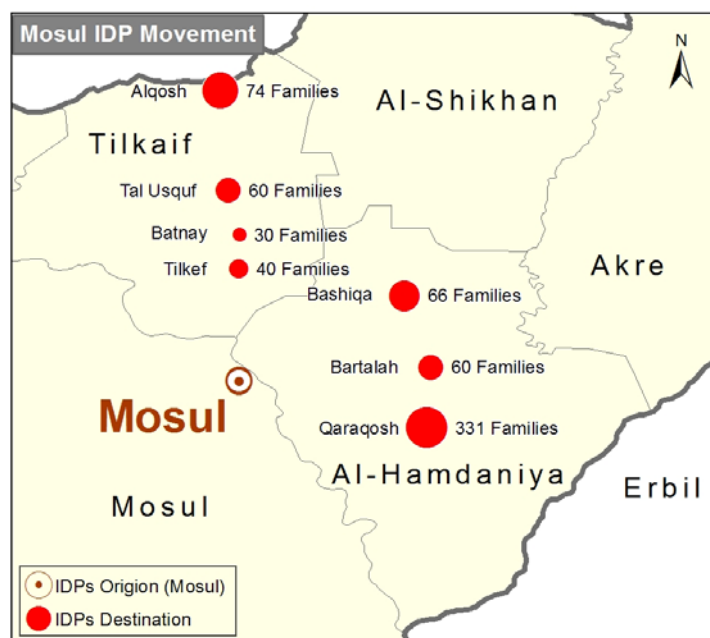


This report was issued by OCHA Iraq. It covers the period from 20 to 27 February 2010. The next report will be issued on or around Monday, 1 March 2010.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- Between 20 and 27 February 2010, some 683 Christian families (4,098 people) became displaced from Mosul city in Ninewa governorate; most of the displacement occurred between 24 and 27 February. This follows increased attacks by unidentified armed groups, which have left at least 12 individuals dead.
- Humanitarian agencies have been conducting needs assessments and are responding to urgent food, emergency shelter, NFIs and protection needs for the current numbers of IDPs. There are still some unmet protection needs.
- Further displacement may be expected and agencies are monitoring the situation closely.



II. Situation Overview

Following a series of attacks by unidentified armed groups against Christians in Mosul in Ninewa governorate during January and February 2010, some 683 Christian families (4,098 people) became displaced between 20 and 27 February 2010; most of the displacement occurred between 24 and 27 February.

The recent series of incidents and direct threats against Christians in Mosul began in January 2010 and has left up to 12 individuals dead. Incidents have included the targeting of two buses transferring Christian students from Al Hamdaniyah to Mosul University as well as improvised explosive devices planted in the vicinity of churches and Christian communities. In the period from 13 to 23 February, there were eight killings, which included a father and his two sons in Al Ceda district in Mosul. This is thought to be the tipping point that marked the beginning of the latest wave

of displacement. Areas targeted have included Al-Bakir, Al-Ceha, Al-Sheffa, Al-Amin, and Hai-Al Arabi. It is not clear who is responsible for these attacks.

The 683 displaced families are now located in the two districts of Al Hamdaniyah (479 families) and Tilkaif (204 families) in Ninewa governorate, close to Erbil and Dahuk governorates respectively. They are being hosted in churches or with their extended families. The internally displaced people (IDPs) in Al Hamdaniya district are in Qaraqosh (331 families or 1,986 people); Bartalah (60 families or 360 people); Bashiqa (66 families or 396 people); and Kmales (22 families or 132 people). Those in Tilkaif district are in Tilkaif town (40 families or 240 people); Batnay (30 families or 180 people); Tal Usquf (60 families or 360 people); and Alqosh (74 families or 444 people).

The number of the IDPs more than doubled between 25 and 27 February. On Thursday, 25 February, they totalled 244 families in the two districts and on 26 February, the number rose to 408 families. On 27 February, it increased to 683 families. The number is expected to rise even further in the next few days.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

Rapid needs assessments carried out by UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, OCHA, IMC and other international organizations have indicated that most of the IDPs left their homes quickly and did not bring many of their belongings. Therefore, they are in need of urgent humanitarian support in the form of food, hygiene kits, protection and psychosocial support. Such support may help complement the resources of the host families, as the IDPs are partly dependent on their support. Watsan and health are not immediate challenges for the IDPs as they are able to access local services. Education may not be a problem for the next month as children are expected to go on vacation from 4 to 26 March 2010. It will, however, become a challenge should the IDPs stay longer as local schools may not immediately be able to accommodate the additional children, especially if more IDPs come to the area.

Emergency Shelter and NFIs:

Both UNHCR and IOM have the immediate capacity to support 1,500 families each; UNICEF also has stocks of NFIs ready for distribution. The three agencies are closely coordinating their responses to avoid duplication. IOM has distributed some 185 NFI kits in Al Hamdaniyah and Alqosh as of 26 February 2010 and will be distributing further kits jointly with UNICEF in Qaraqosh to 140 families, where IOM will provide NFIs and UNICEF will provide hygiene kits. UNHCR will be distributing NFI kits on 1 March instead.

Food and Nutrition:

The IDPs are currently dependent on support from host communities and the local market. Distribution has been completed in Alqosh for 47 families; Deir al-Saida for 36 families; Tal Usquf for 72 families; Badnaya for 60 families; and Tilkaif for 40 families. WFP will provide wheat flour to complement its parcel and joint distribution, which will begin from 28 February in Bashiqa and Bartalah. WFP has warehouses and food stocks prepositioned in Al Hamdaniyah and Tilkaif.

Protection:

There is a need for an immediate assessment of the protection needs of both the minorities in Mosul and in the areas of displacement. UNICEF will monitor the psychosocial conditions of the IDP children and provide appropriate support if needed and is not being provided by other agencies.

Logistics:

So far, no logistical constraints have been reported. Agencies are coordinating together on the transportation of NFIs and food items to the areas of displacement. The Governorate Emergency

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Cell (GEC) in Erbil has indicated that it is standing by to facilitate with their Ninewa governorate counterparts should there be any challenges in this regard.

Education

Education is a challenge as many children have left their schools in Mosul. Local schools in the places of displacement may not immediately be able to accommodate them due to limited capacity especially if more IDPs come to the area. However, schools will be on vacation from 4 to 26 March 2010. UNICEF will monitor and update accordingly.

Health

There are no immediate health concerns for the IDPs as they are currently able to access local facilities. Agencies will continue to monitor the situation and UNICEF will provide children's hygiene kits if needed.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Water and sanitation are not an immediate challenge for the IDPs as they are able to access local services. UNICEF will continue to monitor the situation and coordinate support, if required.

IV. Coordination

OCHA is supporting field coordination; UNHCR is the lead agency overseeing the humanitarian response in Ninewa governorate over this period.

The IDPs themselves as well as church leaders in each sub-district have established coordination committees through which basic data is being gathered and distribution of NFIs is being facilitated. Local authorities have been providing security support during the distribution process.

Ninewa governorate has a committee within the Civil Defense Organization, which is in charge of providing aid to families through the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. UNHCR will establish contacts and meetings with these bodies.

The GECs in Erbil and Dahuk have both called for coordination meetings with humanitarian agencies to prepare for the possibility of IDPs crossing over the border to the KRG. The Erbil meeting, held on 26 February, was attended by UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, WFP, IMC, several other humanitarian agencies, and the KRG Department of Displacement and Migration. The next GEC meeting in Erbil will be held on Wednesday, 3 March.

UNHCR, OCHA, IOM, UNICEF and WFP met on 26 February 2010 and intend to conduct daily coordination meetings.

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