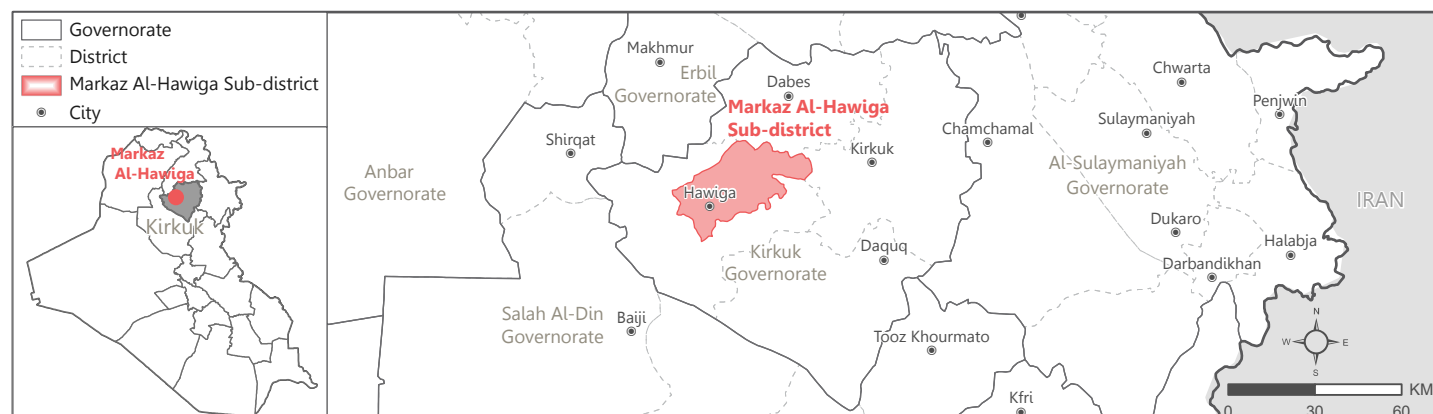


Situation Overview

In 2022, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to their areas of origin (AoOs) or being re-displaced continued, coupled with persisting challenges in relation to social cohesion, lack of services, infrastructure and - in some cases - security in AoOs.¹ The [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\) Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#)'s returnee master list recorded over 4.97 million individuals returning to their AoOs across the country, as of July 2022.

Increased returns and secondary displacement were driven primarily by the closure, consolidation, and reclassification of IDP camps.² Between January and July 2022, no camps were closed, consolidated, or reclassified. However, for the camps that remain open across Iraq, there is an ongoing planning procedure to determine their future.³ In light of these dynamics, 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 identified in the context of durable solutions planning.

Map 1. Coverage map



Background and Methodology

A number of partners are currently tracking population movements and measuring progress towards durable solutions for displaced populations in Iraq.⁸ For example, IOM has collected data on a bi-monthly basis, found in the [IOM DTM Returns Index](#). This tool provides indicative trends on the severity of conditions in areas of return (AoRs) nationwide.

To build on this information, [REACH Initiative \(REACH\)](#) has conducted multi-sectoral assessments in AoOs or areas of return (AoRs) across Iraq assessing the overall condition of affected areas to inform how and to what extent durable solutions have or can be achieved. REACH's Returns and Durable Solutions profiles (ReDS) focus on the study of conditions at the sub-district level, providing a localized overview of the perceptions of displaced and host communities on a variety of conditions linked to the (re)integration of IDPs and returnees.

In light of recent return and re-displacement movement dynamics, REACH conducted a ReDS assessment in Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district to provide an in-depth profiling of needs and understanding of social relationships between remainee,⁹ returnee,¹⁰ and IDP populations.¹¹

Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district

Markaz Al-Hawiga is a sub-district of Hawiga District, located in Kirkuk Governorate, north of Baghdad. The district's importance lies in its strategic location connecting the cities of Kirkuk and Mosul to the capital Baghdad. Hawiga District is one of the most important agricultural areas and the second-largest source of vegetables in Iraq.⁴ In June 2014, Hawiga District came under the control of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).⁵ The Iraqi forces and their allies liberated Hawiga District from ISIL control in October 2017.⁶ As of June 2022, the [IOM DTM Integrated Location Assessment \(ILA\) VII](#) suggested that households in 85 assessed villages in Markaz Al-Hawiga (out of 88) were not concerned about further ISIL operations in the sub-district.

Reported Population Profile⁷

18,971-20,323	households were residing in Markaz Al-Hawiga before the events of 2014.
92%-96%	of households in Markaz Al-Hawiga were displaced after 2014.
86%-91%	households had returned to Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection.
6-8	IDP households were displaced in Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection.

Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district was selected for the assessment as: social cohesion and safety severity¹² was classified as 'high' or 'medium' in 37 villages out of 88 assessed,¹³ and it was reportedly an area of interest for the Area Based Coordination (ABC) group in Kirkuk. The findings are based on 52 key informant (KI) interviews conducted between 22 June and 3 July 2022, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods adapted to the context. Data collection was conducted remotely by phone.

KI Profile

Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district

Returnees (more than 3 months ago) ¹⁴	13 KIs	
IDPs from the community ¹⁵	10 KIs	
IDPs in the community ¹⁶	8 KIs	
Remainees ⁹	6 KIs	
Community leaders ¹⁷	6 KIs	
Subject matter experts (SMEs) ¹⁸	5 KIs	
Returnees (less than 3 months ago) ¹⁹	4 KIs	52 KIs²⁰

Key findings

-  Recent returns to Markaz Al-Hawiga in the six months prior to data collection were not widely reported. However, one KI **expected returns to occur in the six months following data collection**. Reportedly, these **may positively impact** the public sector and access to basic public services, the reconstruction of the sub-district, the private and industrial sectors, the agricultural sector, and trade and commerce.
-  The majority of households in the community reportedly resided in owned houses. **Most of IDP households in the community** were reportedly **residing in houses under verbal rental agreement**, a **less secure form of tenure**, due to not owning a house in the sub-district.
-  **Damage to housing or need for housing rehabilitation was the most reported barrier for returns, the second most commonly reported community need, and the second most needed activity to encourage further returns to Markaz Al-Hawiga**. All KIs reported that households faced challenges in accessing housing rehabilitation in the sub-district. Access to housing, land, and property (HLP) documentation was also reported as a barrier for returns, according to one KI.
-  KIs from different profiles prioritized community needs differently. Further efforts to develop **access to healthcare**, was **the most reported primary community need for community leader KIs**, which was reportedly the **most negatively affected basic public service** at the time of data collection.
-  In contrast, **SME, returnee, remainee, and IDP KIs from/in the community** most commonly reported **access to livelihoods** as a primary community need. Additionally access to livelihoods was reportedly the second most common barrier for returns and the most needed activity to encourage further returns to Markaz Al-Hawiga.
-  **Agriculture** was the most frequently reported **sector with the highest growth potential** in Markaz Al-Hawiga for the 12 months following data collection and **the most available livelihoods sector** at the time of data collection. It was also reported as **the sector of most interest for the returnees, remainees, and IDPs** to work in. Findings showed that the agricultural sector was negatively affected at the time of data collection due to the lack of support and compensation to farmers from the local government, inflated prices of agricultural materials, and water scarcity, climate change, and challenges for land irrigation.
-  All KIs reported that **the majority of households faced challenges in accessing livelihoods** in the sub-district. KIs reported an **overall decrease in the availability of job opportunities compared to before 2014**. Employment in the public healthcare sector was reportedly the most negatively affected at the time of data collection. In addition, findings showed that job opportunities in the public education sector and finance and real estate were less affected by the post-2014 developments, when compared to healthcare.
-  **Tribal leaders** were reportedly the **most effective body at resolving disputes within the sub-district**, likely because the Markaz Al-Hawiga community was reportedly structured according to a tribal system and applied customary laws²¹ to resolve these disputes.
-  **Fear of being perceived as affiliated to ISIL** was reportedly of **concern to IDP households from the community as a barrier for their return**. However, a couple of IDP KIs from the community reported that IDP households may feel welcome and accepted if they return to Markaz Al-Hawiga. KIs reported that IDP households from the community mainly interacted with returnees and participated in decision-making processes in their AoOs. **All IDP KIs reported that the majority of IDP households from the community did not feel integrated in their AoDs since they “were far from home”**.
-  Findings suggested that additional efforts and advocacy may be needed for the return of IDP households from the community to their AoOs and reconciliation between community members.
-  The majority of returnee KIs reported that **returnee households interacted with all groups** in the community, **felt welcome or very welcome**, and **felt reintegrated** in the community of Markaz Al-Hawiga. This was mainly reported due to existing strong relationships they had with other members of the community and the presence of kinship ties with other households in the sub-district. They reportedly participated in decision-making processes.
-  Regarding IDP households in the community, findings suggested that further efforts were required to promote their feeling of being welcome, ensure interaction, and advocate for sustainable durable solutions.

Findings are based on the perceptions of the KIs who were purposively sampled; all data should therefore be considered as indicative. The occasionally large variation between perceptions is potentially due to KIs' varying profiles and personal interests. For further details on the methodology, please see the ReDS [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#).

Expected return movements

Returnee, remainee, IDP from the community, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (38 out of 52 KIs). The vast majority of consulted KIs (37 out of 38 KIs) reported **no expected returns** in the six months following data collection. However, one remainee KI reported that returns may occur in the six months following data collection.

Expected returns from non-camp areas

20-25 households were expected to return to the sub-district in the six months following data collection.

These movement may occur from non-camp areas in Kirkuk Governorate due to the nostalgia IDP households had about their previous life in the sub-district.

Reported impact of expected returns

Returnee, remainee, IDP from community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (44 out of 52 KIs). The majority of consulted KIs (39 out of 44 KIs) reported that further returns may impact the community in Markaz Al-Hawiga. The rest of the KIs did not answer this question (4 KIs) or did not know about the impact further returns may have in the community (1 KI).

