to northern Iraq's oil capital of Kirkuk, 65,747 in Salaheddin and 10,675 in Sulaimaniyah, based on US statistics. Aside from the Kurds, 4,757 Turkmen and 2,226 Arabs have resettled in Salaheddin, with another 5,000 Arabs and 2,000 Turkmen classified as IDPs in Tamin, home to the largest oil reserves in the world's second largest producer. The US military was unable to provide immediate statistics for Diyala, which makes up the fourth province patrolled by the 1st ID, north of Baghdad. Tens of thousands of Kurds, desperate to return to the northern land from where they were hunted under Saddam Hussein's brutal 'Arabisation' policy, are living in camps dotted around the north, waiting for their claims to be heard. Forty-four of those camps are in Tamin province, which has a rich ethnic mix of Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen. But as some Kurds have forcibly seized control of their former property, thousands of Arabs have

been shunted into similar camps, waiting for their fates and compensation to be resolved with nowhere else to live.

See also (in sources, below):

IRIN, "Property commission gives displaced people hope" , 25 May 2004

UNHCR, September 2004

UNHCR, October 2005, p. 129

Law and policy

General: Law and Policies.

- The Iraqi government policies toward housing and property rights have been varied. While addressing housing and property concerns of former regime through the CRRPD, the Iraqi Government has replied to post 2003 displacement in an ad hoc manner. This has broadly signalled a lack of consistency in the Governments approach.
- Recommendations from NGOs have advocated for improved mechanisms to claimants, inclusion of all categories of loss included or omitted in the CRRPD but allowable under Iraqi law. These recommendations have underlined the applicability of Iraqi Civil Code in the adjudication of property disputes and related claims, including broadening the applicability the law to replace the ideological focus of current property dispute mechanisms in the CRRPD.
- This should address all parties and not be constrained by time or area of applicability including the Multi-National Forces and remove immunity for multinational forces personnel from the jurisdiction of Iraqi courts in matters of liability for housing and land rights violations (HIC, August 2005)
- Iraqi civil law system is said to provide an adequate legal scheme for providing restitution to property owners who have been displaced or who have suffered a loss due to damaged property. Legislation under the CPA however does limit the remedies for victims of loss of property due to military operations. (Sigall, July 9, 2008; Sigall, March 2005)
- The lack of adequate coordination with the Iraqi legal system and the lack of adequate mechanisms to operationalize restitution has meant that many displaced Iraqis - both from before and after 2003 – remain vulnerable and without an adequate means of redress. (Brookings, 9 June 2008)
- The nature of the sectarian violence over since 2006, the lack of enforcement and limited judiciary throughout the country and the slow re-emergence of public institutions, has all rendered it difficult to address housing and property issues.
- This could be significantly compounded were returns of refugees and IDPs to occur suddenly, there is a risk of further instability as a result of overwhelming inadequate infrastructure and dealing with a large number of property disputes at the same time. (Brookings, 9 June 2008; Leikie 30 July 2003)
- Domestic institutions may lack the institutional capacity to deal with the enormous influx of claims. International institutions or specialized domestic institutions, are therefore likely needed to complement/ augment those domestic institutions. (Brookings, 9 June 2008)

Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 9 June 2008:

"By utilizing the laws and civil courts already in place, international organizations could avoid needless repetition and interference while at the same time harnessing local capacity. He

underscored the importance of involving Iraqi civil courts in property restitution, given their natural jurisdiction over the subject matter, their existing legal infrastructure, their enforcement mechanisms, and the existence of their extraordinary civil law system. The involvement of domestic institutions is also critical in terms of legitimacy as it may lead to a certain amount of domestic buy-in.

The Iraqi Civil Code, authored by Abdel-Razeq al-Sanhuri and enacted in the 1950s, clearly recognizes the right to private property as well as the right of 'possession', which typically exist in civil codes. Such possessory rights are a kind of right that allow for possession of a thing but which are less than full ownership and, thus, do not require proof of ownership. Continued possession for a prolonged period can lead to ownership over immovable property, however possession cannot be claimed if it is ambiguous, coupled with coercion, or obtained secretly. Therefore, many families who were forced out by militias, by generalized violence, and whose homes are now occupied by other families, will have the right to reclaim their homes.

The lack of adequate coordination with the organic Iraqi legal system and the lack of adequate mechanisms to operationalize restitution has meant that many displaced Iraqis - both from before and after 2003 - remain vulnerable and without an adequate means of redress. Civil courts remain critical to the process of enforcing rulings and protecting property rights. Moreover, they are a central part of domestic society and must be empowered if the trend of continued displacement is to be halted and property rights are to be protected in an enduring fashion. The domestic legal system, however, cannot alone solve the enormous crisis of displacement in Iraq. While civil courts protect property rights and determine the "winner" in a contest over disputed property, they do not fully address the plight of the "loser." Further, domestic institutions may lack the institutional capacity to deal with the enormous influx of claims. International institutions or specialized domestic institutions, therefore, are needed to step in to augment those domestic institutions and to do those things that are not part of the ordinary legal process: assisting those without valid claims but who are, nonetheless, displaced; finding housing; providing compensation where appropriate; etc."

Dan. E. Stigall, March 2005:

"What recourse is left to an interim government that wishes to provide a means of redress to its aggrieved citizenry? The answer is astonishingly simple: allow property disputes to be addressed in their proper forum. Civil courts, in most jurisdictions throughout the world, are the proper forum for property disputes. Iraq possesses an advanced system of property law that, in contrast to the incomplete, untested, and ad hoc guidelines in the IPCC statute, is more than adequate for resolving property disputes of the most complex sort, including cases in which property was taken unlawfully. The Iraqi Civil Code states that ownership vests unto the owner the right to dispose absolutely of that which he owns and that "[n]o one can be deprived of his ownership except in the cases and in the manner provided for by law and in consideration for fair compensation payable in advance." Thus, true title does not pass with property (movable or immovable) not acquired lawfully or for less than fair compensation. [...]

Further, unlike the IPCC statute, the Iraqi Civil Code contains a sophisticated regime of law governing contracts and other obligations that could be invoked to address situations in which Iraqi citizens were duped or intimidated into signing contracts divesting themselves of property. (77) Like many civil codes based on the French model, the Iraqi Civil Code nullifies obligations if tainted by a vice of consent or defect of the will. (78) Accordingly, a contract is not valid if executed in mistake, (79) under duress, (80) or where a contracting party has made false representations. (81) Like most modern civil codes, the Iraqi Civil Code contains provisions for force majeure (82) and other exigencies. (83) Therefore, the Iraqi Civil Code is a superior claims system. It not only has an advanced system of rules designed to address complex property disputes, but also addresses movable and immovable property and causes of action beyond confiscation of property. It permits recovery for a broad range of injury, allows recovery for

damaged and confiscated property, and contains provisions that consider the good or bad faith of subsequent purchasers. Finally, it allows recovery of lost rent, lost fruits, emotional damages, and moral injury.

There are distinct and numerous disadvantages to the status quo. From a legal standpoint, the clock is ticking on prescriptive periods (or statutes of limitations.) The Iraqi Civil Code states that "[a] case shall not be heard in respect of an obligation whatever its cause ... if it has not been claimed without lawful cause for a period of 15 years...." (84) In the case of recurring rights, such as rent or income due to a possessor in bad faith, that period is shortened to five years. (85) In other cases, such as certain commercial exchanges, the prescriptive period is shortened even further to a period of one year. (86) Such legal limits could, in theory, bar certain actions within civil courts--especially for those acts which took place over fifteen years ago. Fortunately, the Iraqi Civil Code tolls the running of prescription where there is an impediment rendering it impossible for the plaintiff to claim his or her right. (87) This rule reflects the civilian concept of *contra non valentem agere nulla currit praescriptio*, a Latin maxim meaning that prescription does not run against a party unable to act. (88)"

Leckie, 30 July 2003

"Under the present circumstances of unrest, the lack of a functioning and impartial judiciary throughout the country and the slow re-emergence of public institutions, housing, land and property transactions are not generally subject to formal legal or institutional oversight. House sales that take place at present may be based on informal contracts between the parties, but these may neither be formally legal, nor necessarily a form of transaction that will be recognized by future judicial and related institutions. The absence of an official means for such transactions serves to create greater insecurity and fear that people forced to sell or buy a home might not have rights as secure as they would otherwise anticipate. This is a problem common to post-conflict settings, and one that requires the attention of the authorities.

The incomplete nature of registration records and the lack of current capacity in housing, land and property registration institutions now in place also means that people will find it increasingly difficult to prove ownership or tenancy rights over a particular dwelling. This, in turn, will become another major challenge to whatever institution is established to resolve housing, land and property disputes. It is clear that a major effort will need to be made by the Competent Authorities to discern the degree to which the system for registering housing, land and property titles and/or tenancy rights is in place, and how best to re-establish these functions throughout the country. The Competent Authorities will need to rapidly discern what portion of the registration (or cadastre) records are still available for consultation, and to what extent they have access to and control over these vital records.

One of the main challenges facing the Competent Authorities and the people of Iraq will be how to best approach the issue of housing privatization. Areas of the economy currently under State control (in name, at least) will all be likely vetted for possible privatization by the CPA. [...]. While the broader scope of this highly contentious issue is beyond the scope of this document, this issue is of vital importance for the housing sector as a whole. A sizable portion of the Iraqi population reside in what is technically social (public) housing, both in ownership and tenancy arrangements. If past practice is anything to go by, it is likely that the CPA will vigorously pursue the privatization of such housing resources, although in the short-term this is not foreseen to constitute a major policy area of CPA concern. In the medium- and longer-term, however, as the realization of the importance of the housing sector for the economic, social and political stability grows, pressure to shift these housing resources from the State to private hands will also increase. In practice, however, hastily arranged maneuvers designed to shift the ownership of public resources into private hands is an immensely complex process that can create a new series of hardships on those affected, as well as complicating the housing, land and property

rights claims process in the shorter-term. The CPA should leave these types of decisions to the Iraqis themselves."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"The Baghdad security plan was formally launched on 13 February 2007 in a live televised address by General Qanbar, Commander of Baghdad security plan operations. General Qanbar announced that the launch of the Baghdad security plans would be accompanied by closure of the borders with the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran for a period of 72 hours and the extension of curfew hours in Baghdad. Illegal occupants of real estate property belonging to displaced persons were given 15 days to vacate and return such properties with their assets to their legal owners. Prime Minister Al-Maliki distinguished the new plan from past efforts by highlighting Iraqi control of security operations with United States troop support, the decision to confront all armed groups regardless of religious or political affiliation, and the combination of reconciliation and economic measures."

HIC, August 2005:

"In the immediate term, victims and their legal representatives are urged to quantify plaintiffs' losses thoroughly, using existing tools and techniques developed in other contexts to the extent that comprise a full inventory of claims and ultimately serve the full restoration of Iraqi victims' housing and land rights, as well as provide policy and financial planners with the data needed to assess future requirements and options for restitution and compensation. That method should take account of the entire complement of housing and land rights elements provided in the CESC General Comments Nos. 4 and 7, as well as other congruent and interdependent rights codified in the human rights treaties to which Iraq is a party and elaborated through the jurisprudence of the treaty-monitoring bodies.

An authoritative Iraqi body, such as the IPCC National Secretariat, in cooperation with the Ministry of Displacement and Migration or the larger interministerial Working Group on Compensation for the Displaced, should develop and provide to IPCC adjudicators ample guidelines for determining remedies based on Iraqi law and prevailing human rights standards. ...These guidelines should allow all categories of loss included and omitted in the current IPCC instruments, but allowable under Iraqi law; value assessments based on current market value of structures, lands and harvest crops; lost revenue from the use of property; relocation and alternative housing costs resulting from the violation and required for resettlement; recurrent costs; values for pain and suffering, etc. (See summary of the "Loss Matrix" from the HLRN Housing and Land Rights Toolkit by way of example.) "

See full report in sources, below.

Of 'Principles' and Property law: the Iraqi Civil Code and its Compatibility with International Standards for the Treatment of Displaced Persons, Dan E. Stigall U.S. Army JAG Corps, July 9, 2008:

"Thousands of homes have been abandoned, destroyed or occupied. There needs to be a legal process to settle ownership and a compensation system for those that can't or won't go back. That will last for years. So far, the governments attempts to deal with this issue have failed. For example, in early 2007, Baghdad said all houses and property needed to be returned to the displaced, but it turned out the government didn't have any means to implement the policy. Iraq is also hindered by the fact that its legal system rarely operates and is overflowing with security cases. Asking it to deal with lawsuits might be too much for it to handle right now."

Habitat International Coalition recommendations on housing and land rights (2005)

HIC, August 2005

Data collection and quantification of losses:

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q Such a mechanism also must improve the current claim forms for new submissions and seek additional information from claimants already on record by issuing detailed instructions to claimants and their representatives on how to present data complete enough so as to determine what compensation is due to the displaced and/or dispossessed owner. These guidelines should allow all categories of loss included and omitted in the current IPCC instruments, but allowable under Iraqi law; value assessments based on current market value of structures, lands and harvest crops; lost revenue from the use of property; relocation and alternative housing costs resulting from the violation and required for resettlement; recurrent costs; values for pain and suffering, etc. (A summary of the "Loss Matrix" from the [HLRN Housing and Land Rights Toolkit](#) is annexed here by way of example.)

Institutional Correction

q It is urgent, necessary and consistent with provisions of the CPA Regulations¹¹⁵ for the IPCC National Secretariat and/or Iraqi National Assembly to restore the applicability of the Iraqi Civil Code in the adjudication of property disputes and related claims arising from housing and land rights violations. That should allow the admissibility of claims arising from forced or coercive contracts for the transfer of real property for less than its full value, including lands taken under the Agricultural Reforms Law No. 117 (1970). Applying neutral law then would replace the ideological focus on claims exclusively against the former Ba`thist leadership and permit claimants to seek remedy, focusing rather on addressing violations, as such, and relief for victims.

q The IPCC National Secretariat and/or National Assembly should determine that cases and claims received under the IPCC statute, and all property disputes, be adjudicated in their proper forum; i.e., courts of law, special courts, or other judicial institution directed by Iraqi representatives, having judicial effect, and respecting rights and due procedures of appeal. q In the meantime, it is urgent and important for victims and their legal representatives to petition for the application of Iraqi law, which is not limited to the service of selective classes of restrictive time prescriptions set forth in the IPCC statute.

q In the interest of deterring further housing and land rights violations, civil and governmental institutions are needed to complement the IPCC's remedial work by investigating and, where possible, prosecuting housing and land rights violations committed by all parties, in addition to former Iraqi government and Ba`th Party members and institutions, identifying also those acts and omissions committed by the personnel of the CPA, multinational forces occupying the country and other domestic and transnational parties that lead to violations of housing and land rights.

q The Iraqi National Assembly should assert practical sovereignty and the rule of law by repealing CPA Order No. 17 claiming immunity for multinational forces personnel from the jurisdiction of Iraqi courts in matters of liability for housing and land rights violations.[...]

q The Iraqi National Assembly should assert practical sovereignty and the rule of law by repealing CPA Order No. 6 "Eviction of Persons Illegally Occupying Public Buildings" in favor of local law and procedures that incorporate CESCR General Comment No. 7 "the right to housing: forced eviction," in order to ensure that human rights and well-being be upheld in the conduct of any due-process evictions.

q Iraqi law makers and political leaders should publicly encourage civil society participation in the monitoring and documentation of past, present and future housing and land rights violations, and should formulate explicit policy and legislation to protect housing and land rights defenders from retaliation.

q International donors should consider providing aid and technical help to the Iraqi judicial system in tandem with that to the IPCC investigative and mediating functions. This will help mitigate the drain of personnel, funding and prestige from the Iraqi courts arising from the IPCC statute and its implementation, while maintaining the relevance of Iraqi courts for disposing of all IPCC-related claims with judicial effect, not only the potentially great number of valid claims that fall outside the IPCC framework. *Interpretive Options*

q Claims for moveable property losses, immovable property damage, and injury arising from mental anguish or humiliation, and other claims outside the IPCC statutory chronological and subject limits still would fall within the purview of the Iraqi Civil Code and Iraqi courts. Claims for remedy should be raised in Iraqi courts now, based on the argument that domestic Iraqi law and international treaty standards continue to apply.

q Certain plaintiffs mounting their claims in Iraqi courts after the 30 June 2005 IPCC submission deadline will hold an advantage by avoiding the various restrictions of the IPCC statute and availing themselves to the more-complete and inclusive Iraqi Civil Code.

q The IPCC's "General Principles" are not absolute and are subject to revision by the IPCC National Secretariat and under the legislative jurisdiction of the National Assembly. [...] In the meantime, claimants and adjudicators may exercise their option, even under the IPCC statute, to resort to other legal guidance and norms in arguing or disposing claims.[...]

q All adjudicators in Iraq should scrupulously avoid replacing original or replacement land remedies with cash awards, where possible. [...]

q Claimants and their representatives before the IPCC, as well as IPCC adjudicators, should take the initiative of invoking both Iraqi and international law in order to ensure full restitution *and* compensation for victims, not a choice between them.

See full report in sources below

Issues of compensation on Housing and Property Damage and Destruction due to military operations (2003-2008)

- While the precise scale of housing and property damage and destruction due to the 2003 conflict is not known, it is clear that a large number of civilian homes were damaged or destroyed by US-led Coalition Forces during the war and in subsequent military operations.
- The United States Foreign Claims Act stipulates American military compensation to local civilians for losses not related to combat operations. The US military has however offered payments for war damage compensation to alleviate tension between soldiers and Iraqi community seeking redress. In 2007 out of 7,103 claims were filed and 2,896 paid out with total dollar amount of \$13,074,660. (Time, 21 January 2008; IHT, 12 April 2008)
- A comprehensive database of Iraqi claims for war damage compensation is not available for US or Iraqi military operations. Critics complain of the lack of consistency in compensation and transparency, and of the lack of information regarding the process in which incidents involving US military are investigated. (Time, 21 January 2008; IHT, 12 April 2008) Similar arguments may be presented regarding Iraqi government compensation.
- The process for receiving compensation is handled by the Iraq Property Compensations Commission (IPCC). It takes at least two to six months just to complete the submission of documents and verifications of claims. Actual disbursement of the money, however, can take more than two years. Several compensation funds have reportedly been provided by Iraqi Transitional Authority and subsequent Iraqi Government for damages and losses incurred during military operations such as in Fallujah (2004), Mosul (2005), Diyala (2007).
- NGOs estimate that at least 80,000 families and businesses across Iraq are still awaiting reimbursement of claims made to the Government for all kinds of damage incurred over the past three years. Expected payments range from US \$800 to US \$30,000 per case. According to surveys and material collected by NGOs, at least one million Iraqis have some kind of compensation owed, related to losses in their homes, shops, mosques, cars and others
- The Iraqi Central Committee for the Compensation of the People of Fallujah (CCCPF) for example was created by the Iraqi government to ensure the compensation of those whose homes and/or businesses damaged during the US led Coalition Forces offensive on the city in November 2004. Reports would make note of insufficiency in allocations for compensation per families, and reconstruction estimated at 500 million in light of depth of destruction. Payments amounted to 2,000 US per family.

International Herald Tribune (IHT), 12 April 2007:

"For more than half a century, the Foreign Claims Act has provided the American military its primary tool to compensate local civilians for losses not related to combat operations. For claims that military claims commissioners deem related to combat, the army may offer a condolence payment, generally no higher than \$2,500 per person killed. In Haditha, the U.S. Marines paid local residents \$38,000 after several troops killed two dozen people, including women and children, in a car and three homes in November 2005. Four enlisted marines have been charged with murder; four officers were charged with dereliction of duty. But in Iraq, the rules for evaluating foreign civilian claims have changed over time. Before President George W. Bush declared major combat operations over in May 2003, commanders considered most checkpoint shootings to be combat-related, and thus not covered by the Foreign Claims Act. But as more and more Iraqis were accidentally injured or killed, the army began offering informal payments to alleviate tension between soldiers and increasingly hostile groups of relatives and tribal elders seeking redress."

Time, 21 January 2008:

"[I]n the fiscal year 2006 9,257 claims were filed in Iraq, of which 3,658 were paid, totaling \$8,397,726. Fewer were filed in and paid out in 2007 — 7,103 and 2,896 respectively — but the total dollar amount was larger: \$13,074,660. U.S. officers praise the program, though it is impossible to say how many Iraqi hearts and minds have been appeased. It can take months for a claim to be paid and if a claim is filed after the U.S. military unit involved is rotated out of Iraq, the odds are that the claim will never be awarded. In Iraq today, it is not uncommon for Iraqi civilians to beseech mid-ranking U.S. officers for claims for damages done in 2003 or 2004. A comprehensive database of Iraqi claims for war damage compensation is not available. Critics of the program, especially of the money paid out to the families of innocent Iraqi families killed in conflict, complain that the military does not proactively release these documents. Last year the ACLU filed a request under the Freedom of Information Act and received about 2,000 pages of information, a snapshot of part of 2005 and 2006, but it is by no means comprehensive or complete. The U.S. has been known to pay up to \$2,500 for an "accidental" killing. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 26 September 2007:

"Residents of Diyala Province, northeast of Baghdad and adjacent to the Iranian border, say the payments they will get from the Iraqi government are insufficient compensation for the damage caused to their property by US and Iraqi forces in recent military operations. The ethnically mixed province [see box], a major insurgent stronghold, saw heavy fighting in the past few weeks in which warplanes, helicopter gunships and artillery were used against Al-Qaeda insurgents in Iraq. Residents say the fighting left over 5,000 families displaced and in poverty, and damaged hundreds of houses, shops, government buildings and schools. Almost all towns and villages in the province have been affected by the military operations, they say. The damage is extensive and many buildings have been totally destroyed. The amount to be paid by the government is less than half the value of the properties before they were damaged, said Maruan Ziad, an economics professor at Baghdad University and a senior official at the Ministry of Construction and Housing.[...] Many families are still displaced and others are fleeing Baqubah [the provincial capital] as sectarian violence worsens. Some partially destroyed houses have been occupied by other families, and residents are encountering difficulties returning to their homes, Ziad added. The Iraqi authorities have allocated US\$50 million for compensation. Imad Jalil, Diyala's deputy governor, has said 10 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$7,000) would be the maximum that would be paid to each household for the damage caused. Residents and specialists have said the money is not sufficient for families to rebuild their properties, and should be doubled."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 10 October 2006:

"NGOs estimate that at least 80,000 families and businesses across Iraq are still awaiting reimbursement for all kinds of damage incurred over the past three years. Expected payments range from US \$800 to US \$30,000 per case. The process for receiving compensation is handled by the Iraq Property Compensations Commission (IPCC). It takes at least two to six months just to complete the submission of documents and verifications of claims. Actual disbursement of the money, however, can take more than two years. Claimants must present full documentation of their goods with pictures of the damage sustained in addition to a police report, and sometimes witness statements. If the claim is accepted, a government official makes a valuation of the damage and then the claimant waits until the commission contacts him. However, the money for the payment must be available "Thousands of families are still awaiting compensation from the government," said Fatah Ahmed, spokesperson for the Baghdad-based Iraq Aid Association (IAA). "Each day there is new fighting, more destruction, more attacks, and as a result, more families without their homes and shops - with the government alleging that there are no funds to reimburse yet." More than 10,000 families have received their compensation, however, and many of them have already rebuilt their homes - especially in the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, according to the IPCC. However, the ongoing dire security situation in Iraq has made it difficult for the compensation process to continue smoothly for other families. Millions of dollars have been reallocated from compensation to additional security measures and the reconstruction

of government offices, officials said. "According to surveys and material collected by NGOs in Iraq [including the IAA], at least one million Iraqis have some kind of compensation owed, related to losses in their homes, shops, mosques, cars and others," said Fua'ad Ibraheem, a political science teacher at Baghdad University. "And as the compensation process is going so slow, it might take years for those families to receive [even] a coin as payment."

IRIN, 20 November 2005:

"Thousands of families from the town of Talafar, some 80 km east of the northern city of Mosul, have begun to receive monetary damages for losses incurred during US-led military operations in September. City officials last week began to distribute part of a \$3-million compensation package funded by the Iraqi Transitional Government aimed at reimbursing residents of the city whose houses and businesses were destroyed during fighting between insurgents and Coalition forces. [...] More than 50,000 families out of Talafar's population of 400,000 left the city during the military operations, many of whom returned to find their homes and businesses devastated. In an effort to compensate their losses, each family received an initial amount of \$100, with monthly stipends planned for residents and extra reparations for those whose properties were totally destroyed. Reimbursements were also extended to a number of displaced families living on the outskirts of the city who have not yet returned to the city because their homes remain uninhabitable. Some residents expressed satisfaction with the payments....Others, however, complained that the amount was insufficient, especially for those with large families. Reconstruction projects have also begun in the city, aimed at repairing the destruction....More than 400 houses and shops were reported to be seriously damaged during hostilities, not counting schools, clinics and mosques."

IRIN, 24 May 2005:

"About 70 percent of buildings, many of them houses, were destroyed during the conflict. [...] The Iraqi Central Committee for the Compensation of the People of Fallujah (CCCPF) told IRIN that 200 families have been given payments spread over eight months. Each person has received nearly \$2,000 but residents complained that the amount was not enough to rebuild their lives and homes again. Bill Taylor, director of the US-Iraqi reconstruction management office, told IRIN that insecurity and attacks elsewhere in the country had caused a general delay in contractors work but insisted that reconstruction would not stop and families in Fallujah would soon start to feel a difference in their lives. Others argued that more funds were needed. Khalid Kubaissy, a senior official from the CCCPF, told IRIN that the \$200 million was not enough to cover compensation and reconstruction costs. According to their evaluation, more than US \$500 million was required for the total reconstruction of Fallujah. Kubaissy added that 30,000 houses were damaged in the battle and more than 5,000 had been totally destroyed. In addition, around 8,500 shops, 60 mosques and 20 government offices required massive repair work. 'When they [US troops] decided to destroy Fallujah they were so fast but when you talk about rebuilding the city and paying for destruction they are very slow. We lost our house, personal things and traditions but no one cares about that and even in the media, Fallujah has been forgotten,' Abu Athir, a local resident, told IRIN standing next to the rubble where his home once stood."

BBC, 7 April 2005:

"About half the population of the Iraqi city of Falluja have returned to their homes in the five months since a major US offensive there, officials believe. Authorities have begun handing out compensation to residents for property damaged during the assault, targeted at insurgents hiding in the city. But only 20% of each claim is being covered, leading to complaints. [...] At the heavily guarded distribution point, set up in western Falluja, hundreds of people queued to pick up payments ranging from \$500 to \$14,000 (£270 to £7,500). But these sums only cover 20% of each claim and many people at the centre complained how long it had taken to get this money. They also asked when they would get the rest."

Further reports relating to compensation (see sources, below):

"Fallujah's struggle for recovery," BBC, 14 April 2005

"Compensation for Fallujah residents slow-locals", IRIN, 4 April 2005

Applying the Lessons of Bosnia in Iraq: Whatever the Solution, Property Rights Should be Secured, **Brookings Institution**, 8 January 2008

Compensation for damaged property inadequate, say Diyala residents, **IRIN**, 26 September 2007
UNAMI, February 2006

["US pays up for fatal Iraq blunders"](#), **The Guardian**, 26 November 2003

IWPR, 19 April 2005

Concerns regarding property rights for women (2004)

- Iraqi Constitution. Article 14 makes clear that all Iraqis are equal under the law without respect to gender, though there is contention as to whether Article 2's embrace of Islamic law will limit Article 14's promise of equality particularly in the legislation of personal statutory laws. The constitution allows Iraqis to choose whether they will follow secular law or Shari'a law in family matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. (Article 41).
- The issue of gender and property rights is noted as a concern in Iraq. The Iraqi constitution and civil code may be favourable to women though certain ambiguities persist in extent to which relevant law is subject to interpretation particularly vis a vis inheritance and divorce in personal statutory laws are of specific concern.
- In practice however, the level of intimidation, discrimination and sexual and gender based violence which have been reported over the last few years in Iraq suggest that ensuring possession and enforceable property rights for women remains difficult to implement. There is limited and consistent reported data on violations of property rights for women.
- The interim constitution (officially: the Temporary Administrative Law) served as the legal framework pending the new permanent constitution put in place by December 31, 2005. The interim constitution was heavily criticised for failing to explicitly guarantee women the right to inherit on an equal basis with men, and equal rights in marriage and divorce as well as right to confer citizenship.

Panel Seminar: Addressing Post-Conflict Property Claims of the Displaced: Challenges to a Consistent Approach, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 9 June 2008:

"The issue of gender and property rights was noted as a concern for Iraq and other conflict zones as well as areas under customary tenure. Stigall noted that the Iraqi civil code is fairly gender-neutral, and contains nothing barring women from owning property. Iraq's Personal Status Law is strongly influenced by the Jafari school of jurisprudence, which is also relatively favorable to women."

HRW, March 5, 2004:

"Iraq's proposed interim constitution fails to give adequate protection to women's human rights, Human Rights Watch said today.[...] 'Equal rights for Iraqi women in marriage, inheritance, and their children's citizenship should not be left in jeopardy,' said LaShawn R. Jefferson, executive director of the Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch. 'The interim constitution should explicitly guarantee these rights.' The Iraqi interim constitution, officially known as the Temporary Administrative Law, will serve as the country's fundamental legal framework until a new permanent constitution is put in place by December 31, 2005. A copy of a draft interim constitution obtained by Human Rights Watch contains a provision prohibiting discrimination based on sex. However, it does not specifically guarantee equality between men and women in at

least three critical areas where women in the Middle East have historically suffered discrimination:

The interim constitution offers no explicit guarantee that women will have equal rights to marry, within marriage, and at its dissolution.

It does not explicitly guarantee women the right to inherit on an equal basis with men.

It fails to guarantee Iraqi women married to non-Iraqis the right to confer citizenship to their children.

The interim constitution contains certain equal protection clauses, including the provision granting Iraqi women a substantial number of seats in parliament and explicitly states that any references made in the masculine tense apply to both men and women. However, in the future, Iraq's constitution should explicitly contain provisions that guarantee women's equal rights in the family and in society more broadly, Human Rights Watch said. Throughout the region, equal protection clauses in constitutions have often been circumvented by the imposition of clearly discriminatory family and personal status codes. 'The interim constitution will be the starting point for drafting a permanent Iraqi Constitution,' Jefferson said. 'If a goal is to ensure that women's rights are given equal stature and protection, the constitutional process in Iraq has gotten off to a weak start.'

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

"Under the Saddam Hussein regime, women had some of the most liberal protections of any Muslim country under Iraqi legislation which prohibited marriage under the age of 18 and denied favouritism to men in inheritance, divorce and child custody. It was even common for Iraqi women to hold political office, and the U.N. ranked Iraq as the Arab country with the highest level of gender equity prior to the 2003 invasion. Although CPA Ambassador Bremer refused to endorse the Iraqi Governing Council's Act 137 dated 29/12/2003 (which would have replaced Iraqi civil law concerning family law with Shari'a law) on the grounds that it deprived women of their basic rights, the new Iraqi Interim Constitution nevertheless does not allow women equal rights to marry, equal rights within marriage, nor equal rights to divorce. It does not guarantee them the right to inherit wealth on an equal basis with men and it fails to guarantee Iraqi women married to non-Iraqi men the right to give citizenship to their children. If adopted and ratified in its present form, the constitution will make Islam one source of law, and this could mean that anything contradicting religious codes may not be allowed. For example, Islam allows men to marry many women and does not require a minimum marriage age."

Leckie, 30 July 2003:

Although the 1990 Interim Constitution of Iraq in Article 17 provided that 'Inheritance is a guaranteed right, regulated by the law', Iraqi women face difficulties inheriting housing, land or property in the event of the death of their spouse. In Iraq, as in many countries, Sharia law guides the inheritance process, and in turn women receive only half of what a male inheritor receives. This appears to be the major housing, land and property problems facing women in Iraq. Rights to participate in the housing, land and property restitution process and equal rights to ownership, use and control of housing, property and land appear to be guaranteed, though the implementation of these rights leaves much to be desired. Women's rights must pervade all elements of the housing process, and steps should be taken to use such processes as an opportunity for securing such rights in places where discrimination against women obstructs the broader enjoyment of housing, land and property rights."

