

Winterization Assessment Report

Erbil: Urban Settings

Assessment Overview

- 71 Household (HH) surveys and Key Informant (KI) interviews were conducted in Erbil city between 15th and 29th of September 2014. The assessment targeted refugees and IDPs in urban non-camp settings.
- The assessment's main objective was to identify shelter specific winterization needs in order to inform winterization programme design and subsequent implementation.
- Main findings suggest that although refugees and IDPs living in individual housing have better access to personal winterization assets than IDPs living in communal buildings, they tend to have greater needs in terms of shelter.
- By contrast, IDPs and refugees who currently live in communal finished buildings—such as churches and mosques, schools, hotels or partly constructed buildings—have access to better-insulated shelter than do refugees or IDPs who occupy individual housing. However, their access to personal assets is often less, and they have frequently to share assets with other families.
- The Syrian and IDP respondents living in unfinished buildings are extremely vulnerable due to extremely poor insulation and direct exposure to weather conditions. However, the Syrian families did

have sufficient winterization items, whereas the relatively newly arrived IDPs had very little assets.

- Overall, the refugees and IDPs interviewed lack many of the most essential winterization items and are in need of additional supplies.
- The majority of respondents reported heaters and fuel as their most urgent need, followed by clothes and blankets.

Introduction

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq has deteriorated rapidly since June 2014, with the total number of people of IDPs and refugees now reaching over 1.8 million. As the colder months approach, it is imperative that humanitarian actors prepare thoroughly to protect this already highly vulnerable population from the additional hardships of winter. As stressed by the HNO, there is an urgent need to develop a robust, all-Iraq winterization strategy as part of cluster response plans; and the humanitarian community has recognised the value of an informed winterization intervention based on solid evidence from the field. In a context where winterization needs vary greatly according to the types of shelters occupied by displaced populations, it is essential to customize winterization programme designs to meet actual requirements. With this in mind, NRC, one of the main shelter actors in Iraq and currently involved in shelter rehabilitation for urban refugees and IDPs in KR-I, undertook to conduct a winterization assessment in urban non-camp settings. The assessment aimed to help NRC improve the planning and effectiveness of its winterization response.



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The assessment's main objectives were as follows:

- To inform programme planning to meet shelter specific winterization needs in non-camp urban settings;
- To evaluate winterization needs at governorate level;
- To evaluate the overall shelter winterization needs;
- To compare needs between types of shelter;
- To conduct an asset inventory;
- To conduct a technical shelter/WASH assessment;
- To identify fuel and energy needs and to map priority needs as reported by the beneficiaries themselves.

Methodology

NRC conducted the winterization assessment in Erbil, Duhok and Baghdad from the 15th to 29th of September 2014. The present report presents the main findings from Erbil. The assessment team used a purposive sampling approach,¹ with targeted locations in the peri-urban areas of Erbil city (namely Kasnazan and Mamzawa neighbourhoods) identified using IOM DTM² and in-house knowledge of the Erbil urban settings. Over the past year, these areas have witnessed an increase in refugees and IDPs seeking rental accommodation. The finished and unfinished communal buildings targeted by the assessment teams were identified primarily in the neighbourhoods of Ainkawa, Daratoo, and Banslawia.

¹ A purposive sample, also commonly called a judgmental sample, is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study. The subjects are selected because of some characteristic.

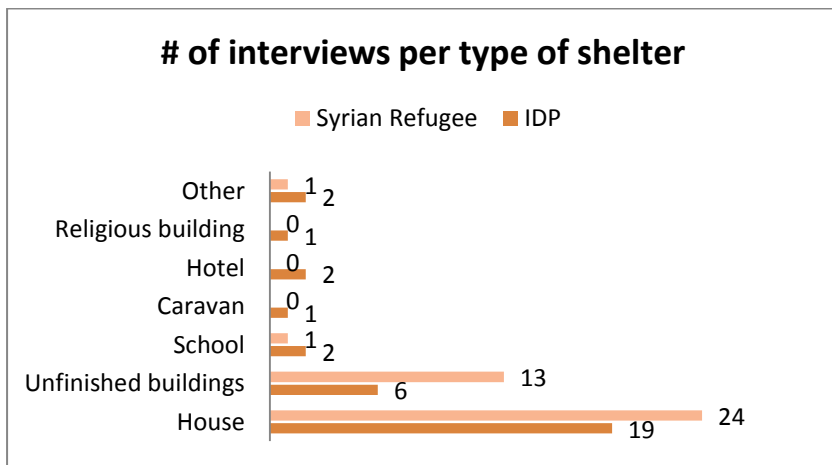
² IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix

