



**PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT**  
EAYAN ALWAAH VILLAGE, AL-  
MUHALABIYA SUBDISTRICT, MOSUL

MAY 2025

## Methodology and Objective

As part of efforts to assess return dynamics in displacement-affected areas, the Returns Working Group (RWG) facilitated a community dialogue in coordination with the Ninewa Governorate Office, focusing on Eayan Alwaah village in Al-Muhalabiya Subdistrict. Eayan Alwaah is considered a partially returned village, with approximately 22% of its original population currently residing there. The objective of the dialogue was to engage directly with displaced families and returnees to better understand their intentions regarding return, identify key challenges preventing wider reintegration, and assess the willingness and readiness of displaced families to re-establish themselves in the village. This consultation also aimed to highlight critical service gaps and recovery needs that must be addressed to support sustainable returns and long-term community stabilization.



### PARTICIPANT LIST

Name	Position
Government	
Mohammed Yahya	Department of water
Akram Abdulqader Ibrahim	Department of education
Younis Ahmed Youssef	Municipality
Community Representatives	
Ali Mahmoud	Community member
Abdullah Salih	Community member
Mohammed Qatas	Community member
Burjs Amyozi	Community member
Jalal Izaldin	Community member
Waleed Khaled	Community member
Mahmoud Qatas	Community member
Khaleel Abdullah	Community member
Bilal Mahmoud	Community member
Adnan Qahtan	Community member
Khaled Abdullah	Community member
Abdulkareem Jassim	Community member
Ali Salih	Community member
Ahmed Jaro	Community member
Jasim Izaldin	Community member
Ramadan Salah	Community member
Adil Khaleel	Community member
UN/NGOs	
Firas Alsaman	RWG
Karam Eskander	



Figure 1 Community members engaged in Eayan Alwaah session

## Basic Information

Eayan Alwaah is a rural village situated in Ninewa Governorate, within the administrative boundaries of Mosul District. The village is in Al-Muhalabiya Subdistrict and is approximately 3 kilometers west of the subdistrict center. The area is accessible by road and is positioned in a zone that witnessed extensive displacement and military activity during the conflict with ISIS. Before the displacement crisis in 2014, Eayan Alwaah had an estimated population of approximately 1,500 individuals (250 families). These families lived in about 200 houses. The community primarily lived in self-built homes, many of which were constructed using traditional mud brick methods.

Following the ISIS invasion and control of the area in 2014, the entire population of Eayan Alwaah displaced to various locations for safety, including the city of Mosul, the center of Al-Muhalabiya Subdistrict, and to internally displaced persons (IDP) camps such as Salamiyah and Jada. A minority of families fled to Turkey. During the conflict, the village was inaccessible, and extensive damage to homes and infrastructure made return impossible for several years.

Between 2019 and 2022, a portion of the displaced population gradually began returning to Eayan Alwaah. As of now, 55 families (342 individuals) have returned to the village. The returnees include both Sunni Turkmen and Sunni Arabs, each representing 50% of the community. Although this return signals a measure of stability, the village continues to face some challenges, including limited public services, infrastructure damage, and a lack of livelihood opportunities. Most returnees came back without comprehensive support, and many essential needs remain unmet, limiting the pace of full reintegration. The returnee households are living in self-reconstructed or newly constructed homes. This represents a return rate of roughly 22%, reflecting both the slow pace of recovery and the continued displacement of most of the village's original residents.

The village is currently under the joint control of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) and the Iraqi Army. The PMF's 60th Brigade, 58th Regiment, is present in the area, and its members are primarily local residents, which contributes to a generally stable security environment. The Iraqi Army's 16th Division maintains a security presence. While the area is currently calm, the visibility and long-term presence of armed actors can influence the decision-making of displaced families, especially those hesitant to return due to security-related concerns. No major security incidents have been reported recently, but ongoing coordination with security forces is essential to maintain community confidence and ensure sustainable returns.

## ACCESS TO HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY



Figure 2 the damage of houses

Before displacement, approximately 90% of the homes in Eayan Alwaah were constructed using traditional mud-brick methods, with only about 10% made from concrete blocks. These mud structures were highly vulnerable to both military operations

and natural erosion, especially given that such houses require regular maintenance. As a result, nearly 90% of the homes in the village sustained full or partial destruction.

To facilitate return and reintegration, international organizations intervened to support housing rehabilitation. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) rehabilitated 25 homes, while the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reconstructed another 25 houses. However, many houses remain damaged and uninhabitable, particularly those owned by families who remain displaced abroad, especially in Turkey. Community members stated that the lack of adequate housing is one of the main barriers preventing families from returning. Displaced families emphasized that unless further reconstruction efforts are undertaken, many will be unable to return, even if they are willing. They also expressed concerns about the high cost of rebuilding and the absence of financial or technical support to do so.”

