iDMC internal displacement monitoring centre

NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

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IRAQ

Political wrangling leaves around 2.8 million displaced Iraqis with no durable solutions in sight

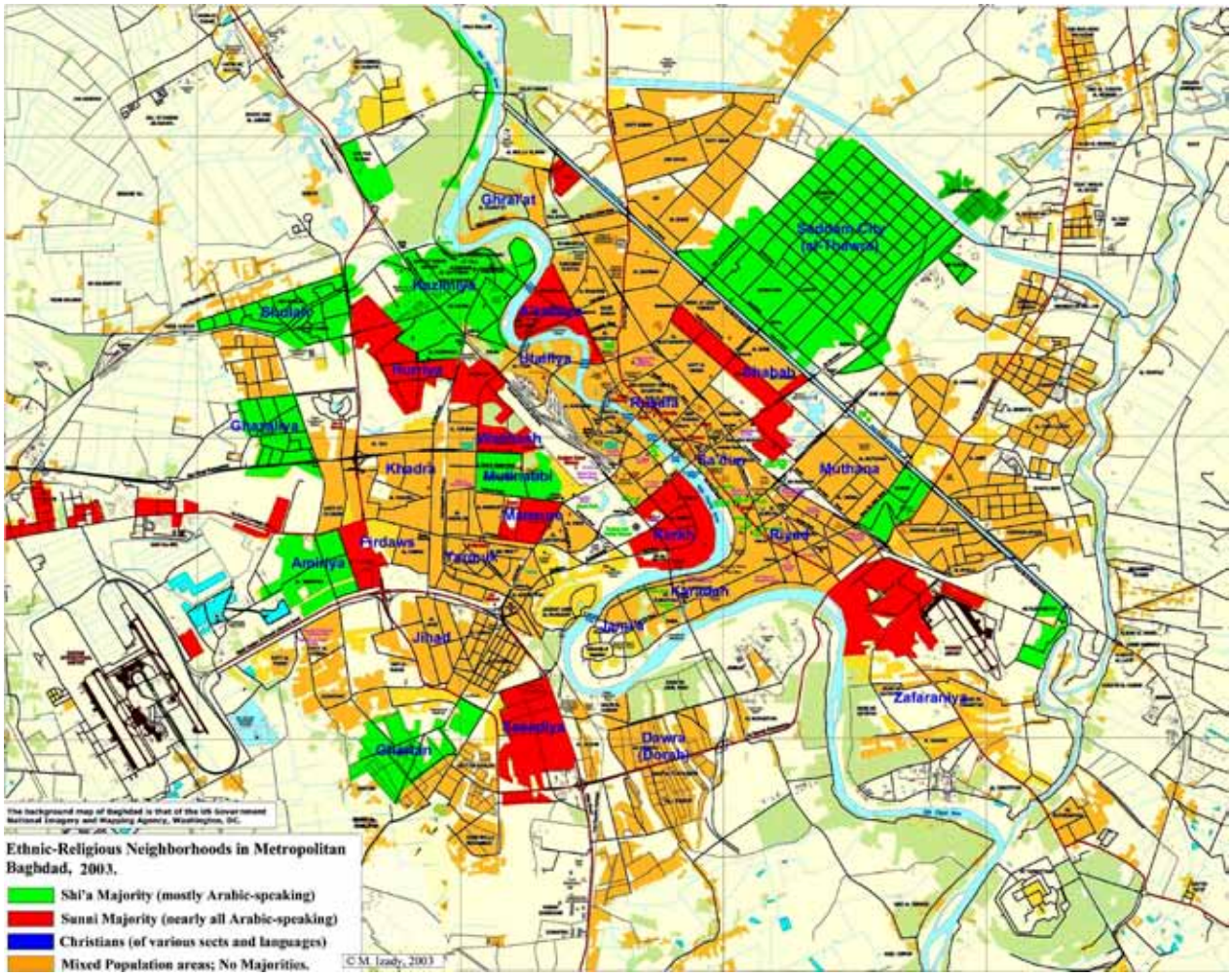
Seven years after the March 2003 US-led invasion, Iraq remains deeply divided. Iraqis have been internally displaced in three periods: either under the former Ba'ath government; from the March 2003 invasion until the February 2006 Samarra bombing; and since then. Today, one in ten Iraqi is still internally displaced, totalling 2.8 million people. They face continuing threats to their physical security and difficulties accessing basic necessities and essential services.

