IDPs and the Informal Economy: Innovations in Dahuk, Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Project Background

This study was undertaken as part of a 2.5-year research project on *Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict cities: the role of the urban informal economy,* funded under the DFID-ESRC *Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation Research* (Project ES-M008789-1), updated with UN-Habitat through fund 32FOD TFFdtnEkedPjOthr. The research explores the role of the urban informal economy in poverty-reduction, peace-building and development in post-conflict cities, and its scope to provide both livelihoods for the extreme poor and a platform for economic recovery. In Dahuk, an additional focus is to examine policy innovation in dealing with large numbers of Internally Displaced People (IDPS) as a result of regional conflict in Syria and Iraq.

Post-conflict recovery is a long and cyclical process and this research examines cities with different drivers of conflict, including urban areas in post-civil war settings, and cities affected by protest, violence or on-going turf wars. The research explores the drivers of conflict and links to the informal economy, examining both structural and individual factors that support/inhibit the informal economy's role and growth in post-conflict settings. Fieldwork is being carried out in five cities: Cali, Dahuk, Hargeisa, Karachi and Kathmandu, exhibiting different facets of conflict and violence.

Research Partners

Cardiff University: Professor Alison Brown; Dr. Peter Mackie; Kate Dickenson

University of Dohuk, Dr. Nesreen Barwari and MSc students

Contacts: BrownAM@cardiff.ac.uk; MackieP@cardiff.ac.uk

Contents

Tables and Figures

1. Introduction

Examining the response of the urban informal economy in the recovery from regional conflict in 2013-2014.

1.1 Introduction to the report

This report summarises the findings from research in Dahuk in 2018 and 2021 to examine the response of the urban informal economy (IE) in the recovery from regional conflicts which affected Dahuk most intensely between 2013-2014. The research also examines current development challenges of the urban IE.

In post-conflict cities, and many developing world cities across the globe, working in the IE is an important coping strategy. Worldwide, the contribution of urban informal enterprises to gross domestic product (GDP) and jobs is substantial. Even when political stability is assured, informality remains a structural characteristic of low-income economies, yet local and international policies see the IE as a temporary solution and rarely provide supportive and enabling environments for its development. In post-conflict and post-crisis settings, the IE's role is vital in providing livelihoods during recovery and in replacing basic services lost during crises.

Dahuk was selected to examine the impact of regional conflict on the urban area. Though Dahuk has not suffered recent direct violence, since 2011 it has been surrounded by multiple and intersecting regional conflicts which have impacted urban life. The most severe of these include: the Syrian civil war and the advancement of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) into nearby territories which have initiated mass displacement of people into Dahuk, and the 2017 loss of oil revenue to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The experience of conflict and displacement, along with a financial crisis and weak governance means that Dahuk exhibits dimensions of fragility typical in 'post-conflict' cities.

Thus, the core focus of interest for the research in Dahuk is to explore the role of the IE during regional violence, its evolution and its current economic contribution. The research team also sought to understand how different livelihood routes reduced the impact of violence, crisis and instability on poor people, refugees and IDPs and the role of the IE in economic innovation and recovery, as a basis for improving development interventions in Dahuk. The report addresses three main questions:

- How does the IE operate in Dahuk today and what are the main challenges that IE workers face?
- What were the short-term and long-term impacts of urban violence on the urban IE, and how did it respond? How does this response contribute to improved development outcomes?
- How can support for the IE contribute to wider initiatives of poverty reduction and economic growth?

Dahuk Governorate lies at the Western side of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), bordering Turkey and Syria. It also borders the Mosul Lake which separates the province from Nineveh Governorate. Dahuk Governorate consists of four districts: Dahuk, Summel, Amedi and Zakho, the highest density of which are the districts of Dahuk and Summel. Dahuk City (in the district of Dahuk) is the capital of Dahuk Governorate and Summel City, the administrative centre of the district of Summel, is just 14km away. For the purposes of this report, Dahuk will refer to the high-density areas in and around Dahuk City and Summel City, which will be differentiated from Dahuk City, the district of Dahuk and Dahuk Governorate. In 2021, the research team reanalysed Dahuk, to see how policy and practice towards accommodating internally displaced people (IDPs) had evolved in the light of major changes to the governance and economic contexts, i.e. building-back-better efforts and impact of the global pandemic.

1.2 Structure of the report

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a short background to Dahuk; it describes the political and socio-economic conditions in the city, current policies and attitudes towards the urban IE, and provides an overview of the periods of regional violence up to 2014. Chapter 3 briefly discusses the two-stage methodology used in the fieldwork. The findings of the report are then set out in two chapters: Chapter 4 explores the characteristics of the IE in Dahuk today. It builds a profile of the IE workers and businesses interviewed, and the challenges and problems that the IE faces, before concluding with a commentary on potential protections to strengthen livelihoods. Chapter 5 discusses the impacts of regional violence on urban society and evaluates how the IE responded to the conflict, before exploring the changed business environment since 2014, how the IE has contributed to economic recovery and innovations in managing IDPs. Chapter 6 summarises key findings.

Dahuk city

2. Setting the Context: Conflict & the City

Dahuk has been surrounded by regional conflict in recent years, which together with financial crisis and displacement, has generated insecurity.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief overview of regional conflict affecting Dahuk up to 2014 and summarises the political, ethnic and socio-economic makeup of Dahuk today, Dahuk's experience of displacement and the policy context affecting the urban IE. While Dahuk has not recently suffered violence, from 2013 to 2015 conflicts in the region resulted in an influx of about 550,000 refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) (GIZ, 2016) effectively doubling the size of the population of Dohuk Governorate's population of around half a million people (IAU, 2010). Thus, the core focus for this study is to explore the role of the informal economy during regional violence, and to understand how different livelihood routes reduced the impact of crisis and instability on poor people, refugees and IDPs.

Dahuk Governorate lies at the Western side of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) bordering Turkey and Syria, and is the main road entry point from these two countries to the KRI. It also borders the Mosul Lake which separates the province from Nineveh Governorate. Dahuk Governorate consists of four districts: Dahuk, Summel, Amedi and Zakho, with the highest density of development in the districts of Dahuk and Summel. Dahuk City (in the district of Dahuk) is the capital of Dahuk Governorate. Summel City, the administrative center of the district of Summel, is just 14km away. For the purposes of this report, Dahuk is used to refer to the built-up areas in and around Dahuk City and Summel City, which will be differentiated from **Dahuk City**, **Dahuk District** and **Dahuk Governorate**.

2.2 Conflict in Dahuk

Dahuk Governorate, has been surrounded by regional conflicts for a number of years which have increased insecurity in the area (WANA 2017). This section first examines recent history to 2013, and then the regional conflict from 2012 to 2014, which forms the significant change considered in this research.

2.2.1 History of conflict in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq up to 2013

The Iraqi-Kurdish conflict has a long history of struggle between Kurds and central government of Iraq from the 1950s onwards in order to secure equal rights of citizenship and expression (McDowall, 2005). Following conflicts with different political regimes, Iraqi forces left the Kurdish region in 1991, and a year later a semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was set up in north and north western region of Iraq.

Although the Iraqi government de-militarized the Kurdistan region, the Iraqi-Kurdish struggle continued in the following years. In the 1990s when Iraq entered a war with Kuwait, some of the provinces in the north rose against the Iraqi government, which led to the imposition of economic sanctions on the Kurdistan region. The Iraqi government cut off financial support for the Kurds and installed a no-fly zone that effectively defined the Kurdistan autonomous region (Chorev, 2007; WANA, 2017). This new territorial entity was formed, comprising the governorates of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Dahuk (Gunter, 2008; McDowall, 2005). This region is referred to as the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) or the Kurdistan Autonomous Region.

When, in 2003, the US-led coalition invaded Iraq and was joined by Kurdish Peshmerga[1] forces to fight against the central Iraqi government, the boundaries of Kurdistan region were expanded southwards (Romano, 2010). The invasion of Iraq resulted in political instability and in the following years various insurgent groups emerged (Jongerden, 2019). Despite of the political instability in Iraq, for the KRI the period between 2003 and 2013 is known as golden period as financial sanctions were lifted, the KRI received 17% of Iraq's annual budget (oil revenues), and opened its doors to international companies, organisations, and the tourism sector (WANA, 2017).

[1] Peshmerga are the military forces of the autonomous region of Kurdistan of Iraq. They are responsible for the security of Kurdistan region since Iraqi law forbidden Iraqi Army to enter Kurdistan region.

In 2013, when the Iraqi army was defeated in Mosul under attack from ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) (now called IS - Islamic State of ISIS – Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), the Peshmerga fighters entered an agreement with central government to fight in coalition against ISIS. This allowed them to establish control over Kirkuk, an oil-rich city, which further stretched the boundary of Kurdistan region southwards (Yoshioka, 2015).

2.2.2 Regional conflict 2012-2014

The 2011 mass protests of the Arab Spring quickly transformed into active insurgency and civil war in Syria against Syrian state policies. During the early stages on civil war in Syria in 2011, the establishment of *de facto* autonomy in Syria's Kurdish majority areas turned the Kurds into key actors of conflict across Middle East (Gunes and Lowe, 2015). The weakening of central government in Syria provided an opportunity for local political factions to demand self-government. Protests in Syrian Kurdistan broke out late in 2012, as Syria fell into warring factions which led into extreme violence and bloodshed between Syrian Kurdish militia and ISIS. The Syrian Kurdish political party – Democratic Union Party (PYD) – asserted control over three Kurdish majority territories in the north of Syria: Jazira, Kobane and Afrin and set up an autonomous administration in these areas (Jongerden, 2017).

With the rising control of Kurds in Syria, especially the dominance of the PYD in north, and effectiveness with which they organised the Kurds military under People's Protection Unit (YPG), Turkey saw the PYD as a threat to its national security (Somer, 2012). Turkey feared that the coalition between YPD and PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) would put pressure on its central government to grant political rights to its own Kurdish minority, and the government therefore refused to negotiate Kurdish demands of decentralisation and autonomy (Gunes, 2019). This added further tension to the regional conflict, followed by Turkish military advancement to the Syrian-Kurdish border and the Turkish government's threat to invade Syria if Kurdish autonomy was established under PYD. The escalation of military action along the Turkey and Syrian-Kurdish border further destabilised the region.

Map 1: Map of Kurdistan

ISIS insurgency and displacement

Mass displacement of refugees from the civil war in neighbouring Syria and Turkey and brutal human rights violations committed by ISIS in other areas of Iraq caused mass displacement of IDPs to the KRI. The central

location of Dahuk Governorate bordering both Syria and Turkey countries made it the major receiving country for both Iraqi IDPs and Syrian Kurdish refugees. The first wave of refugees started in late 2012, when Syrian refugees fled from the northern areas of Syria, especially districts with large Kurdish populations, resulting in the movement of around 250,000 Syrian refugees to the KRI (UNHCR, 2016).

In addition, on-going conflict in Iraq's Nineveh and Sinjar districts, and capture by ISIS of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, increased the displacement, and up to 500,000 more people arrived in KRG (WANA, 2017). It is estimated that 39% of the total Syrian refugees and 68% of the Iraqi IDPs in the KRI were hosted in Dahuk Governorate, which resulted in 49% increase in the total population of Dahuk Governorate between 2013-2014 (UNHCR, 2016). However, numbers of Syrian refugees gradually decreased after 2014 when Peshmerga forces began to take back territory from ISIS.

2.2.3 Conflict and the city

Dahuk, the only Governorate of the Kurdistan Regional Government, has been haven for many refugees, and since 2014 has been pushed into financial crisis. Dahuk's strategic location meant that it became the principal destination for Syrian refugees fleeing the conflict in the northern areas of Syria in 2012, and for families displaced after the fall of Mosul and Nineveh and genocidal killing and abduction of thousands of people in June 2014. In August 2014, after the fall of Sinjar, Dahuk received large numbers of Dahuk IDPs, often fleeing and transiting through the Sinjar Mountains and Syria before settling in the Dahuk governorate. Kurdish insurgence in southeastern Turkey heightened conflict in the region, and saw more movement of refugees from conflict-affected areas into the main cities of KRI (Brathwaite, 2014).

Most IDPs in Dahuk are from other governorates of Iraq. By 2018, the Dahuk Governorate had a total host population of 1.5 million people, including 88,566 Syrian refugees and 348,198 IDPs. Thus approximately 29.7% of the total population in Dahuk governorate is displaced, with refugees and IDPs living both in camps and amongst the wider population. Around 39.2% (34,750) of Syrian refugees hosted in Dahuk governorate lived outside camps (DSP, 2019). Although many IDPs have now returned, large numbers still remain in Dahuk Governorate.

Within the KRI, there are 18 camps and more than 50 informal settlements housing displaced people. Figures at the end of 2019 and end of 2020, suggest that around 350,000 people in Dahuk Governorate are in need of humanitarian assistance, including around 190,000 IDPs living outside camps, and 84,000 refugees and persons of concern (OCHA, 2019; UNHCR, 2021). A more recent report noted that in December 2020 there were 25 camps still open in the KRI, with an estimated population of 186,400 people (USAID, 2020). Although the Iraqi government is closing IDP camps, but for humanitarian reasons the KRG is not pursuing that route (Jangiz, 2021).

2.3 Ethnic, geographic, socio-economic and political characteristics of Dahuk

2.3.1 Ethnic and religious diversity in KRI and Dahuk

Dahuk has an ethnically mixed population. The majority of people born in Dahuk are Muslim Sunni Kurds, and the various waves of migration have added to its ethnic diversity. The majority of the displaced population is Kurdish (Muslim Sunni and Dahuk), but there is a sizeable population of Assyrians, and some Arabs, Christians and Turkmens in the city and surrounding region.

2.3.2 Weak economy and the financial crisis

The arrival of refugees and IDPs triggered social and economic crises in the region. The lack of integrated strategy, restrictions on public budget, and land management issues for hosting refugees and IDPs led to financial crises and weak governance. KRI economy is characterized by key weaknesses which have been worsened by financial crisis during/since period of conflict due to:

- the high dependency on oil prior to 2014 - constitutionally-mandated oil revenues from Baghdad provide 85% of the KRG's revenue but 1% of region's employment;
- the high dependency on public sector – KRG is main employer with over 50% of total employment so salaries, pensions, social assistance and subsidies consume over 50% of budget, and
- dependency on imports (Barwari, 2018).

The on-going security threat from ISIS requires significant military expenditure, and thus a major portion of KRI's budget goes on national security, leaving fewer resources for local development (Barwari, 2018; Tearfund, 2015). Infrastructure and services expenditure could not cope up with the unexpected population increase from both

internal and regional displacement. Another important factor of the fragile economy was the fiscal imbalance of the KRG budget, due to delayed and diminished budgetary transfers from the central government of Iraq – from USD 12 billion in 2013 to about USD 1 billion in 2014, to zero in 2015. The sharp decline in international oil prices, from USD 115 per barrel in June 2014 to about USD 45 in 2017 also contributed to the financial crises.

As a result, the region went into near bankruptcy which has led to non-payment of public sector salaries and job losses in public sector since 2014 – especially in education and health-care – which limited further development and public sector provision. Very low investment by the private sector over the period of conflict has undermined the tourism industry which was previously providing jobs to the local population (Tearfund, 2015).

2.3.3 Women in Dahuk

Female experience of conflict is often complex and while women face victimization and insecurity they are also active agents in resistance and conflict (Denov, 2007). Women faced particular problems during periods of regional conflict. They were especially vulnerable to losing family members, particularly husbands and sons, and to gender-based violence. Specific experiences during conflict need to be analyzed alongside the historic and cultural violence acceptance of violence against women in the KRI.

The effects of conflict amongst the refugees and IDPs who were displaced from Syria, Sinjar, Mosul and the wider KRI or Iraq were different to those who were in Dahuk the whole time. Many of the former experienced overt violence which resulted in displacement, loss of family and friends, disruption to livelihoods and emotional and psychological distress. Those who were in the city throughout the conflict also reported loss of family and friends outside the Dahuk area (particularly members of the Peshmerga), and fear of conflict, as the ISIS advance heightened tensions in the region. The accompanying financial crisis affected livelihoods, profits and incomes for residents of Dahuk as well as refugee and IDP arrivals.

