

Cities as home:
**UNDERSTANDING BELONGING AND
ACCEPTANCE AMONG IDPs AND HOST
COMMUNITIES IN IRAQ**

Summary presentation at RWG



Rationale

- It is frequently said that we focus too much on returns, that DS isn't only returns
- At the same time, we have seen repeatedly the government's general (and sometimes vehement) lack of acceptance of local integration or settlement elsewhere
- Still, we know that local integration is happening around Iraq, and has happened following earlier conflicts and displacement crises
- A large majority of people who were displaced as a result of the conflict with ISIS (over 4.7 million) have returned home, significant numbers remain in displacement (over 1.3 million), many of whom are already integrating locally or may not be able to return due to a variety of issues
- If integration is not a policy option available in all cases, can we show where it's already happening, show the factors that make integration conducive (or not) for IDPs, host communities and local authorities, and in the process find entry points for more productive policy discussions with government that could lead to greater willingness to countenance local integration?

The aim of the study is to identify:

- Which factors help or hinder local integration
- Which locations are more (or less) conducive to this outcome

The study relies on mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) and it was conducted in the cities and towns with the largest size of IDP population hosted from 2014 onwards.

Location	Governorate	Number of IDPs (individuals)	Rank	Closing camp nearby?	Significant presence of returnees?
Erbil City	Erbil	136,884	#1		
Kirkuk City	Kirkuk	71,004	#2	Yes	
East Mosul	Ninewa	70,230	#3	Yes	Yes
Zakho Town	Dohuk	32,880	#6		
Dohuk City	Dohuk	28,578	#7		
West Mosul	Ninewa	25,206	#9	Yes	Yes
Tooz Khormatu	Salah al-Din	21,000	#10		Yes
Baghdad City	Baghdad	19,800	#11	Yes	
Samarra Town	Salah al-Din	17,910	#12		
Baquba Town	Diyala	16,374	#13		
Kalar Town	Sulaimaniya	16,206	#14		
Al-Amiriya Area	Anbar	13,734	#15	Yes	Yes
Musayab Town	Babylon	10,584	#16		
Khanaqin Town	Diyala	9,030	#25	Yes	Yes

Note: population figures from the time of data collection (Displacement Tracking Matrix Masterlist Round 113).

