



IAPSRS Activity in Iraq Kurdistan



Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society

2016

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Introduction

Imam Ali's popular student's relief society as an international NGO has been always concerned about refugees (children and women) in need and emergency situation. Refugees and displaced of war issues in the neighboring countries of Iran specially Iraq and Syria in the recent years were one of the priorities of the NGO to provide for victims. The majority of Members of IAPSRS are young people, university students and graduates who cannot stand aside and be the silent spectators of the news of the humanitarian cataclysm of the children of war on the mass media. In this regard, the NGO members came to the conclusion to do their best to provide benevolence relief works for the afflicted people such as IDPs and refugees. Since the target community of the NGO has always been children and women, in the above-mentioned programs the focus was on this groups. Although, there are many war-torn areas in the world we would like to assist; considering our accessible facilities Kurdistan Iraqi Region has been designated as the primary desired step for commencing aid services.

The first mission: Identification of War-torn areas in the south of Iraq

In the summer 2010, after taking consultative status from economic and social council of the United Nations, IAPSRs decided to do investigations with the goal of programming under consideration of available facilities of the NGO to carry out relief works for IDPs and refugees in Iraq. For the idea, the first trip to war torn areas in Iraq was targeted to southern areas in Al-Amareh city. From the results of this program, studying clues of war and genocides like mass graves and the tragic situation of poor families affected in war years can be mentioned. The report of this trip was documented and presented to international organizations with the goal of gaining international support and advocacy for future plans in Iraq.



The second mission: Identification and relief work for refugees' camps in Erbil Kurdistan Iraq

In September 2014, some Christian members of IAPSRs proposed a plan for raising funds to support a relief program assisting IDPs Christian camps affected by ISIS attacks to Mosul. In this regard, funds were raised in two ways: first, Iranian Christian community contributions, second, micro donations of thousands of the NGO members. Eventually, the first caravan carrying Iranian people's donations of IAPSRs was sent to Iraqi Kurdistan region, in the summer of 2015. The team reached Erbil city and immediately took the necessary actions to meticulous identifications of the vital necessities of IDPs. According to observations, one Christian camp and a Syrian camp were designated as the most destitute targets. The most vital needs of the official Christian camp located in "Ankawa " district were determined as food-stuff scarce, lack of dry milk for infants, lack of detergents, weak hygiene status of the camp. The impoverished identified Syrian refugees had been left in a worse condition in unofficial tents on the street. They faced shortage of food-stuff and their infants struggled with

severe malnutrition. Their hygiene conditions were tragic, people were struggling with diseases and hygiene issues due to abandoned sewage and lack of fresh water.

The executive officers of the team in respect to the investigations and observation deduced to purchase dry milk with the donated budget and distribute them among infants of four mentioned camps. Furthermore, need assessment based on observation method, walking survey and Focus Group Discussion was implemented. The report including curtail requirements of IDPs and the catastrophic status of infants and children settled in these IDPs camps reflected to international organizations to convince donors and supports to endorse next relief projects via financial funds and advocacy.



The third mission: The 2016 Christmas Project in Kurdistan Iraqi region

IAPSRS based on gathered information on the summer trip programed a new relief project for furthering its mission assisting children and women affected by war settled in IDPs camps in Kurdistan Iraqi region. The NGO planned its new relief project to aid IDPs and refugees in Christmas 2016. In the new project, a dexterous relief team was sent to the region on a ten day lasting mission.

The team carried out investigations precisely in two cities (Sulaymaniyah, Erbil) to catch the last issues of IDPs, Refugees and war victims, in order to meet their last crucial needs. Two camps in "Sulaymaniyah" were visited and investigated "Arbat" and "Barikeh". "Arbat" camp people were Iraqi Arab IDPs from "Al ramadi", "Salahuddin" and "Mosul", displaced due to ISIS attacks. They only spoke Arabic. "Barikeh" camp in Sulaymaniyah was the temporary settlement of refugees from "Kubany", "Dayrik", "Afrin", and "Al-Qamishli" and their spoken language was Arabic and Kurdish. These two camps were officially under the supervision of the Kurdistan Iraqi region government. However, they had received supports from international organizations and some other charities; they still had some necessary requirements such as food, warm

clothes, oil for heaters and suffered from lack of hygiene facilities. Moreover, spiritually depression of the residence (notably children) was obviously observable. So that, for those camps the team decided to have some plans to bring a joyful atmosphere among children.



In Erbil city the former Christian camps that were received relief aid in the second mission was reinvestigated. The reappearance was remarkably welcomed and the visit evoked sympathy. Chiefly, the team congratulated and wished the residence a new year without war and hardship in durable peace. Moreover, after the discussion with the heads of the camp, officers of the team planned to distribute dry milk and diapers for infants. Furthermore, a ceremony for children was managed and planned.

Simultaneously, the team planed some ceremonies on the occasion of the New Year to make children happy. In Muslim camps the ceremony was held by playing Kurdish cheerful sounds, dance, and a variety of fascinating games for children. In Christen camps one of the members of the NGO appeared as a Santa Clause and celebrated the New Year with children. In the events children were given paintings instruments asking to draw their dreams and messages to the people of the world. The event was very interesting for children and they were given gifts. This plan resulted in increasing the sense of hope and drawing memorable moments in their minds.



Forth Mission: The plight of Syrian wandered refugees

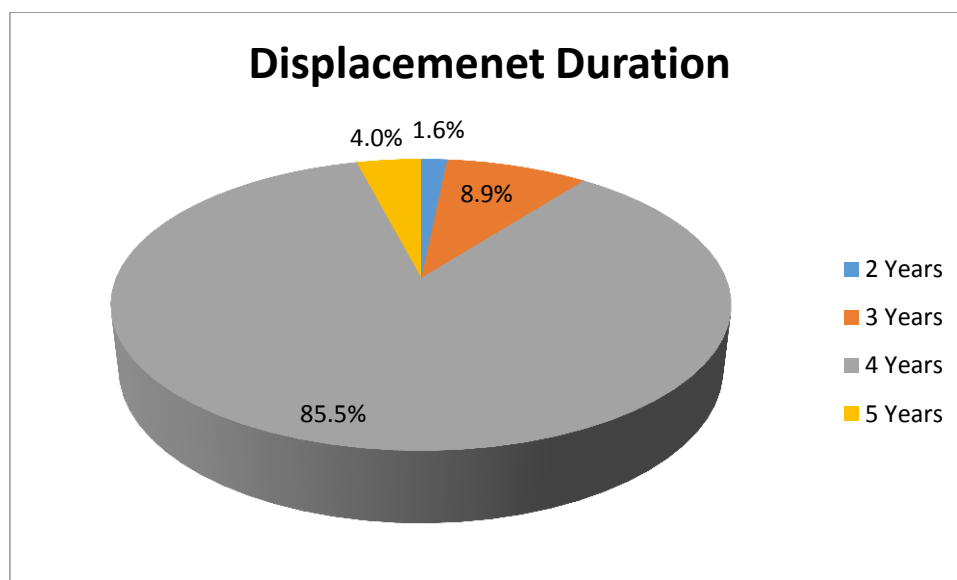
In June 2016, according to the last identification carried out at the third mission on 2016 Christmas by regarding to catastrophic and serious condition of Syrian IDP's wandered in the street on informal accommodations and marginalized areas, the IAPSRs planned to head out an organized team to Erbil city in order to accurately identify the living status of these families and also performing some relief works and advocacy. On the other hand the unofficial tents of the Syrian "evacuees" on the streets of the Erbil city was recognized and determined as the main target conducting us to the research on the plight of all adrift refugees.



