

PROGRESS TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN IRAQ: ANBAR

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ACRONYMS

CCCA	Central Committee for Compensating the Affected
CSI	Coping Strategy Index
DS	Durable Solutions
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EGRIS	Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics
FHH	Female Headed Households
GoI	Government of Iraq
HH	Household
HoHH	Head of Household
IASC	Inter Agency Standing Committee
IRIS	International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIL	The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
ID	Identity Document
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
NES	Northeast Syria
PMU	Popular Mobilization Units

DEFINITIONS

Critical shelters – Tents/caravans/makeshift shelters/mud or brick houses, unfinished/abandoned buildings, public buildings or collective shelters, religious buildings, school buildings and uninhabitable residences located, for IDPs, at the location of displacement and, for returnees, at the location of origin.

Dependency ratio – The number of children (aged 0–17 years) and elderly persons (aged 60 years or over) in relation to the working-age population or active citizens (aged 18–59 years).

Durable Solution – A durable solution is achieved when displaced people no longer have any specific assistance or protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement. It can be achieved through three processes – return, local integration or relocation (Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) framework¹) with the end goal of all three being (re)integration.

Economically inactive – A person or members of the household who are pre-school children, students, retired persons, doing housework or not employed and not actively looking for a job.

Essential identity documents – The documents considered to be essential are proof of nationality, national ID, residency card and birth certificate. All others are not considered to be essential for the purpose of this study.²

Female-headed household – Households that are headed by a female member. When female heads of households are described as residing 'alone', it means that they are single, widowed, separated, divorced, or if married, not living with their husband.

Household – Group of people who regularly share meals, income and expenditures together. Members must acknowledge the authority of one person as head of household and that person must live with the rest of the household members. In polygamous households, each wife is treated as a distinct household when the wives live in different houses, cook separately and take decisions independently.

Housing, land and property – An area of humanitarian practice that examines and seeks to address issues related to rights over immovable property, in the context of emergency response.

Internally displaced person (IDP) – Person or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix unit (DTM) in Iraq considers IDPs all Iraqi nationals who were forced to flee from 1 January 2014 onwards.

Location – An area that corresponds either to a village for rural areas or a neighbourhood for urban areas.

Returnee – IDPs who have returned to their place of habitual residence, that is, the place where they used to live at the time of the displacement-causing event. IOM DTM Iraq considers as returnees all those displaced since January 2014 who have returned to their location of origin, irrespective of whether they have returned to their former residence or another shelter type. The definition of returnees is not related to the criteria of returning in safety and dignity, nor with a defined strategy for ensuring durable solutions.

Stable income sources – Regular income generated from salaried work (public or private sector), pensions, owned business or from rented property that is not fluctuating significantly on a month-to-month basis.

Stayee – The population who was not forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence due to the 2014–2017 crisis. This group is used as a baseline for comparison with IDPs and returnees to assess displacement-related vulnerabilities against a population group which has not been displaced. This comparison forms the basis for assessing progress along the solutions pathway, in line with the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (IRIS).³

Unified Card – A card that serves as proof of an individual's Iraqi identity and is a substitute for the Iraqi nationality certificate, civil status identity and residence card.

1 The IASC is the longest-standing and highest-level humanitarian coordination forum of the United Nations system. It brings together the executive heads of 18 organizations and consortia to formulate policy, set strategic priorities and mobilize resources in response to humanitarian crises.

2 This definition of essential documentation used for this study includes all those considered critical in the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (as defined by the Protection Cluster) but also considers additional documentation that is considered necessary to be able to obtain a durable solution to displacement. Additionally, the questionnaire allowed space for the respondent to list another document if missing and considered essential. Protection Cluster Iraq, *Protection Analysis Report: Right to Identity and Civil Documentation* (2021).

3 Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics (EGRIS), *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* (IRIS), European Commission and United Nations (Luxemburg, 2020).

CONTEXT AND DISPLACEMENT TRENDS

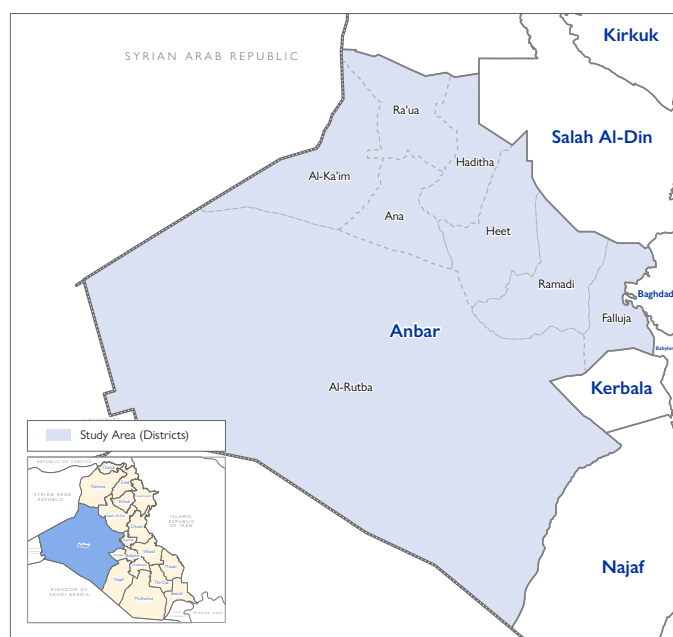
With the end of the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in December 2017, protracted displacement has become a defining feature of Iraq's post-conflict environment. As of April 2024, approximately 1.09 million people remain internally displaced, nearly all of whom fled their areas of origin over seven years ago.⁴ In many cases, displacement is not only prolonged but also unstable, in the sense that livelihoods, housing destruction and living conditions push households to redisplace.

A significant number of IDPs and returnees continue to live in severe conditions. These complex dynamics – prolonged displacement, stagnating returns and severe living conditions – warrant focus on Anbar to understand whether IDPs and returnees have achieved their preferred solution and what displacement related vulnerabilities remain.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Anbar is Iraq's largest governorate by area, stretching across the western part of the country and bordering the Syrian Arab Republic, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The landscape of Anbar is diverse, ranging from vast deserts to fertile valleys along the Euphrates River, which have traditionally supported an agricultural economy.⁵ However, the viability of this sector is increasingly threatened by climate change, environmental degradation and water scarcity.⁶ Anbar's strategic location makes it a vital area for both political and economic activities in the region. The governorate comprises seven districts: Ana, Falluja, Haditha, Heet, Al-Ka'im, Al-Rutba and Ramadi, which serves as the Governorate's capital.⁷

Map 1: Districts in Anbar Governorate



Despite its large size, Anbar is one of the most sparsely populated regions in Iraq, with an estimated population of approximately 1.91 million in 2021.⁸ The population primarily consists of Sunni Arabs, mostly from the Dulaim tribe, with the remaining being Christians and other minorities. Anbar's society is deeply influenced by its tribal structures, which play a crucial role in social, cultural, political and security dynamics; tribal leaders have historically mediated conflicts and interacted with national and international entities.⁹

The strong tribal structure of the Sunni Arab population has significantly influenced the Governorate's social and political dynamics, particularly during and after the ISIL conflict. During the conflict, Sunni tribes in Anbar formed alliances, sometimes with Shi'ite paramilitaries, to combat ISIL. This cross-sectarian cooperation aimed to stabilize the region but also complicated tribal interactions and alignments with the central government and actors like the United States of America and Shi'ite militias.¹⁰ The tribal leaders, with their considerable influence, were central in the 'Anbar Awakening'¹¹ — a movement where Sunni tribes turned against Al-Qaeda in Iraq and later ISIL, which significantly impacted the security landscape of Iraq. The U.S. military and Government of Iraq over the years have sought to engage these tribal forces,¹² viewing them as vital for establishing peace and security in the region. The dynamics of these relationships frequently fluctuate, reflecting the complex role of tribal allegiance in Anbar's governance and security.

DISPLACEMENT FROM ANBAR GOVERNORATE DURING THE 2014-2017 CRISIS

From 2014 to 2017, Anbar Governorate was at the epicentre of one of the most severe displacement crises in recent history, triggered by escalating violence from ISIL. This period witnessed unprecedented displacement, profoundly reshaping the demographic and social landscape of the region.

Anbar was one of the first governorates attacked by ISIL, beginning with the fall of Falluja in January 2014. This was followed by the capture of Al-Rutba, Al-Qaim, Heet and eventually the governorate capital, Ramadi, in 2015.¹³ In 2014, ISIL controlled 80 per cent of Anbar's territory,¹⁴ a critical logistical hub due to its strategic location and control of major cities and road networks.

This initial period of conflict resulted in significant waves of displacement, as civilians fled from the frontline areas to safer locations within Anbar and to other governorates. Nearly half a million residents fled ISIL's advance between January and May 2014 as the group expanded its territorial control.¹⁵ Displacements primarily took place in the districts of Falluja, Heet, Ramadi and Haditha, due to ongoing clashes and insecurity.¹⁶

Throughout 2015 and 2016, the conflict in Anbar was highly volatile, with ISIL

4 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq Master List Displacement Dashboard* (Baghdad, 2024).

5 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), *Promoting agriculture and peace in Iraq* (2019).

6 Norwegian Refugee Council, *Inadequate and Inequitable: Water Scarcity and Displacement in Iraq* (Baghdad, 2023).

7 European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), *Country Guidance Iraq 2022* (Anbar, 2022).

8 Ibid.

9 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Community-Based Reconciliation & Reintegration In Iraq (C2RI): Conflict Analysis 2022* (Baghdad, 2022).

10 Asfura-Heim, P. "No Security Without Us": Tribes and Tribalism in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, *CNA*, (2014).

11 McCary, J. A. *The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives*, *The Washington Quarterly*, 32(1), pp. 43–59, (2009).

12 Quil, L. *Political Rift In Iraq's Anbar Province*, *NPR*, (2009).

13 International Rescue Committee (IRC), *The long road home - Achieving durable solutions to displacement in Iraq: Lessons from returns in Anbar* (2018).

14 Middle East Monitor, *Iraqi minister: ISIS controls 80% of the Anbar province* (2014).

15 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Managing return in Anbar - Community Responses to the Return of IDPs with Perceived Affiliation* (Baghdad, 2020).

16 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Iraq Displacement Crisis: 2014–2017* (Baghdad, 2018).

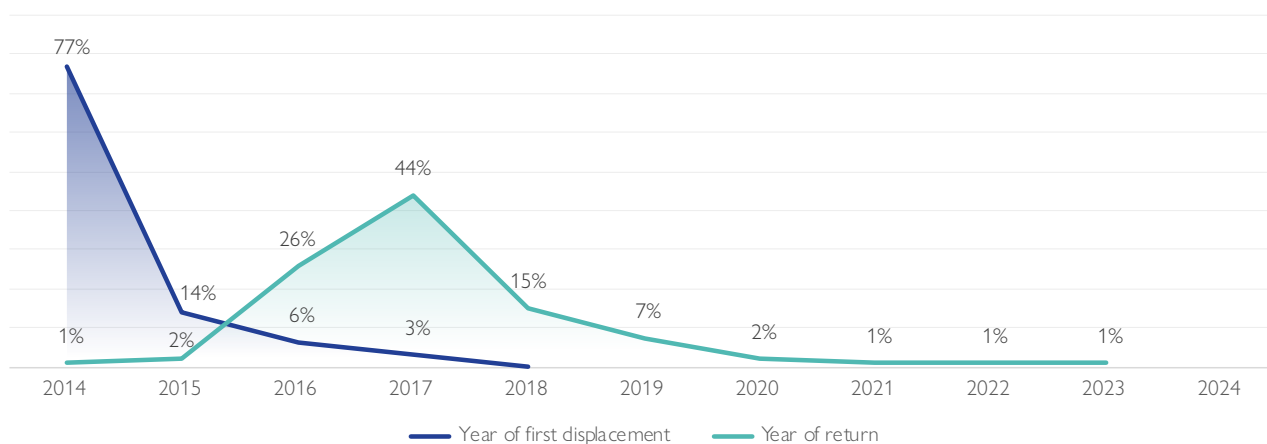
controlling significant portions of the Governorate. Although returns were recorded in the first half of 2015, the capture of Ramadi by ISIL halted further movements and led to the displacement over half a million individuals from Anbar.¹⁷ By December 2015, over three fourths of IDPs across Iraq originated from Anbar, with nearly one fourth of displacement movements having occurred after the fall of Ramadi in April 2015. High rates of inter-governorate displacement were reported, with IDPs leaving Anbar for Baghdad and Kirkuk. However, most families eventually returned to Anbar due to the lack of a required sponsor to enter Baghdad and partial blockages on the alternative route through neighbouring Babylon Governorate. By the end of 2015, the total number of IDPs from Anbar reached 1,417,134, including 249,450 individuals who were displaced after April 2015 and remained within the Governorate.¹⁸

In 2016, significant military campaigns, including the battles for Ramadi and Falluja, caused temporary but intense surges in displacement and initiated return movements as areas were reclaimed by Iraqi forces. On May 22, 2016, the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Popular Mobilization Forces (PMFs), with coalition support, launched an offensive to retake Fallujah and its surroundings from ISIL. This campaign led to immediate displacement, with residents moving to northern

neighbourhoods, where the conflict was less intense, or to areas near the river to access water. After a month of fierce fighting, Iraqi and coalition forces entered and reclaimed Falluja. The retaking of the city triggered a massive return of IDPs, with nearly 220,000 returns recorded between August and December, making Falluja the district with the second highest number of returns after Ramadi.¹⁹ However, tensions persisted between those displaced during earlier years and those who remained and were displaced during later stages of the conflict. This mistrust led to acts of reprisal, particularly against individuals perceived as having ties to ISIL, complicating the return and reintegration of IDPs into their original communities.²⁰

2017 marked a turning point with the retaking of key territories in Anbar. The retaking of Mosul and the end of hostilities in other areas, such as Telafar, Tilkaif, Al-Shirqat and western Anbar, along with the policy of encouraging returns, were the main factors triggering returns. The number of IDPs began to decrease, with the focus shifting toward stabilization and the return of displaced populations. By the end of 2017, as hostilities died down, the number of returnees began to exceed the number of IDPs, reflecting a slow but steady movement toward recovery and reconstruction.

