

### Situation Overview

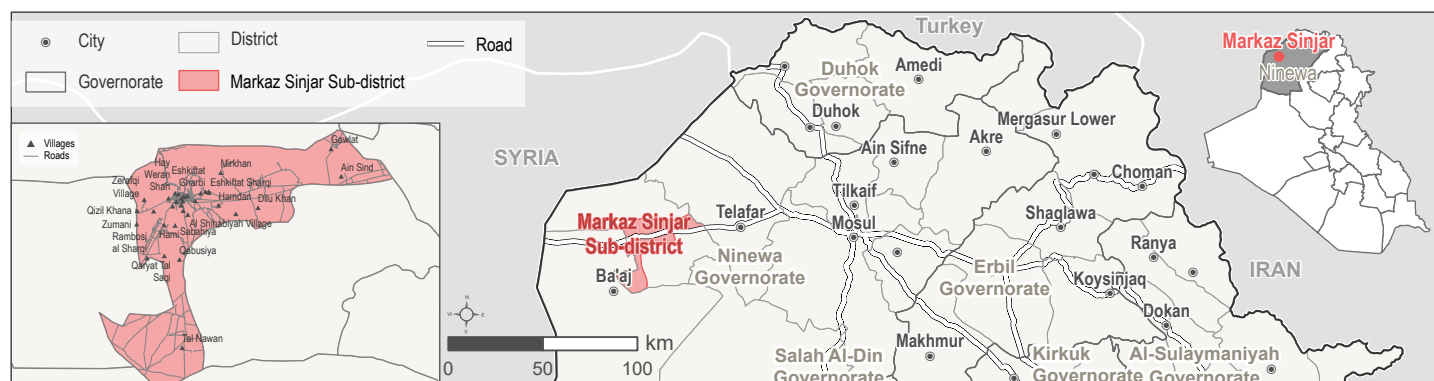
In 2019 and 2020, the numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to their area of origin (AoO) or being re-displaced for a second time increased, coupled with persisting challenges in relation to lack of services, infrastructure and - in some cases - security in areas of origin.<sup>1</sup> The need to better understand the sustainability of returns, conditions for the (re)integration of IDPs and returnees, and the impact of their presence on access to services and social cohesion has been an identified need for humanitarian and development planning. Decisions related to the closure of all IDP camps by the end of 2020<sup>2</sup> have also impacted these dynamics.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)'s Emergency Displacement Tracking<sup>3</sup> recorded around 6,394 households returned to non-camp locations between 31 August and 31 October 2020, 60% of which were recorded in Ninewa Governorate. Sinjar District witnessed 57% of the returns in the governorate, representing 34% of the total returns during the mentioned period.<sup>4</sup>

### Markaz Sinjar Sub-district

Markaz Sinjar is a sub-district of Sinjar District, located in the western area of Ninewa Governorate close the Iraq-Syria border. Key informants (KIs) reported that Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was housing an average of 16,781 households (HH) before 2014.

### Coverage Map



### Background and Methodology

To date, IOM DTM's bi-monthly tracking<sup>8</sup> of returnees and IDPs provides an overview of numbers and trends in movement and returns. Simultaneously, since 2018, the Returns Index<sup>9</sup> was run as a joint initiative of DTM, Social Inquiry and the Returns Working Group (RWG), collecting data bi-monthly to provide indicative trends in the severity of conditions in areas of return (AoR) nationwide. Similarly, the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, IOM DTM, the Protection Working Group (PWG) and RWG have conducted assessments with IDPs that have left camps following or in anticipation of closures to better understand and map areas of return and secondary displacement.

REACH Initiative (REACH) has been conducting nationwide multi-sectoral assessments which include indicators concerning sustainability of returns. In addition, in light of recent movement dynamics, REACH conducted an assessment in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district to have an immediate understanding and in-depth profiling of needs and community inter-relations between remainee, returnee,<sup>10</sup> and/or IDP populations.<sup>11</sup> This report outlines the overall conditions to determine how and to what extent they are conducive to sustainable solutions.

In August 2014, the the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) undertook military activities in the district of Sinjar, threatening minority groups and resulting in the displacement of over 200,000 people.<sup>5</sup> While ISIL was dislodged from Sinjar in 2017, the return of those who fled has been hindered by the district's disputed status between the Federal Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).<sup>5</sup> In October 2020, the GoI and KRG signed an agreement on the status of Sinjar District in preparation for the return of the displaced populations originally from the district.<sup>6</sup>

### Reported Population Profile (by 16 community leader KIs)

- 16,580-16,981** households were residing in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district before the events in 2014.
- 14,819-15,331** pre-2014 households in Markaz Sinjar were displaced in 2014.
- 13,791-14,475** households displaced since 2014 have returned to their AoO in Markaz Sinjar.<sup>7</sup>
- 3,249-3,675** IDP households (AoO not specified) reside in Markaz Sinjar settlements.












Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was selected for the assessment as: social cohesion severity<sup>12</sup> is high; it is an AoO for IDPs in camps at risk of closure and dynamic population movements to this district were recently reported by relevant actors through the RWG. The findings are based on 43 KI interviews conducted between 26 November and 1 December 2020, combining remote qualitative and quantitative data collection adapted to the context and restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings are grounded on KI level data and should therefore be considered as indicative. Findings represent the perceptions of interviewed KIs<sup>13</sup> and are supported with secondary data. Purposive sampling methods were employed to identify KIs.