The expedition team accomplished the accurate and precise investigations and identification in some marginalized district of the Erbil city so that we could find the Syrian refugees inflicted by war, In addition to Havalan street, the team found a lot of Syrian families in “Darato” district in margin of the city, and also Beneslava, Sahekostar neighborhoods. 150 families were identified and received relief aids in this mission. According to information obtained in this walking survey, these identified Syrian families were in poor and serious condition in supplying their primitive needs. Most of them living in poor tents without any facilities and basic equipment. We observed the families with shortage of food-stuff and their infants struggled with severe malnutrition. Their hygiene condition was disastrous, struggling with diseases and hygiene issues due to lack of fresh water and adjacency to sewage and waste disposal.

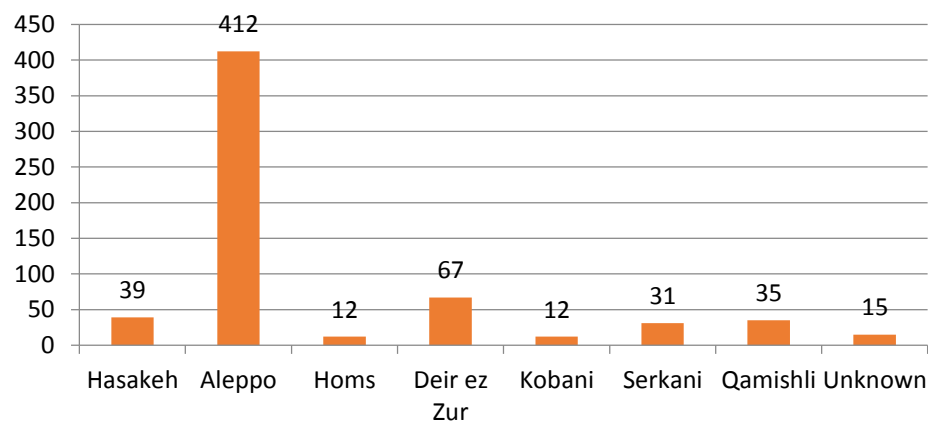


On the mentioned areas, 150 Syrian displaced families came under a statistical research elaborately. According to the survey, Most of these families are living in displacement and far from their home for 5 years.

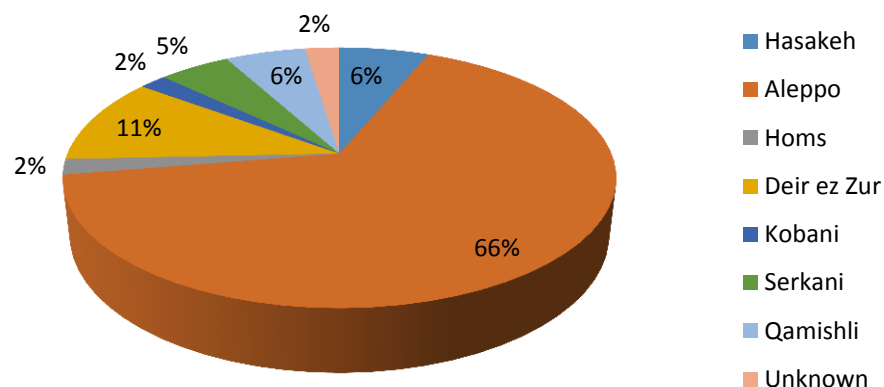


The entire members of the families were 623 people coming from Aleppo, Deir_ez-Zur, Hasakeh, Kobani, Qamishli and etc.

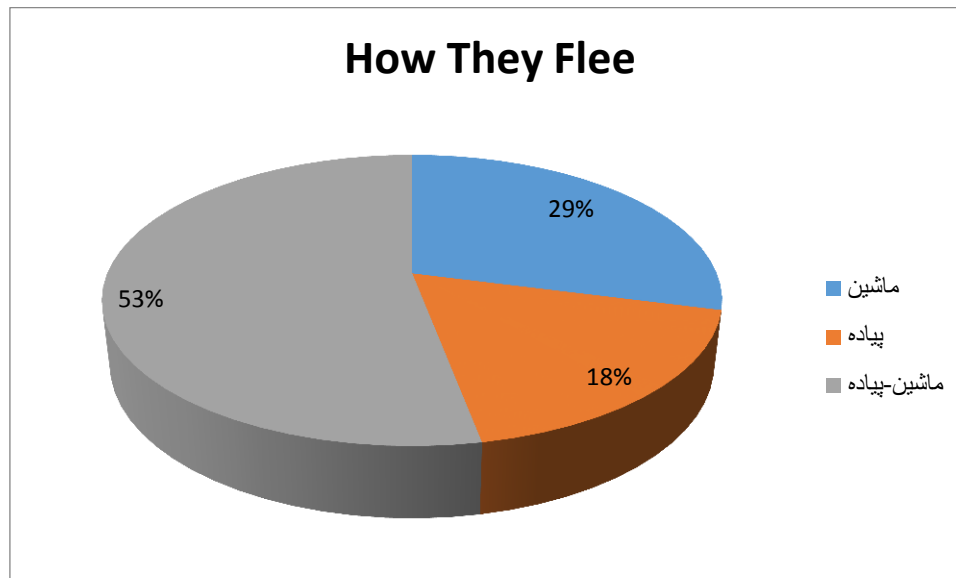
Dispersion diagram of the origin of identified syrian displaced families



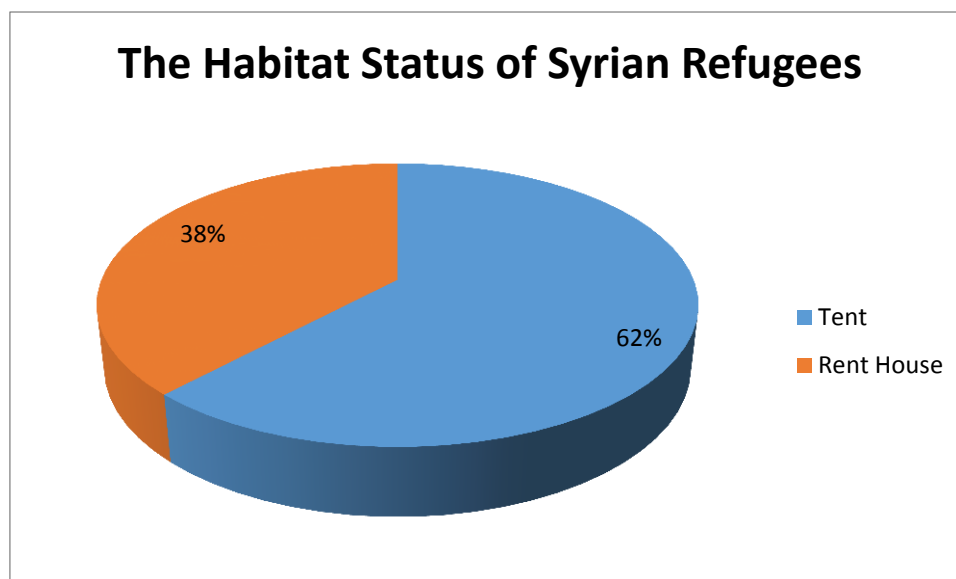
Dispersion diagram of the origin of identified syrian displaced families