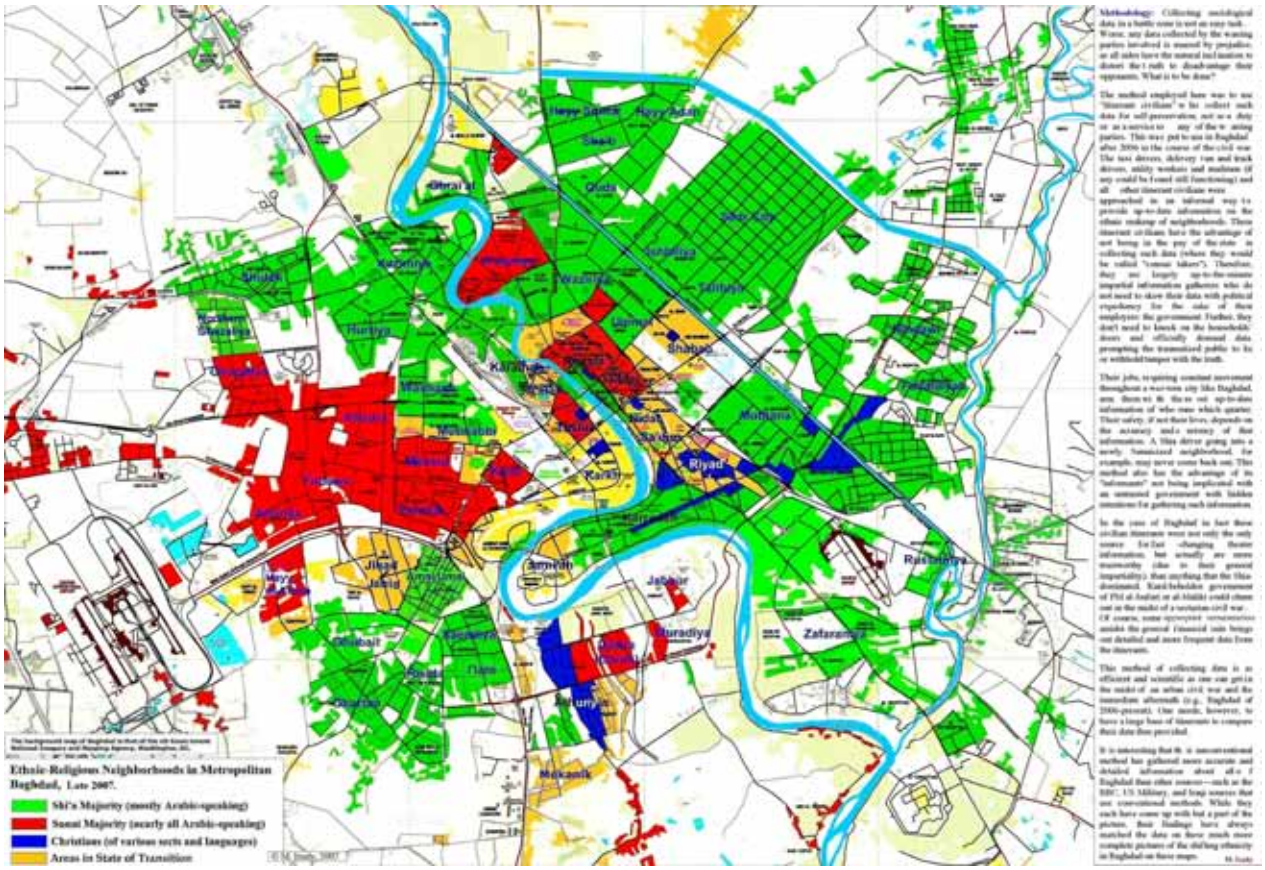
Today, the governorates and neighbourhoods which were most affected by displacement are now more ethnically or religiously homogenous than at any time in Iraq's history. Tensions have remained high yet increasingly confined to the disputed areas of the ethnically diverse northern governorates of Kirkuk and Ninawa. Though it remains fragile, security has to some extent improved, and as a result there has been little new displacement outside disputed northern areas since 2009. However, the improvement in security is linked to the major political parties eschewing violence for political competition which in turn has brought the state to a standstill. The government has proven unable to provide access to basic services to internally displaced people (IDPs), most of whom are either single women, children or elderly people.