Expected positive impacts

The majority of consulted KIs reporting that additional returns may impact the community (32 out of 39 KIs) also reported that these movements **may have positive effects** in the sub-district. Reportedly, the positive impacts of further returns to the sub-district were attributed to their effect on the public sector and access to basic public services (12 KIs), the reconstruction of the sub-district (10 KIs), the private and industrial sectors (9 KIs), the agricultural sector (9 KIs), and trade and commerce (8 KIs).

Impact on the public sector and access to basic public services

Reportedly, the return of professionals including education and medical staff may improve the quality of basic services provided to the community, namely in education and healthcare (12 KIs).

Impact on the reconstruction of the sub-district

According to five KIs (out of 10 KIs), expected returns to the sub-district may lead to increased job opportunities within the construction sector, especially for housing rehabilitation projects. Furthermore, a couple of KIs reported that the return of skilled construction workers may increase the quality of the reconstruction work in Markaz Al-Hawiga. Additionally, four KIs also reported that local authorities and organizations may focus on the reconstruction of the sub-district in the case of increased returns (2 KIs) and may encourage investment in projects such as construction ensuring various job opportunities (2 KIs).

Impact on the private and industrial sectors

KIs reported believing that the return of skilled workers such as carpenters and craftsmen may have a positive impact on the quality of services in the private and industrial sectors (7 out of 9 KIs). Additionally, KIs reported that the return of shop owners may increase the availability of job opportunities and access to the labour market (5 KIs).

Impact on the agricultural sector

Reportedly, the return of farmers to the area may ensure the revitalization of agricultural activity by reclaiming their lands and promoting farming production (8 out of 9 KIs). According to four KIs, reactivating the agricultural sector in the sub-district may lead to increased job opportunities. Additionally, one IDP KI from the community reported that further returns may encourage the return of fishing-lake owners and consequently the lakes reopening as a source of income for households in Markaz Al-Hawiga.

Impact on the trade and commerce sector

Reportedly, trade, commerce, and the demand for basic products may increase with the influx of returns (7 KIs). Additionally, one IDP KI from the community reported that returns may increase the availability of food in the sub-district with the return of food shops owners and the reactivation of the food market.

Impact on the social life in the sub-district

According to 10 KIs, further returns to the sub-district in the six months following data collection may ensure family reunification, increasing community bonds (3 KIs).

Impact on safety and security perceptions

One IDP KI from the community reported that an increase in the population of the sub-district may increase the likelihood of reports about potential security concerns to formal security actors, making them more responsive to security concerns and therefore increasing the feelings of safety and security.

Expected negative impacts

On the other hand, one quarter of consulted KIs (11 out of 44 KIs) reported that additional returns may have negative impacts on the community.

Impact on safety and security perceptions

According to five KIs (out of 7 KIs), some IDP households allegedly had links with ISIL, representing a risk for the community. The KIs also expected potential tensions between returnee households and these households in the sub-district due to their alleged links to ISIL. A few KIs (3 KIs) reported that the return of this specific household profile may lead to increased crime in Markaz Al-Hawiga. Additionally, one KI reported that some returnee households had links with informal armed groups which may create a feeling of insecurity in the community. On that point, one community KI reported that some returnee households were not trusted by the community in Markaz Al-Hawiga.

Impact on access to food

According to one community leader KI (out of 3 KIs), access to food in the sub-district was limited and an increase in the population may negatively affect access to food items. A couple of KIs also reported that households in the sub-district resorted to purchasing food items on credit from shops. These KIs reported believing that with the potential return of additional households these debts will increase, which may reduce the capacity of shop owners to improve their commercial activity.

Impact on access to employment

Reportedly, these movements may lead to increased competition for the limited available job opportunities in the sub-district (3 KIs).

Family separation

Returnee, remainee, IDP from the community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (44 out of 52 KIs). The majority of consulted KIs did not know about family separation cases (23 out of 44 KIs) or reported no cases of family separation in the sub-district (16 KIs). However, five KIs (mainly remainees) reported that **some adult male family members remained in displacement** at the time of data collection, namely adult sons (4 KIs) and husbands (1 KI).

Reportedly, the main reasons influencing the decisions of these households' members to remain in displacement were associated to the lack of job opportunities in the sub-district (5 KIs) and the lack of specialised medical treatment in AoOs (1 KI) for household members with specific health conditions, while these were available in AoDs.

Most commonly reported reunification plans

According to five KIs, the most common reunification plan was related to potential returns when job opportunities were available in the sub-district, followed by returns in the case of ensured access to specialised quality medical services (1 KI).

Barriers for further returns

Returnee, remainee, IDP from the community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (44 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported the presence of factors in AoOs which could block/delay further returns to the sub-district.

Reported barriers for further returns (out of 44 KIs)²²

Access to housing and housing rehabilitation

Destroyed/damaged housing	38 KIs	
House being illegally occupied	1 KI	
Lack of HLP documentation to claim housing	1 KI	

Access to livelihoods and basic public services

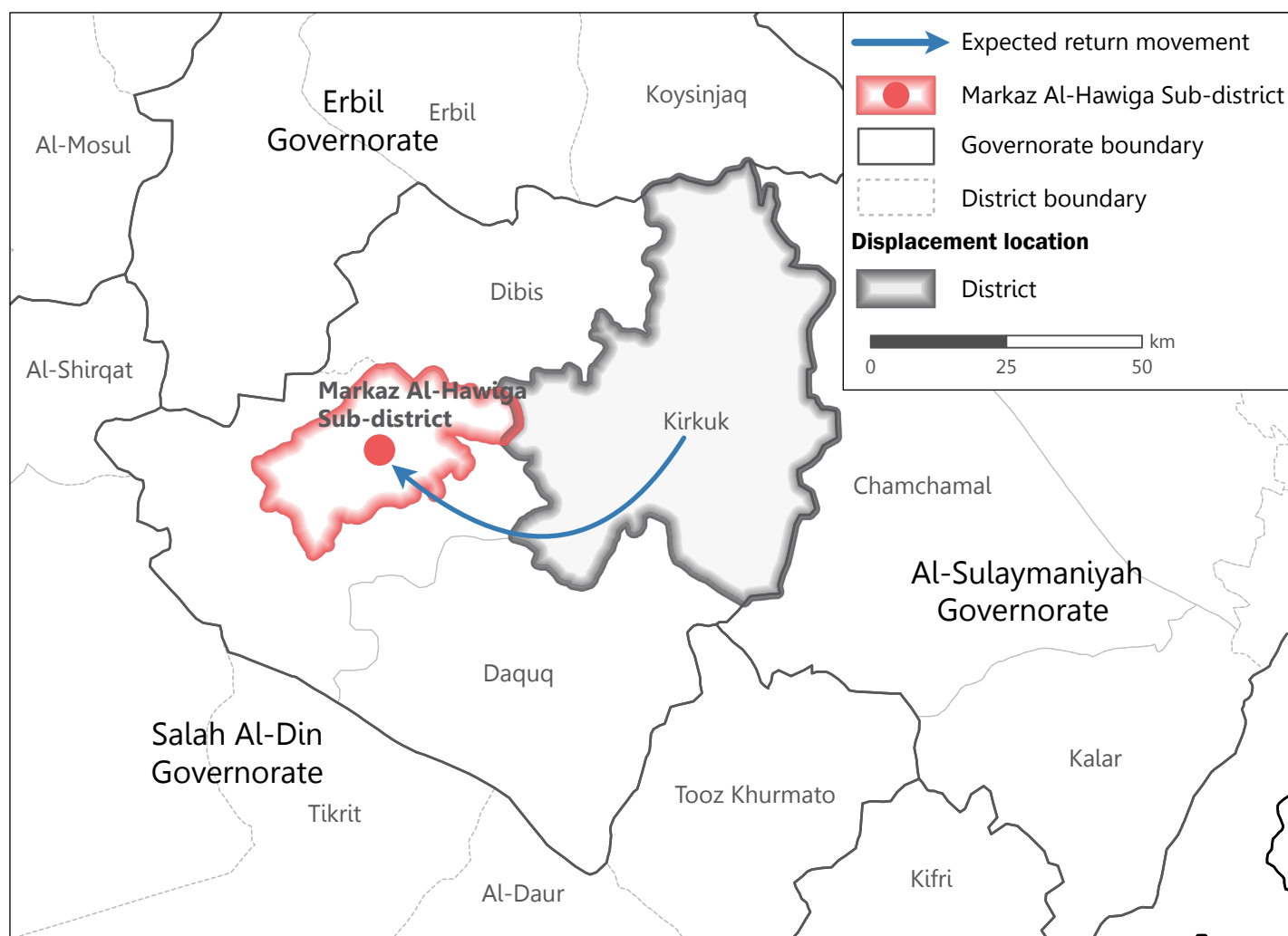
Limited availability of job opportunities	34 KIs	
Limited access to basic public services	16 KIs	
Limited access to medical treatment	1 KI	

Access to safety and security

Fear of being perceived ISIL-affiliated	4 KIs	
Security concerns in AoOs	1 KI	

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned barriers, 10 KIs reported that IDP households from the community preferred to remain in their AoDs.

Map 2. Expected return movements to Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district (in the six months following data collection)



Primary community needs

Most reported primary community needs in Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection (out of 52 KIs)^{22, 23}

	First Need	Second Need	Third Need
Livelihoods	27 KIs	9 KIs	3 KIs
Housing rehabilitation	10 KIs	11 KIs	3 KIs
Healthcare	5 KIs	7 KIs	7 KIs
Electricity	1 KI	5 KIs	6 KIs
Education	2 KIs	6 KIs	0 KIs
Water	1 KI	6 KIs	1 KI
Infrastructure rehabilitation	2 KIs	0 KIs	5 KIs

The most commonly reported primary community need was **access to livelihoods** (39 out of 52 KIs). Reportedly, the lack of job opportunities and the high unemployment rate among graduated youth (28 out of 39 KIs) was affecting access to livelihoods. See section on access to livelihoods on pages 10.