Gender-based violence

Literature suggests that gender-based sexual violence is a common outcome and strategy of conflict and it often continues in the post-conflict environment (Nordås, 2013). Gender-based violence was a strategy of war in the Syrian civil war, but particularly during the ISIS advance and women faced organised rape and sexual assault, sexual slavery and forced marriage. Dahuk women and others in Mosul faced fear. Many of them were raped or killed and many are still in the hands of ISIS. Women experienced all sorts of violence in Syria. There women were being sold as slaves in the bazaars.

During the Syrian civil war and ISIS advance, women experienced human rights abuses, organised rape and sexual assault, sexual slavery, and forced marriages (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Women's low level of formal education (National Strategy, 2012) and restricted mobility in the public domain result in limited participation in the labour market across KRI. Most employed women work in public sector employment (education or health) or in agriculture or the private sector. Lack of women in work is attributed to inadequate education and training levels and cultural norms. However, the recent conflict and financial crisis has increased female participation in the labour market (UNHCR 2016). In the KRI, the *2012 National Strategy to Confront Violence Against Women* acknowledged high levels of honour killings, suicide, self-immolation, FGM and forced marriage of teenage girls.

New roles for women

Conflict sometimes has the effect of changing women's role within the household and within wider society and women often become heads of household over the course of conflict (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Case studies show a common trajectory emerging for those women affected by conflict in Dahuk, as many became widows, refugees, IDPs or breadwinners. The divorce rate has also increased in Dahuk over the period of conflict creating more female-headed households. Women were not working before the conflict but now they do.

However, livelihood opportunities do not always translate into political, economic and social rights and violence against women remains high in the post-conflict transition period while female empowerment remains contentious. Women also face discrimination in the labour market and are vulnerable to harassment in the public realm. Furthermore, the stigma around women working outside the home persists which restricts female liberation.

2.4 Local government in Dahuk

KRI's local governments are characterised by a high dependence on central government transfers and weak revenue base to sustain vital local services (WB, 2015). Throughout the Governorate, displacement and the

financial crisis has impacted on government income and functions. There are reportedly high levels of corruption, and a code of conduct for government employees to deal with conflicts of interest was introduced in 2009, but not implemented (Barwari, 2019).

2.5 The informal economy in Dahuk

Regional conflict had numerous impacts on the informal economy, but the sector has huge potential to contribute to development outcomes in Dahuk.

The informal economy is the largest provider of jobs in the KRI (ILO, 2016). An increase in the informal economy has been particularly evident since the economic and political crises, which resulted in an influx of displaced people including educated, skilled, and experienced refugees from Syria (WANA, 2017). Refugees and IDPs are free to work in the local private economy (within and outside camps), but no legal framework has been established for them to achieve citizenship or to integrate them within the public sector. Lack of resources and gaps in employment policies resulted high levels of discrimination and exploitation, and many refugees and IDPs are working at below-average wages and in poor working conditions (WANA, 2017). Though refugees and IDPs cannot legally work in public sector jobs, some exceptions have been made for education or healthcare personnel (WANA, 2017).

However, informal workers do not have access to labour rights or social security and can face discrimination and exclusion in the labour market, a problem particularly experienced by refugees, IDPs and women. The growth of some sectors within the IE is also problematic.

While increased vending opportunities are important for job creation and livelihood survival, the harassment of street vendors, as well as the congestion vending creates, raises questions about when and how government and other local actors intervene. Furthermore, the detrimental effect of increased prostitution is yet to be ascertained. Importantly, the continuing financial crisis and lack of support for, and regulation of, the IE inhibits the ability of IE workers to enter, grow and thrive within the sector and constrains the IE's contribution to wider economic growth. For instance, while some informal businesses may pay fees to the local authority for operating spaces, they do not pay tax on profits.

A more secure business environment due to the lack of regulation and restrictions and increased regional security since 2014 has deterred conflict within the city itself. In particular, the ability of the informal economy to absorb vulnerable groups such as IDPs, refugees, youth, ethnic minorities and women and the ability to provide valuable goods and services at cheap rates to a conflict-affected population is beneficial for poverty reduction and conflict prevention. However, in Duhok, declining income and increased competition, particularly between IDPs, refugees and the host community, sustains poverty at household level and threatens peace in Duhok itself.

Domiz Camp

3. Methods

This study adopted a mixed-method approach and used a combination of two key methods.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the key methods employed during the fieldwork for this research. The study adopted a mixed-method approach and used a combination of two methods, outlined below. Where possible the findings from Dahuk have been linked to relevant points in the literature to show the extent to which the findings here reflect, or differ from, findings elsewhere.

3.2 Informal economy analysis

In order to gain in-depth comparative information of individual experiences extended semi-structured pathways interviews were conducted with two groups. The first group consisted of IE workers in Dahuk today. The second included those who had been in Dahuk in 2013-2014 and had been directly affected by regional conflict, either as a refugee, IDP or member of the host population, so could answer questions about the impact of regional conflict on their lives and livelihoods.

3.2.1 Interviews with IE workers today

In the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, the 175 current IE workers in Dahuk are referred to as "current IE workers" throughout this report. The questionnaire was designed to elicit people's experience of the IE; the challenges and problems they face; any engagement with local authorities; and the impacts of conflict. Questions fell under the following broad categories: people; business; links and networks (including engagement with local authorities); safety; and security. If they could, respondents were then asked to comment on the impacts of the past conflict on society generally and the IE more specifically.

In order to get a diverse range of participants, selection was based on a number of observed factors including gender; age; business district, business type; and business premises. Factors such as time restraints of the fieldwork, and the unwillingness of some IE workers to participate, mean that an equal mix of participants within these groupings was not possible, an unavoidable limitation in the sampling. A brief profile of the 175 IE workers interviewed and their businesses is given below.

Gender

Some 157 men (90% of the sample) were interviewed compared with 18 women. This fits with findings from elsewhere which suggest that employment rates for women are extraordinarily low in Dahuk Governorate and across the KRI region (UNHCR 2016). It could also reflect the willingness of IE workers to be interviewed. The lack of female participants is recognised as a limitation of the study.

Age group

The vast majority of those interviewed (63%) were young people aged between 18–35 years (Table 3.1). There were few very young workers (under 18 years) or older (55 years and over) in the sample.

The presence of a large number of 18-25-year olds in this study is contrary to wider statistics on young people's employment in Dahuk Governorate, and UNCHR (2016) found that 50% of 18-25-year olds were unemployed, and youth integration in the labour market was highlighted as a key challenge for local government.

Table 3.1: Age group

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
0 -17 Years	18	11
18 – 25 Years	55	31
26 – 35 Years	56	32
36 – 55 Years	42	24
55+ Years	4	2
Total	**175**	**100**

Business location

The survey focussed on four key areas all of which had been impacted by regional conflict and displacement: Dahuk City, the capital and largest city in Dahuk Governorate; Summel City, a high density area close to Dahuk City where the arrival of displaced people has resulted in a large population increase; Domiz 1 camp (30,925 people) and Domiz 2 camp (10,812 people) situated outside Dahuk City and established in 2012, and mainly hosting Syrian refugees; and Shariya IDP camp (18,000 people – 2015 figures), also situated outside Dahuk City and established in 2014 which hosts mostly Dahuk Kurds and Sinjar IDPs (IAU, 2015; UNHCR, 2021).

Most of the 175 IE workers interviewed operated from the urban areas of Dahuk City (82 or 47% of the total) and Summel City (32 or 18% of the total). The remaining 61 IE workers worked in camps: 36 (21%) in Shariya IDP camp and 25 (14%) in Domiz refugee camp. This distribution allowed for a good mix of urban-based and camp-based businesses in and around Dahuk.

Business type

The majority (62%) of those interviewed were vendors selling fruit and vegetables, dry and cooked foods, grocery items, cigarettes, clothes, perfume, cosmetics and mobile accessories, amongst other goods (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Business type

Business Type	Frequency	Percent
Vending	109	62
Services	31	18
Home-based	13	7
Café	12	7
Construction	8	5
Other	2	1
Total	**175**	**100**

Those involved in services, including cobblers and shoe shiners, tailors, beauticians and hairdressers, printers, taxi drivers, mobile and watch repairers and money exchange workers, accounted for 18% of those interviewed. Home-based workers (7%) either worked as domestic workers or tailors or prepared and sold food and spices from their houses. Those involved in cafés, most of which were based in Dahuk City catering mainly for tourists, made up a further 7%, while construction workers, mostly labourers, made up 5% of those interviewed. The two "other" workers consisted of a shepherd and a people smuggler (1%).

Business premises

The majority of businesses (53%) operated from the street or from a bike, cart or cabinet in a public space while 6% operated from a market-type premises without a permanent roof. A third (33%) were based in a roofed building, while construction sites provided working space for 5% of those IE workers interviewed. The remaining 3% either operated from a vehicle (which they used as a taxi or vending space) or were itinerant in their work (such as hawkers, the shepherd and the people smuggler). This suggests that respondents face varying degrees of precariousness, enabling any variation in challenges to be explored.

Analysis

Numerical data from the questionnaires was analysed in SPSS using cross-tabulations of demographic indicators and current challenges within the IE to explore associations within the data. Qualitative data was analysed using NVivo.

3.2.2 Interviews with conflict-affected people in 2013-2014

Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed 113 (65%) had directly experienced regional conflict in 2013-2014 as a refugee, IDP or member of the host community. This group will be referred to as "conflict-affected people" (CAP) in this report. They were asked questions exploring the experience of conflict from a personal, business and societal perspective as well as the ability of the IE to contribute to economic development and peace-building in the period of transition.

Analysis

The responses from the 113 CAP were mainly qualitative and data was analysed using NVivo.

3.2.4 Governance analysis

In parallel, key informant (KI) interviews were conducted with stakeholders, including senior staff from local government, IDP and refugee camp managers, international NGOs, consultants and academics. A total of nine KI interviews took place. The KI interviews focussed on the historic and current role of the IE in Dahuk, national economic trajectories, current attitudes and policies of central and local government to the urban IE and potential opportunities within this.

Analysis

Again, analysis was performed using NVivo. This allowed KI interview data to be coded alongside the experiences of the 175 current IE workers and within this, the 113 workers who could answer questions on conflict.

Domiz Camp

4. Dahuk's informal economy today

IE workers in urban areas and camps face a host of challenges which restrict their ability to secure sufficient livelihoods, increasing insecurity.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the contemporary IE in Dahuk by examining the profile of current IE workers, the characteristics of their businesses and the challenges they face. It also investigates potential ways to address these problems through initiatives of central and local government or other urban actors.

The chapter draws on information from the 175 interviews with current IE workers, the 9 KI interviews and secondary data where relevant.

4.2 Describing the contemporary informal economy in Dahuk

This section builds a profile of interviewees working in the IE in Dahuk today, examining issues of birthplace, ethnicity, displacement, home district and education. It then explores business characteristics including business districts, types of businesses and premises, income levels and issues of seasonality.

We had expected to find that the livelihoods for those originally from KRI and refugees/IDPs were significantly different. Although the questionnaire did not specifically ask about refugee status (whether the interviewee was a registered international refugee, internally displaced person, or internal migrant from one city to another), we explored this hypothesis through a number of secondary indicators (e.g. date of moving to current home), and did not find significant differences between groups. The place of work seemed to be a better indicator of difference. More significantly, IE workers generally seem to have been affected by the challenging economic situation in the region.

4.2.1 Profile of informal economy workers

Though the IE provides poor urban residents with crucial opportunities for income generation in conflict-affected situations, there are entry barriers to participation (Günther and Launov, 2012). This section therefore analyses the profile of current IE workers interviewed in Dahuk with particular attention to structural inequalities such as birthplace, ethnicity, displacement, home district, and education, all recognised as factors that enable or inhibit access to the IE (Sen, 2008)

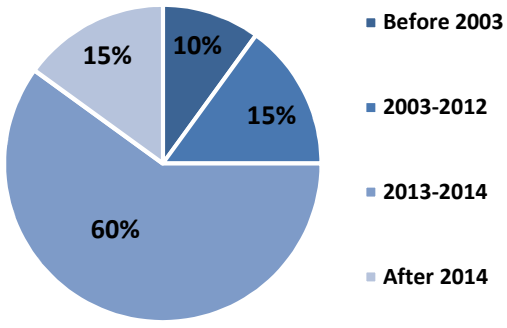
Birthplace and migration status

Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed only 47 (27%) were born in Dahuk or Summel while 128 (73%) migrated to the city.

Of the 128 migrant IE workers 47 (37%) were born in Sinjar; 45 (35%) were born in Mosul (29) or other areas of the KRI or Iraq (16)[2]; 31 (18%) were born in Syria and 5 (3%) in Turkey.

Some of the 47 people born in Dahuk or Summel had also moved away after birth and since returned to the city. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed 130 (74%) provided a response when asked when they moved to (or back to) Dahuk while seven IE workers who had moved to Dahuk from Mosul or other Iraqi regions did not respond. Of these 130 IE workers, 75% had moved since 2013 and 60% had moved in the two years between 2013-2014 and all can be presumed to have migrated because of conflict respond (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Move date to Dahuk



Move date can affect registration status Of the 47 IE workers born in Sinjar, all moved in the period after 2012 and will be referred to as "Sinjar IDPs" in this report. Of the 45 born in Mosul or other Iraqi regions, 21 moved in the period

[2] Other areas of the KRI or Iraq include Akre, Bardarash, Amadiya, Raabia and Bashiqa.

after 2012 and will be referred to as "Iraqi IDPs" in this report to differentiate them from Sinjar IDPs specifically, though they will be known together simply as IDPs. All 31 IE workers born in Syria migrated from the start of civil conflict in 2011 (though most in the period between 2013-2014) and will be referred to as "Syrian refugees" in this report. All Turks moved since 2013 and will be referred to as "Turkish migrants" in this report while all other IE workers born in the KRI or Iraq moved in the period before 2013 and will be known as "internal migrants" in the report.

The majority (83%) of the 18 female IE workers interviewed were born outwith Dahuk or Summel, and 50% (9) of the female interviewees were from Syria.

Ethnicity and religion

Ethnically and in terms of religion, the KRI is fairly diverse. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed 135 (77%) were Muslim Sunni Kurds while 34 (19%) were Yezidi Kurds. The remaining 3% were assorted ethnicities including Shia and Sunni Arabs and Christians.

Of the 135 Muslim Sunni Kurds 34% were born in Dahuk; 27% were regional migrants; 23% were born in Syria, 12% in Sinjar and 4% in Turkey. On the other hand, 91% of the 34 Yezidis interviewed were born in Sinjar.

Home district and households

The 175 IE workers were interviewed at their place of work. Only 52% of these lived in the urban areas of Dahuk City or Summel City and a significant proportion (41%) lived in refugee or IDP camps on the outskirts of Dahuk: 23% lived in Shariya IDP camp and Khanke IDP camp while 18% lived in Domiz refugee camp. The remaining IE workers (7%) lived in other low-density towns or villages in the region such as Misurike, Akre, Qasrok and Bardarash while working in Dahuk.

There is a link between migration status and home district in Dahuk. The majority of Syrian refugees (81%) interviewed lived in the Domiz refugee camps though 19% lived outside of the camp in Dahuk City or Summel City (Table 4.1). Similarly, the majority of Sinjar IDPs (75%) lived in Shariya or Khanke IDP camps, though 25% lived off-camp in Dahuk City or Summel City or other nearby urban areas. Conversely, the majority of Iraqi IDPs (85%) lived in Dahuk City, Summel City or other towns in the region. All internal migrants (88%) and the majority of Turkish migrants (80%) lived in urban areas outside camps. Though all 47 IE workers born in Dahuk have been included as members of the host community in analysis, some moved away from, and then back to, Dahuk and so could have shared experiences with migrants or displaced people on their return. While 40 of the 47 IE workers from the host community lived in urban areas, five lived in Domiz refugee camp and two lived in Shariya IDP camp.

