Conditions and Rights of IDPs and Returnees in Four Governorates of Iraq

A Comparative Survey Conducted by

MADARIK FOUNDATION
FOR STUDYING THE MECHANISMS OF CONCEPTUAL PROMOTION

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In Partnership With

NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL
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1. **Methodology**

The research team followed a number of methodological steps to successfully perform the study:

1. **Setting Goals**
   
The success of any theoretical or empirical study or research depends on the clarity and relevance of the objective defined prior to the start of the study. For this study, Madarik and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) defined the objective of this study as to:

   **Examine the level of awareness and access to rights for IDPs and returnees and government response to the needs of these groups in the four provinces of Baghdad, Ninewa, Diyala and Anbar**

2. **Designing the Survey Forms**

   For the purpose of the study, two survey forms were designed. The first was filled by selected Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and consisted of 71 questions divided into 9 categories as follows:

   1. Data related to the head of household;
   2. Data related to the place of habitual residence before displacement and the place of residence after displacement;
   3. Displacement and the causes behind it;
   4. The current financial situation and basic need satisfaction of the displaced families;
   5. The role of the Iraqi government (provincial and central) in supporting the displaced families;
   6. Services and infrastructure in the current place of residence;
   7. Education;
   8. Access to health care;
   9. Social situation.

   The second form was filled by returnees and consisted of 40 questions divided into 4 categories as follows:

   1. Data related to the head of household;
   2. Data related to the residential area, the neighborhood and the current place of residence;
   3. Education, work, livelihood and the role of the government;
   4. The social conditions and re-integration;

   The two forms were reviewed by two professors in sociology and demography as well as the co-researcher Dr. Ahmad Qasim, the Director General of Research and Development at the
Ministry of Migration and Displacement, benefitting from his broad expertise in this field. Following recommendations, the forms were adjusted and after a final review by Madarik both forms were approved for use.

3. Training Workshops
The research team worked with selected civil society organizations and a number of displaced persons that had the academic qualification to participate in conducting the survey. After selection of survey partners, two training workshops were organized as follows:

Workshop 1:
A one-day training workshop was conducted for Governorate Liaison Officers and some of the questionnaire distributors at the head office of Madarik in Baghdad. The questionnaire team was supervised by the head of the research team Dr. Khalid Hantoosh. The one day training was divided into a day-session and an evening-session and focused on the following issues:

a. How to interview the displaced families, the number of families targeted, appropriate timings to visit the families and how to fill the form;

b. Examining all the questions in the form, making final adjustments in order to make sure that they are properly understood by the distributors and liaison officers;

c. Selecting the distribution sample, the targeted areas and the problems that might face the research team during the distribution;

d. Reviewing and analyzing all the survey questions by the trainer accompanied by extensive discussion on the questions with the surveyors to ensure the surveyors had fully understood the following:

   a. All of the questions;

   b. The goal of the study;

   c. How to conduct the survey.

Workshop 2:
The second training workshop was conducted at the Madarik head office for the database team. The workshop was supervised by the head of the research team with the purpose of providing training in how to enter data into a database specifically designed for the project to allow for systematic management and analysis of statistics through SPSS. The workshop was divided into a day-session and an evening-session. It was attended by four trainees on how to number and notate the forms and the questions, how to enter data into the database and how to correct data.
4. Survey and Data Analysis

The next methodological step was to choose the research sample. Once the sample had been selected the data was gathered, registered in the database and analyzed. The followings points describe the process in detail:

*The number of families:* the basic unit of our research is the family, not the individual. Thus, it was agreed with the Norwegian Refugee Council that the number of families will be 1000 coming from 4 governorates: Baghdad, Diyala, Anbar and Ninewah. The following table outlines the make-up of the sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorate</th>
<th>Displaced Families</th>
<th>Returnee Families</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>70.23%</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyala</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anbar</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninewah</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>87.25%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initially it was decided to work with a sample composed of a 1/2 percentage of IDPs to returnees, two third IDPs and one-third returnees. However, we discovered that the number of returnees to Mosul (the Centre of Nineawa Governorate) was very small as Mosul has proven too insecure for religious minorities and many other IDPs to return and displacement has continued into the end of 2012. Thus, the survey worked with returnees in the outskirts, villages and suburbs of Mosul totaling 32 returnee families against 219 displaced families. As illustrated in the table above, this changed the proportion of IDPs to returnees interviewed in the survey.

*The families selected for the field survey:* the surveyors were instructed to observe a number of criteria, the most important among which was that the families are geographically spread out within the governorate. The families were selected in coordination with the heads of the provincial offices of the MoMD through Dr. Ahmad Qasim.

*Testing the survey forms:* The first three days were dedicated to testing the questionnaire forms and 100 forms were used (25 forms for each governorate) for this purpose. The purpose was to assess the extent to which the subjects had understood the forms. Identified
problems were then analyzed by the researchers and solutions applied. Following the review of the first forms, the survey team could go ahead with completing the full survey.

Data analysis: Having received the data from all surveyors of the four governorates, the researcher began integrating and consolidating the data from all governorates. This data was then transferred to the Statistical Portfolio of Social Sciences (SPSS) to allow for analysis. The data was then identified to the program and designated through allocation of a table for each question (as we will see in the tables designating the form) using appropriate statistical methods for the designation which is the recurring table that includes the categories, the recurrences and the percentages. The researcher also used the arithmetic means, the standard deviations and the largest value for each category. These are the appropriate methods to describe the data (the quantitative and qualitative data). The findings presented in the following pages were then drawn from these tables.
2. Findings of the Survey

The findings are classified into three categories:

First: findings common to IDPs and returnees. 18 of the questions in the survey questionnaire were identical for the IDPs and returnees. This gave 9 findings that are common for both groups.

Second: 35 findings specifically concerned with IDPs.

Third: 19 findings specifically concerned with returnees.

This gives a total of 63 findings that represent the summary of 104 detailed tables in total. The tables provide detailed information and are included in the annexes to this report. The study sought to look into every single detail related to the living conditions of the IDPs and returnees before, during and after displacement in order to provide a comprehensive picture about their situation, 6 years after the largest wave of displacement took place. In the following, we examine the findings in detail.

2.1 Findings Common to 1000 IDP and Returnee Families

1. Head of household data: these are findings related to the heads of households of both the IDP and returnee families:

   - Gender: the largest percentage of head of households, as expected in an oriental Arab Muslim society, are male (77.9%). Females accounted for 22.1%. The highest percentage of male head of households was in Diyala (88.5%) and the lowest was in Baghdad (63.9%);

   - Position in the family: fathers accounted for the highest percentage as heads of families (75.1%) followed by mothers (20.3%), then brothers/sons (2.2%) and last came sisters/daughters (1.7%). We found that mothers, followed by the oldest son and then the oldest sister, replace fathers who are absent for any reason. These percentages conform to the situation and traditions of the Iraqi society.

   - The age of head of households: the oldest was 87 and the youngest 18 years. The arithmetic mean was 45.24 years. The age category (38-47) accounted for 41.9%, which was the largest percentage followed by the category (28-37) which accounted for 19.6%.  