In Diyala and Baghdad, where the Iraqi government and its UN partners have taken steps to address displacement, there was an encouraging rate of returns in late 2009; however the number of returns has dropped in 2010, with would-be returnees concerned about the political uncertainty and poor public services as well as insecurity.

2010 has been an electoral year, but as of December a government was still to be formed. This political stalemate, the result of entrenched sectarianism and the altered demographics of Iraq, has left little room for reconciliation and effective policy-making to support durable solutions for IDPs. The National Policy on Displacement is yet to be passed into law, and there has been no support for IDPs seeking to integrate locally or resettle elsewhere.

Ethnic-Religious Neighborhoods in Metropolitan Baghdad in 2003 and 2007





Source: Columbia University
More maps are available at www.internal-displacement.org

Background and patterns of displacement

About one in ten Iraqis was internally displaced as of 2010. About one million people were displaced before 2003. Nearly 200,000 were displaced between 2003 and 2006, and almost 1.8 million subsequently (UNHCR, November 2009 and March 2010).

Though the authorities in Iraq have recognised the situations of displacement prior to the 2003 invasion and the wave of sectarian violence from 2006, they have only registered as internally displaced people (IDPs) those who have been forced from their homes since 2006. Post-2006 figures are based on registration by the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) of displaced people in 15 central and southern governorates, while the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) has registered people displaced in the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Irbil and Sulaymaniyah (IDP WG, November 2008).

These figures should be approached with caution. Registration remains voluntary and contingent on documentation which displaced people may lack (Brookings, October 2006; IDP WG, March 2008). The estimates of the number of people displaced before 2003 are outdated and contested; estimates of displaced populations, particularly in northern Iraq, have been subject to manipulation according to interested parties' claims over disputed territories (IDMC interviews, November 2008).

Monitoring and assessments undertaken by the humanitarian community, MoDM and KRG are mainly based on post-2006 figures. An estimated 60 per cent of the almost 1.8 million people internally displaced since then originate from Baghdad. The capital hosts nearly 40 per cent of IDPs in Iraq. About half of the total displaced population is either in Baghdad or Diyala, the second most affected governorate (IOM February 2010).

About 87 per cent of IDPs are Shi'a and Sunni Arab (roughly two thirds and one third respectively) the remaining 13 per cent are from minority populations, notably Shabaks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Faeeli Kurds, Yazidis and Sabean Mandeans.

IDPs have fled to areas where their own sectarian or ethnic group was dominant, leading to a demographic homogenisation of the country's governorates and greater segregation of communities. Over 95 per cent of the people fleeing to the nine predominantly Shi'a governorates of the south were themselves Shi'as, while those that left them were overwhelmingly Sunnis. In the two Sunni governorates of Anbar and Salah-al-Din, over 95 per cent of IDPs are Sunnis. Other more mixed areas have seen a similar process take place within their boundaries. Christians have been displaced within the governorate of Ninawa, where they have historically been concentrated, but have also fled to the more secure northern governorates where they made up over half of IDPs in Dohuk and nearly a quarter of those displaced to Irbil (IOM May 2009; IOM February 2010; MRG, September 2009; IRIN, July 2008).

Violence and displacement since 2007

Since the beginning of 2008, sectarian violence has continued but it has become less intense. However, in the disputed northern territories, inter-ethnic and sectarian tensions fuelled by disputes over governorate borders have continued to cause displacement. Hundreds of families were reportedly displaced in Kirkuk due to ethnic tensions in 2008 (IOM, September 2008), while several thousand Christian families have steadily fled Mosul since (UNHCR, November 2008; ICRC, August 2009; HRW, November 2009; BBC, December 2009; CSIS, November 2009; OCHA, 6 March 2010).