In total, the team conducted 72 interviews in Erbil at the household and community level, and included both refugees and IDPs in host communities. Data collection was done using a mixed method approach. Fifty-five interviews were conducted at HH level using a HH questionnaire. The households were identified using the Key Informant (KI) snowballing methodology combined with random walks. For the 16 communal shelters, the teams conducted interviews with community focal points, using the Key Informant approach. In addition, three FGDs (focus group discussions) were conducted with female respondents. For the technical shelter and WASH assessments, the technical team used observations as means of verification.

There were two major limitations to the methodology employed. Firstly, the sample size was not statistically representative, and findings should not be generalised to the entire IDP and refugee urban population without considering a high error of margin. However, due to the extensive qualitative information of the survey, the results do provide a good indication of the needs specific to various shelter typologies. A second limitation was the potential bias of respondents in underreporting their assets.



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The sampling frame included the following targeted shelter categories:

	# of interviews	# of IDP families	# of Refugee families
Apartment/houses	43	39	33
Unfinished private buildings	18	16	19
Unfinished communal building	2	350	14
Hotels	2	20	0
Religious buildings	1	130	0
Schools/ Kindergarten	4	160	0
Others (car garage/ wedding hall)	2	74	5
Total	72	789	71

Main findings

1. Profile of interviewees

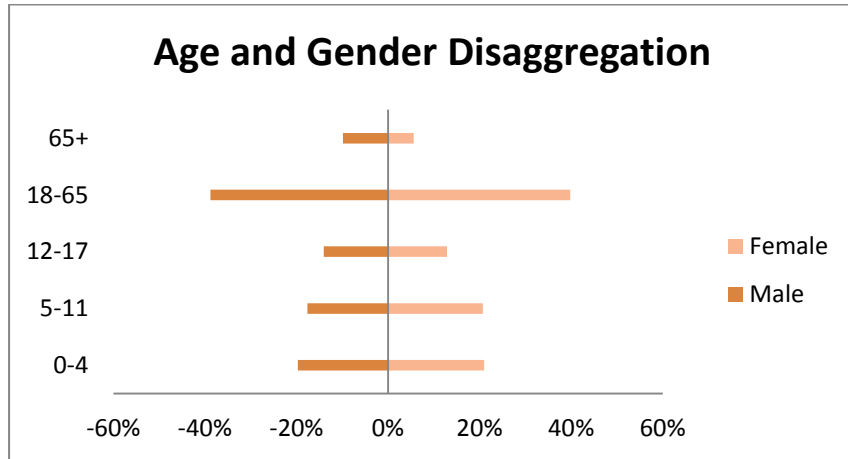
The majority of interviews were conducted at HH level, with close to 15 per cent using the KI approach in order to reflect the needs of people living in communal buildings. Whereas almost all Syrian respondents were living in individual and/or shared houses- with one case of 14 families living in an unfinished privately owned building -, the internally displaced respondents were living both in rental accommodation and communal buildings. Out of the 71 interviewees, 55 per cent were Syrian refugees and the remaining 45 per cent were newly arrived IDPs. Gender was also taken into account, with 25 per cent of respondents being women.

The average number of families per housing unit was 1.54 and 2.69 for Syrians and IDPs living in individual housing respectively. The average family size was 4.68 members for Syrians and 5.75 for IDPs. The figures are similar with other previous assessments.

Forty-eight per cent are female and 52 per cent male. Close to twenty per cent of the total population are children between 0 to 4, with nineteen per cent between 5 to 11, thirteen per cent between 12-17, thirty-nine per cent between 18-65, and eight per cent above 65. The average family size, population breakdown and shelter occupancy rate provides an indication of the number and sizes of items such as winter clothing and, for example, number of blankets.



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The length of respondents' stay at their current locations varied according to nationality. The majority of Syrian refugees had lived in their current location for more than a year. By contrast, the majority of the interviewed IDPs (sixty per cent) had arrived less than three months previously, and the remainder had arrived in the preceding four to six months, suggesting new pockets of IDP settlements in the urban and peri-urban areas of Erbil.

