



In this issue

- Over 170,000 flee west Mosul P.1
- Returning families face hazards P.3
- Transitional aid in Sulaymaniyah P.3
- Emergency funding for Mosul P.4

HIGHLIGHTS

- 172,000 flee Mosul for displacement sites as fighting reaches the Old City.
- Returning communities face risks from explosive hazards and social tensions.
- Transitional assistance needed in areas of Iraq outside of emergencies.
- Damage to homes and lack of livelihood opportunities the biggest barrier to returning communities.

FIGURES

# of people in need	11m
# of people targeted for assistance	6.2m
# of internally displaced persons (IDPs)	3.1m
# of IDPs who live outside camps	2.5m
# of affected ppl within host communities	3.2m
# of returnees	1.6m
# of Syrian refugees	0.23m

Source: 2017 Iraq HRP/HNO/IOM DTM

Humanitarian Response Plan

FUNDING

985 million
requested for 2017 (US\$)

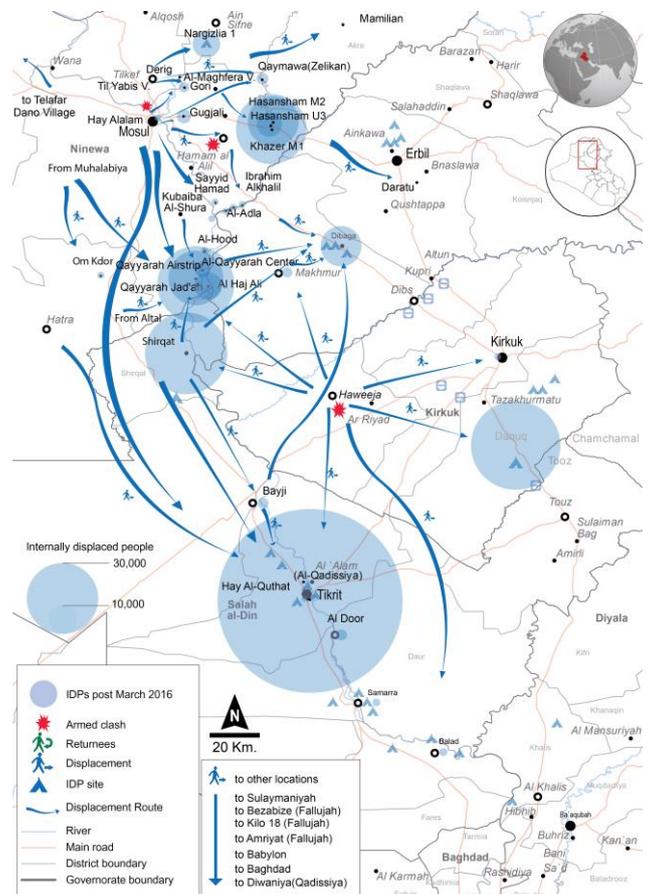
8% (\$77.1 million)
(reflects funding on FTS as of 23 March 2017)

Source: <http://fts.unocha.org>

Over 170,000 flee fighting in west Mosul

Sharp uptick in displacement as hostilities resume in western Mosul

As military operations to retake the western part of Mosul city from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) push forward into more heavily populated areas in the Old City, the rate of displacement has escalated sharply. Some 172,000 people have fled western neighbourhoods for camps and emergency sites since operations recommenced on 19 February. Almost 274,000 people are currently displaced by the fighting in east and west Mosul. Since military operations began on 17 October, over 350,000 people have been displaced, of whom [76,000] have returned home to eastern Mosul and surrounding areas, where conditions have allowed. Government figures indicate that many more could be in out-of-camp settings; data verification is ongoing to ensure all locations of displaced families are known, so assistance can be provided.



Displacement along Mosul corridor. Source: Authorities and humanitarian partners. Displacement figures International Organization for Migration (IOM).

As the fighting reached the southernmost neighbourhoods of western Mosul on the evening of 25 February the rate of displacement increased sharply: on average, 6,000 people from western neighbourhoods are arriving at displacement sites every day.

Camp expansion south of Mosul accelerates

Camps are rapidly filling to capacity, and humanitarian partners are making efforts to accelerate the expansion of camps and emergency sites to the south of the city, which are seeing most new arrivals. Work is underway to expand Hammam al-Alil, Qayyarah Airstrip and Hajj Ali sites, and to support government efforts to expand Qayyarah Jad'ah

Since mid-October, over 5,000 wounded people have been referred to hospitals to be treated for trauma injuries.

People in western Mosul face serious risks from snipers, mortars, indirect fire and IEDs.

and Al-Salamiyah sites south of Mosul. People from western neighbourhoods have recently begun to arrive in camps to the east of Mosul city, with a smaller number also travelling to camps to the north, where 4,000 families can be housed immediately.

