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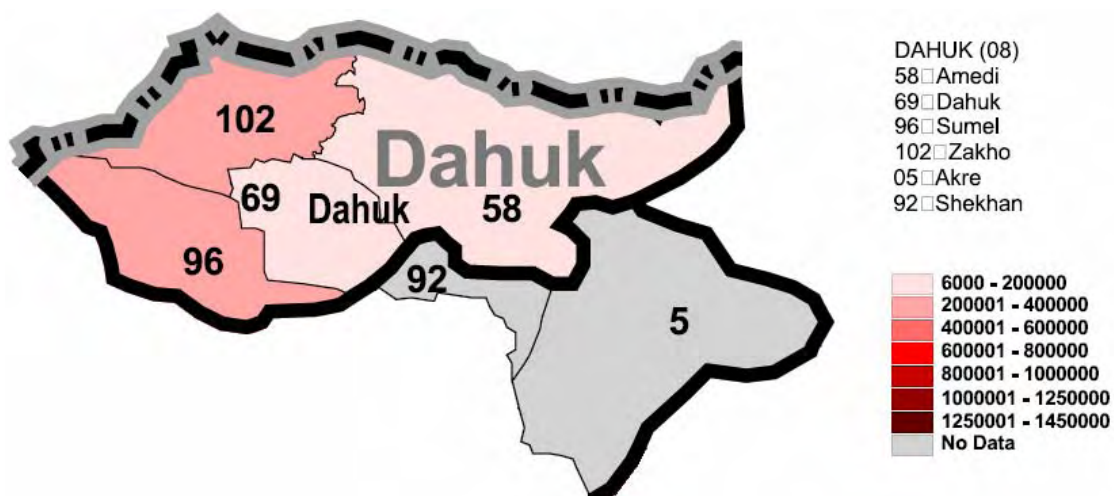


UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

GOVERNORATE ASSESSMENT REPORT DAHUK GOVERNORATE

September 2007



This UNHCR Assessment Report is intended to provide objective information regarding the overall situation in the Governorate in question, detailing the situation faced by persons of concern and their communities. The report has been drafted by UNHCR with its partners, *Millennium* and *IRD*, and governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as other UN agencies have been invited to contribute to this report, which draws on international sources, reports of district authorities, UNHCR's Returnee and IDP Monitoring activities and consultations with returnees and their communities. Efforts have been made to ensure that only accurate, reliable, factual, independently confirmed information is reported. This Assessment Report is not intended to be a comprehensive human rights report, nor is the report an expression of political opinion or a statement of UNHCR policy.

This report does not take into account events occurring on or after 31 August 2007, unless a later date is specified. UNHCR plans to update the report on a regular basis.

Requests for further information or feedback on this report can be sent to iraqoper@unhcr.org.

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List of Abbreviations

AFP	Agence France-Presse
ADM	Assyrian Democratic Movement
AM	Assyrian Movement
AP	Associated Press
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
BP	Bethnahrain Party
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CM	Chaldean Movement
CMOC	Civil Military Operation Center
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CRRPD	Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (previously the Iraq Property Claims Commission)
ENS	Environment News Service
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ID	Iraqi Dinar
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IKMAA	Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency
IKMAC	Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Centre
ILCS	Iraq Living Conditions Survey
ILIS	Iraq Landmine Impact Survey
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRCS	Iraqi Red Crescent Organization
IRD	International Relief and Development
IRIN	United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
KCP	Kurdistan Communist Party
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KIG	Kurdistan Islamic Group
KIM	Kurdistan Islamic Movement
KIU	Kurdistan Islamic Union
KNA	Kurdistan National Assembly
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KSDP	Kurdistan Socialist Democratic Party
KWU	Kurdistan Women Union
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MNF-I	Multinational Forces-Iraq
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health (unified KRG)
MoHR	Ministry of Human Rights (unified KRG)
MoI	Ministry of Interior (Erbil, not yet unified with MoI Sulaymaniyah)
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (unified KRG)
MoPDC	Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (central

MoT	Government in Baghdad)
NGO	Ministry of Trade (unified KRG)
PAC	Non-Governmental Organization
PDS	Protection and Assistance Centre
PHC	Public Distribution System
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TAL	Transitional Administrative Law
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMI HRO	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UPI	United Press International
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VOI	Voices of Iraq
VVAF	Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation
WHO	World Health Organization

Exchange Rate

As of 31 August 2007, the exchange rate between the Iraqi Dinar (ID) and the US Dollar (US \$) was: 1 US \$ = 1,258.90 ID 1 ID = 0.0008231 US \$

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Governorate Profile

1. Governorate Summary

Size	6,553 km ²
Population	942,268 ¹
Dominant Religion	Sunni branch of Islam
Administration	<i>Qadha</i> (District) and <i>Nahiya</i> (sub-District) Councils Governorate Council
Administrative Capital	Dahuk City
Districts	Dahuk, Amedi, Sumel and Zakho (<i>de facto</i> Akre and part of Shekhan) ²
International Borders	Turkey, Syria
Internal Boundaries	Erbil, Ninewa
Border Crossings	Ibrahim Khalil, Fish Khabur
Checkpoints ³	Rizgari sub-District checkpoint, Dahuk City checkpoint

2. Demographic Profile

Religion and ethnicity: The predominant religion in Dahuk is the Sunni branch of Islam practiced by the majority ethnic group, the Kurds. There is also a Yazidi minority, which mostly consider themselves to be ethnic Kurds, and a significant number of Christians (Assyrian, Chaldean and Armenian). There are also some ethnic Arabs and a few Turkmen.

Tribal groups: Tribal groups in Dahuk Governorate include Dosky, Mizury, Barwary, Kocher, Slevany, Gully, Cindy, Rekany, Harky, Nihly, Nowroy and Myran.

IDPs: Dahuk Governorate is home to the second largest concentration of post February 2006 IDPs in the three Northern Governorates, hosting 54,797 IDPs by 31 August 2007.⁴ The majority lives in Akre District (14,376 persons) and Dahuk Centre (11,482), with others in the Districts of Zakho (10,002), Shekhan (8,857), Sumel (8,195) and Amedi (1,885). The majority of IDPs are Kurds (81%), followed by ethnic-based Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans and Syriacs, 16%), Arabs (2%) and others (1%).⁵ About 20% of all new IDPs in the Governorate of Dahuk are children.⁶

¹ Dahuk Statistics Directorate.

² Akre and Shekhan Districts belong *de jure* to the Governorate of Ninewa; *de facto* they are under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government. Until 1976, the Governorate of Dahuk was part of Ninewa Governorate, which was called Mosul Province at the time.

³ This includes permanent checkpoints only.

⁴ These are 9,569 families.

⁵ Information received from Directorate of IDPs and Refugees Dahuk, September 2007.

⁶ Of the 65,056 IDPs recorded by Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in the Governorate of Dahuk by 31 August 2007, 20.5% are children; IRCS, *Figures of Internally Displaced Persons*, Update 26, 16 September 2007.

In addition, the Governorate hosts 134,844 persons displaced prior to the Samarra bombing in February 2006.⁷

Returnees: Between 2003 and September 2007, 473 families (1,541 persons) returned to the Governorate of Dahuk.⁸ Returnee Monitoring⁹ showed that the majority of repatriates surveyed returned from Iran and Turkey, with other returning from Syria, Europe, the US, Australia and New Zealand.¹⁰ Returnees are living in all districts of the Governorate.¹¹ A high number of returnees, 40.7%, did not return to their place of origin, but most of these intend to settle in their new location.¹² Nearly 40% of returnees surveyed are under the age of 18.¹³ Most returnees surveyed chose to return due to the change of the political and security situation since 2003.¹⁴

B. Political Developments

The Governorate of Dahuk is part of the area administered by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), based in Erbil. The KRG has constitutionally recognized authority over the Governorates of Erbil, Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah, as well as *de facto* authority over parts of Diyala, Ninewa and Kirkuk Governorates.¹⁵

The predominant political party in the Governorate of Dahuk is the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Other political parties include the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the Kurdistan Islamic Union (KIU), the Kurdistan Communist Party (KCP), the Kurdistan Socialist Democratic Party (KSDP) and the Kurdistan Islamic Movement (KIM). Also the

⁷ Figure as of 31 December 2005 (will be reviewed in cooperation with authorities). These include persons expelled during the “*De-villagisation*” campaign, the *Anfal* campaign, the “*Arabization*” campaign; persons expelled or who fled due to mid-1990s fighting between the two Kurdish parties as well as those fleeing fighting between the PKK and the Turkish military in Northern Iraq; Kurds expelled to Iran in the 1970s, and who have since returned to Northern Iraq but into internal displacement; Iraqis of all ethnic and religious backgrounds who fled Government-controlled territory since opposing the Iraqi Government; populations fleeing the Centre of Iraq after the fall of the former regime due to religious/ethnic or political persecution and harassment (e.g. religious minorities, intellectuals, Kurds from Fallujah and Ramadi) as well as ongoing fighting between Coalition Forces/Multinational Forces (MNF-I) and insurgents.

⁸ This includes both persons that returned as part of UNHCR’s facilitated return or other programmes as well as those that returned spontaneously. Sources: UNHCR/IRD and Directorate of Displacement and Migration in Soran (Erbil Governorate).

⁹ UNHCR through its implementing partner IRD surveyed a total of 337 returnee households between February and December 2006 (hereafter “UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*”). As not all households provided an answer to all questions raised, the number of “households surveyed” may not always account for 337.

¹⁰ Of 333 returnee households, 76.9% returned from Iran, 10.5% from Turkey, 3.9% from Syria, 2.7% from Sweden, 1.2% from the US and the remainder from various countries; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹¹ Dahuk (37.8%), Amedi (28.4%), Sumel (27.2%) and Zakho (6.6%); UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹² Of 337 returnee households surveyed, 31.8% intend to settle in their current location and are not planning to return to their place of origin; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹³ Of 335 households surveyed, 30.5% were between 5 and 17 years of age, 7.2% between 1 and 4 years of age and 1.4% below the age of 1; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹⁴ Of 333 returnee households surveyed, 95.2% mentioned change of political situation and 83.8% mentioned improved security as reasons for their return (the values do not add up to 100% because households listed up to three reasons for returning); UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹⁵ See Article 53(A) of the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), which continues to be valid under the National Constitution as approved by popular referendum in October 2005 (Article 143).

Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM), the Assyrian Movement (AM), the Bethnahrain Party (BP) and the Chaldean Movement (CM) have offices in the Governorate.

Until January 2006, the Governorates of Dahuk and Erbil were governed by a KDP-led administration, while the Governorate of Sulaymaniyah was governed by a separate, PUK-led administration. An agreement between the PUK and the KDP on the joint administration of the KRG was reached on 21 January 2006, and the KRG assumed office on 7 May 2006.¹⁶

The governing body of Dahuk Governorate is the Governorate Council. The Council is made up of 41 members, consisting of an executive body (Governor and Deputy Governor) and legislative (members of Governorate Council). The Council holds weekly meetings every Thursday to discuss projects and activities. Unanimity is required before proposals can be passed to the Governor for implementation. Members of the current Council were elected on 30 January 2005 and its 41 seats are divided among four parties: the KDP holds 32 seats, the PUK four seats, the KIU four seats and the Communist Party one seat. Since the KDP owns the majority of the seats, it occupies the posts of the Head of Council (Mr. Tamar Ramadhan) and Deputy Head of Council (Dr. Fadhil Omer).

