

IOM IRAQ

ACCESS TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS AMONG IDPs IN IRAQ:

Unpacking the Policy Implications



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INTRODUCTION

IOM Iraq, in collaboration with Georgetown University, developed the panel study entitled *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq* in 2015 to deepen the understanding of progress towards achieving durable solutions for IDPS over time.¹ The study has yielded significant insight into the lived experiences of displacement over time, the dynamics of Iraqi displacement and the changing perceptions of IDPs about their current situation as well as their aspirations for solutions. This policy paper draws out the policy implications of these findings – for the Iraqi government, for the national and international humanitarian community and for researchers studying displacement.

This one-of-a-kind longitudinal research project offers the opportunity to delve deeply into how IDPs manage their displacement in the search for durable solutions. Over the course of five years, this project traces the lives of the same 4,000 families originally from Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din (seven governorates of origin) who were displaced to one of four governorates where the study was conducted: Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah. The mixed-method study focuses on IDPs who were displaced by the Islamic State in the Levant (ISIL) from between January 2014 and December 2015 living in non-camp locations.² This is an important aspect of the study, both because of the lack of research on IDPs living outside of camps and also

because there are important differences between IDPs living in camps and outside of camps. The longitudinal nature of the study also allows it to capture information on secondary displacement, returns and other movements.

The paper opens with targeted analysis of the implications of this study's findings and understanding of how to measure durable solutions, with specific recommendations for local and national governmental policy-makers, international actors, and researchers. It then offers a brief background on IDP data collection and the unique features of this study. This is followed by a short explanation of Iraq's complicated and multi-faceted context - with a particular emphasis on displacement caused by the wave of militancy by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) from 2014-2017. The paper then reviews the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions that provided the conceptual underpinning for the study. Following that is a summary of the main findings emerging from the five rounds of data collection. For each of these findings, key takeaways are highlighted for governmental policy-makers working at the local and national levels and who under international law have responsibility for IDPs, including the responsibility to find solutions to their displacement. The takeaways are also relevant to international actors seeking to support solutions for IDPs.

¹ All of the publications from this project are available [IOM: website] and at <https://ccas.georgetown.edu/resources/iom-gu-iraq-idp-study/>

² For a further description of the methodology used, see Appendix A of IOM Iraq and Georgetown University *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement*, February 2019.

SECTION 1: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS SEEKING TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR IDPS

Some of the key takeaways from this report are directly relevant to governments.

First, the sense of safety that displaced populations feel and the ability of the government to ensure security in the host community and establish security in areas of return are the most urgent priorities. Without a sense of safety, displaced populations have trouble rebuilding social networks, finding work, and are reluctant to send their children to school or venture much outside their homes. The findings of this study showed how much IDPs valued the sense of safety felt while living in host communities and also how feelings of acceptance were high and continued to increase over time. In addition, once security has been established in areas of return, IDPs will begin to return and rebuild, particularly when security also allows for the rebuilding of markets and supply/trade networks, roads and other transportation infrastructures, services (electricity, water, sewage, etc.), as well as health and education institutions. Security is the first step in a government-wide engagement involving all ministries and portfolios.

Second, once security has been established, the study highlights the importance of livelihoods and housing in supporting all of the durable solutions: return, integration, and relocation. When national governments can support IDPs in this regard, such as by transferring public service jobs to new locations, as well as offering housing and the restoration of livelihood networks, institutions, and infrastructure, IDPs can and will return and restart businesses and other essential services or rebuild their lives in new places that also spurs on more growth and more returns, in a symbiotic relationship. When governments are not able to address the need for displaced people to find work and housing or the need to restore destroyed infrastructures to enable return, likewise return to normality is slowed or halted. In particular, the findings show that IDPs who formerly worked in the agricultural sector before displacement face particularly difficult situations. Governments should either seek to restore agricultural infrastructure, resources access, and markets so that farmers and those raising animals can restore their livelihoods or support agriculturalists to find other jobs. They

should also carry out labor needs assessments in areas to which IDPs may return.

Third, compensation for lost lives and property is essential, both financially as well to build trust between the government and those displaced. In the case of Iraq, the bureaucratic mechanism to apply for compensation has been in place since 2009, and the money exists within a combination of Iraqi government funding and international donor assistance. However, the huge gap between the numbers of IDP applications for compensation and the very few who have received it needs to be addressed. The rebuilding processes are connected as well to issues such as the importance of effective governance including the administration of government entitlement schemes in general. These programs are essential for the resolution of displacement as well as building the trust and confidence of its citizens.

Fourth, the study shows over time the challenges faced by displaced populations due to shifts in international funding and national priorities. In particular, IDPs reported in early rounds the importance of direct emergency aid to displaced households, at the forefront of which was the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD). After three years of humanitarian assistance and the end of the ISIL occupation, governmental and international priorities have, to an extent, shifted to recovery, stabilization and development. While these activities are important – and in many cases are specifically designed to support durable solutions – the study shows that IDPs reported a concurrent decline in receiving aid and a drop in their ability to meet their basic needs, send children to school and get medical care, among other things. IDPs and returnees felt this shift in funding priorities acutely in their ability to meet their basic needs, a point which underscores the need for continuing humanitarian assistance so long as needs persist. In Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), over 82 per cent of IDPs reported that they did not have any savings left and almost 63 per cent reported that they had borrowed money within the previous 12 months. While it is unfortunate but natural for international interest to fade with time, it remains the responsibility of the Iraqi government to assist

IDPs and to help them find durable solutions. This does not – and should not – have to be the domain of humanitarian ministries such as MoMD but rather should involve all line ministries. IDPs should be integrated into national development plans; in order for this to happen good data needs to be collected within official data or statistical mechanisms on internal displacement.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTORS SUPPORTING SOLUTIONS FOR IDPS

Iraq is different from most countries with large numbers of IDPs. It is a middle-income country and a large proportion of those employed have worked for the government. It also has a long tradition of population mobility where people have often moved within the country not only because of forced displacement (although Iraq has a long history of such displacement) but also for employment, family or military service. IDPs have generally experienced welcoming, supportive host communities.³

Iraq has witnessed a large international effort to support government compensation programs, which includes inter alia capacity development, training, staffing, equipment, supporting improvement of systems, sensitizing populations, creating referral pathways and many other activities. By providing funds for compensation or rebuilding, long-term solutions can be found for IDPs – which should be a key issue to consider for donors concerned about protracted need for humanitarian assistance. If governments do not have the capacity or the funds to provide the needed compensation to repair and rebuild homes so that IDPs can return, then the international community should do so, perhaps learning from the experience of actors such as the OSCE in the Balkans and IOM with post-2003 compensation schemes in Iraq. In the case of Iraq, significant funds are available for stabilization; more than one billion USD, including to United Nations Development Programme, has been allocated to support stabilization activities in Iraq, including infrastructure development and improving access to water and other public services. Surely restoring homes so that IDPs can return home is in line with the goals of stabilization funds. However, transparency for the applicants to the program has been lacking, and few have received compensation to date. Whether this is

Finally, this study has shown somewhat surprising confidence of IDPs in the ability of courts to ensure justice. The importance of re-establishing rule of law, confidence in institutions, and combatting corruption are essential elements not only in finding durable solutions for Iraq's large displaced population but in ensuring stability and prosperity for all Iraqi citizens.

due to governance issues or bureaucratic hurdles, a solution needs to be found. A more responsive compensation program might result if the focus was on more resources to compensation funds (money from international financial institutions, oil revenues, etc.), greater international oversight of compensation schemes to reduce corruption levels and other systemic issues, and other measures that would address the issues preventing compensation from being implemented on a greater and faster scale in the first place.

International actors could also could better support local organizations to be part of programming from the planning through implementation stages. In the interviews with local aid organizations, many commented on how rarely they are consulted by international agencies; when they do receive funding, it is usually for projects that are designed by outsiders. Requiring such partnerships could benefit local governance development by helping to ensure these local organizations have the freedom to respond to local needs away from local powerful entities, or other extraneous factors that sometimes constrain their effectiveness. Consulting and partnering with local organizations to ensure local knowledge, participation and buy-in would strengthen the effectiveness of international efforts.

International actors should think more strategically about aid to IDPs, incorporating an understanding that displacement is dynamic and that different kinds of support are needed at different stages of displacement. Better communication about the shift in funding priorities and efforts to smooth the transition from emergency aid (which directly impacts IDPs) to the structural development aid phase (which is more abstracted from IDP lives) would assist IDPs in understanding the larger picture as well as help them make informed

³ IOM Iraq, Returns Working Group and Social Inquiry, *Reasons to Remain (Part 2): Determinants of IDP Integration Into Host Communities in Iraq*, April 2019.

decisions about their future. Much has been written about the need for more joined-up efforts by development and humanitarian actors and indeed there is a need for development actors, especially in stabilization efforts, to engage in the reconstruction of areas destroyed by ISIL to support returns or, where IDPs cannot or do not wish to return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country.

It perhaps bears repeating that resolving displacement is not a box to be ticked off but a process. Since the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II) in the mid-1980s there have been calls for better coordination between humanitarian

and development actors – an issue which has once again risen to the fore in the concept of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. This study has shown, as others have argued, that the model of a linear progression whereby humanitarian agencies ‘hand off’ to development actors after a certain period of time is not realistic. This difficulty is often compounded by the manners in which humanitarian and development programs are structured, and how they address vulnerability. An intermediate, transitional phase, marked by stabilization and early recovery activities, could serve to bridge humanitarian and development, and harness the strengths of both.

SECTION 2: ABOUT THE STUDY

EXISTING DATA ON IDPS

Study Target

4,000 Iraqi households displaced by ISIL from between January 2014 and December 2015 to non-camp locations in four governorates: Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah.

Most of what is known about internally displaced persons (IDPs) comes from United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) data collection, reports, and academic studies that focus on one particular situation at one moment in time.⁴ The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) compiles country-level statistics on IDPs while IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and the Joint Internal Profiling Service (JIPS) provide detailed data on displacement by location and by demographic characteristics.⁵ These are important resources for policy-makers and practitioners but they are snapshots at a particular moment in time.

The IOM Iraq-Georgetown University study on which this policy paper is based has taken a longitudinal approach by tracking the dynamics of displacement over almost five years. Specifically, this research project has focused on Iraqi households who

were displaced by ISIL between January 2014 and December 2015. The researchers have been in contact with the same IDPs between March 2016 and January 2020, charting their movements and interviewing them in person at five specific points in time (see Figure 1 below). These longitudinal surveys were supplemented with longitudinal qualitative interviews that investigate in depth the experiences of a portion of the households involved in the study, as well as host communities in four governorates and those working in the fields of aid and education in locations experiencing displacement and return. With its focus on analyzing the dynamics of displacement – how situations, needs and perceptions vary over time – this study differs from most research on IDPs by offering an opportunity to look at the way that displacement evolves over time.

⁴ See, for example, the many publications of the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)*; the reports of the *Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons*; other UN reports such as *Breaking the Impasse: Reducing Protracted Displacement as a Collective Outcome*, UN OCHA 2019. Also see Phil Orchard, *Protecting the Internally Displaced: Rhetoric and Reality*, Routledge 2019, as well as academic articles such as Fu-Min Tseng, Barbarfa McPake and Ijeoma Edoke, “*The Impact of Leaving Camps on Well-being of Internally Displaced Persons in Northern Uganda*,” *South African Journal of Economics*, 2019; Abdulrahman Adamu and Muhammed Abdullahi “*The Socioeconomic Implications of Displacement in Nigeria: A Survey on the Internally Displaced Persons in the North-East*,” *International Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 6(1), 2019.

