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Glossary

PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party
SGBV	Sexual & Gender Based Violence
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IS	Islamic State
KRG	Kurdish Regional Government
KR	Kurdish Region
HPE	Ezidkham Protection Units
YBS	Yazidi Sinjar Resistant Unit

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In the text when '*Comment: ...*' appears in *italic* and the subsequent text is also in *italic*, this information is not fact, but the opinion of the author.

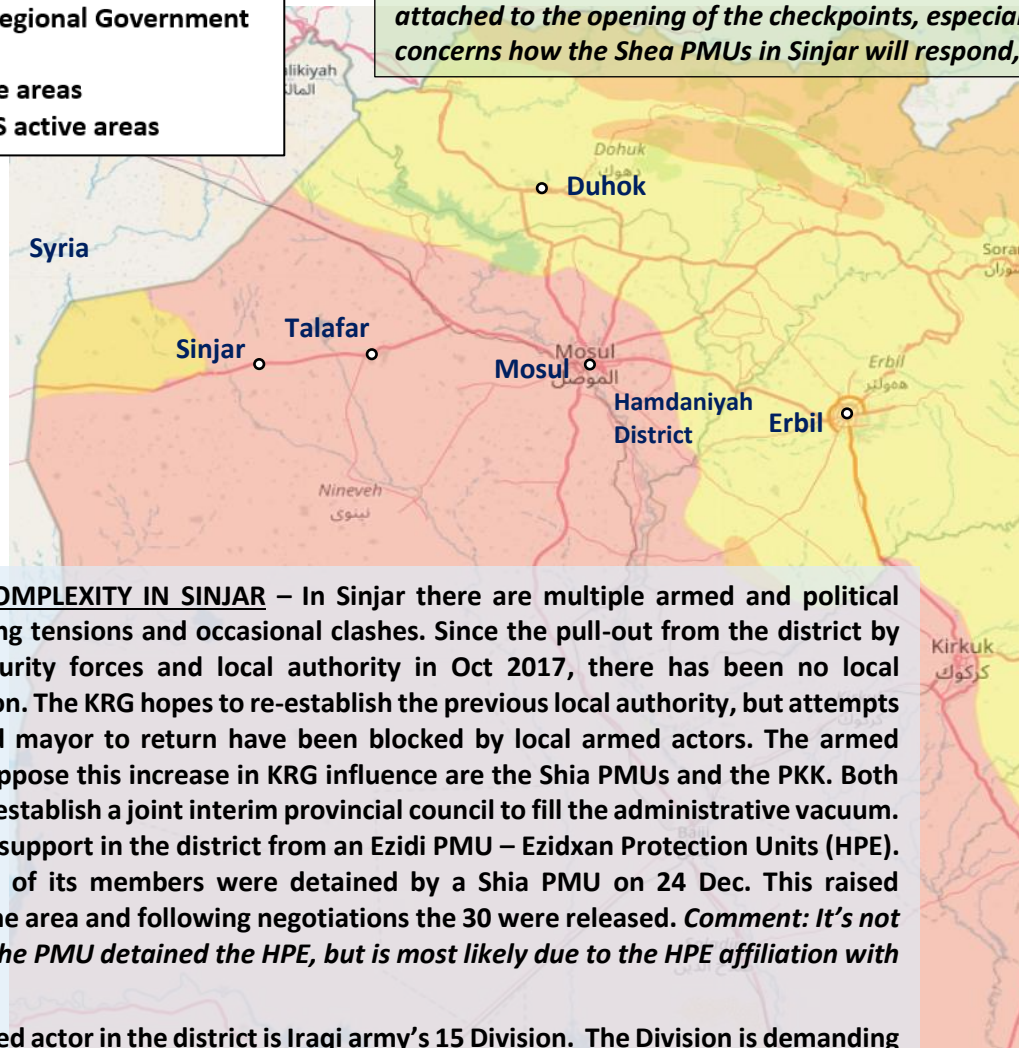
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Locations	Risk Level	Comment	Forecast
Erbil, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, Zokho and routes between the cities but within the KRG borders (except those areas assessed as High).	Moderate	<i>Whilst threats faced by INGOs in these areas would suggest the Risk Level is Low, uncertainty remains over the future relationship between the KFG & the Bagdad government. Kurdish political parties might be in a strong position to benefit from a new government in Bagdad & thereby improve access to the KRG.</i>	<i>*Turkish military & PKK clashes will continue, as will Turkish airstrikes. *Despite political tensions following the KR election results, there will be little change in the governance of the KR.</i>
Kirkuk Governorate, Hawijah Governorate, Mosel, Telafar, Sinjar Districts, within 10km of Turkey and Iran border.	High	<i>INGOs are operating in these areas & international staff do visit. However, strong Security Operating Procedures, Contingency Plans & well trained competent staff are essential. Agencies must also have a high risk threshold and strong resilience.</i>	<i>*No improvements in the poor security of the listed locations is expected for the near to medium future. *Harassment of INGO staff likely to increase as INGOs areas of operations grow. *Risk Levels will most probably remain high.</i>