The second most commonly reported primary community need was **access to housing rehabilitation** (24 out of 52 KIs). Half of reporting KIs (12 out of 24 KIs) also reported that access to housing rehabilitation was mainly affected by the high level of housing damage in the sub-district at the time of data collection and the lack of financial means owners had. See section on access to housing and housing rehabilitation on page 6.

The third most commonly reported primary community need was **access to healthcare** (19 out of 52 KIs). KIs reported that access to healthcare was mainly affected by the shortage of medicines (15 out of 19 KIs) and medical staff at public health facilities (9 KIs). See section on access to basic public services on page 7.

Most commonly reported primary community needs per KI profile at the time of data collection^{22, 24}

Community leader KIs (out of 6 KIs)	SME KIs (out of 5 KIs)	IDP KIs (out of 18 KIs)	Returnee KIs (out of 17 KIs)	Remainee KIs (out of 6 KIs)
Healthcare 4 KIs	Livelihoods 4 KIs	Livelihoods 11 KIs	Livelihoods 17 KIs	Livelihoods 6 KIs
House rehab 3 KIs	Electricity 3 KIs	House rehab 9 KIs	House rehab 9 KIs	Healthcare 3 KIs
Security 2 KIs	Infrastructure 2 KIs	Healthcare 6 KIs	Healthcare 5 KIs	

Access to durable solutions assistance²⁵ and impact on returns

Returnee, remainee, IDP in community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs). The vast majority of the KIs (39 out of 42 KIs) reported that **there were humanitarian and development activities or projects implemented** in Markaz Al-Hawiga. The rest of the KIs did not know about this topic (2 KIs) or reported that there were no activities implemented in the sub-district (2 KIs).

Most reported activities implemented in Markaz Al-Hawiga in the six months prior to data collection (out of 39 KIs)^{22, 26}

Livelihoods	20 KIs
Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)	15 KIs
Reconciliation and social cohesion	8 KIs
Food programmes	7 KIs

Activities' implementers

Over three quarters of the KIs reporting the implementation of activities in the sub-district (31 out of 39 KIs) also reported that these **activities or projects were implemented by humanitarian and durable solutions actors**, followed by local authorities (19 KIs). KIs reported that local authorities were mainly involved in WASH (14 KIs) and livelihood programmes (9 KIs).

Reported groups participation in activities

Almost half of the KIs (18 out of 39 KIs) reported that there were **no groups less likely to be involved in activities or projects** in the sub-district. According to other 18 KIs, IDPs from the community were least likely to participate in these activities or projects.²⁷ A couple of KIs did not know about groups less likely to be involved in activities.

Regarding vulnerable groups,²⁸ almost half of the KIs (20 KIs) reported that all vulnerable groups had the same level of access to participate. However, other KIs reported believing that **persons with disabilities** (17 KIs) and older persons (3 KIs) were less involved in activities or projects compared to other vulnerable groups. The rest of the KIs (4 KIs) did not know about vulnerable groups less involved in activities.

Durable solutions assistance as a factor to encourage returns

Returnee and IDP KIs from the community were consulted for this section (27 out of 52 KIs). The vast majority of these KIs (25 out of 27 KIs) reported that the **availability of durable solutions assistance would be a factor encouraging returns** to Markaz Al-Hawiga. **Livelihood programmes** were identified by KIs as the **most needed to encourage further returns** (23 KIs), followed by housing rehabilitation (3 KIs), the restoration of electricity services (1 KI), and access to water (1 KI).

Perceptions on access to housing, housing rehabilitation, and compensation

Returnee, remainee, IDP in community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that the majority of households in Markaz Al-Hawiga resided in houses.

Types of tenure and housing agreement

Findings showed that the majority of **returnee and remainee households** resided in **owned houses** (23 KIs). On the other hand, three quarters of IDP KIs in the community (6 out of 8 KIs) reported that the majority of **IDP households in the community** resided in **houses under verbal rental agreement**.

Additionally, a couple of IDP KIs in the community reported that some IDP households in the community resided in owned houses. According to six IDP KIs in the community, some households in the community were renting or being hosted by other households since their owned houses were damaged (3 KIs) or illegally occupied (3 KIs).

Risk of eviction

According to 15 KIs, **households with alleged links to ISIL** were more at **risk of eviction** than other vulnerable groups.²⁸ Additionally, one SME KI reported that IDP households in the community may be more at risk of eviction than other population groups, especially taking into consideration that they resided under less secure tenure and housing agreements.

Access to HLP documentation

All KIs reporting that households owned houses in the sub-district (36 KIs) also reported that these households **had HLP documents** to prove housing ownership.

Regarding IDP households from the community, most of IDP KIs (8 out of 10 KIs) reported that the majority of IDP households from the community had HLP documents to prove housing ownership in their AoOs. These KIs were displaced in Markaz Kirkuk Sub-district. However, according to one SME KI, some IDP households from the community remained in displacement due to their lack of HLP documentation to prove housing ownership. A couple of IDP KIs from the community did not know if these households had HLP documents.

Access to housing rehabilitation

Returnee, remainee, IDP in community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs).

30%-40% of houses in Markaz Al-Hawiga remained destroyed or damaged at the time of data collection, according to all consulted KIs.

Challenges to access housing rehabilitation

All KIs (52 KIs) reported that the majority of households in the sub-district faced challenges in accessing housing rehabilitation. KIs reported that access to housing rehabilitation was mainly affected by the limited access to financial resources for housing rehabilitation (33 KIs), factors affecting construction and reconstruction works (31 KIs), and the lack of government compensation for housing rehabilitation (25 KIs).

Limited access to financial resources for housing rehabilitation

According to 29 KIs, affected households had no financial means to rehabilitate their damaged houses, this was negatively impacted by the lack of job opportunities in the sub-district. In addition, four KIs reported that the lack of financial support and loans for housing rehabilitation affected the reconstruction of damaged houses. According to a couple of KIs, reconstruction of houses was also impacted by the lack of local and central government support, for example to distribute plots of land to compensate affected households.

"After families spent all their money on providing food for the family members, they reached the point of not being able to rebuild their houses."

– Male IDP KI from the community –

Challenges for construction and reconstruction works

- » High construction/reconstruction prices influenced by the high level of housing damage and inflated prices for construction materials (14 KIs),
- » Lack of reconstruction projects led by the local or central government to rehabilitate damaged houses in the sub-district (14 KIs),
- » Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) limited intervention in housing rehabilitation. NGOs reportedly rehabilitated some of the damaged houses and partially reconstructed others; however, it was perceived by KIs as not being enough (5 KIs),
- » Lack of construction companies accepting payments in instalments for housing rehabilitation (3 KIs), and
- » Skilled and unskilled construction workers remained in displacement, in addition to the low wages paid for these who were available in the sub-district (1 KI).

Lack of government compensation for rehabilitation

According to 24 KIs, compensation claims were not processed, or transactions were not delivered to affected households even if claims were presented to relevant entities. Additionally, KIs reported other factors affecting access to government compensation mechanisms. These reportedly included the:

- » Lack of awareness among affected households about government compensation mechanisms (17 KIs),
- » Perception that compensations processes are long and complex (17 KIs),
- » Lack of legal assistance or representation provided to affected households to present their compensation claims (16 KIs),
- » Presence of intermediaries and affected households being forced to pay bribes to access compensation transactions (2 KIs),
- » Lack of public employees in relevant entities to evaluate housing damage (1 KI), and
- » Exclusion of some affected households from compensation benefits (1 KI).

Additionally, eight KIs also reported that affected households believed they will never be compensated for the damage to their houses, which negatively affected their decision to present their claims.

Strategies adopted by affected households

Almost half of the KIs (23 out of 52 KIs) reported that affected households adopted strategies to cope with the damage to their houses. These reportedly included some affected households:

- » Remaining displaced due to housing damage or illegal residency occupation in their AoOs (16 KIs),
- » Renting in their AoOs due to housing damage at elevated rent prices (4 KIs),
- » Borrowing money for housing rehabilitation (2 KIs),
- » Partially rehabilitating their damaged houses and forcing them to reside in low standard houses (1 KI), and
- » Selling their destroyed houses due to the lack of compensation (1 KI).

Additionally, one remainee KI reported that some returnee households were hosted by their relatives until they were able to rehabilitate their homes.

KIs' recommendations to enhance access to housing rehabilitation

Over one third of the KIs (19 out of 52 KIs) reported that various initiatives can be considered by the local government and NGOs to enhance access to housing rehabilitation. These reportedly included:

- » Launching reconstruction projects for housing rehabilitation (14 KIs),
- » Providing loans or grants for housing rehabilitation (4 KIs),
- » Launching construction projects for low-cost housing or building housing complexes for returnee households (2 KIs),
- » Ensuring access to construction materials at reasonable/affordable prices monitored by specialised entities (1 KI), and
- » Establishing government monitoring mechanisms for compensation processes and ensuring affected households receive their transactions (1 KI).

Perceptions on access to basic public services

All KIs (52 KIs) reported that the majority of households in the sub-district faced challenges in accessing basic public services. Access to **public healthcare** was reportedly **the most challenging** to access (47 out of 52 KIs).

Reported affected basic public services (out of 52 KIs)²²

Healthcare	47 KIs	<div style="width: 90%;"></div>
Electricity	29 KIs	<div style="width: 56%;"></div>
Water	20 KIs	<div style="width: 38%;"></div>
Education	18 KIs	<div style="width: 35%;"></div>
Waste disposal	5 KIs	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>

Challenges to access basic public services

"All public services in the sub-district are below the required level due to the neglect from the local government."

