IOM EMERGENCY NEEDS ASSESSMENTS
FEBRUARY 22, 2009: THREE YEARS OF POST-SAMARRA DISPLACEMENT IN IRAQ

I. POPULATION DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN IN IRAQ

Three years after a severe wave of sectarian violence began, returns are increasing and new displacement is rare. Iraqis look to rebuilding their lives facing an uncertain security future.

On 22 February 2006, the bombing of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra triggered escalating sectarian violence that drastically changed the cause and scale of displacement in Iraq, both to locations inside Iraq and to locations abroad. **Since February 2006, more than 1,600,000[1] Iraqis (270,000 families) have been displaced - approximately 5.5% of the total population.** Of these 270,000 families, IOM monitoring teams have identified and assessed 209,402 (an estimated 1,256,412 individuals), or 80% of the total post-Samarra displacement population.[2]

These assessments, illustrated in this report, reveal the demographic composition and geographic journeys of the IDP populations remaining in displacement, as well as detail the overwhelming needs for basics such as adequate shelter, sufficient food, clean water, and access to employment.

INSIDE:

- Displacement/ Return Summary
- Post February 2006 Profile with Numbers, Identities, Locations, Origins
- Return potentials
- Humanitarian Needs & Response

Even as security appears to improve and displacement slows, Iraqi IDPs face threats of eviction and live in precarious environments, with the possibility of violence still a present worry. IOM's assessments of IDP families' intentions reveal that many wish to return home and may do so if conditions permit, especially that of security. Others wish to begin new lives in their places of displacement or other locations. These families need assistance to implement these choices successfully. Of the assessed IDP population, there are about 130,000 families who have indicated they would return to their original locations, while about 45,000 families would like to be integrated into their current locations of displacement. In addition, about 35,000 families would like to resettle in a third location.

A family among 200 IDP families who received return transport assistance from IOM, returning from Qadissiya to Baghdad.

Currently 49,432[3] returnee families (an estimated 296,592 individuals) have been identified across the country by IOM returnee field monitors. They too, face harsh living conditions, destroyed property and infrastructure, and loss of former livelihoods. IOM and other humanitarian organizations are working to assist IDP and returnee families, but the response remains inadequately funded in proportion to the many and diverse needs across Iraq.

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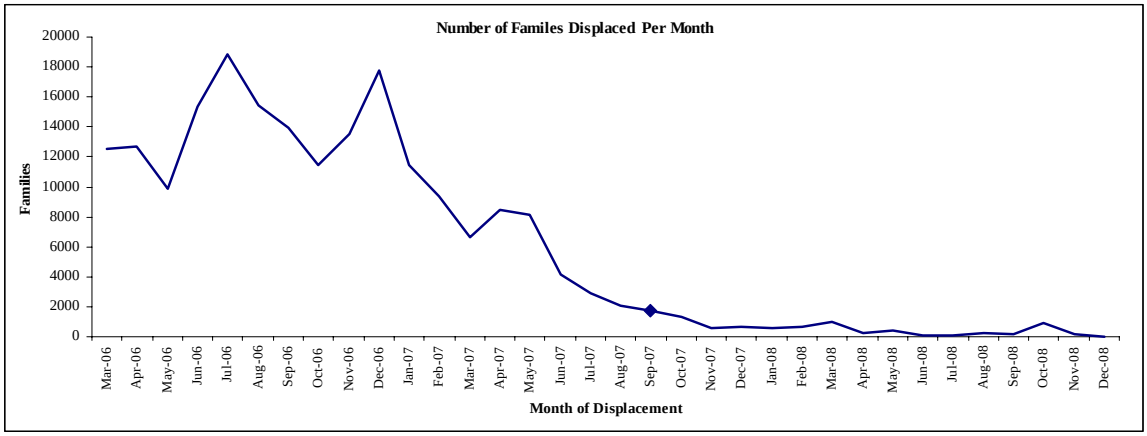
[1] As per figures from the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) for the three northern governorates and the Iraqi Ministry of Displacment and Migration (MoDM) for the 15 central and southern governorates. See the IDP Working Group Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq Update (September 2008) for figures per governorate.

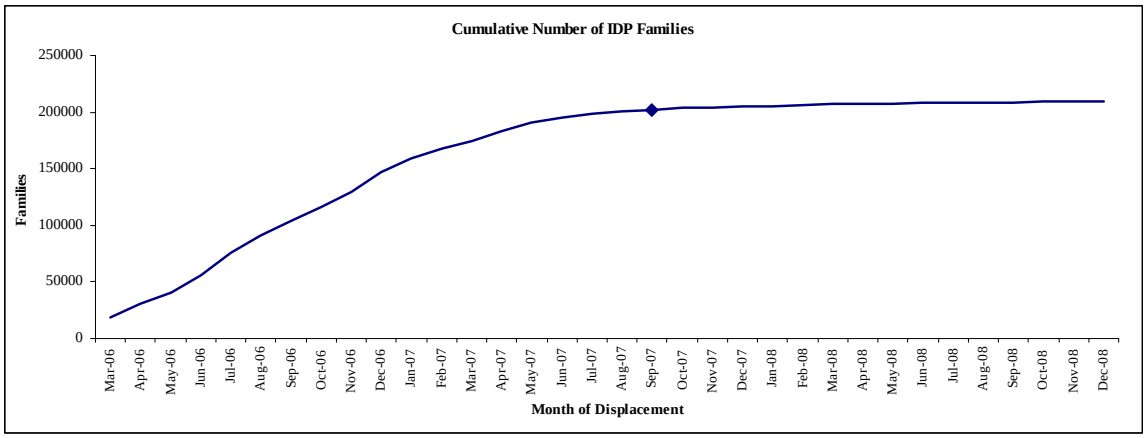
[2] For information on IOM's monitoring methodology, see "IOM Monitoring Needs Assessments Methodology" available at www.iom-iraq.net/library.html#IDP

[3] The number of returnee families presented in this report is not the total number of returnees in Iraq, but the summary number of returnee families for locations (villages and neighborhoods) for which the returnee monitoring teams managed to collect data through particular sources as of the reporting date. These figures do not include displacement in Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah.

DISPLACEMENT: New displacements have stopped, but the total number of families living in displacement remains high.

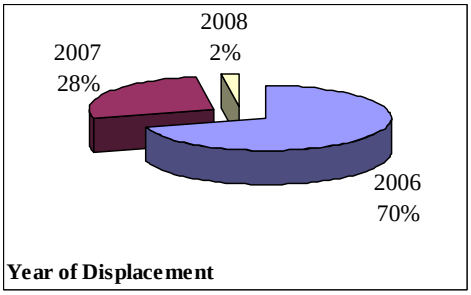
The number of families being displaced every month was highest in 2006, when an average of 14,152 families was displaced every month. This extreme rate continued in the first half of 2007, when 8,033 families was displaced monthly. In 2008, 378 families were being displaced per month:





Most of the post-Samarra displacement took place in 2006 (70%) and the first half of 2007, and new displacements are rare in Iraq today. Yet the number of IDPs in the country remains large (270,000 families), a serious concern for the future of Iraq.