⁵ IDMC: *IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)*; *Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service*.

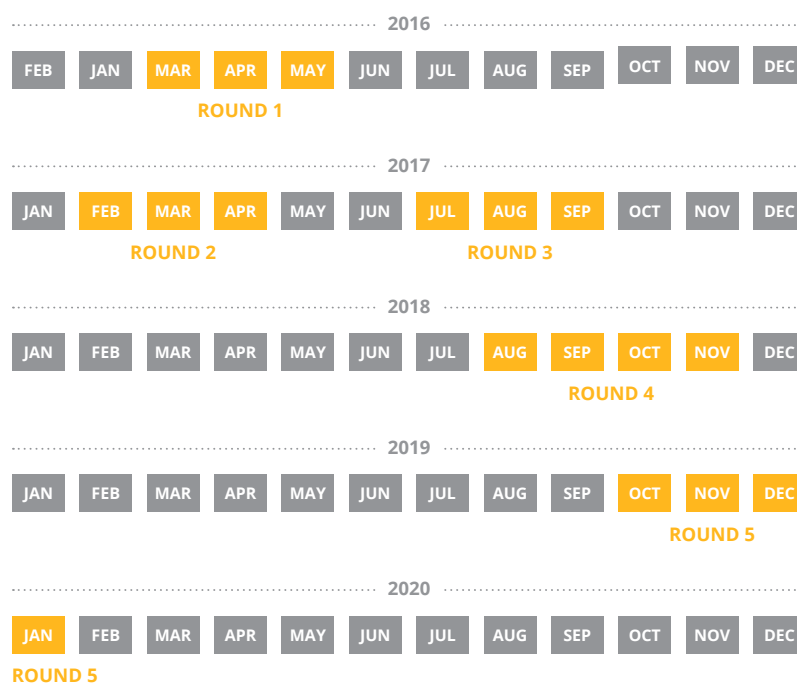
The data collected in this study provide rich material for understanding IDPs' ability to access durable solutions for academics, analysts, policy-makers and operational actors alike. IOM Iraq and Georgetown have published a number of studies on specific aspects of the findings (see Annex 1). Further analytical work is forthcoming.

Rather than purely analyzing the findings of this five-year study, this policy paper pulls out particular insights from these studies that are useful to policy-makers. In particular, it focuses on the issue of solutions for IDPs, exploring how the dynamics of

displacement affect the current understanding of durable solutions.

Protracted displacement has unfortunately become the norm for both internally displaced persons and refugees around the world. Of the 45.7 million persons displaced internally by conflict in 2019, 37.2 million had been displaced for at least a year⁶ and for many IDPs, displacement has lasted far longer. Finding solutions for IDPs in protracted displacement is a paramount concern for the IDPs themselves and the communities and countries where they are displaced.

To date, five rounds of data have been collected



THE IRAQI CONTEXT

Iraq has experienced multiple waves of internal displacement. Displacement was used as a political tool during the Saddam Hussein regime to systematically marginalize ethnic minorities and to consolidate political control. During the 1970s and 1980s, violent campaigns against the Kurds

and Shi'as led to the internal displacement of over one million people.⁷ While the US invasion of Iraq and the overthrow of the Hussein regime did not immediately trigger massive waves of displacement, the resulting instability led to sectarian violence that started in 2006 and has led to repeated waves of

⁶ IDMC, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020*.

⁷ Joseph Sassoon, *The Iraqi Refugees: The New Crisis in the Middle East*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2009, pg. 9; see also Chatelard, Geraldine, "What Visibility Conceals: Re-embedding Refugee Migration from Iraq" and al-Takriti, Nabil, "There Go the Neighbourhoods: Policy Effects vis-à-vis Iraqi Forced Migration" both chapters in Dawn Chatty and Bill Finlayson (eds.), *Dispossession and Displacement: Forced Migration in the Middle East and North Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2010). For an overview of internal displacement in Iraq during the Saddam Hussein regime, see John Fawcett and Victor Tanner, *The Internally Displaced People of Iraq*, Brookings Institution, 2002.

internal displacement as well as refugee flows.⁸ By 2008, 2.78 million Iraqis were internally displaced with a similar number living as refugees outside the country.⁹ Growing militancy by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) led to yet another displacement crisis, which began in December 2013 and led to a third wave of 3.2 million newly displaced IDPs by October 2015.¹⁰ By October 2016, the number of IDPs stood at 3.2 million¹¹ and military operations to retake Mosul from ISIL triggered further displacement. During 2017, the Iraqi military with support from the US and coalition forces, battled to retake ISIL-controlled territory, declaring victory over the Islamic State at the end of 2017.¹² Between 2017 and the end of 2019, the number of newly displaced Iraqi IDPs fell each year. By the end of 2019, there were around 1.5 million Iraqi IDPs – less than half of the 3.2 million people who were internally displaced as of October 2015.

Table 1. Internal Displacement in Iraq Due to Conflict¹³

Year	New Displacements	Total IDPs
2014	2,177,000	3,276,00
2015	1,114,000	3,290,000
2016	659,000	3,035,000
2017	1,379,000	2,648,000
2018	150,000	1,962,000
2019	104,000	1,555,000

While the decrease in Iraqi internal displacement since 2017 has been impressive, resulting from changed conditions due to military operations to

remove ISIL from the territory it controlled, these figures do not tell the whole story. The international humanitarian community geared up in 2014-2015 to respond to the humanitarian needs of the IDPs, setting up camps that hosted from nine per cent of IDPs in February 2015 to 31 per cent in February 2019 to 24 per cent in February 2020 of displaced Iraqis.¹⁴

However, the vast majority of Iraqi IDPs lived in host communities, who were often themselves in need of both protection and humanitarian assistance. In 2017 it was estimated that 3 million vulnerable host community members and 1.4 million highly vulnerable people living in ISIL or other conflict areas were in need of humanitarian aid.¹⁵ To further complicate things, around the same time, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq experienced an influx of approximately 250,000 Syrian refugees, leading not only to increased pressure on the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and humanitarian actors but also to problems in the coordination of assistance efforts.¹⁶

Since its inception in August 2003, Iraq's Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoMD) - the government entity responsible for assisting IDPs, refugees and returnees - has provided assistance to IDPs, but has only helped a small percentage of those in need. In order to receive assistance, IDPs had to register with the MoMD in the local governorate office. However, the registration system relied on the criteria set by the MoMD offices in defining the displaced, rather than the internationally recognized criteria.¹⁷ After displacement due to ISIL, there has been a much more consistent response to registering IDPs as the study data shows: Round 1 (March-May 2016)

8 Dawn Chatty and Nisrine Mansour, "Unlocking Protracted Displacement: An Iraq Case Study" *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 30, 2011, pg. 52; Geraldine Chatelard, "Iraqi Refugee and IDPs: From Humanitarian Intervention to Durable Solutions," *Middle East Institute and Fondation Pour La Recherche Strategique*, 9 June 2011.

9 Sassoon, *op cit.* pg.13. See also Geraldine Chatelard, *Jordan as a transit country: semi-protectionist immigration policies and their effects on Iraqi forced migrants*, *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 61, Geneva, UNHCR, 2002; IOM "Review of Displacement and Return in Iraq," February 2011.

10 IOM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix-Iraq Mission, Round XXX, October 2015*, pg. 4-7, <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/response-idp-crisis-iraq-displacement-tracking-matrix-dtm-round-xxx-october-2015-enarku>.

11 IOM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix-Iraq Mission. Round 57, October 2016* pg. 1.

12 "Iraq declares war with Islamic State is over," *BBC News*, 9 December 2017.

13 IDMC, *Annual Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures*.

14 Data on percentage of IDPs living in camps are from IOM's *Displacement Tracking Matrix*. For the latest information on IDP camps, see: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/iraq.cccm>.

15 OCHA, *2017 Humanitarian Response Plan: Iraq: Advance Executive Summary. 16 December 2016*, pg. 8. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IRQ_Advance_Exec_Summary_HRP_2017_FINAL.pdf

16 Louise Redvers, "Refugee or IDP – does it really matter?" *The New Humanitarian (Formerly IRIN News)*, 13 November 2014.

17 IOM Iraq, *Internal Displacement in Iraq: Barriers to Integration*, December 2013, pg. 14.

of the study in 2016 found that 94 per cent of the families surveyed were registered with MoMD in spite of facing some registration difficulties.¹⁸

As will be shown in later sections of this report, the Iraqi government provided early on initial cash amounts of 1 million IQD (about 800 USD) to IDPs who registered with the MoMD. These cash infusions were cited by many as crucial to their getting by during the initial phase of their displacement. Also, in the first few years of displacement, international aid provided essential help in the form of food, water, fuel, and hygiene materials. Table 2 summarizes the inflow of international assistance from 2010 to 2020.

Table 2. Humanitarian Funding for Iraq over Time, as of May 2020

Year	Funding in Millions (USD)
2010	200
2011	100
2012	50
2013	300
2014	1,400
2015	1,100
2016	1,800
2017	1,400
2018	1,100
2019	1,000
2020	300

Source: UN Financial Tracking Service, <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/106/summary/2019>.

When it comes to solutions for IDPs, the issue of compensation for damaged property and support for return remains paramount. The Iraqi government's compensation mechanisms, as will be discussed below, is an important factor in returns. The legal statutes for compensation were put in place by the post-2003 Iraqi government. In particular, a Central Committee for Compensating the Affected Due to War Operations, Military Mistakes and Terrorist Operations (CCCA) was established with subcommittees set up in each governorate with representatives from various ministries. In February 2017, the CCCA set out the parameters of compensation with the idea to unify the criteria across all governorates. It established five cases for which compensation could be made: death, missing persons, complete or partial disability, damages that affect property and damages that affect educational programs and career paths. All claims are considered on a case-by-case basis.¹⁹ As will be discussed further below, while Iraqi IDPs over time became more aware of the compensation programs, and by Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) a majority of IDPs had applied for compensation, the percentage of IDPs whose claims had been decided upon remained low.

¹⁸ IDMC, *Iraq: IDPs caught between a rock and a hard place as displacement crisis deepens*, 30 June 2015, pg. 11.

¹⁹ IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions in Iraq: Experiences Applying to Compensation*, January 2020.

THIS STUDY

IOM Iraq, in collaboration with Georgetown University, developed the panel study entitled Access to Durable Solutions for IDPs in Iraq in 2015 to deepen the understanding of IDP progress towards durable solutions over time. Over the course of five years, the longitudinal study on durable solutions traces the journeys of 4,000 families originally from Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din (seven governorates of origin) who were displaced to one of four governorates where the study was fielded: Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah. The mixed-method study focuses on IDPs who were displaced by ISIL from between January 2014 and December 2015 living in non-camp locations.²⁰ This is an important aspect of the study, both because of the lack of research on IDPs living outside of camps

and also because there are important differences between IDPs living in camps and outside of camps. The study captures information on secondary displacement, returns and other movements.

The study is based on three research questions:

- How does the experience of displacement and access to durable solutions among IDPs in Iraq change over time?
- What are the needs, coping strategies, and aspirations of IDPs, and which events or factors are perceived to impact these needs, coping strategies, and aspirations over time?
- How does the experience of IDPs in Iraq inform our conceptualization and operationalization of quasi-durable and durable solutions?