– IDP KI in the community –

Infrastructure damage and rehabilitation needs

General challenges affecting households access to basic public services were reportedly related to the **high level of public infrastructure damage in the sub-district** (36 out of 52 KIs). In addition, nine KIs also reported that main and secondary roads needed rehabilitation to facilitate movements and access to services specially in winter when roads become muddy and it is difficult to access some neighbourhoods. One community leader KI reported believing that these were factors affecting access to and availability of quality basic public services.

Access to public healthcare

The vast majority of the KIs (47 out of 52 KIs) reported that the majority of households faced challenges in accessing public healthcare services. According to eight KIs (out of 47 KIs), the public healthcare sector was neglected by the local government. Conditions at operating public healthcare centre (PHC) were reportedly the main factor affecting access to quality services (43 KIs).

Conditions at operating PHC

These reportedly included:

- » Shortage of medications for proper treatment of patients (35 KIs),
- » Shortage of medical staff (including specialists) due to continued displacement of staff or inability to access the sub-district (19 KIs),
- » Limited available medical equipment, tools, and supplies (such as echo sonography, magnetic resonance imaging, and echo cardiogram machines) at the PHC (15 KIs), and
- » Healthcare centres lack emergency doctors available at night (only operating on day hours) (1 KI).

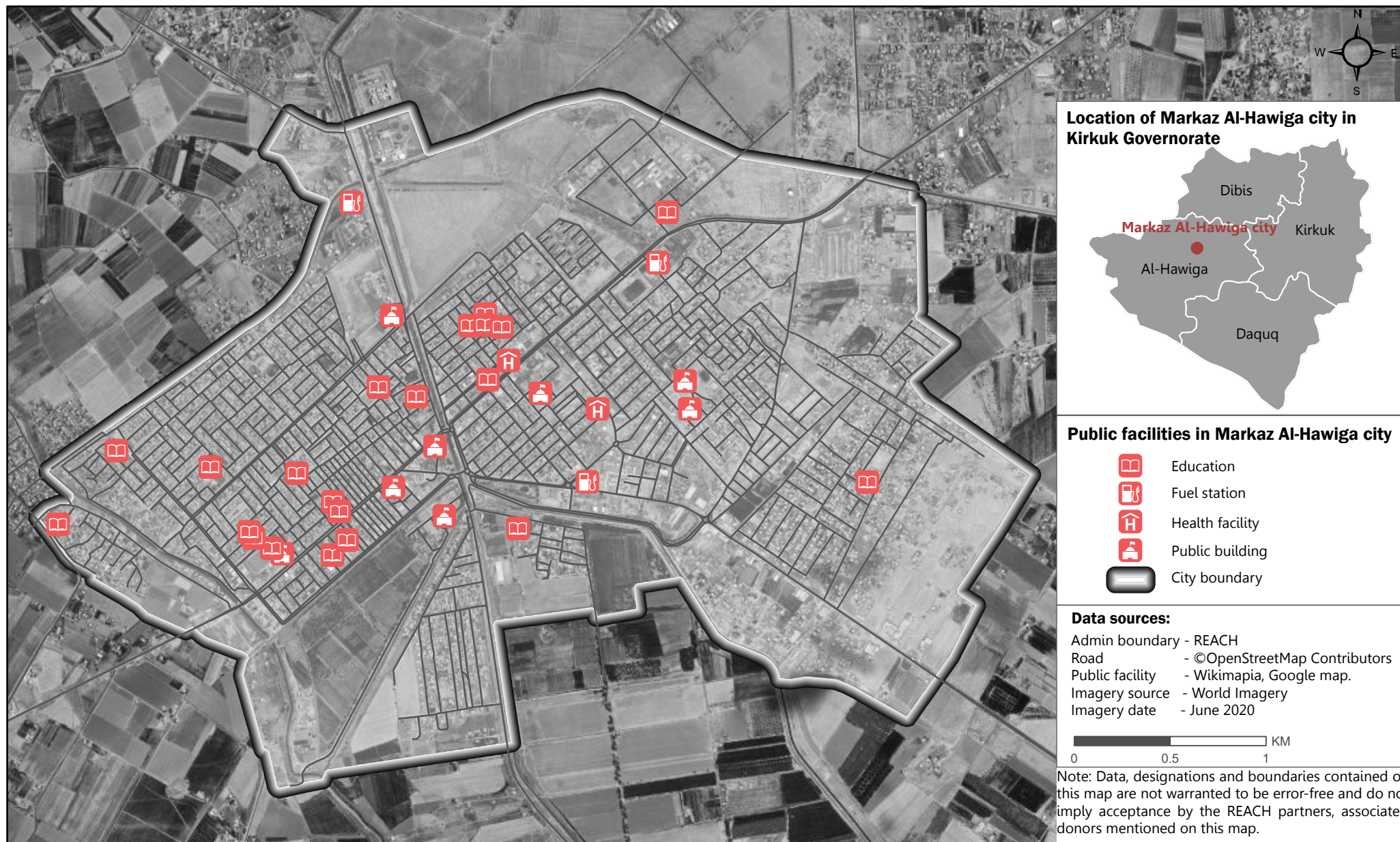
Coping strategies adopted and practices implemented by households to enhance access to healthcare

Reportedly, households resorted to different strategies to overcome the above-mentioned challenges. These reportedly included:

- » Patients resorting to private doctors at high prices for their services (10 KIs),
- » Patients being forced to purchase medicines at private pharmacies which were expensive (6 KIs), and
- » Households with members having specific medical conditions remained displaced due to the limited access to healthcare in their AoOs in the sub-district (1 KI).

Additionally, one IDP KI from the community reported that free medications provided in the PHCs in their AoDs, namely in Markaz Kirkuk, were not distributed to IDP households in the community due to them not originally belonging to the AoDs.

Map 3. Basic public services providers in Markaz Al-Hawiga city



Access to public electricity

Half of the KIs (26 out of 52 KIs) reported that household members faced challenges in accessing public electricity services. The most reported reasons were the limited access to public electricity supply hours (16 KIs) and the damage to the public electrical network, poles, and transformers (12 KIs). In addition, 11 KIs reported that electrical transformers needed to be replaced to meet the community demand.

Impact of lack of public electricity services

Lack of public electricity services reportedly affected access to water for agriculture irrigation purposes and water pumping in general (6 KIs). According to a couple of returnee KIs, the lack of electricity negatively impacted on households' daily life activities (1 KI) and the operation of workshops and small businesses (1 KI).

Coping strategies adopted to enhance access to electricity

Reportedly, households resorted to private generator services, which had inflated prices (11 KIs). Additionally, one IDP KI from the community reported that the increased price and limited availability of fuel in Iraq resulted in private generators services being rationalized.

Access to public education

Over one quarter of the KIs (14 out of 52 KIs) reported that household members faced challenges in accessing public education services. The most reported challenges were related to the conditions at operating schools (6 KIs) and the shortage of education staff who reportedly remained in displacement (4 KIs).

Conditions at operational schools

These reportedly included:

- » Limited number of schools which were overcrowded and did not meet the demand of students (4 KIs) and
- » Lack of free stationery and books distributed to students and households being forced to purchase them from private libraries (3 KIs).²⁹

Additionally, one IDP KI in the community reported that IDP children were discriminated against by education staff at public schools in the sub-district. IDP children in the community reportedly were not provided with free books, this was allegedly due to IDP children not being considered to belong to the sub-district.

Shortage of public education staff

According to four KIs, there was a shortage of public education staff in Markaz Al-Hawiga, who mostly remained displaced. In addition, one IDP KI in the community reported that operating schools depended on volunteers or lecturers to cover education activities who lacked experience, which negatively affected the quality of education in the sub-district.

Temporary solutions adopted to facilitate access to education in the sub-district

According to one returnee KI, caravans were installed in Markaz Al-Hawiga for schooling purposes. However, these provisional classrooms did not absorb the demand of students and did not meet minimum standards for students' safety.

KIs' recommendations to enhance access to public education services

According to 10 KIs, there were initiatives to be considered by the local government and NGOs to enhance the situation related to access to public education services in the sub-district. These reportedly included:

- » Building new schools (6 KIs). These KIs also reported that new single-sex schools for girls and boys were needed taking into consideration that girls were not allowed to attend mixed school due to cultural and social norms, and
- » Rehabilitating active schools from damages suffered during military operations (5 KIs).

Access to public water

One quarter of the KIs (13 out of 52 KIs) reported that households faced challenges in accessing public water services. According to 10 KIs, access to water was not available for some neighbourhoods and the public water network needed rehabilitation and to be extended to other areas in the sub-district. This reportedly resulted on households having access to insufficient quantities of water, which negatively affected their daily life, especially in summer (6 KIs). A few KIs (3 KIs) reported that the quality of water received at household level was also affected by the damage to the public water network.

Limited access to public water service impact

According to one returnee KI, shortage of water negatively affected the operation of small businesses in the sub-district, such as crafts workshops. Reportedly, the reduced water levels in the sub-district due to climate change also impacted the revitalization of agriculture, specifically lands irrigation (2 KIs).

