# Iraq Protection Cluster: Anbar Returnees Profile - January 2018

Global Protection Cluster

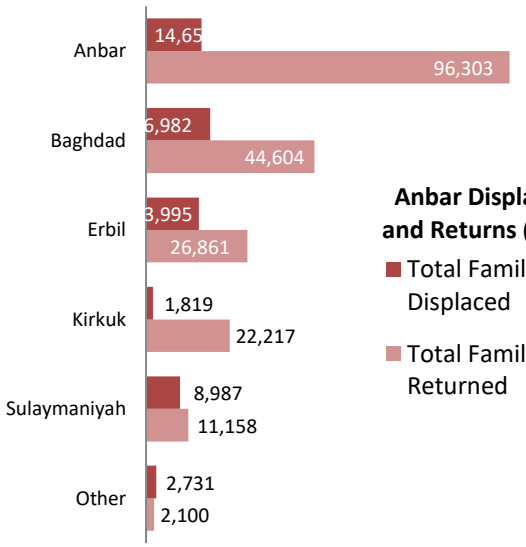
**Protection Risk Matrix by District**

High / Medium / Low

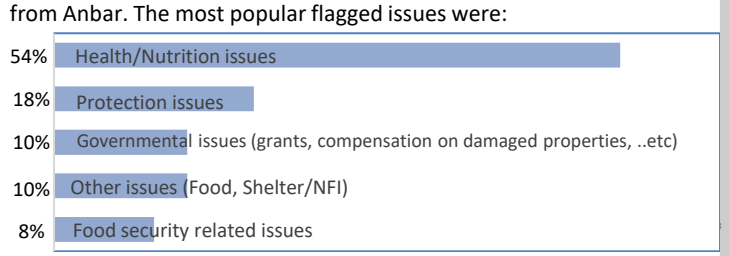
| Protection Concerns | Ramadi | Heet | Falluja/ Garma | Haditha | Rutba | Khaldiyah[1] | Amiriyat Al-Falluja[1] | Ana | Ru'ua | Qaim |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reported Violations of principles relating to return movements (including non-discrimination in the right of return, as well as voluntariness, safety and dignity of return movements) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Security incidents resulting in death/injury in return area (including assault, murder, conflict-related casualties) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)/ Improvised Explosive Device (IED) contamination in return area | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reported Rights violations by state or non-state military/security actors (including abduction, arbitrary arrest/detention, disproportionate restrictions on freedom of movement) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Concerns relating to inter-communal relations and social cohesion | | | | | | | | | | |

