

The REACH Initiative Data Overview for the HNO Process, September 2015

Summary

This document provides an overview of key messages and findings for each cluster in Iraq, as identified by REACH Initiative's research in preparation for the upcoming HNO.

The overview of key data presented here on IDPs outside camps comes from the Multi Cluster Needs Assessments (MCNA) carried out in October 2014 (covering the Kurdistan Region of Iraq [KR-I] and neighbouring governorates) and June 2015 (covering all Iraqi governorates apart from Anbar, Baghdad, Kirkuk and Salah al Din). The VAM project implemented by the REACH Initiative for the WFP and FAO in April 2015 also covers IDPs living outside camps: the VAM data matched that of the MCNA, and can be visited for triangulation.

The data presented here on IDPs residing inside camps comes from the VAM project, and covers 20 camps as recognised by the CCCM in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates.

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Demographics

IDPs outside camps

- The average displaced household size outside camps in Iraq was 6.4 persons.
- 51% of the population was male, and 49% were female.
- 89% of households are headed by a male, and 11% of households are headed by a female.
- 49% of the population was under the age of 18.
- The average dependency ratio across all assessed governorates was 0.9. This implies that for every ten individuals of working age, nine are not of working age; therefore in the majority of households that do have access to income, only one or two bread winners provide for a large number of family members.
- Demographics of the IDP population in the KR-I have remained largely unchanged since the previous MCNA, which was conducted in October 2014.

IDPs inside camps

- The average displaced household size inside camps in Iraq was 6 persons.
- 51% of the population was male, and 49% were female.
- 54% of the population was under the age of 18.

Food Security

IDPs outside camps

- 1. Food was the top priority need across Iraq, reported by 72% of households. This was also the most reported priority in the KR-I during the previous MCNA.** As food is an immediate and life-saving need, the fact that food is highlighted as a priority need for more than one year into the humanitarian response indicates that IDPs' capacity to deal with protracted displacement remains low.
- 2. High engagement in negative food coping strategies reveal significant food insecurity, despite strong Food Consumption Scores (a measure of the frequency of consumption and the nutritional value of food consumed¹).**
 - Across Iraq the large majority of households (94%) showed an acceptable FCS, with higher scores in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates than elsewhere in Iraq.
 - IDPs residing in the Southern governorates of Muthanna and Basrah registered some of the worst FCS outcomes of all governorates, averaging a score of 55 and 63, respectively.
 - This contrasts with higher scores in the KR-I, which has seen an increase in average food consumption scores since the previous MCNA: previously 22% of households had less than an acceptable score, but now this amounted to less than 2%. In Northern Dahuk and Erbil governorates, the average FCS scores stood at 90 and 81, respectively.
 - Across all assessed governorates, coping strategies were employed by a majority of households.

¹ For the MENA region, including Iraq and Syria, WFP interprets an FCS score of 28 or under to indicate a poor food consumption profile; a score from 28.1 through 42 to be borderline; and an FCS score above 42 to indicate an acceptable food consumption profile of food security.

- 68% of households were relying on less expensive food, 29% limiting their portions at mealtimes and 18% reducing the number of meals eaten at least once a week.
- Despite the higher FCS in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates, these governorates featured some of the highest proportions of households engaged in negative food coping strategies, indicating that they need to employ behaviours that heighten their vulnerability in order to meet an acceptable standard of food consumption.
- Missan, Muthanna and Wassit also show higher rates of coping strategy engagement. In particular, more households in these governorates compared to the KRI-I were engaging in severe strategies such as bartering, child labour and reducing the amount of food consumed by adults in order to prioritise food for children.

3. The current level of food consumption is not sustainable in the long term without assistance. This is indicated by the **pervasive use of coping strategies** by households, as well as the **high reliance on cash purchases for food** amongst IDPs across Iraq, coupled with **high rates of unemployment and debt**.

- Across all governorates, most households (83%) relied on cash purchases as their main source of food.
- Taking into account the high rate of unemployment amongst IDPs in Iraq it is unlikely that households will be able to sustain the same level of food consumption without assistance.
 - This is particularly true for those households reporting to be in debt, with higher rates of debt in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates, Basrah and Najaf.
 - Indeed, **89% of households in debt said that this was due to meeting food costs.**
 - The average family size of households in debt due to food was generally bigger, and almost all of the female headed households in debt cited food as a reason. Interesting, a slightly higher proportions of those who arrived since April 2015 cited food as a reason across all governorates, apart from Dahuk.

