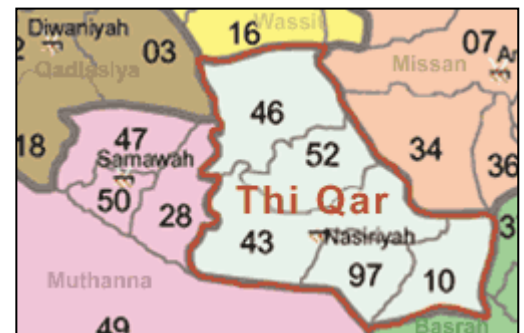




Governorate number: 33
Capital: Nassiriyah
Districts: Al-Chibayish, Al-Rifa'i, Al-Shatra,
Nassriya, Suq Al-Shoyokh
Population: 1,200,000



PHASE II MONITORING

IOM's Phase II monitoring compliments Phase I monitoring, which was implemented from April 2004 to September 2005 through a network of NGO partners in each governorate. The main objective of Phase I was to identify varying Internally Displaced People (IDP) caseloads in Iraq, their locations, reasons for displacement, numbers, protection concerns and humanitarian needs. Based on experience from the first phase, the second phase monitoring was expanded to a more in-depth needs assessment and to identify the return intentions of those populations interviewed.

As with the first phase, the second phase implemented a group-level IDP recording form. The data collection and processing was simplified and the coverage focused on IDP categories (pre- and post-2003 conflict and, in some governorates, IDP returnees). The interviewing focused on identifying immediate needs in the areas of water, sanitation, health, education, food, access to legal documents, and income generation. The data collected through the Phase II monitoring will be used for planning community assistance projects and to better understand and address the needs of IDPs.

GOVERNORATE OVERVIEW

The Governorate of Thi-Qar is located in Iraq's southern region, bordered in the south by the governorate of Basrah and in the north by the governorates of Qadisiya and Wassit. An estimated population of 1,200,000 people is distributed throughout the districts. Nassiriya, the capital city, lies along the Euphrates River about 400 km south of Baghdad. With the exception of Nassriya, a dynamic trade and economic knot, the rest of the districts in Thi-Qar rely on agricultural activities and tourism. A vital component of these industries was represented by the marshlands covering the south-eastern part of Iraq and flowing over part of Thi-Qar governorate.

The drainage of the marshes carried out by the former regime during the early 1990s led to the displacement of thousands of persons. Hundreds of families were deprived of their houses and of their livelihood means closely connected to the marshlands. Marsh Arabs were forced to leave their place of residence moving into displacement either in settlements on the outskirts of the main urban centers or in the lands neighboring the marshes.

The recent 2003 conflict and the following intermittent waves of armed violence between local militias and MNF have resulted in even more complex situations of vulnerabilities for the IDPs and the population as a whole, affected by lack of houses and difficult access to services.

Thi-Qar Governorate is one of the safest in southern Iraq as a result of good tribal relations and religiously homogenous communities. Cooperation between political parties and authorities is usually strong in this governorate.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS OVERVIEW

Post 2003	Pre 2003	IDP Returnee	Refugee Returnee	Others At Risk	Total
3569	657	2816	342	815	8199

All figures are in families (on the basis of 6 persons per family)

*Based on Phase I monitoring figures

*Current monitoring figures combined with Phase I monitoring figures

Thi-Qar has a total estimated 7,042 IDPs (pre-2003, post-2003, and Returnee). Of those, the greatest numbers of IDPs were displaced after the 2003 conflict. The Phase II monitoring revealed that after 2003 events, the IDPs' primary reason to return to their place of origin in Thi-Qar governorate has been discriminations based on the religion, especially in Latifiyah district in northern Baghdad areas.

Recent movement to Thi-Qar is due to the proliferation of armed militias, criminal and terrorist organizations, especially in the center of Iraq. For these reasons, most of the families returned to their original places of residence in Suq Al-Sheoukh and Al-Chibiash in Thi-Qar Governorate, were they settled in public buildings (army or civil locations).