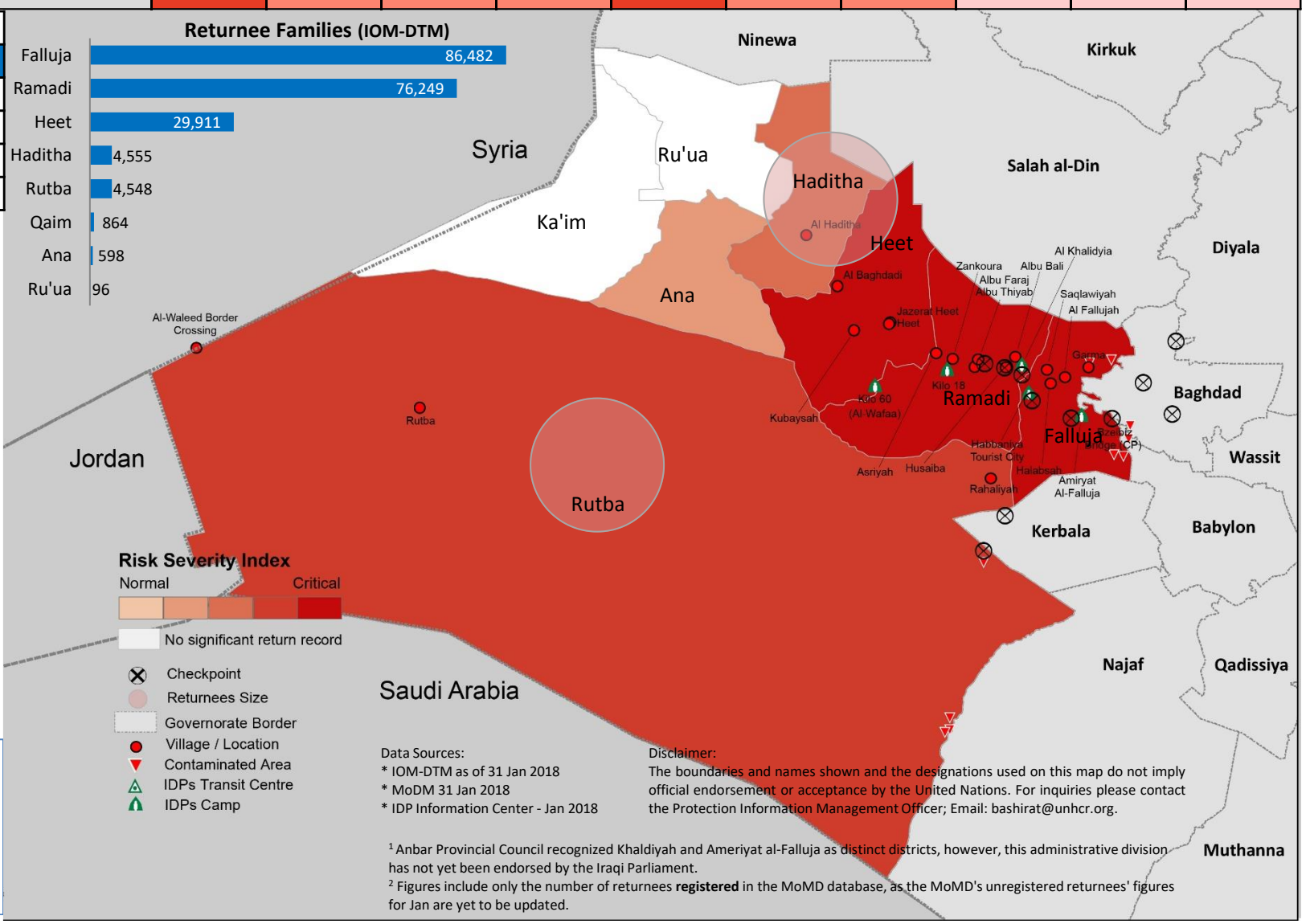
**MODM Returnees' Figures[2]**

| District | Families |
|---|---|
| Ramadi | 39,409 |
| Falluja/Garma | 49,358 |
| Heet | 7,487 |
| Haditha | 3,569 |




**IDP Information Center:** 3% of 2385 calls received from returnees were from Anbar. The most popular flagged issues were:




Data Sources:
* IOM-DTM as of 31 Jan 2018
* MoDM 31 Jan 2018
* IDP Information Center - Jan 2018

Disclaimer:
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. For inquiries please contact the Protection Information Management Officer; Email: bashirat@unhcr.org.

[1] Anbar Provincial Council recognized Khaldiyah and Ameriyat al-Falluja as distinct districts, however, this administrative division has not yet been endorsed by the Iraqi Parliament.

[2] Figures include only the number of returnees **registered** in the MoMD database, as the MoMD's unregistered returnees' figures for Jan are yet to be updated.