Figure 1: Year of first displacement and return²¹



During the ISIL crisis, thousands of people, especially from border governorates like Anbar and Ninewa, moved across the border to the Syrian Arab Republic. Since ISIL's defeat, the government has struggled with how to handle citizens who lived under ISIL rule, especially those in Al Hol camp. Situated in Northeast Syria (NES), Al Hol was initially intended to provide temporary shelter for war-displaced civilians. However, as ISIL lost control in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, the camp saw an influx of people from ISIL-occupied areas, raising concerns about their ideological affiliations.²² Since May 2021, the Government of Iraq has been repatriating its citizens from Al Hol. First, households go to the Jeddah-1 camp in Ninewa Governorate to complete preparations for reintegration, including

security clearances and sponsor identification and after, return to their original communities or relocate elsewhere in the country.²³ However, female headed households (FHH) face additional challenges in this process.²⁴ Meeting the requirements for leaving Jeddah-1 can be more difficult for them, in particular the process of filing *tabriya*, an official complaint against their ISIL affiliated male family members, and securing the sponsorship requirement.²⁵ Additionally, weaker social networks may result in lower rates of sponsorship for FHH. Moreover, economic hardships and lack of job opportunities are exacerbating factors due to cultural expectations that women should stay at home.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Managing return in Anbar - Community Responses to the Return of IDPs with Perceived Affiliation* (Baghdad, 2020).

21 The percentages in this and subsequent charts may sum to more or less than 100 per cent due to rounding.

22 Parry, J., Y. Khoshnaw, S. O'Neil, J. Munguia, and M. Genat *The Road Home from Al Hol camp: Reflections on the Iraqi experience. MEAC Findings Report 24* (New York, 2022).

23 Ibid.

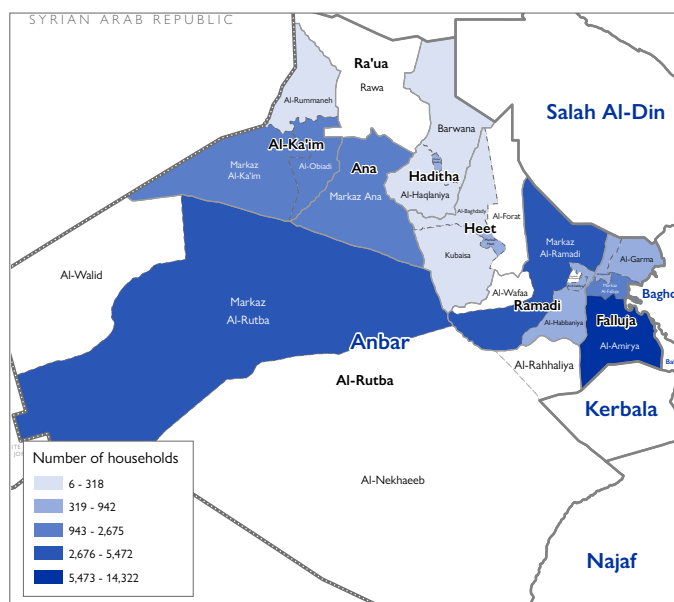
24 Semnani, S. S. O'Neil, M. Genat, and Y. Khoshnaw, *Return and Reintegration Prospects for Iraqis Coming Back From Al Hol. Findings Report 32*, UNIDIR (Geneva, 2023)

25 Ibid.

CURRENT DISPLACEMENT AND RETURNS TRENDS

As of April 2024, Anbar hosts around 3 per cent of the total IDP population in Iraq (33,354 individuals),²⁶ nearly all of whom had been displaced for more than seven years (97%).²⁷ Within Anbar, around half of IDPs are concentrated in Falluja (51%) and one fifth in Ramadi (20%) with the remaining share distributed across Al-Rutba (8%), Al-Ka'im (8%), Ana (6%), Heet (4%) and Haditha (3%) districts.

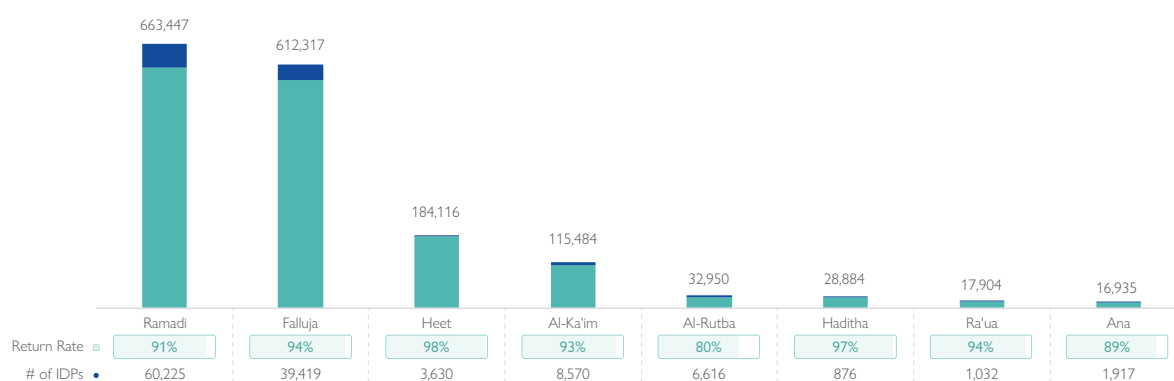
Map 2: Subdistricts of displacement of current IDP population in Anbar



According to the **Displacement Index Round 9** (January - April 2024),²⁸ Anbar Governorate hosts the largest number of IDPs living in severe conditions (15,150 individuals) in Iraq. Two hotspot areas,²⁹ based on the severity of living conditions and number of IDP residents, can be found in Anbar: Al-Amirya and Markaz Falluja subdistricts, both in the Falluja District, with the most critical domains being livelihoods along with infrastructure and services.³⁰

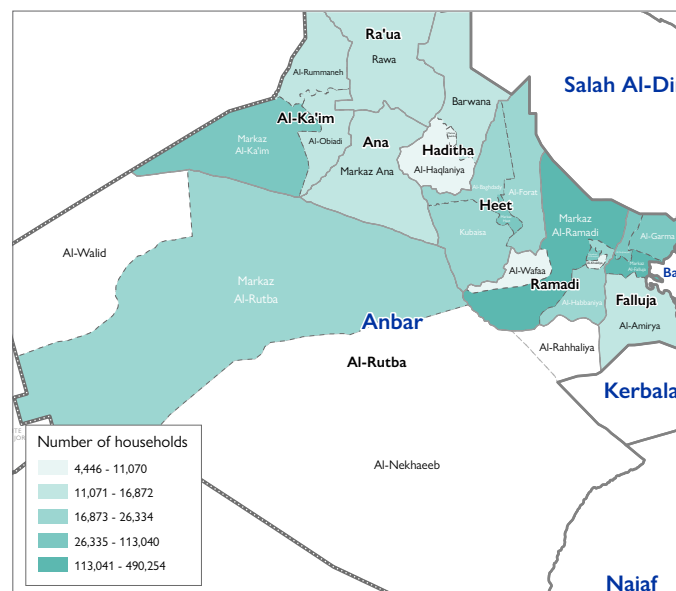
As of April 2024, Anbar Governorate hosts the second largest returnee population

Figure 2: Rate of return in districts in Anbar Governorate³³



in Iraq (1,549,752 individuals) after Ninewa Governorate, representing 32 per cent of the overall caseload.³¹ The majority of the returnee population in Anbar live in Ramadi (39%) and Falluja (37%) districts. Moreover, from May 2018 to August 2024, 2,098 individuals returned to Anbar Governorate from abroad, of which 535 came from the Syrian Arab Republic (26%).³²

Map 3: Subdistricts of return of current returnee population in Anbar



The current **rate of return** for Anbar Governorate stands at 93 per cent, meaning that only 7 per cent of the IDPs originally displaced from Anbar Governorate have not yet returned. Out of these households, around half reside in Erbil Governorate, one fifth is displaced within the governorate and another fifth is in Sulaymaniyah Governorate. The rate of returns across districts is relatively consistent with the highest rates observed in Heet (98%), Haditha (97%) and Ra'ua (94%) and the lowest rates were found in Ana (89%) and Al-Rutba (80%).

26 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq – Master List Dataset 132 (January - April 2024)* (Baghdad, 2024).

27 Ibid.

28 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq - Displacement Index Dashboard: Round Nine* (Baghdad, 2024).

29 Ibid. Subdistricts are classified as 'hotspots' if they score highly in terms of overall severity and have at least 1,000 IDPs residing in the subdistrict. Starting from Round 5, the list also includes subdistricts with medium overall severity and a high score at least on one of the five domains.

30 Ibid. Severity is also driven by issues related to services, security and social inclusiveness. Issues include the poor provision of electricity, presence of other security actors, high concerns about ISIL attacks, movement restrictions and cases of discrimination or unfair treatment due to IDP status when it comes to access to rental houses and political representation.

31 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq – Master List Dataset 132 (January - April 2024)* (Baghdad, 2024).

32 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq – Iraqi Returnees from Abroad (August 2024)* (Baghdad, 2024).

33 The rate of return is computed as the ratio of returnees to a geographical area (governorate, district or subdistrict) to the total number of returnees and IDPs originally from the same area. For main trends, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq – Master List Dataset 132 (January - April 2024)* (Baghdad, 2024).

According to **Return Index** Round 21 (January - April 2024),³⁴ Anbar is the governorate hosting the third highest number of returnees (64,788 individuals) living in severe conditions after Ninewa and Salah al-Din. Six hotspot areas,³⁵ based on the severity of living conditions and number of returnee residents, can be found in the governorate: Al-Amirya and Al-Garma in Falluja District, Markaz Heet and Al-Forat in Heet, Markaz Al-Ka'im in Al-Ka'im and Husaibah Al-Sharqiah in Ramadi. The main drivers of severity are concerns about different sources of violence, checkpoints being controlled by other security actors, blocked returns, the poor provision of government services and livelihoods issues.

KEY FINDINGS

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS

As of April 2024, Anbar hosts **33,354 IDPs**, nearly all of whom had been displaced for more than seven years, and **1,549,752 returnees**, the second largest returnee population in Iraq. The current **rate of return** for Anbar Governorate stands at 93 per cent, meaning that only 7 per cent of the IDPs originally displaced from Anbar Governorate have not yet returned.

When asked about their preferred solution, **around one third of IDPs currently residing in Anbar preferred to return to their place of origin**, which is mostly Al-Musayab in Babylon Governorate and Falluja in Anbar Governorate. However, barriers such as **blocked returns by security actors, housing destruction and lack of livelihoods opportunities** are preventing return. Almost a quarter of IDP households reported **failed returns**. In addition, around two thirds prefer to stay where they currently are, while a small proportion prefer moving to a third location within the country or are undecided.

The average household size is seven members for both IDPs and returnees. **Around 3 in 10 IDP households are headed by a woman, compared to 2 in 10 of returnee households.** In contrast, around **three quarters of households who returned from Northeast Syria (NES)** and have been interviewed in this survey are headed by a woman, have a smaller average size (six members) and a higher dependency ratio – a balance between children, older persons and working age members of the household. Furthermore, around **three quarters of NES households have an absent family member** (either missing, dead or imprisoned), compared to less than one fifth of other households.

COMPARING LIVING CONDITIONS

This study compares living conditions for IDP, returnee, NES and stayee households **across five criteria**: (1) safety and security, (2) adequate standard of living, (3) access to livelihoods, (4) restoration of housing, land and property (HLP) and compensation and (5) documentation and participation.

Access to livelihoods is the most critical domain for all groups with IDP and NES households underperforming relative to the other groups. Income stability is the main driver of differences between groups. Almost 9 in 10 NES households and 8 in 10 IDP households lack a stable source of income in contrast with just around half of returnee and stayee households. Furthermore, only a

In light of the above, it is essential to assess progress toward durable solutions to displacement in the governorate to inform targeted interventions in key areas of concerns. Identifying locations or groups that face similar challenges will support more efficient and effective programmatic responses. These activities, in turn, will enable IDPs to voluntarily take steps toward their preferred durable solutions and make returns more viable in the long run.

small fraction of all groups can face unexpected expenses (21% of IDPs, 33% of returnees and 33% of stayees), indicating that even having a stable income does not necessarily provide sufficient financial resources for sustainability and addressing unforeseen costs.

HLP restoration and compensation is the second most challenging domain with the most significant gap across groups. The main driver of differences between groups is the **lack of documentation**, such as formal rental agreements or legal ownership. Over 8 in 10 IDP households and 6 in 10 NES households lack legally recognized documentation, compared to around half of returnees and stayees. Another factor driving the disparities between groups is the proportion of households with **property loss and whose compensation claim has not been resolved**. Over 6 in 10 IDP households suffered property loss or have unresolved compensation claims compared to other households (63% IDPs, 36% NES, 32% returnees and 9% stayees).

Adequate standard of living is the third most challenging domain, with IDP and NES households facing more challenges than returnee and stayee households. The main driver of these discrepancies is shelter condition. Only a third of IDP households and nearly half of NES households live in an apartment or house in good condition, in strong contrast with the majority of returnee and stayee households (35% IDPs, 46% NES, 81% returnees and 80% stayees).

Safety and security is one of the least challenging domains, with IDP, returnee and NES households reporting similar scores to stayee households. Most households feel safe walking alone in their area of residence, moving in and out of the area they live in and feel comfortable getting help from authorities.