Many IDPs who had left Thi-Qar Governorate during the 1990s to escape the repercussions of Saddam's regime following the failed Shia uprising in 1991 tried to move back to their original homes after the overthrow of Saddam's government in 2003. They returned from their place of usual residence in Kerbala, Baghdad, Badilon, Dhiyala, Kirkuk and Basrah.

Some of the IDP Returnee families are living in public buildings (38%); schools, police and military compounds (20%); and some are living with their relatives in the cities (15%). IDP Returnees who have reached their villages have started farming, although support and services are still needed. It is witnessed that many IDP Returnees do not have their own land and are coming back to the southern areas where they have previously lived in villages as sharecropping farmers. From August to November, the returnees' movement to the marshes notably increased. This is due to the increase of the terrorism operations in the north and center of Iraq.

CASELOADS

Post-2003 Conflict IDPs: 3,569 families

The total number of IDPs displaced after the 2003 conflict began is 3,569 families. These families, displaced in Nassiriyah and in Suq Al-Shoyokh, are for the most part accommodated in collectives. They have fled their houses in Thi-Qar or in Missan due to military operations. Some of the post-2003 IDPs are families compelled to return to their locations of origin as a result of the returning waves of Kurds. They are currently displaced in Nassriyah, and Al Rifa'i, living for the most part in collectives and mixed in host communities.

IDP Intentions: About 80% of the IDPs in this caseload wish to return to their place of origin. A smaller percentage wish to integrate into their current locations, and a few wish to return to their place of usual residence or resettle in a third location.

Pre-2003 Conflict IDPs: 657 families

Six hundred fifty-seven IDPs were identified as pre-2003 conflict. A majority of them are Shia Arabs, and the remaining are Shia Marsh Arabs.

The Marsh Arabs caseload is mostly concentrated in Nassriyah City. The displacement of this group appears to have occurred over a number of years, starting in 1987 following the drainage of the marshes by the former regime, and continuing through to early 1999. The vast majority of Marsh Arab IDPs wish to go back to their place of origin in the marshlands, with a few of them, especially the younger generations willing to integrate and to find employment opportunities in the current urban areas of displacement.

Many pre-2003 IDP families were displaced due to political persecution. They fled from their houses in Nassriyah, Suq Al-Shoyokh, Al Shatra and Al Rifa'l back in the 1990s to escape the political persecutions perpetrated by Saddam regime after the failed Shia uprising in 1991.

IDP Intentions: Over half of IDPs in this category want to return to their place of origin and almost half plan on integrating with the community in their current location. A small percentage of IDPs wish to return to their place of usual residence.

Returnee IDPs: 2,816 families

This caseload includes Arabs and Marsh Arabs that have decided to return to their residence of origin in Thi-Qar after the fall of Saddam. For most of them, the return has not succeeded because their original residences have been either destroyed or occupied.

About two-thirds of this caseload wishes to integrate into the current location, and one-third wishes to return to the place of origin.

Refugee Returnees: 342 families

Three hundred forty-two families have returned to their place of origin in Thi-Qar from surrounding countries where they fled as a result either of the Iraq/Iran conflict, or to escape political persecution carried out by Saddam's regime.

Others at Risk: 815 families

The caseload encompasses families who are living in public buildings of Nassiryia mixed with IDPs.

ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Top Priority Needs:

The IDPs in Thi-Qar communicated that their top three priority needs are:

1. Non-Food Items
2. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
3. Social assistance

Priority Needs per Sector:

Water & Sanitation:

Water:

1. Extension/rehabilitation of water network
2. More than one water tanker
3. Water tanks/containers

Sanitation:

1. Garbage containers
2. Construction of latrines
3. Hygiene campaign

This sector is the main concern for those IDPs living in marshes, rural areas and public buildings (Al-Food, Tar, Alokeaka, and Al-Esakrah). Due to the increasing number of population in the governorate, IDPs face a lack of water access. The main sources of drinkable water are the water tank trucks and the river.