See also (in sources, below):

Iraq's Refugee and IDP crisis: Human Toll and Implications, **Middle East Institute**, July 2008

Update on IDP and USAID mission activities in Iraq, **U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS)**, 27 June 2008

Applying the Lessons of Bosnia in Iraq: Whatever the Solution, Property Rights Should be Secured, **Brookings Institution**, 8 January 2008

Compensation for damaged property inadequate, say Diyala residents, **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 26 September 2007

Compensation for wartime losses going slow, **IRIN**, 11 October 2006

Courts, confidence, and claims commissions: the case for remitting to Iraqi civil courts the tasks and jurisdiction of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission, **Dan E. Stigall**, March 2005

IRAQ: National and Regional Laws and Policies on Internal Displacement, **Brookings Institution**, 2006

<http://www.merijournal.com/en/asp/journal/2008/september/rubin/index.asp>

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

Return movements

Returnee Trends in 2007-2008 - less than 6% involved in return process

- According to IOM and MoDM, a returnee is someone who has returned to his original neighborhood or home. If someone has returned to the same city or village but is not able to return to his/her original neighborhood or home, the person is considered secondarily displaced, not a returnee. (IOM, August 2008)
- As of 21 September, based on MoDM's returnee registration, IOM and MoDM monitors' field visits, UNHCR rapid assessments, IOM has identified 16,782 returnee families (100,692 individuals) to Baghdad. An additional 11,986 returnee families have been identified in the rest of the country. Countrywide, 92% of returns are from internal displacement. (IOM, October 2008)
- Improving security situation and a lack of access to basic services and assistance in areas of displacement have prompted increasing numbers of internally displaced persons to return in June (12,000), July (18,000) and August (36,000). (UNAMI, November 2008)
- The majority (74%) of assessed returnees were displaced in 2006 and returned in 2007. The peak month for displacement of the assessed population was December 2006, and the peak month for return was March 2007. (IOM, August 2008)
- In July 2008, the UN SG would report that refugees and internally displaced persons continue to return to their places of origin at a steady rate of some 10,000 persons a month. (UN SG, July 2008) This would not take note of events in late summer of 2008 which saw heightened displacement of Christian Iraqis in northern Iraq.
- National reconciliation and security measures adopted in 2006 by Iraqi government would also bear results in early 2007, with peak months for return witnessed in February to March 2007. (IOM, August 2008; IRIN, 12 September 2006; IRIN, 21 February 2007)
- Returnees are principally of Arab Shia, and Arab Sunni sectarian origin. As of April 2008, a few Christian returnees have been assessed, but no Sabaeen-Mandaeans or Yazidis have been reported to be among the returnees. (IDP Working Group, 23 June 2008; IDP WG, November 2008)

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 6 November 2008:

"35. The improving security situation and a lack of access to basic services and assistance in areas of displacement have prompted increasing numbers of internally displaced persons to return in June (12,000), July (18,000) and August (36,000). Refugee returns are believed to be much lower at around 1,000 to 2,000 per month. Some 50 per cent of the returnee totals represent families returning to Baghdad. Housing in many cases has been problematic, as many of the returnees' houses have been occupied by others or damaged. To encourage the return of displaced people, on 2 August the Government issued a directive to evict illegal occupants from Baghdad on private homes and government buildings across the country. Eviction started in 2 September following a one-month notice period and is applicable countrywide. The Government has established a reconciliation council to arbitrate property disputes and is offering a one-off payment of 1 million dinars (around \$830) to each returning family. In addition, the Government is committed to paying 1.8 million dinars (equivalent to six months' rent) to displaced persons evicted from houses in Baghdad and unable to return to their original homes. Unfortunately, the Government continues to face challenges in the actual implementation of the assistance

programme. The United Nations and its partners continue to advocate with Iraqi authorities on the protection of the internally displaced and those facing secondary displacement from the implementation of eviction orders, as well as the simplification of registration and compensation procedures."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), October 2008:

"As of 21 September, and based on available information from MoDM's returnee registration, IOM and MoDM monitors' field visits, UNHCR rapid assessments (snapshot), and other sources, IOM has identified 16,782 returnee families (100,692 individuals) to Baghdad. An additional 11,986 returnee families have been identified in the rest of the country, 8,691 of whom are in Anbar and Diyala. Countrywide, 92% of returns are from internal displacement."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Returnee information is gathered from the Returnee Support Center at MoDM, field visits conducted by IOM and MoDM monitors, UNHCR Rapid assessments (snapshot), and other sources. IOM has identified 325 locations comprising 16,848 returnee¹ families (101,088 persons) in Iraq.² The majority of these returnees (9,699 families, or 58%) have returned to Baghdad. A significant proportion (3,000 families) has also been identified in Anbar. 14,119 of returnees assessed (84%) have returned from internal displacement, while the remaining 2,729 families (16%) have returned from abroad. [...] The majority (74%) of assessed returnees were displaced in 2006 and returned in 2007. As the chart below demonstrates, the peak month for displacement of the assessed population was December 2006, and the peak month for return was March 2007.

The majority of assessed returnees were displaced for less than a year, with almost 46% having been displaced for only 3 to 6 months:"

Returning Monitoring and Needs Assessments: Tabulation Report, Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), September 2008:

UNSC, 28 July 2008:

"39. According to UNHCR and IOM, refugees and internally displaced persons continue to return to their places of origin at a steady rate of some 10,000 persons a month, and there has been no major incidence of displacement during the last quarter."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

"Most of the surveyed returnees are Arabs, reflecting the mostly Arab make-up of the post-February 2006 displaced population. Some Kurds and Faili Kurds returned to the Governorates of

Diyala, Ninewa, Wassit and Diwaniya from internal as well as external displacement. Both Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims have been found to be returning. Sunnis are returning to predominantly Sunni areas in the Governorates of Al-Anbar, Salah Al- Din, Ninewa and Diyala as well as to Sunni-controlled areas of Baghdad. Based on the surveys, around 270 Sunni IDP families have returned to predominantly Shi'ite Basrah Governorate, which used to have a significant Sunni minority population. These families could not return to their place of origin and are currently living in secondary displacement. Kurdish families that returned to Diwaniya Governorate are of Sunni origin. Najaf is also hosting a small number of Sunni returnees. It is worth noting that no Sunnis have been found returning to Diyala Governorate from external displacement. Shi'ites are returning to predominantly Shi'ite areas of Southern Iraq (Governorates of Babylon, Basrah, Kerbala, Missan, Najaf and Thi-Qar) and Shi'ite-controlled areas of Central Iraq in the Governorates of Diyala, Baghdad and Salah Al-Din. Shi'ite Kurds were also found to be returning to the Districts of Khanaqin and Muqdadiya in Diyala Governorate. No members of minority groups such as Christians, Sabaeen-Mandaeans and Yazidis have been reported among the returnees. "

Intensions, Reasons, and Locations of Returnees 2007-2008

- The majority (65%) of returnees have returned from within the same governorate, while 24% have returned from a different governorate, and 11% have returned from abroad, mostly from Jordan and Turkey.
- Overall, 43% of assessed returnees cited 'improved security in area of origin' as their reason for returning. This is particularly notable in Anbar and Babylon governorates (73% each) as well as Diyala (85%). (IOM, August 2008)
- Another 37% of returnees in Iraq cited the combination of improved security and difficult conditions in displacement as primary reasons for return, particularly in Missan, which reported 86%. (IOM, August 2008)
- Only 14% cited the difficult conditions in displacement alone as their reason for return, although this figure was significantly higher in Ninewa. (IOM, August 2008)
- Improved security is reason for return after the calming of the recent violence in Sadr City, Baghdad, in mid 2008. According to MoDM's estimation, about 4,073 IDP families displaced by recent military operations have returned to Sadr City due to this improvement in security.
- According to NGO reports, most IDPs and returnees receive information about their former neighborhoods from friends and relatives. Results of the surveys suggest that "go and see visits" are happening, which is also confirmed by anecdotal reports. (UNHCR, 2 February 2008; IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- According to IOM's monitoring in February 2007, 45% of IDPs plan on returning to their place of origin once security improves. 25% plan on integrating into their current location, and 28% plan to resettle in a third location (IOM, 2 February 2007)

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"The majority (65%) of returnees have returned from within the same governorate, while 24% have returned from a different governorate, and 11% have returned from abroad, mostly from Jordan and Turkey. The breakdown of returnee place of displacement by governorate is as follows:

A closer look at returnee dynamics reveals certain trends across the governorates. 100% of returnees to Ninewa, 70% to Baghdad, 57% to Babylon, 56% to Diyala, and 51% to Anbar have all returned from elsewhere within the same governorate. In addition, many returnees are returning from displacement in Baghdad, including 94% of returnees to Missan, 30% of returnees to Babylon, 20% of returnees to Basrah, and 20% of returnees to Diyala. 80% of Basrah

returnees have come home from Ninewa. There have also been notable returnee movements from abroad. 67% of Muthanna returnees, 45% of Kirkuk returnees, and 32% of Anbar returnees have come back from Syria. 55% of Kirkuk returnees have returned from Turkey, while 28% of Muthanna returnees have come home from Jordan and 5% from Turkey."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Overall, 43% of assessed returnees cited 'improved security in area of origin' as their reason for returning. This is particularly notable in Anbar and Babylon governorates (73% each) as well as Diyala (85%). Another 37% of returnees in Iraq cited the combination of improved security and difficult conditions in displacement as primary reasons for return, particularly in Missan, which reported 86%. Only 14% cited the difficult conditions in displacement alone as their reason for return, although this figure was significantly higher in Ninewa.

[In] some areas an increase in stability has encouraged return. For example, due to improved security and reconciliation efforts beginning in May, there was a wave of return in Awarej area of Rasheed sub-district in Baghdad. The total number of returnees in this area has now passed 1,000 families. Increased stability was also the main reason cited in Anbar (72%), Babylon (74%) and Diyala (85%). In addition, after the calming of the recent violence in Sadr City, Baghdad, the majority of families displaced during this episode have returned. According to MoDM's estimation, about 4,073 IDP families displaced by recent military operations have returned to Sadr City due to this improvement in security."

Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), September 2008:

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Returns continue at a slow pace throughout the country, with most returns concentrated in Baghdad (the place of origin for most displaced internally or abroad). While people may be returning to areas where their religious/ethnic group is now in the majority and they are accepted state and/or non-state actors in control of the area, they are not always returning to their former communities or homes. Furthermore, despite improved security in those areas - targeted attacks, generalized violence and criminality continue to occur. In some neighbourhoods and cities, returnees cannot return to their originally home because it was destroyed or is occupied.

- According to IOM returnee monitoring, through end of May 2008 a total of 285 locations with 16,451 returnee families (estimated 98,706 individuals) were identified. Of them 2,581 (16%) are returnee from abroad and the other 13,870 (84%) are returnee families from internal displacement in Iraq.

- According to NGO reports, most IDPs and returnees receive information about their former neighborhoods from friends and relatives.

Some returnees are therefore experiencing continued or secondary displacement in areas of return."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

"Results of the surveys suggest that "go and see visits" are happening, which is also confirmed by anecdotal reports. The large majority of returnees to the Governorate of Diyala, a large percentage of the returnees to the Governorate of Salah Al-Din and 20% of the returnees to the Governorate of Baghdad, both from within and from outside Iraq, consisted of individuals, possibly returning to assess the conditions on the ground before bringing their families.

· In some cases, returnees found the situation suitable for return, i.e. their property was accessible, the security situation was considered sufficiently stable and the group in control of the area accepted the returnees (either because they are of the same sect or because there have been political agreements among combating groups).

· In other cases, the family members on a "go-and-see visit" found the situation not suitable for return, e.g. because their property was occupied or seriously damaged (even burned) and/or because the area was not sufficiently safe. In these cases, the individuals were forced to go back to the place of displacement or to move their families into secondary displacement. "

IOM, 2 February 2007:

"According to IOM's monitoring, 45% of IDPs plan on returning to their place of origin. The majority of these people are waiting for security to improve. However, as time passes and the IDPs become more integrated at their location of displacement, this percentage will likely decrease. The highest numbers of people who wish to return were displaced to the central governorates of Ninewa (95%), Diyala (75%), Baghdad (72%), and Anbar (62%). Surprisingly, Najaf in the south also has a high percentage of displaced who wish to return to their former residences (90%). Twenty-five percent plan on integrating into their current location. This response occurs most often in the more stable governorates of the south, such as Basrah (91%), Kerbala (82%), and Missan (76%). These governorates also tend to have the most intact infrastructure and employment opportunities. Twenty-eight percent plan to resettle in a third location."

Return trends during 2003-2006

- UNHCR based on IOM and UNOPs monitoring data estimated that over 470,000 IDPs and 300,000 refugees had returned between 2003 to 2005. The largest IDP return movements are reported to have taken place to central Iraq (UNHCR, April 2006)
- The majority of these returnees taking place in 2003-2004 consisted of spontaneous IDP return movements after the fall of the previous regime. Significant returns involved formerly displaced Kurds returning to Kirkuk and surrounding areas, which involved subsequent displacement of non-Kurdish communities. (UNHCR 12 August 2004; UNHCR, April 2006)
- There are number of reported difficulties faced by returnees including property disputes, and lack of appropriate shelter and housing. Returnees were reported living in tents, or inhabiting abandoned buildings and warehouses. In other instances returnees have caused tension leading to further displacement. (UNSC, 5 December 2003)
- Many returnees are reported to have faced secondary displacement upon return to places of origin due to lack of housing, livelihood or infrastructure, property disputes, the presence of mines and UXO in their return areas and other reasons. There are no clear figures on number having faced secondary displacement. Those who are able to return have faced severe problems successfully reintegrating. (UNHCR, October 2005)

UNHCR, April 2006, p.4:

UNHCR, October 2005, p.29:

"UNHCR returnee monitoring confirmed that many refugees end up in internal displacement upon their return to Iraq because of a lack of housing, livelihood or infrastructure, property disputes, the presence of mines and UXO in their return areas and other reasons. Those who are able to return have faced severe problems successfully reintegrating; contributing factors include, inter alia, a lack of employment possibilities, difficulties obtaining documentation and accessing education

due to the non-recognition of school certificates earned abroad, a lack of adequate language skills in Arabic or Kurdish, inadequate health care facilities and the high cost of essential medicines."

UNHCR 12 August 2004:

"Since the collapse of the former Government, significant spontaneous return movements of IDPs has taken place to Governorates bordering Kurdish autonomous areas, formerly controlled by the Central Government; primarily to Tameem Kirkuk. In April 2003, as the Peshmerga forces traveled south to Ninewa and Tameem with Coalition forces, non-Kurdish IDPs who had settled in the three northern governorates of Sulemaniyah, Dohuk and Erbil faced harassment including the destruction of their housing, thus forcing them to move south in order to reclaim property and land. With intervention in May/June 2003 from various actors including UNHCR, this overt push ceased. However, various push factors continue to be exerted on the most vulnerable to return to areas south of the green line. It is estimated that 26,000 individuals have returned to Kirkuk city and the surrounding areas but are unable to return to their villages due to property disputes or destroyed shelter."

UNSC, 5 December 2003:

"Over the summer and autumn a large proportion of Iraq's hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons have tried to move back to their original homes. Some are now living in tents pitched next to their destroyed houses, while others have managed to move back into their former homes, in some cases causing tension and further displacement."

Reuters, 3 February 2004:

"Only days after Saddam's government was overthrown last April, Kurdish families began leaving their exile in the far north of Iraq and moving south towards Kirkuk, spurred on in part by their wealthy and astute political leaders. The goal was to reassume influence in and around the city, which lies south of the northern no-fly zone enforced by the United States and Britain after the first Gulf war, meaning that during 12 years of sanctions, Saddam still held sway. Turkmen, less well-off and well-prepared than their Kurdish rivals, moved more slowly, but in recent months have also begun returning in numbers. At the same time, many Arabs who were moved into the region have fled, fearing retribution. Around the periphery of the city there are now tented encampments of Turkmen and Kurds desperate to return. They have been waiting for months, and some are losing patience, but most expect that they will soon find a home in Kirkuk or nearby."

See also (in sources, below):

UNHCR, October 2005,
UNHCR, 1 November 2004
UNHCR, 22 October 2003
UNHCR, 1 April 2008

Obstacles to return and resettlement

Overall analysis of return environment: Humanitarian and Security/Protection Concerns for Returnees in 2007-2008 (2008)

- Of assessed returnees, 59% said that they consistently felt safe in their place of return, 40% said that they sometimes felt safe, and 1% said that they do not feel safe at all. Those who did not always feel safe cited general insecurity, continued insurgent activity in their area, sectarian violence and detention campaigns. (IOM, August 2008)

- There are concerns regarding the sustainability of the improved security situation, given that it depends on international security presence (the Multinational Forces in Iraq - [MNF-I]) and local arrangements (Awakening Councils, Mehdi Army ceasefire). (IDP Working Group, 23 June, 2008)
- Of returnees assessed, 85% had returned to their original house and the remaining 15% are living in their original neighbourhood but not their original house. (IOM, August 2008) The Migration and Displacement Ministry released first report on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties included houses, flats, land and other buildings. (IRIN, 8 September 2008)
- The majority of returnees lost their original jobs and livelihoods during displacement, while others have been forced out of work by direct threats from insurgents and armed groups. Those from agricultural areas return to find their farms neglected. Returnees to urban areas such as Sadr City are frequently coming home to find their livelihoods destroyed during military operations. (IOM, August 2008)
- Access to potable water is a major concern of IDPs, returnees, and host community members alike because of the wider implications for health and disease prevention associated with clean water. 84.4% of those assessed have access to municipal water networks, although this does not guarantee that the water is potable. (IOM, August 2008)
- 97% of assessed returnees reported having a current PDS card. 38% of returnees reported regular access to PDS rations, 59% said they have intermittent access, and 3% said they have no access at all.
- Of assessed returnee families, only 51% have access to health care. When asked why they could not access health care, returnees cited lack of health facilities and a shortage of medications. Access to health care is worst in the centre (IOM, August 2008)
- Many returnee children have had their education interrupted. Reasons include sectarian discrimination, displacement to a location too remote to attend school, or being forced to work to help support their family. (IOM, August 2008)

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Of assessed returnees, 59% said that they consistently felt safe in their place of return, 40% said that they sometimes felt safe, and 1% said that they do not feel safe at all. Those who did not always feel safe cited general insecurity, continued insurgent activity in their area, and detention campaigns. Military operations, general insecurity, and occupied houses are the primary reasons preventing Iraqis from returning home. Many of those who have returned remain cautious and even fearful of recurring violence. [...] In addition, sectarian violence is still a concern for some returnees. [...] However, in some areas an increase in stability has encouraged return. [...] Many returnees have found their houses destroyed or damaged, placing them in need of shelter assistance. [...] Of returnees assessed, 85% had returned to their original house and the remaining 15% are living in their original neighbourhood but not their original house.⁶ 89% of returnees in Ninewa are living in their own house, albeit in poor condition.

Approximately one third (30%) of heads of household nationwide are able to work, but not working. This was highest in Diyala (46%), Ninewa (43%) and Baghdad (47.5%). 36% of returnees in Missan reported not being able to work, significantly higher than the Iraqi average (23%). [...] Families with unemployed female heads of household, pregnant women, chronically ill or disabled members, or young children are often especially vulnerable in a humanitarian crisis. Widowed heads of household in particular have great difficulty finding employment in the Iraqi context, due to religious and cultural practices. [...] Of assessed households, 84% are headed by married men, 49% of whom are currently unemployed. Female-headed households number 12% and the number of unemployed in this group rises to 98%. [...] Another 4% of families are headed by widowed men, 72% of whom are unemployed. 16% of assessed returnee families

reported that they had family members who were chronically ill or disabled. [...] The majority of returnees lost their original jobs and livelihoods during displacement, while others have been forced out of work by direct threats from insurgents and armed groups. Those from agricultural areas return to find their farms neglected and therefore cannot immediately support themselves. [...] Returnees to urban areas such as Sadr City are frequently coming home to find their livelihoods (such as shops and offices) destroyed during military operations.

Access to potable water is a major concern of IDPs, returnees, and host community members alike because of the wider implications for health and disease prevention associated with clean water. 84.4% of those assessed have access to municipal water networks, although this does not guarantee that the water is potable. [...] While 58% of the assessed mentioned fuel being accessible in their area, 62% of them said that it was too expensive for them to buy. Families returning to their place of origin often are unable to fully access their ration of gas and oil, and are frequently forced to collect wood for cooking and heating. [...] 97% of assessed returnees reported having a current PDS card. 38% of returnees reported regular access to PDS rations, 59% said they have intermittent access, and 3% said they have no access at all. [...] Of assessed returnee families, only 51% have access to health care. When asked why they could not access health care, returnees cited lack of health facilities and a shortage of medications. Access to health care is worst in the centre[...]. Of returnees assessed there, 52% said that they cannot access medications they need. [...] Many returnee children have had their education interrupted. Reasons include sectarian discrimination, displacement to a location too remote to attend school, or being forced to work to help support their family. In some locations, monitors have noted that returning families have left their children in an area of displacement to continue studying for the remainder of the year. Military operations have destroyed the only schools in Al A'aboss, Al Hamdeet and Momniya. Studies have since been suspended. Similarly, Al Saheroon neighbourhood's only primary school was destroyed by insurgents. [...] Returnees are not content with government efforts to rebuild schools or provide incentives for teaching staff to return to communities."

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"41% of assessed returnees report regular access to Public Distribution System (PDS) food rations, while 57% report that they do not have regular access to food rations and 2% report no access. 51% report no access to health care. Only 58% report that they feel safe "all of the time". In addition, of those assessed, few returnees (especially women) became employed once they returned2:

There are concerns regarding the sustainability of the improved security situation, given that it depends on international security presence (the Multinational Forces in Iraq - [MNF-I]) and local arrangements (Awakening Councils, Mehdi Army ceasefire). In addition, access and provision of services remains limited and an increase of the population could strain the absorption capacity of the areas of return.

After several months of violence, destruction of infrastructure and displacement due to military operations in Sadr City, Baghdad is experiencing relative stability and increased returns. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) report that the majority of the city is under their control, although intermittent clashes continue. The area experiences partial closures as ISF continue to conduct search campaigns in buildings for weapons and insurgents. According to MoDM's estimation, about 4,073 IDP families have returned to Sadr City, due to improvement in security.²² All IDP families (about 35 in total) have left the camp at Al-Sha'ab Stadium, set up by MoDM to host families fleeing Sadr City."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

"Returnees from both internal and external displacement face similar difficulties and needs when returning to the same area. Food, NFIs, shelter, access to legal aid and employment opportunities seem to be common needs in many governorates, while water and access to basic services is a problem especially in the South. Many have complained about damaged housing and stolen furniture and are asking for financial and in-kind support from the Government. The general understanding is that one million ID is not enough to allow the returnees to meet their immediate needs (e.g., repair or reconstruction of houses) and that in many cases the payment of the grant has been delayed. Respondents anecdotally indicated that families returning to Baghdad suffer from limited access to basic services, have difficulties transferring their PDS cards and accessing life-essential rations, and lack documentation. Shelter was overwhelmingly presented as the priority need of families which returned to the Districts of Adhamiyah and Al-Rusafa in Baghdad."

Return for Marsh Arabs difficult due to the destruction of their natural habitat (2005)

- The draining of this area in 1990s would lead to estimated displacement of 100,000 to 200,000. The former regimes actions has significantly altered the Marsh Arabs' ability to continue their traditional way of life and farming activities which were based on the cultivation of the marshes
- As of August 2004, 40,000 persons are estimated to be returning displaced persons in Southern Iraq (mostly Marsh Arabs). In 2008, it was reported that larger areas of the Marsh lands had been reflooded, while 80,000 persons estimated to have returned.
- Access to livelihoods remains limited. The region has been affected by insecurity and poor infrastructure and limited access to services. For none-returnees the limited livelihood options has contributed in preferring to reside in current locations.
- Marsh Arabs have also been unable to return due to poor investment in the marshlands area, insecurity and slow reconstruction work.
- The need to ensure complete documentation such as identity documents, marriage and birth certificates, and rations cards is a primary concern for this group

AMAR International Charitable Foundation, December 2006:

"The final section of the Principles deals with protection during return or resettlement and reintegration. This section is particularly pertinent to the Marsh Arabs situation today. It provides that the displaced have the right to freely choose between voluntarily return to their home areas in safety and dignity or to remain where they presently are or to resettle in another part of the country. Whichever option they choose, the national authorities are expected to facilitate their reintegration. In the case of return, this means creating an environment that will prove sustainable for those returning, whether they are internally displaced persons or refugees. In particular, this means: Security, both for inhabitants of the area and for humanitarian and development workers, including de-mining.

- Services for those returning, such as clean drinking water, sewage disposal, primary education, health services and household building materials.
- Documents to enable returnees to access basic services.
- Materials to enable returnees to regain their livelihoods, such as seeds, tools, livestock and fishing nets.
- Establishment of mechanisms for the resolution of land and property disputes. Indeed, the Guiding Principles provide that governments must assist the displaced to recover their property

and possessions lost during displacement. When this is not possible, they must provide or assist the displaced in obtaining compensation or another form of just reparation.

IDP families living in the rural areas at the edges of the marshes live with very limited access to drinking water and sanitation facilities. For example, a survey of 11,000 displaced Marsh Arabs indicates that 98 per cent of the surveyed population live in camp-like settlements with little or no access to water or sanitation facilities. IOM monitoring shows that displaced Marsh Arab families living in the Al-Mejar and Al Kabi districts of the Missan province are, for the most part, cut off from the public water and sanitation infrastructure, and electricity and garbage collection services are not functioning in these areas. This has resulted in extreme deterioration of IDP living conditions, representing a threat especially for the most vulnerable, such as children and the elderly. Similar conditions, including a significant spread of water-borne diseases due to absence of proper water and sanitation facilities, are reported in other areas with concentrated populations of displaced Marsh Arabs. Contaminated drinking water has increased risk of diseases like typhoid and cholera in the summer. In the winter, health is at risk due to poor housing conditions and the high cost of kerosene for heating.

- Access to basic health care: The people in the marshes do not have sufficient health care because of lack of staffing, equipment and health centres and because IDP settlements and camps are often located far away from public health centres. Access to health facilities is especially limited for women and girls.

- Housing: Large numbers of displaced persons cannot return to their places of origin because their villages were destroyed by the drainage of the marshes and other acts undertaken by the former government. For example, monitoring by IOM in ThiQar province indicates that all displaced Marsh Arabs who returned to their areas of origin in the province during 2003 returned to a situation of displacement because their homes were destroyed or are occupied. Many displaced Marsh Arabs find shelter with host communities or occupy public buildings or live in informal settlements. For instance in Nassiriyah city (Thi Qar province) the majority of those displaced from the Marshes (more than 900 families out of 1,300 families) rely on accommodation with host families. However this does not represent a viable option in the long term. The allocation of land to IDPs for relocation or resettlement as well as compensation present more durable solutions. The lack of housing affects all IDPs in the country and should be addressed in a national housing policy. A further housing concern relates to the situation of IDPs who face eviction because they are occupying government buildings, which are slowly being reclaimed by local authorities. Alternative housing or financial compensation needs to be provided for these IDPs who face homelessness.

- Documentation Lack of documentation among IDPs poses an obstacle to reintegration. Lack of documentation prevents the displaced from access to food rations, education and employment. Some displaced, particularly those who have faced political persecution do not have documentation and will require legal assistance from the authorities to obtain food rations cards, register marriages, work and for children to attend school.

- Basic education services: Many children of displaced families do not have access to education, which poses a barrier to return and reintegration. Despite school rehabilitation efforts in north Basrah province, in Al Qurna, for example, where thousands of Marsh Arab families are displaced, children in several villages are attending school in inadequate structures. In the governorate of Thi-Qar, illiteracy rates among the general population are 25 percent while they are over 50 per cent among IDPs. Displaced children are often forced to work during school hours selling cigarettes, chewing gum, or shining shoes to support their families.

Groups with Special Needs: To ensure that durable solutions extend to all displaced, special attention should be paid to vulnerable groups like women-headed households, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and unaccompanied and separated children. Special efforts should be

taken to ensure that the displaced are consulted in the design and implementation of protection and assistance programmes, in particular women, children and the elderly.

Justice: Finally, acknowledgement of the injustices suffered by the Marsh Arabs would contribute to broader initiatives to bring justice to Iraq, including by addressing the root causes of the conflict and displacement. Some international observers argue that the drainage projects, military operations and forcible evacuations of people in the marshes amount to a “crime against humanity”. Establishing a mechanism, like a tribunal or a Truth and Reconciliation Commission may be a way to address issues of impunity, past injustices and promote reconciliation.”

FMR (Romano, David), 2005, p. 48:

“After the fall of Saddam’s regime in April 2003, however, Iraqi engineers working with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) began the process of re-flooding these marshlands and restoring the ecosystem upon which the population depended. Enormous ecological challenges remain but this often ignored story has emerged as one of the few unambiguous successes of post-Saddam Iraq. With little involvement of international organisations, the Marsh Arabs have been returning to their homes and rebuilding their old lives.”

IRIN, 22 August 2005:

“There are increasing calls for quicker flooding and rehabilitation of Iraq’s southern marshlands in Amarah, due to rising unemployment and delays in the return of the marsh Arabs. [...] Since July 2003, more than six projects have been developed by AMAR and the United Nations, who are taking the lead role, to assist the marshland people, but much more is required to guarantee a future for some 30,000 local residents. Local people say their lives have not changed much since the fall of Saddam’s oppressive regime, as little has changed in the marshes so far.[...] Approximately 20 percent of the marshes have been re-flooded since April 2003, according to Abdul Kareem Qassim, director of the agriculture directorate in the southern city of Amarah and home to the marshlands said.

“There has been poor investment so far and the increase in our requirements for security has meant that money has been spent on that instead of development in the area,” Chasib al-Marsomi, general director of Rehabilitation and Development of the Marshes (RDM) in Amarah said. [...] Following the downfall of the regime in 2003, there were signs that people living in the marsh areas would live a much more prosperous life. However, problems remain due to insecurity and slow reconstruction work. This is having a huge impact on the education system there. According to official sources in Amarah, there has been a decrease in the number of students attending school, due to insecurity, poor infrastructure, compounded by a lack of qualified teachers. Many qualified staff has left Iraq due to insurgency and previous conflicts.

Improvements can be seen, however, in the health system in the marshes. Today, there are five primary health clinics serving the area. Most of the centres were built over the past two years, Mejb al-Mosawi, a senior official in the Amarah health directorate said. [...] The Ministry of Health in Baghdad said it had invested in the marshes and hoped by 2006 to be able to cover the needs in that region. A new highly equipped hospital is also planned. [...] AMAR and the Centre for Marine Studies (CMS) are also focusing on rehabilitating fishing in the area. Fishermen had been told not to fish in the area until stocks were replenished to guarantee growth – but many are continuing due to financial needs. [...] The UN Food and Agriculture organization (FAO) is in the process of implementing programmes to replenish livestock, but help can’t come soon enough. [...] Slow reconstruction has forced many of them to search for alternative ways to survive.

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

“In the South, the principle group of IDPs remains the Marsh Arabs, who, over the past 15 years, have been subjected to forced migration as a result of an organized Marsh- Drainage campaign undertaken by the former Iraqi regime. The persistent implementation of this campaign led to

massive displacement within and outside the country. The policy of the former Iraqi regime to drain the Marshlands in southern Iraq underwent several stages. A large swathe of the central marshes was drained to facilitate the movement of the military units during the Iraq-Iran war. During the 1990's, the marshes underwent further extensive drainage. As part of the previous government's policy which consisted of resettling Shia populations to the north in order to alter the ethnic balance of the area, many Marsh Arabs were forced to resettle there to replace Kurdish, Turkmen and Assyrians. Although the number of displaced Marsh Arabs is quite difficult to identify due to the protracted nature of displacement and varying levels of integration, it is estimated that between 100,000-200,000 persons remain internally displaced from the marshland areas.

Up to 40,000 persons are estimated to be returning displaced persons, i.e., they were originally from Southern Iraq (mostly Marsh Arabs), were resettled under the Arabization program to Northern Iraq and, following the recent conflict, returned to their ancestral lands in Southern Iraq, although the draining of this area has significantly altered the Marsh Arabs' ability to continue their traditional way of life and farming activities which were based on the cultivation of the marshes. This group of persons is considered returning displaced persons; their preferred durable solution is to reside in or near their current locations.

UNHCR, 12 August 2004:

The need to ensure complete documentation such as identity documents, marriage and birth certificates, and rations cards is a primary concern for this group. Property claims, legal assistance, basic reintegration assistance as well as focused assistance for vulnerable groups including female-headed households, the elderly, and physical and mentally disabled persons must also be urgently addressed."

See also (in sources, below):

Cohen & Fawcett, 28 Dec 02

AMAR International Charitable Foundation, December 2006

Iraq's uncertain marshland revival, BBC News, 27 June 2006

Marsh Arabs to return to 'modern' homes, The Telegraph, 1 October 2007

Restoring the Garden of Eden, Chronogram Magazine, 1 September 2008

Property, Sectarianism, and Security concerns

- Loss of property, continual insecurity, occupied housing, and ethnic/religious make of return areas are amongst leading obstacles to return of refugees and IDPs.
- Amongst concerns as to whether such return is sustainable emphasised in humanitarian and protection needs of IDPs, property and security are leading issues of concern.
- Sources doubt that a peaceful chain return to occupied houses would be possible: IDPs occupying houses in safe areas will not leave these houses before return to their houses in the place of origin becomes safe. (UNHCR, February 2008)
- Surveyed families reported of having been threatened by the current occupiers when checking on their properties. Given that their area is controlled by members of the opposite sect, they do not have the possibility to request the authorities to help recover their homes. (UNHCR, February 2008)
- Humanitarian and protection needs in terms of access to basic services and needs including access to PDS, health care facilities and water and sanitation remain central to question of sustainability of return process. (IOM, August 2008)
- Clear mechanisms are required by the Government of Iraq to address property issues related to displacement. Level of occupancy of private and public buildings by IDPs remains considerable estimated by MoDM at 3,491 in nine provinces. (MoDM, September 2008)

The Looming Crisis: Displacement and Security in Iraq, Policy Paper, Number 5, Brookings Institution, August 2008

As mentioned above, one of the greatest obstacles to the return of refugees and especially IDPs is the issue of property restitution or compensation. Two steps could be taken now in Iraq which would make the return process smoother in the future: the government should stress that all rights to property will be upheld and that those who are currently displaced will not be penalized for being away from their homes. Secondly, the government should implement a mechanism for displaced Iraqis to register their properties now in the expectation of having them returned in the future. The government has already developed a way for Iraqis to do this, but it needs to be publicized in the Iraqi displaced communities and the government needs to make sure that it is implemented in practice. In the best-case scenario, conditions in Iraq will continue to improve, but it will take time before conditions are safe and stable enough for the refugees to return on a large scale. If they are forced to return too soon—because they are desperate and destitute in exile—they could overwhelm fragile Iraqi capacity.

Government cracks down on squatters, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN, 8 September 2008)

But on 3 September, the Migration and Displacement Ministry released its first report on the number of illegally occupied houses - 3,491 in nine provinces. These properties included houses, flats, land and other buildings. Baghdad had the highest number of squatter-occupied properties at 2,369, followed by Diyala with 963 and Anbar with 63. The rest were in the provinces of Salaheddin, Ta'mim, Babil, Kut, Nineveh and Muthana. On 20 July, the Iraqi government announced measures to encourage the more than four million IDPs and refugees to return to their homes, including a one-month grace period for squatters to vacate properties. The measures also included a one-off payment of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$1,500) to squatters to help them rent other properties. In addition, it was stipulated that IDPs willing to return to their houses would be paid one million dinars (\$840). Each internally displaced family that has not yet returned home qualifies for a monthly payment of 150,000 dinars (\$145) for three months while still displaced. Other measures include helping Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries with free air transport if they choose to return home, the free shipment of their belongings and compensation for damaged property.

