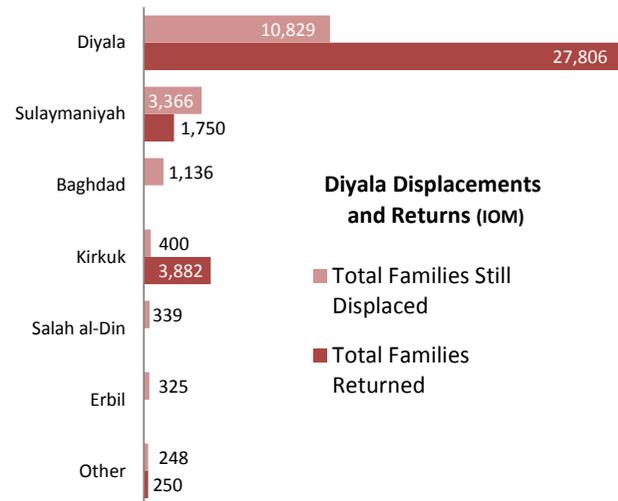
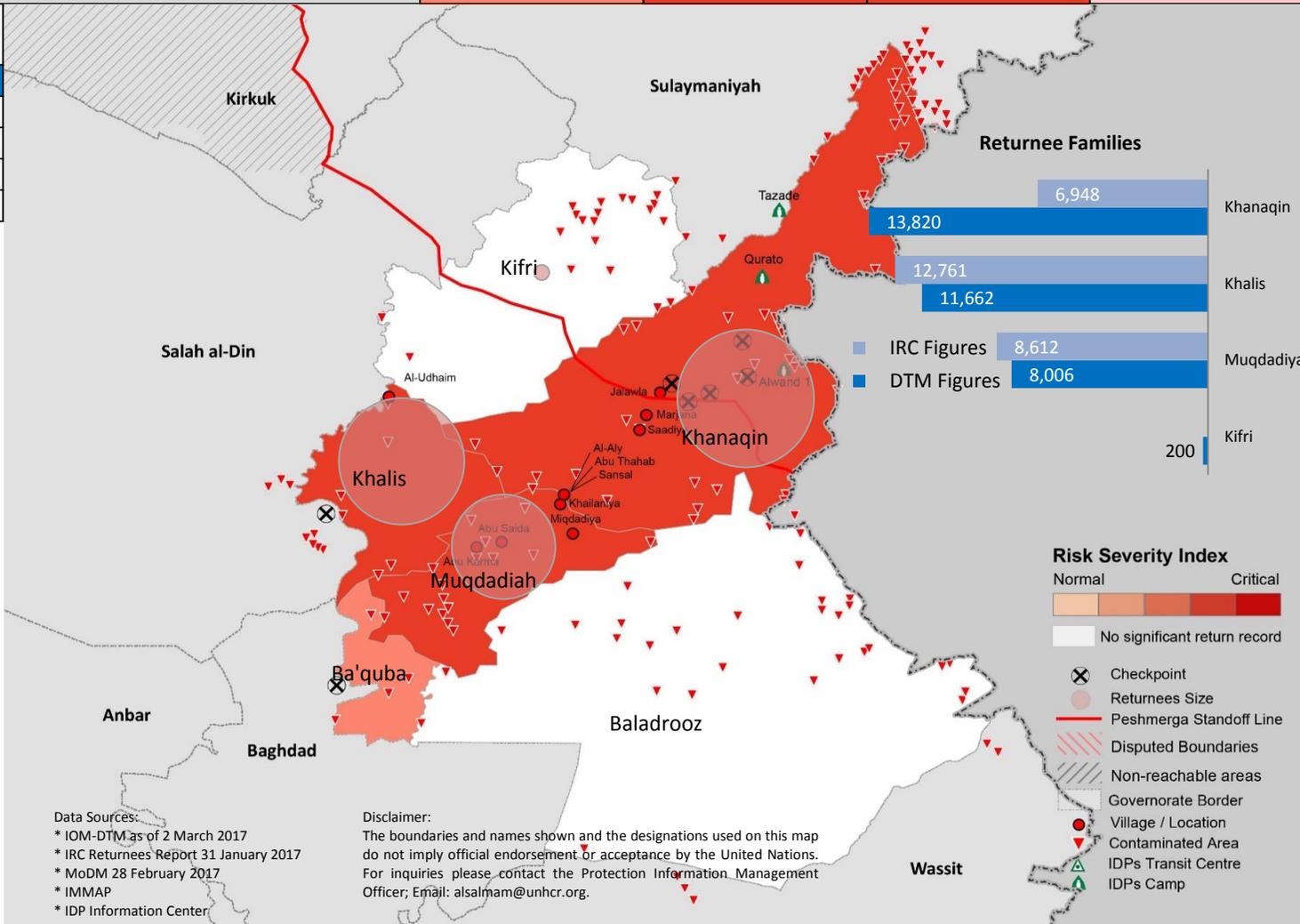


