LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Mahmoudiya District, Baghdad Governorate

IOM Iraq – April 2019
IOM Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

Contact: For more information on the Return and Recovery Unit (RRU) programme and current activities taking place in Iraq, please contact: iraqpublicinfo@iom.int

Main Office in Baghdad
UNAMI Compound DIWAN 2
International Zone, Baghdad, Iraq.
Tel: +3908 3105 2600 ext. 5857/5928
E-mail: iraqpublicinfo@iom.int

List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEP</td>
<td>Business Expansion Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSP</td>
<td>Business Support Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoC</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoI</td>
<td>Chamber of Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Community Implementation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Community Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>Employment Support Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Farming Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIL</td>
<td>Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JP</td>
<td>Job Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMA</td>
<td>Labour Market Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>Non-Food Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLSA</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OJT</td>
<td>On-the-Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>Vocational Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents

IOM Disclaimer ................................................................................................................................................. 2
List of Acronyms .................................................................................................................................................. 2

1. Executive Summary ......................................................................................................................................... 4
   1.1. Introduction
   1.2. Study Components
   1.3. Mahmoudiya Key Findings
       1.3.1 Challenges & Opportunities Facing Youth
       1.3.2 Challenges & Opportunities Facing Jobseekers
       1.3.3 Challenges & Opportunities Facing Employers
       1.3.4 Challenges & Opportunities Facing Consumers
   1.4. Overall Recommendations

2. Location and Study Overview .......................................................................................................................... 5
   2.1. Introduction
   2.2. LMA Overview
   2.3. Mahmoudiya District Overview
       2.3.1 Location and Demographics
       2.3.2. Security, Displacement, and Returns
       2.3.3. Local Concerns
   2.4. LMA Methodology Overview
       2.4.1. Key Informant Interviews
       2.4.2. Youth Focus Group Discussions
       2.4.3. Jobseeker Surveys
       2.4.4. Employer Surveys
       2.4.5. Consumer Surveys

3. Findings ......................................................................................................................................................... 7
   3.1. Key Informant Interviews
   3.2. Youth Needs and Priorities
   3.3. Jobseeker Needs and Priorities
   3.4. Employer Needs and Priorities
   3.5. Consumer Needs and Priorities
   3.6. Community Implementation Plan (CIP) Recommendations

4. Conclusions .....................................................................................................................................................10
1. Executive Summary

1.1. Introduction

With sub-offices across Iraq, jointly managed Community Resource Centres (CRCs), and a presence within Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA’s) sub-offices, IOM has a field presence that allows for a community driven approach to recovery and development. Under its livelihoods programming, IOM works with a system of community engagement that has been refined through an interactive learning process, and relies on stakeholder consultation throughout the design of sustainable livelihoods activities. In order to design market-led development interventions, a series of Labour Market Assessments (LMAs) were conducted. In Baghdad Governorate, the Al-Mahmoudiya district — also referred to as Mahmoudiya – was selected for an in-depth study.

1.2. Study Components

This LMA is based on 101 individual interviews and three youth Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with roughly 30 total participants, conducted over a two-month period between December 2018 and January 2019. Survey tools included a mix of quantitative and qualitative exercises, conducted with key informants, jobseekers, youth, consumers, and employers. It focused on two communities of Mahmoudiya – Al-Azam and Al-Kwam. A summary of key findings is below, followed by a fuller analysis and explanation.

1.3. Mahmoudiya Key Findings

1.3.1. Challenges & Opportunities Facing Youth

- All participants were unanimous that better job opportunities would make youth less likely to join military actors;
- The most in demand skills mentioned by youth in Al-Azam neighborhood were related to agricultural trade, including greenhouse management, irrigation methods, and other skills and knowledge related to agriculture; and
- In Al-Kwam, the demand for training skills were in relation to agriculture and animal husbandry, with the former sector noted to have the most desirable jobs. Other trainings that were recommended included computer skills, accounting, and language skills trainings.

Recommendations:

More farming training can be provided, but should focus on advanced techniques such as drip irrigation, new animal husbandry practices, and greenhouse management. If possible, tech service providers would also be good to approach about job placement or vocational training.

1.3.2. Challenges & Opportunities Facing Jobseekers

- Most respondents were not aware of any job centres or similar service providers in their community.
- Respondents were likely to mention poor families, female headed households, other women, youth, and the disabled as priority candidates for livelihood programming.
- Agriculture was reported as one of the most successful business types as well as way to support the wider local community.