Documentation and participation is one of the stronger domains for all groups, although this domain is challenging for NES households compared to other groups. Most IDP, returnee and stayee households possess both a national or unified ID and Iraqi nationality, while only 6 in 10 NES households have these documents. Another crucial difference between groups is the level of acceptance in the community, with a smaller portion of IDP and NES households reporting feeling accepted by the community compared to returnees and stayees.

In summary, livelihoods and HLP represent the most critical areas for intervention, especially for IDP and NES households. On the other hand, displaced groups have achieved comparatively greater progress in terms of documentation and participation and safety and security.

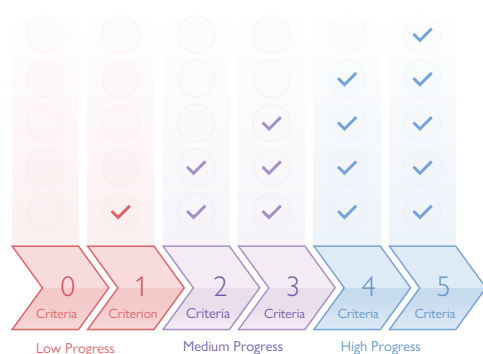
34 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq Return Index 21 Dashboard (January – April 2024)* (Baghdad, 2024).

35 Subdistricts are classified as 'hotspots' if they score highly in terms of severity on at least one of the two scales (either livelihoods and basic services, or safety and social cohesion) or if they score medium in terms of severity but also host relatively large numbers of returnees, at least 60,000 returnees in a subdistrict.

MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Households were rated according to the number of criteria met to measure the overall progress toward solutions. Those who met only one criterion or none are categorized as low progress, while those who met two or three criteria are classified as medium progress and those who met four or all five criteria as high progress.

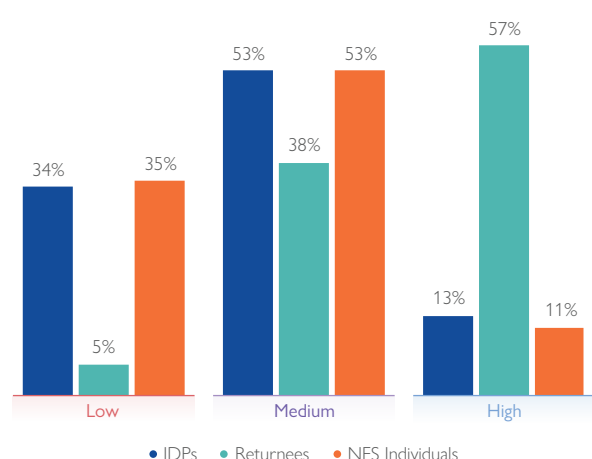
Figure 3: Number of criteria met per progress group



Overall, **returnee households have achieved significantly greater progress than IDP and NES households**. Nearly three in five returnee households are in the high progress group (57%), while two in five fall in the medium progress group (39%). Only a small share of returnee households are classified as low progress (5%).

Most IDP households are in the medium progress category (53%) with around a third classified as low progress (34%) and only a small share falling in the high progress group (13%). Similarly, around half of NES households are in the medium progress category (53%) while a third are classified as low progress (35%) and only a small share as high progress (11%).

Figure 4: Percentage of IDP and returnee households by progress group



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOW PROGRESS GROUP

This study offers evidence on the distinguishing characteristics of low progress households.

The low progress group, which includes IDP, NES and returnee households, share common characteristics. In particular, the low progress group had a higher share of households with:

- a female head of household (HoH),
- HoH with limited or no formal education,
- a high dependency ratio, i.e. proportion of children and elderly to working-age members,
- multiple displacements (IDP and NES households),
- fear of being evicted and lack of tenure security,
- property losses and unsuccessful compensation claims,
- absent members of household because of the 2014–2017 crisis,
- bad shelter conditions, poor access to improved sanitation facilities and health care,
- food insecurity for NES HHHs,
- unemployed household members and unstable sources of income and who cannot meet unexpected expenses,
- lower comfort levels seeking help from authorities,
- lower feelings of acceptance by the community,
- a lack of essential documentation,
- a preference to return to their place of origin (IDP households)

The findings also demonstrate that **instability during displacement often hinders progress toward solutions**. Households in the low progress group more often reported multiple displacements, failed attempts to return and fewer years in the same place. In addition, a higher share of NES households in the low progress group returned only one year ago or less. In contrast, those in the high progress group usually returned to their areas of origin at least five years ago. This indicates the **correlation between time settled in the same place and progress toward durable solutions**.

Instability is also shown in the **housing situation, as fear of being evicted and lack of tenure security are much more common in the low progress group**. Only some households in the low progress group, including NES households, have formal rental agreements or own their housing with documents. Most households in this group live either for free or with an informal rental agreement or no agreement at all.

In line with the previous pilot conducted in Ninewa, data show a correlation between the **preferred solution and level of progress**. **The higher progress, the more likely households prefer to remain in their current location**. IDP households in the low progress group more often prefer to return to their place of origin or relocate within the country than other progress groups.

INTRODUCTION

This report on Anbar Governorate is the third round of the project aimed at assessing progress toward durable solutions³⁶ to displacement for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees in the governorates with the largest shares of displaced populations in Iraq.

The goal is to understand where IDPs and returnees stand seven years after the end of the 2014-2017 crisis and in which aspects they are still struggling compared to the population who never left their location of origin ('stayees'). In this respect this project contributes to a broader discussion and to the Action Agenda around measuring progress toward solutions – and determining the end of displacement – which aims at operationalizing the eight criteria of the Framework for Durable Solutions produced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and informing targeted interventions in key areas of concern.³⁷

The analysis of this project builds on the information and knowledge gained by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) about the 2014-2017 crisis. IOM Iraq has been tracking and monitoring IDP stock figures as early as December 2014 through the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM).³⁸ The collection of returnee stock figures began in April 2015, although returnee stock figures have been retroactively

reported since October 2014. IOM Iraq also uses the Displacement Index³⁹ and Return Index⁴⁰ as tools to monitor the living conditions of the IDP and returnee populations at the location level across key sectors, such as livelihoods, housing, services, safety, social cohesion and inclusiveness. Since 2015, IOM Iraq and Georgetown University implemented a longitudinal study, *Access to Durable Solutions in Iraq*, to understand how IDPs take steps to build lasting durable solutions. The study has regularly surveyed non-camp IDP families since their displacement in 2014-2015, including some families who managed to return to their area of origin since 2017.⁴¹ Since 2019, IOM Iraq has been monitoring protracted⁴² and urban displacement⁴³ in the main districts of origin and displacement to provide a contextualized categorization and inform planning and development of durable solutions strategies.

The analytical framework for this pilot was developed according to the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions and the recommendations provided by the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRIS)/UN Statistics Division (UNSD) on IDP statistics and composite measures for progress toward durable solutions and overcoming key displacement-related vulnerabilities. All indicators selected for the composite measure were selected from the Interagency Indicator Library and, as such, they align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING DESIGN

Two sources of data were utilized as sampling frames to obtain the estimated base number of IDP, returnee and stayee households in each subdistrict in Anbar Governorate. DTM Master List Round 130 data, collected between May and August 2023, were used as a sampling frame for IDP and returnee households, while the source for stayee households was 2021 statistical population data from the Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Planning of Iraq.

A two-stage sampling procedure was used. In the first stage, locations in each subdistrict were selected with a probability proportional to the population size. In the second stage, IDP and returnee households were selected proportionally to the total number of households in the location. All locations where IDPs and returnees were present according to DTM Master List Round 130 were included in the frame. In addition, a sample of households who returned from NES were surveyed. For stayees, the procedure was slightly different and based on 2021 Iraqi Central Statistical Office population estimates at the subdistrict level, which are available upon request. Only locations with IDPs and returnees were included in the frame and the number of households was based on the total number of stayees in the subdistrict. In cases where no stayees or few stayees were present at the selected location, households were replaced within the subdistrict.

Data collection for this report took place between March and April 2024 across 8 districts and 23 subdistricts in Anbar Governorate of Iraq. Data were collected through IOM's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs), composed of over 29 staff members (55% of enumerators are female). They collected data through structured face-to-face interviews with a sample size of 5,982 households, split between three groups: **IDP (1,340)**, **returnee (2,838)** and **stayee (1,804)** households. This sample size and design allow for comparison between IDPs, returnees and stayees as well as generalization of the findings per population group at the district level. At the subdistrict level, findings can be generalized only for areas with the largest populations. This includes Al-Amirya subdistrict in Falluja and Markaz Ramadi subdistrict in Ramadi for IDP households and Markaz Falluja and Al-Garma in Falluja, Markaz Al-Ka'im, Markaz Heet and Markaz Ramadi for returnee households. Overall, surveyed households represent 5,828 IDP households, 257,955 returnee households and 64,876 stayee households. In addition, 98 households who returned from NES were interviewed using the snowball sampling method, which is a non-probabilistic approach. As a result, findings for surveyed NES households cannot be generalized to the entire population and thus are distinguished from other results presented in the report.

36 A durable solution is achieved when displaced people 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. It can be achieved through return, integration or resettlement. IASC, *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, The Brookings Institute & University of Bern (Washington D.C., 2010).

37 In 2015, an interagency process, composed by a group of development, humanitarian and peacebuilding actors under the leadership of the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, was established. The group started work on developing and testing indicators and guidance for comprehensive durable solutions analysis in internal displacement situations, resulting in a library of standardized indicators and operational guidance. For more information, refer to: IASC, *Inter-Agency Durable Solutions Indicator Library, Joint IDP Profiling Service* (2020).

38 For more information, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq Master List* (2023).

39 For more information, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq Displacement Index* (2023).

40 For more information, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Iraq Return Index* (2023).

41 For more information on the study, its methodology and main findings, refer to: IOM and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq. Part One* (2017). IOM and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Three Years in Displacement* (Baghdad, 2019). IOM and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Four Years in Displacement* (Baghdad, 2019). IOM and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Five Years in Displacement* (Baghdad, 2020). IOM and Georgetown University, *Access to Durable Solutions Among IDPs in Iraq: Six Years in Displacement* (Baghdad, 2022).

42 For more information, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Progress Toward Solutions* (2023).









43 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM – An Analysis of Urban Displacement in Iraq* (Baghdad, 2021).

SELECTION OF INDICATORS

Indicators to assess the advancement toward durable solutions stemmed from the IASC Framework.⁴⁴ The framework defines three 'durable solutions' — sustainable return, sustainable integration or sustainable resettlement — each of which depends on the fulfilment of eight criteria: (1) long-term safety and

security; (2) adequate standard of living; (3) access to livelihoods and employment; (4) access to effective and accessible mechanisms to restore housing, land and property; (5) access to personal and other documentation; (6) family reunification; (7) participation in public affairs and (8) access to effective remedies and justice.

Figure 5: IASC Durable Solution Framework's criteria to measure the progress toward achieving durable solutions






Criteria I	Criteria II	Criteria III	Criteria IV	Criteria V	Criteria VI	Criteria VII	Criteria VIII
							
Safety and security	Adequate standard of living	Access to livelihood	Restoration of HLP	Access to documentation	Family reunification	Participation in public affairs	Access to effective remedies and justice

In consultation with partners and following the International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS), indicators across those criteria were developed and organized into a questionnaire. The questionnaire and indicators were further refined following the pilot testing in Ninewa.⁴⁵ Two additional indicators were included since the pilot round: 1) 'reunification' in the restoration of HLP and compensation criteria and 2) 'acceptance' in the personal documentation and participation domain. The 'Reunification' considers whether any household members are deceased, imprisoned or missing because of the 2014-2017 crisis. 'Acceptance' measures feelings of acceptance by the community. Additionally, three indicators were adjusted: the head of household's source of income was adjusted to the household's source of

income (livelihood); HLP loss and compensation include all three groups and the status of the compensation claim (HLP); and essential documentation includes Iraqi nationality together with ID (documentation and participation).

The questionnaire was then administered to the sample of 1,340 IDP households, 2,838 returnee households and 1,804 stayee households across 23 subdistricts and 8 districts of Anbar Governorate. Afterwards, indicators were tested and analysed across the three population groups and those that differentiated groups better and were consistent across domains were selected for analysis. Overall, 18 indicators were selected and grouped into five domains to have at least three indicators per domain (Figure 6: IASC Durable Solution Framework's criteria, sub-criteria and indicators used in this project).

Figure 6: IASC Durable Solution Framework's criteria, sub-criteria and indicators used in this project

<div>IASC DURABLE SOLUTION FRAMEWORK'S CRITERIA, SUB-CRITERIA AND INDICATORS USED IN THIS PROJECT</div>		
<div><div></div><div>SAFETY AND SECURITY</div><div>Criteria I</div></div> <div><div>Victim of violence</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Feeling of safetyComfortable to get help from authorities</div><div>Freedom of movement</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Freedom of movement</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>ADEQUATE STANDARDS OF LIVING</div><div>Criteria II</div></div> <div><div>Food security</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Food security⁴³</div><div>Shelter and housing</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Shelter conditionAccess to improved sanitation facility</div><div>Medical services</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Ability to access health care</div></div>	
<div><div></div><div>ACCESS TO LIVELIHOODS</div><div>Criteria III</div></div> <div><div>Employment</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">At least one employed household member (15–60 years old)Stable source of income</div><div>Economic security</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Able to face unexpected expenses (of up to 440,000 IQD)</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>RESTORATION OF HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY AND COMPENSATION</div><div>Criteria IV+V+VIII</div></div> <div><div>Secure tenure rights</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Have legally recognized documentationNot at risk of eviction</div><div>Restitution/compensation</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Did not suffer loss or applied to compensation and it is resolved</div><div>Reunification</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">No absent members of household because of the 2014–2017 crisis</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION AND PARTICIPATION</div><div>Criteria V+VII</div></div> <div><div>Documentation</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Possession of ID and Iraqi nationalityRegistration of birth (children born between 2014-2022)</div><div>Right to vote</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Participation in 2021 parliamentary election</div><div>Acceptance</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Feeling of acceptance by the community</div></div>

All indicators were coded as binary variables, with 1 representing when a displacement-related or return-related vulnerability was overcome and 0 when the vulnerability remained for a specific household. For example, 'feeling safe' or 'not

reporting movement restrictions' is coded as a 1 as this is positive progress toward solutions. Recording of missing data was performed in the following way. Missing data by design, due to skipping patterns and non-applicability, were interpreted

44 IASC, *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, The Brookings Institute & University of Bern (Washington D.C., 2010).