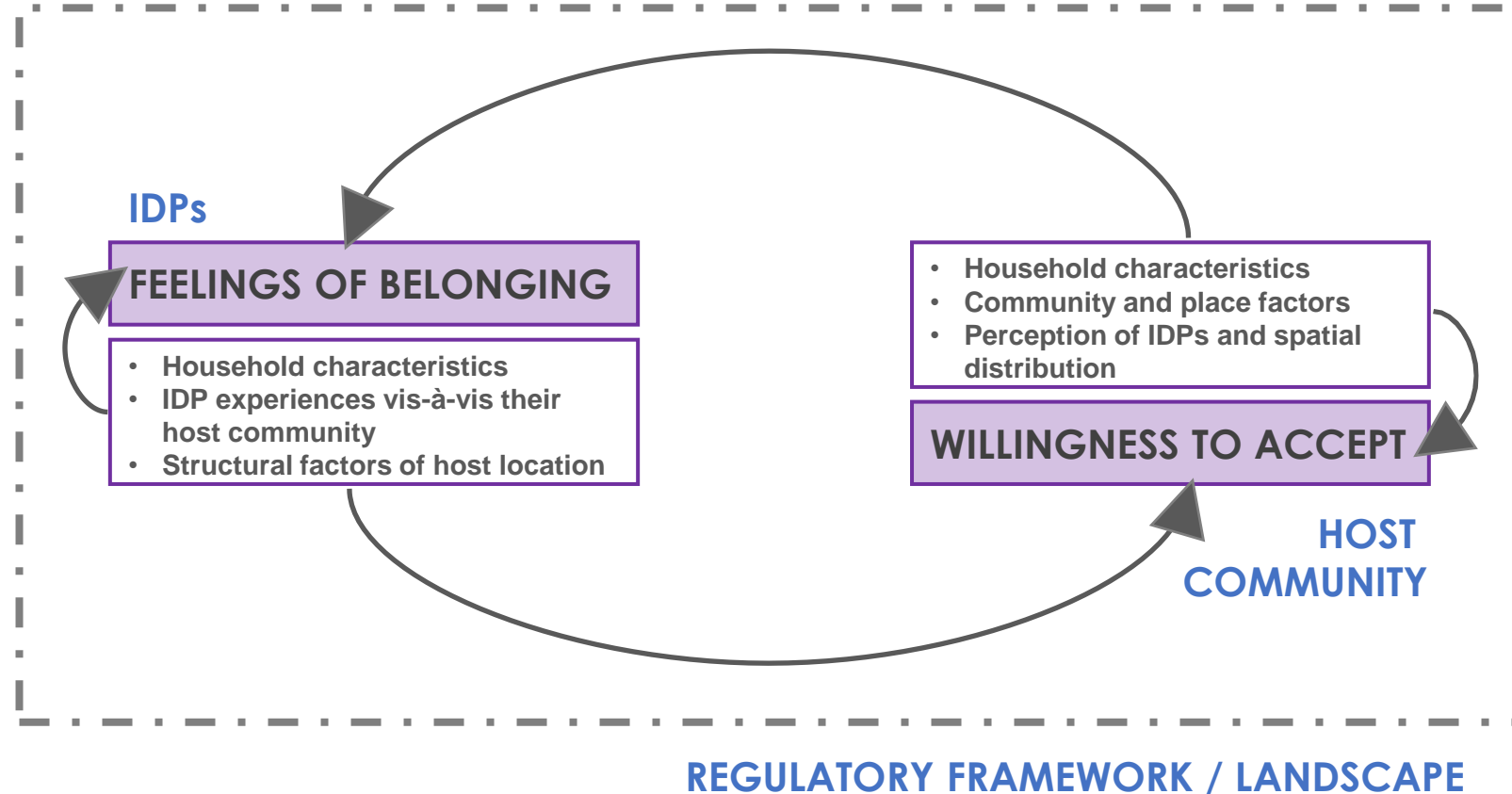


These locations host 51% of the total non-camp IDP population in Iraq.

To conceptualize and measure integration, we frame it as a two-way street.

We focused on three elements that comprise the concept of local integration:

- IDPs' feelings of belonging to the place of displacement.
- Host community's acceptance of the IDPs hosted long term.
- Local regulatory framework / landscape that may affect integration outcomes.



Indicators to measure factors relevant for integration are categorized at different levels:

- Individual or household characteristics.
- Place factors:
 - Interactions, experiences, perceptions on the host community / IDPs.
 - Structural characteristics of the location.

Sources used to generate these indicators are drawn from different fields:

- Indicators from Durable Solutions Criteria (e.g. JIPS DS Library).
- Indicators from migration and refugee integration frameworks (e.g. Eurostat, OECD, MIPEX).
- Indicators from social cohesion and fragility frameworks.
- Indicators from humanitarian assessments (MCNA).

Methodology: mixed methods

Quantitative analysis:

- Aim to collect 100 surveys with IDPs and 100 surveys with HC members in EACH location.
- Total sample size obtained after data cleaning is 1,382 IDP respondents and 1,437 HC respondents.
- **Data collected right before COVID-19 lockdown** (fieldwork in some locations interrupted).
- The quantitative data allows us to conduct a multilevel regression analysis:

$$IDP \text{ belonging} = f (\text{indicator 1, indicator 2, indicator 3, ...})$$

$$HC \text{ acceptance} = f (\text{indicator 1, indicator 2, indicator 3, ...})$$