UNHCR Second Rapid Assessment of Return of Iraqis from Displacement Locations in Iraq and from Neighbouring Countries, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008

Primary sources doubt that a peaceful chain return to occupied houses would be possible: IDPs occupying houses in safe areas will not leave these houses before return to their houses in the place of origin becomes safe. Leaders from all sides expressed that they are willing to let returnees access their homes provided that the other side does the same. Reports highlight that IDPs, whose houses are currently rented out by armed groups to other IDPs as a source of income, will face serious difficulties to return to their homes. Some interviews revealed that in places like Missan and Kerbala destroyed property is among the reasons for secondary displacement. An NGO reported that 115 IDP families, which returned to the District of Al-Muqdadia in Diyala Governorate, found their homes completely destroyed. [Al-Muqdadia District is predominantly Shi'ite and surrounded by Sunni districts. It was attacked by insurgents and largely destroyed. Reports are available upon request and previous authorization of the relevant NGOs that reserves the rights on the reports.] Reports of the destruction of a Chechen village in Diyala Governorate have also been received.

Reports and primary sources indicate that many houses were destroyed and that houses left behind were usually occupied by IDPs of another sect. According to primary sources and various reports, a part of the IDPs are not able to return because their property has been occupied by other IDPs. [Houses of Sunnis forced to flee from Shi'ite-controlled areas are managed and rented to Shi'ite IDPs by the Sadrist offices (Makatib Al-Sayyid Al-Shahid). According to other reports, IDPs are also occupying houses left behind by Shi'ite families who fled Sunni-controlled

areas.] Surveyed families reported of having been threatened by the current occupiers when checking on their properties. Given that their area is controlled by members of the opposite sect, they do not have the possibility to request the authorities to help recover their homes. There have been reports of returnees being escorted by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). When they found their homes occupied by a third party, the ISF allegedly threatened the occupiers to leave. However, no further information is currently available.

Risks of secondary displacement of returnees in 2007-2008.

- Extent to which obstacles are entailing secondary displacement is not clear from information available. Though secondary displacement is reported, the extent to which this is the case is not clearly known.
- Some returnees are experiencing continued secondary displacement due to loss of property, ongoing security, occupied housing, ethnic or religious make up of the return area. 16% were not able to return to their original homes due to house being destroyed or occupied, (IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008)
- From surveys of returnees by IOM 83% of those surveyed are residing in their own homes. Of those who were able to return to own neighbourhood, suggesting secondary displacement of 17%. (IOM, August 2008)
- Returnee assessment by UNHCR in February 2008, indicated that 68% of surveyed IDP returnees went back to their place of origin, while others might have been displaced again to a different neighbourhood or governorate. (UNHCR, February 2008)
- Assessments indicate that 67% of surveyed refugees returnees from abroad in early 2008 seem to have returned to their place of origin, indicating that 23% may have been at risk of secondary displacement. (UNHCR, February 2008)

IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008:

"Some returnees are therefore experiencing continued or secondary displacement in areas of return, mainly due to: 1. Loss of property (as is the case for some refugee returnees in their governorate of origin, e.g. in Kerbala and Thi-Qar Governorates); 2. Ongoing insecurity; 3. Occupied housing; 4. Ethnic/religious make-up of the return area (e.g. the returnees belong to a minority in their place of origin, e.g. in some areas of Baghdad). Of those who are able to return to their original neighborhood, not all are able to return to their original home. 16% were able to return to their original neighborhood but not to their original home."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Many returnees have found their houses destroyed or damaged, placing them in need of shelter assistance. [...] Of returnees assessed, 85% had returned to their original house and the remaining 15% are living in their original neighbourhood but not their original house.⁶ 89% of returnees in Ninewa are living in their own house, albeit in poor condition. "

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008:

"Families who were not able to successfully return and who, consequently, either ended up in secondary displacement or were forced to return into internal displacement, were not easily accessible to the local authorities. Among those, there are families who faced security incidents or whose property was occupied/destroyed.

68% of surveyed IDP returnees went back to their place of origin, while others might have been displaced again to a different neighbourhood or governorate.

The Governorates of Dahuk, Kerbala, Baghdad and Basrah appear to have been particularly affected by "returns" into displacement: All families surveyed in the Governorates of Dahuk and Kerbala had moved into secondary displacement as they could not return to their place of origin. The same is true for 28% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Basrah and 10% of the families surveyed in the Governorate of Baghdad.

In addition, some families in Missan Governorate have not returned to their place of origin in other governorates due to ongoing insecurity and presence of armed groups. They are living with relatives.

Some families surveyed the Governorate of Kerbala cited security concerns to return to their places of origin in Baghdad, saying that they had heard of returnees having been killed in their area. Most families in Kerbala said they were unable to return to their place of origin because the groups who had previously threatened them were still in control of their areas. In addition, they mentioned that the general security situation had not yet completely stabilized. Some of these families are now living with relatives in the Governorate of Kerbala.

Of the surveyed families who had returned to Baghdad in December 2007, only 37% had returned to their home. The main reasons for not returning were damaged houses and the unstable security situation.

Families, who returned to their place of origin but were subsequently displaced again, were not captured by this survey. UNHCR became aware of these cases only through narrative accounts and therefore does not have a clear number. The fact that some returnees were displaced again was also confirmed by other sources.

67% of surveyed returnees from abroad seem to have returned to their place of origin. However, many families, in particular in the Governorates of Missan and Kerbala, may not have come back to their place of origin and may again move.

Local authorities indicated that for 67% of the surveyed returnees they assume they will stay in their current location, while in 31% of the cases they are not able to indicate whether they will stay in their current location or not. In 1% of the surveyed cases, they clearly stated that the families will move again. "

Overall analysis of return environment for returnees in 2004-2005 (2006)

- The general insecurity, lack of law and order presents an obstacle to return and reintegration. UNHCR returnee monitoring in 2004 and 2005 indicated that 80 per cent of returnees in the North and 35 per cent of returnees in the south ended up internally displaced upon return.
- Many returnees face obstacles in exercising their rights to housing, identification, property and freedom of movement. Many returnees have not returned to their villages of origin because of lack of shelter and services. Many returnees did not own land or property prior to their displacement. Others fear renewed military operations and violence.
- Some returns have been influenced by political actors.
- Lack of housing is particularly a problem in the South, where many Marsh Arabs have returned to impoverished areas. Returnees often lack documentation which would facilitate their freedom of movement and access to basic services.

UNHCR, April 2006, p.10:

"During the course of 2004 and 2005, UNHCR's priority under return and reintegration gradually shifted to IDPs, without which return of Iraqi refugees from abroad is not sustainable in the returnee concentration areas. Assistance to returnees includes shelter and infrastructure, income-

generation activities, legal aid and information. However, return is complicated by scarce resources and prevailing instability. Returnee monitoring data obtained during 2004 and 2005 showed that about 80% of the returnees in northern Iraq and more than 35% in the lower south of Iraq ended up internally displaced upon return, mainly due to the lack of housing, employment and social services."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.29:

"With the fall of the former regime in April 2003, Kurds and Turkmen who were displaced in the Northern Governorates of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah started to return spontaneously to their places of origin in the Governorates of Kirkuk, Diyala, Salah Al-Din and Ninewa. A large number of returnees reside in the main cities in their Governorate or district of origin and have not returned to their villages of origin for a lack of shelter and services. The returnees, who in general did not own land or property prior to their displacement, now live in public buildings, most notably schools and police stations, with little or no basic facilities. Those with land have pitched tents and many are believed to be moving between their original villages and their previous places of displacement. While many of the returns are voluntary, some have been influenced by political actors. The uncoordinated return of IDPs from the North to areas below the former 'green line' has led to the 'secondary displacement' of Arab families that had been resettled by the former regime in traditionally Kurdish areas in the Governorates of Kirkuk, Mosul, Diyala and Salah Al-Din. Many Arab families have fled these areas out of fear of harassment or actual harassment by returning Kurds and Turkmen." "Most people who have opted for voluntary repatriation from Iran and Saudi Arabia have returned to areas where their ethnic or religious group constitutes a majority. They therefore usually do not suffer from any systemic discrimination. However, as all other Iraqis, they suffer from the prevailing insecurity as well as lack of law and order. They also remain in dire need of assistance to help them reintegrate in communities whose absorption capacity is limited and where humanitarian and development activities are presently difficult to implement due to the prevailing security situation.

Moreover, Iraqi returnees face a number of problems relating to their rights to housing, identification, freedom of movement and property restitution. Furthermore, housing, a general problem throughout Iraq, affects returnees in particular and specifically in the South. Many of the Marsh Arab families have returned to very impoverished areas. While homeless families have moved into public buildings or schools, others have sought accommodation with extended family members. Some returning families have even moved to partially-destroyed power stations. The need to pursue shelter solutions for these groups is pressing. Returnees often lack documentation which would facilitate their freedom of movement and access to basic services. For many of those who have returned with UNHCR assistance to Iraq, their only means of identification is the voluntary repatriation form that UNHCR has provided. As for those who have repatriated spontaneously, a significant number of them have no documentation at all, especially those who were previously expelled from Iraq and stripped of their nationalities."

IRIN, 28 June 2005:

"Thousands of residents are gradually returning to the town of Karabila, 325 km west of the capital, Baghdad, after fleeing a heavy US-led attack two weeks ago but for many there is little to go back to.

Nearly 7,000 residents were displaced to the desert near the Syrian border during the fighting, according to the Iraq Red Crescent Society (IRCS). The town, which is home to 60,000 people, showed signs of extensive devastation following the battle, a five day operation which ended on 22 June. Nearly 1,000 residents are still displaced and living in the desert. "I couldn't find anything left of my house. It has been totally destroyed and my family has become homeless and dependent on humanitarian support," said Salua Ibraheem, 42, a Karabila resident who had her home completely destroyed. "People started to go back trying to get what is left from their destroyed homes. Based on information from our volunteers inside the village, near 40 percent of the village buildings have been partially or totally destroyed," Mazeen Saloon, general secretary of the IRCS, said. [...] Utility services have been destroyed and now thousands of families are without power, clean water or sewage according to local officials."

See also (in sources, below):

"Displaced families return to devastated Talafar", IRIN, 21 September 2005

"Families returning to Karabila in need", IRIN, 17 July 2005

"Many displaced in West fear returning home", IRIN, 13 Dec 2005

Examples of returns following military operations in 2004-2008: Tal Afar, Fallujah. Basra

- Military operations of MNF-I and Iraqi military have reported on many occasions to use excessive force, and entail significant damage to civilian and public properties and buildings. Reconstruction efforts have been criticised as slow and insufficient in light of levels of destruction in number of localities.
- In September 2005, up to 5,000 families were reported to have fled northern city of Talafar, following military operations to rout insurgents in Tal Afar. Following operation more than 1,600 families remained displaced, reluctant to return due to the level of devastation, and lack of services. (UNAMI, November 2005)
- Fallujah was the scene of fierce battles between US forces and insurgents between November 2004 and January 2005. Nearly 80 percent of the population fled Fallujah. A return assessment undertaken by UNHCR (February 2005) indicated that 95 per cent of the displaced Fallujah population would like to return if international forces present in the city left.
- In May 2005, 80% of IDPs were estimated to have returned. Reconstruction process was heavily criticised for being slow. The level of destruction having entailed that basic facilities, including sewage systems, adequate electricity and water supplies had all but collapsed. Security measures including the presence of UXOs had continued affect on the population including a negative impact on the local economy.
- The UN has raised concerns about the conditions imposed on IDPs wishing to return to Fallujah where IDPs have been subjected to curfews, restrictions on movement, and intensive ID and search systems. Some of these measures contradict commonly accepted principles for UN supported programmes worldwide which promote returns in safety and dignity (UNAMI, November 2005)
- Other concerns expressed by the displaced include a lack of information about planned assistance and compensation, the presence of unexploded mines, fears for personal security and lack of shelter. Such fears seem replicated in other of the myriad of cities in which such operations have taken place.

UNAMI, 3 January 2006, p.2:

"Tal Afar: NGO monitors reported that more than 1,600 families remained displaced and reluctant to return due to insecurity and poor conditions inside the city. IDP figures fluctuated throughout the month and in a number of return cases, only some members of the family returned, leaving mainly women and children still in displacement. One reason for the overall rise in displacements was attributed to the lack of basic services and job opportunities in Tal Afar. The provision of basic services such as water, electricity, waste disposal, healthcare, schools, and fuel supplies remained disrupted"

UNAMI EWG, 18 January 2005:

"Since the end of December 2004, the IIG has encouraged IDPs to return to the city in a phased process whereby selected districts of the city were gradually re-opened as MNF-I/Iraqi forces reportedly cleared areas of UXOs and ensured the neighbourhoods were secure. The IIG has reported that from 14 January onwards, all districts of the city will be open to returnees. A total of five entry checkpoints have been established by the MNF-I to control access into the city by civilians, government officials, contractors, and NGOs, citing concerns about the possible return

of insurgents. Those entering must undergo extremely strict inspection and identification procedures, and are subject to curfew after 17:00, thus raising concerns about access and freedom of movement.

[...]

The EWG has raised concerns about the conditions imposed on IDPs wishing to return to Fallujah, including curfews, restrictions on movement, and intensive ID and search systems. All males of military age are reportedly issued biometric ID cards consisting of iris scan and fingerprint details. Unconfirmed reports indicate that civilians are being denied access at checkpoints due to insufficient identification and that some are being detained, all of which further contribute to lengthy and slow queues to enter the city. The documents required for entry by civilians must include at least two of the following three: National ID card, food ration card, or nationality certificate. Some of these measures contradict commonly accepted principles for UN supported programmes worldwide which promote returns in safety and dignity."

IRIN, 24 May 2005:

"Reconstruction of Fallujah, the city which was the scene of fierce battles between US forces and insurgents between November 2004 and January 2005, has been slow according to local officials.

Little progress has been made despite Washington allocating US \$200 million for rehabilitation efforts and compensation for families. Nearly 80 percent of the population fled Fallujah, which is 60km west of the Iraqi capital Baghdad and so far only half of them have returned, aid officials have said. Local people complain that there are still no basic facilities such as sewage systems, adequate electricity and water supplies and there are disputes over how much compensation has been distributed so far.

[...] According to Bassel Mahmoud, director of Fallujah's reconstruction project, less than \$50 million of the \$200 million for reconstruction had been released so far. He said although the main hospital had been repaired, only three schools out of 40 and four government buildings out of 20 had been rebuilt. Massive damage was caused by the conflict and repair work could take several years. [...] Power, water treatment and sewage systems were badly damaged in the city. Some districts are still dependant on water tankers as the only way to access clean water and most houses with electricity are connected to private generators. The official said more funds need to be released in order to accelerate reconstruction.

UNAMI, 27 February 2005:

"The situation in Fallujah remained tense in April. An estimated 80 % of IDPs from Fallujah returned, although it was not sure that they had remained in the city. Access to the city remained difficult and time-consuming, with residents expected to show their Public Distribution System (PDS) cards, official IDs, as well as badges provided by the MNF-I (Multi-National Forces-Iraq). Similar access restrictions were also reported by aid agency personnel. The water and electricity situation remained precarious, as three districts of Fallujah were solely dependant on water tankering and seven districts were without electricity

Medical access for residents improved to some degree when the MNF-I relocated to two kilometres away from the main hospital in the city. According to the Education Department of Fallujah, of the 104 schools listed within the city, seven school buildings were severely damaged, 53 are in need of rehabilitation to some degree, and 15 schools in the city remained occupied by the MNF-I. It was reported that the presence of mines and unexploded ordinances (UXOs) in the north and south parts of the city contributed to delays in reconstruction efforts. Due to these various constraints, the reconstruction efforts were restricted in scope, but still ongoing. MNF-I has done some substantial reconstruction work in the Fallujah area since the end of the operation, complementing the activities and support of the aid agencies and the Iraqi government." (UNAMI, 17 May 2005)

"Aid agencies continued to raise concerns about the nearly 14,000 internally displaced families from Fallujah, the majority of which are dispersed across Anbar governorate, while the remainder are located in the Baghdad area. These families represent approximately 84,000 internally

displaced persons (IDPs), many of whom are children, who left their homes and livelihoods almost four months ago. A significant rise in the number of IDP families was witnessed during this reporting period, which indicates a reverse movement from the city of Fallujah; mainly due to the harsh living conditions and lack of basic services such as shelter, water, electricity, healthcare, and education. UN monitors continued to report an urgent need for food, cooking sets, bedding material, hygiene kits, and medical care in many of the current places of displacement.”

UNAMI, 1 February 2005:

“UNHCR through implementing partners have finalized the returns intentions survey for those who have been displaced by the Fallujah crisis. The survey captured over 4,500 families in Al Anbar and Baghdad. Initial results indicate that ninety-five percent of the population would like to return if international forces present in the city left. Other concerns expressed include a lack of information about planned assistance and compensation, the presence of UXOs/mines, health fears associated with use of munitions, and lack of shelter. The vast majority indicated that they will wait for at least three months to monitor the situation in Fallujah before fully returning families.”

See also (in sources, below):

UNHCR, 11 January 2005

UNAMI EWG, 18 January 2005

UNAMI, 1 March 2005

UNAMI, 1 February 2005

IRIN, 17 February 2005

"Displaced families return to devastated Telafar", IRIN, 21 September 2005

"Fallujah's residents angry at the city's devastation", IRIN, 13 January 2005

"Displaced Fallujah residents unsure of when they can return home", IRIN, 20 December 2004

"Renewed Fallujah fighting hampered return of residents: US", AFP, 16 December 2004

Justice

National Reconciliation and Mechanisms of justice for past abuses (2007)

- There are no present mechanisms that have emerged as part of larger transitional justice effort to address the question of all victims of the former regime. Efforts undertaken such as the establishment of Iraqi Special Tribunal, or the CRRPD did not reflect a wider transitional justice mechanisms – such approaches runs risk of leading to unequal treatment of victims of past abuses.
- The Iraqi Special Tribunal was set up to deal with human rights violations committed by the former government. The tribunal was intended to bring charges against senior members of the former regime for human rights violations committed against various groups in Iraq, including the Kurds, the Shiites and the Marsh Arabs
- However, the tribunal has come under extensive criticism for failing to maintain independence and impartiality. The trial of some of the key members of the former government including Saddam Hussein have been met with widespread criticism.
- Addressing past crimes, the missing and the disappeared, including effective accountability mechanisms to fight impunity, are the basis for national reconciliation efforts

Van der Auweraert, Peter, 7 September 2007:

"Neither the IPCC nor the CRRPD emerged as part of a larger transitional justice effort addressing the question of redress for all victims of the former regime. They were not the outcome of an inclusive political debate or reflection on how Iraqi society could best come to terms with a legacy of brutal and violent oppression or what was needed to facilitate a transition from decades of authoritarian rule to a democratic society living under the rule of law. Not addressing post-conflict property restitution from a wider transitional justice perspective raises at least three problematic issues. The first issue has to do with the fact that an isolated approach is more likely to lead to an unequal treatment of victims. In the concrete example of Iraq, it is difficult to defend that until the present day systematic redress is only available to victims of land and property rights violation and not, for example, to the widows of those who died at the hands of Saddam Hussein's regime, the former political prisoners or the people who lost property other than real estate.¹ Equally, there is little to say for the fact that the CRRPD Law focuses only on the forcible taking of property but provides no redress for property destruction which e.g. in the Kirkuk area affected many. In the context of Iraq it is thus legitimate to ask whether failing to address the question of redress holistically has not led to the exclusion of the most vulnerable groups from the reparations process. Beyond the basic justice and equity issues such a situation raises, it also casts doubt on the ability of an isolated process like the CRRPD to contribute to durable reconciliation and peace building in Iraq. The ongoing conflict makes this point when it comes to Iraq itself probably academic. Any good the CRRPD could have done in this respect is largely offset by the brutal violence and strife the country witnesses every day. But it does carry a warning for other post-conflict situations to avoid looking at property restitution in isolation."

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"On 26 December 2006, the Appeals Chamber of the Iraqi High Tribunal unanimously dismissed the appeals of Saddam Hussein and his two co-defendants, Barzan al-Tikriti and Awad al-Bandar, upholding all three death sentences. The Appeals Chamber returned the case of a fourth defendant, Taha Yassin Ramadan, to the Iraqi High Tribunal for re-sentencing, recommending a harsher sentence than the term of life imprisonment that he had received. The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, in a statement made on 27 December 2006, expressed concern at the failure of the panel to address the grave shortcomings in the trial. He urged the Government not to carry out the death sentences following an allegedly procedurally flawed legal process. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, called for restraint by the Iraqi authorities and reiterated her concerns about the appeal process and fairness of the original trial. Saddam Hussein, however, was executed on 30 December 2006. The other two co-defendants were executed on 15 January 2007.

On 8 February 2007, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights filed a legal brief as *amicus curiae* with the Iraqi High Tribunal, arguing against the imposition of capital punishment in the case of Taha Yassin Ramadan. In her submission, the High Commissioner argued that "The egregious violations of human rights that took place in Iraq over decades have been well documented by the United Nations human rights system ... There is no doubt that the horrors of the past must be effectively addressed and their perpetrators must be brought to justice ... At the same time, experience and history in very different contexts around the world have shown the absolute indispensability of the integrity of such proceedings, both in fact and perception, for true understanding of the past, for national reconciliation and for the construction of a just, durable, and sustainable society founded on the rule of law and respect for human rights of both victims and defendants."

UNAMI, 23 May 2006:

"UNAMI continues to follow closely the trial of Saddam Hussein and his co-accused before the Iraqi Higher Tribunal held sessions of the trial of Saddam Hussein and his co-accused. The trial for the Dujail killings entered a new phase with the defendants' testimonies. Concerns have been expressed by the defence team about the lack of equality of power between the parties and the lack of independence and impartiality of the tribunal. The prosecution called witnesses and the defence produced a list of witnesses with serious concerns regarding their security.

The Iraqi Higher Tribunal announced that the investigation of the Anfal campaign was concluded and that the case had been referred to Trial Chamber II on 3 April. The Anfal campaign took place in Northern Iraq during the late 1980's and was characterized by a series of savage military attacks on civilians who had remained in or moved back to so-called "prohibited areas" near the Iranian border and where hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Kurds were displaced, arrested, tortured or killed. Saddam Hussein and six other codefendants are charged with war crimes related to an internal armed conflict and with crimes against humanity. Saddam Hussein and Ali-Hassan Al-Majid are also charged with genocide."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.126-127:

"The Statute of the Iraqi Special Tribunal was adopted by the IGC on 10 December 2003.[...] It was established under Iraqi national law to try Iraqi nationals or residents accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or other serious crimes committed between 17 July 1968 (the date the Ba'ath Party seized power) and 1 May 2003 (the date the Coalition declared that major combat operations in Iraq were over). The TAL reaffirmed the Tribunal's Statute.[...] Charges against senior members of the former regime are likely to include atrocities committed against several ethnic groups within Iraq, such as the violent repression of Kurds during the 1988 Anfal campaign. Crimes committed against the Shiites will likely also come to the fore, such as the violent repression that followed the revolt against the former regime in 1991 in which villages were shelled and destroyed and ancient marshes drained, resulting in thousands of deaths, forced displacements and the destruction of communities of Marsh Arabs.[...] The IST has declared that it will adhere to standards of international law in compliance with the sovereign law of Iraq. Still, international human rights law groups[...] oppose the IST, questioning whether its statute fully complies with international fair trial standards and recent developments in international criminal law. These groups also worry about the availability of the death penalty, the lack of explicit guarantees against using confessions extracted under torture, a lack of experience in managing complex criminal trials and trials involving serious crimes and the non-admission of international experts to serve as prosecutors.

On 17 July 2005, former President Saddam Hussein, his brother-in-law Barzan Ibrahim Al-Hassan, former Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan and former top judge Awad Badar Al-Bender were formally charged with the killings of Shiite Muslims in Dujail, the town in which the former President survived an assassination attempt in 1982. The Iraqi Government said it plans to bring only 12 charges against the former leader out of a possible 500 of which he is accused, saying it would be 'more than enough to give him the maximum sentence applicable'. The Dujail case is said to have been chosen as it is one in which the investigation has progressed the most and Saddam Hussein's personal culpability may be easier to prove in a smaller case, thereby leading to a swift conviction and possible death sentence. Critics say that such swift justice would mean that the larger-scale crimes would never be properly dealt with in court. The first trial is expected to start as early as September 2005.[...]"

ICL, 8 March 2004:

"Article 48 [Iraqi Special Tribunal]

(A) The statute establishing the Iraqi Special Tribunal issued on 10 December 2003 is confirmed. That statute exclusively defines its jurisdiction and procedures, notwithstanding the provisions of this Law.

(B) No other court shall have jurisdiction to examine cases within the competence of the Iraqi Special Tribunal, except to the extent provided by its founding statute.

(C) The judges of the Iraqi Special Tribunal shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of its founding statute.

Article 49 [National Commissions]

(A) The establishment of national commissions such as the Commission on Public Integrity, the Iraqi Property Claims Commission, and the Higher National De-Ba'athification Commission is confirmed, as is the establishment of commissions formed after this Law has gone into effect. The

members of these national commissions shall continue to serve after this Law has gone into effect, taking into account the contents of Article 51, below.

(B) The method of appointment to the national commissions shall be in accordance with law.

Article 50 [National Commission for Human Rights]

The Iraqi Transitional Government shall establish a National Commission for Human Rights for the purpose of executing the commitments relative to the rights set forth in this Law and to examine complaints pertaining to violations of human rights. The Commission shall be established in accordance with the Paris Principles issued by the United Nations on the responsibilities of national institutions. This Commission shall include an Office of the Ombudsman to inquire into complaints. This office shall have the power to investigate, on its own initiative or on the basis of a complaint submitted to it, any allegation that the conduct of the governmental authorities is arbitrary or contrary to law.

Article 58 [Steps to Remedy Injustice]

(A) The Iraqi Transitional Government, and especially the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other relevant bodies, shall act expeditiously to take measures to remedy the injustice caused by the previous regime's practices in altering the demographic character of certain regions, including Kirkuk, by deporting and expelling individuals from their places of residence, forcing migration in and out of the region, settling individuals alien to the region, depriving the inhabitants of work, and correcting nationality. To remedy this injustice, the Iraqi Transitional Government shall take the following steps:

(1) With regard to residents who were deported, expelled, or who emigrated; it shall, in accordance with the statute of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other measures within the law, within a reasonable period of time, restore the residents to their homes and property, or, where this is unfeasible, shall provide just compensation.

(2) With regard to the individuals newly introduced to specific regions and territories, it shall act in accordance with Article 10 of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission statute to ensure that such individuals may be resettled, may receive compensation from the state, may receive new land from the state near their residence in the governorate from which they came, or may receive compensation for the cost of moving to such areas.

(3) With regard to persons deprived of employment or other means of support in order to force migration out of their regions and territories, it shall promote new employment opportunities in the regions and territories.

(4) With regard to nationality correction, it shall repeal all relevant decrees and shall permit affected persons the right to determine their own national identity and ethnic affiliation free from coercion and duress.

(B) The previous regime also manipulated and changed administrative boundaries for political ends. The Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government shall make recommendations to the National Assembly on remedying these unjust changes in the permanent constitution. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree unanimously on a set of recommendations, it shall unanimously appoint a neutral arbitrator to examine the issue and make recommendations. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree on an arbitrator, it shall request the Secretary General of the United Nations to appoint a distinguished international person to be the arbitrator.

(C) The permanent resolution of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, shall be deferred until after these measures are completed, a fair and transparent census has been conducted and the permanent constitution has been ratified. This resolution shall be consistent with the principle of justice, taking into account the will of the people of those territories."

See also (in sources, below):

UNAMI, 18 July 2006

Policy

Iraqi Government Encouraging Number of Policies for Return of IDPs & Refugees (2008)

- INGOs and UN agencies including the UNHCR, have repeatedly noted that prevailing conditions are not suitable for return. Though insecurity has diminished, the still prevailing high levels of insecurity and precarious socio-economic situation are thought not to provide sustainable return.
- Iraqi government and the United States have placed considerable pressure in advocating for return of refugees and IDPs. National reconciliation and security measures adopted in 2006 by Iraqi government would take considerable time to take effect. In early 2007, witnessed peak months of return to then diminish. (IOM, August 2008; IRIN, 12 September 2006; IRIN, 21 February 2007)
- Iraqi government is now as of 2008 implementing a number of measures aimed at encouraging the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes. The Iraqi Government has allocated 250 billion Iraqi Dinars for all expenditures related to support return process. (IOM, October 2008)
- This includes such as payments of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (approx. US\$1,500) to families who are illegally occupying the houses of other displaced families and who want to return to their homes, so that they may rent their own homes lawfully. (IOM, October 2008)
- Prime Minister Order 101 took effect on the 1st of September, requiring that all squatters vacate IDP and refugee houses in Baghdad or face prosecution under Iraqi anti-terrorism legislation. The Order also establish return facilitation centers to assist returnees to register, receive the returnee grant of 1 million ID, and to resolve property issues they may encounter upon returning. (IOM, October 2008)
- IDPs or refugees willing to return to their houses will be paid one million Iraqi dinars (about \$840). Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries are being offered free airline tickets, free shipment of their belongings, and compensation for damaged property. (IOM, August 2008)
- 32% of assessed families reported that they had registered and received the Government of Iraq's financial grant for returnees. Of the total assessed, another 68% said that they had registered for the grant but had not yet received it. The remaining 46% had not registered for the grant. Nearly all families who actually received the grant are in Baghdad, Babylon and Anbar. (IOM, August 2008)
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International Organization for Migration (IOM), October 2008:

"The past month has seen an increased emphasis on returns by the Government of Iraq (GoI) through a variety of legal and practical measures, including an allocation of 250 billion Iraqi Dinar (ID) for all expenditures related to return support. Prime Minister Order 101 took effect on the 1st of September, requiring that all squatters vacate IDP and refugee houses in Baghdad or face prosecution under Iraqi anti-terrorism legislation. All IDP squatters are compensated with 300,000 Iraqi Dinar (ID) per month for six months, so that they may rent an alternative housing option. PM Order 101 also established return facilitation centers in Baghdad, with plans to replicate this system throughout the rest of the country. These centers assist returnees to register, receive the returnee grant of 1 million ID, and to resolve property issues they may encounter upon returning. As of 21 September, and based on available information from MoDM's returnee registration, IOM and MoDM monitors' field visits, UNHCR rapid assessments (snapshot), and other sources, IOM

has identified 16,782 returnee families (100,692 individuals) to Baghdad. An additional 11,986 returnee families have been identified in the rest of the country, 8,691 of whom are in Anbar and Diyala. Countrywide, 92% of returns are from internal displacement. While security in many parts of the country is improving and new displacements are decreasing, many IDPs are still unable or unwilling to return home and are in need of basic humanitarian assistance such as food and non-food items. Many IDPs are also facing the threat of eviction. 512 IDP families in Rusafa district of Baghdad have been informed that they must vacate their residences. Other groups of IDP families are reportedly facing eviction in Babylon, Basrah, Kirkuk, Missan, and Qadissiya governorates. The drought is a major concern for IDPs and host communities alike, and has even caused some new displacement such as that in Anbar, where families who depend on green grazing land must move to find better conditions."

Voice of America (VOA), 12 October 2008:

"The International Organization for Migration says the Iraqi government is allocating more than \$200 million to persuade internally displaced people and refugees to return home. The IOM says the government is enacting a variety of legal and practical measures to encourage these returns. Lisa Schlein reports for VOA from IOM headquarters in Geneva. The Iraqi government has had some successes in getting people to return to the homes they fled during the peak years of the conflict. In a new report, the International Organization for Migration says more than 100,000 people have returned to Baghdad since the program went into effect on September first. And it says nearly 72,000 more people have returned to other places in the country, mostly to the provinces of Anbar and Diyala. The report finds very few refugees have returned. It says 92 percent of those going back to their homes of origin are people who have been displaced within the country. IOM spokesman Jean-Philippe Chauzy, tells VOA these returns are encouraging, but remain insignificant given the huge scale of the displacement problem.

"You still have 2.8 million people internally displaced within Iraq, including 1.6 million people who were displaced following the bombing of the Samara mosque in February 2006," said Chauzy. "So the scale of the challenge is absolutely stupendous." In addition, more than two million people have fled Iraq and sought asylum in other countries, mainly in Syria and Jordan. According to the IOM report, very few of these refugees have taken up the government's offer to return. Chauzy says disputes over property rights remain the single biggest impediment. He says the government has enacted a number of measures aimed at resolving this problem. Chauzy says a law passed last month requires that all squatters vacate houses they unlawfully occupy in Baghdad or face prosecution. But he says to help matters, the government is offering financial inducements to persuade squatters to leave. "That includes a financial payment of about \$250 per month for six months to help people find alternative housing options. It also includes return facilitation centers, mostly in Baghdad. And, these centers are there to assist returnees to register to receive a return grant of about \$900 and to resolve those property issues that many returnees will face when they return to their home," said Chauzy. IOM notes security in many parts of the country is improving and new displacements are decreasing. But it says millions of internally displaced people are still unable or unwilling to return home."

International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008:

"Monitors report most disputes over property ownership are in Baghdad. Resettlement and property occupation is currently being handled on an ad hoc basis by various authorities in Baghdad. In the event of future large-scale returns, a comprehensive policy and mechanism will be essential to prevent renewed tensions. The Iraqi government is now implementing a number of measures aimed at encouraging the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes, such as payments of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (approx. US\$1,500) to families who are illegally occupying the houses of other displaced families and who want to return to their homes, so that they may rent their own homes lawfully. IDPs or refugees willing to return to their houses will be paid one million Iraqi dinars (about \$840). Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries are being offered free airline tickets, free shipment of their belongings, and compensation for damaged property.

Many returnees have found their houses destroyed or damaged, placing them in need of shelter assistance. Furthermore, of IDPs assessed nationwide by IOM, 32% report that the property they

left behind has been occupied by others. Even among returnees assessed, 6% still report that their property is occupied. Monitors report most disputes over property ownership are in Baghdad. Resettlement and property occupation is currently being handled on an ad hoc basis by various authorities in Baghdad. In the event of future large-scale returns, a comprehensive policy and mechanism will be essential to prevent renewed tensions. [...] 32% of assessed families reported that they had registered and received the Government of Iraq's financial grant for returnees. Of the total assessed, another 68% said that they had registered for the grant but had not yet received it. The remaining 46% had not registered for the grant. Nearly all families who actually received the grant are in Baghdad, Babylon and Anbar."

