

June | 09

Findings from Iraqi Outreach Activities in Lebanon

2nd ISSUE



DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL Lebanon

WHO WE ARE

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a private, humanitarian organisation representing all aspects of the refugee cause. The organisation's aim is to protect refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) against persecution and to promote durable solutions. DRC currently works in more than 20 countries worldwide.

DRC has worked in Lebanon since 2004, supporting Palestinian and Iraqi refugees, and with Lebanese communities affected by the 2006 war. DRC uses a rights-based approach to programming that incorporates basic humanitarian principles, including impartiality and neutrality and offers the highest standards of accountability to the people it serves.

Under its commitment to the International Humanitarian Accountability Principles (HAP) initiative, DRC operates a Complaints Mechanism which requires timely consideration and response to the concerns of beneficiaries and other stakeholders about DRC services and conduct. Comments may be addressed to the DRC Country Director, in writing, via email or fax. Please include name and contact information if a response is required.

DRC Lebanon
5th Floor, Aresco Centre
Justinian Street,
Hamra, Beirut
Tel/Fax +961 1 736987
Email: drc.lebanon@drclebanon.dk

INTRODUCTION

DRC Lebanon is currently implementing an outreach and NFI (Non-Food Item) distribution project to support Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon. The 12-month project, *Civil Society Development for Iraqis in Lebanon*, is generously supported by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM).

The project addresses a gap in the existing response to the needs of Iraqi refugees in Lebanon especially in remote areas outside of greater Beirut.

An essential component of the project is the expansion and improvement of NGO outreach services to Iraqis by enhancing information exchange and networking opportunities with Iraqi refugee communities and between civil society players.

To this end, the project manages a variety of outreach activities including household visits, focus groups, community meetings, newsletters, a website (www.iraqisinlebanon.org) and reports which facilitate the collection and dissemination of relevant information.

This is the second report issued by DRC Lebanon in 2009. It presents quantitative and qualitative information on issues of specific concern to the support of Iraqi refugees in Lebanon identified in DRC's outreach and assistance program. It is hoped that this report will contribute to increased coordination, information sharing and networking among service-providers, donors and other stakeholders helping Iraqi refugees in Lebanon.

The first section of the report explores the patterns and rationale behind the common practice of re-selling of NGO assistance received by Iraqis.

The second section examines the short term (3-6 months) plans of Iraqi refugees: the reasons behind their choices for resettlement, returning to Iraq, or staying in Lebanon.

The final section of the report presents information about Iraqi refugees who are not registered with UNHCR.

This report draws on information drawn from relatively small numbers of Iraqi refugees, most of whom are beneficiaries of or applicants for DRC assistance. As these sample populations do not fully represent the larger Iraqi population in Lebanon, information in the report should be used cautiously, i.e., to identify and describe trends rather than draw specific numeric or statistical conclusions. Statements by Iraqis regarding services provided reflect their own opinions and perceptions.

Comments, questions and corrections on this material and contributions for further reports are solicited and welcome.

DRC Lebanon

June 2009

1.0 NON FOOD ITEM (NFI) ASSISTANCE

1.1 RE-SELLING NFI ASSISTANCE – WHY?

Non-Food Item (NFI) distribution constitutes a major component of assistance provided to Iraqi refugees in Lebanon. However, it has emerged during UNHCR and NGO stakeholder meetings and from Iraqi refugees during outreach work that some NFIs distributed by a variety of service-providers are being re-sold.

In June 2009, DRC facilitated discussions with five groups of Iraqi refugees in bid to establish and understand the reasons for the re-selling of items.

The locations and participants in the discussions are recorded below.

Location	Total Participants	Male	Female
Nabatieh	15	14	1 #
Saida	7	7	0 ##
Hay el-Selloum 1	11	5	6
Hay el-Selloum 2	15	12	3
Baalbeck	11	7	4

Table 1.1: DRC Group Discussions on re-selling of NFI assistance: Location and participant numbers

Women were invited but did not feel comfortable sitting with men in the Husseyniyeh of Nabatieh

Women were invited to the discussion but chose not to travel from their homes to Saida town which for many is a significant distance.

The discussion groups were facilitated by DRC field staff and structured around four main topics (1) Most useful types of assistance received (2) Least useful types of assistance received (3) Reasons for re-selling of assistance and the use of money (4) How service-providers could improve assistance to Iraqi refugees.

While every effort has been made to present information that accurately reflects the views and needs of the Iraqi community in Lebanon, the information contained within this section of the report is gathered from discussions with 59 refugees from four geographic regions.

Most useful type of assistance

There was a general consensus that all NFI assistance received by participants addressed some form of need.

Discussion groups were asked to identify the three most useful types of NFI assistance they have received.

Medical Assistance (hospitalisation and medication) was regarded as the most useful form of assistance. It was the most frequent response for two groups (Nabatieh and Hay El-Selloum 1), and solicited the second-most recorded responses for two groups (Saida and Baalbeck).

Food Coupons recorded the most frequent responses in two groups (Saida and Baalbeck) and were determined by half of participants in a third group (Nabatieh) to be most useful.

Winterisation kits (blankets, carpets, heaters and fuel) were considered by all groups to be one of the most useful forms of assistance. The kits recorded the most frequent responses in one group (Hay El-Selloum 2) and more than half of the participants in Baalbeck indicated winterisation kits were useful but commented that the amount of fuel was insufficient.

School Assistance (monetary contribution to school fees and school kits) was also considered by all groups to also be one of the most useful types of assistance. School assistance is only available to those participants with school-aged children. Given the composition of the discussion groups it was unlikely to record the most frequent response in any group.