### KI Profile

Markaz Sinjar Sub-district	
Community leaders <sup>14</sup>	16 KIs <div style="width: 100%;"></div>
Remainees/non-displaced	4 KIs <div style="width: 25%;"></div>
IDPs (displaced from the area) <sup>15</sup>	8 KIs <div style="width: 50%;"></div>
IDPs (displaced in the area) <sup>16</sup>	5 KIs <div style="width: 31%;"></div>
Returnees (more than 3 months ago)	5 KIs <div style="width: 31%;"></div>
Returnees (less than 3 months ago)	5 KIs <div style="width: 31%;"></div>
<b>43 KIs<sup>17</sup></b>	

### Key findings

Overall, Markaz Sinjar is perceived by KIs to have a positive environment in terms of security and community acceptance of certain groups. Many households have returned due to a sense of increased safety and security in their AoO in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district. However, IDP KIs originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced elsewhere and returnees KIs reported security concerns related to the presence of armed groups in the area. Further efforts are required to improve perceptions of safety and security, social cohesion, participation and interaction between different groups. In addition, damage or destroyed housing reportedly poses a risk to the sustainability of returns and was identified as the main barrier to return. Some KIs reported differences in access to services between different groups, mainly affecting IDPs and returnees. Understanding distinct barriers to access services will improve the overall conduciveness for sustainable returns, while improving the well-being of vulnerable groups<sup>18</sup> mainly female-headed households, child-headed households and unaccompanied/separated children (UASC).

-  The situation regarding returns to Markaz Sinjar remains fluid, with ongoing returns occurring affected by the camps closure decisions. According to the REACH Intentions Survey from September 2020, IDP households from 27 camps in Al-Suleimaniya, Baghdad, Duhok, Erbil, Ninewa and Salah Al-Din governorates have indicated Markaz Sinjar as their area of return.<sup>19</sup> Twelve per cent (12%) of the interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar have indicated their intention to return in the short/long term.<sup>20, 21</sup> Camps closure has been identified by KIs as a push factor for returns to Markaz Sinjar, exemplified by recent returns of households to their AoO.
-  Other reported barriers to return included: damaged or destroyed housing; lack of basic public services and job opportunities; and concerns around housing, land and property (HLP) as some households do not have the necessary documents to claim their properties. These factors are not only obstacles to future returns but also pose a risk to the sustainability of returns.
-  Perceived improved safety and security was the main pull factor for returns to Markaz Sinjar. In general, most KIs noted that community members feel safe in Markaz Sinjar, that there are no restrictions of movements and that there are no specific groups that are not welcomed. However, a returnee KI reported concerns around the presence of armed groups and the sensitive security situation in Markaz Sinjar as factors which negatively affect the freedom of movement. In addition, persisting challenges related to safety and security were reported by IDP KIs originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced elsewhere such as the fear of persecution in AoO or perceived ISIL affiliation.
-  Recent and expected return movements into Markaz Sinjar were reportedly positively and negatively affecting the perception of access to job opportunities and access to assistance across the different respondent groups:
  -  On one hand, these movements reportedly positively contributed to increased job opportunities due to the return of business owners and access to assistance reportedly increased due to the response from different service providers to the recent returns.
  -  On the other hand, they were negatively perceived due to the presence of higher competition in the labour market and it was reported that the level of household assistance decreased due to increased demand given the presence of a higher number of households in the area.
-  There are reported differences in access to services across different groups with IDPs and returnees persistently reported to have less access to housing, housing rehabilitation, basic public services and being more at risk of eviction. This is commonly attributed to the lack of relationships and connections they have in the community. Vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, child-headed households, UASC, large families,<sup>22</sup> elderly-headed households and people with disabilities also face distinct challenges to access services.
-  Access to livelihoods was reportedly unequal for different vulnerable groups namely people with disabilities, UASC, elderly, child heads of household and people with less connections. In addition, an overall decrease in the diversity of employment opportunities was reported in Markaz Sinjar at the time of data collection compared with 2014.
-  Healthcare was the commonly reported primary community need by all respondent groups. Community leader KIs and remainee KIs reported the need for further efforts to restore public infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, water and sanitation systems. Infrastructure rehabilitation was also related to the availability of job opportunities, modernisation of the area and enhanced access to services. Housing rehabilitation was commonly cited by returnee KIs and IDP KIs as the primary community need.
-  Reportedly, those with vulnerable profiles are less involved in community projects. In particular, child-headed households are the group reportedly least involved in humanitarian activities and projects, in addition to UASC, people with disabilities, returnees and female-headed households, suggesting a need for further outreach and participation of different population groups.
-  Lack of harmony in the community as the main reported barrier for interaction with other population groups might affect the sense of community therefore the (re)integration of returnees and IDPs displaced in Markaz Sinjar. Friendship, kinship ties between community members and work relationships are reported factors to promote participation in social events for different population groups.

### Recent household returns, failed returns and family separation

#### Recent returns

**35-67 households** returned to Markaz Sinjar in the six months prior to data collection from Dohuq Governorate, specifically from non-camp areas in Aqra District and from Chamishku camp, in Zakho District, as reported by 11 KIs (out of 43 KIs). The rest of the KIs (20 KIs) reported no returns or did not know about recent movements (12 KIs).

The latest round of the REACH Intentions Survey, conducted between August and September 2020 in formal IDP camps across Iraq, showed that 3% of interviewed households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in nine camps<sup>23</sup> located in Baghdad, Dohuq, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Erbil governorates expressed their short-term intention (three months following data collection) to return to their AoO.<sup>21</sup> These intentions may be affected by ongoing discussions and planning surrounding camp closures and consolidation, which picked up pace after the data collection period.

The main reasons for returns were reportedly the **sense of increased security** in Markaz Sinjar (9 out of 11 KIs), the **nostalgia about previous life in AoO** (2 KIs) and **following the return of other family members** (1 KI).

Reportedly, recent returns had positive and negative perceived impacts on access to livelihoods and assistance for all population groups. On one hand, recent returns reportedly contributed to **increased job opportunities** due to the return of business owners (6 out of 11 KIs) and **access to assistance reportedly increased** due to the response from different service providers to the recent returns (6 KIs). On the other hand, these movements were also perceived as negative due to the presence of **higher competition in the labour market** (5 KIs) and it was reported that the level of **household assistance decreased** due to increased demand given the presence of a higher number of households in the area (5 KIs).

#### Failed returns

During data collection, over the half of the KIs (24 out of 43 KIs) reported that there were **no attempted returns** to Markaz Sinjar in the six months prior to data collection. The rest of the KIs (13 KIs) did not know and six KIs refused to answer (four community leader KIs, a remainee KI and an IDP KI from Markaz Sinjar displaced elsewhere).