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• **Occupation before displacement:** we noticed that the highest percentage among long-term occupations was entrepreneurship and everyday business dealings. These accounted for 49.7% followed by housewifery (15.7%) and civil service (14.5%). Occupations percentages among the four governorates were not different from each other except for Diyala where farmers came second followed by housewives and Anbar where security service came second. In all cases, the table gives us a clear picture of the harsh reality of these people who are the most impoverished and most affected by displacement.

• **Occupation after displacement:** entrepreneurship and everyday business dealings (46.6%) still account for the highest percentage of occupations practiced by the displaced after displacement. However, civil service came second (18.8%) followed by housewifery (14.7%). We noticed a decrease in the percentage of housewives against an increase in that of civil servants which proves the involvement of more women in work under the harsh conditions of displacement or the loss of the husband as we will later see. Pensioners came third in Ninawah and security service men came third in Diyala and Anbar. Farming is almost absent in these governorates especially in Diyala (3.2%) from having occupied 15.6% before displacement, which points to another economical problem. Armed groups forcefully displaced these people from their farming lands which were then taken over as safe havens for the armed occupiers.

2. **Monthly Family Income**

• **Before displacement:** the monthly family income before displacement was IQD510.852 (almost $ 426 on a $1 = IQD 1200 rate basis). Diyala came last with an income rate of $ 188 before displacement. Ninewah came first ($ 846) followed by Baghdad ($372) and Anbar ($ 361). It must be noted that that 96 families were without an income. We classified incomes into 10 categories where the (IQD 240,000-360,000) category was the highest (23.9%) followed by the (IQD 480,000-600,000) category (16.6%) and then the (IQD 120,000-240,000) which accounted for (13.8%).

• **After displacement:** the monthly income rate after displacement amounted to $ 431 which shows a slight increase. However, this increase is related to inflation and the events of the period 2006-2012, the changes in income and the increase in salaries accompanied by a high increase in inflation which makes this increase equal to a $ 5 decrease. The four governorates maintained their income rates. There were 83 families without an income. As for income categories, the (IQD 240,000-360,000) category was the most recurrent (30.2%) followed by the two categories (IQD 120,000-240,000) (IQD 360,000-480,000) with the same percentage each (15.4%).

**• • •**
Per capita income before and after displacement: the number of family members in the four governorates was 5.45 on average, which is not very different from the national average (6.4), according to the Central Office of Statistics in Iraq, 2009. Dividing income rates on this average will give us the per capita monthly income rate before displacement ($ 97) and ($ 96) after displacement or on return. The rate on the level of governorates showed that Ninewah, as usual, came at number one ($ 204) before displacement and ($ 203) after displacement or on return. Baghdad came in the second place ($ 86, 75) before and after displacement followed by Anbar ($ 75, 63) and then Diyala ($ 36, 50).

3. Number of People per Family
The average number of family members was (5.45) as mentioned above. Diyala, the poorest, had the highest number of family members (6.23) followed by Anbar (5.6), then Baghdad (5.47) and last came Ninewah (4.96). Thus, the number of family members is inversely connected to the monthly income rate which increases the hardship for the displaced families, the poorest and most vulnerable among groups. It is common as poor households tend to have a higher reproduction rate than families with a better economic status.

4. Widows in displaced families as a result of husbands killed in sectarian conflict
The conflict produced multiple hardships and tragedies in the lives of the displaced. The loss of husbands, turning wives into widows, is one of those tragedies the survey looked into. 145 women lost their husbands and the largest number was in Baghdad (89) followed by Diyala (34) and Anbar (6). The burden of raising the family certainly falls on the shoulders of these women (the widows). We noticed a change in the occupations of some (from housewives to civil servants). However, due to a lack of access to economic opportunities, many widows are in need of assistance since only 80 widows receive the social security salary dedicated to widows (55.17%) against (44.84%) who do not have access to this compensation.

5. The loss of a family member as a result of sectarian violence in areas of displacement:
Not only husbands but also other members of the families have perished as the result of violence. 225 families lost a member, which is equal to 22.5% of the total number of families studied. This presents a large percentage of those killed in Iraq due to sectarian violence and yet the real numbers are not known and are likely higher. Displaced families were particularly targeted and affected by the armed conflict in Iraq. To properly understand the impact of the loss of human lives, the study carried out a deeper investigation into the matter by looking at the following factors:
• The victim’s position in the family: fathers/husbands came in the first place (124) followed by brothers/sons (71) and then relatives (63) followed by mothers (8) and last were sisters/daughters (2). These numbers clearly show that male members of families were primarily targeted (258) followed by (10) females only.

• Number of victims: some families lost one person (168 families). Other families lost two persons (86 families), three persons (63), four persons (52), five persons (35) and six persons (18). This gave a total number of (422) victims for the families that were interviewed.

6. Period of displacement
As mentioned earlier, displacement started in 2004 due to the American occupation of Iraq. In that year, (8) of the surveyed families were displaced and the number rose to (58) in the following year. The number reached its peak in 2006 with the tragic increase of displacement that accompanied sectarian violence when (864) of the surveyed families were displaced (68.4%). The numbers then decreased in the following year to (155) families to stop in 2008 in the Governorates of Diayla and Anbar and continue in the Governorates of Baghdad and Ninewah where (44) families were displaced. In the following years up to 2012, displacement stopped in three governorates while it continued among Christians in Ninewah resulting in a significantly higher number of displaced Christians than returning Christians. Ninewa, the center of Mosul in particular, is still deterring IDPs from returning.

The security operations carried out by the government in the areas of conflict in 2007 and the relative stability that followed was the main reason behind the decrease in displacement and a slow movement of returnees that started gaining momentum, as will be described below. It is important to note that a key cause of displacement was the emptying of certain areas of certain groups of people as armed groups sought to give those areas one population composition (be it religious, sectarian or ethnic). As a result, no component of the society was safe from forced displacement by various armed groups. This resulted in a re-make of demographic setups, breaking up the integrated communities and creating “homogenous” areas with increased polarization and tensions as a result, the type of environment that promotes the establishment of inert or active armed cells.

7. Property of the Displaced
Family houses were not safe from the attacks of armed groups. 252 houses were partially or fully destroyed (25.2%) of the research sample. The largest percentage of destruction was in Diyala (122 houses). 206 families sold their houses for low prices after their displacement
while (133) houses remained as they are, (89) houses were let and (79) houses were illegally occupied by others (despite the creation of a committee at the Ministry of Migration and Displacement responsible for returning illegally occupied houses to their legal owners in order to assist the return of IDPs). Some surveyed families refrained from explaining the situation of their houses after displacement as either they did not own a house or had no information of the current condition of their house.

8. Assistance from the Government
The inadequacy of government response to the security situation was one of the most critical factors causing the high level of suffering and subsequent displacement. A large number of the surveyed families did not receive any assistance in terms of protection to be able to stay in their homes or limit the extent of human and material loss before and after displacement, especially at the peak of displacement in 2006. 80.3% of the surveyed families explained that the Iraqi army did not help them at all in the areas of displacement. 81.8% reported that, similar to the army, the Police Force did not provide protection. The biggest help came from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (23.8%).

9. Loss of Property and Assets
An important question related to the extent of material loss. 366 reported that they lost houses, 555 families lost furniture and household appliances, 126 families lost their farm or orchard, 97 families lost their shops and 95 lost their cars.