Table 4.1: Home district by migration status

Home district	% Host n=47	% Sinjar IDPs n=47	% Iraqi IDPs n=21	% Syrian refugees n=31	% Internal migrants n=17	% Turkish migrants n=5
Dahuk/Summel	77	23	76	19	88	80
Domiz	11	0	5	81	0	20
Shariya/Khanke	4	75	10	0	0	0
Other	8	2	9	0	12	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Large numbers of dependents in households can increase household vulnerability. Within the sample, the number of people in a household ranged from 2-25 with a median of 8. Similarly, the number of children in a household ranged from 0-13, and the median was 3. While the averages are not particularly high there were a few households with large numbers of dependents. There was no particular difference in the number of dependents in households in camps compared with urban areas.

Education levels

Lack of educational attainment can also increase levels of vulnerability. Of the current IE workers interviewed, the majority (44%) stopped education at primary school level and 14% had received no formal education whatsoever (Table 4.2). Conversely, while 32% had been educated to secondary school, very few (10%) reached higher education. This correlates with evidence which suggests low levels of human capital across the population of Dahuk Governorate and across the refugee, IDP and host communities (UNHCR 2016).

Table 4.2: Education level

Education level	Frequency	Percent
None	23	14
Primary	76	44
Secondary	55	32
Higher	17	10
Total	**171**	**100**

Unlike findings elsewhere there was no difference between the educational attainment of women and men, though the number of female IE workers interviewed was very small. However, there was a significant difference between Yezidi Kurds and other Kurds with 30% of the 34 Yezidis, the majority of whom were Sinjar IDPs, receiving no formal education compared with just 10% of the 131 Muslim Sunni Kurds.

4.2.2 Profile of informal businesses

This section looks at the profile of IE businesses, with particular attention to differences in business practices of the different demographic groups outlined above.

Key business locations

As demonstrated in Section 3.2.1 the majority of IE businesses were located in Dahuk City (47%); Summel City (18%); Shariya IDP camp (21%) and Domiz refugee camp (14%).

The majority of IE workers worked in the same areas as they lived (apart from those living outside of the four main business locations where interviews were carried out). However, those living in Domiz refugee camp (22%) and, to a lesser extent, Shariya or Khanke IDP camps (12%) were more likely to move outside of their place of residency to work. None of those living in Dahuk City or Summel City or in other towns in the area worked in the camps. In this study, it appears that while there is commuting out of camps for work, there is not commuting into camps.

As there is an established relationship between home district and migration status there is also a link between business location and migration status (Table 4.3). The majority of members of the host community (96%) as well as all internal migrants and Turkish migrants worked outside camps. Conversely, the majority of those born in Syria worked in Domiz refugee camp (77%), though 23% worked in Dahuk City or Summel City. Similarly, the majoirty of IE workers born in Sinjar worked in Shariya IDP camp (70%) though 30% worked in Dahuk City or Summel City. In comparison to IDPs from Sinjar, the majority of Iraqi IDPs worked in urban areas (90%) while 5% worked in Domiz refugee camp and only 5% worked in IDP camps.

Table 4.3: Business location by migration status

Business location	% Host n=47	% Sinjar IDPs n=47	% Iraqi IDPs n=21	% Syrian refugees n=31	% Internal migrants n=17	% Turkish migrants n=5
Dahuk City	85	11	52	13	71	60
Summel City	11	19	38	10	29	40
Domiz camp	0	0	5	77	0	0
Shariya camp	4	70	5	0	0	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Main businesses

As demonstrated in Section 3.2.1 vending (62%) and services (18%) were the most frequent livelihoods amongst current IE workers interviewed followed by home-based workers (7%), café workers (7%) and construction workers (5%). Cafés mainly served the tourist trade.

This study found that business type was correlated with the location of business (Table 4.4). Vending was the most prevalent type of business in every district, though it was less prevalent in Domiz, where more Syrians lived than in other interview areas. IE workers in Shariya IDP camp, the majority of whom were born in Sinjar, were more likely to be in services (30%) than those in Domiz (20%), Dahuk (13%) and Summel (12%). In Domiz, 32% of IE workes were involved in home-based enterprises compared with 5% in Dahuk and 3% in Shariya (no home-based

IE workers interviewed worked in Summel). All construction workers were based in Summel and all but one café/resturant was in Dahuk City.

Table 4.4: Business type by business location

Business Type	% in Dahuk City n=82	% in Summel City n=32	% in Domiz camp n=25	% in Shariya camp n=36
Vending	68	63	44	64
Services	13	12	20	30
Home-based	5	0	32	3
Café	13	0	4	0
Construction	0	25	0	0
Other	1	0	0	3
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

There was also a link between business type and migration status. While all groups worked as vendors, IDPs from Iraq (29%) and Sinjar (23%) and refugees from Syria (23%) were more likely to work in services than migrants from Iraq (12%) or Turkey (0%) or members of the host community (11%). Similarly, only IDPs from Iraq (14%) and Sinjar (6%) and refugees from Syria (7%) worked in construction. Refugees from Syria (25%) were also much more likely to be involved in home-based enterprises than any other groups (ranging from 0-6%).

There was also a link between gender and business type, though the sample of female IE workers was extremeley small. More men (64%) worked in vending than women (44%), while in services more women were working (28%) than men (17%). The type of service provision was also genedered, with men working as cobblers, drivers and in money exchange and shoe cleaning, while women worked as beauticians or tailors. More women (28%) than men (5%) worked in home-based enterprises or domestic service and no women worked in construction or in cafés/restaurants. Despite number of needs created by conflict, women's share to household expenses remain largely shaped by society-wide perception and level of acceptance by men.

Business premises

Section 3 demonstrated that the 175 current IE workers interviewed operated from different business premises, with the majority running businesses from the street (53%) or a site without permanent roofing (6%) while others operated from roofed buildings (33%). A small percentage worked on construction sites (5%) while the remaining 3% either operated from a vehicle (which they used as a taxi or a vending space) or moved around for work (such as the shepherd and people smuggler).

Unsurprisingly, vendors (73%) were most likely to operate from a street or cart, although there were a significant number of those in the café and tourism industry (58%) operating from public spaces (Table 4.5). The majority of those in services (65%) worked from a roofed building (as did all home-based workers). All construction workers operated from a construction site. Generally, IE workers who operate from the street or an insecure space without a permanent roof are more vulnerable than those who do not (Brown, 2006).

Table 4.5: Business premises by business type

Business premises	% Vending n=108	% Services n=31	% Home-based n=13	% Café n=12	% Construction n=8	%Other n=2
Street	73	19	0	58	0	0
No permanent roof	6	10	0	0	0	0
Roofed building	20	65	100	42	0	0
Construction site	0	0	0	0	100	0
Other	2	6	0	0	0	100
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

IE workers who operated in camps were less likely (31%) to work on the streets than those who worked in the urban areas of Dahuk City and Summel City (65%) as the camp administration has made some provision for them. Migrants who work from the street are thought to be particularly vulnerable (Craig et al, 2015) and this study found that migrant IE workers operating outside camps faced a degree of precarity. Indeed, 71% of the 17 internal migrants, and all Turkish migrants worked on the street or a site without a permanent roof.

Business premises were also linked with gender, and 83% of female IE workers interviewed operated from a permanent roof in comparison to only 28% of male workers. This is unsurprising given that the fact that a greater percentage of women worked in services and home-based industries, most of which are conducted from a roofed building.

People in business

In this study, 46% of all IE workers work alone, which can also signify vulnerability. IE workers based in camps (57%) were more likely to work alone in comparison with those operating outside of camps (40%). Fewer IE workers worked alone in Dahuk (32%) than in Summel City (63%), Domiz refugee camp (56%) and Shariya IDP camp (57%).

Business income

Income data is generally difficult to assess, either because people do not keep count of what they earn, or are reluctant to divulge this in interview. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed, 159 reported income data and daily income ranged from IQD. 3–65,000 averaging at IQD. 10,760 (US$9.00) a day[3].

Table 4.6: Daily income by business type

Business Type	n	Average daily income (Iraqi Dinar)
Vendor	99	11,1150
Services	31	10,550
Home-based	11	2,500
Restaurant	10	21,00
Construction	8	5,000

The income data was measured against some of the demographic groups above and there was discrepancy in income between the different types of businesses (Table 4.6). Generally, those involved in home-based enterprises (IQD 2,500) and construction (IQD 5,000) made significantly less on average that those in other professions whilst café workers, often catering for tourists, made significantly more (IQD 21,500). It follows, given that a greater percentage of women compared with men were involved in home-based enterprises within this study that, albeit from a small number of interviewees, women (IQD 340) also received significantly less daily income than men (IQD 11,900).

Perhaps most significant however, was the discrepency in daily income between businesses in different districts (Table 4.7). Businesses run from camps earned significantly less daily income on avearge than those operating from urban areas with refugees in Domiz camp on average earning least (IQD 3,400) and those operating in Dahuk City (IQD 15,200) earning most. Syrian refugees (IQD 3,850) and Sinjar IDPs (IQD 7,800) also received less daily income than Iraqi IDPs (IQD 15,100), internal migrants (IQD 17,000), Turkish migrants (IQD 19,200) or members of the host community (IQD 15,200).

Table 4.7: Daily income by business district

Business District	n	Average daily income (Iraqi Dinar)
Dahuk City	71	15,200
Summel City	24	11,350
Domiz Camp	30	3,400
Shariya Camp	34	6,250

Seasonality of business

Studies have found that seasonal businesses bring “risks” to the income flow of informal workers, with decreased capital from the structural and cyclical features of the business increasing vulnerability (Lund and Srinivas, 2000). In Dahuk 49% of the 175 current workers interviewed associate their business with seasonality. Summer, winter, and festivals were all factors that affected seasonality.

Unsurprisingly, vending, construction and café/restaurant businesses, the majority of which operated from the street or without a permanent roof, were more affected by seasonality than services or home-based enterprises, the majority of which operated from roofed buildings (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Seasonality of business by type

Business seasonal?	% Vending n=109	% Services n=31	% Home-based n=13	% Café n=12	% Construction n=8	%Other n=2
Yes	52	38	15	75	50	50
No	48	61	85	25	50	50
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Both construction workers and café workers reported better earnings in the spring and summer when the weather was better and tourists were more plentiful. Vendors were affected differently depending on their products and operating spaces though were generally more likely to see profit increase during cultural festivals, like Nawroz and Eid and decrease during the rainy season. Seasonality and the availability of products meant that vendors often diversified or changed their products in line with the seasons.

[3] This does not include the smuggler who earned IQD.398,000 daily which was disproprotionatre to the rest of the IE workers interviewed.

The summer is better than winter because in summer we sell a lot of local vegetables grown in our region. In winter they are imported from Turkey and Iran and it is too expensive (Male IE worker, Vendor, Fruit and vegetables).

4.3 Challenges and problems in the informal economy today

Worldwide, the IE is a structural characteristic of urban economies in low and middle-income countries and a source of innovation and jobs. However, even under relatively stable political regimes, state policy marginalises the urban IE and problems and challenges are commonplace (Brown, 2015). This section investigates some of the challenges and problems faced by IE workers in contemporary Dahuk, focusing on vulnerability and multiple jobs, lack of inclusion in government policy, problems with local authorities, economic variables and difficulties with infrastructure and operating spaces.

4.3.1 Challenges in the informal economy

Of the 175 IE workers interviewed, 137 (78%) admitted they face one or multiple challenges at work, discussed below. Generally, difficulties are faced by all business sectors and business premises and by all genders, ages, ethnicities. However, those with more formal education seemed to be more affected by challenges than those with less formal education, with 90% of those who had received secondary education admitting challenges compared to 61% of IE workers with no formal education.

Business district was also a factor and marginally fewer IE workers in Summel reported business challenges (62%) than those working in Dahuk (88%), Shariya IDP camp (75%) or Domiz refugee camp (72%) (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Business challenges by business district

Business challenges?	% in Dahuk City n=82	% in Summel City n=32	% in Domiz camp n=25	% in Shariya camp n=36
Yes	88	62	72	75
No	12	38	28	25
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

This section investigates the specific challenges and problems that IE workers experienced in contemporary Dahuk both from interviews with 175 current IE workers and key informants. Five broad categories of problem were identified:

- Vulnerability and multiple jobs
- Lack of inclusion in government policy
- Problems with local authorities
- Economic variables
- Difficulties with infrastructure and operating spaces

4.3.2 Vulnerability and multiple jobs

Much emphasis is put on the survivalist nature of the urban IE and its importance for household resilience in times of shocks (Jha et al., 2013). A drop in profit or turnover undermines this resilience, and poses a threat to urban livelihoods. In this study 43% of current IE workers interviewed reported a decrease in business over the last five years and a further 12% mentioned experiencing a specific and significant drop of profits. Much of this was attributed to the financial crisis and lack of liquidity in the local market.

The only problem is the bad economic situation. My work declined from IQD 15,000 to IQD 10,000 per day because of it. The salaries have decreased and there is no money so the customers have decreased and my profit has decreased (Male IE worker, Services Shariya, Barber).

The inability to earn a decent living means that many current IE workers have multiple livelihood strategies, changing work frequently or holding secondary jobs. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed, only 28% had never had a secondary or previous job. The remaining 72% had to adapt their income stream to sustain their livelihoods.

For IDPs and refugees conflict and displacement necessitated a change in livelihoods on arrival in Dahuk:

I was a police officer in Mosul from 2009 to 2014 which is when I came to Dahuk. I am now a construction worker but work has declined a lot in recent years. The situation is unbearable because sometimes we

even cannot even pay the private electricity fees. A check-up with a private doctor is more than IQD 15,000 but we cannot make more than IQD 20,000-40,000 per week (Male IE worker, Construction, Labourer).

I was a blacksmith in Sinjar from 1985 to 2012. ISIS burnt my car and we lost everything we had there. I now live and work in Shariya [IDP camp] and sell fruit and vegetables on the street (Male IE worker, Vendor, Fruit and vegetables).

I was a teacher in Syria. Now I wait on street to find any construction work. I want to work as a teacher as I have a teaching certificate, but it is not recognised here so they do not let me teach (Male IE worker, Construction, Labourer).

The financial crisis in Dahuk has also necessitated job changes for residents as private and public-sector job losses and non-payment of wages have impacted the local population.

I graduated and worked in an NGO for five or six years. Then there were no salaries so I worked in a clothing shop. Now I make money from this business to satisfy my family's need and I also employ other people as a help for them. I would prefer to do other work (Male IE worker, Café, Tourist snacks).

As a result of such uncertainty some current IE workers also hold secondary jobs in order to diversify income streams.

I sell cigarettes, socks and lighters on the street. I am also Peshmerga[4]. The advantages were good but now they are not (Male IE worker, Vendor, Cigarettes)

Vulnerability and the need for multiple jobs was attributed to various factors including lack of protect in labour policy, difficulties with local authorities, financial crisis, the saturation of certain IE sectors, increased competition, and trouble with business operating spaces. The most prominent will be discussed in more detail below.

4.3.3. Lack of inclusion in government policy

Current labour laws in KRI are in transition from Old Labour Law (71/1987) to New Labour Law (37/2015). The KRI's parliament has not yet ratified the new law which was enacted in Feb 2016 in federal government of Iraq. After gaining *de facto* autonomy, with ILO assistance KRI has adopted various policy frameworks to improve labour social security, freedom of association and development programmes.

In 2012, the Kurdistan Council of Ministers endorsed the regional employment policy to develop an action plan to reinforce the capacities of ministry and social partners to implement the policy to improve the social security of labour force in KRI. Kurdistan Regional Development Policy in 2013 was an important project to monitor the implementation process in the Council of Ministers. The project aims to produce a framework for policy implementation which includes an action plan and capacity building to enhance tripartite support essential to a Kurdistan Employment Strategy. Also focuses on providing employment opportunities focused on the youth and achieving economic growth through support to the private sector.