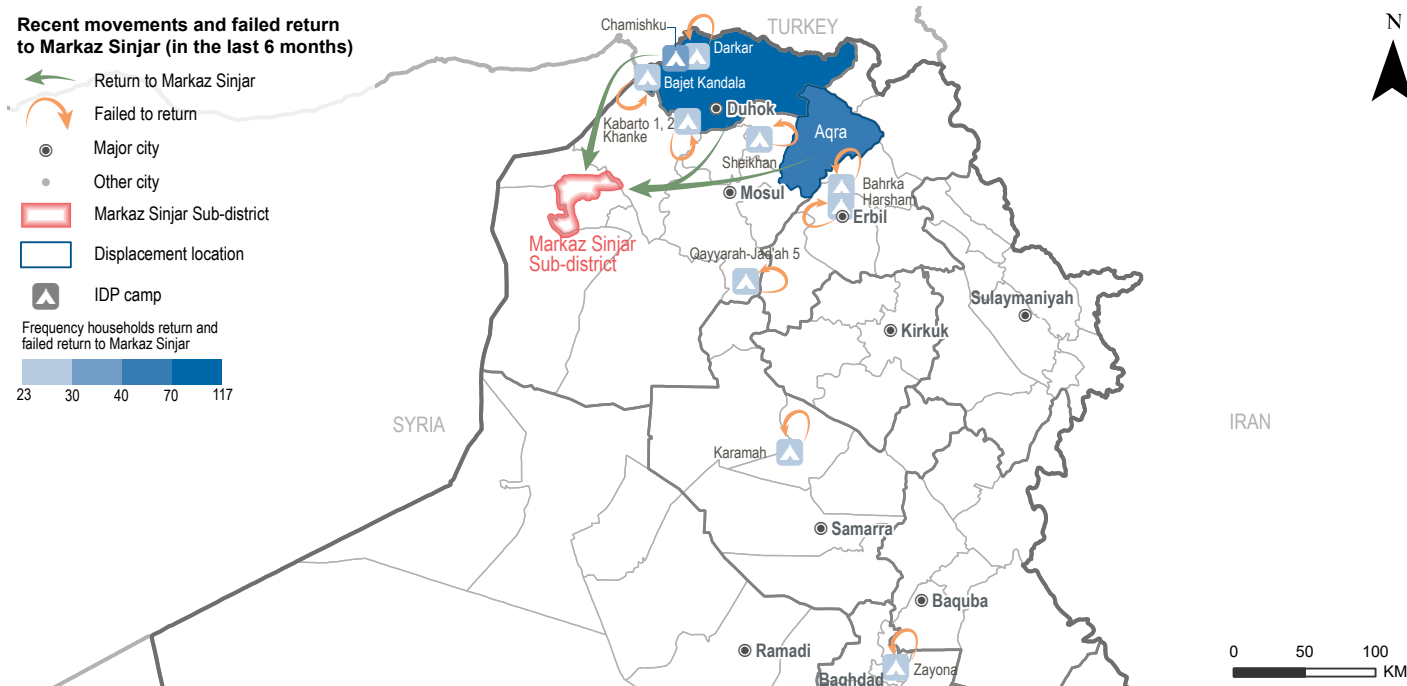
REACH Intentions Survey showed that 9% of interviewed households originally from Markaz Sinjar reportedly attempted to return but these movements were not sustainable. The three most reported reasons for failed returns were: the perceived lack of security forces in the area (49%); fear or trauma associated with returning to their AoO (28%); and, presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW) in surrounding lands (9%).<sup>21</sup> It is assumed that the perceptions in this assessment and the responses in the camp profiling and intention updates differ as the latter case represents only the views of IDPs originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps.

#### Family separation

During data collection, 21 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are **no households with members who are displaced**. The rest of the KIs (21 KIs) did not know and a community leader KI refused to answer.

A study by Dorcas in June 2020 found that 35% of families interviewed [originally from Sinjar District] had returned [to their AoO] to join some of the family members who had returned already. The reunification process has continued since, in general, it is reasonable to assume that IDPs have "a strong preference to return to their places of origin".<sup>24</sup> Rather than face additional months of separation, some families are making the difficult choice to reunite in Sinjar, even if conditions are still challenging.<sup>25</sup>

#### Recent movements and failed return to Markaz Sinjar (in the last 6 months)



### Expected household returns and displacement

#### Expected returns

During data collection, 8 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are **no expected returns** in the six months following data collection. The majority of the KIs (30 KIs) did not know about expected return movements and five KIs refused to answer (four community leader KIs and a remainee KI).

However, 30 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are drivers that might result in further returns (13 KIs did not know).

#### Reported drivers for expected returns (out of 30 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Perceived increase of safety and security	25 KIs	
Camp closure in areas of displacement (AoD)	5 KIs	
Nostalgia about previous life in AoD	2 KIs	
Following the return of other family members	2 KIs	

REACH Intentions Survey showed that 8% of interviewed households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in ten camps<sup>27</sup> located in Duhoq, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Erbil governorates expressed their long-term intention (12 months following data collection) to return to their AoO.<sup>21</sup> These intentions may be affected by ongoing discussions and planning surrounding camp closures and consolidation, which picked up pace after the data collection period.

#### Reported barriers to return (out of 43 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Destroyed/damaged housing in AoO	36 KIs	
Perceived lack of services and jobs in AoO	24 KIs	
Lack of documents needed to claim properties	9 KIs	
Perceived security concerns in AoO	3 KIs	
Lack of specialised medical treatment in AoO	3 KIs	
Fear of persecution in AoO or perceived ISIL affiliation	2 KIs	
Housing is rented in AoO	1 KI	

In addition to destroyed/damage housing and perceived lack of job opportunities, during the REACH Intentions Survey, 88% of the interviewed households originally from Markaz Sinjar reported that the main barriers to return are related the trauma from the past events of 2014 and perceived presence of extremist groups (32%), perceived community tensions and discrimination (29%), perceived lack of security forces in AoO (21%), and movements restrictions imposed by armed groups or militias in AoO (13%).<sup>21</sup>

Further returns reportedly could lead to positive and negative impacts. On one hand, expected returns reportedly might contribute to **increased job opportunities** with the return of business owners (10 out of 43 KIs) and it was reported an expected **increase on assistance** due the expected attention of service providers in the area following the returns movements (6 KIs). At the same time, it was reported that there would be a **higher competition for the limited available job opportunities** (17 KIs), in addition to a expected **decrease of households level assistance** due to the presence of a higher number of households in the area (19 KIs), and the **perceived limited capacity of humanitarian and governmental actors to absorb the demand for assistance** (1 KI).