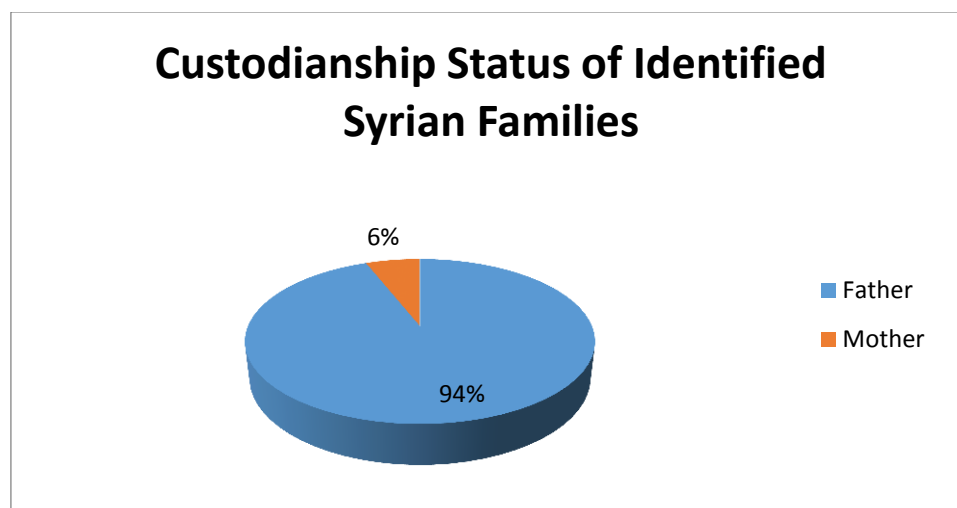
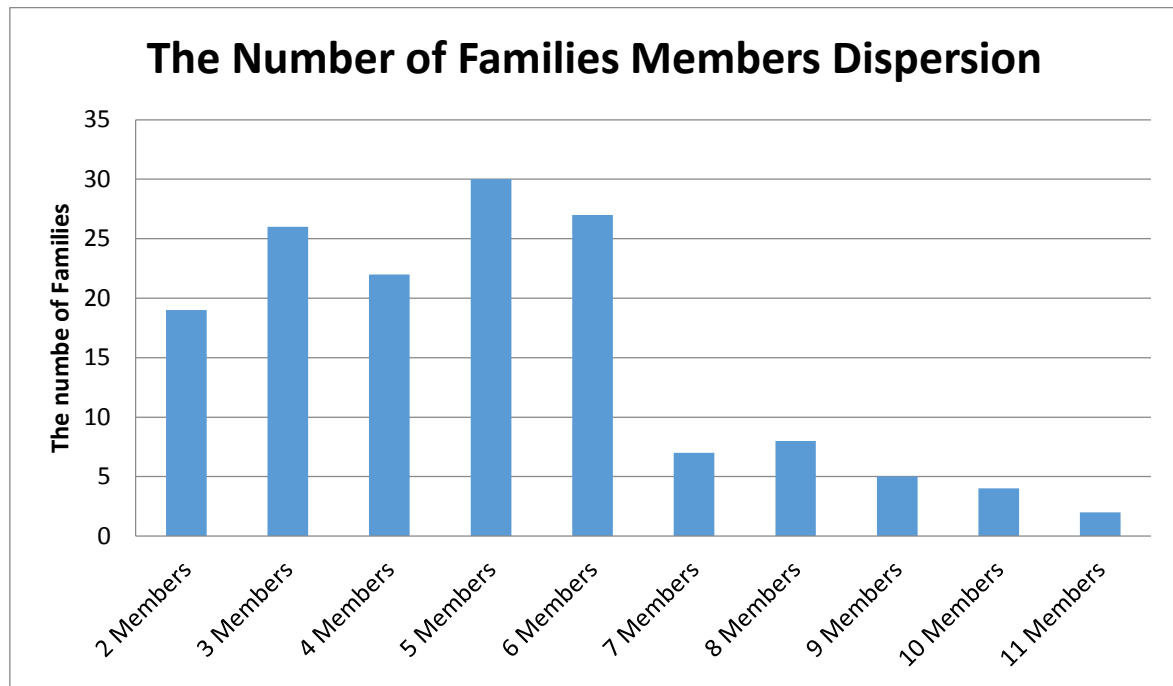
As we already mentioned most Syrian IDPs and refugees have run away from war torn cities and regions and fled to safe regions in Iraqi Kurdistan and other areas. As shown in this diagram, More than half of these families walked most section of the route and went through rest of the way by car and about 20 % only walked on foot all the way.



The majority of Syrian refugees and IDPs out of official camps are living in the tents in informal accommodation and in poor condition. According to beneath diagram this majority are about 62%.

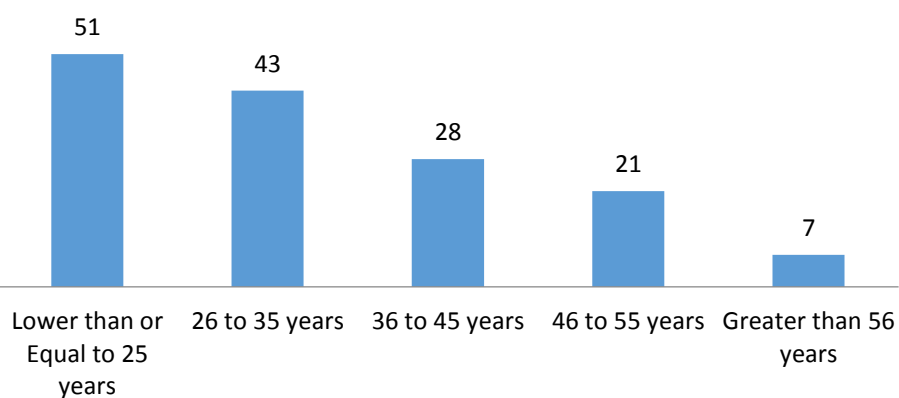


The below diagram illustrates that the majority of families in the survey were considered populous which stems from the cultural religious beliefs of the residence. In 10 cases mothers were the heads of the family whose husbands were killed in the bombardment, 3 others had become disabled due to war consequences and the other 3 had been lost in the heart-breaking war conflict.

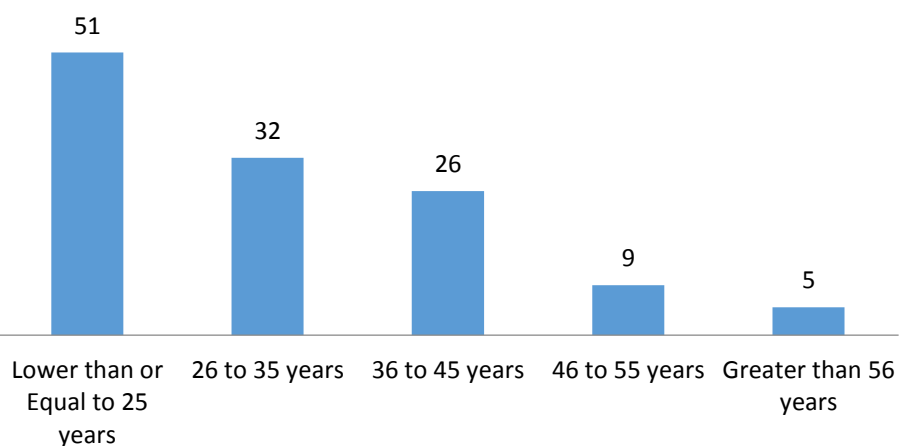


As we see in above diagram, only 6 percent of head of families are mothers whose husbands has been killed or lost in the war. Also beneath diagram shows that the most of head of identified Syrian families are young, aged between 18 to 36 years old.