Health:

1. Construction of hospital/clinic
2. Rehabilitation of Primary Health Center

There is a high demand for health services due to the high rates of malaria, cholera and typhoid, which are reported to be common among the population. The hospitals face a lack of equipment such as surgical tools, ambulances and laboratory equipment.

Education:

1. Rehabilitation of schools
2. Furniture for the school (desks, chairs, etc.)
3. Increase number of school teachers

Most of the IDPs living in camps and destroyed villages do not have access to schools. Many schools in the area are in need of rehabilitation (the estimated number of schools is 499). The lack of schools in camps is noteworthy. Most IDPs families send their children to schools in towns, causing congestion in classrooms. In addition, access to schools was reported to be difficult for girls. 40% of 'non-school attendance' is in the age group of 13 -18 year olds. Also, a lack of furniture and teachers has been reported.

Child labor is reported to be a common practice.

Food:

1. Fresh food
2. Adding items in PDS Ration Card
3. Assistance with transfer of the PDS Ration Card

All families have a PDS food ration card, but the food items supplied by the food ration are not sufficient to satisfy their needs. Therefore the residents have to buy some items from the markets, especially rice and sugar, to cover their daily needs.

Legal Assistance:

1. Legal/information center
2. Assistance with filling claims with the Iraqi Property Claim Commission- IPCC
3. Nationality certificates

The main legal problem facing the IDPs families is the threats of being evicted from the buildings where they are settled.

Income Generation:

1. Carpentry/Construction
2. Metal works
3. Sewing

The rate of unemployment is very high (around 85 %). The main income resource is agriculture, but there are many problems that the farmers face, such as the lack of agricultural kits, especially tools, fertilizers and seeds. The other problem is the presence of swamps, which cover agricultural lands.

Type of Information needs:

1. Housing
2. Jobs
3. General services

PROTECTION CONCERNS

Discrimination: Marsh Arabs follow strict tribal customs, which at times prevents women from accessing education and employment.

Evictions: Evictions from public buildings (such as the ex-army locations, Baath party locations) without an alternative shelter are imminent. 45% of IDPs in Nassiryah center have heard both informally and formally that families will be evicted from public buildings. Shelter is the main priority for displaced people living in marsh areas such as Al-Chibayish and Suq-Al-Sheuokh, where IDP populations are settled in camps and in public buildings.

In Thi-Qar, light has been shed on the particular vulnerabilities affecting the life of IDP children. A vast majority of the surveyed kids have been reported having anxious or aggressive behavior. In spite of this, no services are available in Thi-Qar to support or protect the psychological and developmental needs of the child. The social sector in Iraq has been traditionally institutionalized into the local government structures, which since the end of the conflict cannot function for the lack of human and financial resources, thus leaving the needs of the most vulnerable children and families unaddressed.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS

The results of the assessments reveal that the majority of the IDP families currently displaced in Thi-Qar wish to return to their place of origin. However, there are two main obstacles to the identification of viable solutions: clarification of property issues and ecological recovery of the marshes. In both cases, long-term plans have to be the result of local political will and international financial support. Neither of them can be achieved without the improvement of the security situation and the establishment of a competent public administration system with regional and local responsibilities.

With regard of the families displaced as a result of the regime reprisal after the failed Shia uprising in 1991, several obstacles are preventing the IDP families from returning: houses have been destroyed, infrastructures such as electricity, water, sanitation and roads, along with schools and health centers are non-existent or in poor conditions. The families themselves do not express a clear wish to return due to the lack of employment and of income generation opportunities.

Concerning the few families displaced in Thi-Qar due to the reversal of the Arabization campaign, a return to their place of habitual residence in Diyala and Tameem appear not viable in the short-term. Restoration of security and resolution of legal disputes are the pre-conditions to the implementation of any kind of return program in the area.

For further information on IDP displacement in Iraq, please contact the IDP Program at IOM Iraq at +962 6 565 9660 or email Dana Graber, Monitoring and Reintegration Officer, at dgraber@iom-iraq.net.