**ANBAR GOVERNORATE - GENERAL CONTEXT**

According to the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and protection monitoring by partners, there were quite significant returns mainly to western Anbar during January. Qa'im district followed by Falluja and then Ana had the highest number of returnees. Ru'ua district recorded its first returnees this month as well as many areas within Al-Qa'im district. Per the DTM, 997 families (5,982 individuals) returned in January bringing the total number of returnee families in Anbar to over 203,243 (1,219,458 individuals). According to local authorities and security agencies in Anbar, in the last two and half months (since mid-November 2017), an estimated 3,178 families left the camps in Anbar and returned to their areas of origin in addition to closure of seven IDPs camps in Khaldiyah and Ramadi in Anbar. While the majority returned to areas of origin, numerous families ended up in secondary displacement as they were unable to return due to safety concerns. The majority of the remaining 11,199 IDP families in Anbar camps are at risk of eviction, due to plans for camp closure and consolidation as part of the GOI authorities' efforts to promote swift return ahead of elections in May 2018.

The security and protection environment remains challenging in Anbar. In the first two weeks of January, there were forced returns of IDPs from east Anbar camps by security actors, and confiscation of identity documents (ID) which were not returned before the IDPs were returned. Two instances of forced returns were reported on 9 and 10 January in Ameriyat al-Falluja (AAF) and Kilo 18 camps in Anbar. The forced evictions in AFF affected 155 families from Al-Qa'im district. In addition, four families from Jazerh al-Khaldiyah, Haditha district remaining in Kilo 18 Camp were also forcibly returned. Authorities continue to emphasize the need for IDPs to return and that camps should be closed in the near future. Reportedly in Kilo 18 and Habbaniyah Tourist City (HTC) camp, freedom of movement for families who are unwilling to return was further restricted. Authorities in Anbar are said to be planning for IDP families staying in non-camp settings in Ramadi, Falluja, Haditha and Rutba district to return starting 10 February, after school exams conclude. Civil servants from Al-Qa'im, including teachers, will be expected to resume work in their area of origin soon or otherwise risk being laid off. After high-level advocacy and interventions at all levels, including by UNHCR, the forced evictions/returns were suspended on 14 January until after the completion of school exams on 1 February.

Explosive hazards continued to be a challenge hampering stability of returns. Several incidents of explosive devices going off in Heet City and Baghdadi sub-district in Heet district as well as explosion of booby-trapped houses, mainly in the new retaken areas of Ru'ua nd Qa'im districts were reported during January resulted in killing and injuring several civilians, including new returnees.

At least 763 families returned from HTC, AAF, Khaldiyah, and Ramadi camps in Anbar to Ana and Al-Qa'im districts in January. However, many IDPs from Al-Qa'im have expressed an unwillingness to return due to poor conditions in the district. Authorities have reportedly imposed movement restrictions on adult male returnees until they obtain security approval from local police stations in their districts, which may take several days.

**FALLUJAH DISTRICT**

According to the DTM, 86,482 families returned to Falluja by January, with around 144 families returning in January. Many of the returns in AAF began with the premise that the returns would not be mandatory. However, the return movements were perceived by some of the families to be forced, based on the approach and instructions given to residents. The notice for returns was usually given by camp management going tent to tent with the instruction that families should prepare for return, without any choice to remain. The buses were provided in some instances and were escorted by Iraqi Army soldiers. Following a round of forced returns to various places in Anbar (including Falluja City, Garma sub-district and western Anbar), many families were not allowed to return to their place of origin and ended up being re-displaced back to AAF camps.

Due to the nature of the return notices, along with the pressure felt from perceived discrimination based on area of origin and perceived affiliation and limited freedom of movement, some families began returning spontaneously after the initial notices to return began. The camp management started registering families who they said wanted to return home, although the process seemed to be disorganized. The IDPs were pre-screened for security purposes prior to departing from the camps, and were presented with a security card. Most of the remaining families in AAF did not want to return to their areas of origin yet due to lack of services and destroyed infrastructure. Families also mentioned that they were fearful of the uncertain security situation, and of mines and other remaining explosive hazards.

Some families from Falluja who were forced to return were later also re-displaced back to AAF. This group was forced to return to Falluja City even though they did not feel safe returning. After return, some of these families were subject to revenge attacks by tribal groups using firearms, as a form of collective punishment, due to perceived alternative affiliations. Other families were unable to return to Falluja because they were afraid of problems they might face with tribes or security forces.

