



AREA OF NO RETURN:
NAJMA VILLAGE – NINEWA
GOVERNORATE, DS DISCUSSION

APRIL 2025

Methodology and Objective:

The Returns Working Group (RWG), in coordination with the Ninewa Governorate Office, facilitated a Durable Solutions (DS) discussion to address the barriers and opportunities related to the safe and voluntary return of displaced families to Najma Village. The meeting brought together key local authorities who play a central role in supporting the community's recovery and reintegration efforts. The session enabled open dialogue with municipal, district, agricultural, electricity, communications, and transportation authorities. Discussions highlighted that only approximately 5–8 families have so far returned to the village out of 180 families and emphasized the absence of obstacles from the nearby oil company or other parties.



The authorities confirmed their willingness to support the families' return and future reintegration. A second thematic meeting will be organized soon, initiated by the authorities themselves, to bring in representatives from the oil company to obtain official answers on access to agricultural lands and further cooperation.

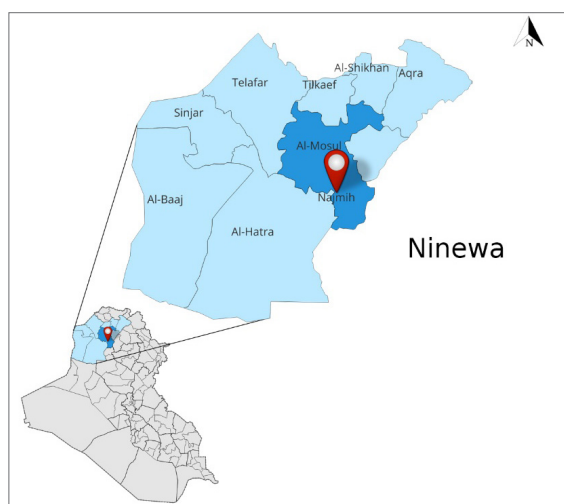


Figure 1: Najma Map



Figure 2: Najma Map

PARTICIPANT LIST

Local authority	
Yasser Abdulmunaam	Municipality Official
Osama Shaher	District Director
Mohammed Ahmed	Qayyarah Agriculture Division
Waad Ahmed	Agriculture department
Ibrahim Fathi	Electricity Department
Jassim Mohammed	Communications Department
Fares Fadel	Sewerage Department
Mohammed Turki	Transportation Department
UN/NGOs	
Firas Alsalman	RWG
Karam Eskander	

Current Situation

Najma Village, located near Qayyarah, Ninewa Governorate, faces persistent challenges preventing large-scale returns. The village infrastructure remains severely damaged, with destroyed mud-brick homes, non-operational schools, limited water access, and one functional electricity transformer for the few returning families. Although the proximity of an oil company was previously perceived as a barrier, local authorities clarified that there are currently no obstacles preventing return linked to the company's activities.

Families who returned reported ongoing needs for support with basic services, housing rehabilitation, water access, and agriculture revitalization. Given these findings, local authorities expressed their strong willingness to assist and work collaboratively to facilitate sustainable returns.



Authorities' Statements of Support

Mr. Yasser Abdulmunaam, Municipality Official, expressed his full commitment to supporting the returning families in Najma Village. He confirmed that the municipality is ready to assist with any efforts related to debris removal, public cleaning, and basic municipal services to enable the community to reestablish itself. Mr. Yasser emphasized that the municipality would prioritize Najma once more families return.

Mr. Osama Shaher, District Director, stated that the district authorities are keen to support the return process. He assured that coordination with higher governorate-level bodies will be initiated to mobilize resources for Najma Village, particularly for infrastructure rehabilitation and administrative services. He also emphasized that he would continue to uphold the commitments made by the previous Mayor, specifically ensuring that if any individuals attempt to obstruct the return of families, he will personally intervene to resolve the issue. Moreover, he expressed his full readiness to support return efforts and announced that he would organize a meeting bringing together the oil company operating in the area and the Returns Working Group (RWG) team. The purpose of this meeting would be to establish an agreement allowing families to access and work their agricultural lands without facing challenges, thereby facilitating a smoother and more sustainable return process.

Waad, Qayyarah Agriculture Division, confirmed the readiness of the Agricultural Department to assist returning families in reclaiming and cultivating their lands. He emphasized that families should first be supported to return to the village, where they can assess the current situation and identify the type of support they require to resume their livelihoods. The Agricultural Department expressed its full willingness to provide necessary technical and material assistance based on the families' needs and priorities, and they conveyed their happiness to support them throughout the process.

Furthermore, he underlined the critical importance of securing families' access to agricultural lands that are currently located within the perimeter controlled by the oil company. He strongly supported the proposal to organize a follow-up thematic meeting involving relevant stakeholders, with the aim of addressing this land access issue officially and reaching practical solutions that would facilitate the full restoration of agricultural activities for returning families.

Mr. Ibrahim, Electricity Department, expressed that the electricity sector is prepared to enhance services as soon as the population increases. He indicated that while currently only one transformer serves the returned families, additional resources and technical teams would be mobilized to expand the electricity network if more families decide to return.

Outcomes and Next Steps

The authorities recommended convening a second thematic meeting to involve representatives from the oil company. This meeting will serve to officially address land access concerns, secure employment opportunities for returnees, and solidify the cooperation framework between the oil company and local governance structures. The authorities stressed that engaging the oil company is crucial to ensure sustainable agriculture revival and job creation for returnees.

The RWG, in collaboration with the Ninewa Governorate Office, will continue to facilitate coordination among all stakeholders to translate commitments into practical support and ensure that Najma Village becomes conducive for larger-scale returns.

AREA OF NO RETURN: NAJMA VILLAGE – NINEWA GOVERNORATE, DS DISCUSSION

APRIL 2025



حلول دائمة في العراق
Iraq Durable Solutions