1. Political and Conflict Summary

(Map Source <http://syriancivilwarmap.com>)

-  Government of Iraq (GoI)
-  Kurdish Regional Government (KRG)
-  PPK active areas
-  Yezidi YBS active areas



LIFTING OF CUSTOMS RESTRICTIONS – In mid-Dec 2018 relations between the KRG and Iraq's central government improved with the lifting of custom restrictions at Iraqi checkpoints on the border with the Kurdish region. *Comment: Whilst the lifting of customs should be a positive move for the Kurdish region, returning IDPs and humanitarian access; there may be negative elements. It is unclear if conditions were attached to the opening of the checkpoints, especially concerning the return of IDPs to Sinjar, and there are concerns how the Shia PMUs in Sinjar will respond, they oppose any influence from KRG.*

NGO INCIDENTS – The second half of Nov and throughout Dec 2018 saw an increase in incidents involving INGOs. In the previous Overview the harassment by youths of 8 NGO offices in Snuny Town, Sinjar District was reported; subsequently:

- An NGO medical team in Sinjar District was detained by the Iraqi army.
- An off-duty NGO staff member was detained by Iraqi security forces in Talafar District.
- Also in Talafar, an NGO's international staff member was detained with their local fixer by a PMU for not having travel authorisation.
- In Mosul District 3 NGO staff members were detained by Iraqi military intelligence for 36 hours.
- In Mosul city police visited an NGO office to investigate an international staff member who had overstayed their visa.
- In a village on the outskirts of Mosul city, shots were fired impacting close to a working NGO staff member.
- In Erbil city a verbal and physical dispute between local men spilled into the compound of an NGO. Shots were fired but there were no casualties.
- Iraq security forces manning a checkpoint in Hamdaniyah District, Ninawa, stole non-food items from a commercial truck carrying NGO supplies.

Comment: The increase in incidents is partially due to the improving NGO access and recent security operations conducted by Iraqi security forces. However, some incidents were due to NGOs not following the correct government procedures.

POLITICAL COMPLEXITY IN SINJAR – In Sinjar there are multiple armed and political actors creating tensions and occasional clashes. Since the pull-out from the district by the KRG security forces and local authority in Oct 2017, there has been no local administration. The KRG hopes to re-establish the previous local authority, but attempts by the exiled mayor to return have been blocked by local armed actors. The armed actors that oppose this increase in KRG influence are the Shia PMUs and the PKK. Both are trying to establish a joint interim provincial council to fill the administrative vacuum. The KRG has support in the district from an Ezidi PMU – Ezidixan Protection Units (HPE). However, 30 of its members were detained by a Shia PMU on 24 Dec. This raised tensions in the area and following negotiations the 30 were released. *Comment: It's not known why the PMU detained the HPE, but is most likely due to the HPE affiliation with the KRG.*

Another armed actor in the district is Iraqi army's 15 Division. The Division is demanding additional information from NGOs operating in the district. These demands go against the agreed access procedures authorised by Iraq's central government. NGOs are resisting the Division's demands whilst the issue is taken up by coordinating bodies.