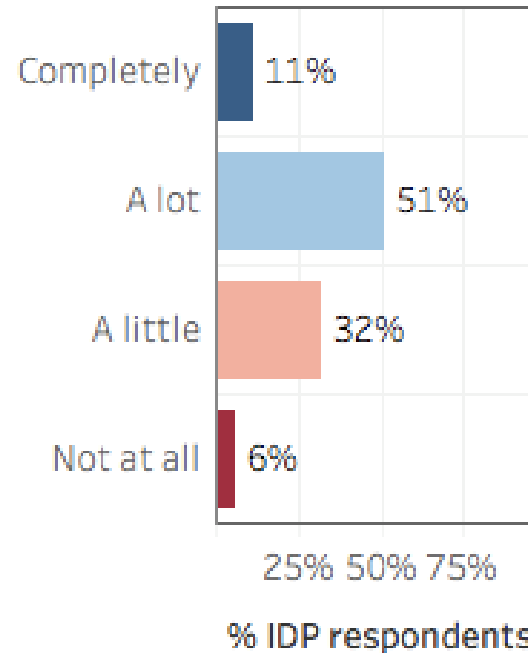
Qualitative analysis

- For the regulatory landscape, we collected 40 interviews with local authority officials across districts + governorates of study (DGs, mayor's office, security apparatus, provincial council, etc.).
- The policy areas included: security, residence, housing, employment, service provision (education and health).
- **Data collected after COVID-19 lockdown.**

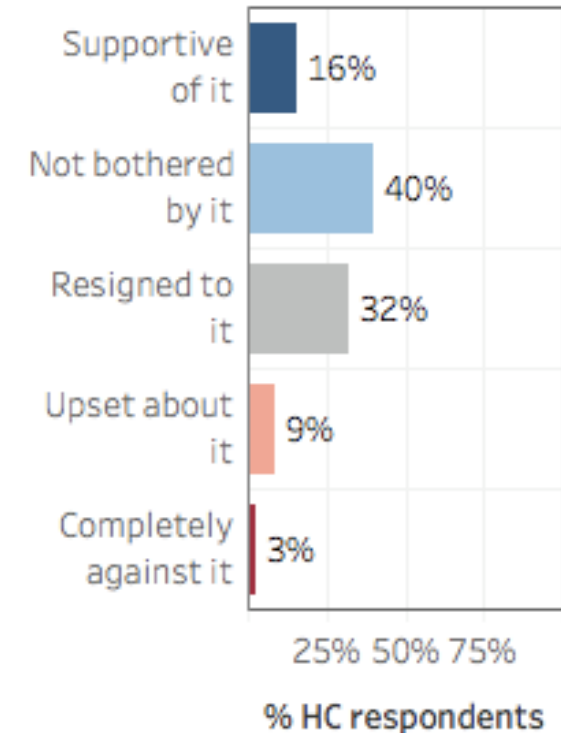
Introducing the quantitative findings: what drives/deters belonging and acceptance?

- The overall measurement of feelings on local integration for both IDPs and host community show the following results:
- *(Results very significantly per location – more in the last slides)*

Perceptions of IDPs feeling belonging



Perceptions of HC on IDPs staying indefinitely



- This is the outcome we want to understand why and how it happens. what factors are more commonly seen in those respondents and those places that tend to have positive feelings on integration?

Introducing the quantitative findings: what drives/deters belonging and acceptance?

- The analysis is done separately for IDPs and host community, but we combine them at the end into one narrative per location.
- Indicators are categorized based on the regression results (magnitude of the correlation and sign):
 1. High relevant drivers / deterrents
 2. Secondary drivers / deterrents
 3. Not significant indicators

Findings for IDPs: what impacts the likelihood of IDPs to feel belonging to their host locations?

Below the key factors that are found to be correlated with **belonging**, either positively or negatively:

HIGH RELEVANCE INDICATORS	
<p>Drivers for belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust in other residents • Trust in local authorities • Having friends in host community • Satisfaction with housing 	<p>Deterrents for belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High exclusion experienced by IDPs • Low freedom of expression for IDPs
SECONDARY INDICATORS	
<p>Drivers for belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having assets / savings • Having a financial safety net • Positive feelings of everyday safety • Poor self-reported mental health • Displaced within governorate • Length of displacement • Having extended family in location 	<p>Deterrents for belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement restrictions • Feeling negatively judged/labelled • Owning property in place of origin • Being a daily labourer • HH member with functional difficulties

Findings for the host community: what impacts the likelihood of host community members to accept long term the IDP population?

