

Displacement from Sinjar, 3-14 August

OVERVIEW

On 3 August 2014, the arrival of Armed Opposition Groups (AOG) caused up to 200,000 people to be displaced from their homes in Sinjar City and the surrounding towns and villages. Predominantly home to Yazidi communities, the area was also hosting Shia Turkmen who had previously fled to Sinjar when AOGs took over towns and villages in and around Tal Afar. Turkmen Shia communities that remained in Sinjar on 3 August experienced secondary displacement.

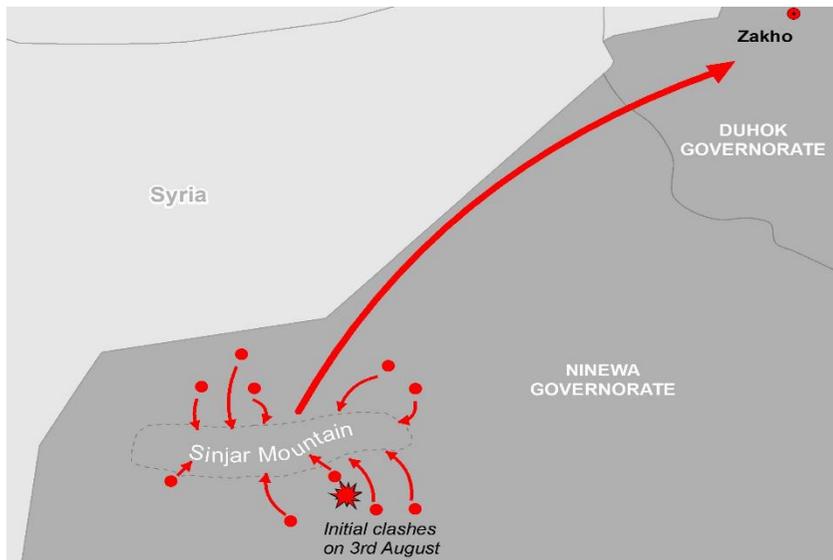
The Yazidis are one of Iraq's oldest minorities, whose population in northern Iraq represents the vast majority of the estimated 700,000 Yazidis worldwide. Now displaced to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Syria and Turkey, many Yazidis fear to return to and represent a particularly vulnerable group. With ongoing plans to establish camps to host them, the large majority of displaced Yazidis are in the meanwhile staying in temporary accommodation in public and empty buildings, and in the open; relying on host community and humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs.

Findings presented in this factsheet are informed by primary data collected between 13 – 18 August by REACH enumerators through 136 Key Informant interviews, complemented by Focus Group discussions and triangulated by available secondary data.

KEY PHASES OF DISPLACEMENT:

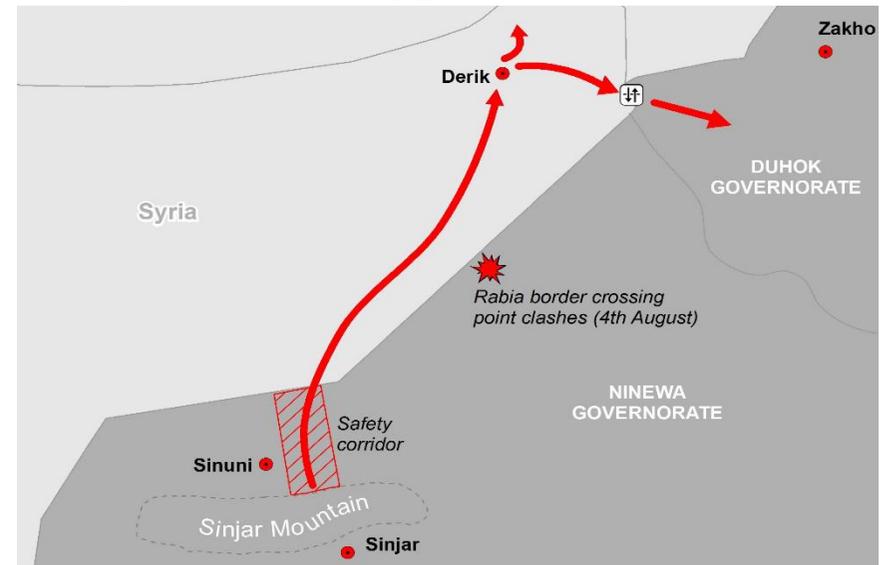
Phase 1: August 3rd

On August 3rd an initial wave of IDPs fled their homes directly along the Syrian / Iraqi border towards Duhok Governorate, mainly by vehicle. The road became inaccessible to IDPs from August 4th following intensification of fighting on the Rabia'a Crossing, on the Syrian / Iraqi border. Approximately 130,000 IDPs were stranded on Mount Sinjar with little access to food, water and shelter, in addition to coming under sporadic attacks from AOGs.



Phase 2: August 4th – 13th

Evacuation of the stranded population began on August 4th following the establishment of a safe corridor by Kurdish armed forces. The majority of people left Mount Sinjar between August 9th-13th, and travelled through Syria in order to reach Nawroz Camp in Northern Syria, or camps and communities in Duhok Governorate, KRI. Travel within Syria was facilitated by trucks provided by Kurdish groups, Yazidi community members, and the local population.



CURRENT SITUATION

Displacement from Sinjar has resulted in the total displacement of around 200,000 people. While a small number are estimated to remain in the Sinjar Mountains, the majority of people have been displaced across to the KRI, Northern Syria and Turkey, and can be grouped as follows:

1. IDPs in Dohuk governorate, KRI

An estimated **125,000** displaced from Sinjar have settled in Dohuk governorate of KRI. Among these, up to **10,000** individuals are estimated to have settled in Bajid Kandala camp, close to the border with Syria. An estimated **170,000** are being hosted by communities in the KRI, notably Yazidi ones around Zakho, Duhok, and Khanke.

2. Refugees in Nawruz camp, Northern Syria

An estimated up to **13,000** people have chosen to remain in Nawruz camp in Syria, which they reportedly believe offers better future access to their homes and livelihoods in and around Sinjar. The population of Nawruz fluctuates daily, including reported recent returns to Nawruz from Yazidi IDPs that initially settled in Dohuk governorate.