Protection Risk Matrix by District	High	Protection Concerns	Khanaqin	Khalis	Muqdadiya	Ba'quba
	Reported Violations of principles relating to return movements (including non-discrimination in the right of return, as well as voluntariness, safety and dignity of return movements)	High	High	High	High	High
	Medium	Security incidents resulting in death/injury in return area (including assault, murder, conflict-related casualties)	High	High	High	High
	Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)/ Improvised Explosive Device (IED) contamination in return area	Medium	High	High	High	High
	Low	Reported Rights violations by state or non-state military/security actors (including abduction, arbitrary arrest/detention, disproportionate restrictions on freedom of movement)	High	High	High	High
	Concerns relating to inter-communal relations and social cohesion	Low	High	High	High	High

MODM Returnee Figures (Registered and non-registered)	
District	Families
Khanaqeen	17,703
Muqdadiya	6,719
Khalis	6,136
Baladrooz	130



IDP Information Center: 3% of calls received from Diyala were from returnees. The one issue flagged by the returnees to Diyala governorate was food assistance and the contact details of a food partner.



Data Sources:
 * IOM-DTM as of 2 March 2017
 * IRC Returnees Report 31 January 2017
 * MoDM 28 February 2017
 * IMMAP
 * IDP Information Center

Disclaimer:
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GENERAL CONTEXT

The reporting period witnessed frequent arrests, including of IDPs and returnees on terrorism-related charges. Following the 30 January announcement of the security committee of the Diyala Provincial Council launch of another round of security operations in Muqadiyah, resulted in the destruction of nine suspected hideaways for extremist elements and the arrest of more than 37 persons suspected of affiliation with extremists in early February. Despite the enhanced security measures, suspected extremist elements continue to operate in many areas in Diyala including the agricultural villages to the north of Muqadiyah district. These areas have significant number of returnees. The ISF and allied armed groups announced that extremist group is expanding their presence in north of Muqadiyah and in areas bordering Salah al-Din thereby threatening residents including returnees in both governorates. Limited displacement among recently returned families was monitored by protection actors, majority towards neighbouring villages.

Strict measures were imposed by authorities at checkpoints within Diyala and along the border with Salah al-Din, on grounds of security, resulting in the arrest of more than 17 suspects and the killing of two persons suspected to be extremist elements infiltrating into the governorate.

At the beginning of February, another conference headed by the Iraqi Parliament Speaker Salim al-Jubouri was held in Diyala and attended by Sheikhs and tribe representatives. The main issues discussed were the dire security situation in the governorate; measures to end displacement and facilitate returns and reconstruction in Diyala. After the conference, there were indications that financial compensation for damages suffered during extremist group's occupation and the military operations to retake occupied areas will start soon. In addition, the authorities are likely to push/go for more organised returns especially for displaced families who already obtained the required approvals. The key consideration is to ensure that all returns are voluntary and in conditions of safety and dignity and not merely based on arbitrary political timelines.

Starting February, IDP returns from Diyala to retaken areas of origin in Ninewa governorate were monitored with yet to be determined number of families returning. Return procedures include obtaining the security approval from the Operations Command, Security Directories and the Diyala PC. The approval covers families and their personal properties.

MUQADIYAH DISTRICT

In addition to the security challenges, contamination with explosive hazards and political disputes, returnees complained about payments allegedly demanded by armed actors at the several checkpoints. According to returnees, payments/levies are based on size of vehicles with the highest paid by trucks carrying construction materials. This has the potential to delay reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the governorate.

Abu Saida Sub-District

Consistent with the situation in the governorate as a whole, the security

situation was the main concern in the Abu Saida sub-district during February. One returnee was killed and three injured by an IED explosion in Tawakuk village of Abu Saida sub-district on 11 February. In addition, conflicts among tribes resumed on 13 February and caused complete shutdown of markets and governmental buildings for several days. The authorities responded by increasing deployment of ISF and tribal fighters which helped to stabilise the situation in late February. In light of the increasing security challenges in Abu Saida sub-district of Muqadiya, sheikhs of five prominent tribes met and agreed to end the conflicts among their tribes that threaten the stability in the sub-district. The tribal agreement was in the presence of representatives of the Dijlah Operations. This important step, if it holds, is anticipated to enhance security and stability in Abu Saida and Muqadiya.