C. Security and Public Order

1. General Security Situation

Dahuk Governorate has escaped the widespread violence and collapse of law and order of neighbouring Ninewa Governorate as well as the tensions and occasional attacks as seen in Erbil Governorate to the East. However, the security situation remains tenuous and unpredictable,¹⁷ in particular in view of the unresolved status of disputed areas¹⁸ and the alleged presence of PKK fighters in the Governorate. In recent months, tensions with Turkey increased after the Turkish Army massed troops along the Turkish-Iraqi border and shelled areas in Zakho District in the Governorate of Dahuk.¹⁹

¹⁶ The seat of the KRG is in Erbil. According to the new power-sharing agreement, the KDP will head the KRG Ministries of Finance, *Peshmerga* Affairs, Higher Education, Agriculture, Martyrs, Culture, Electricity, Natural Resources, Municipalities, Sports and Youth as well as the Ministry for Extra-Regional Affairs. The PUK oversees the Interior, Justice, Education, Health, Social Affairs, Water Resources, Transportation, Reconstruction, Planning and Human Rights Ministries. The KRG Ministries of Finance, *Peshmerga* Affairs and Interior should unite within one year, but to date remain separate. The KIU, the KIG as well as the Turkmen and Chaldo-Assyrian parties are heading the remaining ministries; KRG, *Kurdistan Regional Government Unification Agreement*, paras 1-5, 21 January 2006, http://www.krg.org/articles/article_detail.asp?LangNr=12&RubricNr=107&ArticleNr=8891&LNNr=28&RNNr=70 (hereafter “KRG, 2006 Unification Agreement”). For a full list of the KRG cabinet, inaugurated on 7 May 2006, see KRG, *Ministers of the new unified cabinet*, 7 May 2006, http://www.krg.org/articles/article_detail.asp?ArticleNr=10938&LangNr=12&LNNr=28&RNNr=70.

¹⁷ See also UNHCR, *UNHCR Return Advisory and Position on International Protection Needs of Iraqis Outside Iraq*, December 2006 (corr.), pp. 5-7, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/home/RSDLEGAL/458baf6f4.pdf>, hereafter “UNHCR, 2006 Return Advisory”).

¹⁸ The status of disputed areas is to be solved in accordance with Article 140 of the National Constitution and Article 53 of the TAL. A referendum in the status of these areas is set to be held by 31 December 2007 and tensions in particular in areas of Kirkuk and Ninewa are expected to further increase in view of the referendum. KDP offices, in particular in the Governorate of Ninewa, have come under regular attack; RFE/RL, Kathleen Ridolfo, *Iraq: Kurdish Region Under Increasing Threat*, 16 May 2007, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/05/29c92089-22f0-42e2-acc7-3666f1ff1419.html>.

¹⁹ AFP, *Tensions on Iraq-Turkey border send residents packing*, 28 August 2007, <http://www.institutkurde.org/en/afp/?src=http://afp.institutkurde.org/AFP/english/topics/news/070828041525.uq>

Civil unrest, street protests and demonstrations have taken place in the Governorate of Dahuk during 2006 and the first half of 2007, with increasing public impatience at the shortfalls in public service provisions and the administration's ability to deliver improvements. Protests over late public sector payments and calls for pay increases were also voiced.²⁰ Some protests have turned violent and resulted in a number of arrests and detentions. Accusations of excessive use of force by security forces in the Governorate have been raised in a number of incidents.²¹ In late 2005, hundreds of rioters ransacked and torched the KIU's office in Dahuk City and other towns of the Governorate after the party had quit the Kurdish alliance to field its own candidates in the December 2005 elections for the Council of Representatives. Reportedly, four KIU members were killed and dozens were injured, many of them police officers.²² There were allegations that the attacks were perpetrated by individuals in security uniforms said to belong to the KDP.²³

Criminality is an ongoing problem in the Governorate of Dahuk with petty crime, smuggling and corruption²⁴ being of concern. High unemployment, particularly in rural areas, has exacerbated the problem of smuggling, the only source of income for many villagers living close to the Turkish border.²⁵

Crimes against women, in particular "honour crimes", are common.²⁶

2. Security Forces

In the Governorate of Dahuk, the provision of security, including law enforcement and basic police functions, remains the responsibility of the local police, local security and

[dru90a.xml](#); VOI, *VP denounces neighboring countries' shelling of Iraqi villages*, 27 August 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php?refid=DH-S-28-08-2007&article=21137; ibidem, *Turkish cross-border artillery shelling in Duhuk*, 6 August 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/20308; ibidem, *Turkish artillery shell Kurdistan area*, 16 July 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/19467.

²⁰ For example, employees of the Public Corporation for Mines in Dahuk went on several days strike in early June 2007, protesting their low salaries; VOI, Khedr Doumli, *Mine employees in Duhuk go on strike*, 6 June 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/18093.

²¹ UNAMI HRO, *Human Rights Report, 1 January – 31 March 2007*, p. 22, <http://www.uniraq.org/FileLib/misc/HR%20Report%20Jan%20Mar%202007%20EN.pdf> (hereafter "UNAMI HRO, March 2007 Human Rights Report").

²² The Washington Post, Jonathan Finer, *For Kurds, A Surge Of Violence In Campaign*, 14 December 2005, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/13/AR2005121302119_pf.html.

²³ UNAMI HRO, *Human Rights report, 1 November – 31 December 2005*, p. 3, <http://www.uniraq.org/documents/HR%20Report%20Nov%20Dec%2005%20EN.PDF>.

²⁴ The Globe and Mail, Mark Mackinnon, *Corruption: The Dark Underbelly of Kurdistan's Dream*, 13 March 2007, available at: <http://www.wadinet.de/news/iraq/newsarticle.php?id=2955>; Los Angeles Times, Solomon Moore, *Safety Over Liberty in Kurdistan*, 10 April 2006, available at: <http://fairuse.100webcustomers.com/fuj/latimes15.htm>; RFE/RL, Kathleen Ridolfo, *Iraq: New Kurdish Administration Comes Under Scrutiny*, 12 May 2006, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/5/4B58E7A7-5456-4D67-A1F1-B5DF2E2AD5B4.html>; ibidem, Kyle Madigan, *Iraq: Corruption Restricts Development In Iraqi Kurdistan*, 29 April 2005, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/4/DA9D366C-C2C2-486F-A4D7-2EEBC0BB507E.html>; Global Security, *Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)*, visited 14 August 2007, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/kdp.htm>.

²⁵ Information received by UNHCR, August 2007.

²⁶ See Section II. D. Human Rights.

intelligence forces and the armed forces, the *Peshmerga*.²⁷

Police: The local police force in Dahuk Governorate is institutionalized and reports to the KRG Erbil Ministry of Interior (MoI). It maintains a General Directorate in Dahuk City and departments in all other districts. Most sub-districts also have a police station. The General Directorate consists of five units: Aid, Guarding, Civil Emergency Unit, Stations and a special unit for guarding the Governor's Office.

Peshmerga: Security in the Governorates of Erbil and Dahuk is under the authority of the *Peshmerga*.²⁸ The KDP continues to run its own Ministry of *Peshmerga*, which is to be merged with the respective PUK-run Ministry of *Peshmerga* under the Unification Agreement and will be headed by the KDP. Under the unification agreement reached by the KDP and the PUK on 21 January 2006, a *Supreme Commission* will be established to institutionalize the police and security agencies of the Kurdistan Region. The agreement also states that “(T)he united agencies are to be removed from political considerations.” Furthermore, the agreement foresees the introduction of a special programme for university graduates with the aim of recruiting new candidates to the unified security services.²⁹

In March 2007, three battalions of *Peshmerga* were sent to Baghdad to support the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Multinational Forces in Iraq (MNF-I) with the Baghdad Security Plan.³⁰ In July 2007, it was reported that in agreement with the Central Government, some 6,000 *Peshmerga* fighters were to be sent to protect power facilities and oil pipelines in Central Iraq, which are regular targets of insurgents.³¹ However, this move has provoked controversy among minority groups in multi-ethnic Kirkuk Governorate.³² By the time of writing, the deployment had not taken place for political reasons.³³

Asayish and Parastin: The *Asayish* is the KDP's internal security agency. By law it has jurisdiction over economic and political crimes such as smuggling, espionage, acts of sabotage and terrorism.³⁴ The *Parastin* is the party's domestic intelligence agency. These

²⁷ The National Constitution stipulates in Article 120 that “(T)he Regional Government shall be responsible for all the administrative requirements of the region, particularly the establishment and organization of the internal security forces for the region such as police, security forces and guards of the region”.

²⁸ According to Jafar Ali Mustafa, the KRG Minister of State for Peshmerga Affairs, the *Peshmerga* number some 200,000, half of which are controlled by the PUK and the other half by the KDP; see *The Economist*, *Does independence beckon?*, 6 September 2007,

http://www.economist.com/world/africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9769132.

²⁹ KRG, *2006 Unification Agreement*, para 7, see above footnote 16.

³⁰ VoA, Jim Randle, *Iraqi Army Soldiers From the Kurdish North Head to Baghdad*, 16 February 2007,

<http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2007-02/2007-02-16-voa27.cfm?CFID=116781601&CFTOKEN=88221502>; Reuters, *Mussab Al-Khairalla, Kurd fighters may add muscle to Baghdad offensive*, 9 February 2007, http://www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2007/02/09/kurd_fighters_may_add_muscle_to_baghdad_offensive/.

³¹ UPI, *Peshmerga to Protect Iraq Power and Oil*, 30 July 2007,

http://www.upi.com/Energy/Briefing/2007/07/30/peshmerga_to_protect_iraq_power_and_oil/1652/.

³² RFE/RL, *Mustafa Mahmud, Iraq: Plan To Deploy Peshmerga To Kirkuk Alarms Minorities*, 8 August 2007, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/8/7470E5AD-D81A-444A-8DC9-14508939152C.html>.

³³ VOI, *Political situation hampers sending Peshmerga fighters to Mosul, Tikrit*, 14 August 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/20616.

³⁴ UNAMI HRO, *March 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 12, see above footnote 21.

local security and intelligence services and the *Peshmerga* monitor villages, towns and regional checkpoints. In addition, these agencies run detention centres in the Governorate.

Multi-National Forces in Iraq: Since June 2003, the MNF-I had a limited presence in Dahuk Governorate focusing largely on the training of the regional security services. Full security responsibility in the Kurdistan Region was formally transferred from the MNF-I to the KRG on 30 May 2007.³⁵

The Civil Military Operation Center (CMOC) closed the Dahuk Office in March 2007. The US Department of Justice Corrections Team is in charge for building the capacity of prison officials and promotion of human rights.

