



# **RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF IRAQI FAMILIES WITH A PERCEIVED AFFILIATION TO ISIL**

**Erbil, December 17, 2019**

# Introduction

*“Any mistake in dealing with them will create massive future problems... To date, the government has not dealt with this problem in the right way... [the government] is dealing with this as a general IDP issue and moving forward with the effort to close the camps, but it is unclear what we will do with [“ISIS families”]”*

Iraqi government official - 12 September 2019



# Background

Partnership between IOM and PPO on *rehabilitation and reintegration of ISIL affiliated families* based on the following assumptions:

- Return and reintegration of ISIL affiliated families can trigger new conflict;
- Obstacles to return result in protracted or secondary displacement of ISIL affiliated families;
- As their displacement grows protracted, marginalizing, disenfranchisement, and exclusion will render IDPs susceptible to alignment with violent extremist groups;
- Upon return and in urban displacement settings, large numbers of “ISIS families” lack documentation, and struggle to access public services, including healthcare, education, security;
- Women with a perceived affiliation are subject to harassment and extortion (in and out of camps);
- Many families are unable to access income because there are limited livelihood opportunities in camps, former breadwinners are dead/missing/detained, and/or their communities continue to reject them.

# Consultation process to date

- Community level consultations in Ninewa and Salaheddin in September and October 2019
- Workshops with authorities, from Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Anbar and with Iraqi CSOs working with families with a perceived affiliation in these governorates in October and November 2019
- Discussion framed around ways to:
  - i) Promote destigmatization, community acceptance, restoring trust
  - ii) Ensure protective factors are in place, such as access to civil documentation, services, and livelihoods; and
  - iii) Respond to radicalization and/or bolstering resilience to potential radicalization



# Findings of the consultation process to date

- General acceptance that isolating families in camps is a massive risk; as is their exclusion upon return.
- Community responsibility to protect women and children and current conditions are a source of shame;
- Return without community acceptance results in isolation, tensions, or violence upon return;
- Reluctance to accept families back into communities compounded by:
  - Perceived lack of justice and lack of confidence in the criminal justice system
  - Fear and security concerns
- There is a common view that the government must develop a process to “categorize” families with a perceived affiliation, but proposed “categorizations” are often simplistic and impacted by fragmented security sector;

# Findings of the consultation process to date

- Tribal mediation efforts take place (mainly in Anbar and Salaheddin) but:
  - highly localized and unable to facilitate return at higher scale;
  - Tribal agreements can potentially victimize others;
  - Complicated by presence of local security actors (PMF have weakened tribal power structures and have a vested interest in non-return)
- Compensation almost universally identified as the most critical means of promoting community acceptance.
- General recognition that return will not reduce vulnerability
- On the other hand, concerns about perceptions that families with a perceived affiliation are being “rewarded” while needs among others remain

*“There is no solution aside from giving them back to their areas of origin”. ”*

Tribal leader, Shirqat, regarding families with a perceived affiliation – 16 September 2019

# Findings of the consultation process to date

---

- Authorities agree that everyone should be provided with access to documentation, but there is still some degree of denial that families with a perceived affiliation face particular barriers
- Questions regarding who will support families (financially) if they do return; some have been resulting to negative coping mechanisms in areas of return
- Significant concern about children who were raised with ISIS members in their households, and consensus on need to reform the educational curriculum
- Differences between Governorates on opportunities for reintegration relate to particular history of conflict, capacity of local government/tribal structures and presence of armed groups
- Localized return processes parallel to national action plan



# Karama camp, Salah Al-Din

- Hosted 265 HH (1,210 individuals) as of the end of September;
- Freedom to leave the camp independently is conditional on having a security clearance; families who are not granted a security clearance can only leave the camp through written commitment (incl. disavowment) and “sponsorship”;
- Some women with a perceived affiliation threatening revenge against other families due to death of ISIS members in their households;
- NGO social workers providing legal and religious education, but significant gaps in service provision remain;
- Severe lack of shelter in the camp - some tents with more than 5HHs living in them (approx. 20-30 people). Personal items are kept outside tents as there is no storage space. People have taken to cooking in the latrines and shower facilities as the existing communal kitchens are being used as shelters;
- Perception that lack of international support is due to perceived affiliation of camp population;
- Extortion and abuse reported within the camp.



# Rapid Assessment

## Objectives:

- Validating findings about the current situation of families with a perceived affiliation to ISIL
- Understand local mechanisms and processes that have allowed for return and reintegration

## Main findings on their situation:

- Validation of concerns regarding access to documentation, income, healthcare, education, but also shelter and food.
- Attempted return has led in some instances to re-displacement due to community rejection.
- Reports of being discriminated, of being victims of verbal or physical abuse or violence, and scared of being mistreated by others, mostly by security forces.

# Rapid Assessment

Return of these families:

- Context factors that have led to a process to be set up
- How the idea of return was “made” acceptable:
  - Creating empathy
  - Cost-benefit calculations
  - Emphasizing traditional values
  - Utilizing the influence of key actors

Different measures and conditions to allow return, mostly based on demands of victims’ families:

- Disavowal or written commitment
- Sponsorship
- Blood compensation
- Security processes



# Rapid Assessment

**(( كفالة ))**  
مفرزة مخيم بستان الشيوخ  
العدد /  
التاريخ /

الاتصال الهاتفي بين ضابط استخبارات قيادة عمليات صلاح الدين والعميد  
(مجيد عثمان مجيد) مدير قسم شرطة الشرقاط والمتضمن تسليم الكفيل  
( ) والذي يسكن محافظة ( ) قضاء  
( ) قرية ( ) العوائل المدرجة أدناه ولأجله وقعت  
بتاريخ ٠٢٠١٩/٩/

أسماء العائلة :-

- ١.
- ٢.
- ٣.
- ٤.
- ٥.
- ٦.
- ٧.
- ٨.
- ٩.
- ١٠.
- ١١.

|                        |                                     |                  |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| تأيد                   | تأيد                                | اسم الكفيل /     |
| قسم شرطة الشرقاط       | قسم استخبارات ومكافحة إرهاب الشرقاط | العنوان الكامل / |
|                        |                                     | رقم الموبايل /   |
| تأيد                   | تأيد                                |                  |
| فانمقامية قضاء الشرقاط | المجلس المحلي لقضاء الشرقاط         |                  |

“Sponsorship” form being  
used in Shirqat, Salah Al-Din  
16 November 2019



# Next steps

- National level consultations, as a basis to work toward a national level roadmap (incl. through engagement of other agencies);
- Legislative review, analyzing legislative framework and gaps;
- Technical support to the Government of Iraq to develop risk assessment and profiling tools;
- Pilot measures in a number of camp and out-of-camp locations of return in Salahedin.



# Discussion