The table below details the responses from each group. A single asterix (*) indicates that the type of assistance was regarded as one of the three most useful NFI received. A double asterix (**) indicates the most frequent response within a single group.

	Nabatieh	Saida	Hay El-Selloum 1	Hay El-Selloum 2	Baalbeck
Medical Assistance	**	*	**	*	*
Winterisation Kits	*	*	*	**	*
School Assistance [#]	*	*	*	*	*
Food Coupons	*	**			**

Table 1.2: Most Useful Type of NFI Assistance

Only beneficiaries with school-aged children are eligible for School Assistance.

Most Useful Assistance - Concerns

A number of recurring concerns raised by participants during the group discussions were considered to negatively impact on the value of assistance that they determined as being most useful.

Timing of distributions: School kits (bags, stationary) were delivered up to 3 months after the start of the school year. Families had already spent money to purchase these items.

Restriction of use: Food coupons that can only be redeemed at selected stores that are considered to be expensive (less value for money) or can only be exchanged at supermarkets where the food has a short shelf life (close to expiry date).

Quantity: Beneficiaries in Baalbeck mentioned that the quantity of fuel was not sufficient.

Least useful type of assistance

The majority of participants testified that while some of them may have received assistance that they did not consider to be a priority - or was judged to be of substandard quality - there were no instances when the assistance received was deemed to be of no use at all.

Participants identified the following factors that influence their perception of the usefulness of assistance.

Repetition: E.g. Annual distribution of winterisation items (blankets, carpets, heaters etc.) to same beneficiaries.

Quality: E.g. Clothing coupons are restricted to a limited range, often low quality, stock in the selected store.

Priority of Need: E.g. Hygiene Kits – one group would prefer cash to purchase “more important needs”, two other groups suggested that the kit should include items required on a daily basis (e.g. toothpaste, shampoo etc.) rather than large bottles of Detol that “last for a year”.

The participants made it clear that the timing of distribution was a critical factor in determining usefulness of assistance. Opinion on this matter was divided - some participants considered poorly-timed or delayed distribution of assistance as being of limited use, while others believed that even if the distribution was badly timed it could be sold to pay for other needs.

Re-selling of Assistance

Discussions indicate that the re-selling of NFI assistance by Iraq refugees is not uncommon. Every discussion group either had participants that had re-sold goods or could cite examples of refugees who had.

In 15 documented cases, the most commonly sold NFI assistance was winterisation items (a combination of heaters, carpets and blankets). In two cases, diesel that was distributed at an inappropriate time was re-sold. In another case, diapers that were too small were sold and replaced with a larger size.

Participants reported NFI assistance was most commonly sold to cover immediate needs and expenses considered to be more important.

As Figure 1.1 illustrates, the main explanation (33%) for re-selling NFI assistance among the discussion groups was for payment of house rent, followed by food, payment of school fees or medicines, fines or legalisation fees at General Security, tools for work and personal goods.

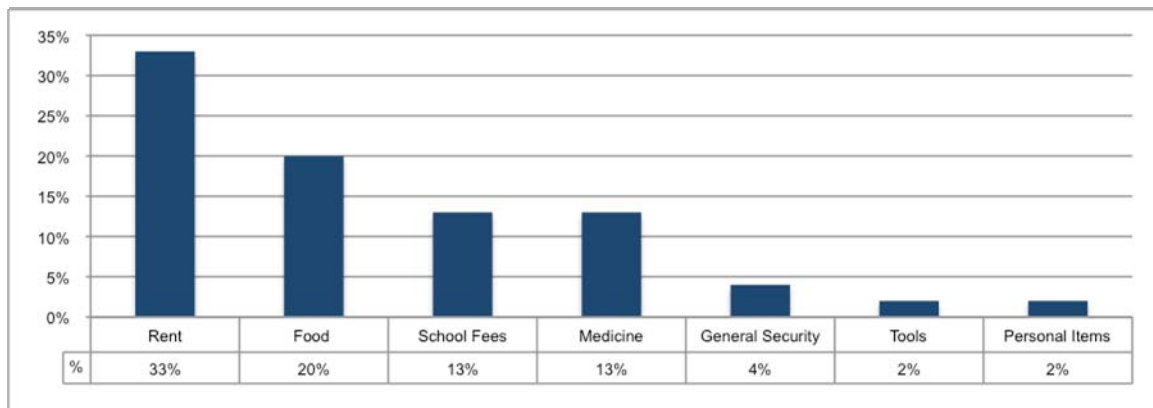


Figure 1.1: How money earned from re-selling NFI assistance is spent

One participant reported that food coupons are never sold as they are needed and currently are not sufficient.

1.2 IMPROVING ASSISTANCE TO IRAQI REFUGEES

For many Iraqi households, humanitarian aid represents a significant, and in some cases critical, source of assistance and support.

Discussion groups were encouraged to evaluate the current forms of assistance being delivered and offer input and ideas to improve this assistance in terms of their needs and priorities.

The feedback has been organised to reflect a number of themes that emerged during the discussions.

It should be noted that the issue that was repeatedly raised across all themes and discussion groups was the essential need for clear and transparent procedures and criteria for the distribution of assistance.

Equal Access to Support

Participants agreed that assistance should be distributed equally and without discrimination. A number of cases were cited (Baalbeck and Hay el-Selloum) where families in similar circumstances received different levels of assistance or no assistance at all. Participants said that this was causing conflict in the community and commented that the lack of criteria about eligibility for assistance was exacerbating this situation.

