

Returns and Durable Solutions (ReDS) Assessment

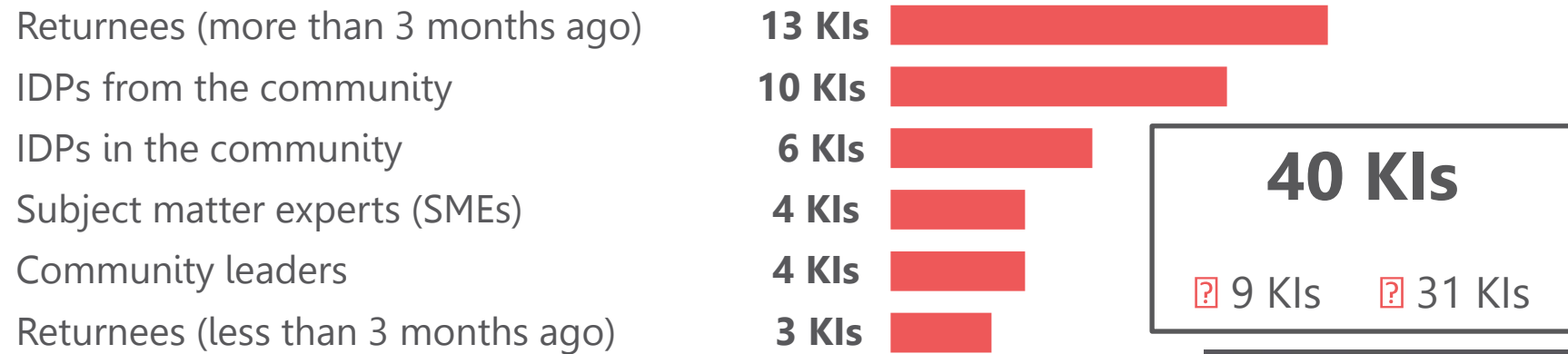
Al-Atheem Sub-district
Al-Khalis District, Diyala Governorate
Preliminary Findings Presentation, Iraq



Assessment Methodology

- **Multi-sectoral** assessment tool, which combined **qualitative and quantitative** data.
- Data collection was done **remotely by phone** between 7 May and 7 June 2022, adapted to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Purposive sampling** methods were employed to identify KIs. Findings should therefore be considered as **indicative**.
- Methodology based on **key informant interviews** (KIIs).

? KI profiles in Al-Atheem Sub-district





Recent Returns and Barriers

Returns from non-camp areas

7-11 households

were reported by several KIs to have returned from non-camp areas in other districts in Diyala Governorate, namely Baquba, Beladruz, and Khanaqin, and from Erbil Governorate.

Reported reasons for returns included:

- Sense of increased security in their AoOs,
- Nostalgia from previous life, and
- Following the return of other family members.

Barriers to return

The top five most reported barriers for further returns included:

- Lack of/limited job opportunities,
- Lack of/limited access to basic public services, namely healthcare and education,
- Damaged/destroyed housing and challenging access to rehabilitation,
- Security concerns at AoOs and fear of being perceived as affiliated with ISIL.



Expected Returns

Expected returns from non-camp areas

10-12 households

may return from Diyala Governorate, namely from Hibhib Sub-district in Al-Khalis District, other districts, specifically from Baquba and Khanaqin, and from Erbil Governorate.

Reported reasons for returns included:

- Nostalgia from previous life,
- Perceived increased in access to services, and
- Following the return of other family members.

Family separation

A few KIs reported that **adult male family members remained in displacement** at the time of data collection due to **the availability of jobs in their AoDs**.

One KI also reported that the **wife and children** in some households remained displaced due to **the involvement of their children in education activities in their AoDs**.



Access to Durable Solutions Assistance¹

Activity/project implementation

Reportedly **there were activities and/or projects** implemented by **humanitarian and development actors** in the area.

The top four implemented activities/projects were:

- Water, sanitation and hygiene,
- Housing rehabilitation,
- Reconciliation and social cohesion, and
- Food programmes.

Assistance as a factor to encourage returns

Reportedly access to durable solutions assistance **was a factor to encourage returns.**

The two most reported needed humanitarian activities were:

- **Livelihoods**, and
- Housing rehabilitation.

¹ Durable solutions assistance includes humanitarian, stabilization, development, and peacebuilding assistance under its umbrella.



Access to Housing and Type of Tenure

As reported, the majority of households in the sub-district resided in **owned houses**.

The majority of households from the community reportedly **had** housing, land, and property **(HLP) documents proving ownership**.

A few KIs reported that some IDP households in the community resided in **unfinished owned buildings** and in **houses** under **verbal rental agreement** because they never owned a house in the sub-district.



Reported Proportion of Damaged Housing

40%-70%

A yellow combine harvester is shown in a field of golden wheat. The harvester is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the image, with its front and side visible. The field of wheat is in the foreground, and the sky is a clear, light blue. The harvester has a large green window for the operator and several lights on top.

Access to Housing Rehabilitation

Challenges

All KIs reported that households faced **challenges in accessing housing rehabilitation**.

The three most reported barriers were:

- Existing factors affecting construction and reconstruction,
- Lack of government compensation for housing rehabilitation, and
- Limited access to financial resources affected households had for housing rehabilitation.



Access to Basic Public Services

Challenges

All KIs reported that the majority of the households faced **challenges in accessing basic public services**, mainly **healthcare**.