3. Prison and Detention Facilities

There are four main detentions centres in Dahuk Governorate, including the General Reformatory Prison in Zerka neighbourhood in Dahuk City (under MoI), the *Asayish* Prison in Dahuk City (under *Asayish*), the Women and Juvenile Prison in Itite village, 5 km outside Dahuk City (under Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [MoLSA]) and the Akre prison in Akre District (under *Asayish*). The latter is supposed to be closed in the near future, but at the time of writing it was still running. In addition, there are several smaller interrogation centres, which are also used by the *Asayish* to detain suspected criminals.³⁶

On 10 April 2007, the KNA approved an Amnesty Law, which was followed by the immediate release of 70 prisoners from prisons in the Kurdistan Region.³⁷ Prison and detention facilities are set to unify during 2007 as outlined in the Unification Agreement. At the end of August 2007, separate KDP and PUK administered facilities were still in operation in the region.

4. UXO and Mines

The three Northern Governorates, one of the most contaminated areas of the world with 1,428 affected communities, contend with thousands of minefields especially along the borders with Iran and Turkey and further contamination along the former “Green Line” as well as UXO across all three governorates. The three Northern Governorates account for the heaviest known contamination within Iraq with 3,024 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) covering an estimated area of 776 km² and affecting 1,126 communities.³⁸

³⁵ VOI, Abdul Hamid Zibari, *Kurdish Peshmarga receives Kurdistan security file from MNF*, 31 May 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php?refid=DH-S-31-05-2007&article=17899.

³⁶ For information on the treatment of detainees at prisons and detention facilities of the *Asayish*, see also Section II. D. *Human Rights*.

³⁷ Kurdish Globe, Qassim Khidhir, *Prisoners in Kurdistan given a second chance*, 22 June 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/18595.

³⁸ The ILIS 2006 recorded 565 “recent” casualties in the three Northern Governorates. It also recorded 5,552 “less recent” casualties, including 2,443 people killed and 3,109 injured; Dahuk Governorate recorded 649 casualties; the international NGO Mines Advisory Group (MAG) recorded at least 8,037 casualties in Northern Iraq since 1993; International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor, LM Report 2006*, <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2006/iraq.html>.

Since 2004, when the KRG took over responsibility for mine action in the three Northern Governorates, the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Centre (IKMAC) based in Erbil has been in charge to manage mine action in the Governorate of Dahuk and Erbil under KDP-administration. IKMAC has cleared 32 minefields between 2005 and 2007, clearing over 1 million m².³⁹ On 7 May 2007, the KNA approved legislation for the creation of a joint Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) to replace the two separate directorates in operation in the Governorates of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil/Dahuk, respectively.⁴⁰ To date, the IKMAC has not been established and the separate bodies continue to be in charge. The IKMAA will have a General Directorate in Dahuk.⁴¹ There is one mine victim assistance (MVA) organization active in Dahuk Governorate.⁴²

As a result of mine clearance activities and MRE, the total number of reported victims in the three Northern Governorates has significantly decreased in the past years, from 192 in 2003 to 48 in 2006. Between January and April 2007, 28 mine victims have been reported.⁴³

IDPs and returnees: The presence of mines and UXO prevents access to and use of agricultural and pastoral land and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure, housing and essential services and road networks. IDPs, which have recently been displaced from Central and Southern Iraq to Dahuk Governorate, in particular to Fayda and sub-districts of Zakho, are at considerable risk from high concentrations of remnants of conflict.⁴⁴ UNHCR is aware that Fayda ex-military camp, which hosts some 410 IDP families, is located nearby mine-affected areas.

II. LEGAL ISSUES

A. Justice System

The justice system in Dahuk Governorate functions within the KRG court system, which operates independently of the Central Government. A joint Ministry of Justice for the KRG was established in February 2007 and the Central Ministry of Justice Building is located in Erbil. The two administrations' separate Cassation Courts were unified in August 2006. The unified Cassation Court is the highest court in the Kurdistan Region and located in Erbil. There are the following Courts in the Governorate of Dahuk:

- Investigation Court for Crime Control;
- Investigation Court for *Asayish*;
- Instance Court;
- Personal Status Court;
- Misdemeanours Court;
- Labour Court;
- Juvenile Court;

³⁹ Information received from UNDP Iraq, May 2007.

⁴⁰ International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor, LM Report 2006*, <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2006/iraq.html>.

⁴¹ Information received from UNDP Iraq, May 2007.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ UNDP Iraq, May 2007.

⁴⁴ Information received from MAG, September 2007.

- Criminal Court.

The Appeal Court in Erbil is also dealing with appeals from courts in Dahuk Governorate. In the Governorate of Dahuk, civil courts apply Shari'a law (Shafiite or Hanafi School) in personal status matters such as marriage and divorce, inheritance, alimony and child custody, while the Iraqi *Personal Status Law* (Law No. 188 of 1959, as amended in the area) is applied to non-Muslims in addition to their own laws.

Judicial services are operating relatively regularly in Dahuk Governorate, although they are prone to delays in court proceedings and issuing verdicts. Lawyers are available at the Lawyers' Chamber at the House of Justice for all stages of trial and legal counselling and low-income families may apply for legal aid in criminal cases. Courts are more frequently referred to as a means to settle disputes in urban rather than rural areas where mediation through traditional leaders is more commonly practiced to solve disputes among families or clans or concerning marriage, divorce or property issues. However, traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution may not always be available or be ineffective in providing protection to the individual concerned. In some cases, reliance on these mechanisms may result in further harm, for example, for women who fear "honour killings" or individuals who fear becoming victims of a blood feud.⁴⁵

B. Documentation

Nationality Certificate and Civil ID Card: These documents are the most essential forms of documentation as they are required in order to obtain most official documents such as passports, birth and death certificates, marriage certificates and food ration cards. Obtaining/renewing these documents is generally possible within a few days and at a reasonable cost; however, in the case of returnees not holding old Iraqi documents, further investigation into records must be carried out to prove entitlement, which can be a lengthy procedure. It is therefore crucial that returnees bring with them any documentation, including Civil ID Cards, Nationality Certificates, military service cards, property documents and birth/death certificates of relatives, even if outdated, which could assist in obtaining new documentation, proving Iraqi citizenship or regaining property.

Passports: Applications for passports of the "S" series are usually processed within a week or, in urgent cases, even within a day. However, "G" series passports⁴⁶ are only issued

⁴⁵ See IWPR, Rebaz Mahmood, *Above the law*, Iraq Crisis Report No. 215, 17 March 2007, http://iwpr.net/?apc_state=henpicr&s=i&o=200703; see also UNHCR, *Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Iraqi Asylum-seekers*, August 2007, p. 37, available in UNHCR's Refworld at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=46deb05557> (hereafter "UNHCR, 2007 Eligibility Guidelines"); UNHCR, *Country of Origin Information Iraq*, October 2005, pp. 123-124, available in UNHCR's Refworld at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=435637914> (hereafter "UNHCR, 2005 Country of Origin Information Iraq").

⁴⁶ Many states, including the UK, USA, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg, only accept holders of Iraqi passports of the "G" series, which is machine-readable and more secure than older versions, given the high level of fraud involved with passports of previous series, including the "S" series which was first issued after the fall of the former regime. The "M", "N" and "H" series passports were issued pre-2003. The Government of Iraq also decided to invalidate its own passport series "M" and "N"; see for example, Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, *Iraqi Passport Info*, visited 31 August 2007, <http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/iraqippts.html>; Swedish Migration Board, *Questions and answers about Iraqi passports*, 6 September 2007, <http://www.migrationsverket.se/english.jsp>; Jordan Times, Linda Hindi, *Iraqis*

centrally by the Directorate of Passport in Baghdad and usually take at minimum three months to be issued. These passports are currently only issued to certain categories of persons:

- Government officials travelling outside Iraq as members of an official delegation;
- Person with a valid entry visa for the USA, Europe or other countries requiring “G” series passports;
- Patients with a valid medical evacuation report indicating that the treatment is not available inside Iraq.

Women below the age of 40 applying for a “G” series passport need to have the approval of a male family member. This decision from the Central Government was criticized by the Kurdish authorities; however, given that “G” series passports can only be issued in Baghdad, the regulation also applies in the Governorate of Dahuk.⁴⁷ While the official fee amounts to 27,500 ID, it has been reported that “G” series passports are only obtained with the use of bribery ranging from US \$700 – 1,500 and even higher.⁴⁸

Food ration cards: These should be free for IDPs and cost approximately 11,500 ID for returnees receiving a PDS ration card for the first time.⁴⁹ For further information on IDPs’ access to food, see Section III. C. 1. Food.

Registration of non-Iraqi spouses: Non-Iraqi spouses of Iraqi returnees are required to register with the Department of Residence in the Passports and Residence Directorate. This process includes security and medical checks (currently a blood test and stool sample). Initial registration lasts for three months, after which non-Iraqi spouses need to extend their residency every six months. After five years of continuous legal residency, non-Iraqi spouses can apply for Iraqi nationality under certain criteria.⁵⁰ Registration requires the spouse to have a valid passport, visa and proof of entry through an official Iraqi border crossing point. This has caused difficulties for many who travelled to Iraq illegally and did not use an official crossing point, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 conflict. If non-Iraqi spouses do not register and do not have the necessary documents, their stay in Iraq is considered illegal. An investigation will then be initiated by the relevant court and the *Asayish*, and provided the person is not considered a security risk, he/she will obtain a residency permit.

Assistance: The Protection and Assistance Centre⁵¹ in Dahuk can provide IDPs and returnees with further information and advice with regard to obtaining documents.

granted extra 7 months to upgrade passports, 30 May 2007,

<http://www.jordanembassyus.org/05302007003.htm>.

⁴⁷ IWPR, *Kurdish Women Resent New Passport System*, Iraq Crisis Report No. 223, 8 June 2007,

http://iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=336227&apc_state=henh.

⁴⁸ KurdishMedia.com, *You can get G-Type Iraqi passports but at a price*, 8 July 2007,

http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php?refid=DH-S-09-07-2007&article=19144.

⁴⁹ A Petition letter to the Mayor (1,500 ID), recommendation letter from the committee offices (free), *Mukhtar* letter (2,000 ID), 2 application forms (2,000 ID), 2 stamps from the Governor’s Office (1,500 ID), 2 stamps from the Food Distribution Department (1,500 ID), 2-4 photocopies of ID cards (3,000 ID).

⁵⁰ Articles 7 and 11 of Law No. 26 of 7 March 2006.

⁵¹ Previously *Legal Aid and Information Centre* (LAIC).

C. Restitution of Property

Claims for the restitution of property misappropriated by the former regime that fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD)⁵² can be submitted to its office in Dahuk.⁵³ The CRRPD office provides assistance with completion and submission of claims. It also collects evidence from appropriate real estate registry and government offices, holds hearings and requests additional evidence on aspects of claims that need further clarification. Working hours are from 08:00 to 15:00 hrs, except Fridays and Saturdays.