Period	Average number of displaced per month	Percent of total IDP population displaced in the period
2006	14,152	70.3%
Jan-Jun 2007	8,033	23.0%
Jul - Sep 2007	2,269	3.3%
Oct - Dec 2007	866	1.2%
2008	378	2.2%

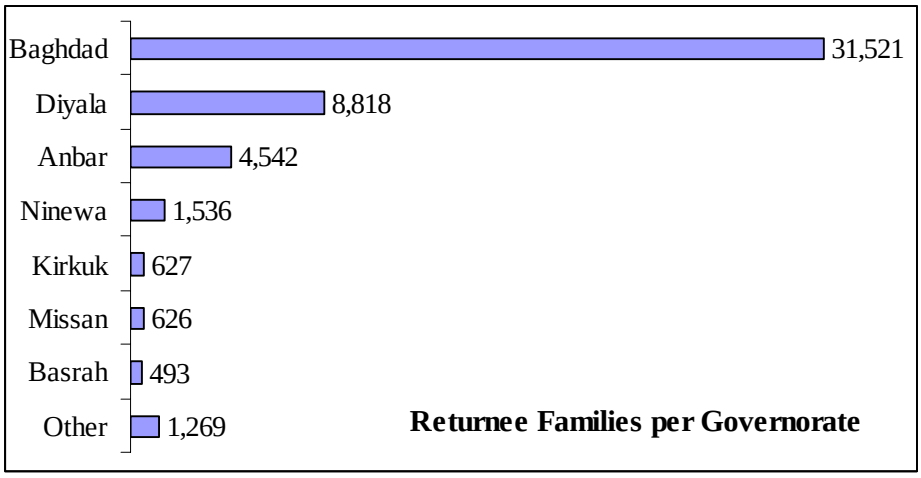


RETURN: As returns increase, returnees need assistance to reintegrate and rebuild.

After the peak of displacement in 2006, IDP returns were first recorded in April 2007 in Mada'in, Abu Ghraib, and Taji districts of Baghdad. Throughout the second half of 2007 and all of 2008, returns increased significantly in Baghdad city, notably Karkh and Al Resafa districts. IOM monitoring teams have recorded a total of 31,521 returnee families in Baghdad governorate.

In addition, late 2007 and all of 2008 saw significant returns in Anbar and Diyala governorates.

Currently 49,432 returnee families (an estimated 296,592 individuals) have been identified across the country by IOM returnee field monitors, distributed according to the following chart. See also the detailed map in Annex 3.

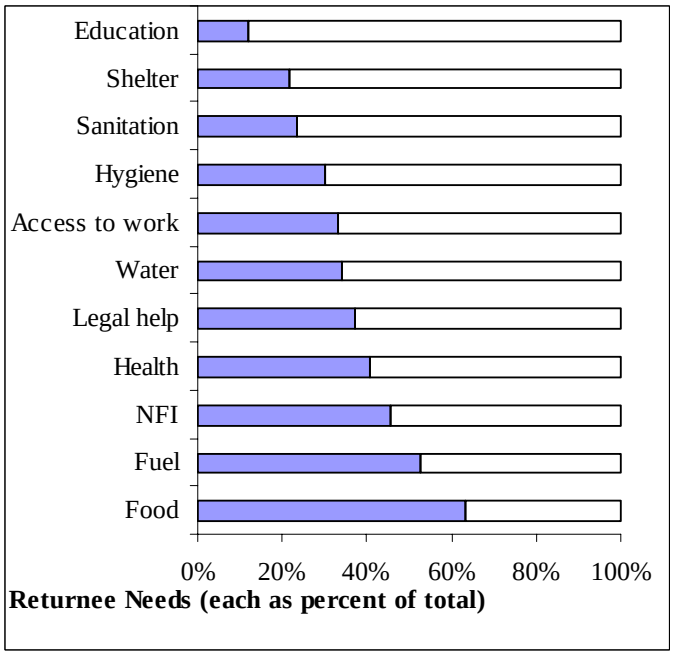


The majority of returns (69%) occur from within the same governorate. A smaller but notable percentage (20%) have returned from other governorates, and only 11% of returnees have come back from outside the country. These families are mainly returns from Syria to Anbar and Baghdad.

IOM returnee field monitors have conducted in-depth interviews with nearly 3000 returnee families, of which half returned in 2007 and half returned in 2008.

When the IDPs were asked about reasons for return, 36% quoted improved security in the area, while another 36% noted a combination of difficult conditions in the place of displacement and improved security as chief motivations for return.

According to IOM interviews, more than half of returnee families stated priority humanitarian concerns as food, fuel and other non-food items. Health care, legal help, access to clean water, and access to employment were listed as priority needs by more than 40% of interviewed families.



II. POST FEBRUARY 2006 IDP POPULATION PROFILE

Summary Points

- **The vast majority of post-Samarra IDP families are from Baghdad, Diyala, and Ninewa governorates, which saw some of the worst post-Samarra sectarian violence.**
- **Most of these families are displaced within their home governorates.**
- **The majority of post-Samarra IDP families wish to return to their places of origin, while IDPs in the south mainly intend to integrate into the place of displacement.**
- **The post-Samarra IDP population shows some specific trends with regard to ethnic and religious identity on the governorate level.**

IDP Locations in Iraq

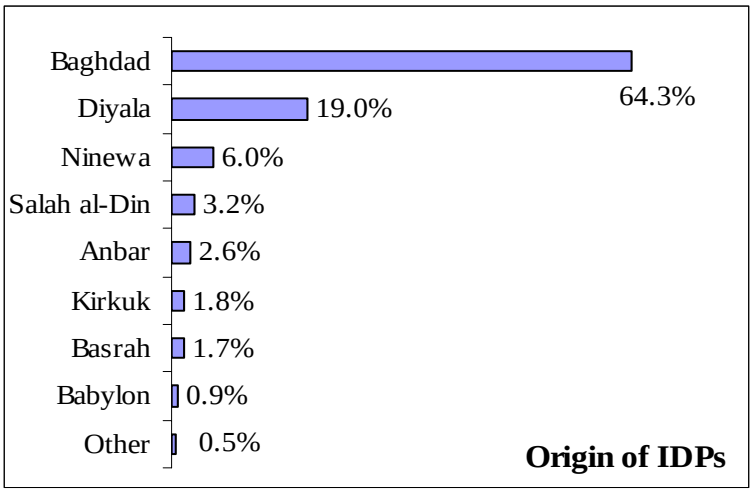
While IDPs have fled to every governorate in Iraq, the largest group of IDP families is currently in Baghdad, where 34% of all IDPs (90,731 families) are currently living. Diyala (22,784), Ninewa (19,100) and Dahuk (18,732) also host significant IDP family populations, according to Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) figures below[4]. See also the detailed map in Annex 2.

Governorate	IDP Families	%
Iraq	273,243	100%
Baghdad	90,731	33%
Diala	22,784	8%
Ninewa	19,100	7%
Duhok	18,706	7%
Sulaymaniyah	14,585	5%
Babylon	12,677	5%
Wassit	12,306	5%
Karbala	10,921	4%
Erbil	10,304	4%

Governorate	IDP Families	%
Anbar	9,179	3%
Kirkuk	7,911	3%
Salah Al Din	7,790	3%
Thi-Qar	7,066	3%
Missan	6,792	2%
Basrah	5,989	2%
Qadissia	3,858	1%
Muthana	2,457	1%
Anbar	9,179	3%