The study evaluates the main trends in eight criteria spelled out in the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs intended to collectively measure a durable solution including: Safety and Security; Standard of Living; Livelihood and Employment; Housing, Land and Property; Personal and Other Documentation; Family Reunification; Access to Justice; and Participation in Public Affairs.

CRITERIA 1



SAFETY AND SECURITY

CRITERIA 2



STANDARD OF LIVING

CRITERIA 3



LIVELIHOOD AND EMPLOYMENT

CRITERIA 4



HOUSING, LAND, AND PROPERTY

CRITERIA 5



PERSONAL AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

CRITERIA 6



FAMILY SEPARATION AND REUNIFICATION

CRITERIA 7



PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CRITERIA 8



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The IASC Framework is the primary international standard for supporting and assessing durable solutions. However, as Annex 1 shows, the issue of determining when displacement ends is a complex one and there have been several efforts to operationalize the framework by developing more specific indicators.

²⁰ For a further description of the methodology used, see Appendix A of IOM Iraq and Georgetown University *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement*, February 2019.

IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons²¹

The Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs, adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) stands as the single most important normative framework for assessing when internal displacement ends. It was developed over the course of a decade; a 2006 version was piloted, revised and endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in 2010.²² The Framework refers to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, in particular emphasizing that the primary responsibility to provide durable solutions for IDPs lies with the national authorities.

The IASC Framework for Durable Solutions spells out the three durable solutions:

- Sustainable reintegration at the place of origin;
- Sustainable local integration in areas where internally displaced persons take refuge;
- Sustainable integration in another part of the country.

The Framework emphasizes that attaining durable solutions is a process – not an end point and it spells out eight criteria that may be used to determine to what extent a durable solution has been achieved:

1. Long-term safety and security;
2. Adequate standard of living without discrimination;
 - IDPs have adequate access to: essential food and potable water; basic shelter and housing; essential medical services, including post-sexual assault care and other reproductive healthcare; sanitation; and at least primary school education;
 - Adequacy means that these minimum goods and services are available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable.
3. Access to livelihoods and employment;
4. Effective and accessible mechanisms to restore housing, land and property;
5. Access to personal and other documentation without discrimination;
6. Family reunification;
7. Participation in public affairs without discrimination;
8. Access to effective remedies and justice.

For this IOM Iraq-Georgetown longitudinal study of Iraqi IDPs, a number of specific questions were developed for each of the eight criteria. In addition to providing nuanced analysis on IDPs' underlying decision-making about return, integration, or relocation, the study also analyzes thematic issues such as access to compensation, female-headed households, urban displacement and economic decision-making among IDPs. Employing mixed methods, it uses the longitudinal qualitative component to provide deeper analysis of the numbers. The fact that different criteria can be measured at different levels of analysis

(i.e. individual, household [HH], area, institution) helps draw focus on the progressive resolution of displacement that can be observed by looking at data over time.²³ In this study, the unit of analysis is the household. One caveat to this study is that differences within the family unit are not captured. This may be particularly important in looking at durable solutions; for example, generational differences may mean that while parents wish to return, their children may prefer to remain in their places of displacement. Family members may also calculate risk differently.

²¹ IASC, *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, IASC, 2010.

²² See *Brookings Project on Internal Displacement, When Displacement Ends: A Framework for Durable Solutions*, Brookings Institution, June 2007.

²³ Rochelle Davis, Salma Al-Shami, Grace Benton, Jake Moran, Caila McHugh, Nicole Ruggiero, and Moez Hayat, *Comparing the Experiences of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban vs Rural Areas: Findings from a Longitudinal Study in Iraq, 2015-2017*, Global Report on Internal Displacement Background Paper, IDMC, February 2019.

By Round 2 (February–April 2017), three distinct groups could be identified in the survey: All rounds of data collection included interviews with IDP households that the study assigned to one of three groups: IDPs, movers (those who have moved from their place of initial displacement but have not returned to their district of origin) and returnees (those who had returned to their districts of origin). The composition of the Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) sample by status is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of IDPs, Movers and Returnees in the Study Sample of Round 5 (October 2019 – January 2020)

	Number	Percent
IDPs	1,865	53.9
Movers	306	8.8
Returnees	1,292	37.3
TOTAL	3,463	100

SECTION 3: FINDINGS

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FROM FIVE ROUNDS OF INTERVIEWS

The five rounds of data collection contain important insights on many issues, ranging from changes in civic participation to use of borrowing money as a survival strategy to health issues. This section highlights the findings across time that are particularly relevant to securing durable solutions; in particular, in this section, responses to one or

two questions for each of the eight criteria are compared – criteria which are important for either prospects for return or for local integration. The sections below show changes over time in IDP perceptions and are based on data for those IDPs who remained IDPs throughout the five rounds.

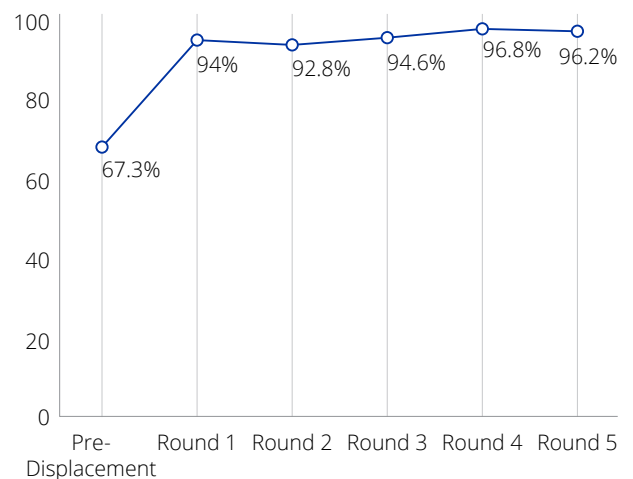
CRITERIA 1

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Central to the understanding of durable solutions is the need for people to be safe in whatever solution they choose. A first observation is that IDPs overall feel safer in their current place of displacement than in the areas where they were living on January 1st, 2014 (pre-displacement). The percentage of respondents who felt completely or moderately safe significantly increased after displacement and remained largely stable throughout the five rounds of data collection (see Figure 1).

In comparison with Round 1 interviews – where around 67 per cent of IDP households reported feeling completely safe – by Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), almost all IDP households (96%) felt completely safe.

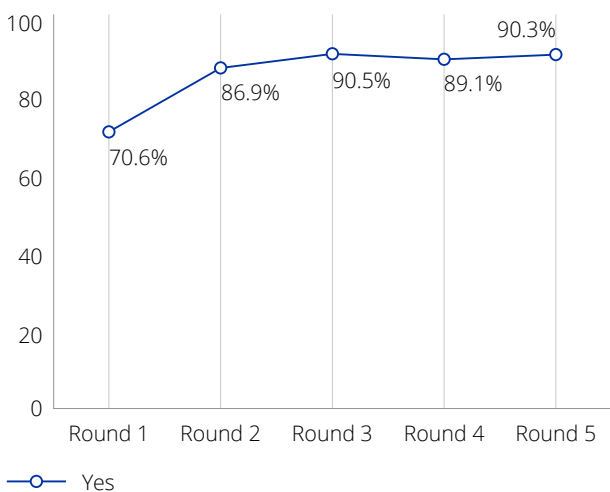
Figure 1. Feelings of Safety Among IDPs in the Community: Percent of Families Who Reported Feeling "Completely" or "Moderately" Safe



Takeaway: Displacement is an effective protection strategy for households affected by conflict. The fact that large majorities of IDPs report that they feel safe in their area of displacement is a significant finding. It shows that IDPs sought refuge in areas where they could find safety and that host communities were largely welcoming.

Qualitative interviews with IDP families, conducted in Round 1 (March–May 2016), revealed that cultivating good relationships with the host community functioned, for some, as a strategy to ensure safety and security. Subsequent interviews in each round of interviews reveal a fairly straightforward increase in the percentage of IDPs feeling accepted in their communities. While 71 per cent of IDPs in Round 1 of interviews said that they felt either strongly or somewhat accepted by the community in which they were displaced, almost 90 per cent of the IDPs interviewed in Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) indicated that they felt accepted by the community.

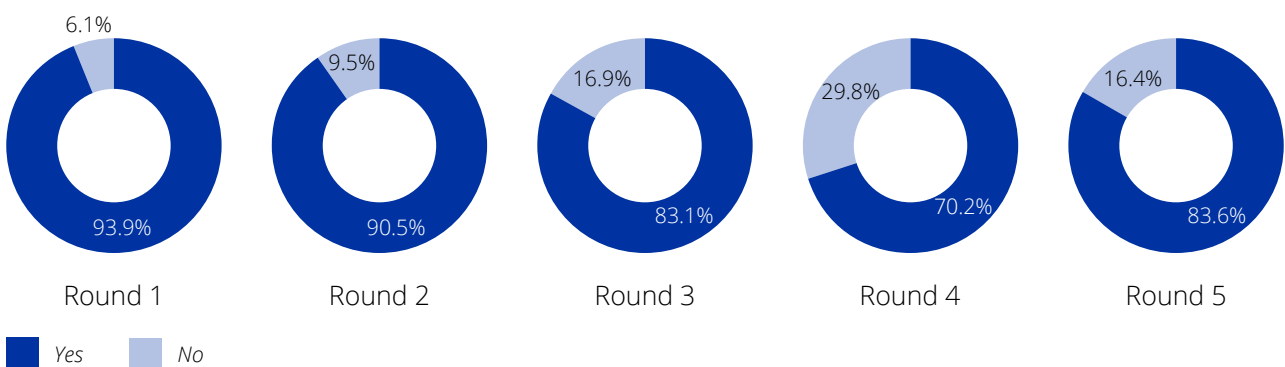
Figure 2. Feelings of Acceptance in Local Community



A very positive finding is that IDPs feel increasingly accepted over time. This certainly does not hold in protracted displacement situations in other contexts where resentment of and tension between host communities and IDPs increases with time.²⁴ This may be due to the fact that Iraq is a country with a fair amount of population movement with rural-urban migration, labor migration and conscription which sent people to other parts of the country. In addition, the nature of the conflict – perpetrated by a violent terrorist group that killed many Iraqis – likely engendered significant sympathy among host community members toward those displaced by ISIL (even as some host community members may have been wary of the IDPs because of ISIL).

Feeling accepted by a community, however, is not the same as resolving displacement. By Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), almost 84 per cent of IDPs surveyed still considered themselves as displaced at the time of the survey. However, over periods of time longer than the five years covered by this study, community acceptance may contribute to a feeling among IDPs that they are no longer displaced.

Figure 3. IDP Households: Consider Themselves displaced?



Takeaway: While feeling accepted by the host community is a positive sign, it is not sufficient to lead individuals to feel that they are no longer displaced. A challenge for understanding durable solutions is how to reconcile indicators of solutions with IDPs’ own perceptions of displacement. None of the frameworks examined here include perceptions of displacement in their criteria.

²⁴ Roberto Carlos Vidal López, Clara Inés Atehortúa, and Jorge Salcedo, *The Effects of Internal Displacement on Host Communities: A Case Study of Suba and Ciudad Bolívar Localities in Bogotá, Colombia*, Brookings Institution-London School of Economics Project on Internal Displacement, October 2011.