45 For more information on methodology and selection of indicators, refer to: International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Methodological Overview* (2023).

46 Food security was assessed by the reduced Coping Strategy Index (CSI) from the World Food Programme, the de facto standard for measuring food security in humanitarian settings. It is based on five core questions that were administered to households and then weighted with universally standardized weights to allow comparability across contexts. In this analysis, the threshold for the absence of vulnerability was set at 18 and includes the first two classes (Minimal/None (0-3) and Stressed (4-18)) that correspond to a situation of less severe food insecurity. World Food Programme, *The Coping Strategy Index: Field Methods Manual (Second Edition)* (2008).

as the absence of vulnerability. For instance, families who did not need health care were coded as 'not vulnerable' in the health sub-criterion. Missing data due to non-response were interpreted as the presence of vulnerability. For instance, families answering 'Do not know' or 'Prefer not to answer' on whether they feel safe were coded as vulnerable, i.e., 'not feeling safe'. Employment indicators were assessed at the household level and coded as the absence of vulnerability if at least one individual passed that indicator, i.e., at least one member ages 15-60 years old is employed in the household and the household has a stable source of income (public or private employment, self-employment or retired). The absence of vulnerability related to personal documentation was applied where all household members owned essential documents.

COMPOSITE MEASURE

The composite measure to assess progress toward solutions was built in several steps. First, the average number of indicators met per domain was calculated. For instance, the safety and security domain include three indicators; thus, the

maximum possible value is three when all indicators are met and the minimum possible value is zero, when none of the indicators are met. This allows for comparison between groups and identification of the most challenging domain.

Second, the average number of criteria met was calculated. To do so, domain scores were also coded as binary variables, with one representing when the IDP or returnee household met on average the same or higher number of indicators per domain as the stayee household and zero when the IDP or returnee household met on average a lower number of indicators.

Thus, the maximum possible value is five when all criteria are met and the minimum possible value is zero, when none of the criteria are met. This allows for comparison of progress across groups.

In addition, to assess the progress toward solutions, households were then rated according to the number of criteria met. Those who met only one criterion or none are categorized as achieving low progress, those who met two or three criteria as medium progress and those who met four or all five criteria as high progress.

Table 1: The average number of indicators met per domain and population group

DOMAIN	IDPs	NES HH	RETURNEES	STAYEES	MAX
Safety and Security	2.87	2.91	2.94	2.90	3
Adequate Standard of Living	2.52	2.81	3.48	3.39	4
Access to Livelihoods	1.25	0.72	1.74	1.77	3
Restoration of HLP and Compensation	1.74	1.84	2.87	2.99	4
Personal Documentation and Participation	3.43	2.65	3.74	3.81	4

Table 2: The score coding per domain based on the average number of indicators met

DOMAIN	0	1	THRESHOLD (Average number of indicators met by stayee households)
Safety and Security	<2.90	= or >2.90	2.90
Adequate Standards of Living	<3.39	= or >3.39	3.39
Access to Livelihoods	<1.77	= or >1.77	1.77
HLP Rights and Access to Remedies	<2.99	= or >2.99	2.99
Personal Documentation and Participation	<3.81	= or >3.81	3.81

Table 3: The average number of criteria met by population group

	IDPs	NES HH	RETURNEES	STAYEES	Max
All five domains	2.47	2.05	3.56	3.61	5

LIMITATIONS

As previously noted, at the subdistrict level, findings can be generalized only for areas with the largest populations, including Al-Amirya subdistrict in Falluja and Markaz Ramadi subdistrict in Ramadi for IDP households and Markaz Falluja and Al-Garma in Falluja, Markaz Al-Ka'im, Markaz Heet and Markaz Ramadi for returnee households. In addition, 98 households who returned from NES were selected using the snowball sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling. Therefore, findings should not be generalized and do not represent the whole population that returned from NES, but rather only those who were interviewed.

Figure 7: Number of criteria met per progress group



I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISPLACED POPULATION

This section presents an overview of the main socio-demographic characteristics of the displaced population in Anbar Governorate. This population is composed of three main groups: households who are still in the location of displacement (IDPs), households who have returned to the place where they used to reside before the 2014-2017 crisis forced them to move elsewhere (returnees) and households who have returned from NES.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The sex distribution of the displaced population is balanced. Around half of IDPs and returnees are female and half are male. The average household size is seven members for both IDPs and returnees.

Around 3 in 10 IDP households are headed by a woman (27%) compared to 2 in 10 returnee households (20%). Additionally, in 14 per cent of IDP households, the head of the household is an elderly person, compared to 21 per cent of returnees. Moreover, while most heads of households (HoH) are married, around 1 in 10 are widowed (12% IDPs and 14% returnees). In over a third of IDP households, the HoHH received no form of education (35% of IDPs versus 28% returnees) or has elementary school education only (39% IDPs versus 31% returnees).

Almost 8 in 10 IDP households do not have a stable source of income⁴⁷ (77%) compared to 5 in 10 returnee households (48%). Most displaced households rely on irregular earnings or daily labour (58% IDPs versus 50% returnees) and social welfare (23% IDPs versus 20% returnees), with IDPs showing slightly higher proportions.

Around 17 per cent of IDP households have an absent family member (either missing, dead or imprisoned), with returnees exhibiting a similar share (16%).

NES HOUSEHOLDS



Household Composition

Sampled NES HH have a smaller average size (5.88 members) and a higher dependency ratio (1.34) compared to returnees (6.97 members and 0.95 dependency ratio).



Head of Household

The majority of HoHH are female (71%), significantly higher than returnee households (20%). Also have higher rates of widowhood (42% NES HH vs. 14% returnee HH) and divorces (13% NES HH vs. 1% returnee HH).



Education

Nearly half received no form of education (47%) compared to a third of returnee HoHH (28%).



Employment

The majority (87%) lack a stable source of income, with a significant portion not working (51%) due to various reasons, including age and disability.



Absent Family Members

Around a third (34%) have a deceased family member, another third reported a missing family member (28%) and one tenth have an imprisoned family member (10%).



Displacement History

Over 8 in 10 have experienced multiple displacements (84%), compared to 6 in 10 returnee households (61%).



Preferred Durable Solutions

The majority (91%) prefer to stay in their current location.

Figure 8: Characteristics of households

IDPs

Returnees

6.94

Average size of household

6.97

1.15

Dependency ratio (balance between children, older persons and working age members of household)

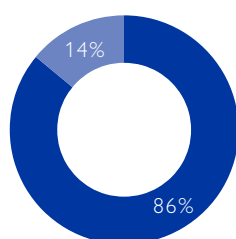
0.95

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

73% Male 27% Female

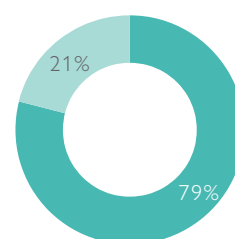
SEX

80% Male 20% Female



• 18-59
• 60 and over

AGE GROUP

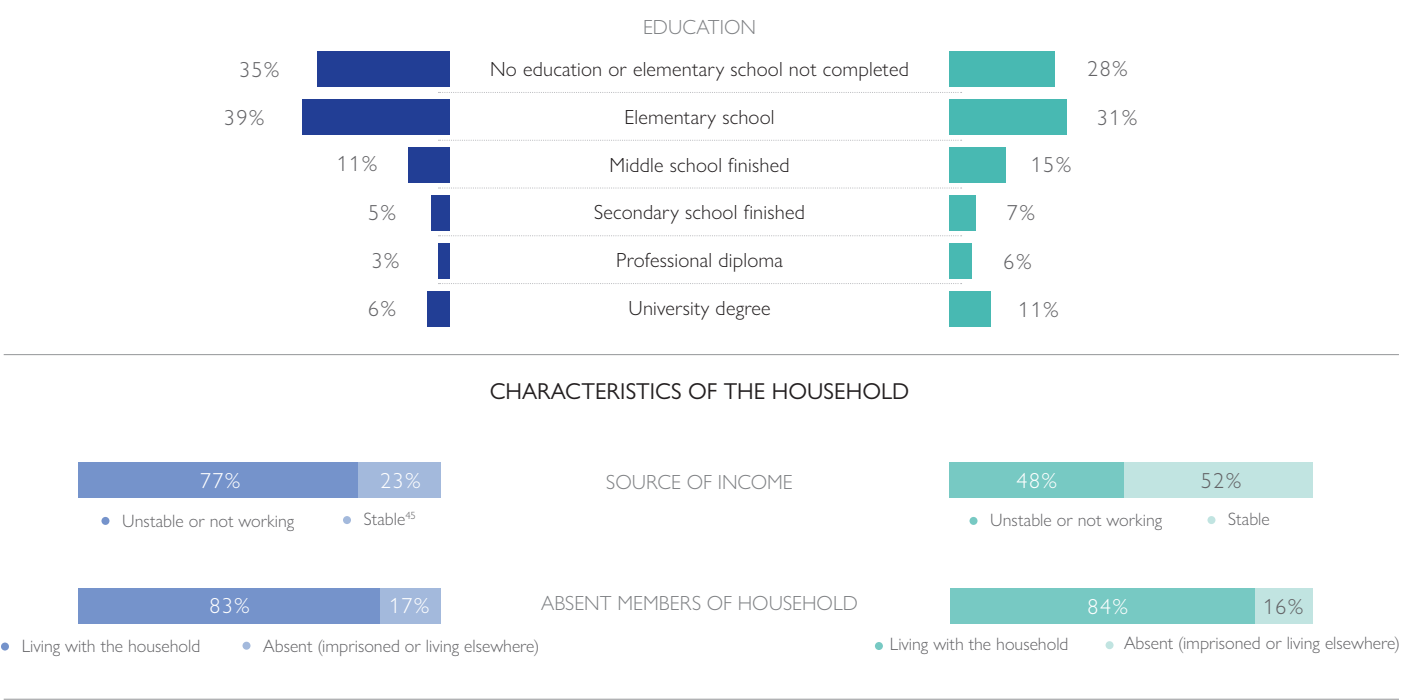


• 18-59
• 60 and over

⁴⁷ A stable income means that household members are regularly employed in the public or private sector; self employed or retired.

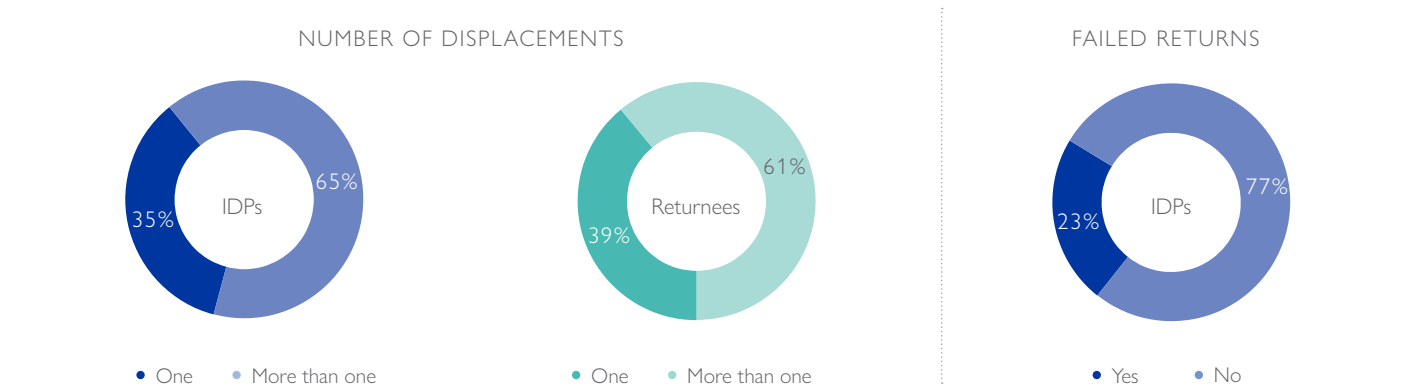
IDPs

Returnees



The majority of IDPs and returnees have been displaced more than once (65% IDPs versus 61% returnees). Most IDPs have been displaced for 10 years (75%) suggesting that displacement is long and protracted. Almost a quarter of IDP households (23%) report failed returns. These were most commonly reported in Markaz Ramadi.

