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I. POST-FEBRUARY 22 IDP ASSESSMENTS: BACKGROUND

An alarming increase in displacement after the Samarra shrine bombing in February 2006 has highlighted the need for in-depth needs assessments of recently displaced populations. IOM conducts assessments in the central and southern 15 governorates, complementing the registration work conducted by other entities, such as the Ministry of Displacement and Migration.

IOM monitors use IDP Rapid Assessment Templates created in coordination with Cluster F¹ and the IDP Working Group. Monitors gather information from MoDM, IDP tribal and community leaders, local NGOs, local government bodies, and individual IDP families. Based on this information, IOM is distributing *Iraq Displacement Assessments and Statistics* reports, *Governorate Assessment Profiles*, and *Displacement Year in Review* reports.² This information is assisting IOM and other agencies to prioritize areas of operation, plan emergency responses, and design long-term, durable solutions programs.

IOM's assessment efforts are ongoing; this should be kept in mind when reading statistics that are represented over time. Also, some statistics represent questions that allowed multiple responses.

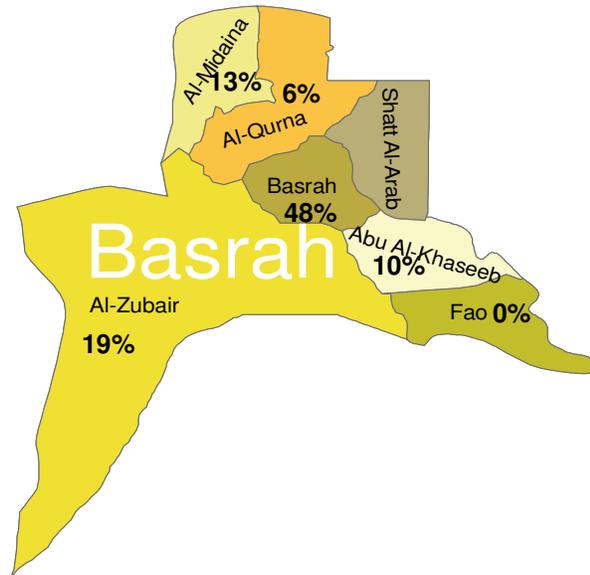
¹ The UN Country Team cluster for IDPs, Refugees, and Durable Solutions, of which IOM is Deputy Cluster Coordinator.

² Available at <http://www.iom-iraq.net/idp.html>

II. IDP OVERVIEW

Percentages on map show distribution by district of the IDP population covered by IOM's assessment.

Capital:	Basrah
Districts:	Abu Al-Khaseeb, Al-Midaina, Al-Qurna, Al-Zubair, Basrah, Fao, Shatt Al-Arab
Population (as per 1997 census):	1,556,445 individuals
Total IDPs post-Feb. 2006³:	4,300 families (est. 25,800 individuals)
Total IDP and IDP returnees pre-Feb. 22, 2006⁴:	16,869 (est. 101,214 individuals)



1. Governorate Background

Basrah City (the capital of the governorate) is the key socio-economic and administrative center of southern Iraq. Located on the Shatt al-Arab waterway, it is Iraq's main seaport and the country's second largest city.

The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) estimates that almost **4,300 families, or an estimated 25,800 individuals**, have been displaced in Basrah since February 2006⁵.

IOM's assessments cover 2,662 families⁶; average family size is six persons, yielding an estimated total of 15,972 individuals assessed. (Note that these are numbers of IDPs assessed by IOM, not total per governorate. Please refer to the Cluster F Update for total displacement figures.)

2. IDP Entry into Governorate:

It was reported that the local authorities have issued an order to the local MoDM office to stop registering any IDPs who are not originally from Basrah and that only IDPs whose families are originally from Basrah are originally allowed to enter.

3. Ethnicity and Religion:

All IDPs assessed in Basrah were Arab and Shia Muslim.