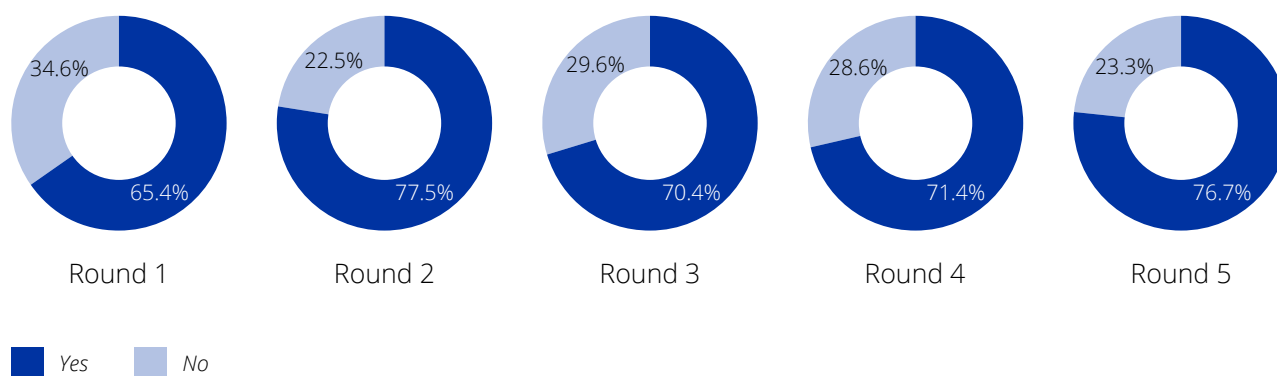
CRITERIA 2

STANDARD OF LIVING

In 2016, during Round 1 (March–May 2016) of data collection, approximately 35 per cent of IDP households could not provide for their family's

basic needs; by Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), this share had decreased to just under 25 per cent.

Figure 4. Family's Ability to Provide for Basic Needs in Past Three Months

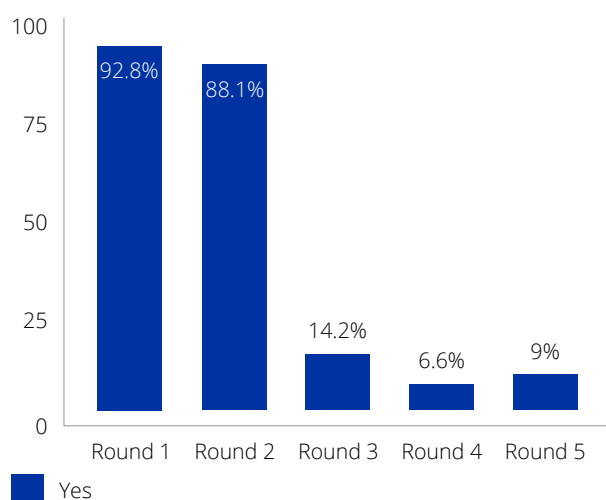


Based on reporting from Round 1 (March–May 2016), many said that they received assistance from the government or from charitable organizations immediately after they were displaced. This aid often allowed them to purchase some basic necessities, pay (at least part of) their rent, and begin to get settled within the host community. Local charities seemed to provide a good deal of assistance to IDPs, which may account for differences in the ability to access adequate living standards. Even among those who received assistance, however, the majority of IDPs borrowed money and/or consumed savings as their primary strategy for covering basic needs, while others reduced consumption of food, restricted their recourse to medical care or shared a house.

In Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), only nine per cent of IDPs reported receiving assistance from a source other than the MoMD. Of the small share who do receive aid, the majority (60%) report

receiving it from another person, such as a relative or friend, and most report receiving either food and water (39%) or non-food items (29%).

Figure 5. IDP Households Receiving Aid



Takeaway: IDPs benefited from assistance in their initial period of displacement, but received far less as time went on. Support from family and friends – and particularly taking on debt to meet daily needs – were the primary means by which IDPs were able to survive. Although as Table 2 above indicates, Iraq continued to receive substantial international humanitarian assistance, and much of this was re-directed from direct aid to families to broader infrastructure development, employment development and safety.

Interview with Iraqi IDP family, now living in Basra

This family, now living in Basra, is headed by a 54-year old woman who was born in Baghdad. Her husband was from Mosul, in the Ninewa governorate, where the family lived and where all the children were born. Her family consists of a married 31-year-old son, a 22-year-old daughter, and a 12-year-old son.

In Round 2 (February–April 2017), she described living in Basra and working in a small hair salon in Sha'iba, a neighborhood that she describes as “very far from the city center [and] the socio-economic conditions of her customers prevented the business from really thriving.” She also said, “the salon is in a small, poor area and the people go to the salon only for special occasions and weddings.”

Prior to displacement, she mentioned that her son had a good job in Mosul, but now “everything depends on our daily income from the hair salon.” She reported that there is no discrimination by members of the host community, although they were a little hesitant at first “because they know that [she] is not from the region.”

In Round 2, she said that if she had more money, she would like to buy a piece of land and open her own shop. She would like to live in a bigger house and make one of the extra bedrooms into her salon. At the time, she reported that her living conditions were crowded and unsanitary due to the presence of insects and vermin. However, she said that she has decided to stay in Sha'iba due to the reliability of electricity in the area. The proximity to Basra's oil refineries means that electricity is more stable than in other parts of the country.

By Round 3 (July–September 2017), the interviewee was still working in the salon, but she reported that her daughter had learned the profession as well. “She even started new services in the salon, such as doing temporary hair tattoos and keratin treatments for the hair at competitive prices”

In Round 4 (August–November 2018), she reported that her family was living in a 4-bedroom house occupied by three different families. The fourth bedroom was converted into a salon, which is the family's only source of income.

In Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), the son who worked in Mosul wanted the family to return so he could go back to his job there. “But the other children do not want to return to Mosul because they have already adapted to the Basra community and feel comfortable living close to their cousins. The subject of returning is hard for me, and it's become an especially difficult decision after the death of my husband. But after many discussions, we decided that staying in Basra was the best solution, so we arranged to live here. It is easy for us to make this decision to stay here and not return to Mosul since my husband's brother donated a piece of land for us to build our own house. This frees us from rent, even though we cannot afford construction expenses for a house right now. In addition, we don't want to return to Mosul in fear that ISIS will return after all we have been through during this time, and out of fear of losing the life we've made in Basra. We had a house on the west side of Mosul, but it is still ruined without any basic amenities. The city also lacks basic services and the economy has deteriorated. Most of the population has not returned because of the destruction and ruin of their homes, so I think our decision to stay in Basra is right.”

In addition, one of her daughters “got a permanent job as a nurse in a hospital in Basra after graduating from nursing school at the Basra Bureau of Health, which appoints graduates immediately after graduation.”

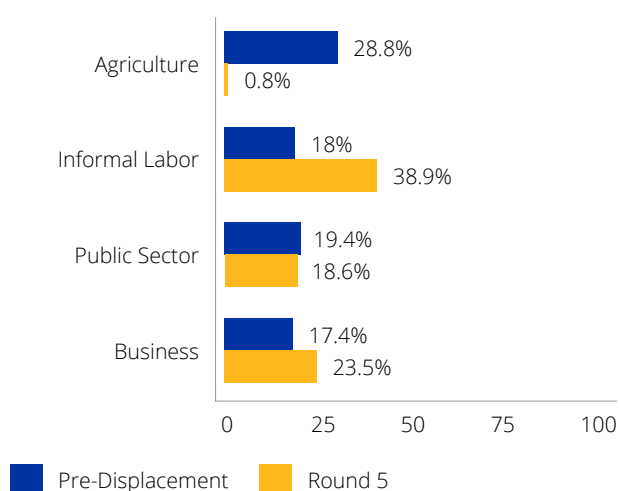
She described that she would happily accept a business loan offer in order to expand and develop her salon. “First, I would move it to a more appropriate location in the center of Basra where I could attract more customers, and I'd also buy the needed modern equipment that every professional beauty salon must have.” She has borrowed money from a neighbor without interest, but “I did not pay back the debt, and I don't know how I'll pay it. Work at the beauty salon is slow right now so I'm not making enough money. I'm very embarrassed of this situation and of problems with paying back the debt since I cannot make the payment deadline.”

CRITERIA 3

EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

IDPs reported having faced limitations in accessing employment. As shown in Table 8 below, IDPs' sources of income/money changed as a result of displacement – most strikingly in the agricultural and informal labor sectors. Almost 30 per cent of IDPs reported that their primary source of income pre-displacement was from agriculture; this number dropped to below one per cent because the land that they had worked on was largely inaccessible. During displacement, informal labor continuously represents the largest share of livelihood for IDPs. Both public sector jobs and business sector jobs grew over the five rounds of data collection. The majority of IDPs (71%) report earning money from a different type of job/different sector than before displacement.

Figure 6. Primary Source of Income/Money: Pre-Displacement vs. Round 5



Variations in employment in the informal sector – from 18 per cent pre displacement to a high 43 per cent in Round 3 (July–September 2017), dropping in Round 4 (August–November 2018) and rising again in Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) – may reflect the turmoil Iraq experienced in this time period. Shortfalls in income were often made up by borrowing money, primarily from relatives and friends. In Round 4 for the first time, the share of those who needed to borrow money dropped (to 66% compared to 95% in Round 3) and almost all who needed to borrow money could do so (95%). The share who needed to borrow money held steady in Round 5 (63%), as did the share that was able to do so (93%).

Takeaway: One of the main consequences of displacement is the loss of livelihoods. In addition to borrowing money from friends and family to get by, IDPs in very high numbers seek employment in the informal sector. With time, IDPs tend to find jobs in both the public and private sectors. With greater stability and security, the development of nation-wide strategy for restoring businesses and transportation is essential to recreating a supportive economic environment. In particular, special investment in the agriculture sector will go a long way toward returning the economic livelihoods of a large group of displaced IDPs, as well as building up Iraq's economy.

Table 4. Primary Source of Income/Money*

	Pre-Displacement %	Round 1 %	Round 2 %	Round 3 %	Round 4 %	Round 5 %
Public job	19.4	0.0	19.5	16.4	24.0	18.6
Private job	4.6	0.7	4.9	2.2	6.5	3.7
Agriculture	28.8	0.0	0.4	2.2	0.4	0.8
Business	17.4	0.0	14.3	16.3	23.4	23.5
Informal Labor	18.0	0.0	42.2	43.4	28.6	38.9
Pension	8.8	0.7	9.3	11.3	11.1	11.1
Other	2.0	0.1	7.9	6.2	3.6	2.0
No Source	0.9	98.5	1.6	1.9	2.3	1.4

*In Round 1, the question wording in Arabic was "income," which respondents understood as a steady, consistent salary. As such, in subsequent rounds, the question wording was changed to ask about the primary source of "money."

Interview with Returnee Family to Anbar

This interview series over four rounds (April 2017-January 2020) was conducted with a family that farmed and raised livestock in Anbar governorate in the Al Karmeh, Khayrat area. The Son who is in his 20s answered the questions. They were displaced to Kirkuk governorate initially, and by Round 2 (February-April 2017) they had returned to their home in Anbar governorate where they remained. It is evident from this interview that a family whose livelihood was entirely based on farming has not, by Round 5, been able to return to it in any substantial way due to lack of resources.

The family looked back on their life before displacement and described it as follows: "Our life was very good and we had everything. We owned our houses, we worked in agriculture, we had sheep and cows, and we sold agricultural crops and milk. We had a good monthly income and we owned agricultural machines. However, with the entry of ISIL, we lost everything, even our houses and properties were destroyed. Now that we have returned, we live in a single room which remained and didn't collapse with the rest of the house."