The most reported challenges were:

- Level of infrastructure damage, lack of rehabilitation, and conditions at public institutions,
- Lack of strategic planning and monitoring-feedback mechanisms from the local government, and
- Shortage of public employees to guarantee quality and timely service provision.



Access to Livelihoods

Challenges

All KIs reported that the majority of households faced **challenges in accessing livelihoods**.

The three most reported challenges were:

- Lack of support and neglect from the local government towards the reactivation of agriculture,
- Water scarcity, climate change, and challenges for land irrigation, and
- Lack of construction and reconstruction campaigns.

Economic support

Community leader and SME KIs reported that **livelihood programme** implementation **may support economic development** in the sub-district.

The main reported economic developments needed:

- Revitalization of the agricultural sector by providing financial or in-kind support to farmers and
- Reactivation of the private sector, including trade and commerce.



Access to Livelihoods

Potential for sectoral growth

Community leader and SME KIs reported that the **agricultural sector** showed the most growth potential in the 12 months following data collection.

Livelihood sectors of interest for returnee and IDP households

The most commonly reported sectors of interest for returnee and IDP households were: **agriculture** (including animal husbandry), **education**, and **construction**.



Perceptions on Social Cohesion

Social cohesion bodies

Durable solution actors were perceived by KIs as the **main body promoting social cohesion**, followed by the local authorities.

Improving social cohesion

KIs believed that the **local authorities**, **tribal leaders**, and **humanitarian actors** played an important role to improve social cohesion.

Reported strategies or initiatives to improve social cohesion:

- Seminars, awareness sessions, and conferences,
- Initiatives promoting access to work for all,
- Initiatives promoting community inter-relationships, and
- Initiatives promoting safety and security.



Perceptions of IDP KIs in the community

Feeling welcome

KIs reported that the majority of households **felt welcome and accepted** by the rest of the community.

The most reported reason was the existing social bonds and kinship ties with host community members, mainly attributed to the proximity of their AoOs to Al-Atheem.

Interaction

Reportedly, the majority of IDP households in the community **interacted with all groups**.

Half of IDP KIs in the community reported that IDP households participated in decision-making processes.

Feeling integrated

The vast majority of IDP KIs in the community reported that **IDP households in the community did not feel integrated** and felt **unbelonging** to Al-Atheem.

“We are still displaced and have not returned to our homes.”



Perceptions of IDP KIs from the community

Feeling accepted

The majority of IDP KIs from the community **did not know how accepted** the households from this specific group felt in their AoDs.

A few IDP KIs reported that IDP households from the community may feel welcome to the sub-district if they decided to return.

Interaction

Almost three quarters of IDP KIs from the community reported that the majority of IDP households **interacted** with all groups.

Feeling integrated

All IDP KIs from the community reported that **households from their displacement group did not feel integrated** and felt **somewhat belonging** to their AoDs.



Perceptions of returnee KIs

Feeling welcome

The majority of returnee KIs reported that returnee households **felt welcome** or **very welcome**.

The two most reported reasons were:

- Kinship ties and social bonds with other households and
- Belonging to the prevalent tribes.

Interaction

KIs reported that the majority of returnee households **interacted with all groups**.

Feeling re-integrated

All returnee KIs reported that **returnee households felt re-integrated** in Al-Atheem where they **strongly belonged**.

"We returned to our homes, where our ancestors resided, and we returned to customs and traditions that link us all."

Key Findings

- Recent returns reportedly **had positively impacted the community by the return of experienced skilled workers reactivated the industrial, trade, and commercial sectors** and **gradually reactivated the agricultural sector** with the **return of farmers** and **recultivation of their lands**.
- Expected returns reportedly **may positively impact** the community in the sub-district **affecting trade and commerce and the private sector** in general, agricultural sector, social inter-relations in the community, reconstruction of the sub-district, and access to services.
- Further efforts to develop **basic public services**, namely water, education, and healthcare, was the most reported primary community need for **SME KIs**. In contrast, **community leader, returnee, and IDP KIs from/in the community** most commonly reported the need to ensure **access to housing rehabilitation** and **livelihoods** as primary community needs.
- The most affected sector was reportedly **healthcare**, followed by education. Conditions at the operational public health center (PHC) in Al-Atheem, shortage of medicines including vaccines at the PHC, and shortage of medical staff, namely doctors who remained displaced, were reportedly the main factors affecting access to public healthcare in the sub-district.
- Access to livelihoods was one of the most reported barriers for returns, the second most commonly reported community need, and the most needed activity to encourage further returns to Al-Atheem.

Key Findings

- **Tribal leaders** were reportedly the **most effective at resolving disputes** within the sub-district. Reportedly, **the majority of returnee and IDP households from/in the community felt safe or very safe** in Al-Atheem.
- Over three quarters of **returnee and IDP KIs in the community** reported that households **interacted with households from different displacement groups** mainly reported due to the kinship ties they had with other households in the sub-district. Additionally, **over two thirds of returnee and IDP KIs from/in the community** reported that households **participated in decision-making** processes in the sub-district.
- **All returnee KIs** reported that **returnee households felt reintegrated in the community** of Al-Atheem, while **all IDP KIs in the community** reported that **IDP households did not feel integrated in the sub-district**.
- In addition, **all IDP KIs from the community** reported that IDP households **did not feel integrated in their areas of displacement (AoDs)** at the time of data collection. Findings showed that feeling of (re)integration were mainly linked to access to housing and lands, followed by the existence of supportive social networks.

THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION



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Upon request