4. In the north (KR-I, Diyala and N-Ninewa) households predominantly received food assistance from international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), while in the centre-south the majority only received government assistance. This reveals a gap in PDS distribution in the north, whilst the reach of the UN and INGOs has been much more limited in the centre and south.

IDPs inside camps

- 1. With funding for the humanitarian response falling, IDPs living inside camps have little capacity to meet their food needs independently and are likely the worst affected by funding shortfalls.** Perhaps unsurprisingly, IDPs inside camps were found to be more reliant on food assistance than IDPs living outside camps. However, given the low levels of income and high rates of unemployment inside camps, IDPs inside camps are still spending a higher proportion of their total household expenditure on food than IDPs outside camps. This makes IDPs in camps particularly vulnerable to the effects of potential further cuts in food assistance.
- Transfers (both formal assistance from the government and non-government agencies as well as informal gifts and exchanges) accounted for on average a third of food consumed by IDPs in camps.
 - In addition, more IDPs residing inside camps (73%) than IDPs outside camps (49%) reported receiving some PDS in the three months preceding assessment.

- A higher proportion of IDPs both inside and outside camps in Dahuk received full rations, while most IDPs in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah received none at all.
- The average expenditure on food per capita as a proportion of the overall monthly expenditure per capita (including food as well as basic expenses such as housing, water, education, health etc.) is much higher for IDP households in camps (63%) compared to both IDPs living outside camps (34%).
 - This is likely due to costs for shelter and basic needs mostly covered in camps, and is also a reflection of high unemployment and low earnings among camp populations whereby most of the income is prioritised on food.

2. Reported FCS were slightly lower among IDPs inside camps compared to outside camps. Although slightly less IDPs in camps were resorting to food-based coping strategies compared to IDP households outside camps, **more households had already used up livelihood-based coping strategies available to them.**

- 97% of IDP households living in camps presented an acceptable FCS.
 - Little variation between governorates was found, although some camps had a particularly negative impact on FCS, namely Al Yawa New, Baharka, Bardarash, Dawudia, Essian, Garmawa and Harshm.
 - A higher proportion of female headed IDP households (13%) had poor or borderline scores inside camps than male households.
 - Regular income appears to have had the largest positive impact on FCS. For example, in camp settings, 43% of IDP households with a poor FCS reported no livelihood.
- A slightly smaller proportion (67%) of IDPs living in camps were engaged in food based coping strategies. However, livelihood-based strategies were more commonly applied by IDPs in camps.
 - Spending savings was employed by a higher proportion of IDPs living in camps (38%).
 - Noticeably, a larger proportion of households residing in camps than outside camps had already exhausted livelihood-based options. For example 33% of camp IDPs had already spent all of their savings and 24% had previously sold their last female animal.

Livelihoods

IDPs outside camps

- 1. Employment was the second most reported priority need across Iraq, reported by 42% of households.**
 - Noticeably this was reported by on average twice as many households in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates compared to the previous MCNA.
 - Considering that many IDPs will be unable to safely return to their area of origin any time soon, lack of access to livelihoods creates severe challenges for sustainable capacity to deal with displacement.
- 2. The majority of IDPs do not have access to any regular, stable form of income.** Employment rates were generally poorer in the central-southern governorates compared to the north. Access to jobs

appears to be particularly difficult for the IDP community as a direct result of displacement and their status as IDPs.

- 17% of IDP households reported not generating any form of income in the month preceding assessment, and 44% were relying on seasonal forms of labour, including agricultural, skilled wage and low skilled wage labour to generate an income.
 - Subsequently, 22% of households reported that they cannot afford all of their basic needs – amongst this subset of households, food was the need most reported as unaffordable (74%), followed by shelter (61%), medical care (59%) and water (26%).
- Employment rates in the central-southern governorates were generally poorer than in the more northern governorates.
 - When looking at average incomes, they were generally higher in major urban and commercial centres such as Basrah (648 USD), Erbil (510 USD), and Dahuk (553 USD).
 - Overall, males between the ages of 18 and 59 absorbed the bulk of income generating activity, with 35% of the total demographic group reportedly employed.
 - In Sulaymaniyah, Diyala and Erbil, employment rates for males aged 18-59 reached a high of 74%, 56% and 53%, respectively, and a low of 3% in Qadisiya and 14% in Najaf. In the KR-I and neighbouring governorates, employment rates amongst both males increased by an average 48% between October 2014 and June 2015.
 - In addition, the MCNA found a rise (roughly 15%) in female headed households with females working in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah and particularly in Ninewa.
- Access to jobs appears to be particularly difficult for IDPs – even more so in the KR-I and surrounding areas
 - 24% of households across all assessed governorates reported that they have unemployed members who are looking for work; including 52% in Diyala, 34% in Sulaymaniyah and 31% in Dahuk.
 - On average, 15% of the male population aged 18 to 59 were unemployed and seeking work, as well as 3% of the female population.
 - The main obstacle cited for not being able to find work was increased competition (79%) as a result of swelling populations looking for livelihoods in areas hosting IDPs. 18% also reported refugees and other IDPs work for less.

