

# IRAQ

## Displacement from Mosul and Tal-Afar



	Not required	Low	Moderate	Significant	Major
Need for international assistance				X	
Expected impact	Very low	Low	Moderate	Significant	Major

### Crisis overview

On 4 May, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) launched an offensive from the northwest of the area held by Islamic State (IS) in Mosul, along the boundaries of the neighbourhoods of Musharifah, Khanisah and al Haramat. With hundreds of thousands of civilians still believed to be trapped in west Mosul, this new front has triggered displacement from that area.

Since the beginning of the operation to recapture Mosul from IS on 17 October 2016, over 806,200 people have been displaced from Mosul as of 4 June. Of these, a total of 630,040 people have fled west Mosul since the start of the operation there on 19 February. From 6 to 7 June, over 25,000 people fled Mosul and surrounding districts.

Approximately 118,000 people are estimated to be trapped in the Old City area and the neighbourhoods immediately north of the Old City as of 4 June. Civilian casualties have been on the rise, since ISF launched an offensive from the northwest of Mosul on 4 May. From 26 May to 8 June, over 231 deaths of civilians attempting to flee west Mosul have been recorded. Food, WASH, and health needs of IDPs and civilians still in west Mosul and IS-held areas are high.

### Key findings

#### Anticipated scope and scale

Military operations are expected to continue and intensify over the coming days. With the advance of ISF, displacement is likely to increase from areas under IS-control in west Mosul: the Old City, Zanjili, and the Medical City. Casualties of civilians attempting to flee IS-held areas are likely to increase during the coming months as fighting intensifies.

Due to high temperatures from mid-June to September, health and WASH needs of civilians trapped in IS-held areas, as well as IDPs in camps, are likely to increase. Due to the influx of arrivals expected, IDP camps are likely to be stretched beyond capacity and prompt premature returns to unsafe areas in west Mosul.

#### Key priorities

- **Food:** Food shortages have been reported as one of the main drivers of displacement from west Mosul and other IS-held areas.
- **WASH:** Shortages of safe drinking water, and the inadequate provision of solid waste manage remains a concern in Mosul city, particularly in newly accessible areas.
- **Health:** Due to the increase in temperatures and the lack of access to safe drinking water, cases of dehydration have been on the rise among IDP children. In west Mosul, medical services have been severely disrupted due to insecurity.

#### Humanitarian constraints

Humanitarian access to affected populations in west Mosul and other IS-held areas is severely constrained due to insecurity. The main supply route to west Mosul has been cut.

#### Limitations

The situation on the ground remains fluid, and displacement routes change daily. The number of people who have fled Mosul and who remain in west Mosul may not be accurate.

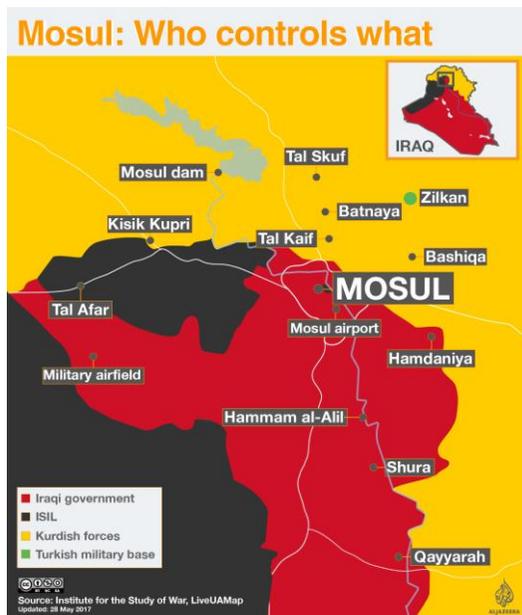
Due to lack of access, information on the needs of civilians still in IS-held areas is limited.

## Crisis impact

On 4 May, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) launched an offensive from the northwest of the area held by IS in Mosul. With the advance of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) into IS-held areas, displacement out of west Mosul, Tal-Afar and surrounding areas continues, with simultaneous returns to liberated areas in both east and west Mosul (OCHA 05/05/2017). As of 2 June, three districts remain under IS control in west Mosul: the Old City, Zanjili, and the Medical City (UNHCR 04/06/2017).