2. Assets inventory

2.1 Individual finished and unfinished houses

2.1.1 Syrian refugees

Findings suggest that on average around one to two Syrian families living in individual rented housing have access to a stove, which represents around sixty six per cent. The majority per cent of respondents reported that they would need additional stoves for the winter. On average, respondents had one kerosene and one electric heater for every 12 families with only eight per cent of respondents owning a heater. Similarly, only forty per cent of respondents have a water heater. At HH level, only four per cent of respondents reported having some fuel reserves, with one HH reporting having 400 litres of fuel. Almost all respondents said they would require additional heaters, with a slightly higher preference for kerosene heaters.

On average, Syrian HHs had one quilt and four blankets. Eighty per cent reported having curtains and carpets, with a majority expressing a greater need for these items. Seventy per cent of Syrian respondents had winter adult clothes, forty per cent have children clothes and twenty five per cent have winter shoes. No one reported having rainproof clothes, and no respondents expressed a need for them. **More than ninety per cent expressed a need for winter clothing.**



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Rented house without roof.



The majority of Syrian HHs already had tarpaulins, and only fifty per cent needed additional items. Twenty per cent reported having floor insulation, with only fifty per cent in need of additional items. Forty per cent reported that they have roof insulation materials, and only sixty per cent expressed a need for additional roofing materials.

In general, Syrian respondents were in possession of many essential winter clothing and housing items such as blankets, curtains, carpets and stoves. However, the majority of interviewees expressed a desire for additional heaters (especially kerosene heaters), fuel, winter clothes and carpets. Respondents did not feel need for additional items such as tarpaulins, other insulation materials or rainproof clothing.

2.1.2 Displaced people

Similarly, the assessment found on average one stove for every two IDP HHs, and one water heater for every four HHs. **Findings indicate that on average there is one heater for every 20 families.** There is a clear preference for kerosene heaters, with one hundred per cent of respondents reporting a need for additional heating items.

IDP respondents reported owning on average 1.05 liters of fuel at HH level, with ninety-five per cent expressing a need for additional supplies.

On average, there is one quilt for every two families respondents reported, and every family has close to two blankets. Only thirty six per cent have curtains, and twenty per cent have carpets, and **no winter adult and children clothes and shoes.** One hundred per cent of respondents reported a need for additional quantities of all these items and identified winter clothing as their most urgent requirement.

Very few IDP HHs were found to have a tarpaulin (five per cent), with twenty six per cent saying they do not need it. Twenty per cent had floor insulation material, with twenty-one per cent in no need. The majority of respondents reported not needing additional insulation materials, except for tarpaulins (sixty-five per cent).

As suggested by the assessment results, the most urgent needs of IDPs living in individual rental accommodation are heaters, fuel and winter clothing.



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2.2 Communal finished and unfinished buildings

To assess winterization needs of populations living in communal shelters, KI interviews were conducted with designated community leaders and focal points. The findings cannot therefore be regarded as representative.

Most KI respondents reported that communities already have blankets—on average one per individual—with fewer number of blankets in schools (less than two per family) and a higher number in churches (7.69 blankets per family). **The majority of KIs said they did not have any winter adult and children clothing and shoes**, and would like to receive additional items. Quilts were more numerous in schools than in other communal buildings. Carpets and curtains were fewer, with a majority of residents in communal shelters in need of additional carpets.

Communal unfinished building.



The majority of KI respondents reported having on average one stove for every 25 families. However, **they had no kerosene or gas heaters**. Respondents expressed a clear preference for kerosene heaters over gas or electric ones. Water heaters were present only in hotels and in a wedding hall.

When conditions in individual shelters are compared with those in communal shelters, findings suggest that families residing in individual housing are better off in terms of assets and other NFIs. Overall, fewer families in individual shelters have to share assets such as stoves and heaters. **For example, while one stove is shared by 1.67 families on average in individual housing settings, one stove is shared by 20 to 25 families in communal buildings**. The majority of IDP families in communal buildings have no heating sources. But those living in individual housing that have greater access to essential assets. They also have greater access to fuel, whereas many in communal buildings reported having no supplies at all.

Similar to the situation for IDPs in individual housing, those living in communal buildings have items such as blankets and quilts. However, they expressed a greater need for carpets. Access to some items, such as blankets and stoves, could be explained by recent NFI distributions that targeted communal shelters shortly before the assessment was carried out.

Common needs across both types of shelters (individual and communal) were winter clothing and shoes. Respondents unanimously reported having no adequate winter clothing for winter conditions.

