

Debaga 1 and Baharka camps FGDs

RWG – January 2025

Objective and Methodology

The primary objective was to understand the movement intentions of households living in Debaga and Baharka camps and to identify the specific needs and challenges they face or expect to encounter during their (re)integration process.

Debaga 1 camp

- On December 4th, 2024, IOM conducted two gender-segregated Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Debaga 1 camp.
- The female FGD included 9 female participants aged 25 to 48 and 9 male participants aged 25 to 65.

Baharka camp

- On December 24, 2024, IOM conducted two gender-segregated FGDs in Baharka camp.
- The female FGD included 9 participants aged 30 to 44, while the male FGD had 11 participants aged 25 to 65.

Overview

Debaga 1 camp

- As of December 2024, around **877 households** were residing in the camp.
- According to both FGDs, the most common area of origin of the camp population is the Ninewa governorate (**Makhmoor, Qaraj, Sinjar and Qayara**) Around 570.
- The second most common area of origin is **Al-Hawiga in Kirkuk** governorate, with around 150 households

Baharka camp

- At the time of data collection, **177 households** were residing in the camp. According to the UNHCR's IDP Camp Population Flow dashboard, most IDP households departed in August and September 2024 (622 hh).
- According to both FGD participants, the majority of the households residing in the camp are originally from **Sinjar, Mosul, Salah Al-Din and Anbar**.
- Ninewa (100HHs), Salah Al-Din (65HHs), and Anbar (13 HHs).

Situation in Areas of Origin (AoO)

➤ Safety and Security

Debaga 1 camp

- **Qaraj:** Considered unstable due to ISIL sleeper cells and night-time curfews. Male FGD
- **Qayara:** Viewed as more stable for returnees. Male FGD
- **Al-Hawiga:** Anticipated significant obstacles upon return, including perceived affiliations. Male FGD

"In some areas and villages of Salah al-Din, some returnees are illegally arrested due to perceived affiliation and no one could see them again. Most of them are sentenced to life imprisonment".
Female FGD

Baharka camp

- **Mosul:** No reported issues with returnees.
- **Salah Al-Din:** Security source intimidation impacts decisions on returning.
- **Sinjar:** Sunni Arabs have not returned due to perceived tensions with the Yazidi community. Female FGD
- Movement restriction at checkpoints.

"My kids were little when we left; I don't want to take my now grown children there to deal with uncertain safety and security," Female FGD.

Situation in Areas of Origin (AoO)

➤ Basic Services

Debaga 1 camp

- Lack of access to adequate water in Al-Qaraj and Makhmour.
- Long distance to healthcare facilities sometimes results in casualties.
- A school exists in Baqarta (Al-Qaraj), but students from other areas face transportation challenges, limiting access to education. Female FGD
- Lack of private and public transportation in rural areas worsens access issues for health and education services. Villages like Akraj Fawqani lack basic communication networks.

Baharka camp

- lack of schools in Yarmaja Sharqiya, Mosul City reported by Female participants.
- Lack of access to adequate water in Baaj, households depend on water trucking.
- In Baiji households face challenges accessing water, electricity, and education.

"In Baaj three water trucks are available, and households wait three days for their turn". Female FGD

"In Baiji households use small electricity generators and cook food in clay ovens". Female FGD

Situation in Areas of Origin (AoO)

➤ Livelihoods

Livelihood opportunities in AoOs are scarce, with many IDPs reported that returning to their pre-displacement jobs is challenging due to destroyed infrastructure and limited market activity.

Debaga 1 camp

- According to male FGD, employment opportunities are limited in AoO, and many IDPs noted that returning to their pre-displacement livelihoods is difficult due to destroyed infrastructure and limited market activity.
- According to female FGD, besides agriculture and livestock, household members travel to nearby towns to find job opportunities

Baharka camp

- Female participants reported that their social salary is too low to cover household expenses in AoO.
- They also mentioned that government employees have lost their jobs, having been replaced by others.

“In Mosul, young people work daily for a small amount of money (5,000 IQDs per day), and we cannot even pay the rent with this income”. Female FGD

Situation in Areas of Origin (AoO)

➤ Housing and HLP

Debaga 1 camp

- According to the male FGD, most households owning a home in AoOs face significant challenges in rehabilitating their damaged houses.
- Female FGD participants reported housing destruction in their AoO, further complicated by challenges in proving legal ownership.
- In Mosul, female FGD participants highlighted the need for support to access HLP documentation, as some face illegal occupation of their homes since they are not able to proof ownership.

Baharka camp

- According to both FGDs, households faces challenges in rehabilitating damaged houses in AoOs, often compounded by difficulties in proving legal ownership.
- Households who were renting a house prior to displacement can't afford renting now, especially with the increase in rental cost compared to before displacement. Female FGD
- The Female participants highlighted that many homeowners lack legal proof of ownership because the homes were built on informal sites in areas where the government did not provide housing documentation.

Movement Intention

Debaga 1 camp

- The majority of households expressed a preference to remain in the camp due to the challenges in their AoOs and limited alternatives for relocation or integration.
- **Financial and Health Constraints:** One woman, living in the camp for 8 years with a sick husband and four school-aged children reported it is difficult to meet basic needs outside the camp.
- Another female participant expressed a desire to return but mentioned that their current income is insufficient to support their return.

"We don't have plans for the upcoming months; we plan on a daily basis". Male FGD

Baharka camp

- Households find it difficult to make decisions or plan for the future due to the complex situation, including regional conflicts and uncertainties in Syria.
- Female participants reported that their current options are either staying in the camp or integrating into Erbil.
- Participants reported that if MOMD could provide support with security, housing, and livelihoods, they would consider returning; otherwise, Erbil is viewed as a safer option where at least their children can attend school.
- Female participants reported that many households in the camp cannot afford to return even if they wish to.

"MOMD wants us to leave the camp, but why did they cut the services while households are still here?". Female FGD

Primary Needs to Depart the Camp

Debaga 1 camp

- While MOMD grant, such as the 4 million IQD, has motivated some families to leave, not all households have received the grant. Female FGD
- Two female participants stated that they prefer to relocate to other areas. Meanwhile, seven female participants expressed a willingness to return to their AoO, but only if adequate services and job opportunities are provided.
- According to both FGDs integration into host communities outside the camp remains limited.

Baharka camp

- Female participants highlighted the high costs associated with the departure process.
- Households are required to obtain a housing support letter, approval from the community leader (Mukhtar), and a security clearance letter from security forces.
- Female participants from Mosul mentioned that they avoided visiting their AoO to prevent potential detention at checkpoints or community rejection due to perceived affiliations with ISIL.
- Female participants reported that obtaining security clearance is not only costly but also involves a lengthy process, typically requiring 10 to 12 steps to finalize the document.

“People in Mosul are hesitant to sponsor households from the camp due to their complex cases” Female FGD

The image features a dark blue background with a network of thin, light blue lines that intersect to form a grid-like pattern. Overlaid on this is a world map where the continents are represented by clusters of small, white, square-shaped dots. The dots are arranged in a way that clearly outlines the shapes of North America, South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. In the center of the map, the text "Thank you!" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

Thank you!