The Age Dispersion of Head of Household



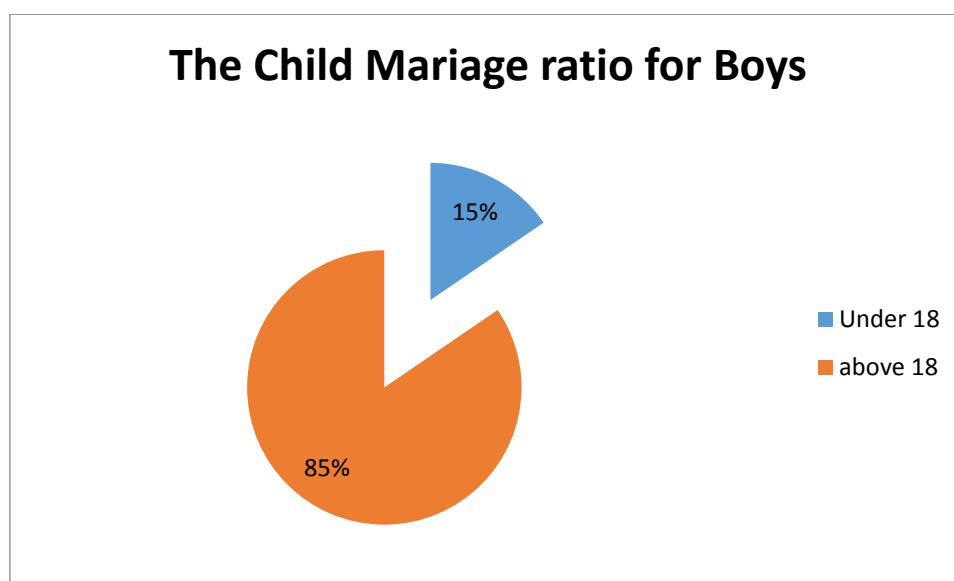
The Age of Mothers



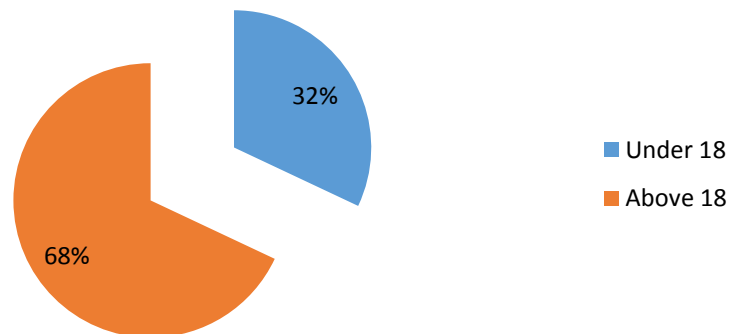


According to above diagrams we see that many head of households and mothers are younger than 25 years old.

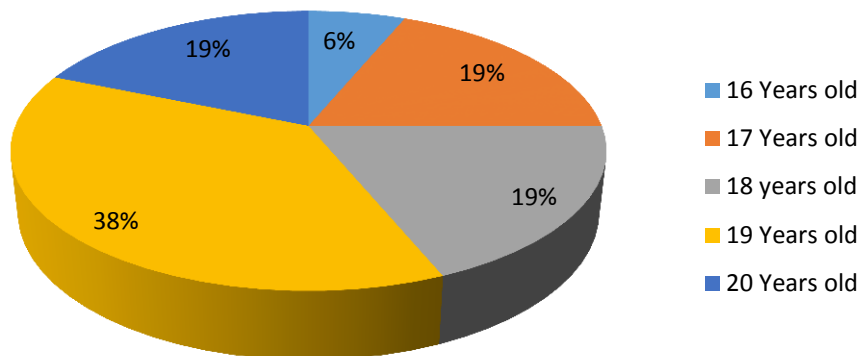
Our survey reveals that 32% of girls and 18 % of boys in the Syrian IDP's married under age of 18 because of their ethnical, religious and cultural beliefs and can be considered and recognized as the child marriage that caused a lot of difficulties and crises in their life, toughened up during the displacement and consequently affected their childhood life.