Recommendations:

- Invest locally (i.e. with the Enterprise Development Fund) to avoid high spending on transportation.
- Look for innovative agricultural trainings such as new types of animal husbandry; and
- Avoid the construction sector;
- Minorities were not mentioned, so best not to explicitly target.

1.3.3. Challenges & Opportunities Facing Employers

- Most employers (70%, or 21 out of 30) were very interested in or had experience already with training apprentices;
- A welding workshop owner, a car parts manufacturer, agricultural machinery suppliers, a baker, a ceramic flooring provider, and an IT business owner all had difficulty sourcing skilled workers;
- Factories and business related to construction needs tended to be most likely to report low demand; and
- Those most likely to report good demand for their products and services included agricultural and kitchen machinery suppliers, children's clothing and toy sellers, and those working in IT.

Recommendations:

- On the job training and job placement should only occur with the sectors that reported good demand: agricultural and culinary service and machinery providers, clothing retailers, and IT.
- Employers surveyed in the LMA can be contacted regarding on the job training and mentorship.

1.3.4. Challenges & Opportunities Facing Consumers

- The hardest services to find locally include health services, car repair services, food and clothes. Most respondents occasionally travelled outside of Mahmoudiya to access or purchase these items; and
- Consumers tended to spend significantly more on electricity and transportation in Mahmoudiya than in other areas surveyed across Iraq, suggesting possible price hikes in these markets.

Recommendations:

- Usually, reselling clothing is a risky business, but since it is in demand in Mahmoudiya, clothing retailers could be considered for support or mentorship linkages as well. Trainings or business support packages for medical services could be targeted.

1.4. Overall Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors to target:</th>
<th>Agriculture, animal husbandry, production of agricultural machinery, children's items, clothing IT services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profile to target:</td>
<td>Poor families, female headed households, other women, youth, and the disabled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes:</td>
<td>• Avoid the construction sector; • Look for innovative agricultural trainings such as new types of animal husbandry; and • Invest locally (i.e. with the Enterprise Development Fund) to avoid high spending on transportation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Organization for Migration

2. Location and Study Overview

2.1. Introduction

Recognizing that the private sector is an engine for growth, IOM works to create inclusive markets at the individual, community and institutional level. At the individual level, IOM has prioritized support to micro enterprises. This has included providing business development services (including business advisory and counselling services) and business support packages (including in-kind and cash support), all of which aim to increase income generation at the household level.

For those individuals who need capacity development support or who have more specific backgrounds like agriculture, IOM provides specialized skills development and training through Vocational Training (VT), Farming Training (FT) or On-the-Job Training (OJT), accompanied by employability assistance inclusive of in-kind items tailored to enhance individual employability. For beneficiaries who already possess relevant education or training and need to gain hands-on work experience, IOM job placement and job matching initiatives link participants with businesses in growth sectors, and agrees to pay their salaries partially or fully for 3-6 months.

At the community level, IOM provides support to slightly larger businesses – small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – to support long term job creation and the expansion of local production capacities.

IOM also targets the infrastructure needed to support markets, linking livelihoods with support for the enabling environment. For example, in agricultural communities IOM may support irrigation projects. At the institutional level, IOM also provides capacity building to national and local authorities, including market assessments that seek to promote institutional change that would support local livelihoods.

2.2. LMA Overview

This and other IOM Labour Market Assessments (LMAs) are intended to provide actionable recommendations for the individual livelihood assistance that IOM provides, for multiple districts throughout Iraq. This LMA addresses Mahmoudiya, a district south of Baghdad in Baghdad governorate.

2.3. Mahmoudiya District Overview

2.3.1. Location and Demographics

Mahmoudiya District is in the Baghdad governorate of Iraq, approximately 35km south of Baghdad. The district has approximately 550,000 inhabitants, about 88% of them Shia Arabs and the rest are mostly Sunni. Most of the inhabitants live in rural areas. Its capital city, Mahmoudiya city, is known as the “Gateway to Baghdad”.

2.3.2. Security and Displacement

After the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the heavy insurgent activity and sectarian violence that followed, Mahmoudiya was part of the “Triangle of Death.” This area between Baghdad and Hillah saw numerous large suicide and other attacks that focused on Iraqi civilian gathering places and government infrastructure, such as nearby Saddam Hussein-era munitions facilities. Violence and attacks were heavy through early 2007, after which troop surges as well as community self-policing efforts by various “concerned citizen” groups helped greatly decrease violence in the area.