#### Expected host community departures

During data collection, 18 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are **no expected departures of host community households** in the six months following data collection. Over the half of the KIs (23 KIs) did not know about expected host community departure movements and two community leader KIs refused to answer.

However, 20 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are drivers that might result in further departures. The rest of the KIs (22 KIs) did not know and a community leader KI refused to answer.

#### Reported drivers for expected host community departures (out of 20 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Perceived lack of services and jobs	20 KIs	
Arrival of security forces	2 KIs	
Perceived lack of security	2 KIs	
Lack of specialised medical treatment in AoO	1 KI	

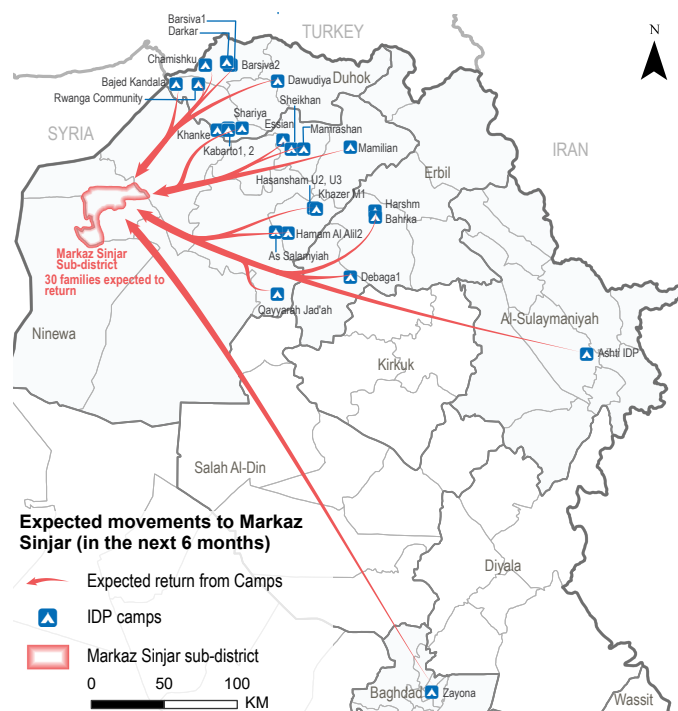
#### Expected IDP arrivals

During data collection, 17 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there is **no expected displacement of IDP households** to Markaz Sinjar in the six months following data collection. The majority of the KIs (23 KIs) did not know about expected IDP arrivals and three KIs refused to answer (a community leader KI, a remainee KI and an IDP KI from Markaz Sinjar displaced elsewhere).

However, 29 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that there are drivers that might result in further IDP household arrivals. The rest of the KIs (13 KIs) did not know and a remainee KI refused to answer.

#### Reported drivers for expected arrivals (out of 29 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Perceived increased safety and security	26 KIs	
Camp closure in AoD	2 KIs	
Following arrival of other family members	2 KIs	





### Primary Community Needs

#### Primary community needs in Markaz Sinjar (out of 43 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

	First Need	Second Need	Third Need
Healthcare	13 KIs	11 KIs	13 KIs
House rehabilitation	10 KIs	5 KIs	3 KIs
Water and sanitation	8 KIs	8 KIs	7 KIs
Electricity	5 KIs	5 KIs	7 KIs
Livelihoods	4 KIs	4 KIs	3 KIs
Education	3 KIs	8 KIs	6 KIs
Infrastructure rehabilitation	0	1 KI	2 KIs
Security	0	1 KI	0
Food	0	0	1 KI

KIs reported that the primary need for the community was **healthcare**. There was reported a decline in the quality of the public healthcare in Markaz Sinjar due to the lack of specialised medical staff (24 KIs) and lack of preparedness to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic (4 KIs). As a result, families resorted to services from the private health sector at high costs, negatively affecting their monthly expenditure (19 KIs); and other families were forced to move to other areas for public medical services as they cannot afford the cost of the private health sector in Markaz Sinjar (7 KIs).

The second main community need most commonly reported was **housing rehabilitation** which was reportedly related to housing damaged, burnt or uninhabitable in Markaz Sinjar as reported by 15 KIs. Reportedly, households have no resources to rehabilitate their houses (12 KIs), rents are too expensive (3 KIs) and families resorted to illegal occupation as per two returnee KIs.

The third main community need most commonly reported was **access to water and sanitation**. There was reported a limited access to public water services in Markaz Sinjar (6 KIs) and reportedly the lack of public filter maintenance resulted in to water pollution (11 KIs). To cope, households resorted to buying bottled water (11 KIs) and another household reportedly depended on wells as the main potable water source.

#### Most reported primary community needs per respondent group<sup>26, 28</sup>

##### Community leaders (out of 16 KIs)

Healthcare	15 KIs
Education	11 KIs
Water and sanitation	7 KIs

##### Remainees (out of 4 KIs)

Healthcare	3 KIs
Education	3 KIs
Water and sanitation	3 KIs

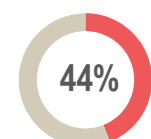
##### Returnees (out of 10 KIs)

House rehabilitation	8 KIs
Electricity	8 KIs
Healthcare	7 KIs

##### IDPs (displaced from and in the area)<sup>15, 16</sup> (out of 13 KIs)

Healthcare	11 KIs
House rehabilitation	8 KIs
Livelihoods	7 KIs

### Access to humanitarian aid and presence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)



of KIs (19 out of 43 KIs) reported perceiving that there are no NGOs implementing activities and projects present in Markaz Sinjar at the time of data collection.

