

Affected Population

271,673 Refugees and Asylum-Seekers
(as of 31 July 2019)

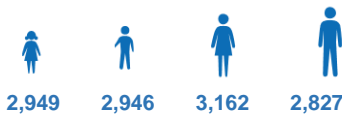
1,607,148 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

4,305,138 Returnees
(as of 30 June 2019)



Protection Monitoring**

2,379 families (**11,884** individuals) reached



**The disaggregated figures indicate the number of households containing individuals from each age and gender group.*

8% of individuals are lacking either a Civil Status ID or a Nationality Certificate.

76% of families do not have access to a regular source of income***

*** The data reflects the number of IDP households assessed from 1 July 2019 to 31 July 2019.*

**** Regular source of income includes pension, remittance from families, employment in private and public sectors, and self-employment.*

LINKS

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Highlights

- Approximately 2,300 families across Iraq departed from camps, and almost 320 arrived in camps in July 2019. Security concerns, contamination of explosive hazards, destruction of houses, tribal conflicts, lack of livelihood opportunities, basic services and civil documentation are frequently cited as reasons hindering the return of IDPs to their areas of origin.
- Forced evictions continued in Anbar, Kerbela, Ninewa and Salah al-Din Governorates due to various measures imposed by state and non-state actors.
- Families with perceived affiliation with extremists continue to endure collective punishment in the form of arrest and detention, restrictions on their freedom of movement and denial of return.
- UNHCR and partners supported the Ministry of Interior (Mol)'s Mobile Civil Documentation Project in Duhok and Erbil Governorate. In Duhok, Mol issued 1,340 Civil Status IDs and 2,090 Nationality Certificates to IDPs while in Erbil, Mol issued 118 Civil Status IDs and 698 Nationality Certificates to IDPs.
- UNHCR and partners held the first SGBV Case Conference Meeting in Erbil with the Department of Combating Violence Against Women of the Kurdistan Regional Government. The meetings are intended to improve response and service provision to SGBV survivors and ensure adherence to the survivor-centred approach.

Barriers to Return and Secondary Displacement

Based on data provided by the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, 2,312 families departed camps across Iraq during July, while 325 families arrived in camps. Of these, 97 families were in secondary displacement.

According to results from protection monitoring visits conducted by UNHCR and partners, IDPs living in camps and informal settlements continue to cite security concerns, explosive hazard contamination, destruction of houses, tribal conflicts, and lack of livelihood opportunities, basic services and civil documentation as the main reasons preventing their return to their place of origin. For instance, in Anbar Governorate, IDPs from Rawa District, to where only 30 per cent of IDPs returned, cited that unexploded ordnance is still the primary reason hindering return.

In Babil Governorate, approximately 530 IDP families in Al-Askandaria (north of Babil), originally from Jurf Al-Sakhar, Al-Buhairat, and Al-Khudhir areas are being prevented from returning to their areas of origin due to tribal and political reasons. IDP families, many headed by women, expressed their willingness to return but claimed they are unable to do so due to tribal disputes and missing civil documentation. In Salah Al-Din Governorate, IDPs living in Al Karama Camp and Al Qadissiyah Complex, most of whom originate from Baiji and Senya, have expressed that they are unable to return due to infrastructure damage and lack of basic services in their areas of origin.

Furthermore, IDPs living in Al Alam camp, where most of the families are from Hawija District in Kirkuk Governorate, stated that they could not return due to infrastructure damage, tribal disputes, and lack of job opportunities, medical care and other basic services.

Forced Evictions and Premature Returns

IDPs across the country reportedly left camps due to various measures imposed by state and non-state actors.

In Anbar Governorate, approximately 970 families are at risk of eviction after the Anbar Operations Command disseminated information among IDPs in Amriyeat Al Fallujah (AAF) Camp that IDPs from Al-Qaim District will be returned to their areas of origin or will be relocated to Habaniyah Tourist City (HTC) camps. The initial date for this eviction was scheduled for 5 July, but after intervention and advocacy by humanitarian actors, it has been postponed to an undetermined date.

In Kerbela Governorate, the provincial council reportedly issued a decision to confiscate some caravans from Kerbala IDP Collective Centre and to distribute them among schools in an effort to indirectly force IDPs to leave the Centre.

In Ninewa Governorate, on 6 July, a security team turned up in Hamam Al-Alil (HAA) camps to start distributing security screening forms to the residents without prior warning, although the humanitarian community had been alerted to the Government's plans to conduct security screenings in Ninewa camps. The team was composed by military intelligence, local police, national security, and government-affiliated armed forces, some of whom carried weapons inside the camp. According to the security team, the procedure was aimed to provide an overview of the population, including information on individuals from other governorates; individuals with perceived affiliation to extremists; as well as individuals with particular needs, such as documentation. The team requested IDP families to fill in forms with basic biodata, indications of any affiliation of family members to extremist groups, and present themselves in front of the security committee for review. Following advocacy by UNHCR and partners, the security team agreed to refrain from carrying guns into the camp and to temporarily withdraw the process until a further agreement was reached between the government and the humanitarian community. Prior to the screening exercise, security forces at a nearby checkpoint allegedly prevented families from leaving the camp without first undergoing security screening, but subsequently allowed them to pass. More than 200 families (1,014 individuals) reportedly departed the camps due to the fear that the screening exercise might subject them to arrest.

IDPs in Jed'dah 5 camp were affected by the government's plans to designate the camp to host Iraqi returnees from Al Hol camp in Syria. Despite the fact that the National Security Council announced that the camp would not serve as the destination camp for returnees, camp management informed IDPs in sectors O and X to relocate to other sectors of Jed'ah 5 or other Jed'ah camps to make room for the returnees. As a result, many IDPs reportedly relocated out of fear of repercussions of non-compliance with the order and/or due to concerns about residing next to Al Hol returnees perceived to be affiliated with extremists.