TURKISH MILITARY ATTACKS IN NORTH IRAQ – In mid-Dec the Turkish military maintained its pressure on the PKK and affiliated force in North Iraq with airstrikes on 10 locations in Sinjar District and 3 PKK bases further south in Makhmur. Four deaths were reported following the Makhmur strikes.

- Government of Iraq (GoI)
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IS VBIED ATTACK – After 2 large Vehicle Borne IED attacks in Mosul in early Nov 2018, IS followed up with another in Talafar city on 25 Dec killing 2 and injuring 11. The target was a market place in a Shia neighbourhood. *Comment: Talafar is protected by numerous checkpoints. The attack demonstrated IS ability to operate despite heavy security measures.*

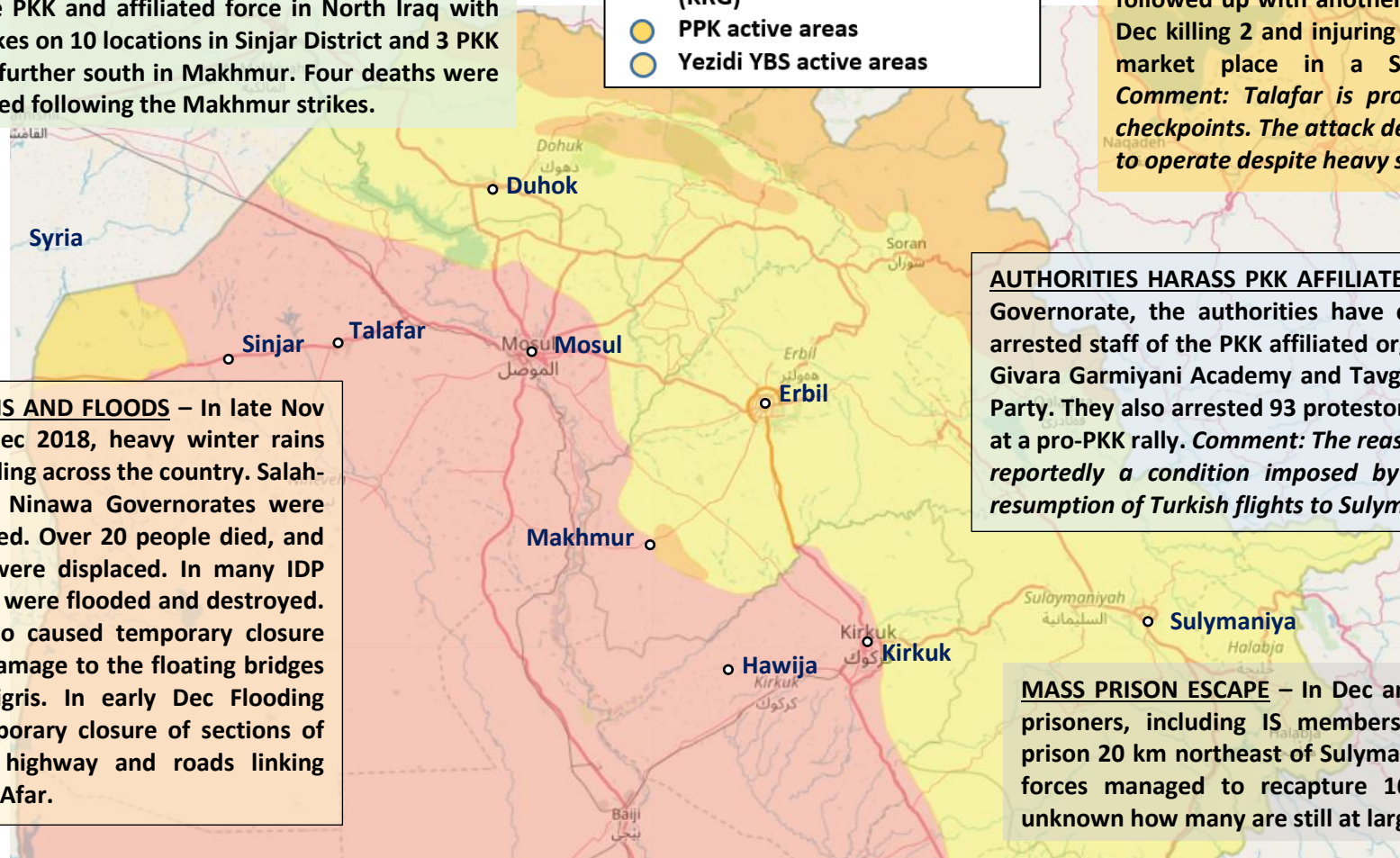
HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODS – In late Nov and early Dec 2018, heavy winter rains caused flooding across the country. Salah-al- Din and Ninawa Governorates were badly affected. Over 20 people died, and thousands were displaced. In many IDP camps tents were flooded and destroyed. Flooding also caused temporary closure and some damage to the floating bridges over the Tigris. In early Dec Flooding caused temporary closure of sections of Mosel-Erbil highway and roads linking Sinjar to Tal Afar.