Displacement away from agriculture was a challenge for their livelihoods, and the son talked about learning to work in the field of construction while living in Kirkuk. "After I returned to Anbar governorate, I did not find a job due to the lack of employment opportunities and the decline of the market and the abundance in labor. It is difficult to find work for you and your family and I do not know anyone who succeeded in his life here because we live in one area and all people are going through the same suffering."

By Round 4, the family had been able to rebuild a small part of their home but most of their money was spent on the daily cost of living. They also bought 4 sheep for milk which they both consumed and sold. If they had more money, the son reported, they would buy a car and use it to transport goods and people and make a living from it.

They reported things had not changed much in Round 5. "As for the living conditions here, they are not good, and this included the area in general and not just my family, because the job opportunities are very little because of the distance of the area from the city and main roads. The people here, including me, depend on daily labor, given that most of the population did not go to school. This is the case in most villages as they are not interested in studying but rather in agriculture and other hard work. As far as specialized trade until now, we need to go to other nearby areas for work for a source of livelihood. Personally, I work as a truck driver, and every day I go to the Syrian border point to bring goods inside Iraq for daily living consumption while my relatives go to the city to find work." When the son was asked what he might do with a loan or a large amount of money, he replied, "I would use this loan in farm projects such as raising cows and sheep where we can buy the tools and farming machines so that the people of the village can benefit from them. They could work in the project and increase local production."

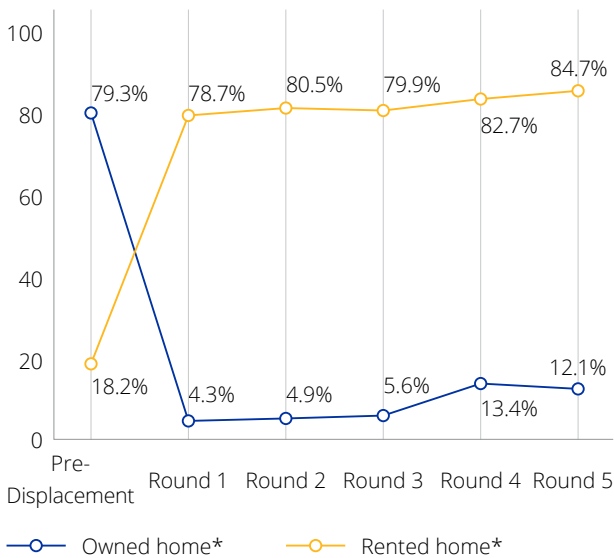
CRITERIA 4

HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

In Round 3 (July–September 2017), 45 per cent of respondents listed housing/ability to repair their houses as one of the top three requisite conditions they would need in order to return to their home governorates. Those who want to stay and integrate where they are, find that access to housing, land and property is also an important factor.

Prior to displacement, the vast majority of IDPs lived in homes that they owned. During displacement, the majority have rented accommodations, either alone or shared.

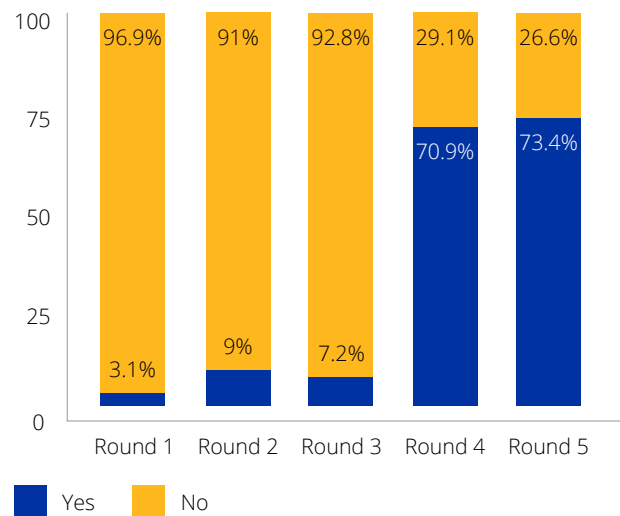
Figure 7. Shelter Type Before and During Displacement



* With immediate or extended family

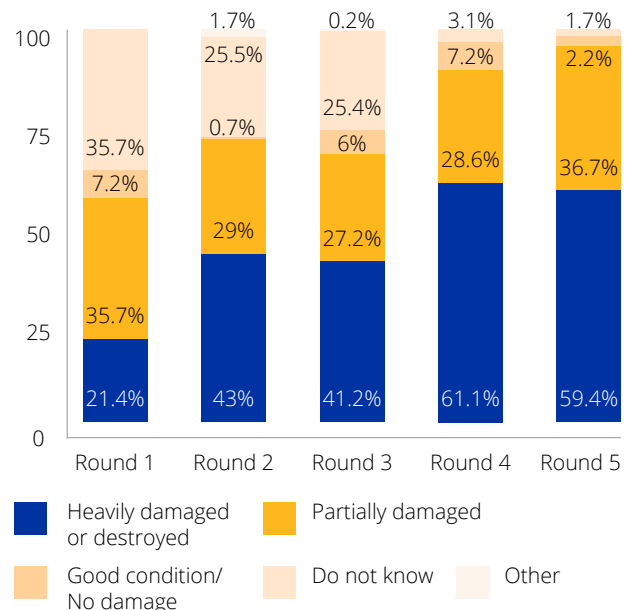
In Round 1 (March–May 2016), the vast majority of IDPs (96%) were unable to access their place of residences, citing active fighting and community tension” as the primary obstacles. By Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), nearly 73 per cent indicated that they were now able to access their property.

Figure 8. Access Property in Governorate of Origin*



*Among those who owned property before displacement and retain ownership of it

Figure 9. Condition of Property in Governorate of Origin*



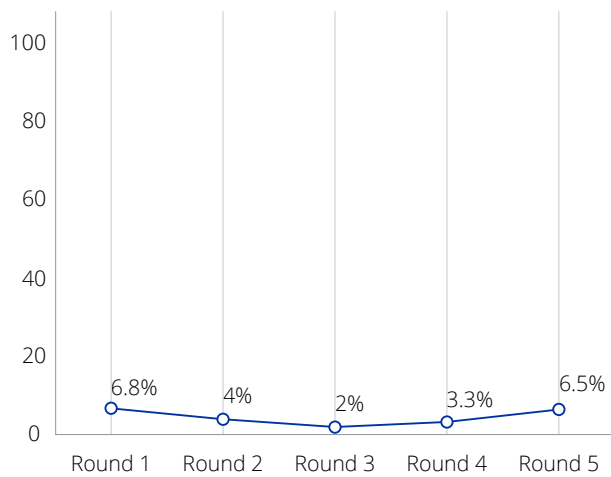
*Among those who owned property before displacement and retain ownership of it

Takeaway: The key role of housing in decisions to return is evident and consequently measures are needed for IDPs to assess the conditions of their homes before any type of return is enacted. Given the very high levels of damage and destruction, funding and other structural and bureaucratic means are essential to assist IDPs in rebuilding their homes.

CRITERIA 5

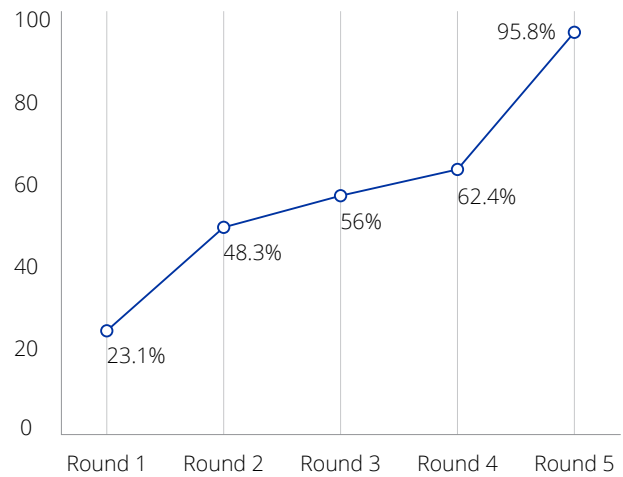
PERSONAL AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

Figure 10. Loss of Documentation Among Any Household Member: Percent of IDP Families Who Reported "Yes"



While loss of documentation is a common feature for many of the world's IDPs including in Iraq, document loss and replacement has not been a major issue for those Iraqi IDPs in this study who were displaced during the 2014 to 2016 time period, and the actual proportion of IDPs who lost official documentation is small. Less than seven per cent of families reported a loss of documentation by at least one of their members – a figure which is far lower than those IDPs living in camps. Those

Figure 11. Ability to Replace All or Some Lost Documentation: Percent of Families Who Reported "Yes"



who did lose documents had numerous difficulties in having documents reissued, as the process is slow, difficult and expensive. Many of those who have to replace their documents must return to their governorates of origin. Of those who lost documents in 2016, only about half were able to replace them by Round 2 (February–April 2017). However, by Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), over 95 per cent had been able to do so.

Takeaway: While affecting only a small minority of Iraqi non-camp IDPs, the loss of documentation is a major issue for those without documents and it seems that those who have moved to a site other than the place of their displacement have a harder time replacing lost documentation. The Iraqi government should make it easier for IDPs to replace missing documents.

CRITERIA 6

FAMILY SEPARATION AND REUNIFICATION

Figure 12. Usual Members of the Family Separated for More than Three Months: Percent of Families Who Reported “Yes”

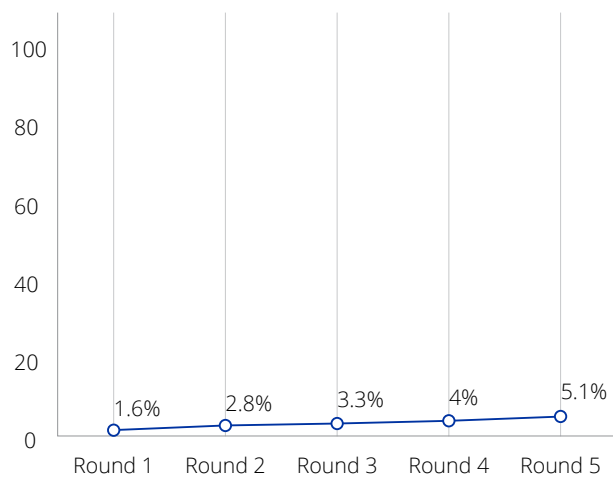
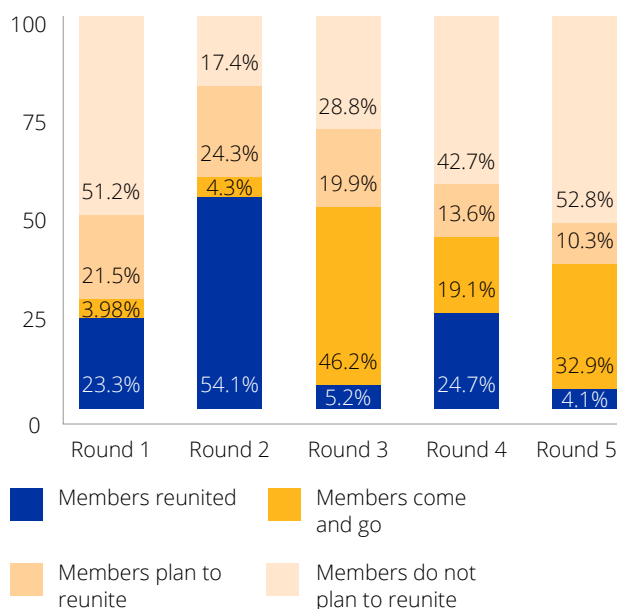


Figure 13. Reunification Status of Usual Members of the Family Separated for More than Three Months*



* Percentages are among those who said “Yes” in Figure 12 above. For example, of the 5.5% of households who had family members separated for more than three months in Round 5, 32.9% say that family members come and go

Again, in comparison with many situations of internal displacement, Iraqi non-camp IDPs have generally not experienced high rates of family separation. Throughout their time in displacement, the vast majority of IDP families (95% or higher) reported that the usual members of the family were not separated for more than three months following displacement. Beginning or continuing education and marriage are among the most common reasons for families who were separated.