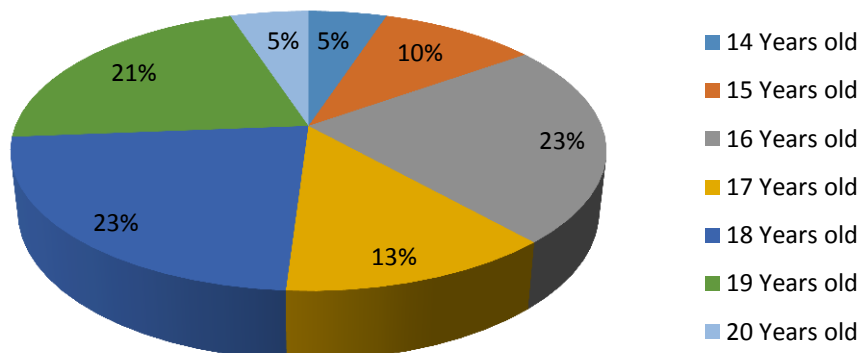
The Child Mariage Ratio for Girls



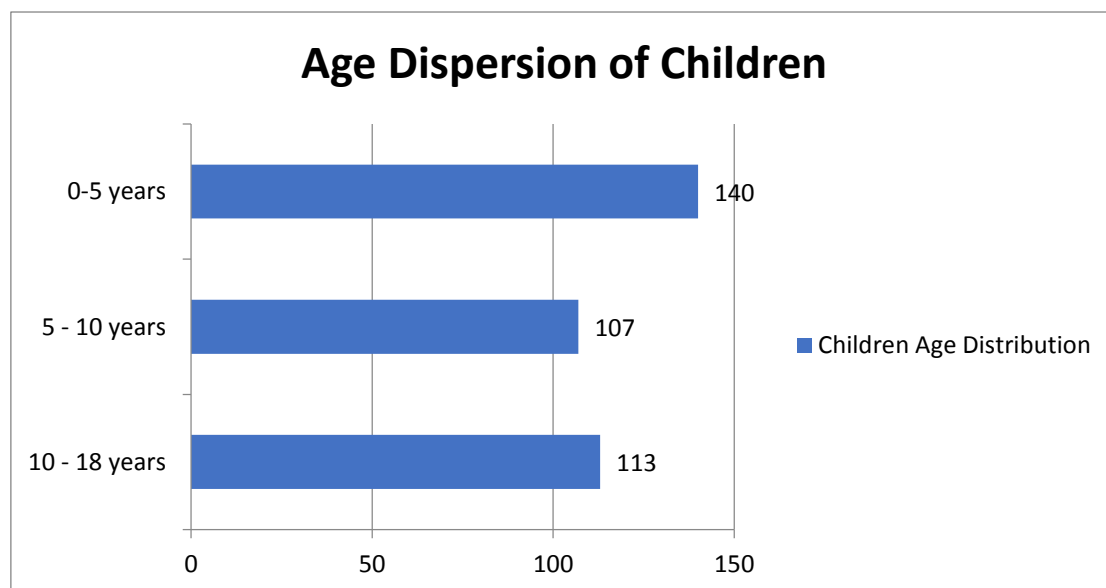
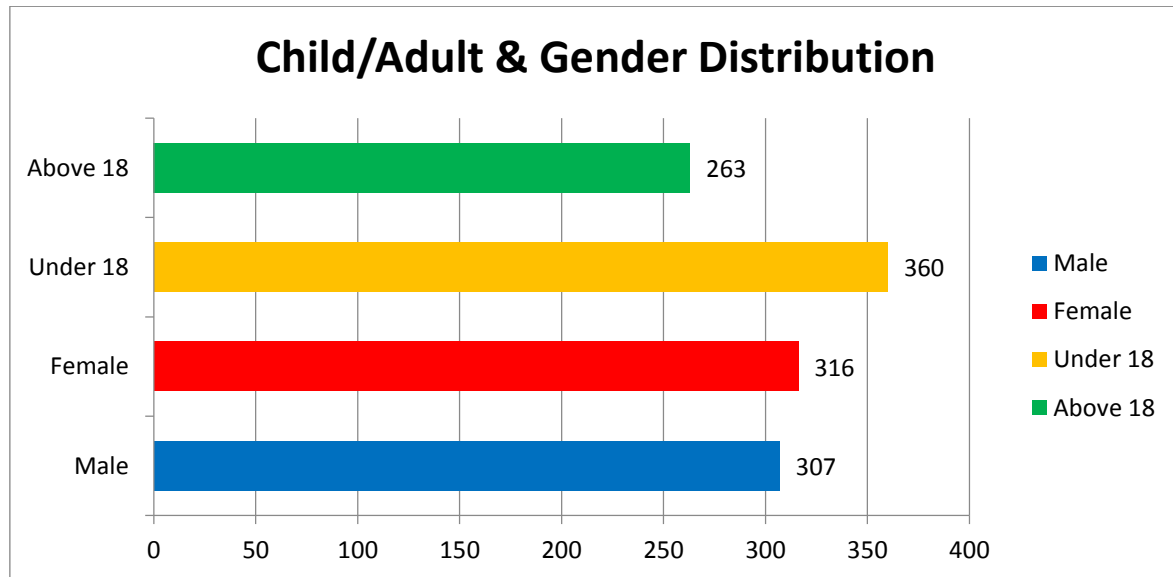
The Father Under 21



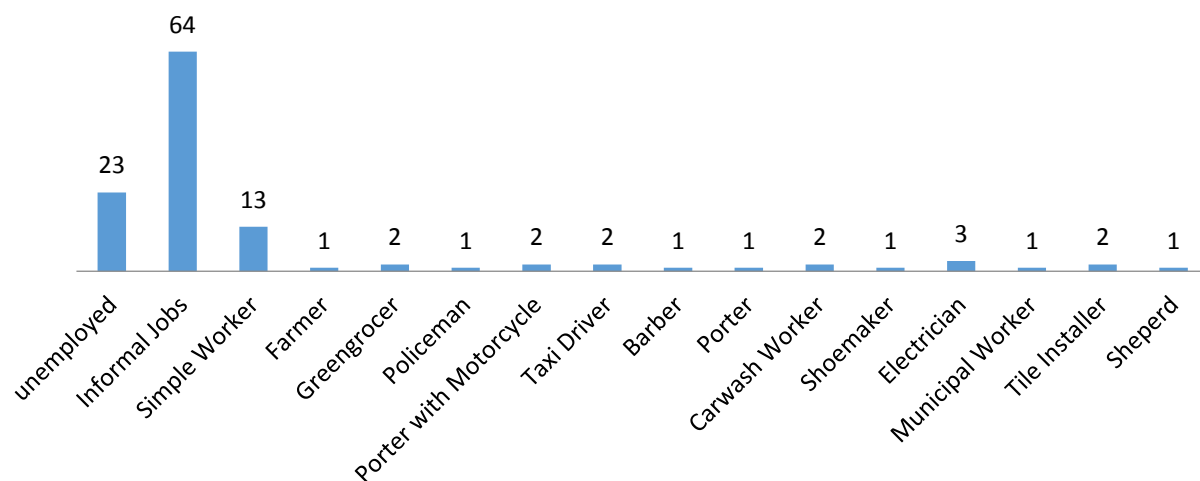
The Mother Under 21



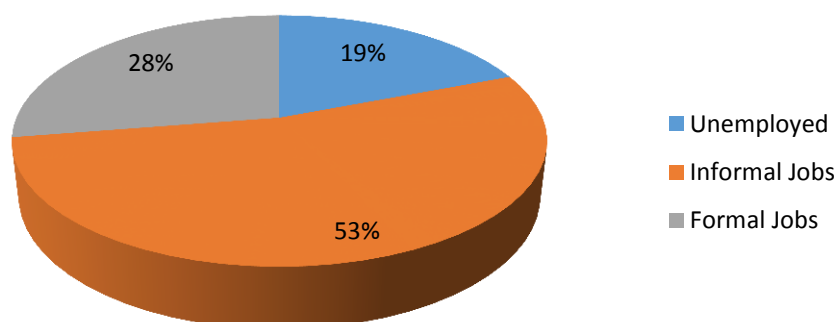
The diagram below demonstrates the age dispersion; 360 individuals among identified Syrian displaced people studied were under 18. The 316 individuals are female and 307 male out of 623.



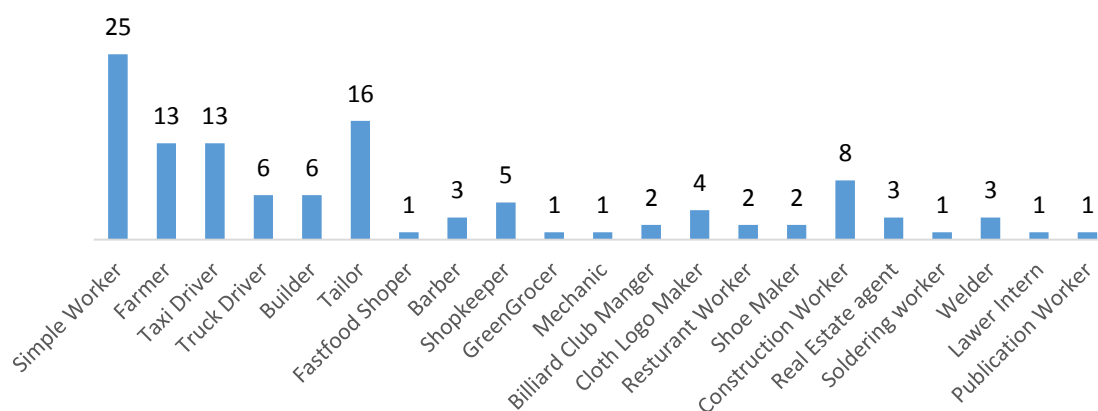
The Occupation Variation of Head of Household After Displacement