Various denials of return to areas in Anbar were reported, including the Al-Malab and Jazerh al-Ramadi areas. Some families from these areas have either been prevented after attempting to return, or have received threats based on perceived affiliation to extremists and these families remain in AAF as a result. One of the incidents involved a house being booby-trapped and injuring two young girls from the family. It was perceived that this act was a form of tribal retribution against the family. Similar accounts of attempts to return that have resulted in attacks or threats have intimidated many IDPs about the prospects of returning home.

New areas in Saqlawiyah sub-district (Al-Daisha, Albu-Tairee, Albu Esa Alefa, Albu Sdirah Al-Thaniya, Albu Shijl, Albu Sarot) witnessed returns for the first time in January since being retaken in mid-June 2016. During January, according to local officials, 70 families returned to Al-Dawiaha, 40 families to Albu-Tairee, 70 families to Albu Esa Alefand Sdiyah Al-Thaniya, and 15 families to Albu Shijul), The Majority were pushed to return from camps in Anbar (HTC, AFF, Khaldiyah camps), in spite of not being ready to return, due to lack of basic infrastructure and the un-cleared contamination with explosive hazards. Many farms were assessed as heavily contaminated so groups of returnees (farmers) could not start their activities.

**HEET DISTRICT**

Per the DTM, 28,359 families (170,154 individuals) returned to Heet by the end of September, an increase of 1,038 families (6,228 individuals) from the previous month. Considerable returns to Al-Muhamdee, Al-Mamora, Binan, Al-Etfaa, Al-Zuhoor, Jubbah, The first Jamaiya and Zoyah Al-Gharbiyah neighborhoods.

**RAMADI DISTRICT**

Per the DTM, 29,911 families returned to Heet by January. Several incident have been reported in January jeopardizing the safety of returnees and affecting sustainability of returns. On 19 Jan 2018, an explosive device detonated on a road in Heet town, leaving four children injured.

**ANA DISTRICT**

Ana experienced returns for the first time in December. Per the DTM, 598 families returning in January to eight neighborhoods. This brings the total number of returnees to 547 families to six neighborhoods since the start of returns on December 2017. Education and health services in the area are said to have resumed. The level of destruction in Ana is believed to be less than in other areas of the governorate. However, some infrastructure had been destroyed during recent military operations. The MoMD and Anbar officials have begun to provide scheduled transportation twice a week for IDPs in Anbar camps to their places of origin in the western areas of the governorate.

**RU'UA DISTRICT**

Ru'ua district has experienced returns for the first time in January. Per the DTM, 96 families returned in January to three neighborhoods. However, the security situation remains a challenge jeopardizing the safety of civilians and hampering the sustainability of returns. More than a hundred of houses are reportedly booby-trapped. On 21st of January, 3 family members were reportedly injured as a result of explosion in their house upon their entering it. A similar incident was reported on 22 January, causing casualties and fatalities..

**QA'IM DISTRICT**

Qa'im experienced returns for the first time in December. Significant returns have been reported in January with 642 families returning to 13 neighborhoods in January, bringing the total number of returnees to 864 families.

Internal returns within Al-Qaim areas started in January, with the Jazerh Operation Command facilitating the return of 356 IDP families, from Al-Masharee area located in the south of Al-Qaim which they had been displaced to in November 2017, to their areas of origin within the same district after their areas were cleared of explosive hazards.

As elsewhere in the governorate, Qa'im has witnessed incidents of forced evictions of persons/families perceived to have alternative affiliations. Among families forced to return from AAF camps, seven males upon departure were prevented from returning to their areas in Al-Qa'im due to perceptions of perceived affiliations alleged by local informants despite that they had gone through several rounds of security clearances. These families, together with others, have sought protection in Kilo 18 Camp.