From 6 to 7 June, over 25,000 people fled Mosul and its surrounding districts (UNHCR 08/06/2017). Since the beginning of the Mosul operation on 17 October 2016, over 806,200 people have been displaced from Mosul city as of 4 June (OCHA 04/06/2017). Of these, a total of 630,040 people have fled west Mosul city since 19 February (OCHA 04/06/2017). Approximately 118,000 people are estimated to be trapped in the Old City area and the neighbourhoods immediately north of the Old City as of 4 June (OCHA 04/06/2017). Conditions of civilians trapped in west Mosul and other IS-held areas continue to deteriorate and civilian casualties have been on the rise since 4 May. From 26 May to 8 June, over 231 deaths of civilians attempting to flee west Mosul were recorded (OHCHR 08/06/2017).

### Mosul: Areas of Control (as of 28 May)



Source: Al Jazeera 06/06/2017

**Food:** Food shortages are one of the main drivers of displacement from west Mosul and other IS-held areas (OCHA 04/06/2017). From 2-6 June, over 500 families fled IS-held Tal-Afar (Ninewa governorate) for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) due to lack of food (Rudaw 06/06/2017).

Civilians that remain trapped in west Mosul face severe food shortages, and have had to rely on leaves and nuts (Rudaw 18/05/2017). Markets in west Mosul have experienced severe shortages, and insecurity has limited the provision of food assistance (FAO 31/03/2017). Restrictions on movement within the Old City have caused severe shortages of flour and potatoes - staple foods for the majority of residents (Rudaw 18/05/2017). While markets in east Mosul have reopened and food prices have dropped since March, access to food remains a problem due to limited purchasing power and lack of income (FAO 31/03/2017).

**WASH:** Shortages of safe drinking water and the inadequate provision of solid waste management remains a concern in Mosul city, particularly in newly accessible areas. As of 4 June, the city-wide water network was not functioning. Clean water in west Mosul is severely rationed and is expensive, as it costs over 10,000 dinars (USD 8.5) per litre (Rudaw 18/05/2017). In IS-held areas, attacks on water systems have been reported (UNICEF 05/06/2017) and water treatment plants have been damaged by airstrikes (Rudaw 29/05/2017).

With increasing temperatures, access to safe water is limited, which poses a risk of outbreaks of water and vector-borne diseases (OCHA 04/06/2017). The majority of the people trapped in the IS-held Old City have reportedly not had access to drinking water since March and have had to drink water from unsafe sources such as wells (Rudaw 29/05/2017).

**Health:** Health is a concern in IDP sites. As of mid-May, cases of scabies have been reported in Qayara emergency site (Rudaw 18/05/2017). Due to the increase in temperatures and the lack of access to safe drinking water, cases of dehydration and diarrhoea have been on the rise among IDP children since early May (Rudaw 18/05/2017).

High numbers of mental health related illnesses, including neurological disorders, substance abuse disorders, post-traumatic disorders, anxiety and other war-related mental health conditions continue to be recorded (WHO 30/04/2017). The rate of trauma injuries remains high (OCHA 04/06/2017).

Access to health facilities and medicines in west Mosul is limited due to insecurity and medical services have been severely disrupted (Rudaw 05/05/2017). Hospitals and medical facilities in IS-held areas continue to come under attack (UNICEF 05/06/2017) and most hospitals in have been damaged or destroyed (Rudaw 05/05/2017).

**Nutrition:** Malnutrition rates among newly displaced children from west Mosul are on the rise: as of 30 May, the global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate among IDP children in Al-Sulaymani camp is 9% - double the rate reported in January (WFP 30/05/2017).

**Protection:** Protection needs are high for IDPs fleeing IS held-areas and for IDPs returning to newly retaken areas. IDPs fleeing IS-held areas face the risk of being caught in crossfire, risking sniper fire, landmines, and armed patrols (HRW 06/06/2017). Civilians fleeing IS-held Hawija district (Kirkuk governorate) reportedly face harassment from armed troops, and report being ostracised by host communities due to the perception that they support or are affiliated with IS (OCHA 10/05/2017).

Gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual harassment remains a key concern in IDP sites, particularly near the female latrines (OCHA 04/06/2017). IDPs have reported abuse and arbitrary detention at mustering and screening sites (UNHCR 26/05/2017).

**Shelter and NFIs:** IDPs in camps need NFIs and adequate shelter (OCHA 04/06/2017). In Al-Alam 2 IDP camp, overcrowding has been reported, with up to 16 family members sharing one tent (UNHCR 26/05/2017). Limited livelihood opportunities and overcrowding in camps continue to trigger premature returns to unsafe areas in west Mosul (OCHA 04/06/2017).

