



PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT
TAL BANAT, QAYRAQAN,
SINJAR THEMATIC MEETING

MARCH 2025

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE:

The Returns Working Group (RWG), in coordination with Sinjar district authorities, facilitated a thematic meeting to explore the return of displaced families to Tal Banat in Qayrawan sub-district, Sinjar. A prior community dialogue in September 2024, with the Mukhtar and returnee community members highlighted a strong willingness to return, despite major obstacles, including severe housing destruction and a lack of essential services such as water, electricity, and shelter. The meeting was arranged between community representatives and local authorities to address these challenges. The two urgent issues requiring immediate attention: low electricity voltage (110V), affecting daily life and essential services, and unregulated waste disposal, with families resorting to burning garbage near their homes.



Figure 1 discussions during the session

Name	Position
Government	
Muhamad Abdullah Majid	Head of electricity department
Abdul-Hakim Faroq	electricity department
Maha Hassan	Electricity department
Mahdi Qassim Qambar	Head of Water department
Nashwan Hassan Ahmad	Sinjar municipality
Hussin Hassan Qassim	Tal Bnaat-Tal Qassab municipality
Dr. Aiman Khudir Faris	Head of Tal Banat PHCC (primary health care centre)
Community Representatives	
Hussain Abass Hassan	Community leader of Tal Banat
Jahfar Kena'an Ahmad	Community
Hussain Hassan Ahmad	Community
Khairy Abdullah Masi	Community
Khalaf Ali Ahmad	Community
Mahmood Abdullah	Community
Ali Ahmed	Community
Hajy Khaled	Community
UN/NGOs	
Karam Eskander	RWG
Sufyan Mandoo	
Astvin Nashwan Hussain	IOM
Jamil Kmo Elias	IOM
Sbeeha Hassan	IOM
Khadil Khalaf Findi	Nadia's Initiative

BACKGROUND

Tal Banat, a village in southern Sinjar is located 18 km southeast of Sinjar city, near Qayrawan and adjacent to Tal Qasab, was home to approximately 5,200 households (26,000 individuals) before the 2014 ISIL attacks, which led to mass displacement, primarily to camps in Duhok. Before the conflict, the village had moderate infrastructure, including basic water and electricity services, though both required maintenance. While the security situation is now stable, only 1,500 households (7,500 individuals) have returned, with many others expressing interest in returning if essential services are restored. However, two major barriers continue to hinder large-scale returns: severe electricity shortages, with low voltage affecting daily life, and inadequate municipal services, particularly waste management, forcing families to burn garbage near their homes. Addressing these critical infrastructure gaps remains essential to facilitating further returns to Tal Banat.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS:

During the session, key community representatives and service providers shared their concerns and ongoing efforts related to infrastructure and public services in Tal Banat. The following points were raised:

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY

The Mukhtar of Tal Banat raised serious concerns regarding the ongoing electricity crisis in the village, noting that the voltage level remains critically low at 110 volts. This insufficient power supply has resulted in the malfunctioning or damage of many homes electrical appliances. During the Governor of Ninewa, Mr. Abdul-Qadir Dakhil's visit to Tal Banat in late February 2025, the Mukhtar relayed these concerns directly. In response, the Governor committed to prioritizing a resolution to the issue.

The Head of the Electricity Department confirmed that materials valued at IQD36 million have been allocated by the Governor to Qayrawan subdistrict for the improvement of electricity in Tal Banat. Two new power lines are planned for installation, pending the finalization of a contract with a service provider. Once implementation begins, the project is expected to be completed within one month, with the goal of stabilizing voltage and improving overall power supply.

However, the electricity director also highlighted challenges that could undermine these efforts. He reported that residents—particularly those with agricultural land—have been illegally drawing electricity from the main transformer. Their excessive and unauthorized consumption exceeds the transformer's capacity, causing recurring voltage drops and power outages. Additionally, many residents are unable to pay electricity fees due to declining agricultural productivity and limited income, leading to widespread non-payment.

To address this, authorities have issued directives to hold department heads accountable for collecting fees from households and agricultural users. Despite staffing shortages, the department has begun collecting payments from agricultural users and is offering installation plans to ease the financial burden. The director also warned that electricity used for commercial and agricultural purposes is significantly more costly—up to 60 times higher than household rates—and that the ongoing illegal consumption could negate the benefits of the upcoming electricity improvements.

Moreover, the director expressed concern about the environmental consequences of unregulated agricultural expansion and the random drilling of wells, which threaten to deplete underground water resources. While community members acknowledged the risks, they emphasized the lack of alternative livelihoods and their dependence on such practices for survival.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT:

The Municipality Representative expressed the department's inability to provide garbage collection services in Tal Banat, citing a lack of human resources, logistical support, and vehicles. Furthermore, it was noted that Tal Banat Al-Qadim is classified as an informal settlement, and under current regulations, the municipality is not authorized to operate there.

The *Head of the Primary Health Care Center (PHCC)* in Tal Banat raised serious health concerns linked to the uncontrolled burning of garbage within the village. He stressed that the smoke and pollution are particularly harmful to individuals suffering from chronic illnesses and respiratory conditions.

SUPPORT AND COORDINATION:

Representatives from *IOM* and *Nadia's Initiative* expressed their willingness to engage with the municipality to explore potential support measures. This includes the possible provision of specialized equipment, such as a garbage compactor vehicle, in response to the urgent waste management needs.

ACTION POINTS AND CONCLUSION:

1. **Electricity:** Continued monitoring and follow-up on the implementation of the electricity upgrade project.
2. **Coordination:** IOM and Nadia's Initiative to initiate discussions with the municipality on feasible support options for solid waste management.

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