Recurrent military bombardments on Iraq's north-eastern borders with Iran and Turkey have caused displacement in the Kurdish governorates. The latest in June 2010 resulted in the displacement

of 945 families in Irbil and Sulaymaniyah (UNHCR, June 2010).

However, the overall rate of displacement in Iraq has decreased since 2007, when a US military "surge" coincided with the realignment of some Sunni insurgent groups and the emergence of pro-government "awakening councils". In March 2007, Muqtada al Sadr's Shi'a militia declared a ceasefire. The MNF-I and the ISF cordoned off areas of Baghdad with concrete barriers, increasing security but cementing the homogenisation and segregation by militias of many formerly diverse neighbourhoods. Initiatives were taken to accommodate Shi'a, Sunni and Kurdish parties, such as the modification of the "de-Ba'athification" law of 2003, an amnesty for insurgents in February 2008, integration of Sunni Arabs into political and security institutions (UNSC, March 2007; ICG, April 2008).

In 2010, relatively few people have been newly displaced in Iraq; the majority of them were displaced from the disputed territories of Ninawa and Kirkuk. Overall numbers of IDPs have changed little as very few returns have taken place during the year. The main concern has been the lack of adequate public service, shelter and food; a situation made worse by the 2010 political deadlock following the election.

There has been a resurgence of violence compared to 2009, but the number of civilian casualties has remained lower than in 2008. During the year, the rates of return to Baghdad and Diyala stalled. The withdrawal of the United States Forces–Iraq (USF-I) continued, but post-electoral political wrangling prevented progress by a public sector marred by corruption and inefficiency.

The March 2010 national elections reflected the ethnic polarisation of the country, and by November they were yet to lead to an effective government. The Sunni-dominated governorates voting for Ayad Allawi's Iraqiya bloc, the Kurds for the Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan (known also as the Kurdistan Alliance), and the Shi'as split their vote between Al Maliki's State of Law and Ja'afari's National Iraqi Alliance.

Violence and displacement in 2006 and 2007
Between early 2006 and December 2007, the estimated internally displaced population more than doubled, as close to 1.6 million people were newly displaced. The 2003 invasion and the policies pursued by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and subsequent Iraqi governments had exacerbated sectarian divisions, and the Sunni community had been marginalised by Shi'a and Kurdish gains in elections and by the constitutional referendum in 2005. Following the February 2006 bombing of the Al Askari Shi'a shrine in Samarra, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi'a militias led to unprecedented civilian casualties (ICG, February 2008). In Baghdad, militant groups, including several affiliated to political actors and state institutions, sought to establish sectarian boundaries across what had been mixed neighbourhoods, systematically displacing members of opposing sects to consolidate their control (Brookings, August 2008).

Those most affected were Sunnis and Shi'as in locations where they were members of minorities, and mixed Sunni/Shi'a households (HRW, November 2006). Triggers for displacement included abductions, assassinations, threats, graffiti and leaflets (IOM, February 2007; Brookings, October 2006). Most violence and displacement took place in and around Baghdad, but it was also significant in Ba'quba, Samarra, Abu Ghraib, Mosul and Basra (UNSC, December 2006).

Professionals, intellectuals and those associated with the coalition forces were targeted and forced to flee (UNAMI, January 2007). Refugees, particularly Palestinians, and members of minority groups such as Chaldeans, Assyrians, Yazidis, Shabak, Turkmen, Sabean-Mandean and Roma also faced persecution, and many sought refuge in Kurdish regions. Iraqi Arabs continued to be for-

cibly displaced from the north. In the second half of 2007 at least 2,000 families fled Kirkuk (UNHCR, January 2007; IRIN, September 2007).

Conflict and displacement between 2003 and 2006
An estimated 190,000 people were displaced between the March 2003 invasion and the end of 2005 as a result of military operations, particularly in the governorates of Anbar, Dhi-Qar, Basra and Baghdad (IOM, January 2008; Cluster F, 2007; UNCT, August 2004).

In the first post-invasion years, operations by the Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I) and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) against armed insurgents were the main causes of displacement, particularly in predominantly Sunni western areas. Most displacements were relatively short-term. In November 2004, almost the entire population of Fallujah in the governorate of Anbar was temporarily displaced (Brookings, October 2006).