Claim forms and instructions relating to the submission of claims can be found at: <http://ipcciraq.org/>.

As of 31 August 2007, the CRRPD Dahuk office had received 4,725 claims, of which 4,083 are currently active. Only 642 have been settled in the first instance (out of which 512 claims were rejected, 127 claimants received compensation and one had his property returned; no claims have been settled outside the court and two claims have been retrieved by the plaintiffs). Out of the 642 of the settled claims, 361 claims were directed against the Government and 281 claims were directed against persons.⁵⁴

Property restitution claims in Dahuk Governorate take considerable time to process as routine procedures between various government departments and lengthy court procedures delay the processing of claims.

Property claims that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the CRRPD can be submitted to the civil courts. However, depending on the case, court procedures can be lengthy due to bureaucracy and poor coordination among different courts at the local and possibly central (Baghdad) level.

D. Human Rights

The unified KRG includes a Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) seated in Erbil and headed by Yousif Mohammad Aziz of the PUK. It maintains Directorates in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah. The Dahuk Human Rights Directorate has 30 staff, which regularly visit detention centres and coordinate with the Attorney General. However, the mandate of the Human Rights Directorate is restricted, e.g. it has no authority to deal with security issues,

⁵² The jurisdiction of the CRRPD runs from 17 July 1968 to 9 April 2003 and covers the following types of properties:

- *Properties that were confiscated and seized for political, ethnic reasons or on the basis of religion or religious doctrine or any other events resulting from the policies of the previous regime of ethnic, sectarian and nationalist displacement.*
- *Properties that were seized without consideration or appropriated with manifest injustice or in violation of the legal practices adopted for property acquisition. Exception is made to the properties that were seized pursuant to the law of agricultural reform, the cases of in kind compensation and appropriation for purposes of public use and which were actually utilized for public use.*
- *The State real properties that were allocated to the factions of the previous regime without consideration or for a symbolic amount.*

⁵³ The office is located in Dahuk Centre, Malata Al-Nassarrah, Main Street, opposite to Dahuk Canning Factory.

⁵⁴ Information from CRRPD office Dahuk, September 2007.

the provision of services or freedom of press.⁵⁵ There are also a number of NGOs operating in the field of human rights in Dahuk Governorate.

Press freedom: Officially, there is no censorship in the Governorate; however, most media outlets are controlled by the KDP.⁵⁶ Independent journalists and media organizations have repeatedly claimed that press freedom is restricted. In February 2007, the KRG Minister of Culture openly criticized the stifling of intellectuals and artists⁵⁷ and criticism of the ruling party has led to physical harassment, arrest and imprisonment on the basis of unspecified defamation charges.⁵⁸ For example, Munir Assad, a reporter for Al-Hurra Television was detained on 19 February, 2007 for several hours by the KDP's *Asayish* after taking photographs of an incident in which young men from a Kurdish tribe attacked members of the minority Yazidi community in the District of Shekhan.⁵⁹ And in December 2006, the *Asayish* closed down the KIU's radio station in Akre on the basis that it was operating without a license, despite the fact that political parties do not require a licence by law.⁶⁰ By September 2007, the station was airing again.

Due process: Human rights organizations documented widespread and systematic mistreatment and violations of due process rights of detainees at detention facilities of the *Asayish*.⁶¹ Many detainees are being held on suspicion of involvement in acts of terrorism or are said to be members or supporters of proscribed Islamist groups. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), Kurdish security forces routinely subject detainees to torture and other mistreatment.⁶²

Death penalty: On 2 September 2006, the Kurdistan National Assembly repealed the CPA's decision to suspend the death penalty.⁶³ According to this decision, the final authority for confirmation of death sentences approved by the Kurdish Supreme Court rests with the Kurdish Executive.⁶⁴

Women and girls: Traditional attitudes towards women continue to dominate in rural areas and girls and women are exposed to harmful traditional practices such as forced and/or early marriages,⁶⁵ marriages between young women and much older men, or giving a girl in

⁵⁵ Information provided by Dahuk Human Rights Directorate, March 2007.

⁵⁶ See for example, The Economist, *Does independence beckon?*, 6 September 2007, http://www.economist.com/world/africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9769132; Wordpress.org, David Axe, *Propagandistan: Iraqi Kurdistan Is Free — but Its Media Sure Isn't*, 5 April 2006, <http://www.worldpress.org/Mideast/2308.cfm>.

⁵⁷ UNAMI HRO, *March 2007 Human Rights Report*, see above footnote 21.

⁵⁸ UNAMI HRO "noted several incidents of harassment, legal action and intimidation against journalists addressing issues of corruption and mismanagement of public services in the Region of Kurdistan"; see UNAMI HRO, *March 2007 Human Rights Report*, pp. 4, 11, see above footnote 21.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, p. 12.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ UNHCR, *2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, p. 107, see above footnote 45; on the *Asayish*, see also above Section I. C. 2. Security Forces.

⁶² HRW, *Caught in the Whirlwind, Torture and Denial of Due Process by the Kurdistan Security Forces*, July 2007, <http://hrw.org/reports/2007/kurdistan0707/>; UNAMI HRO, *March 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 22, see above footnote 21.

⁶³ CPA Order No. 7, *Penal Code*, Section 2 para. 1, 10 June 2003, available online in UNHCR's Refworld at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=452524304>.

⁶⁴ See UNAMI HRO, *Human Rights Report, 1 September – 31 October 2006*, p. 20, <http://www.uniraq.org/documents/HR%20Report%20Sep%20Oct%202006%20EN.pdf>.

⁶⁵ This includes exchanging women between families for marriage purposes (*Jin bi Jin*).

marriage to another family as compensation for a killing.⁶⁶

“Honour killings”: Despite the fact that the Iraqi *Penal Code* (Law No. 111 of 1969, as amended in the area)⁶⁷ defines “honour killings” as murder, crimes of this type still take place and women who are, for example, victims of sexual aggression, may be at risk of being killed by their family members in an attempt to preserve the family’s “honour”. Given the fact that “honour killings” are prohibited by law, families often try to conceal them as accidents, suicides or suicide attempts, and reportedly, most cases are investigated as such. Closely linked to the issue of “honour killings” is the trend of mostly young women committing suicide by self-immolation due to the strict social pressures of Kurdish society. According to a newspaper portal source, Awena, injuries and deaths by immolation and suspected “honour crimes” are increasing.⁶⁸ The issue has recently been covered quite extensively by the Kurdish media.⁶⁹ According to the Health Department in Dahuk Governorate, 294 women had been burned in 2006 and 67 women have been burned in 2007, mostly young women between 15 and 39 years of age.⁷⁰

There are several women’s rights organizations⁷¹ active in Dahuk, but no women’s shelter exist providing protection to women at risk of “honour killings”.

Religious freedom: Christians and members of other religious minority groups can worship freely without interference by the Kurdish authorities.⁷² Through the efforts of Evangelicals, which are increasingly active in Northern Iraq, a number of Kurdish Muslims have reportedly converted to Christianity. The general population does not tolerate a Muslim’s conversion to Christianity and, accordingly, law enforcement organs may be unwilling to interfere and provide protection to a convert at risk.⁷³

Economic and social rights: The ability of the government to address economic and social rights is still limited due to shortfalls in key public services such as water, fuel and electricity and a dire lack of adequate housing.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ IWPR, Najeeba Mohammad, *Brides pay high price*, Iraqi Crisis Report No. 215, 17 March 2007, http://iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=334150&apc_state=heniicr2007; UNHCR, 2005 *Country of Origin Information Iraq*, p. 162, see above footnote 45.

⁶⁷ The unofficial English translation, as prepared by the US Armed Forces Judge Advocate General, is available online in UNHCR’s Refworld at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=452514424>. For further information on Iraq’s Penal Law, see UNHCR, 2005 *Country of Origin Information Iraq*, pp. 116-117, see above footnote 45.

⁶⁸ UNAMI HRO, *March 2007 Human Rights Report*, p. 16, see above footnote 21.

⁶⁹ See for example, Kurdish Women’s Rights Watch, Nazaneen Rashid, *Roundup of reports on honour-based violence in Kurdistan Region*, 10 July 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php?refid=DH-S-10-07-2007&article=19241.

⁷⁰ *Avrou* weekly newspaper (in Kurdish language), No. 196, 4 July 2007; see also AFP, *Self-immolation: the dark secret of Iraqi Kurdish women*, 23 August 2007, <http://www.institutkurde.org/en/afp/?src=http://afp.institutkurde.org/AFP/english/topics/news/070823042456.xi.guyoak.xml>.

⁷¹ The Kurdistan Women’s Union (KWU) is the largest women’s organization in the Governorate. It is linked to the KDP and has more than 10,000 members in the Kurdistan Region; see KDP Iraq, *Kurdistan Women Union*, accessed 15 August 2007, <http://www.kdp.se/?do=women>.

⁷² On the situation of Christians and Yazidis in the three Northern Governorates, see also UNHCR, 2007 *Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 65, 80, see above footnote 45.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 66.

⁷⁴ See Section III. *Housing / Land / Employment / Infrastructure / Public Services*.

E. Freedom of Movement

Freedom of movement is generally uninhibited within Dahuk Governorate and between neighbouring Governorates and there are no curfews in place across the Governorate. However, persons originating from outside the Kurdistan Region have to inform the authorities if they intend to change their location. Travellers are asked to show an identification document (e.g. Civil ID Card) as part of routine security checks. This can restrict the movement of returnees and IDPs who may not have appropriate Iraqi documentation. Returnees, who have not yet renewed their ID Cards, are required to obtain a letter from the local security office in their area before travelling outside the district or between Governorates. It has been reported that some women face restrictions on their freedom of movement by their families because of social customs/traditions.⁷⁵

The authorities in the Governorate of Dahuk have introduced restrictions on admission and stay of IDPs. For further information, please see Section IV. *B. Internal Relocation*.

III. HOUSING / LAND / EMPLOYMENT / INFRASTRUCTURE / PUBLIC SERVICES

A. Housing / Land

Housing remains a critical issue in the Governorate of Dahuk. The large influx of IDPs since February 2006 has further exacerbated the shortfall and prices have risen sharply.⁷⁶ But also within the Governorate, people tend to move from rural to urban areas to seek employment and better access to services.⁷⁷ At the end of July 2007, the minimum rental price for a house of 200 m² was US \$400-600 per month while minimum rental price for an apartment of 150 m² was US \$300-400 per month.

IDPs: IDPs have no right to purchase or own property in Dahuk Governorate, but may rent property provided that they are registered in the Governorate. In order to rent property, IDPs must register with the *Asayish* and should present a permission letter issued by security to the brokers' offices. IDP Monitoring in Dahuk Governorate in 2007⁷⁸ found that housing was considered a major problem by IDPs in the Governorate.⁷⁹ IDP Monitoring in Dahuk Governorate in 2007 found that the majority of surveyed IDPs were living either in rented accommodation or with a host family, often in overcrowded conditions. A significant number is living in former military camps or collective towns.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Of 166 returnee households surveyed since October 2006, 8.4% of women reported that their freedom of movement had enhanced since 2003, 81.3% reported no change and 10.2% said their freedom of movement had become more restricted since 2003.

