

IRAQ | IDPs - CIVIL & IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION (JAN-DEC 2020)

IN BRIEF

Civil documentation serves as proof of one's legal identity and civil status. Due to the lack of civil documentation, many internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees are unable to access basic services such as education and health care, experience restrictions on their freedom of movement, are exposed to an increased risk of arrest and detention and may be excluded from restitution and/or reconstruction programmes. The lack of civil documentation may also increase the risk of statelessness for undocumented children. According to the Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment 2020, **55% of IDPs in camps, 47% of IDPs in out-of-camp situations, and 57% of returnees¹ in Iraq miss at least one core document.**²

IDPs and returnees cite various challenges in obtaining civil documentation, such as a lack of knowledge of procedures, high transportation costs incurred accessing government offices in places of origin, complex court procedures, and meeting *de facto* requirements such as security clearances.

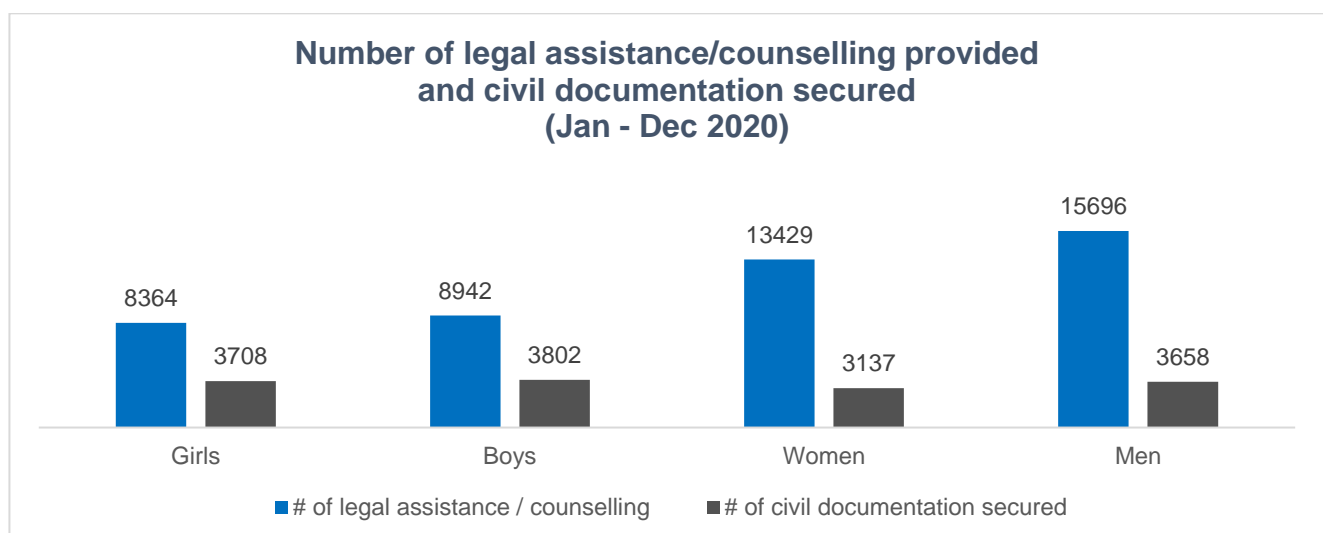
Given the grave consequences and challenges faced by IDPs and returnees who lack key civil documents, UNHCR, in cooperation with government and civil society partners, has implemented and supported a number of projects to enable IDPs and returnees to access civil documentation.



Distribution of civil documentation in Jeddah IDP Camp Ninewa Governorate December 2020 © UNHCR

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

As a core activity, in 2020 UNHCR continued to mobilize legal assistance partners so that IDPs and returnees have access to accurate information and quality **legal advice and representation** on access to civil documentation. Between January and December 2020, UNHCR and partners had provided legal assistance and/or counselling to **46,431 individuals** of which **14,305 individuals** successfully secured civil documentation. This year restrictions related to **COVID-19** had a significant impact on the provision of legal assistance services which had to be undertaken remotely for much of the year (March to September). Courts and civil affairs offices also functioned at reduced capacities resulting in delays and critical needs being unmet. By comparison in 2019 47,172 individuals were provided with legal assistance of which 36,601 successfully secured civil documentation.



¹ There are some 1.22m IDPs and 4.83m returnees in Iraq, [UNHCR Iraq Fact Sheet January 2021](#), 28 January 2021.