In Salah Al-Din Governorate, security forces visited the Al Qadissiyah Complex many times asking the IDPs to leave the Complex despite the Deputy Governor issuing a letter to postpone the eviction until 1 September 2019. Furthermore, IDP families living in Balad train station cited fear of forced eviction as they were notified by local contractors to evacuate the area in order to complete construction work. The IDPs were displaced from camps in Baghdad to the train station in 2018 and reported they were unable to return as government-affiliated armed groups in their areas of origin denied their return. Moreover, approximately 31 IDP families living in Al Jameiyah School in Samara District, originally from Balad District and the surrounding areas, have expressed their fear of possible eviction as Samara police and the school contractor notified them to evacuate the school premise so that they could complete construction work. The families stated they were unable to return due to infrastructure damage, tribal problems and lack of civil documentation.

Collective Punishment

UNHCR continues to receive reports of collective punishment of families due to accusations of perceived affiliation with extremists. In Ninewa Governorate, on 4 July, the Tel Afar National Security Force (TNSF) entered Salamyiah 2 camp and detained a 43-year-old woman accusing her of being affiliated to extremists. On 8 July, TNSF entered the camp again and searched the tent of the detained woman looking for evidence. In HAA 1 camp, on 13 July, 30-year-old women originally from Nimroud Sub-District was detained at Talkief checkpoint during an attempt to visit her husband who is held in Talkeif jail over alleged affiliation with extremists. In Haj Ali camp, a family from Al-Shirqat District in Salah-Al Governate reported that, on 4 July, they were forcibly evicted from their home and verbally abused by community members because they have family members allegedly involved with extremists. Moreover, two families who returned from HAA camps to Al-Salahya village in Rabeea Sub-District, Tel Afar District, reportedly were re-displaced to Haj Ali camp after returning to their house for one day. An unknown person threw a grenade in their house, allegedly targeting the families in the belief that they have family members affiliated with extremists. Moreover, a family originally from Al-Qayarah Sub-District, Mosul District were prevented from returning to their place of origin as a government-affiliated armed group abused them verbally and threatened them that they would kill them if they attempt to return again. Likewise, three families in Jed'ah camp 4 originally from Al-Shirqat District reported that a government-affiliated armed group evicted them from their house on 5 July, citing their family members' alleged affiliation with extremists as the reason. In HAA camps, many female heads of household reported abuse by police officers at the camp's gate, accusing their relatives of being extremists and commenting that they would never be allowed to return to their areas of origin and would instead end up in the streets or in jail. Several women reported that they were traumatized by such threats.

Iraqi Returnees from Syria

During the reporting period, UNHCR identified 8 Iraqis who returned from Syria and reunited with their families in Duhok Governorate. The returnees are reportedly Yazidis who had initially crossed into Ninewa Governorate through self-organized returns.

Syrian Refugees and Asylum-seekers

In July, UNHCR registered 1,199 individuals from Syria, including 676 new arrivals. Currently, the total number of Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR is 228,851 individuals (48% female and 52% male. 44% children and 56% adults.). Nearly 99% of the population resides in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), where 39% are living in camps and 61% in urban, rural and peri-urban areas. The majority of Syrian refugees originate from Al-Hasakeh (55.8%) followed by Aleppo (22.5%) and Damascus (8.1%).

Response by UNHCR and Partners

- UNHCR and partners continued to support the Ministry of Interior (MoI)'s Mobile Civil Documentation Project in Duhok and Erbil Governorates. In Duhok Governorate, the MoI Issued 1,340 Civil Status IDs and 2,090 Nationality Certificates to IDPs residing in Bersive 1 and 2 Camps and Chamishko Camp. In Erbil Governorate, the MoI issued 118 Civil Status IDs and 698 Nationality Certificates in six camps in Erbil and East Mosul (i.e. Baharka, Debaga, Harsham, Hasansham U2, Hasansham U3, Khazir M). Cumulatively, from April to July, 3,307 Civil Status IDs and 1,395 Nationality Certificates have been issued to IDPs in Erbil. UNHCR and partners will continue to support the Government in the mobile missions with the aim to expand the project to different governorates and to urban and peri-urban areas.
- UNHCR and partners held the first Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) Case Conference Meeting with the Department of Combating Violence Against Women (DCVAW) under the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The members reviewed eight complex SGBV cases and agreed to eight action plans. DCVAW and partners will follow-up and provide an update on each plan during the next meeting. The purpose of the monthly meetings is to improve response and service provision to SGBV survivors (both IDPs and refugees) in Erbil and ensure adherence to the survivor-centered approach.

- UNHCR organized a two-day training in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah for UNHCR staff and partners as well as staff from the Department of Social Affairs (DoSA) under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) in the KRI on UNHCR's updated Best Interest Procedures (BIP) for children at risk. 29 people attended the training in Erbil while 33 people participated in Sulaymaniyah. Furthermore, a three-day BIP and Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) training for UNHCR staff and partners was conducted in Mosul in cooperation with UNICEF, targeting 20 humanitarian protection staff. UNHCR used the BIP training as an opportunity to brief UNHCR staff, partners and DoSA staff on the updated Best Interest Determination Standard Operating Procedures for Iraq, finalized in July.
- 28 UNHCR and partner staff attended a two-day training on "Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons in Forced Displacement" in Dohuk, which aimed to better equip staff to conduct effective and respectful interviews and other interactions with LGBTI people and respond to the needs of LGBTI persons of concern across different sectors. This training is part of ongoing capacity development efforts of UNHCR in Iraq that aim to create safe spaces for LGBTI persons of concern as they continue to be subjected to severe social exclusion and violence and are often in need of specialized protection and assistance.