³ As per Ministry of Displacement and Migration. See latest Cluster F Update on IDPs, 15 May 2007

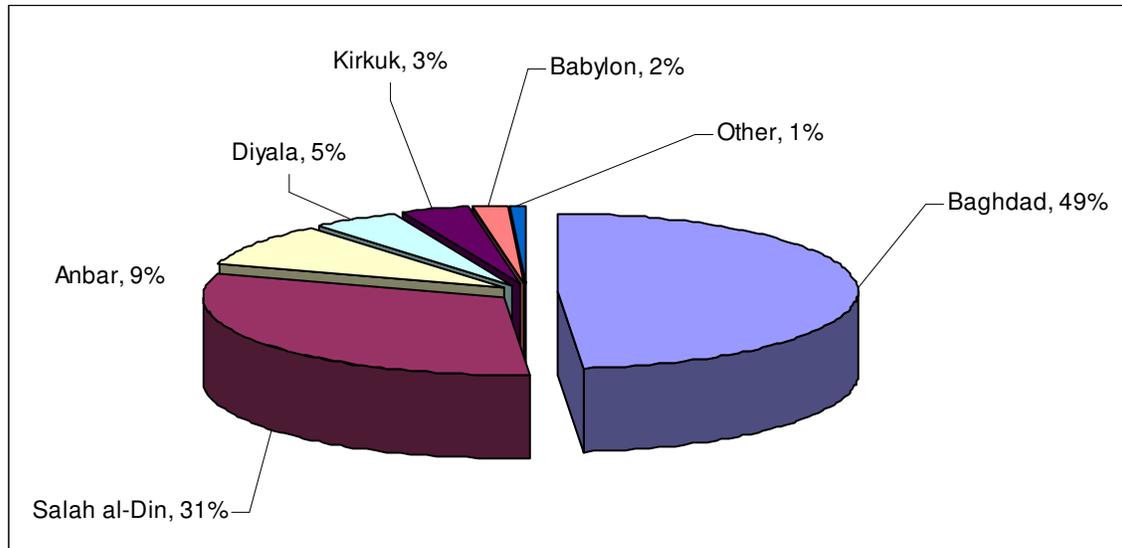
⁴ As per IOM's Phase II monitoring, December 2005

⁵ Cluster F Update on IDPs, 15 May 2007

⁶ The monitors use templates for both IDP groups and individual IDP families; therefore, information obtained from group templates applies to multiple families.

4. Places of Origin:

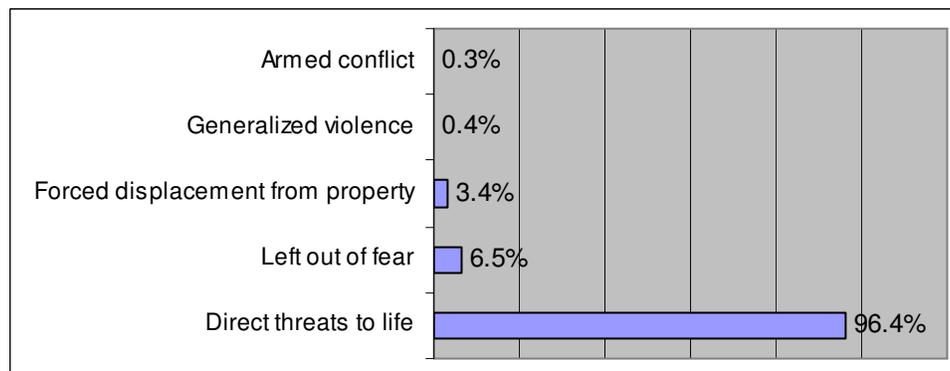
Almost all IDPs assessed in Basrah were displaced from the central areas of Iraq, with most coming from Baghdad or Salah al Din:



5. Reasons for Displacement:

By far the majority of IDPs interviewed in Basrah fled because of direct threats to life, such as threats of abductions, death, threatening messages sent via mobile text or distributed leaflets, or general violence.