Coping strategies adopted to enhance access to water

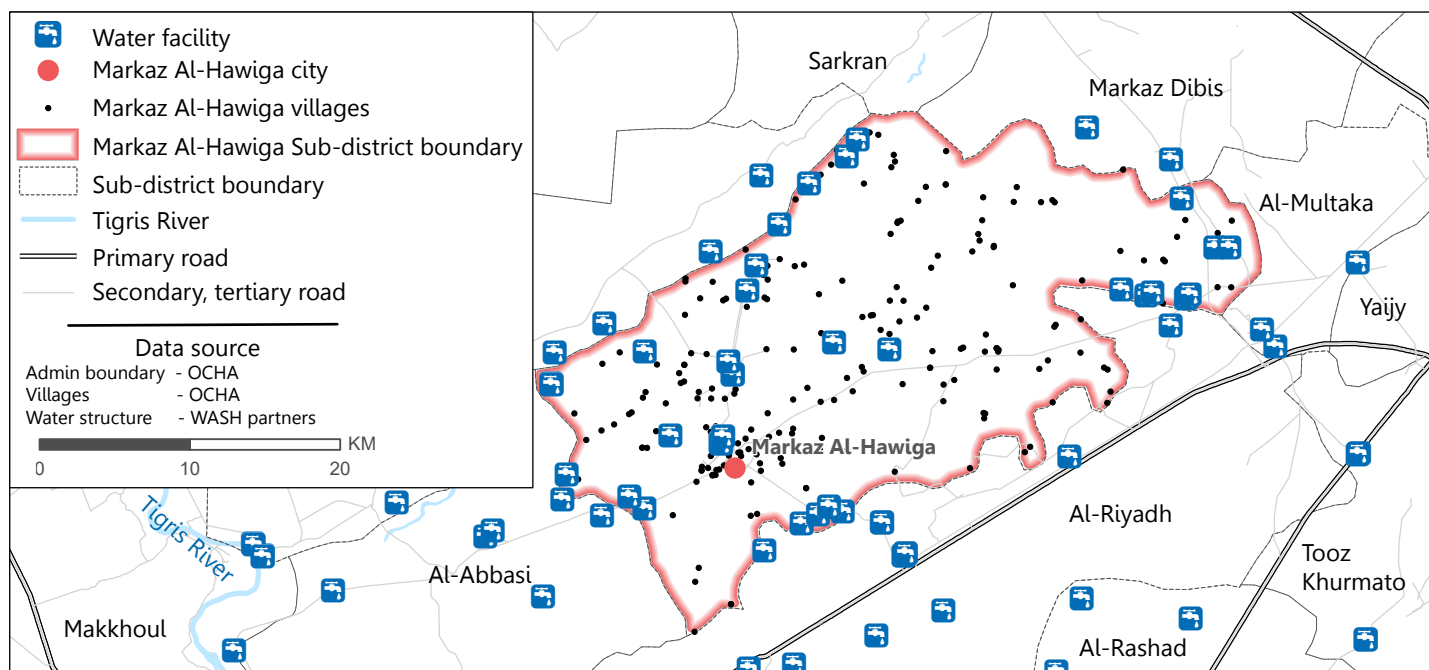
According to seven KIs, households in the sub-district adopted different strategies to cope with the limited access to water. These reportedly included some households:

- » Resorting to purchasing bottled water from the local market for drinking purposes (5 KIs),
- » Resorting to water trucking for domestic use (2 KIs), and
- » Building artesian water wells in an unplanned and illegal way to ensure access to water (1 KI).

KIs' recommendations to enhance access to public water services

According to a couple of KIs, the local government should focus on the construction of a new water complex and a set of water treatment plants to overcome the situation regarding limited quality and quantity of public water services.

Map 4. Water facilities supplying Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district



Access to waste collection, disposal, and management

Reportedly, households in the sub-district faced challenges in accessing public waste collection, disposal, and management services (5 KIs). According to four reporting KIs, this service was neglected by the local government and the municipality lacked funds and proper means to ensure safe waste collection. The KIs reported that the municipality faced a shortage in waste collection vehicles and waste containers which was negatively affecting the environment in Markaz Al-Hawiga.

A couple of KIs reported that the sub-district suffered a shortage of sanitation workers from the municipality due to the low daily wages they were paid. Regarding the above-mentioned, one returnee KI recommended to the local authorities and NGOs to promote the implementation of cleaning campaigns and rubble removal.

Perceptions on access to livelihoods

All KIs (52 KIs) reported that the majority of households faced challenges in accessing livelihoods. Over three quarters of the KIs (40 KIs) reported that there was a general lack of livelihood opportunities in the sub-district. In addition, IDP KIs from the community reported that access to job opportunities was affected by the:

- » High level of competition and community members lacking skills and experience for the limited available jobs (3 KIs) and
- » Dependency on daily labour and low wages which affected the ability of households to meet their basic needs (1 KI).

One IDP KI from the community also reported that IDP households from the same group could not access jobs in the sub-district due to the lack of trust from employers (host community members).

"In general, most of the population depends on daily labour to secure their basic needs. Now, after the decline in job opportunities and the drop in wages due to the recession in the economic field and the high exchange rate of the dollar, finding a job to support your family has become more important than staying safe at home."

– Male IDP KI from the community –

Moreover, findings showed that households faced challenges in accessing several livelihood sectors at the time of data collection.

Challenges in the agricultural sector (38 out of 52 KIs)

Hawiga District had a rich agricultural history. It was known for its booming vegetable, fruit, corn, wheat, and cotton production that catered to most of Iraq.³⁰ According to 10 KIs, Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district had extensive agricultural lands and agriculture and livestock were the main sources of income for households before 2014. Findings showed that the agricultural sector was negatively affected at the time of data collection. The most reported reasons were related to the lack of support and compensation to farmers from the local government (29 out of 38 KIs); inflated prices of agricultural materials, seeds, fertilizers, and spare parts for relevant machinery (18 KIs); and water scarcity, climate change, and challenges for land irrigation (12 KIs).

"Farmers need to fight to get paid. Government payments for wheat are not done on time; they are often delayed for a very long time [...] In the harvest season, there is not enough machinery for harvesters to collect the wheat. Consequently, the higher harvest wages harm the farmers."

– Male IDP KI from the community –

Other less reported challenges in the agricultural sector included:

- » Some farmers abandoning their lands or selling them for housing project purposes due to the lack of support from the government and NGOs (4 KIs),
- » Local products being negatively affected by the increased presence of imported products in the local market (3 KIs),
- » Farmers being forced to pay bribes to access the market and sell their products (1 KI), and
- » Farmers lacking proper means for harvesting which had inflated prices at the time of data collection (1 KI).

Challenges in the construction sector (26 out of 52 KIs)

Over three quarters of reporting KIs (20 out of 26 KIs) reported a lack of construction and reconstruction projects in the sub-district, the presence of which could ensure access to a higher number of jobs. According to four KIs, construction projects were reportedly affected by the limited access to construction materials in the sub-district and providers being forced to pay bribes to pass materials through checkpoints, in addition to the inflated prices of these materials had when locally available. Additionally, six KIs reported that there was a limited number of skilled and unskilled construction workers available in the sub-district. This was mainly attributed to the lack of construction projects in the sub-district (3 KIs) and the low wages paid for their services (3 KIs).

Challenges in the governmental or public sector (20 out of 52 KIs)

KIs reported that the main factor affecting households' access to public employment were the lack of government appointment for jobs in the public sector³¹ assigned to recent graduates (16 KIs) and the presence of intermediaries and households' members being forced to pay bribes to be employed (7 KIs).

"[...] appointments [to public jobs] have become a dream."

– Male remainee KI –

Challenges in the trade and commerce, and private sectors (17 out of 52 KIs)

Reportedly, trade and commerce activity was negatively affected by the damage to local factories and workshops during the military operations, which used to ensure jobs for the community members in the sub-district, and the lack of focus from the local government on building new ones (14 out of 17 KIs). According to three KIs, the lack of job opportunities and incomes negatively affected sales and commerce in Markaz Al-Hawiga. Additionally, one community leader KI reported that trade and commerce was also affected by the limited financial capacity of shop owners to develop their businesses and ensure jobs creation.

Livelihood interventions by NGOs

According to three KIs, NGOs livelihood projects were not enough to cover the needs of the community, and the distribution of jobs and beneficiary selection was not as transparent as expected.

Coping strategies adopted

As a way to cope with the above-mentioned challenges households resorted to different strategies, according to 20 KIs. These reportedly included:

- » Household members, mainly youth, being forced to do daily travels or temporarily move to other areas in Kirkuk Governorate seeking for jobs causing family separation (16 KIs),
- » Whole household remaining displaced due to lack of job opportunities in the sub-district (10 KIs), and
- » Youth becoming affiliated to informal armed groups and resorting to negative coping mechanisms (2 KIs).

KIs' recommendations to enhance access to livelihoods

To overcome this situation, 19 KIs recommended to the local government and NGOs to:

- » Implement livelihood projects namely cash for work activities (14 KIs),
- » Support farmers to access seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural machinery at controlled prices and reopen fishing lakes (10 KIs),
- » Provide financial support to small business owners such as craftsmen to develop their businesses (5 KIs), and
- » Promote investment in construction projects to increase the number of workshops, factories, and specialised farms such poultry and cattle farms in the sub-district (3 KIs).

Livelihood activities support economic growth

Community leader and SME KIs were consulted for this section (11 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that livelihood programmes implementation may support economic development in the sub-district with special focus on the revitalization of the agricultural sector (10 KIs).

Supporting the revitalization of the agricultural sector (including livestock farming)

The ISIL-conflict left behind destroyed irrigation systems, damaged equipment, burnt farms, and decimated livestock. It was estimated that this caused over 12.6 million USD worth of damage to the agricultural sector across Kirkuk.³⁰ According to 10 consulted KIs, revitalizing the agricultural sector could reportedly depend on (but not restricted to):

- » Providing financial assistance and loans to farmers to purchase seeds, fertilizers, machinery, and other agricultural and farming products (7 KIs),
- » Ensuring access to water for land irrigation by improving and updating the existing irrigation systems for agricultural lands (3 KIs),
- » Promoting the marketing of local products outside the sub-district (2 KIs), and
- » Monitoring animal feed prices to assure they are accessible and affordable to farmers (1 KI).

Other reported ways through which livelihood programmes could assist in enhancing the sub-district's economic development were:

- » Providing financial support to small businesses such as tailors and barbers (2 KIs),
- » Implementing long-term livelihood projects involving all population groups in the sub-district (2 KIs),

- » Promoting and ensuring job creation for men and women equally (1 KI), and
- » Ensuring monitored and planned public job assignment by the central and local governments (1 KI).