3. A high rate of engagement in coping mechanisms to deal with limited livelihoods was reported across all assessed governorates, but particularly often in the KR-I. In addition, the level of debt in the KR-I has quadrupled since the previous MCNA, mostly to meet renting costs.

These findings raise concerns because many households might soon exhaust all coping strategies available to them – once they have crossed this threshold, their vulnerability is likely to increase drastically. As they will not be able to meet any of their basic needs, these households will be in need of immediate, life-saving assistance.

- Across all assessed governorates, 80% of the IDP population reported resorting to some form of coping mechanism to deal with limited livelihoods over the course of the 30 days prior to the survey.
 - A majority relied primarily on spending savings (64%), charitable donations (31%) and kinship support networks (23%), and a sizeable proportion also resorted to debt (22%) and sales of assets (18%).
 - Engagement in coping strategies to deal with limited livelihoods was generally higher in the north compared to the central-southern governorates.

- 22% of IDPs across the assessed governorates reported being in debt, with particularly high rates in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates, Basrah and Najaf.
 - The amount of household debt was on average three times as large in the KRI-I as elsewhere in the country (3,191 USD compared to 1,129 USD). In the KR-I, the proportion of households in debt has remained similar but the average amount of debt has quadrupled since the previous MCNA.
 - Rent was reported by the majority of households in debt as one of main reasons for borrowing money – especially Erbil (81%) and Sulaymaniyah (91%). The large majority of households are in debt to friends and relatives either in the host or IDP community. This indicates that many may soon exhaust borrowing money as a coping strategy and be forced to move to substandard shelters.

IDPs inside camps

1. **Overall employment rates and access to livelihoods were found to be much lower for IDPs residing inside camps compared to those outside.**
 - Just over a quarter (26%) in camps reported no livelihood at all in the month preceding assessment. Many IDP households were recipients of inactive income, including still receiving their public sector salaries (16%), and humanitarian aid (16%), and the most common active job amongst IDP households was unskilled labour (15%). The average monthly income for IDPs living in camps (382 USD) was also lower than those outside camps (599 USD).

Shelter

IDPs outside camps

1. The majority (69%) of IDP households were residing in houses and/or apartments, whilst over 10% were residing in abandoned or unfinished buildings and 2% were residing in schools. **The central and southern governorates saw a higher proportion of households living in critical shelters, and are therefore in more need of shelter-assistance.**
2. **Of those residing in houses or apartments, approximately 72% were reported as renting, raising acute concerns over sustainability and affordability given the high rates of unemployment in the centre-south and debt in the KR-I.** This raises concerns that an increasing number of households will be forced to move to less adequate shelters.
 - 84% of those citing rent as a reason were living in houses, 8% in apartments. As the crisis continues households may no longer be able to afford adequate shelter if rent prices rise or income levels fall, possibly resulting in further displacement
 - For example, compared to 2% across all groups reporting being threatened with eviction, 31% of households citing rent as reason for debt reported being threatened with eviction.
 - Of those IDPs who reported intending to move (4%), much higher proportions of households in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates who were currently renting said they planned to move due to the cost of living whereas this was rarely reported in more central and southern governorates.
3. **Amongst households living in critical shelters, 56% did not feel that their shelter was of adequate quality.** These proportions were generally higher in central and southern governorates

compared to the north, apart from a similarly large proportion in Dahuk (43%), mostly citing overcrowding and poor shelter conditions. **The poor quality of accommodation raises concerns for capacity to deal with the winter climate**, especially in more northern governorates where the winter climate is harsher and accommodation issues were also frequently reported.

