

Humanitarian Overview: Heet City

Iraq, April 2017



Introduction

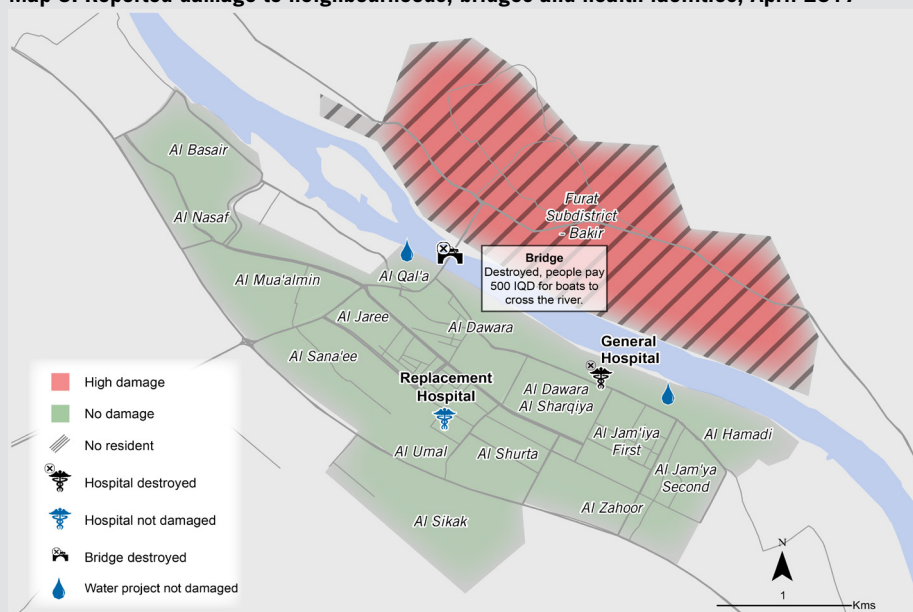
Total population in the city:	At least 13,000 families ¹
Est. returnee population:	12,734 families
Est. % of IDPs (of total pop.):	722 families
Date of AG arrival:	October 2014
Date of AG departure:	April 2016
Humanitarian access:	Limited
Month of data collection:	April 2017

Overview

In April 2016, Heet was retaken by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) from Armed Groups (AGs), who had controlled the city since 2014. Compared to other cities in Anbar, Heet suffered less damage, yet the security situation remains unstable due to continued activity of AGs within the city and the surrounding areas.²

Since the last round of data collection in December 2016, the humanitarian situation in Heet had improved slightly in the water and healthcare sectors, but the lack of livelihoods remained severe. Limited livelihoods opportunities were a cross-cutting source of vulnerability with high reported unemployment and underemployment, in part caused by a damaged agricultural sector. Water was beginning to be treated, but health issues arising from untreated water remained. While health services were limited, the reconstruction of the main public hospital was reported most complete and basic medical supplies had been replenished.

Map 3: Reported damage to neighbourhoods, bridges and health facilities, April 2017



¹ IOM DT, 30 May 2017.

² Iraq Protection Cluster, Returnee Profile Anbar (March 2017).

Key findings

Summary of key findings and needs by sector:

The severity ranking below is based on a set of indicators measuring the severity of each sector: 0= No severity to 4 = Extreme severity.

Sector	Key findings
Livelihoods	2.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">At the time of assessment, 50-70% of the working population were reported to be employed by the government or receiving pensions.³Of the total working population, 60-80% reportedly had a sufficient salary, with the remaining 20-40% receiving salaries that were not sufficient to meet their daily expenses.Between 25-40% of the population was reported to be unemployed.Those who did not have enough money were reported to be borrowing from friends and relatives, and relying on charity in the form of food or shelter. Between 15-25% were reported to have taken on debts of more than 5 million IQD.While 20-40% of workers relied on agriculture before AG arrival, at the time of data collection almost no one was reported to be farming. KIs indicated that farmers did not have equipment or seeds, orchards had been burned and, though the northern area had been cleared of some mines, it was perceived to be unsafe.
Healthcare	1.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">The public hospital was said to be 80% repaired. At the time of assessment, the main medical staff were working at a health clinic in the al Umal neighbourhood as a replacement for the main public hospital. There were reported to be other clinics open, though no specific numbers were provided.There was a reported shortage of medicine, especially for chronic diseases, as well as a shortage of medical equipment. However, equipment was starting to be delivered to the main hospital to replace the equipment that was looted by AGs.There were said to be 15-25 pharmacies open in the city, but medicine was prohibitively expensive for most people.⁴Basic surgery was reportedly available at the health clinic in al Umal neighbourhood, but for complex surgeries individuals had to travel to the private hospital in the city or to public hospitals in Baghdad.Children were reported to be receiving some vaccines for free, though there were no specific vaccines noted.
WASH	1.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Both water projects (pump and treatment plant) were reported to be functional, with piped water available 24 hours per day.There was disagreement among KIs concerning whether the water was clean – most indicated that the water from the water plant was treated, but some of these said that the pipes were old and contaminated the water. However, this situation varied from one neighbourhood to another.⁵More than 90% of the population was reported to be using water filters, which was already a common practice before AG arrival. The remainder were said to be using chlorine to clean water and the health center provided chlorine tablets for free.There were no reports of individuals getting sick from the water, which was an improvement from December.⁶
Shelter and damage	1.5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Rent was reported to be slightly more expensive than it was prior to AG arrival, on average between 150,000-300,000 IQD.There were said to be small numbers of IDPs living in unfinished buildings and maybe a dozen IDP families living in tents on the outskirts of the city.Between 10-20% of houses were damaged, but the damage was often light, and residents had been repairing the damage themselves.10-30% were reported to be sharing homes, with an average of 2-3 families per house.
Food Security	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Food and NFIs were reportedly commonly available, with no shortages of goods, and with prices approximately 15-30% higher than before AG arrival.The PDS was generally not functioning – there was only one delivery of reportedly bad quality flour in January.
Education	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">At least 80% of schools were said to be functional, though there were some reports of overcrowding.Approximately 90% of children were reported to be attending school – those that were not were primarily IDPs and recent returnees.Sufficient numbers of teachers were reportedly working, and receiving their government salaries. There were sufficient books, especially with copies of old books, but they were said to have been provided late in the school year.