One community leader KI also reported that “the construction of highways for the passage of goods to northern Iraq” may reactivate the trade and commerce sector and therefore improve the economic activity in the sub-district.

Livelihood sectors with reported growth potential

Community leader and SME KIs were consulted for this section (11 out of 52 KIs). Reportedly, **agriculture was the livelihood sector with the most growth potential** in the 12 months following data collection (9 KIs), followed by construction (2 KIs) and private and public healthcare (2 KIs).

Most reported livelihood sectors available in Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection (out of 42 KIs)^{22, 32}

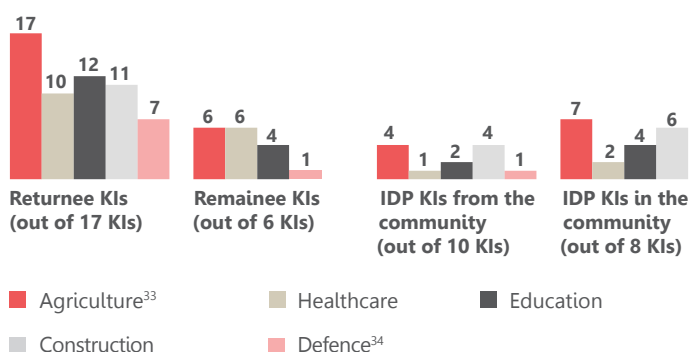
Agriculture ³³	40 KIs	
Public education	33 KIs	
Construction	22 KIs	
Private healthcare	16 KIs	
Public administration and defence ³⁴	12 KIs	

Findings indicated that the availability of jobs in some livelihood sectors had been negatively affected by the conflict.³⁵ Employment in the public healthcare sector was reportedly the most affected at the time of data collection. In addition, findings showed that job opportunities in the public education sector, finance, and real estate were less affected at the time of data collection compared to prior to 2014.

Livelihood sectors of interest for returnee, remainee and IDP households

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, and IDP KIs from the community were consulted for this section (41 out of 52 KIs). The most commonly reported livelihoods sector of interest for returnee, remainee, and IDP households from/in the community to work in was **agriculture** (including animal raising) (33 out of 41 KIs). Construction was commonly reported as a sector of interest for returnees and IDPs from/in the community to work in.

The most commonly reported livelihood sectors of interest:²²



Reported groups with less access to livelihoods

Almost half of the KIs (24 out of 52 KIs) reported that **all displacement groups and vulnerable²⁸ community members faced challenges in accessing livelihoods**. Over one third of the KIs (19 KIs) reported that IDPs from the community faced more challenges to access livelihoods compared to other displacement groups.

Regarding vulnerable groups,²⁸ according to 15 KIs, **people with disabilities** faced more challenges in accessing livelihoods than other vulnerable groups, followed by older persons (5 KIs) and female heads of households (1 KI).³⁶

Access to public judicial mechanisms

Challenges to access public judicial mechanisms

All KIs (52 KIs) reported that **households did not face challenges in accessing public judicial mechanisms**.

Presence of public judicial offices/departments and missing personal documentation

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs). According to the majority of the KIs (39 out of 42 KIs), there were no public judicial offices closed in the sub-district at the time of data collection.

However, three KIs reported that accessing documentation in Markaz Al-Hawiga was challenging due to some public departments lacking funds for the rehabilitation of the public building (1 KI), specialised staff (1 KI), and assets for their proper operation (1 KI). Reportedly, households faced challenges to accessing civil status documentation (2 KIs) and their unified national ID card (1 KI).

According to one remainee KI, households needed to travel to Markaz Kirkuk (centre of Kirkuk Governorate) to process their requests for the above-mentioned documents. The KI also reported that the main associated challenge was the distance from Markaz Al-Hawiga to Kirkuk and the additional cost on transportation households needed to pay in addition to the process-related cost.

Perceptions on governance³⁷

Community leader and SME KIs were consulted for this section (11 out of 52 KIs). Over half of the KIs (6 out of 11 KIs) reported believing that none of the present bodies in the sub-district were influencing governance at the time of data collection (4 KIs), did not know about influencing bodies (1 KI), or refused to answer (1 KI).

However, five community leader KIs reported that **local authorities** (4 KIs) and the **formal security forces** (3 KIs) were the most influential bodies regarding governance.

Bodies influencing returnees and IDPs affairs

The majority of the KIs (46 out of 52 KIs) reported that **there were no local bodies influencing returnees and IDPs affairs** in Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection. The rest of the KIs did not know about the presence of influencing bodies (5 KIs) or refused to answer (1 KI).

Perceptions on safety and security³⁷

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, and IDP from the community KIs were consulted for this section (41 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that **the majority of returnee, remainee, and IDP households from/in the community felt safe** (13 KIs) **or very safe** (28 KIs) in Markaz Al-Hawiga. This situation was reportedly the same for women, girls, men, and boys, according to all consulted KIs (41 KIs).³⁸

Freedom of movement

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that **there were no restrictions of movement imposed** in the sub-district.

All returnee and IDP in the community KIs (31 out of 52 KIs) also reported that **the majority of returnee and IDP households in the community could freely move during the day and at night** in Markaz Al-Hawiga if they desired. All consulted KIs reported that this situation was reportedly the same for women, girls, men, and boys.³⁸

Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) land contamination

The vast majority of the KIs (51 out of 52 KIs) reported that **there were no fields known to be contaminated with ERWs** in Markaz Al-Hawiga at the time of data collection. However, one community leader KI reported the presence of ERWs in agricultural lands belonging to the sub-district negatively affecting the recultivation of these lands.

Perceptions on community tensions³⁷

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, community leader, and SME KIs were consulted for this section (42 out of 52 KIs).

Disputes within the sub-district

The vast majority of consulted KIs (40 out of 42 KIs) reported that there were **no disputes within the sub-district** in the six months prior to data collection. However, internal disputes, retaliation incidents, and increased crime may occur in the future if households with alleged links to ISIL decided to return (5 KIs).

Resolving disputes within the sub-district

Returnee, remainee, and IDP in the community KIs were consulted for this section (31 out of 52 KIs). The majority of consulted KIs (27 out of 31 KIs) reported different bodies that were effective in resolving disputes within the sub-district. The rest of the KIs refused to answer (2 KIs) or did not know about these bodies (2 KIs).

Tribal leaders

Almost three quarters of consulted KIs reporting the presence of bodies (19 out of 27 KIs) also reported that tribal leaders were the most effective in resolving small disputes. Reportedly, the Markaz Al-Hawiga community was structured according to a tribal system and applied customary laws²¹ to resolve these disputes (13 KIs). In addition, tribal leaders were reported being trusted by the community members (10 KIs) and having strong influence on the tribe members facilitating their ability to negotiate solutions (4 KIs).

Formal security forces³⁹

Some KIs (4 KIs) reported that formal security forces were the most effective body in resolving disputes. These KIs also reported that formal security forces were responsible for enforcing the law and ensuring security for the community. In addition, three KIs reported believing that formal security actors represented the state in the sub-district.

Local authorities

According to three KIs, local authorities played an effective role in resolving disputes. Reportedly, local authorities were responsible for enforcing the law (2 KIs) and representing the state and the judicial apparatus related to the administration of justice (2 KIs).

Mukhtars⁴⁰

In addition to the above mentioned, one remainee KI reported that mukhtars in the sub-district were effective in resolving small disputes and minor disagreements. The KI reported that mukhtars were elected officials and members of existing tribes, and they therefore represented the tribe members.

Disputes between the sub-district and other areas

The vast majority of consulted KIs (41 out of 42 KIs) reported that there were **no disputes between the sub-district and other areas** in the six months prior to data collection. One KI did not know about this type of incidents.

Resolving disputes between the sub-district and other areas

Returnee, remainee, and IDP KIs in the community were consulted for this section (31 out of 52 KIs). Almost two thirds of consulted KIs did not know about these bodies (11 out of 19 KIs) or refused to answer (8 KIs). The rest of the KIs reported that local authorities (7 KIs) and formal security forces (5 KIs) were the most effective bodies in resolving disputes between the sub-district and other areas.

Local authorities

According to seven KIs, local authorities had the role to resolve criminal incidents and impose the law. In addition, four KIs reported believing that local authorities represented the state and the judicial apparatus (related to the administration of justice). However, one KI reported that these bodies only intervened when tribal leaders could not resolve the disputes.

Formal security forces³⁹

Some KIs (5 KIs) reported that formal security forces were the most effective body in resolving disputes between the sub-district and other areas. These KIs also reported that formal security forces were responsible to enforce the law. In addition, a couple of KIs reported believing that formal security actors had the role to prevent incidents and disputes and ensure security in the sub-district.

Perceptions on community inter-relations³⁷

Feeling welcome in the sub-district

Returnee, IDP in the community, and IDP from the community KIs were consulted for this section (35 out of 52 KIs). Almost three quarters of consulted KIs (26 out of 35 KIs) did not know how households from different displacement groups felt in the sub-district (25 KIs) or refused to answer (1 KI). Findings showed that different groups perceived community inter-relations differently.

Returnee households feeling welcome

Returnee KIs were consulted for this section (17 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that the majority of returnee households felt welcome or very welcome in the sub-district. KIs stated that returnee households:

- » Returned to the areas where they were born and belonged to (11 KIs),
- » Had strong communication and interpersonal relationships with other households in the sub-district (6 KIs),
- » Had kinship ties with other households in the community (5 KIs), and
- » Belonged to the different tribes prevalent in the area, causing households to feel protected and accepted (3 KIs).

Regarding the feeling of belonging to the sub-district, almost two thirds of returnee KIs (11 out of 17 KIs) reported that returnee households felt a strong sense of belonging to the sub-district. The rest of the KIs (all older returnees) (6 KIs) reported that some returnee households felt that they somewhat belonged to Markaz Al-Hawiga.