2.2 Findings Specific to the Situation of IDPs
35 findings specifically concerned with the situation of IDPs are presented in the following:

1. Gender of head of households
Fathers or brothers were the head of households in most families (77.2%). The largest percentage was Diyala followed by Ninewah and then Baghdad. Females (mothers or sisters) replaced fathers or brothers in (22.8%) of the studied families, keeping in mind that the absence of fathers is normally the result of death, divorce or other reasons that force mothers, oldest sons, oldest sisters or brothers to replace the fathers as head of household.
2. **Age of head of households**
   The youngest head of household was 18 and the oldest 82. The arithmetic mean for the ages of heads of households was 44. The largest age category for heads of households was (38-47) which formed a percentage of 40.9%, followed by the category (48-57) which formed a percentage of 18.9%. Diyala had the youngest heads of households.

3. **Occupation before and after displacement**
   Many families lost their previous occupations. However, Diyala’s farmers experienced the biggest loss. They were 20% before displacement and went down to 0% after displacement. That was accompanied by a demand on governmental jobs. The government employed a substantial number of the displaced. The percentage of civil employees rose from 18.9% to 23.7% after displacement. The number of housewives went down which proves that they opted for work either because of the absence of husbands or to help the family after displacement.

4. **Occupation before and after displacement**
   The most practiced occupation was, and remained after displacement, everyday business activities which represented 48.2% before displacement and 48.1% after displacement. Civil service was the second most common occupation.

5. **Income before and after displacement**
   Income indicator reveals a slight increase in families’ income mostly due to the increase in salaries of those who work as civil servants, resulting from high inflation rate of the Iraqi economy. This issue does not necessarily point to a large or medium improvement in these families’ real incomes after displacement.

6. **Income**
   Christians in Ninewah had the highest incomes before and after displacement, followed by the displaced from Anbar before displacement. The displaced from Baghdad followed by Diyala were amongst the poorest displaced families. After displacement, Baghdad came second followed by Anbar and lastly Diyala.

7. **Per Capita Income**
   The per capita income was $2.47 per day before displacement and up to $5.57 after displacement (for families with income). The average rate of families’ monthly income was $397 before displacement and $419 after displacement.
8. **Income**
Displacement hit the poorest families especially in Baghdad, Diyala and Anbar.

9. **Size of the family**
The average number of members per family was 5.44. The largest number was in Diyala (6.11 individuals), followed by Baghdad (5.48) and then Anbar (5.43) and Ninewah (4.81). Ninewah has the lowest number of family members and the highest income. This might have a religious dimension as the displaced families from Ninewah are Christians who tend to have fewer children in comparison to average Muslim families in Iraq.

10. **Widow-Headed Households**
Families headed by widows as a result of the husband's death during displacement constituted 14.58% of the surveyed families. The largest number was in Baghdad (70 widows), followed by Ninewah (23), Diyala (8) and Anbar (6).

11. **Social Security for Widows**
50.47% of widows receive social security salaries while, for multiple reasons, 49.53% do not have access to this governmental financial assistance administered by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Some widows were not aware of this entitlement while for others lack of required documents related to marriage registration, lack of accuracy in their data or obstacles prevented access to this financial assistance which they are entitled to as displaced widows. Although a small amount, this assistance is important for families with little to no income. Awareness-raising and support is important to ensure that the widows can access this assistance.

12. **Human Loss**
202 families lost one member (27.5%) as a result of the armed violence that ravaged their original areas of residence. The largest number was in Baghdad (90 individuals) followed by Ninewah (54), Diyala (46) and last came Anbar (12). Fathers accounted for 44.98% of those killed, followed by sons/brothers (27.27%) and then relatives (23.45). Women were least targeted.

13. **Displacement Period**
The largest displacement wave took place in 2006 due to the outbreak of violence and its culmination with the bombing of the two holy shrines of Emamayn Askaryen in Salahudddeen. That year witnessed the displacement of two thirds of the surveyed displaced (67%) followed by the year 2007 (14,3%). In 2008, displacement hit its lowest levels and came to a stop in
2009 in two of the four surveyed governorates. It is only in Ninewah that displacement has continued to occur until end of 2012.

**14. Quality of Housing**
Displacement was accompanied by suffering and tragedies in different forms, such as deteriorating quality of housing. It resulted in a significant decrease in the number of rooms per family and as consequence over-crowdedness. Family members’ room occupation rate was 1.43 individuals before displacement. This rate reached 2.27 after displacement adding another element to the hardship endured by the displaced. The highest rate of crowdedness was recorded among the displaced in Baghdad (2.56), followed by Anbar (2.41), Diyala (2.39) and Ninewah (1.97). This undermines one of the most important rights of the displaced families, adequate standard of housing. The study found that this right is still unattained, which we will further elaborate on when discussing the nature and quality of building materials.

**15. Quality of Housing**
Regarding building materials, concrete blocks constitute the main materials used for houses (57.5%), followed by baked mud bricks (16.2%), unbaked mud (15.8%) and last came trailers (8.2%). The use of low cost building material produces low quality houses that do not provide necessary comfort and protection for the displaced families.

**16. Property Rights**
Regarding ownership of their house before displacement, 67.7% of displaced families owned their houses while 26.8% of them were tenants and 5.4% were residents on other arrangements. The highest percentage of ownership was in Diyala (90.3%) and the most affected by displacement as a result of the move from owned houses before displacement to low-quality mud houses after displacement, as described in item (15) above.

**17. Property Rights**
What happened to the houses of the displaced families? 25.2% reported that they sold their houses a lower price than the prevailing house prices. 19.89% of the houses were destroyed, and finally some families leased out their houses. Diyala was the governorate most affected by destruction of houses (60.57%) where 107 of the surveyed families lost their houses because of destruction. The highest number of cases in which houses were sold for low prices was recorded in Anbar (57.69%). There were also families whose houses were illegally occupied by others (8.58%). To address this problem, a committee was formed by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement to, in coordination with the security forces.
ensure that the illegal occupants vacate the houses of IDPs. Criminal actions that amount to charges of terrorism can be raised against those who illegally occupy property of displaced families.

18. Causes of Displacement
The primary cause of displacement has been sectarian-based violence. Among the reasons for displacement mentioned by the surveyed families, the first, sectarian violence accounted for 59.64% of the cases. This calls for careful attention to a detrimental element that breaks down the social fabric of the Iraqi society and undermines the structures of the Iraqi state. It is a regrettable fact that sectarianism has penetrated into and is dominating politics. Today, we are witnessing the growth of a polarized and sectarian-driven exercise of public and political life that threatens all political achievements realized in Iraq after 2003. It is of utmost importance that all efforts are united to counter this development.

The second reason for displacement is the mass exodus out of the original area due to armed violence and the operations of armed groups especially after 2006. That year witnessed the largest wave of violence and the strongest level of control exercised by armed groups.

The third reason, related to the first reason, is that the displaced were religious minorities in their original areas of residence. This constituted the main cause of displacement in Ninewah.

To summarize, sectarian tensions intensified and produced violence and armed conflict often controlled by armed groups. This resulted in the displacement of families from all sides. The result was new demographic setups along religious and/or sectarian lines. Some geographic and residential areas were emptied from all ethnic/religious groups but one. Many such areas have become bases for extremist groups that more or less actively use intimidation and violence to exercise power and influence. Such areas have turned into ticking bombs that can explode at any moment.

