

### In this issue

- 750,000 still in west Mosul P.1
- Thousands return to east Mosul P.1
- 23,000 children back to school P.3
- Returns continue across Iraq P.3
- People continue to flee Hawiga P.4



Children in a displacement camp in Anbar Governorate. Credit: OCHA/Kate Pond

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 750,000 people trapped in west Mosul in deteriorating conditions.
- Tens of thousands return home to east Mosul.
- 23,000 children resume education in east Mosul.
- Explosive hazards continue to pose risks in returnee communities.

### FIGURES

# of people in need	11m
# of people targeted for assistance	6.2m
# of internally displaced persons (IDPs)	3m
# of IDPs who live outside camps	2.5m
# of affected ppl within host communities	3.2m
# of returnees	1.5m
# of Syrian refugees	0.23m

Source: 2016 Iraq HRP/HNO/IOM DTM

### Humanitarian Response Plan

### FUNDING

**861 million** requested for 2016 (US\$)

**84% (\$719 million)** (reflects funding on FTS as of 20 February 2017)

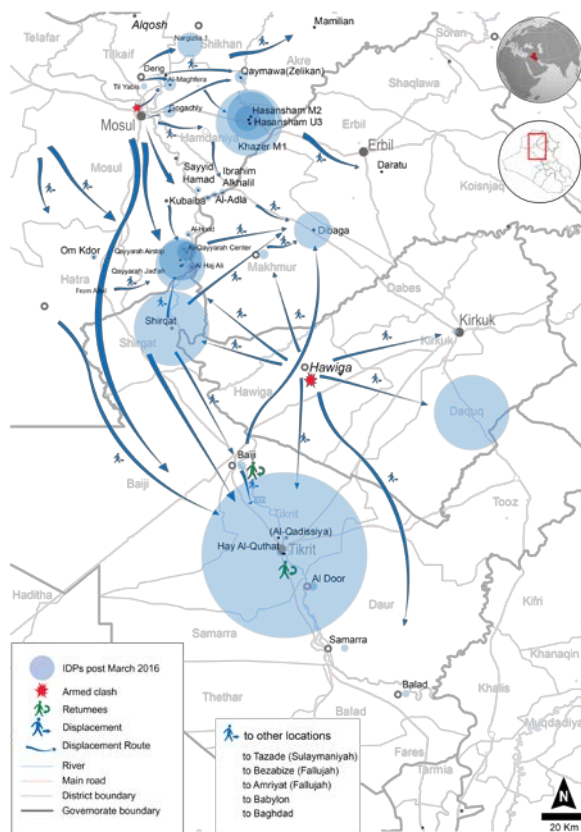
Source: <http://fts.unocha.org>

## 750,000 civilians potentially still in western Mosul city

The humanitarian community is extremely concerned for the wellbeing of the roughly 750,000 people believed to be still living in western Mosul. It is of the utmost importance that all parties to the conflict uphold their responsibility under international law to protect civilians in context of the military operation to retake this part of the city.\*

The Iraqi government and humanitarian partners are preparing for a variety of possible scenarios that could unfold in the operation, including assisting people displaced by the fighting and people sheltering in situ. Western Mosul has been cut off from its previous supply routes, including the highway from Mosul into Syria, since late November, and conditions are understood to be deteriorating as available food and fuel supplies continue to dwindle, with residents resorting to burning furniture and rubbish to keep warm.

\* *The military operation on western Mosul commenced at time of publication. A flash update on the situation is available here: <https://goo.gl/7YrnOv>*



**Displacement along Mosul corridor.** Source: Authorities and humanitarian partners. Displacement figures International Organization for Migration (IOM).

## Thousands return to east Mosul as security improves

### Military gains improve security and access in east Mosul

As the battle to retake Mosul from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) approaches its fourth month, eastern Mosul city is now under the control of the Iraqi Security Forces. Some neighbourhoods on the east bank of the River Tigris continue to be hit by ordnance delivered by unmanned aerial vehicles and indirect fire from ISIL positions

*Aid distributions are reaching almost 700,000 people in eastern Mosul.*

in the west, causing civilian casualties. In general, however, the security situation in the east has significantly improved, and a semblance of normal life is starting to emerge, with people returning from displacement sites and camps in their thousands.

Humanitarian access has improved markedly throughout January following Iraq Security Forces' territorial gains, and distributions made by Government and humanitarian partners are reaching almost 700,000 people in the city and other newly-accessible areas. In recent weeks, humanitarian partners reached a number of new areas for the first time, including villages 80 kilometres south-west of Mosul, where 16,000 people benefited from a distribution of water, household and hygiene items.