AUTHORITIES HARASS PKK AFFILIATES – In Sulymaniya Governorate, the authorities have closed offices and arrested staff of the PKK affiliated organisations Shahid Givara Garmiyani Academy and Tavgar Azadi Kurdistan Party. They also arrested 93 protestors and 4 journalists at a pro-PKK rally. *Comment: The reason for the clamp is reportedly a condition imposed by the GoT for the resumption of Turkish flights to Sulymaniya airport.*

MASS PRISON ESCAPE – In Dec an unknown number of prisoners, including IS members, escaped from Suse prison 20 km northeast of Sulymaniya city. KRG security forces managed to recapture 16 escapees, but it is unknown how many are still at large.

IS ATTACKS IN HAWIJA – Hawija District was one of the last districts to be retaken from IS, but as with other recaptured districts in Ninawa and Kirkuk Governorates, IS maintain a presence and conduct a violent terrorist campaign against the community and security forces. In Dec 2018 two IS attacks in villages in Hawija District resulted in one Muktar murdered and several civilians and family members kidnapped. More than 10 IS attacks against Muktars and their families have taken place in Hawija District.

In Nov and Dec, more than 56 IED incidents were reported in Hawija District, 20 were rendered safe by Iraqi military and PMU forces. Approximately 15 detonated against military, PMU and civilian vehicles. *Comment: The targeting of civilians as well as the military is a common IS tactic. It creates fear and undermines the authority of the local government and security forces. The tactic often initiates a response by security forces, such as mass arrests, that can be unpopular with the local civilians. This creates an environment in which IS can take advantage of and gain support within local communities.*



2. Humanitarian Situation

KEY FIGURES – In 2019, thousands of families are in their fifth year as IDPs. The majority of those surveyed indicated their intention to remain in displacement as Areas of Origin continue to lack security, services and social cohesion. The Number of:

- IDPs – 1,802,832
- Returnees – 4,165,320
- Syrian Refugees – 252,772
- Non-Syrian Refugees – 44,019
- Stateless – 47,630

Total Population of Concern: 6,312,573

- 2.4 million people are vulnerable to food insecurity
- 5.5 million people require health care
- 4.5 million people need protection support
- 2.3 million people require water and sanitation assistance
- 2.6 million children require access to education
- 2.3 million people are in need of shelter and non-food items.

The poverty rate in the areas most impacted by military operations against IS exceeds 40%, in comparison to the already-high 22.5% in the rest of the country.