In 2015, the new Labour Code was submitted to the Kurdistan Regional Council of Ministers. The new labour legislation only covers the private sector but includes amendments proposed by the Iraqi unions with the ILO support 'recognising the right to collective bargaining and reintroducing the right to strike' (ILO 2016). However, the labour policies are primarily focussed on the private sector employment, and do not address regulations governing casual or informal workers.

Within the wider KRI there is a lack of legislation, policies and labour rights cornering the urban IE. There is little knowledge of the informal economy and limited government focus on the implementation of local labour laws, even for the formal sector. The absence of protective and supportive systems inhibits the potential of the IE in Dahuk.

Over the last 30 years there have been no strategic economic development plans at the national level. What existed were non-strategic decisions by the State to address the problems caused by instability in Iraq over the period...There are no clear policies or legislation that promote economic growth. If there are any they are ineffective and there is no interest in enforcing them…There is not enough interest in the informal economy and no laws of legislation for it…This is due to the instability in the region, which in turn

[4] The Peshmerga are the military forces of the federal region of the KRI.

impedes the existence of long-term development plans to promote economic growth in both the formal and informal economy (KI1).

In contexts where government regulation is weak, the urban IE tends to thrive, but it is difficult to introduce tax systems or business registration measures and the lack of legal status and social protection can disadvantage IE workers. In the KRI, estimates suggest that in 2016 taxes revenue constituted only 5% of total revenue (World Bank 2016) and there is an absence of labour standards and social protection for IE workers, leaving them vulnerable.

The great difference between the privileges of workers in the formal and informal economy are in social security. Informal workers cannot plan for retirement. They do not have insurance or other material benefits [of the public sector] (KI1).

The informal economy causes problems because it is not stable work and not legal, so a lot of problems occur for workers (Male IE worker, Services Dahuk, Tailor).

*Most of the time we do very hard work and when I go home I cannot sleep from the pain in my back and foot. The work is quite unsafe, and injuries happen on the work site. Recently one of my friends broke his hand and there was no support (*Male IE Worker, Construction Summel, Labourer).

Refugees and IDPs do have official access to employment both in the camp environment and urban environment so long as they are registered with UNHCR or have residency permits. However, there is no legal framework for refugees to achieve citizenship and no long-term legislation for the local integration of refugees. There is also a lack of knowledge of the livelihoods and contribution of refugees currently working in the region.

There is no specific process of coordination between the parties concerned with displaced persons and refugees. There is no long-term planning process with clear laws and policies for migration in the KRI. There is an absence of a central body at national level responsible for this and thus nothing for local officials to implement…All work carried out by IDPs and refugees falls within the informal economy, but we do not have a reliable information on the number of workers in this field (KI1)

Lack of inclusion and protection in government policy can result in discrimination and exploitation, and some refugees highlighted their experience of discrimination. They reported lack of payments for work completed, receiving less money than local workers for the same work, and poorer working conditions. Furthermore, only 10% of the 114 businesses based in Dahuk City or Summel City employed refugees despite 54% benefitting from a refugee customer base.

I was working in Dahuk, but they didn't pay me my wages because I am a refugee (Male IE worker, Home-based work Domiz, Spices).

I worked in a restaurant for two months, but they only paid me for one month, so I quit. Now I prefer to do this (Male IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Bed linen).

4.3.4 Problems with local authorities

The lack of legal status and social protection means that globally IE workers remain unrecognised and vulnerable to victimisation, police harassment, evictions and confiscations (Bromley and Mackie, 2009). Although not particularly extensive compared to elsewhere, the impacts of harassment on IE workers can be acute. Out of the 175 current IE workers interviewed 17% faced problems from local authorities. Some 10% of IE workers interviewed had experienced harassment and to a lesser extent IE workers had also been vulnerable to fines. Confiscations and eviction were rare (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Prevalence of problems with local authorities

Type of Problem	% of IE Workers n=197
Harassment	10
Fines	6
Confiscations	1
Eviction	1

According to the interviews in this study, certain demographic groups and IE businesses are more likely to experience harassment from local authorities than others. Businesses that operated from the public realm, whether from a street or informal market place (34%) or from a vehicle (33%), were much more likely to face challenges than those in roofed buildings (7%) or private construction sites (0%) (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: Challenge with local authority by business premises

Challenge with Local Authority	% operate from street n=92	% operate without permanent roof n=10	% operate from roofed building n=58	% operate from construction site n=8	% operate from other n=6
Yes	24	10	7	0	33
No	76	90	93	100	67
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Vendors (22%) and those working in cafés (25%), the majority of whom operated from public places were more likely to face challenges with local authorities than those in services (3%); home-based work (0%) or construction (0%). Similarly, IE workers in Dahuk (32%), where the survey included more vendors and café workers, reported more problems with local authorities than workers in Summel (3%), Shariya (5%) and Domiz (0%).

> *The municipality bothers me a lot. They ask me to move my cart continuously, and not to stay in one place* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, *Smeet*[5]).

> *This bus terminal is given for investors. Recently the contract finished so the government wants to evict us so that they can make a new contract with another company or investor to develop the land* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Lighters).

A common complaint was an inconsistency in local authority permissions (both formal and informal). IE workers were sometimes given permission to work in certain areas whilst at other times they were harassed to leave. This hinders the ability of IE businesses to grow.

> *The municipality sometimes give us permission to sell but other times they evict us* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Fish).

> *The camp management doesn't allow me to sell here every day* (Male IE worker, Vendor Shariya, Chickens).

4.3.5 Economic variables

For the purposes of this report economic variables are considered to be those which affect the profit or income margins of IE workers and include profit loss, competition, fees and theft, all of which are acknowledged in academic research as key problems for IE workers (Roever, 2014). Out of 175 current IE workers 63% struggled with economic pressures of different types.

The financial crisis has severely affected IE workers in Dahuk. The loss of formal and public-sector wages has resulted in a drop in consumption which has affected real income in the IE and there is a lack of work for IE employees.

> *The only problem is the bad economic situation. My work declined from IQD 15,000 - 10,000 per day because of it. The salaries have decreased and there is no money so the customers have decreased and my profit has decreased* (Male IE worker, Services Shariya, Barber).

> *When I ask people to clean their shoes, they say that due to the economic crisis they do not want to pay... If the government gives them their salaries we can also work, and our work profits will increase* (Male IE Worker, Services Dahuk, Shoe-shine).

> *I have to pay rent on my shop and the transportation to get to and from the camp is expensive. There is not a lot of work due to the economic crisis and my income is very low. I do not work enough to cover my expenses* (Female IE worker, Services Domiz, Salon).

Competition over sparse jobs or customers and over-saturation of the market by the same type of IE businesses in the same areas affected 49% of the 175 current IE workers interviewed.

> *I face competition with neighbouring shops. I've worked as a tailor for many years and my work is recognized…The other shops owners do not like me and get angry when they see a lot of customers come to my shop instead of going to theirs. Usually they come and fight with me* (Male IE worker, Services Dahuk, Tailor).

[5] Smeet – traditional sweet.

Often price undercutting was used which increased competition and caused conflict between IE workers, particularly those in construction, vending and services.

> *Sometimes there are problems between the vendors about the business premises or the price of the goods. One vendor may sell the goods cheaply, while the other does not, so fights happen* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Fish).

> *There are too many workers in one place. Some of us are asking for a lower price which leads all of us to ask for lower prices. Instead of asking for IQD 25,000 per day we will ask for IQD 15,000. [The price] goes lower day after day. We need more jobs* (Male IE worker, Construction Summel, Labourer).

Competition for jobs and customers between refugees, IDPs and the host community was highlighted by IE workers and KIs, who reported that refugees and IDPs often worked for less money than locals which created conflict.

> *The crisis and displacement had a large impact on our economy and society. Most of the IDPs are wage workers and they work for lower wages so that affects the employment of the host community negatively, particularly in agriculture, construction and trade* (KI5).

> *The impact of the refugee crisis on the city has been direct in terms of employment. Refugees compete for employment opportunities with the local community of the city. Consequently, the majority of the local labour force of the city is unemployed in this sector simply because the refugees do not pay for rent and take assistance from the camp. Therefore, they can work for lower wages compared to host community members in Dahuk* (KI7).

> *After the IDPs and Syrian refugees came in it has got harder [to find work]. They are competing with us* (Male IE worker, Vendor, Cigarettes).

However, as refugees and IDPs are discriminated against and rarely find work in formal employment or in the public sector, competition is felt most in low-income informal sectors.

> *Refugees often compete with locals for low skilled labour in the private sector but they cannot access the public sector so what are they meant to do? (KI6)*

> *Mass unemployment in Dahuk (and other cities in the region) makes it difficult for IDPs and refugees to compete with the local Kurdish unemployed for some jobs* (KI8).

Low pay, lack of payment and the need to provide goods on credit were also reported by those in construction and in services and the café sector. This severely hampered household income.

> *We are a lot of workers and there are few opportunities for work. When we do [find work] it is very difficult and sometimes we aren't paid our wages* (Male IE worker, Construction Summel, Labourer).

> *After the crisis there is no money in the market so no work. We work for credit. Imagine that people cannot even pay IQD. 55 for the cleaning of their shoes. Today people owe me about IQD. 50,000-60,000 I work, and they do not pay* (Male IE worker, Services Summel, Shoe-shine).

The need to pay fees affects disposable income and, of the 175 current IE workers, 30% paid formal fees and 8% paid informal fees. While workers often complain about the payment of fees, local governments generally need to collect business fees in order to support service provision. The problems are when fees outweigh profit, are increased without warning or when fee-payers see no benefit from the payments.

Problems with formal fees were more likely to occur in Dahuk than in any other business district (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Formal fees by business district

Pay formal fees	% in Dahuk City n=82	% in Summel City n=32	% in Domiz camp n=25	% in Shariya camp n=36
Yes	50	9	20	11
No	50	91	80	89
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

The municipality has asked for increased fees for rent but the electricity and water supply has decreased. The work has also decreased and so have my earnings. [Despite this] the municipality are always requiring me to pay more fees (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Cosmetics).

The electricity became more expensive and recently we have to pay for the waste as well. I really wish the fees were less and the rent cheaper (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Clothes).

Theft in the workplace by customers, clients and other workers also affected 11% of the 175 interviewed and was cited as being a fundamental challenge to business profitability. Theft was also more likely in Dahuk City (20%) than in Summel City (3%), Domiz refugee camp (8%) or Shariya IDP camp (3%).

These economic pressures are exacerbated by a lack of business knowledge and capital and these challenges were felt particularly acutely by women or camp-based IE workers who have lower incomes than other demographic groups. Low-income workers often do not separate business and household finances, or keep any form of accounts, and as such find it difficult to invest in their business and compete in the marketplace.

My sewing machine has been broken. I need to buy another one but I do not have enough money. The other sewing shops have fabric that I do not have because it costs a lot of money. That is why most customers do not come here and go to the other shops that have the fabric…My work has declined a lot (Female IE worker, Services Domiz, Tailor).

There are some families in the camp whose economic situation is good. They have shops and they reduce the opportunity of low income families to sell their goods (Female IE worker, Services Domiz, Tailor).

In the absence of high profit margins, remittances and informal cash transfers influence the ability of IE workers to maintain incomes, particularly in times of economic shocks (Bradbury, 2008). However, hardly any (1%) of the 175 current IE workers interviewed received additional income from cash transfers, which suggests that remittances may not be a common source of income for many low-income urban workers.

4.3.6 Difficulties with infrastructure and operating space

Some 20% of the 175 IE workers interviewed claimed that one of the main challenges is the infrastructure and operating space they work from. Workers in all businesses complained of the lack of adequate serviced spaces that were safe and permanent with adequate roofing, electricity supplies, drinking water or waste management.

The lack of electricity is a big challenge for my business (Female IE worker, Services Shariya, Hair salon).

There is no water. It would be great if there was water in the camp (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Plants).

Businesses without designated spaces and permissions to operate suffered greater problems than others and were vulnerable to eviction, confiscation, and removal, particularly if they operated from a public space. Vendors reported being moved by the city council to other areas of the city with less footfall that proved unsuitable for their purposes and detrimental to business profits.

The municipality closed my business for two days because I passed the boundary of the land specified for me and my business (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Mobile accessories).

The municipality changed our place which affected our work a lot. In the old area more people were coming (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Clothes).

The old place of this Bazaar was much better because it caused no problem for people and there were lots of customers (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Bicycles).

Poor occupational safety and health workplace conditions have been highlighted by the ILO as common in the informal economy and implementation of new labour codes has been supported (ILO, 2016). In this study, construction workers, all IDPs and refugees, who waited on roadsides in Summel for labour work complained of safety risks and hazardous conditions in their working environment and whilst waiting for work.

If we could be protected from rain and from the high degree of sun in summer that would be better (Male IE worker, Construction Summel, Labourer)

We stand in front of shopkeepers waiting for an offer of work and it bothers them. Shopkeepers fight to not let us stand in front of their shops and lots of fights happen. When a construction boss comes all the workers try and get their attention so that they get work and in the last four months two workers have been hit by cars whilst standing on the street (Male IE Worker, Construction Summel, Labourer).

Within wider Dahuk, there is the additional challenge of physical safety, although security has generally increased in the city since 2014. Three quarters (75%) of the 175 IE workers interviewed confessed to feeling "very safe" in their working environment, however, perceptions of safety for women were significantly lower (40%). Public spaces, particularly spaces used mainly by men, were highlighted as areas where women could be at particular risk of harassment.

> *Culturally it is not accepted [for women to work here]. Last year one woman was working here and she faced a lot of harassment so she quit working in this area* (Male IE worker, Café Dahuk, Café worker).

> *Most of the customers are men, so women may face problems in such work. It is on the street, so they may get stared at or disturbed by men for working here* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Perfume).

While political action could alleviate the difficulties experienced by IE workers, only 3% of 175 IE workers felt that the majority party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (PDK), helped their business activities.

4.4 Potential protections from problems and challenges

The inclusion of informal workers in urban policy and planning encourages recognition of the economic, environmental and social contributions that they make and can protect and enhance existing livelihoods in the post-conflict setting (UN-Habitat, 2016). Of particular importance is the ability of local government and other urban actors to facilitate the inclusion and participation of groups who may feel marginalised (Ernstson et al., 2010). This section explores possible protections for IE workers in Dahuk investigated during the research with KIs and interviews with current IE workers. Through this process, five key protections were identified that could dilute the challenges faced by IE workers in Dahuk:

- Policy Inclusion
- Improved governance
- Support for associations
- Increased business education and training
- Improved infrastructure and operating spaces

4.4.1 Policy inclusion and labour laws

Economic development strategies and legislation is needed across the KRI following years of economic and humanitarian crises. While there has been some progress in this area, such as the National Employment Policy of 2012 and new Labour Code which was presented to KRG in 2016, legislation has not been implemented or enforced.

> *For fifteen years the country has experienced a cycle of disasters and crises with increasing debt and unemployment. There is a role for international organisations to build a national programme of recovery to rebuild the country. The government must allow those with expertise and competence to assume responsibility…There must be a programme to develop the national economy of Iraq. We need to restructure the budget and identify the immediate and future objectives of the economy and the compatibility with current capabilities and resources…The elimination of unemployment, the increase in health provision, fight against corruption, the restriction of arms, the end of militias can all be done by increasing rule of law. This would create a positive atmosphere for economic development and then we would be able to better support the informal economy* (KI9).

> *If the government gives the people their salaries all the problems will be solved. Most of the vendors who come to this Friday market already have shops. If they do not work well during the week they come to Friday market with the hope of selling their goods to earn some money. If people got their salaries they will buy from the shops during the week and this will decrease competition in this area on Fridays* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Olives).

Furthermore, there is little acknowledgement of the IE, although KIs contacted for this study (such as senior officials from local government and UN agencies) recognised the role of the IE in economic recovery and the need to support and empower IE workers through enabling policy and legislation. Recognition of the IE in national and economic employment strategies would raise the profile of the IE on government agendas and help alleviate discrimination and exclusion by providing rights to the disenfranchised.