IDP Governorates of Origin

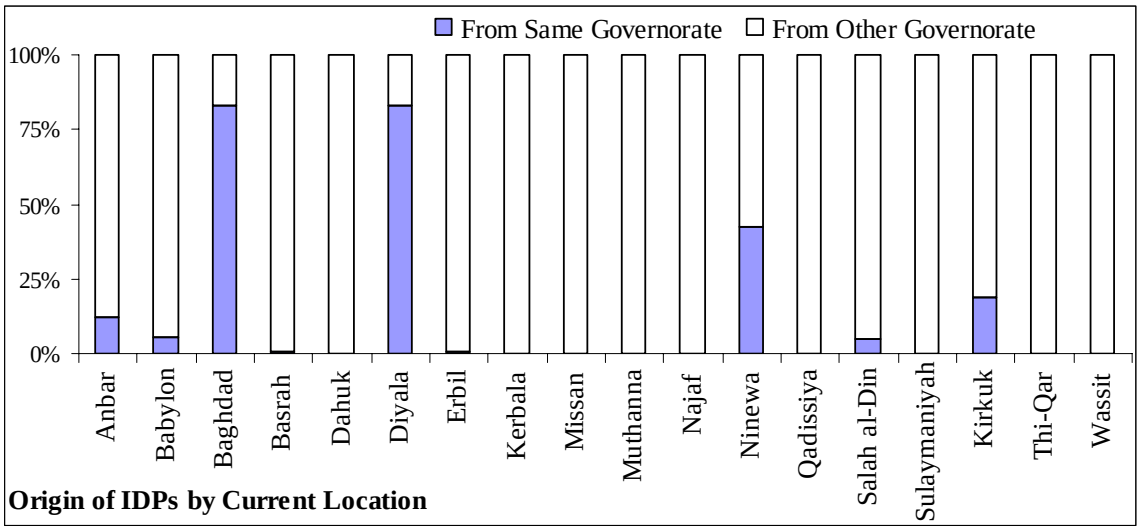
According to IOM displacement monitoring, almost 90% of post-Samarra IDPs are from Baghdad(64%), Diyala (19%), and Ninewa(6%):



[4] Chart shows distribution of 264,719 IDP families displaced since February 2006, according to MoDM and KRG/DDM registration.

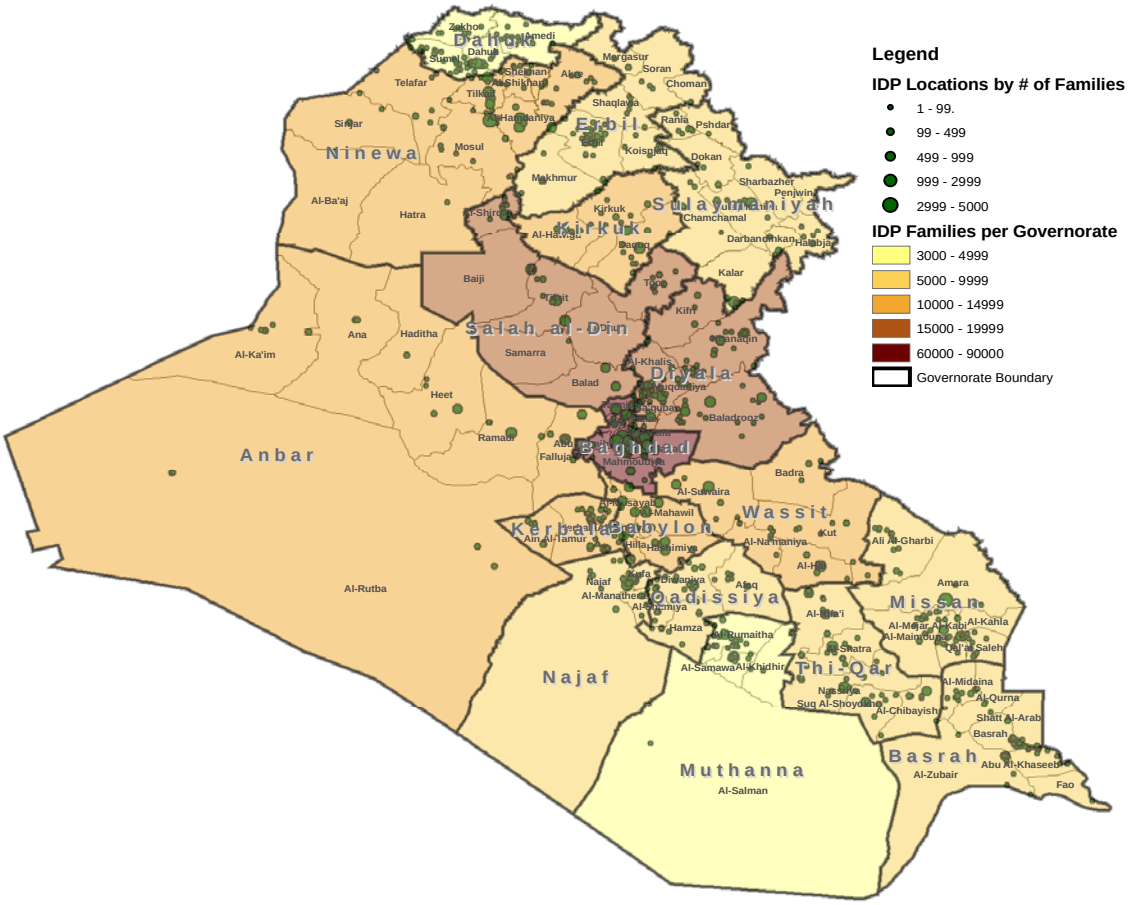
Origin of IDPs According to Displacement Location

According to IOM monitoring, 83% of all IDPs in Baghdad and Diyala have been displaced within their home governorates. This percentage is also significant in Ninewa (43%), Kirkuk (19%), and Anbar (12%). All other governorates are hosting IDPs originating from a different governorate:



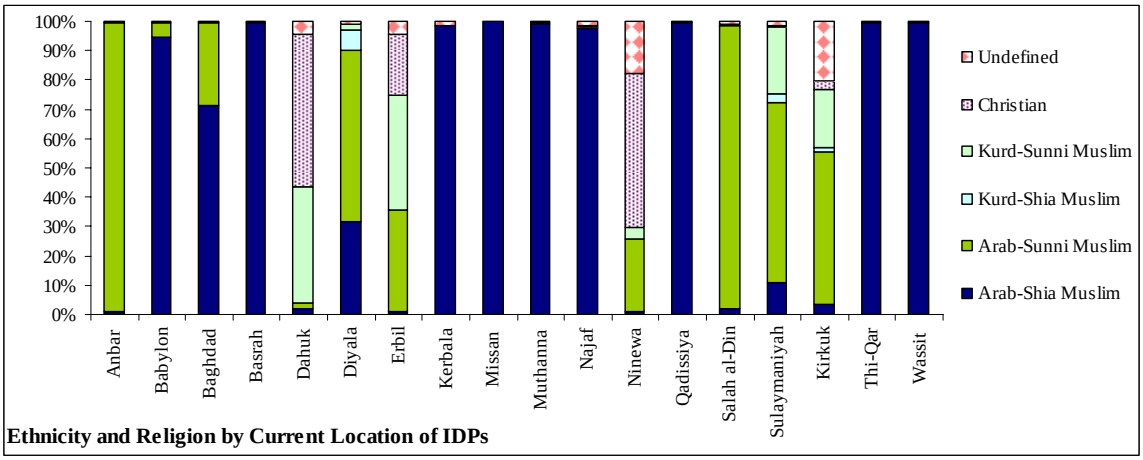
Origin of IDPs by Current Location

IDP Locations 2006 - 2009



Ethnicity and Religion According to Current Location

According to IOM figures, 57% of IDPs are Arab Shia Muslims. 31% are Arab Sunni Muslim, 5% are Christian, 4% are Kurd Sunni Muslim, and 3% belong to other groups.