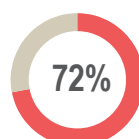
Ten KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that **there are NGOs implementing food security programming, infrastructure rehabilitation, livelihood activities and non-food items (NFIs) distributions** in the area. The rest of the KIs (4 KIs) did not know and a returnee KI refused to answer.

According to REACH Intentions Survey, 19% of interviewed IDP households reported the provision of assistance in their AoO in Markaz Sinjar, and 89% of them reported that assistance was provided by humanitarian actors.<sup>21</sup>

As reported by 9 KIs (out of 10 KIs) **child-headed households** are the least involved group in humanitarian activities and projects, in addition to **UASC, people with disabilities, returnees** and **female-headed households**.

*"Implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation activities are important for the modernisation of the area. Its continuous development will allow for enhanced provision of services to the community."*

- Male community leader KI -



of KIs (31 out of 43 KIs) reported that the **increased availability of humanitarian aid would be a factor encouraging returns** to Markaz Sinjar. Five KIs reported that it is not a factor that would encourage return, five KIs did not know, and two community leader KIs refused to answer.

The most needed projects or activities in Markaz Sinjar as reported by 42 KIs (out of 43 KIs) were:

Livelihoods	23 KIs
Housing rehabilitation	14 KIs
Water and sanitation	3 KIs
COVID-19 awareness	1 KI
Social cohesion	1 KI

During REACH Intentions Survey, interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar reported activities or needs to be covered to encourage further returns. The most reported needs were: increased safety and security in AoO (55%), housing rehabilitation (49%), access to basic services including healthcare and education (42%), and access to livelihood opportunities generating income (32%).<sup>21</sup>

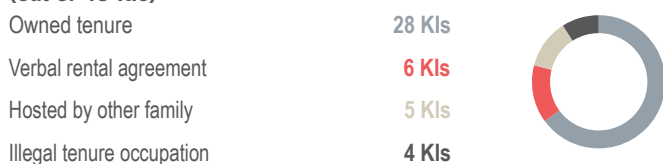
### Perceptions on access to housing, basic public services and livelihoods

#### Access to housing

Most of the KIs (37 out of 43 KIs) reported that the majority of families in Markaz Sinjar reside in houses, and two KIs (a community leader KI and a returnee) reported that other households reside in apartments.

Four IDP KIs reported that some households in their community reside in tents; including **returnees, child-headed households, UASC, people with disabilities, large households and elderly-headed households**, as reported by 22 KIs (out of 43 KIs).

#### Reported housing agreement for the majority of the HHs (out of 43 KIs)



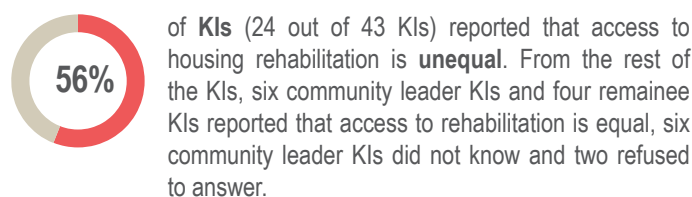
IDP KIs (5 KIs) reported that the majority of IDP households reside in houses or tents under a verbal rental agreement, other households are hosted by families in the community. Returnee KIs (6 KIs) reported that the majority of the returnee households own houses in Markaz Sinjar and four returnee KIs reported that some returnee households resorted to illegal tenure occupation.<sup>29</sup> Community leader and remainee KIs reported that the majority of the households in the community reside in owned houses.<sup>30</sup>

#### Housing damage proportion

**30%-50%** of **houses** in Markaz Sinjar were damaged during military operations in 2014, as reported by all KIs (43 KIs).<sup>31, 32</sup>

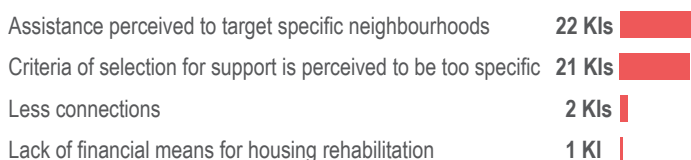
IDPs and **returnees** are reportedly more likely to **reside in damaged or unfinished buildings/houses** (22 out of 43 KIs). In addition, 22 KIs reported that **UASC, child-headed households, people with disabilities, large households, elderly-headed households and female-headed households** are more affected.

#### Access to housing rehabilitation

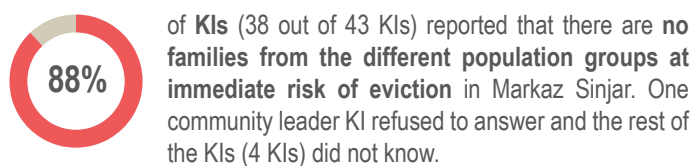


As reported by 22 KIs (out of 24 KIs) IDPs and **returnees** have less access to housing rehabilitation, in addition to **child-headed households, UASC, people with disabilities and elderly-headed households**.

#### Reported barriers to access assistance for rehabilitation (out of 24 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

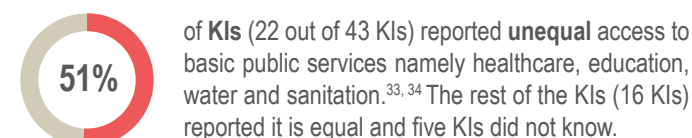


#### Risk of eviction



IDPs and **returnees** are most at **risk of eviction** as reported by 22 KIs (out of 43 KIs), in addition to **UASC, people with disabilities, child-headed households, elderly-headed households, large households and people with less connections** due to a perceived lack of resources.

#### Access to basic public services

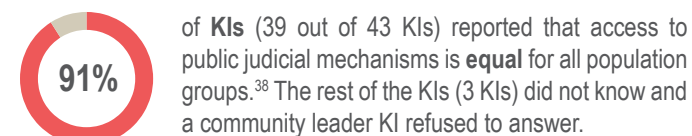


KIs (18 out of 39 KIs) reported that IDPs and **returnees**, in addition to **child-headed households, UASC, people with disabilities, elderly-headed households** have less access to basic public services due to having **less connections**. **Large households** were reportedly affected due to a perceived lack of resources.

