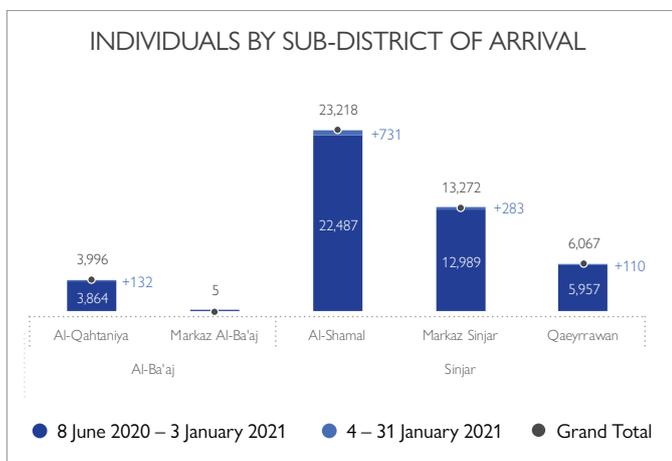
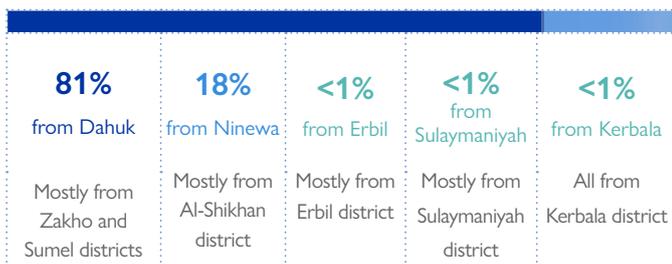
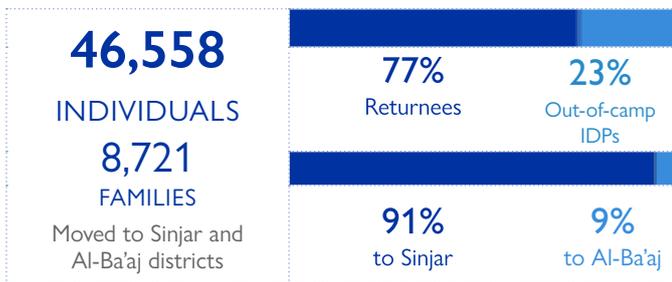


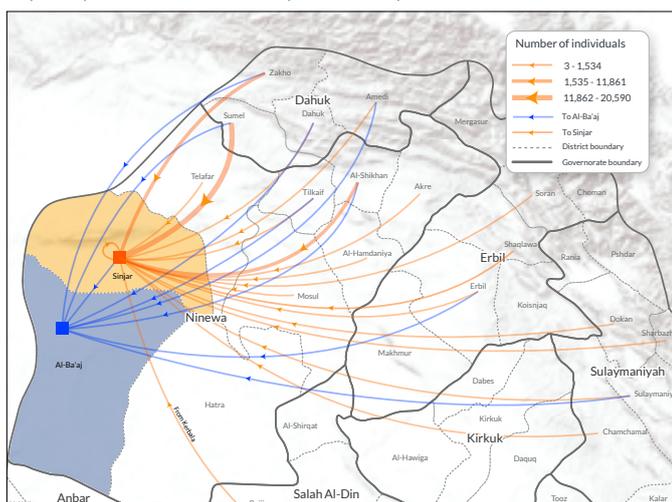
DISPLACEMENT AND RETURNS TO SINJAR AND AL-BA'AJ DISTRICTS

PERIOD COVERED:
4 TO 31 JANUARY 2021

*All charts/graphs in this document show total figures for the period of 8 June 2020 to 31 January 2021



Map 1. Population Movements to Sinjar and Al-Ba'aj districts



Between 4 and 31 January 2021, DTM tracked 1,256 individuals (227 families) returning to Sinjar and Al-Ba'aj districts in Iraq's Ninewa Governorate. This brings the total number of individuals who have taken this route to 46,558 (8,721 families) since data collection commenced on 8 June 2020.

In this reporting period, the average number of daily individual arrivals was 39 to Sinjar (down significantly from 111 in the last round) and five to Al-Ba'aj (down from 10 in the last round). In this period, the daily number of arrivals to Sinjar was significantly lower than the overall daily average since 8 June (181). The daily number of arrivals to Al-Ba'aj was also lower than the overall daily average since 8 June (17).

Of those individuals who arrived between 4 and 31 January 2021, a total of 1,124 were recorded in Sinjar (89%) and 132 were recorded in Al-Ba'aj (11%) – broadly consistent with the rates of individuals' districts of arrival since 8 June.

The most common sub-district of arrival was Al-Shamal with 731 individuals (58%), followed by Markaz Sinjar with 283 individuals (23%). Together, these two sub-districts comprise 78 per cent of all individuals recorded as having arrived to Sinjar and Al-Ba'aj since data collection commenced on 8 June. Otherwise, 132 arrived to Al-Qahtaniyah (10%) and 110 individuals arrived to the sub-district of Qaeyrrawan (9%).

