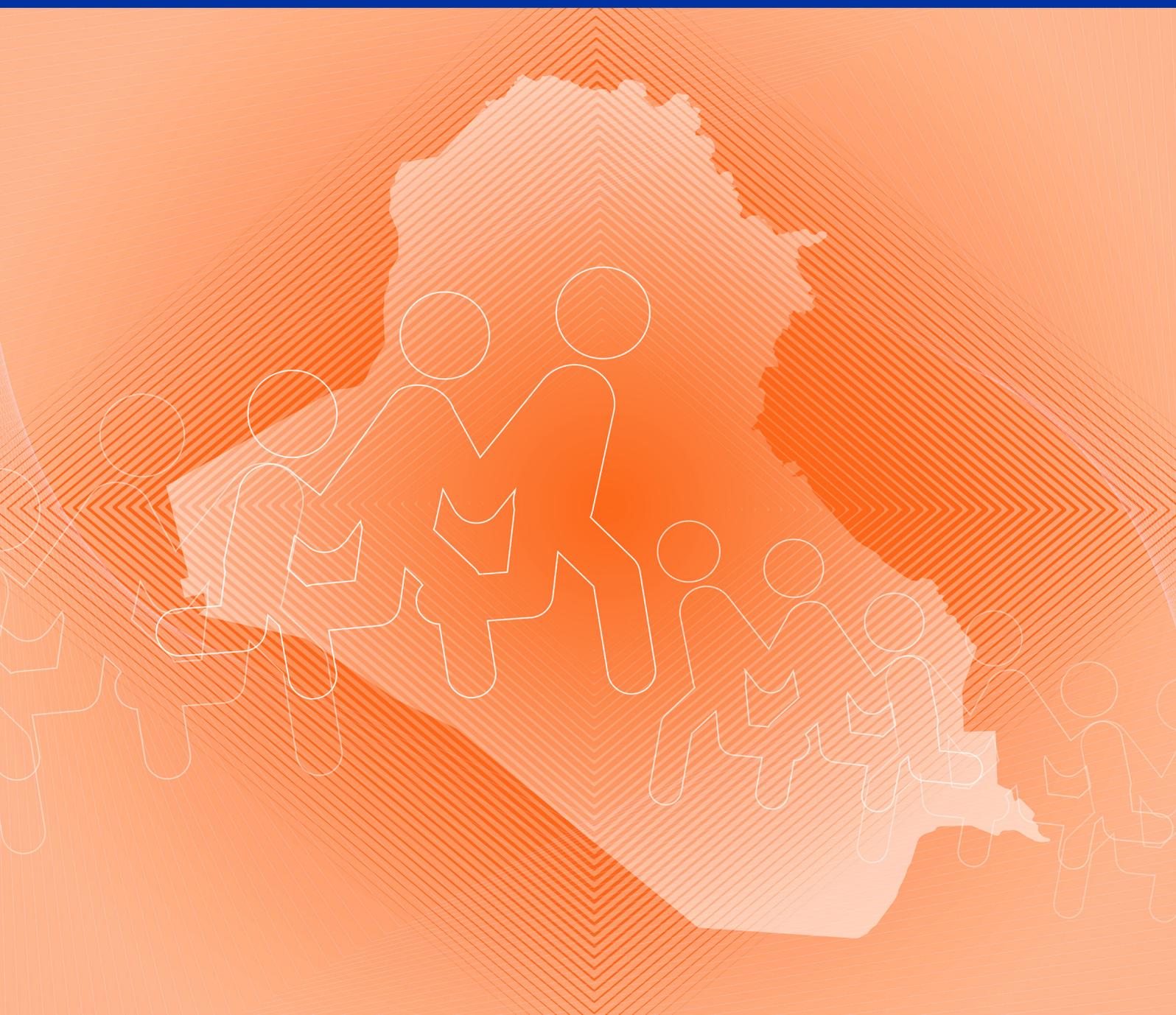


IOM IRAQ

ACCESS TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS AMONG IDPs IN IRAQ: MOVING IN DISPLACEMENT



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The study is funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Report design and layout by Connard Co – www.connard.co

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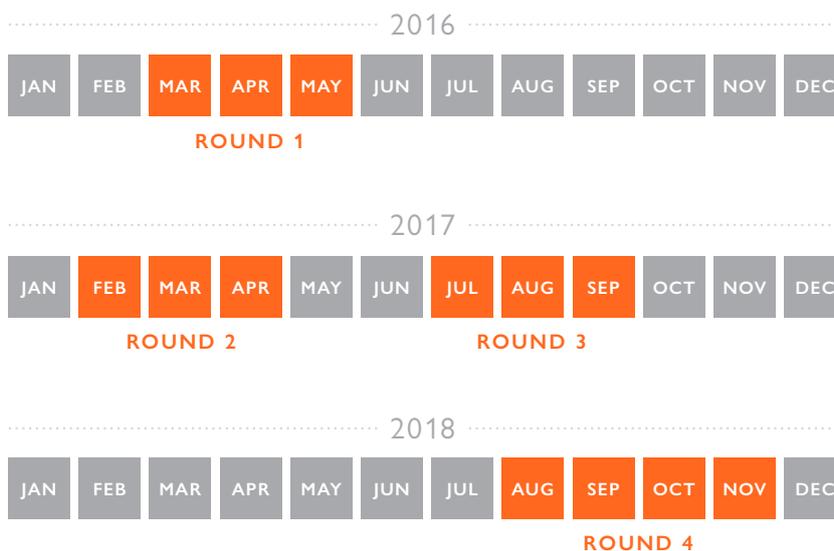
INTRODUCTION