<http://iraqdtm.iom.int>

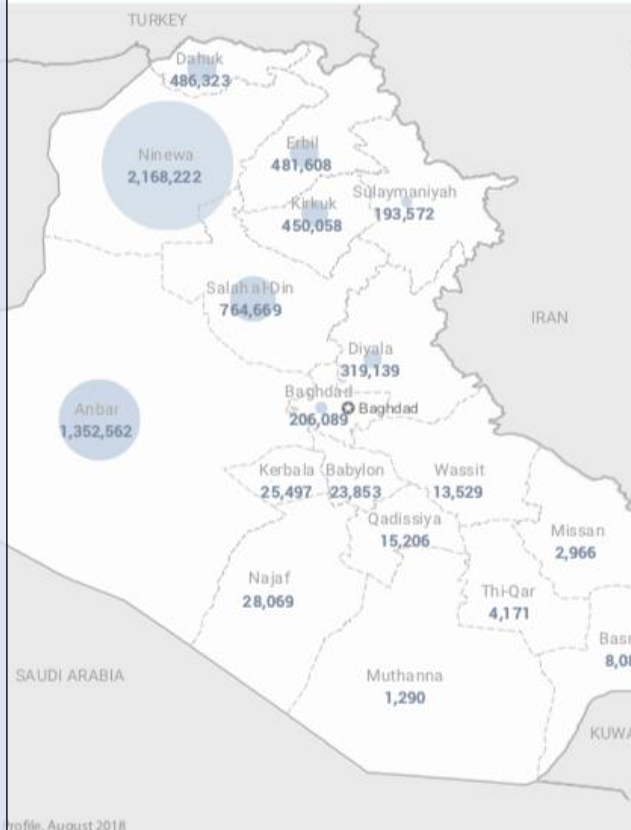
<http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Iraq%20Factsheet%20-%20December%202018.pdf>

TOTAL POPULATION OF IRAQ

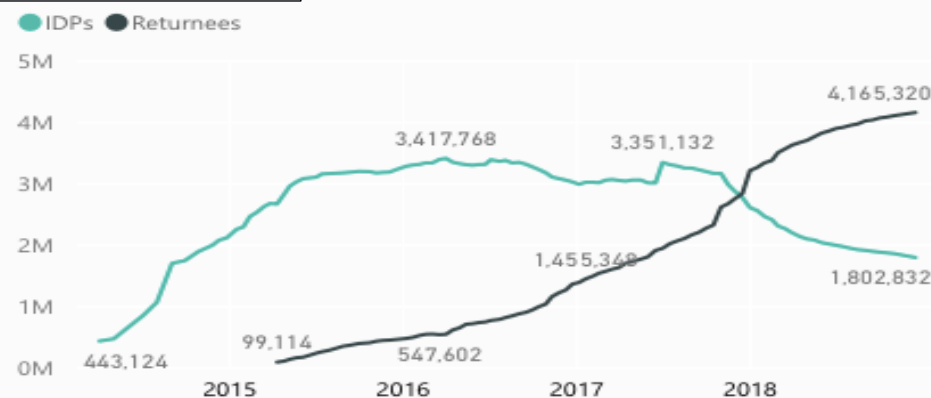
37M

PEOPLE IN NEED

6.7M



Population Figures Over Time



KEY HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Protection remains the overarching humanitarian priority for 2019. The importance of safe, voluntary, informed, dignified and sustainable **return of IDPs** cannot be overestimated.

Women and children continue to be exposed to multiple protection risks; child labor and child marriage among IDP and returnee children is more prevalent than in recent years, while over 10 per cent of children are reported to experience psychosocial distress.

IDPs in-camp and out-of-camp settings continue to depend on the provision of humanitarian assistance to meet their **basic needs**. More than 60% of the affected people surveyed reported incurring debt, mostly to meet basic needs.

Challenges to secure **livelihood** opportunities are among the top three needs cited by IDPs and returnees. Difficulties in accessing employment and livelihoods limits the possibility for IDPs to obtain shelter, food and essential non-food items; it can also impede returnees in securing services including health, utilities and education. The situation is critical in several districts, including Mosul, where 80% of youth between 18 and 25 are currently unemployed.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-humanitarian-needs-overview-2019-november-2018>

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/irq_2019_hno.pdf