

Climate-Induced Displacement – Central and Southern Iraq





DATA COLLECTION PERIOD: 1 – 15 DECEMBER 2023

DTM has been tracking climate-induced displacement across the central and southern regions of Iraq since June 2018. Drought, land degradation and increased salinity in important rivers and tributaries continue to place a strain on the agriculture, livestock herding and fishing industries, with many families unable to guarantee sufficient and sustainable livelihoods in rural areas. DTM's tracking of climate-induced displacement aims to provide data on the number and location of vulnerable families forced to displace due to climatic and environmental factors.

CONTEXT

Data collection for this update took place between 1 and 15 December 2023. Data are collected through IOM's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs), who are deployed across Iraq (20% of enumerators are female). IOM's RARTs collect data through interviews with key informants utilizing a large, well-established network of over 2,000 key informants that includes community leaders, mukhtars, local authorities and security forces.

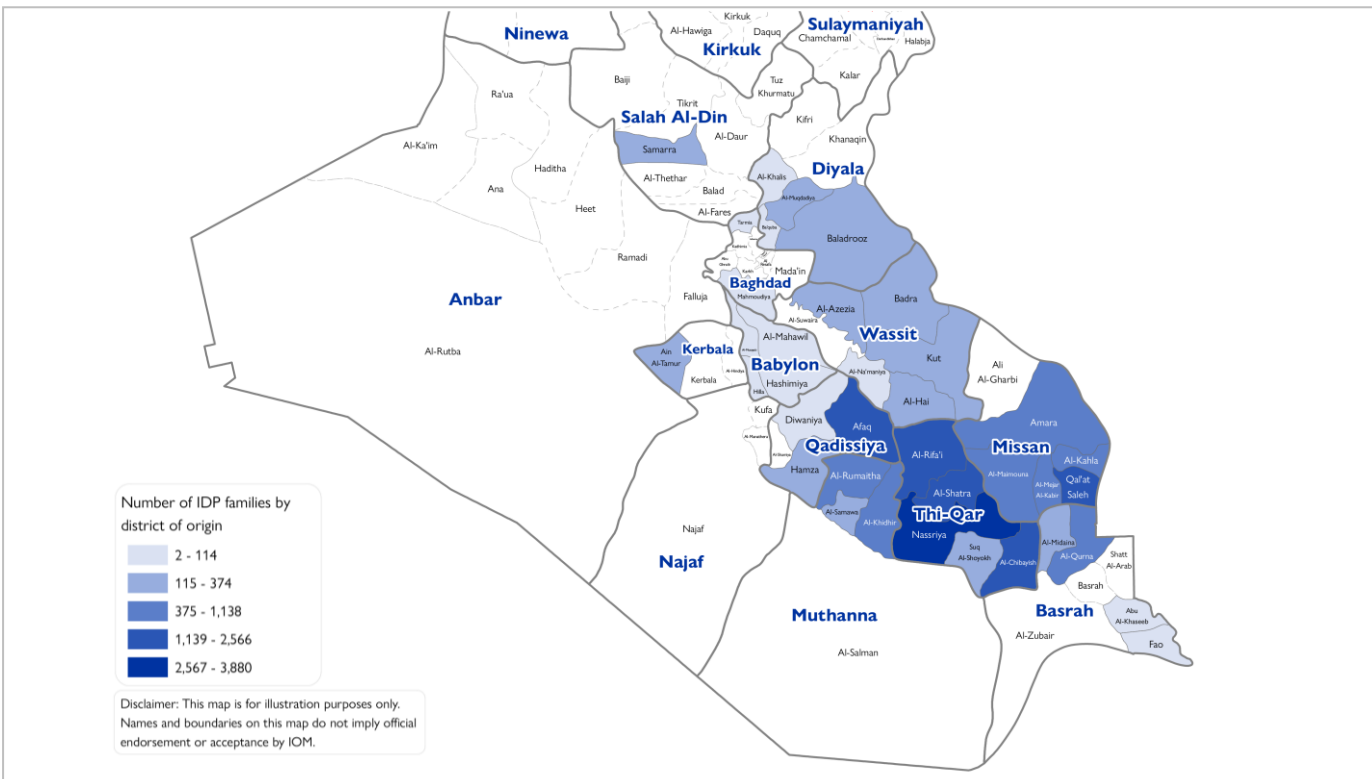
EXTENT OF DISPLACEMENT

	Families Individuals	22,583 135,498		Families displaced within their governorate of origin	81%
	Families displaced to urban locations	54%		Families displaced in critical shelters	922

As of 15 December 2023, **22,583 families** (135,498 individuals) remain displaced because of climatic factors across 12 governorates. The displaced families are dispersed across 405 locations. Of these, just under half of families displaced within their district of origin (46%). Slightly more than half of families displaced to urban locations.