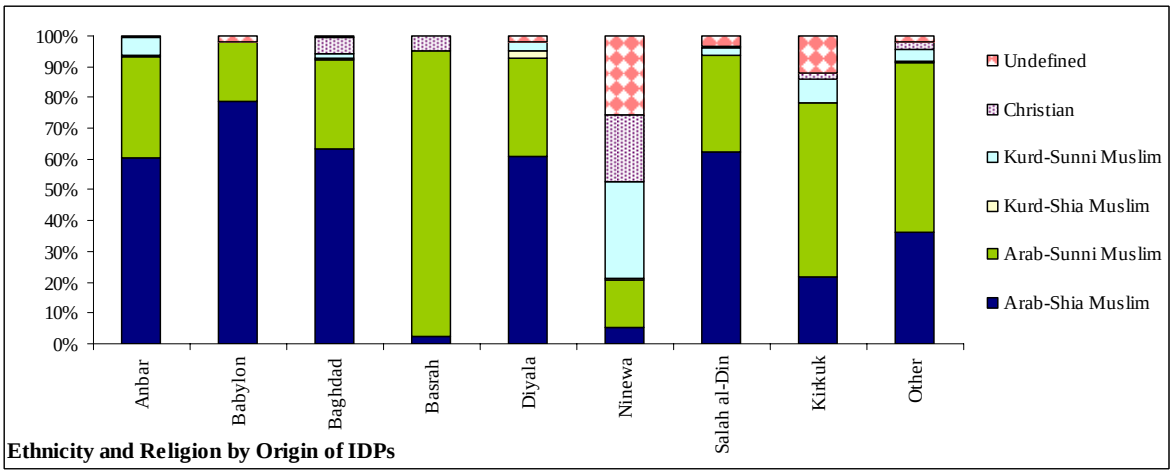


Ethnicity and Religion by Current Location of IDPs

There are notable trends in the ethnic composition of IDPs on the governorate level. For example, all IDPs residing in Anbar are Sunni Muslims, yet 60% of those IDPs who fled from their homes in Anbar are Shia Muslims.

Similarly, the majority of IDPs that fled their homes in Basrah are Sunni Muslims, yet IDPs currently residing in Basrah are Shia Muslims, predominantly from Baghdad. Aside from Basrah, other governorates in the center and south of Iraq, such as Kerbala, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, Thi Qar, and Wassit, do not have any IDP families who originate from the same governorate. Rather, these governorates are recipients of thousands of families who fled from Baghdad and Diyala. All of these IDP families are Shia Muslims.

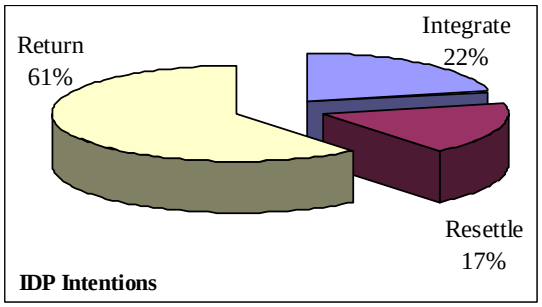
IDPs in Ninewa mostly fall into two groups. Approximately half are from Baghdad, while the other half are from within the government, mainly along disputed border areas.



Ethnicity and Religion by Origin of IDPs

IDP Intentions, Potential Return and Local Integration

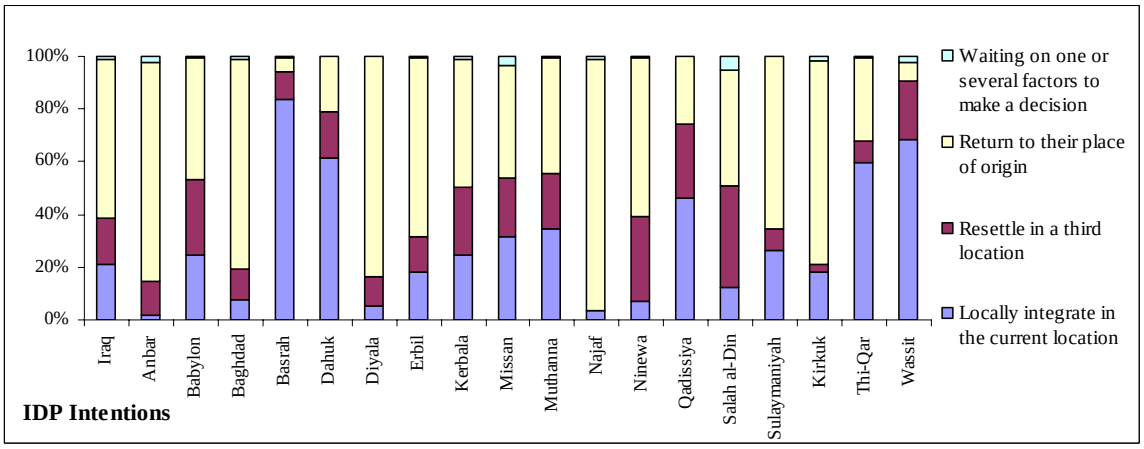
61% of all post-Samarra IDPs would like to return to their places of origin, while another 39% do not wish to do so. Of these, 22% would like to remain and integrate into the current place of displacement, and 17% would like to resettle in a third location.



These intentions vary significantly by region within Iraq. As seen in the chart below, the southern governorates of Basrah (84%), Wassit (69%), Thi Qar (60%) and Qadissiya (46%) have disproportionately high numbers of IDPs who wish to stay and integrate, while very few wish to return.

Intention to return to place of origin is very high in Baghdad (80%) and Diyala (83%), but it is important to understand that most of these IDPs originate from the same governorate and have moved from one settlement to another within the same governorate.

In addition, high numbers of IDPs wish to return home in Najaf (95%) and Anbar (83%). Most of these families originate from Baghdad. Most IDPs in Kirkuk (77%) also wish to return. Most of these originate from other governorates, specifically Baghdad, Diyala, Salah al-Din, and Ninewa.



III. IDP AND RETURNEE HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENT

Summary Points

- **Security and basic needs continue to be serious concerns for both IDP and returnee families across Iraq.**
- **While security has improved significantly since the height of displacement in 2006, some IDPs still feel unsafe to return to their homes.**
- **Access to food, shelter, and employment remain priority needs for vulnerable IDP families across Iraq, and many cannot access the property they left behind.**
- **IDP registration has almost completely stopped, while returnee registration is ongoing yet much lower than the current number of identified returnee families.**

More in-depth information and data are available at http://www.iom-iraq.net/idp.html. IOM's recently released December 2008 Governorate Profiles contain detailed area-specific analysis and comparisons on displacement and return throughout Iraq.

Security/Protection

Since the initial eruption of severe sectarian violence in 2006, security appears to have significantly improved in Iraq, culminating in relatively uneventful January 31 provincial elections in 14 of 18 governorates. Indeed, many returnee families surveyed by IOM displacement monitors cited improved security as a reason for return.

However, security still remains of paramount concern to IDPs and others across the country. In October of 2008 a relatively small and stable rate of displacement was broken when almost 2000 Christian families were displaced from Ninewa governorate due to sectarian-motivated threats and violence. Those who return are still sometimes targeted, and other IDP families do not feel safe enough to return at all.

Evictions remain a protection concern throughout the country, as many IDP families squatting on government or private property are told to leave these shelters. This is occurring in particular in Baghdad, in accordance with Prime Minister Order 101, which permits evictions to facilitate returns. Some of the evicted families were already IDPs. While Order 101 offsets the cost of rent by providing a subsidy to returnee families, not all evicted IDP families have received this assistance. The Government of Iraq (GoI) has however delayed evictions, preferring that this be effected after the local elections at the end of January 2009. There are also policies being discussed to build houses for the squatters.