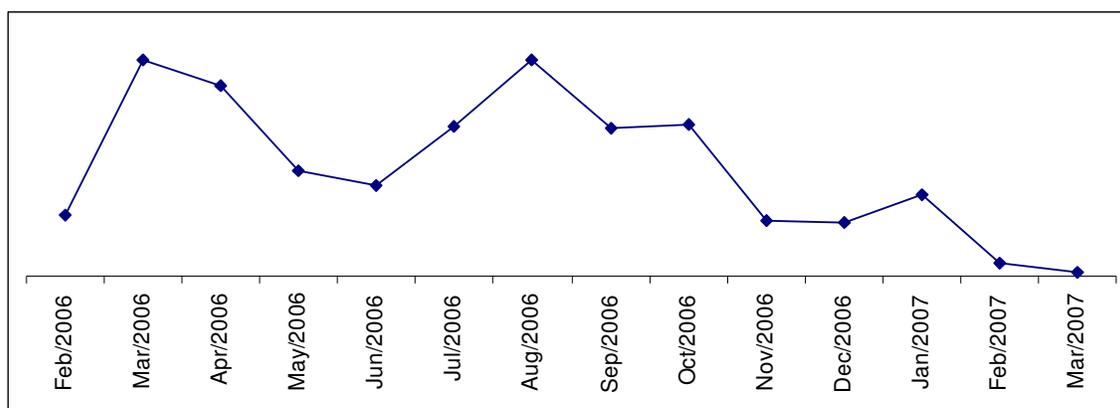
IDPs listed their top reasons for fleeing as follows:



When asked why they or their families were targeted (political opinion, belonging to a certain social or ethnic group, etc.), IDPs in Basrah responded overwhelmingly that they thought it was due to belonging to a certain religion or sect. Most IDPs in Basrah fled from mixed communities in the center of Iraq and cite that their impetus for fleeing was sectarian violence, not the generalized crime or military operations that also causes other IDPs to flee.

Few IDPs were displaced more than once after they left their place of origin. One percent (1%) was displaced twice, and 1% was displaced four times. No one was displaced three times.

Most of the IDPs interviewed fled in March 2006, right after the Samarra bombing that caused a spike in displacement, and in the summer of 2006.



Please note that this is not a representation of population displacement rate in Iraq. This simply represents the various dates of displacement reported by those IDPs in the sample IOM assesses. Since assessments are ongoing, the fact that few IDPs reported dates of displacement in 2007 does not mean that fewer Iraqis are being displaced; it simply means that these populations are just now being identified during the assessments.

6. Outline of Pre-Existing IDP Population (pre-February 22, 2006)

During IOM's Phase II monitoring, IOM identified 16,869 IDP families residing in Basrah as of December 2005. These for the most part had been displaced before the 2003 conflict, or were IDP returnees. IDPs were found throughout the governorate; however, the majority were located in the center of the district of Basrah. Basrah city hosts the largest portion of the post-2003 conflict IDPs, while Al-Qurna and Al-Midaina hold the Marsh Arab concentrations. The majority of pre-2006 IDPs were living in public buildings or mixed with the host communities.

The displacement experienced in Basrah in the past two decades originated mainly from the marshlands covering the northern part of the governorate along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Until the 1980s, these lands were populated by an estimated 250,000 Marsh Arabs. Due to their proximity to Iran and the Shia factions, the Marsh Arabs were perceived by the former government as a potential threat to their power. They were therefore the target of persecution campaigns, especially in the aftermath of the 1991 failed Shia uprising against Saddam's regime, when they were suspected of hiding Shia militants.

The most serious assault on the Marsh Arabs, however, was the drainage of 90% of the marshes instituted by Saddam Hussein's regime in the 1990s. The drainage operations destroyed the ecosystem on which the Marsh Arabs relied, forcing them to seek refuge either in the outskirts of Basrah or in the land around the marshes.

Wars also displaced populations to Basrah; during the Iraq-Iran War of the 1980s thousands of persons were relocated from the front lines. The 1991 Gulf War also created instability in the region with many more displaced and fleeing the governorate.