Of those who have experienced family separation, the majority were initially reunited in Round 2 (February–April 2017). In subsequent rounds, family separation seems to be tied to adult children moving because of marriage or for continued education. This is especially notable in Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) where almost a third of family members are reported as ‘coming and going.’

Takeaway: There is a need to recognize that not all family separation is bad. These data seem to indicate that most family members are separated for “normal” reasons – they move away to go to school, for work, or to marry or join family members elsewhere. This suggests that mobility after displacement is a normal phenomenon and some mobility should be recognized as “normal” and not always as displacement.

CRITERIA 7

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

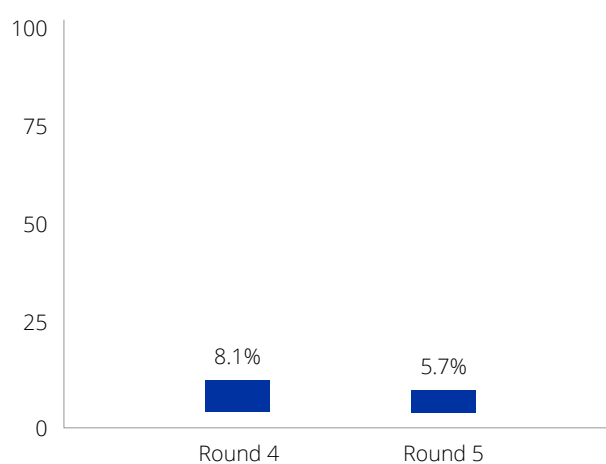
Levels of participation in civic affairs were low prior to the wave of displacement in 2014, likely stemming from the destruction of institutions – particularly those aligned with the Ba’ath party – after 2003. “Civil society” concepts developed as ideas about non-governmental institutions in Europe; thus, imposing this understanding of how the world functions on places that have different histories, political structures, were colonized, and/or led by authoritarian rulers does not make for good survey work or legible data. Thus, the surveys asked about civic participation in different ways in the various rounds: by enumerating different types of groups—such as charity organizations, women’s groups, cultural or sports groups²⁵—and enumerating different types of activities, as was in Rounds 4 and 5.

Among IDPs, participation in both civic groups and local reconciliation initiatives increases throughout IDPs’ time in displacement, but overall participation remains very low – less than six per cent of IDPs in Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020) reported volunteering for any civic activity. The most common form of participation is in a parent’s group or school committee.

Another measure of civic engagement is voting in elections. In almost 56 per cent of cases, the head of household reported voting in the May

2018 Parliamentary elections. While procedural obstacles in obtaining the biometric card was given as a reason for not voting in the election (about 34% of cases), over half of those who did not vote said it was because of a lack of interest or faith in the political system.

Figure 14. Percent of IDP Families Who Participated in Associational Life*



*Volunteered for, attended a meeting of, or donated money to a civic group, cultural club, or professional association. Percent reported for “yes” includes those IDP households where at least one member of the household did one of the three listed activities.

Table 5. Voting in May 2018 Parliamentary Elections*

Did the household head vote in the 12 May 2018 elections? %		If not, why? %	
Yes	55.8	Did not receive biometric card	16.7
		Unable to apply for biometric card	18.0
		No interest or faith in the political system	52.6
No	44.2	Unable to travel to voting location	11.3
		Other	1.4

*These questions were asked in Round 4 only

Takeaway: Although IDPs have increasingly felt accepted by their host community, their participation in civic affairs remains low. In order to interpret this finding, it would be important to have comparable data for civic participation of host communities.

25 IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Four Years in Displacement*, 2019, pg. 19.

⚖️ CRITERIA 8

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

While legislation on compensation was developed in the mid-2000s, its utility for IDPs has been limited, in part due to the fact that returning IDPs have been prioritized over those who remain displaced. When it comes to broader issues of achieving justice,

in Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), IDPs indicated that prosecution of criminals was most important (53%), followed by compensation for victims (19%) and finding truth and acknowledging violations (14%).

Takeaway: Prosecution of criminals remains the single most important aspect of achieving justice for displaced families, suggesting that restoring rule of law and the capacity of law enforcement and the judicial system to bring criminals to justice may be more important than truth & reconciliation mechanisms or even compensation schemes. However, these findings might be because Iraqis have little faith in receiving compensation because of the many years of delay in the system.

As mentioned in the introductory section, the Iraqi government has established a mechanism to provide compensation to Iraqis whose property was damaged as a result of the conflict. But it has taken time for IDPs to learn about the process and to apply for compensation. In Round

1 (March–May 2016), only nine per cent of IDPs knew that compensation had existed. By Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), 59 per cent of IDPs had applied to or accessed restitution and compensation mechanisms for property.

Figure 15. Most Important Aspect of Achieving Justice for the Family

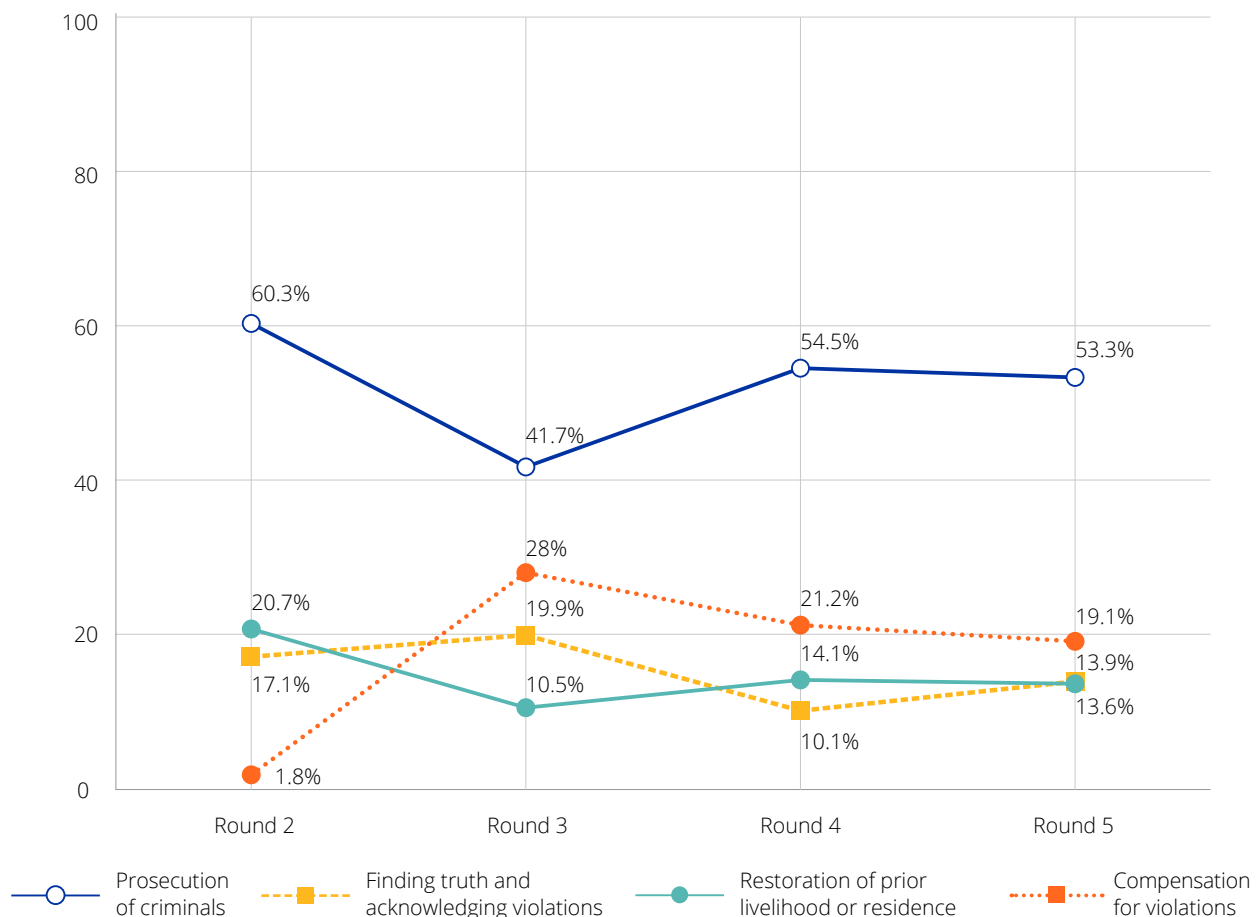
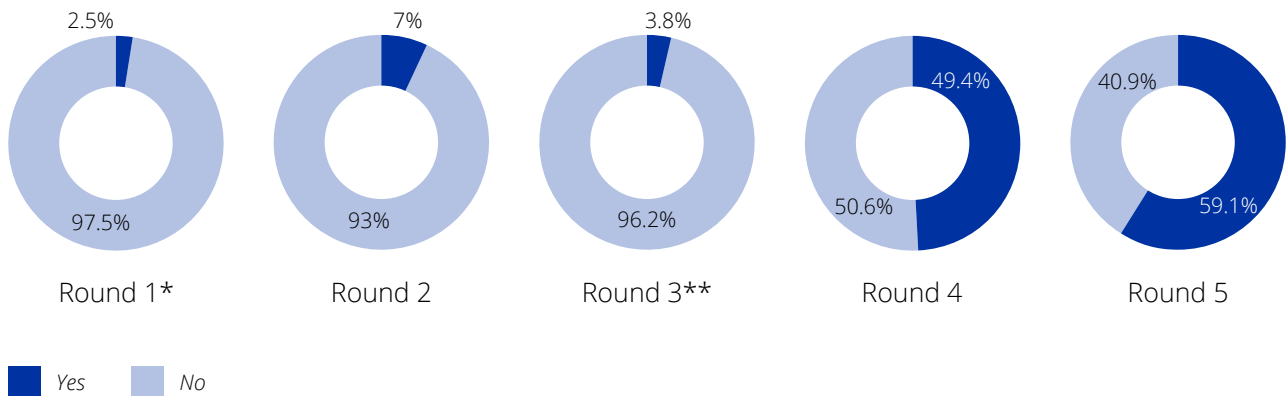


Figure 16. Applied to Compensation: Percent of Families Who Reported “Yes”

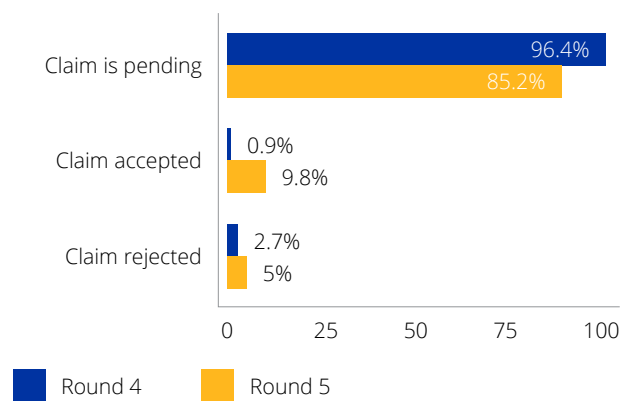


*In Round 1, only 9.2% of all IDPs indicated they knew compensation existed. The reported numbers in this table apply to all IDPs, regardless of their knowledge of compensation.