² Core documents as defined by the National Protection Cluster include ID card, Nationality Certificate, birth certificates and PDS cards.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

UNHCR has continued to support the [rehabilitation of the offices of the Civil Affairs Directorates \(CAD\)](#) including in the context of the rollout of the new Unified ID card. In 2020, seven such projects were completed in [Diyala \(Jalawla\)](#) and in [Ninewa \(Hamam Al-Alil, Qayararah Sinuni, Al Hatara, Rabia'a, Zummar\)](#). A further project is ongoing in [Ninewa \(Qahtaniyah\)](#).

MOBILE CIVIL DOCUMENTATION PROJECTS

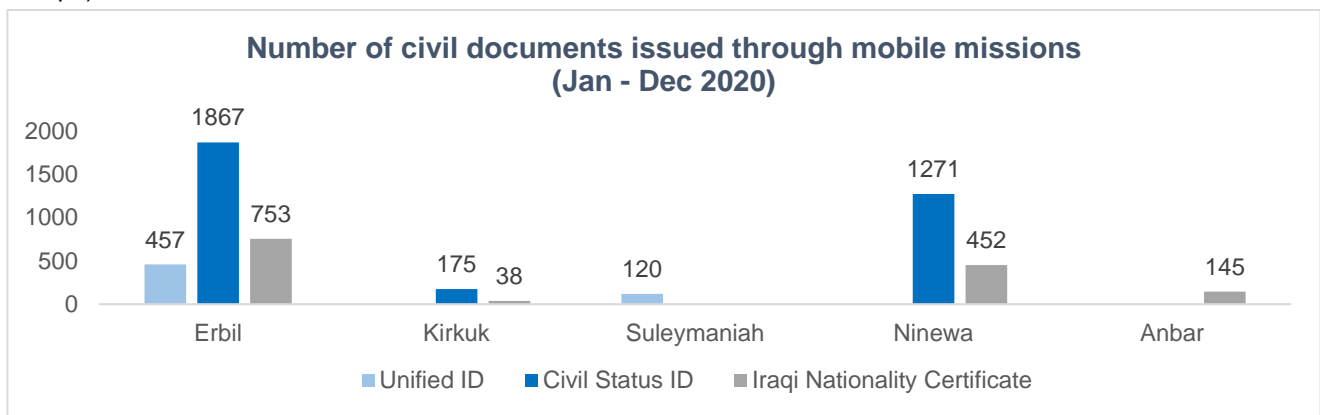
UNHCR continues to support the undertaking of [mobile missions](#) by government officials to IDP camps to receive and process applications for civil documents and to issue civil documentation. While for much of 2020 these missions were suspended owing to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Civil Affairs Offices resumed the missions in December in a number of locations. In 2020 overall, UNHCR and its partners supported the issuance of over [5,200 documents](#) through various mobile missions.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Federal Government of Iraq as well as the Kurdistan Regional Government, mobile missions covering 6 IDP camps under the administration of [Erbil Governorate](#) were undertaken in December. The mission resulted in the issuance of a total of [1,867 Civil Status \(CS\) IDs](#) and [753 Iraqi Nationality Certificates \(INCs\)](#) to IDPs. A further [457 UIDs](#) that had been applied for in 2019 through mobile missions were also distributed this year to IDPs in Erbil. Earlier in the year missions were undertaken to 1 camp in [Kirkuk Governorate](#) resulting in the issuance of [175 CSIDs](#) and [38 INCs](#), and a mission was also undertaken to 2 IDP camps in [Sulaymaniyah](#) for the issuance of [120 Unified IDs](#) that had been applied for during missions in 2019.



Distribution of civil documentation in Hasansham U3 IDP Camp in Duhok Governorate December 2020 © UNHCR

in 2020 UNHCR and partners also supported mobile missions undertaken by local CAD offices in [Ninewa](#) and [Anbar](#) to camps within those Governorates. In [Ninewa](#), CAD offices undertook 18 visits to 3 IDP camps (Hamam Al Alil, Salamiyah and Jeddah camps), including a number of missions to these camps just prior to their closure, resulting in the issuance of [1,271 CSIDs](#) and [452 INCs](#). In [Anbar](#), similar missions to 2 IDP camps (AAF and HTC camps) resulted in the issuance of [145 INCs](#).



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