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence [...] and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.”¹ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement lay out eight different criteria for how IDPs attempt to find solutions for their displacement. The durable solutions are defined as: return to their homes, integration in their location of displacement, or relocation/resettlement in a different place.

To better understand the progress IDPs are making toward durable solutions and the end of displacement among IDPs, IOM Iraq and Georgetown University have been conducting a longitudinal study, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq*, that began in March 2016. The mixed-method project collects data from surveys and interviews to understand how the same 4,000 Iraqi IDP households displaced by ISIL try to access a durable solution to their displacement. These

households were displaced by the ISIL crisis between January 2014 and December 2015 and were not living in camps.² The findings of the study generalize to non-camp IDP households originally from seven governorates (Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din) and were displaced to one of four governorates where the study was fielded: Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah.

To date, four rounds of data have been collected:



¹ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) 2010’s “Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons” identifies a durable solution to displacement when IDPs “no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement.” United Nations General Assembly. *Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons*, Walter Kälin: *Framework on Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, A/HRC/13/21/Add.4, (9 February 2010), p. 1. Available from <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/HRC/13/21/Add.4>

² The full methodology is featured in the Round 3 Report of the study. See “Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement.” (February 2019), 68-70. <https://iraq.iom.int/iom-iraq-access-durable-solutions-three-years-displacement>

In Round 4, the study sample included 3,635 households: 1,100 have returned home and 2,535 were still in displacement. Of this latter group, most households have remained in their initial place of displacement, but a small group of 265 households has moved to third locations.

The report is about “movers.” We label those who were displaced to a particular district at the time of the first interview (Round 1, March-May 2016) and who subsequently moved to another district, but did not return to their districts of origin, as “movers.” They may fit the “durable solution” of relocation/resettlement to a different place, but that assessment can only be made with the passage of more time.

Operationally, we define movement at the district level. Iraq is divided administratively into 18 governorates [*muhāfazāt*] that have a total of 120 districts [*qaḍā'*, plural: *aqḍiyah*]. The study sample included 217 households confirmed as movers in Round 2 (February-April 2017), 266 mover households in Round 3 (July-September 2017), and 265 mover households in Round 4 (August-November 2018).³ This report looks only at the 265 households confirmed as movers in Round 4 to leverage the longitudinal nature of the study and track the experiences of the same families to understand why they move.⁴

In reviewing the reports and literature on the subject, the process of moving again after the initial displacement is referred to by a number of terms, most often “secondary displacement” and “secondary migration.”⁵ Both terms are commonly used to describe refugees and migrants rather than IDPs. Use of the two terms appears to differ based on whether authors believe the cause of the movement is forced or voluntary: “Secondary displacement” encompasses those who move because of violence or discrimination while “secondary migration” is most often used to describe those who voluntarily move seeking a job or for personal circumstances. Because the use of these terms appears to prescribe rather than describe or investigate the cause of movements, we chose to use the word “movers” instead to sidestep these limitations.

This report offers four key findings:

- 1** Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq suggests that displaced households move for the purpose of finding jobs or securing livelihoods; however, such economically motivated moves are facilitated more commonly by extended family networks.
- 2** Mover households may have visited their original homes, but the vast majority have not tried to return to live in them. Thus, the study shows that movers constitute a new category, different from “failed returns”.
- 3** Some of the “mover” households are “in process” returnees, i.e., have returned to areas very close to their original homes.
- 4** The conditions of their homes in the area of origin are likely relevant to where people move. Movers face a higher level of damage to housing, land and property than returnee households. Thus, movers may be “in process” returnees who want to return but cannot because their homes are too badly damaged.

After first providing demographic information on mover households from Round 4 (August-November 2018), the report discusses each of these key findings by relying on the four rounds of survey data. The report concludes with narratives of mover households over time as they move from one place to another. This longitudinal qualitative component, a distinguishing feature of the study, focuses the spotlight on the complexities of their experiences.

³ 10 households have been removed from the analysis because their status in Round 4 is not confirmed.