7. IDP Population's Relationship with the Host Community

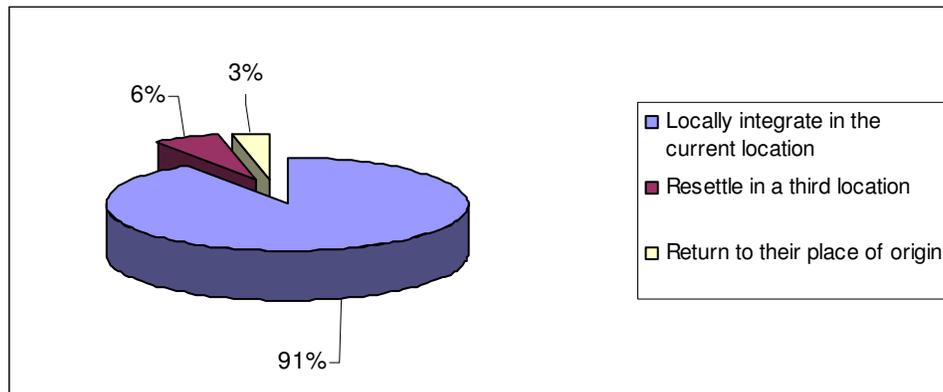
IDPs in Basrah have fled mixed neighbourhoods where they were threatened for their religious identity to homogeneously Shia neighbourhoods in Basrah. Only a few families reported that they were not well-received by the host family. Some families in Al-Zubair said they feared the host

community due to reports of abductions and violence, but this was the only location where this was reported.

8. Intentions of post-February 22 IDPs:

One of the most important and politically charged questions regarding displacement is whether IDPs will stay in their current location (thus crystallizing the polarization of communities), move to a third location, or return home (resulting in potential mass returns).

Unlike those IDPs displaced in the center of Iraq, IDPs in the south tend to prefer to stay in their current location, which is clearly the intention of IDPs assessed in Basrah: 91% plan to stay in Basrah.



Although IDPs plan to locally integrate, the majority are not sure when they will move forward with their plans; almost all responded that they will wait until the security situation improves, as the volatility in Basrah does not support permanent arrangements.

III. EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT AND NEEDS

1. Security & Vulnerabilities

Security

In 2003, Basrah was considered a stable governorate with great potential for reconstruction and future economic and political stability in Iraq. However, four years later the situation in Basrah has deteriorated; security has worsened especially over the past year. There has been a proliferation of militias associated with various political parties, and the local government has had little success in curtailing inter-militia conflict or militia attacks on police stations or against the MNF-I/IF. Violence in Basrah city has necessitated curfews, additional checkpoints, and road closures throughout the city over the past year. IDPs are often victims of the fighting, as they are accused of supporting one of the various factions and are then themselves targeted.

Monitors must work with local police in order to access IDP sites in dangerous areas. In these areas, wariness of any unknown presence can create unwanted hostility.

Despite deteriorating security in Basrah, only 36 families reported that they do not feel safe in their current location. Given that most people fled their place of origin due to direct threats to their lives, this response is understandable. Less than 2% require authorization to move from their current location or face other restrictions on their movement. Only three families reported having to pass through checkpoints to move near their homes

Twelve percent (12%) of IDP families reported a death or serious injury within their families. Of these, deaths and injuries were reported as follows:

Mine accidents	87.7%
Other deaths	8.4%
Group members killed by militants or MNF or Iraqi Forces	2.6%
Mine accidents & other injuries	1.0%
Other injuries	0.3%

Twenty-one (21) families also reported that they had family members who were unaccounted for. Only nine families reported that family members had been detained.

Vulnerabilities

Four percent (4%) of those assessed reported vulnerabilities among the family members, although the number is believed to be underrepresented, based on the situation witnessed on the ground. Of those who have vulnerabilities, the types are as follows:

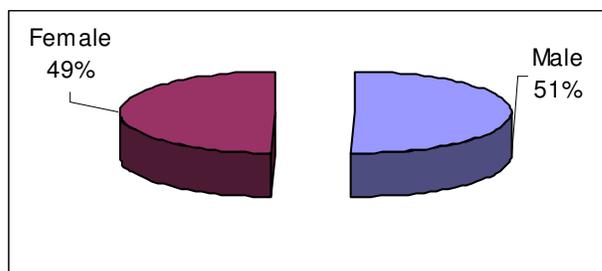
Elderly person	30.5%
Female head of household	32.8%
Other vulnerability	2.5%
Person with mental disability	1.6%
Person with serious illness	4.5%
Pregnant woman	28.2%

Women & Children

Women and children IDPs in Basrah are facing certain challenges unique to their situation. Women in Basrah have reported that they are not able to access gynecological health care due to a lack of funds. Some IDP women from the north of Basrah were abducted in a tribal conflict; many women now have to restrict their movement for their own safety. Some women and children demonstrated psychological trauma due to events they witnessed or experienced in their place of origin, such as brutal assassinations of family members or abductions.

