



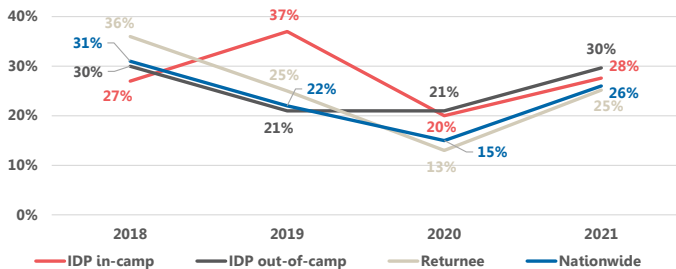
## Context

The violence and destruction caused by the group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as well as the military operations against them, have caused the displacement of nearly 6 million people since 2014.<sup>1</sup> As of March 2022, 1.18 million people remain displaced throughout 18 governorates of Iraq, of which 180,000 are living in 26 formal camps established for internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>2</sup> Additionally, 4.96 million people have returned to their areas of origin.<sup>3</sup> Iraq continues to be characterized by prolonged displacement, fragmented access to basic services, precarious livelihoods, as well as a fragile political and security environment. **Households' (HHs) livelihood conditions were further impacted by oil price volatility and COVID-19 related constraints, resulting in a 10 percentage point increase in unemployment rates** compared to pre-COVID-19 levels.<sup>4</sup> Although the economy is gradually recovering from these shocks, the World Bank emphasizes that climate change, fragmented public service delivery, geopolitical tensions, rising food prices, and over-reliance on oil revenues will continue to pose major risks to HHs' ability to sustain their livelihoods.<sup>5,6</sup> Following increasing concerns about security, the government restricted the cultivation of certain crops by 50%, which **risks negatively impacting food security and domestic agricultural production**.<sup>7</sup> Indicative data from a selection of districts that were covered through the Joint Price Monitoring Initiative (JPMI) in April 2022 showed a 12% price increase for food items that are part of the Iraq Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), compared to the previous month, resulting in a 32% average price increase of the SMEB value since the start of 2022.<sup>8</sup> This factsheet summarizes MCNA IX findings on livelihood conditions reported by in-camp IDPs, out-of-camp IDPs and returnees in Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

## KEY FINDINGS

Nationwide, the proportion of HHs who reported that at least one adult member was unemployed and seeking work increased from **15% in 2020 to 26% in 2021**.<sup>10</sup>

**Proportion of HHs who reported that at least one adult was unemployed and seeking work, by year and displacement status:**



No substantial differences were found between the proportion of male-headed HHs (26%) and female-headed HHs (24%) who reported that at least one adult member was unemployed and seeking work. However, HHs with at least one member with a **physical and/or cognitive disability were more likely to report that at least one member was unemployed while seeking work (40%)**, compared to HHs without such disability (24%), potentially indicating limited inclusive employment opportunities.

Among IDP HHs who reported intending to remain in their current location in the year following data collection (83%), **almost one third (30%) reported a lack of livelihoods in**

**their area of origin and the lack of financial means (28%) as primary barriers to return.**

**Top five districts with the highest proportion of HHs who reported that at least one adult member was unemployed and seeking work:**

- Sinjar 71%**
- Al-Khalis 60%**
- Al-Kaim 52%**
- Al-Baaj 49%**
- Beygee 48%**

**The most commonly reported barriers to employment nationwide, among HHs who reported that at least one adult member was unemployed and seeking work, by population group:\***

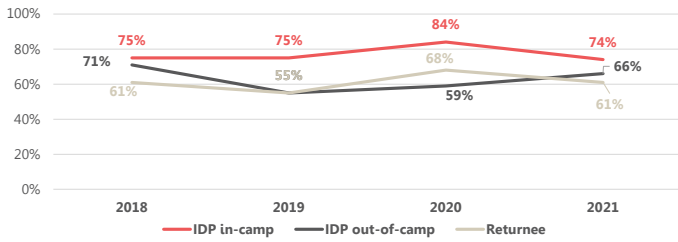
	In-camp IDP	Out-of-camp IDP	Returnees
<b>Lack of jobs</b>	79%	73%	75%
<b>Lack of jobs for women</b>	18%	19%	17%
<b>Distance to available jobs</b>	25%	11%	17%
<b>Lack of family/personal connections</b>	17%	11%	14%
<b>Under-qualified for available jobs</b>	19%	12%	11%

**Nationwide, one quarter of adult women reported working or contributing to the HH income.** However, considering that 17% of HHs perceived the lack of jobs for women to be a primary barrier to employment, a higher proportion of women may be willing to work if employment opportunities would be available to them.