IDPs in the community feeling welcome

IDP KIs in the community were consulted for this section (8 out of 52 KIs). The majority of consulted KIs (6 out of 8 KIs) did not know how IDP households in the community felt in the sub-district.

According to one KI, the majority of IDP households in the community felt welcome in the sub-district because of the tribal nature it had, and these households belonged to same or similar existing tribes. The KI also reported that IDP households in the community had strong communication and interpersonal relationships with other households and - in some cases - there were kinship ties between them. However, a second KI reported believing that some IDP households felt discriminated against and harassed by host community members in Markaz Al-Hawiga and consequently they felt unwelcome.

“There should be a full welcoming environment and cessation of harassment of the displaced households who live in the area. Host community members must be lenient with them, for example, reducing the price of renting homes or hiring their parents in shops or any place of work.”

– Female IDP KI in the community –

IDP households from the community feeling welcome

IDP KIs from the community were consulted for this section (10 out of 52 KIs). Over half of consulted KIs (6 out of 10 KIs) did not know how IDP households from the community may feel if they returned to their AoOs (5 KIs) or refused to answer (1 KI).

A couple of consulted KIs reported that the majority of IDP households from the community may feel welcome in the sub-district if they decided to return. IDP households from the community reportedly had kinship ties and social bonds with other households in the sub-district (2 KIs), had strong communication and interpersonal relationships with other households (1 KI), and belonged to existing tribes causing IDP households to feel protected and accepted if they decided to return (1 KI).

Although, a couple of KIs reported that some IDP households from the community would feel unwelcome in the sub-district if they decided to return. This was mainly reported due to their fear to of being alleged to have links to ISIL (1 out of 2 KIs), fear of harassment from host community members (1 KI), and fear of discrimination or marginalization (1 KI).

Interaction between displacement groups

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, and IDP from the community KIs were consulted for this section (41 out of 52 KIs). Almost two thirds of consulted KIs (27 out of 41 KIs) did not know about the state of interaction between groups (19 KIs) or reported that households in their respective groups did not interact with households from different displacement groups in the community (including remainees, returnees, and IDP households). The rest of the consulted KIs (14 KIs) reported that households from different displacement groups interacted differently with other groups in the community.

Reported interaction for returnee households

Almost two thirds of returnee KIs (11 out of 17 KIs) did not know about interaction between groups (6 KIs) or reported no interaction between returnee households and other groups (5 KIs). Over one third of returnee KIs (5 out of 17 KIs) reported that the majority of returnee households interacted with all groups in the community. The most reported ways of interacting for returnee households included supporting:

- » Vulnerable households financially to meet their basic needs, namely food, and patients to provide their required medical treatment (3 KIs),
- » Cleaning schools from rubble and reestablishing education (1 KI), and
- » Farmers for agricultural lands irrigation (1 KI).

Reported interaction for remainee households

All remainee KIs (6 KIs) reported that the majority of remainee households interacted with all groups in the community. The most reported ways of interacting for remainee households included supporting:

- » Housing rehabilitation for returnee households (3 KIs),
- » Vulnerable households financially to meet their basic needs (2 KIs), and
- » Transportation of patients who needed to reach healthcare centres inside and outside the sub-district and financial support to buy their medications (2 KIs).

Reported interaction for IDP households from the community

Almost three quarters of the KIs (7 out of 10 KIs) did not know about interaction between groups. One KI reported that IDP households did not interact with other groups in the sub-district. According to one IDP KI from the community, some IDP households, mainly displaced in Markaz Kirkuk Sub-district, financially supported other households in Markaz Al-Hawiga to rehabilitate their damaged houses. In addition, one remainee KI reported that some IDP households hosted returnees in their own houses in the sub-district.

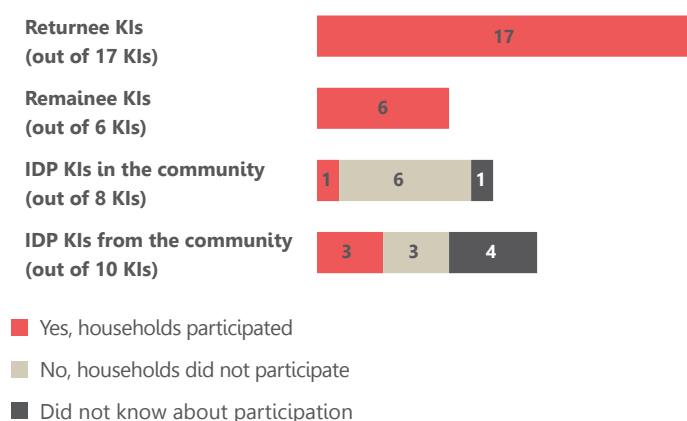
Barriers for interaction between groups

Returnee, remainee, IDP in the community, and IDP from the community KIs were consulted for this section (41 out of 52 KIs). Almost two thirds of the KIs (25 out of 41 KIs) reported that there were **no challenges for interaction between displacement groups** in the sub-district. However, nine KIs (mainly IDPs in the community) reported the presence of factors affecting interaction between groups. These reportedly included:²²

- » Presence or fear of discrimination, abuse, and exploitation (5 KIs),
- » Fear of being marginalized by other groups (2 KIs),
- » Fear of being perceived as ISIL affiliated (1 KI),
- » Existence of inter-communal disputes (1 KI), and
- » Presence of harassment and feeling unaccepted by the host community (1 KI).

Participation in decision-making processes

Returnee, remainee, IDP from the community, and IDP KIs in the community were consulted for this section (32 out of 52 KIs). **Over two thirds of consulted KIs** (22 out of 32 KIs) reported that households **participated in decision-making** processes in the sub-district.



Perceptions on social cohesion³⁷

Actors influencing social cohesion

The vast majority of the KIs (38 out of 52 KIs) reported that **the most influential actors in terms of social cohesion** were the **durable solutions actors** in the sub-district.

Perceptions on influential actors were as the following:²²



Improving social cohesion

All KIs were consulted for this section (52 KIs). The majority of the KIs (44 out of 52 KIs) reported initiatives to improve social cohesion in the sub-district. These reportedly included:

Initiatives ensuring access to employment for all

Almost two thirds of the KIs (29 out of 44 KIs) reported the need to implement different initiatives that may ensure access to employment. The vast majority of these KIs (26 out of 29 KIs) reported that employers, NGOs, and the local government should ensure access to livelihood opportunities equally for community members from different population groups.

In addition, the following initiatives were recommended by KIs:

- » Employers to create safe spaces for workers from different population groups to interact (6 KIs),
- » The local government to establish large factories or workshops where members from different population groups can work (4 KIs),
- » Encouraging common businesses between entrepreneurs from different population groups (3 KIs),
- » NGOs and the local government to support farmers with agricultural materials, considering that agriculture may ensure high number of jobs opportunities and various people can be employed (1 KIs), and
- » NGOs and the local government to ensure job creation for vulnerable households, especially female-headed households (1 KI).

Implementing seminars, national and local conferences, and awareness sessions

Over half of the KIs (24 out of 44 KIs) reported that organising seminars, conferences, awareness sessions, and workshops could effectively promote social cohesion. The most recommended topics for these activities were:

- » Accepting differences and ensuring tolerance (9 KIs),
- » Reconciliation and coexistence (8 KIs),
- » Peace building and conflict resolution (7 KIs), and
- » Participation and discussion about sub-district related topics promoting exchange of ideas (3 KIs).

KIs also reported that these activities should target community members from different population groups (9 KIs), tribal leaders (2 KIs), and youth (1 KI). Reportedly, these should be organised by local authorities (3 KIs), NGOs and civil society actors (3 KIs), and tribal leaders (2 KIs).

Initiatives promoting community inter-relationships and social bonds

One quarter of the KIs (11 out of 44 KIs) reported that initiatives strengthening community inter-relationships and interaction may improve social cohesion in the sub-district. The most suggested initiatives were:

- » Promoting and participating in voluntary work initiatives organised by NGOs (5 KIs),
- » Promoting frequent visits between households (4 KIs),
- » Welcoming IDP households (originally from other areas) in the community of Markaz Al-Hawiga (2 KIs),
- » Promoting and encouraging intermarriage between members of different population groups (2 KIs), and
- » Attending social events and gatherings for households' members to interact (1 KI).

Advocacy initiatives

Several KIs (mostly remainees and SMEs) (8 out of 44 KIs) reported the need to implement advocacy initiatives promoting social cohesion in the sub-district.

These specifically included advocating for:

- » The return of displaced households who reportedly had security indicators while being alleged links to ISIL (8 KIs) and
- » Forgiveness and reconciliation of households who had members with alleged links to ISIL (2 KIs).

According to six KIs, local authorities and tribal leaders had the role to develop relationships and promote interaction between community members, which may increase social cohesion.

Perceptions on durable solutions³⁸

Returnee, IDP from the community, and IDP KIs in the community were consulted for this section (28 out of 52 KIs). Returnee households were reportedly feeling re-integrated in the community of Markaz Hawiga, while IDP households in/from the community were reported not feeling integrated in the sub-district or in their AoDs.

Returnee households feeling reintegrated

Returnee KIs were consulted for this section (17 out of 52 KIs). All consulted KIs reported that the majority of returnee households felt re-integrated in the sub-district. According to 10 KIs, this was due to households having returned to their homes and lands in the same villages they used to live before 2014. Additionally, one returnee KI reported that households felt re-integrated since "they were relieved of the difficulties of displacement and did not need to pay rent anymore".

IDPs in the community feeling integrated

IDP KIs in the community were consulted for this section (8 out of 52 KIs). The vast majority of consulted KIs (6 out of 8 KIs) did not know about households feeling of integration (5 KIs) or refused to answer (1 KI). According to a couple of KIs, the majority of IDP households in the community did not feel integrated in Markaz Al-Hawiga since they were not residing in their AoOs.