⁴ Unweighted results presented in this report apply to Round 4 sampled households but do not generalize to any population because the sample in the prospective study was never constructed to be representative of the “mover” population. Results, however, give an indication of what might be happening among IDPs who move in displacement but do not return home. The margin of error for reported results is 6.1 percentage points. Reported differences discussed in the text are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

⁵ The review of the literature for both IDPs and refugees showed the following use of terms: Secondary Migration; Onward Migration; Onward Movement/Movers; Secondary Movement/Movers; Resettlement; Secondary Displacement; Failed Returns; Multiple Displacements; Movers.

ROUND 4 MOVERS: WHO ARE THEY?

GOVERNORATE OF ORIGIN	SHARE OF ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS % (n)
Anbar	11.3 (30)
Babylon	5.7 (15)
Baghdad	8.3 (22)
Diyala	9.8 (26)
Kirkuk	6.8 (18)
Ninewa	19.2 (51)
Salah al-Din	38.9 (103)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>
GOVERNORATE OF DISPLACEMENT (IN ROUND 4)	SHARE OF ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS % (n)
Anbar	6.0 (16)
Baghdad	14.7 (39)
Basrah	0.8 (2)
Dahuk	3.0 (8)
Diyala	5.3 (14)
Erbil	14.3 (38)
Kerbala	1.5 (4)
Kirkuk	9.1 (24)
Najaf	0.8 (2)
Ninewa	1.5 (4)
Salah al-Din	29.1 (77)
Sulaymaniyah	8.7 (23)
Thi-Qar	0.8 (2)
Out of Iraq	4.5 (12)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>

All of the households in the study, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq*, were displaced from one of seven governorates (Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din). The study was fielded with those who were displaced to four governorates (Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah). Over time, movers in the study moved to 13 of Iraq's 18 governorates, including some who moved back to their original home governorate but who did not move into their home district. Another 12 households moved out of the country.⁶

All seven governorates of origin are represented among the 265 IDP households confirmed as movers in Round 4 (August–November 2018). The highest shares of Round 4 mover households are originally from Salah al-Din, followed by those from Ninewa.

While the movers included in this analysis share the experience of having moved at least once while in displacement, they did not all move at the same time: 103 households first moved to a different location in displacement sometime between May 2016 and February 2017 (between Rounds 1 and 2); another 33 moved between April and July 2017 (between Rounds 2 and 3); and 125 households moved between September 2017 and August 2018 (between Rounds 3 and 4).⁷ Furthermore, of the 265 households who moved, 166 households (63%) moved to a different district more than once following their initial displacement.

Household heads of 235 mover families described themselves as Arab (88.7% of the sample); 12 as Kurdish (4.5%); and 18 as variously Turkmen, Chaldean, or Armenian (6.8%). Families had 5.7 members on average, which is on par with the national Iraqi average household size. Of the Round 4 mover households, 24 (9.1%) were female-headed households.

⁶ One household moved to each France and Jordan; two households moved to each Germany and the United States; and six households moved to Turkey. These families remain part of the study.

⁷ There are three households for whom it is impossible to know the exact move date because they were among the families who dropped out of the study in Round 2 but returned to the study in Round 3.

ROUND 4 MOVERS

Ability to Provide for Basic Needs

	PRE-DISPLACEMENT % (n)	ROUND 1 % (n)	ROUND 2* % (n)	ROUND 3 % (n)	ROUND 4 % (n)
Yes	95.8 (254)	47.5 (126)	70.6 (185)	68.3 (181)	75.5 (200)
No	4.2 (11)	52.5 (139)	29.4 (77)	31.7 (84)	24.5 (65)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (262)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>

* Three missing responses omitted

While initially struggling during Round 1 (March-May 2016), more than two-thirds of Round 4 mover households were able to provide for their basic needs starting in Round 2 (February-April 2017). In 2018, movers report spending

approximately USD 799 per month on average on food, housing, medical care, schooling, utilities and transportation, and the largest share of that cost (39%) is spent on food rather than housing or other expenses.⁸

ROUND 4 MOVERS

Reported Costs of Basic Needs Per Month (2018, Iraqi Dinars)

	AVERAGE EXPENDITURE	MEDIAN EXPENDITURE ⁹
Food	352,570 (USD 310)	300,000 (USD 264)
Housing	207,569 (USD 182)	200,000 (USD 176)
Medical Care	98,235 (USD 86)	50,000 (USD 44)
Schooling	89,738 (USD 79)	60,000 (USD 53)
Utilities	81,839 (USD 72)	60,000 (USD 53)
Transportation	79,868 (USD 70)	50,000 (USD 44)
<i>Total</i>	<i>909,819 (USD 799)</i>	<i>720,000 (USD 633)</i>

⁸ The survey question originally asked respondents to report amounts in Iraqi Dinars (IQD). Exchange rates to US dollars are calculated based on the US Department of the Treasury's "Treasury Reporting Rates of Exchange as of December 31, 2018," which reported that USD 1= IQD 1138. This date most closely aligns with the end of the survey fielding period. See: <https://fiscal.treasury.gov/files/reports-statements/treasury-reporting-rates-exchange/iitin-12-31-2018.pdf>

⁹ The median expenditure represents the value where half of reported expenditures are above it and half of reported expenditures are below it. Across all types of expenditures, the monthly average (mean) is higher than the median. The data is skewed slightly such that a number of households with high expenditures are inflating the average amount spent on each expenditure. This could happen for various reasons. For example, households with more household members may spend more on food, while households who have members who are chronically ill may need to spend more on medical costs.