> *The most important opportunities for development in the informal economy are through supporting the private sector and considering it as a true partner of the government in economic development processes.*

> *We must encourage young graduates of institutes and universities to establish their own small companies, finance them with soft loans from government banks, and exempt them from taxes for an appropriate period. We must guide them in identifying the sectors of work that suit their abilities and qualifications. We must provide laws and legislation for regulating informal work and give it legal status, eliminating the differences and advantages that exist between workers in the formal and informal economy. We must particularly look at social security and pensions* (KI1).

> *If the government could ensure the rights of informal workers that would be beneficial to my business* (Male IE worker, Dahuk, Money exchange).

Attention must be given to the working rights of refugees and IDPs as well as members of the local population, with particular attention to women. This is important given the positive contribution that refugee work has brought to the local economy in recent years (see Section 5.3.2).

> *UNHCR is advocating to formalise employment opportunities for refugees. Formal employment should be tied to access to health insurance, respect for minimum wage agreements, and awareness raising amongst refugees of the applicable labour law and protective dispositions. Partnership with ILO, and their decent work approach, the World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UNDP and other development partners that are actively supporting the growth of the labour market and national economy would be of key importance, to ensure that refugee protection is enshrined in their agenda* (KI6)

Policies to formalise the IE, as advocated by UNHCR, are widely promoted through international policy agendas, but formalisation requires long-term legal and regulatory change. Instead, the team advocates a more immediate policy-focussed approach, which seeks to reduce vulnerabilities through policy inclusion, building the organisational capacity of workers, and small-scale projects on the ground, rather than seeing formalisation as an end goal.

To this end, policy change should focus on recognising the IE in national labour policies and frameworks. Approaches to reduce discrimination on ethnic, gender or citizenship grounds should also be considered.

4.4.2 Improved governance

Since the regional crisis in 2013-14, the local government has faced a number of challenges, due to financial instability as a result of disruption of central-local transfers from Baghdad, security concerns resulting from the rise and proximity of ISIS, and the influx of displaced people. However, current IE workers and KIs also reported corruption amongst senior government officials which weakens local government capacity to support local economic development.

> *The most important challenges are the financial crisis experienced by the region and its direct impact on the labour sector, as well as the weak labour organisations and institutions who are in charge of organising work, job creation and vocational training* (KI1)

> *If corruption decreases and government give the salaries, everything will be good. A more stable political environment would achieve more profit for us* (Male IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Cigarettes).

While IE workers generally face relatively low levels of harassment from local authorities, greater consistency in the way in which local authorities deal with informal economy workers, both within and outwith camps, would allow IE businesses to thrive and grow.

4.4.3 Support for associations

Associations and trade unions are important means for strengthening IE workers' rights (Bonner and Spooner, 2011). There is recognition amongst IE workers and KIs that greater organisation and representation is needed, particularly if business challenges in the IE are to be overcome. Though there are various organisations which support businesses, professionals and workers in Dahuk, such as the Dahuk Chamber of Commerce and Industry, they often focus on larger, more formal businesses and capacity and levels of organisation among them and other civil organisations are generally low.

> *The first challenge is to create new employment opportunities for the working class in the informal economy…This means investment by investors and by the activation of informal organisations or trade unions who can study the existing challenges faced by workers and plan accordingly. Foreign workers are not organised but at the same time there is a lot of skilled labour. There is no one to support this sector to*

organise work and create better employment opportunities so there is inequality between formal and informal workers (KI7).

There are many organisations and offices concerned with the economy and the labour market but unfortunately, they do not receive their share of support and interest from government in order to have a role in directing and strengthening the economy. These include the Dahuk Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Contractors Union, the professional trade unions for workers and engineers and the Labour Office among others...Most other civil society organisations are still not qualified to play a vital and influential role in responding to crises due to lack of sufficient interest from the government and lack of support from international organisations. The Department of Relations and Information in the province communicates and coordinates with civil society organisations, but the capacity of these organisations is still growing and has not reached the level by which it can affect the response to crises in a reliable manner (KI1).

If a group can be created for domestic workers we will be more recognised, and our work will better (Female IE worker, Domestic Worker Domiz, Maid).

Self-help groups and co-operatives can also be important sources of support savings and could smooth shocks or crises, and unions of self-employed workers have been effective in protecting the rights of own-account workers. Though some IE workers had created self-help groups which benefitted their work, access to more formalised associations would increase scope for support.

We are a group of six women who work in the same sector, they help me and take care of my shop when I go somewhere and in return I help them to (Female IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Grocers).

If collective bargaining is to be effective, more participation, training and development is also needed. This is particularly vital given the absence of involvement of the most vulnerable IE workers in formal or informal associations within Dahuk. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed, only 2% were part of a trade union and 9% were part of an informal group, highlighting the potential for increased association to encourage collective voice.

4.4.4 Increased business and skills training and access to capital

Many current IE workers and KIs identified a need for increased education, business training and skills resources. Particular focus should be on vulnerable, low-income workers such as women and those in refugee and IDP camps as well as young people and those with little formal education in the host community.

Support programs for poor families in setting up small projects for them to increase their income, as well as the establishment of vocational training courses for young people and job creation in coordination with international organisations and private sector companies, would help informal economy workers in Dahuk (KI1)

I want to be involved in sewing training to better my skills. I also want to buy a sewing machine but do not have enough money (Female IE worker, Domiz Services, Tailor).

*If there was a special women's NGO that could teach women and where women could show their abilities they could work in different areas (*Female IE worker, Home-based worker Dahuk, Embroidery).

Some IE workers knew what they needed to do to improve their business, or would change their business, but had a lack of access to capital.

If there was a loan program by the government so we have access to financial resources to develop a better business for ourselves. [If we had this] I could have my own shop and sell my goods for a better profit (Male IE worker, Vendor Shariya, Clothes).

If the government could give us a small fund, we can develop our work… If I had more capital, I would develop my business by bringing more and better-quality products (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Perfume maker and seller).

If I got financial help I would buy a shoes sewing machine to repair shoes for people (Male IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Second-hand shoes).

In Dahuk there are several NGOs who have been providing grants, loans, and skills training for business start-up and improvement, with some success. These include the Danish Refugee Council, Five One Labs and International Organisation for Migration which have focussed on providing for refugees and IDPs (KI6). Other organisations serve the host community, though there is less support for this population (KI6). It is important then, that business

and skills training and access to capital is targeted at both refugees, IDPs and the host community to alleviate tension or conflict over resources.

> *The management of the camp depends mainly on the programmes of non-governmental organisations and international community organisations as there is an absence of support by the Kurdistan Regional Government or the Iraqi government. These programmes include livelihood projects (with long-term impact) and cash-for-work projects (short-term impact) in refugee and IDPs camps and these have shown to have direct impact on per capita income* (KI7).

> *The province has also received support from some organisations in the implementation of some important projects that serve the host community affected by the displacement. In coordination with international organisations, it has directed some programs to serve needy families within the host community, including cash assistance programs, cash-for-work schemes and white oil distribution. All these measures have contributed significantly in avoiding the tension between the host community, refugees, and displaced people* (KI1).

> *When I started working the camp management helped me and bought some of the goods for me to start my work* (Female IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Fruit and vegetables).

However, while there has been some success, donor funding is usually short-term and the task of developing consistent, long-term and workable policies is difficult, resulting in the exclusion of some of the most vulnerable. Of the 175 current IE workers interviewed only 13 (7%) had regularly engaged with an NGO, demonstrating the need for increased access to business training for vulnerable groups amongst the host community and displaced communities. Focus on longer-term integration strategies for refugees and IDPs should also be considered.

4.4.5 Improved infrastructure and operating spaces

As discussed in Section 4.3.6 there is a great need for improved working spaces for the IE. Secure and serviced operating spaces were highlighted by many IE workers as fundamental to business improvement.

There has been some work completed to this end in refugee camps, where vendors have been supplied with a designated space and kiosks from which to operate within the camp environment. However, only some businesses have benefitted and there was an absence of similar schemes in the urban areas, though some cafés have been given permissions to work from the public space.

> *In order to control the randomness in the camp, we organised some of the practiced activities by giving them a 2×2-meter piece of land and material to construct cabinets on it. About 135 pieces of land were given in the project which covered about 15% of all business in the camp* (KI4).

> *The BRHA[6] allowed us to build kiosks instead of selling on the street. The health department comes every two weeks come to check the cabinet and the materials to make sure they are up to date* (Male IE worker, Vendor Shariya, Groceries).

> *The municipality gave us permission to work here so if there are any problems we call the police and they sort it* (Male IE worker, Café Dahuk, Café worker).

Safe, serviced spaces for vendors is a priority, though areas need to be convenient and appropraite, for both vendors and consumers, to encourage high levels of foot traffic. Additionally, work in construction needs to be made safer. Particular attention, however, should be paid to women, who are perceived to be less safe in the public sphere due to cultural barriers and face high levels of harassment in the public sphere.

> *If there is a special area for us to work in it would decrease the problems for us …because the area is not safe* (Female IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Fruit and vegetables).

[6] BRHA (2016) IDPs and Refugees in Dahuk Governorate: Profile and General Information

4.5 Key findings

In most developing cities globally, urban policy marginalises the IE, despite the IE providing vital employment to urban citizens (Lyons et al., 2012). In Dahuk, 78% of current IE workers admitted facing challenges at work. The main challenges were:

- **Vulnerability and multiple jobs:** 43% of current IE workers had witnessed a decrease in business, and 12% mentioned a significant drop in profit or turnover in the last five years, threatening household resilience. More substantially, 72% had a previous or secondary job in the IE and had been required to adapt or diversify their income stream to sustain their livelihoods.
- **Lack of inclusion in government policy:** There is a lack of recognition of the role of informal work in providing livelihoods for many households in Dahuk. The IE remains unrecognised in national and local labour law and policy, and there is no enabling regulatory framework. Furthermore, there is an absence of labour standards and social protection for IE workers. While this means that IE businesses can be start up easily and informal employment can be found, there is an absence of protection for IE workers. Though refugees and IDPs have permission to work, lack of protective legislation has resulted in discrimination and exploitation in the informal economy.
- **Problems with local authorities:** Globally IE workers remain unrecognised and vulnerable to victimisation, police harassment, evictions and confiscations. In Dahuk, only 17% of current IE workers had experienced these problems. Of those, workers who operated from public space, vendors and café workers, particularly those in Dahuk City, were most likely to have been affected. The main complaints regarded inconsistency in permissions granted for work in both camps and urban areas and resultant harassment of IE workers.
- **Economic variables:** The wider financial crisis in the KRI has affected the businesses and profit margins of IE workers. Economic pressures such as competition, pay delays or non-payment (particularly prevalent in the construction and café sectors and amongst refugees and IDPs), formal and informal municipality fees and theft all affected the profit and income margins of current IE workers in Dahuk. Businesses in Dahuk City seem to have been more affected than businesses in the other three locations. These problems were exacerbated by a lack of business training and access to capital, which influences the capacity for business growth. In the absence of high profit margins, remittances and informal cash transfers influence the ability of IE workers to maintain incomes. However, only 1% of current IE workers receive additional income from cash transfers.
- **Difficulties with infrastructure and operating spaces:** 20% of current IE workers cited the lack of safe and secure operating spaces, and an absence of occupational safety and health workplace conditions, as a severe hindrance to business. Problems were exacerbated by the low levels of physical safety in wider Dahuk, particularly for women, with only 40% of 175 IE workers deeming working environments safe for women. In particular, there was a general absence of gender appropriate operating spaces and women were prone to harassment if operating from public spaces.

Within the IE there are several vulnerable groups who are more affected than others by the challenges above. For example, those operating businesses from Shariya IDP camp (mostly Yezidi Kurds and Sinjar IDPs) and Domiz refugee camp (mostly Syrian refugees) on average earned significantly less daily income than Iraqi IDPs, internal and external migrants and members of the host community operating from Dahuk City or Summel City. IE workers in camps were also more likely to work alone than those in Dahuk City, which increases vulnerability. Women were significantly more likely than men to be in low-income businesses such as services and home-based enterprises and face harassment when working in the public realm. The majority of Iraqi migrants, Iraqi IDPs and those from Turkey, as well as the majority of vendors, operated from the street which increases vulnerability due to lack of access to safe, permanent, serviced spaces.

The report has identified several key protections that could alleviate the challenges and problems in the contemporary IE in Dahuk:

- **Policy inclusion to support and empower IE workers and their businesses:** Small-scale enabling actions would raise the profile of the IE on government agendas and help alleviate discrimination, exploitation and social exclusion by providing rights to the disenfranchised, particularly women, refugees, IDPs, and young people and those with limited formal education in the host population.
- **Improved governance:** Capacity-building in local government in order to implement and enforce employment legislation must be prioritised. Local-level corruption affecting local government and other regulatory authorities should be addressed.
- **Support for associations:** Enabling workers to organise into associations, trade unions or co-operatives can be important in providing a platform for IE workers to articulate and negotiate their needs, establish rights, and address conflicts in the urban context. Savings and credit associations and financial co-operatives can also be important sources of savings. In the KRI, participation in trade unions has been restricted and there is a lack of institutions and organisations which have the resources to organise, support and protect workers. Indeed, only 2% of current IE workers interviewed were currently involved with a trade union.
- **Extension of business training:** Business training could address some of the difficulties of lack of formal education and skills shortage faced by some IE workers, particularly Yezidi Kurds and women. However, training sessions should be affordable and timed so that people can combine training with income earning. Some training is provided by NGOs, but only 1% of the current IE workers interviewed had regularly engaged with NGOs, highlighting the need for increased training and capacity building opportunities. Furthermore, access to finance should be extended.
- **Improved infrastructure and operating spaces:** There is a need for secure and serviced operating spaces which would not only protect vulnerable members of the IE but would encourage business growth and improve urban governance. Enabling policies and practices that support vulnerable groups like women such as gender-appropriate operating spaces, should be sought.

While these measures could provide protection and support for IE businesses, the presence of vulnerable groups and businesses call for focussed interventions beyond the broader ones aimed at the entire sector.

Domiz Camp

5. The informal economy in conflict

Regional conflict had numerous impacts on the IE, but the sector has huge potential to contribute to development outcomes in Dahuk.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the general effects of regional conflict in Dahuk between 2013-2014 before investigating the short-term and medium-term impacts of violence on the urban IE. It analyses the changes in the IE from 2003-2012, the period before the conflict, compared to the period conflict and recovery after 2013-2014 following the retreat of ISIS. This chapter will also look at how the IE functions in post-conflict settings before analysing whether the urban IE in Dahuk can contribute to broader economic growth, poverty-reduction and peace-building. The findings incorporate qualitative data from interviews with the subset of 113 conflict-affected people (CAP) from the 175 interviews with current IE workers.

5.2 General effects of conflict

Cities are often the arena for a range of global conflicts which all have devastating effects politically, socially and economically on their residents (Beall et al., 2011). While Dahuk itself did not witness overt conflict or violence, the surrounding regional conflict caused widespread insecurity in the region, which, coupled with financial crisis and mass displacement of people into the city produced insecurity typical in conflict-affected areas.

Of the 175 current IE workers, 113 (65%) had been affected by regional conflict and are referred to as conflict affected people (CAP) in this report. Of these, 99 (57%) were refugees from Syria, or IDPs from Sinjar, Mosul or other areas of the KRI or Iraq and who had been directly affected by conflict and violence because of civil war and/or the ISIS advance. These CAP experienced conflict very differently from those CAP who were in Dahuk throughout the period of conflict. Therefore, throughout this chapter, there is differentiation between those who moved to Dahuk over the period of conflict and those who had been in Dahuk the entire time. All are referred to as CAP having been in Dahuk Governorate at some point during regional conflict.

5.2.1 Effects on families

The effects of conflict amongst the 99 CAP who were displaced from Syria, Sinjar, Mosul and wider KRI or Iraq over the period of conflict were different to those CAP who were in Dahuk the whole time. Many of the former experienced overt violence which resulted in displacement, loss of family and friends, disruption to livelihoods and emotional and psychological distress (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Effects of conflict

> *We suffered a lot when we fled from Mosul. ISIS wanted to kill us. Then they asked us to become Muslim in order to survive. We managed to escape after five days of them being there…Thanks to God, none of my family were killed but when we fled we suffered a lot until we found a secure area* (Male CAP, Sinjar).