Suggestions:

- Clear guidelines should be established for determining eligibility for receiving assistance.
- Family size should be considered when determining the level of assistance.
- Single householders, who have similar needs to families, need access to assistance that they are currently excluded from.

Prioritisation of Needs/Customisation of Support

Participants suggested that assistance should relate more clearly to their immediate needs and that support could be customised to suit newly arrived refugees, refugees planning to stay in Lebanon and refugees planning to resettle.

Rent was identified as the leading priority for refugees. Medical assistance (medicine and hospitalisation), protection (legalisation) and food assistance were also prioritised.

Suggestions:

Rental

- Prioritise assistance for house rental. Refugees are under constant threat of eviction if they cannot pay.
- Service-providers could pay minimum rent (e.g. 100USD/month for 6 month) to allow refugees to save money to pay for other important needs such as residence permits and food.

Protection

- Prioritise protection assistance and securing of residency permits. Iraqis fear that General Security will cancel their residency if they are unable to find a sponsor willing to employ them and register them with the Lebanese social security.

Medical

- Prioritise medical assistance and improve coordination between service-providers and doctors/hospitals and the system for reimbursement of fees. Doctors/hospitals are raising fees based on the fact that UNHCR/service-providers are paying the fees. Refugees are often forced into debt to pay upfront for tests and doctors fees until service-providers and doctors/hospitals reimburse a percentage of the costs.
- Service-providers to establish their own medical clinics and include services of pediatricians.

Food

- Food coupons should be distributed on a regular/monthly basis and their value increased from \$50.
- Food coupons should not be limited to stores that do not offer value for money, or require long distance travel.

Education

- Widen educational support to include university fees. Providing educational opportunities offers refugees a chance to provide for themselves and for their families and can be more valuable than NFI assistance.
- Monetary contribution to education fees should be paid directly to schools and universities to avoid risking corruption.

Support relevant to needs and plans of Iraqis:

- Cash assistance would be preferable to NFI distribution of heaters and similar items for families who have been in Lebanon for a number of years and most probably have these items. Winterisation distribution would mostly suit newly arrived families.
- Short-term support for Iraqis who are planning to resettle e.g. NFI, food coupons.
- Long-term support for Iraqis who are planning to settle in Lebanon e.g. tools to improve their income

New Activities

Refugees identified a number of new activities that would complement existing assistance:

- Providing computers to improve children's educational opportunities
- Creating income opportunity projects E.g. establishing a factory, bakery or providing sewing machines to generate regular income and reduce the need to work illegally or travel long distances and the risk of arrest and deportation.
- Arranging day trips

Conduct of service-providers

Participants from all groups were critical of the performance and conduct of service-providers. These type of comments represent 60% of participant feedback and indicate that (1) participants are unsatisfied with the current processes, methodologies and systems, (2) communication with refugees and sensitivity to individual needs must be improved and (3) there is an extreme lack of confidence with regard to the transparency of assistance.

Many participants testified that they felt humiliated as a result of their experience with service-providers and commented that their expectation was to be treated with respect and like human beings. The failure of service-providers to operate in a transparent manner was creating unnecessary distress, conflict and misunderstandings on individual, family and community levels.

Participants stated that service-providers:

- failed to articulate their criteria and eligibility guidelines for assistance and did not update refugees when they changed their criteria or procedures for applying for assistance or submitting cases
- were biased and did not offer assistance equally to all refugees
- were not easily accessible
- forced refugees to wait in urgent cases and postponed cases with no reason or explanation
- have refused assistance to a mother and her children who were not registered on her husbands UNHCR card
- dealt with refugees in an unprofessional manner; service-providers "*scream at us*", "*kick people away*" and one participant cited an incident where a man had been reprimanded by a social worker, "*how would I know!!*" when he appealed for medical assistance for his pregnant daughter
- closed the files of refugees who did not attend training they facilitated
- instructed refugees not to disclose details of assistance they were receiving to other refugees
- were inefficient and did not give proper attention to medical files or provide basic vaccinations for children

- delayed the distribution of medicines (even in emergency cases)
- delayed reimbursement of medical fees forcing refugees into debt
- reimbursed diesel purchases based on the market rate at the time of reimbursement as opposed to the time of purchase (resulting in a loss for the refugee)
- forced refugees to shout and fight in order to receive assistance
- negotiated a deal with a clothing store so that clothing vouchers limited refugees to the stock that was unable to be sold and “*pretend to be helping*”
- were accepting payment to provide assistance including resettlement to non-Iraqi refugees
- funding projects for local NGOs in the name of Iraqi refugees (e.g. they send our names as participants but none of us attended) and then charge Lebanese participants to attend

Suggestion:

- Participants appealed for service-providers to operate with transparency and emphasised the need to provide regularly updated, clear, accurate and articulate information on assistance criteria and processes and to treat refugees equally, with respect and based on humanitarian principles.

2.0 SHORT TERM PLANS OF IRAQI REFUGEES

In May 2009, DRC conducted phone surveys with 252 Iraqi households to collect information about their current situation and the short term plans of households who have to date not received an offer for resettlement.

The 252 Iraqis were selected from DRC database of 844 Iraqi households visited and/or assessed and/or assisted by DRC. The selection process was the following:

- Division of Iraqis in DRC database according to Lebanese districts (caza) and governorates (mouhafazat). According to the percentage of Iraqis per governorate, the 252 households to be called were divided as follow: 57% from Mount Lebanon, 16% from Nabatieh, 13% from the Beqaa, 10% from the South, 2% from the North and 2% from Beirut;
- Per governorate the selection was random; the only criterion was whether the Iraqi to be called had provided DRC with contact information. Although the majority had provided DRC with such contacts, some contact had changed or were out of service;
- Iraqis were briefed at the beginning of the phone call on the purpose of the questionnaire and upon their approval the questionnaire was completed.