ROUND 4 MOVERS: WHY THEY MOVE

The literature explaining “secondary displacement” or “secondary movement” focuses on three causes of movement: livelihoods, conflict/security, and humanitarian aid. *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq* asked the study participants why they moved, and their answers suggest the reasons for movement are closely tied to each other. No one reason they provided motivated one group to move more than the others in a statistically significant manner. In each round, nearly equal shares indicated moving for jobs (livelihoods), joining family, and housing.

Notably, safety and security and freedom of movement are not issues that mover households describe as a concern in areas of displacement. More than 95 per cent of these sampled households in each round say they can move freely and without restrictions in their locations of displacement, and more than 96 per cent in each round report they have not encountered a security threat. Furthermore, four out of five households (80%) feel accepted throughout their time in displacement. Yet, despite feeling secure, accepted, and safe—and prioritizing security as the most important element for staying in a given location—sampled Round 4 movers are moving anyway, thus suggesting that they are not moving in search of safety or acceptance.

ROUND 4 MOVERS: REASON FOR LAST MOVE*				
MOVED BECAUSE...	Households that Moved...			
	BETWEEN ROUNDS 1 & 2 % (n)	BETWEEN ROUNDS 2 & 3 % (n)	BETWEEN ROUNDS 3 & 4 % (n)	ALL ROUND 4 MOVERS % (n)
Better / more security	8.2 (8)	16.1 (5)	17.4 (20)	13.5 (33)
Better / more jobs	19.4 (19)	32.3 (10)	21.7 (25)	22.1 (54)
Better/cheaper housing	22.4 (22)	12.9 (4)	13.9 (16)	17.2 (42)
Joining family or relatives	25.5 (25)	16.1 (5)	20.9 (24)	22.1 (54)
Place with similar values, people, or beliefs	7.1 (7)	16.1 (5)	8.7 (10)	9.0 (22)
Return to area of origin	17.3 (17)	6.5 (2)	17.4 (20)	16 (39)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (103)</i>	<i>100% (33)</i>	<i>100% (125)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>

* Analysis here excludes one family that moved multiple times; three families whose exact date of movement is unknown; and 16 families who did not know or refused to answer. (n=244)

MOVING FOR EMPLOYMENT AND FAMILY

As the data shows, 22 per cent of movers in Round 4 (August–November 2018) said that finding better or additional employment was the main reason for their last move. Though nearly 59 per cent in Round 3 and 80 per cent in Round 4 said they faced no discrimination in accessing employment, mover households do not report “job stability”: only about one-third (31%) of the sample reports earning income from the same type of job throughout their time in displacement.

Thus, from this data we know that almost a quarter of the IDPs who move, do so for employment reasons, and that includes a high proportion who move because they find work in a different sector (or more jobs). That IDPs are moving for employment and the high levels of ability to meet their basic needs among these movers suggests that they are accessing durable solutions to their displacement through their employability and openings in job markets.

ROUND 4 MOVERS

Job Stability Over Time in Displacement*

	% (n)
Same Sector in All Rounds (2, 3, & 4)	31.4 (82)
Same Sector in Rounds 2 & 3 Only	15.7 (41)
Same Sector in Rounds 3 & 4 Only	16.1 (42)
Same Sector in Rounds 2 & 4 Only	16.9 (44)
Different Sector in Each Round	19.9 (52)

* Analysis here excludes one family that moved multiple times and three families whose exact date of movement is unknown. (n=261)

The various employment sectors were differently affected by displacement. Prior to displacement, the highest share of Round 4 movers reported working in agriculture, followed closely by those working in business and the public sector.

The agricultural employment sector was the most affected by displacement: those movers who worked in agriculture decreased from 25 per cent before displacement to less than 2 per cent post-displacement.

While living in displacement, these agricultural sector workers find jobs across sectors: between 11 and 14 per cent find work in the informal sector between Rounds 2 (February-April 2017) and 4 (August-November 2018); between 4 and 5 per cent work in business; and less than 2 per cent find jobs in each the public and private sectors.