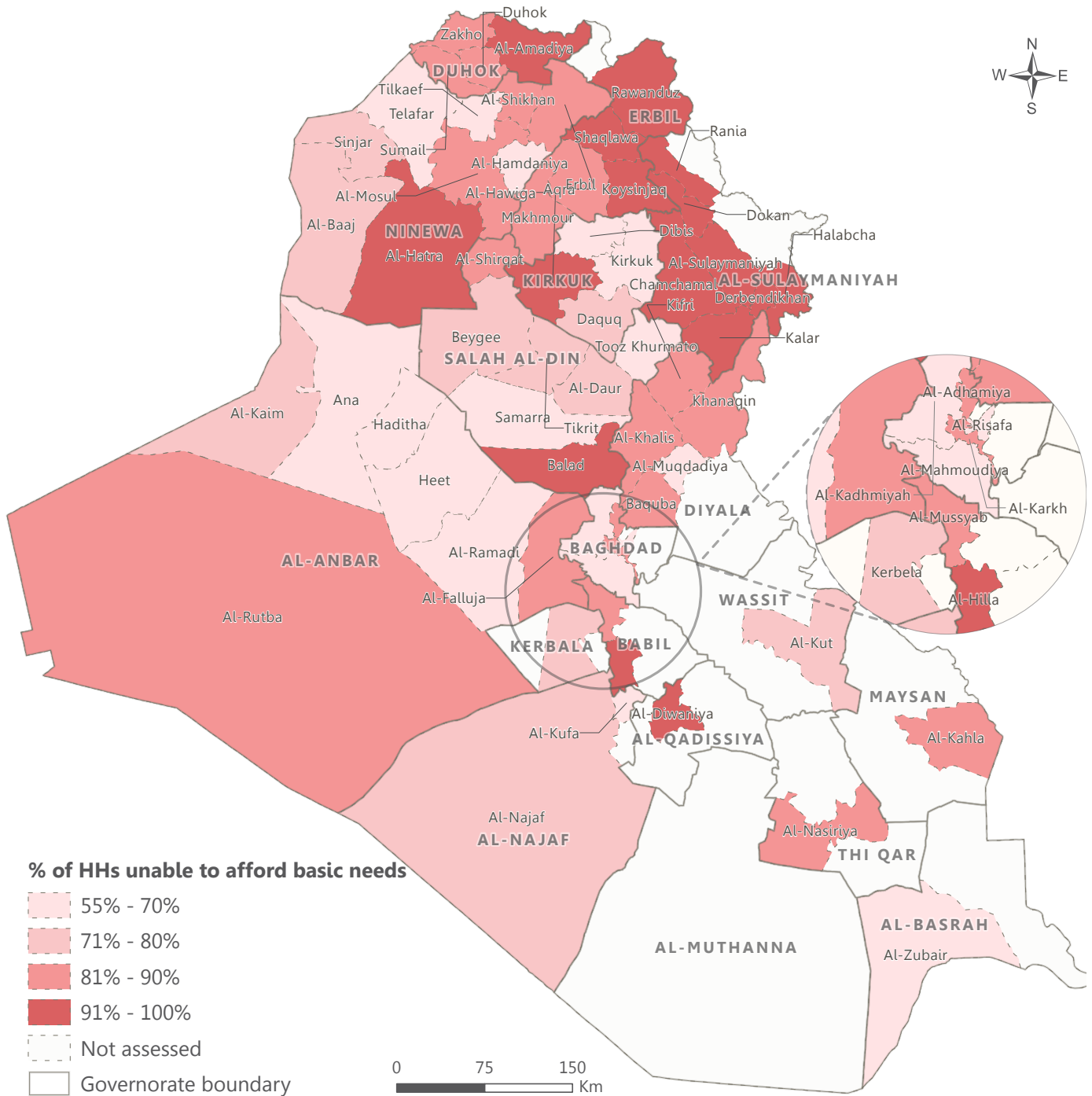
<sup>1,2,3</sup> IOM-DTM, [Displacement Overview](#) (December 2021). <sup>4</sup> World Bank, [Iraq Economic Monitor, Spring 2021: Seizing the Opportunity for Reforms and Managing Volatility](#), 2021. <sup>5</sup> World Bank, [Iraq Country Overview](#), June 2022. <sup>6</sup> Agriculture and the public sector are the main sources of employment in Iraq (World Bank 2019 & 2020). <sup>7</sup> World Food Programme (WFP), [Iraq Market Monitor Report](#), March 2022. <sup>8</sup> Cash Working Group and REACH Initiative, Joint Price Monitoring Initiative (indicative data collected by JPMI partners in a selection of districts; 19 districts were covered in April 2022). <sup>9</sup> The MCNA IX is informed by a nationwide household-level survey, for which 11,645 returnee, out-of-camp IDP and in-camp IDP households were interviewed between June 9 and August 16, 2021. Additional findings can be found on the [MCNA IX Dashboard](#). <sup>10</sup> Due to serious health risks that COVID-19 posed to both enumerators and respondents, MCNA IX data was collected through a hybrid of face-to-face and phone-based interviews. Therefore, results were partly indicative. \* This was a multiple choice question; findings may exceed 100%.

