

## Field Office Haradh

### Durable Solutions for IDPs in Al-Mazrak Camps

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#### 1) Introduction

Following recent rumors circulating in the Al-Mazrak camps that UNHCR will offer 1,000 USD to each family that opts to return to Sa'ada, and a subsequent meeting that was held with the camp population to clarify the situation, the population has responded by indicating their **preferred durable solution** among the three provided for under the **National IDP Policy** namely (a) returning and reintegrating into the community where they lived prior to displacement, (b) integrating in the places of displacement and (c) relocating/integrating in a different area of the country. It has been made clear to the population that the sustenance of IDP camps is not an option even though no date for camp closure has been suggested.

In addition to the above, the recent intensification of immigration formalities and stern border controls by the KSA has eliminated the traditional livelihood means for most of the IDPs and their hosts i.e. smuggling of various items to either side of the border. This has been strongly cited as the major factor leading to the decision to return at this point in time. Almazrak camps were opened in July 2009.

#### 2) Demographic Breakdown

- As per the ExU database, the total **population of the two camps is 12,102 individuals** (1,755 families). **91%** of this population originates from **Al-Daher** (69%) and **Haydan** (22%) districts of Sa'ada governorate. The remaining (9%) are from others districts in Sa'ada.
- Through a camp management supervised registration exercise, individual families indicated their preferences as follows;
  - **Return** to Sa'ada: **1,227 families** (8,392 individuals)
  - **Integration** in places of displacement: **131 families** (982 individuals)
  - **Relocation** to other parts of Yemen: **7 families** (43 individuals)
- The overwhelming majority would like to return to former places of residence namely Al-Daher and Haydan districts. The **remaining 390 families** (2,685 individuals) did not come forward to register either for lack of interest or were not in the camps at the time of exercise. See below statistical illustration of the intentions.

#### 3) Situation in potential Areas of Return

- Al-Daher and Haydan districts are located approximately 12 Kms from the Almazrak camps. While the Alhouthies exercise influence in these districts, central government departments and the local council are present and functional.

- It is still a general concern that the issue of Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) has not been fully addressed. However the general security situation is relatively calm.
- Out of the **53,000 recorded returns** from 2010 to 2013, **62 %** have returned to **Al-Daher** and **Haydan districts**.
- There are three types of shelter in the district: stone houses, mud houses and thatches. Majority of returned IDPs settled in thatches and some in destroyed houses using plastic sheets as temporary roof cover.
- The Sa'ada Reconstruction Fund (SRF), a government agency, works in these districts carrying out selected damaged house rehabilitation through provision of financial assistance.
- Agricultural activities are ongoing. The main crops cultivated include grains and maize. About 15% of the arable lands are under cultivation. In most cases farmers depend on seasonal rainfalls to irrigate their farms. Supplementary water supply is obtained from commercial sources.
- While there are various challenges, public services are generally available albeit of varying qualities. District hospitals and health units are operational even though the lack of medical equipment and medicines are reported. Schools have resumed.
- Some humanitarian actors such as Oxfam, WHO, UNICEF among others have projects in the districts.

#### **4) Requested Assistance to Facilitate Return**

##### **a) Shelter Support**

Some IDPs whose houses were destroyed wishes to have them rehabilitated, while others who claim to have no houses at all wishes to have a complete shelter built.

##### **b) Livelihood**

Prior to the war the main source of livelihood included agriculture and animal husbandry. Support to re-establish these activities are sought. Others are suggesting that cash grant be provided to kick start some income generating activities.

##### **c) Core Relief Items**

Having lost everything during the war and having been away for over four years most of the household items are requested for.

##### **d) Basic Services**

As a result of the war improvement of the basic services such as water, education, health etc in the districts of return is requested.

##### **e) Transportation**

Families intending to return wishes to be assisted with transport from the camps to the final destinations.

## 5) Integrating in the Places of Displacement

Those intending to integrate in areas around Al-Mazrak or nearby places are expecting to be assisted with transitional shelters, core relief items and transport.