Related to access to **public education**, 41 KIs (out of 43 KIs) reported that boys and girls between 6-15 years old can access school and there are no children between 6-15 years out of school in Markaz Sinjar. However, there was reported a perceived decline in the quality of public education in Markaz Sinjar (16 KIs). The lack of gratuitous distribution of books and/or educational stationery for students forced families to resort to buy them (15 KIs) negatively affecting their monthly expenditure (5 KIs).

There was also reported a decline in the quality of the **healthcare** services after the events of 2014,<sup>35</sup> and lack of preparedness to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Public electricity** services reportedly had limited operation hours, not only affecting households but also preventing the operation of businesses (17 KIs).<sup>36</sup> A limited capacity in terms of **waste handling, transportation and collection**, at the municipal level was reported by seven KIs. Related to **access to water**, the lack of maintenance of the water network and water filters in Markaz Sinjar reportedly resulted in water pollution and scarcity<sup>37</sup> forcing families to resort to purchasing bottled drinking water for highly inflated prices or depending on local wells (17 KIs).

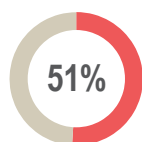
#### Access to public judicial mechanisms



There are no population groups identified with less access to justice.

Returnee KIs (5 KIs) reported that the **department granting civil status documents was closed** at the time of data collection, but all population groups reportedly have access to civil status documentation in the nearest departments to them.

### Access to Livelihoods



of KIs (22 out of 43 KIs) reported that access to livelihoods is **unequal**.<sup>39</sup> The rest of the KIs (19 KIs) reported that it is equal for all population groups and two community leader KIs did not know.

**People with disabilities, UASC, elderly, child heads of household and people with less connections** have less access to livelihoods opportunities, as reported by 22 KIs. The main reported reasons were the **perceived limited physical capacity, skill or education level, or trauma** that prevents these groups from performing the available jobs and the **lack of connections** these groups have.

*"The lack of livelihood opportunities, the high unemployment rate and the absence of governmental jobs are preventing us from ensuring a dignified life."*

- Male returnee KI -

### Reported types of jobs in Markaz Sinjar in 2014 compared to November 2020 (out of 43 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

2014		November 2020
39 KIs	Construction	2 KIs
34 KIs	Finance	11 KIs
32 KIs	Public education	22 KIs
16 KIs	Agriculture	0 KI

The types of jobs available have reportedly shifted since 2014 in Markaz Sinjar. KIs reported that jobs available in 2020 were less diverse than those in 2014. Employment in the public and private health sectors (14 KIs); manufacturing (6 KIs); transportation (5 KIs); public administration and defense (4 KIs); and trade, hotels and restaurants (1 KI) were not reported to be available at the time of data collection. Nineteen KIs (19 KIs) did not know about available jobs in 2020 and a community leader KI refused to answer.

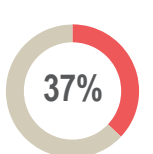
### Perceptions on Governance and Safety

#### Governance and influencing bodies

#### Reported most influential bodies in governance (out of 43 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Local authorities	43 KIs
Mukhtars	18 KIs
Tribal leaders	4 KIs

All KIs (43 KIs) reported that local authorities are the most influential in terms of governance. The majority of the KIs (25 KIs) did not know about expected changes in the most influential bodies in governance, 17 KIs reported that it is not expected to change in the six months following data collection. A community leader KI refused to answer.

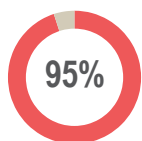


of KIs (16 out of 43 KIs) reported that there has **not been any appointment for new local government** in the six months prior to data collection. The rest of the KIs (26 KIs) did not know and a community leader KI refused to answer.

#### Perceptions on the presence of security forces

The majority of the KIs (42 out of 43 KIs) reported that the presence of the security forces contributed **positively to a feeling of safety**. A community leader did not know. In addition, it was generally reported that security forces are **effective in resolving disputes** within the community and between different villages.

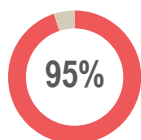
#### Explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination



of KIs (41 out of 43 KIs) reported that there are **no contaminated fields. No incidents were reported due to ERW** in the six months prior to data collection as per 42 KIs. The rest of the KIs did not know.

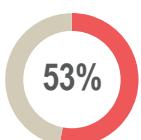
During REACH Intentions Survey, 7% of the interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps referred feeling unsafe due to the presence of ERW contamination.<sup>21</sup>

#### Safety and security



of KIs (41 out of 43 KIs) reported that their community members **feel safe** in Markaz Sinjar. A community leader KI did not know and a returnee reported not feeling safe due to the presence of armed groups.

During REACH Intentions Survey, 66% of the interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported that they feel unsafe in their AoO. The main reasons were reportedly the fear for the presence of armed groups (45%), perceived presence of extremist groups (43%), fear from community violence (28%), perceived discrimination (16%), proximity of AoO to an area of conflict (12%), and presence of sporadic clashes (4%).<sup>21</sup>

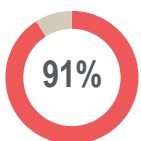


of KIs (23 out of 43 KIs) reported that their community members **avoid specific areas or neighbourhoods** in Markaz Sinjar due to the **fear of the COVID-19 pandemic** (21 KIs) and one returnee reported that they avoid specific areas due to the **presence of armed groups**.

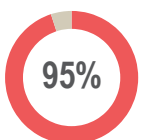
The rest of the KIs did not know (9 KIs), reported not avoiding areas (6 KIs) and five community leader KIs refused to answer.

#### Freedom of movement

The majority of the KIs (42 out of 43 KIs) reported that **females and males can freely move** in Markaz Sinjar during the day. A returnee KI reported that males and females do not freely move during the day or at night due to the sensitive security situation.



of KIs (39 KIs) reported that **females can freely move at night**.



of KIs (41 KIs) reported that **males can freely move at night**.