> *We became refugees overnight and we lost everything. I feel like I've lost five years of my life* (Male CAP, Syria).

Those who were in the city throughout the conflict also reported loss of family and friends outside the Dahuk area (particularly members of the Peshmerga) and fear of conflict as the ISIS advance heightened tensions in the region. The accompanying financial crisis affected livelihoods, profits and incomes for residents of Dahuk as well as refugee and IDP arrivals.

The crisis and resulting displacement had a large impact on our economy and society… When a local citizen loses his or her job it affects the whole family. It's not only the individuals who are affected by the whole society (KI5).

The work declined, salaries were cut and so people felt very afraid (Male CAP, Dahuk).

5.2.2 Effects on women

Female experience of conflict is often complex and while women face victimisation and insecurity they are also active agents in resistance and conflict (Denov, 2007). This research explicitly sought to explore impacts on women and 41% of 113 CAP thought that women faced particular problems during periods of regional conflict. CAP claimed that women were especially vulnerable to losing family members, particularly husbands and sons, and to gender-based violence. Specific experiences during conflict need analysed alongside the historic and cultural violence acceptance of violence against women in the KRI.

Gender-based violence

The literature suggests that gender-based sexual violence is a common outcome and strategy of conflict and it often continues in the post-conflict environment (Nordås, 2013). Gender-based violence was a strategy of war in the Syrian civil war, but particularly in the ISIS advance and numerous CAP who experienced overt conflict in regional areas noted that women faced organised rape and sexual assault, sexual slavery and forced marriage.

Yezidi women and others in Mosul faced fear. Many of them were raped or killed and a lot of them are still in the hands of ISIS (Male CAP, Sinjar).

Women experienced all sorts of violence in Syria. There women were being sold as slaves in the bazaars (Male CAP, Syria).

New roles for women

Conflict sometimes has the effect of changing women's role within the household and within wider society and women often become heads of household over the course of conflict (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Case studies from female CAP and KIs show a common trajectory emerging for those women affected by conflict in Dahuk, as many became widows, refugees, IDPs and breadwinners. The divorce rate has also increased in Dahuk over the period of conflict creating more female-headed households.

My husband died [in the conflict] and I'm now the only one who runs the family. It's affected our life a lot (Female CAP, Syria).

Women were not working before the conflict but now they do. For me, I need to earn money for my family. That is why I work (Female IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Kurdish material).

In general, this hard situation has led to increased divorce rate and other family related problems. When a man in the family loses his job, or cannot bring money to home, he is disappointed and angry at his wife (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Mobile accessories).

However, livelihood opportunities do not always translate into political, economic and social rights and violence against women remains high in the post-conflict transition period while female empowerment remains contentious. As discussed in Section 4.3.6 women also face discrimination in the labour market and are vulnerable to harassment in the public realm. Furthermore, stigma around women working outside the home persists which restricts female liberation.

*Generally, in our society violence is being practiced against women and they are not being respected. That does not include the specific problems that Yezidi women faced during conflict (*Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Fruit and vegetables).

Women were not working a lot [before 2013] because it was not accepted culturally. That's why a lot of restrictions were put on working women. Now women work (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Agricultural materials).

Before [the conflict] we never saw a woman working at this Friday market. Now some work but still there are not a lot working. It is rare (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Crockery).

5.2.3 Effects to the supply of goods and services

Much of the conflict literature focuses on the devastation to physical infrastructure and the disruption to the supply of goods and services impacting on the assets and livelihoods of the urban poor (Luckham et al., 2001).

Whilst there was no direct violence experienced in Dahuk, the rapid population resulting from the influx of IDPs, refugees and other conflict-affected people put pressure on the city's public resources. The accompanying financial crisis mean CAP reported difficulties accessing some goods and services between 2013-2014 which has continued in the post-conflict period. Electricity, water and transport were in particularly short supply. In the post-conflict phase, oil and food prices have risen and electricity is still rationed in Dahuk City and surrounding refugee and IDP camps, which affects business.

> *If the population increases the need for goods and services will increase. The arrival of IDPs and refugees put a lot of pressure on the supply of goods and services. The supply decreased. There was less food, less water, less electricity* (Female IE worker, Vending Dahuk, Grocer).

> *Public services worsened and decreased. We went from having 14-15 hours of public electricity supply a day to 6-8 hours today* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Mobile accessories).

> *Services have decreased. Our electricity is bad and this camp is located on high ground so we get poor tap water via the pipes* (Male IE worker, Vendor Shariya, Clothes).

5.3 Effects of conflict on the informal economy

As the literature suggests, during conflict, economic turmoil leads to high inflation, loss of formal work and civil unrest. Initially, livelihoods are more constrained as vulnerability is heightened and formal job opportunities reduced (Farrington, 2015). However, as the conflict develops there is generally a large increase in the urban IE as it expands to provide livelihood opportunities to vulnerable and displaced people (Beall and Schutte, 2006). This section looks at the impact of regional conflict on the urban IE in Dahuk generally as well as the way that individual livelihoods responded in the short and medium term.

5.3.1 Short term effects

In urban-centred conflict, livelihoods are often destroyed in the short-term (Farrington, 2015). Conflict often precipitates a gradual decline of formal employment and real wages, forced asset sales and declining consumption (Luckham et al., 2001). This has an effect on the GNP (as it becomes stagnant and hyper-inflated) but also on the poverty levels and livelihood opportunities of the urban poor. Though regional conflict in Dahuk was not centred in the city itself, the economic and humanitarian crisis affecting the city meant that 82% of the 113 CAP saw their livelihoods directly affected between 2013-14.

As documented in Section 5.2.1, refugees, IDPs and other conflict-affected people in regional areas were displaced from homes and jobs. In Dahuk there was wide-scale decline of formal employment and wages over the period of conflict. This affected consumption in the informal economy and many saw their business disrupted in the initial period of conflict.

> *I was an accountant in a construction company…The work was very good but after the economic crisis the work declined a lot so I quit working…Before my work profit were very good and I liked my work, but because of the crisis I left my job and started this job…There were no salaries being paid and the work of companies declined. Before the conflict I was earning $250-300 a day…My wife was an employee but her salary became half. Then, every two months they were giving her half of that salary and we have two children she quit working* (Male IE worker, Services Dahuk, Money exchange).

> *I'm a teacher but we were receiving only half our salary for months. How could that serve our needs?* (Female IE worker, Home-based Dahuk, Hand-made clothes).

> *Before [conflict] people were coming and buying a lot of things but now they do not come because they do not have enough money. That's why this situation affected me a lot. When people do not buy your products, you cannot earn money for you and your family, so it affects the business a lot* (Male IE worker, Vending Dahuk, Grocers).

5.3.2 Medium term effects

Generally, in the immediate aftermath of direct violence or conflict, the IE performs a vital labour absorbing function through its ability to provide poor citizens with employment opportunities despite of, or because of, crisis

(Vaillant et al., 2014). These livelihood strategies are driven by blended motives of coping and survival, adaptation and accumulation, and demonstrate the resilience of the IE and its workforce (Farrington, 2015).

In Dahuk, the decrease in public-sector employment and in the provision of goods and services opened spaces for informal work and different types of informal economies sprung up in Dahuk over the period. Three main economies will be discussed below:

- Replacement economies
- Sharing/solidarity economies
- Refugee and IDP economies

Replacement Economies

Often, during conflict, the IE is vital in replacing services and utilities disrupted by economic and humanitarian crisis. In Dahuk, lack of electricity provided livelihood opportunities for entrepreneurs in the IE who replaced the key service with generators. Health-care and education also became informally privatised. However, provision was at high cost to local conflict-affected consumers.

> *Generators replaced [publicly supplied] electricity and people began walking or taking buses to destinations instead of taxis because we did not have enough money to spend* (Male IE worker, Construction Summel, Labourer).
>
> *People provided electricity through generators, but the private electricity was so expensive* (Male IE worker, Vending Dahuk, Mobile phone accessories).
>
> *You find that some medical assistants are selling medicine informally…The medical care is very expensive in Dahuk* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Fruit).

Conversely, the provision of informal taxi services actually declined as people preferred using cheaper publicly run buses or walking to save on transport costs.

Sharing/solidarity economies

The lack of public services, and the expense of alternatives such as electricity generators, encouraged community sharing and self-help initiatives to ease costs for conflict-affected residents of Dahuk. The self-help approach is common when crisis hits and "communities are unique and have their own local needs, experiences, resources, and ideas about…response to and recovery from different types of disasters" (Longstaff et al., 2010).

IDPs and refugees reported receiving much help from the host community when they first arrived in Dahuk. Since the economic crisis has worsened, CAP in Dahuk also share food, water and transport among themselves, though community sharing is made more difficult by the continued disruption to food supplies and services in the region.

> *There is a lot of help between everyone [in the camp]. When we have enough food, and know that our neighbours do not, we give them some, and vice versa* (Female IE worker, Services Domiz, Tailor).
>
> *Before I was coming to my work alone, but now to save money me and my neighbour share the transport. One day I bring my car and one day he brings his* (Male IE worker, Services Dahuk, Money Exchange).
>
> *Before there was a lot of community sharing but now there is less because the family is barely serving their own needs. How are we meant to help others?* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Shoes)

Refugee and IDP economies

As demonstrated in earlier sections, Dahuk received thousands of displaced CAP both from the wider KRI and Iraq and Syria between 2013-2014. Many ended up in camps such as Domiz refugee camp and Shariya IDP camps and refugee camps often provide ways for the displaced to combat unemployment as they adapt and acclimatise their livelihoods to the new setting (Abdelnour et al., 2008). All CAP interviewed for this study had found new sources of income within the camps or in cities since their arrival in Dahuk, and KIs report emerging refugee economies in the city due to lack of regulation and restriction regarding informal work.

> *The informal economy activities noticeably increased in the camp, especially street vending...Types of refugee businesses emerging included street vending, cafés, sewing and others. Some people in the camp operate businesses that are not allowed without legal permission like temporary restaurants in the night...They set up the business after the office closing hours and remove it before office opening time the next day. Due to the absence of monitoring and control during the night they survive* (KI4).
>
> *You can find many things now in this camp informally* (Male IE worker, Café Domiz, Café worker).

While some highlight the negative effects of refugee and IDP livelihoods such as increased competition with the local population (section 4.3.5), others note the positive contribution displaced populations have made to the local economy in Dahuk over the period of conflict. This includes as providers of goods and services, as employees and as consumers.

> *The large number of displaced persons and refugees contributed to the acceleration of the local market, which was stagnant and slow due to the financial crisis in the region. The projects and assistance allocated to refugees have contributed to liquidity in the domestic market, and refugees and IDPs have contributed by providing new products and services and as consumers* (KI1).

> *Refugees tend to be more entrepreneurial-minded than the local population and enhance the labour force with demand driven services* (KI6).

That said, different types of refugee businesses have different levels of potential contribution to local economic development.

> *It is known that most Syrian refugees have good professional skills in the construction, decoration and furniture sectors as many of them worked in these sectors before [in Syria] and have achieved tangible successes. Many Syrian refugees also have excellent skills in tourism services. They have been employed extensively in the management of tourism facilities in the region, such as hotels, restaurants and cafés. Iraqi displaced persons from Sinjar and Nineveh Plain areas are much more likely to be concentrated on unskilled manual labour in the construction or agricultural sectors* (KI1).

5.4 The informal economy in transition

In the immediate post-conflict phase, economic recovery and development can begin and the IE tends to grow rapidly (Beall and Schutte, 2006). This section looks at the period after 2014 when ISIS were defeated and the rate of migration from Syria slowed. It will look at the changes to societal and business environments and the way this impacted the urban IE.

5.4.1 Effects of transition in the IE

CAP and current IE workers noted how, since 2014, there has been an increase in physical security in the region due to the defeat of ISIS and slowing displacement which made the region (and business environment) more secure. Lack of regulation has encouraged the IE to flourish and CAP report less harassment of IE workers by the local authority compared to the period before conflict which has encouraged IE business.

> *As I know the government were controlling the IE prior to 2013 and were not letting people work informally. Now because the economic situation has become so bad they are not putting a lot of restrictions on IE workers* (Male IE worker, Services Dahuk, Money-exchange).

> *Before 2013 the municipality bothered us a lot but now things have changed. Because of the economic crisis they do not bother us* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Agricultural materials).

However, despite reports of increased informal work since 2014, there were also reports of increased unemployment (due to the decrease in formal work), increased competition (due to the displacement of refugees and IDPs to Dahuk and more workers entering the IE), decreased availability of goods, and declining profit within the sector compared to the period before 2013.

> *For some the IE has increased, and for some it has decreased since 2014. For example, some people who were teachers are now opening small shops selling different things while those who were already working in IE before and during conflict have quit working because the costs of work outweighed the benefits. Before 2013 the situation was so much better. I had many customers who would come regularly and buy many products from me…Economically, the number of the customers has decreased since 2014 so the profits have also decreased…Also, before 2013 the import levels were higher than now, and we imported a diverse range of goods. At the beginning most of the products were coming from Iran and the quality was not good but then they were coming from Dubai and Turkey and the quality was much better. The borders were open, and things were exported and imported easily, not like now* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Cosmetics).

The economy was very good, and people were receiving their salaries regularly, so the profit was better for me before 2013 (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Watch repair).

The work was more profitable before 2013 because of the greater prosperity and availability of money in the city (Male IE worker, Vendor Summel, Electrical goods).

Sectoral change within the urban IE

While the urban IE generally increases during and after periods of conflict, specific sectors and businesses change more than others. The growth of these sectors can have different implications for development (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Along with the recovery of the tourism sector following the end of conflict, CAP and KIs highlighted two other sectors which have experienced significant change: street vending (particularly food based vending) and prostitution. While livelihoods have been provided, these sectors also have negative development implications for Dahuk.

From 2014 until the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, there was a general proliferation of street vendors and particularly notable was the surge in food-selling including fresh food such as fruit and vegetable; fast-food sold from kiosks, and more formalised cafés selling tea and snacks, specifically those catering for tourists. All restaurants in the study were opened in the period after 2014 which suggests a revival of the tourist trade which had been disrupted by conflict.

When I started this work, this street was almost empty, and no one was selling on streets. Now a lot of people sell from this street (Female IE worker, Vendor Domiz, Fruit and vegetables).

All kind of work declined over the period of conflict except food-based businesses because people cannot stop consuming food (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Fruit and vegetables).

Many sectors were making a negative profit because of the financial crisis so many people changed to the vegetable business…Smeet with Nutella and many other food sectors also increased (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Lighters).

While vending provides jobs and goods for the local population in contemporary Dahuk, street vendors can be vulnerable to harassment from authorities (see Section 4.3.4), and operating spaces are often inadequate (see section 4.3.6). Furthermore, the increase in vendors has intensified congestion in the city, which has development implications, and can impact negatively on the livelihoods of other IE workers such as those reliant on public transport to get to and from work as well as formal shops. There has also been an increase in counterfeit goods and low-quality products coming onto the market, which proves problematic for both vendors and consumers.

Street vending causes a lot of problems. Vendors occupy a lot of space on the streets and people cannot walk freely (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Shoes).

It bothers the shopkeepers when we sell in front of their shops. It causes problems for the formal economy businesses that sell the same type of goods because it is competing with them, but the informal economy workers don't pay rent or other costs (Male IE worker, Vendor Summel, Watches).

Sometimes the traders bring products which are not original, and we do not know. When the customers use it, they know they are not original, so they come and complain. We lose many customers because they do not trust us anymore although it is not our fault (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Cosmetics).

IE workers and KIs also reported an increase in prostitution in the transition period, as women attempt to create livelihood opportunities for themselves in a city where female work is restricted because of cultural traditions.

The prostitution also increased nowadays, because some women cannot offer their children's milk and diapers (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Mobile phone accessories).