As of 28 May, airstrikes continue to hit residential neighbourhoods in west Mosul. From 11 May to 28 May, over 238 residential buildings in Al-Rabee district of west Mosul were heavily damaged and completely destroyed due to airstrikes (UN Habitat 28/05/2017).

**Education:** As of 4 June, over 132,700 children have been recently displaced since the start of the operation in west Mosul. Of these, approximately 66,500 are not accessing any form of education (OCHA 04/06/2017). Shortages of clean water and sanitation facilities in schools continue to be a concern in east Mosul (OCHA 04/06/2017).

## Vulnerable groups affected

The majority of IDPs are women and children. Children are reportedly being used as human shields by IS (UNICEF 05/06/2017). Many are caught in the crossfire, as they attempt to flee west Mosul (HRW 06/06/2017). As of 5 June, an estimated 100,000 children remain trapped in dire conditions in the Old City and other areas of west Mosul (UNICEF 05/06/2017).

IS has attacked vulnerable ethnic and religious minorities, including Christians, Shabak, Yazidis, and Turkmen, causing their mass displacement (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 15/05/2017).

## Humanitarian constraints

Humanitarian access to affected populations in west Mosul and other IS-held areas is severely constrained. Restrictions on movement inside west Mosul have limited the ability of humanitarian agencies to reach affected populations. On 17 May, ISF troops cut off the main supply route in west Mosul (Iraqi News 17/05/2017). Several villages in Tal-Afar remain inaccessible to humanitarian agencies due to insecurity. As of 6 June, Zunmar (KR-I) is inaccessible, due to insecurity (UNHCR 06/06/2017).

## Aggravating Factors

### Increase in Temperatures

Temperatures in Iraq's Ninewa governorate are expected to continue rising and are likely to surpass 50°C from mid-June to September (Iraq Business News 22/05/2017). By mid-May, temperatures were already at 37°C (Rudaw 18/05/2017). The increasing heat is already affecting the living conditions of those living in emergency sites (Rudaw 18/05/2017).

### Referendum on Independence of Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I)

The term of the president of KR-I, Masoud Barzanie, expired in August 2015, but he continues to rule. The Kurdistan Regional Parliament has not convened since October 2015 (Rudaw 13/10/2016). In March, ruling party Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) confirmed that funds had been allocated for the election process. As of 7 June the referendum on the independence of KR-I was expected to be held on 25 September (Rudaw 07/06/2017).

Political instability related to the scheduling of the referendum on the independence of KR-I is likely to aggravate the needs of IDPs arriving in the area, as protection needs are likely to increase. An increasing number of families fleeing Tal-Afar, west of Mosul, are crossing into Zummar, an area northeast of Tal-Afar in KR-I, before being transferred onwards to camps south of Mosul (UNHCR 06/06/2017).

## Contextual information

### Drivers of the current conflict

In June 2014, IS declared the establishment of a Sunni caliphate, covering the area between Aleppo in northern Syria and Diyala in eastern Iraq (BBC News 28/04/2017). In 2014, the group made territorial gains in Iraq. IS has control over territories in Anbar, Ninewa,

Salah al Din, and Kirkuk governorates, with its stronghold in Mosul since June 2014. Iraqi forces have launched offensives to recapture territories held by IS since 2014 (BBC News 28/04/2017). The military operation against IS in Mosul was launched on 17 October 2016, with some 30,000 Iraqi soldiers, Kurdish Peshmerga and Sunni tribal fighters advancing on the city (Reuters 17/10/2016). On 17 February, an offensive to recapture the western part of the city was launched (UN News Centre 16/03/2017).

Since October 2016, IS has gradually lost territory. East Mosul was declared fully recaptured from IS on 25 January (CNN 25/01/2017). In the beginning of May, the city of Hatra was retaken by ISF (UNHCR 14/05/2017). By mid-May, authorities reported that only 7% of Mosul remained under IS control as ISF advanced into northwest Mosul (Rudaw 21/05/2017). As of 2 June, three districts remain under IS control in western Mosul: the Old City, Zanjili, and the Medical City (UNHCR 04/06/2017).

## Past displacement

Prior to the start of the conflict in June 2014, over 1.1 million IDPs were living in displacement in early 2014 following sectarian violence between Iraqi Sunni and Shia factions from 2006 to 2008 (IDMC 2015).