Below the key factors that are found to be correlated with **acceptance**, either positively or negatively:

HIGH RELEVANCE FACTORS	
<p>Drivers for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling protected from external threats • Confidence in local administration 	<p>Deterrents for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe IDPs pose a security threat
SECONDARY FACTORS	
<p>Drivers for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-sociality towards IDPs • Satisfied with level of services received • Having assets / savings • Having a financial safety net 	<p>Deterrents for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt cultural distance with IDPs • Stronger identification with own ethno-religious group • Being member of an ethno-religious minority group • Experienced violence in the 80s-90s
OTHER STRUCTURAL FACTORS	
<p>Drivers for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in a location with strong social safety nets / relationships • Living in a location with relative inequality 	<p>Deterrents for acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in a location affected by ISIS conflict • Living in a location relatively poor • Living in a location where IDPs live in urban enclaves • Living in a location with a high ratio of IDPs over host community

Qualitative data: findings on the regulatory landscape around local integration

Results are very localized (as central government, KRG, and governorates issue instructions, regulations, and laws), but overall trends are as follows:

- More than actual regulations that affect the likelihood of integration taking place, there were (are) actions to influence IDPs' decisions to resolve displacement towards return to their place of origin.
- The critical measures applied to IDPs specifically in displacement relates to security clearance measures in place in relation to ISIL conflict (with local specificities by governorate). This is a prerequisite for everything else. Affects some IDPs in some locations significantly more than others.
- Other measures apply for any person living in a different governorate (either new/old IDP or other internal migrant). For this category of people, there are very localized measures on property ownership, residence, voting, access to services, etc. They are impacted by local political and social dynamics (sometimes linked to ethno-religious balances). **Overall**, there are no stated prohibitions (with few exceptions), but no additional support for IDPs either.

Conclusions: Interpreting the findings in the current context

1. Overall, integration is strongly driven by the characteristics of the surrounding environment for both IDPs and host community: the social environment, the physical environment, the institutional environment.
2. This also means that drivers and deterrents for integration are very localized. Issues are different in each place – more on this in **next slide**.
3. How is the current COVID context affecting this? Likely it will affect outcomes of integration, both positively and negatively, given the impact on social interactions, collective experiences, livelihoods, governance, etc.
4. This analysis complements wider research on durable solutions – irrespective of the intentions IDPs have, we know now better how to increase facilitate their belonging.

What's next? Given that findings are so localized, we aim now to produce factsheets for each location.

- These factsheets aim to answer the last research question: which locations are more (or less) conducive for integration and why?
- We explore:
 - *Socio-political context of the location*
 - *Top critical deterrents of integration*
 - *Top critical drivers of integration*
 - *Local policy aspects around IDPs*
 - *Suggested areas of location intervention*
- Looking for feedback from partners that work in these locations.

Location	Governorate	Conduciveness for integration	
		IDPs feeling belonging	Host community accepting IDPs
Erbil City	Erbil	Medium	Low
Kirkuk City	Kirkuk	High	Low
East Mosul	Ninewa	Medium	Medium
Sulaimaniya City	Sulaimaniya	High	High
Zakho Town	Dohuk	High	Low
Dohuk City	Dohuk	High	Medium
West Mosul	Ninewa	Medium	Medium
Tooz Khormatu	Salah al-Din	Low	Medium
Baghdad City	Baghdad	Low	High
Samarra Town	Salah al-Din	Low	Low
Baquba Town	Diyala	Low	Low
Kalar Town	Sulaimaniya	High	High
Al-Amiriya Area	Anbar	Medium	High
Musayab Town	Babylon	Low	High
Khanaqin Town	Diyala	Medium	Medium