The cheap labour and goods supplied by an experienced informal labour force has been of much benefit to the urban economy in particular. The disadvantages have been the increase of illegal activities such as prostitution (KI8).

Going forward, greater attention must be paid to finding alternative employment solutions for women within the city.

5.5 Contribution of the informal economy to development

This section focuses on the contribution that the urban IE has had, and can continue to have, on development outcomes in the city of Dahuk.

5.5.1 Economic growth

The importance of economic growth in conflict reduction in post-conflict settings is continuously highlighted If combined with higher post conflict incomes for urban populations, economic growth can significantly reduce the risk of further war (Collier et al., 2008; Fearon and Laitin, 2003).

In post-conflict Dahuk, the lack of formal work, significant levels of unemployment and continuing financial crisis means that the IE is vital in sustaining the livelihoods and incomes of the urban population in the transition phase from regional conflict. Current IE workers and KIs highlighted the capacity of the IE to absorb poorer urban residents, new arrivals such as IDPs and refugees, and those with limited formal education, due to the relatively low skill levels and start-up capital required.

> *There are many important informal economy activities. They absorb unemployment and mobilise the people economically* (KI9).

> *The informal economy provides a lot of jobs for those who are jobless. This is especially important now as the city is going through an economic crisis* (Female IE worker, Domestic-Worker Domiz).

Interviewees also documented the importance of the informal economy in increasing the size of the market in a period of economic crisis which signals the cumulative capacity of the IE to contribute to contribute beyond household welfare to wider economic growth. The contribution of refugees and IDPs has been particularly highlighted (Brown et al., 2017), and Syrians have been attributed to improving the tourism sector within Dahuk in the last few years (KI1).

However, as discussed in Section 4.3.3, IE workers do not have access to labour rights or social security and can face discrimination and exclusion in the labour market, a problem particularly experienced by refugees, IDPs and women. The growth of some sectors within the IE is also problematic. While increased vending opportunities are important for job creation and livelihood survival, the harassment of street vendors, as well as the congestion vending creates, raises questions about when and how government and other local actors intervene. Furthermore, the detrimental effect of increased prostitution is yet to be ascertained. Importantly, the continuing financial crisis and lack of support for, and regulation of, the IE inhibits the ability of IE workers to enter, grow and thrive within the sector and constrains the IE's contribution to wider economic growth. For instance, while some informal businesses may pay fees to the local authority for operating spaces, they do not pay tax on profits.

> *The informal economy is the work of those who are not formally registered in the State and has benefits for the beneficiary but not to the government because they do not take taxes from this sector…In Iraq, especially in the Kurdistan region…there is no regular banking system to calculate per capita income and pay taxes. All businesses outside the government employment framework are considered, indirectly, to be informal because commercial companies do not officially register any employees in the tax system. Consequently, the benefits are not calculated on the gross national product or on the gross domestic product* (KI7).

5.5.2 Poverty reduction and conflict prevention

It has been argued that economic growth without social policies which alleviate poverty at household level does not reduce the risk of conflict (Mallett and Slater, 2012). Indeed, both the onset of conflict, and participation in conflict, have been linked to high unemployment and low household income (Justino, 2011).

As demonstrated earlier in the chapter, the IE provided employment in Dahuk to vulnerable city-dwellers and newly arrived refugees and IDPs in a period of economic crisis. The increase in the IE in the years after the conflict demonstrates the resilience of the IE and the ability of IE workers to diversify and adapt their livelihoods to cope following violence and shocks. This has enabled individuals to build resilience and sustain household income while surrounded by regional conflict.

A more secure business environment due to the lack of regulation and restrictions and increased regional security since 2014 has dissuaded conflict within the city itself. In particular, the ability of the IE to absorb vulnerable groups such as IDPs, refugees, youth, ethnic minorities and women and the ability to provide valuable goods and services at cheap rates to a conflict-affected population is beneficial for poverty reduction and conflict prevention.

> *The informal economy is good for those who are jobless as well for low income families because the goods and services it provides are cheap* (Female IE worker, Domestic Work Domiz).

However, in Dahuk, declining income and increased competition, particularly between IDPs, refugees and the host community (Section 4.3.5) sustains poverty at household level and threatens peace in Dahuk itself.

> *After the arrival of the IDPs and refugees many Dahuk citizens lost their jobs because the IDPs and refugees work for less money* (Male IE worker, Vendor Dahuk, Cosmetics).

> *There has been conflict between IDPs, refugees and members of the host population over access to jobs* (KI8).

The importance of the IE to poverty-reduction, economic growth and conflict prevention cannot be underestimated. However, in Dahuk, certain groups such as young people, women, refugees, IDPs and those working in particular industries remain vulnerable within the IE, and others cannot access it. Therefore, emphasis on the quality of economic growth, rather than the rate, will ensure sustainable poverty-reduction by generating sufficient employment and even distribution of resources for vulnerable workers in the IE (CPAN, 2013). Small-scale sector-specific changes, targeting refugees, IDPs and the host community, and supported by central and local government and other urban actors can often avoid further disenfranchisement and marginalisation.

5.6 Innovations in peace-building and support for the informal economy

The effective doubling of the population of the urban area of Dahuk in 2013-2015 put enormous strains on the local economy and service provision. However, it is widely recognised that since the start of the Syrian conflict, the KRG has shown hospitality and made extensive efforts to accommodate the influx of Syrian refugees, despite difficult circumstances and internal challenges (DSP, 2019). Although not been widely reported, this could not have been achieved without considerable innovation in the delivery of support, and urban services provision.

A study of Syrian refugees in 2018, found that they generally felt safe and integrated relatively well, although they struggled with differences between the Syrian and Kurdish dialects, and the later influx of IDPs increased job competition and diverted humanitarian assistance to IDPs. Local people saw Syrians as hardworking, adaptive, willing to work in different sectors and to make efforts to integrate (DSP, 2019).

5.6.1 Regional context and potential

Strengthening labour rights: Legislation is in place to protect workers, but its application to displaced people is limited. The new Labour Code, 2016, submitted to the Regional Council of Ministers includes amendments proposed by the Iraqi unions with ILO support, recognising the right to collective bargaining and re-introducing the right to strike, which was banned in 1987. The law limits child labour and provides protections against discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace (ILO, 2016). The legislation was presented to the KRG in 2016, but has not been implemented or enforced. A new unemployment insurance scheme was developed for construction workers with ILO support, based on international labour standards and international best practice (IL, 2016). In September 2013, the Ministry of Labour adopted an amendment to social security regulations governing casual workers. The scheme also addresses the lack of unemployment insurance coverage for private sector workers, providing unemployment benefits, and is now mandatory for all employees in the Kurdistan region (Barwari, 2019). The Labour Law covers all groups, and determines working hours and the rights of employees and workers in general, but there is no specific legislation relating to the protection of refugees and displaced persons.

Refugee status: Iraq is not a party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Political Refugee Law, 51, 1971 provides for asylum rights for political and military refugees, but not for those who have fled for reasons of face, religion, ethnicity, or for those fleeing conflict and wars. The situation in KRI for refugees and asylum seekers is different to that of Iraq, and Syrian refugees, regardless of their ethnicity, religion and sect are registered as asylum seekers. In practice, the UNHCR and KRG provides asylum status for those within KRI who do not fall under the 1971 Law. Other nationals such as Turks or Iranians are provided with a refugee residency card, but may be detailed under certain circumstances (Qadir, 2019), showing a welcome approach to displaced people.

Rights to work in the KRI: On paper the legal and policy environment is enabling for refugees' and IDPs' access to livelihoods. In terms of legal policy frameworks there's nothing that stops refugees or IDPs from accessing sustainable livelihoods, and the 1971 Law does however grant the right to work for any person on its territories, including refugees and asylum seekers (Qadir, 2019). At the same time, 'informal' policies or implementation challenges have resulted in a degree of unequal access to livelihoods, including limitations on certain jobs or hiring

quotas. A wide range of stakeholders is responsible for enforcing relevant laws and policies relating to the informal economy, most commonly Asayish (the KRG's security and intelligence organisation) and employers. The United Nations (UN), police and NGOs also have some responsibilities, as well as the camp administration authorities for camp-based refugees and IDPs. There is a complete absence of legal or contract protections for worker rights, and of complaint procedures that would enable refugees and IDPs to secure their rights, and it is left to the employer to provide rights (e.g. through contract protections). The Directory of Labour and Social Affairs (DOLSA) has an 'inspection and monitoring committee'. However, this committee lacks capacity.

5.6.2 Local innovations

At local level and the ability of local government to facilitate the inclusion of marginalised groups is critical to resilient recovery from shocks and stresses (Ernston et al., 2010), and Dahuk has faced huge challenges in the provision of basic services.

In December 2020, Miran Abdulrahman was elected as the first woman may of Dahuk Province, alongside new mayors of Dahuk district (Nasri, 2020). Economic policy in the KRI and governorate seeks to diversify the economy. Major tourism projects including the Dohuk Dam project, and Zawa Mountain resort are on hold (Spendary, 2020).

Provision of basic services: The influx of a vulnerable population has put extensive pressures on urban services. For example, in 2015 it was reported that the displaced population produced an average of 1,690 tons of solid waste per day, a 26% increase over the KRI's normal output. Dahuk was the only governorate able to effectively manage the solid was because of construction of a new sanitary landfill site and its recycling capacity. Nevertheless, as the first city in the KRI to invest in recycling Dahuk was largely able to manage the increase, and it was reported that only about 25% of the city's solid waste goes to landfill (WB, 2015). Local administrations were also facing an 11% increase in the demand for water, sanitation in the camps remained a concern, and there were sharp increases in the price of gasoline and diesel fuel. However, KRG strategic plan for water adapted, categorising IDPs as those living in the open air, those in schools, churches and mosques, and those in unfinished buildings, although private sector suppliers have increased supplies for services.

The crisis has also taken a toll on the municipal road network, which saw a 20% increase in traffic and increased traffic congestion in Dahuk city, without limited government capacity to invest in maintenance or improvements. The electricity network has marked significant achievements with the installation of new generating capacity, but the sector faces serious challenges such as electricity losses, distribution bottlenecks and low tariff collection rates, losing about 20% of electricity generated (WB, 2015).

Health: By November 2020, of Iraq's 241,682 Syrian refugees, 99% were living in the KRI, of whom 61% were living in urban areas and 39% in camps (UNHCR, 2020). There have been several Covid-19 outbreaks in camps, but government restrictions designed to halt the spread of the virus have had several implications, based on a large survey of 4,650 households. From March to September 2020 curfews were instituted within and between governorates. The pandemic had a negative impact on financial and food security, and wellbeing and a high proportion of households had been evicted during the reporting period. While schools were closed, many children could not access smart devices or the internet to support learning (UNHCR, 2020)

NGO participation: There have been many local initiatives, several of which have been aimed at women's empowerment and employment. For example, the Dak Organization was started by a group of Ezidi (Dahuk) women in 2015, to encourage women how to support each other to reduce vulnerability and isolation, an important initiative in the traditionally male dominated society of Dahuk. Dak works through a number of projects to strengthen women's empowerment. Projects include; increasing women's participation in conflict prevention and decision-making in the community and family; legal support to enable women to claim their rights and identity; debates on (traditional) justice systems; using social media to foster social cohesion and peace-building, and establishing a music band for young IDPs and local people from Dahuk. The organisation also supported the development of self-help groups, for example a group of six women vendors reported helping each other when they are not there to sell goods (Dak, 2021)

In Dahuk, projects have supported income generation initiatives. For example, several INGOs have provided grants, loans and skills training for business start=ups and improvement for IDPs and refugees. These include the Danish Refugee Council, Five One Labs, and International Organisation for Migration. In the camps, these livelihood projects support long-term enterprise development, and cash-for-work projects support short-term work. Humanitarian projects run in collaboration with international organisations have included cash assistance, cash-for-work schemes, and white oil distribution, which have included both host and displaced populations.

5.7 Key findings

While Dahuk itself did not witness overt violence, the surrounding regional conflict, coupled with the financial crisis, significant decline in tourism, and mass displacement of people into urban areas produced insecurity typical in conflict-affected areas. Of the 175 current IE workers, 113 (65%) said they had been directly affected by the regional conflict. IDPs from Sinjar, Mosul and other areas of Iraqi and KRI and refugees from Syria experienced conflict very differently from those CAP who were in Dahuk throughout the period of conflict. That said the general economic decline affected livelihoods, profits and incomes for residents of Dahuk as well as arriving refugees and IDPs, though the counter-trend was a more permissive attitude from local authroties towards the IE.

Women are particularly vulnerable in conflict-affected situations and may have experienced the specific effects of gender-based violence. However, some have also been able to seek new livelihood opportunities, and since 2014 female presence in the labour market has increased. Unfortunately, there are still high levels of gender-based violence in the KRI. Women also face discrimination in the labour market and are vulnerable to harassment in the public sphere. Furthermore, stigma around women working outside the home persists which restricts female liberation.

Conflict has had numerous short-term, medium-term and long-term impacts on the urban IE in Dahuk.

- **The short-term effect** was a decline in formal employment and wages in the private and public sector over the period of conflict. Decline in consumption also affected the income of informal economy workers and many urban residents saw their livelihoods lost or disrupted in the initial period of conflict. The counter-trend was a more permissive attitude from local authorities to informal work.
- **In the medium-term** the IE provided a vital labour absorbing function for poor urban residents as well as for arriving refugees and IDPs from conflict-affected areas. Replacement economies sprang up with health-care, education and electricity all being provided in an informal capacity. Sharing and solidarity economies also increased and enabled conflict-affected people to support themselves in the absence of state provision. Refugee and IDP economies not only provided income for displaced people but contributed to the local economy by providing liquidity and goods and services.
- **In the period of transition**, the IE continues to increase dramatically as political stability, increased security and lack of regulation enables the speedy establishment and operation of new businesses and employment opportunities. However, increased competition (due to decline in formal work and increasing population) together with declining income and decreased availability of goods compared to the period before 2013 is causing challenges for IE workers. The increase in certain sectors has been particularly notable, for instance, street vending (particularly food-based goods) as well as prostitution. Though these sectors provide livelihoods for low-income urban workers, they both pose significant challenges for Dahuk.

The IE has huge potential to contribute to ongoing development outcomes in Dahuk:

- **Economic Growth** has been cited as a major requirement for long term peace in conflict-affected countries. In Dahuk, the IE enabled city-dwellers and displaced populations to sustain or create livelihoods during conflict and provided cheap goods to residents during financial crisis. In the post-conflict environment, some businesses have flourished, although others have declined. However, the lack of government policy and protection for IE workers, and the sectoral growth of street vending and prostitution pose development challenges. That said, the scale of the IE demands that it be a primary focus for economic and social planning.
- **Poverty reduction and conflict prevention** have also been linked in development literature and there is evidence that an effective IE can reduce the likelihood of further violence by providing employment and household income. In Dahuk, the IE has provided many jobs to conflict-affected and vulnerable people such as women, refugees, IDPs, young people and those with limited formal education. However, declining income and increased competition for jobs sustains poverty at household level and threatens peace in Dahuk itself. The ability to absorb these groups is vital for both poverty reduction and continued conflict prevention.

Going forward, an emphasis on the quality of economic growth, rather than the rate of growth, will ensure sustainable poverty-reduction by generating sufficient employment and even distribution of resources for vulnerable workers in the IE (including IDPs, refugees and the host population) Furthermore, small-scale sector-specific changes supported by central and local government and other urban actors can often avoid further disenfranchisement and marginalisation of these groups.

Shariya Camp

6. Conclusions

This chapter summarises the key findings and lessons from the report.