- The most commonly reported issues amongst households living in critical shelters were related to over-occupancy and general shelter conditions: lack of privacy (64%), too small (54%), broken windows (30%) and leaking roof (27%).
- In addition, similar proportions of households not living in critical shelters across all assessed governorates reported issues with general shelter conditions, such as broken windows and leaking roofs.
- A lack of heating was more commonly reported in the KR-I. It should be noted that privacy was also reported by large proportions not living in critical shelters in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates.

Health

IDPs outside camps

- 1. 25% of IDP households reported medical care as one of their top three priority needs.** In the KR-I 16% more households than the previous MCNA reported medical care as a primary need.
- 2. Problems accessing healthcare were especially common in Thi-Qar as well as the KR-I and surrounding areas.** Findings indicate the reason for the rise of healthcare as a priority need is that households are **foregoing healthcare in the face of limited finances in order to service other needs**, such as food and shelter.
 - Of the 92% of households who reported having sought medical care since their displacement, 35% reported having experienced difficulties accessing care. Problems were especially common in Thi-Qar (76%) as well as the KR-I and surrounding areas.
 - The most frequently cited reasons for poor access were cost of healthcare (65%) and insufficient funds to purchase medical supplies (35%). A lack of medicine available at the hospital was reported by 26% of households. Other reasons, such as lack of staffing or problems with civil documentation were only cited by a minority of households.
- 3. Immunisation rates against polio and measles were much lower in central-southern governorates than in the northern governorates of Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Ninewa and Sulaymaniyah.** This raises acute concerns over the risk of infection amongst infants.
 - Across all assessed governorates, 20% of infants aged 0-59 months from IDP households were reported as not immunised against poliomyelitis (polio), and 70% of infants aged 9-23 months were reported as not immunised against measles.
 - Immunisation rates for at-risk infants were generally higher in the northern governorates of Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Ninewa and Sulaymaniyah, where over 80% of infants aged 0-59 months were reportedly vaccinated against polio.
 - In turn, polio vaccination rates in Muthanna and Missan were as low as 28% and 36% respectively. In the same governorates, only 4% and 6% respectively of at risk children were vaccinated against measles.

4. **Access rates to obstetric care in general were lowest in central/southern governorates such as Babylon, Muthanna and Wassit, and were on average higher in the KR-I and neighbouring areas.** This raises acute concerns over the potential increase of health complications during pregnancy and the availability of life-saving surgery during delivery, as well as limited adequate care for new-born infants amongst IDPs. Across all assessed governorates **nearly 20% of households were found to host pregnant and lactating women.**

WASH

IDPs outside camps

1. Nearly 60% of the assessed IDP population relied primarily on some form of private source of drinking water. Within this subset, over 40% purchased bottled water from private vendors, whereas 17% relied on trucked water. **The reliance on purchased water was overwhelmingly high in southern governorates, for example reported by 95% of households in Kerbala, 89% in Babylon and 84% in Wassit.** Shortages in non-drinking water was also generally more common in the southern governorates.
2. **Overwhelming majorities in all governorates reported access to functional latrines, but access to private or shared latrines was much lower amongst critical shelters and less access was reported in more southern governorates.** Lack of access to private latrines in shared accommodation arrangements raises serious protection concerns.
 - Between 87% of households in Thi-Qar and 100% in Sulaymaniyah reported access to latrines – apart from only 40% in Muthanna. The lack of access to latrines in Muthanna raises concerns for sanitation and spread of disease.
 - The slight majority of IDPs across Iraq (62%) had access to private latrines, with lower proportions of private access in Najaf (30%), Wassit (32%), Ninewa (48%) Diyala (50%) and Dahuk (51%).
 - Unsurprisingly, households living in less formal or more crowded shelter arrangements, such as containers, schools and tents, were more likely to share latrines with other households.

IDPs inside camps

1. **IDPs living in camps in Erbil, Dahuk and Ninewa were mostly reliant on piped water networks for drinking water (mostly communal in Erbil and private in Dahuk and Ninewa), while in Sulaymaniyah and Diyala households relied on private vendors.** These trends remained much the same for the primary reported sources of water for other household purposes.
2. Across the assessed region **32% of IDP households living in camps had faced constraints accessing water** (mostly due to limited availability and then household storage), and **33% perceived their water to be unsafe for drinking** – although 75% reported they did nothing to make it safer.