Sections 2.1 and 2.2 provide information about the entire surveyed population of 252 households. Section 2.3 provides information about the location and date of resettlement for households who have received an offer for resettlement. Section 2.4 explores the short term plans for households who have not received an offer of resettlement.

Whilst every effort has been made to present information that accurately reflects the Iraqi community in Lebanon, the information contained in this section of the report represents the cases of 252 households only.

The information presented below corresponds with the themes and questions contained in the questionnaire.

2.1 Lebanon

Movement to Lebanon

The graph below illustrates the flow of surveyed Iraqi refugees into Lebanon as of May 2009. The earliest arrival was in 1978 with the highest number arrivals (18%) in 2006, closely followed by 2008 (16.4%). Information for 2 households was missing (families could not remember exactly year of arrival).

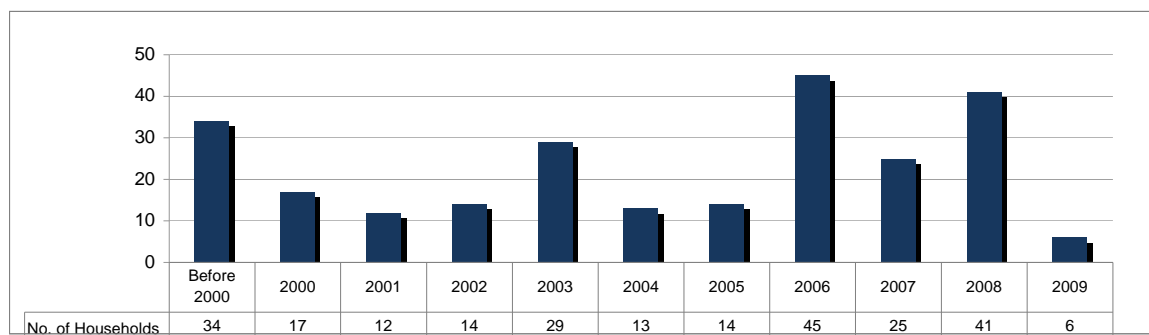


Figure 2.1: Year of arrival of surveyed Iraqi refugees to Lebanon as of May 2009

UNHCR registration

Of the 252 households of surveyed Iraqi refugees, 96% report they are registered with UNHCR in Lebanon.¹ The table below illustrates the geographic dispersion of 11 cases of un-registered surveyed Iraqi refugees.

District in Lebanon	No. of unregistered households
Saida	3
Tyre	1
Chouf	1
Hermel	3
Zahleh	1
Bint Jbeil	2

Table 2.1: Geographic dispersion of surveyed Iraqi refugees not registered by UNHCR by Lebanese district

Section 3 of this report explores in more depth the situation of Iraqi refugees not registered with UNHCR in Lebanon.

Legality of stay in Lebanon

42% (105 households) of the 252 surveyed households report their stay in Lebanon is legal.

¹ For purposes of comparison, 11% of the 844 households (which include the 252 in this survey) individually assessed by DRC for NFI and other assistance since last fall were not registered with UNHCR. Even this percentage of unregistered Iraqis is significantly lower than the 33% found in DRC's 2007 Iraqi Population Survey. One explanation for this variance is that the 2007 survey population was not limited to Iraqis receiving or seeking assistance.

2.2 Iraq

Governorate of origin

Of the 252 households surveyed, data relating to their Governorate of origin and the Governorate of residence prior to coming to Lebanon was available for 249 (one household is from Palestinian origin) and 250 cases, respectively.

Governorate in Iraq	Governorate of Origin (No. of household)	Governorate of Origin (% of surveyed population)	Governorate of Residence prior to Lebanon (No. of household)	Governorate of Residence prior to Lebanon (% of surveyed population)
Baghdad	115	46.2%	136	54.4%
Ninawa	34	13.7%	27	10.8%
Thi Qar	16	6.4%	15	6.0%
Basra	14	5.6%	12	4.8%
Karbala	12	4.8%	10	4.0%
Diyala	10	4.0%	11	4.4%
Najaf	9	3.6%	8	3.2%
Wasit	8	3.2%	7	2.8%
Missan	7	2.8%	5	2.0%
Babil	7	2.8%	7	2.8%
Muthanna	6	2.4%	6	2.4%
Qadisiyah	5	2.0%	2	0.8%
Anbar	3	1.2%	3	1.2%
Sulaymaniyah	1	0.4%	0	0%
Salah Ad-Din	1	0.4%	0	0%
Ta'mim	1	0.4%	1	0.4%

Table 2.2: Governorate of origin and governorate of residence prior to Lebanon of surveyed Iraqi refugees