These self-policing efforts grew into larger-scale reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts with some support from external organizations like the US Institute for Peace (USIP). The stability established here as a result of these efforts was such that despite ISIL’s rapid advancement throughout Iraq – often facilitated by its exploitation of sectarian tensions – it could not successfully penetrate and occupy Mahmoudiya. As ISIL’s hold on Iraq lessened, the USIP has sought to present Mahmoudiya as a model for peacemaking that can stabilize other Iraqi regions, preventing resurgences of extremism. As a result, despite heavy displacement in previous conflicts, this was not the case during the ISIL occupation of nearby areas and the violence that accompanied it.

2.3.3. Local Concerns

An IOM Rapid Needs Assessment found that road access in the district is available and safe, with various police and military checkpoints. Due to the lack of insurgent or other armed forces, people and goods encounter few if any obstacles moving within the area.

Local infrastructure is available in Mahmoudiya. A water treatment plant on the Euphrates is close to Al-Azam village and supplies it and other local villages with drinking water. However, residents have reported that while the plant is in working condition, the network of pipes are damaged. Some residents have chosen to purchase reverse osmosis filtration systems to further purify drinking water at home. Electricity is supplied via a power station that serves various nearby villages. Power is reliable but adheres to a schedule so it is not available all of the time. Some families in the area own generators; based on whether they were able to afford such a high cost item. Residents purchase subsidized fuel from the government.

Health services are available in the district via a centrally-located public health centre (PHC). Facilities are in good condition, but residents have reported that the PHC needs more supplies and staff, and that locals would benefit from additional health care providers as well as an ambulance or mobile clinics.

Residents have reported that while there is access to food and non-food items (NFIs) at reasonable prices at a variety of shops and markets, many families depend on government rations for food which are insufficient overall, and many cannot afford NFIs.

Consumer Spending Snapshot

Key Weekly Expenses:
• 100% of survey respondents reported having a weekly food expense, averaging 86.9 USD per week.

Key Monthly Expenses:
• 75.8% of survey respondents reported having a monthly transportation expense, averaging 107.7 USD per month;
• 90.9% of survey respondents reported having a monthly combustibles expense, averaging 100 USD per month;
• 57.6% of respondents reported a monthly water expense, averaging 36.6 USD per month; and
• Only 23% of respondents reported monthly expenses on temptation goods, averaging 72.2 USD per month.

A more thorough breakdown of consumer expenditure based on the collected data is presented in the Findings section below.

2.4. LMA Methodology Overview

The LMA process took two months to complete. Two communities of Mahmoudiya were selected for in depth assessment – Al-Azam and Al-Kwam. After a two-day training, surveyors interviewed key informants, jobseekers, average consumers, youth, and local businesses. Where possible, surveys were collected evenly across these locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>No. Conducted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Informant Interviews</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Focus Group Discussions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobseeker Surveys</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector Employer Surveys</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Surveys</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Surveys Conducted in Mahmoudiya for LMA

Below is an explanation of the surveys conducted:

2.4.1. Key Informant Interviews

Eight key informant interviews were conducted for Mahmoudiya. These included representatives from the Federation of Industries, the Private Banks League, the Iraqi Company for Financing Small and Medium Enterprises, the Department of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

2.4.2. Youth Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Youth FGDs were designed to identify bottlenecks to youth employment and training preferences. They were conducted by soliciting participation from members of each of the studied communities. Three FGDs were conducted with participants aged between 15-25, and sought to include a diverse group of youth if possible.

2.4.3. Jobseeker Surveys

The jobseeker survey is designed to identify the preferences of unemployed and underemployed workers. In Mahmoudiya, 32 jobseekers were identified and surveyed. The survey purpose was communicated to each participant and informed consent was obtained.

2.4.4. Employer Surveys

28 Employer surveys were also conducted in nearby Baghdad in order to provide a representative sample of the local market, as Mahmoudiya was not found to have a sufficient level of companies likely to be good candidates for job placement and on the job training. Employers were initially provided with an advance copy of the handout materials and then later contacted for follow-up interviews. The map below shows the locations of the surveyed employers.

2.4.5. Consumer Surveys

The consumer survey was designed to triangulate data related to demand, income, and vulnerability. In Mahmoudiya, 33 respondents were identified by approaching members of the public in commercial or industrial districts and asking to speak with them. There were no restrictions on the demographic profiles of participants, but IOM sought diversity of groups within the population to the extent possible.
3. Findings

3.1. Key Informant Interviews

Most respondents noted that food production or agricultural jobs were the most common type of employment, in addition to construction, electrical and mechanical jobs. Although Mahmoudiya city was not occupied by ISIL, the impact of the three-year crisis from 2014-2017 was reported to have had the most severe impact on the agricultural sector, likely in surrounding areas, with mixed estimates of how many businesses have recovered or restarted. For example, a respondent mentioned that only 5-10% of livestock, fisheries, agricultural processing, and poultry fields businesses have recovered, while another respondent mentioned that food industry businesses, tailors, and beauty salons were still functioning.