IRIN, 6 February 2008:

"The Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration is planning to build a yet undetermined number of residential compounds nationwide to ease the problems faced by over two million internally displaced persons (IDPs), a ministry official said on 6 February. "We are still at the drawing-board phase for residential compounds to be built over 50,000 square metres, scattered nationwide," said Ali Shaalan, head of the Ministry's Planning Directorate. "We expect to complete this phase in about a month. So far we've managed to buy land in only seven provinces, including Missan, Karbala, Basra and Thi Qar; we are planning to buy more land nationwide," Shaalan told IRIN, adding that the precise number of compounds to be built would be determined as soon as it was clear how much funding and land would be available. According to Shaalan, each residential compound will have 50 buildings and each building will have six apartments – allowing some 300 IDP families per compound the opportunity to purchase a unit. Schools, markets, mosques, electricity and water plants, and other facilities will be built in each compound. "We are planning that the IDP families pay in instalments for maybe 20-30 years," said Shaalan who estimated the cost of each compound at about US\$12 million. So far, it has not been determined which displaced families will have priority in occupying these compounds but Shaalan said his Ministry's plan "will not change the demography of any province".

IRIN, 21 February 2007:

"It is also not clear how many Iraqis trust the government's assurances that they will be protected against militias and sectarian death squads if they do move back. In a press conference on Wednesday, Brigadier Qassim al-Mousawi, spokesman for Operation Imposing Law, said that about 650 families had returned to their homes in Baghdad since the new crackdown began a week ago."

IRIN, 12 September 2006

"Nearly three months have passed since Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki took office and outlined his reconciliation plan to end sectarian violence in the country. The plan's main objective is to decrease violence in the country by offering political participation to sectarian militant groups. "The advantage that the reconciliation plan is offering locals is to make them feel more secure to return to their homes and in the mean time show that security is improving countrywide, and that soon sectarian violence will be a thing of the past," said Mehdi al-Haydari, spokesperson for the Ministry of Migration and Displacement. However, analysts believe that the security situation has not really improved. [...] However, two Baghdad neighbourhoods demonstrate that the sectarian problem is far from over. No displaced people have returned to the Sadr City district of the capital, a shi'ite stronghold, and to the Baghdad Ijrida area, a Sunni stronghold."

See also:

<http://www.uniraq.org/docsmaps/undocuments.asp>

UNHCR maintains advisory against return of Iraqis & NGOs Recommend Against Premature Returns (2007-2008)

- UNHCR does not encourage returns to Iraq at the moment, due to the fragile security situation. But it provides some assistance to those who insist on going. This includes interviewing them to make sure return is voluntary and providing a cash grant to help them with transport and initial reintegration costs. (UNHCR, 23 September 2008)
- In UNHCR advisory note in 2007, UNHCR advised that Iraqi asylum seekers from Southern and Central Iraq should be favourably considered as refugees under the 1951 Convention. Asylum claims should not be rejected merely on the basis of an internal flight alternative in 3 northern Governorates. (UNHCR, 30 April 2007) UNHCR has since repeatedly advised governments to consider Iraqi asylum seekers from southern and central Iraq as Convention refugees.
- Over 100 Iraqi and international NGOs have warned of the dangers of premature return and the disastrous consequences both for the displaced and for the stability of Iraq. Violence is still widespread, and basic services such as access to healthcare, clean water or adequate shelter are unavailable in many parts of the country entailing that the situation is still not conducive to the return of refugees and internally displaced families. (Relief International et al., 8 August 2008)

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008:

"Currently, most actors in the humanitarian community are acutely concerned about the apparent manipulation for political purposes of the question of returns of IDPs and refugees to their homes in Iraq. Humanitarian agencies face a dilemma. On one hand, there are grounds for facilitating a return as soon as safely possible in order to avoid the entrenchment of displacement, and the institutionalization of divisions that ratify inter-communal cleansing. However, there is a strong sense that a return is being rushed before conditions conducive to safety and dignity have been established, and suspicions that data on existing returns has been inflated and propagandized by Iraqi and international authorities in order to illustrate that Iraq is safer and more stable than it actually is. There is an acute risk that as pressures mount on the humanitarian community to prematurely begin facilitating returns, returns will be neither safe nor sustainable. It is far from certain whether the localized and relative reduction in violence of the last few months will persist. The potential for further bloodshed from rushed and premature returns is high and there is a strong likelihood that those who are convinced to return prematurely will be returning to secondary displacement. This is not a new dilemma for humanitarian agencies working in conflict situations, and particularly for UNHCR. At the heart of protection mandates is the imperative to safeguard the vulnerable regardless of extraneous political agendas."

Refugees International (RI), 30 October 2008:

"In the past year, the Government of Iraq has started providing incentives for Iraqis to return. The best solution for most refugees would indeed be to return home when the conditions to ensure their safety and dignity are met. According to the UN Refugee Agency, this is not yet the case, as many parts of Iraq are still too insecure to allow for safe returns and essential services are not widely accessible to the civilian population. According to a UNHCR survey, 70% of those who returned to Iraq became internally displaced."

The priority for the Government of Iraq should not be organizing transportation back to Iraq or offering financial assistance when returns are not sustainable. Rather, the Government should provide assistance to the displaced in the region, while working to establish the right conditions for returning Iraqi refugees, including security, essential services and effective means to resolve property disputes."

Refugees International (RI), 31 July 2008:

"Refugees and IDPs know from their contact with friends and family that it is not safe to go home. Violence is still widespread, and basic services such as access to healthcare, clean water or adequate shelter are unavailable in many parts of the country. As the situation in Iraq evolves, it is essential the US Government, the Government of Iraq and other countries in the region do not

encourage returns to Iraq until conditions are met for a voluntary, safe and sustainable return process. A rushed premature return process would have disastrous consequences both for the displaced and for the stability of Iraq.

The U.S. Government should work with host countries in the region to encourage them to keep providing protection for Iraqi refugees until they can voluntarily return home in safety and dignity. Efforts should be made to develop conditions which permit greater self-reliance activities and education and training programs for the refugees. The U.S. Government should also advocate for the legal right for Iraqis to work within host countries. The U.S. and the Government of Iraq should encourage the UN and NGOs to conduct regular assessments missions throughout Iraq to evaluate the conditions for returns in different areas of the country, as security varies greatly from one province to the next. Particular attention needs to be given to access to adequate shelter, essential services, and livelihoods as well as the specific needs of vulnerable or minority groups. The USG and the GoI should support the conclusions that the UN and NGOs reach on whether conditions for returns are met. The U.S. should provide financial and technical support for the GoI to track the property rights of IDPs who were either forcibly expelled or who fled because of the violence and develop a system to resolve disputes. Human rights abuses should also be monitored and documented to prepare for post-war justice and reconciliations mechanisms. The U.S. Government should provide financial and technical expertise to the Government of Iraq and the UN in the design of a transitional justice framework coherent with the Iraqi judicial system that will be implemented when conditions permit. The U.S. Government should encourage the Government of Iraq to support the establishment and implementation of an assistance plan for returnees, once the UN deems that conditions are met for safe and sustainable returns. The U.S. Government should provide financial support to the UN and NGOs providing assistance to returnees."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 12 August 2008:

"The Iraqi government is encouraging the return of refugees from Middle Eastern countries by laying on free flights, but a group of over 100 Iraqi and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has issued a statement warning of the dangers. "A rushed and premature return process would have disastrous consequences both for the displaced and for the stability of Iraq," said the 8 August statement. "Violence is still widespread, and basic services such as access to healthcare, clean water or adequate shelter are unavailable in many parts of the country," it said, adding that the situation in Iraq was still not conducive to the return of refugees and internally displaced families. The NGOs called on the Iraqi and US governments, and regional countries, not to encourage the return of refugees to Iraq "until conditions are met for a voluntary, safe and sustainable return process".

UNHCR, 23 September 2008:

"On September 8-9 in Paris, High Commissioner António Guterres told a Conference on Asylum convened by the French EU Presidency that UNHCR hopes that the majority of Iraqi refugees will be able to return home in safety once the necessary conditions of stability and security are established. However, these conditions are not yet present. The security environment remains precarious, particularly in Central and Southern Iraq, where issues relating to shelter and property restitution or compensation have yet to be solved. In addition, access by returnees to public distribution systems and other services remains limited. UNHCR therefore appeals to asylum countries to extend protection to Iraqis who originate from Central and Southern Iraq and to refrain from forcible returns to these regions at this time."

UNHCR, 18 December 2006:

"Iraqi asylum-seekers from Southern and Central Iraq should be favourably considered as refugees under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, given the high prevalence of serious human rights violations related to the grounds in the 1951 Convention. Where appropriate, the applicability of the exclusion criteria in the 1951 Convention should be considered. Asylum claims should not be rejected merely on the basis of an internal flight alternative.⁷ Whether the individual is a refugee under the 1951 Convention or flees generalised

violence, there is no internal flight alternative within the Southern or Central regions, given the reach of both state and non-state agents of persecution, the lack of national protection and grave insecurity and human rights violations prevailing in those parts. An individual, who relocates to an area from where she/he does not originate, would likely face serious ongoing difficulties given the lack of protection provided by local authorities, communities or tribes, ethno-religious hostilities and the lack of access to basic services. Furthermore, it would not be reasonable to expect an Iraqi from the Southern or Central regions to relocate to the three Northern Governorates of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Dohuk. Apart from the requirement to have a sponsor in order to be admitted and/or to legally reside in the Region of Kurdistan, individuals from the Southern or Central part of Iraq face serious obstacles in obtaining physical protection and in gaining access to accommodation, employment and other services. Internal relocation for individuals from Southern or Central Iraq is therefore not likely to address threats of persecution or security risks, nor would it permit a relatively normal life without undue hardship. Additionally, since 2005, there are increasing signs of public impatience with the administration and its ability to deliver improvements to public service provision, particularly as regards water, fuel and electricity. This has led to a number of protests throughout the Kurdistan Region. Additional pressure is placed on basic services by the large numbers of IDPs in the three Northern Governorates and absorption capacities are therefore severely limited.⁸ Furthermore, support by both the local communities as well as the local authorities, may be dwindling in light of the increase of IDPs to the Region."

UNHCR, 9 January 2007:

"We noted in the latest advisory that since the previous one in September 2005, the security situation in Iraq has deteriorated. Today's overall security situation is marked by extreme violence in Central Iraq and significant instability in the south of the country. Sectarian tensions sharply increased after the Samarra bombing last February, leading to targeted killings of thousands of Iraqis and ongoing massive displacement. The advisory notes that the overall situation can be characterised as one of generalised violence and one in which massive, targeted violations of human rights are prevalent. In light of this dire security situation, the UNHCR advisory to governments recommends that Iraqi asylum seekers from Southern and Central Iraq should be favourably considered as refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention given the high prevalence of serious human rights violations. And it notes that if an Iraqi from Southern or Central Iraq is not recognised under Convention grounds, a complementary form of protection be granted. It says no Iraqi from Southern or Central Iraq should be forcibly returned to Iraq until such time as there is substantial improvement in the security and human rights situation in the country. UNHCR also advises against returns to the three Northern Governorates of persons not originating from there and recommends that asylum claims of Iraqis originating from the north be assessed based on 1951 refugee Convention criteria, taking into account the individual merits of the claim."

See also:

Guidelines on the Treatment of Iraqi Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Europe issued by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, March 2006

"Advisory Regarding the Return of Iraqis", UNHCR, September 2005

UNHCR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Iraqi Asylum-Seekers, UNHCR, August 2007

Addendum to UNHCR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Iraqi Asylum-Seekers, UNHCR, December 2007

UNHCR urges reinforced EU commitment to protection of Iraqi refugees, UNHCR, 23 September 2008

Group of NGOs warn against "premature" refugee return, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 12 August 2008

IOM Monitoring and Needs Assessments: Assessments of Iraqi Return, International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2008

Incentives announced to encourage return of IDPs, refugees, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 20 July 2008

IDPs fear returning to their homes in Diyala Province, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 14 July 2008

Iraq's Refugee and IDP crisis: Human Toll and Implications, Middle East Institute, July 2008

Iraq Displacement and Return 2008 Mid-Year Review, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 30 June 2008

IDP Working Group Internal ly Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (June 2008), IDP Working Group, 27 June 2008

Returnee Assessment and Statistics Report for March 2008, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 10 April 2008

Uprooted and Unstable, Refugees International (RI), April 2008

Assessment on Returns to Iraq Amongst the Iraqi Refugee Population in Syria, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), April 2008

The Iraq Ministry of Migration and International Medical Corps hold first national conference to prepare for displaced and returning refugees, International Medical Corps (IMC), 14 February 2008

Not safe enough for Iraqi refugees to return - UNHCR chief, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 14 February 2008

Exiled Iraqis too scared to return home despite propaganda push, The Independent, 11 February 2008

UNHCR Second Rapid Assessment of Return of Iraqis from Displacement Locations in Iraq and from Neighbouring Countries, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), February 2008

Baghdad Returnee Monitoring and Needs Assessment, Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), 31 January 2008

Return to Fallujah, The Independent, 28 January 2008

Defence ministry asks IDPs to evacuate former military base, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 27 January 2008

Authorities destroy Kerbala farms, displacing peasants, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 January 2008

More Refugees Returning to Iraq: Red Crescent, Agence France-Presse (AFP), 4 January 2008

Newly displaced in north considering alternative livelihoods, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 26 December 2007

Northern Iraq: Turkish shelling causing displacement, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 18 December 2007

Yearender: Iraq enjoys more security but reconciliation still a dream, Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), 17 December 2007

Iraq: Returning to destroyed, looted or occupied homes, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 9 December 2007

Iraq returns latest, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 7 December 2007

Returning Iraqi Refugees face difficult conditions, Refugees International (RI), 6 December 2007

Iraqi Ministry of Migration and the United Nations Launch Plan to Assist Returnees, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 5 December 2007

Families in south displaced as former Baathists targeted, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 30 July 2007

Rate of displacement rising, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 28 July 2007

Decision by Kirkuk Commission to relocate "Arabisation" Arabs in Kirkuk area (2005-2008)

- Under Article 58(2) of the Transitional Administrative Law – Iraqi provisional constitution which came into effect on June 28, 2004 – newly introduced persons in Kirkuk should be

resettled and or compensated. Kurdish political parties have interpreted the article to mean that a political referendum will be held to decide the status of Kirkuk

- The Law remained in effect until the formation of the current government in May 2006, when it was superseded by the permanent constitution that had been approved by referendum on October 15, 2005. Iraqi constitution reiterates the provision in Article 140. As of December 2008, the referendum has been extended repeatedly.
- In February 2007, the High Commission on the Implementation of Article 140, regarding the status of Kirkuk, announced Orders Nos. 3 and 4, which were intended to commence the process of relocating Arab families that moved to Kirkuk during the "Arabization" campaign of Saddam Hussein. The Orders, which require approval by the executive branch, offer compensation to relocated families. (UNSC; 7 March 2007)
- The Commission underlies that the relocation and compensation mechanisms are strictly voluntary and that 7,000 families by March 2007 had reportedly registered for relocation. (UNSC; 7 March 2007)
- It appears that many secondarily displaced Arabs do not wish to return to their areas of origin in the South yet from the Kurdish side, to allow them to remain in the "arabised" regions would be to "endorse the injustice of Arabization" This issue, continues to be a source of tension, must be part of a national policy on displacement and durable solutions that the relevant Iraqi authorities should address. (UNHCR, October 2005)
- The violence in 2006-2007 has also entailed significant numbers of displaced fleeing central governorates to northern cities including Kirkuk

UNSC; 7 March 2007

"On 6 February 2007, the High Commission on the Implementation of Article 140, regarding the status of Kirkuk, announced Orders Nos. 3 and 4, which were intended to commence the process of relocating Arab families that moved to Kirkuk during the "Arabization" campaign of Saddam Hussein. The Orders, which require approval by the executive branch, offer compensation to relocated families. The announcement by the Commission was followed by demonstrations in Kirkuk by opponents of the measure, who claimed it was tantamount to forced displacement. In response, Commissioners clarified that the relocation and compensation mechanisms were strictly voluntary and that 7,000 families had reportedly registered for relocation. It is not clear how the cases handled by the High Commission will relate to those processed by the Commission for Resolution of Real Property Disputes, which is responsible for settling claims by people who lost property as a result of actions of the Ba'athist regime during the period from 1968 to April 2003. More than 50,000 Kirkuk-related claims have been filed with the Commission for Resolution of Real Property Disputes to date."

UNHCR, October 2005, p.77-78

"The Kurdish Peshmerga has emerged as a main ally of the MNF in the fight against the mainly Sunni Arab insurgents in the region, and in the 30 January 2005 elections the Kurdish alliance won a majority in Kirkuk's Provincial Council. Fears are high among the Turkmen and Arab populations that the Kurdish parties' ultimate aim is for Kirkuk to be attached to their area of control within a federal Iraqi state. As Turkey claims to protect the Turkmen minority in Kirkuk and fears that Kurdish control over the city's oil wealth would give an economic foundation to an independent Kurdish state, the fight over Kirkuk has a dimension going beyond Iraq's borders.[...]

Article 58 TAL outlines a process for reversing the consequences of the former regime's policies, including the return of the displaced, the recovery of their homes and properties, the resettlement and compensation of those that were newly introduced to the disputed areas and remedying the change of administrative boundaries done for political reasons. Only once these steps have been undertaken and a census has been held will the final status of the disputed territories, including Kirkuk, be determined, 'taking into account the will of the people of those territories'.[...]The Kurdish parties interpret this to mean that a provincial referendum will be held to decide the status

of Kirkuk while Turkmen and Arabs accuse the Kurds of pushing Kurds to settle in Kirkuk to secure a majority in any popular referendum.[...]

The US Government holds the position that how to undo the former regime's unjust policies in and around Kirkuk is an internal issue to be decided by Iraqis, and supports the implementation of Article 58 TAL.[...] The highly contentious issue regarding Arab families settled by the former regime in Northern Iraq under its Arabization policy, particularly in Kirkuk where the majority of such families remained following the 2003 war, has not yet been resolved. Article 58(2) TAL provides that in accordance with Article 10 of the IPCC Statute 'newly introduced' persons may either be resettled, receive compensation, new land in their place of origin or compensation for the cost of moving to these areas. While it appears that many 'secondary displaced' Arabs do not wish to return to the areas of origin, in particular those originating from the South,[...] there are strong calls from the Kurdish side not to allow them to remain in the formerly 'Arabized' areas, particularly in view of a popular referendum, as this would endorse the injustice of Arabization.[...] This issue, which continues to be a source of tension, must be part of a national policy on displacement and durable solutions that the relevant Iraqi authorities, including the MoDM, must address."

HRW, 14 March 2003

"While the ethnic Kurds, Turkmen, and Assyrians displaced by the 'Arabization' policies have a right to return to their homes in the Kirkuk region and receive compensation for their losses, it is important that this right is implemented in a manner that does not cause additional human rights abuses. The Iraqi government has brought ethnic Arab populations—some also against their will, others with financial incentives—to Kirkuk to advance its 'Arabization' drive, and many of those ethnic Arabs now live in the former homes of displaced persons. The right to repossess private property must be balanced against any rights these secondary occupiers may have in domestic or international law, using impartial and efficient procedural safeguards."

RI, 25 August 2003

"While the horrific policy of Arabization destroyed families, property, and livelihoods while displacing hundreds of thousands of people, reversing this process, by returning those initially displaced to their original homes, will result in many of the same consequences. Although the return of Kurds to their homes of origin to reclaim their land has been largely non-violent, several deaths have resulted from this process. The more significant issue, however, is the loss of investments made by Arabs who were resettled on Kurdish property. In several instances, Arabs formally purchased lands from departing Kurds. Even those who were provided with these confiscated lands free of charge by the former regime built new homes and improved agricultural land over the many years that they inhabited these lands. These investments are now being lost as Arabs leave these resettled areas and return to their original homes. Moreover, in many cases, Arabs returning to their villages of origin face the problem of insufficient farmland to support their families and a lack of capital with which to rebuild their lives."

http://www.uniraq.org/documents/iraqi_constitution.pdf

"Article 140:

First: The executive authority shall undertake the necessary steps to complete the implementation of the requirements of all subparagraphs of Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law.

Second: The responsibility placed upon the executive branch of the Iraqi Transitional Government stipulated in Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law shall extend and continue to the executive authority elected in accordance with this Constitution, provided that it accomplishes completely (normalization and census and concludes with a referendum in Kirkuk and other disputed territories to determine the will of their citizens), by a date not to exceed the 31st of December 2007."

http://www.servat.unibe.ch/law/icl/iz00000_.html

"Article 58:

(A) The Iraqi Transitional Government, and especially the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other relevant bodies, shall act expeditiously to take measures to remedy the injustice caused by the previous regime's practices in altering the demographic character of certain regions, including Kirkuk, by deporting and expelling individuals from their places of residence, forcing migration in and out of the region, settling individuals alien to the region, depriving the inhabitants of work, and correcting nationality. To remedy this injustice, the Iraqi Transitional Government shall take the following steps:

(1) With regard to residents who were deported, expelled, or who emigrated; it shall, in accordance with the statute of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission and other measures within the law, within a reasonable period of time, restore the residents to their homes and property, or, where this is unfeasible, shall provide just compensation.

(2) With regard to the individuals newly introduced to specific regions and territories, it shall act in accordance with Article 10 of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission statute to ensure that such individuals may be resettled, may receive compensation from the state, may receive new land from the state near their residence in the governorate from which they came, or may receive compensation for the cost of moving to such areas.

(3) With regard to persons deprived of employment or other means of support in order to force migration out of their regions and territories, it shall promote new employment opportunities in the regions and territories.

(4) With regard to nationality correction, it shall repeal all relevant decrees and shall permit affected persons the right to determine their own national identity and ethnic affiliation free from coercion and duress.

(B) The previous regime also manipulated and changed administrative boundaries for political ends. The Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government shall make recommendations to the National Assembly on remedying these unjust changes in the permanent constitution. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree unanimously on a set of recommendations, it shall unanimously appoint a neutral arbitrator to examine the issue and make recommendations. In the event the Presidency Council is unable to agree on an arbitrator, it shall request the Secretary General of the United Nations to appoint a distinguished international person to be the arbitrator.

(C) The permanent resolution of disputed territories, including Kirkuk, shall be deferred until after these measures are completed, a fair and transparent census has been conducted and the permanent constitution has been ratified. This resolution shall be consistent with the principle of justice, taking into account the will of the people of those territories."

Transitional Administrative law outlines steps for the return of the displaced (2005)

- Kurdish political parties have interpreted the article to mean that a political referendum will be held to decide the status of Kirkuk
- The US government holds that the status of Kirkuk is an internal issue
- Under Article 58(2) of the TAL, newly introduced persons should be resettled and or compensated
- It appears that many secondarily displaced Arabs do not wish to return to their areas of origin in the South yet from the Kurdish side, to allow them to remain in the "arabised" regions would be to "endorse the injustice of Arabization"

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Article 58 TAL outlines a process for reversing the consequences of the former regime's policies, including the return of the displaced, the recovery of their homes and properties, the resettlement and compensation of those that were newly introduced to the disputed areas and remedying the change of administrative boundaries done for political reasons. Only once these steps have been undertaken and a census has been held will the final status of the disputed territories, including Kirkuk, be determined, 'taking into account the will of the people of those territories'.[....]The Kurdish parties interpret this to mean that a provincial referendum will be held to decide the status of Kirkuk while Turkmen and Arabs accuse the Kurds of pushing Kurds to settle in Kirkuk to secure a majority in any popular referendum.[...]

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Although the return of Kurds to their homes of origin to reclaim their land has been largely non-violent, several deaths have resulted from this process. The more significant issue, however, is the loss of investments made by Arabs who were resettled on Kurdish property. In several instances, Arabs formally purchased lands from departing Kurds. Even those who were provided with these confiscated lands free of charge by the former regime built new homes and improved agricultural land over the many years that they inhabited these lands. These investments are now being lost as Arabs leave these resettled areas and return to their original homes. Moreover, in many cases, Arabs returning to their villages of origin face the problem of insufficient farmland to support their families and a lack of capital with which to rebuild their lives."

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Insecurity limits humanitarian capacity to assist displaced, and non-displaced (2003-2008)

- The task of humanitarian intervention in Iraq is severely hampered by the security constraints in the country which limit the capacity of humanitarian organisations in their operations on the ground. (NCCI, January 2008; IDP WG, November 2008)
- Humanitarian action in Iraq has gone steadily more underground since the bombing of the U.N.'s Baghdad headquarters in August 2003 and, soon thereafter, the bombing of the ICRC office there. (FIC, 2 July 2007)
- Targeted attacks on aid personnel have led most agencies to cease operations completely or to withdraw their international staff to a safe distance. (NCCI, January 2008)
- Since 2004 a number of international and Iraqi aid have found creative ways to strike a balance between the need to keep staff reasonably safe in an unstable war environment while preserving their access to Iraqis in need. (NCCI, January 2008)
- Several large humanitarian agencies maintain a presence in security "bubbles" due to continuing security risks and targeted attacks. These move under armed protection and lose meaningful access to communities in need. (NCCI, January 2008)
- There is estimated 50 NGOs operating in Iraq through various modalities including humanitarian agencies operating in close association with MNF-I. This includes several 1,000 local NGOs with an estimated 50-100 with close partnerships with INGOs and UN agencies.
- The low visibility of assistance and protection efforts in Iraq confounds misperceptions about humanitarian work and the lack of acceptance of humanitarian organizations. (FIC, 2 July 2007)

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008:

"Since March 2003, at least 94 humanitarian and human rights workers have been killed in Iraq, most of them Iraqi nationals. Targeted attacks on aid personnel have led most agencies to cease operations completely or to withdraw their international staff to a safe distance. Where work has continued, risks have been transferred to Iraqi staff who now almost exclusively shoulder the security burden in environments where the motives and means of humanitarian work are often misunderstood, misperceived or mistrusted. The death toll has led to an increasing tendency among some agencies to regard staff security in Iraq as an end in itself, rather than as way of facilitating humanitarian operations in the safest reasonable conditions. Preoccupation with security — and mainly the security of international staff — has often eclipsed the fundamental principle of *humanity*, the humanitarian imperative to protect and assist people in urgent need.....

Since 2004 a number of international and Iraqi aid organizations — some very large and some very small — have found creative ways to strike a balance between the need to keep staff reasonably safe in an unstable war environment while preserving — and even expanding — their access to Iraqis in need. Staff security without access achieves little or no humanitarian impact. Several large, well-guarded humanitarian agencies have quit Iraq or maintain a presence in security "bubbles" due to continuing security risks and targeted attacks. Bunkerized agencies

or those that move under armed protection lose meaningful access to communities in need because of the way their affiliations with such security actors are perceived by the population in much of Iraq. By their own accounts, the security “bubble” that envelopes such agencies can indeed make them a less-attractive target, but it also insulates them from their caseload and from vital information about the communities and contexts where they work. While this may not be so important for one-off distributions of relief goods, sustained access enabling sound assessments of needs, needs-based distributions and adequate follow-up require a measure of acceptance that is not possible with such operational modalities. Moreover, the evidence is far from clear as to whether such deterrence strategies repel attacks, or if instead they act as a magnet for additional security problems.”

Feinstein International Center (FIC), 2 July 2007:

“A typology of remote management modalities has evolved over time in Iraq, with successively greater degrees of sophistication. Humanitarian action by **remote control** is generally seen as a reactive stance taken in response to an insecure environment as an alternative to, and the last available option before, program closure. Under remote control, all or nearly all decisions are taken by international managers who have been re-located to a safe environment. Decisions of internationals are implemented by nationals. Limited resources and time are invested in transferring skills and otherwise developing the capacities of national staff. Control over resources is retained by international staff, where possible, and limited monitoring occurs.

The **remote management** modality is also generally seen as a reactive stance taken in response to an insecure environment to enable existing programs and projects to continue. However, it entails a temporary and partial delegation of authority and responsibility to national staff following the re-location of international staff to a safer environment. It is assumed that lines of authority and decision-making will return to “normal” once conditions have stabilized. Remote management usually entails a moderate investment in skills transfer and capacity building for national staff and in development of procedures and protocols to enable better communications, accountability, and effectiveness. Although temporary, it is consistent with many of the features of developmental approaches to relief assistance and can therefore be regarded in a somewhat more positive light than “remote control”. Remote management is not for newcomer agencies but an option for those with a certain depth of experience in the context and some reliable organizational infrastructure already in place.

Remote support of humanitarian operations is a more proactive, conscious strategy that is consistent with long-term plans to hand over decision making and authority to national staff and/or local organizations. It is developmental by design. It involves full investment in mentoring, skills transfer, and capacity building consistent with planning for eventual handover. For example, Iraqi staff participate fully in meetings with donors, implementing partners and coordinating bodies. Senior international managers have national counterparts who receive additional mentoring. Although its main thrust is on building local capacity for humanitarian action, it is almost coincidentally practical for continuing implementation of assistance programs amid deepening insecurity and uncertainty in external events. The remote support modality assumes a high level of experience, sophistication, and organizational infrastructure in the context and a determination to adapt with changing conditions.

Remote partnership arrangements take remote support a step further. They entail an equal partnership and even greater handover of responsibility to local actors. Two organizations come together and contribute different resources to jointly address a common problem or issue, with one organization present and operational inside Iraq and the other outside (or without key staff present inside). [...]

The low visibility of assistance and protection efforts in Iraq confounds misperceptions about humanitarian work and the lack of acceptance of humanitarian organizations. Humanitarian action in Iraq has gone steadily more underground since the bombing of the U.N.'s Baghdad headquarters in August 2003 and, soon thereafter, the bombing of the ICRC office there. Insecurity for aid operations and personnel grew steadily worse through 2004 and 2005, leading to the evacuation of virtually all international staff in the central and southern governorates to safer locales and widespread adoption of a low-profile presence and remotely controlled, managed, or supported operations. Attacks targeted Iraqi staff with much greater frequency in 2005 and 2006 due to the near-absence of foreign aid workers and the far greater exposure of national staff. Transparency—the practice of being open to scrutiny—is usually understood by humanitarian organizations as a necessary foundation for building the community relationships that are essential for effectiveness, accountability, and differentiation from providers of greater measure of safety for humanitarian workers, and has arguably bought agencies more time and more access. However, the benefits have come at an immense cost to acceptance. Our research among Iraqis indicates that perceptions of the humanitarian enterprise are far more positive among those who report direct contact with local or international assistance or protection work than among those whose impressions are formed second-hand through rumor and media. [...] Some Iraqi and international NGOs that have taken an independent course in their approach to security, relying relatively more heavily on relationships and acceptance of their work by communities, have also decided to cease operations. However, others have stayed to continue vital programs. Flexible agencies that have invested considerable time and resources into understanding local (in addition to national) contexts and trends, building relationships and supportive networks, and nurturing staff professionalism appear to have a comparative advantage in Iraq over less rooted agencies. An experienced MSF hand saw the tensions between security and the humanitarian imperative somewhat differently. He recognized that although large-scale high profile humanitarian programs were now untenable in Iraq, it was still possible to perform systematic “individual acts of medical humanitarianism” such as emergency surgery and support to medical professionals through remote operations by cultivating a dedicated team and good local counterparts. "

United Nations presence remains severely constrained to operate effectively in Iraq (2003-2008)

- The UN's presence and its ability to operate effectively in Iraq has been severely constrained by the security environment. In November 2003, the UN pulled out its last remaining staff following the bombing of the U.N.'s Baghdad headquarters in August 2003.
- The UN has since 2003 continued to review the possibility of reestablishing a sustained presence since that period in time. The UN has gradually reestablished a minimum presence placing international staff in Baghdad as well as initially by liaison offices in Erbil, and Basrah protected and housed by the MNF-I.
- In 2007-2008, UNAMI has sought to increase its presence and envisages extending its offices in several localities in Iraq. The number of personnel continues to be limited and confined. (UNAMI, November 2008)
- The U.N.'s security apparatus in Iraq remains dysfunctional. According to UN mandates, UNAMI is dependent on MNF-I for security and movement. This compounded by security DSS guidelines which are regarded as relatively high limiting operational capacity. (RI, January 2008)
- In most of Iraq—less so in the three northern governorates of KRG—close association with MNF forces, or other visible armed escorts, restricts UN's access to Iraqi communities and also renders the UN partly inaccessible, and 'un-humanitarian' for Iraqis and humanitarian agencies.

- UN and IOs have since 2003 operated through INGOs and NGOs as implementing partners. UNHCR and IOM have implementing partners in most, if not all Governorates. The UN has also employed NGOs and consultants to monitor and assess activities being undertaken by implementing partners. (RI, January 2008; UNSC, 7 June 2005)
- There are numerous challenges on UN operational capacity, impact of phased withdrawal of MNF-I on UN security and redefinition of Civil-Military guidelines, and whether the lessened violence in 2008 offers UN opportunity to reassert itself.

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 6 November 2008:

"28. An expanded international presence in Iraq is critical to sustain and accelerate these initiatives, both in Baghdad and at the governorate level. The World Food Programme (WFP) has joined the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in establishing a permanent international presence in Baghdad, while other agencies are present on a rotating basis. Field coordination has also been enhanced by international staff of UNAMI and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Basra and Erbil. As part of the United Nations plan to increase its support throughout Iraq, missions of the United Nations country team led by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General visited Najaf in August and the Kurdistan Regional Government on 12 October to present the United Nations Assistance Strategy and establish the basis for an enhanced presence in these locations."