IDP and Returnee Registration

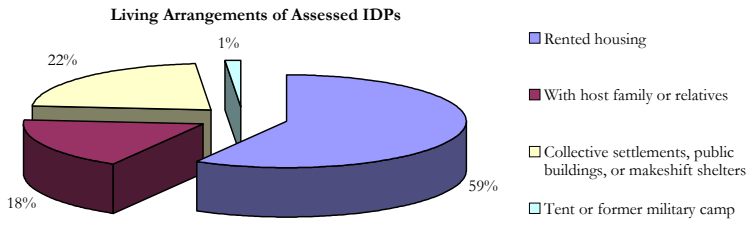
MoDM is currently registering returnee families who are eligible to receive the 1,000,000 Iraqi Dinar (IQD) ($870 USD) stipend in accordance with government order 262. As of January 2009, they had processed 12,969 returnee families, most of whom (9100) were registered through the MoDM returnee centers in Baghdad. 3096 were processed in the Diyala MoDM branch office, and 552 were in Anbar, while the remaining 221 were in other governorates.

The MoDM returnee registration process has captured approximately 26% of the total number of identified returnee families. While some families do not meet all of the specifications necessary to receive the grants, the high number of applicants has also created a registration backlog.

IDP registration has currently stopped in the majority of governorates across Iraq. This is due to both lack of new displacements and the current focus on return, integration, and reintegration for IDP families.

Shelter

IOM assessments reveal that shelter is consistently one of the highest-priority needs reported by IDPs, followed by employment and food. Although the majority (59%) of IDPs assessed by IOM are renting, their finances are dwindling as time passes and rent prices rise. A sizeable minority (18%) is living with host families or friends in crowded conditions, an added burden on households already struggling to provide for themselves. Another 22% live in collective settlements, public buildings, or other makeshift housing. IDPs



living in settlements or public buildings often may be at risk of eviction by local authorities or private owners. Less than 1% lives in tent camps. IDPs view camps as an absolute last resort, due to cultural sensitivities and camps' lack of basic services and harsh living conditions.

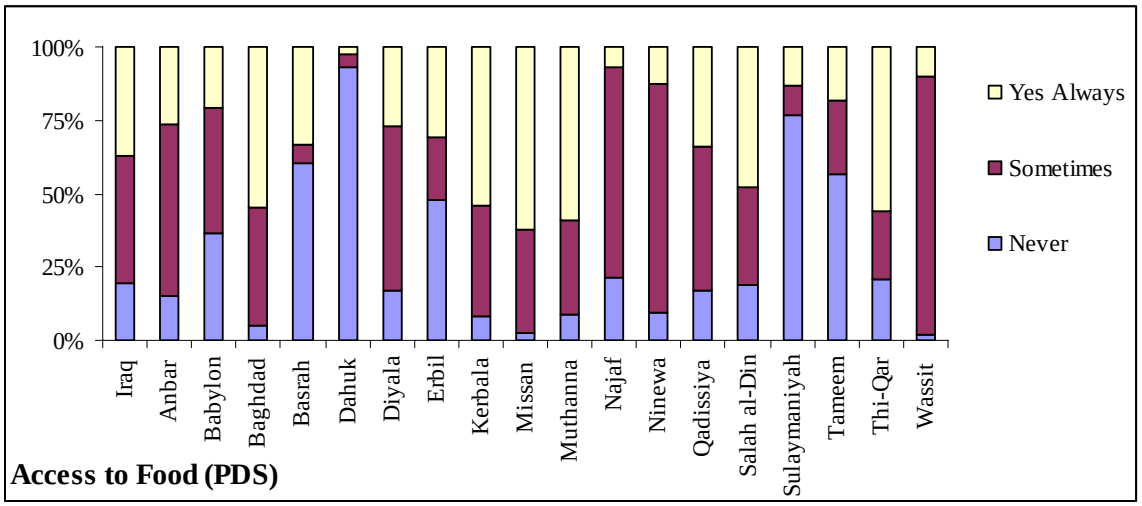
Substandard shelter and a lack of basic services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity are a major factor in the IDP humanitarian crisis. IDPs who are renting do not necessarily have access to these services. IDPs living in tents, public buildings, or makeshift shelters in collective settlements are particularly vulnerable and usually have additional urgent needs in other sectors such as food, health, water, and sanitation.

The MoDM has included in the "National Policy of Return" an aspect of the returnees' right to repossess their property without any encumbrances.

Food/Public Distribution System (PDS)

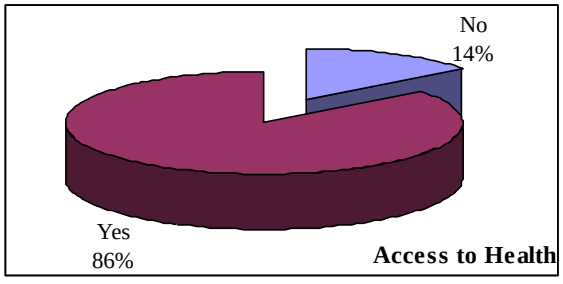
Much of the Iraqi population depends upon the government's PDS food rations, and vulnerable IDP families are particularly in need of this monthly support. However, across the country 19% of post-Samarra IDPs still do not have any access to PDS rations, and another 44% have only periodic access.

Lack of access is particularly high in the three northern governorates, as well as in Basrah and Kirkuk. These IDP families are mostly inter-governorate, having fled from a different governorate. Periodic access is higher in governorates such as Baghdad, Diyala, and Ninewa, where displacement is mostly within the same governorate.



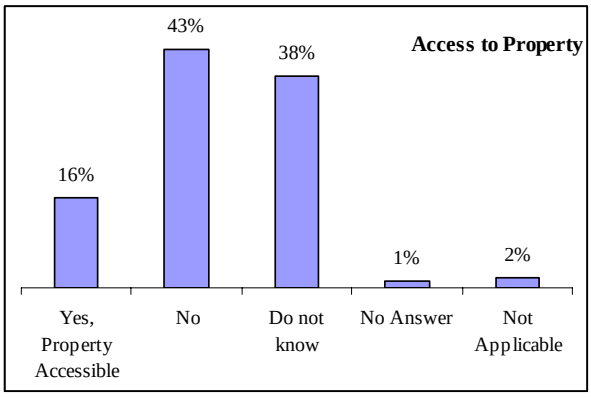
Health Care

Access to health care remains a serious concern for IDPs across Iraq because of their frequently precarious living situations without access to potable water, protection from the elements, or sewage disposal. While 86% of IDPs nationwide report access to health care, this does not ensure that the health care is good quality, nor that the health care facilities have the necessary qualified



staff, medicine, and equipment. Health care services in Iraq have deteriorated greatly due to the exodus of qualified professionals, a severe shortage of medication and equipment, and damage to medical facilities.