IDPs from the community feeling integrated

IDP KIs from the community were consulted for this section (10 out of 52 KIs). Over half of consulted KIs (6 out of 10 KIs) did not know about households feeling of integration (5 KIs) or refused to answer (1 KI). According to four KIs, the majority of IDP households from the community did not feel integrated in their AoDs since they were not residing in their own homes (3 KIs), they were not in their AoOs (2 KIs), and they were far from their lands (1 KI).

End Notes

1 [IOM DTM Return Index](#)

2 Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCCM) Cluster Iraq, [Iraq Informal Sites Overview](#), September 2021

3 Iraqi News Agency, [Minister of Migration announce the closure of all IDPs camps except for Kurdistan](#), 12 December 2021

4 Al Jazeera, [Iraq: What is the strategic importance of Hawija?](#), October 2017

5 REACH Initiative, [Hawiga District, Iraq - Rapid Humanitarian Overview](#), September 2017

6 BBC News, [Iraq forces retake town of Hawija from IS](#), October 2017

7 The ReDS questionnaire is tailored to direct questions related to demographics only to community leader and SME KIs based on their knowledge about the sub-district and population groups. In the case of Markaz Al-Hawiga, there were 6 community leader and 5 SME respondents. Population figures for returns and IDP populations in Markaz Al-Hawiga were based on their estimates at the time of data collection.

8 To date, [IOM DTM's bi-monthly tracking of returnees and IDPs](#) provides an overview of numbers and trends in movement and returns. Simultaneously, since 2018, the Returns Index 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 (AoRs) nationwide. Similarly, the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCCM) Cluster, IOM DTM, 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 AoR and secondary displacement.

9 For the purposes of this research, "remainee" refers to members of the host community who did not displaced during the events of 2014 or after.

10 For the purposes of this research, "returnees" are categorized as IDPs returning to their AoOs, where AoO is defined as the stated original sub-district of origin for the IDP as per the [IOM returnee index](#). Given the complexity of (re)integration, this could mean that returnees still face challenges to their sustainable return to their AoOs.

11 "The DTM considers as Internally displaced persons (IDPs) all Iraqis who were forced to flee from 1 January 2014 onwards and are still displaced within national borders at the moment of the assessment." - IOM DTM Iraq, [Location Assessment Methodology](#)

12 "To measure the severity of conditions in each location of return, the Return Index is based on 16 indicators grouped into two scales: (i) livelihoods and basic services, and (ii) social cohesion and safety perceptions. To compute an overall severity index, the scores of two scales are combined. The severity index ranges from 0 (all essential conditions for return are met) to 100 (no essential conditions for return are met). Higher scores denote more severe living conditions for returnees. The scores of the severity index can be grouped into three categories: 'low' severity conditions, 'medium', and 'high' (which also includes the identified 'very high' locations)." - [IOM DTM Methodology](#)

- 13 The most severely affected areas in Markaz Al-Hawiga in terms of social cohesion and safety perceptions were reportedly Shamllan village, Hallawa village, Kadhimia village, Sader Al-Nahr village, Al-Musanaa village, Al-Khan village, Um Gaseir village, Al-Salhaiyah village, Um Al-Duniya village, Izeri Ghurbi village, Al-Madhurya village, Al-Mansuriyah (Al-Abazz) village, Al-Dibes village, Al-Aziziyah village, Al-Mahafif village, Al-Jamalya village, Hay Al-Qada, Al-Quds village, Jadidah Sada village, Aakola village, Al-Jubooria Village, Bakara village, Al-Eisalanayah village, Al-Ghaziyah village, 8 Shabahit, Al Mahmodiya, Al-Husayniyah village, Al-Aythar village, Al-abomfaj village, Al-Farouk village, Hay Al-Hurriyah (Al-Hawiga), Mustafya village, Khazifi village, Al-Atshanah village, Al-Romana village, Lazaga Ulya village, and Howr Al-Sufen village - IOM DTM, [Returns Index Round 15](#), January, February, and March 2022
- 14 For the purposes of this research, "older returnees" refers to households who returned to Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district more than three months prior to data collection.
- 15 For the purposes of this research, "IDPs from the community" refers to households from Markaz Al-Hawiga displaced during the events of 2014 to areas different than their AoOs. Interviewed IDP KIs were displaced in Kirkuk Governorate, specifically in Markaz Kirkuk Sub-district.
- 16 For the purposes of this research, "IDPs in the community" refers to households originally from areas different than Markaz Al-Hawiga who displaced to Markaz Al-Hawiga during the events of 2014 and after. Interviewed IDP KIs were originally from Hamam Al-Alil (4 KIs) and Markaz Hatra (1 KI) sub-districts (Ninewa Governorate), Alam Sub-district (2 KIs) (Salah Al-Din Governorate), and Markaz Kifri (1 KI) and Markaz Khalis (1 KI) sub-district (Diyala Governorate).
- 17 For the purposes of this research, "community leaders" are members of the host community represented by five mukhtars and one social cohesion official in the area. A mukhtar can be defined as the head of a village or neighbourhood in some Arab countries, this position is officially recognised as local authority.
- 18 For the purposes of this research, "SMEs" are members of the community with a high level of expertise in different sectors or topics. These were represented by: three public employees and two education specialists.
- 19 For the purposes of this research, "recent returnees" refers to households who returned to Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district less than three months prior to data collection.
- 20 There were 52 individuals interviewed for the Markaz Al-Hawiga assessment aged between 26 and 67 years old. The majority were male (44 KIs). The lack of gender balance among the KIs was a limitation to the assessment.
- 21 "Customary law" refers to "Law consisting of customs that are accepted as legal requirements or obligatory rules of conduct; practices and beliefs that are so vital and intrinsic a part of a social and economic system that they are treated as if they were laws." – UN Environmental Programme, [Customary law definition](#), 2007
- 22 KIs were able to select multiple responses to this question.
- 23 Other less reported primary needs were access to waste collection, disposal, and management (4 KIs), security (4 KIs), food assistance (3 KIs), reconciliation (3 KIs), and documentation (1 KI).
- 24 Findings were indicative of each population group and not representative. Due to the small sampling, findings may be under-reported.
- 25 Durable solutions assistance includes the humanitarian, stabilization, development, and peace-building assistance under its umbrella.
- 26 Other less reported types of programmes implemented in Markaz Al-Hawiga in the six months prior to data collection included: non-food item distribution (1 KI), housing rehabilitation (1 KI), and infrastructure rehabilitation (1 KI).
- 27 "Community participation is the active involvement of the people of a particular community in a developmental program/project. It is universally accepted that without community involvement and participation, developmental initiatives in the economic and social sectors have little chance to succeed." – SlideToDoc, [World Bank community participation definition](#)
- 28 For this assessment, vulnerable groups included female heads of household, older persons, people with disabilities, unaccompanied/separated children (UASC) and minor heads of households. Other groups mentioned in the report were reported by KIs under 'other vulnerable groups' option.
- 29 "In previous years, students used to receive free learning materials, including books, notebooks, and transportation from the Ministry of Education (MoE). These distributions were affected in the 1520s, and the situation remained the same at the time of data collection. "During the 1970s and 1980s, primary and secondary schools developed to provide learning materials, free meals, public healthcare, and transportation for their students. [...] particularly for the country's isolated rural and semi-rural populations. [...] This system suffered under international sanctions in the 1520s, creating infrastructure shortages and competing exigencies for students and teachers that undermined education provision. [...] Widespread looting after the 2003 events gutted many schools of their supplies and equipment, including computers, desks, pens, and copper wiring. Entire libraries burned. [...] In November 2016, over 4,000 textbooks were stolen from the Ministry of Education and sold on the black market, following a nationwide shortage." – EPIC, [Empty classrooms and black-market textbooks](#), December 2016
- 30 UNDP Iraq, [Bringing life back to Kirkuk](#), September 2021
- 31 "The Iraqi state cannot afford to keep creating government jobs to appease its underemployed, ever-growing, and increasingly dissatisfied population [...]" : Institute for the Study of War (ISW), [IRAQ 2021–2022: A FORECAST](#), June 2021
- 32 Returnee, remanée, IDP in the community, community leaders, and SME KIs (42 out of 52 KIs) were consulted for this section. Other less reported livelihood sectors available in the sub-district at the time of data collection were transportation (6 KIs), manufacturing (2 KIs), services jobs (hotels, restaurants, etc.) (2 KIs), finance and real estate (1 KI), and oil industry (1 KI).
- 33 Agriculture works also reportedly included livestock raising and animal breeding.
- 34 Referring to the official police and the Iraqi Security Forces under the Iraqi Ministry of Defence.
- 35 When the KIs were asked to compare which types of jobs were available in the sub-district before 2014 and at the time of the data collection, the availability had reportedly decreased. The KIs were asked to recall the period before 2014 and the perceived difference was understood keeping this in mind. In addition, the seasonality aspect of the situation at the time of data collection might have had an impact on the perceived availability.
- 36 It should be noted that gender indicators can be subject to potential under-reporting due to the limited number of female KIs interviewed.
- 37 The findings of this section represent the perceptions of a relatively small group of respondents and therefore are not representative and may differ from other reporting on these topics. Additionally, differences in reporting compared to other metrics could also be due to the methodology, with people being less open to sharing sensitive information over the phone.
- 38 It should be noted that gender indicators can be subject to potential under-reporting due to the limited number of female KIs interviewed. In addition, there might be a stigma around reporting on safety for men and boys.
- 39 "Formal security forces" refers to the Iraqi security forces and all its components. "There are three principal components of the Iraqi Security Forces: the Iraqi Army (IA), the Iraqi Police (IP), and the National Police (NP). The Iraqi Army and the National Police are both national-level assets, with the IA under the command of the Ministry of Defence and the NP under the command of the Interior respectively." – Institute for the study of war, [Iraqi security forces](#)
- 40 A mukhtar can be defined as the head of a village or neighbourhood in some Arab countries, this position is officially recognised as local authority.