Feinstein International Center (FIC), 2 July 2007:

"The U.N.'s security apparatus in Iraq is particularly dysfunctional. The conventional wisdom among aid workers in the three northern governorates, where risks are generally regarded as relatively low and freedom of movement unconstrained, was that the U.N.'s security posture at its compound in Erbil was absurdly out of step with the actual level of risk. Until early 2007, staff were confined to the compound, which is surrounded by three layers of blast walls guarded by three layers of armed guards—Kurdish Peshmurga fighters on the outside entrance, Korean troops manning the second layer, and Fijians guarding the final entrance. International staff were not allowed out of the Erbil compound under any circumstances except with explicit approval on a case-by-case basis from the U.N.'s Department of Safety and Security (DSS) in New York. U.N. security reports refer to vague MNF-issued warnings of increased threats from Islamic militant organizations without independent U.N. corroboration, adding to the vague and pervasive sense of vulnerability expressed by some U.N. staff. "We're a target because we're the U.N.," said one. That may be eminently true, as it was when the Canal Hotel was destroyed, but passive acceptance of such perceived vulnerability will do little to make the U.N. any safer in Iraq. As one seasoned aid veteran put it, *"At some point, individual staff need to say to their headquarters and staff associations, no, this isn't what we want. Living in a bunker doesn't help us do our job."*

In most of Iraq—less so in the three northern governorates—co-location with MNF forces, or accepting MNF or other visible armed escorts, renders many Iraqis for whom the neutrality (or affiliations) of aid is important, at least partly inaccessible. Wholesale reliance for security on the MNF or private western contractors implies—or corroborates—a commonality of purpose between some aid agencies and military forces. Many Iraqis at the community level find such coherence unacceptable and, in the words of one beneficiary, "un-humanitarian." Likewise, there is little doubt among Iraqis as to the political allegiances and purposes of social welfare offices operated by, or under the armed protection of, various militias and parties. However, in many areas such offices are becoming welcome providers of life-saving assistance. Critically, the reliance on the MNF by U.N. agencies and others calls into question the fate of aid operations, if and when co-location and mobility arrangements are changed or ended due to reassignment or withdrawal of MNF forces and private security details. As of late 2006, UNAMI was about to

embark on a reduction of staff levels in Baghdad from 90 to 55 personnel, including 15 substantive officers, only 5 of whom were to be humanitarian or human rights officers, and 40 support and security staff. Acceptance strategies do not render humanitarian workers immune from targeted attack in Iraq but do contribute to greater adaptability and longevity of humanitarian programs. "

UNSC, 7 March 2007:

"The United Nations presence and activities in Iraq continue to be severely limited by the prevailing security situation in the country. However, with significant mitigation measures and proper training of United Nations staff members, the risk level continues to be assessed at the medium level. [...] These security challenges to the integrity of the international zone, and the continuing threat of kidnapping, highlight the risks faced by the United Nations staff in Baghdad. However, extensive mitigation measures are in place within the international zone aimed at reducing the overall risk to United Nations staff. Movement of United Nations staff in the international zone is controlled with a curfew and limitations on travel. Visits to government buildings outside the international zone require armed escorts, and UNAMI has practised procedures for this requirement. National staff working at all locations in Iraq are exposed to high levels of risk, particularly when travelling to and from work. An Iraq-specific package of measures has been designed to reduce their risk."

UNSC, 3 March 2006, p.12-17:

"Iraq remains a dangerous place and United Nations staff members are at risk of becoming targets of violence. [...] The security of the international zone in Baghdad, which is home to UNAMI premises, is of great importance to all occupants, including the United Nations. Accordingly, the situation, which is in the midst of a transition from Multinational Force primacy to that of the Iraqi security forces, is under constant review by UNAMI and the Department of Safety and Security. At the moment, the integrity of the internal zone perimeter and internal checkpoints is being maintained, but the topic is a regular point of discussion with the Multinational Force to ensure that the current level of security is sustained. [...] The Organization's presence and its ability to operate effectively in Iraq remain severely constrained by the security environment. This high-risk setting greatly restricts freedom of movement, especially by road. To provide United Nations staff members with the best security possible, and therefore ensure that the Organization is able to maintain a presence in Iraq, a number of mitigating and protective measures have been introduced, which are both expensive and timeconsuming. [...] Moreover, the United Nations is dependent on the Multinational Force for movement security and threat information. To keep pace with the constantly changing security dynamics, the UNAMI security unit requires access to accurate information on a regular and timely basis. [...] While UNAMI is seeking to step up its activities following the completion of the transition timetable endorsed in resolution 1546 (2004), in the current political and security environment in Iraq United Nations staff members remain at risk of becoming targets of violence. [...] Although the nature of the deployment of the Multinational Force is likely to change, the Mission's need for a dedicated protection force for all its activities in Iraq remains. Operational constraints, such as the lack of dedicated air assets, will also have to be addressed as a matter of priority. "

UNSC, 7 June 2005, paras. 64-65

"Despite the efforts of the United Nations, significant obstacles to full implementation of United Nations activities remain. This is largely due to the security situation, which dictates that work be done using national staff with less direction than preferred. Therefore, the United Nations is using the services of third parties such as local non-governmental organizations or consultants to monitor and assess activities being undertaken through implementing partners in Iraq. This triangulation of management, although not ideal, appears to be working reasonably well and will continue for the foreseeable future. However, one of the critical constraints is the inability to quickly gather information, such as in the case of developing a humanitarian response in Al-Qa'im, which resulted in a delayed response. This dependency upon second-hand information

and the associated potential for bias continues to be a major constraint in ensuring that the response provided is relevant and appropriate as well as timely..... Changes in ministerial incumbents, reformulation of portfolios within ministries and other effects of the creation of the Transitional Government, while not unexpected, nonetheless posed some difficulties for United Nations activities."

UNSC, 7 March 2005, para. 56-63

"Small United Nations liaison detachments of up to six staff members each were deployed to Erbil and Basrah on 1 and 12 February 2005, respectively. These liaison detachments include military advisers and security and support staff who will work with the multinational force to facilitate periodic visits, prepare United Nations facilities and assess the security conditions required for any expansion of the United Nations presence in Iraq. I am grateful to the Member States of the multinational force for providing support to the United Nations for the deployment of the liaison detachments. Additional arrangements for protection by the multinational force, as well by United Nations security personnel, will have to be put in place if the United Nations is to establish its own facilities in Basrah and Erbil." "The number of United Nations personnel in Iraq continues to be constrained by security conditions necessitating extremely well-protected living and working facilities within heavily guarded areas. Movement outside the Baghdad international zone, or similarly well-protected compounds in other parts of the country, continues to be extremely hazardous and therefore dependent on the protection of the multinational force. Under these conditions, any expansion of the United Nations presence in Iraq has of necessity been confined to the number of persons who can be accommodated in the Baghdad international zone, as well as the small security liaison detachments deployed to multinational force cantonments at Basrah and Erbil."

UNHCR, September 2004, p.3

"Although the UN continues to review the possibility of re-deploying international staff to Iraq and at the end of August 2004 sent a small team to Baghdad for six weeks, under the auspices of the Special Representative to the Secretary-General, in order to assess the humanitarian situation, it is unlikely, in light of continued security concerns, that any type of sustained international presence will be possible in the near future. UNHCR's ability as well as that of its partners to engage in any type of protection, returnee monitoring, and/or reintegration activities towards sustainable return in Iraq thus remains severely limited. It should furthermore be noted that the Ministry for Displacement and Migration is still in the process of building up its own operational capacity, and is currently in no position to offer any type of accommodation or other assistance to returning Iraqis."

OHCHR, 9 June 2004, p.22

"The prevailing insecurity in most parts of the country exacerbates the already vulnerable human rights situation of most displaced persons. Following the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003, most humanitarian agencies have withdrawn, and now only limited assistance reaches the internally displaced and there is no consistent monitoring of and reporting on the human rights situation of displaced persons"

See also, "[Delivery of aid still a problem four years after US invasion](#)", IRIN, 21 March 2007
[Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel Report of the Secretary-General to General Assembly, A/63/305](#), **United Nations Secretary General (UN SG)**, 18 August 2008

UNAMI, November 2005, p.1 (Anbar province)

UNAMI, September 2005,p.2

UNAMI, July 2005, p.1

UNSC, 7 March 2005, para.80

UNSC, 7 June 2005, para.95

Deutsche Presse Agentur, 7 September 2004

UN, 22 July 2004

See "[UN pulls out last of foreign staff from Baghdad](#)", Reuters, 3 November 2003

Generalised insecurity, MNF-I operations and insurgency hinders access and provision of assistance to displaced and non displaced. (2004-2008)

- Humanitarian access is limited by armed conflict, general insecurity and crime, restrictions on movement, and in some cases deliberate obstruction by authorities. Humanitarian workers must operate cautiously as in many cases they are deliberately targeted by armed groups. (IDP WG, November 2008)
- This has been notably reported since 2003 to 2008 due to military operations. NNGOs and INGOs have for instance reported lack of access and security affecting their ability to provide assistance in Fallujah (2004-2005), Sammara (2006), Basra (2008).
- Humanitarian access is also complicated by the multiplicity of actors involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance. The situation is complicated by a blurring of roles between military and humanitarian actors.
- Monitoring reports indicate that 38% do not receive humanitarian assistance. Communities report having received assistance from relatives and host communities, Ministry of Migration and other government bodies (33%), religious groups (25%), and humanitarian NGOs (44%) majority of which from Iraqi Red Crescent Society (25% of total). (IDP WG, November 2008)
- Non-state actors have also increasingly take up humanitarian assistance of displaced and non displaced Iraqi communities. The gap in assistance provided by the humanitarian community and the Government has been partly taken up by non-state actors. (Brookings, 2008; RI January 2008) The extent of assistance provided is unclear.
- The precarity of the situation of IDPs should not either neglect the situation of those populations compelled to remain in areas of conflict. There has been rising concern that many IDPs and all refugees are relatively more accessible to current assistance and protection efforts than those who have remained in the worst-stricken areas. (FC, 2 July 2007)
- The security situation and impeded access has prompted NGOs and UN to call on Iraqi authorities, MNF-I and none state actors to ensure humanitarian space and respect for human rights. UNAMI through humanitarian working groups in Baghdad and NGOs play a vital role in negotiating access with MNF-I and ISF as witnessed in Baghdad (2008).
- Arguably close association with MNF-I, and Iraqi Government, has enable to improve coordination or information exchange with MNF-I and Government, whether the benefits of doing so outweighs the opportunity cost of being associated with one party is contentious.

IDP Working Group, 26 November 2008:

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

Feinstein International Center (FIC), 2 July 2007:

"In political circles and within the international humanitarian apparatus itself, there is an emerging disproportionate focus on Iraqis who have fled as IDPs or refugees.⁷ Many IDPs and all refugees are relatively more accessible to current assistance and protection efforts than those who have remained in the worst-stricken areas. Little attention is so far being paid to preventing forced

migration from occurring. Conditions facing the “internally stuck”, those who have opted to stay in their homes or are unable to move and are therefore mostly hidden from view, are perhaps much more worrisome as access to essential needs and services becomes increasingly difficult in much of the country, and as social supports such as the Public Distribution System (PDS) for food rations collapse.....”

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 30 March 2008:

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) appealed to the Iraqi authorities on 30 March to facilitate their distribution of relief materials in Baghdad and [Basra](#), 545km southeast of the capital. Both cities are under an indefinite curfew due to ongoing clashes between government forces and the Mahdi Army, the Shia militia led by Moqtada al-Sadr. We call upon the [Iraqi] government to allow local and international aid organisations to move during curfew time and get into conflict areas to do their job, Basil al-Azawi, head of the Iraqi Commission for Civil Society Enterprises (ICCSE), a coalition of over 1,000 Iraqi NGOs, told IRIN. It is a really dangerous situation and must be focused on. The clashes and curfew have highly affected the delivery of humanitarian assistance in both Baghdad and Basra. People are still in [dire need of food and water](#) and some hospitals need medicines and medical items, he said

UNAMI, 16 January 2007:

"In November, HRO submitted an official memorandum to MNF-I Chief of Staff, Major General Thomas L. Moore, Jr., requesting more detailed information on a number of incidents involving MNF-I activities in Ramadi and Fallujah. These included also the use of facilities protected by the Geneva Conventions, such as hospitals and schools, as military bases. HRO would like to stress the importance of MNF-I investigating and reporting on allegations of violations of human rights and humanitarian laws."

IRIN, 22 March 2006:

"Aid agencies say they have been prevented from entering the city of Samarra, in central Iraq, where a major US and Iraqi military operation is underway. "Our convoys sent on Sunday and Monday have been prevented from entering the city by US troops and our information from inside is that families are without food, power and potable water, particularly because they cannot leave their homes," noted Abdel Hameed, a spokesperson for the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS). This, they say, has left hundreds of families without medical assistance and food supplies.....According to al-Daraji, no citizens have been allowed to leave the city, some 120 km north of the capital, Baghdad, since the operation began on 16 March.Nearly 1,200 families have fled the city to Baghdad and are living in abandoned buildings and makeshift camps, according to local NGOs who are monitoring. Few of them have received assistance so far.

UNSC, November 2005, pp. 2-3:

"Access to some IDP locations remained sporadic and hindered by checkpoints or strict security cordons around towns. The EWG shared these concerns with UNAMI civil-military focal points in order to encourage dialogue with the concerned parties and to develop practical measures to facilitate access of humanitarian convoys to insecure areas. UNAMI facilitated an information exchange between interested NGOs and the military authorities to promote the possibility of humanitarian corridors."

UNSC, 7 June 2005, para.58:

"Military action in the Al-Qaim area had an impact on local residents and on internally displaced persons from Fallujah. As a result, 2,000 internally displaced families from Fallujah were identified to receive assistance, as well as an estimated 2,000 internally displaced families originally from Al-Qaim and its surrounding areas. Food, water, non-food items such as mattresses, tents and water storage containers, and essential medical supplies were distributed to families in need and to local health facilities. The security situation has impeded access and thus assessments of the area's needs. However, the United Nations country team and its partners, working through the

emergency working group, are in the process of positioning supplies and are calling on the relevant Iraqi authorities and the Multinational Force for humanitarian space and respect for human rights."

UNAMI, 17 May 2005:

"The situation in Fallujah remained tense in April. An estimated 80% of IDPs from Fallujah returned, although it was not sure that they had remained in the city. Access to the city remained difficult and time-consuming, with residents expected to show their Public Distribution System (PDS) cards, official IDs, as well as badges provided by the MNF-I (Multi-National Forces-Iraq). Similar access restrictions were also reported by aid agency personnel. The water and electricity situation remained precarious, as three districts of Fallujah were solely dependant on water tankering and seven districts were without electricity. [...] The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's office convened the Emergency Working Group (EWG) to coordinate the response of humanitarian actors. Working in concert with the EWG in Baghdad, information is being shared and response coordinated to ensure that resources reach those most in need. Of prime concern is to reach the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with basic needs such as water, shelter, food and essential medical care. [...] The UN and its partners urge the relevant authorities to respect the right for humanitarian space and the human rights of the civilians, and facilitate the access of humanitarian actors to those in need. Dialogue has been initiated with the Transitional Government of Iraq and the MNF-I to secure access."

UNAMI EWG, 18 January 2005:

[Falluja] "Overall, NGOs report that lack of access and security continues to affect their ability to independently assess conditions inside the city and to directly deliver humanitarian aid to the returning population. [...] Insecurity and sporadic access due to roadblocks by MNF and insurgent groups also continue to impact the provision of humanitarian assistance to IDPs at their current places of displacement. Joint IOM/UNHCR distributions in the area of Amiriya were recently suspended due to risks associated with criminal activity."

UN EWG, 19 December 2004:

"Lack of security and access continue to impact the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the residents of Falluja and the estimated 200,000 IDPs dispersed to surrounding areas. At best, IOM monitors report there is sporadic access to the various IDP locations due to military activities/checkpoints and insecurity; whereas Falluja itself remains strictly inaccessible due to the ongoing conflict. IOM monitors report that clinics at the IDP areas are experiencing shortages of some drugs and that many IDPs have not received their food rations despite the apparent resumption of PDS distributions by the Ministry of Trade in some of the affected areas. UNAMI continues to raise the issues of access, protection of civilians, and the need for humanitarian corridors with the MNF-I/IIG regarding the IDPs."

See also "[Armed groups occupy hospitals and kidnap doctors](#)", IRIN, 13 February 2007 and "[Delivery of aid is still a problem four years after US invasion](#)", IRIN, 21 March 2007

UNAMI, February 2005

Response of Regional & Bilateral Actors to Iraqi Crisis

- The U.S. government has been the single biggest contributor of humanitarian assistance to displaced Iraqis since 2003 to funding multilateral aid organizations, subcontracting humanitarian relief activities and supporting Iraqi government, giving more than \$500 million humanitarian aid in total. (Brookings, August 2008)

- European Commission was slow to provide large amounts of humanitarian assistance for Iraqi refugees and IDPs. Pending approved budget for 2008, the EC will have provided a total of over €94 million in reconstruction assistance for displaced and €45.8 million in humanitarian assistance. (EC, September 2008; Brookings, August 2008)
- In contrast, according to the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. spends \$2.4 billion per week on the war effort in Iraq. U.S. military has also engaged in civic humanitarian, relief and reconstruction intended to support U.S. military 'hearts and minds' objectives including CERP, as well as PRTs which have appropriated funding in excess of 4.5 billion as of January 2008. (Brookings, August 2008; NCCI, January 2008)

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"U.S. policy towards the Iraqi displacement crisis primarily focuses on funding multilateral aid organizations, subcontracting humanitarian relief activities and supporting host governments. Ambassador James Foley understands the U.S.'s primary obligation to the displaced is to "provide assistance in place." USG contributions to humanitarian assistance have increased steadily over the past three years, but they should continue to increase at an even faster pace in order to meet urgent needs. The U.S. contributed \$43 million in FY 2006, \$171 million in FY 2007, and in FY 2008, as of April, \$208 million. U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) plan to spend about another \$70 million before October, bringing the projected contribution for FY 2008 to just over \$281 million. In contrast, according to the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. spends \$2.4 billion per week on the war effort in Iraq. While there is no agreed-upon figure for what it would take to meet the needs of displaced Iraqis, a variety of human rights and humanitarian organizations have suggested much larger financial contributions from the U.S. to support humanitarian operations in the region. For example...International Rescue Committee (IRC) assert that the U.S. has a special responsibility to provide the much-needed aid increase. They propose that the refugee population alone will require a minimum of \$2 billion annually for the next two to four years and that the United States ought to contribute at least half of that. The U.S. government has been the single biggest contributor of humanitarian assistance to displaced Iraqis since 2003, giving more than \$500 million in total. This assistance money is channeled primarily through the State Department via PRM and through USAID via OFDA and USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP). USG funds support the work of international organizations such as UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO as well as NGOs operating in the region. For example, contributions announced in February 2008 include assistance to the following: \$83 million for UNHCR's Iraq Situation Supplementary Appeal which aims to improve protection and access to basic services for IDPs and refugees, \$5 million for the World Food Program's Emergency Operation in Syria, and \$2.4 million for UNICEF's portion of the joint U.N. Education Appeal which supports education opportunities for displaced Iraqis in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon. The Department of State charts below provide breakdowns of U.S. assistance in FY 2007 and FY 2008.

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2007 <i>(in millions)</i> ⁹⁸ | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|---------|----------|
| USG | IOs | NGOs | OTHER * | TOTAL |
| STATE/PRM | \$ 99.26 | \$ 18.55 | \$ 5.00 | \$122.81 |
| USAID/OFDA | \$ 6.00 | \$ 57.40 | - | \$ 63.40 |
| USAID/FFP | \$ 0.65 | - | - | \$ 0.65 |
| USAID/Jordan | - | - | \$10.30 | \$ 10.30 |
| TOTAL | \$ 105.91 | \$ 75.95 | \$15.30 | \$197.16 |
| * State Department/Near Eastern Affairs Bureau supplement to the Department Scholar Rescue fund grant; USAID support to Jordanian government to reinforce ongoing health and education programs in communities affected by large numbers of Iraqi refugees | | | | |

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2008 <i>(in millions)</i> ⁹⁹ | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|-------|----------|
| USG | IOs | NGOs | OTHER | TOTAL |
| State/PRM | \$ 145.9 | - | - | \$ 145.9 |
| USAID/OFDA | - | \$ 26.1 | - | \$ 26.1 |
| USAID/FFP | \$ 36.0 | - | - | \$ 36.0 |
| FY08 Contributions to date | \$ 181.9 | \$ 26.1 | - | \$ 208.0 |
| PRM Planned | \$ 2.3 | \$ 21.2 | - | \$ 23.5 |
| OFDA Planned | \$ 20.6 | \$ 29.4 | - | \$ 50.0 |
| Planned total FY08 contributions | \$ 204.8 | \$ 76.7 | - | \$ 281.5 |

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2006-2008 <i>(in millions)</i> | | |
|--|----------|---------------------|
| FY 2006 | FY 2007 | FY 2008 (projected) |
| \$43 | \$171.06 | \$281.5 |

Although the U.S. military has engaged in humanitarian work in Iraq, this work is intended to support U.S. military objectives—to win “hearts and minds” of Iraqis for the coalition’s cause. In fact, it does not meet a basic requirement of humanitarian assistance, which is that assistance be made available on the basis of need alone—rather than for political purposes. The work of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has been central to U.S. strategy in Iraq and yet these teams have not been able to meet the assistance needs of the vast majority of Iraqi IDPs. There is an urgent need for better coordination by U.S. government departments and agencies in developing comprehensive plans for humanitarian assistance. Responding to displacement must be central to overall U.S. policy in Iraq. Any gains achieved by the surge can quickly be erased by inadequate policies toward the displaced.”

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008:

Although humanitarian action and the assistance activities of military forces often occur in the same space and appear very similar, there are fundamental differences between them. US military doctrine describes military civic action in a theatre of war as a “force-multiplier”. It serves the commander’s military mission through intelligence gathering, force protection and “psychological operations”, commonly known as “hearts-and-minds” activities. The latter are aimed at building acceptance with populations by influencing public perceptions about the legitimacy of a military mission in the conflict area and the home country. Visibility is thus essential to the success of military assistance efforts. Military civic action and other forms of instrumentalized assistance are often erroneously described by combatants and in media as “humanitarian”. Humanitarian action is based on need alone. It provides life-saving assistance, protection and support for the welfare of the civilian population in accordance with international norms and standards.

MNF-I counter-insurgency strategy in Iraq emphasizes the importance of “non-lethal operations” or the “build” component of “clear, hold and build” operations. The US surge strategy includes unprecedented involvement of MNF-I troops and assets in various civic action efforts including provision of assistance directly to the population. Since 2003, US\$2.7 billion has been appropriated by the US Congress for the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP) for “urgent humanitarian, relief and reconstruction requirements” that immediately assist Iraqis. CERP funding has steadily increased since 2003: un-expended CERP assets are approximately US\$1.2 billion. As of January 2008, 32 “Provincial Reconstruction Teams” (PRTs), Provincial Support Teams (PSTs) and “Embedded PRTs” (ePRTs) have been established by coalition governments, primarily the US but also the UK, Korea and Italy (see map Page 4), with core funding of some US\$1.8 billion. The CERP and other funds are also put at the disposal of the PRTs.

US PRTs are formally led by the US Department of State but the majority are embedded in US military positions. PRT staff typically include military personnel, diplomats, USAID staff and commercial contractors. Although US documentation on the PRTs avoids mention of “humanitarian” roles, in practice the PRTs have been providing relief goods directly to the population, sometimes in cooperation with affiliated local organisations. Civil affairs or “CIMIC” teams have also been providing substantial direct assistance, including relief goods, to the population. Commercial contractors and affiliated not-for-profit organisations execute various forms of assistance operations for—and under escort from—the MNF-I. In policy or practice, independent humanitarian organisations in Iraq are careful to keep their distance from the MNF-I so as not to appear affiliated with, or co-opted by, an unpopular party to the conflict. However, in a context where armed soldiers hand out assistance directly to the population, roles are thoroughly blurred and the perception of many Iraqis is that western aid agencies are affiliated with what they regard as “the occupation”. This increases the risks for humanitarian organisations and for the population.

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

The European donor community which has traditionally been a major supporter of humanitarian operations was slow to provide large amounts of humanitarian assistance for Iraqi refugees and IDPs. For many European governments which had opposed the war, the humanitarian consequences were seen as a U.S. responsibility. Although they responded to UNHCR appeals, there were few large bilateral assistance programs. But this began to change as the war reached the five-year mark. By late 2007, the European Commission allocated €17.8 million for humanitarian needs and a funding package of €7.8 million to support basic services for IDPs. In

2007, the Commission also allocated €10 million in basic support for UNHCR's work in the region and almost €50 million for provision of basic health and education services.

European concern is motivated in large measure by the growing number of Iraqis turning up on their borders in search of protection. Traditionally, European governments have not accepted many refugees for resettlement; in 2007, only 1,650 Iraqis were resettled in Europe (although this is higher than the number of Iraqis who were resettled to the U.S. in its fiscal year 2007). But reflecting the geographical proximity of Iraq, large numbers arrive in search of asylum. While in 2007, the U.S. reported just 734 asylum applications from Iraqis, almost 40,000 Iraqis asked for asylum in Europe—twice the number as in 2006.¹⁰³ In fact, in both 2006 and 2007, Iraqis constituted the largest number of asylum-seekers in Europe.

European Commission, September 2008:

In 2003, the EC allocated €8 million in humanitarian assistance specifically targeting IDPs in Iraq. As part of this €8 million, €3 million was allocated to a project implemented by the International Committee of the Red Cross and covered emergency supplies for 75,000 IDPs, 320 tonnes of flour for hospitals, a humanitarian air transport service and protection activities for IDP. The other €5 million was also allocated to the ICRC for food, non-food items, medical kits and rehabilitation of water/sanitation facilities in conflict affected areas and targeted up to 2 million beneficiaries.... In 2007, the deterioration of the humanitarian situation caused by unrelenting violence resulting in increased refugee flows led the EC to provide a new package of €17.8 million in humanitarian aid specifically targeted at displaced Iraqis. Of this amount, €7.8 million was allocated to IDPs in Iraq and €10 million was allocated to refugees in neighbouring countries, primarily Jordan and Syria, but also Turkey and Lebanon..... Following the events of 2003, the International Community established the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, with the aim of providing a co-ordinated response to the reconstruction challenge. Most EC aid in support of Iraq's reconstruction was initially channelled through this Fund, including assistance for refugees. ...In 2006, the EC allocated €10 million in support of IDPs in Iraq to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq. The EC contribution was channelled through the United Nations arm of the IRFFI.....

The Assistance Programme for 2008, currently under approval, foresees a further increase in measures and funding aimed at assisting refugees, IDPs and returnees in Iraq. Support in 2008 is expected to amount to €43.5 million over 5 main programmes. Building on the initiatives of earlier years, priority will be given to the provision of basic services, working closely with other actors active in addressing the plight of the refugee communities. The programme **Support to the return and reintegration of returnees and IDPs inside Iraq**, with a proposed allocation of €6 million is to be implemented by the UNHCR. It aims to create a protective environment and facilitate durable solutions for returnees and IDPs inside Iraq and to provide assistance to local communities impacted by displacement and/or relocation..... With 5 million Iraqis living in temporary conditions across several countries, the scale of the challenge that faces Iraq and the International Community is considerable. The Commission is committed to continuing to help the plight of displaced Iraqis. Once the programme for 2008 is approved at the end of this year, the EC will have provided a total of over €94 million in reconstruction assistance for displaced people and €45.8 million in humanitarian assistance..... In May of this year EU Ministers also encouraged the Iraqi Government to use its own resources to help neighbouring countries to cope with the additional burden of refugees. While the main responsibility for adequately meeting the immediate and longer term needs of displaced and returning Iraqis lies with Iraqi authorities, the International Community has a responsibility to protect displaced Iraqis and to support neighbouring host countries in their efforts to protect and assist the refugees. The majority of Iraqis will not return to their neighbourhoods until such time as they feel the security situation has improved and continues to improve, and until they know that living conditions have improved and public services provision is adequate. The basic needs of the displaced people must be addressed in order for increased returns to take place. A coordinated approach by all actors

committed to responding efficiently and effectively to the needs of those internally and externally displaced by the continuing crisis in Iraq is essential.

EC support to Iraq's refugees and IDPs (Figures in € millions)

| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | Total |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|--------------------|---------------|
| Reconstruction | - | - | 1.4 | 10.7 | 38.68 | 43.5 ³² | 94.28 |
| Humanitarian | 8 | - | - | - | 17.8 | 20 | 45.8 |
| Total | 8 | - | 1.4 | 10.7 | 56.48 | 63.5 | 140.08 |

UN Secretary General (UNSG), 28 July 2008:

9. During the reporting period Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates announced the resumption of full diplomatic representation in Iraq. In June the Organization of the Islamic Conference deployed a senior representative to Baghdad, pending the formal opening of its offices in August. At its 19 April meeting in Bahrain, the Gulf Cooperation Council accepted Iraq as a regular participant in ministerial meetings and resolved to regularly convene with a new configuration that also includes Egypt, Jordan and the United States of America.

10. At the third expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, held in Kuwait on 22 April, support for the ad hoc support mechanism for regional dialogue increased and an agreement in principle was obtained to convene the next ministerial meeting in Baghdad. The high-level International Compact with Iraq Annual Review Conference, held in Stockholm on 29 May, also reflected engagement of the international community in favour of the reconstruction and development of Iraq and served to strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries. Subsequently, on 6 July, the United Arab Emirates announced that it would forgive Iraqi debt, which is an important and welcome contribution to the Compact process.....

See Also:

[Update on IDP and USAID mission activities in Iraq](#), U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS), 27 June 2008

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

Overview

General: National Response

- With the Iraq Government, the Ministry of Displacement, MoM, is primarily responsible for the addressing IDPs. Iraqi Government has undertaken various measures to address displacement including establishment of National IDP Policy in mid 2008, provision of assistance and incentives for returnees, budgetary allocations for IDPs.
- This has included the establishment of various mechanisms to address property issues of displaced. The CCPRD (initially established by CPA) addresses property concerns of displaced pre 2003 with moderate success.
- More recently the Government has established a reconciliation council and mechanisms to arbitrate property disputes for post 2003 displaced. (IDP WG, November 2008) Measures to address property issues have been described as lacking, ad hoc and inconsistent.
- The Government has been accused of being negligent in addressing displacement. Commentators have noted that the Government has been slow to recognise the magnitude of the displacement, the consequences of displacement.
- The capacity of MoM is said to be limited, and steps have yet to be taken to be clearly implemented and sufficient. (Brookings, August 2008)
- There are continual concerns on influence of partisan policies in Government. Observers note that Government is itself a party to the conflict and its security forces have facilitated displacement and sometimes carried it out themselves. (RI, January 2008)
- Recent launch of the National IDP policy in the first national conference to address displacement held in July 2008, suggests that the Government is taking up greater position though remains still limited.

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 6 November 2008:

"35. The improving security situation and a lack of access to basic services and assistance in areas of displacement have prompted increasing numbers of internally displaced persons to return in June (12,000), July (18,000) and August (36,000). Refugee returns are believed to be much lower at around 1,000 to 2,000 per month. Some 50 per cent of the returnee totals represent families returning to Baghdad. Housing in many cases has been problematic, as many of the returnees' houses have been occupied by others or damaged. To encourage the return of displaced people, on 2 August the Government issued a directive to evict illegal occupants from Baghdad on private homes and government buildings across the country. Eviction started in 2 September following a one-month notice period and is applicable countrywide. The Government has established a reconciliation council to arbitrate property disputes and is offering a one-off payment of 1 million dinars (around \$830) to each returning family. In addition, the Government is committed to paying 1.8 million dinars (equivalent to six months' rent) to displaced persons evicted from houses in Baghdad and unable to return to their original homes. Unfortunately, the Government continues to face challenges in the actual implementation of the assistance programme. The United Nations and its partners continue to advocate with Iraqi authorities on the protection of the internally displaced and those facing secondary displacement from the implementation of eviction orders, as well as the simplification of registration and compensation procedures."

UN Secretary General (UNSG), 28 July 2008:

"36. The Iraq 2008 consolidated appeal for \$267 million is 47 per cent funded, with \$127 million. This amount includes a contribution by the Government of Iraq of \$40 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) to fund internally displaced Iraqis who are particularly vulnerable and the \$8 million Iraq donated to UNHCR in Jordan for Iraqi refugees. Funding levels vary across sectors, with the most underfunded being health, water and sanitation, education, and agriculture and food security, which have received only about 13 per cent of the funding necessary for the delivery of essential services. Limited financial support has been received by non-governmental organizations participating in the consolidated appeal process, which is of concern, as their operations are crucial for reaching communities inside Iraq.... "

Refugees International (RI), April 2008:

"The Government of Iraq is itself a party to the conflict and its security forces have facilitated displacement and sometimes carried it out themselves. Officers in the Iraqi Security forces complain that most of their men are loyal to the Mahdi Army and most of their commanders are loyal to the Mahdi Army or the Badr Militia. They and Sunni groups described incidents where Iraqi Security Forces opened fire on Sunni neighborhoods, protected death squads, or were directly involved in the kidnapping and execution of Sunni civilians..... This lack of separation between the state and the Shiite denomination intimidates Sunnis and creates the impression of Shiite ownership of government institutions. Iraqi ministries are controlled by political parties and the Ministry of Migration is controlled by Iraqis widely reputed to be Sadrist sympathizers, although no accusations were made of ties to the Mahdi Army. As a result, to the extent that the Ministry of Migration provides services to Iraqis, it is widely perceived to have a strong bias in favor of Shiites. Local officials in the Sunni areas of Kirkuk, Mosul and Diyala, also believe that aid is more available in Shiite governorates. However, the situation may change in some Sunni governorates such as Anbar, where security has improved and the Ministry of Migration can now gain more access.... The Ministry of Trade, in charge of the essential Public Distribution System (PDS), is also widely perceived as being compromised by sectarianism in favour of Shiites. Meanwhile, corruption, inefficiency and security problems also militate against proper PDS outreach. In the best cases, Iraqis only received fifty percent of the PDS contents and the quality of the contents has gone down. Refugees International interviewed internally displaced people (ID Ps) in Baghdad, Diyala, Mosul, Falluja, Babel, Kirkuk and Najaf. Although anecdotal, our evidence shows that few ID Ps have succeeded in transferring their PDS cards when they move to new neighborhoods. Of those who were able to, the overwhelming majority are Shiites. Returnees also have a hard time renewing their PDS cards. Although most government bias seems to be in favor of Shiites, aid groups note that in provinces that are in the hands of Sunnis, such as Salahedin governorate, Shiite areas face a sectarian bias against them from local officials and receive an inferior quality of help. For example in Salahedin, the towns of Dujail and Balad are Shiite pockets and receive less assistance. Within Baghdad, government services, always plagued with inefficiency, are distributed according to a sectarian bias. Shiite areas get more hours of electricity than Sunni areas, in most cases.

Since then, the Government of Iraq has taken some steps to respond to these concerns, but they have yet to be implemented and are insufficient. The government has issued an executive order to create an inter-ministerial "Displacement and Migration Committee" in charge of identifying safe areas for returns within Iraq, laying out a plan to provide services, and developing a plan to return the displaced to their homes. Despite the creation of this committee, and the pressure exerted by both the US and the UN , the government has yet to adopt a National Policy on Displacement and Returns. In its strategy on returns, the Ministry of Migration recognizes the existing challenges to returns, and notes that the lack of essential and commercial services is a factor discouraging returns. It underlines the necessity for the government and the assistance community to provide an array of services to the returnees and improve the overall infrastructure of Iraq. The strategy also mentions the importance of involving all religious leaders and

communities in encouraging returns. However, while recognizing the sectarian divide in many of the displaced areas of origin, it does not discuss political reconciliation or the sustainability of returns."