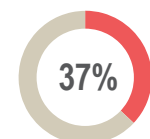
### Community disputes

#### Community disputes within neighbourhoods

Over the half of the KIs (22 KIs) did not know about disputes within neighbourhoods in Markaz Sinjar, 12 KIs reported that there were no disputes in the six months prior to data collection. The rest of the KIs (9 KIs) refused to answer.

The majority of the KIs (33 KIs) did not know if there could be an increase on disputes within neighbourhoods in the six months prior to data collection, and ten KIs refused to answer.

#### Retaliation incidents



of KIs (16 out of 43 KIs) reported that there were **no retaliation incidents** in the six months prior to data collection. The rest of the KIs (22 KIs) did not know and five KIs refused to answer.

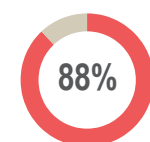
#### Community disputes between villages

Although over the half of the KIs (28 KIs) did not know about disputes between villages in Markaz Sinjar, three KIs reported that there were no disputes in the six months prior to data collection. The rest of the KIs (12 KIs) refused to answer.

The majority of the KIs (32 KIs) did not know if there could be an increase on disputes between villages, and 11 KIs refused to answer.

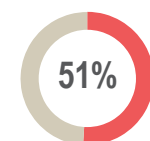
Upon the last return index assessment done by IOM between September and October 2020, community reconciliation severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as high with a slight deterioration compared to the last reporting period (May-June 2020).<sup>40</sup>

### Community relations and co-existence



of KIs (38 out of 43 KIs) reported that there are **no specific population groups which are not welcome** by the majority of the community in the area. Five community leader KIs did not know.

#### Participation in social and public events



of KIs (22 out of 43 KIs) reported that community members **participate in social and public events**. The rest of the KIs (15 KIs) did not know and six KIs refused to answer.

As reported by 22 KIs (out of 43 KIs), community members from different groups **participate in work and social events** (namely weddings) and they **did not report barriers for participation**. The rest of the KIs (12 KIs) did not know and nine KIs refused to answer.

#### Interaction between population groups

All KIs (43 KIs) reported that community members **interact with other groups**. The majority of the KIs (41 out of 43 KIs) reported that **their community members trust each other**.<sup>42</sup> A community leader KI did not know and another refused to answer.

#### Reported types of interaction (out of 43 KIs)<sup>26</sup>

Friendship	35 KIs	
Kinship ties	31 KIs	
Work relationships (employment)	29 KIs	
Operating businesses	4 KIs	

Although over half of the KIs (22 KIs) reported that the **lack of harmony in the area is the main barrier for the interaction** between different groups, 21 KIs reported that there are **no obstacles for the interaction**.<sup>42</sup>

### End Notes

1. IOM DTM: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex>
2. Iraq announces intent to close all displaced camps across the country, The National News, 29 November 2020: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/mena/iraq-announces-intent-to-close-all-displaced-camps-across-the-country-1.1101741> - "Iraq is pushing to close all displacement camps housing IDPs and facilitate the safe return of people to their areas of origin."
3. IOM DTM: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int>
4. IOM DTM, Returnees, rounds 117 and 118, August 2020 and October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/MasterList#Datasets>
5. Caught in the middle, the impact of security and political fragmentation on civilian protection in Sinjar, Center for Civilian in Conflict (CIVIC), October 2020: [https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC\\_Sinjar\\_Report\\_Draft3.pdf](https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC_Sinjar_Report_Draft3.pdf)
6. Return to Sinjar, ACAPS Briefing note 20 November 2020: [https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/slides/files/20201120\\_acaps\\_briefing\\_note\\_sinjar\\_province\\_iraq.pdf](https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/slides/files/20201120_acaps_briefing_note_sinjar_province_iraq.pdf) - "The agreement details and organises aspects of administration, security, and reconstruction in Sinjar, and aims to restore security and stability in preparation for the return of the displaced populations originating from the district."
7. IOM DTM, November 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - KIs reported that, from 21 locations assessed, 12 locations in Markaz Sinjar have witnessed the return of less than 50% of the displaced population originally from the area; and nine locations witnessed 50% and above of returns. According to DTM, only 12,981 individuals returned between 8 June 2020 and 3 January 2021, indicating that high numbers of people from Markaz Sinjar still in displacement, especially Arabs.
8. IOM DTM: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int>
9. IOM DTM: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex>
10. For the purpose of this research, returnees will be categorized as an IDP returning to their AoO, where AoO is defined as the stated original sub-district of origin for the IDP. Given the complexity of (re)integration, this could mean that returnees still face challenges to their sustainable return to their AoO.
11. As clarified by the Iraq Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) in 2018, secondary displacement covers multiple scenarios: 1) IDPs who are voluntarily or forcibly displaced to another displacement location; 2) IDPs who voluntarily or forcibly, return to their AoO, but are unable to achieve sustainable solutions and are consequently re-displaced to their first place of displacement or to a new location of displacement; and 3) IDPs who voluntarily or forcibly, return to their AoO, but are unable to resume habitation in their former habitual residence and cannot achieve sustainable solutions and are consequently re-displaced to a new location within their AoO.
12. IOM DTM: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - refer to methodology, to compute the severity index, different parameters are combined.
13. The findings in the factsheet are mainly the reflection of the perception of the original populations in Markaz Sinjar who remained in the area after the events of 2014 (including community leaders and remainees) and those who have returned after 2017, with the minority of KIs representing the displaced populations who did not return yet.