19. Methods of enforcing displacement
Different accounts were given of how people were displaced. Methods ranged from violent to more violent to the most violent. Threat messages were the most common form of intimidation (61.18%) followed by killing or kidnapping of family members (18.24%) and then forcing the family out of their house (13.13%). Other methods included detonating the house, forcing the family out after killing a family member or setting fire on or blowing up the house,
as happened in Diyala for example. In particular during 2006-2007, people feared for their lives as armed groups controlled their areas.

20. Loss of Possessions
When displaced families took the decision to leave, 52.5% of them were not allowed to take their furniture with them, while 45.8% were allowed to do so. 1.8% did not specify. These findings confirm with previous findings related to displacement and its conditions.

21. Social Fabric
Did the neighbors take part in enforcing the displacement? This was one of the most critical questions as it touches on the strength of social bonds and ability to resist pressure in the context of armed conflict. 9.8% of the displaced families said that ALL NEIGHBORS took part in enforcing their displacement. (We mean here neighbors who belong to a different sect or religion). 47.1% reported that some neighbors took part in the process. Adding the two figures leaves us with the conclusion that in 56.9% of the displacement cases all or some neighbors, of a different religious or ethnic group, participated in enforcing the displacement. This indicates a weak social fabric despite the prevalence of inter-marriages. In these cases, family and social bonds failed to resist the agendas of armed groups and protect the network of social relations (marriage, family relations, and neighbor relations). This topic deserves a separate socio-anthropological study. However, 43% of the displaced families surveyed said that neighbors did not take part in displacement which revealed a more positive side of this complex reality. Yet, while they did not participate in forcibly displacing people, they did not manage to protect those who were displaced.

22. Family Relations After Displacement
Mass displacement occurred on religious or sectarian basis 74.5% of the areas of displacement which ended the religious, social and ethnic diversity of the targeted areas. 19.6% of the displaced said that there was no mass displacement in the areas they fled from. As for relatives, 88% of them were displaced together while 9.8% had relatives remaining in the places of origin. 2.2% of the studied families did not explain what happened to their relatives after they were separated. 15.5% said they were in contact with their relatives while 62.9% did not give an answer and 21.5% reported that they do not have any contact with their relatives. What we mean by “communication” here is to go to visit and meet these relatives face to face in their original areas from which they were displaced. The low level of communication was partly the result of the relatives moving to another area after the first group had been displaced. Consequently, 70% the relatives had either voluntary or by forced moved and no one remained in the places of origin.
23. **Protection**

The survey result noted that among the basic rights of the displaced, the right to protection (which was not provided by the security forces) in conflict areas was the right they were most aware of. It was the absence of physical safety that forced the surveyed families to move to another location. 84.6% said that the Iraqi army did not help, especially families displaced from Diyala 98.9% of whom insisted that the army had not protected them. As for the police forces, 85% of the displaced families said that they failed to provide help especially to those displaced from Anbar, Diyala and Ninewah. As for the U.S. forces that were operating in Iraq, especially at the peak of displacement in 2006 and 2007, 87.9% of the displaced said that those forces failed to provide protection especially in Diyala, Anbar and Ninewah. These findings related to the security forces point to a couple of important issues:

*First*: there is a clear failure on the part of security services when it comes to protecting the general population and helping the displaced.

*Second*: the security situation is of utmost importance in bringing an end to displacement and sectarian conflict in Iraq and in all areas of conflict in the world. However, we should not forget the political, cultural and ethnic incentives that push towards this conflict. We conclude that the displaced did not enjoy their right to protection during the period of sectarian conflict in Iraq, though these people have high awareness of this right. The surveyed families were asked about the level of protection received from any governmental institution (other than the security forces) before displacement. 91.7% replied that they did not receive any significant help and were left to face their destiny without any governmental intervention.

24. **Injured and Disabled**

Displacement brought many tragedies and some have been brought up already. Yet another tragedy is the number of injured and disabled as a result of the sectarian violence that ravaged in the areas that people were displaced from. 5.4% of the surveyed said that they suffer from injuries. The number of families with injured and displaced members was 40, (17.5%) of these received necessary health care and (82.5%) did not. (12.5%), especially the disabled, had salaries allocated to them through the social security office or they received other forms of financial support from the government, while (87.5%) did not get help of any kind. The largest number of injured amongst the displaced was recorded in Baghdad and Ninewah.
25. **Loss of Property and Assets**
Another tragedy was the loss of assets and possessions. 37.2% said that they lost their houses, 52.2% lost their furniture and house appliances, 7.8% lost their personal cars, 9.9% lost their shops and 10.2% lost movable assets of an average amount of IQD 1 million. The highest amount was IQD 25 million. The important issue here is their right for compensation and whether they were compensated. The majority of those surveyed reported that they were not compensated for their losses, in particular their houses. In Iraq the price of houses is extremely high as a result of a large housing deficit and the absence of a housing plan to meet the housing needs of the population in general and the displaced in particular.

26. **Food Distribution System**
The nutritional situation of the displaced families: the surveyed families were asked about the governmental food distribution system. 92.5% of these families reported that they received help to transfer the rationing cards to their new areas of residence. 7.5% said that they did not transfer the cards despite considerable efforts by the Ministry of Trade to facilitate the transfer of the PDS cards from the province of origin to the current province of residence of displaced families. For these 7.5%, there is no official explanation why they have not transferred their card other than perhaps they did not have a card in the provinces of origin.

27. **Income and Basic Need Satisfaction**
Does the family have sufficient money to meet the basic needs of its members? This question was important as, although we already had information about the income of the families, it was unclear whether the income was sufficient to meet the basic needs of the family members. 27% of the families answered positively that they have a sufficient income to cover the needs and 69.3% reported that the income was not enough, while 3.7% did not specify. This sheds light on the difficulty for these families to realize their right to a dignified quality of life protected under international human rights law that have to be observed by all states, in particular when working with displaced persons.

28. **Assistance Received**
Building on the findings reviewed in the previous two groups, the surveyed families were asked about the level of assistance received from various actors including governmental, non-governmental, international, religious and other actors. The answers were disappointing: 84.5% said that they did not receive any food supplies from any party. When we listed the parties, 88.9% said that they did not receive any food supplies from Iraqi civil society organizations, 85.4% said that they did not receive these supplies from religious
organizations, 95.2% did not receive these from international organizations, 97.1% did not receive these from political parties in Iraq and 94.4% did not receive these from people of the current area of residence.

These findings reveal the lack of support provided and oblige us to acknowledge first the impact of the tragedy caused by displacement and second the extent to which the displaced families are denied their basic rights. This raises a question about the role and responsibility of these actors and to what degree they have failed to assist the displaced populations in Iraq. Is it indeed a systematic failure to provide any form of protection and assistance or are the expectations of the displaced so high that they perceive any received assistance as close to nothing?