KHANAQIN DISTRICT

A meeting was held in Baghdad on 27 February to discuss the IDPs situation in Khanaqeen, attended by members of parliament from Diyala, a delegation from the dominant political party in the district (PUK), Deputy of MoMD, the Head of PUK in Khanaqin and mayors of Khanaqin, Jalawla, Saadiya, Jabbara, and Qara Tapa. During the meeting, it was agreed that all IDP families from Jalawla sub-district should return, except those with links to extremist groups. The IDPs originally from Muqadiya and Saadiya will be allowed to stay in Khanaqeen until their places of origin are stable. In addition, it was agreed that the families who were evicted or denied return to Jalawla should resubmit their files through the MoMD office in Diyala in order to be referred to the Jalawla Asayesh for security screening. The Khanaqin delegation announced that a decision about the return of IDP families to surrounding villages of Jalawla will be taken soon.

Jalawla Sub-District

Despite the declared "official closure" of the displacement file in Jalawla in December 2016, local authorities announced that about 745 families from Jalawla, mostly displaced in Khanaqin, received approval to return on 16 February. Out of this group, only 100 families returned to Jalawla in February, according to the head of Jalawla Asayesh, while the remaining are expected to return later. Property destruction is cited as the main reason behind the low pace of returns. In Tajneed neighbourhood, where around 450 families used to reside prior to their displacement, properties are reportedly completely destroyed, according to assessments undertaken by a UNHCR partner. Returns to the neighbourhood also are hindered by other complications such as the announcement by the mayor of Jalawla to the effect that the Tajneed neighbourhood was illegally constructed after 2003 and that families from there would only be allowed to return to Jalawla but not to Tajneed neighbourhood. The mayor proposed that returnee families should rent or buy houses in other neighbourhoods of Jalawla but did not offer any assistance to affected families to enable them do this. Without an alternative housing solution, this will effectively bar families from returning to reconstruct their destroyed homes, leaving them in protracted displacement. The Head of Jalawla Asayesh confirmed that another list of 1,100 IDPs families, mostly from Tajneed neighbourhood, will be prepared soon. Their names will be announced once security approval is granted.

In addition, new files of 450 IDP families originally from Jalawla and currently residing in Saad camp in Baquba were referred to the Jalawla Asayesh by the Head of MoMD-Diyala for clearances in order to facilitate their return.

Saadiya Sub-District

In February, seven families returned to Saadiya being part of the lists of families that received approval to return in December 2016. The Saadiya Mayor's Office announced that IDP families from villages around the sub-district who are willing to return should approach the Mayor's office's representatives in areas of displacement to register their names.

UNHCR's return monitoring showed that most of the families who have returned to Saadiya Sub-district were facing water shortages as essential infrastructure is yet to be rehabilitated. At the end of February, the security forces in Diyala stopped any goods to enter Saadiya due to customs related issues between the Iraqi Government and KR-G. Later, it was decided to allow about 10 trucks from Saadiya to bring food and other goods into the city. This dispute between central and regional governments on custom issues will only increase the difficulties residents and returnees are facing and hinder more returns and sustainability of returns.

KHALIS DISTRICT

The return of dozens of displaced families is pending security approval, which is taking longer than usual due to the overall instability in Diyala. Majority of families are displaced in Ba'quba and other districts in Diyala.

Al-Udhaim Sub-District

In light of the security situation, tribes in Al-Udhaim sub-district requested the provincial government to provide them with weapons and support them to establish a local militia for their own protection. There has been no official response from the authorities. It is not yet clear whether the tribes will forge ahead with the plans to create the militia but the proliferation of armed actors is likely to complicate the security and protection environment, for residents including IDPs and returnees. The area has had many families evicted for alleged affiliation with an extremist group, without due process, and often based on mere allegations of informants.

UNHCR and partners are following with the concerned authorities at the Al-Udhaim Agricultural Directorate on the possibility to renew the expired agricultural contracts for returnees. Further, there is need for the local authorities and partners involved in clearance of explosive hazards to ensure that the area is cleared. This will ensure safety of returnees in Al-Udhaim and encourage more returns to the sub-district.