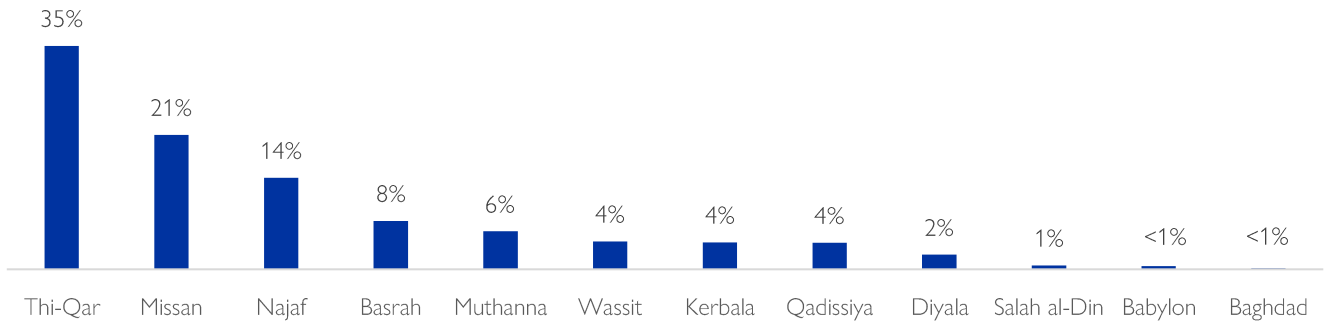
Nearly half of families were displaced from **Thi-Qar** (46%, 10,296 families), followed by **Missan** (23%, 5,182), **Qadissiya** (8%, 1,791) and **Muthanna** (8%, 1,768). At the district level, Nassriya in Thi-Qar Governorate has the largest number of families displaced by climatic factors (3,880). Other districts with significant climate-induced displacement include Qal'at Saleh in Missan Governorate (2,566 families) and Al-Shatra (2,411) and Al-Rifa'i (2,065), both in Thi-Qar Governorate.

Map 1: Districts of origin for families displaced by climate change and environmental degradation



DISPLACED FAMILIES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN IRAQ

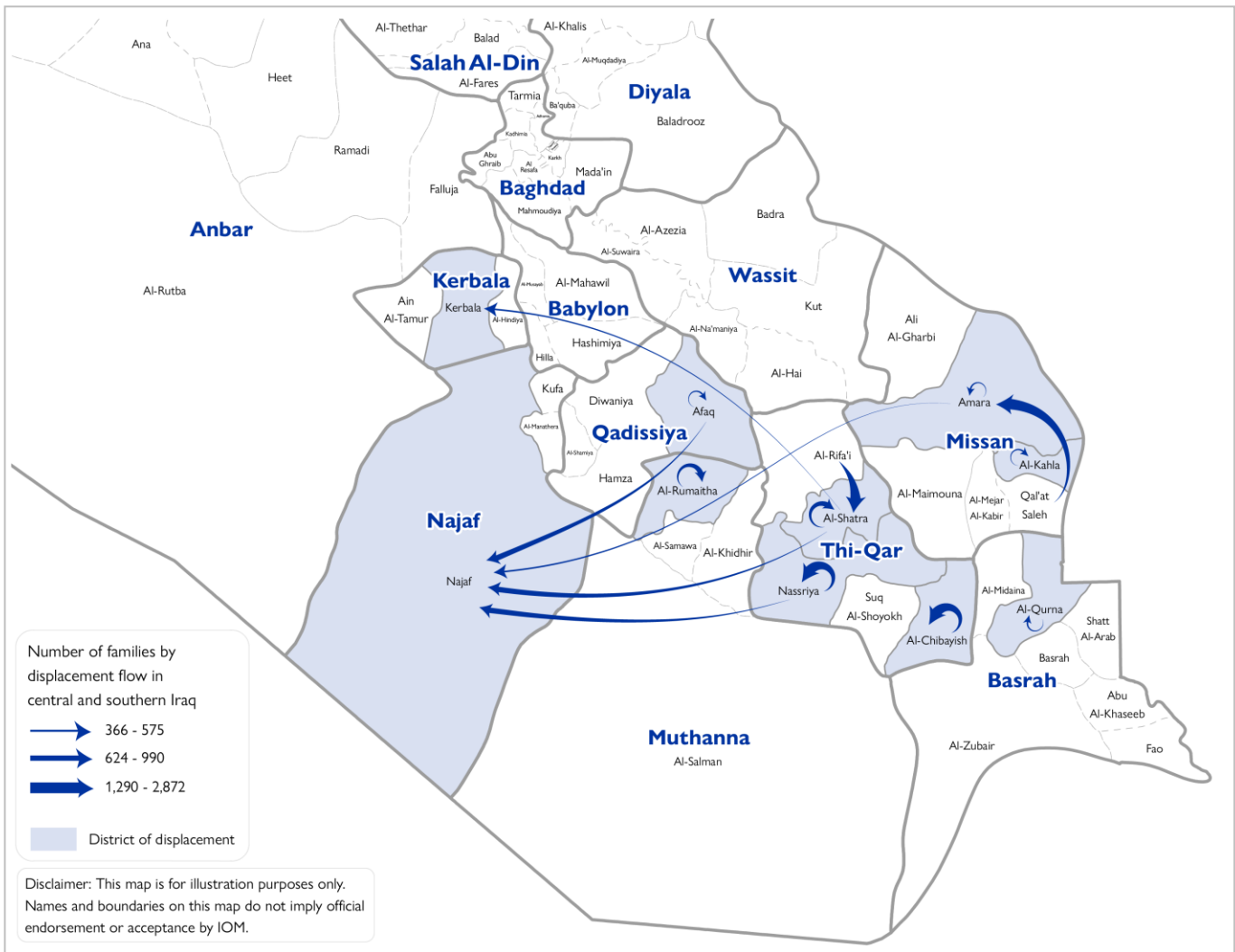
Figure 1: Percentage of families displaced due to climactic factors by governorate of displacement