29. Assistance Received
We categorized provided assistances according to the sources: the government, civil society organizations or international organizations. On the extent of supports provided by the government, 80.2% reported that neither the local government nor the central government provided help. In regards to civil society and international actors, the result was the same as presented under point 27. The displaced reported that the government did not provide financial assistance. 19.8% said they received governmental support in the form of salaries given to some displaced families, namely social protection salaries provided to 103 families and a financial grant given to 29 families, as well as compensations given to families of the martyrs, a wheelchair for one disabled family member, Prime Minister’s grant, provincial councils supports and material assistance such as oil and blankets.

30. Registration with MoMD
The Ministry of Migration and Displacement established centers to assist the displaced in all governorates of Iraq. These centers register the displaced in order to be able to deliver different kinds of support with the greatest focus on facilitating return. When asked about registration, 88.4% reported that they have registered while 11.6% have not though there were no obstacles to do so. However, the over-crowdedness of these centers on certain days of the month might discourage some from showing up and registering. It should be noted that these centers exist within the premises of provincial councils and local councils, indicating sincere governmental efforts to register the displaced in order to provide necessary assistance. Support can include the transfer of the rationing coupons and registering the displaced families in the nearest police station. 83.2% said that the government helped them in this regard while 16.8% said that they received help after transferring the residence card which helped in formalizing their current place of residence.
31. Restoration of Government Employment
Many of the displaced were governmental employees before displacement. Thus, an effort on the part of the governmental focused on helping these people transfer their services to government offices within their new area of residence to protect their employment and secure a source of income. 89.7% said that their employment was transferred to the new areas while 10.3% said they were not without clarifying the reasons.

32. Other Types of Government Support
There were three other issues related to governmental support provided to the displaced:
First: provision of protection in their new areas after displacement. 50.3% of the surveyed families reported that protection was provided by security forces in their current locations. 28.9% said it did not exist and 20.8% refrained from answering.

The Second issue relates to the differential treatment of the displaced by various government offices. 6.5% said that they have experienced a difference in treatment in their favor, 51.8% said there was no difference in treatment between the displaced and the non-displaced, 17.1% said there was differential treatment to their disadvantage. These figures indicate that displacement was seen as a “stigma” and in some cases resulted in discrimination by some governmental bodies. 25.6% preferred not to answer this question.

The third issue was concerned with the perception of the displaced in regards to the ability of the government to address the issue of displacement in Iraq. 44% answered that the government is capable of addressing the issue, 18.4% said that its ability is limited in this regard and 33.9% said that the government is incapable of addressing the issue of displacement. This is the perception of the displaced that have directly suffered from displacement and have experiences in dealing with responsible government bodies. Therefore, their perceptions provide a valuable insight.

33. Access to Services
One of the basic rights of the displaced is access to basic services in their current area of residence. This is one of the most important indicators of the government’s, and the society’s, ability to meet its responsibility towards the displaced. In the following, we will examine the perceptions of the surveyed displaced families in regards to access to services:

a. The existence of a working water network in the current area: 89.9% of the subjects said that such a network exists in their areas, which is a positive indicator. The next question
was whether the water is potable, given the pollution of water in many networks; 58.6% said it was potable. The third question was whether the quantity of water was sufficient, particularly during the hot summers. 34.5% said that it was enough while 62.1% said it wasn't. We draw the conclusion that a water network is available in most areas where the displaced reside but the water is not always potable. As for its sufficiency for the summer, it covers only one third of the area which requires a serious action by the government to address this issue.

b. The existence of a working sewage system in the areas of the displaced: 40.5% said that a working sewage system exist while 57.8% said it did not. Thus, the majority of the displaced families suffer from the absence of sewage systems in their current areas of residence.

c. The existence of the national electricity grid in the areas of the displaced: First of all we would like to note that the existence of the electricity grid does not mean that electricity is supplied. Daily hours of electric power supply does not exceed 40-50% of the day. As for its existence, 90.6% of the displaced reported that there is a national security grid in their area of current residence while the rest reported there was none. It is concluded that the majority of the areas where the IDPs reside are connected to the national electricity grid.

d. Roads: 38.3% of the displaced said that the roads are paved while 59% said the roads in their areas are unpaved. This raises another issue which is the nature of the areas. Most of the displaced live in areas we call “poverty zones”. 98.9% of the Displaced in Diyala live in areas without paved roads, followed by the displaced of Anbar where 81.5% don't have paved roads. As for the quality of these roads, 48% said that they were modest, 32.8% said they were bad and 17.4% said they were good. Here we came to the final conclusion that the majority of displaced families live in areas with either unpaved roads or bad/modest roads, which requires careful attention to this issue to find appropriate solutions.

e. Education: 93.6% said they have primary schools in their areas and only 4.8% reported that they do not have primary schools in their areas. This is appositive indicator in terms of primary school infrastructure. As for the building quality and the nature of these schools, 40.5% said they were built of baked clay bricks, 28.3% of trailers and 24.3% of cement blocks. Adding schools made of trailers to schools made of cement blocks, we have 52.6% of schools built of low quality materials, which reveals the low quality of these schools. Beyond the existence of school buildings, other factors are of significant importance such as the quality of the building materials, the location of schools, the number of pupils per class and other factors that negatively affect the quality of education provided.
When asked about attendance rates, 72.3% of the families indicated that their children did attend school, while some had registered and others had dropped out 9.1%. 18.6% either did not have children of primary school age or refused to submit their children’s documents to the schools. Amongst the reasons presented by the surveyed families for not sending their children to school financial reasons came at number one (29.82%), followed by the far distance between houses and schools (17.54%), lack of necessary documents for the children (16.67%) and other reasons like the security situation, the over-crowdedness of schools, the refusal of schools to admit their children and other reasons that accounted for 35.96% of the reasons.

f. Health services: six questions in regards to healthcare were included in the survey. The first was whether there is a health center in the area. 61% answered positively, 37.3% answered negatively and 1.6% abstained. Of importance is not only whether there are health facilities but also other factors such as the availability of medicines, especially those in demand; 47.3% said that they exist in their health centers, 48.9% said they don’t and 3.8% abstained. A second factor is access to the two health care books: the chronic diseases book, through which the government distributes medicines to patients with these diseases, and the family care book covering pregnant women and vaccination of children. 100 heads of households said that their families have the chronic diseases book. The situation was different for the second book as only 122 out of 734 IDP families (16.62%) have this book. Many children are thus deprived of important vaccinations. We note here that some of this gap is covered through mobile health teams that vaccinate children at their homes every now and then. 94.7% of the families said that they have such teams in their areas, which is a positive indicator of the government’s response in regards to health care. There were 220 families with members suffering from diabetes, hypertension or stomach ulcers, and these need special books. 77 families had an elderly man or woman in need of special health care. 75 families have disabled members with special needs. We have had 11 comments regarding health services for which we dedicated a separate table at the end of health services tables.