Oversaturated sectors identified were supermarkets, restaurants, malls, transportation and distribution services. The most frequently reported underdeveloped sectors were the same industries reported as most affected by the crisis, including animal husbandry, bee-keeping, and food industries, in addition to construction-related businesses. Government investment was only mentioned in relation to agricultural projects, including wheat and barley, and by one respondent in the construction industry. Private investment in the construction sector, meanwhile, was almost unanimously identified by all respondents. International actors identified who are present in the area were UNIDO, GIZ, and the World Bank.

3.2. Youth Needs and Priorities

Three youth FGDs were conducted in Mahmoudiya, including two in Al-Azam village, and one in Al-Kwam village. Most participants agreed that there are no major security issues currently inside the community, although the focus group participants from Al-Kwam village did feel that youth were in a position to play a role in these areas. All participants were unanimous that better job opportunities would make youth less likely to join military actors.

In all three Focus Group Discussions, skills trainings were reported to be in demand, with no course type currently oversaturated.

Al-Azam

The most demanded skills mentioned by youth in Al-Azam neighborhood were related to agricultural trade, including greenhouse management, irrigation methods, and other advancements in agriculture. Industrial trainings in blacksmithing and in car mechanics were also mentioned as high in demand. These training courses align well with job types that were noted as desirable, which included agricultural and animal husbandry jobs, metal working, and health services. Out of those who answered whether or not they would prefer to work for themselves or someone else, all responded that they would prefer to work for themselves.

Al-Kwam

In Al-Kwam, skills in need of more trainings included agricultural and animal husbandry, while the agricultural sector was also noted to have the most desirable jobs. Other trainings that were recommended included computer skills, accounting, and language skills trainings.

Findings from both FGDs held, expressed limited hiring organizations and businesses, apart from the agriculture and animal husbandry sector.

The sources of money that participants felt that youth would be most likely to approach for funding to start a business, in turn, was unanimously reported as their family, and no other source of capital, credit, or other assistance was mentioned. This speaks to the paucity of financial services in the area, and possible issues of trust or lack thereof.

Karma Al-Somod

In Karma Al-Somod, carpentry, metalworking, tailoring, and working either in a bakery or grocery store were mentioned as desirable jobs, in addition to service jobs such as photography, printing, and haircutting. No particular training subjects were mentioned, but youth felt that vocational trainings were needed to enhance their livelihoods opportunities.
3.3. Jobseeker Needs and Priorities

Jobseekers mentioned that unskilled persons, the retired, and daily workers were the least likely to be sustainably employed, along with a fair amount of respondents (18%) feeling that no group is more likely to be unemployed than the other. The perceived main contribution to finding work was connections (mentioned by 78% of respondents), followed by experience. Similar to the youth FGDs, the sector most often noted to currently be hiring was the agricultural industry, mentioned by 88% of respondents, and this was also noted to be desirable. However, it was noted that most people have multiple ways of making money, including involvement in daily wage work.

Asked about job centres or resources, most respondents were not aware of any in their community, but would want one, if it were to be established, to offer both courses and job announcements. Asked who should be prioritized for livelihood assistance, respondents were likely to mention poor families, female headed households, other women, youth, and the disabled. Agriculture was also noted to be both one of the most successful business types and the type of business that should invest in the local community.

The source of funds, if funds were to be borrowed, were again mostly from family, although a number remarked that they had no resource at all for such a need if it occurred. A few mentioned the ability to borrow from friends, but not many.

3.4. Employer Needs and Priorities

Many employers surveyed (46%) reported having no issues with suppliers, with those that did have issues noting delays, taxes and checkpoints most often. Client side issues, on the other hand, included debts and paying debts, the general economic situation, and a lack of quality control.

Asked specifically about demand, factories and business related to construction needs tended to be most likely to report low demand. Those most likely to report good demand for their products and services included agricultural and kitchen machinery suppliers, children’s clothing and toy sellers, and those working in IT.