Figure 9: Number of displacements and failed returns

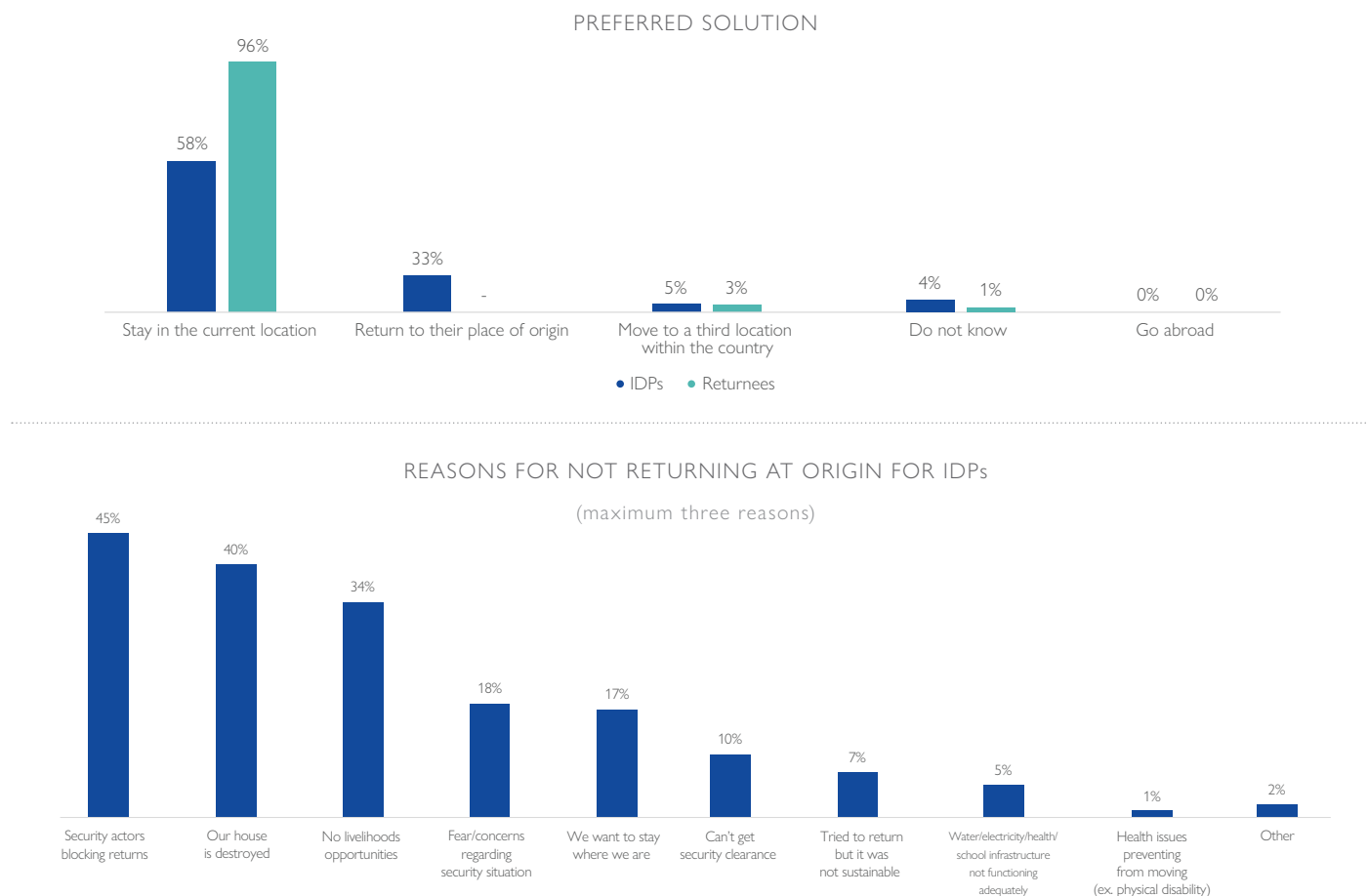


PREFERRED DURABLE SOLUTIONS AND OBSTACLES

Almost all returnee households (96%) prefer to stay in their current location, while 58 per cent of IDP households prefer this option. A third of IDP households prefer to return to their place of origin (33%) and only a small proportion prefer moving to a third location within the country (5%) or do not know (4%). The main reasons for not returning are security actors blocking returns (45%), house destruction (40%) and lack of livelihoods opportunities (34%).

48 A stable income means that household members are regularly employed in the public or private sector; self employed or retired.

Figure 10: Preferred solutions and main barriers to return



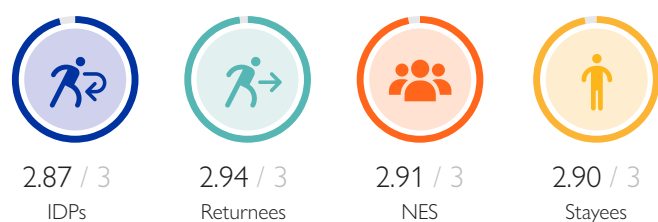
II. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS PER CRITERIA

This section compares progress for IDP, returnee, NES and stayee households across five criteria: (1) safety and security, (2) adequate standard of living, (3) access to livelihoods, (4) restoration of HLP and compensation and (5) documentation and participation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety and security domain considers whether households feel safe, are comfortable getting help from local authorities and are able to move in and out of their location of residence.

Figure 11: The average number of indicators met per Safety and Security domain



Safety and security is one of the least challenging domains, with IDP and returnee households reporting similar scores to stayee households. Over 8 in 10 households pass all three indicators for this criterion (88% IDPs, 94% returnees and 91% stayees), with a slightly lower proportion of IDP households compared to the rest.

Nearly all IDPs and returnees feel safe walking alone in their area of residence (99% IDPs, 100% returnees and 99% stayees). Most IDPs and returnees feel free moving in and out of the area they live in (96% IDPs, 99% returnees and 97% stayees). Additionally, a high proportion of households feel comfortable getting help from authorities (92% IDPs, 94% returnees and 94% stayees).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

In the Safety and Security domain, interviewed NES households reported similar scores to returnee and stayee households. Over 9 in 10 households pass all three indicators for this criterion (91% NES, 94% returnees and 91% stayees).

- **100%** feel safe walking alone in their area of residence
- **95%** comfortable getting help from authorities
- **97%** feel free to move in and out of the area they live

ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING


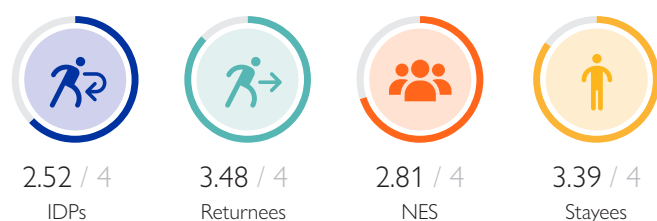
 The assessment measured adequate standards of living based on whether households have access to health care if needed or improved sanitation facilities.⁴⁹ Additionally, this domain considered whether IDPs' and returnees' housing is in good condition. Finally, it examined levels of food security based on households' scores on the Coping Strategy Index.

Figure 12: The average number of indicators met per Adequate Standard of Living domain



Adequate standards of living is the third most challenging domain, with IDP households facing more challenges than returnee and stayee households. Only 19 per cent of IDP households are able to pass all criteria, compared to 62 per cent of returnee households and 59 per cent of stayee households.

The main driver of these discrepancies are shelter conditions. Only a third of IDP households live in an apartment or house in good condition, in strong contrast with the majority of returnee and stayee households (35% IDPs, 81% returnees and 80% stayees). Almost half of IDPs (47%) in Markaz Ramadi report living in damaged housing.

Furthermore, there is a drastic difference in ability to access healthcare. A substantially higher proportion of IDP households are unable to access health care when needed compared to other groups (42% IDPs versus 22% returnees and 25% stayees). In addition, almost a third of IDP households do not have access to improved sanitation facilities, which is much higher compared to other groups (27% IDPs, 6% returnees and 9% stayees). Finally, IDPs have higher share of households reporting food insecurity (15% IDPs, 6% returnees and 7% stayees), although this share is even greater among NES households (26%), as described below.

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Sampled NES households face more challenges related to standard of living than returnee and stayee households. Only 29 per cent of NES households are able to pass all criteria, compared to 62 per cent of returnee households and 59 per cent of stayee households.

- 26% experience food insecurity
- 46% live in inadequate shelter conditions
- 13% do not have access to improved sanitation facilities
- 34% are not able to access healthcare

ACCESS TO LIVELIHOODS


 The livelihoods domain assessed whether at least one member of the household (ages 15-60) is employed, whether the household has a stable source of income and whether households are able to face unexpected expenses of up to 450,000 IQD.

Figure 13: The average number of indicators met per Access to Livelihoods domain



Access to livelihoods is the most critical domain for all three groups. This is also the domain where IDP households pass the least number of criteria. Only 32 per cent of IDP households meet all criteria, compared to 60 per cent of returnee households and 62 per cent of stayee households. The low proportion of stayee households meeting these criteria indicates that this domain is particularly challenging overall.

Most households have at least one employed member (81% IDPs versus 89% returnees and 86% stayees). However, almost 8 in 10 IDP households (77%) lack a stable source of income in contrast with just around half of returnee and stayee households (48% returnees and 42% stayees). **This suggests that income stability is the main gap driving the differences between the three groups.**

Only a small fraction of all three groups can face unexpected expenses (21% IDPs versus 33% returnees and 33% stayees), indicating that having a stable income does not necessarily provide sufficient financial resources for sustainability and addressing unforeseen costs.

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Access to livelihoods is critical for sampled NES households, although to a much larger extent. It is a domain where respondents pass the least number of indicators. In fact, only 20 per cent of NES households meet all livelihood indicators, compared to 60 per cent of returnee households and 62 per cent of stayee households. Income stability is the main driver of the differences across groups. Sampled NES households tend to rely on loans or money from family and friends (18%), irregular earnings or daily labour (30%), or simply have no sources of income (15%).

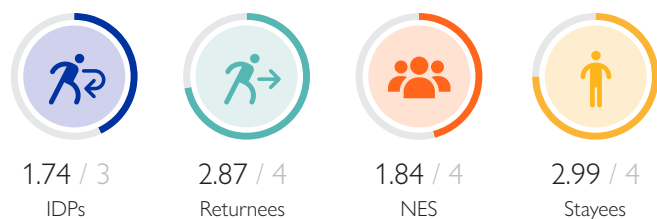
- 40% have at least one employed member
- 87% lack a stable source of income
- 19% can face unexpected expenses

49 This includes flush/pour-flush toilets or latrines connected to a sewer, septic tank or pit; ventilated improved pit latrine; pit latrine with a slab or platform, which covers the pit entirely; and, composting toilets/latrines.

RESTORATION OF HLP AND COMPENSATION

With respect to property restoration and compensation, the assessment considered whether households have legally recognized documentation for their housing, whether they are at risk of eviction, whether their property was damaged and whether they have applied for compensation and the claim has been resolved. Additionally, the presence of deceased, imprisoned or missing members was added as a measure of vulnerability.

Figure 14: The average number of indicators met per restoration of HLP and compensation domain



HLP restoration and compensation is the second most challenging domain with the most significant gap across groups. Only 23 per cent of IDP households meet all criteria, compared to 68 per cent of returnees and 72 per cent of stayees.

The main driver of the difference between the three groups is possession of documentation of housing ownership. Over 8 in 10 IDP households (83%) lack legally recognized documentation, compared to around half of returnees and stayees (49% returnees and 56% stayees). More specifically, only 17 per cent of IDP households have a formal rental agreement or legal ownership with documents in comparison to 51 per cent of returnees and 44 per cent of stayees. More than half of IDP households have informal agreements (56% of IDPs compared to 11% of returnees and 12% of stayees).

Relatedly, a significantly higher proportion of IDP households face higher risks of

eviction (64% IDPs versus 15% returnees and 18% stayees).

Another factor driving the disparities between groups is the proportion of households with property loss or whose compensation claim has not been resolved. Almost double the proportion of IDP households suffered property loss and have unresolved compensation claims compared to returnees (63% IDPs versus 32% returnees and 9% stayees).

However, all three groups report similar shares of absent household members (17% IDPs versus 16% returnees and 18% stayees).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

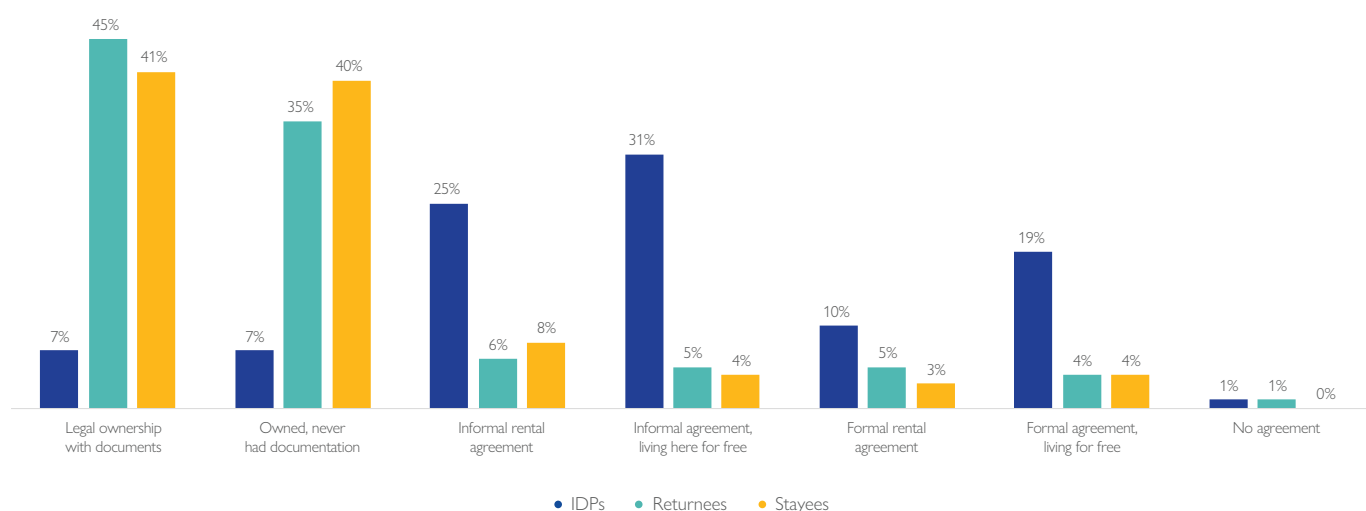
HLP restoration and compensation is a challenging domain with drastic gaps between NES households and the other groups. Only a third of NES households (35%) meet all criteria compared to 7 in 10 returnees (68%) and stayees (72%).

The main driver of the discrepancy is related to the reunification indicator. Around 7 in 10 sampled NES households report the absence of a household member due to the 2014-2017 crisis (71% NES versus 16% returnees and 18% stayees).