** In Round 3, the question was only asked to those who specifically reported partial or complete damage to their property

Unfortunately, there is a gap between applying for and receiving compensation for damaged and destroyed property. In Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020), 85 per cent of IDPs reported that their claims were pending, 10 per cent that their claim had been accepted and 5 per cent that their claim had been rejected.

Figure 17. Status of Compensation Claim Among Those Who Applied



Takeaway: There is a need for the Iraqi government’s committees to accelerate the processing of claims for compensation.

SECTION 4: WAYS FORWARD AND FUTURE RESEARCH

OTHER INSIGHTS FROM THE DATA OVER THE FIVE ROUNDS

Limited space precludes more detailed analysis of all of the data collected over the past five rounds of interviews, but there are three points which emerged in the data analysis and need to be taken into account by both Iraqi and international actors. These may also be relevant in other situations of non-camp internal displacement.

First, the importance of IDP agency.²⁶ Out-of-camp IDPs themselves are making decisions about moving on and returning home based on their own calculations of risk, benefits and situational factors. They are not just passive aid recipients. However, it should be noted that because the study was based on the household level of analysis, little can be inferred about the different preferences and priorities of different members of the household. It is clear that families find temporary solutions that cobble together different things to aid them

in getting by, relying on host community, family, friends, work connections, aid, etc.

In responding to detailed questions about livelihoods and standards of living, IDPs repeatedly lifted up the importance of friends and family members as sources of information about jobs and as lenders of cash. This suggests that resilience – a term which is much used – is actually quite complicated and dynamic as IDPs acquire and then pay back debts and change livelihoods in response to changed circumstances. The factors that make it possible for IDPs to ‘get by’ change over time. In the beginning, direct assistance as well as support from friends and family is essential. After a few years, as aid diminishes, assistance from individuals becomes key. In particular, borrowing money, thereby incurring debt, plays a role in IDP resilience which merits further study.

Takeaway: Social capital is tremendously important at all stages of displacement and should be recognized by the international community as a network and set of obligations that IDPs rely on. Staff of international organizations should practice humility about their influence on IDPs’ lives and particularly their decisions about the future.

Second, the importance of restoring livelihoods as key not only to IDPs’ survival in displacement but about their ability to find durable solutions. In particular, attention to rural areas is important not only for IDP livelihoods but also for enhancing food security in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Iraq

generally.²⁷ A related issue is the need to conduct labor needs assessments in places of return and to develop support systems for returning IDPs so that they can either resume their pre-displacement jobs or find employment in other sectors.

Takeaway: While security and safety remain the most important factors in IDPs’ decisions about whether or not to return to their communities of origin, livelihoods are important both in decisions about return and about the extent to which IDPs are able to integrate in their communities of displacement. The particular needs of those who worked in the agricultural sector before displacement need to be addressed by both humanitarian and development actors.

²⁶ IOM and Georgetown University, "Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement," April 2017.

²⁷ Rochelle Davis, Grace Benton, Dana Al Dairani, Michaela Gallien, & Salma Al-Shami (2018). *Home After Isis: A Study of Return as a Durable Solution in Iraq*, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 13:2, 1-15; Joost Jongerden, Wouter Wolters, Youri Dijkhoorn, Faik Gür, Murat Öztürk, *The Politics of Agricultural Development in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region in Iraq (KRI)*, *Sustainability*, 11(21), MDPI, October 2019.

Longitudinal Perspective and Needs for Agriculture, Round 5 (October 2019–January 2020)

In Round 5, a module was added in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to inquire about agriculture. Thus, 774 households who were involved in agriculture—meaning any part of their income came from agriculture or herd animal raising on their own or another's land—before displacement were asked specific questions about agriculture and farming.

Just over one quarter (27% and 208 households) of these households had returned to their area of origin by Round 5. Of these returnee households, 20 per cent has resumed farming or herding, while the remaining majority rely (71%) on non-agricultural sectors such as informal labor, business and public jobs as main source of income.

Focusing on the main economic activities of returnee farmer households as defined above, longitudinal data of Rounds 2 through 5 suggest that public jobs, private businesses, agriculture, and informal labor are the four primary sources of returnees' income. An increased number of returned farmer families indicate agriculture as the most important source of their income having increased from nearly four per cent in Round 2 (February–April 2017), 2 households out of 53, to more than 20 per cent in Round 5, 42 households out of 208.

Despite the small number of returnee households with an agriculture background who have now resumed farming and herding as the main economic activity, agriculture was found to still represent an important source of income/revenue and food security. A complete set of policies correctly implemented might lead agriculture to return to be one of the main livelihood durable solutions for IDPs in Iraq especially in rural areas, for both returnees and those who remain in displacement

For all those declared that they were interested to work in agriculture (both returnees and still displaced), access to farm inputs (seeds, animals, feed, or equipment) and access to land emerged as the first and the second most important needs for households to work in agriculture. Lack of access to seeds, animals, feed or equipment was the first reason as mentioned by 40 per cent of farmers, followed by problems of accessing land (25% of farmers) are the main reasons to explain why returnee farmers have not returned to agriculture in the past 12 months. Provision of these two essentials would encourage displaced and returned households to work in agriculture.

Some 10 per cent of the farmers chose to leave agriculture and enter different livelihoods options (economic activities). In addition, and relevant to the greater economic problems facing Iraq, nearly seven per cent of the farmers found it cheaper to import food than growing it locally, reflecting the fact that agriculture is no longer profitable and competitive for this group of farmers. Thus, it is not surprising to find that only 13 per cent of the total 1,241 returnee families in Round 5 indicated their interest in working in agriculture in the coming 12 months. Most of them, 87 per cent, expressed no interest in agriculture, at least, in the coming year.

Third, aid provision to the displaced was critical to their well-being and ability to get by. While the study found that while some IDPs had received multiple rounds of aid from the government and nongovernmental organizations, others received it only once from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement.²⁸ As displacement became protracted, direct aid to IDPs diminished. With the passage of time, there was increased need for other kinds of support, such as livelihoods training, compensation, or loans for rebuilding housing.²⁹ This study shows how IDP

needs change over time. In order to support their needs as they seek solutions, sustained financing and international coordination around assistance is needed, and IDPs need to be incorporated into national development plans. Local aid organizations must be consulted as idea generators and partners, and not just implementers of funding policies developed outside Iraq. Although outside the scope of this study, it seems that the large sums of money available for stabilization in Iraq have been used more intentionally to support solutions for IDPs.

²⁸ IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Part One*, April 2017.

²⁹ November 2019. "Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Four Years in Displacement"; IOM and Georgetown University, February 2019 and "Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement."; IOM and Georgetown University, April 2017.

Takeaway: International assistance plays an essential role in supporting solutions for IDPs in the immediate aftermath of displacement. More robust systems for coordination of international assistance and planning about direct aid versus structural aid is needed to support IDPs to find solutions to displacement.

Diving Deeper: What This Study Tells Us About Durable Solutions

As discussed above, there have been several important efforts to develop and apply criteria for determining when displacement ends as well as several different initiatives to develop specific indicators for assessing whether these criteria are met.³⁰

The findings of this study reinforce three things. First, the contention in the IASC Framework that ending displacement is a process – not just meeting certain objective and measurable criteria. However, while the pilot version of the Framework for Durable Solutions put equal emphasis on the process as on the criteria and while it emphasized that IDP participation in the process was critical for its success, the final version of the Framework (as well as IOM, JIPS and ReDSS) seem to have translated ‘IDP participation’ into the voluntariness of IDP decisions for a particular solution. Second, IDPs are making their own choices about solutions – for example in deciding to move closer to their communities of origin even if they are unable to return to their homes – even when those moves do not fall into one of the three neat categories of available durable solutions. This suggests a need to re-elevate the issue of IDP participation in the processes by which solutions are identified and implemented. Third, IDP intentions and their knowledge of conditions back home increase over time, thus suggesting that IDPs are likely to be better equipped for full participation in the process as displacement continues.

In tracking IDPs over four years, the study identified two specific groups in addition to the larger IDP population: ‘movers’ and ‘returnees’ that complicate use of the existing durable solutions concept. Movers are those who have moved away

from their original place of displacement but have not returned home while returnees are those who have returned to their district of origin.³¹ With this distinction, the question remains “how close to ‘home’ must a household be to be considered ‘returned?’” Thus, 41 per cent of mover households had returned to their governorate but not district of origin. If returning to one’s governorate was considered as an indication of return, then these movers could have been classified as returnees. But if the strict criterion of returning to the home where an IDP formerly lived was used, then it is likely that some of those classified here as returnees should instead be considered as movers.

A key difficulty in measuring internal displacement “stems from a conceptual shift in the benchmarks demarcating when displacement begins and when it ends.” Displacement begins when individuals are “forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes of habitual residence [emphasis added],” in other words as a result of physical movement.³² But as the IASC Framework indicates, displacement ends “when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement. In sum, displacement begins with geography but ends with rights.” In addition, the eight criteria spelled out in the IASC Framework do not have a geographical referent.³³ This analysis shows a limitation of the displacement-resolution nexus, in particular for the displaced whose sense of whether or not they have found a durable solution may be tied to either geography or rights or both.

30 See, for example, the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service (JIPS) <https://www.jips.org/> and the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat: <https://regionaldss.org/>.

31 IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions among IDPs in Iraq: Moving in Displacement*, September 2019.

32 Salma Al-Shami and Lorenza Rossi, “What makes measuring internal displacement so difficult?,” *Forthcoming*.

33 IASC, *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, IASC, 2010.

A further difficulty raised by these researchers is the disparity between perceptions of displacement and objective indicators. As Al-Shami and Rossi ask “[i]f households are no longer counted as IDPs because they are safe, employed, sheltered, with family, etc., yet they consider themselves still displaced, who has the legitimacy to impose which label they get and what is the consequence of the label?”

This also raises the question of how the IASC Framework and other efforts to develop indicators for durable solutions take into account individual perceptions of displacement. Given the trauma experienced by those displaced, it is difficult to imagine a situation where IDPs ‘no longer have needs emanating from their displacement,’ at least when it comes to the emotional and psychological scars left as a result of the violence which provoked their displacement. Granted, it is easier to measure access to services and whether or not an IDP votes or experiences discrimination than to measure the psychological pain of displacement, but that does not make it any less real.

The study also suggests that there is a need for a much more nuanced understanding of ‘local integration,’ which is one of the three traditional solutions. Rather than seeing an individual as either ‘locally integrated’ or not, perhaps integration should be considered as a continuum, marked for example by: a) the gold standard of local integration (where IDPs have no needs related to displacement and can exercise their rights on a par with those who haven’t been displaced) and b) a ‘getting by’ solution which might be interim or might be long-term, in which IDPs feel accepted into the host community and the host community is willing to accept IDPs, but where location integration is not formally recognized as a policy.³⁴

A study by Chatty and Mansour³⁵ found a somewhat similar phenomenon among large numbers of Iraqi refugees in Jordan who were comfortably settled although they lacked formal status in the country.