The Employment Types Dispersion of Head of Refugee Families



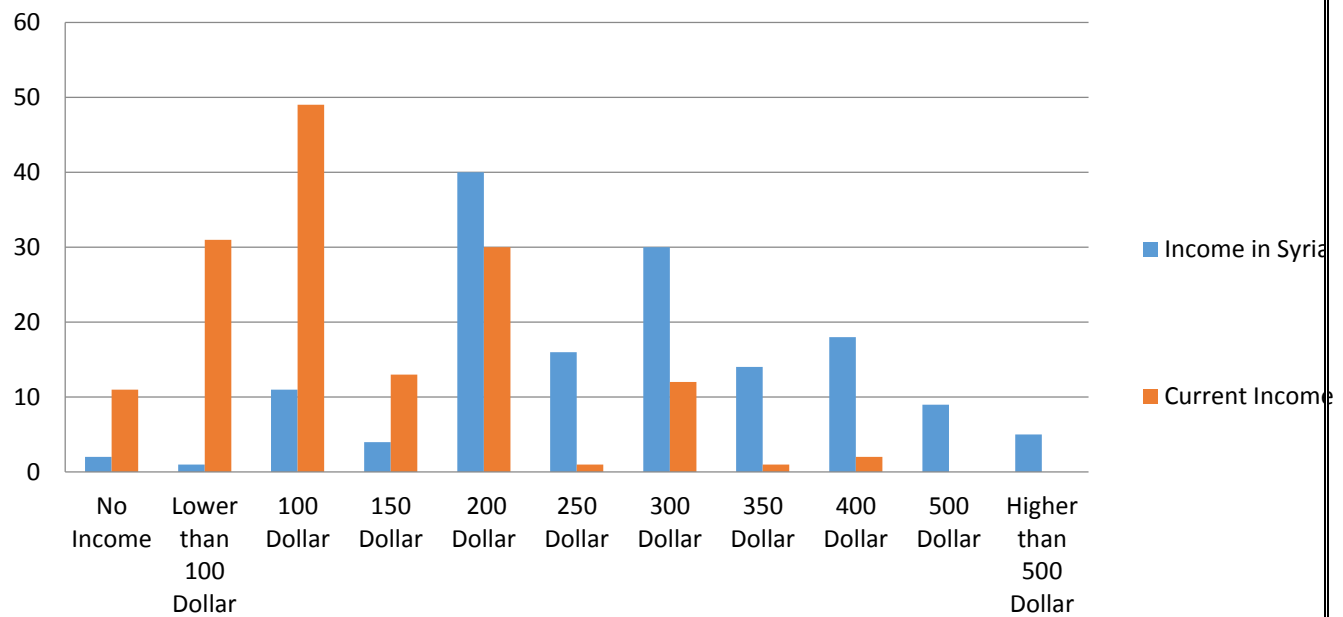
The Occupation Variation of Head of Household before Displacement (In Syria)



Our field research illustrates that the most head of Syrian families had decent occupation and formal jobs before the misery of war forced them to leave their homes in Syria. Unfortunately after the displacement to Iraq, they are not able to find a relevant job because of lack of occupation and economic recession in Iraqi Kurdistan region.

As shown on above diagrams, the 53% of Head of families had informal and low-status jobs such as metal and plastic waste gathering or Street Peddling. The 19 percent of them were unemployed and only 28% were able to find a formal jobs. In comparison to their current situation, in Syria their employment status was so difference and more better and satisfying for those families and arguably none of these head of families have ever experienced such informal jobs they have now.

The Comparison of the Monthly Income of Syrian Families before and after Displacement



Based on the information elicited from observation method, walking survey and focus group discussion, the mentioned families used to live in social middle-class or lower before the occurrence of civil war in Syria. Explicitly, their social class and economic status became dilapidated after the catastrophe. In the time they used to live in Syria, the average of their income was approximately 12 dollars per day in a range of 5 to 15 dollar.

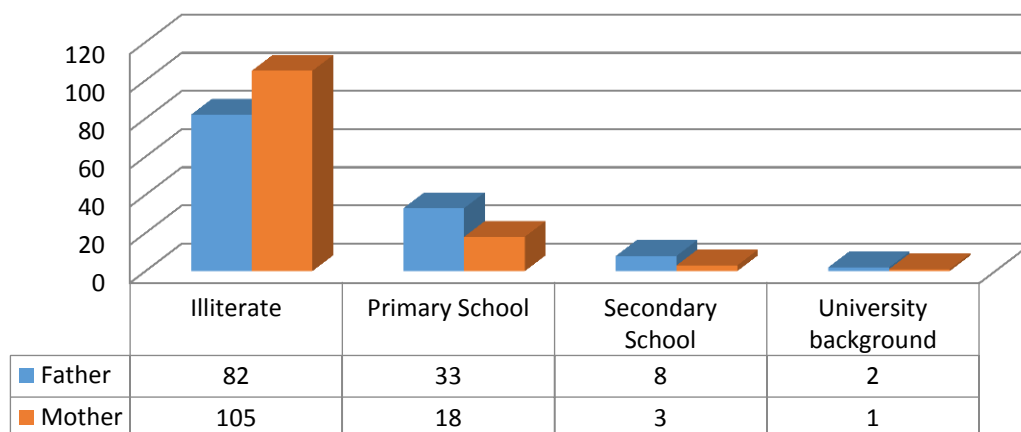
At the time of the survey, the average of family incomes in Erbil were 4 dollars per day in a range of 2 to 8 which indicates a substantial reduction of 50% in their incomes, while, the expenses in Kurdistan are considerably higher than their former situation.

The majority of them have been resorted to low-status temporary jobs including daily ordinary working, street peddling and gathering plastic waste. The families usually were settled in deep depression and low life expectancy, relying on the generosity of the people and charities to give them hand. As a result of the deteriorated financial status of the families, objective samples of child labor were seen.

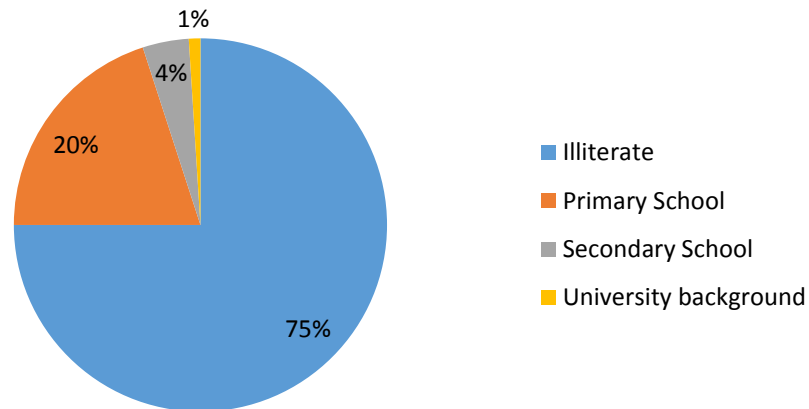


The research studies have revealed that 75% percent of parents were illiterate and 20% percent only have some primary school background. Only 3 parents had university background that lost their life expectancy after the disaster.