Proportion of HHs who reported that their income from employment and pension was less than IQD 480,000 in the 30 days prior to data collection, by year and displacement status:<sup>11</sup>

The proportion of HHs who reported earning less than IQD 480,000 per month remained largely consistent with 2020 MCNA findings, with the exception of in-camp IDP HHs, who reported the lowest income levels.<sup>12</sup> A higher proportion of female headed HHs (78%) reported a monthly income from employment and pensions of less than IQD 480,000, compared to male-headed HHs (60%).

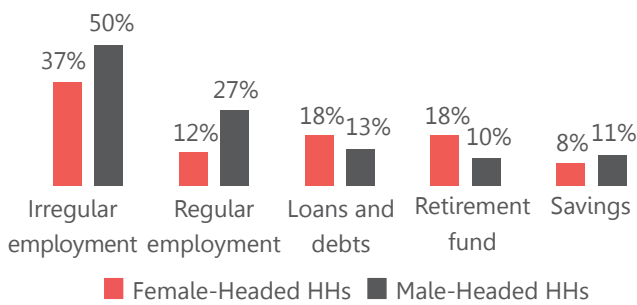


Map 1: Proportion of HHs who reported being unable to afford basic needs, by district:<sup>13</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Up until 2022, the [Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket \(SMEB\)](#) value was IQD 480,000. <sup>12</sup> Ibid. <sup>13</sup> These households reported taking on debt due to afford healthcare food, education, clothing or NFIs, house repair/reconstruction, and others.

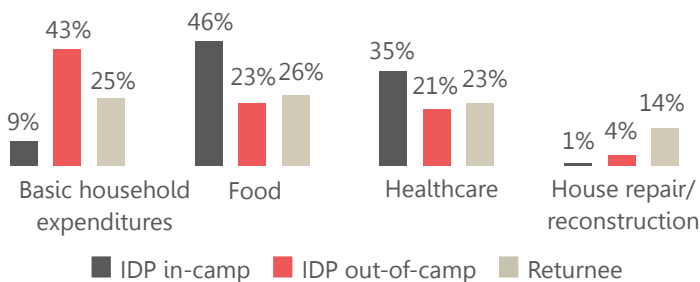
**Most commonly reported primary income sources, by gender of head of HH:\* 14**



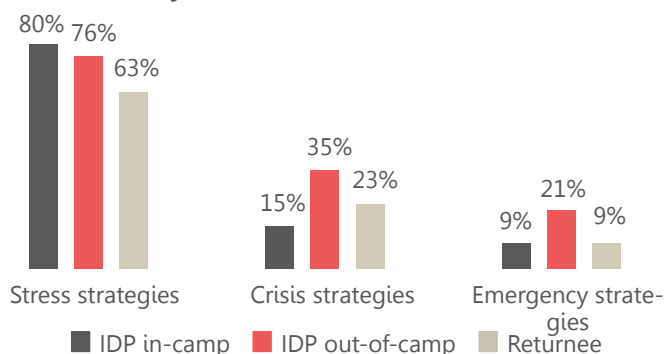
The majority of HHs (64%) reported relying on unsustainable income sources (e.g. debt, irregular employment), which may impact HHs’ financial stability and resilience to shocks. However, MCNA IX data showed that only three percent of in-camp IDP HHs relied exclusively on humanitarian assistance.<sup>15</sup>