The number of families in climate-induced displacement expanded in this round as key informants referred RART teams to previously unassessed locations of displacement. In total, 14 new locations were added this round, particularly in Baghdad. The number of locations and climate-displaced families is expected to increase each round as the network of key informants expands. However, the continual increase in families also suggests such movements are permanent, rather than temporary.

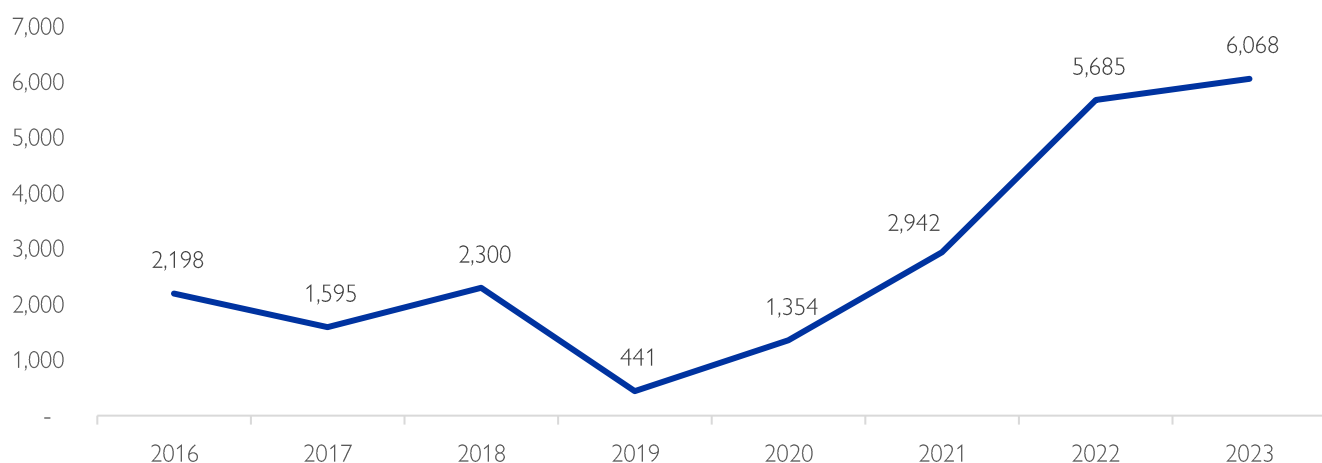
Just over one third of families displaced to **Thi-Qar**, while a fifth displaced to **Missan** and a seventh to **Najaf**. Districts hosting high numbers of displaced families include Amara (Missan), Najaf (Najaf) and Nassriya (Thi-Qar). Around four fifths of families displaced within their governorates of origin and just under half within their district of origin. Most families who displaced to Thi-Qar and Missan came from elsewhere in the governorate. By contrast, all families coming to Najaf originate from outside the governorate, especially Thi-Qar and Qadissiya. Moreover, nearly all families who displaced to Najaf are in rural areas, running counter to the general trend of rural-to-urban movements.