### **COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

According to the participants, approximately 75% of the affected families, not just those who have returned—have received compensation from the government for property damage. These funds have helped some returnees rebuild or repair their homes. However, around 25% of families—mostly those still residing outside Iraq—have not received compensation, either because they did not apply or were not eligible under existing mechanisms. Participants noted that despite compensation, many families remain hesitant to return due to other challenges beyond housing, such as access to services, livelihoods, or security concerns. This suggests that while housing support is important, it may not be the only factor affecting return decisions.

## **Access to Livelihoods and Economic Recovery**

### **BEFORE DISPLACEMENT**

Prior to 2014, Eayan Alwaah relied heavily on agriculture and livestock farming. In addition, some residents worked as government employees, while others were self-employed in skilled or unskilled labor such as construction work.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

“During the dialogue, community members explained that the village’s economic base has been severely eroded since the conflict. They reported that farmlands were left untended or damaged, and many families lost their livestock. As a result, most residents can no longer rely on traditional livelihoods such as farming and animal husbandry. Participants shared that many working-aged men are now forced to seek daily labor opportunities in cities like Erbil and Baghdad, mostly in construction, painting, and other manual trades. Only a few families, they noted, have been able to resume agricultural activities, largely due to the lack of financial means to purchase livestock or rehabilitate farmland. Community members strongly emphasized the need for targeted livelihood recovery support as a top priority to enable sustainable returns and reintegration.

## **Access to Basic Services**

### **ACCESS TO WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES**

Before displacement, residents obtained drinking water through purchases and relied on artesian wells for washing and irrigation. The water infrastructure was informal and insufficient.

Today, water access has significantly improved. A functioning potable water network now serves the entire village, supplied through a pipeline connected to the Al-Muhalabiya water project, located approximately 4 kilometers away. This development has alleviated one of the major barriers to return and supports basic daily needs for returned families.

### **ELECTRICITY ACCESS**

Prior to the displacement, Eayan Alwaah received electricity from the main power network in Al-Muhalabiya. Electricity was generally available for 10 to 15 hours a day, though this varied by season, with more significant outages during summer and winter. Families also used small personal generators, particularly in the hotter months.

Currently, electricity supply levels have returned to their pre-displacement state. However, many families lost their private generators during the liberation operations due to theft or destruction, leaving them with no backup options during power outages. This is especially problematic during the summer, when high temperatures severely affect living conditions. The lack of a shared community generator or other alternatives remains a pressing issue. Community representatives explained that

affordability is the main barrier — most families cannot contribute financially to purchase or operate a communal generator. Participants also highlighted that no external support has been provided for such an initiative, making it difficult for the community to address this gap on their own.”

### **ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES**

There is no health facility in Eayan Alwaah village, neither before nor after displacement. Residents must travel approximately 3 kilometers to access the primary healthcare center located in the center of Al-Muhalabiya Subdistrict. This continues to limit timely access to essential medical services and places additional pressure on returnee families, particularly the elderly, people with disabilities, and young children.

## **Access to Education**

### **BEFORE DISPLACEMENT**

The village operated a single mixed-gender primary school, which enrolled around 150 students and employed six teachers. For secondary and high school education, students commuted to Al-Muhalabiya, which is approximately 3 kilometers away.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

The same primary school remains functional, but due to the decline in population, it now serves only 80 students and is staffed by four teachers. The drop in enrollment reflects the partial return of residents and also the limited quality of education and infrastructure. Secondary school students still commute to Al-Muhalabiya for further education, highlighting the continued reliance on neighboring areas for essential services.

## **Key Challenges to Return**

The return process to Eayan Alwaah remains hindered by a combination of structural, economic, and service-related challenges, including:

- **Limited Livelihood Opportunities:** The collapse of the agriculture and livestock sectors has eliminated the village’s primary sources of income.
- **Inadequate Electricity Supply:** The absence of functioning generators or reliable backup systems leaves residents vulnerable to extreme heat during the summer months.
- **Incomplete Housing Rehabilitation:** Many homes remain in ruins, especially those belonging to families still abroad, deterring wider return.
- **Lack of Basic Services:** The absence of a health facility, limited educational infrastructure, and insufficient livelihood programs restrict long-term reintegration.

## **Intentions to Return**

Despite these challenges, more than 90% of displaced families from Eayan Alwaah have expressed a strong willingness to return, especially if the following needs are addressed:

- Job creation initiatives, particularly in agriculture and livestock sectors, to restore income-generating opportunities.
- Support from government or NGOs for the rehabilitation of agricultural land and the repurchasing of livestock.
- Reconstruction of additional damaged homes to accommodate families currently unable to return.
- Installation of a community generator or other alternative energy solutions to provide relief during national power outages, particularly in summer.

These measures would significantly improve living conditions and encourage more displaced families to return and reintegrate into their community.

# PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT

## EAYAN ALWAAH VILLAGE, AL- MUHALABIYA SUBDISTRICT, MOSUL

MAY 2025



حلول دائمة في العراق  
Iraq Durable Solutions