⁷⁶ IRIN, *IRAQ: Sharp increase in rents hurting people in Dahuk*, 22 June 2006, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=27046>.

⁷⁷ Swiss Refugee Council, *The socio-economic situation in the KRG administrated provinces Sulaimaniyah, Erbil and Dohuk*, 10 July 2007, http://www.osar.ch/2007/07/27/0707_irq_socioecosituation (hereafter "Swiss Refugee Council, 2007 KRG socio-economic situation").

⁷⁸ UNHCR through its partner, IRD, surveyed 398 IDP households in Dahuk Governorate between May and 15 August 2007 (hereafter "UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*").

⁷⁹ 74% of IDP families surveyed in Dahuk Governorate saw housing as a major priority after public services (80%); UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*, see above footnote 78.

⁸⁰ IDP Monitoring revealed that 44 % of IDP families are living in a rented house and 26% with host families. Others are living in public buildings and tents and private housing.

Dashtmir tented camp outside Zakho City was established in 2004 and currently hosts some 46 families, who mainly originate from the Governorate of Ninewa (Sinjar and Zumar Districts). Fayda Camp, located 20km south-west of Dahuk City in the District of Telkaif (Ninewa Governorate), is a former military camp that currently hosts some 2,000 pre-2006 IDPs as well as some post-2006 IDPs. In addition, some 750 post-2006 IDP families are scattered in nearby Domiz collective town and in Fayda village, mainly living in rented accommodation and with relatives.⁸¹

Returnees: Few returnees in Dahuk Governorate have access to their previous homes as most privately owned properties in their areas of origin were severely damaged or destroyed by the former regime;⁸² lack rehabilitation, are in the vicinity of mines and UXO and lack basic infrastructure, which prevents return. UNHCR Returnee Monitoring in 2006 showed that most returnees live in rented accommodation (61.4%), their own house (22.6%) or with relatives (10.2%). Others live in public buildings,⁸³ with host families, on land they do not own, in camps or former military camps.⁸⁴ In many cases, housing conditions were bad with more than 40% of surveyed households living in damaged or destroyed housing.⁸⁵ The majority also reported living in overcrowded conditions.⁸⁶ Housing was identified as a major concern for the majority of returnees monitored in the governorate.⁸⁷

The Dahuk Governorate Village Reconstruction Department has been involved in a number of projects to assist with the housing needs of returnees and refugees.⁸⁸ In an effort to reduce the number of people living in public buildings, the local authorities have introduced financial incentives for families to vacate public buildings; however, the US \$2,000 provided is hardly sufficient to rent an apartment and, as a result, few families have made use of the programme.

B. Employment and Economy

Since March 2003, the economic situation in the three Northern Governorates has improved due to the relatively stable security situation and a foreigner-friendly investment law that was approved by the Kurdistan Assembly in July 2006 and aims at attracting foreign capital to the

⁸¹ Cluster F, IDP Working Group, 16 August 2007.

⁸² In the 1980s, the former regime destroyed over 4,000 villages in the Kurdistan Region, including 809 out of 1,123 villages in Dahuk Governorate. Since 1991, many destroyed villages were rebuilt by the KRG with the support of UN agencies and NGOs. According to the KRG, 339 villages in the Governorate of Dahuk still need to be rehabilitated; see KRG, Ministry of Reconstruction and Development, accessed 14 August 2007, <http://old.krg.org/about/ministries/reconstruction/index.asp>.

⁸³ The Directorate of IDPs and Refugees in Dahuk Governorate stated that as of July 2007, there were 5,018 pre-2003 IDP families (Kurds displaced within the Kurdistan Region) living in public buildings. Information received from the Directorate of IDPs and Refugees in Dahuk, July 2007.

⁸⁴ 332 returnee households surveyed; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

⁸⁵ Of 163 households surveyed, 58.9% lived in housing with no or minor damages, 25.9% in housing with moderate damages, 12.3% in housing with severe damages and 3.1% in destroyed housing; *ibidem*.

⁸⁶ 27.2% of 169 returnee households in 2006 reported living in “somewhat overcrowded” housing and 30.8% in “extremely crowded” housing. Monitoring revealed that an average of 8 persons live on an average of 111m²; *ibidem*.

⁸⁷ 78.7% of 328 returnee households listed “shelter” as their top priority; *ibidem*.

⁸⁸ Dahuk Governorate Village Reconstruction Department, December 2006.

region.⁸⁹ In particular bilateral trade with neighbouring Turkey has boomed in recent years. Annual bilateral trade was estimated at around US \$5 billion by April 2007 and Turkish contractors reportedly secured contracts worth US \$2 billion in northern Iraq. A total of 1,200 Turkish companies were estimated to be operating, employing around 14,000 Turkish employees. However, due to increasing tensions with Turkey over the PKKs' presence in Iraq, Turkish companies are reportedly winding down their business operations in the Region.⁹⁰

The Governorate has seen a construction boom, in particular for huge infrastructure projects; however, this has led to only limited creation of new jobs for the local population as the mostly foreign construction companies employ foreigners rather than Kurds.⁹¹ Corruption, government control and bureaucracy restrict both foreign investment as well as private business initiatives.⁹² In addition, electricity and fuel shortages further inhibit business development as construction costs become increasingly high.⁹³ The three Northern Governorates also lack a developed banking system and the economy is still largely based on cash.⁹⁴

Dahuk Governorate is a small regional centre for the region's fruit orchards and pasturage. While in the past, Dahuk had some limited production, including a fruit-canning plant and a textile mill, it is today largely dependent on imports of essential goods.⁹⁵ In recent years, Dahuk's tourist industry has been growing.

The KRG has issued its own Oil and Gas Law to regulate oil management in Kurdistan Region in early August 2007.⁹⁶ The KRG has signed contracts for oil exploration with foreign companies. The Norwegian DNO, the first foreign oil company, began drilling in the Tawke field near the town of Zakho in early 2006.⁹⁷ In September 2007, Hunt Oil Company of Dallas received permission to drill for oil in Dahuk Governorate.⁹⁸ Legal concerns deter new oil firms from exploring Kurdistan's oil fields and Iraq's Oil Minister, Hussain Al-

⁸⁹ KRG, *Kurds approve foreigner-friendly investment law*, 6 July 2006, <http://www.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?rnr=24&lngnr=12&anr=12117&smap=>. Reportedly, more than 5,800 companies have been registered over the past few years in the Kurdistan Region, of which 1,900 are foreign; see IPS, Mohammed Salih, *Is Iraqi Kurdistan a Good Investment?*, 22 June 2007, <http://www.antiwar.com/ips/salih.php?articleid=11177>.

⁹⁰ The Jamestown Foundation, Gareth Jenkins, *Political Tensions Hit Turkish Economic Ties With Northern Iraq*, 14 September 2007, http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372423.

⁹¹ Kurdish Globe, Ali S. Murad, *Kurdistan unemployment*, 6 September 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/21455; Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 3, see above footnote 77; IPS, Mohammed Salih, *Is Iraqi Kurdistan a Good Investment?*, 22 June 2007, <http://www.antiwar.com/ips/salih.php?articleid=11177>.

⁹² See above footnote 24.

⁹³ ENS/IWPR, Fazil Najeeb, *Zooming Fuel Costs Trouble Iraqi Kurdistan*, 30 January 2007, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/jan2007/2007-01-30-02.asp>

⁹⁴ The Economist, *Iraq's economy*, 4 April 2007, http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8960605.

⁹⁵ Encyclopaedia of the Orient, *Dahuk*, visited 31 August 2007, <http://i-cias.com/e.o/dahuk.htm>.

⁹⁶ KRG, *KRG publishes approved Kurdistan Region Oil and Gas Law in Arabic and English, updated model contract*, 6 September 2007, <http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?smap=02010100&lngnr=12&anr=20040&rnr=223>.

⁹⁷ ENS, *Oil and Corruption in Iraq Part III - Kurdistan's Gushing Crude Spawns Conflict*, 12 September 2007, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/sep2007/2007-09-12-01.asp>.

⁹⁸ KRG, *KRG signs oil and gas contract with US-based Hunt Oil*, 8 September 2007, <http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?rnr=223&lngnr=12&anr=20067&smap=02010100>.

Shahristani, called the agreement between Hunt and the KRG “illegal” as a controversial national oil law is yet to be passed by the Council of Representatives.⁹⁹

Inflation remains high,¹⁰⁰ so does unemployment,¹⁰¹ and deficiencies in the public sector are rampant.¹⁰² Access to employment, in particular in the public sector, often requires tribal links or affiliation with the KDP.¹⁰³ The Unification Agreement has frozen public sector recruitment and resulted in some cuts, whilst increased demand from new IDPs for housing, services and jobs has increased living costs across the Governorate. In the public sector, employees are often inactive or under-employed due to a lack of training and human resources management.¹⁰⁴ Many jobs created by the authorities tend to be in the lower paid manual sector which, rather than lowering unemployment, has had the effect of attracting an influx of labourers from other parts of Iraq, who are willing to work for lower salaries.¹⁰⁵ Daily wages have fallen considerably in the lower paid employment sector.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, the Governorate is benefiting from an influx of professionals such as professors and doctors.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁹ ENS, *Oil and Corruption in Iraq Part III - Kurdistan's Gushing Crude Spawns Conflict*, 12 September 2007, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/sep2007/2007-09-12-01.asp>; AP, *Iraqi oil minister says Hunt Oil deal with Kurd regional government illegal*, 10 September 2007, <http://www.ihf.com/articles/ap/2007/09/10/business/EU-FIN-Austria-Iraq-Hunt-Oil.php>; Dow Jones Newswires, Spencer Swartz, *Iraq Legal Hurdles Delay Norwegian DNO's Oil Project*, 30 April 2007, http://www.rigzone.com/news/article.asp?a_id=44510.

¹⁰⁰ According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Iraq's inflation had jumped 65% by the end of 2006, mainly due to shortages of fuel and other key commodities. While the Iraqi Government brought down record inflation levels in the first half of 2007, prices continue to be 35 – 40% higher than they were a year ago; IWPR, Zanko Ahmed, *Kurds bemoan soaring costs of living*, Iraqi Crisis Report No. 227, 13 July 2007, http://iwpr.net/index.php?apc_state=hen&s=o&o=I=EN&p=icr&s=f&o=337118; see also Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 4, see above footnote 77.

¹⁰¹ There are no official unemployment statistics. For unemployment estimates in the Kurdistan Region, see *ibidem*, page 5.