Meanwhile, after the fall of the Ba'athist government, thousands of displaced Kurds, Turkomans and others began returning to Kirkuk, Mosul and Diyala, while Arabs were forcibly displaced from these areas (RI, November 2003).

Displacement before 2003
86 per cent of the people internally displaced prior to 2003 sought refuge from the former government's forces in areas that became the former "no-fly zones"; with about 60 per cent in KRG and a little under 30 per cent in the predominantly Shi'a southern governorates.

Prior to 2003, the Ba'athist government forcibly displaced entire populations it labelled as opponents. The government carried out "Arabisation" campaigns in the north to thwart Kurdish aspirations to independence and strengthen its control over oil reserves adjacent to the ethnically diverse city of Kirkuk. The government evicted Kurds and offered their land and houses to Arabs as incentives to move there (RI, November 2003; UNCHR, February 1999). The end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 saw an intensification of atrocities against the Kurds, which caused over 100,000 deaths and the destruction of some 4,000 villages (USCR, 2000; Dammers, 1998; HRW, August 2004). After the 1991 Gulf War, the northern governorates of Dohuk, Irbil and Sulaymaniyah came under Kurdish control, supported by a no-fly zone, and separated from the rest of the country.

In the predominantly Shi'a southern governorates over 340,000 people were internally displaced. The Ba'athist government had gradually drained the Arab marsh land through projects in the catchment area of the Euphrates and the Tigris following unsuccessful agricultural development policy. The government accelerated the drainage process in the 1980s to facilitate the movement of military units during the Iran-Iraq war, and used chemical weapons and burnt villages. Between 100,000 and 200,000 of the marsh land's estimated population of 250,000 were displaced.

Many thousands more were displaced from the border with Iran due to the Iran-Iraq war, of whom 80,000 people were still displaced within Basra province in 2004. Political and religious persecution was a further cause of displacement in the south and in Baghdad, where it caused the displacement of at least 25,000 people (UNHCR, August 2004; Fawcett and Tanner, October 2002; UNOHCI, June 2003; UNCT, August 2004).

Protection and assistance needs of IDPs

Internal displacement has profoundly marked the country. Neighbourhoods that once were mixed are now visibly dominated by one sectarian group, with signs such as flags, pictures and grafitti. The main sectarian groups have eschewed armed struggle for the political arena, leaving violence to smaller more radical organisations. Consequently, violence has become less predicta-

ble and remains a central obstacle to the development of a stable Iraq, while the sectarian political stalemate has had the primary effect of preventing the development of essential public services.

Threats to life, safety and security
Overall, Iraqis now enjoy greater physical security, even though coordinated large explosions have continued, in Baghdad and elsewhere, every few months. The second half of 2010 has witnessed an upsurge in violent attacks, especially in Baghdad. However, the open insurgency and conflict has given way to smaller-scale violence, with the re-emergence of small "sticky bombs" and covert assassinations.

Violence against Christians has continued, with a series of attacks in November 2010 and direct threats against this community underlining the likelihood of further displacement (Rand, 2010; Brookings, 30 September 2010; BBC, 27 October 2010). In a survey in the second half of 2009, 11 per cent of people displaced since 2006, and 28 per cent of returned IDPs, reported being targeted due to their religious and political affiliation. Six per cent reported having been targeted simply because they were IDPs. The main concerns of the IDPs were the insecurity and the political uncertainty following the March 2010 elections.

There are concerns that gender issues are not sufficiently addressed in the national response to displacement (NCCI, January 2010; RI, July 2009; ICRC, March 2009). The great majority of IDPs are either women, children or elderly people (IOM, May 2009). Displaced female heads of household, households headed by older people, widows, divorced people, women without male relatives, and orphans are acutely vulnerable (UNHCR, December 2009). Vulnerable Iraqis have been trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labour (UNHCR, 14 June 2010).

IDPs who are not registered are more vulnerable. Unregistered displaced people are unable to rent or purchase property, vote, obtain land title and access services specific to IDPs (IOM, January 2008; UNHCR, August 2008 *and* November 2009).