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"There is also concern about the fact that Iraq is not devoting sufficient resources itself to the displacement issue. An Iraqi pledge of \$25 million for host countries that was announced in April 2007 was "very slow to materialize; Jordan reportedly refused to accept its \$8 million share and suggested it be given directly to UNHCR, because the sum was perceived as so small relative to the need."⁶⁷ The gap between the amount the Iraqi government has pledged for IDPs—US\$350 million—coupled with the amount of its unspent budget—US\$40 billion—leads most donors to argue that Iraq should provide the bulk of humanitarian assistance to its own people.⁶⁸ Other middle-income countries facing displacement situations, such as Turkey and the Philippines, have devoted relatively more resources to their own internally displaced than has Iraq. But the political, economic, and security situations in Iraq have been so dire in recent years and the government's capacity to act has been so dismantled that these comparisons are perhaps unfair. There are serious concerns, for example, about the capacity of the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) which has recently been renamed the Ministry of Migration—presumably to indicate the government's desire to do more with returning refugees. A General Accounting Office assessment of U.S. efforts to build capacity within Iraqi ministries revealed that such programs had not been successful. Hinderances to well-functioning government ministries, including MoDM, include lack of capable, trained staff, corruption, insecurity, and "partisan influence over the leadership and staffing of the ministries."⁶⁹ A senior international official explained that even after five years of war, MoDM lacked basic procedures and had virtually no staff with any experience with displacement. Moreover the Ministry was still not clear about whether its role was to be a coordinating or an operational body. Simply providing more money to the ministry is unlikely to result in better programs on the ground.⁷⁰ However, the Iraqi government could certainly contribute to international organizations' appeals to meet the needs of its own citizens as in the recent Consolidated Appeals Process. Moreover, al-Maliki government lacks political will to recognize either the magnitude or the potential consequences of the displacement. To do so would be an indication of the government's failure to protect its people."

National Response: Resource and Financial allocations to IDPs.

- There concern by donors, UN and Iraqi actors about the fact that Iraq is not devoting sufficient resources itself to the displacement issue. The Parliamentary Committee on Displacement has underlined the need for extensive financial resources to address displacement. (IRIN, May 2008; Brookings, August 2008)
- The government only allotted about \$200 million in mid 2008 for displaced. A parliamentary committee on displacement and migration demanded the Iraqi government allot US\$4 billion in next year's budget to meet the needs of more than four million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. (IRIN, September, 2008)
- An Iraqi pledge of \$25 million for host countries that was announced in April 2007 was "very slow to materialize. In 2008, Iraq contributed \$40 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) to fund internally displaced Iraqis who are particularly vulnerable and the \$8 million Iraq donated to UNHCR in Jordan for Iraqi refugees. (UNAMI, July 2008)
- According to Government policies under Order 232, and 101 as of July 2008, the Government shall provide monthly basis equivalent of 130 USD for 3 consecutive months to equivalent 120,000 families displaced. So far some 140,000 families had received 120 US\$ for 6 months' period. The order renewed in July 2008 is to target an additional 80,000 families in Central South and 35,000 families in KRG (GoI, July 2008)

- Families returning from displacement shall be covered by 850 US (1,000,000 ID) provided that displacement status will be written off. Rent assistance of the equivalent of 250 US (300,000 ID) for 6 months shall be provided for returnees to Baghdad in return for vacating these premises (Gol, July 2008). Other measures include helping Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries with free airline tickets if they choose to return home, the free shipment of their belongings, and compensation for damaged property.
- The Government has also provided various compensation schemes through various bodies for IDPs following military operations and insurgency activities. In December 2007, communities displaced from Turkish incursions were provided with 850 US. (IRIN, December 2007)
- Observers have commented on the insufficiency in the assistance provided, and that such measure do not offer an adequate durable solution to the displaced. There has also been concern to the extent to which the Government is employing financial incentives in a manner to compel returns with specific period of time, and at cost of losing any further assistance.

Gol. Council of Ministers, Decree number 262 of 2008:

"The Council of Ministers in his thirtieth ordinary session held on 13/7/2008 and after viewing the results of the joint meeting chaired by HE the PM and attended by the Minister of Displacement and Migration, and the Parliamentarian IDPs and Migrants committee, the CoM decided to approve the recommendations of the Ministry of Displacement and Migration as raised in its letter 1/1/MO/782 dated 24/6/2008, as follows:

Continue to grant the amount of Iraqi Dinars (150,000) on monthly basis to each IDP family remaining in displacement, with a cut-off date on 1/1/2008, for three consecutive months. The number of displaced families is around (120,000 one hundred twenty thousand) including the IDPs in Iraq Kurdistan region.

Families returning from internal displacement to their places of origin inside Iraq are covered with the (1) one million Iraqi Dinars grant for each family, provided that their displacement record will be written-off.

Families returning from neighbouring countries are covered with the grant in mentioned in para (II) above, and in accordance with the regulations set by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration; it will include families who have stayed in the countries in subject for a period between 8 to 12 months, provided that their displacement record will be written-off for all members of the family.

Families returning from Iraq Kurdistan region is covered with grant mentioned in para (II) above, as per lists and similarly to other governorates. The estimated total number of displaced families is around (35,000) thirty five thousand families.

Granting rent assistance for six months at (300,000) three hundred thousand Iraqi Dinars per month for displaced families who are occupying houses of other returning displaced families exclusively to the Capital city "Baghdad" in return for the vacating these houses, in accordance with regulations set by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration with other relevant authorities."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 25 September 2008:

"A parliamentary committee on displacement and migration demanded the Iraqi government allot US\$4 billion in next year's budget to meet the needs of more than four million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. "We asked the government last year to allocate 3 to 5 percent of the oil revenues in the 2008 budget to cover the needs of IDPs and refugees as they represent a big segment of the Iraqi people and are going through harsh conditions," Abdul-Khaliq Zankana, a lawmaker and head of parliament's displacement and migration committee, told IRIN on 24 September. "But unfortunately this call was ignored," Zankana said. "A few months ago, we appealed for \$2 billion to be allotted in the \$21 billion complementary budget to the 2008 budget for the same purpose, but the government only allotted about \$200 million," Zankana said. Iraq's 2008 budget was \$70 billion. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 13 May 2008:

"The problem of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries is likely to grow into a regional and international problem because the government appears to have no clear policy to tackle it, a member of parliament (MP) said on 12 May." "The government's obvious inability to solve the problem of IDPs and refugees could lead to serious regional and international problems, as there is no clear and comprehensive policy to get them back into their homes," MP Abdul-Khaliq Zankana, head of parliament's Displacement and Migration Committee, said. "These problems will hit Iraqi security and society. The absence of support and appropriate solutions will leave them easy prey to militias and armed gangs inside Iraq and [make them into] possible recruits to intelligence services outside Iraq," Zankana said. Since the beginning of 2008, Zankana's committee has demanded a comprehensive, long-term government policy and budget to tackle the problem, proposing that 3-5 percent of national oil revenues be set aside to fund programmes to assist IDPs. "All these demands and appeals have vanished," he said, threatening that he and his committee members could resign "because there are no appropriate measures to solve this problem". According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), over 4.2 million Iraqis have fled their homes during this period - most since 2003. Of these, over 2 million are living as refugees in neighbouring countries - mostly Syria and Jordan - while 2.7 million are IDPs. On 9 May, UNHCR launched an appeal, after pointing out at a donor meeting in Geneva that it could find itself forced to reduce or suspend a number of its programmes - covering medical, food, education and direct financial assistance - unless additional support were forthcoming. In January 2008, the UNHCR appealed for US\$261 million for its Iraq-related operations inside and outside the war-torn country but it has so far received only US\$134 million. It is now appealing for US\$127 million"

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 10 February 2008:

"With no end in sight for the plight of Iraqis displaced in and outside their country, a comprehensive, long-term government policy and budget to assist them is urgently required, an Iraqi parliamentary committee said on 9 February. We believe that occasional financial support given by the government, national and international organisations is not enough to solve this problem," said MP Abdul-Khaliq Zankana, head of parliament's Displacement and Migration Committee. So the government has to adopt a fixed, clear and comprehensive policy that leads to an assigned budget as this problem [displacement] is unlikely to be solved in months or even years," Zankana told IRIN. Zankana proposed that the government should take advantage of an increase in national oil output and soaring world oil prices by allocating a percentage of oil revenues for a budget for aiding the displaced. We propose 3 to 5 percent of national oil revenues should be allocated to this problem as they [displaced families] have become not only a burden on the Iraqi government but on all host countries as well," he said. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 24 January 2008

"Another tranche of 350 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$290,000) has been allocated by the Iraqi parliament to cope with the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), a lawmaker said on 23 January. This amount will help displaced families living in makeshift camps and compounds which, for many reasons, did not receive enough aid from government and non-governmental organisations [NGOs], Abdul-Khaliq Zankana, head of parliament's displacement committee, told IRIN. A plan for using this money has not been drawn up yet as the committee members are trying to determine how to help these most needy families in such compounds, either by giving them cash or by buying materials," Zankana said. On 6 December parliament allocated 500 million Iraqi dinars (about \$410,000) to help the IDPs. The money had been earmarked from unused attendance allowances for MPs. The parliamentary displacement committee was planning to use the money to buy food, blankets, hygiene kits and clothes, especially for children."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 12 December 2007:

"The Iraqi parliament decided on 6 December to allocate 500 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$410,000) to help displaced families nationwide. The money is unused attendance allowances for members of parliament (MPs), explained Speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani. "This is a preliminary payment and will be followed by more. The money has already been sent to parliament's displacement committee to distribute," al-Mashhadani said. In a bid to curb frequent absences of its members, Iraq's 275 MPs decided to recycle unused attendance allowances in this way. The displacement committee said it would use the money to buy food, blankets, hygiene kits and clothes, especially for children, and other essentials which will be distributed to internally displaced persons (IDPs). "It has become very hard for the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to meet the increasing needs of these [displaced] families and especially those who are living in camps and abandoned government buildings," said MP Abdul-Hadi Mohammed. "Most of these families are living in harsh conditions and need every penny, especially those who have children or chronic diseases," Mohammed said. He said it had become hard to determine how much money these families needed each month as their numbers were increasing. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 31 December 2007:

"Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has ordered financial support for all Kurdish families driven from their homes in Iraq's northern semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan in the wake of Turkish bombardments on rebel hideouts, his office said on 30 December. "The prime minister has ordered the formation of a committee to visit these families and pay one million Iraqi dinars (about US\$830) to every Kurdish family displaced by Turkish bombings," the statement issued by al-Maliki's office said. The statement did not say how many families have been displaced, but said the aid would be distributed in coordination with the local Kurdish authorities. According to Hamza Hamid Mohammed, a spokesman for the Kurdistan Regional Government in Arbil, only 450 families out of about 700 displaced families who have fled their border villages since 16 December, have received financial support. Others will receive it in the coming days. "

National Policies regarding Displacement, Evictions & Returns

- The Iraqi government has adopted a number of measures aimed at addressing internally displaced as well as encouraging the return IDPs and refugees to their homes. Observers have generally noted on the ad hoc nature in which policies have been developed and are implemented, and the lack of consistency in application.
- In July 2008, the National IDP policy was launched in the first national conference to address displacement. An agenda on implementation of the national IDP policy is currently being developed. (IDP WG, November 2008; UNCHR, September 2008)
- In mid 2008, the prime ministerial office issued order 101 which stipulates the establishment of return centres to manage return and provide necessary support and assistance to returning IDPs and refugees including recovery and reconstruction.
- The order also foresees the evictions of second occupants of private properties, with compensation. A similar evictions order on public property was issued earlier in 2008 but reportedly its application has been placed on hold. (IRIN, 2008)
- In July 2008, the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers issued decree 262 which extends IDPs assistance and incentives provided to secondary occupants, IDPs and returnees.
- Concern is voiced that the assistance provided is not sufficient to address the needs of IDPs and not consistently applied, that evictions are entailing secondary displacement, and that incentives to return need be more cautious in light of the situation prevailing in Iraq. (IDP WG, November 2008; IRIN,)

- In February 2008, MoM also laid out plans to build a yet undetermined number of residential compounds nationwide for IDPs. NGOs have welcomed the step but have noted the need to ensure suitability of these housing for needs of displaced, and cautioned against sectarian divide. (IRIN, February 2008)
- Policies remain presently applied in ad hoc manner throughout the country at provincial levels. At same time different policies are being applied to address needs of IDPs through provision of assistance, and shelter.

IDP Working Group, 26 November 2008:

"The *First National Conference to Address Displacement* took place in Baghdad from 8 to 9 July 2008. The Conference was chaired by the Minister of Displacement and Migration and was supported by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), through funding by the Australian Government.

- The event brought together a large number of different stakeholders including: high-ranking officials, representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the Government of Iraq (GoI), the Iraqi Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the various diplomatic missions accredited to Baghdad and those from the numerous national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the region, Governors, Governorate Councils, religious and tribal leaders, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the media.

- The main purpose of the Conference was to launch the *National Policy on Internal Displacement* which was prepared by the MoDM and the KRG, with the support of UNHCR, International Medical Corps (IMC) and other agencies and non- governmental organizations, including Sector Outcome Teams. The Policy was also previously endorsed by the Council of Ministers with the request of incorporating more Iraqi-related technical and legal aspects. Together with the National Policy, a draft work plan was prepared and distributed to all Conference participants to guide the implementation of the National Policy.

The National Policy itself describes the rights and the needs of the newly displaced families inside Iraq and together with the draft work plan provides a framework to respond to their needs during emergencies, displacement and durable solutions phase, It also outlines the need for coordination and cooperation between the different Ministries and the international community to facilitate their durable solutions.

- Participants from different quarters highlighted the need for more resources for IDPs, not only for those displaced post-February 2006, access to assistance for unregistered IDPs, access to PDS during displacement; some stressed the need for increased security and the creation of employment opportunities for IDPs. To further advance the implementation of the National Policy, four Working Groups were established and were tasked to come up with recommendations on the following four topics

- *Working Group 1: Internally displaced persons post 2003 – Emergency preparedness and responses*

- *Working Group 2: Loss of property, assets and damaged housing (post 2003)*

- *Working Group 3: Looking for durable solutions of IDPs*

- *Working Group 4: Iraqis abroad*

There was agreement that the National Policy and the draft work plan provide the basis for addressing the needs of IDPs and returnees and that they now need to be implemented through the various Ministries and institutions at central, regional and local levels. The next steps will include the follow-up of issues to be addressed at central level as well as the development of concrete work plans at Governorate level."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), September 2008:

"July 8th and 9th, MoDM held the National Conference on Iraq's National Policy on Displacement. Some 300 participants attended, representing the central Government, Parliamentarians, Governorates, Municipalities, national/international NGOs, UN Agencies, ICRC and Diplomatic Missions. Key recommendations from the Conference:

- Urgent need to apply the positive principles and recommendations of the policy by the Central Government
- Provision of grants to all displaced families (so far some 140,000 families received 120 US\$ for 6 months' period; an additional 80,000 families in Central South and 35,000 families in KRG will be included under the latest budget)
- Minister agreed to carry out registration of unregistered IDPs - this problem is particularly serious in Kerbala with an estimated 5,000 - 7,000 unregistered IDP families
- Many Governors, Deputy Governors and Sheikhs highlighted the social burden of hosting IDPs and suggested that they should be returned to their places of origin, even involuntarily. It was suggested that dedicated budgetary allocations should be provided to Governorates hosting IDPs. This would ease the pressure and the call for involuntary returns
- More rigorous application of existing compensations laws - for property loss/damage before 2003 and for personal sufferings - death, injuries. The need for a property compensation law was emphasized by many participants. "

IDP Working Group, 26 November 2008:

"The PM Office issued Order No. 101 which stipulates the establishment of a Return Cell (Centres) as an implementation arm to manage the return and provide the necessary support and assistance to returning IDPs and refugees, including on property recovery and reconstruction. Two Centres are now operational in Baghdad (Al-Resafa – return/property, Al-Karkh - property).

- The Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri Al-Maliki, gave a one month ultimatum, beginning on 1 August, for all individuals occupying the houses of displaced persons, to vacate them. Anyone who does not conform to the order will be evicted. (*See Order No. 101 issued on 01.09.2008*)
- The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers issued Decree No. 262 (17 July 2008) – extending the IDP assistance scheme to the caseload that has not yet received it."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 20 July 2008:

"The Iraqi government has adopted a number of measures aimed at encouraging the return of over four million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to their homes, a government statement has said. The most significant measure is the one-off payment of 1.8 million Iraqi dinars (about US\$1,500) to families who are illegally occupying the houses of other displaced families from a different sect and who want to return to their homes, [the statement said on 16 July](#). The aim is to help those families to rent other places, the statement said. All IDPs or refugees willing to return to their houses will be paid one million Iraqi dinars (about \$840), it said. Another measure stipulates an additional monthly payment of 150,000 Iraqi dinars (about \$145) to each internally displaced family which has not yet returned to its home. The payment will be for three months while the family is still displaced. Other measures include helping Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries with free airline tickets if they choose to return home, the free shipment of their belongings, and compensation for damaged property. These decisions are designed to facilitate and expedite the return of displaced families to their houses to boost the peaceful coexistence among Iraq's different components in mixed areas," the statement said.... Adil Muhsin al-Baghdadi, a Baghdad-based analyst, said the government move was a positive one aimed at ending the displacement problem. The government has achieved some security gains and wants to maintain them especially with regards to the displacement problem," al-Baghdadi, who runs the independent Hiwar Research Centre, said. But, of course, this will not

end the displacement problem as its roots lie in political infighting, but at least it will be a positive factor, he added. "

Reuters, 22 June 2008:

"Iraqi security forces will announce a deadline next month for squatters to get out or be evicted from homes of people forced to flee sectarian violence in Baghdad, a military spokesman said on Sunday. Major-General Qassim Moussawi, spokesman for the Iraqi military in Baghdad, said kicking out squatters to allow refugees to return was vital to restoring security in the capital. "Next month, God willing, we will announce a final deadline to clear out the occupants (in Baghdad), otherwise the security forces will raid those occupied houses and evacuate them at once," Moussawi told a news conference in Baghdad. "The return of all displaced families is essential to the Baghdad security plan," Moussawi said. "It was one of the aims of terrorists ... to divide Baghdad into sectarian districts." UNHCR said this month that as many as 70 percent of would-be returnees to Iraq had been unable to resettle in their own homes for various reasons, including a lack of services. Some homes have been occupied, while others were destroyed, aid workers say. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 27 July 2008:

"A provincial investigative committee in the southern Iraqi city of Najaf is to go check the files of more than 200 displaced families living in a camp outside the city to determine who are genuinely displaced and who are not, an official said on 26 July. Mashkour al-Mousawi, director of the Ministry of Displacement and Migration's Najaf province branch, added that the committee will expel from the camp those families claiming to be displaced and will encourage the return of some genuine internally displaced persons (IDPs) to areas now deemed safer for them to return to....Once news of the governmental committee reached the desert camp, displaced families began a protest on 25 July, fearing that local authorities would close the camp."

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 March 2008:

"As Iraq's displacement problem continues to grow, representatives of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on 15 March warned that government plans to build residential compounds for internally displaced persons (IDPs) should neither be sectarian nor permanent. Basil al-Azawi, head of the Iraqi Commission for Civil Society Enterprises (ICCSE), a coalition of over 1,000 Iraqi NGOs, said that plans by Iraq's Displacement and Migration Ministry to build compounds for IDPs were a step in the right direction, but warned that they should not become permanent solutions. There are now more than two million internally displaced persons in the country, with the majority still living in camps. There must be suitable places for them to live with good sanitation, electricity and other services! until they can get back to their normal lives, al-Azawi told IRIN, adding that tents did not meet the minimum standards required for IDPs. But these places [such as compounds] should be temporary and should not end up as sectarian residential areas. The government must not forget that the only solution for their problem is a political one to achieve reconciliation, al-Azawi told IRIN. On 6 February, Iraq's displacement ministry announced it was planning to build a number of residential compounds nationwide for IDPs. With 50 buildings per compound, and six apartments per building, each compound is expected to house 300 displaced families. The exact number of compounds to be built is still not finalised as the displacement ministry is in talks with Iraqi and Arab banks to fund the project. Although the project is still on the drawing board, on 12 March officials from the displacement ministry laid the cornerstone of a compound in Missan city, about 350km south of Baghdad. The compound will cost US\$5 million and will be built on 20 acres of land. This step is clear proof that the government is dealing with the displacement problem but also that it is not solving it as it does not get to the bottom of the problem, Tawfiq Mutaz Hassan, a sociology professor at Babil University, said. These compounds will entrench what others are promoting: neighbourhoods and areas divided according to sect and then the country's whole demography will be changed, he added. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 6 February 2008:

"The Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration is planning to build a yet undetermined number of residential compounds nationwide to ease the problems faced by over two million internally displaced persons (IDPs), a ministry official said on 6 February. We are still at the drawing-board phase for residential compounds to be built over 50,000 square metres, scattered nationwide, said Ali Shaalan, head of the Ministry's Planning Directorate. We expect to complete this phase in about a month. So far we've managed to buy land in only seven provinces, including Missan, Karbala, Basra and Thi Qar; we are planning to buy more land nationwide, Shaalan told IRIN, adding that the precise number of compounds to be built would be determined as soon as it was clear how much funding and land would be available. Shaalan said his ministry was planning to approach Iraqi and Arab banks to get funds for the project. According to Shaalan, each residential compound will have 50 buildings and each building will have six apartments – allowing some 300 IDP families per compound the opportunity to purchase a unit. Schools, markets, mosques, electricity and water plants, and other facilities will be built in each compound. We are planning that the IDP families pay in instalments for maybe 20-30 years, said Shaalan who estimated the cost of each compound at about US\$12 million. So far, it has not been determined which displaced families will have priority in occupying these compounds but Shaalan said his Ministry's plan will not change the demography of any province. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 27 January 2008:

"The Iraqi Ministry of Defence has given about 300 internally displaced persons (IDPs) one week to evacuate a former military compound in Babil Province, about 100km south of the capital, Baghdad, officials said on 25 January. "Representatives of about 45 displaced families last week appealed to the Iraqi parliament for help to persuade the defence ministry to postpone its decision," Abdul-Khaleq Zankana, head of parliament's displacement committee, told IRIN, adding that the Iraqi army intended to reuse the compound as a military base. Zankana said his committee had been in discussions with US-led forces, the Iraqi defence ministry and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in an attempt to reverse the decision. "Nothing yet has been achieved to solve this problem but we are against displacing these families again and increasing their daily suffering," Zankana said. Al-Zubaidi added that a provincial committee had been formed to find a solution for these families; either by re-housing them in an abandoned government building or by erecting a new camp for them. "But most probably we will get a piece of land in the suburbs [of Hilla] from the city's municipality to erect more than 100 tents for them and supply them with food and non-food items," al-Zubaidi said. "It is indeed a problem. It will be difficult for us to erect a camp in four or five days as we are in winter and it is raining nowadays. Because of that we need more time." When contacted, the Iraqi defence ministry refused to comment on the issue. "

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 16 January 2008:

"Local authorities in Kerbala, a southern province of Iraq about 120km south of the capital, Baghdad, have destroyed thousands of hectares of agricultural land, putting dozens of peasant families at risk of being displaced, according to residents. "The farmers had been warned since last September to leave their farmland as plans have been drawn up by local authorities to turn the area into a residential one for the families of victims of the previous regime," Amal al-Hir, head of Kerbala Agricultural Directorate, said. According to al-Hir, the late former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in 1991 granted 10-year contracts to peasant farmers in a desert area that he designated as a new green"

International Response: Response of United Nations to Situation of Iraq:

- Following the destruction of the Canal Hotel in 2003, the U.N. responded to the bombing and by suspending programs and withdrawing staff from Iraq, effectively cutting off any

meaningful assistance to a population (FIC, July 2007) U.N. would eventually re-establish a limited presence in Iraq but only by effectively embedding itself with coalition forces. UNICEF and UNHCR made efforts to keep programs operating through local networks and partner organizations. IOM established similar networks for monitoring needs and assisting. (FIC, July 2007)

- The UNSC Resolution 1546 of June 2004, formalized the reliance of the entire U.N. system - making no distinction between UNAMI and the various members of the UNCT - in Iraq on the MNF. (FIC, July 2007) Resolution 1546 effectively shackled and subordinated the U.N.'s humanitarian role to the fortunes or misfortunes of the MNF and to UNAMI's political role in facilitating the transition of Iraq away from occupation. (FIC, July 2007)
- UNSC Resolution 1770 (2007), would recognise the humanitarian crisis to which existing UN structure had been slow to respond to and broadened the responsibilities of the four-year-old Mission, authorized the head of UNAMI to "advise, support and assist" the Iraqi Government in advancing an "inclusive, national dialogue and political reconciliation", (RI, April 2008)
- This would follow suit in late 2007 to 2008, with restructuring of UN coordinated response to the humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian issues were mainstreamed in revised UN response structure under SOTs. The first CAP launched in early 2008 and Regional CAP launched in December 2008, revealed UN's revised attention to the situation. (RI, April 2008; Brookings August 2008)
- Many criticize the Amman based decision-making process that often seems disconnected from the reality of Iraq. However, despite the commonly-held perception of a UN presence only in northern Iraq and the international zone, many UN agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM) operate throughout Iraq with local staff and partners. International presence has also been expanding in selected areas with security provided by MNF (UNAMI, November 2008; RI, April 2008)
- There has nevertheless been criticism regarding the lack of appropriate response and capacity to address the situation, parallel and contradictory coordination mechanisms, and overt reliance on MNF to detriment of UN credibility. The lack of an appropriate government response and the central role armed groups now have in assisting vulnerable Iraqis make it more urgent than ever for the UN to take a much stronger humanitarian role in Iraq. The humanitarian imperative is real. (RI, April 2008)

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 6 November 2008:

"23. The United Nations Assistance Strategy for Iraq 2008-2010 was signed on 13 August by the Government of Iraq and the United Nations. Iraq had not endorsed a comprehensive cooperation framework with the United Nations on development and humanitarian issues since the mid-1990s. The Assistance Strategy, which focuses on mobilizing Iraq's own resources and building its capacity for good governance, provides a strong platform for aid harmonization, development sustainability and effectiveness. It is closely aligned with the Government's National Development Strategy and the International Compact with Iraq, and supports adherence to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, to which Iraq is now a signatory. Rather than focus on individual projects, the Assistance Strategy provides a comprehensive programme to support the Government's institutional development more effectively and enable improved budget execution and transparency, civil service reform, job creation within the private sector and improved social service delivery at the local level.

24. To realize the goals of the United Nations Assistance Strategy, the United Nations country team has accelerated the development of programmes utilizing the remaining funds of the United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund, which is one of the two funds of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq. Central to the United Nations engagement are three important large-scale crosssectoral initiatives budgeted at \$30 million apiece, for private sector development, public sector reform and decentralization of essential services. These programmes

are expected to deliver legislative, executive and field-level changes to Iraqi systems. The private sector development programme will reform Iraq's investment sector laws (banking and insurance), and when linked with small business development initiatives will spur job creation and local commerce. The public sector reform programme will strengthen anti-corruption and transparency initiatives for budget execution and lead to civil service reform. This in turn is closely linked to the decentralization programme, which will train and equip local governments to plan, fund and manage the delivery of social services to communities.

25. The Development Group Iraq Trust Fund continued to be the primary means of financing United Nations assistance to Iraq. As of 30 September 2008, the total commitments to the Trust Fund equalled \$1.36 billion and total deposits equalled \$1.32 billion. Some 141 projects and joint programmes valued at \$1.11 billion were approved for funding, as of 30 September 2008. In addition, to ensure transparency, monthly financial updates are made available on the website of the Reconstruction Fund Facility. During the reporting period, the Donor Committee of the Reconstruction Fund Facility agreed to allocate up to \$20 million from the Trust Fund for humanitarian assistance and to support internally displaced persons. The Trust Fund Steering Committee will approve the use of the funds through the Expanded Emergency Response Fund to ensure that timely humanitarian assistance can reach vulnerable populations and promote an improved alignment in the relationship between humanitarian and development assistance.

28. An expanded international presence in Iraq is critical to sustain and accelerate these initiatives, both in Baghdad and at the governorate level. The World Food Programme (WFP) has joined the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in establishing a permanent international presence in Baghdad, while other agencies are present on a rotating basis. Field coordination has also been enhanced by international staff of UNAMI and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Basra and Erbil. As part of the United Nations plan to increase its support throughout Iraq, missions of the United Nations country team led by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General visited Najaf in August and the Kurdistan Regional Government on 12 October to present the United Nations Assistance Strategy and establish the basis for an enhanced presence in these locations.

29. These developments are also underpinned by stronger evidence and information analysis to align the relationship between developmental and humanitarian priorities. To guide programme strategies, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNAMI have provided the core staffing of an information analysis unit, an inter-agency coordination mechanism. The unit is tasked to compile and analyse sectoral development and humanitarian data as well as mapping United Nations and other projects and spending in Iraq against identified areas of need. The unit can potentially inform political initiatives within UNAMI by adding a more substantive socio-economic analysis than has been available to date.

36. Humanitarian assistance for Iraqis in general increased during the third quarter of 2008 with the pledging of new funds in response to the 2008 consolidated appeal. Of the \$267 million appeal, 55 per cent is now funded. The planning for the 2009 appeal is well advanced; its strategy will be to capitalize on increased access to address urgent and long-standing humanitarian needs. It will also, for the first time, streamline Iraq's internal and refugee-linked humanitarian needs into a single appeal to provide a coherent overview of the humanitarian priorities, and create a stronger subregional platform to assist affected Governments. The appeal will be based on two complementary pillars: the first, addressing the needs of vulnerable populations inside Iraq, is led by the Humanitarian Coordinator with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; the second, concerning protection and assistance for Iraqi refugees, is led by UNHCR with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

39. New national survey data now being finalized by WFP suggest that access to social services in Iraq, including electricity supply, has improved from its lowest levels in 2005 and 2006. Initial analysis suggests that food insecurity has also fallen to a quarter of 2005 levels. However, UNICEF humanitarian assessments in August and September confirmed that State services are still struggling in the most vulnerable parts of Iraq. Access to safe drinking water has fallen to as low as 31 per cent in the poorest subdistricts, and access to sanitation services to 35 per cent. In poor subdistricts of Baghdad, as few as 18 per cent of children aged 1 to 5 years were found to be immunized against measles. Across parts of Al-Anbar, Babil and Basra, fewer than 60 per cent of children aged 6 to 11 had regularly attended school in the past two school months. In many of these governorates, over 30 per cent of primary schools operate two or more shifts per day."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), September 2008:

"In 2007 UNHCR commitment to humanitarian responses to internally displaced has mainly focused on protection, provision of Non-Food items to meet household needs, shelter assistance, community-based projects and national capacity building, with a total budget of **\$26.7 Million**. In 2007, UNHCR carried out the following activities:

- distribution of shelter kits and NFI packages along with hygiene kits and sanitary items for **181,172** IDPs and returnees;
- community based projects: rehabilitating infrastructures and aiming at creating income generation opportunities and increasing communities absorption capacity; have benefitted **134,778** IDPs, as well as their host communities nationwide;
- through an expanded network of Protection and Assistance Centers (PACs) throughout Iraq's 18 Governorates, advisory services with access to justice, due process of law, employment, access to education and other vital services were provided to **39,717** IDPs;
- **19,215** refugees were provided with NFI packages, **18,808** were regularly provided with water and Kerosene, **4,835** refugees benefitted from health care services, **797** from HIV/AIDs awareness sessions and **2,088** benefitted from income-generation projects.

In 2008 UNHCR Iraq Operation budget is USD **44.5 Million**. Programming of interventions has allocated 70% of the overall Iraq Operation budget to IDPs & Returnees, 20% for refugees and 10% for operational support. The financial increase of the Iraq Operation budget from 2007 to 2008 has been almost completely absorbed by the upgrade of IDP and returnee responses. The 2008 Programme therefore greatly expands IDP and returnee assistance respectively to 350,000 and 60,000 beneficiaries with stockpiling for emergency response preparedness of 100,000 beneficiaries. Activities are designed to:

- enable basic survival through emergency distributions of shelter kits and NFI packages (58% of the IDP budget);
- improve living conditions in impacted communities (community-based projects targeting primarily water & sanitation, health and emergency education in order to improve access to basic services and increase the absorption capacity of host communities (20% of the IDP budget);
- protection of legal and physical safety through Protection and Assistance Centers (PACs) (22% of the IDP budget);
- provide protection, basic assistance to vulnerable refugees and continue endeavors for viable durable solutions.

On the return front, as part of the 2007-2008 joint UN/Gol Rapid Response Plan (RRP), UNHCR has set a target of **10,000 returnee families** with a budget of **\$9.5 million**. UNHCR is engaged in delivering basic NFIs, shelter and protection monitoring services to vulnerable returnees inside Iraq. Complementary to UNHCR's conduct of rapid assessments to establish figures and trends in consultations with MoDM and IOM, UNHCR is assisting MoDM in establishing mobile teams for returnee registration. UNHCR is leading with MoDM and with the participation of IOM and IMC

(International Medical Corps) the preparation of a comprehensive return assessment to be conducted throughout Iraq in 2008 in order to ascertain the existence of conditions conducive to return, returnee needs and the obstacles to be removed for the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees."