6.1 Summary of key findings

In most developing cities globally, urban policy marginalises the IE, despite the IE providing vital employment to urban citizens (Lyons et al., 2012). In Dahuk, 78% of the current IE workers interviewed admitted facing challenges at work. The main challenges were:

- **Vulnerability and multiple jobs:** 43% of current IE workers had witnessed a decrease in business, and 12% mentioned a significant drop in profit or turnover in the last five years, threatening household resilience. More substantially, 72% had a previous or secondary job in the IE and had been required to adapt or diversify their income stream to sustain their livelihoods.
- **Lack of inclusion in government policy:** There is a lack of recognition of the role of informal work in providing livelihoods for many households in Dahuk. The IE remains unrecognised in national and local labour law and policy, and there is no enabling regulatory framework. Furthermore, there is an absence of labour standards and social protection for IE workers. While this means that IE businesses can be start up easily and informal employment can be found, there is an absence of protection for IE workers. Though refugees and IDPs have rights to work, lack of protective legislation has resulted in discrimination and exploitation in the informal economy.
- **Problems with local authorities:** Globally many IE workers remain unrecognised and vulnerable to victimisation, police harassment, evictions and confiscations. In Dahuk, only 17% of current IE workers had experienced these problems. Of those, workers who operated from public space, vendors and café workers, particularly those in Dahuk City, were most likely to have been affected. The main complaints regarded inconsistency in permissions granted for work in both camps and urban areas and resultant harassment of IE workers.
- **Economic variables:** The wider financial crisis in the KRI has affected the businesses and profit margins of IE workers. Economic pressures such as competition, pay delays or non-payment (particularly prevalent in the construction and café sectors and amongst refugees and IDPs), formal and informal municipality fees and theft all affected the profit and income margins of current IE workers in Dahuk. Businesses in Dahuk City seem to have been more affected than businesses in the other three locations. These problems were exacerbated by a lack of business training and access to capital, which influences the capacity for business growth. In the absence of high profit margins, remittances and informal cash transfers influence the ability of IE workers to maintain incomes. However, only 1% of current IE workers receive additional income from cash transfers.
- **Difficulties with infrastructure and operating spaces:** 20% of current IE workers cited the lack of safe and secure operating spaces, and an absence of occupational safety and health workplace conditions, as a severe hindrance to business. Problems were exacerbated by the low levels of physical safety in wider Dahuk, particularly for women, with only 40% of 175 IE workers deeming working environments safe for women. In particular, there was a general absence of gender appropriate operating spaces and women were prone to harassment if operating from public spaces.

Within the IE there are several vulnerable groups who are more affected than others by the challenges above. For example, those operating businesses from Shariya IDP camp (mostly Yezidi Kurds and Sinjar IDPs) and Domiz refugee camp (mostly Syrian refugees) on average earned significantly less daily income than Iraqi IDPs, internal and external migrants and members of the host community operating from Dahuk City or Summel City. IE workers in camps were also more likely to work alone than those in Dahuk City, which increases vulnerability. Women were significantly more likely than men to be in low-income businesses such as services and home-based enterprises and face harassment when working in the public realm. The majority of Iraqi migrants, Iraqi IDPs and those from Turkey, as well as the majority of vendors, operated from the street which increases vulnerability due to lack of access to safe, permanent, serviced spaces.

The report has identified several key protections that could alleviate the challenges and problems in the contemporary IE in Dahuk:

- **Policy inclusion to support and empower IE workers and their businesses:** Small-scale enabling actions would raise the profile of the IE on government agendas and help alleviate discrimination, exploitation and social exclusion by providing rights to the disenfranchised, particularly women, refugees, IDPs, and young people and those with limited formal education in the host population.
- **Improved governance:** Capacity-building in local government in order to implement and enforce employment legislation must be prioritised. Local-level corruption affecting local government and other regulatory authorities should be addressed.
- **Support for associations:** Enabling workers to organise into associations, trade unions or co-operatives can be important in providing a platform for IE workers to articulate and negotiate their needs, establish rights, and address conflicts in the urban context. Savings and credit associations and financial co-operatives can also be important sources of savings. In the KRI, participation in trade unions has been restricted and there is a lack of institutions and organisations which have the resources to organise, support and protect workers. Indeed, only 2% of current IE workers interviewed were currently involved with a trade union.
- **Extension of business training:** Business training could address some of the difficulties of lack of formal education and skills shortage faced by some IE workers, particularly Yezidi Kurds and women. However, training sessions should be affordable and timed so that people can combine training with income earning. Some training is provided by NGOs, but only 1% of the current IE workers interviewed had regularly engaged with NGOs, highlighting the need for increased training and capacity building opportunities. Furthermore, access to finance should be extended.
- **Improved infrastructure and operating spaces:** There is a need for secure and serviced operating spaces which would not only protect vulnerable members of the IE but would encourage business growth and improve urban governance. Enabling policies and practices that support vulnerable groups like women such as gender-appropriate operating spaces, should be sought.

While these measures could provide protection and support for IE businesses, the presence of vulnerable groups and businesses call for focussed interventions beyond the broader ones aimed at the entire sector.

While Dahuk itself did not witness overt violence, the surrounding regional conflict, coupled with the financial crisis, significant decline in tourism, and mass displacement of people into urban areas produced insecurity typical in conflict-affected areas. Of the 175 current IE workers, 113 (65%) said they had been directly affected by the regional conflict. IDPs from Sinjar, Mosul and other areas of Iraqi and KRI and refugees from Syria experienced conflict very differently from those CAP who were in Dahuk throughout the period of conflict. That said the general economic decline affected livelihoods, profits and incomes for residents of Dahuk as well as arriving refugees and IDPs, though the counter-trend was a more permissive attitude from local authorities towards the IE.

Women are particularly vulnerable in conflict-affected situations and may have experienced the specific effects of gender-based violence. However, some have also been able to seek new livelihood opportunities, and since 2014 female presence in the labour market has increased. Unfortunately, there are still high levels of gender-based violence in the KRI. Women also face discrimination in the labour market and are vulnerable to harassment in the public sphere. Furthermore, stigma around women working outside the home persists which restricts female liberation.

Conflict has had numerous short-term, medium-term and long-term impacts on the urban IE in Dahuk.

- **The short-term effect** was a decline in formal employment and wages in the private and public sector over the period of conflict. Decline in consumption also affected the income of informal economy workers and many urban residents saw their livelihoods lost or disrupted in the initial period of conflict. The counter-trend was a more permissive attitude from local authorities to informal work.
- **In the medium-term** the IE provided a vital labour absorbing function for poor urban residents as well as for refugees and IDPs arriving from conflict-affected areas. Replacement economies sprang up with health-care, education and electricity all being provided in an informal capacity. Sharing and solidarity economies also increased and enabled conflict-affected people to support themselves in the absence of

state provision. Refugee and IDP economies not only provided income for displaced people but contributed to the local economy by providing liquidity and goods and services.

- **In the period of transition**, the IE continues to increase dramatically as political stability, increased security and lack of regulation enables the speedy establishment and operation of new businesses and employment opportunities. However, increased competition (due to decline in formal work and increasing population) together with declining income and decreased availability of goods compared to the period before 2013 is causing challenges for IE workers. The increase in certain sectors has been particularly notable, for instance, street vending (particularly food-based goods) as well as prostitution. Though these sectors provide livelihoods for low-income urban workers, they both pose significant challenges for Dahuk.

The IE has huge potential to contribute to ongoing development outcomes in Dahuk:

- **Economic Growth** has been cited as a major requirement for long term peace in conflict-affected countries. In Dahuk, the IE enabled city-dwellers and displaced populations to sustain or create livelihoods during conflict and provided cheap goods to residents during financial crisis. In the post-conflict environment, some businesses have flourished, although others have declined. However, the lack of government policy and protection for IE workers, and the sectoral growth of street vending pose development challenges. That said, the scale of the IE demands that it be a primary focus for economic and social planning.
- **Poverty reduction and conflict prevention** have also been linked in development literature and there is evidence that an effective IE can reduce the likelihood of further violence by providing employment and household income. In Dahuk, the IE has provided many jobs to conflict-affected and vulnerable people such as women, refugees, IDPs, young people and those with limited formal education. However, declining income and increased competition for jobs sustains poverty at household level and threatens peace in Dahuk itself. The ability to absorb these groups is vital for both poverty reduction and continued conflict prevention.

Going forward, an emphasis on the quality of economic growth, rather than the rate of growth, will ensure sustainable poverty-reduction by generating sufficient employment and even distribution of resources for vulnerable workers in the IE (including IDPs, refugees and the host population). Furthermore, small-scale sector-specific changes supported by central and local government and other urban actors can often avoid further disenfranchisement and marginalisation of these groups.

References

Abdelnour, S., Babiker, B., El Jack, A., Wheeler, D., McGrath, S., and Branzei, O. 2008. Examining Enterprise Capacity: A Participatory Social Assessment in Darfur and Southern Sudan. Centre for Refugee Studies. Toronto: York University.

Barwari, N. M. S. (2019) The informal economy and conflict: Dohuk – Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a case study, Qalaai Zanist Scientific Journal, 4(2): 700-746.

Brathwaite, K.J. (2014) Repression and the spread of ethnic conflict in Kurdistan. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 37(6), pp.473-491.

Beall, J., Goodfellow, T., and Rodgers, D. 2011. Cities, conflict and state fragility. Crisis States Research Centre, Working Paper No. 85. London: London School of Economics. Available online: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39766/1/Cities,_conflict_and_state_fragility_wp852(author).pdf

Beall, J. and Schutte, S. (2006) Urban Livelihoods in Afghanistan. Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Synthethis Paper. Kabul, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/2902/1/Urban_livelihoods_in_Afghanistan.pdf

BRHA (2016) IDPs and Refugees in Dahuk Governorate: Profile and General Information http://www.brha-Dahuk.org/wp-content/uploads/Report%20of%202016.pdf

Bromley, R. and Mackie, P. (2009) Child experiences as street traders in Peru: contributing to a reappraisal for working children. Children's Geographies 7(2): 141-158.

Brown, A. 2015. Claiming the streets: Property rights and legal empowerment in the Urban Informal Economy. World Development 76: 238-248.

Chorev, M., (2007) Iraqi Kurdistan: The internal dynamics and statecraft of a semistate. Al Nakhlah, pp.1-11.

CPAN. 2013. Employment policy guide: working out of chronic poverty. Chronic Poverty Advisory Network. London: Overseas Development Institute. Available online: http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion- files/8515.pdf

Collier, P., Hoeffler, A. and Söderbom, M., (2008) Post-conflict risks, Journal of Peace Research, 45(4): 481-478.

Dak Organization (2021) About us, https://dakngo.org/about-us/

Denov, M. (2007) Girls in fighting forces: Moving beyond victimhood. Canadian International Development Agency. Montreal: McGill University. Available online: https://www.crin.org/en/docs/CIDA_Beyond_forces.pdf

DSP (2019) Far from home: future prospects for Syrian refugees in Iraq, DSP (Durable Solutions Platform) with the Impact Initiative, NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council), DRC (Danis Refugee Council), IRC (International Rescue Committee), https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/dsp-impact_initiatives_far_from_home_-_future_prospects_for_syrian_refugees_in_iraq_january_2019.pdf

Ernston, H., ven der Leeuw, S., Redman, C., Meffert, D., Davis, G., Alfsen C. and Enlqvist, T. (2010) Urban transitions: on urban resilience and human-dominated ecosystems, Ambio, 39(8): 532-545.

Farrington, J. (2015) Stabilizing and Improving Livelihoods in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (FCAS) - The Search for Frameworks and Evidence. Sri Lankan Journal of Agricultural Economics 12: 83–98.

Fearon, J.D, and Laitan, D.D. (2003) Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. American political science review 97(1): 75-90.

GIZ (2016) Refugee camps in northern Iraq, https://www.giz.de/en/mediacenter/39213.html

IAU (2010) Dahuk Governorate Profile, Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit (IAU), OCHA and UNAMI, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/E6B98360CEB1949BC12577EB00506145-Full_Report.pdf

Gunes, C. (2019) Turkey's Kurdish conflict: the sudden reversal of gradual progress, in Gunes, C., The Kurds in a New Middle East (pp. 41-60). London: Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Gunes, C. and Lowe, R. (2015) The impact of the Syrian War on Kurdish politics across the Middle East (p. 4). London: Chatham House.

Gunter, M.M. (2008) The permanent and new realities facing the Kurdistan Regional Government: Options and Prospects. Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 28(2): 237-249.

Houston, C. (2008) Kurdistan: The Crafting of National Selves, Osford: Berg Publishers.

Human Rights Watch (2016) Women suffer under ISIS, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/05/iraq-women-suffer-under-isis

ILO (2016) The ILO in Iraq. Jan 2016. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_444514.pdf

Jangiz, K. (2021) Kurdistan region has 'no intention' of closing down its displacement camps, RUDAW, https://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/11022021

Jongerden, J. (2019) Governing Kurdistan: self-administration in the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq and the democratic federation of Northern Syria. Ethnopolitics, 18(1): 61-75.

Justino, P. (2011) Violent conflict and human capital accumulation, IDS Working Paper 379, Sussex: Institute of Development Studies, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2011.00379_2.x

Longstaff, P., Armstrong, N., Perrin W., and Hidek, M. (2010 Building resilient communities: a preliminary framework for assessment, Homeland Security Affairs, VI(3): 1-23.

Luckham, R., Ahmed, I., Muggah, R. and White, S. 2001. Conflict and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa: an assessment of the issues and evidence. IDS Working Paper 128, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

Mackie, P. Brown, A., Dickenson, K., Ahmed, E; Hassan, S, Barwarni, M. (2017) Informal economies, conflict recovery and absent aid, Environment and Urbanization, 29(2); 365-382.

Mallet, R., and Slater, R. (2012) Growth and livelihoods in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), Working Paper 9. London: Overseas Development Institute.

McDowall, D. (2005) The Kurdish question: a historical review, in Kreyenbroek, P.G & Sperl, S. (ed.) The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview (pp. 17-34), Abingdon: Routledge.

Nasri, A. (2020) First woman mayor appointed in Duhok province, Ruda, https://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/031220201

Nordås, R. (2013) Preventing conflict-related sexual violence. PRIO Policy Brief 2. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo.

OCHA (2019) Iraq: Humanitarian dashboard for KRI, https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-humanitarian-dashboard-kri-january-december-2019

Romano, D. (2010) Iraqi Kurdistan: challenges of autonomy in the wake of US withdrawal. International Affairs, 86(6): 1345-1359.

Somer, M. (2012) Regional role forces Turkey to revisit Kurdish issues at home, The National, 27 August, 2012, https://www.thenationalnews.com/regional-role-forces-turkey-to-revisit-kurdish-issues-at-home-1.602368

Spendary, P. (2020) Conflict analysis in the implementation of tourism plans: Duhok Dam project and Zawa Mountain project, MSc dissertation, Cardiff University.

Tearfund (2015) Assessment of the Livelihood Opportunities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/causal_tearfund_livelihood_assesment_report_with_graphics.pdf

UNHCR (2016) Displacement as a Challenge and Opportunity: Urban profile: Refugees, internally displaced persons and host community. Dahuk Governorate: Kurdistan Region of Iraq, http://www.jips.org/system/ckeditor_assets/attachments/317/kri-Dahuk-urbanprofilerefugeesidpshostcommunity-en-web.pdf

UNHCR, 2020, Iraq: Protection and monitoring of refugees in response to Covid-19, August-December 2020, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IRQ_Protection%20Monitoring_Summary_Dec%202020.pdf

UNHCR, 2021, Situation report, Kurdistan, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/5

USAID (2020) Iraq – complex emergency: situation report December 2020, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2020_12_16%20USG%20Iraq%20Complex%20Emergency%20Fact%20Sheet%20%231.pdf

Vaillant, J., Grimm, M., Lay, J., and Roubaud, F. 2014. Informal sector dynamics in times of fragile growth: The case of Madagascar. The European Journal of Development Research 26(4): 437-455.

WANA Institute (2017) Refugee Labour Inclusion: Turkey and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication_RefugeeLabourInclusion_English3.pdf

Yoshioka, A. (2015) The shifting balance of power in Iraqi Kurdistan: The struggle for democracy with uninstitutionalized governance. International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies, 9(1): 21-35.

Photos: Alano Hosen; Nazih; Raqeeb Mahmood; Aram Sliman; Saber Othman; Bilind, T. Abdullah


54-A2