13% Registration process and winterization items
30% Governmental issues (grants, compensation on damaged properties, etc)
57% Other

IDP Information Center: 8% of calls received from Diyala were from returnees. The most popular issues flagged:

- Governmental issues (grants, compensation on damaged properties, etc) - 30%
- Registration process and winterization items - 13%
- Other - 57%

Data Sources:
- * MoD 2 January 2017
- * IRC Returnee Report 31 December 2016
- * IPC 4 January 2017
- * IMMAP
- * IDP Information Center

Disclaimer:
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December, ISIL announced their presence in Kuba village in Abu Saida by raising their flag over schools there that lead to more displacement towards the neighbouring villages. The security forces have sought the announcement of a state of emergency in Abu Saida and for the deployment of more troops to fight ISIL’s expanding presence in the area.

KHANAQEEEN DISTRICT

On 13 December, a meeting at the governorate office in Baquba was attended by officials and security representatives from Khanaqeen to discuss the control of Saadiya sub-district and end the displacement file of Khanaqeen district. While the meeting resulted in a preliminary agreement to end the displacement of more than 5,000 families originally from the outskirts of Saadiya and Jalawla sub-districts who are currently in IDP camps in Khanaqeen, later information confirmed that the mayor of Khanaqeen has decided to place the decision on hold considering the security situation and the lack of services in areas of return. The authorities plan to meet in January 2017 to agree on a schedule for IDP returns taking into consideration the ongoing challenges in Diwala governorate.

Jalawla Sub-District

The displacement file in Jalawla sub-district is officially closed on 20 December with the return of 1,847 families that represent the last group of IDPs. This brings the total number of returnees to Jalawla to more than 12,000 families, according to MoMD. Jalawla is the first area in Diwala governorate that announced the return of all IDP families and return was celebrated by the mayor and some of the security forces. Security concerns, limited services, livelihood opportunities, and inflated rents due to destroyed houses continue to be reported from Jalawla and other areas of return within Diwala governorate.

KHALIS DISTRICT

Voluntary returns but also pressured/organized and forced returns continues to the various areas in Khalis district despite the volatile security situation, unstable political environment and lack of basic services, compounded by tribal conflicts. During the month of December, the security search operations resulted in the arrests of more than 35 persons, including returnees. The majority of those arrested were on suspicion/allegations related to terrorism. According to the Diwala Security Committee, presence of “fake checkpoints” are reported from some of Khalis streets with ISIL sleeper cells which are active especially at night.

On 13 December, areas of returns in Khalis bordering Salah al-Din governorate were again attacked by ISIL causing material destructions. While no casualties were recorded among returnees, such continuous attacks on areas of return have compromised safety and sustainability of returns.

Al-Udhaim Sub-District:

The 130 expelled families from Kirkuk governorate are still accommodated in a random camp at Al-Udhaim outskirt either pending security approval to return or being unable to return to their destroyed houses. IDPs have been living there since September 2016 and have named the camp “Albu Hnehen” and authorities in Al-Udhaim are requesting MoMD to recognize the camp in order to allow assistance delivery, especially by organizations that only assist camps recognized by the MoMD. Local authorities have mentioned that IDPs are in urgent need for assistance, including CRI, fuel and food.

BAQUBA DISTRICT

The authorities have stated their plans to facilitate the return of all IDPs in and from Diwala by the end of 2016, including returns to Baquba District. However the security situation on the ground continues to deteriorate with daily arrests, abductions and killings including in areas that have received returnees. The unstable security situation in Baquba and Diwala as a whole is not conducive to the large scale expedited returns being planned by the authorities and there are serious concerns over the voluntariness of returns and safety of returnees. Protection partners continue to urge authorities at all levels to ensure that all returns are voluntary and in conditions of safety and dignity.

Return to Diwala can be classified as:

Voluntary return: Families returning to areas of origin after stabilization of the security situation and restoration of services, following successful screening procedures.

Spontaneous return: Families returning due to push factors of economic pressure and displacement fatigue, following successful screening procedures.

Forced return: Mainly IDP families in Kirkuk where coercive measures have been used to encourage displaced families from liberated areas such as Diwala to return. These include evictions, confiscation of documents, harassment, and arbitrary arrest/detention.

No or limited return: Due to security concerns, especially in Muqdadiya in light of the sectarian conflict and unstable security situation; families rejected for return by the authorities/security committees; destroyed property and lack of services in certain areas preventing return for the time being; in addition to fears of demographic change with returns being allowed to families based on sectarian affiliation.