Since hostilities resumed, trauma casualty rates have been high, with more than 1,000 people being treated for conflict-related injuries at trauma stabilization points close to the front lines. Furthermore, 15 people have been referred from eastern Mosul city to hospitals in nearby Erbil for the treatment of skin burns, blistering and respiratory issues, consistent with symptoms of exposure to a blistering agent. Civilians make up a high percentage of casualties in Mosul. Since mid-October, over 5,000 wounded people have been referred from frontline areas to hospitals to receive treatment for trauma injuries.

Desperate conditions reported for civilians in western Mosul

Remote assessments carried out since mid-January show a rapid deterioration in the general humanitarian situation in western neighbourhoods, which resonates with reports from newly-displaced people. Food, clean drinking water and fuel are increasingly scarce and infant formula is unavailable. Prices of basic staples like sugar and potatoes continue to spiral. Householders' stockpiled goods are reportedly close to being depleted. Potable water is also in short supply, with only some neighbourhoods in the north receiving water through the public network, and then only for a couple of hours every few days. Most of the population are dependent on well water of dubious quality for washing and general household use. As well as severe shortages of necessities, people remaining in western Mosul continue to face serious risks from, indirect fire, mortars, ordnance dropped by unmanned aerial vehicles and improvised explosive devices.

The most common reason people have given for choosing to remain in their homes is fear of being killed or injured by indirect fire or bombardments. While fighting is ongoing in residential areas people are hiding in their houses: in basements or under staircases. Displaced people in the camps report having been afraid of being caught in the crossfire during the journey to safety.

Drinking water shortage continues in east Mosul

In eastern Mosul, conditions have improved since it was retaken by Iraqi Security Forces in late January, but life-saving humanitarian assistance is still required. Potable water continues to be the greatest need, and although water for washing is available from wells, residents report having no functioning tap water and are using bottled water for drinking. The only operating water treatment plant in the east of the city, which had been providing water to 70,000 residents, was hit by indirect fire on 19 February. Although a generator has been procured, it has not yet been installed. Humanitarian partners continue to truck 2.3 million litres of water into eastern neighbourhoods on a daily basis. In western Mosul, people in many southern and western neighbourhoods also have no access to the public network and are potentially using untreated drinking water.

According to assessments carried out in eastern Mosul, food is still a widespread need despite being available in most neighbourhoods, due to lack of purchasing power rather than supply. The ongoing lack of income amongst returnee families and those who remained in their homes continues to pose a significant barrier to people's efforts to rebuild their lives. In terms of basic services, where infrastructure has been damaged across the eastern neighbourhoods, services are being provided through alternative means. Electricity is reportedly still lacking in many neighbourhoods and sewerage systems are in need of rehabilitation, but telecommunications are largely functioning through viable alternatives.

Civilians in eastern neighbourhoods have also reported constraints on their freedom of movement between districts, and a high prevalence



A family returns to their home in eastern Mosul from Hasansham camp. Credit: OCHA/C. Heath

of explosive devices.

76,000 return to retaken areas

Some 76,000 people have returned to their homes in eastern Mosul and nearby villages, the majority of whom are from the east of the city or Hamdaniya district, to the east of Mosul. Almost three quarters of the returnee community have been able to return to their own homes, although a small number are living in unfinished or damaged buildings.

Displacement patterns continue to be complex, and the population of camps to the east of Mosul in particular has been fluctuating significantly, largely as a response to changes in the security situation. People began to return home to eastern Mosul in large numbers during the lull in hostilities after the east of the city was retaken, whilst displacement from neighbourhoods on the east bank of the River Tigris has continued in bursts, as areas have been affected by indirect fire and ordnance dropped by ISIL-controlled unmanned aerial vehicles. Of people currently displaced from Mosul and surrounds, 90 per cent are from Mosul city, according to IOM.

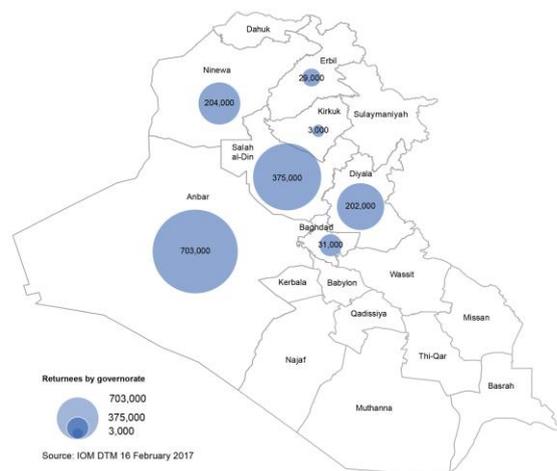
Returning communities face ongoing risks

Explosive hazards and damage to homes compromise sustainable returns

Returns continue across Iraq, with almost 1.6 million people having returned home at a steady rate of around 100,000 a month. However, risks from security-related incidents and explosive hazards remain high in most areas seeing a high level of returns in Anbar and Salah al-Din, and to a lesser degree in Diyala. Anbar Governorate continues to see the highest rate of return with 753,000 people having returned to their homes since April 2015, including to areas around Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet, where security risks are highest. Some 742,600 people have been able to return to their habitual residence, despite widespread infrastructural damage in urban areas. Returnees and those who remained in their homes face not only a lack of basic services, but also life-threatening risks from explosive hazards, and restrictions to freedom of movement.