Lack of documentation remains a significant driver as well. A higher share of interviewed NES households does not have legally recognized documentation, compared to other groups. Only 37 per cent of NES households have a formal rental agreement or legal ownership with documents in comparison to 51 per cent of returnees and 44 per cent of stayees. As such, a significantly higher proportion of NES households face risks of eviction (46% NES versus 15% returnees and 18% stayees).

- **63%** lack legally recognized documentation
- **46%** at risk of eviction
- **36%** suffered property loss or have unresolved compensation claims
- **71%** reported the absence of a household member due to the 2014-2017 crisis

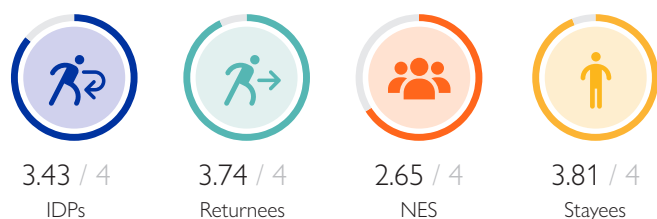
Figure 15: Ownership status of housing by population group



DOCUMENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

With respect to personal documentation, households were asked whether all members of their household have essential personal documentation, i.e. a national or unified ID, Iraqi nationality and a birth certificate. Additionally, regarding participation in public affairs, the assessment considered whether all eligible members of the household voted in the 2021 parliamentary elections. Households were also asked to evaluate the extent to which they felt accepted by the community.

Figure 16: The average number of indicators met per the Personal Documentation and Participation domain



In contrast to other domains, documentation and participation is one of the stronger domains for the three groups. Over half IDP households meet all four criteria (53% IDPs versus 77% returnees and 82% stayees).

Regarding documentation, most households across all three groups possess both a national or unified ID and Iraqi nationality. However, a slightly larger percentage of IDPs lack one of these documents (11% IDPs versus 4% returnees and 5% stayees). On the other hand, almost all three groups had a birth certificate for children born between 2014-2024 (99% IDPs versus 100% returnees and stayees).

The main difference between the three groups is related to the level of acceptance in the community. Around 74 per cent of IDP households reported feeling accepted by the community, compared to 87 per cent of returnees and 94 per cent of stayees.

IDP households also report lower levels of participation in the 2021 elections (80% IDPs versus 91% returnees and 92% stayees).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

The Personal Documentation and Participation domain is challenging for NES households compared to other groups. Only 28 per cent of sampled NES households met all four criteria, compared to 77 per cent of returnees and 82 per cent of stayees.

The main difference between groups is related to the possession of a national or unified ID and Iraqi nationality and participation in the 2021 election. Just over half of NES households (56%) possess national identification compared to the majority of returnee and stayee households (96% returnees and 95% stayees). NES households also report significantly lower levels of participation in the 2021 elections, with less than half participating (42%) compared to the majority of returnees and stayees (91% returnees and 92% stayees). This low participation rate may be due to the GoI's formal return process starting in May 2021, making it unlikely for these individuals to participate in the October 2021 elections.

- **56%** possess ID and Iraqi nationality
- **88%** have a birth certificate for their children born between 2014-2024
- **42%** participated in the 2021 elections
- **79%** feel accepted in the community

III. PROGRESS TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS

OVERALL PROGRESS TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS

To measure the overall progress toward solutions, all five criteria discussed in the previous section were summed to obtain a composite measure. Stayee households meet on average 3.61 out of 5 criteria, while IDP and returnee households meet 2.47 and 3.56, respectively.

Households were then rated according to the number of criteria met. Those who met only one criterion or none are categorized as low progress, while those who met two or three criteria are classified as medium progress and those who met four or all five criteria as high progress.

Figure 17: The average number of criteria met per population group

	IDPs	NES HH	RETURNEES	STAYEES
Average	2.47	2.05	3.56	3.61

Table 18: Number and percentage of households by number of criteria met and progress group⁵⁰

		Number of criteria met						Total
		Low progress		Medium progress		High progress		
		0	1	2	3	4	5	
IDPs	# of households	218	1,744	1,833	1,255	529	249	5,828
	% of households	4%	30%	31%	22%	9%	4%	100%
Returnees	# of households	830	10,948	31,591	67,906	79,287	67,392	257,955
	% of households	<1%	4%	12%	26%	31%	26%	100%
NES	% of sampled households	4%	31%	33%	20%	11%	<1%	100%

⁵⁰ The application of population weighting affected the calculation of certain totals and subtotals in this chart.

Nearly half of the IDP households (53%) fall in the medium progress category, with around a third (34%) classified as low progress and the remaining small share falling in the high progress group (13%).

Returnee households have achieved significantly greater progress than IDP households. Over half of returnee households are in the high progress group (57%) and the remaining share falls in the medium progress group (39%). Only a small share of returnee households are classified as low progress (5%).

Interviewed NES households have achieved less progress toward durable solutions compared to the returnee caseload and relatively similar progress as the IDP caseload. Nearly half of these households (53%) fall in the medium progress category, with around a third (35%) classified as low progress and the remaining share falling in the high progress group (11%).

LOW PROGRESS HOUSEHOLDS

IDP HOUSEHOLDS	
1,962 Households	34% of IDP caseload

The low progress group includes HHs who have made progress on only one criterion or fewer. Overall, around a third of IDP households (34%) fall in this category, including 4 per cent who have met no criteria and 30 per cent who have met one criterion.

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS	
11,779 Households	5% of returnee caseload

Only a small share of returnee households falls in the low progress group (5% of returnee caseload or 11,779 households). This indicates that overall returnees have achieved more progress toward durable solutions compared to IDP households. However, the number of returnee households in this group is considerably larger than the number of IDP households (11,779 vs 1,962 households, respectively).

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The share of **female-headed households** in the low progress group (32%) is almost double that observed in the high progress group (14% high, 27% medium). Additionally, the share of widows among IDP heads of household is also higher (14% low, 13% medium, 4% high).

Heads of households in this group more often have **limited or no formal education** (39%) compared to the high progress group (28% high, 35% medium).

IDP households in the low progress group more often have a **higher dependency ratio** (36%) than those in the high progress group (23%).⁵¹

The ethnoreligious composition of IDP households is very homogenous – most households are **Sunni Arabs** (94% low, 94% medium, 99% high).

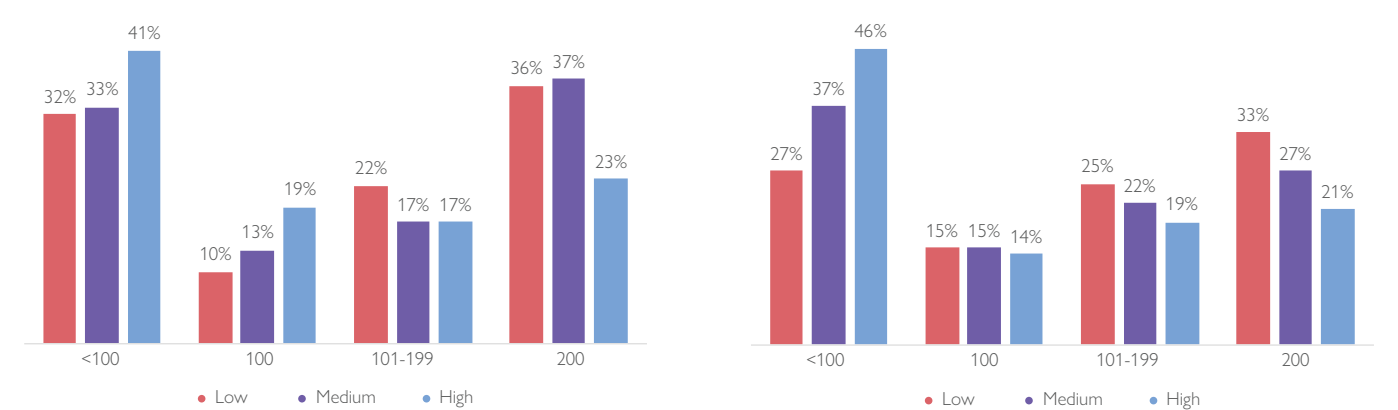
This group has also a higher percentage of **female-headed households** (39%) compared to higher progress groups (26% medium, 14% high) and a higher share of widows (30% low, 17% medium, 10% high).

Educational attainment is notably lower in the low progress group. Over half of heads of households in this group have **limited education or no formal education** (52%), compared to higher progress groups (40% medium, 19% high).

Returnee households in the low progress group also more often have a **higher dependency ratio** (33%) compared to higher progress groups (27% medium, 21% high).

Similarly, the ethnoreligious composition of returnee households is very homogenous with most households being **Sunni Arabs** (90% low, 96% medium, 91% high).

Figure 19: Dependency ratio by progress group



51 This refers to a dependency ratio of >200, meaning that there are over 2 dependents for every 1 working age individuals in a household.

DISPLACEMENT HISTORY

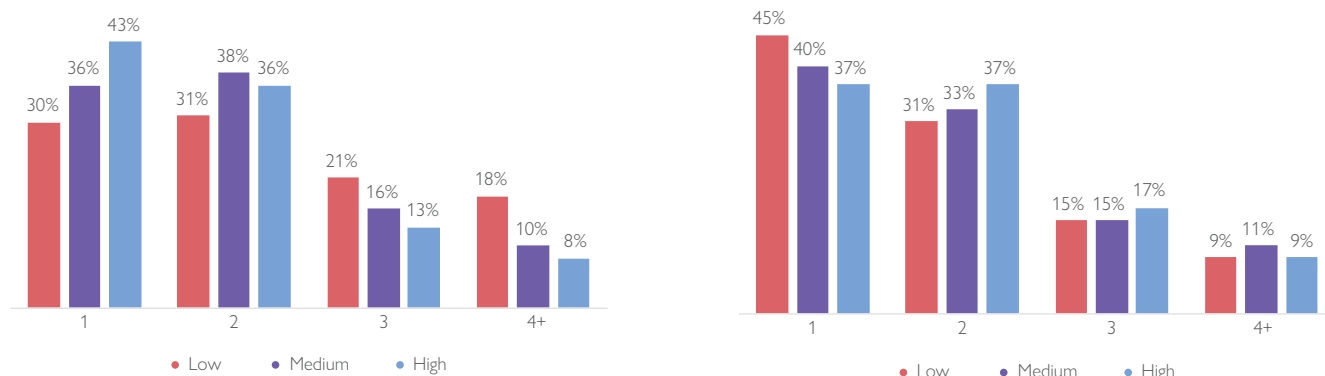
IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Histories of displacement appears to influence the progress toward solutions. Households in low progress group more often underwent **multiple displacements** (three and more) (39%) compared to higher progress groups (26% medium, 21% high).

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

In contrast, returnee households in low progress group more often were displaced only once (45% low, 40% medium, 37% high). Most returnee households across progress groups were displaced between 2014–2016 and returned over five years ago.

Figure 20: Number of displacements by progress group



NES HOUSEHOLDS

A **third of interviewed NES households** belong to the **low progress group (35%)**. This indicates substantially **less progress** toward durable solutions compared to the returnee caseload.

These households have similar demographic characteristics as others in the low progress group. Specifically, this group has a larger share of **female-headed households** with noticeably **higher share of widows** (55% low, 42% medium, 2% high). Additionally, a greater share of HoHHs have **limited education or no formal education** compared to high progress groups (58% low, 47% medium, 8% high). Similarly, the vast majority across all progress groups are **Sunni Arabs**.

In a similar fashion to other households in the low progress group, most went through **multiple displacements** with households in the low progress group generally displaced more times than the high progress group. The low progress group more often were displaced three times (33% low, 30% medium, 3% high), while the high progress group more often were displaced twice (15% low, 39% medium, 85% high).

In addition, a higher share of households in the low progress group returned only one year ago or less (66% low, 29% medium, 0% high). In contrast, those in the high progress group usually returned to the origin at least five years ago (0% low, 15% medium, 75% high). This indicates the **correlation between time settled in the same place and progress toward durable solutions**.

HOUSING

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Restoration of HLP and compensation is a domain with one of the smallest shares of households meeting all indicators. Nearly all IDP households in the low progress group face severe challenges with only 2 per cent meeting all indicators of this domain (19% medium, 87% high).

Only 2 per cent of the low progress group **have secure tenure arrangements** (14% medium, 69% high). Most IDP households in the low progress group are afraid of **being evicted** (83%), compared to other progress groups (63% medium, 18% high). This is likely due to the fact that only a few households have formal rental agreements. The majority (68%) either have informal agreements or no agreement at all, compared to other progress groups (59% medium, 20% high). Specifically, almost half of IDP households in the low progress group (48%) have an informal agreement and live for free in their current location, an arrangement that is significantly more common than in other progress groups (28% medium and 2% high).