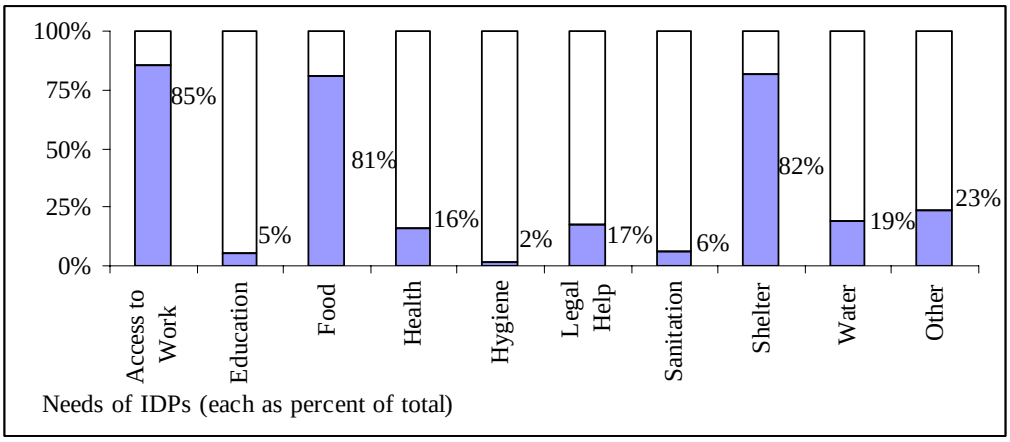
Access to Property



As assistance for restoring lives and livelihoods of IDPs and returnees in Iraq progresses, one of the major issues will continue to be resolution of property matters. Currently according to IOM displacement monitoring, only 16% of post-Samarra IDPs have access to the property they left behind. Another 43% do not have any access, primarily because the property is occupied or destroyed. 38% of surveyed IDPs have not been able to find out the status of their property, often for security reasons.

Priority Needs

When asked about their most pressing needs, post-Samarra IDPs overwhelmingly name food (81%), shelter (82%), and access to work (85%). Health, water, legal help, and other needs are also chief concerns:

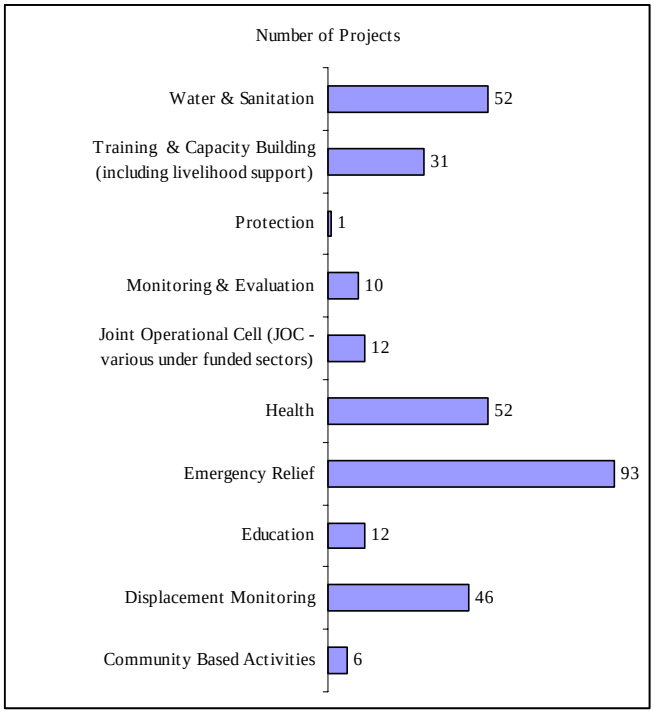


IV. IOM HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

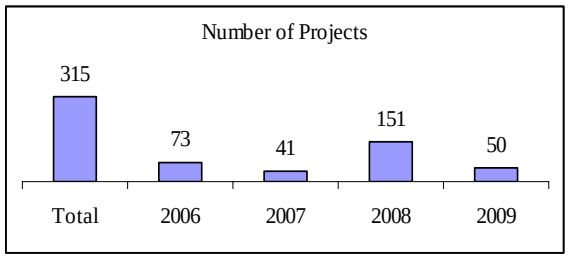
Summary Points

- **From training of traditional birth attendants, to emergency distribution responses for displacement crises such as Sadr City, to Kurdish language training for Arabs displaced to the north, to distribution of wheelchairs, IOM continues to find creative, cross-sectoral solutions for assistance to displaced populations and vulnerable host communities in Iraq. (See also the detailed map in Annex 1.)**
- **Recently IOM has provided transport, emergency NFI kits, and in-kind grants for business generation to returnee families returning to Baghdad and Diyala.**
- **Since 2006 IOM has completed 315 assistance projects in 952 locations with direct costs of over 32 million USD, as detailed in the charts below.**

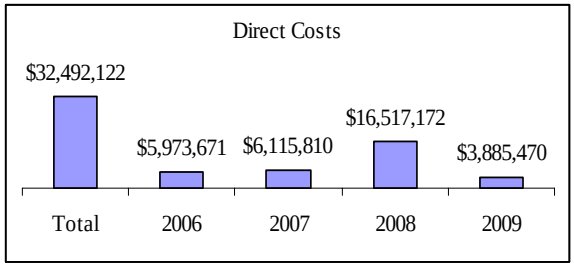
IOM has successfully assisted post-Samarra IDP, returnee, and host community families in every governorate of Iraq with 315 projects, divided among the following sectors:



Projects were distributed across the years as follows:



Direct costs for projects are as follows for each year:



In addition, the government of Iraq has adopted a policy on "Returning Displaced Persons" in Iraq. It has become clear that recent trends indicate the viability of an organized return program, where IOM and the international community can play a significant role. The scope and complexity of the Iraqi displacement issue is beyond the current capacity of the GoI and therefore calls for international involvement.

V. CONCLUSION

Sectarian violence and displacement resulting from the 22 February 2006 bombing of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra peaked in 2006, and new displacement is today no more than a trickle. Yet 270,000 families continue to live in displacement, making more than 5% of Iraq's total population particularly vulnerable. 22% live in collective settlements, public buildings, or makeshift housing; 14% have no access to health care; 19% cannot access their PDS rations, and another 44% have only periodic access to PDS.

Overall, 61% of all post-Samarra IDPs would like to return to their places of origin, while another 39% do not wish to do so, but rather want to integrate into the place of displacement or into a third location. In many cases IDP families do not have adequate means to act on these desires to move ahead with their lives, even when the security situation permits. Access to employment is consistently listed by IDP families as a top priority need. In addition, 43% of IDPs do not have access to the property they left behind.

The vast majority of post-Samarra IDP families are from Baghdad, Diyala, and Ninewa governorates, which saw some of the worst post-Samarra sectarian violence. Most of these families (83%) are displaced within their home governorates, and most wish to return home. Indeed, these governorates are home to the majority of the 49,432 returnee families identified by IOM displacement monitors. These families require sustainable solutions along with continued security improvement in order to make their return permanent and successful.

Caused chiefly by sectarian violence, conditions of displacement in Iraq are themselves also characterized by ethnic and religious patterns. For example, according to IOM assessments IDPs who fled to southern governorates are mostly Shia Arabs who left a different governorate, and they mostly wish to integrate into their places of displacement. They are less likely to have even occasional access to PDS rations, and they also require support for basic needs and livelihoods in order to begin anew.

Despite limited funding and insecurity, IOM continues to assist the displaced, returning Iraqis, and host communities with emergency food, water and household item distributions, community assistance projects, and advocacy. Since 2006, IOM has successfully completed 315 projects in 952 locations with direct costs of over 32 million USD. However, overall assistance to these vulnerable communities remains inadequate.

The interventions indicated above have also served to complement GoI efforts, local and otherwise, in search of sustainable, durable solutions. Spontaneous IDP returns continue, and in some cases, there is need for local integration at the initial sites of displacement or settlement elsewhere. However, until these solutions can be successfully implemented, displacement and the protection needs for the particularly vulnerable displaced will continue to be a chief concern for the future of Iraq.