¹⁰² The New York Times, Kirk Semple, *Pointing to Stability, Kurds in Iraq Lure Investors*, 27 June 2007, <http://travel.nytimes.com/2007/06/27/world/middleeast/27kurds.html>; CFR, Lionel Beehner, *Economic Doldrums in Iraq*, 20 June 2007, http://www.cfr.org/publication/13629/economic_doldrums_in_iraq.html#7; ENS/IWPR, Fazil Najeeb, *Zooming Fuel Costs Trouble Iraqi Kurdistan*, 30 January 2007, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/jan2007/2007-01-30-02.asp>; IRIN, *IRAQ: Kurdistan, low in violence but lacking services*, 18 January 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=64504>.

¹⁰³ US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2006, Iraq*, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78853.htm>.

¹⁰⁴ The KRG estimates that up to a quarter of the four million people in the Kurdistan Region work for the Government, but salaries are as low as US \$75 per month; IWPR, Zanko Ahmed, *Kurds Bemoan Soaring Cost of Living*, Iraqi Crisis Report No. 227, 13 July 2007, http://www.iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=337118&apc_state=henh; see also Kurdish Globe, Ali S. Murad, *Kurdistan unemployment*, 6 September 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/21455; Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 5, see above footnote 77.

¹⁰⁵ VoA, Chris Padden, *Peaceful Kurdish Region Experiencing Growing Pain*, 22 August 2007, <http://voanews.com/english/2007-08-22-voa22.cfm>; see also Asharq Alawsat, Maad Fayyad, *A tale of two Iraqi cities*, 17 June 2006, <http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?smap=&lngnr=12&rnr=77&anr=11773>; IWPR, *Arab Labourers Flock to Kurdistan*, Iraqi Crisis Report No. 172, 13 April 2006, http://iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=261036&apc_state=heniicr2006.

¹⁰⁶ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 6, see above footnote 77. The report also provides an overview of average wages in different sectors.

¹⁰⁷ Hawlati, *Arab Doctors Head for Kurdistan*, published and translated by Iraqi Press Monitor, No. 563, 8 November 2006, http://iwpr.net/?apc_state=henmicr&o=c-1-1162944000-2-1163030400-3-icr&ol=month-11,year-2006&month=11&year=2006.

Attempts to re-invigorate rural livelihoods and rehabilitate the rural sector to its pre-1980 levels of productivity have yet to be accomplished despite international investment in agricultural products.¹⁰⁸

Women contribute to the economic life in Dahuk Governorate but the urban areas are more receptive to educated working women. They mostly work in the public sector, but for considerably lower wages than their male counterparts. This contrasts with rural areas where women are restricted from holding high positions by limited educational opportunities and traditional values. However, women still play a prominent role in the agricultural sector in some areas of the Governorate.¹⁰⁹

IDPs: Among the IDPs monitored in 2007, only 25% received their income through regular full-time employment. Most were either unemployed (30%) or held some casual employment (35%). They registered employment as their third priority after public services and housing.¹¹⁰

Returnees: Returnees have in principle access to employment on par with the local population. However, UNHCR Returnee Monitoring in 2006 indicated that more than half of the returnees surveyed did not have access to regular employment or a regular income in Dahuk Governorate.¹¹¹ The major reason is that many returnees are originally farmers and are not able to return to their places of origin due to the destruction of villages and houses and the threat of military operations near the Turkish borders.¹¹² Employment was listed as the third priority by returnees surveyed in the governorate.¹¹³ More than three-quarters of surveyed women returnees reported that they had access to the labour market.¹¹⁴

C. Infrastructure and Public Services

1. Food

Access to public food rations is a main concern given the high dependency of many Iraqis on the PDS. All Iraqi citizens and refugees within Iraq are entitled to receive food rations in their place of residence.

¹⁰⁸ Agriculture and livestock were important sectors of the economy in Dahuk Governorate before the destruction of many rural villages during the former regime's *Anfal* campaign in the 1980. Other reasons for the weakening of the agricultural sector are the general political and security situation of Iraq, including the threat of a Turkish invasion, the presence of the PKK, the civil war between the PUK and KDP in the mid 1990s as well as the high prices of fuel and transportation. Agricultural products include: wheat, barley, tobacco, vegetables and fruits (e.g. pomegranates, apples, apricots, pears, grapes and figs). According to the KRG's Minister of Planning, the percentage of Kurds in agriculture has dropped from some 60% to around 10% in the past generation; The Economist, *Does independence beckon?*, 6 September 2007, http://www.economist.com/world/africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9769132.

¹⁰⁹ Swiss Refugee Council, 2007 KRG socio-economic situation, p. 7, see above footnote 77.

¹¹⁰ UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*, see above footnote 78.

¹¹¹ Of 165 returnee households surveyed in 2006, 46.7% had full-time employment. The others were living on casual/irregular employment, savings and remittances or were simply unemployed; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹¹² Destruction of villages, lack of security and destruction of the environment and houses are the main reasons for returnees not being able to return to their place of origin; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹¹³ 52.7% of 328 returnee households; *ibidem*.

¹¹⁴ 77% of 334 returnee households; *ibidem*.

IDPs: In order to register with the PDS in Dahuk Governorate, IDPs must submit a number of documents to the Ministry of Trade (MoT). The transfer of ration cards is a time consuming process requiring the completion of paperwork at both the original place of registration and the new location. Registration procedures for the PDS for IDPs moving between Governorates require a letter of request for transfer of their PDS registration from their place of origin to the place of displacement together with a letter from their new *Mukhtar* confirming the new place of residence.¹¹⁵

Since many IDPs left their homes at short notice, few were able to initiate procedures at their place of origin. IDPs may be prevented from registering with the PDS because they do not possess the necessary documentation or are unable to transfer their ration cards from the place of origin due to political reasons. Unlike the Governorates of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil, the authorities in Dahuk have not initiated a temporary PDS transfer option for IDPs.

Arab IDPs from Central and Southern Iraq are also not allowed to transfer their PDS registration to Dahuk Governorate due to geopolitical concerns about the ethnic make up of Iraqi Kurdistan. More specifically UNHCR has received reports indicating that the local authorities have refused to assist Kurdish IDPs fleeing the disputed areas. However, Christian families have reported faced few problems transferring their ration cards to Dahuk. This is partly because many of the Christians fleeing to Dahuk have roots in Christian communities in Zakho and historically Christians do not have any geopolitical significance. There are efforts underway to allow IDPs from Ninewa Governorate to collect their food rations in areas of Ninewa which are de facto under control of the KRG; however, at the time of writing, no such mechanism was in place and Arab IDPs, and Kurdish IDPs from disputed areas, continue to be denied access to their monthly food rations and have to fully rely on food available in the local markets.

67% of the IDP families surveyed in the Governorate of Dahuk reported not being able to collect their rations.¹¹⁶

Returnees: UNHCR Returnee Monitoring in 2006 revealed that 97% of returnee households monitored said that they receive PDS rations.¹¹⁷ Almost all returnees rely solely on the PDS to cover their food needs.¹¹⁸

2. Water

There are three main water sources in Dahuk Governorate, Dahuk Dam, Chambarakat Project and underground water. Rural mountain villages get their water from natural springs, shallow wells and rivers. The villages in lower lying areas depend on deep wells drilled into the water table. Many of the municipal water networks in Dahuk are dilapidated and in need of maintenance. Irregular electricity supplies affect pumping and filtration stations and therefore further exacerbate the problem of irregular water supplies. Water supply is more regular in winter, while in summer households receive water in

¹¹⁵ See Section II. B. Documentation.

¹¹⁶ UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*, see above footnote 78.

¹¹⁷ Of 337 returnee households; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹¹⁸ 96.5% of 170 returnee households; *ibidem*.

shifts. Provision of water also varies among areas and neighbourhoods, depending in particular on the conditions of the water networks.

There are concerns about the imminent collapse of Mosul Dam, located 30 km north-west of Mosul City after an ad hoc committee recently recommended emptying the dam of all its water and preparing a contingency plan in case the dam breaks. The dam, built between 1980 and 1984 by a joint German-Italian corporation, has long been known to be in a dangerous condition because of unstable bedrock. The US Army Corps of Engineers said that there are “*fundamental and irreversible flaws existing in the dam's foundation*” and the safety of the dam against a potential catastrophic collapse “*cannot be guaranteed*.” While a post-collapse flood would harm the areas downstream Tigris River, in particular Mosul, Tikrit, Samarra and the peripheries of Baghdad, the Governorate of Dahuk would also be affected as it benefits from the dam for irrigation and power generation.¹¹⁹

IDPs and returnees: IDPs and returnees face the same problems accessing potable water in Dahuk Governorate as the local population. IDP Monitoring indicated that IDPs rely mostly on municipal water networks (58%), public wells (43%) and tankered water (30%).¹²⁰

UNHCR Returnee Monitoring in 2006 found that almost all returnees had access to water.¹²¹ Those that did not have access to drinking water reported that water was not sufficiently available, they were refused access or the water source was more than 500m away from their places of residence. Returnees rely mostly on municipal water networks (63.5%), public wells (59.4%), tankered water (58.8%) as their main water source. Some relied on open or broken pipes (3.5%), unprotected wells (2.9%), rivers or lakes (2.9%), springs (1.2%) or the collection of rain water (0.6%).¹²²

3. Electricity

Dahuk Governorate has a relatively stable electricity supply averaging 12 hours per day. Most electricity is supplied from Turkey and, occasionally, the Governorate also uses electricity from the national grid. A local power station provides electricity in emergency cases for essential infrastructure such as hospitals and main water projects. The supply is generally reliable with occasional shortfalls during peak usage times.¹²³ Many families rely on the local supply, while others use private or community generators to supplement the available electricity supply. However, recently, electricity supply in Dahuk Governorate started to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance and spare parts for the only local power station, the smuggling of copper cables to Iran and Turkey, the lack of

¹¹⁹ VOI, *Possible dam collapse overshadows Mosul residents*, 5 September 2007, http://www.iraquupdates.com/p_articles.php?refid=DH-S-05-09-2007&article=21429; The Independent, Patrick Cockburn, *Disaster Looms as Saddam-Era Tigris River Dam Verges on Collapse*, 8 August 2007, http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article2843961.ece.

¹²⁰ Of 398 IDP households; UNHCR, *2007 IDP Monitoring*, see above footnote 78.

¹²¹ 95% of 336 returnee households; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹²² 170 returnee households surveyed; *ibidem* (multiple answers were possible).

¹²³ Supplies are down in summer and winter as the usage of geysers, heating and cooling apparatuses increases the demand.

experts and skyrocketing of fuel prices.¹²⁴ By August 2007, 1,000-1,500 kW/h cost 1 ID. The use of a sector generator cost 10,000 ID per Ampère per month.

IDPs and returnees: IDPs and returnees face the same issues as local residents in accessing electricity. Also IDPs surveyed in 2007 indicated that they had mostly more than four hours of electricity per day.¹²⁵ Returnee Monitoring in 2006 showed that the majority of surveyed households had four hours or more electricity per day.¹²⁶

4. Fuel

The Directorate of the Distribution of Petroleum Derivatives in Dahuk Governorate receives commodities from the Kirkuk City and Baiji (Salah Al-Din Governorate) refineries. The import of fuel from Turkey ceased in April 2007 for political reasons.¹²⁷ However, the ongoing insecurity, sabotage acts against the refineries, corruption and disruption to distribution mean that the Governorate of Dahuk faces shortages of all petroleum derivatives including gasoline, gas oil, kerosene and liquid gas.