Knowledge of displaced populations' age and gender facilitates the targeting of humanitarian assistance. Throughout Iraq, assessments are revealing that displacement is close to equally distributed among females and males. For Basrah, the following information was obtained through interviews with 665 families (4,330 individuals):

Gender:



Breakdown per gender and age group:

Age	Total	Male	Female
Total	100%	100%	100%
Less than 1	6%	5%	8%
1 to 4	16%	15%	17%
5 to 17	38%	36%	39%
18 to 60	38%	41%	34%
More than 60	2%	2%	2%

2. Shelter and Basic Services

Shelter (living arrangements)

The majority of IDPs assessed in Basrah are renting. The next most frequently used shelter is sharing a home with family or relatives, which often creates overcrowded conditions and a burden on the hosts, or living in abandoned buildings, which often lack electricity, water, or sanitation.

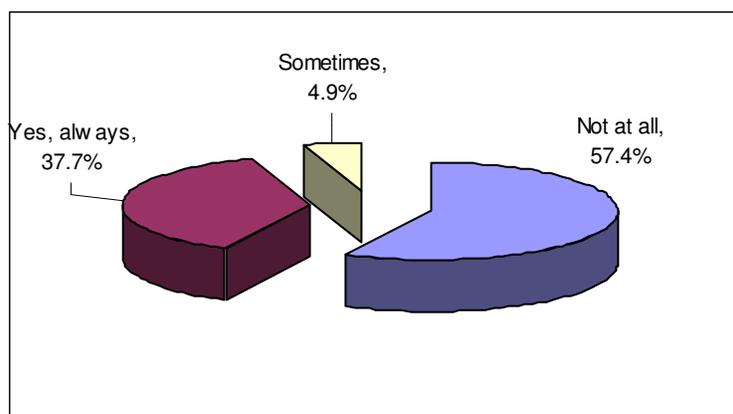
Following is the breakdown of shelter for IDPs assessed:

Rented housing	63.7%
In the house of host family or relatives	22.6%
Public building	11.2%
Other	1.6%
Collective town / settlement	0.6%
Tent in camp	0.3%

Less than 1% reported that they face eviction or other threats to leave their premises. Of those who face these threats, a few families face pressure to leave from militants or a court-ordered eviction.

Food/Public Distribution System (PDS)

A very high percentage (57%) of IDPs assessed in Basrah reported no access to PDS rations, which is higher than most governorates, even those in the volatile center. Access is as follows:



This can be further broken down by district:

District	Yes, always	Not at all	Sometimes
Abu Al-Khaseeb	52%	48%	
Al-Midaina	10%	74%	16%
Al-Qurna	78%	22%	
Al-Zubair	30%	59%	11%
Basrah	41%	58%	1%
Fao		100%	
Shatt Al-Arab	27%	73%	

Lack of access to PDS rations is clearly due to a delay or inability in transferring their PDS card to IDPs' new location in Basrah. Usually the transfer procedure requires the IDP to deregister in their place of origin, which is impossible for many IDPs due to the security situation or inability to pay for the travel. In some governorates, IDPs simply return to their places of origin to pick up their rations, but again security makes this impossible for IDPs in Basrah. Reasons presented for lack of access are as follows:

Delay transferring PDS registration to new location	95.1%
Food transportation route insecure	12.2%
Families lack documentation or PDS cards	1.0%
Other	0.2%
Lack of transportation for food supplies	0.1%

In addition, 37% of those who did receive rations said that they were missing items, which is higher than most governorates.