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

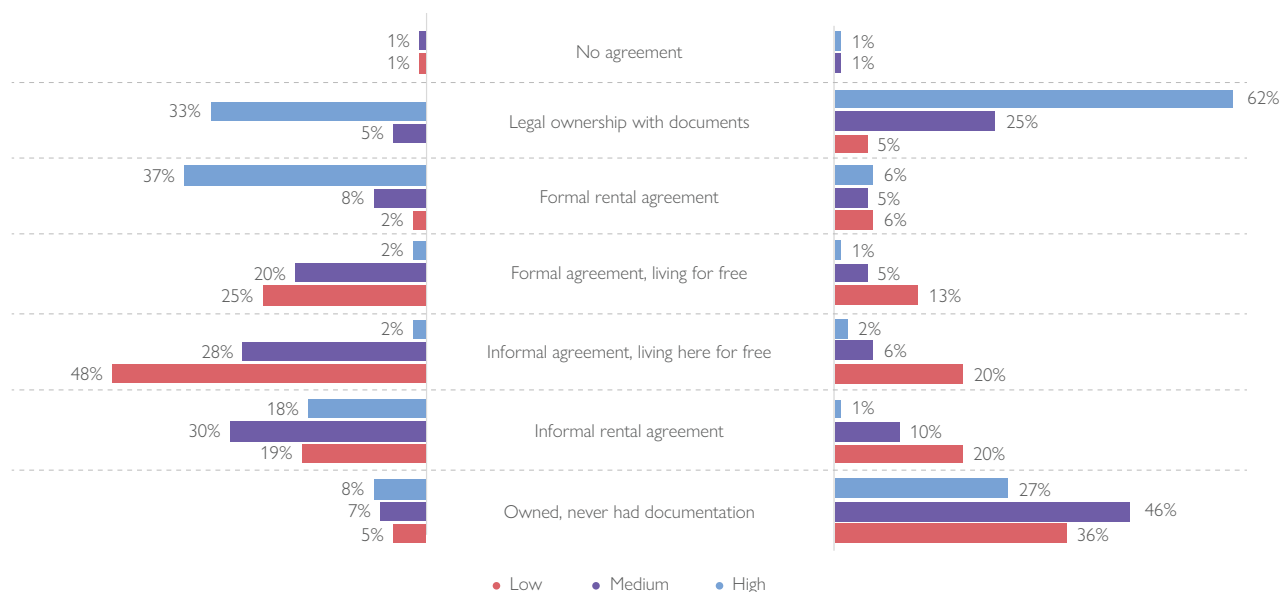
Similarly, almost all returnee households in the low progress group face severe challenges in terms of restoration of HLP and compensation with only 3 per cent meeting all indicators of this domain (44% medium and 89% high).

Secure tenure arrangements are available only for 10 per cent of returnee households in the low progress group (30% medium and 68% high), as many households in this group have informal agreements (40% low, 17% medium and 3% high). However, unlike IDPs, returnee households have higher proportion of **ownership**. Almost a third of low progress returnee households (36%) owned their housing but never had documentation. **Legal ownership with documentation appears to be correlated with progress, with the proportion of those having documentation significantly increasing by progress group** (5% low, 25% medium, 62% high). This issue is particularly pronounced in Al-Garma, Markaz Ramadi, Markaz Al-Ka'im and Markaz Heet, where nearly 9 in 10 low progress households in each subdistrict report have no legally recognized documentation.

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Figure 21: Security of tenure by progress group

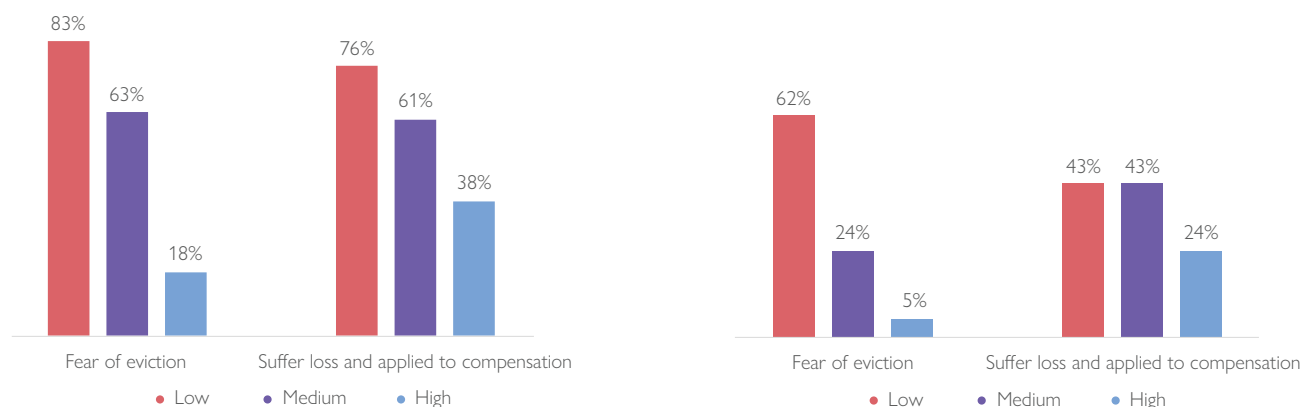


Most IDP households in the low progress group suffered property loss and applied to compensation (76% low, 61% medium and 38% high). Only about a quarter of low progress IDP households (24%) did not lose any property or have successfully resolved a compensation claim. This portion is lower compared to other progress groups (39% medium and 62% high). A large proportion of households with unsuccessful compensation claims are in Al-Amirya, where nearly 9 out of 10 (86%) low progress households report this issue.

Fear of eviction is a significant concern amongst low progress returnee households (62% low, 24% medium, 5% high), which may be related to the higher proportion of returnees without legal ownership agreements.

In contrast to IDPs, a lower share of returnee households in the low progress group suffered property loss and applied to compensation (43% low, 43% medium, 24% high).

Figure 22: Fear of eviction and compensation by progress group



Most IDP households do not report an absent family member, with the proportion increasing by progress group (77% low, 85% medium, 94% high).

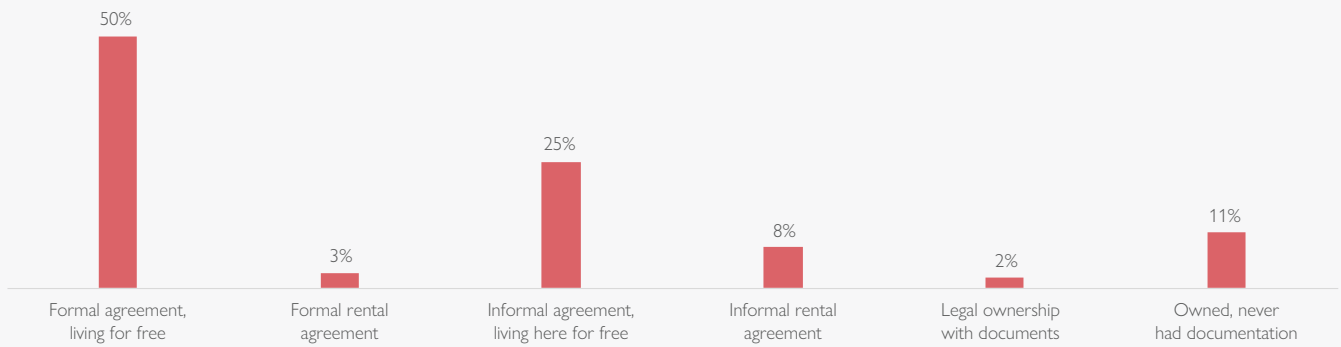
Almost half of low progress returnee households (44%) report an absent or missing family member, compared to noticeably smaller shares in other progress groups (22% medium, 10% high).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, interviewed NES households face severe challenges in terms of restoration of HLP and compensation, although to a greater extent. None of NES households in the low progress group passed all indicators.

The main driver of these challenges is tenure rights. Almost all in the low progress group do not have a secure tenure agreement (95% low, 55% medium, 0% high) and most are concerned about the possibility of being evicted (79% low, 29% medium, 26% high). Most interviewed NES households live for free in their current location, either through formal (50%) or informal agreements (25%).

Figure 23: Security of tenure in the low progress group



When it comes to the restitution and compensation, only a quarter of sampled NES households in the low progress group (24%) did not suffer losses. This share is noticeably lower than in other progress groups (85% medium, 97% high).

Similarly to other returnee households in the low progress group, although to a larger extent, respondents in this group reported the absence of household members due to the 2014–2017 crisis. Nearly 9 in 10 have an absent family member (87%), which is substantially higher than in other progress groups (74% medium, 10% high).

Figure 24: Reunification by progress group



STANDARD OF LIVING

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Adequate standard of living is a domain with the smallest share of households meeting all indicators. Almost none of IDP households in the low progress group met all indicators related to the adequate standard of living (98% low, 83% medium, 26% high).

Regarding food security, most households did not adopt negative coping strategies due to a lack of food (85% low, 81% medium, 97% high).

However, only a quarter of IDP households in the low progress group live in an adequate shelter (24% low, 31% medium, 83% high). Low progress households tend to live in precarious shelter types, either in a mud or block structure (25%), a tent or makeshift shelter (20%), or damaged, destroyed or bad condition housing (14%). Most low progress households in Al-Amiryra reported living in mud or block structures or tent/makeshift shelters, highlighting the precarious living arrangements that IDPs in this subdistrict face.

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly, nearly none of returnee households in the low progress group met all indicators related to the adequate standards of living (96% low, 67% medium, 14% high).

Returnee households do not appear to struggle with food insecurity, as most did not adopt negative coping strategies due to a lack of food (83% low, 90% medium, 98% high).

Around half of households in the low progress group live in an apartment or house in good condition (52% low, 67% medium, 93% high). Low progress households tend to live in precarious shelter types, either in a mud or block structure (10%), unfinished or abandoned building (10%) or damaged, destroyed or bad condition housing (15%).

In addition, over a half of IDP households in the low progress group have access improved sanitation (56%). This proportion is considerably lower than the medium and high progress groups (78% and 99%, respectively). Around half of households in Al-Amirya and Markaz Ramadi reported not having access these facilities.

Only a small share of IDP households in the low progress group have the ability to access health care when needed compared to higher progress groups (32% low, 67% medium, 92% high).

However, most returnee households in the low progress group have access to improved sanitation facilities, although to a lesser extent than other groups (75% low, 89% medium, 99% high).

Only a small share of returnee households in the low progress group have the ability to access health care when needed compared to higher progress groups (21% low, 60% medium, 95% high).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, interviewed NES households face severe challenges in terms of adequate standards of living, although to a greater extent. Almost no households met all indicators in this domain (97% low, 51% medium, 83% high).

Food security is more challenging for this group compared to other households in the low progress group. A smaller share of households did not adopt negative coping strategies due to a lack of food (65% low, 80% medium, 74% high).

Additionally, a smaller share of households reported living in good condition shelters. Around a third of interviewed NES households in the low progress group live in an apartment or house in good condition (35% low, 68% medium, 46% high). Most live in critical shelters (65%), most commonly damaged or destroyed housing or mud/block structures.

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, most interviewed NES households in this group have access to improved sanitation facilities, although to a lesser extent than other groups (73% low, 94% medium, 96% high).

Only, a small share of interviewed NES households in the low progress group have the ability to access health care when needed compared to higher progress groups (37% low, 79% medium, 98% high).

LIVELIHOODS

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Livelihoods is a domain with one of the smallest shares of households meeting all indicators. It is a significant issue, especially for households in the low progress group. Nearly no households in this group met all indicators in this domain (99% low, 62% medium, 13% high).

While most households have at least one employed family member (72% low, 83% medium, 97% high), almost none of them have a stable source of income and are able to face unexpected expenses.

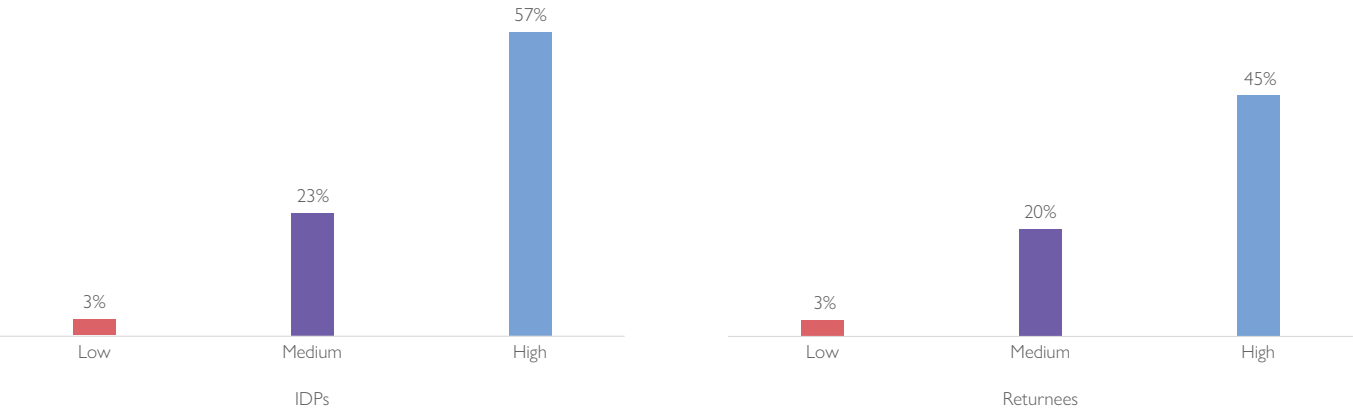
Only an extremely small proportion of low progress households (5%) have a stable income source compared to other groups (25% medium and 61% high). Most households tend to rely on irregular earnings or daily labour, social welfare, followed by loans from friends or family. As a result, almost no households in the low progress group (97%) can face unexpected expenses, compared to higher progress groups (77% medium and 43% high).

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly, this domain is challenging for returnee households in the low progress group. Only 4 per cent of returnee households met at least two indicators (4% low, 31% medium, 85% high).

Although most households have at least one employed member (68% low, 81% medium, 96% high), only a small share returnee households in the low progress group have a stable source of income (14% low, 24% medium, 74% high) and consequently can face unexpected expenses (3% low, 20% medium, 45% high). This is related to the fact that the majority tend to rely on irregular earnings or daily labour, social welfare or loans from friends or family.

Figure 25: Ability to face unexpected expenses by progress group



NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, interviewed NES households face severe challenges in terms of livelihoods. None of them met all indicators in this domain (100% low, 80% medium, 17% high).

In contrast to other household in the low progress group, a substantially smaller share of interviewed NES households have at least one employed member (21% low, 41% medium, 100% high) and nearly none of households in this group have a stable source of income (98% low, 84% medium, 70% high) and consequently none can face unexpected expenses (0% low, 23% medium, 55% high).

SAFETY AND SECURITY

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Most households, even in the low progress group, met all indicators in the safety and security domain (76% low, 94% medium, 97% high).