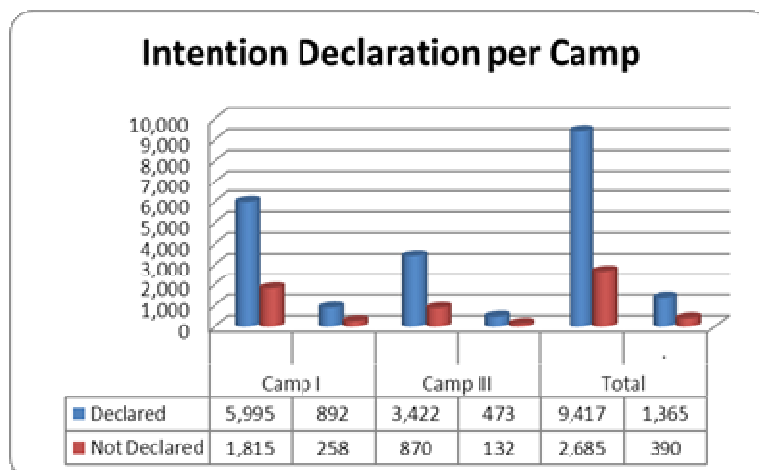
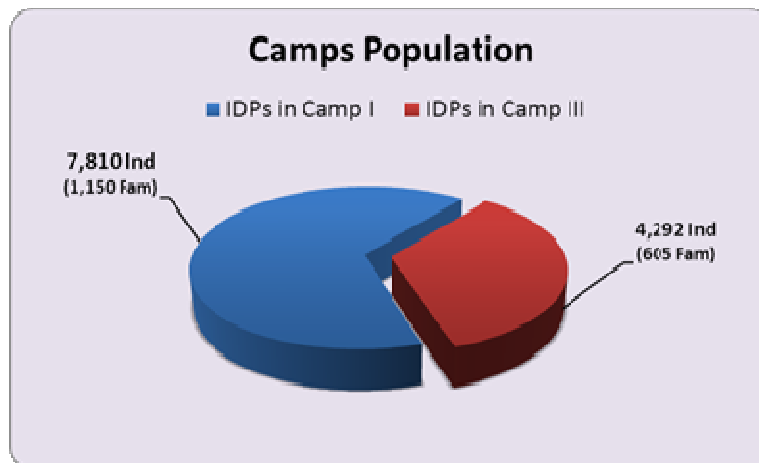
## 6) Expressed Concern

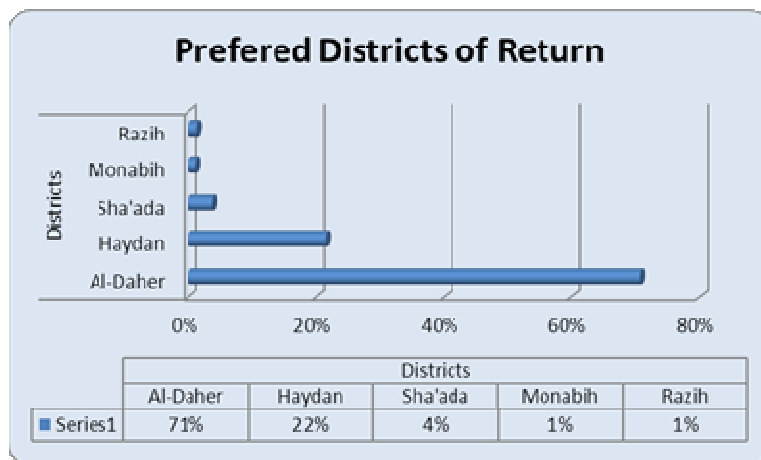
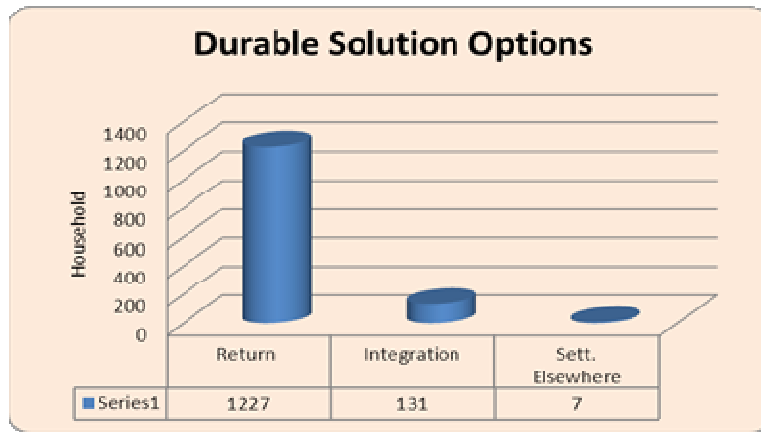
IDPs have voiced their frustration at what they described as inaction on the part of service providers. They argue that past promises to facilitate return did not materialize; once again they have made their intentions known and are therefore waiting for swift responsive action.

## 7) Recommendations

1. Provide feedback on what Agencies (and the government) are able to do in light of these intentions
2. Formulate a time-bound road map for Al-Mazrak camps closure.
3. Inter-agency collaboration aimed at complementing the existing municipal infrastructures and sectorial services in areas of return.
4. Enhancing the capacity of the Protection Cluster in Sa'ada to carry out effective protection monitoring in the areas of return.

## 8) Statistical illustration of the intentions





*FO Haradh*  
*8th April, 2014*