Education

IDPs outside camps

1. **10% of IDP households reported that education was one their top three priority needs.** In the KR-I, this saw a drop from being reported by 17% of households in October 2014, to 8% of households in June 2015.
2. **A big drop in formal school attendance amongst school-aged IDP children since displacement has been identified in the KR-I,** especially amongst children aged 12-15.
3. **IDP attendance in formal education is extremely low across Iraq, in particular in the central and southern governorates.** Reasons for non-attendance in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates were more related to **quality of curriculum and language**, whereas reasons in central-southern governorates were more closely linked to **movement and frequent displacement**.
 - Across all of the assessed governorates, only 20% of eligible IDP school-aged children attend formal education.
 - Attendance is overall higher in the KRI governorates of Dohuk (27%), Erbil (26%) and Sulaymaniyah (36%).
 - In comparison, attendance is much lower in central and southern governorates. For example, in Kerbala (1%), Missan (2%) and Qadissiya (4%).
 - Attendance rates were consistently lower for girls than for male cohorts in the same age group. The gap is most striking for girls aged 15-17.
 - Across all assess governorates 38% of households hosting children who do not attend formal education reported that a lack of funds for equipment was the largest challenge.
 - Frequently moving places was cited much more as a reason for non-attendance of the majority of households in the central and southern governorates compared to more northern governorates – especially accounting for the low rates in Missan and Qadissiya.
 - Looking at the reasons for the lowest rates in Kerbala, the majority of households reported that schools were too far away.
 - In comparison, bad quality of curriculum and language barriers were cited by many more IDP households residing in the KR-I and neighbouring governorates.
4. **Attendance in informal education is 2% or less in all assessed governorates across all age groups and gender.**

Protection

IDPs outside camps

1. **The IDP population across all assessed governorates includes relatively large proportions of vulnerable groups.** Compared to the central and southern governorates as a whole, governorates in the KRI-I host larger groups of households with separated children, disabled members, and elderly members that are still working. These vulnerable households are less capable of dealing with displacement.
 - Across the assessed governorates, almost one fifth (17%) of households included children below the age of five years.
 - 2% of interviewed families reported caring for a minor who was not part of their immediate family; most of these cases were children who had been separated from their own family. Particularly large proportions were identified in the KR-I (Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah) and Missan and Kerbala governorates.

- Less than 1% in all governorates had minors as heads of households.
 - In turn, 4% of the IDP population was 60 years old and above – 13% of households had an elderly head of household, with a noticeably larger proportion in Dahuk (18%).
 - The KR-I saw much larger proportions of males over the age of 60 still earning an income: large proportions were not receiving pensions but were still engaged in active jobs.
 - Overall 11% of households had a member suffering from a disability: these proportions were slightly higher in the KR-I. The types of disabilities reported were most often either physical or speech impediments.
 - In 21% of all interviewed cases, at least one woman in the household was either pregnant or still lactating.

- 2. **In the KRI-I, the proportion of female headed households that have one female member working has increased since the previous MCNA.** In addition, previously none of these households were in debt whereas now **a large majority are in debt**. This indicates that female headed households are struggling to provide for their families and resorting to negative coping strategies.
 - 11% of households are headed by a female.
 - The MCNA found a rise (roughly 15%) in female headed households with females working in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah and particularly in Ninewa.
 - Previously none of the female headed households with females working reported being in debt, but now they are in Diyala, Erbil and Ninewa.

- 3. **Although registration appears to have been largely successful, many IDPs are missing other forms of civil documentation and are still lacking residency.** A lack of civil documentation and residency creates difficulties in access to jobs, the PDS system, public services and legal representation. This minimises the capacity for IDPs to deal with their displacement.
 - The overwhelming majority (96%) of the IDP population reported being registered with the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MODM) or the Department of Displacement and Migration (DDM) in Dahuk, with minimal variation across governorates.
 - Of those registered with the MODM, 88% reported that they had received the financial grant of one million Iraqi Dinar after registration.
 - On the other hand, many IDP households (16%) across Iraq reported missing other forms of civil documentation.
 - 5% of the IDP population were missing their food ration card, 4% their passport and 3% their identification card.
 - In addition, although the entry and residency documentation policy varies for each governorate and has been subject to multiple changes in policy at the borders, at the time of assessment a larger proportion of IDPs in the KR-I had residency compared to the first MCNA in October 2014.
 - Far fewer IDPs had residency in Dahuk (18%) and Sulaymaniyah (26%) than Erbil (62%).
 - Dahuk also hosted the largest proportion of IDPs without any legal permission to remain (76%), compared to 20% in Erbil and 17% in Sulaymaniyah.

IDPs inside camps

- 6% of camp IDP households had a female head of household. The majority (73%) of female heads of households in the camps are widowed.