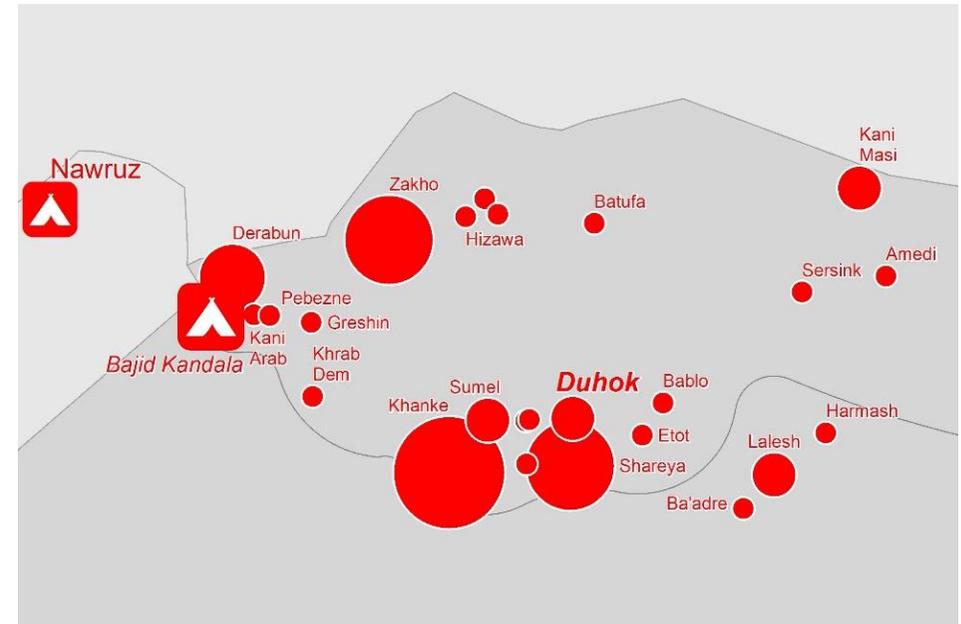
3. Refugees in Turkey

Key informants estimate that up to **12,000** Yazidis have fled to Turkey through both official and unofficial border crossings.

4. Remaining populations on Sinjar mountain

An estimated up to **5,000** IDPs are reported to remain on Mount Sinjar, who are unwilling and/or unable to leave. The majority are reported to be men, including goat-herders, who had chosen to remain close to their homes and livelihoods. Key informants report that small numbers of vulnerable individuals may also remain, notably the elderly with limited mobility.

Locations of displaced Yazidis in Syria & Dohuk Governorate



PRIORITY NEEDS AND COPING CAPACITY

Having left their homes in a rush and taking little or no assets with them, the vast majority of displaced Yazidi communities are in need of humanitarian assistance to meet their most basic needs.

65% of key informants identified **food** and **water** as the priority need of displaced Yazidi communities, reflecting their high level of vulnerability. **Shelter** assistance was also among the top three needs for over 60% of Key Informants interviewed. Displaced Yazidi families are staying in a variety of different shelter types, with over a fifth squatting in unfinished buildings and in the open. These families are particularly vulnerable, with little privacy and no protection from high daytime temperatures.

Key informants reported that there are no sustainable income sources for community members in their current location. Although 63% reported that community members brought some savings with them, these were small amounts, which were rapidly depleting. As the length of displacement continues and these savings are depleted, increasing numbers of people are likely to require assistance to meet their basic needs.

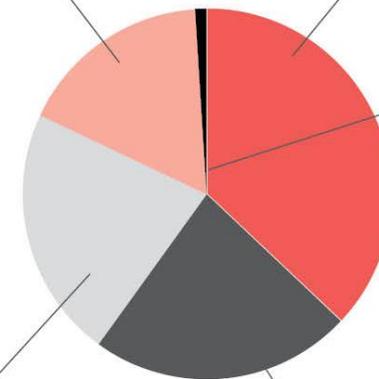
HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Displaced Yazidis have been heavily reliant on support from host communities and local NGOs in their area of displacement. While displaced communities in the KRI reported receiving distributions of food (82%) and water (54%) at the time of assessment, only a minority of distributions were reportedly conducted by international humanitarian actors.

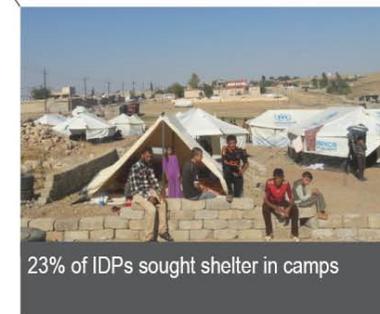
In order to cater for communities currently residing in the open or in collective shelters, camps are being set up and extended across Dohuk governorate, several of which are planned to cater specifically for Yazidis:

- Existing camps at Bajed Kandala (1 & 2), close to the border with Syria, are being extended to provide a combined capacity of 15,000 individuals.
- Planning is underway new Yazidi camps at Khanke (capacity 9000 individuals); Garmawa (reopening for up to 7,000 individuals); Sharya (up to 17,000 individuals); and Zakho, where the Turkish government plans a mixed camp for up to 13,500 individuals.
- Seven further camps are proposed for Dohuk governorate, but none have yet been finalised.

SHELTER TYPES FOR IPDS FROM SINJAR



1% of IDPs assessed were hosted by friends or family. This group may be under-represented due to a focus on areas with a high concentration of IDPs



About REACH Initiative

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