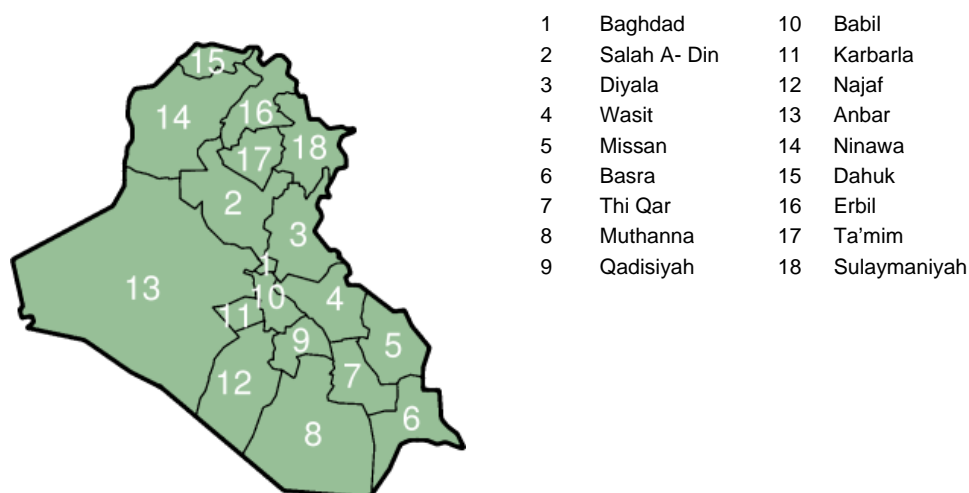


Figure 2.2: Governorates of Iraq

The data illustrates that 21 households (8%) moved to Baghdad before arriving in Lebanon.

Monitoring the Situation in Iraq

Primary and Secondary News Source

More than three-quarters (79%) of households reported that they monitored the political, security and social situation in Iraq. Of these 197 households, television and information from family and friends in Iraq were the most common forms of news monitoring. Television was reported the primary source of information for 64% and the secondary source for 24%. Information from relatives and friends in Iraq provided primary information for 33% and was the second choice of news source for 46%. The Internet was a primary news source for 2% and newspapers 1%. The graph below illustrates the primary and secondary preferences for news monitoring. 76% of Iraqis monitoring the situation in Iraq reported using a secondary source of news monitoring.

The graph below illustrates the primary and secondary preferences for news monitoring. 76% of Iraqis monitoring the situation in Iraq reported using a secondary source of news monitoring.

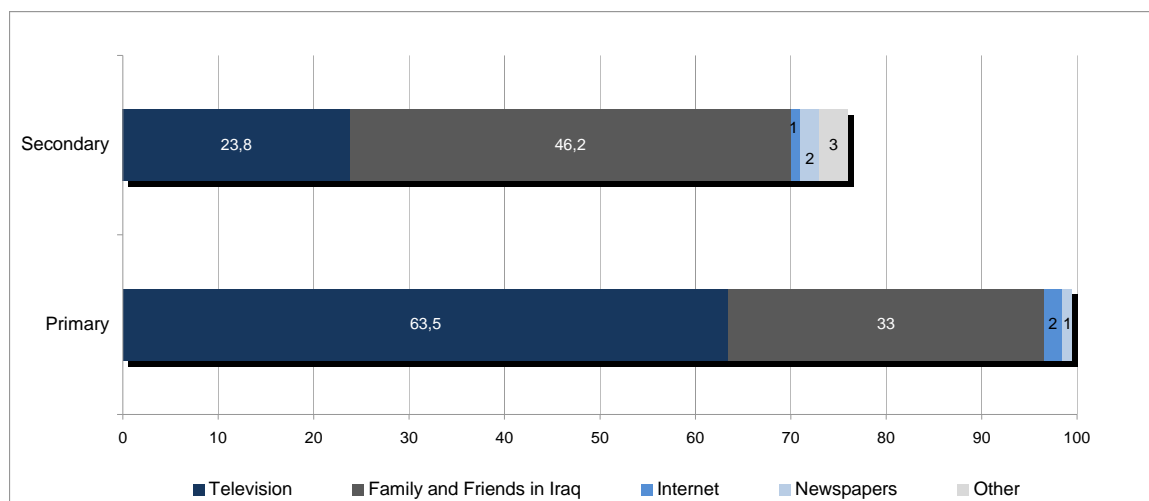


Figure 2.3: Primary and secondary sources of news for surveyed Iraqi refugees

Frequency of Monitoring

60.2% of households monitor their primary source of political, security and social situation in Iraq on a daily basis. Table 3 illustrates the frequency of monitoring primary information sources. Information on frequency of monitoring is missing for one household.

Frequency of monitoring primary source of news	No of households	(% of surveyed population)
Daily	118	60.2%
2 - 3 x per week	8	4.0%
Weekly	13	6.6%
2 - 3 x per month	19	9.7 %
Monthly	31	15.8%
Other	7	3.5%

Table 2.3: Frequency of monitoring of primary news source by surveyed Iraqi refugees.

2.3 Resettlement

Before asking Iraqis what were their short term plans, surveyed households were asked if, to their current knowledge, they will be resettled to another country, and if yes, where and when. 243 households were able to confirm whether they will be resettled or not. Of these cases, 29 households reported they received confirmation for resettlement, of these, only four reported a response regarding a date for resettlement.

Resettlement destination and date for resettlement is recorded below.

Resettlement Destination	No. of households
USA #	20
Australia	5
Denmark	2
Sweden	1
Australia or Sweden ##	1

Date for Resettlement	No. of households
May 2009	1
June 2009	3
July 2009	1

Table 2.4: Resettlement destination and date of resettlement for surveyed Iraqi refugees.

2 households are waiting for a final response from the US embassy, and 1 household was resettled to the USA but has refused to go.

One household claims he had two interviews with representatives from Australia and Sweden but has not received a final answer.

2.4 Short term plans

The information below documents the short term plans (3 - 6 months) of the surveyed population who identified they have not currently been selected for resettlement (223 households). Households were asked to indicate if their plan was (1) Resettlement, (2) Return to Iraq, (3) Stay in Lebanon, (4) Move to a neighboring country, or (5) Other. When asking and explaining the question, interviewers tried as much as possible to make interviewees present answers with regard to what they will actually do, as apposed to what they wish to do.