34. Social Integration
The last matter looked into during the survey was related to integration into the current areas of residence, relations with the neighbors, willingness to remain in the current locations or to return to the habitual areas of residence before displacement and the existence of harmful behaviors amongst members of IDP families.

g. Integration: the question was related to possible difficulties faced by IDPs in terms of social integration within the host communities. 11.7% said they continuously faced difficulties, 48.8% faced difficulties sometimes and 36.9% did not face any difficulties.
h. *Relation with the neighbors:* In terms of acceptance by neighbors, 36.5% pointed out that there is a substantial difficulty in winning the acceptance of all neighbors, 57.6% said that some neighbors did not accept them and only 2.5% said they did not face any difficulty in this regard.

i. *Willingness to remain in the current area:* Linked to the above questions, the surveyed IDP families were asked whether they would be willing to stay in their current locations and integrate locally. 84.2% expressed their willingness to stay and cope with this problem of integration while 12% refused to stay.

j. *Willingness to return to the original area:* continuing with the issue of social integration, the surveyed IDP families were asked the hypothetical question of whether they would be willing to return to their places of origin if the security situation in their areas before displacement was improved. 25.6% answered “yes” only if the security situation improves, while 71.5% said “no” even if the security situation improves. The largest number of negative answers came from the displaced of Diyala (91.4%); while most of the positive answers came from the Christians of Ninewah.

k. *Harmful behaviors amongst members of IDP families:* Under the retrogressive economical, educational and security situation, behavioral deviations will appear among the sons and daughters of displaced families. The question was asked during the survey and 37% reported that they heard or noticed deviation on the part of some sons, 57.9% said that this issue does not exist while 5% abstained from going into this issue.

l. *Beggary:* as a consequence of the economic hardship some families are pushed to practice beggary for their livelihood. 40.1% said that they have heard of some vulnerable displaced families practicing this, 55.7% said this did not happen and 4% did not express their opinion.

35. *Cries of the Displaced*

The survey with IDP families was concluded with some remarks made by those interviewed. The below table presents specific remarks made by 60 interviewed IDP families. Some remarks were made by several people. We have tried to avoid editing the wording and formulations to truly transmit the messages as they were communicated to the research team. We put them under the title “Cries of the Displaced”: 
# Cries of the Displaced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remark</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The displaced were treated unjustly by the state + the society</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In short of fuel</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We hope for a solution to the situation of displaced families since living in trailers deprives us from a decent life</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We were treated unjustly by the current minister of Migration and Displacement, and the same thing goes for the government and the parliament</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing apartments should be allocated only to holders of the displaced ID card victims of terrorism only</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We hope that the government solves the issue and distributes pieces of land to help us integrate and become regular residents where we are today, since we cannot return to our original areas</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government can solve the problem by showing some interest and allocating some of its huge finances, spent on personal issue, to the poor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government can distribute pieces of land and low cost houses to solve the problem of housing faced by the displaced and make things easier for them by giving them new houses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We thank Kurdistan Regional Government for the good treatment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My husband was working on daily wages and then on a contract basis in Baghdad Provincial Council. He was killed in the explosion that targeted the Council on 25/10/2009. They did not allocate any pension for us nor any support to meet some of his family’s needs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask you to allocate a monthly salary for me. I am a widow raising 6 orphans and I don’t receive any support from any government. I have no job.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daughter is suffering from tonsillitis and she needs a surgical operation. I don’t have the money and I ask for support</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask you to provide housing to the displaced families, especially those of the martyrs, and then to transfer the ownership of these houses to these families</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish to have a house for my family provided by the government</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ask the government and the civil society organizations to seriously address our issue and take care of our displaced families</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My son is suffering from asthma and needs a devise to help him. I need your help please</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am enlisted in the police force of Diyala and because of displacement and sectarian violence I lost three brothers. I was threatened and so I left the police and I would like to return to the service. I need your help in this.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The locations of the displacement offices are inappropriate, just like the other governmental offices</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government can do something to the displaced. It is a simple issue and the government can do everything they need.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ask to observe human rights for all people equally without resorting to sectarian and ethnic quotas.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight the oppression against Christians and end the suffering of living in leased houses.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The provincial government should observe clause 70</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since the head of household does not have a job, he was obliged to travel to the neighboring countries</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of people making a remark</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Findings Specific to the Situation of Families Returning to Habitual Areas of Residence before Displacement

1. Heads of returnee households
   a. Gender: Males accounted for (79.7%) and females accounted for (20.3%). Females usually take the place of males in their absence for any reason.
   b. Position in the family: fathers accounted for the highest percentage as heads of families (75.2%) followed by mothers (18%), brothers (2.6%) and last daughters (1.5%). (2.6%) did not specify. We found that the percentage of fathers acting as head of households was (95.7%) among the returnee families of Anbar, but it was the lowest in Ninewah where we had (46.9%) only. This gave a wider responsibility for mothers (31.3%) which reveals the nature of the social structure of Christian families and how it is slightly different from the Arab Muslim family.
   c. The age of head of households: The arithmetic mean for the ages of head of households was 43.74. The youngest age was 20 and the oldest was 73. The category (40-49) came at number one and accounted for 38.7% of them followed by the category (30-39) which accounted for 29.7%.
   d. Occupation of head of households: To better understand the occupation of head of households, we asked about the occupation before and after displacement. The highest percentage was entrepreneurship and everyday business dealings (53.8%) which went down after displacement to (42.5%) but remained at number one. The second percentage was for police men or soldiers, (23.7%) before displacement and went down slightly to (26.3%) after displacement but remained at number two. The third was for housewifery (for female head of households), (14.3%) before displacement to rise to (15%) after displacement since 3 women left their occupations they had before displacement. Civil service accounted for (2.3%) before displacement to rise to (5.3%) after displacement, putting in mind that there was a slight increase. Farmers percentage went down from (4.9%) to (2.6%) after displacement.

2. Monthly family income: Monthly incomes and the per capita share is one of the basic economic issues for the lives of displaced and returnee families. We address this issue through the following points:
   a. Monthly income before displacement and after returning: the monthly family income rate before displacement was IQD 356.459 ($383). On returning, it was IQD 457.427 ($356), which presents a slight decrease due to the security situation in the areas to which they returned. Some areas are still unsafe which constitutes an obstacle for
entrepreneurs and skilled workers who represent the largest category of workers. The highest income before displacement was recorded in Ninewah (IQD643.750 = $536) while the lowest income was in Diyala (IQD274.931 = $229). After displacement, Ninewah had also the highest income (IQD751.852 = $627) while Anbar had the lowest income (IQD348.551 = $291). There were 22 families without income before displacement and 21 families after displacement.

b. **Per capita income before and after displacement:** The per capita monthly income rate before displacement was (IQD83.997= $70). After displacement, it was (IQD78.146 = $65). The average number of family members was 5.47. Ninewah maintained the highest per capita income before and after displacement ($88 and 98) while Diyala had the lowest before and after displacement ($46 and 58). The highest income before displacement was (IQD16,000) and the lowest was (IQD50,000), while the highest income on return was (IQD3,103) and he lowest was (IQD50,000).

3. **The average number of family members** was 5.74. The smallest number was 1 and the largest number was 14. The category 4-6 individuals accounted for the highest percentage (%62.4) of the returnee families, followed by the category 7-9 (18.8%) and the last category was 1-3 (12.8%)

4. **Widows as a result of armed conflict before and after displacement:** Families with widows formed 14.3%. When we asked whether these widows received the social care salaries, (34.2%) gave a positive answer while (65.8%) gave a negative one, though it is one of the basic rights of widows stipulated in the Iraqi laws.

5. **Loss of family members:** (53) families lost one or more members (19.9%). (29) families lost fathers, (27) lost women (14 mothers and 13 sisters) and (1) brother. (46) families lost a member, (5) lost two members, (1) lost 3 members and (1) lost 4 members.