When asked if they received food assistance from other sources besides PDS, a large percentage (61%) said they do not. Although there are many NGOs working to assist IDPs in Basrah, food assistance is not reaching those who need it most. Religious entities are most often credited with collecting funds to purchase food for recently-arrived IDP families.

Of those who have received it from other sources, the majority said they receive it from humanitarian organizations or religious charities:

	Of those who received food	Of total assessed
Religious charities	49.7%	19.4%
Humanitarian Organizations	44.3%	17.3%
Others	29.8%	11.6%
Regional authorities	3.0%	1.2%
National authorities	0.8%	0.3%

Unfortunately, almost all of the food provided was dried food, with less than 1% receiving fresh or intermediate food.

	Of those who received food	Of total assessed
Dried food	98.8%	37.6%
Dried food / Fresh food	0.9%	0.3%
Intermediate food	0.3%	0.1%

Clearly more humanitarian organizations need to focus on providing food assistance to IDPs in Basrah, based on the aforementioned data.

Water and Sanitation

Access to water is less of a problem in Basrah than access to food or PDS rations. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of IDPs assessed have regular access to water, and less than 1% has to travel more than 500 meters to access water. IDPs are able to access the following water sources:

	Of those who have regular access	Of total assessed
Municipal water (underground pipes)	100.0%	97.3%
Water tanks / trucks	4.7%	4.5%
Rivers, streams or lakes	0.9%	0.9%
Other Sources	0.8%	0.8%
Open / broken pipe	0.5%	0.5%

Access per district is as follows:

District	No	Yes
Abu Al-Khaseeb		100%
Al-Midaina	1%	99%
Al-Qurna	1%	99%
Al-Zubair	11%	89%
Basrah	1%	99%
Fao		100%
Shatt Al-Arab	8%	92%

No one reported no access to toilets; however, many areas visited lack appropriate sewage systems, such as Al-Hartha in Basrah district, Al-Door Al Jahiza in Muafaqiya sub-district, and in Al-Bradiya in Basrah district and Al-Hakimiya sub-districts. Lakes are becoming increasingly contaminated, resulting in skin infections in areas such as Khamsa Meel of Basrah district.

Fuel & Electricity

Most IDPs have access to electricity, either through a generator or provided by the municipality. For example, in Basrah city, electricity is often provided by a three hours on, then three hours off schedule, requiring generators and kerosene, which is costly.

Access to electricity is as follows:

Four or more hours per day	95.5%
1-3 hours per day	3.2%
No Electricity	1.2%

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of IDPs assessed in Basrah have access to fuel, although only 12% have access to kerosene, which is used for cooking and heating. Other fuels available to IDPs are as follows:

Benzene	72.9%
Diesel	2.6%
Kerosene	12.1%
No Access to fuel	3.0%

Other	28.4%
Propane	93.8%

Health Care

On a positive note, all IDPs assessed reported that there were health care services available to them and only 1% reported that they do not have access to the medications they need. Only 2% reported infectious diseases/epidemics in the past 45 days.

In some areas, provincial health centers are closed at night, which forces IDP families to take patients to Basrah city. In the district of Basrah, IDPs reported an unavailability of medications and a lack of qualified staff.

Overall, however, access to health care for IDPs is better in Basrah than any other governorate.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of IDPs in Basrah have been visited by a health care worker in the past 30 days. These health professionals provided vaccinations to IDP families. Another 58% have been involved in a vaccination campaign, either by visiting health care providers or through a local clinic. They were provided with vaccinations within the following timeframe (as of interview date, not as of report date):

1-3 months ago	37.6%
7 or more months ago	33.9%
last month	11.8%
4-6 months ago	11.8%
last week	4.9%

Education

Most children have access to education in Basrah. Some colleges have required original documents from schools in the IDPs' place of origin, which are difficult to obtain for those fleeing dangerous areas. Some students have therefore discontinued their studies.