## Relevant stakeholders

**Islamic State (IS):** IS grew out of what was al-Qaeda in Iraq, which was formed by Sunni militants after the US-led invasion in 2003 and became a major force in the country's sectarian insurgency (BBC News 28/04/2017). As of March, there were approximately 7,000 IS militants in Iraq. Of these, approximately 2,000 are in west Mosul and Tal-Afar. Over 10% of IS fighters are foreign fighters (Rudaw 03/03/2017). In Syria, opposition forces have launched an offensive to take over IS' stronghold ar Raqqa. For more on the ar Raqqa situation, see the ACAPS briefing note Displacement from ar Raqqa.

**Iraqi Security Forces (ISF):** ISF are military forces of the government of Iraq. ISF is composed of approximately 48,000 troops. As of February, over 5,000 additional personnel have been trained by the United States to assist ISF in Mosul (US Defense 17/02/2017).

**Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF):** Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF), also known as Popular Mobilisation Units (PMU) or Hashd al Shaabi, and mainly comprising Shia militia, have been supporting government forces on all major fronts against IS since the beginning of the insurgency (Long War Journal 23/11/2016). Asa'ib, Kita'ib Hezbollah, and the Badr Brigades are among the largest militia units. The number of PMU fighters is estimated at 120,000. While the Shia militias operationally support Iraqi Prime Minister

Haider al-Abadi's government, a large number of fighters are loyal to the Iranian government (Long War Journal 23/11/2016).

**Kurdish Peshmerga Forces:** The Kurdish Peshmerga is the military of the Kurdistan Regional Government. They are supported by Kurdish fighters from Syria and Turkey, and are engaged in a counter-offensive against IS. The Peshmerga have been involved in operations to retake IS-held areas in Iraq, including the Mosul offensive (Reuters 17/10/2016).

## International and neighbouring countries' relationship to the conflict

**United States:** The United States leads an international coalition to combat IS. In August 2014, a US-led Combined Joint Task Force of over 30 countries was formed (RT 04/05/2017). The focus of US troops in Iraq is to provide advice on military strategy and reforms within the ISF (New Arab 18/12/2016).

**Turkey:** Turkish troops have been in north Iraq since the IS invasion in 2014. As of June, the Turkish military has been carrying out airstrikes against Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) fighters in northern Iraq (EPIC 08/10/2016).

## Response capacity

### Local and national response capacity

The Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) was established in August 2003 to assist IDPs, refugees, and returnees. MoDM has established a presence in most governorates and has worked to facilitate the process of registration and return throughout Iraq (IOM 12/09/2016).

As of June, the MoDM has undertaken efforts to manage the effects of increasing temperatures through the distribution of air coolers in Nargizlia camp (UNHCR 02/06/2017).

As of 6 June, the capacity of the government to transport IDPs from Zummar is limited. The school building used as a reception centre in Zummar is not equipped to shelter the increasing number of IDPs waiting to be transferred onwards (UNHCR 06/06/2017).

### International response capacity

A rapid response mechanism (RRM) has been in place in Iraq since 2013 and has expanded into a consortium of UN agencies and NGOs (RRM Iraq 2016). Through the RRM, humanitarian agencies have pre-positioned emergency package assistance along the

various displacement routes as of June (OCHA 04/06/2017). UNHCR provides protection services, including psychological support, for IDPs in camps, and has started providing legal assistance services for IDPs in east Mosul (UNHCR 26/05/2017).

Since January, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has been supplementing the local health system in Mosul (Rudaw 05/05/2017).

## Population coping mechanisms

Due to severe food shortages in west Mosul, civilians have had to rely on leaves and nuts (Rudaw 18/05/2017).

## Information gaps and needs

- There is a lack of information on humanitarian needs of civilians trapped in IS-held areas.
- Due to changes in the conflict, it is difficult to track the exact location and number of civilians who have fled west Mosul.
- Food security information in Ninewa governorate is lacking.