Of those individuals identified as returning between 4 and 31 January 2021, 1,058 were recorded as returnees (84%), while the remaining 198 were recorded as out-of-camp IDPs (16%). This represents a minor deviation from the overall proportion of individuals having been identified as returnees (77%) and out-of-camp IDPs (23%) since 8 June.

Additionally, between 4 and 31 January 2021, a total of 993 individuals were recorded as departing from Dahuk Governorate (79%) – which is similar to the rates of individuals having departed from there since 8 June (81%). As with all previous rounds, between 4 and 31 January 2021, the majority of individuals from Dahuk were recorded as coming from the districts of Sumel (61% of all individuals) and Zakho (16%). The remaining individuals from Dahuk Governorate were recorded as coming from the districts of Amedi (2% of all individuals) and Dahuk (<1%).

Additionally, between 3 and 31 January 2021, a further 183 individuals were recorded as having come from within Ninewa (15% of all individuals), from two districts: 168 came from Al-Shikhan (14%) and 15 came from Sinjar (1%).

This proportion (15%) of individuals recorded as having come from Ninewa between 4 and 31 January 2021 is consistent with the overall proportion of individuals recorded as having come from there since 8 June (18%). Otherwise, in this reporting period, 80 individuals arrived from Sulaymaniyah Governorate (6%), and unlike previous rounds, no individuals arrived from Erbil or Kerbala Governorates.

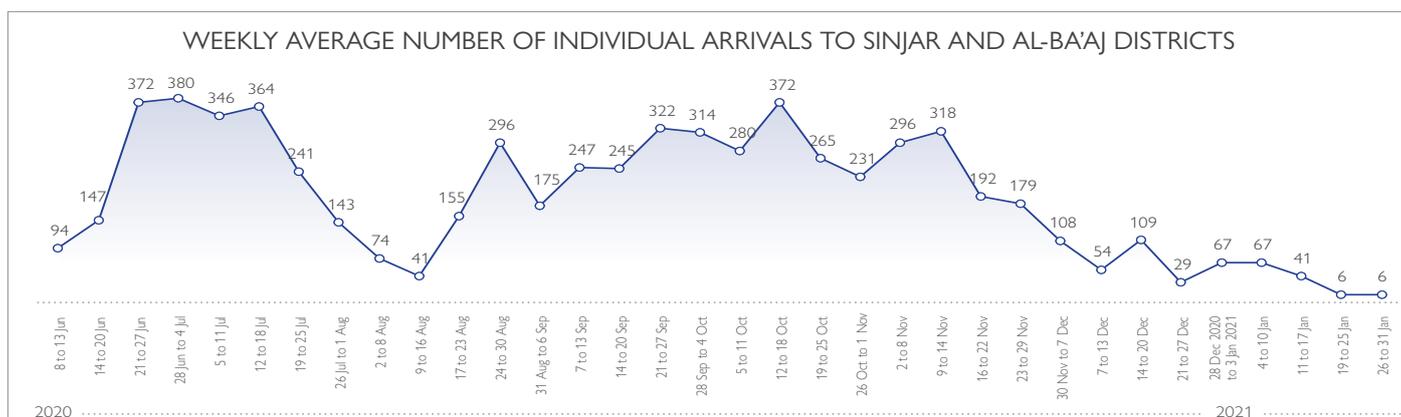
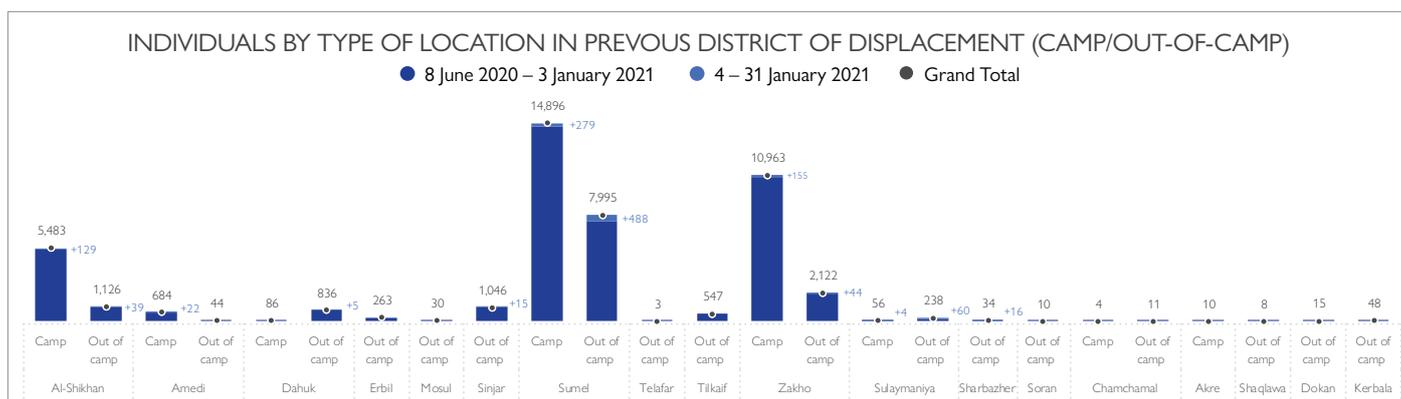
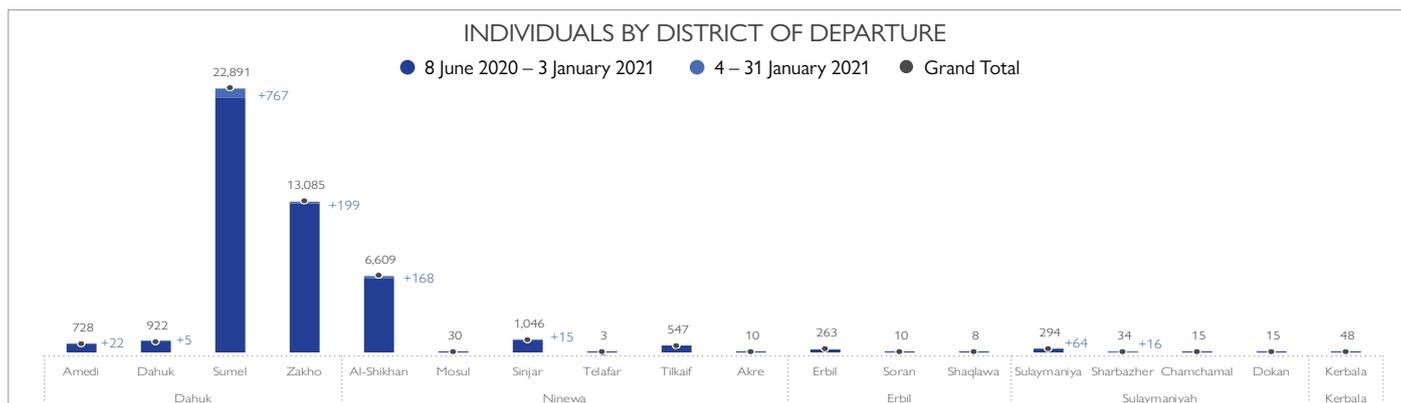
Since 8 June, almost all individuals have been recorded as having departed from the districts of Sumel (49%) and Zakho (28%) in Dahuk Governorate, and Al-Shikhan (14%) in Ninewa Governorate.