Map 2: Top 15 climate-induced displacement flows in central and southern Iraq¹



1. The map depicts the top 15 flows from their district of origin to their district of displacement. Intradistrict displacement is shown as a circular arrow.

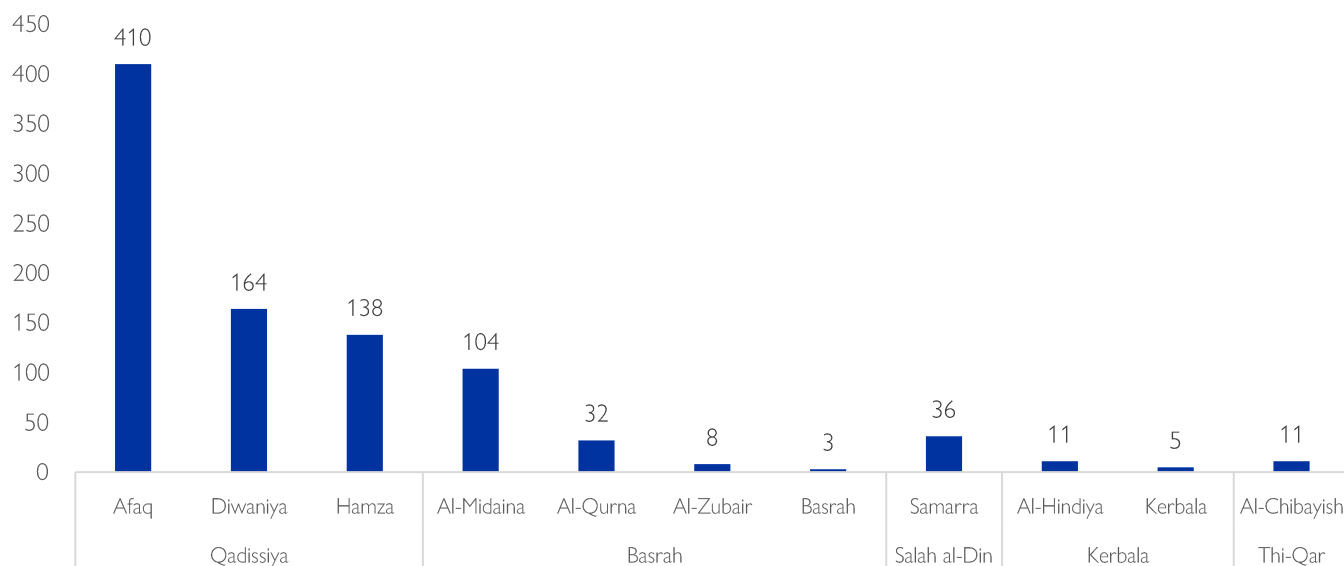
Figure 2: Number of families displaced due to climactic factors by year of displacement, as of December 2023



DTM also collects information on the year families were displaced, extending back to 2016. Given the expansion of coverage each round, DTM may identify families years after their displacement. As a result, figures recorded for each year may increase with new rounds of data collection.

Climate-induced displacement in Iraq appears to be increasing over time, despite fluctuations from year to year. Between 2016 and 2018, levels of displacement were generally moderate. Many families displaced during this period came from Missan and Thi-Qar, as well as Muthanna. In 2019, new displacement decreased, before rising again in 2020 and 2021, particularly from Missan, Thi-Qar and Basrah. The number of families displacing sharply increased in 2022, driven by movements from Thi-Qar and Qadissiya and to a lesser extent from Wassit, Muthanna and Diyala. In 2023, new displacement surpassed the already elevated levels observed in 2022. This trend is mainly attributable to growing displacement from **Thi-Qar**, especially **Nassriya** and **Al-Rifa'i** districts, toward other parts of the governorate, particularly **Nassriya** and **Al-Shatra** districts.

Figure 3: Number of displaced families living in critical shelters by district of displacement



Most displaced families live in private settings. However, 922 displaced families are living in critical shelters (4% of the caseload). More than three in four families displaced in critical shelters are in **Qadissiya Governorate**. At the district level, just under half of families are in **Afaq District** in Qadissiya (410 families, 44%). The remaining share of families mostly reside in Diwaniya (18%) and Hamza (15%) districts in Qadissiya and Al-Midaina District (11%) in Basrah. Families living in critical shelters are more likely to have displaced within their district of origin (71%) than those living in private settings (46%).