14. Community leaders are members of the host community represented by three mukhtars (from five different locations in Markaz Sinjar), five public sector employees, four health sector employees and four educational sector employees. Mukhtar can be defined as the head of a village or neighbourhood in some Arab countries.
15. IDPs (displaced from the area) refer to households from Markaz Sinjar displaced after 2014 events to other areas different than their AoO, specifically in Shamal Sub-district (Sinjar District of Ninewa Governorate); in Markaz Telafar Sub-district (Telafar District of Ninewa Governorate); and, in Markaz Duhoq Sub-district (Duhoq District of Dohuq Governorate).
16. IDPs (displaced in the area) refer to households from AoO different than Markaz Sinjar who were displaced after 2014 events and reside in Markaz Sinjar. Households were reportedly originally from Aqra District of Duhoq Governorate
17. There were 43 individuals aged between 29 and 81 years old interviewed for Markaz Sinjar assessment. The majority were male (35 KIs). Ensuring gender balance still a limitation to the assessment, mainly reported due to female KIs not answering to the phone calls. Elderly inclusion and consultation were also considered, 7% of the KIs were elderly (over 65 years old).
18. "The concept of 'vulnerable groups' is typically based around fixed categories such as women headed households, persons with disabilities and older persons. On the basis of classification as 'vulnerable' or 'not', a person or household may be entitled to some form of assistance.": [https://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/publication/Vulnerability%20Profiling\\_0.pdf](https://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/publication/Vulnerability%20Profiling_0.pdf)
19. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - During the assessment 262 households originally from Markaz Sinjar were interviewed. The findings should be considered as indicative.
20. Short-term intentions refer to movement intention in the three months following data collection. Long-term intentions refer to movement intention in the 12 months following data collection.
21. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646>
22. For the purpose of this research, large households refer to household who have over seven members including parents and children, which is the average size for a household in Iraq: <https://population.un.org/Household/index.html#countries/368>
23. Zayona camp (Baghdad Governorate); Qayyarah Jad'ah 5 and Essian camps (Ninewa Governorate); Karamah camp (Salah Al-Din Governorate); Darkar, Bersive 1, Dawouda and Bajed Kandala camps (Duhoq Governorate); and, Debaya 1 camp (Erbil Governorate).
24. Returnees Needs Assessment, Dorcas, June 2020: [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/returnee\\_initial\\_assessment\\_sinjar\\_june\\_2020\\_dai.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/returnee_initial_assessment_sinjar_june_2020_dai.pdf)
25. Six Years After Yazidi Genocide, IOM, 16 July 2020: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/six-years-after-yazidi-genocide-investment-services-crucial-returning-yazidi-families>
26. Sum of answers may exceed the 100% due to KIs being able to select multiple response options, including other topics.
27. Qayyarah Jad'ah 5, Hamam Al-Alil, AsSalamiyah and Khazer M1 camps (Ninewa Governorate); Karamah camp (Salah Al-Din Governorate); Kabarto 1, Bajed Kandala and Darkar camps (Duhoq Governorate); and, Baharka and Debaya 1 camps (Erbil Governorate).
28. Findings are indicative of each population group but not representative.
29. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - Illegal occupation of private residencies severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as high. It was one of the parameters reported affecting negatively the overall severity score for social cohesion in Markaz Sinjar upon the return index assessment of September and October 2020.
30. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - Interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported that they were residing in houses under a different type of arrangement. The majority (68%) reported owning houses in their AoO, 12% reported renting, and 10% were reportedly hosted by other families in the community in Markaz Sinjar.
31. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - Markaz Sinjar Sub-district is considered as a hotspot of Sinjar District in Ninewa Governorate. The housing destruction severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as medium upon the last return index assessment of September and October 2020.
32. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - 77% of interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported their houses in their AoO are completely or heavily damaged.
33. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - 60% of interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported that access to basic public services is an essential need to encourage returns.
34. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - Provision of government services severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as high upon the return index assessment of September and October 2020.
35. CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE, The impact of security and political fragmentation on civilian protection in Sinjar, Center for Civilian in Conflict (CIVIC), February 2020: [https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC\\_Sinjar\\_Report\\_Draft3.pdf](https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC_Sinjar_Report_Draft3.pdf) - "Historically, Sinjar district has been neglected by the central Iraqi and Kurdish governments, leaving it underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure and service provision. The ISIS occupation and military operations caused enormous damage to the already limited infrastructure."
36. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - Recovery of businesses severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as high upon the return index assessment of September and October 2020.
37. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex> - Water sufficiency severity in Markaz Sinjar Sub-district was classified as high upon the return index assessment of September and October 2020.
38. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - 1% of interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported that functioning judicial mechanisms is an essential need to encourage returns.
39. Intentions Survey Round VII, REACH Iraq, August 2020: <https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/iraq/theme/movements-and-intentions/cycle/646/?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-646> - 26% of interviewed IDP households originally from Markaz Sinjar displaced in camps reported that access to livelihood opportunities is an essential need to encourage returns.
40. IOM DTM, September-October 2020: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturnIndex>
41. Caught in the middle, the impact of security and political fragmentation on civilian protection in Sinjar, Center for Civilian in Conflict (CIVIC), October 2020: [https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC\\_Sinjar\\_Report\\_Draft3.pdf](https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CIVIC_Sinjar_Report_Draft3.pdf) - "Social cohesion among ethnic and religious groups has deteriorated in Sinjar. Though some Sunni Arabs from the area participated in extremist attacks against Yazidi communities, all Sunni Arabs and some Kurds are collectively blamed by Yazidis for perceived affiliation with extremists. Many Yazidis report they will never be able to live in peaceful coexistence with their Arab neighbors and do not want them to return to the area. Large numbers of Sunni Arabs and Kurds remain displaced across the country, fearing retaliation from Yazidi armed groups and the Yazidi community if they return."
42. "Measuring Social Interaction and Social Cohesion in a High Density Urban Renewal Area, UNSW Sydney and Macquarie University, January 2013: Social sustainability allows for the consideration of the importance of social interaction and cohesion for the sustainability of communities [...] Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected and democratic and provide a good quality of life.": [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259782824\\_Measuring\\_Social\\_Interaction\\_and\\_Social\\_Cohesion\\_in\\_a\\_High\\_Density\\_Urban\\_Renewal\\_Area\\_The\\_Case\\_of\\_Green\\_Square](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259782824_Measuring_Social_Interaction_and_Social_Cohesion_in_a_High_Density_Urban_Renewal_Area_The_Case_of_Green_Square)