ROUND 4 MOVERS

Main Source of Income*

	PRE-DISPLACEMENT % (n)	ROUND 2** % (n)	ROUND 3 % (n)	ROUND 4 % (n)***
Public job	20.8 (55)	22.9 (60)	20.0 (53)	25.4 (67)
Private job	4.5 (12)	3.1 (8)	2.3 (6)	5.3 (14)
Agriculture	24.2 (64)	1.5 (4)	1.1 (3)	0.8 (2)
Business	22.6 (60)	17.6 (46)	12.8 (34)	16.7 (44)
Informal commerce	18.9 (50)	37.4 (98)	43.8 (116)	40.9 (108)
Money from family & friends	1.5 (4)	5.0 (13)	3.4 (9)	4.2 (11)
Pension	6.0 (16)	6.5 (17)	7.5 (20)	4.9 (13)
Other	0.8 (2)	5.0 (13)	4.5 (12)	1.1 (3)
No Source	0.8 (2)	1.1 (3)	4.5 (12)	0.8 (2)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (262)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (264)</i>

* Round 1 data is unavailable because of a translation discrepancy

** Three missing responses omitted (n=262)

*** One response omitted (n=264)

Despite the high rate of change in job sector, the public sector still appears to offer the most stability: In Round 4, among those who had a public job (66 households), 51 per cent held the same type of job in all rounds. Of those that

worked in informal commerce (107 households), only 36 per cent held the same type of job in all rounds. Among those in business (44 households), the share was only 13 per cent.

Family and friends play a significant role in how people find employment. More than half of movers relied on relatives and friends to find jobs in Rounds 1, 3, and 4, which may account for why movers reported changing job sectors so frequently. In Round 4 (August–November 2018) specifically,

two-thirds of movers relied on relatives and friends as a way to access a job. The ability to access training for new job skills was reported as less relevant: only 6.8 per cent (18 households) said they received vocational training.

ROUND 4 MOVERS			
Most Used Means to Access Job Opportunities*			
	ROUND 1	ROUND 3	ROUND 4**
Relatives / friends	68.2 (180)	56.2 (149)	67.8 (179)
Wasta (Connections)	14.0 (37)	15.8 (42)	11.4 (30)
Pick-up sites	8.3 (22)	16.6 (44)	6.4 (17)
Transfer or rehire	1.9 (5)	8.3 (22)	6.4 (17)
Other	7.6 (20)	3.0 (8)	8.0 (20)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (264)</i>

* Question not asked in Round 2

** One missing answer omitted

The share of movers reporting they moved to join family or relatives is the same as those who moved for economic reasons (22%). This connection to extended family as a reason for moving reiterates the importance of extended family networks in offering places to live, providing loans and other financial support, and providing help in finding jobs.¹⁰ Though the highest share of movers who moved between Rounds 1 and 2 (between May 2016 and February 2017) said they did so to join family or relatives, none of these households said they were separated from usual members of their family for more than three months in Round 1. Among those who moved after Round 2 (after February 2016), only about 5 per cent said they were separated from usual members of their family. In Round 4 (August–November 2018), when asked about whether they had at least one parent, child, or sibling living in another district, only 12.8 per cent said yes (34 out of 265 households).

Thus, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq* shows that households are moving to get jobs, find cheaper housing, and to join extended family; at the same time, extended family and friends are the most common way that movers find jobs.

¹⁰ The study has witnessed this regularly throughout all rounds of the study. See "Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Part I." (June 2017). <http://www.iomiraq.net/reports/access-durable-solutions-among-idps-iraq>. See also "Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement" (February 2019). <https://iraq.iom.int/iom-iraq-access-durable-solutions-three-years-displacement>

MOVING AS “IN PROCESS” RETURN

The reports and literature on the subject of secondary migration and displacement posit security and/or conflict as a major reason for movement; *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq* finds that security was not a main impetus behind moving. But, this study uncovers a new reason for movement not discussed in the literature: many displaced

households move en route home. This reason for movement sheds light on two issues: first, the need to be more explicit in terms of defining “return” and the need to potentially expand the definition to “in process returnees”; and second, that “mover” is a different category from “failed return.”

THE HIGHEST SHARE OF ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS ORIGINALLY FROM: (n)	[...] IN ROUND 4 WERE RESIDING IN	[...] IN ROUND 3 WERE RESIDING IN	[...] IN ROUND 2 WERE RESIDING IN	[...] IN ROUND 1 WERE RESIDING IN
Anbar (30)	Baghdad (57.6%, n=17)	Baghdad (43.3%, n=13)	Baghdad (40.0%, n=12)	Kirkuk (56.7%, n=17)
Babylon (15)	Anbar (53.3%, n=8)	Sulaymaniyah (40.0%, n=6)	Sulaymaniyah (53.3%, n=8)	Sulaymaniyah (66.7%, n=10)
Baghdad (22)	Baghdad (36.4%, n=8)	Baghdad (40.0%, n=7)	Kirkuk (40.9%, n=9)	Kirkuk (50.0%, n=11)
Diyala (26)	Diyala (38.5%, n=10)	Sulaymaniyah (38.5%, n=10)	Sulaymaniyah (53.8%, n=14)	Sulaymaniyah (53.8%, n=14)
Kirkuk (18)	Kirkuk (66.7%, n=12)	Kirkuk (88.9%, n=16)	Kirkuk (88.9%, n=16)	Kirkuk (88.9%, n=16)
Ninewa (51)	Erbil (39.2%, n=20)	Sulaymaniyah (25.5%, n=13)	Sulaymaniyah (25.5%, n=13) Ninewa (25.5%, n=13)	Sulaymaniyah (35.3%, n=18)
Salah al-Din (103)	Salah al-Din (67.0%, n=69)	Sulaymaniyah (38.8%, n=40)	Salah al-Din (36.9%, n=38)	Kirkuk (46.6%, n=48)