## Lessons learned

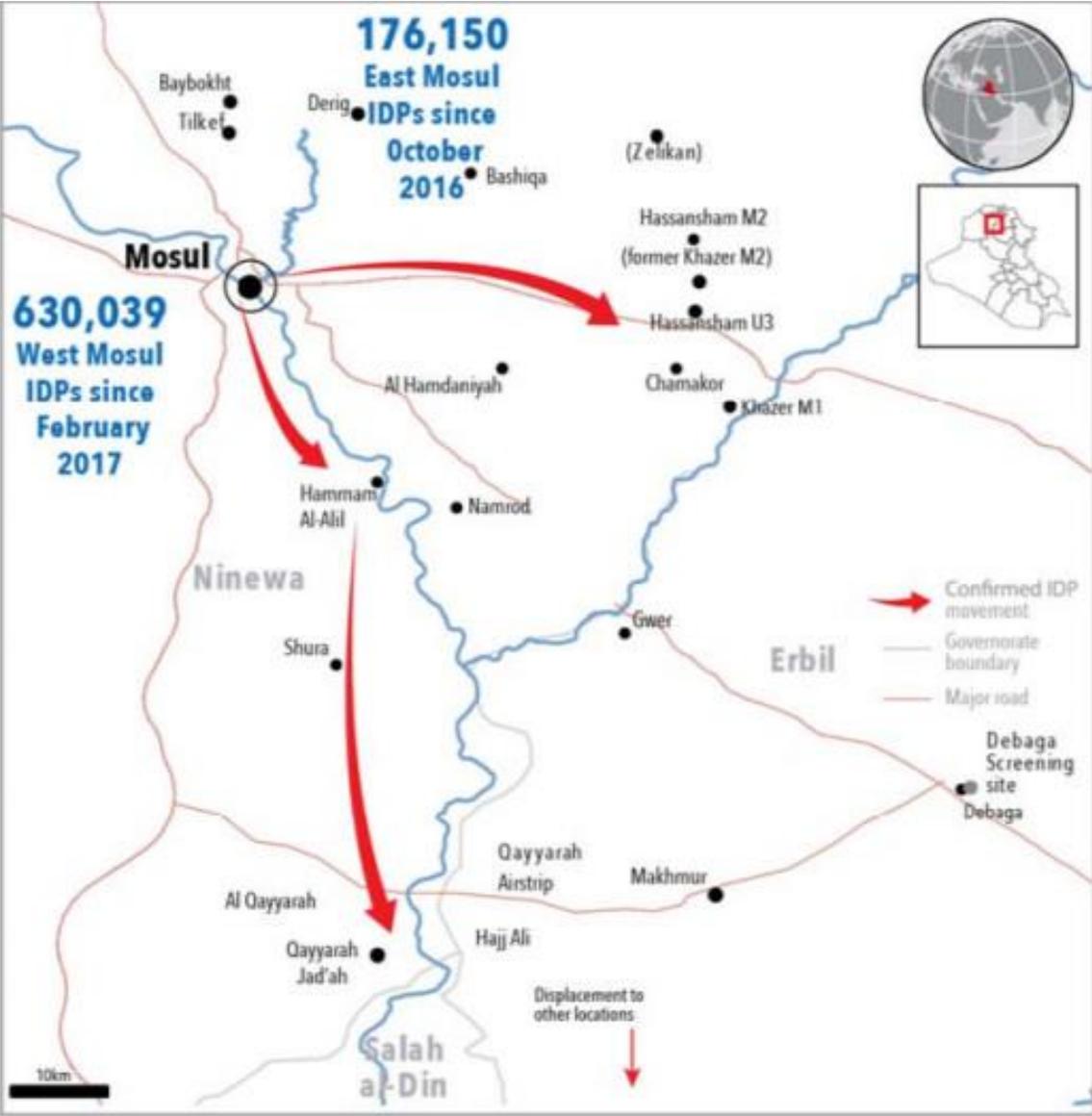
- In the past, a deadly cholera outbreak was successfully contained in Iraq by the provision of safe drinking water and disinfection of existing water supplies (UNICEF 23/02/2016).
- Lack of cultural proximity in Iraq may negatively affect interaction between displaced and host communities (UNHCR 04/2016). Unresolved historical or religious grievances as well as competition for job opportunities may also contribute to tensions between IDPs and host communities (UNHCR 04/2016).
- Lack of active involvement by Iraqi authorities, local institutions, and community leaders in facilitating peaceful co-existence between communities may limit chances of achieving better social cohesion (UNHCR 04/2016).

## Key characteristics

Key indicators	Ninewa Governorate
Total population	3,524,300 (est. 2014)
% population in rural areas	29% (2010)
Gender and age distribution of population	50% male (2010) 50% female (2010)
State capital	Mosul
WASH figures	
Population using improved water sources:	84% (2010)
Population using improved sanitation facilities:	92% (2010)
Households with a toilet:	95% (2010)
Health figures	Under-5 Mortality rate: 43/1000 live births (2010)
Literacy rates	79%(2015)
Unemployment	7.3% (2014)

Sources: CityPopulation, Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit 2010, NCCIraq, UNDP

Map of displacement routes from Mosul (as of 4 June)



Source: OCHA 04/06/2017