114 households (51.1%) who have not been accepted for resettlement still reported that obtaining resettlement to a third country was their only plan, 106 households (47.5%) plan to stay in Lebanon, two households (0.9%) are planning to return to Iraq and one (0.4%) reported a plan to travel illegally to a third country.

When the 114 households planning for resettlement were asked about a second realistic opportunity if resettlement was not an option, 112 households offered a response. 91 households (81.3%) reported they would remain in Lebanon, 21 households (18.8%) did not currently have a plan.

Resettlement

111 of the 114 households who indicated they wanted to be resettled recorded the reasons why they believed they would be resettled. 55% stated they cannot return to Iraq and 30.6% indicated the situation in Iraq (economic, political and security). The remaining 16 households cited various reasons including reporting having nothing to return to in Iraq, family reasons and reunification with relatives living abroad.

Table 2.5 presents a summary of the total 111 responses.

Reasons why they think they will be resettled	No. of households	(% of surveyed population)
Cannot return	61	55.0%
Situation in Iraq	34	30.6%
Other	16	14.4%

Table 2.5: Primary reasons for resettlement as provided by surveyed Iraqi refugees

All respondents who indicated they cannot return to Iraq reported that there was a direct threat (either death, kidnapping or violence) to themselves or their family. 30 reported their lives have been threatened and 8 reported that their family members had been killed. The remaining 23 respondents recorded threats of violence and kidnapping to themselves or their families but most often did not give specific reasons for the threats. Of those that did cite reasons - factors included ethnic discrimination and threats based on past employment with the US or the army.

Of the 34 respondents who recorded the situation in Iraq as the reason why they believe they will be resettled, 19 households specifically indicated the security situation and 7, the current political situation.

Return to Iraq

The two households that indicated they are planning to return to Iraq reported they do not have a timeframe for their return.

In the first case, a man who was born in Lebanon, indicated he would return to his Governorate of origin, Baghdad, when he could afford to do so. Her reported that he would return alone as his immediate family preferred to remain in Lebanon. He stated his reason for his return was to get to know his home country and look for his grandfathers and extended family. He will be supported by his family.

In the second case another man also intends to return to his Governorate of Origin, Baghdad, and reported his return is motivated by the lack of work in Lebanon and the improving security situation in Iraq. He indicated that he would be assisted by the Iraqi Embassy to return and would support himself once he arrived.

Both men haven't been to Iraq recently to assess the situation and they do not own property in Iraq.

Remain in Lebanon

197 households were surveyed concerning their short term plan to remaining in Lebanon: 106 households identified remaining in Lebanon as their primary plan and 91 households indicated they would remain in Lebanon if they were not offered resettlement. 196 households provided a reason as to why they were not ready to return to Iraq. 58.2% indicated that the situation in Iraq prevented their return, 28.6% indicated they cannot return and 5.1% reported they had nothing to return to. Alike the households who are seeking resettlement, security and the threats to life are the most common themes preventing an imminent return.

Table 2.6 presents a summary of the reasons refugees are not ready to return to Iraq.

Reasons not ready to return to Iraq	No of households	(% of surveyed population)
Situation in Iraq	114	58.2%
Cannot return	56	28.6%
Nothing to return to	10	5.1%
No family remaining in Iraq	9	4.6%
Other	7	3.5%

Table 2.6: Primary reasons for not being ready to return to Iraq from surveyed Iraqi refugees

Of the 58.2 % who indicated the “situation in Iraq” response, an analysis of these responses found that 78.9% recorded security as the major concern regarding the situation and 11.4% reported the political situation. The overall situation and economic circumstances were also presented as reasons.

For the 28.6% who recorded the “cannot return” responses, direct threats to life (57.1%) were the most common explanation given for not being able to return. 19.6% reported death or threats to family members.

Legalisation of Stay in Lebanon

Legalisation presents serious concerns to many Iraqi refugees. The process of legalisation is often a timely, costly and difficult one. Without legal status refugees report widespread insecurity and a lack of freedom of movement, fear of detention and are often more vulnerable to exploitation.

Of the 197 households who intend in the short term to remain in Lebanon 91 households (46.2%) have legal status. Remembering that out of the total number of surveyed households (252), 105 households are legal (see page 10), it can be concluded that 87% of Iraqis having a legal stay in Lebanon intend to stay in Lebanon, either as their first preferred plan or their second preferred

plan if resettlement is not an option (55 households recorded this as their intended plan and 36 as a second option after resettlement).

47 households without legal status are actively working toward legalising their stay.

The table below documents the processes and different stages of legalisation that the 47 households are attempting to undertake. Less frequent responses offered by respondents have been grouped under 'other' and include amongst other activities: saving money, preparing papers and meeting with General Security.

Process /Stage of attempting legalisation	No. of households
Renewing residency permit	21
Trying to find a sponsor	12
Other	14

Table 2.7: Different stages of application processes of surveyed Iraqi refugees for legalisation

Relatives in Lebanon

Of 197 households who intend to stay in Lebanon for the short term, 191 responded to questions concerning Lebanese relatives. 74 households reported having Lebanese relatives. In 67 households, (90.5%), the wife of the head of household is Lebanese. In the remaining seven households, five have a Lebanese mother, and two recorded a Lebanese mother-in-law and 1 recorded her ex-husband as being Lebanese.