Refugees International (RI), April 2008:

"The lack of an appropriate government response and the central role armed groups now have in assisting vulnerable Iraqis make it more urgent than ever for the UN to take a much stronger humanitarian role in Iraq. The humanitarian imperative is real. The security implications of a failure to act are increasingly real as well. Unlike in south Lebanon and Gaza where it has failed to act in time, the international community must step in to fill the vacuum created by the absence of the state. The window of opportunity to do that in Iraq is rapidly closing. Since this is unlikely to change, the UN has no choice but to work within the framework it has been given. The opening of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Amman, as well as the appointment of David Shearer, a man of great humanitarian experience, as deputy SRSG of UNA MI are positive signs and point to a shift in the UN mentality in Iraq. UN staff in the region are determined to give humanitarian issues the attention they deserve. The ceiling of UN international staff allowed in Iraq at any one moment remains at 35, a low number. Many criticize the Amman-based decision-making process that often seems disconnected from the reality of Iraq. However, despite the commonly-held perception of a UN presence only in northern Iraq and the international zone, many UN agencies operate throughout Iraq with local staff and partners. Indeed, UNICEF has over 100 local staff and facilitators throughout the country who work on both rehabilitation and humanitarian projects. The UN Refugee Agency (UN HCR) operates fourteen low-profile Protection and Assistance Centers (PACS) throughout Iraq, and has six mobile teams as well. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) — the main international agency dealing with the internally displaced — has forty NGO partners and is able to operate throughout Iraq and respond to any situation. Despite IOM's record in Iraq however, only 25 million out of its two-year 85 million dollar appeal has been funded. To address funding issues and to build on recent initiatives, the UN issued its first Common Appeal Process (CAP) for Iraq in February 2008. UN agencies, as well as international and local NGOs, devised a document that established who is doing what where, and defined the needed financial resources. This resulted in a 263 million dollar appeal to respond to humanitarian needs in Iraq. This is a key development, as this appeal sends a strong signal to the international community and the Government of Iraq that the UN considers a grave humanitarian crisis to be developing in the country.....

Still, the CAP comes at a time where there is a window of opportunity for international actors wanting to operate in Iraq. The Sunni and Shiite ceasefires increased the humanitarian space available in Iraq. Iraqis are able to move with greater freedom than they had in much of 2007 and checkpoints, though numerous, are less dangerous. Additionally, as militias and warlords have consolidated control over territory, there is now somebody in a position of power to deal with in many areas of Iraq. As in Somalia, Afghanistan, Lebanon and other recent conflicts in which warlords, militias and other non-state actors play a role, humanitarian actors can now identify local non-state power brokers with whom arrangements can be made and security guarantees provided so that aid can reach the communities in need. This is an important development but it requires a paradigm shift in the way the UN and other international NGOs operate in Iraq. Not only would this allow for increased humanitarian assistance to reach Iraq's most vulnerable, it would also undermine the quasi-monopoly armed groups currently hold."

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"1..While the U.N. is seen in many parts of the world as an idealistic, neutral organization, it has a different reputation in Iraq. The long years of U.N. sanctions which reportedly resulted in widespread civilian casualties were tremendously unpopular among Iraqis. The widespread

corruption in the U.N.'s Oil for Food program was well-known in Iraq and there was a perception that U.N. officials were enriching themselves with Iraqi resources. Finally, the weapons inspections were perceived as a humiliating exercise for Iraq. In other words, even in the best of circumstances the U.N. would face an uphill battle in re-establishing its credibility among the Iraqi public. And these are far from the best of circumstances.

2. The U.N. is further hampered by the legacy of the August 2003 bombing of its headquarters in Iraq and the death of its well-respected official, Sergio Vieira de Mello along with 21 other U.N. staff. Not only did the U.N. immediately withdraw its personnel from Iraq, but it instituted wide-ranging changes in its internal security system which limits its ability to travel to dangerous areas. (In fact, some argue that the greatest impediment to U.N. access to humanitarian situations is its own internal security guidelines.) Moreover, the U.N. Staff Association has come out strongly against deployment of U.N. personnel to Iraq in light of the security threats.

3. Of particular concern in the U.N. resolution, is the recognition of the "important role of the Multi-National Force Iraq in supporting UNAMI, including security and logistical support..." Security for humanitarian work may well be the Achilles heel of U.N. efforts to play a more active role in Iraq. When U.N. staff arrive in communities accompanied by U.S. or MNF-I forces, their neutrality is immediately compromised. It is in U.S. interests that U.N. agencies operate independently and that they are perceived as independent actors. If the U.S. sees the U.N. as its agent or ally, the U.N. will not be able to act effectively. The U.S. needs to give the U.N. its humanitarian space and to distance itself from U.N. operations. And yet the absence of alternative providers of security for U.N. operations limits both U.N. and U.S. options.

In addition to these particular challenges, the U.N. will have to overcome the same kinds of difficulties it does in other situations in which it is tasked with delivering humanitarian assistance and in eventually coordinating the return of refugees and IDPs. In order for the U.N. to surmount these difficulties and regain its lost credibility, it will have to perform well and to deliver assistance quickly and effectively. But the reality is that its ability to do so is dependent on factors largely outside its control. For example, while the return of refugees and IDPs will be an important factor in Iraq's eventual recovery, this will depend more on the security situation inside the country than on U.N. programs to support return."

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008:

Within the UN system the UN Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible for ensuring greater adherence to MCDA Guidelines & other relevant policy & guidance. In support of this role, UN OCHA normally deploys civil-military coordination (UN-CMCoord) officers who, in theory, work to ensure familiarity and compliance with the guidelines from a humanitarian perspective. UN-CMCoord officers also serve as liaisons and troubleshooters with military forces for the humanitarian community, providing a conduit for concerns, complaints, and information essential to humanitarian operations. Dire threats to humanitarian space in Iraq and the particular actors involved necessitate a much more assertive stance, at a higher policy level, than the UN has been willing to support, reflecting ongoing reticence in the UN to take a proactive stand to safeguard humanitarian space. In contrast to the period during and immediately after the US-led invasion, this stewardship role has been a low priority or has been disregarded since 2003, partially because the UN's presence, mobility and security in Iraq is formally tied to the MNF-I by UN Security Council Resolutions 1546 and 1770. In the absence of forthright UN humanitarian diplomacy on the issue, others in the humanitarian and donor communities have the option of assuming a greater and more vocal role, in keeping with positions laid out by the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), and donor undertakings elaborated in the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship.

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 10 August 2007:

Approving a 12-month mandate extension for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the Security Council today expanded the world body's political role in Iraq, aimed at bringing together the strife-torn country's rival factions, gaining broader support from neighbouring countries, and tackling the deepening humanitarian crisis. Unanimously adopting resolution 1770 (2007), the Council broadened the responsibilities of the four-year-old Mission, whose existing mandate expires today. Among other things, the measure authorized the head of UNAMI to "advise, support and assist" the Iraqi Government in advancing an "inclusive, national dialogue and political reconciliation", reviewing the Constitution, setting internal boundaries, and dealing with the millions of Iraqis who have fled their homes.

.....The United Nations would be increasing its role and looked forward to working in "close partnership" with the Iraqi Government and people to encourage national political dialogue, help with humanitarian assistance and promote human rights.The resolution -- co-sponsored by the United Kingdom, United States, Italy and Slovakia -- underscored the need for all communities in Iraq to reject sectarianism and to participate in political processes "for the sake of Iraq's political stability and unity". It authorized the Special Representative of the Secretary-General -- the head of UNAMI and the top United Nations official in Iraq -- to help the Government and relevant institutions develop processes for holding elections and referendums. It further expanded the Special Representative's role to bolster regional dialogue, including on issues of border security, energy and refugees.

According to the text, the Council expressed its concern for the humanitarian situation in Iraq and stressed the need for a coordinated response. Under its new mandate, UNAMI could now "promote, support and facilitate", in coordination with the Government, the management and implementation of programmes to improve Iraq's ability to provide essential services for its people, as well as on economic reform and capacity-building. The Mission would also help with the safe, orderly and voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons, and the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance. "

United Nations Security Council (UN SC), 10 August 2007:

"Recalling all its previous relevant resolutions on Iraq, in particular 1500 (2003) of 14 August 2003, 1546 (2004) of 8 June 2004, 1557 (2004) of 12 August 2004, 1619 (2005) of 11 August 2005 and 1700 (2006) of 10 August 2006,... *Reaffirming* the importance of the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in supporting the efforts of the Iraqi people and Government to strengthen institutions for representative government, promote political dialogue and national reconciliation, engage neighbouring countries, assist vulnerable groups, including refugees and internally displaced persons, and promote the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform,

Expressing concern for the humanitarian issues confronting the Iraqi people and stressing the need for a coordinated response and adequate resources to address these issues, *Decides* to extend the mandate of UNAMI for another period of twelve months from the date of this resolution;

2. *Decides further* that, as circumstances permit, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMI, at the request of the Government of Iraq, shall:

(a) Advise, support, and assist: (i) The Government and people of Iraq on advancing their inclusive, political dialogue and national reconciliation; (ii) The Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission on the development of processes for holding elections and referendums; (iii) The Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives on Constitutional review and the implementation of constitutional provisions, as well as on the development of processes acceptable to the Government of Iraq to resolve disputed internal

boundaries; (iv) The Government of Iraq on facilitating regional dialogue, including on issues of border security, energy, and refugees; (v) The Government of Iraq at an appropriate time and in connection with progress on reconciliation efforts, on planning, funding and implementing reintegration programmes for former members of illegal armed groups; (vi) The Government of Iraq on initial planning for the conduct of a comprehensive census;

(b) Promote, support, and facilitate, in coordination with the Government of Iraq: (i) The coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance and the safe, orderly, and voluntary return, as appropriate, of refugees and displaced persons; (ii) The implementation of the International Compact with Iraq, including coordination with donors and international financial institutions; (iii) The coordination and implementation of programmes to improve Iraq's capacity to provide essential services for its people and continue active donor coordination of critical reconstruction and assistance programmes through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI); (iv) Economic reform, capacity-building and the conditions for sustainable development, including through coordination with national and regional organizations and, as appropriate, civil society, donors, and international financial institutions; (v) The development of effective civil, social and essential services, including through training and conferences in Iraq when possible; (vi) The contributions of United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes to the objectives outlined in this resolution under a unified leadership of the Secretary-General through his Special Representative for Iraq; (c) And also promote the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform in order to strengthen the rule of law in Iraq;

3. *Recognizes* the important role of the Multi-National Force Iraq (MNF-I) in supporting UNAMI, including security and logistical support, and further recognizes that security is essential for UNAMI to carry out its work on behalf of the people of Iraq;"

Feinstein International Center (FIC), 2 July 2007:

"Following the destruction of the Canal Hotel and the loss of 22 U.N. and NGO staff, the Security Council passed Resolution 1502, which characterized the attack on the U.N. as a violation of international humanitarian law. The U.N. responded to the bombing and a subsequent smaller attack by suspending programs and withdrawing staff from Iraq, effectively cutting off any meaningful assistance to a population suffering ever more acutely as living conditions in Iraq deteriorated. Some NGOs followed suit, but others stayed on to continue programs in lower profile. As for the U.N., it would eventually re-establish a limited presence in Iraq but only by effectively embedding itself with coalition forces. UNICEF and UNHCR made efforts to keep programs operating through networks of home-based local staff and local partner organizations. IOM, a partner of UNHCR, established similar networks for monitoring needs and assisting where possible. At the strategic policy level of the U.N.'s humanitarian posture in Iraq, the implications of the terrorism - counterterrorism mix have been profound. As we noted in the preliminary report of the HA 2015 project: "Placing a function that draws its legitimacy from the U.N. Charter (or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) within a management structure borne of political compromise in the Security Council is questionable and possibly self-defeating". The experience of Iraq puts the political/humanitarian tension in sharp relief. With UNSC Resolution 1546 of June 2004, U.N. humanitarian agencies had their security and coordination arrangements with a belligerent or occupying force dictated by the Security Council. Making no distinction between UNAMI and the various members of the UNCT, Resolution 1546 formalized the reliance of the entire U.N. system in Iraq on the MNF. At least five factors combined to produce this result. First, the U.N. system was still reeling from the shock of the Canal Hotel bombing of August 2003. Second, the U.N.'s security apparatus was in disarray: fallout from two investigations into causes and culpability in the bombing was still intense, and staff often reacted with paralysis. Third, the U.S. administration's justifications for the pre-emptive invasion of Iraq had not yet been fully

discredited, and misplaced optimism prevailed regarding the chances that the U.S.-led coalition could keep Iraq minimally stable and governable. Fourth, extreme pressure to step up U.N. activity in Iraq was being brought to bear on the Secretariat, and on Kofi Annan himself, by the U.S. Fifth, U.N. staff associations in New York were voicing harsh objections to any further U.N. presence in Iraq and were insisting on a zero-risk environment.

Now western leaders have appropriated the rhetoric of humanitarian intervention as part of the military lexicon: tough on terrorism and tough on the causes of terrorism. Poverty and injustice are recognized as factors that nurture terrorism. From there the Bush administration took a major leap to the assertion that U.S. NGOs should consider themselves a branch of the government's anti-terror effort. The consequences of this approach are obvious—NGOs are associated with U.S. military policy, and where that fails, so does the humanitarian effort. Resolution 1546 effectively shackled and subordinated the U.N.'s humanitarian role to the fortunes or misfortunes of the MNF and to UNAMI's political role in facilitating the transition of Iraq away from occupation.²⁵ It also set the stage for the use of coalition forces—widely perceived as unfriendly belligerents by many Iraqis—for humanitarian efforts as an expedient of first resort, rather than as an option of last resort in accordance with international U.N. guidelines which coalition governments had themselves helped to draft prior to the invasion.²⁶ The Resolution "...Requests Member States and international and regional organizations to contribute assistance to the multinational force, including military forces, as agreed with the Government of Iraq, to help meet the needs of the Iraqi people for security and stability, humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, and to support the efforts of UNAMI." Importantly, the Resolution appropriated the language of the "Global War on Terror" in its description of armed groups not somehow affiliated with the MNF or the new government installed by the occupation. There was no recognition in the Resolution that several different insurgencies were being waged against coalition forces by a wide variety of actors that could be discerned even in mid-2004. It made no distinction between the different armed actors hostile to the MNF and affiliated authorities: all were "terrorists". The new U.N. Strategic Framework for Humanitarian Action in Iraq²⁸, released in April 2007, has generally been received as an earnest attempt to re-assert the U.N.'s humanitarian role and to protect it against politicization. It also asserts a stronger coordinating and leadership role for the U.N.'s Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, in keeping with the U.N.'s humanitarian reform agenda. Early indications from the UNCT have suggested strong resistance from the headquarters of WFP, UNICEF and WHO to the Humanitarian Coordinator's enhanced role and the U.N.'s re-assertion of a more neutral and independent humanitarian posture.

Our evidence is mixed as to whether the U.N. has already crossed the point of no return in terms of its image and acceptance among Iraqis as a humanitarian actor. UNICEF, which continues to distribute some of its standard items marked with the UNICEF logo through the Iraqi Red Crescent, had relatively good name recognition among several of those whom we interviewed in Iraqi communities and appeared to be better known than most other organizations as an agency that did humanitarian work for children around the world.....It was evident from some of the comments heard in Iraqi communities that many were familiar with the humanitarian work of the U.N. in other countries through media exposure. But as one woman asked, "Where are they now?" The withdrawal of the U.N. following the Canal Hotel bombing is well-known in Iraq, as is the role of the U.N. in managing the sanctions regime. It would be a stretch to expect Iraqis to appreciate the inherent tensions that prevailed inside the U.N. system during the sanctions period and doubtful that many would remember two successive U.N. Humanitarian Coordinators and the head of WFP in Iraq quitting in protest over the sanctions and their harmful humanitarian effects.

See Also:

[Humanitarian briefing on the crisis in Iraq](#), United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), 2 May 2007

["Eyes Wide Shut"](#), Peter Harling and Joost Hiltermann in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, International Crisis Group (ICG), May 2007

[Human Rights Report: 1 January – 31 March 2007](#), **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, 25 April 2007

[Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to Paragraph 30 of Resolution 1546 \(2004\)](#), **United Nations Security Council (UN SC)**, 5 June 2007

[Chairman's Summary, International Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Needs of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons inside Iraq and in Neighbouring Countries, Geneva, 17-18 April 2007](#), **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, 18 April 2007

[Iraq: International conference crucial opportunity to galvanize support for Iraq's growing humanitarian needs, Secretary-General says in video message](#), **United Nations Secretary General (UN SG)**, 17 April 2007

[Guterres calls for sustained international humanitarian effort for Iraq](#), **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, 17 April 2007

[Secretary-General appoints David Shearer of New Zealand Deputy Special Representative for Iraq](#), **UN Secretary General (UNSG)**, 22 August 2007

[Iraq Conference: UNHCR convenes humanitarian conference on Iraqis forced from their homes](#), **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, 16 April 2007

[Humanitarian programme for internally displaced persons and host communities in Iraq receives new backing](#), **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, 13 April 2007

[Civilians without protection: The ever-worsening humanitarian crisis in Iraq](#), **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**, 11 April 2007

[Iraq conference next week](#), **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, 10 April 2007

[Strategic Framework for Humanitarian Action in Iraq](#), **United Nations and partners**, April 2007

Response of Regional & Bilateral Actors.

- The U.S. government has been the single biggest contributor of humanitarian assistance to displaced Iraqis since 2003 to funding multilateral aid organizations, subcontracting humanitarian relief activities and supporting Iraqi government, giving more than \$500 million humanitarian aid in total. (Brookings, August 2008)
- European Commission was slow to provide large amounts of humanitarian assistance for Iraqi refugees and IDPs. Pending approved budget for 2008, the EC will have provided a total of over €94 million in reconstruction assistance for displaced and €45.8 million in humanitarian assistance. (EC, September 2008; Brookings, August 2008)
- In contrast, according to the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. spends \$2.4 billion per week on the war effort in Iraq. U.S. military has also engaged in civic humanitarian, relief and reconstruction intended to support U.S. military 'hearts and minds' objectives including CERP, as well as PRTs which have appropriated funding in excess of 4.5 billion as of January 2008. (Brookings, August 2008; NCCI, January 2008)

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"U.S. policy towards the Iraqi displacement crisis primarily focuses on funding multilateral aid organizations, subcontracting humanitarian relief activities and supporting host governments. Ambassador James Foley understands the U.S.'s primary obligation to the displaced is to "provide assistance in place." USG contributions to humanitarian assistance have increased steadily over the past three years, but they should continue to increase at an even faster pace in order to meet urgent needs. The U.S. contributed \$43 million in FY 2006, \$171 million in FY 2007, and in FY 2008, as of April, \$208 million. U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) plan to spend about another \$70 million before October, bringing the projected contribution for FY 2008 to just over \$281 million. In contrast, according to the Congressional Research Service, the

U.S. spends \$2.4 billion per week on the war effort in Iraq. While there is no agreed-upon figure for what it would take to meet the needs of displaced Iraqis, a variety of human rights and humanitarian organizations have suggested much larger financial contributions from the U.S. to support humanitarian operations in the region. For example...International Rescue Committee (IRC) assert that the U.S. has a special responsibility to provide the much-needed aid increase. They propose that the refugee population alone will require a minimum of \$2 billion annually for the next two to four years and that the United States ought to contribute at least half of that. The U.S. government has been the single biggest contributor of humanitarian assistance to displaced Iraqis since 2003, giving more than \$500 million in total. This assistance money is channeled primarily through the State Department via PRM and through USAID via OFDA and USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP). USG funds support the work of international organizations such as UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO as well as NGOs operating in the region. For example, contributions announced in February 2008 include assistance to the following: \$83 million for UNHCR's Iraq Situation Supplementary Appeal which aims to improve protection and access to basic services for IDPs and refugees, \$5 million for the World Food Program's Emergency Operation in Syria, and \$2.4 million for UNICEF's portion of the joint U.N. Education Appeal which supports education opportunities for displaced Iraqis in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon. The Department of State charts below provide breakdowns of U.S. assistance in FY 2007 and FY 2008.

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2007 (in millions) ⁹⁸ | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|---------|----------|
| USG | IOs | NGOs | OTHER * | TOTAL |
| STATE/PRM | \$ 99.26 | \$ 18.55 | \$ 5.00 | \$122.81 |
| USAID/OFDA | \$ 6.00 | \$ 57.40 | - | \$ 63.40 |
| USAID/FFP | \$ 0.65 | - | - | \$ 0.65 |
| USAID/Jordan | - | - | \$10.30 | \$ 10.30 |
| TOTAL | \$ 105.91 | \$ 75.95 | \$15.30 | \$197.16 |
| * State Department/Near Eastern Affairs Bureau supplement to the Department Scholar Rescue fund grant; USAID support to Jordanian government to reinforce ongoing health and education programs in communities affected by large numbers of Iraqi refugees | | | | |

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2008 (in millions) ⁹⁹ | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|-------|----------|
| USG | IOs | NGOs | OTHER | TOTAL |
| State/PRM | \$ 145.9 | - | - | \$ 145.9 |
| USAID/OFDA | - | \$ 26.1 | - | \$ 26.1 |
| USAID/FFP | \$ 36.0 | - | - | \$ 36.0 |
| FY08 Contributions to date | \$ 181.9 | \$ 26.1 | - | \$ 208.0 |
| PRM Planned | \$ 2.3 | \$ 21.2 | - | \$ 23.5 |
| OFDA Planned | \$ 20.6 | \$ 29.4 | - | \$ 50.0 |
| Planned total FY08 contributions | \$ 204.8 | \$ 76.7 | - | \$ 281.5 |

| U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE – 2006-2008 (in millions) | | |
|---|----------|---------------------|
| FY 2006 | FY 2007 | FY 2008 (projected) |
| \$43 | \$171.06 | \$281.5 |

Although the U.S. military has engaged in humanitarian work in Iraq, this work is intended to support U.S. military objectives—to win “hearts and minds” of Iraqis for the coalition’s cause. In fact, it does not meet a basic requirement of humanitarian assistance, which is that assistance be made available on the basis of need alone—rather than for political purposes. The work of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has been central to U.S. strategy in Iraq and yet these teams have not been able to meet the assistance needs of the vast majority of Iraqi IDPs. There is an urgent need for better coordination by U.S. government departments and agencies in developing comprehensive plans for humanitarian assistance. Responding to displacement must be central to overall U.S. policy in Iraq. Any gains achieved by the surge can quickly be erased by inadequate policies toward the displaced.”

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008:

"Although humanitarian action and the assistance activities of military forces often occur in the same space and appear very similar, there are fundamental differences between them. US military doctrine describes military civic action in a theatre of war as a "force-multiplier". It serves the commander's military mission through intelligence gathering, force protection and "psychological operations", commonly known as "hearts-and-minds" activities. The latter are aimed at building acceptance with populations by influencing public perceptions about the legitimacy of a military mission in the conflict area and the home country. Visibility is thus essential to the success of military assistance efforts. Military civic action and other forms of instrumentalized assistance are often erroneously described by combatants and in media as "humanitarian". Humanitarian action is based on need alone. It provides life-saving assistance, protection and support for the welfare of the civilian population in accordance with international norms and standards.

MNF-I counter-insurgency strategy in Iraq emphasizes the importance of "non-lethal operations" or the "build" component of "clear, hold and build" operations. The US surge strategy includes unprecedented involvement of MNF-I troops and assets in various civic action efforts including provision of assistance directly to the population. Since 2003, US\$2.7 billion has been appropriated by the US Congress for the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) for "urgent humanitarian, relief and reconstruction requirements" that immediately assist Iraqis. CERP funding has steadily increased since 2003: un-expended CERP assets are approximately US\$1.2 billion. As of January 2008, 32 "Provincial Reconstruction Teams" (PRTs), Provincial Support Teams (PSTs) and "Embedded PRTs" (ePRTs) have been established by coalition governments, primarily the US but also the UK, Korea and Italy (see map Page 4), with core funding of some US\$1.8 billion. The CERP and other funds are also put at the disposal of the PRTs.

US PRTs are formally led by the US Department of State but the majority are embedded in US military positions. PRT staff typically include military personnel, diplomats, USAID staff and commercial contractors. Although US documentation on the PRTs avoids mention of "humanitarian" roles, in practice the PRTs have been providing relief goods directly to the population, sometimes in cooperation with affiliated local organisations. Civil affairs or "CIMIC" teams have also been providing substantial direct assistance, including relief goods, to the population. Commercial contractors and affiliated not-for-profit organisations execute various forms of assistance operations for—and under escort from—the MNF-I.

In policy or practice, independent humanitarian organisations in Iraq are careful to keep their distance from the MNF-I so as not to appear affiliated with, or co-opted by, an unpopular party to the conflict. However, in a context where armed soldiers hand out assistance directly to the population, roles are thoroughly blurred and the perception of many Iraqis is that western aid agencies are affiliated with what they regard as "the occupation". This increases the risks for humanitarian organisations and for the population."

Brookings Institution, August 2008:

"The European donor community which has traditionally been a major supporter of humanitarian operations was slow to provide large amounts of humanitarian assistance for Iraqi refugees and IDPs. For many European governments which had opposed the war, the humanitarian consequences were seen as a U.S. responsibility. Although they responded to UNHCR appeals, there were few large bilateral assistance programs. But this began to change as the war reached the five-year mark. By late 2007, the European Commission allocated €17.8 million for humanitarian needs and a funding package of €7.8 million to support basic services for IDPs. In 2007, the Commission also allocated €10 million in basic support for UNHCR's work in the region and almost €50 million for provision of basic health and education services.

European concern is motivated in large measure by the growing number of Iraqis turning up on their borders in search of protection. Traditionally, European governments have not accepted many refugees for resettlement; in 2007, only 1,650 Iraqis were resettled in Europe (although this is higher than the number of Iraqis who were resettled to the U.S. in its fiscal year 2007). But reflecting the geographical proximity of Iraq, large numbers arrive in search of asylum. While in 2007, the U.S. reported just 734 asylum applications from Iraqis, almost 40,000 Iraqis asked for asylum in Europe—twice the number as in 2006.¹⁰³ In fact, in both 2006 and 2007, Iraqis constituted the largest number of asylum-seekers in Europe."

European Commission, September 2008:

"In 2003, the EC allocated €8 million in humanitarian assistance specifically targeting IDPs in Iraq. As part of this €8 million, €3 million was allocated to a project implemented by the International Committee of the Red Cross and covered emergency supplies for 75,000 IDPs, 320 tonnes of flour for hospitals, a humanitarian air transport service and protection activities for IDP. The other €5 million was also allocated to the ICRC for food, non-food items, medical kits and rehabilitation of water/sanitation facilities in conflict affected areas and targeted up to 2 million beneficiaries.... In 2007, the deterioration of the humanitarian situation caused by unremitting violence resulting in increased refugee flows led the EC to provide a new package of €17.8 million in humanitarian aid specifically targeted at displaced Iraqis. Of this amount, €7.8 million was allocated to IDPs in Iraq and €10 million was allocated to refugees in neighbouring countries, primarily Jordan and Syria, but also Turkey and Lebanon..... Following the events of 2003, the International Community established the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, with the aim of providing a co-ordinated response to the reconstruction challenge. Most EC aid in support of Iraq's reconstruction was initially channelled through this Fund, including assistance for refugees. ...In 2006, the EC allocated €10 million in support of IDPs in Iraq to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq. The EC contribution was channelled through the United Nations arm of the IRFFI.....

The Assistance Programme for 2008, currently under approval, foresees a further increase in measures and funding aimed at assisting refugees, IDPs and returnees in Iraq. Support in 2008 is expected to amount to €43.5 million over 5 main programmes. Building on the initiatives of earlier years, priority will be given to the provision of basic services, working closely with other actors active in addressing the plight of the refugee communities. The programme **Support to the return and reintegration of returnees and IDPs inside Iraq**, with a proposed allocation of €6 million is to be implemented by the UNHCR. It aims to create a protective environment and facilitate durable solutions for returnees and IDPs inside Iraq and to provide assistance to local communities impacted by displacement and/or relocation..... With 5 million Iraqis living in temporary conditions across several countries, the scale of the challenge that faces Iraq and the International Community is considerable. The Commission is committed to continuing to help the plight of displaced Iraqis. Once the programme for 2008 is approved at the end of this year, the EC will have provided a total of over €94 million in reconstruction assistance for displaced people and €45.8 million in humanitarian assistance..... In May of this year EU Ministers also encouraged the Iraqi Government to use its own resources to help neighbouring countries to cope with the additional burden of refugees. While the main responsibility for adequately meeting the immediate and longer term needs of displaced and returning Iraqis lies with Iraqi authorities, the International Community has a responsibility to protect displaced Iraqis and to support neighbouring host countries in their efforts to protect and assist the refugees. The majority of Iraqis will not return to their neighbourhoods until such time as they feel the security situation has improved and continues to improve, and until they know that living conditions have improved and public services provision is adequate. The basic needs of the displaced people must be addressed in order for increased returns to take place. A coordinated approach by all actors committed to responding efficiently and effectively to the needs of those internally and externally displaced by the continuing crisis in Iraq is essential."

EC support to Iraq's refugees and IDPs (Figures in € millions)

| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | Total |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|--------------------|---------------|
| Reconstruction | - | - | 1.4 | 10.7 | 38.68 | 43.5 ³² | 94.28 |
| Humanitarian | 8 | - | - | - | 17.8 | 20 | 45.8 |
| Total | 8 | - | 1.4 | 10.7 | 56.48 | 63.5 | 140.08 |

UN Secretary General (UNSG), 28 July 2008:

"9. During the reporting period Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates announced the resumption of full diplomatic representation in Iraq. In June the Organization of the Islamic Conference deployed a senior representative to Baghdad, pending the formal opening of its offices in August. At its 19 April meeting in Bahrain, the Gulf Cooperation Council accepted Iraq as a regular participant in ministerial meetings and resolved to regularly convene with a new configuration that also includes Egypt, Jordan and the United States of America.

10. At the third expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, held in Kuwait on 22 April, support for the ad hoc support mechanism for regional dialogue increased and an agreement in principle was obtained to convene the next ministerial meeting in Baghdad. The high-level International Compact with Iraq Annual Review Conference, held in Stockholm on 29 May, also reflected engagement of the international community in favour of the reconstruction and development of Iraq and served to strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries. Subsequently, on 6 July, the United Arab Emirates announced that it would forgive Iraqi debt, which is an important and welcome contribution to the Compact process....."

See also:

[Update on IDP and USAID mission activities in Iraq](#), U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS), 27 June 2008

Response from Non-Governmental Organisations, & Non-State Actors

- The distinctions between military and humanitarian activity have been threatened from a number of different directions in Iraq. Prior to and during the invasion in 2003, many humanitarian organizations were alarmed by the extent of attempted military involvement in humanitarian efforts. The U.S. military established "Humanitarian Operations Centers" (HOCs) in Kuwait City before the invasion, and later in Baghdad (FIC, July 2007)
- In January 2003, 5 large U.S.-based NGOs (World Vision, Save the Children-US, IRC, Mercy Corps, and IMC) accepted a USAID-OFDA grant to form the Joint NGO Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI), with the objective of preparing NGOs for a major relief operation in Iraq once combat operations started.
- NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) developed as a platform for agencies that were concerned about preserving the distinctions between military forces and civilian humanitarian actors. NCCI grew rapidly through 2004 and into 2005, eventually providing coordination services to the majority of international humanitarian NGOs. (FIC, July 2007)
- As a coping mechanism, NGOs currently operating in Iraq decided to maintain lowprofiles to prevent themselves from being targeted from attacks. Aid workers on the ground that work with international NGOs do not advertise where the aid is being brought from or who they partner with, nor do they communicate on their programs or interventions. (NCCI, May 2007)

- Because of the Government of Iraq's inability to respond to the needs of Iraqis, and the UN 's slowness in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, a vacuum was created that is being filled by non-state actors. The fragmentation of Iraq and the eradication of any form of real government benefit militias and individual political movements that provide assistance as an integral part of their programs. (RI, April 2008)
- Iraqis are looking to militias and ad-hoc neighborhood organizations as their option of first resort when seeking protection and assistance. As non-state actors consolidate their control over local territory or neighborhoods, new power structures are increasingly discernible through close localized monitoring of developments and may likely lead, over time, to localized increases in humanitarian access for experienced and trusted agencies (FIC, July 2007)

Refugees International, April 2008

Because of the Government of Iraq's inability to respond to the needs of Iraqis, and the UN 's slowness in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, a vacuum was created that is being filled by non-state actors. The fragmentation of Iraq and the eradication of any form of real government benefit militias and individual political movements that provide assistance as an integral part of their programs. As a result, non-state actors play a central role in providing assistance to families throughout Iraq. The largest "humanitarian" organization in Iraq is the Sadrist movement affiliated with Muqtada al Sadr, the anti- American Shiite cleric, and his local Offices of the Martyr Sadr, which exist throughout Iraq — from Kirkuk to Baghdad to Basra. Operating on a model similar to the Lebanese Hezbollah, his sustainable program provides shelter, food and non-food items to hundreds of thousands of Shiites in Iraq.

As part of its assistance programs, the Mahdi Army — Muqtada al Sadr's armed group — also "resettles" displaced Iraqis free of charge in homes that belonged to Sunnis. It provides stipends, food, heating oil, cooking oil and other non-food items to supplement the Public Distribution System (PDS) rations which are still virtually impossible to transfer after displaced Iraqis have moved to a new neighborhood, though it is easier for Shiites to do so. Even when the displaced succeed in transferring them, they find that, because of rampant corruption and banditry on the roads, they do not get more than fifty percent of what the rations used to contain. 80% of the population of Iraq was dependent on the Public Distribution System before 2003.....

Sunni militias play a similar role with displaced and other needy Sunnis. They too settle the displaced in homes that belonged to Shiites. There is less organized help for Sunnis, but the Islamic Party — the main Sunni political Party in the Government — is an important service provider, distributing food and non-food items, providing medical relief and supporting local NG Os. Sunni militias also handle the distribution of key items such as heating gas. As Sunnis in Baghdad get virtually no electricity or other services from the government, they rely on local militias and warlords to secure their areas and manage what services they can obtain.

Feinstein International Center, 2 July 2007

The distinctions between military and humanitarian activity have been threatened from a number of different directions in Iraq. Prior to and during the invasion in 2003, many humanitarian organizations were alarmed by the extent of attempted military involvement in humanitarian efforts. The U.S. military established "Humanitarian Operations Centers" (HOCs) in Kuwait City before the invasion, and later in Baghdad, for the stated purposes of "coordinating" humanitarian action and liaising with the humanitarian community. Reflecting pre-existing differences in aid agency attitudes toward interaction with military forces, some NGOs—of all nationalities—eschewed all contact with the HOCs, while others welcomed it. Concurrent with the build-up of U.S. forces in Kuwait, in January 2003, 5 large U.S.-based NGOs (World Vision, Save the Children-US, IRC, Mercy Corps, and IMC) accepted a USAID-OFDA grant to form the Joint NGO Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI), with the objective of preparing NGOs for a major relief operation

in Iraq once combat operations started. Using staff seconded from the implementing agencies, JNEPI worked in Amman, Kuwait City, and Washington, opening an Amman office in mid-March. Friction emerged almost immediately between the members of JNEPI and other, mostly European NGOs, some of which had already been present and operational inside Iraq for years.