### **Over 57,000 people return home**

As security improves, significant numbers of people are leaving camps to the east of the city to move back to their homes in east Mosul. Of the almost 220,000 people who have cumulatively been displaced by the military operations in Mosul and surrounds, over 57,000 have returned home.

Shops and markets in some of the eastern neighbourhoods are open and being supplied through commercial routes, and basic household staples are available at prices comparable to nearby cities. Purchasing power remains low amongst citizens, and returning communities and authority figures have called for an increased focus on livelihood assistance to help boost household income and restart the economy of the city.

### **Stopgap measures taken to alleviate water shortages**

One of the greatest humanitarian concerns in east Mosul is the inadequate functioning of the municipal water network, leaving hundreds of thousands of people without water for drinking, washing and general household needs. Humanitarian partners are currently trucking 2.3 million litres of water into the city each day, but the quantity is still insufficient for the expanding population. Bottled water is for sale in shops and markets, but as income levels are low, this option is unavailable to the poorest and most vulnerable households. Labour-intensive and expensive, water trucking can only be a stopgap measure until the network is fixed.

*Some 2.3 million litres of water is being trucked into east Mosul every day as a stopgap measure.*

Trauma casualty rates have decreased in recent weeks following the lull in military operations. Trauma care capacity close to the city remains low, and many wounded civilians are still being shuttled 80 kilometres to hospitals in Erbil. Since military operations began on 17 October, over 1,600 civilians have been treated for trauma injuries in Erbil's main hospitals. An NGO-run field hospital sited 20 kilometres east of Mosul, which opened its doors on 8



Children return to homes in east Mosul from Hasansham camp. Credit: OCHA/Catriona Heath.

January, has treated more than 300 patients for trauma injuries in its first month of operations. Work is underway to expand trauma care capacity to cope with the expected rise in casualties as a result of the military operations in western Mosul, and two additional trauma stabilization points have been established to the south of the city.

## **23,000 children return to school in east Mosul**

### **Thirty schools reopen their doors**

Thirty schools in east Mosul were reopened at the end of January by the Ministry of Education with the support of humanitarian partners, allowing 23,000 children to resume their education. Some of the schools had been closed for two years, and girls in particular have lost out on learning under ISIL, as they were largely prevented from attending school. The resumption of education is also crucial for adolescent boys, who were often recruited under ISIL, while girls were kept in their homes. The Ministry and partners are planning to

*Thirty schools reopen in east Mosul, allowing 23,000 children to resume education, some for the first time in two years.*

run special courses to help children catch up on their schooling, to prevent them falling behind and losing opportunities available to children in other parts of Iraq. The presence of unexploded ordnance in east Mosul – including in school grounds – and across recently-retaken areas of Ninewa, continues to pose a high risk to children and hamper the reopening of schools.

### 24,000 children attend tented schools in camps

Temporary learning spaces set up in the displacement camps close to Mosul are currently providing schooling to almost 24,000 children living in the camps and emergency sites. Space is limited in the camps, and the tented learning spaces double as recreational spaces for the children, meaning that educational activities are available in shifts, or on alternate days of the week. Despite issues of space, over 30 per cent of the 53,400 school-aged children currently displaced from Mosul and surrounding areas are now participating in informal education programmes. Over 26,000 children displaced by the fighting still do not have access to education of any sort.

## Returns continue across Iraq

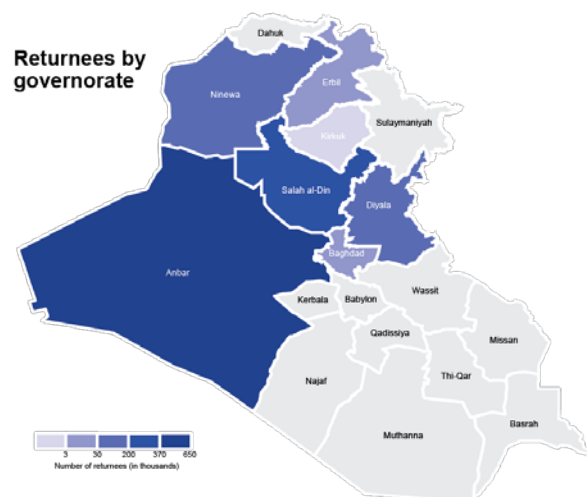
### Almost 1.5 million people have returned to their homes

Across Iraq, returns continue apace, with almost 1.5 million people having returned to their homes since June 2014. In the last month, almost 100,000 people have returned home countrywide. Anbar continues to have the highest number of returns at 670,000 people, followed by Salah al-Din at 375,000.