The indicator with a relatively lower share of households passing it is related to getting help from authorities. Around one fifth of households in the low progress group reported that they were not comfortable getting help (17% low, 4% medium, 2% high).

Otherwise, almost all households felt safe walking around the area they live in (98% low, 100% medium and high progress) and enjoy freedom of movement (93% low, 97% medium, 100% high).

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Safety and security is the least challenging domain for returnee households as well, with the majority passing all indicators (76% low, 92% medium and 97% high).

Similarly, the indicator with a relatively lower share of households passing it is related to getting help from authorities. Around one fifth of households in the low progress group reported that they were not comfortable getting help (17% low, 8% medium, 3% high). This issue appears to be particularly prevalent in Markaz Al-Ka'im and Markaz Heet, where around a third of low progress households do not feel comfortable getting help.

Despite that, most returnee household felt safe in their area (95% low, 100% medium, 100% high) and have freedom of movement (96% low, 99% medium, 100% high).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, most interviewed NES households, even in the low progress group, met all indicators in the safety and security domain (82% low, 96% medium, 100% high).

In the same manner, the indicator related to getting help from authorities has a relatively lower share of households passing it. Around 1 in 10 households in the low progress group reported that they were not comfortable getting help (8% low, 4% medium, 0% high).

However, all household felt safe in their area (100% low, 100% medium, 100% high) and most have freedom of movement (90% low, 100% medium, 100% high).

DOCUMENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

Documentation and participation are a particularly challenging domain for IDPs in the low progress group, with only a small share of households meeting all indicators compared higher progress groups (7% low, 73% medium, 88% high).

The main driver of this difference across progress groups is the feeling of acceptance by the community. Only around half of low progress households (48%) report feeling accepted by the community, in strong contrast with the vast majority of households in the medium and high groups (87% medium, 92% high). **This highlights the integration challenges that low progress households face.**

Further, only 6 in 10 low progress households have participated in the 2021 elections, compared to almost all in the higher progress groups (64% low, 87% medium, 94% high).

In addition, around a third of households in the low progress group do not have essential documents in contrast to almost none in higher progress groups (27% low, 4% medium, 0% high). However, nearly all IDP households have a birth certificate for their children born between 2014–2024 (98% low, 100% medium and high progress).

RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Documentation and participation are also a major issue for returnees in the low progress group. Only a small share of households meet all indicators compared to higher progress groups (6% low, 69% medium, 89% high).

Similarly, the main driver of this drastic difference is the feeling of acceptance in the community. A relatively smaller share of households in the low progress group reported acceptance compared to the higher progress groups (67% low, 82% medium, 93% high). This highlights the challenges related to reintegration after return.

Additionally, a relatively smaller share of households in the low progress group have participated in the 2021 elections, compared to the higher progress groups (63% low, 88% medium, 96% high).

Furthermore, around two fifths of households in the low progress group do not have essential documents in contrast to almost none in higher progress groups (39% low, 6% medium, 0% high).

However, nearly all returnee households have a birth certificate for their children born between 2014–2024 (98% low, 100% medium and high).

NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to all households in the low progress group, documentation and participation are a particularly challenging domain for interviewed NES households in the low progress group, with only a small share of households meeting all indicators compared higher progress groups (3% low, 29% medium, 100% high).

However, in contrast to the rest of households in the low progress group, the main driver of this drastic difference is participation in elections. Only a small share of households in the low progress group have participated in the 2021 elections, compared to the higher progress groups (21% low, 44% medium, 100% high).

Furthermore, most households in the low progress group do not have essential documents in contrast to none in the higher progress groups (64% low, 40% medium, 0% high).

In addition, a relatively smaller share of households have a birth certificate for their children born between 2014–2024 (83% low, 89% medium and 100% high). Barriers to documentation among NES households stem from their extended displacement in Al-Hol, which prevented them accessing existing documentation or obtaining documentation for new life events such as marriage. Children face additional difficulties acquiring documents. Those born after 2014 may lack any prior documentation. Moreover, the marriage of the child's parents must be proved in order to issue documents, which can be challenging in cases where a parent is absent, deceased or suspected of ISIL affiliation.⁵²

A relatively larger share of interviewed NES households in the low progress group reported acceptance by the community (81% low, 73% medium, 100% high).

PREFERRED SOLUTION

IDP HOUSEHOLDS

In line with previous research, data show a correlation between the preferred solution and level of progress. The higher progress, the more likely households prefer to remain in their current location. IDP households in the low progress group more often prefer to return to their place of origin (40% low, 33% medium, 18% high) or relocate within the country (7% low, 5% medium, 1% high) than other progress groups. Security actors blocking returns, mainly in Al-Amirya subdistrict, and housing destruction, mainly in Markaz Ramadi subdistrict, are the main reasons preventing returns for this group.

Compared to the overall proportion across the governorate (58%), a smaller share of low progress IDP households prefer to remain where they are (49%), while in the high progress group, a relatively larger share prefer to remain (78%).

Figure 26: Preferred solution for low progress IDP households

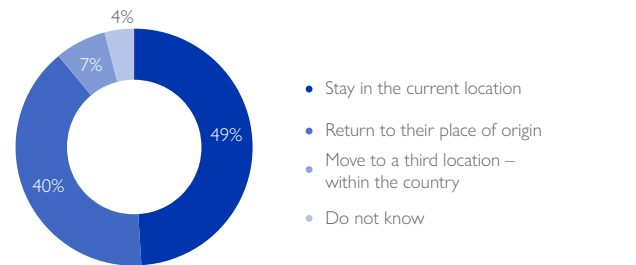
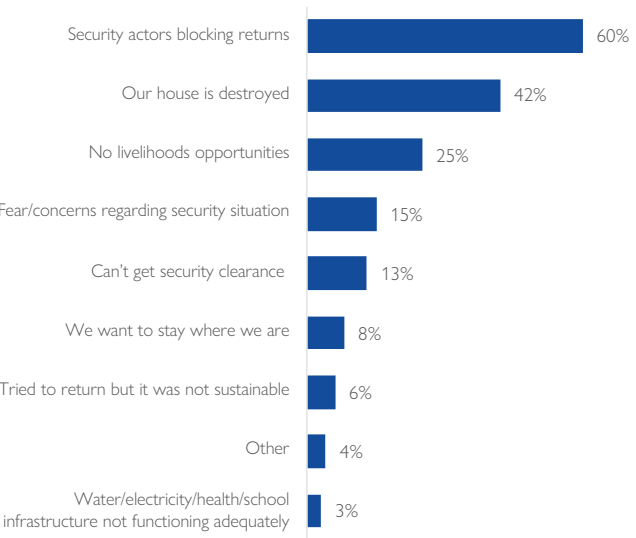


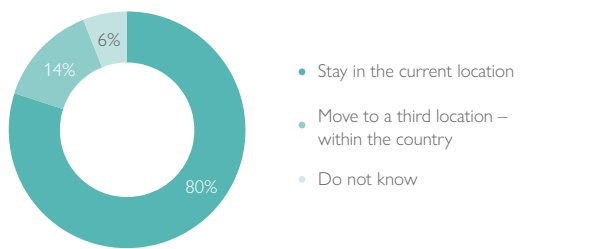
Figure 27: Reasons for not returning to the location of origin for low progress IDP households households (up to three options permitted)



RETURNEE HOUSEHOLDS

Overall, most returnees across progress groups prefer to remain in their current location. However, there is still variation across progress groups. A relatively higher share of low progress returnees prefers to relocate within the country (14% low, 4% medium, 1% high) or report being undecided (6% low, 1% medium, 0% high). In contrast, high progress returnees more often prefer to remain where they are (80% low, 95% medium, 98% high).

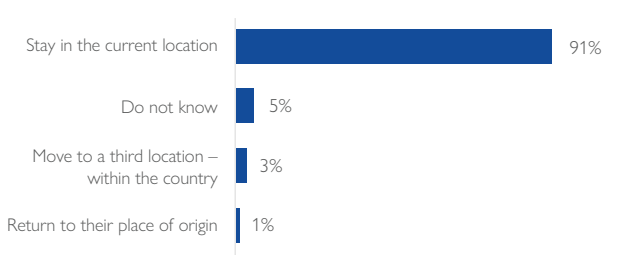
Figure 28: Preferred solution of households in the low progress returnee group



NES HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly to low progress returnees, most sampled NES households in the low progress group prefer to stay in their current location. However, there is variation across progress groups. A relatively lower share of this group prefers to remain where they are (88% low, 90% medium, 98% high), while a relatively higher share of this group prefers to relocate within the country (5% low, 3% medium, 2% high).

Figure 29: Preferred solutions among NES households

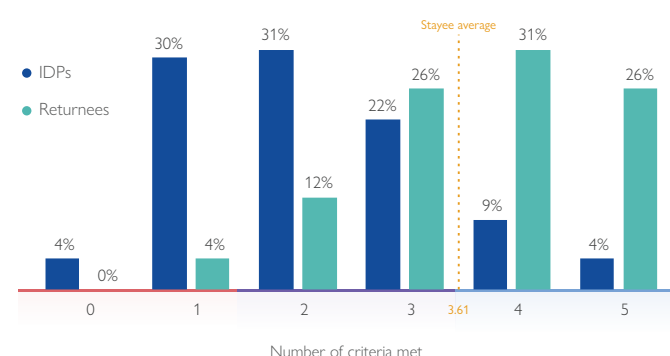


CONCLUSION

This study in Anbar Governorate provides unique evidence to measure progress toward the achievement of durable solutions for the Iraqi IDP and returnee population eight years since the start of the 2014 – 2017 crisis. It contributes to a broader discussion around determining the end of displacement. In addition, this report offers unique insights into specific challenges faced by households who moved to NES during the crisis and returned back to Iraq.

Only 4 per cent of IDPs and 26 per cent of returnee households have met all five criteria and can be considered as having overcome displacement or return related vulnerabilities. Using stayees' average as a baseline, 13 per cent of IDP households and 57 per cent of returnee households have achieved high progress toward durable solutions.

Figure 30: Percentage of IDP and returnee households by number of criteria met in Anbar



Returnee households have achieved significantly higher progress toward durable solutions. This is evidenced by the majority of households (57%) meeting four or all five criteria, and the other significant proportion (39%) falling in the medium progress category. Only 4 per cent of returnee households are classified as low progress.

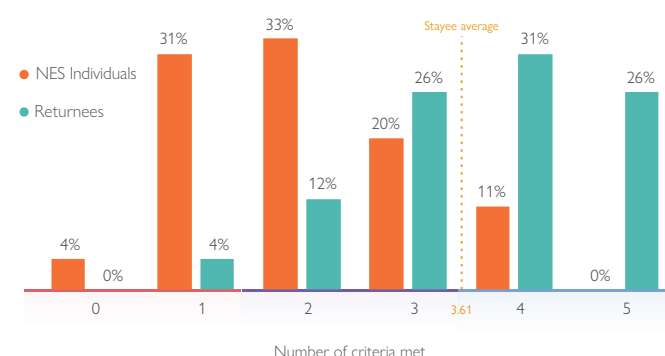
In contrast, only 13 per cent of IDP households have met four or all five criteria. The majority of IDP households fall in the medium progress group (53%), while a third fall in the low progress group (34%). The share of IDP households in the low progress group is therefore significantly higher than the share of returnees in the same progress category.

This highlights that IDP households are significantly more vulnerable than returnee households. Low progress IDP households struggle with issues related to their displacement, insecure housing, unstable livelihoods and community acceptance.

None of the NES households sampled meet all five criteria. Slightly over half of NES households have achieved medium progress (53%) and around a third have achieved low progress (35%). Furthermore, 4 per cent of NES households fall in the low progress group. These progress scores highlight the additional barriers NES households face in overcoming displacement related vulnerabilities upon return.

The study's results should be understood in the context of stayees, whose living conditions served as a benchmark rather than a target. On average, stayee households met 3.61 out of 5 criteria, indicating significant vulnerabilities even for those who did not flee during the 2014-2017 crisis. This shows that the conflict's impacts extend beyond displacement, affecting livelihoods and restitution and worsening pre-existing challenges. Consequently, both development-focused programmes and targeted assistance for vulnerable IDPs are essential for achieving durable solutions.

Figure 31: Percentage of NES and returnee households by number of criteria met in Anbar



SECTORS FOR PROGRAMMING


This assessment identifies key domains and indicators driving vulnerabilities among IDP, NES, returnee and stayee households in Anbar. These insights can inform the development of targeted interventions focusing on critical sectors.

- **Access to livelihoods** is the most critical domain for all groups with IDP and NES households underperforming compared to others. Most households across groups do not have stable incomes and only a small proportion can manage unexpected expenses. IDP and NES households are particularly vulnerable, often relying on irregular earnings or daily labour, further exposing them to economic instability and shocks.
- The **restoration of HLP rights and compensation is the second most challenging domain with the largest gap across groups**. The main driver of differences between groups is the **lack of legally recognized housing documentation**, such as formal rental agreements or legal ownership, making households more susceptible to eviction. Another factor driving the disparities between groups is **property loss and compensation claims that had not been resolved**.
- **Adequate standards of living is the third most challenging domain**, as IDP and NES households face more challenges than returnee and stayee households. The main driver of these discrepancies are shelter conditions, followed by limited access to healthcare services and sanitation facilities.

AREA BASED PROGRAMMING

This study also identifies key geographic areas for targeted interventions. Specifically, IDPs in **Al-Amirya** and **Markaz Ramadi** report significant challenges in terms of adequate standard of living, livelihoods, restitution of HLP rights and compensation. Similarly, returnees in **Markaz Al-Ka'im**, **Al-Garma** and **Markaz Ramadi** face difficulties in these areas, particularly in accessing healthcare and sanitation facilities. These geographic-specific issues add to the complexity of the displacement situation, highlighting the need for tailored solutions to address the unique needs of each area.

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