6. **Period of Displacement and Return:** The Findings for the returnees were not very different from those for the displaced during the years of displacement. They reached a peak in 2006 (72.2%). In 2007, the percentage of the displaced was 18.8%. When we add the two percentages, we have 91% who were displaced in the years 2006-2007, which then went down to the lowest percentage in 2008-2009 to come to a halt in 2010 when only one family in Baghdad was displaced. As for the findings related to the return,
we noticed that families started to return since 2007 but it gained momentum in 2008, 2009 and 2010. The percentage of returnees in those years was 21.4%, 27.10% and 18.8% respectively, with a total percentage of 67.3% for the three years. Thus, more than two thirds of the displaced were returning in these years and the return continues. Last year, 30 families returned (11.3%). These numbers reveal that sectarian violence of 2006-2007 was the main reason behind the emigration of the people out of the conflict areas. With the implementation of the “Rule of Law Plan”, the government gained control and the control of armed groups was curbed which gradually stopped displacement and at the same time encouraged some families to return to their original areas.

7. **Did the families return to the location of residence before displacement?** 80.5% returned to the same area while 19.5% moved to another area within the same governorate. This is a positive indicator of the return to the same area and a proof to improvement in the security situation. We asked those who did not return to the same area about the reason for that, “feeling insecure” was the main reason for 42 families. 17 families preferred to live with relatives. Some said that some of their neighbors took part in displacing them (10). A family gave no reason. The total number of reasons for not returning was 70.

8. **In what condition did the returnees find their houses upon return?** 102 houses were destroyed and unfit for living. 23 families said they sold their houses cheap on their return. 39 said that they did not have a house at all. 75 families left their houses as they are, 20 families leased their houses and 16 had their houses broken into.

9. **Reintegration upon return:** The unease that the returnee feel comes from a number of problems the most significant of which are:

   a. **Feeling insecure and fear of renewed sectarian violence:** This was the first problem that is of constant concern for 37.6% and of periodic concern for 41%. Adding the two percentages, we have 78.6% of the returnee families feeling worried about renewed sectarian violence, while a minority of 21.4% was not worried about this issue.

   b. **Fear of the neighbors and the residents of the area:** What we mean here are those of a different ethnic origin, sect or religion. 25.6% were always afraid while 30.8% were sometimes afraid. Adding the two percentages, we find that 56.4% were afraid of these people while 34.6% were not afraid and these either returned to the neighborhood or the security situation in their areas was fully improved.
c. **Failing to integrate and communicate:** (Resuming relations with the neighbors and the residents of the area). This issue is related to the above. 15% said they were not always fully integrated with the neighbors, and 36.1% said they were not integrated sometimes. Adding the two, we have a percentage of 51.1% not yet integrated and lack communication with the neighbors, while 48.9% had their communication with the neighbors resumed.

d. **Absence of security forces:** (the army and the police). This is a main source of concern for returnees. Security services are responsible for ensuring the physical safety of the population and this protection is a fundamental right. 27.1% said they are always worried that security personnel will not be available when they are needed. 24.1% said they are sometimes worried. Adding the two, we have 51.2% who believe that the security personnel might not be available when they are needed. 48.9% were not worried that these personnel will not be available. These percentages are identical to what we mentioned when we discussed communication or lack of communication with the neighbors.

10. **The return of children to their schools:** This is an important integration factor. 94.4% of the families said all their children returned to their classes, while 4.5% said that some of them returned while others did not. 1.1% only did not have any of their children return to school. These have their reasons first of which is feeling insecure about the lives of their sons (3 families) and 2 families lacked transfer papers since they left school after displacement.

11. **Returning to the previous occupation:** (civil service/earners/everyday business activities).

   a. Restitution of employment is another re-integration factor, in particular for civil servants. We had 69 families with civil servants before displacement of which 54 individuals returned (78.26%) to their previous work places while 15 individuals did not (21.74%).

   b. Earners and everyday business activities workers returned to their previous works. This is another positive indicator to the improving security situation and reintegration. 181 of these returned to their previous works (68%) while 63 persons did not (23.3%), and (8.6%) abstained.

12. **Receiving food assistance through the food distribution system:** The government made significant efforts to facilitate the transfer of food coupons to the areas the IDPs
had returned to. 97.7% reported they receive food supplies in their areas of return and the remaining smaller percentage (2.3%) did not have their coupons transferred yet.

13. **Compensating the returnees, especially the vulnerable:** One of the issues of concern to the Iraqi government is to compensate the returnee to encourage return. Different methods have been applied to achieve this objective, two of which are:
   a. **Grants for the returnee family:** The government allocated an amount to the family according to lists still announced by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement. 59.8% of the returning families benefited from these while 40.2% are still waiting.
   b. **Compensations for material damages:** All governments of the world bear the largest share of responsibility when disasters struck. Thus, the Iraqi Government has the same duty and commitment towards its citizens. 8.6% said they were compensated for material damages. There are people who lost houses, furniture, vehicles, shops or farms. The number of these people was 378 which was larger than the number of returnees, since there were those who lost two, three, four or all things. Those who were compensated were 23 families only, 5 of these families had compensations equal to the things they lost while 18 (78.3%) had less than they deserve. Thus, compensations in general covered a small percentage and a small percentage only received them. Even so, these compensations did not cover the value of what they lost, which is another obstacle standing in the way of encouraging other IDPs to return. This issue deserves careful consideration from the government.

14. **Assistance received from the government offices:** As the previous question failed to examine the full extent of governmental assistance to the returnees, an additional question was asked about assistance received from four government bodies:
   a. **The Iraqi army:** 31.6% answered positively while 68.4% answered negatively;
   b. **The Iraqi police:** 27.1% of the returnees answered positively while 72.9% answered negatively;
   c. **The local and provincial councils:** 24.1% answered positively while 75.9% answered negatively;
   d. **The Migration and Displacement Offices:** This Office had provided the largest amount of assistance. 75.2% answered positively while 24.8% answered negatively.

15. **The injured and the disabled:** Among the largest number of victims of violence were those that were killed, the injured and the disabled on each side of the conflict. The share of returnee families was 17 injured and disabled, which accounted for (6.4%) of the total number of returnee families. 11 families had (1) person and 6 families had (2)
persons. (8) of these received health care while the rest, the majority, did not. 3 persons received the social care salaries, while 12 did not and 2 abstained.

16. **Material losses:** As a result of their forced displacement, many returnee families had lost their property, assets and possessions such as:
   a. *Loss of houses:* 93 families lost houses, (35%) of the returnees.
   b. *Loss of furniture and house appliances:* 172 families lost these, (64.7%).
   c. *Loss of cars or vehicles:* 38 families lost these, (14.3%).
   d. *Loss of shops:* 24 families lost these, (9%).
   e. *Loss of farms or orchards:* 51 families lost these, (19.2%).

The total number, as we mentioned earlier, was 378.

17. **Did the returnee families have sufficient money to meet the basic needs of all family members?**

This question is of central importance for assessing the economic and livelihood impact of the displacement. 29.7% of head of households answered positively while 70.3% answered negatively. This led us to ask another question: **whether those with an insufficient income to meet the basic needs of their families receive social welfare through the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.** 25 head of households said they registered for this salary (9.4%), while 214 families whose income was not enough did not register with the welfare office (90.6%). This draws attention to a right protected in many countries, including under the Iraqi constitution. We are faced with an important question about the reasons why these families did not register with the social security network.