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Methodology

REACH collected in-depth information from 32 Key Informants (KIs) through community group discussions (CGDs) and Key Informants (KIs) between 16 and 27 April 2017. Participants were comprised of returnees living in Heet City and IDPs living in the KRI who remain in touch with friends and family in Heet. Where possible, findings have been triangulated with secondary sources. The presented findings should be understood as indicative only.

Returnees and IDPs

Since the departure of AGs from Heet in April 2016, the city has seen a steady influx of returnees, as well as a number of IDP families. By the end of May 2017, 12,734 families had returned to Heet city, primarily from areas of displacement in Anbar (5,742) and Baghdad (2,530) governorates. Significant minorities had also returned from Sulaymaniyah (1,649 families) and Kirkuk (1,523) governorates. In addition to the population of returnees, Heet city also hosted approximately 722 IDP families, all of which originated from Anbar governorate.⁷ According to KIs, these IDPs primarily originated from the AG-controlled cities in Western Anbar as well as from the heavily damaged subdistricts north of the Tigris River.

When asked for the primary factors driving return, KIs reported two main factors: firstly, government employees had been informed by the GoI that their salaries would be halted if they did not return to their area of origin; secondly, for all IDPs, depleting resources in their area of displacement, particularly for those who had to pay rent in out-of-camp settings, was a strong push factor.

Returnees were said to largely be returning to their own neighbourhoods of origin, unless their homes had been damaged or destroyed, in which case they reported living with family or renting homes. IDPs were especially vulnerable, and were the most likely to be living in informal settlements or unfinished buildings. The lack of livelihood opportunities for non-government employees and IDPs, when combined with slightly elevated rent prices, put these individuals at particular risk of adopting negative coping strategies, particularly the accumulation of debt and living in overcrowded or damaged shelter.

Table 4: Reported price changes between December 2016 and April 2017

Product	Prices December 2016 ⁸	Prices April 2017 ⁹	Price Change
Flour (50 kg)	25,000-30,000 IQD (21-25.4 USD)	25,000-30,000 IQD (21.3-25.5 USD)	—
Rice (50 kg)	50,000 IQD (42.3 USD)	50,000 IQD (42.6 USD)	—
Sugar (50 kg)	50,000 IQD (42.5 USD)	50,000 IQD (42.6 USD)	—
Cooking oil (1 L)	1,500-1,750 IQD (1.3-1.5 USD)	2,000 IQD (1.7 USD)	▲
Tomato (1 L)	500-750 IQD (0.4-0.6 USD)	1,500-2,000 IQD (1.3-1.7 USD)	▲
Fresh Meat (1 kg)	8,000-10,000 IQD (6.7-8.5 USD)	10,000-11,000 IQD (8.5-9.4 USD)	▲
Fuel (1 L)	500-750 IQD (0.4-0.6 USD)	500-750 IQD (0.4-0.6 USD)	—
Kerosene (1 L)	800-1,000 IQD (0.7-0.9 USD)	500-600 IQD (0.4-0.5 USD)	▼

Footnotes:

³ Many of these individuals reportedly returned to the city because the GoI indicated that they would cut the salaries of displaced government employees who did not return to their areas of origin.

⁴ For example: blood pressure medication that used to cost 12 to 14,000 IQD and now costs 20,000 IQDs.

⁵ IOM, DTM (March 2017). Reports that household water was not clean.

⁶ Reach Initiative, Humanitarian Overview of Five Hard-To-Reach Areas in Iraq (December 2016).

⁷ IOM DTM, 30 May 2017.

⁸ Based on an exchange rate of 1 USD = 1,178 IQD (as of 22 December 2016) via www.xe.com.

⁹ Based on an exchange rate of 1 USD = 1,175 IQD (as of 30 May 2017) via www.xe.com.