Between 4 and 31 January 2021, of the 1,124 individuals who arrived to Sinjar District, 899 came from Dahuk Governorate (80%), while 145 came from within Ninewa (13%), and 80 came from Sulaymaniyah (7%). Additionally, of the 132 individuals who arrived to Al-Ba'aj District, 94 came from Dahuk Governorate (71%) and 38 came from within Ninewa (29%).

Furthermore, during the same period, a total of 589 individuals were recorded as coming from camp settings (47%), while the remaining 667 individuals came from out-of-camp settings (53%). This represents a deviation from the rates of individuals coming from different settings since 8 June, as follows: 32,182 individuals have arrived from camp settings (69%) while 14,376 individuals have arrived from out-of-camp settings (31%).

Between 3 and 31 January 2021, increases were recorded in the number of individuals who had been living in camp settings in their previous districts of displacement. Since 8 June 2020, the total number of individuals now in Sinjar and Al-Ba'aj who have come from camp settings within Sumel is now 14,896 (up from 14,617), while Zakho's is 10,963 (up from 10,808), and Al-Shikhan's is 5,483 (up from 5,354).

In addition, since 8 June 2020, the total number of individuals who have come from out-of-camp settings within Sumel is now 7,995 (up from 7,507), while Zakho's is now 2,122 (up from 2,078), and Al-Shikhan's is 1,126 (up from 1,087).



ADDITIONAL ANECDOTAL NARRATIVE

Reasons for returns

- Reasons for IDPs returning to Sinjar include their desire to go home, as well as the improved security situation in their areas of origin, while Mukhtars, local NGOs and returnees have also encouraged IDPs to return home. Threats facing eviction in locations of displacement is also a factor for those IDPs returning to Sinjar. Otherwise, the main reason for IDPs returning to Al-Ba'aj also relates to their desire to go home, while the availability of services (such as education and health) in their areas of origin is also central to the decision.
- One of the push factors has been COVID-19 pandemic, as some families who had a member working in the area of origin and moving back and forth between Sinjar and an area of displacement could no longer move easily due to movement restrictions, which then pushed the IDPs to return.

Assistance and registration

- Reportedly, the Directorate of National Security in Sinjar has established a feedback/complaint/response mechanism in the form of a hotline to be used by the new returnees or IDPs willing to return to their areas of origin in Sinjar. The main purpose of the system is to enable authorities to follow up on emerging issues/complaints, including but not limited to difficulties at checkpoints, as well as on reports that some of the newly returned individuals occupy buildings that do not belong to them.

Challenges faced by returnees

- Debris removal has been noted as an obstacle to return, given the large-scale destruction that took place in Sinjar.
- There are reports of individuals having returned to areas with limited basic services such as healthcare, markets, water, and electricity and having not received assistance. Some of these locations had not previously witnessed any returns.