Of the 378,700 people who have returned to Salah al-Din, Tikrit district has seen the highest rate of return at around 172,000 people. The district also has a high level of contamination by explosive hazards, and the extensive damage to infrastructure in the district compromises the sustainability of return. Return movements have driven up rental prices in the district, causing them to double on average and increase up to fourfold in some areas. Although the majority of returnees in Salah al-Din have been able to return to their habitual residences, over 35,000 are in rental accommodation, public or unfinished buildings or living in host communities, with a small number having taken shelter in camps.

According to mine action partners, the scale and complexity of explosive hazard contamination in retaken areas of Iraq is unlike any they have faced to date. Since the beginning of the year, over 1,000 explosive devices have been identified, collected and destroyed by weapons clearance teams in Kirkuk and Diyala Governorates alone. Action on Armed Violence have recorded almost 10,000 people were killed or injured by explosive weapons in Iraq in 2016, including through improvised explosive devices, an increase of 26 per cent from 2015. Approximately 65 per cent of the recorded victims were civilians.



Returnees by governorate. Source: IOM DTM

Almost three quarters of the 76,000 returnees have been able to go back to their homes.

1.6 million returnees countrywide face ongoing risks from explosive hazards, extensive damage to infrastructure and social tensions.

The scale and complexity of explosive hazard contamination in Iraq is unlike any faced to date.

Transitional measures needed in Sulaymaniyah

Outside of conflict areas, many Iraqis need longer-term initiatives

In Sulaymaniyah governorate, the humanitarian situation is in transition. While people continue to be displaced by conflict and insecurity, resources to meet both urgent and longer-term needs are becoming increasingly stretched. Humanitarian partners are laying the groundwork for their exit strategy, paving the way for development actors to step up their involvement, although the situation continues to be complex. Both humanitarian and development initiatives will be required in the immediate term so that transition can begin while acute needs continue to be met. Shortages risk premature humanitarian cutbacks or delayed development efforts.

Sulaymaniyah Governorate currently houses 152,000 displaced Iraqis, most of whom arrived in 2014. A thin trickle of newly-displaced people continues to arrive in the governorate, often escaping from insecurity in neighbouring Diyala and Salah al-Din, and the military operations in Mosul, but most of the displaced people in the governorate fled their homes over two years ago, and have not yet been able to return.

Many families in protracted displacement across Iraq require transitional assistance to longer-term initiatives to meet their changing needs. With over 80 per cent of displaced people in the governorate living in rented housing and only 15 per cent in camps, the needs of displaced people in Sulaymaniyah are markedly different to people fleeing ongoing hostilities. Some 80 per cent of displaced people in the governorate are from Anbar, and may be unable or unwilling to return to their homes due to heavy contamination of the area by explosive hazards and damage to homes and public infrastructure.

Insecurity and social tensions continue in neighbouring Diyala

In addition to assistance being provided within the governorate, partners are also delivering aid from humanitarian hubs in Sulaymaniyah to Khanaqin district in northern Diyala, to assist displaced and returnee communities. In Khanaqin, ongoing ISIL activities are causing continuing insecurity and social tensions between local and displaced communities, resulting in numerous orders for displaced people to relocate to camps from host communities by local authorities since the beginning of the year.

Urgent additional funding for Mosul response

Emergency Reserve Allocation activated for targeted WASH response

Faced by the rapid outflow of people fleeing western Mosul and the redoubled rate at which camps are expanding to keep pace with the needs of the newly-displaced, Government and humanitarian partners face a pressing challenge to provide fully-serviced spaces for people in displacement sites that meet international standards.

WASH partners have been requested to urgently step up water, sanitation and hygiene services to cover the needs of an extra 60,000 people displaced from Mosul in Hajj Ali site. Due to exceptional circumstances and the absence of available funding through other channels, the Emergency Reserve Allocation window has been activated to release US\$1.8 million to fund an emergency project. Partners are ready to start work as soon as funds are released.

The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq requires US\$985 million to reach the needs of 6.2 million of the most vulnerable Iraqis. US\$331 of the total ask is to cover the humanitarian response in Mosul.

After more than two years in displacement, families in Sulaymaniyah require transitional assistance to longer-term initiatives to meet their changing needs.

Visit us online



For further information, please contact:

Ivo Freijesen, Head of Office, freijesen@un.org

Kate Pond, Reports Officer, pond@un.org, Tel. (+964) 0782 780 6086

OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at www.unocha.org/iraq | www.unocha.org | www.reliefweb.int