18. **Transfer of residency cards after return**

87.6% families managed, with the help of relevant government offices, transfer their residency card to their original areas after return, while 12.4% did not. This calls for increased efforts from the government to ensure that the process of transferring residency cards is concluded for all returnees as the residency card is of central importance for all official procedures whether educational, health, migration, employment and other. It should be considered an indicator for successful re-integration after return.

19. **The final finding: difficulties families might face in the process of re-integration:**

- Do you face any difficulties when seeking to integrate with the residents of the after your return? 11% and 51.9% answered positively always and sometimes respectively, a total of 63.6%. Here we followed this with another question:
• Have you been socially accepted by the residents of the area? This is essential for social re-integrating of returnees. 42.5% answered positively while 53.8% said that some of the residents accepted them. 3.8% were not accepted by all residents of the area. In general, these two findings are positive indicators regarding social re-integration.

• Willingness to stay in the same area? To have a better understanding regarding the area, we asked about willingness to stay. 87.2% answered positively, which was the highest percentage and a positive indicator for re-integration. 12.8% were worried about staying in the same area and they were considering/willing to leave the area again. It is important for the government to identify measures to ensure that people are willing to stay to avoid new displacements. Their staying and successful reintegration would promote the willingness of others to return while new displacements after return would deter others from returning.
3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following a review and analysis of collected data, this report presents a number of recommendations that are necessary to address the challenges faced by IDPs and returnees. There are a number of important obstacles that are prohibiting an effective response to the needs of the displaced populations. These obstacles must be addressed in order to ensure a successful end to the displacement crisis that has strongly affected the country during the last decade. Years have passed and it is sensible to believe that many more years will be required to fully address the negative impacts of the armed conflict and widespread violence. The impact, especially the psychological and social, will take many years and perhaps generations to overcome. However, there are measures that can be taken to effectively address short and medium-term challenges faced by displaced populations and the Iraqi society in general in order to promote national reconciliation and social and psychological recover. In the following, we present eight recommendations to the government of Iraq:

First: The security situation
The most important factor that encourages return of families is the level of security they can confidently rely upon return or re-location to another place. The survey revealed that the majority of the displaced (IDPs and returnees) believe that the security level is weak in the places of origin as well as locations after displacement. Ensuring a secure environment for people to either integrate locally, relocated or return to their places of origin is of paramount importance. Without an adequate level of security no other factors can create a favorable return environment. Integration of returnees into the security institutions could increase trust in such institutions and encourage return.

Second: National reconciliation
The second important factor for successful return is national reconciliation that is supported by the Iraqi Government, the UN and the international and local organizations. National reconciliation will provide the favorable environment for the return of the displaced to their areas of residence.

The survey revealed that the social bonds and relations have been affected by the dynamics of the conflict. This has created an atmosphere of distrust based on religious, sectarian or ethnic associations. Rebuilding the social fabric and strengthening social bonds requires intense efforts over a long period of time but is a necessity in order to ensure successful
integration of the displaced families either locally or through return to areas of origin. Rebuilding the social fabric is also a necessity in order to limit the influence of armed groups and prohibit displacements in the future.

**Third: Compensations**

Thousands of displaced and returnee families lost their assets and possessions and many family members became victims of violence (killed, disabled or injured). The survey revealed that the interviewed families did not experience an adequate response from the government or non-governmental actors in this regard. Compensation and assistance would increase motivation to return and increase the likelihood for successful re-integration. Civil society should be included in the compensations committees and particular attention should be paid to compensation for property, assets, lost employment and other losses.

**Fourth: The economic factors**

The economic factor is related to access to job opportunities, sources of income and means of livelihood. The survey revealed that many displaced families live in abject poverty. They cannot cover the basic needs of their children. The government must consider ways to raise the level of income by creating job opportunities. Measures could include priority for governmental employment similar to the priority given to families of the martyrs and political prisoners. Prioritization of IDPs under various livelihood projects is another measure that the government should pursue. An additional factor is access ensure that eligible displaced families have access to the social welfare benefits.

**Fifth: Infrastructure and services especially in the areas where IDPs reside**

The survey revealed major problems related to potable water networks, roads, quality of housing, health care and education, especially the problem of drop-out and the quality of education, and access to other services. There is a need to establish strategies and time-bound action plans to remove barriers to access to each of the services necessary for a dignified quality of life. A comprehensive strategy is needed to address the impact of displacement in order to avoid the creation of poverty zones in the outskirts of large cities, especially in Baghdad where slums inhabited by the poor and the displaced testify to the impact of such poverty zones on the quality of life of thousands of Iraqis. Housing is a major challenge which calls for a strategy to address the housing deficit through housing projects where housing units are primarily allocated to displaced families either for free or at a, for them, affordable price. Allocating housing units to the displaced in Baghdad and Diyala within the Basmaya Project could be part of such a housing strategy.
Sixth: Establishing a center for research and studies dedicated to the issues of displacement and migration

Often, policy and decision-makers within governmental and non-governmental structures lack the necessary understanding and information to effectively address political, social and economic problems. Establishing a national research center for displacement and migration would make, research based data, information and analysis, derived from the reality of people, available to policy and decision-makers. Through a rights-based approach, such a center could play an important role in guiding the legislative and executive bodies of government when addressing the situation of IDPs and returnees. A central finding of this survey is the need for raising the awareness of the displaced families about their rights and entitlements such as social security. A second finding is the need for assessing the level of access to rights in order to expose barriers to access and recommend measure to address such barriers.

Seventh: Psychological and social rehabilitation of the victims of displacement, especially the children

This is one of the most serious problems at present that is likely to get more serious in the near future when the children enter adulthood and must handle the psychological effects of their experiences while facing multiple social, economic and educational obstacles to a fulfilled life. Likely impacts are harmful behaviors within the family and broader social and political context. Psychopathic personality would be the most prevailing with impacts on their personality and social relations. Early attention to these children and rehabilitating them psychologically, emotionally and socially through specialized centers is very important.

Eighth: Level of awareness amongst the displaced about their rights

Despite some variations, the displaced families throughout Iraq have common concerns. Measures should be taken to organize displaced families in the form of civil society, creation of specialized councils, supporting their nominations to district and provincial councils, or to the parliament is important to help them demand their rights in all forums. They should be empowered to raise their concerns and disseminate their messages perhaps through the establishment of a newspaper, a radio station, a TV channel, an electronic website, a specialized center or other mediums of communication. Today, the displaced have no formal or informal forums where they can gather, organize and interact amongst themselves and with relevant state and non-state actors. It is important that displaced families are proactive and organize themselves to demand their rights. It is therefore recommended that the displaced become lead actors in organizing themselves and creating projects and opportunities for raising awareness about their own situation, their rights and mobilizing
support from all relevant actors. Iraqi civil society and international actors should assist the displaced and treat them as active agents. This would create self-awareness amongst the displaced populations and promote a more active engagement in terms of demanding rights and entitlements. Human rights monitoring and the role of pressure groups is very important to influence policies and priorities in a country.