The data from Round 4 (August–November 2018) offer evidence for this key finding of seeing some movers as “in process returnees.” Salah al-Din governorate hosts the highest number of Round 4 movers (69 households), and it is also the governorate from which the majority of Round 4 movers originate (103 households). Of those mover households originally from Salah al-Din, 67 per cent could be categorized as “in process returnees” because they have

“returned” to their governorate—but not district—of origin. These 69 mover households are originally from two districts: 47 from Baji, of whom 45 are living in neighboring Tikrit; and 19 from Balad, 14 of whom have moved to neighboring Samarra. These movement patterns suggest that households initially start their journey home by moving to areas as close as possible to their habitual addresses.

ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS VS. ROUND 4 RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Condition of Property Among Property Owners in the Governorate of Origin

	ALL ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS % (n)	ROUND 4 MOVER HOUSEHOLDS FROM SALAH AL-DIN AND RESIDING IN SALAH AL-DIN % (n)	ROUND 4 RETURNEES* % (n)
No Damage	6.2 (10)	0.0 (0)	9 (76)
Partially Damaged	32.3 (52)	22.0 (9)	66.4 (558)
Heavily Damaged or Destroyed	61.5 (99)	78.0 (32)	24.5 (206)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (265)</i>	<i>100% (41)</i>	<i>100% (840)</i>

* Of the 1100 returnees in Round 4, 840 owned property prior to displacement and knew the condition of their properties

MOVING BECAUSE OF HOUSING CONDITIONS

Housing conditions appear to be a key obstacle precluding the return home. The findings show a major difference in the damage to property reported by Round 4 movers and households who returned to their homes by Round 4 (returnees). Among Round 4 movers, 90 per cent of the 171 households who owned property prior to displacement retained ownership of it in Round 4. A majority (61 per cent) of those owners indicate that the property is heavily damaged or destroyed. Among Round 4 sampled returnees, a minority (25%) report their property is heavily damaged or destroyed. Thus, it may well be the case that “in process returnees” would have been returnees, if their property were not destroyed or heavily damaged.

Movers originally from Salah al-Din illustrate this situation about the role of destroyed housing. There are 69 out of 103 mover households originally from Salah al-Din who have returned to the origin governorate but not to their origin districts. Of these 69 households, 41 owned and retained ownership of property through Round 4. Of these 41 households, 32 (78%) said their property was completely destroyed or damaged. However, only 13 households (32%) applied for compensation, which is neither substantially nor significantly different from the 46 households (27%) of all Round 4 movers who indicated they applied.

Thus, it appears that households are moving to get closer to home but may not be able to move home because of the destruction of their property.

MOVING IS NOT FAILED RETURN

Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq thus identifies an additional reason to the ones most frequently cited in the literature for why households move in displacement: they are en route home. Notably, however, these mover households did not previously try to return home and “fail.” As such, this data suggests that “failed return” is categorically different from a “mover.” All failed returns may be classified as a subset of movers, but not all movers are necessarily “failed returns.”

This finding raises an important issue as it relates to both the literature on secondary displacement and on the durable solutions framework. “Return home” is not necessarily well defined operationally. This study defined it at the district

level, but how close to “home” must an IDP family come so as to be considered a “returnee”? One of the durable solutions is “return to the place of origin” but what “place of origin” means concretely is less well defined. It is likely these IDPs would not say that they are “home” because home is the house and land they were displaced from. Clarifying this definitional component allows enumerating how many of these households fall under which durable solution: if they have returned to their governorate but not their district, is this considered return? Or is this considered relocation or resettlement (in another part of the country)? Finally, the initiatives of those displaced to access these solutions should be taken into consideration as they envision and report on whether they feel they have returned or not.

CONCLUSION

This longitudinal study of Iraqis displaced by ISIL allows us to understand how IDPs make decisions about where they live, whether they want to return or not, their basic standard of living, their ability to access health care and educational services, and their sense of safety and security, among other issues, over multiple years. This report covers a subset of the IDP population – those who have moved while in displacement but who have not returned.

The findings show that movers have certain issues that cause them to move, which seem to contrast with much of the literature on IDP movements globally. In the case of IDPs in Iraq, safety and security are not issues that mover households describe as a concern in areas of displacement or that seem to prompt their movement. Instead, mover households are divided between those who move for new types of employment and those who move to be with family. A related finding is that family and friends are the main way that people find employment, and so these two reasons are closely linked to each other.

An equally significant reason why people move is better or cheaper housing. As people extend into their fourth or fifth year in displacement and they report lower levels of aid provision than before, it is clear that they have less access

to capital and need to cut down on expenses even more than they already have. Elsewhere, the study has shown that IDPs have been spending their savings and/or borrowing money from family and friends.¹¹ Neither of these sources get larger or easier to obtain over time.