77% of HHs reported being unable to afford basic needs.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, 26% of HHs reported having taken on debt to purchase food. The average reported food expenditure share was 55%, while nearly one in five HHs (17%) reported spending more than 75% of their monthly expenditure on food, reflecting economic vulnerability.<sup>17</sup> High food prices and/or low income likely contribute to the finding that 52% of HHs reported food as an unmet priority need in the year prior to data collection. Female-headed HHs were also more likely to report food as an unmet priority need (66%), compared to male-headed HHs (53%), which suggests a higher proportion of female-headed HHs were struggling to meet their basic needs or prioritised their expenses differently.

**Primary reported reasons to take on debt, by population group:**



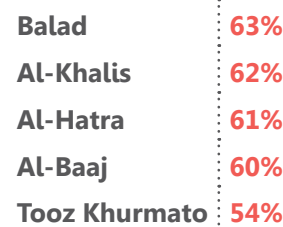
**Proportion of HHs who reported relying on coping strategies to cope with a lack of food or money to buy it, in the 30 days prior to data collection, by population group and LCS severity classification:\* 18**



MCNA VIII (2020) and MCNA IX (2021) findings showed that reported reliance on at least one crisis strategy to cope with a lack of food or resources to buy it in the 30 days prior to data collection increased across population groups.<sup>19</sup> Namely, reported reliance on at least one crisis strategy increased from 8% to 15% of in-camp IDP; from 23% to 35% of out-of-camp IDP; and from 8% to 23% of returnee HHs. Furthermore, while the reported reliance on at least one emergency strategy remained at 9% of in-camp IDP and returnee HHs; it increased from 13% to 21% of out-of-camp IDP HHs. Note that this increased reported reliance on negative coping strategies likely has protection implications for these HHs (e.g. child labour, engaging in harmful activities).

15% of HHs nationwide reported facing barriers to accessing an operational marketplace or grocery store with the most commonly reported barriers being the long distance (8%) and lack of transportation (5%).

**Top five districts with the highest proportion of HHs reporting barriers to accessing an operational market place or grocery store:**



**Concluding Notes**

According to MCNA IX findings, a large proportion of in-camp IDP, out-of-camp IDP and returnee HHs continue to be impacted by a lack of employment and/or a low income, resulting in a substantial reported reliance on negative coping strategies (which reportedly increased compared to 2020) as well as the high reported inability to meet basic needs. Precarious livelihood conditions are likely to aggravate multi-sectoral needs as they tend to further limit HHs’ access to basic services. Furthermore, livelihood concerns tend to have protection implications (e.g. child labour) and reduce HH self-reliance and resilience. As such, access to sustainable and inclusive livelihood opportunities will remain a critical condition to increase the resilience of formerly and currently displaced HHs.

<sup>14</sup> Note that single female-headed households were a subset of the total number of households surveyed (1,308 single female-headed households were surveyed out of 11,645 households), and since this subset represents only 11% of the total number of surveys, these findings should be interpreted with care. <sup>15</sup> In 2021, 80% of in-camp IDPs reported to have received aid in the 30 days prior to data collection, compared to 10% of out-of-camp IDPs and 2% of returnees. <sup>16</sup> These households reported taking on debt due to healthcare, food, education, basic household expenditures, house repair/ reconstruction, purchasing productive assets, education, clothing or NFI. <sup>17</sup> Note, the cost of WFP’s Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) Food Basket increased by 14%, to compensate for the inflated prices of basic goods that have resulted from the devaluation of the Iraqi dinar (IQD) by 20% in late 2020 (WFP, 2021). <sup>18</sup> HHs were report relying on multiple strategies (e.g. selling household properties, buying food on credit, children working) belonging to different classifications, therefore. [Livelihood coping strategies](#) is an indicator to measure the extent of livelihood coping households need to utilise as a response to lack of food or money to purchase food. The most common coping strategies reported by households relying on negative coping strategies included borrowing money to purchase food (64%), reducing spending on non-food items (39%), or selling assets (36%). <sup>19</sup> Ibid. \* This was a multiple choice question; findings may exceed 100%.