

IRAQ | IDPs - CIVIL & IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION (AUGUST 2021)

IN BRIEF

Lack of civil documentation remains one of the main protection issues facing internally displaced persons (IDPs)¹ and returnees who continue to face numerous barriers seeking to obtain and/or renew civil documentation.

Missing civil documentation impedes one's ability to access basic services, education, healthcare, and social security benefits. It also leads to restricted freedom of movement, increased risk of arrest and detention, exclusion from reintegration programmes and inability to participate in the public affairs of the country.

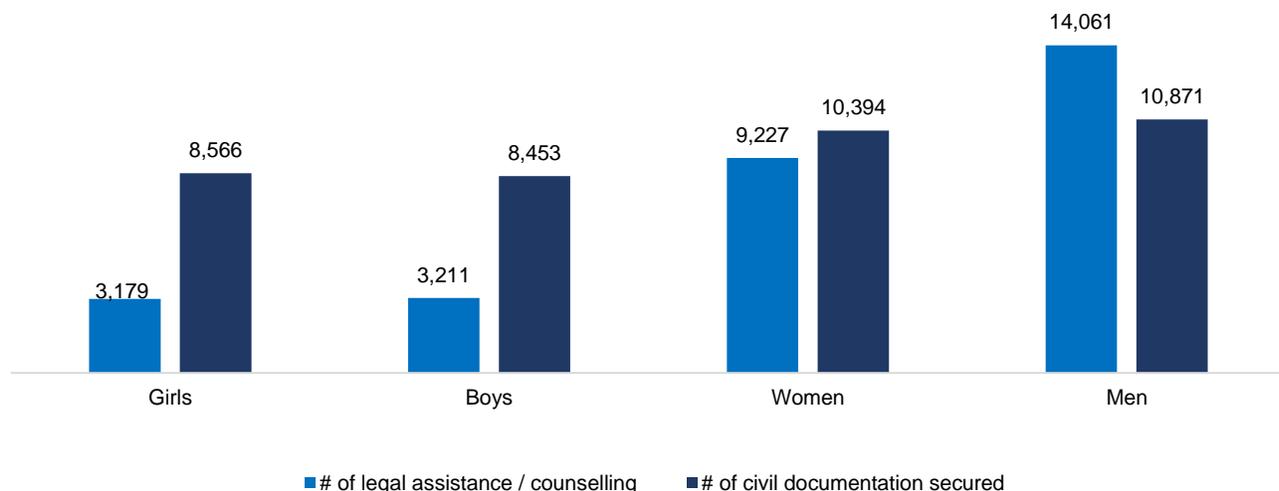
In response, UNHCR in cooperation with government and civil society partners, continues to implement and support projects and initiatives to enable IDPs and returnees to access civil documentation.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Lack of awareness and the complexity of procedures remain key barriers faced by IDPs in accessing civil documentation, making legal assistance in this regard critical. UNHCR therefore continues to mobilize legal assistance partners so that IDPs and returnees have access to accurate information and quality legal advice and representation on obtaining civil documentation.

In August 2021, UNHCR and partners provided legal assistance and/or counselling to 4,704 individuals resulting in the issuance of 1,029 civil documents. Between January to August 2021, a total of 29,678 individuals were provided with legal assistance, and 38,284 civil documents were issued. While authorities resumed processing of new applications for Unified ID cards as of June, technical glitches in the online appointments system persist making it challenging for IDPs/returnees and legal partners to continue with file submissions at Unified ID card offices. Generally, courts and Civil Affairs Directorate (CAD) offices continued to function at near full capacities (generally up to 90%) in most locations. The exact working modalities and degree of functionality continue to vary by location. Similar to previous months, partners continue to employ a combination of face-to-face (using precautionary measures) and remote approaches in the provision of legal assistance.

Number of legal assistance/ counselling provided and civil documentation secured (Jan - August 2021)



¹ According to the Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment VIII (2020), more than 2.1m individuals are in households reporting that they miss one or more core documents, while more than 800,000 persons are in households reporting that they miss 3 or more core documents. Core documents as defined by the National Protection Cluster include ID card (Civil ID and Unified ID), Nationality Certificate, birth certificates and Public Distribution System (PDS) cards.

MOBILE APPROACHES

As a key part of addressing IDPs civil documentation needs, UNHCR supports mobile missions by government officials to IDP camps, informal sites and urban areas with large IDP population groups to receive and process applications for civil documents and to issue civil documentation without the need for IDPs to travel to their area of origin.

In August, UNHCR and its partners followed up on finalizing the pending and rejected applications from the five missions conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Federal Government of Iraq as well as the Kurdistan Regional Government between April and July at IDP camps in Dohuk. Thus far, the success rate of these missions stands at 97%, with 8,630 Iraqi Nationality Certificates (INCs) and 3,206 Civil Status IDs (CSIDs) issued and only 632 files returned or rejected while 213 files remaining pending.

Similar missions in coordination with the MoI of the Federal Government of Iraq are planned for the upcoming period (prior to the elections) to 6 IDP camps located in East Mosul (Khazir, Hasansham U2, Hasansham U3, Debaga, Baharka, and Harsham) as well as an urban area. These missions are expected to support with the processing and issuance of approximately 1,325 CSIDs and 2,192 INCs.

UNHCR and its partners also supported mobile missions undertaken by local CADs. In coordination with the Civil Affairs Office in Ninewa, a mission was carried out at the UNHCR partner run Community Support Centre (CSC) in Al Ba'aj, during which 99 INC applications were submitted for processing and 61 INCs were distributed to beneficiaries following processing by the Civil Affairs Office. During this period, the remaining 7 INCs and CSIDs were also issued to IDPs residing in Jeda'a 1 camp, applications for which were submitted during the CAD mission to Jeda'a 1 camp that took place in June. With this, the processing of all 45 INC and CSID applications submitted during that mission has been completed.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

UNHCR continues to support the rehabilitation of the offices of the CAD with a project ongoing in Shirqat, Salah al Din. In Mosul, seven of the 11 rehabilitated CAD offices are now functional while the remaining four recently rehabilitated and furnished CAD/Unified ID offices in Hamam Al-Alil, Tal Abta, Shimal/Sinuni, and Qahtaniya are yet to be officially operational, and continue to await the recruitment and training of additional staffing by the authorities. The CAD office in Qayarah became operational during this reporting period.

ADVOCACY AND OTHER INITIATIVES

UNHCR and partners continue to engage in regular advocacy at various levels to resolve obstacles faced by IDPs and returnees in accessing civil documentation and provide outcomes favourable to them. During the reporting period, in Sulaymaniah, UNHCR and its partner coordinated with the Civil Affairs Office to facilitate the process for IDPs to obtain Unified ID cards without having to visit the Civil Affairs Offices in their areas of origin. UNHCR also coordinated with Personal Status Courts to facilitate the process of IDPs to obtain marriage certificates without needing to issue a power of attorney, thus simplifying the process. Efforts continue with authorities to obtain documentation for all the remaining Jeda'a 1 residents (not originally from Ninewa) through advocacy for CAD missions from their respective governorates. For persons originating from other governorates where Unified ID cards have been rolled out, UNHCR is advocating for fees (IQD 250,000: approximately USD 170) to be waived.

SPECIAL THANKS TO MAJOR DONORS

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