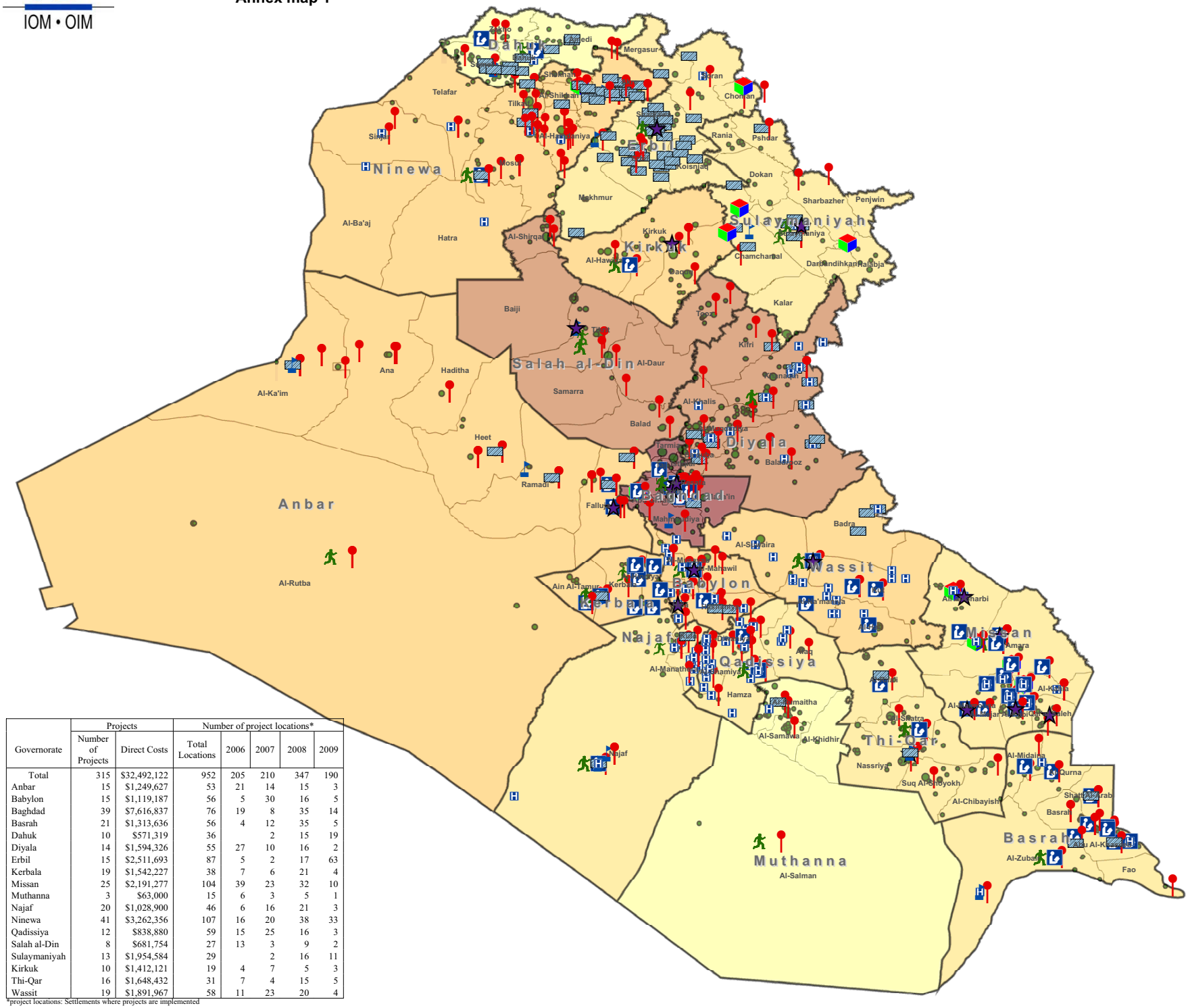
For further information on IDPs and returnees in Iraq, please contact Martin Ocaga, IOM Iraq Program Manager at mocaga@iom.int or Liana Paris, IDP Monitoring Program, at lparis@iom.int (+962 6 565 9660 extensions 1061 and 1033).

IOM Iraq - IDP Programme Projects 2006 - 2009

Annex map 1

IOM • OIM

IOM DISPLACEMENT MONITORING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS



Legend

IDP Locations by # of Families

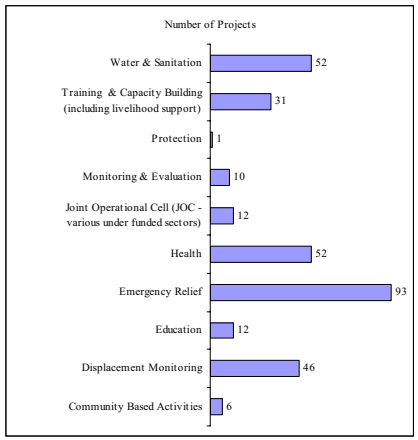
- 1 - 99.
- 99 - 499
- 499 - 999
- 999 - 2999
- 2999 - 5000

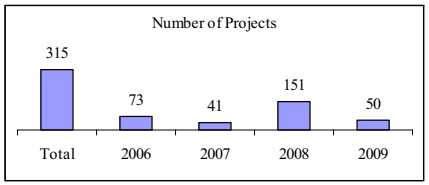
IDP Families per Governorate

- 3000 - 4999
- 5000 - 9999
- 10000 - 14999
- 15000 - 19999
- 60000 - 90000
- Governorate Boundary

IOM PROJECT LOCATIONS AND SECTOR

- COMMUNITY BASED ACTIVITIES
- DISPLACEMENT MONITORING
- EDUCATION
- EMERGENCY RELIEF
- HEALTH
- Joint Operational Cell (JOC)
- TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING
- WAT/SAN





Governorate	Projects		Number of project locations*				
	Number of Projects	Direct Costs	Total Locations	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	315	$32,492,122	952	205	210	347	190
Anbar	15	$1,249,627	53	21	14	15	3
Babylon	15	$1,119,187	56	5	30	16	5
Baghdad	39	$7,616,837	76	19	8	35	14
Basrah	21	$1,313,636	56	4	12	35	5
Dahuk	10	$571,319	36		2	15	19
Diyala	14	$1,594,326	55	27	10	16	2
Erbil	15	$2,511,693	87	5	2	17	63
Kerbala	19	$1,542,227	38	7	6	21	4
Missan	25	$2,191,277	104	39	23	32	10
Muthanna	3	$63,000	15	6	3	5	1
Najaf	20	$1,028,900	46	6	16	21	3
Ninewa	41	$3,262,356	107	16	20	38	33
Qadissiya	12	$838,880	59	15	25	16	3
Salah al-Din	8	$681,754	27	13	3	9	2
Sulaymaniyah	13	$1,954,584	29		2	16	11
Kirkuk	10	$1,412,121	19	4	7	5	3
Thi-Qar	16	$1,648,432	31	7	4	15	5
Wassit	19	$1,891,967	58	11	23	20	4