One major obstacle to return is widespread contamination by unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices. Another is the extent of infrastructural damage in areas of return. After returning home to retaken areas, Iraqis continue to face hardship and risks.

### Explosive hazards hinder returns in Baiji, Salah al-Din

The town of Baiji, 250 kilometres north of Baghdad in Salah al-Din Governorate, was retaken by Iraqi Security Forces in October 2015. After an extended battle, the damage to civilian infrastructure, basic services and housing is estimated to be around 50 per cent. The majority of people displaced from Baiji fled between June and August 2014, shortly after the city was seized by ISIL. On 31 January, the Iraqi Government announced the scheduled return of the people of Baiji to their homes. To date, around 28,000 people have already returned to Baiji, and a further 11,000 are still living in displacement, according to Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) data.<sup>1</sup>



Humanitarian partners have raised concerns over the conditions in Baiji, including high contamination by explosive hazards and significant infrastructural damage, both of which are hindering safe return. Security incidents are reported to be a regular occurrence in the Baiji area, including the recent death of two children when an improvised explosive device detonated where they were playing. Mine clearance activities are ongoing, but given the high level of contamination and the intricacy of booby traps, it is a slow and painstaking

<sup>1</sup> <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/ReturneeML.aspx>

*1.5 million Iraqis have returned to their homes, often to areas still heavily contaminated with explosive hazards.*

*Economic hardships caused by protracted displacement compound protection concerns for vulnerable returnees.*

process. In the meantime, the community has called for a campaign to raise general awareness of the risks posed by explosive hazards.

### **Depleted resources compound vulnerability**

In addition to protection concerns, many families will be facing economic hardships following two and a half years in displacement. People have depleted their savings, and household items are worn out. Job opportunities are limited, leaving people with few resources to rebuild their homes. Vulnerable groups like the elderly, disabled and female-headed households are particularly at risk, and are in need of continuing humanitarian assistance.

A similar story is seen in other areas of Iraq, where large numbers of displaced people are returning home: in Tikrit in Salah al-Din, Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet in Anbar and in recently-retaken parts of Ninewa. Across the country people returning to their homes continue to be vulnerable to shocks, and need ongoing, comprehensive humanitarian assistance, in close coordination with recovery initiatives, to ensure no-one in Iraq is left behind.

## **People continue to flee Hawiga in Kirkuk**

### **Violence persists in Hawiga triggering new displacement from the district**

The humanitarian situation in Hawiga in Kirkuk Governorate continues to be precarious amidst ongoing violence. More than 85,000 people have fled from Hawiga District since August when military operations intensified, according to the DTM. Almost 18,000 people fled in January alone. Those who have managed to escape speak of dangerous journeys, often at night, and cite shortages of food, water and medicines. People fleeing Hawiga face serious risks including injury and death from improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance along the way, especially in the Hamreen mountains.

*Of the over 85,000 people who have fled Hawiga since August, 18,000 were in January alone.*

Of the people who have been displaced from Hawiga, about 40,200 have stayed in Kirkuk Governorate, while 37,000 have fled to nearby Salah al-Din. Smaller numbers have fled to Ninewa, Erbil and Baghdad. With the increasing rate of displacement, camp capacity in Kirkuk has recently been boosted and a new camp, Laylan C, established by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration started receiving displaced people in February. Government authorities and humanitarian organizations are providing emergency assistance to arriving families at displacement camps and sites. This includes water and sanitation, ready-to-eat food and emergency medical care to families passing through checkpoints and screening sites. Rapid protection assessments are being conducted to identify critical needs and to respond accordingly. Emergency shelters are also being constructed in Salah al-Din.

Between 70,000 and 80,000 people are estimated to remain in Hawiga, which has been under the control of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant since June 2014.

## **6.2 million Iraqis targeted for aid in 2017**

### **2017 Humanitarian Response Plan seeks USD 985 million**

In December, humanitarian partners presented an advance summary of the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan. At least USD 985 million is required this year to reach the 6.2 million most vulnerable Iraqis. Of this amount, \$331 million is being sought specifically for the Mosul response. Principled humanitarian assistance will remain crucial after Mosul, Tal Afar, Hawija, and Ba'aj are retaken, and millions of Iraqis return home or remain in areas they have moved to during the conflict. The full-fledged HRP for 2017 will be launched in the coming weeks.

Visit us online



For further information, please contact:

**Ivo Freijesen**, Head of Office, freijesen@un.org

**Kate Pond**, Reports Officer, pond@un.org, Tel. (+964) 0782 780 6086

OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at [www.unocha.org/iraq](http://www.unocha.org/iraq) | [www.unocha.org](http://www.unocha.org) | [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)