3. Technical shelter and WASH assessment

3.1 Individual finished and unfinished houses

3.1.1 Syrian Refugees

Technical observations reveal that the majority of individual houses inhabited by Syrian families (sixty-five per cent) have concrete foundation and roof. In three cases, the roof materials included wood, metal and plastic sheet. External walls had cracks for close to forty per cent of the assessed shelters, and the walls were damaged and with holes for close to twenty per cent. Two of the assessed houses had no walls. Close to half of the observations show that most windows had broken glass, twenty per cent had no window insulation, and nine houses had missing windows. In twenty per cent of cases, there were missing interior doors and six houses did not have external windows.

In seventy per cent of the cases, none of the rooms had a heating source and for twenty- three per cent, only one room had a heating source. This finding coincides with the asset inventory results and main needs. The rooms with heating sources were not insulated in eighty per cent of cases and have no proper ventilation in fifty per cent of cases.

House without external door.



Close to sixty per cent of assessed houses had no water heaters. In fifty per cent of cases, there was no reported risk of having the pipes/valves to the main water storage tank freeze. Also, taps could potentially freeze in fifty-five per cent of cases. There have been no reports of standing water around the water storage tank and/or tap and around the toilet in sixty per cent of cases. In most cases, the toilet water supply risks freezing, and this could potentially prevent the adoption of adequate hygiene practices.

Half of respondents do not have sufficient pots and kettles for water heating. Only half of respondents report having available heated water for bathing, using an electric water heater. A striking majority state that they do not have sufficient fuel for water heating (ninety per cent).

Overall, findings suggest that the individual shelters inhabited by Syrian families require considerable shelter and WASH rehabilitation- primarily focusing on fixing the external walls, adding missing windows and doors, and improving the isolation of the water network.

3.1.2 Internally Displaced People

Technical observations reveal that all assessed houses have resistant structures- namely, concrete foundation and roof. Two buildings had plastic sheets replacing the missing roof. **Close to thirty per cent of assessed locations had damaged external walls with holes and cracks, and one building had no walls. Over fifty per cent of houses had broken**

IDPs currently renting private housing are in greater need of shelter rehabilitation and clothing- to ensure adequate protection against the cold

windows and seven houses had missing windows (twenty-five per cent of total assessed). 20per cent of house had missing exterior doors and more than forty per cent had missing interior doors.

The majority of houses had no rooms with a heating source (sixty- five per cent), with the remaining thirty five per cent with one single heated room. The heated rooms did not have adequate insulation and ventilation in seventy per cent of cases. The majority of bathrooms and showers had no water heaters (seventy per cent); in the majority of cases (seventy per cent) respondents reported no risks of freezing pipes and valves to the main water storage; **in half of cases there was standing water around the water storage tank that might freeze/become muddy; less than half of the assessed locations had standing water around the toilet and risk having the toilet water supply freeze.**

House without external window.



The majority of respondents (sixty per cent) reported not having sufficient pots and kettles to heat water, nor had sufficient fuel for water

heating (seventy per cent). Also, there was no heated water for bathing in the majority of the cases (eighty per cent).

Overall findings suggest that the shelters currently inhabited by IDPs are not prepared for winter and do not offer an adequate protection from the elements in most cases. This suggest that in majority of the cases, the shelter and WASH infrastructure needs to be adapted and rehabilitated- with major focus on fixing the damaged/replacing the missing walls; fixing or adding missing windows; adding interior and exterior doors; insulating and ensure adequate ventilation for heated rooms; providing water heaters and insulating the bathing areas; offer solutions for the standing water around water tanks and toilets, as well as distribute clean and clear kits³.

3.2 Communal finished buildings

On communal finished buildings, foundations and roofs were primarily made of concrete. Most external walls were in good condition, as were windows and doors. Three of the assessed communal buildings had heating sources in some rooms, while the other three were without any

IDPs currently living in communal shelters have access to better-insulated buildings and are better protected from the elements. However, they have less access to private assets and to clothing.

³ Clean and clear kits include tools that will help with clearing deposits of mud, snow and ice.



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source of heating. Rooms were well insulated and adequately ventilated. Most of the assessed communal finished buildings had no water heaters, and the bathing areas were without insulation from the cold. There were no reports of possible freezing pipes and valves connected to the toilet water supply. There was no standing water around water tanks, toilets and showers.

The majority of respondents did not have sufficient pots and kettles or fuel to heat water. In most cases there was no heated water available for bathing.