Another important finding is that movers may also be thought of as “in process” returnees but not “failed returnees.” They are “in process” because they have moved closer to their places of origin, but not back to the original district. This may be because their housing, land, and property in their place of origin has been destroyed, and thus they move close to that place in order to rebuild their lives and property. The upcoming round of the study may reveal if they do end up returning once there is more stability and livable spaces in their places of origin. But they are not “failed returnees” because they did not try to return.

We conclude that movers are an important pilot group to monitor for all of the potential issues that returnees and those seeking to integrate will face, such as access to jobs, cheap housing, and ability to find some sort of permanence in their situation.

¹¹ “Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement.” (February 2019), 68-70. <https://iraq.iom.int/iom-iraq-access-durable-solutions-three-years-displacement>



MOVERS' STORIES

Families' Experiences in
Multiple Stages of Displacement



STORY 1

THE TAXI DRIVER FROM MOSUL

This family fled from al-Kharda neighborhood in Mosul just before it was captured by ISIL. The family took refuge with the wife's family who live in Kirkuk, during which time the father was able to continue his work as a taxi driver. The father expressed a desire to return to Mosul while in his second and third year in displacement. After four years in displacement, the family moved to Erbil, where the father found a job as a tour guide. By that time, Mosul had been retaken from ISIL control and the family knew the condition of their home and the experiences of family and friends who had returned. The father said they had no immediate intent to return, both because of the infrastructure situation in Mosul and because of his job in Erbil.

DECEMBER 2016

Kirkuk City, Kirkuk Governorate

“ We left Mosul fearing aerial bombardment when ISIL started to take control. At the beginning, we went to my uncle and father-in-law's house. The conditions in Kirkuk are very good for us. Personally, I feel safe here because my wife is originally from Kirkuk and all of her relatives are here. We lived with them until my financial situation improved, and we were able to rent a house for my family. I do miss my friends in Mosul, the atmosphere of the city, the traditional food, and the area's culture and heritage.

I cannot provide all of my family's needs, but we are being economical in our spending until money is again available. Otherwise, we will wait until my city is liberated, then return there and be done with the burden of expensive rent, which would free up a lot of our money. I practice the same profession as I previously did, as a taxi driver, using my own car. I think that my wife hopes that we will stay here in Kirkuk and live close to her parents.

AUGUST 2017

Kirkuk City, Kirkuk Governorate

“ I am comfortable here and I got used to living in this area. In addition, the people of the area now know me well. But for sure, I wish to return to my region; however, the security situation is neither good nor stable. I'm still working as a taxi driver. I do not have enough resources to provide for all of my basic needs, but I try as much as possible to provide for my basic daily necessities by reducing my spending and being economical in my expenses.

In the past we used to receive aid and I received a financial grant from the Iraqi government. Also, I previously received aid from organizations and this aid helped me a lot in meeting my needs and the needs of my family, but it has been a long time since this financial assistance from the government ceased. Also, all sorts of assistance by organizations halted and we have not received anything from the organizations for a long time.

OCTOBER 2018

Bnaslawa, Erbil Governorate

“ We moved to Erbil last year because job opportunities and the living conditions here are better. I found a better job as a tour guide with one of the tourism companies in Erbil in addition to my job as a taxi driver in my car. As you know, job opportunities in Kirkuk are few and after the changes in circumstances it became hard to provide for the needs of the family because of lack of assistance and no job opportunities. That is why we decided to look for a better place to live and we settled here. We needed to borrow some money in the beginning because there were a lot of needs. I borrowed money from my friends here and thank God I was able to pay it back in this last period. There are no problems because I didn't borrow from a stranger and those whom I borrowed from appreciate our situation and didn't pressure us.

[Before we moved to Erbil], I had some general information about the area regarding work and housing. The cost of living here is expensive and very high rent. That is why I decided to rent a house in the suburbs of the city. But with time we started to get used to living here and we have more information regarding the local markets and the cheap bazaar and affordable locations.

I don't want to return to Mosul now because there is no housing available for us there now. Everything is destroyed now. And if we return we would have to rent a place to live as well. Because there are no job opportunities and there is a lack of services I don't intend on returning again at the time being. But if I returned, more than anything I would miss my current job at the tourism company that I work with right now because of how much I enjoy this work and my colleagues are good to me here. If I return I would be able to return to my previous job. I own a taxi car that I used to work in before displacement, but now this work is not sufficient because there are many cars and not enough fuel in my area of origin.



STORY 2

THE IRAQI ARMY OFFICER FROM DIYALA

This family of eight (husband, wife, and six children) fled their homes in Diyala for safety. They first resided at a relative's home in Baghdad. They then moved within Baghdad governorate to find their own apartment when the relative's landlord wanted the apartment back. The family is facing financial difficulties and has borrowed money from relatives. They have no intention of returning to Diyala because of ongoing security concerns and lack of job opportunities in the governorate. Furthermore, the family is enjoying the time spent with relatives in Baghdad as well as the big-city opportunities.