Reasons for non-registration include bureaucratic delays, lack of documentation, the perceived lack of associated benefit, and the fear of being identified by the authorities (IDMC interview, January 2010; UNHCR, December 2009). Each governorate used different requirements for IDPs trying to register. Registration has been tightly restricted in areas with high levels of sectarian violence, such as Kirkuk. In northern governorates, IDPs without sponsorship were reportedly prevented from registering until recently. In 2009, the government issued an order halting further registration of IDPs, and it has not honoured promises to re-open it since (IOM, February and May 2009; IDMC interview, January 2010; UNHCR, 1 October 2010).

Livelihoods, shelter and access to basic services
Since the 1990s, and particularly since 2003, there has been an overall deterioration in the standard of living of Iraqis (OCHA, February 2008 *and* December 2009). In 2010, Iraq was one of the most corrupt countries in the world, ranking 175 out of 178 countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (UNHCR, 1 October 2010; Al Jazeera, August 2010; BBC, December 2009, Transparency International, 2010).

The country suffers from chronic shortages of electricity, drinking water, housing and employment opportunities. Most IDPs are concerned about their access to shelter, food, employment and basic services (IDP WG, November 2008; OCHA, December 2009). Many have been forced to flee to areas where employment opportunities are limited and public services overstretched or non-existent. Host communities have increasingly struggled to share limited resources (Cluster F, February 2007; IDP WG, November 2008, UNHCR, December 2009).

Most IDPs, particularly women, cannot find work. Over 70 per cent of internally displaced families have no members employed. Only in Baghdad, Diyala and the Kurdish regions are the unemployment rates less dramatic: Baghdad and Diyala have benefited from government projects, while the Kurdish regions have sustained a higher economic growth rate. Across the country, unemployment has particularly affected IDPs who have moved to areas where their skills might not be marketable. In the Kurdish regions, IDPs have had to learn Kurdish in order to enter the job market (IOM, May 2009, June 2008 *and* February 2010; IDP WG, June 2008).

Shelter remains a high priority for all Iraqis. The government has reported a deficit of some two million housing units. Many dwellings are dilapidated, overcrowded and unsafe. 57 per cent of the urban population lack access to clean water, sanitation or secure tenure (OCHA, December 2009).

Over 60 per cent of post-2006 IDPs are thought to live in rented housing, 15 per cent with host families and over 20 per cent in collective settlements in tents, former military camps and public buildings. UNHCR reported in 2008 that over 250,000 IDPs were believed to be occupying public property, and estimated in 2009 that over 450,000 IDPs were in informal collective settlements (UNHCR, September 2008 *and* December 2009). Internally displaced tenants often endure overcrowded conditions in inadequate dwellings where they remain at risk of eviction (IOM, February 2010; IDP WG, November 2008; OCHA, December 2009).

Most IDPs, like many other Iraqis, rely on the Public Distribution System (PDS) for basic food, but they face considerable obstacles accessing the system. A third of IDPs interviewed in a late-2009 UNHCR survey did not have a PDS card valid in their governorate of residence, and only 15 per cent of those with one reported receiving their full monthly entitlement. Over 90 per cent of IDPs surveyed by UNHCR reported being able to obtain health care, but a quarter could not afford health care fees (UNHCR, December 2009; IOM, February 2010).

Prospects for durable solutions

Measures to address pre-2003 displacement have been fraught with difficulties. There is no clear assessment of the situation of this group of IDPs, which has been largely unaddressed by the Iraqi government as well as the international humanitarian community. The resolution of the situations of the people displaced before 2003 in northern regions has been subject to a still-distant agreement between the KRG and the Iraqi federal government over disputed territories. Reports have underlined the precarious situation of Marsh Arab returnees and other pre-2003 IDPs, including victims of multiple displacements.

The Iraqi government established the Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD) in 2006 to settle property disputes arising from displacement caused by the former government's policies between July 1968 and April 2003. By October 2009, it had received over 152,000 claims and ruled on almost 43,000; however as of April 2009 only 1,000 decisions had been enforced. The CRRPD does not address property destruction, leaving without redress many victims of the former government, such as Marsh Arabs and Kurdish communities whose villages were completely destroyed. In early 2010, legislation was passed to replace the CRRPD with the Real Property Claims Commission, which shall include a compensation programme for movable and immovable property expropriated or damaged under the former government (Brookings, February 2010).