*project locations: Settlements where projects are implemented

Iraq - IDP Families and Locations per Governorate February 2009

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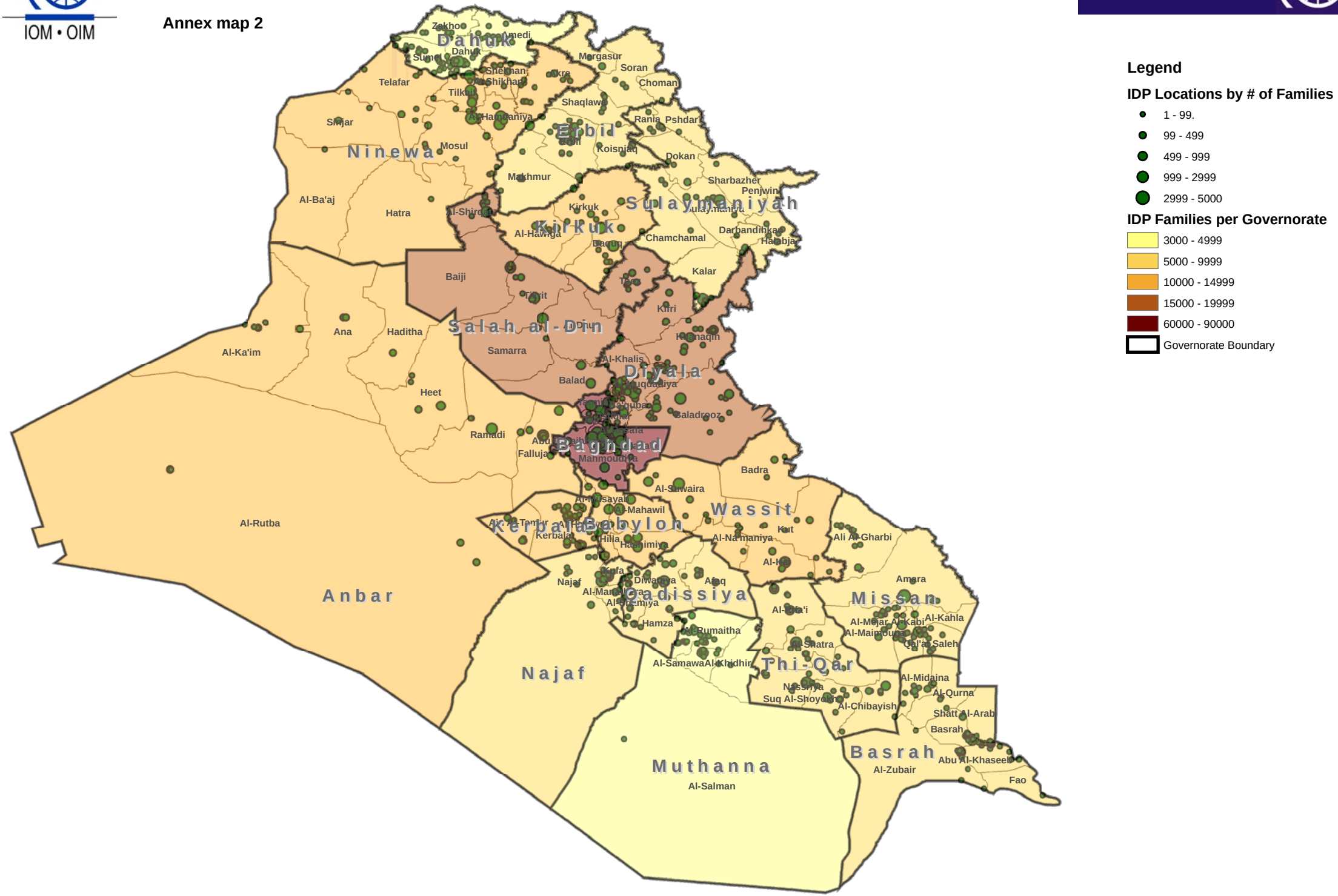
IOM DISPLACEMENT MONITORING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Annex map 2



Legend

IDP Locations by # of Families

- 1 - 99.
- 99 - 499
- 499 - 999
- 999 - 2999
- 2999 - 5000

IDP Families per Governorate

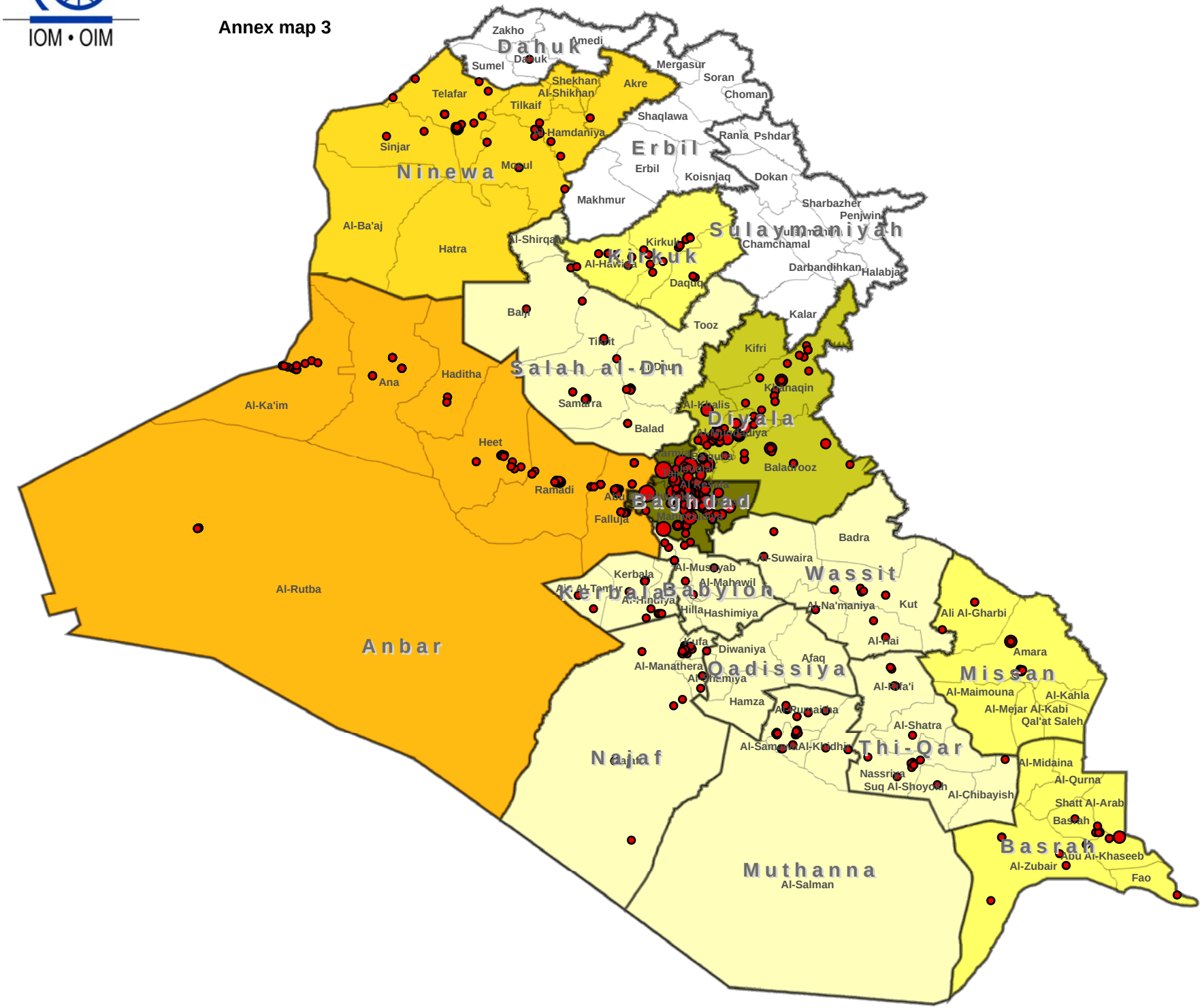
- 3000 - 4999
- 5000 - 9999
- 10000 - 14999
- 15000 - 19999
- 60000 - 90000
- Governorate Boundary

Iraq - Returnee Families and Locations per Governorate February 2009

IOM • OIM

IOM DISPLACEMENT MONITORING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Annex map 3



Legend

Returnee locations by # of Families

- 1 - 99
- 100 - 199
- 200 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1000 and more

Returnee Families per Governorate

- No data
- < 500
- 500 - 700
- 1500
- 4500
- 8800
- 31500
- Governorate Boundary