Sources of Income in Lebanon

The ability to support a household when faced with a multitude of issues, including a lack of legal status, is challenging in many ways. 196 households intending to remain in Lebanon provided information regarding their sources of income. 166 households (84.7%) recorded their primary source of income was through employment followed by 16 households (8.2%) who rely on their families for economic support (in one case children work after school) and 9 households (4.6%) live off life savings. NGO support provided primary income for four families (2%), and 1 household (0.5%) indicated rental income from Iraq is his primary source of income.

In this context, where only 46.4% of the surveyed population has legal status, there is widespread opportunity for exploitation. In the past, refugees have complained about unfair treatment, long work hours and delayed payment of salaries (DRC Findings from first Iraqi Outreach Activities Report April 2009). They reported that employers know they are not protected by Lebanese Labour Law and that they have no legal recourse.

NGOs provide a secondary source of income for 87.9% of households.

3.0 UNHCR REGISTRATION

Why refugees are not registered

Based on a database of 844 household cases, DRC recorded 98 households not registered with UNHCR (11.6%). From those 98 households, 7 had appointments with UNHCR at the time of writing.

In June 2009, DRC conducted phone surveys with 45 Iraqi households who, based on DRC outreach work, were recorded as not being registered with UNHCR. The remaining 42 households could not be contacted (some had changed their mobile numbers, some mobile numbers were out of service and some had not provided a mobile number at the time of DRC visit).

In the time between DRC's last outreach visit and the survey seven of the 45 households had sought registration and have appointments scheduled with UNHCR in the next two months (June/July 2009). This indicates that despite obstacles – logistical and/or perceived ones - refugees are seeking registration.

The phone questionnaire was designed to follow up earlier DRC research and establish the reasons why refugees are not registered, their attitudes towards registration, and their awareness of the registration process.

Section 3.1 provides information on the households surveyed, Section 3.2 investigates their reasons for not registering, Section 3.3 presents perceptions of the benefits and expectations of registration and Section 3.4 explores whether changes to the registration process would encourage more refugees to do so.

While every effort has been made to present information that accurately reflects the percentage of Iraqi refugees not registered with UNHCR in Lebanon, the information contained in this section of the report represents the cases of 45 households only.

3.1 Lebanon

Location in Lebanon

The highest number of surveyed households (26.7%) not registered with UNHCR live in Saida, a district in the South Governorate of Lebanon, followed by 22.2 % in Zahleh in the country's west and 15.6% in Nabatieh, a district south-west of Saida.

The data substantiates previous DRC research which indicated that refugees living in outer-lying areas are less likely to be registered than their counterparts who reside in, or close to, Beirut.

The table below illustrates the locations of the unregistered households.

District in Lebanon	No. of households	% of surveyed population
Saida	12	26.7
Zahleh	10	22.2
Nabatieh	7	15.6
Hermel	3	6.7
Tyre	2	4.4
Baalbeck	2	4.4
Tripoli	2	4.4
Ouest Beqaa	2	4.4
Marjeyoun	1	2.2
Baabda	1	2.2
Bint Jbeil	1	2.2
Chouf	1	2.2
Kesrouan	1	2.2

Table 3.1: Geographic dispersion of surveyed Iraqi refugees not registered with UNHCR by Lebanese district.

DRC did not complete the questionnaire with the 7 Iraqis who mentioned they had appointments with the UNHCR. Hence the remaining findings are based on 38 Iraqi households who are not registered with UNHCR and did not have a UNHCR appointment at the time of phone survey.

Movement to Lebanon

The data reveals a larger percentage of more recent arrivals have remained unregistered. Six households (17.1%) who arrived in 2007 are still unregistered and four households (11.4%) who arrived in 2006 are also not registered. This data should be considered in the context of the small population sample size: 35 households (2 households did not record a response and one householder was born in Lebanon 1981).

3.2 Registration

Ten of the surveyed households have attempted UNHCR registration in the past. Seven of them reported having difficulties during the process. In four cases the renewal of previous registration cards was refused. One householder only attended a first interview, another interview was cancelled because of the 2006 war and another said he was mistreated.

Reasons for not attempting registration

In order to establish the reasons for remaining unregistered, households were requested to nominate the three reasons or issues that discouraged them from pursuing the process.

Of 34 households who answered the question, six households (17.6%) indicated that security (fear of arrest, or detention while travelling to UNHCR) was the primary reason they remain unregistered. For five families unfamiliarity with procedures was their main concern whilst transportation issues (5 families) and lack of time due to work commitments (5 families) were also recorded reasons.

Amongst the responses grouped as 'other', four houses indicated that they were planning to return to Iraq and/or did not want to be resettled as their main reason. Another three households indicated they had no reason to register or would not benefit from registration. One head of household indicated it was the first time he had heard of registration. Collectively, 23.5% of the surveyed households primary reasons for not registering could be linked to lack of information about the full scope and potential benefits of UNHCR registration.

Table 3.2 below documents the primary responses.

Primary reasons for not registering	Frequency of response	% of surveyed population
Security	6	17.6%
Busy at work	5	14.7%
Don't know procedures	5	14.7%
Transportation problems	5	14.7%
Other	13	38.2%

Table 3.2: Primary reasons for not registering with UNHCR from surveyed Iraqi refugees

19 households indicated a secondary reason and 11 households a tertiary reason for not registering. The responses generally reflected the major concerns identified in the primary reasons. Transportation and unfamiliarity with procedures and potential benefits were recurrent responses.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the primary, secondary and tertiary reasons or issues identified by surveyed households that discouraged registration with UNHCR.