In 2009, approximately 60 per cent of IDPs surveyed by UNHCR reported not seeking assistance from relevant institutions as they lacked required documents, did not trust state institutions, could not afford required fees, or feared retribution. Nearly 36 per cent of IDPs said that their property

had been destroyed or damaged, 18 per cent reported that their property was being occupied illegally by militias, local residents or other IDPs and many feared harassment should they attempt to reclaim property. Meanwhile, 15 per cent of returned IDPs and 56 per cent of repatriated refugees reported being unable to access their property (UNHCR, December 2009).

The main government measures only relate to property disputes for registered IDPs, they exclude claims regarding businesses and other non-residential property, and do not provide redress for returnees who have been forced to sell property under duress or who were tenants prior to displacement (USIP, April 2009; Brookings, February 2010). Neither do they include compensation for those who do not wish to return but would prefer to integrate in their place of displacement.

The government has promoted return as a durable solution; however many IDPs would prefer to integrate where they are or resettle in a third location. Continuing insecurity, the destruction of their housing, the ethnic or religious make-up of their area of origin, and the limited access to livelihood and basic services there are the leading obstacles to their return (Brookings, February 2010; IOM, August 2010).

Returns

The Iraqi government has implemented a number of measures to encourage returns. In 2008, Prime Minister's Order 101 and the accompanying Council of Ministers' Order 262 set in place measures to restitute private property and resolve property issues. It also established centres in Baghdad to help returnees register and receive assistance. Returnees can receive around $850 (one million ID) and registered IDPs who are residing as secondary occupants can apply for rental assistance worth around $250 per month for six months to help them vacate returnees' properties (Government of Iraq, August 2008).

Most returnees have gone back to neighbourhoods under the control of members of their community. According to UNHCR, approximately 58 per cent of IDP returns have occurred within the same governorate, overwhelmingly in Baghdad and Diyala. Returnees were principally Shi'a and Sunni Arabs(UNHCR, August 2010).

However, government measures to promote or facilitate return have had mixed results. State support has been far from sufficient, and bureaucratic procedures make it hard for IDPs to access entitlements. By the end of 2009, only 40 per cent of surveyed returnees had registered and applied for a grant, and only 30 per cent of those who applied had actually received one (IOM, 3 November 2009). Also significantly, in late 2009, 38 per cent of returnees reported not always feeling safe, over 34 per cent had found their homes damaged or completely destroyed, and 50 per cent had had movable property lost or stolen. Their property was being occupied illegally by militias, local residents or other IDPs; many returnees feared harassment should they attempt to reclaim property. Predictably, the rate of return declined from a high of 17,000 IDPs per month in July 2009 to 9,000 in June 2010 (UNHCR, August 2010).

Local integration and resettlement

In mid-2010, return was the preferred option of only an estimated 42 per cent of IDPs, while 37 per cent preferred to integrate in their place of displacement and 17 per cent to resettle elsewhere. The percentage of IDPs wishing to integrate locally had increased from 30 per cent since 2006. Not surprisingly, in the uniformly Shi'a south the favoured durable solution is local integration. An IOM survey in February 2010 found that over 40 per cent of IDPs wished to integrate locally across the southern governorates, with peaks at 76 per cent in Basra and 61 per cent in Dhi-Qar.

NGOs have repeatedly warned of the dangers of encouraging premature returns, and have drawn attention to the consequences of failing to con-

sider local integration or resettlement. However, there is little support available for those wishing to integrate or resettle, as the government, the international donor community and the UN have promoted return at expense of the other settlement options. IOM, following a request from the Iraqi government in late 2007, has worked closely with MoDM to facilitate voluntary returns (RI, 17 March 2010). UNHCR also facilitates voluntary returns, but it does not currently encourage returns to Iraq, due to the continuing insecurity. It has strongly criticised involuntary returns and the refusal of asylum by host governments based on the internal flight alternative.