DECEMBER 2016

Baghdad Governorate

“ Before we fled, we lived in the district of Khanaqin in the governorate of Diyala. I was working as a member of the army and the situation was entirely stable before 2014, which is when ISIL entered Diyala. After they entered our region, the situation was no longer secure. Therefore, I decided to leave the region and come to Baghdad, out of fear for my six children and my wife. We went to live in my aunt's house in Baghdad, since we didn't initially have a house there. After that, we lived in a rental house which cost IQD 600,000 monthly (USD 527). Even if the situation entirely improved, I wouldn't wish to return to my place of origin. The road to return is difficult and I am bound to my work here in Baghdad because I have settled, so I can't leave my family and return. My relationships with my relatives have grown stronger since I came to Baghdad. My wife's family provided a lot of financial support, because we are relatives. However, other members of the family returned to Diyala since their jobs are there.

My work did not change from pre-displacement to post-displacement but I don't work every day (for example, I work three days and then have three days off). Sometimes, I do freelance work in my free time, and this is a new activity for my days off. Some of my IDP neighbors work for daily wages and I know some people who haven't found work since coming here. It depends upon connections and acquaintances. I hope to save up an advance payment so that I can buy a car, which I could depend upon to provide a source of income.

In Diyala, most of my expenses went towards essential needs, like food and clothing. Things have changed since I now have the housing rental expenses and the schooling costs. If I had had a larger source of income, I would use it to start a business project which would be of benefit to my family.

SEPTEMBER 2017

Baghdad Governorate

“ We moved to Hay Al-Jami'a in Baghdad. We moved to this place because of its proximity to my workplace (I work at the Ministry of the Interior). I had to take a loan from my wife's family in order to move here. I'm currently paying off that loan in monthly payments. We don't have any intent to return at this time, because my work is in Baghdad and it is currently my only source of income. If I were to return to my area of origin, I would miss the good-quality services available in Baghdad, the safety, the continuous presence of the security forces in the streets of Baghdad, and the sources of entertainment and recreation available for me and my family.

Previously, my spending went towards the main needs of my children, like clothing and education. Now, my expenses are different--they are greater, with respect to paying monthly rent, and the high cost of living here. In Diyala, IQD 5,000 was enough to buy daily food, but here in Baghdad, I need IQD 25,000 for our daily needs.

Most of the homes in my area of Diyala are destroyed, looted, or burned. The percentage of returns is low because of the lack of basic services for return, like electricity and water. Additionally, because people don't have enough money to restore their homes, and there is no compensation from the central government.

In the beginning, I was forced to take out loans in an attempt to provide the daily livelihood needs, like food and shelter. I remember that on several occasions, I wasn't able to buy daily food because there wasn't enough money, and I had to go to neighbors or the Husseinis convoys carrying a food container, asking for food to feed my family... I consider this among the most difficult thing I've done. It was the circumstances that forced me to go out asking for money or food.

AUGUST 2018

Baghdad Governorate

“ I changed my place of residence. I shared the previous house with my relatives, but its owner needed it, so we were forced to leave and search for another house. In general, the new house that we live in now, we rent for less than the previous house but it is smaller in size. Because there are 8 members of the family, we are somewhat uncomfortable, as it only has one bedroom.

I do not intend to return to Diyala. A person who lives in Baghdad cannot live outside such a place, because of its influential and entertaining characteristics and everything that it provides. Even security in Baghdad is better than security in Diyala by a lot, even when Baghdad was worse than it is now. Additionally, the place I work is here in Baghdad and this eases the difficulties of traveling from Baghdad to Diyala and back, like I used to do.

My salary is somewhat enough to cover my family and my needs but without savings. Any emergency at this time would force me to borrow and repay it later. About the same type of spending, but my children are older and their needs changed, but I feel that they are estimating that I am the only breadwinner in the family and they put themselves in

my shoes. They do not ask for excessive things and they do not ask for too much in the same month so as not to increase my burden. All my children are in school except the youngest one. The level of education is not great and frankly my wife knows more about the situation with their studies because I am absent from the house most of the time.

I voted here in Baghdad because I voted on the special day of voting (when all security, interior, defense, and intelligence employees vote, 24 hours before the time of the regular elections because they protect the voters during the election period). But my wife voted in Diyala. She did not face any difficulty going or returning and the process of voting was easy.

I am the only one of my relatives who fled from Diyala. The rest of my relatives fled to secure areas inside Diyala governorate, thus they returned immediately after liberation. They say that the situation is generally good, but it is lacking services and provides few work opportunities and some of the houses are demolished. Even some of the areas like Jalawla and the great suburbs that are safe in the day, they hear the sound of ISIL fighters at night.

ACCESS TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS AMONG IDPs IN IRAQ: MOVING IN DISPLACEMENT

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