As the findings suggest, IDPs living in communal finished buildings have better protection from the elements compared with those living in individual housing.

3.3 Communal unfinished buildings

Syrian and IDPs living in unfinished buildings are more vulnerable to extreme weather conditions mainly as a result of extremely poor shelter

stoves (one per family), quilts and blankets (on average four and

Two additional unfinished communal buildings were assessed by the teams, namely a privately owned unfinished building accommodating 14 Syrian families – around 89 individuals- in Banslawia; and an unfinished building owned by the church in Ankawa, accommodating 350 families – an estimated 3,500 individuals. Although the Syrian families already had items such as

respectively two per family), carpets and sufficient winter clothes, they had almost no insulation materials and were living in poorly insulated shelter. With no windows, doors or walls, the families are exposed to the extreme weather conditions and the cold.

In contrast, the IDP families had almost no access to items such as heaters, fuel, carpets, and winter clothes. They did however have a number of blankets – on average one per family-, communal stoves, and insulation materials. The communal unfinished building had sandwich panels used for internal partitioning; however they had no proper roof insulation. In addition to this, the building itself had no walls, nor windows or doors, which is posing a great risk for exposure to cold weather.

Communal unfinished building.





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As the findings suggest, the situation for Syrians and IDPs residing in communal unfinished buildings is quite different. Although the findings cannot be further extrapolated due to the low number of observations, they do however show higher vulnerabilities for those living in unfinished communal buildings. The lack of adequate insulated shelters is compounded by the fear of eviction from private property, and a lack of clarity concerning the legality of shelter improvements.

4. Access to energy/fuel consumption

Sixty per cent of Syrian respondents reported having access to intermittent electricity from the grid or from a mixture of private generator and grid. **Forty per cent are without access to any source of electricity.**

Syrian respondents reported kerosene as the fuel they most prefer for heating (56 per cent), followed by gas (23 per cent) and electricity (13 per cent). On average, respondents had consumed 1.8 cylinders of 90 litres per month during the past cold season in their current location or area of origin. **Respondents spent an average of 206,524 IQD on fuel last winter per family per month (an estimated USD172 per family for one month). None of the 39 respondents received fuel assistance or winter items last year.**

Preferences for the modality of fuel distribution range from a combination of fuel and cash (41 per cent), to cash/fuel vouchers (33 per cent) to direct fuel distribution (26 per cent).

IDPs living in rented housing report having access to regular electricity in only 40 per cent of cases. Instead, they tap into a mix of grid and private generators. In contrast, all KIs living in communal buildings reported regular access to electricity.

On average KIs reported around 2.28 cylinders of 143 litres for a family for one month in the area of origin, costing on average 292,380 IQD (USD243 per family per month). This is a slightly higher level of consumption than that reported by Syrian refugees. The majority of respondents (60 per cent) were using kerosene heating; 20 per cent were using gas, and 5 per cent electricity. IDPs living in individual houses expressed a preference for fuel distribution through cash/vouchers and a combination of cash and direct distribution; those in communal buildings preferred direct fuel distribution.

Last winter, Syrian refugees spent on average USD172 on fuel per family per month. On average, either in their current location or in their place of origin, they consumed 1.8 90-litre cylinders per month.

In comparison, IDP families spent an estimated USD243 on fuel last winter per month in their area of origin. On average a family consumed 2.28 cylinders of 143 litres.