3. Legal Concerns

Property Issues

Some IDPs have heard that once they fled their place of origin, their property was confiscated, destroyed, or illegally occupied. Most simply do not know the condition of possessions they left behind. In the case of Basrah, responses were as follows:

Do not know	60.7%
Property occupied, controlled or claimed by private citizens	23.1%
Property destroyed	5.4%
Property accessible	4.4%
Property occupied, controlled or claimed by government	0.1%

Those 665 individual families who were interviewed were asked if they had property they left behind. Many owned a house but little else. Responses were as follows:

House	93.7%
Land for agriculture	0.9%
Apartment or room	2.2%

Shop / small business	2.3%
Land for housing	0.3%
Other	0.6%

Many IDPs who fled to Basrah were able to take their cars, tools, and other items with them, facilitating integration or the search for employment. IDPs were able to take the following with them when they were displaced:

Other (mostly furniture and money)	90.6%
Car transportation	71.3%
Tools	70.4%
Winter clothing	61.8%
Food	50.1%
Livestock	46.9%

Documentation

IDPs in Basrah managed to retain some documents during their displacement, although possession of documentation is lower in Basrah than in other governorates. Document possession is as follows:

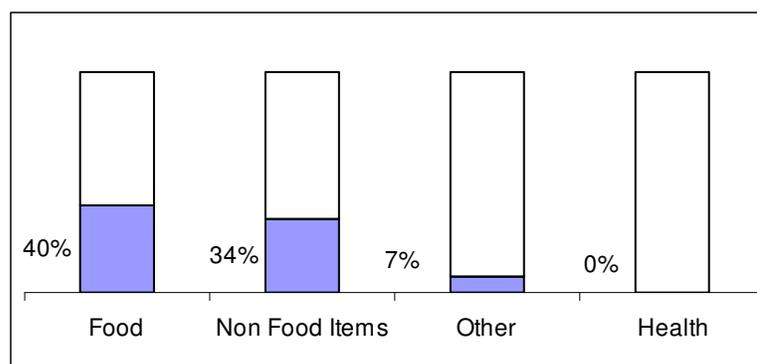
Nationality certificates	73.9%
ID cards	72.7%
Marriage documents	68.6%
Birth certificates	28.1%
Death certificates	11.6%
Passports	2.2%
Other documents	1.7%

IV. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

Forty-three percent (43%) of IDPs assessed in Basrah reported that they have received assistance since they fled. This was primarily provided by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society or MoDM.

	Of those who received assistance	Of total assessed
Iraqi Red Crescent	72.0%	31.1%
MoDM	37.4%	16.2%
Relatives	22.1%	9.5%
Religious group	21.2%	9.2%
Host community	12.4%	5.4%
Humanitarian agency	5.8%	2.5%
Other Iraqi Government body	2.5%	1.1%
Other	1.0%	0.4%

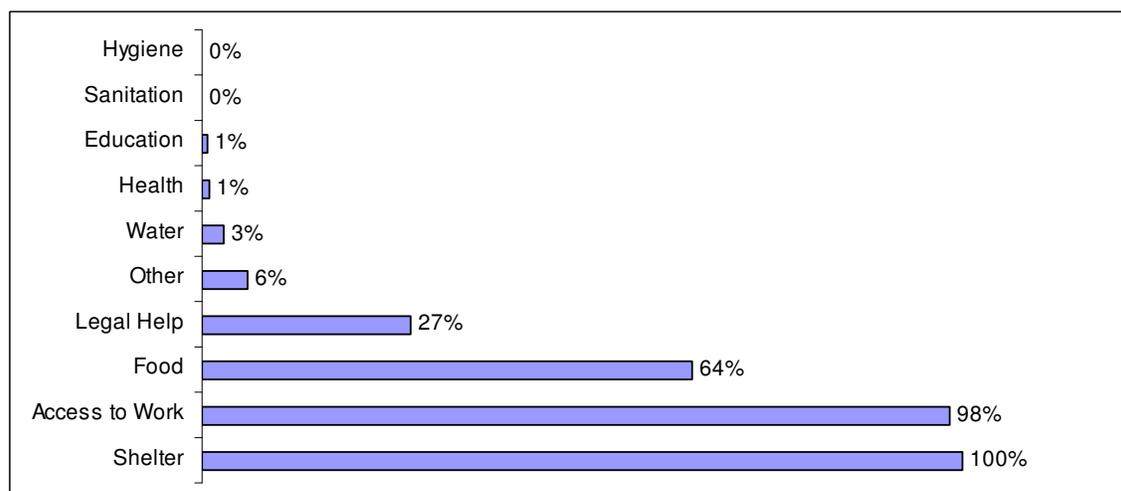
These organizations provided the following:



V. PRIORITY NEEDS

Top priority needs:

Shelter was unanimously mentioned as a top priority by IDPs in Basrah. Since almost all IDPs assessed plan on staying in their current location and are now renting, living with host families, or are living in abandoned buildings, shelter is urgent. Employment ranked almost as high. Food was also frequently mentioned, due to the inability to access PDS rations.



Areas/Populations in Need of Priority Assistance:

Monitors identified 16 IDP families living in a partially-destroyed public building in Basrah district. The building has no water, sanitation, or electricity, and families are using tin sheets for roofs. Water is obtained through plastic pipes connected to houses in the host community. They do not have access to PDS rations and depend on the generosity of the host community. Local authorities intend to demolish this building and accordingly an eviction order has been issued to these families. This group of families is in need of shelter and food and non-food items.

Monitors also identified 55 IDP families living in overcrowded conditions in houses made of reed and mud in Basrah district. No basic services are available. Stagnant water surrounds the houses. The families are in need of food and non-food assistance.

Nine families in Abu-Al Khaseeb district have no source of income and rely on their children to work as porters in markets. The host community has assisted with food since these families do not have access to PDS rations. They are in need of food and non-food items.

Recommendations for Assistance:

IDPs assessed in Basrah provided the following suggestions for community assistance projects:

- In Al Khaleej neighbourhood in Basrah district, IDPs suggested the construction of a high school for female students.
- IDPs suggested establishing a sewage system in Khamsa Meel area in Basrah district to solve the water drainage problem.
- IDPs in Safwan sub-district of Al-Zubair district suggested building a new school for students in the area and installing a reverse osmosis water system to decrease the dependence on Basrah city supplies.
- Garbage collection projects in area Al-Door Al-Jahiza in Muafaqiya sub-district were recommended.
- IDPs in Al-Zubair suggested establishing a water purification unit near their site.
- Some of IDPs recommended installing lighting around their sites in Al-Amin Al-Dakeli area in order to reduce criminal activity and increase safety

CONCLUSION

Basrah governorate is an important facet of Iraq's economy due to its oil reserves, agricultural fertility, and its capital's status as the country's main seaport. The security situation in Basrah has deteriorated greatly since 2003; tribal conflicts and militia violence complicate efforts to rebuild governorate infrastructure. Violence impedes monitoring activities and IDP movement. Reportedly, local authorities have ordered that only IDPs originating from within Basrah be registered by the MoDM office.

Large populations were displaced to Basrah during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, the 1991 Gulf War, and the Hussein regime's military operations against the Marsh Arabs. The bulk of the more recently displaced populations (post-February 2006) fled sectarian violence in central Iraq. These are Shia Arabs who fled mixed areas, mainly in Baghdad or Salah Al-Din, and sought refuge in Basrah's homogenous Shia communities. This sectarian affinity has meant that the IDPs are generally well-accepted by the Basrah host community.

Services such as electricity, fuel, and healthcare are generally available to IDPs in Basrah. There is, however, a severe shortage of food, mainly because most IDPs are unable to access PDS rations. This is largely due to bureaucratic complications in transferring PDS registration. Although humanitarian organizations are working in Basrah, a majority of those IDPs assessed reported that they had not received humanitarian food aid. There is an urgent need for more widespread distribution of food to IDPs in Basrah.

Most (91%) IDPs assessed plan to settle in Basrah permanently, making employment and more permanent shelter their priority concerns. These longer-term needs can be comprehensively met only if security improves in Basrah, allowing economic recovery and stability.

For further information on IDP displacement in Iraq, please contact Martin Ocaga, IOM Iraq IDP Program Manager at mocaga@iom-iraq.net (+962 79 64 00581) or Dana Graber, Iraq Displacement Specialist, at dgrab@iom-iraq.net (+962 79 611 1759).