Most employers (70%, or 21 out of 30) were very interested in or had experience already with training apprentices. A welding workshop owner, a car parts manufacturer, agricultural machinery suppliers, a baker, a ceramic flooring provider, and an IT business owner all had difficulty sourcing skilled workers. The rest of the assessed businesses, however, mentioned no difficulty in sourcing qualified or skilled workers. Business types that had good demand, were interested in having apprentices, and had difficulty finding skilled labourers are below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Type</th>
<th>Source of Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selling Agriculture supplies</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling honey, and beekeeping material</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling machinery, equipment and tools</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and manufacturing marble, ceramics, tile flooring</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasses workshop</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology (hardware)</td>
<td>relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welding workshop</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumps and generator distributor</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramic tiles</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>relatives only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Baghdad Businesses for JP and OJT
3.5. Consumer Needs and Priorities

The average monthly income for consumers surveyed in Mahmoudiya was 400 USD a month. Only one respondent mentioned saving around 10% of their income on a monthly basis, whereas 96% reported not being able to save money, indicating a high marginal propensity to consume and spillover effects.

The hardest services to find locally include health services, car repair services, and some food and clothes. Most respondents travelled outside of Mahmoudiya often or sometimes to access or purchase these items.

Consumers tended to spend significantly more on electricity and transportation in Mahmoudiya than in other areas surveyed across Iraq, suggesting possible price hikes in these markets. They were not found to spend significantly more on food than in other areas in Iraq, suggesting food prices are stable in the area.

Spending patterns are shown in the table below:\[3\\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>% Participants With Expense</th>
<th>Average Local Expense (USD)</th>
<th>Average National Expense (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>97.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combustibles</td>
<td>90.9 %</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>58.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport services</td>
<td>75.8 %</td>
<td>107.7</td>
<td>49.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Temptation goods</td>
<td>27.3 %</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>64.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>57.6 %</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>20.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone, cable and internet</td>
<td>75.8 %</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>37.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>51.5 %</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>372.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Medical expenses</td>
<td>97 %</td>
<td>459.8</td>
<td>496.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repairs</td>
<td>63.4 %</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>485.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household appliances</td>
<td>27.3 %</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>215.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase of vehicle such as car, bike, motorbike</td>
<td>21.2 %</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>1604.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family events</td>
<td>21.2 %</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>808.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3. Average Consumer Spending- Mahmoudiya District*

\[3\\] Please note that this data is self-reported and therefore subject to some isolated calculation errors and information bias.
3.6. Community Implementation Plan (CIP) Recommendations

Based on the surveys conducted and data collected, IOM developed an initial list of potential community interventions, or Community Implementation Plans (CIPs) in Mahmoudiya to help address various identified infrastructure and livelihoods issues.

Infrastructure recommendations largely included activities to repair water piping for several villages. Additionally, recommendations were made to rehabilitate and better supply the local health center, as well as to construct a football field for youth organized activities.

Livelihoods recommendations included a number of On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs for various vocations including mechanics, sewing, welding, and carpentry; agricultural trainings on a number of areas such as bee-keeping, irrigation, animal husbandry, and others. Finally, a number of Business Support Packages (BSPs) and Employment Support Packages (ESPs) were recommended for various area businesses to support them to rebuild, expand, or develop capacity.

Community engagement recommendations included activities to rehabilitate several area schools, literacy training primarily aimed at local women, a beautification campaign for the health center (for which a rehabilitation activity was suggested above), and the organization of a football tournament to take advantage of the new field to be built.

4. Conclusions

Mahmoudiya is a district with a high level of interest, even from youth, in pursuing agricultural livelihoods. Agricultural related businesses, in turn, are consistently more likely to report good demand for their products or services, including bee-keeping and machinery suppliers. Children’s toy sellers and IT service providers were also experiencing a good rate of demand. Trainings requested also aligned with this trend, including requests for modern agricultural techniques such as irrigation. IOM can capitalize on this interest and the capacity of the market to absorb an increase in the supply of agriculture-related businesses.

Construction related businesses, on the other hand, struggled with low demand. IOM should be careful with granting to, linking jobseekers with, or supporting construction-related businesses.

Some of the skills possible to support include the training of youth in culinary arts, car mechanic services, agricultural and animal husbandry supplies and methods, and IT. Clothing may also be supported as a good or service reported as not available in the community by consumers, and as a business type in high demand by employers. The area would be a good location for an Enterprise Development Fund as well, given the high level of average monthly income by consumers. Minorities may not be appropriate to explicitly target here, but female headed households were considered perfectly acceptable candidates for livelihood assistance, in addition to poorer families, youth and the disabled.
IOM-IRAQ MISSION

LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Written and designed by:
The International Organization for Migration — Iraq Mission
© IOM Iraq 2019
iraq.iom.int