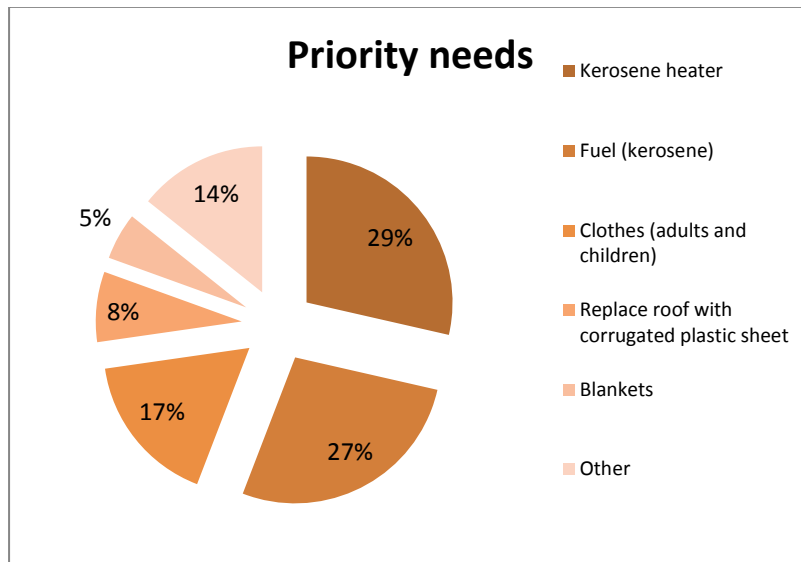
5. NFI preferences- Main reported needs

The main reported needs were for heaters and fuel, winter clothes and blankets. Some respondents also expressed a need for house repairs and improvements—for example, for internal partitions, stoves or carpets, or for repairs to roofs. As a second main need, most respondents mentioned



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clothing, blankets, carpets, quilts, stoves, water heaters and plastic sheets. Similarly, FGDs with women suggested that their main needs were for winter clothing and underwear, footwear, blankets, stoves and water heaters.



Conclusion

- On average 1.54 Syrian families and 2.69 IDP families are sharing individual houses. The average family size is 4.68 members for Syrians and 5.75 for IDPs. The figures are similar with other previous assessments.
- Main findings suggest that whereas Syrian refugees and IDPs living in individual housing have improved access to personal winterization assets, they tend to have greater needs in terms of shelter rehabilitation.
- As suggested by the assessment results, in terms of NFIs, the most urgent needs of IDPs living in individual rental accommodation are heaters, fuel, and winter clothing.
- Overall, findings suggest that the individual shelters inhabited by Syrian and IDP families require considerable shelter and WASH rehabilitation- primarily focusing on fixing the external walls, adding missing windows and doors, and improving the isolation of the water network.
- IDPs currently living in communal finished buildings – such as religious buildings, schools, hotels, unfinished buildings- have access to better insulated shelter; however they do not have access to personal assets, which they would have to share with other families.
- The Syrian and IDP respondents living in unfinished buildings are extremely vulnerable due to extremely poor insulation and direct exposure to weather conditions. The Syrian families did have sufficient winterization items, whereas the relatively newly arrived IDPs had very little assets. Common needs across both types of shelters (individual and communal) are clothing for winter and shoe



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ware. Everyone unanimously reported having no adequate winter clothing.

- Last winter, Syrians spent on average 172\$ dinars on fuel for one family for one month. On average, they consumed 1.8 cylinders of 90 litres per month during the past cold season in the current place or area of origin.
- In comparison, one family of IDPs spent an estimated \$243 on fuel last winter for one month, in their area of origin. On average a family consumed 2.28 cylinders of 143 litres.
- Overall, the interviewed refugees and IDPs do not access to the most essential winterization items and are in need of additional items.
- The majority of respondents reported heaters and fuel as the main priority needs, followed by clothes and blankets.

Recommendations

- The assessment findings confirm that the IDP and refugee communities have great winterization needs, which vary according to the socio-economic status and type of shelter. NRC is recommending the use of Global and Regional Technical Guidance developed by the UN, the Shelter Cluster and partners including the graphic for shelter priorities in the annexed UN OCHA "*TENTS: Guide for the use and logistics of family tents in humanitarian relief*", to guide and prioritise the winterization assistance. NRC also supports the review and development of appropriate technical solutions through the Working Groups for the Shelter Cluster in Iraq, including the Cluster's Winterization Strategy.

- As the needs vary according to shelter type and family profile, NRC recommends adapting the aid modality to the diversity of needs, individual capacities and coping mechanisms. Lessons learned from the 2013-14 winter show that standardised distribution of clothing often resulted in high levels of re-sale by the beneficiaries. Market-based approaches can give the beneficiaries more choice and dignity, and can lead to more cost-efficient impacts. At the same time, with the rapid onset of colder weather, direct distribution of shelter 'sealing off kits' can result in that shelter support reaching a greater number of vulnerable households in a shorter period of time. A balance must always be made between the demands of the emergency, and the appropriateness of the materials and implementation methodology.
- Although not directly addressed in the winterization assessment, additional vulnerabilities related to gender should be further explored when conducting similar exercises and/or during implementation. As an example, restricted movement outside of the household could potentially have an impact on the coping mechanisms for women and girls who cannot access public or commercial heated spaces.
- Lastly, NRC recommends further coordination efforts between relevant agencies implementing a winterization response.