This raises the question that in addition to the three traditional durable solutions, should a fourth quasi- or partial solution of ‘getting by’ be added? Also, if displacement lasts for many years, could ‘getting by’ morph into local integration?³⁶

Among the traditional three durable solutions, return is almost always seen as the preferred solution, followed by local integration. Much less attention has been directed toward relocation or settlement elsewhere. There is virtually no research on ‘settlement elsewhere,’ yet this study has shown that a significant number of Iraqi IDPs have moved away from their place of initial displacement but have not returned home. There is a need to recognize that IDPs may take partial measures toward return, including moving to be closer to the communities of origin in stages. These movements should be acknowledged as ‘in-process returnees’ and supported.³⁷ More generally there is a need to recognize that mobility of IDPs contributes to durable solutions, an issue highlighted in IOM’s *Framework for Progressive Resolution of Internal Displacement*.

Analysis of Round 4 (August–November 2018) data on movers is reported elsewhere,³⁸ but bears summarizing here because of its relevance to recognizing possible shortcomings in the current understanding of returns. The group called ‘movers’ does not fall into the neat categories of IDPs and returnees, nor are they secondarily displaced (although some might be). These are individuals who may have visited their pre-displacement homes, but the vast majority have not tried to live in them. Rather, they can be considered as ‘in process returnees’ – in many cases, returning very close to their homes. As pointed out in the September 2019 report,³⁹ in comparison with returnees, movers face a higher level of damage to their housing, land and property. However, funding for housing reconstruction is not sufficient for IDPs to find durable solutions as conditions of safety and security are crucial. For example, some

34 Also see IOM Iraq’s study on integration of IDPs in the report titled *Reasons to Remain (Part 2): Determinants of IDP Integration Into Host Communities in Iraq*, April 2019. The study employed two sets of multivariate analyses to evaluate different areas of integration: 1) What impacts the likelihood of IDPs feeling integrated (belonging) within the host locations, and 2) What impacts the likelihood of the host community in being willing to accommodate (accept) the IDP population.

35 Dawn Chatty and Nisrine Mansour, “Unlocking Protracted Displacement: An Iraq Case Study” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 30(4), 2011, pg. 50-83.

36 See *Refugee Self-Reliance Index*: <https://www.refugeeselfreliance.org/>. Note that most of the indicators in the *Refugee Self-Reliance Index* are also applicable to IDPs, including indicators to employment. While IDPs – unlike refugees – should not need work permits, in practice sometimes their abilities to work can be limited for a variety of reasons.

37 IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions among IDPs in Iraq: Moving in Displacement*, September 2019.

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

people were not allowed to return earlier because of unexploded ordinance or presence of security actors.

Understanding movers also challenges the current terminology. In the literature, people move from their places of initial displacement either because they are seeking new or better livelihoods because of conflict and security issues or to access humanitarian aid. The term secondary displacement generally refers to those forced to

move from their initial place of displacement, while secondary migration applies mostly to those who move for voluntary reasons. Movers did not move because of safety or security concerns. Ninety-six per cent of movers reported that they had not faced a security threat and 95 per cent reported that they could move freely. Rather, many moved to be closer to their original homes or to find better or additional employment or to join extended family members.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT RESEARCH ON IDPS

Finally, this policy paper concludes with a plea for more longitudinal studies of internal displacement.

Longitudinal studies can enhance understanding of migration and population displacement for a number of reasons: 1) they allow for a more precise understandings of the processes through which various factors influence decisions to move, return, or integrate; 2) they permit analysis of patterns and trends in displacement and 3) they enable understanding of the longer-term effects of displacement. The longitudinal research design of this study is thus particularly well-suited to understand the circumstances in which individuals were displaced, and how individuals' needs, strategies and access to durable solutions change over time. The findings thus allow us to build an evidence base that helps researchers and policymakers to move beyond conceptions of displacement as either a 'crisis' or a problem that has been solved, and instead bring into focus the ways in which the process of seeking out durable solutions to displacement coexists alongside patterns of mobility and risk management.

Important questions such as the appropriate level of analysis as well as to whom IDPs should be compared remain. Such research could enable us to consider whether area-based approaches might be more effective, rather than focusing aid efforts on the displaced. Research that distinguishes between the needs of different generations in displacement is also needed, for example exploring the specific needs of adolescents and young people.

This research also suggests that there is a need for more research on IDP agency, for example how families survive, how they make decisions (including differences within the household), how they see mobility as a solution, the needs—financial, health, social, etc.—that arise from different contexts, and how displaced populations perceive their own status as displaced or not. Taking into account IDPs' experiences and perceptions could contribute to structural, governmental and institutional efforts to enable IDPs a much more active and participatory role in decisions that affect their lives, including the quest for durable solutions but also concrete measures that would reduce the stress and pain of their displacement.

ANNEX 1. INDICATORS ON DURABLE SOLUTIONS

JIPS: Durable Solutions Analysis Guide⁴⁰

In 2015, at the request of the Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of IDPs, JIPS, working with a wide range of stakeholders, developed a Durable Solutions Indicators library as well as a Durable Solutions Analysis Guide. This was intended to guide a user in applying the durable solutions indicators when undertaking a durable solutions analysis.

The Durable Solutions Indicator Library provides a list of the most relevant indicators for measuring durable solutions outcomes and is organized according to the eight criteria laid out in the IASC Framework. The Durable Solutions Analysis Guide provides an overview of the analytical framework based on the eight criteria spelled out in the IASC

Framework and core demographic data on the displaced population. The Guide emphasizes the need for macro-level analysis, including the legal and policy environment as well as comparative analysis between both IDPs and non-displaced populations. It also sets out the steps needed to implement the durable solutions analysis.

The Durable Solutions Indicator Library organizes indicators in modules according to the population level indicators of the analytical framework: Module A on core demographic indicators, Module B on IDPs' future preferences and plans, and Module C:1-8 corresponding to the eight durable solutions criteria laid out in the IASC Framework.

Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)⁴¹

Established in 2015 and now comprising 14-member organizations, the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat, ReDSS, seeks to end protracted displacement of both refugees and IDPs in eleven east African and Horn of African countries. Toward this end, it has developed a Solutions Framework, based on the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions, which identifies 28 outcome indicators organized around physical safety (6 indicators), material safety (14 indicators) and legal safety (10 indicators) to measure durable achievements in a particular context. ReDSS has developed dashboards for each of the eleven countries and the various outcome indicators.

ReDSS has also identified core elements to guide its work in supporting durable solutions for those displaced in the region, including the need for:

- A multi-stakeholder and sectoral, rights- and needs- based programming approach

- Collective action rather than mandate-driven based on an inclusive, participatory and consensus building approach
- Recognition that national, regional and local authorities have the primary responsibility for finding solutions and need to be supported
- Area-based solutions approaches to ensure integrated and comprehensive programming for host and displaced populations
- Community engagement to make solutions supportive of social cohesion and to a displacement-affected-communities approach, inclusive of refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities
- Gender, age and diversity to be taken into account

Recognition that displacement is a development issue with humanitarian components.

⁴⁰ Joint Internal Profiling Service (JIPS). *Durable Solutions Analysis Guide: A Tool to Measure Progress towards Durable Solutions for IDPs*, 2018.

⁴¹ See <https://regionaldss.org/>.

IOM Framework: The Progressive Resolution of Displacement Situations⁴²

IOM's Framework on durable solutions is based on an understanding that situations and population movements are rarely static and that mobility should be incorporated into understanding how and when displacement ends. It states "for many there is seldom a predictable path from displacement to a finite physical end point and a fixed outcome," but rather a "continuum of mobility and migration is often a key livelihoods strategy, providing an adaptable means of dealing with the root causes and long term consequences of displacement." The Framework further recognizes that displacement isn't resolved at one particular moment of time but rather people may move in stages or different members of a household may move at different times. Building on the 8 criteria of the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, IOM's framework is built around four programmatic pillars:

- Protection, safety, and security: legal safety and physical and material security;
- Adequate standard of living: sustained access to adequate food, water, housing, health services

and basic education;

- Sustainable livelihoods and employment: enabling individuals and households to meet their own daily needs and live in dignity;
- Inclusive governance: inclusive participation in decisions and processes of public affairs at all levels.

IOM spells out the process to support the development of a comprehensive response:

1. Analyze the displacement situation within the wider mobility context
2. Identify and engage with the affected populations, including not only IDPs but also other affected communities.
3. Engage with coordination mechanisms and partners
4. Develop strategic objectives
5. Integrate key principles
6. Monitor and evaluate

⁴² IOM, *IOM Framework: The Progressive Realization of Displacement Situations*, 2016.

ANNEX 2. PUBLICATIONS AND TIMELINE OF DATA COLLECTION

Round 1 Data Collection (March-May 2016):

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. April 2017. Access to Durable Solutions among IDPs in Iraq: Baseline Report of One Round of Data Collection. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Access_to_Durable_Solutions_2017.pdf

Round 2 Data Collection (February-April 2017):

Davis, Rochelle, Dana al-Dairani, Michaela Gallien, and Salma Al-Shami. "Home after ISIS: A Study of Return as a Durable Solution in Iraq." *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*. June 2018. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15423166.2018.1469425?journalCode=rjpd20>

Rossi, Lorenza, Rochelle Davis, Grace Benton, Sinan Zeyneloglu and Salma Al-Shami. "Iraqi IDPs' Access to Durable Solutions: Results of Two Rounds of a Longitudinal Study." *International Migration* 2018 57(2). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/imig.12491>

Round 3 Data Collection (July-September 2017):

Davis, Rochelle, Grace Benton, Dana al Dairani, and Michaela Gallien. October 2018. "Iraqi IDP Returns to Former ISIS-Held Areas: Findings from a Longitudinal Study on Durable Solutions." *Jadailyya*. <https://www.jadailyya.com/Details/38030>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three years in displacement. February 2019. <https://iraq.iom.int/publications/iom-iraq-access-durable-solutions-three-years-in-displacement>

IOM Iraq, Returns Working Group and Social Inquiry. April 2019. Reasons to Remain (Part 2): Determinants of IDP Integration Into Host Communities in Iraq. <https://iraq.iom.int/publications/reasons-remain-part-2-determinants-idp-integration-host-communities-iraq>

Davis, Rochelle, Salma Al-Shami, Grace Benton, Jake Moran, Caila McHugh, Nicole Ruggiero, and Moez Hayat. February 2019. Comparing the Experiences of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban vs Rural Areas: Findings from a Longitudinal Study in Iraq, 2015-2017. Global Report on Internal Displacement Background Paper. IDMC. https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2019/downloads/background_papers/Davis_FinalPaper.pdf

Round 4 Data Collection (August-November 2018):

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions among IDPs in Iraq: Moving in Displacement. September 2019. <https://iraq.iom.int/publications/access-durable-solutions-among-idps-iraq-moving-displacement>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Four Years in Displacement. November 2019. <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/6blqicvrl5n2q326cn8u74y1fywx6o7v>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions in Iraq: Experiences Applying to Compensation. January 2020. <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/aqq3r4nfplhcttx6qwo8lpinjt2ic04>

Round 5 Data Collection (October 2019-January 2020):

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Five Years in Displacement. Forthcoming, 2020. <http://iraqrecovery.org/durablesolutions/>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Experiences of Female-Headed Households. Forthcoming, 2020. <http://iraqrecovery.org/durablesolutions/>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Unpacking the Policy Implications. Forthcoming, 2020. <http://iraqrecovery.org/durablesolutions/>

IOM Iraq and Georgetown University. Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Livelihoods and Economic Security in Displacement. Forthcoming, 2020. <http://iraqrecovery.org/durablesolutions/>

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