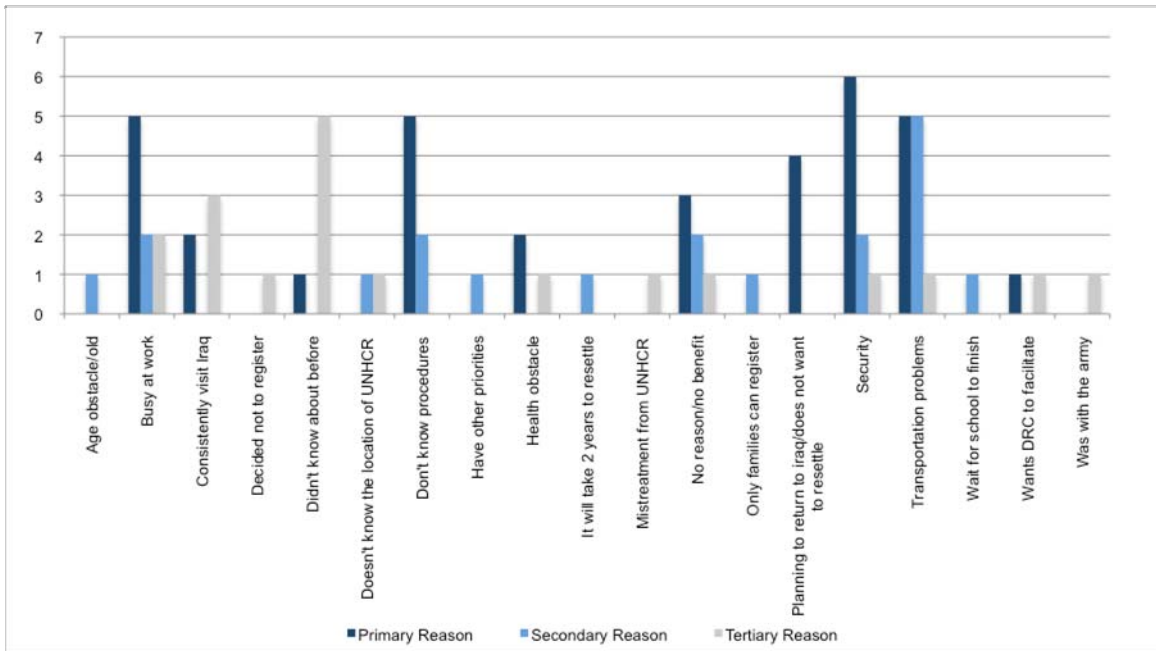


Figure 3.1: Primary, secondary and tertiary reasons for not registering with UNHCR from surveyed Iraqi refugees

Benefits of registration

Misinformation and the lack of information about UNHCR registration impacts on the motivation of households to seek to register.

Householders were asked to record what they considered to be the benefits of UNHCR registration. Overwhelmingly, resettlement was reported to be the major benefit. Medical assistance was also considered to be a popular benefit of registration.

The figure below presents the benefits as considered by surveyed households. The data is categorised as primary, secondary and tertiary responses.

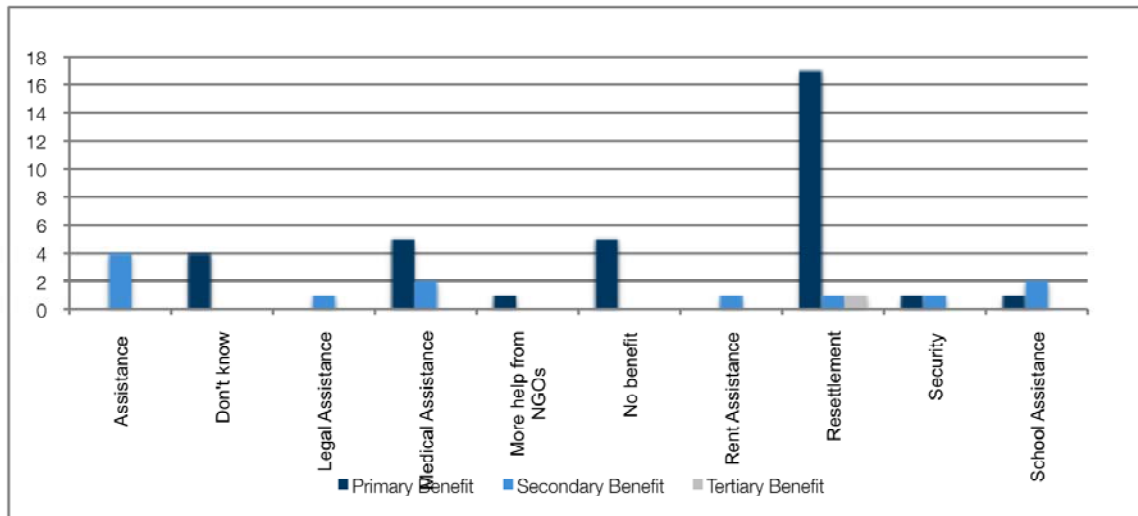


Figure 3.2: Primary, secondary and tertiary understandings of benefits of UNHCR registration from surveyed Iraqi refugees

Plans for registration

23 households indicated that they had plans to register with UNHCR in the coming months (June/July 2009).

Households which indicated that they were planning to register in the coming months were asked to identify any support that would assist in the registration process.

12 households suggested amalgamating the registration meeting and certificate visit into one appointment. Another six households requested more information about the registration process. Transportation was recorded as a need by one household and one household said they would register only if all family members get registered. Three households were unsure about the type of assistance needed.