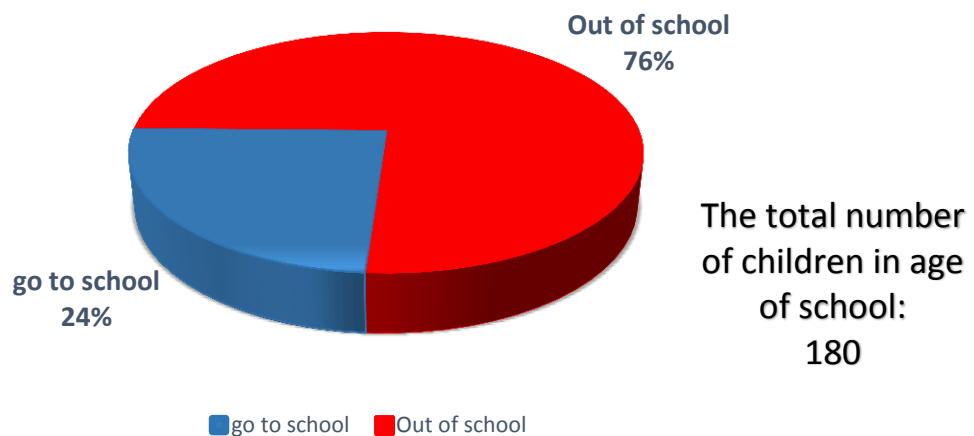
Parent's Educational Status



Parent's Literacy Status



Children's educational status

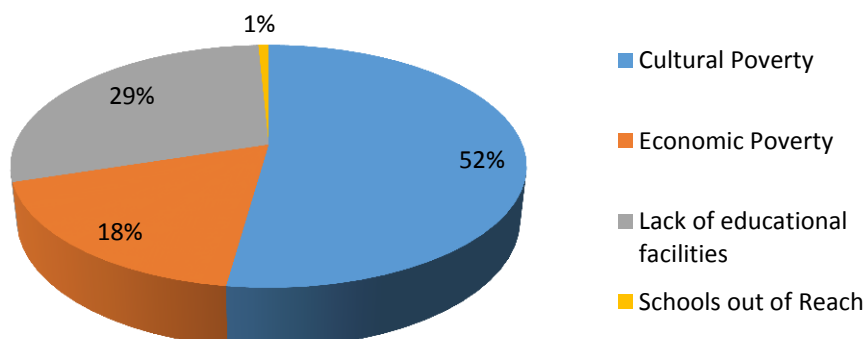


In June 2016 in the target population of Syrian refugees, 137 children were deprived of education out of 120 in the age of school during displacement.

Additionally, due to harsh poverty situation, the education of the children among Syrian refugees has been considered as the lowest priorities of their necessities.

As shown in the diagram below, the cultural poverty among Syrian refugees is the main cause of education deprivation of children in those families whose economic poverty aggravates this situation.

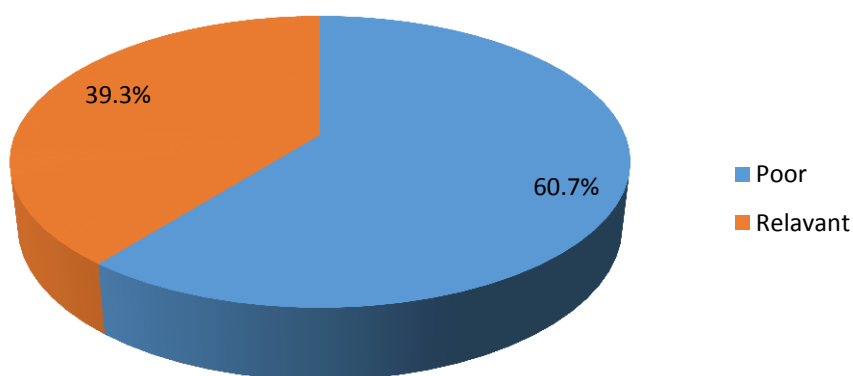
The Causes of Educational Deprivation of Children



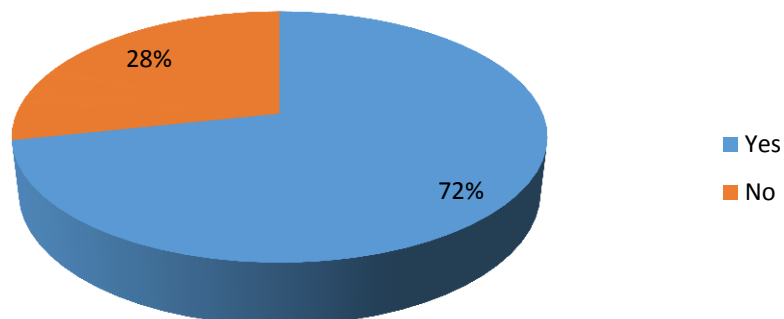
According to this survey, only 39% of Syrian refugee households have hygienic environment and have their own toilets at home. Unfortunately there were more households who had mobile phones rather than essential things like toilet and sanitized place for garbage disposal. More than 60% of those family used public unhygienic toilets and more than half of them get simple water faucet to take shower and had to warm water with pot on Hearth for bathing.

Also the majority, about 72%, also did not have any refrigerators or other cooling appliance for keeping their food fresh and preventing them from perishing.