As part of the PDS, each family is entitled to one gas cylinder per 20 days, one 200 litre barrel of kerosene every three months and 20 litres of gasoline every 7 to 10 days. However, shortages have left the local authorities unable to provide the full allocated fuel quotas.¹²⁸ Gasoline is rationed across the Governorate of Dahuk and falls short of consumption needs.

Shortages have led many families to rely on the black market to meet their fuel needs and accordingly black market prices have risen sharply. In Dahuk Governorate, one cylinder of gas¹²⁹ per family is available from the Government for 5,000 ID; on the black market the same quantity reached around 30,000 ID by the end of July 2007. The black market price for kerosene reached 175,000 ID for 200 litres and gasoline reached 1,200 ID per litre, more than three times the official price of 360 ID.

Dissatisfaction with fuel shortages and long queues at gas stations across the Governorate has led to public protest across the Governorate.¹³⁰

IDPs and returnees: IDPs and returnees face the same problems as local residents in accessing fuel in the Governorate. However, given their limited incomes and resources, many vulnerable families are unable to afford private or black market supplies.

¹²⁴ Information received from UNHCR, August 2007.

¹²⁵ 99.5% of households surveyed in 2007.

¹²⁶ 2.4% of 170 returnee households had less than 4 hours electricity per day; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹²⁷ Main issues of controversy are the alleged PKK's presence in Iraq and the payback of debts; information received by UNHCR, September 2007.

¹²⁸ Provision of gas is not regular and at times is delayed. Kerosene shortages have reduced allocation to one annual quota of 200 litres instead of four.

¹²⁹ Approximately 26 litres.

¹³⁰ See also Section I. C. *Security and Public Order*.

5. Health

The KRG Ministry of Health (MoH) is responsible for health policy and strategy in the Kurdistan Region. In Dahuk Governorate, the Directorate of Health is responsible for healthcare planning and management at the governorate level.

The quality and effectiveness of basic health services provided in Dahuk Governorate are generally good in urban areas, but of concern in rural areas. There is a lack of specialists and medical training.¹³¹ Despite the efforts of the Directorate of Health in collaboration with the Medical College to increase the number of qualified health staff, there are shortages of specialist surgeons, intensive care, specialists, toxicology and forensic medicine, health administration and epidemiology and college base nurses. Accordingly, those with financial resources prefer to travel abroad for major surgery or modern treatment. In recent years, the Governorate benefited from the influx of medical specialists fleeing the insecurity in Southern and Central Iraq.¹³²

Health facilities: There are seven public hospitals,¹³³ covering all district towns and some of the larger sub-districts. In addition, there are primary health centres (PHCs),¹³⁴ which are distributed according to the population in each village and sub-district. Public health facilities hold medical consultations from 8.00 to 15.00 hrs. Outside of these hours, health care is provided by on-duty doctors in the emergency wards of the main hospitals and consultant clinics. The latter were opened recently in order to complement the public health facilities that are open only until the early afternoon. Consultant clinics are usually open from 15.00 to 19.00 hrs, some even until midnight.¹³⁵

There are two private hospitals located in Dahuk City,¹³⁶ which provide general medical services and a number of private clinics and specialist centres (See *Table 1*).¹³⁷ Health facilities are not available in much of rural areas and insufficient medical coverage in those areas is one of the main reasons for overcrowding in the city's facilities.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 10, see above footnote 77; IRIN, *IRAQ: Kurdistan government appeals for medical supplies*, 1 July 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=73018>.

¹³² Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 13, see above footnote 77.

¹³³ Azadi General Hospital, Dahuk City (488 beds), Heevi Paediatrics Hospital, Dahuk City (138 beds), Amedi Hospital (66 beds), Zakho Hospital (148 beds), Akre Hospital (75 beds) and Amedi Rozana Hospital (13 beds).

¹³⁴ There are 31 in Dahuk District, 16 in Zakho District, 21 in Amedi District, 17 in Sumel District, 27 in Akre District and 15 in Shekhan District

¹³⁵ In Dahuk Governorate, the following consultant clinics exist: Khabat PHC (16:00 to 24:00), Bahdinan PHC (16:00 to 24:00), Dahuk centre (15:00 to 19:00), Mateen centre (15:00 to 19:00), Sarlehdaan centre (15:00 to 19:00).

¹³⁶ These include Dahuk Hospital (17 beds) and Shilan Hospital (16 beds). In addition, there is one day clinic called Kurdistan (10 beds) in Dahuk City and another one private day clinic in Zakho called Jian (40 beds), providing medical and surgical health care services for Dahuk Governorate. The total number of beds provided by private hospitals is 83.

¹³⁷ Including a Central Laboratory, a Rehabilitation Centre, an Early Detection of Childhood Disability Centre, a Dental Poly-Clinic, the Dahuk Mental Health Centre, a Tuberculosis Centre, the Thalassaemia Disease Centre, the Blood Bank, the Zanin School Health Centre, a Renal Dialysis Unit and a Lithotripsy Centre.

¹³⁸ According to the Iraq Living Conditions Survey (ILCS) of 2005, 35% percent of rural households in the Governorate of Dahuk lack access to health centres, more than 40% of rural households cannot reach pharmacies within 30 minutes and almost 50% do not have access to a public hospital in less than 30 minutes; see MoPDC/UNDP, *Iraq Living Conditions Survey, Analytical Report*, April 2005, pp. 38-39, <http://www.iq.undp.org/ILCS/PDF/Analytical%20Report%20-%20English.pdf>; see also Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 13, see above footnote 77.

Table 1: Health facilities in the Governorate of Dahuk¹³⁹

Type of health facility	No.
Public hospitals	7
PHCs (including consultant clinics)	127
Specialist centres	10
Private hospitals	2
Private clinics	145
Private dentists	30

Drugs and equipment: In June 2007, the KRG Minister of Health issued an appeal saying that the security situation in other parts of Iraq, and in particular in Baghdad, was the cause for the lack of needed materials, equipment and pharmaceuticals. He added that the Kurdistan Region's 48 hospitals and 672 PHCs lack the basic medicines and medical supplies needed to treat wounds or provide basic care.¹⁴⁰ Dahuk Governorate similarly suffers from a shortage of both medical drugs and equipment. Drugs are supplied to public hospitals and clinics by the Central Drug Distribution Network in Baghdad. Fair distribution across the governorates of Iraq has been hindered by poor management and the security situation, leaving Dahuk Governorate with an inadequate supply. In addition, Central Government allocations have not taken into consideration the IDP influx since 2006, which has increased the shortfalls. Some medicines are purchased locally by the MoH, but this system also suffers from delays and a shortfall in items. With the consent of the MoH, many essential items are procured directly by the Directorate of Health Dahuk from private medical stores and the local market. There are also donations from NGOs. Shortages of all but the most basic of drugs are common in the public system. Reportedly, several diseases such as brain, lung or pancreas cancer and diseases that require laser surgery cannot be treated in the three Northern Governorates;¹⁴¹ however, according to recent information, laser eye surgery is available in Dahuk City. Health officials reported that they lack anti-retroviral drugs and the necessary equipment for testing for HIV.¹⁴² UNHCR in September 2007 received the information that HIV testing can be done in Dahuk Governorate; however, no treatment with anti-retroviral drugs is available.

Costs: Emergency medical care and health services in public health facilities are free except for a nominal charge of 500 ID. There is no charge for medication; however, due to shortages and a lack of availability of some medicines for chronic diseases such as blood hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and thyroid tablets, many patients have to rely on private pharmacies or the black market where prices are high. In consultant clinics the examination fee is 2,000 ID and patients must pay for all medication. Impoverished families, including returnees and IDPs, face problems affording even nominal charges for health consultations and prescriptions. Examinations and medical treatment in privately owned hospitals and health centres are expensive. The MoH has fixed prices for private

¹³⁹ Information received from Directorate of Health, Dahuk. Information valid as of July 2007.

¹⁴⁰ IRIN, *IRAQ: Kurdistan government appeals for medical supplies*, 1 July 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=73018>.

¹⁴¹ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 15, see above footnote 77.

¹⁴² IRIN, *Iraq: Shortage of anti-retroviral drugs in Kurdistan*, 12 December 2006, <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=62435>.

consultations;¹⁴³ however, prices are often beyond the means of poor patients.¹⁴⁴

Mental health: Psychiatric services are limited and reportedly insufficient in view of increasing numbers of persons in need of mental treatment.¹⁴⁵ There is a public mental and psychological centre for children in Gre Basi neighbourhood and a psychiatric department is under construction in Azadi Hospital in Dahuk City. In addition, two international and one local NGO provide mental health care for children. There are only very few psychologists and no possibility of treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder in the Governorate.¹⁴⁶

IDPs and returnees: IDPs and returnees in principle have access to health facilities on par with the general population. 2007 IDP Monitoring in the Governorate revealed that the majority of IDPs (70%) had access to healthcare services, but less reported access to required medication (30%). Also, visits from health workers in their current location and participation in vaccination campaigns were low.¹⁴⁷ Returnee Monitoring in 2006 revealed that most returnees had access to health facilities and their mostly needed drugs.¹⁴⁸ But visits from health workers in their current location and participation in vaccination campaigns were low.¹⁴⁹

6. Education

According to Unification Agreement, the responsibility of the education system is shared between the PUK, which heads the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the KDP, which is overseeing Higher Education.¹⁵⁰

School infrastructure in Dahuk Governorate remains poor and many schools are in urgent need of renovation and repair.¹⁵¹ The Governorate of Dahuk has 852 primary schools, 107 intermediate and 135 secondary schools (see *Table 2*).¹⁵² There is also one

¹⁴³ The official costs are 15,000 ID for members of the Medical Board, 10,000 ID for doctors holding a master degree and 5,000 ID for general physicians.

¹⁴⁴ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, pp. 13-14, see above footnote 77.

¹⁴⁵ Experts believe that in urban areas mental illness is on the rise, blaming increasing violence among the youth and the deterioration in living conditions; see Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 16, see above footnote 77.

¹⁴⁶ The American NGO Heartland Alliance runs an Institute for child psychiatry and the Swedish humanitarian organization Diakonia offers mental treatment for traumatized children in Dahuk. In 2002, Diakonia opened in Erbil and Dahuk *Psychosocial Education, Treatment and Consulting Centres* (PSTEC), which provide treatments to children with behavioral abnormalities and psychological illnesses in addition to social education for their families. It is also involved in the running of training courses on psycho-social education for different sectors of the population; see Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 16, see above footnote 77.

¹⁴⁷ UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*, see above footnote 78.