When the Baghdad HOC began attempting to assert a coordinating role in early April, several NGOs conspicuously opted out of HOC-sponsored meetings with humanitarian actors and also moved further away from JNEPI, forming the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) as a platform for agencies that were concerned about preserving the distinctions between military forces and civilian humanitarian actors. NCCI was gradually formalized with a principles-driven charter and, with funding from ECHO, OCHA, and other sources, grew rapidly through 2004 and into 2005, eventually providing coordination services to the majority of international humanitarian NGOs operating in Iraq.

Soon after the invasion, U.S. forces also initiated the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), a pool of discretionary cash available to field commanders for quick-response civic action or "hearts and minds" activities, including "humanitarian" assistance.³⁴ The program has not been carefully scrutinized for its impact on humanitarian space and corruption, but the sums involved are now enormous. Originally funded out of cash seized from Saddam Hussein's palaces, the CERP is now formalized in U.S. counter-insurgency doctrine and underwritten by U.S. military spending bills. CERP funding was US\$753,000,000 for FY 2006 alone, dwarfing the worldwide budgets of all but the largest humanitarian agencies. Also of concern, as in Afghanistan, is the renewed emphasis being placed by coalition forces on Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq. While American PRTs are ostensibly now managed by the U.S.

State Department, they are located within military compounds. A March 2007 memorandum of understanding between the U.S. Defense Department and Department of State makes no mention of a humanitarian role for the PRTs, but, as with the CERP, their impact, if any, on humanitarian space has not been scrutinized. The conventional wisdom among humanitarian agencies in Iraq is that the PRTs are not particularly active and thus not a threat. However, the "surge" strategy of U.S. forces includes a doubling of the number of PRTs, and the addition of neighborhood variants on PRTs in urban areas. Accordingly, there is strong potential for blurred distinctions between military and civilian roles, and developments appear not to be monitored by the humanitarian community. Using the media, Japanese and Korean forces in Samarra and Erbil have actively promoted their roles in the occupation and its aftermath as essentially "humanitarian," likewise leading to strong potential for blurred distinctions between military hearts-and-minds efforts and genuine humanitarian action. Other contingents have also periodically attempted to portray their presence as essentially humanitarian. There is no evidence that the humanitarian community has scrutinized these attempts in any detail nor called military forces to account. Evidence of blurred distinctions between military and civilian roles heard by the research team at ground-level gives ample cause for concern.

The perceived neutrality, impartiality, and independence of genuine humanitarian action is threatened in Iraq by blurred distinctions between military, political, commercial, and humanitarian roles. Our fieldwork in different regions of Iraq confirms that it is now often virtually impossible for Iraqis (and sometimes for humanitarian professionals) to distinguish between the roles and activities of local and international actors, including military forces, political actors and other authorities, for-profit contractors, international NGOs, local NGOs, and U.N. agencies. In some of our conversations it was clear that commercial contractors affiliated with the MNF had been mistaken for humanitarian NGOs. In many other interviews it was completely unclear what kind of agency or agencies were being discussed. Conversely, assistance provided by local religious charities and mosques was often readily distinguished from assistance provided by other actors and, in many of our interviews, was described as vital. In contrast with nearly all other actors,

religious offices and mosques are sometimes—but not always—able to provide assistance in relatively more open and visible ways. Local Islamic charities and mosques were identified in many of our conversations as the preferred option of first resort for those needing assistance or protection.³⁵ However, we heard several examples of “pressures” being exerted on local religious charities to conform more to the wishes and priorities of parties and militias. As mentioned previously, many agencies also report increasing security-related stresses and inter-communal tensions within their own staff, with resulting declines in effectiveness.....

Our research confirms a discernible trend in the consolidation of social welfare offices within militias and parties, introducing new but, paradoxically, perhaps more manageable access challenges than have hitherto existed in Iraq as new power structures crystallize in some locations. Protection and assistance gaps left by the incremental failure of the state and the absence of an appropriately scaled humanitarian presence are being filled by militias and parties throughout the central and southern governorates. This trend was heard by the research team with consistency. The pattern is similar to that evident in many other conflicts—Lebanon comes most recently to mind—where armed groups take up social burdens or exploit needs to gain legitimacy. Increasingly, Iraqis are looking to militias and ad-hoc neighborhood organizations as their option of first resort when seeking protection and assistance. As non-state actors consolidate their control over local territory or neighborhoods, new power structures are increasingly discernible through close localized monitoring of developments. Experienced aid workers in the region feel that this consolidation of localized control is likely to lead, over time, to localized increases in humanitarian access for experienced and trusted agencies that have Iraqi and international staff equipped with the requisite political skills. A small number of operational organizations have already begun to explore and, in a few cases, to capitalize on such opportunities for expanding presence and activity, with the hope and expectation that access can be expanded progressively outwards from well-chosen access points. Until now the approaches and gains remain tentative and experimental, but the strategy shows strong promise in some locations

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq, 14 May 2007

The Iraqi Government's capacity to administrate and guide the country and to enforce the rule of law is extremely limited because of:

- Loss of technical capacity (through various processes including de-baathification within Government ranks, brain drain of experts, academics etc.) which had direct impacts on the management and running of most institutions;
- The emergence of new leaders and increasing resentment of some parts of the population that challenge the basis and legitimacy of the central Government;
- The inability of the Government to access some parts of the country (including districts within Baghdad)

Likewise, at the notable exception of ICRC, most of International Organisations' capacity has failed to respond to the needs in Iraq because:

- They have not adapted and adjusted their responses to the evolving and complex context;
- The emphasis of their efforts have focused on Government capacity and reconstruction - which has been a slow process producing few milestones;
- Their acceptance amongst the Iraqi population has been affected by 12 years of sanctions against Iraq and the need to use MNF-I escorts for their logistics/security; The implications are that most of the International Organisations that are based within the International Zone, have skewed their perception of the situation faced on the ground, and have lost the opportunity to access the population and hot spots. NGOs working in Iraq faced multiple obstacles in responding to the numerous needs. NGOs have met with some success and many failures compounded by the problems faced by all key stakeholders involved in delivering aid and assistance. However the key comparative advantages NGOs have are their streamlined approaches, and ability to react quickly to develop strategies and micro-responses locally adapted by:

- Adapting their structures and activities to the volatile context and newly emerging needs;
- Building relative trust and acceptance in the communities they operate in;
- Adhering to an impartial and neutral approach in their service delivery within the limitations of keeping a low profile, to help correct some of the misperceptions the population may have about NGOs, their affiliations and objectives. These efforts have allowed INGOs to maintain their own capacities and to extend their services and assistance at a national level by building the capacity of Iraqi NGOs. Of critical importance, they are still able to access communities and represent a large part of the last humanitarian actors and witnesses on the ground

The overall objective of humanitarian aid is to provide lifesaving assistance and alleviate suffering. In achieving this objective, access to vulnerable and needy people in conflict zones is essential. However the conflicts in Iraq are saturated with multiple stakeholders' strategic interests and agendas, politicising the context and compromising humanitarian access conditions. Prior to 2003 the few INGOs operating in Iraq were labelled as spies by the regime. At the time, the concept of NGOs and the culture of a free civil society were not fully articulated. In 2003, the en masse arrival of NGOs in Iraq reinforced the perception that NGOs were linked with the Coalition Forces. Today, this misperception still exists in the current atmosphere of distrust. Several non-humanitarian actors (military, private companies, non state armed groups) have presented some of their activities as 'humanitarian' thereby blurs the line and reinforces misperceptions, which has a serious impact on legitimate aid worker security.

As a result, thousand of NNGOs have been created since the fall of the former regime, with only few of them being in accordance with the international criteria defining an NGO. This variance in perception makes it difficult for NGOs to be able to deliver aid while strictly adhering to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and RedCrescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief (CoC), which remains nonnegotiable. Humanitarian aid agencies and NGOs have to strike a balance between these principles, and managing everyday realities to achieve their stated goals without compromising their integrity. Insecurity in Iraq has forced most foreign NGOs that work on the central and southern areas to adopt remote programming strategies and complicated the efforts of Iraqi NGOs who wish/ed to develop relationships with international actors. This imposed distance has raised a number of concerns with respect to the quality of the aid delivered, NGO's accountability for those deliverables, and donor's ability to appreciate and respond to the needs on the ground. The worsening security situation in Iraq has forced most of the above-mentioned INGOs to continue operating in a remote mode since end of 2004. Some of the challenges in distance programming are still very difficult to overcome and it was deemed necessary to share experiences and lessons learnt by foreign and local NGOs in order to identify concrete measures that could be taken to overcome challenges related to distance programming.

....

However, the main differences with the situation in 2004 are related to the organisational and programming options adopted by NGOs. This illustrates an adaptation of INGOs to the Iraqi operational environment consisting mainly in providing greater responsibility to Iraqis working for INGOs. INGOs have developed a range of remote programming approaches that offer mixed results. As a result of the situation, a new distance programming option was developed - remote partnership - whereby INGOs enter into partnerships with LNGOs. This option can be implemented in parallel of other remote approaches. There are several factors NGOs should consider before adopting one or a combination of the remote programming options. Participants of the above-mentioned workshop concluded that it was not possible to compare the limits of each remote programming option since too many factors have to be taken into consideration and, most likely, a combination of factors would result in the failure of a remote programming option as opposed to a single factor. However, on the principle, approaches that gave the most latitude to national personnel and NNGOs are favoured. NGOs identified possible solutions (see table summarizing them below) to reinforce their capacity to overcome those challenges, which gives

an indication that there is room for improvement. Those solutions imply that increased attention should be paid to:

- Empowerment of National staff, and therefore on capacity building;
- Coordination and capacity building resources at local level;
- Collectively address common issues of concern;
- Justifying and explaining the need for adequate funding, as NGOs find increasingly difficult to get sufficient funding for human resources, support costs and even activities.

See Also:

| |
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| Series of Briefing Papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq January 2008, NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI), 2008 |
|---|

Financial Appeals for Humanitarian Situation

- The extent of politicization in donor behavior is a recurring complaint of operational humanitarian agencies. Donor responsiveness to lifesaving assistance and protection work in Iraq has gone through several phases since 2003
- Following the invasion, funding for major humanitarian programs, including a U.N. Flash Appeal for \$2.2 billion in April 2003, continued into early 2005 with some operational agencies being actively encouraged by donors to dramatically expand their presence in the country. (FIC, July 2007)
- However, important sources of “neutral” funding fell off sharply in mid-2005. ECHO closed its Baghdad office in May 2004, ceased funding new humanitarian activity in Iraq in April 2005. Funding problems compelled some operational NGOs to withdraw from Iraq completely from late 2005, even up until early 2007 when it was clear that a renewed humanitarian response was necessary (FIC, July 2007)
- Donors have indeed been generous with funds earmarked for reconstruction. The International Reconstruction Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), to which 25 donors have pledged some US\$2 billion and the International Compact for Iraq are structured to channel funds through U.N. agencies, the World Bank, and the tottering and often corrupt structures of the Iraqi state. Yet these funds are not easily accessible, or at all accessible, to emergency humanitarian programs.
- Meanwhile, the perception among Iraqis of waste and corruption among international actors and their own authorities has been thoroughly validated, by investigations of the U.S. Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR). The scale of carelessness has been staggering. (FIC, July 2007)
- The Iraq Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) 2008 is the first joint UN effort since 2003 to respond to immediate priority needs among vulnerable Iraqis according to a common strategy for the UN, international organisations and international and national NGOs, in close coordination with Iraqi authorities (Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government). (OCHA, July 2008)
- While the appeal overall is 47% (US\$2128.5 million) funded, donors' financial contributions are unevenly allocated across the sectors vis-à-vis their requirements, and key humanitarian sectors face immediate funding shortages. Hence, urgent needs inside Iraq are not sufficiently met as they exceed funding available. (UNSG, July 2008; IRIN, May 2008)

UNAMI, 6 November 2008

36. Humanitarian assistance for Iraqis in general increased during the third quarter of 2008 with the pledging of new funds in response to the 2008 consolidated appeal. Of the \$267 million appeal, 55 per cent is now funded. The planning for the 2009 appeal is well advanced; its strategy will be to capitalize on increased access to address urgent and long-standing humanitarian needs. It will also, for the first time, streamline Iraq's internal and refugee-linked humanitarian needs into a single appeal to provide a coherent overview of the humanitarian priorities, and create a stronger subregional platform to assist affected Governments. The appeal will be based on two complementary pillars: the first, addressing the needs of vulnerable populations inside Iraq, is led by the Humanitarian Coordinator with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; the second, concerning protection and assistance for Iraqi refugees, is led by UNHCR with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

UNHCR, September 2008

Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Iraq In recognition of the urgency of addressing the situation inside Iraq, Security Council Resolution 1770 calls on all actors to meet Iraq's humanitarian needs rapidly and in a comprehensive fashion within the broader frame of Iraq's longer-term recovery goals. The 2008 Iraq Consolidated Appeal (CAP) was launched in 2008 to meet immediate needs of the most vulnerable Iraqis and fill the gaps in the delivery of protection and basic services to civilian populations affected by conflict and displacement. The CAP appealed for \$265 Million for UN agencies and NGOs in February 2008 and it was revised to \$271 Million. Within the CAP, UNHCR appealed for a total of \$40.7 Million for projects covering the sectors of: Shelter/NFIs, Protection, Water & Sanitation, Education and Health & Nutrition. These projects are part of the UNHCR Regional Supplementary Appeal. UNHCR's projects with the CAP have been funded at 73%. At 10 September 2008, the overall CAP has been funded by 58%.

UN OCHA, 9 July 2008

The Iraq Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) 2008 is the first joint international effort since 2003 to respond to immediate priority needs among vulnerable Iraqis according to a common strategy for the UN, international organisations and international and national NGOs, in close coordination with Iraqi authorities (Government of Iraq [GoI] and Kurdistan Regional Government [KRG]). The Consolidated Appeal¹ and the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) underpinning it was launched mid-February this year, hence the implementation is still in its nascent stages. Given the relatively short time-lapse since the launch of the original appeal, and the scarcity of concrete new data to enhance our collective understanding of existing vulnerabilities and needs - which would warrant a more substantial revision of the CAP - the overall analysis of the context and humanitarian situation in Iraq is unchanged. Consequently, the humanitarian strategy and priority needs as well as the specific sector priorities and response plans identified in the original CHAP represent the continuing strategic vision of humanitarian partners. The overarching strategic priorities for humanitarian actors in Iraq remain:

- Relieve immediate suffering in communities acutely deprived by crisis, through bridging the gap in access to essential services;
- Provide protection for the most vulnerable civilians against grave violations of their human rights;
- Improve the capacity, coverage, coordination and impact of humanitarian action;
- Strengthen links between immediate action for families in crisis and support for sustainable recovery.

While the appeal overall is 47% (US\$2128.5 million) funded, donors' financial contributions are unevenly allocated across the sectors vis-à-vis their requirements, and key humanitarian sectors face immediate funding shortages. Hence, urgent needs inside Iraq are not sufficiently met as they exceed funding available; with many vulnerable civilians not receiving much needed assistance and protection. Moreover, funding for the emergency response has been late coming

in, and has only recently allowed the start up of projects, while other emergency programmes still need funding to be delivered to Iraqi communities. Based on all these factors, it was not deemed suitable for the Iraq CAP 2008 to engage in an extensive Mid-Year Review at this stage, and it was considered premature to report substantially on the status of response and progress of projects. Rather, this Iraq CAP Mid-Year Status Update highlights the continuity of the recently agreed humanitarian strategy and priorities for the rest of 2008, and underscores funding shortages delaying the emergency response. Sector response plans and project portfolios have not been overall amended or adjusted at this time. However, due to the increase in food and fuel prices, contributing to the global food crisis, there is a slight upwards adjustment of the financial cost of the World Food Programme's (WFP) emergency operation, consequently increasing the total amount requested for Iraq in 2008. The emergency appeal for Iraq now stands at \$273 million, out of which a total of \$144 million is still urgently required to fully implement the joint humanitarian strategy for 2008 and meet immediate priority needs through delivery of assistance and provision of protection, wherever humanitarian actors can gain access.

UNSG, 28 July 2008

33. In addition to working to implement the April 2008 decision by the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs to launch a consolidated appeal for Iraq, a regional approach has been agreed upon aimed at: (a) establishing an informal information network for Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs regional coordinators in the Middle East covering key humanitarian, developmental and political issues arising from inside Iraq as well as from neighbouring countries affected by Iraq; and (b) providing a link for inputs and joint initiatives for the three working groups (refugees, energy and border security) established under the Iraq neighbours' dialogue....

34. The United Nations country team has developed an assistance strategy for Iraq for 2008-2010, which was presented to the Ministry of Planning and Development in April. By June, the strategy had received approval from an interministerial committee within the Government. Key to the new approach is the co-financing of projects between United Nations programmes, funds and agencies and the Government, aimed at leveraging Iraqi resources with United Nations technical support and capacity-building. United Nations agencies and their implementing partners have successfully concluded more than 60 projects, with an estimated 20 more to be completed during the next reporting period. In addition, increased capacity to undertake monitoring, evaluation and data-sharing has been achieved through support from donors and the UNDP Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office. I am grateful for the support of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq Donor Committee and the Government of Iraq in the effort to ensure targeted programming through evidence-based policy for the remaining \$250 million in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Iraq Trust Fund in support of the International Compact with Iraq and the national development strategy.

35. UNAMI continues to support the United Nations country team in expanding its humanitarian, reconstruction and development activities inside Iraq in line with Security Council resolution 1770 (2007). Both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have now stationed representatives permanently in Baghdad. Offices in Arbil and Basra were also reinforced with additional staff.

36. The Iraq 2008 consolidated appeal for \$267 million is 47 per cent funded, with \$127 million. This amount includes a contribution by the Government of Iraq of \$40 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) to fund internally displaced Iraqis who are particularly vulnerable and the \$8 million Iraq donated to UNHCR in Jordan for Iraqi refugees. Funding levels vary across sectors, with the most underfunded being health, water and sanitation, education, and agriculture and food security, which have received only about 13 per cent of the funding necessary for the delivery of essential services. Limited financial support has been received by non-governmental

organizations participating in the consolidated appeal process, which is of concern, as their operations are crucial for reaching communities inside Iraq....

37. Twenty-three Iraqi and international non-governmental organization projects were funded in the first half of 2008 by the Expanded Humanitarian Response Fund for Iraq, with grants of up to \$400,000 to deliver emergency relief assistance to the most vulnerable Iraqis or those most affected by conflict. To date, 24 per cent of the \$20 million requested (\$4.8 million) has been contributed. The current balance stands at \$1.7 million, and further funds are urgently needed....

IRIN, 12 May 2008

Local aid organisations on 12 May joined the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in appealing to international donors for US\$127 million to help Iraqi internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees until the end of 2008. These are international commitments and must be honoured by the donors, said Basil al-Azawi, head of the Iraqi Commission for Civil Society Enterprises, a coalition of over 1,000 Iraqi non-governmental organisations (NGOs). And apart from this, we call on the Iraqi government not to depend solely on international aid and to shoulder its responsibilities by drawing up plans, as there are more than four million uprooted Iraqis scattered inside and outside Iraq, al-Azawi told IRIN. He stressed the need for cooperation between international and Iraqi aid agencies, and said how aid money is spent must be clearly documented. We local NGOs have no idea how this [aid] money is being spent. Some organisations present detailed documents on their expenditures, others do not. There is a perception that huge sums are being paid as high salaries to these organisations employees or being paid as rent for their buildings, he said.

Feinstein International Center, 2 July 2007

The extent of politicization in donor behavior is a recurring complaint of operational humanitarian agencies. Donor responsiveness to lifesaving assistance and protection work in Iraq has gone through several phases since 2003. In the months prior to the U.S.-led invasion, donors committed generous funding to a preparedness appeal for \$193 million launched by the U.N. in anticipation of a massive displacement and refugee crisis that did not then materialize. Following the invasion, funding for major humanitarian programs, including a U.N. Flash Appeal for \$2.2 billion in April 2003, continued into early 2005 with some operational agencies being actively encouraged by donors to dramatically expand their presence in the country. However, important sources of "neutral" funding fell off sharply in mid-2005. ECHO closed its Baghdad office in May 2004, ceased funding new humanitarian activity in Iraq in April 2005, and closed its Iraq office in Amman the following July. ECHO's stated reasons for the closures were the inflow of large-scale reconstruction funding, coupled with what it perceived to be the impossibility of effectively conducting humanitarian operations in the central and southern governorates. Through the auspices of NCCI, the latter claim has been strenuously discounted by the NGO community in Iraq and Amman on the grounds that ECHO was well-informed of efforts underway by experienced NGOs to refine remote-management and remote-support modalities of continued operations, with promising results. ECHO is currently re-assessing the situation, recently pledging €6 million to the U.N. Development Group's Cluster F for refugees and displaced persons, and €4 million to the ICRC's protection activities. Funding problems compelled some operational NGOs to withdraw from Iraq completely from late 2005, even up until early 2007 when it was clear that a renewed humanitarian response was necessary. Our interviews with a range of humanitarian organizations still operational inside Iraq indicate that since the escalation of inter-communal violence sparked by the Samarah Mosque bombing in February 2006, bilateral donors and ECHO have generally been unresponsive and resistant to operational innovations on the ground. Thus, at a time when operational personnel have needed the greatest understanding and support, such has not been forthcoming.

Donors have indeed been generous with funds earmarked for reconstruction. The International Reconstruction Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), to which 25 donors have pledged some US\$2 billion and

the International Compact for Iraq are structured to channel funds through U.N. agencies, the World Bank, and the tottering and often corrupt structures of the Iraqi state. Yet these funds are not easily accessible, or at all accessible, to emergency humanitarian programs. Attempts by U.N. humanitarian officials in 2006 to raise the profile of humanitarian problems in IRFFI discussions “made people nervous”. In general, donors have not calibrated funding for humanitarian programs to needs and have often been careless with funding for reconstruction. Our interviews with aid agency staff and with Iraqi communities suggest some disturbing donor failure. Aid agency staff in the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, U.N. agencies, NCCI, and international and national NGOs consistently raised shortages of accessible and flexible donor funding as a threat to current and planned humanitarian programs. Operational NGOs with proven track records inside Iraq are feeling the shortfalls most acutely, leading some to close down even as needs escalate. NGOs spoke of being incensed at a multi-million dollar pledge from the Iraqi Government to Lebanon in the summer of 2006, when funds for their own emergency assistance programs were “stuck” in ministries. Other managers identified a lingering sentiment, among some donors and even within one U.N. agency’s headquarters, that individual MNF governments—and pre-eminently the United States itself—should bear primary responsibility for underwriting a humanitarian response. Meanwhile, the perception among Iraqis of waste and corruption among international actors and their own authorities has been thoroughly validated, not least by investigations of the U.S. Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR). The scale of carelessness has been staggering. A culture of waste, incompetence and fraud may be one legacy the occupiers have passed on to Iraq’s new rulers more or less intact. [SIGIR] found that nearly \$9bn in Iraqi oil revenues could not be accounted for. The cash was flown into the country in shrink-wrapped bundles on military transport planes and handed over by the ton to Iraqi ministries by the Coalition Provisional Authority. . . . The money was meant to demonstrate the invaders’ good intentions and boost the Iraqi economy [. . .] but it also fuelled a cycle of corruption left over from Saddam Hussein’s rule.

See Also:

[Government negligent in tackling human displacement - MP](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 13 May 2008

[Local NGOs appeal for more financial support](#), **Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)**, 24 July 2008

Legal framework and national policy

Iraq is a state party to several international human rights agreements

UNCHR, 9 June 2004, p.35

"International human rights treaties and applicable constitutional framework

Iraq became a party to the following international human rights instruments, which are therefore binding upon Iraqi institutions:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (on 23 March 1976);
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (on 3 January 1976);
- The International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (on 13 February 1970);
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (on 12 September 1986);

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (on 15 July 1994).

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Iraqi Governing Council had promulgated a constitutional framework and related legislation that took into account certain aspects of international human rights law. The new Interim Iraqi Government will need to bring these national instruments further into conformity with international human rights law.”

UNHCR, June 2000, pp.8-9

Iraq has ratified regional instruments including:

- The Arab Charter on Human Rights
- The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, Cairo 5 August 1990
- Declaration on the Protection of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Arab World, 19 November 1992

To view the current state of ratifications by Iraq to the key international human rights treaties, see the [OHCHR's Iraq page](#)

From Transitional Administrative Law to a new constitution & other institutional developments (2004-2006)

- The Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) came into effect in June 2004 and is valid until 31 December 2005. It outlines two phases: 1) Dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority and full sovereignty to an Iraqi Interim Government by 30 June 2004 2) Election of an Iraqi Transitional Government following elections to be held before 31 January 2005. (IWPR, 2005)
- System of government envisioned in the TAL was republican, federal, democratic and pluralistic. Islam will be the official religion of the State and will be considered as a source for legislation. The Transitional Executive Authority was to be composed of a Presidency, a Council of Ministers and a Prime Minister. The Kurdish Regional Government was to be recognised as an official regional government within Iraq (IWPR, 2005)
- The current constitution of Iraq was approved by a referendum that took place on 15th October 2005. The constitution was drafted in 2005 by members of the Iraqi Constitutional Committee to replace the "TAL". It was submitted to the public in a referendum vote in October 2005. The constitution was subsequently adopted though not without controversy.
- In 2006, Office for Human Rights was established within the Deputy Prime Minister's office expected to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights within Government and State institutions

IWPR, 2005

“The Transitional Administrative Law will be the Supreme Law of Iraq, during the transitional period. It will expire once a government is elected under a permanent constitution and take office. This will happen no later than December 31, 2005..... The Fundamental Principles of the Law include the following:

- The system of government in Iraq will be republican, federal, democratic, and pluralistic. Federalism will be based on geography, history, and the separation of powers and not on ethnicity or sect.
- The Iraqi Armed Forces will fall under the control of Iraq's civilian political leadership.
- Islam will be the official religion of the State and will be considered a source of legislation. The Law will respect the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people and guarantee the freedom of religious belief and practice.
- Arabic and Kurdish will be the official languages of Iraq.

The people of Iraq are sovereign and free. All Iraqis are equal in their rights and without regard to gender, nationality, religion, or ethnic origin and they are equal before the law. Those unjustly deprived of their citizenship by previous Iraqi regimes will have the right to reclaim their citizenship. The government will respect the rights of the people, including the rights:

- To freedom of thought, conscience, and expression;
- To assemble peaceably and to associate and organize freely;
- To justice; to a fair, speedy, and open trial and to the presumption of innocence;
- To vote, according to law, in free, fair, competitive and periodic elections;
- To file grievances against officials when these rights have been violated.

The Transitional Iraqi Government will contain checks, balances, and the separation of powers. The federal government will have the exclusive right to exercise sovereign power in a number of critical areas, including the management and control of the following:

- National security policy; independent militias shall be prohibited,
- Foreign policy, diplomatic representation, and border control,
- National fiscal, monetary and commercial policy,
- National resources; revenues from which must be spent on the needs of all of Iraq's regions in an equitable manner.

The Transitional Legislative Authority will be vested in a National Assembly, which will pass laws and help select and oversee the work of the executive authority. The National Assembly will be freely elected by the people of Iraq, under an electoral system designed to achieve representation of women of at least one-quarter of its members, as well as fair representation of all of Iraq's communities.

The Transitional Executive Authority will consist of the Presidency and the Council of Ministers, including the Prime Minister.The Federal Judicial Authority will be independent. A Federal Supreme Court will be created to hear judicial appeals and to ensure that all laws in Iraq are consistent with the Transitional Administrative Law. It will consist of nine members, who will be appointed by the Presidency Council upon the recommendation of an impartial Higher Juridical Council. Federalism and local government will ensure a unified Iraq and prevent the concentration of power in the central government that enabled decades of tyranny and oppression. This will encourage the exercise of local authority in which all citizens are able to participate actively in political life.

·The Kurdistan Regional Government will be recognized as an official regional government within a unified Iraq, and will continue to exercise many of the functions it currently exercises. Groups of governorates elsewhere in Iraq will be permitted to form regions, and take on additional authorities.

·The governorates will have Governors and Governorate Councils, in addition to municipal, local, and city councils as appropriate.

·All authorities not reserved to the Federal Government may be exercised as appropriate by the governorates and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

·Elections for Governorate Councils throughout Iraq, and also for the Kurdistan National Assembly will be held at the same time as elections for the National Assembly, no later than 31 January 2005..... The National Assembly will be responsible for drafting the permanent constitution. After consulting with the Iraqi people and completing a draft, the proposed constitution will be submitted to the public in a referendum, which will occur no later than 15 October 2005.

UNAMI, 22 November 2006

“HRO welcomes the establishment of the Office for Human Rights within the Deputy Prime Minister’s office and the appointment of a human rights adviser to the President of the Council of Representative (CoR). Both are expected to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights within Government and State institutions and to assist in overseeing the Government’s action on and the Council’s oversight over critical human rights concerns, including conditions of detention

To read the Iraqi constitution: [click here to access the text](#)

Link to “[Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period](#)”

National Policy on Displacement providing national framework in addressing displacement (2008)

- In July 2008, the National Policy on Displacement was issued out by the MoDM. The goal of this National Policy is to find durable solutions and to set an effective, realistic and comprehensive framework to respond to the needs of the displaced persons regardless of whether their displacement is characterized as protracted or recent. (MoDM, July 2008)
- The National policy recognises the wide scope of displacement in Iraq requires a unified response at all levels of Government that will include development of workplan based on needs of displaced, provide adequate protection and assistance to displaced specify coordination structures for response, and allocation of funds for that purpose. (MoDM, July 2008)
- The National Policy on Displacement was launched the first national conference addressing displacement in Iraq. The First National Conference was held in July 2008 in Amman, Jordan, assembling representatives of governments and provinces, national and international NGOs, and UN actors. A detailed workplan is to be developed following the conference for the implementation of the national policy.

UNHCR, 8 July 2008

The Government of Iraq today launched a policy which will improve the situation for displaced persons and returnees. The National Policy to Address Displacement is the result of wide-scale consultations with displaced persons around the country by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in coordination with other partners. The National Policy to Address Displacement describes the rights and the needs of the 240,000 newly displaced families inside Iraq and clearly outlines the need for coordination and cooperation between the different Ministries and the international community. ‘The Policy also is an important tool in the planning for the return to their homes of persons who are displaced inside Iraq or abroad,’ according to the Minister of Displacement and Migration, Dr. Adul Samad Rahman Sultan. ‘By adopting this National Policy the Government of Iraq makes it clear that it wants to strengthen the protection of and assistance to displaced persons, and it indicates its willingness to work towards durable solutions for the displaced,’ added Daniel Endres, Representative of UNHCR in Iraq.

MoDM, July 2008

The displacement of Iraqis is one of the key challenges faced by the Government of Iraq and international community. Displacement in Iraq has reached an alarming level which has attracted the attention of all Government, non-governmental and international agencies trying to find appropriate solutions and strategies to reverse the situation and swiftly address the issues. In the years before and after the fall of the former regime, Iraq witnessed a wide variety of forced displacement. This has created large groups of displaced persons both inside and outside the country. Such a situation has created many challenges in all governorates and for all sectors of

Iraqi society. As a result, displacement has become one of the most complicated and difficult issues the Government of Iraq must address immediately and in the future.

The magnitude and the nature of displacement and the dispersal of Iraqis around the country and in other states has interlinking political, humanitarian, social and economic dimensions. The complex nature of the displacement has meant any solution must extend beyond the Government and involve the wider international community. The latter has a responsibility to intervene and offer help by supporting and assisting the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi society to overcome this problem.

Hence, the Government of Iraq will implement a National Policy on Displacement through its line ministries and institutions. This policy comes with a vision for the future in order to understand the nature and size of the problem as well as to mobilize national and international efforts to develop relevant solutions and reconstruct the fabric of Iraqi society. This reconstruction should take place on the basis of citizenship or ties to the country based on long-term stay, decent living, fair distribution of wealth, enjoyment of public and private rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the Iraqi Constitution and all national and international legislations and instruments.

This Policy has been developed through wide consultations led by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), supported by the international community, with a large number of stakeholders at the local, regional and national levels in Iraq. The consultations also involved the groups and communities affected by displacement (both internally displaced persons [IDPs] and host communities), professionals working with mixed communities, national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local authorities.

Therefore, this National Policy comes as a national achievement involving many concerned actors and institutions in order to arrive at a new strategic vision to solve this national issue.....The goal of this National Policy is to find durable solutions and to set an effective, realistic and comprehensive framework to respond to the needs of the displaced persons regardless of whether their displacement is characterized as protracted or recent. The wide scope of displacement in Iraq requires a unified response at all levels of Government that will include the following activities:

1. Set up a comprehensive, effective and realistic workplan based on facts and respond to all basic needs to deal with all aspects of displacement.
2. Provide adequate protection and assistance to displaced persons at all levels.
3. Specify coordination structures among all state institutions to provide protection and assistance in a more effective manner to the displaced persons and returnees, and covering needs during emergencies.
4. Allocate funds and develop relevant financial procedures for the implementation of this Policy.

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"Iraq does not have any particular legislation dealing with the situation of **IDPs** and their rights. Being Iraqi nationals, their rights are guaranteed by the generally applicable laws and regulations.

However, and given the extent of the IDP problem in Iraq, MoDM included the full definition contained in the *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*[...] in the Draft *Law on the Ministry of Migration and Refugee Affairs*. It goes further to state that:

Coordinating, facilitating and supporting the monitoring, protection and assistance of the following categories, and the pursuit of solutions for them, according to the principles of prevailing international laws and practices, including the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and taking into account the national interest and internal considerations: a) Iraqi displaced persons.

Therefore, the protection of IDPs is governed by human rights law standards and principles, including the provisions enshrined in the *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*.”

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Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

The GP are available in Arabic [[Internet](#)]

On the implementation of the Guiding Principles see also:

[Addressing Internal Displacement: A Framework for National Responsibility \(Arabic\)](#)

[Handbook for Applying the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement \(Arabic\)](#)

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