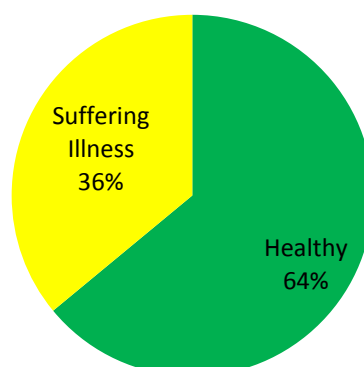
The Hygiene Condition of IDPs



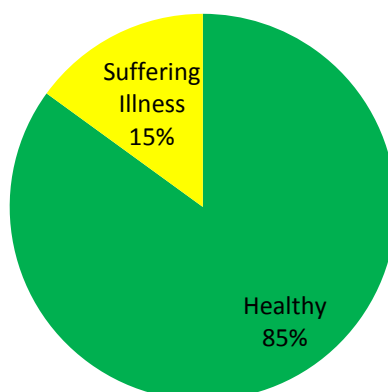
The Refugees Equipped with Refrigerator



Parent's Health Condition

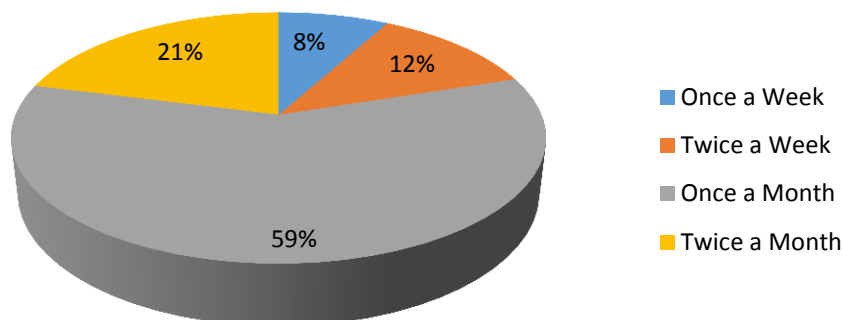


Children's Health Condition



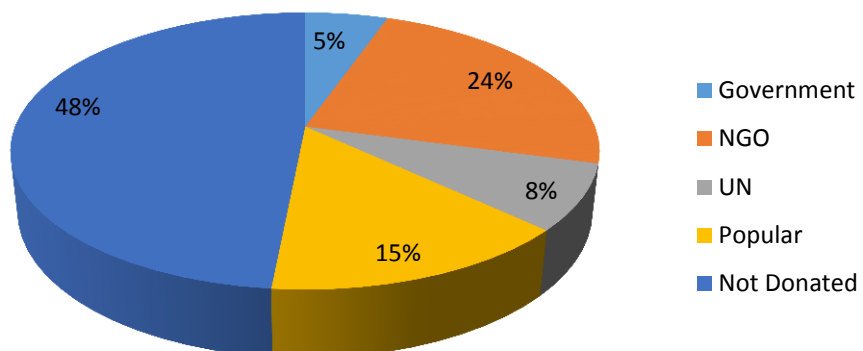
Our survey reveals that the majority of families have been struggling with physical or mental diseases. These families affected by the civil war resulting wandering, displacement and losing their loved ones, are suffering from severe depression, distress and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Half of the parents have some chronic disease such as Blood pressure, Cardiovascular and respiratory disease, Digestive disease and rheumatism. Some disabilities were caused by infantile paralysis within children. Most of these families struggling with disease and illness are not able to afford their treatment and medications and also because of lack of charity hospital and medical center, they do not get medical services.

The Meat & LiveStock Consumption of Syrian Housholds

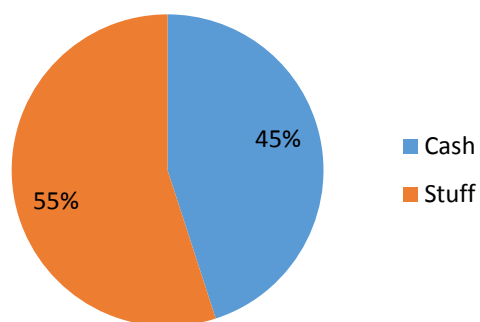


In this survey, as illustrated in above diagram, about 60% of households used to eat meat and livestock only once a month mostly through donations. Most of infant and child refugees suffer from lack of proper nutrition and consequently malnutrition. The mineral and vitamin deficiencies specially lack of iron. Generally the survey results indicate that global acute malnutrition is relatively high in the Syrian refugee population wandered in marginalized area of the Erbil city. The mid to high prevalence of acute malnutrition among them results from lack of support and observation from care and support organizations whether international, governmental or NGO's.

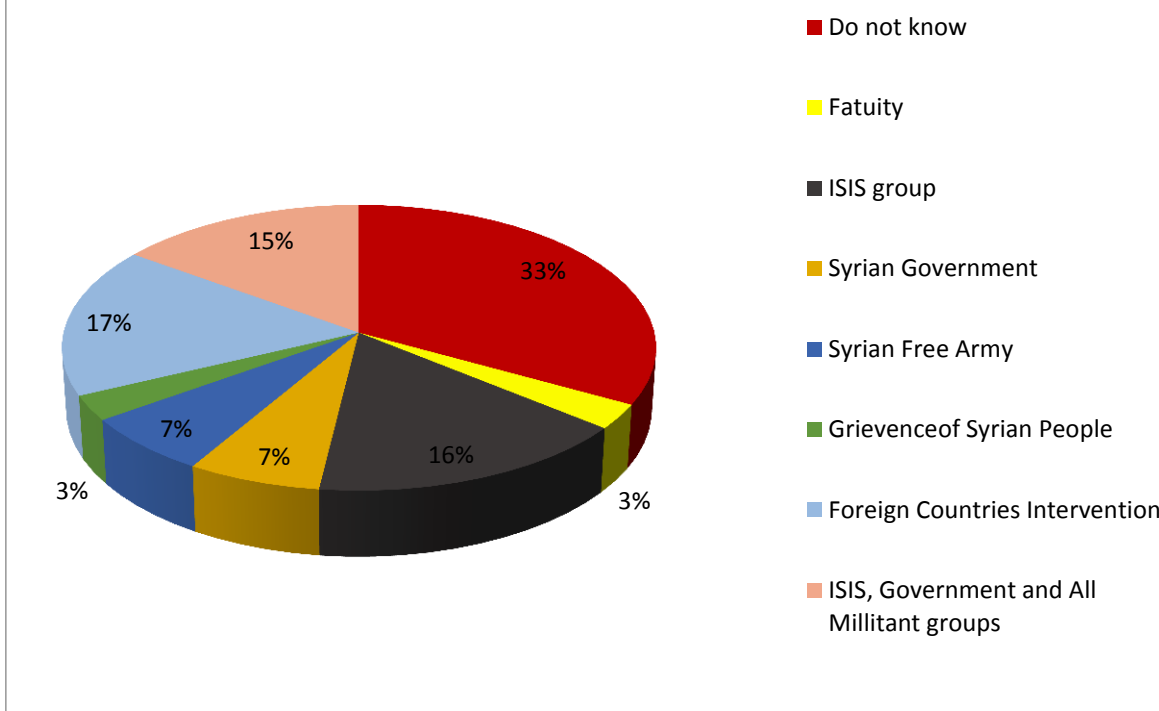
Donation Sources Dispersion



Donation Types



The Cause of War from Refugee's Point of View



As the above diagram indicates, about one third of our target community really didn't know the cause of civil war in their country. In contrast, the most Syrian refugees believed that the tyranny of incumbent government opposing militant groups and also ISIS totalitarianism have been the main cause of the current civil war in Syria.

Relief works on the forth mission, Syrian refugees in the informal accommodation as the most significant target community, received relief services from IAPSRS.

After precise investigations to list up the urgent needs of them, officers of the team decided to allocate food and non-food aids like warm clothes and required goods. Every identified family was presented a package of food-stuff to supply their one month food needs. Every Food package included rice, lentil and beans, edible oil, sugar, tea, canned tuna, tomato paste, red meat, chicken and pasta, fresh fruit (apple & orange), potato, detergents, and shampoo. Additionally diapers and dry milk were added to the package for those families with infants.



Moreover, we had every Syrian child less than 16 years old presented a special toy as a gift. Children were very excited about this program. Obviously, those childish toys stimulated an indescribable enthusiasm in the eyes of the children which implied reviving the sense of hope towards a better upcoming life they would be able to make.

The next step

Having regard to discussions with the relevant authorities of Kurdistan Iraqi region and implemented negotiations with the heads of some universities in the region, IAPSRs is going to expand its relief activities for the evacuees during 2016. The upcoming plan would be:

1. Inviting university Iraqi students to volunteer in the NGO branch in Kurdistan to carry out relief activities supporting children and women afflicted by war with the goal of Participation of local community.
2. Identifying, investigating and prioritizing more numbers of evacuee families in terms of primitive requirements of life in order for programming relief services.
3. Addressing the human right status of the target groups and reflecting their real situation and demands to the pertinent international responsible communities.
4. Attracting the participation of international communities and donors to collaborate in providing crucial needs of the target group.

5. Holding social and cultural programs like special ceremonies to boost the morale among children to reduce the deprivation of recreational facilities and bring a cheerful atmosphere for evacuees.
6. Helping remove the educational obstacles a head of the children of refugees and IDPs.
7. Assisting to enhance the level of hygiene and health status among evacuees.
8. Initiating sports teams for children to promote their physical health and self-esteem.

Contact Us

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