¹⁴⁸ 96% of 336 households reported having access to health facilities in their village. 89% of 335 households surveyed had access to the most needed drugs; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹⁴⁹ 77.7% of 166 households surveyed were not visited by a health worker in their current location and only 19.9% were included in vaccination campaigns; *ibidem*.

¹⁵⁰ KRG, *2006 Unification Agreement*, see above footnote 16.

¹⁵¹ The School Survey 2003-2004 in Iraq revealed that in the Governorate of Dahuk there are no primary and secondary schools that escaped damage; Ministry of Education/UNICEF, *School Survey 2003-2004 in Iraq*, October 2004, p. 57, <http://www.unicef.org/files/school-survey-vol1-eng.pdf>.

¹⁵² For an overview of the schooling system, see Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 19, see above footnote 77.

University, the University of Dahuk, which was founded in 1992,¹⁵³ and a number of colleges located in the City of Dahuk. Plans are underway to establish a new university in Zakho for the academic year 2008/2009,¹⁵⁴ while commercial and teacher colleges are set to be opened this academic year. Education at all levels, including University, is free of charge in Dahuk Governorate. By 31 July 2007, a total of 305,130 students were registered at schools in Dahuk Governorate (see *Table 2*). Access to higher education and the granting of academic titles are controlled by the KDP and may therefore depend on party affiliation rather than academic qualifications. This has also affected the academic standards at the institutions.¹⁵⁵

Table 2: Educational facilities in the Governorate of Dahuk¹⁵⁶

School Type	No. of Schools	No. of Students
Kindergarten	17	4,930
Primary	852	193,172
Intermediate	107	1,300
Secondary	135	102,533
Vocational Secondary Education ¹⁵⁷	6	3,195

The large influx of IDPs into the Governorate since 2006 has placed additional pressure on already limited educational facilities and there is a shortage of both primary and secondary schools in all districts.¹⁵⁸ Approximately 20% of all new IDPs in the Governorate of Dahuk are children.¹⁵⁹ As a result of the shortage of school buildings and teaching staff, the majority of schools in Dahuk Governorate are operating on a shift system¹⁶⁰ in order to meet the increased demand.

There are currently 18 schools teaching in Arabic language.¹⁶¹

IDPs and returnees: IDPs and returnees face the same problems as the local population and, in principle, have access to education on par with the general population. However,

¹⁵³ The University of Dahuk includes 11 colleges with more than 7,400 undergraduate students and 346 Postgraduate students in different specializations; see <http://www.dohukuni.net/index.php?p=front/home>. The University maintains agreements with several universities in the US, Europe, Arab countries and South-east Asia. It has recently renewed its agreements with US's Baylor University and the German Leibniz University of Hanover, which involve assistance and academic coordination as well as the exchange of students; see VOI, Khidr Domli, *Dahuk university renews agreements with U.S. and German universities*, 1 May 2007, http://www.iraqupdates.com/p_articles.php/article/16938.

¹⁵⁴ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 19, see above footnote 77.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem; see also IWPR, *Students Abuse University Admissions Scheme*, Iraqi Crisis Report No. 205, 9 December 2006, http://www.iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=326017&apc_state=henniicr2006.

¹⁵⁶ Information received from the Directorate of Education, Dahuk, July 2007.

¹⁵⁷ These are industrial, commercial, arts and agricultural schools.

¹⁵⁸ Currently, more than 8,800 IDP children are enrolled in schools in Dahuk Governorate, including 5,858 students at primary level (3,150 male and 2,708 female students), 2,729 at secondary level (1,116 males and 1,613 females) and 230 in vocational schools (136 males and 94 females); information from UNICEF, September 2007.

¹⁵⁹ IRCS, *Figures of Internally Displaced Persons*, Update 26, 16 September 2007.

¹⁶⁰ Shifts are split between morning and afternoon sessions; in some districts, evening classes constitute a third shift.

¹⁶¹ Two primary schools and four intermediate schools in Dahuk City, seven primary schools and three intermediate schools in Zakho and one primary school in Amedi and Sumel, respectively; information received from the General Directorate of Education in Dahuk, 17 September 2007. According to UNICEF, nearly 6,000 IDP children are attending Arabic schools in Dahuk Governorate.

they face a number of additional problems in accessing education, including language barriers and lack of required documentation to register at schools or for examinations. Three-quarters of surveyed returnee children have access to education.¹⁶² The main reasons for not attending are the need to work, refused access and curriculum language (Kurdish). Some children were not in possession of the necessary academic certification needed to register them or to place them in the correct level. Some children were found to be illiterate.¹⁶³ Returnee children from Europe and other Western countries may face problems reintegrating when used to a Western schooling system. This is particularly true for girls that may not easily integrate into a traditional and conservative society.¹⁶⁴ Returnee children therefore often prefer to enrol in private schools, for example, the International School in Dahuk City, which follow a more “Western”-oriented curriculum.¹⁶⁵

7. Social Welfare

The Special Social Care Directorate in Dahuk Governorate, which belongs to MoLSA, has three departments, dealing with orphans, kindergartens and old aged persons. Social care facilities operated by the Directorate of Special Social Care include two orphanages, one for boys and one for girls.

Pension and welfare benefits remain at a very low level in Dahuk Governorate. The Directorate of Social Development offers 30,000 ID as a regular monthly salary to households fitting MoLSA’s criteria and whose applications are accepted. Criteria should be checked with the Directorate of Social Development in Dahuk City. However, due to a lack of funding, not all persons in need receive social welfare and access may at times depend on political/personal links rather than actual needs.

The Directorate of Handicapped Care runs two institutes, the Hewa Institute for Deaf and Mute¹⁶⁶ and the Hanna Institute for training and qualifying the handicapped.¹⁶⁷

Returnees: Returnee Monitoring in 2006 showed that almost 30% of returnee families surveyed have one or several special needs, including chronic diseases, serious medical conditions and disabilities.¹⁶⁸

IV. REPATRIATION - RELOCATION MOVEMENTS

A. Voluntary Repatriation and Return¹⁶⁹

There are the following means of voluntary repatriation to Dahuk Governorate for returnees

¹⁶² 76.1% of 318 returnee households; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹⁶³ 1.9% of 205 returnee households surveyed with children 5-17; *ibidem*.

¹⁶⁴ Swiss Refugee Council, *2007 KRG socio-economic situation*, p. 21, see above footnote 77.

¹⁶⁵ Annual school fees at the International School are US \$500.

¹⁶⁶ This is a learning institute with 39 pupils of ages 6-12.

¹⁶⁷ A learning institute for students of ages 15-35.

¹⁶⁸ Of 337 households; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.

¹⁶⁹ For an overview of UNHCR’s position regarding returns to the three Northern Governorates, see UNHCR, *2006 Return Advisory*, see above footnote 17.

from abroad:

1. **Spontaneous Repatriation (without UNHCR facilitation):** Refugees returning spontaneously to Iraq without assistance should apply to the Iraqi Embassy in their country of departure to ensure that they have the documentation needed to cross the border. Documentation should be presented to the Kurdish Border Authorities to be stamped on entry to Iraq. A number of European countries provide limited return and reintegration assistance for Iraqis wishing to return to Iraq. Persons interested should check with the concerned authorities of their host country.
2. **Voluntary Repatriation Procedures (with UNHCR facilitation):** Refugees interested in returning to Iraq voluntarily should register their interest with UNHCR offices in their host country. Assisted voluntary return convoys, after being cleared by the KRG Ministry of Interior, are operated from Iran to Erbil through the Haji Omaran border crossing in Erbil Governorate.

B. Internal Relocation¹⁷⁰

Admission: Persons originating from the Kurdistan Region can enter the Governorate of Dahuk without any restrictions. However, single men not originating from the Kurdistan Region need a sponsor for security reasons.¹⁷¹ The sponsor has to present him/herself at the entry checkpoint and provide his or her Civil ID Card, phone number and address. The IDP has to fill out a card at the entry checkpoint and will be allowed to enter the Region. Single males without a sponsor will generally be denied entry to the Governorate.¹⁷²

Stay: IDPs not originating from the Kurdistan Region have to approach the Residency Section in the Security Department to obtain a permit to stay. Single men not originating from the Kurdistan Region generally need to have a sponsor in order to legalize their stay.¹⁷³ He/she will have to undergo a security screening in which the reasons for relocation are investigated. Applicants need to either establish political links to the region or provide evidence that they have fled violence or persecution; otherwise they will not be allowed to stay due to the serious lack of shelter in the Governorate. Provided the person is not considered a security risk, he/she will be granted a permit to stay for 3-6 months, which is subject to extension. Upon arrival IDPs should also contact the Quarter Representative (*Mukhtar*) to introduce themselves and should inform the security department whenever they change the place of residence.

¹⁷⁰ For a full overview of issues related to Internal Flight or Relocation Alternatives in the three Northern Governorates, please see UNHCR, *2007 Eligibility Guidelines*, pp. 159, see above footnote 45.

¹⁷¹ The sponsor could either be an individual person or a company. The responsibility of the sponsor is to inform authorities that he/she knows the IDP and, in case of security-related incidents, the sponsor will be questioned. The sponsor should have his/her food ration card issued in the Governorate of Dahuk and have a good reputation.

¹⁷² It appears that the authorities exceptionally grant entry to IDPs without a sponsor, provided that 1) the person's background can be thoroughly checked by the KDP, if the party has an office in the person's place of origin (e.g. in Kirkuk, Ninewa), and it is determined that he does not pose a security risk and 2) the person can establish that he fled violence or persecution. Otherwise, the person will not be admitted to the Governorate of Dahuk.

¹⁷³ On an exceptional basis, and provided that 1) the person's background can be thoroughly checked and it is determined that he does not pose a security risk; and, 2) the person can establish that he fled violence or persecution, a permit to stay might be given.

V. ASSISTANCE UPON ARRIVAL

Several organizations are active in the Governorate and provide humanitarian assistance to returnees, refugees and IDPs, including several international agencies and international and Iraqi NGOs. No Government Development Agencies currently have offices in Dahuk Governorate,¹⁷⁴ but some are nevertheless funding programmes in the Governorate. Financial assistance is provided by the Ministry of Finance to Christian families¹⁷⁵ and individual mayor's offices have given basic assistance in some areas.

IDPs: Monitoring revealed that less than half of the IDPs surveyed had received humanitarian assistance since their arrival in Dahuk Governorate and the main type of assistance related to shelter.¹⁷⁶

Returnees: Only 1.2% of returnees monitored in the governorate received some assistance upon return.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ This includes Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and USAID.

¹⁷⁵ Christian IDPs in the Governorate of Dahuk, who originate from the Kurdistan Region, currently receive a monthly allowance of US \$65.

¹⁷⁶ 30% of new IDP families surveyed had received humanitarian assistance since their arrival in Dahuk Governorate. The main provider was the KRG assisting with shelter (59%) followed by the church (23%), relatives with food and shelter (13%) and UNHCR (4%); UNHCR, *IDP Monitoring 2007*, see above footnote 78.

¹⁷⁷ Of 337 returnee households; UNHCR, *Returnee Monitoring 2006*, see above footnote 9.