National and international responses

Government of Iraq

The government has taken several important steps to address the needs of returnees and IDPs. However its continuing lack of institutional capacity has allowed corruption and bureaucracy to flourish and has limited its ability to respond to the needs of IDPs. In addition, the political deadlock, the lack of genuine national reconciliation and the resulting insecurity have not allowed for the development of durable solutions for IDPs (RI, April 2008; Brookings, August 2008; IDMC interview, January 2010).

The protection of IDPs' rights and the national response to internal displacement continue to be severely impaired by sectarian and partisan politics, as well as by tensions between IDPs and host communities. Reconciliation mechanisms coupled with public campaigns, which have taken place in Diyala and Baghdad, should be extended across Iraq, especially if considered within a national framework in line with international law as expressed in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Financial allocations to internal displacement have remained insufficient. The Iraqi government allocated $210 million to IDP programmes in late 2008 but cut that to $42 million in its 2009 budget. For 2010, the budget allocated has been approximately $170 million. The Iraqi Parliamentary Committee on Displacement and Migration has consistently appealed for increased budgetary allocations (IRIN, September 2008 and January 2010).

MoDM has extended its presence in most governorates, enhanced national registration procedures, and facilitated returns; it is well positioned to develop a national framework which would facilitate the coordination with the Directorate of Migration and Displacement (DMD) of the KGR. MoDM played a pivotal role in the July 2008 adoption of the National Policy on Displacement but as it is yet to be passed into law, its implementation remains to be devised. This should enable a more effective response, taking into account people displaced prior to 2006; and it should include effective support for durable solutions, whether they are achieved through return, local integration or resettlement (MoDM, July 2008; IDMC interview, December 2009).

Thousands of national NGOs, many established since 2003, have complemented the limited state response (Brookings, October 2006; FIC, February 2007). Some, however, appear to lack credibility and capacity, while others are affiliated to militias or political parties (NRC, August 2009).

UN and other international responses

The UN faced significant challenges in responding to humanitarian needs after the withdrawal of its international staff in 2003. The UN Country Team's ability to undertake effective humanitarian work has continued to be impaired by its operational restrictions due to insecurity (Brookings, August 2008; NCCI, January 2008). Meanwhile, significant gaps remain in efforts to protect and assess the needs of affected communities.

IOM and UNHCR, working through implementing partners, are the organisations leading the inter-

national response to displacement within Iraq; they are also working to enhance MoDM's capacity. There is little evidence of participation of IDPs or returnees in the planning and implementation of policies and programmes for addressing internal displacement. By carrying out local planning and implementation activities involving community leaders, the UN Country Team could facilitate the participation of affected communities.

In 2009 and 2010, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies and several international NGOs have relocated international staff to central and southern Iraq, but due to insecurity many have continued to operate remotely from KRG-controlled governorates or neighbouring countries (NRC, August 2009; FIC, November 2008; UN SC, July 2009 *and* February 2010). By holding a wider institutional mandate to address all matters pertaining to displacement and have a more inclusive coordination, the UN should be able to fill the gap and increase its operational capacity.

In December 2009, the UN announced the $194 million Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan (IHAP). The IHAP is intended to build on the greater cohesiveness demonstrated by the launch in Iraq in 2008 of the inter-agency Consolidated Appeal Process, and has prioritised 26 vulnerable districts where integrated humanitarian assistance projects are to be implemented (OCHA, December 2009). However, it does not include UNHCR Iraq's $264 million programme, while both these programmes are separate from the UN and World Bank's International Reconstruction Fund Facility, other bilateral assistance, and humanitarian and reconstruction support provided by military-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

Assistance provided in the name of counter-insurgency continues to overshadow assistance provided by traditional humanitarian actors and blurs boundaries between military and civilian endeavours. Up to January 2008, the US Congress allocated over $4.5 billion to such military-led humanitarian and reconstruction efforts in Iraq (Washington Post, November 2008).

The withdrawal of USF-I in August 2010 has given the UN Country Team and its partners more space to assert the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality. As the remaining PRTs are phased out, this gives the opportunity to the wider humanitarian community to reaffirm its independence.

Note: This is a summary of IDMC's internal displacement profile on Iraq. The full profile is available online here.

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About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capaci-ties to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing com-prehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to en-hance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people.

In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at www.internal-displacement.org .

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