Eyzidi – Arab Sunni Perspectives in Sinuni

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Conflict and Stabilization Monitoring Framework for Ninewa Province

JULY 2018
Summary findings:

- The overall findings underscore the fraught relationship Sinuni – and the greater Sinjar district – has had with security and political actors since the area was cleared of ISIS in 2015.

- Eyzidis may feel more comfortable on security issues than Arabs given that community members from their components are being recruited into these security and administrative units, but divisions exist given the growing politicization of the Eyzidi community.

- The views of the Arab IDP community highlight the deep cleavages emanating between the community and security actors, and the need to bridge the divide to quell potential conflict in the future.

- On a positive note, political and ideological factors are not seen as a central driver for armed group recruitment; rather, economic and protection concerns dominate and, as such, are in the realm of addressing provided other credible livelihood alternatives are established.
SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

**GOAL:** The security configuration allow for the expression of differing ethno-religious and/or political identities.

**INDICATOR:** % of people who feel they can express their political identity without fear of violence against them

**QUESTION:** Given the security forces or armed groups present in your subdistrict, how comfortable are you in publicly expressing your political views without fear of violence against you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Very comfortable</th>
<th>% Somewhat comfortable</th>
<th>% No response</th>
<th>% Not very comfortable</th>
<th>% Very uncomfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finding:** Eyzidi returnees (HC) to Sinuni are split in their views on whether they can express their political views without violent repercussions.
SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: The security configuration allow for the expression of differing ethno-religious and/or political identities.

INDICATOR: % of people who feel they can express their ethnic-sectarian identity without fear of violence against them.

QUESTION: Given the security forces or armed groups present in your subdistrict, how comfortable are you in publicly expressing your ethno-religious identity without fear of violence against you?

- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- No response
- Not very comfortable
- Very uncomfortable

**Finding:** The majority of Eyzid returnees to Sinuni feel they are able to freely express their ethno-religious identity without fear of violent repercussions
GOAL: There is not a growing militarization of the civilian population.

INDICATOR: % of people that perceive local recruits joining security forces or armed groups for ideological reasons as first option

QUESTION: Why do you think members of your component in general (not only your household) join security forces or armed groups as first option?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>Ideological and political</th>
<th>Economic need</th>
<th>Protect my own community</th>
<th>Coerced to join</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Don't know / No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding: Eyzidis and Sunni Arabs from Sinuni overwhelmingly do not believe ideological and political factors to be the main drivers for recruitment into armed groups.
**SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT**

**GOAL:** Citizens are confident that the security actors responsible for their areas are impartial.

**INDICATOR:** % of people that perceive their group is treated fairly by security forces or armed groups

**QUESTION:** How fairly do you feel security forces or armed groups in your subdistrict treat your component?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>Fairly</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not fairly</th>
<th>Don't know / No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finding:** Irrespective of ethno-religious component, returnees and IDPs perceive the treatment by security forces in the sub-district differently,...suggesting that place of residence and political differences matter.
GOAL: Citizens are confident that the security actors responsible for their areas are impartial.

INDICATOR: % of people that perceive other groups are treated the same as them

QUESTION: As compared to your component, how fairly do security forces or armed groups treat other components in your subdistrict?

Finding: However, ethnic-religious affiliations matter when perceiving the treatment of other groups by security actors.
SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: Citizens are confident that the security actors responsible for their areas are impartial.

INDICATOR: % of people who think the security forces and/or PMU represents their community’s interests

QUESTION: How well are your component’s interests protected in the current security configuration in your subdistrict?

Finding: The majority of Arab and Eyzidi IDPs do not believe the current security configuration of the area protects their community’s interest while Eyzidi returnees are more or less split on the issue.
SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: There is a safe and secure environment.

INDICATOR: % of residents who feel comfortable to move around the town at any time

QUESTION: How comfortable are you moving around your subdistrict day or night?

Finding: The security environment in Sinuni is still not conducive to returnees feeling fully comfortable moving about the sub-district freely.
**SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT**

**GOAL:** There is a safe and secure environment.

**INDICATOR:** % of IDPs who do not feel safe to return because of the overall security situation in their area

**QUESTION:** What are the reasons why you have not returned to your place of origin more permanently? (multiple choice allowed) (Question only asked to IDPs)

![Chart showing reasons for not returning to place of origin](chart.png)

**Finding:** Security is seen as a central obstacle to return by both Eyzidi and Sunni Arab IDPs from the area but other factors are also contributing to their continued displacement.
Summary findings:

• The findings largely reflect recent and not-so-recent historical developments and events that have impacted Sunni Arab and Eyzidi communities in the area.

• Recent politicization and political empowerment of certain actors within the community has created internal cleavages and differences, which are apparent when analyzing responses on identity and political rights: differences are arising that transcend ethnic political cohesion, or the desire for ethnic-based political organization.

• With regards to national identity, both communities have disparate perceptions that are rooted in the ways national identity was constructed pre- and post-2003.

• Arab Sunnis place emphasis on aspects missing to them since 2003: military power and strong civilian leadership.

• On the issue of reconciliation, the findings reflect the divisions between the Eyzidi and Sunni communities from the area, which were exacerbated following the crimes committed against the Eyzidi community by ISIS.
GOAL: Authorities and dominant groups do not engage in political exclusion or repression of dissent on the basis of group identity.

INDICATOR: % of people perceiving their group in the subdistrict as being marginalized

QUESTION: Do you feel your component is politically or socially marginalized and/or neglected in the subdistrict now?

Finding: Both Eyzidis and Sunni Arabs from Sinuni feel politically and socially marginalized, though to differing degrees.
GOAL: Authorities and dominant groups do not engage in political exclusion or repression of dissent on the basis of group identity.

INDICATOR: % of people perceiving other groups in the subdistrict as being marginalized

QUESTION: Do you feel other components are politically or socially marginalized and/or neglected in the subdistrict now?

Finding: Yet, each community does not fully recognize the same grievance – political and social marginalization – when assessing the other community’s situation.
GOAL: Political and identity groups do not perceive the political process in exclusive (zero-sum) terms.

INDICATOR: % of people thinking that having another group in power will not govern for them or protect their rights

QUESTION: Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?

Finding: Nearly half of Eyzidi returnees and the majority of Sunni IDPs in the sample do not believe their interests would be compromised if the district is governed by others not from their community, a view not shared by a majority of Eyzidi IDPs.
POLITICAL MODERATION AND GOVERNANCE

**GOAL:** Political elites and communities are not polarized on the basis of their identities.

**INDICATOR:** % of people that would support cross-identity movements/parties in their governorate.

**QUESTION:** Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?

- [ ] There should not be political parties based on ethno-religious identity, but based on common cause across groups
- [ ] No response
- [ ] Each component should have its own political party or movement to defend its interests

**Finding:** Arab Sunnis and Eyzidis in the sample differ in their views on whether or not political parties should represent specific ethno-religious groups
GOAL: Political elites and communities are not polarized on the basis of their identities.

INDICATOR: % of people who closely or very closely identify with a national identity (i.e., Iraq)

QUESTION: Please indicate which image most clearly depicts your feeling of belonging in relation to Iraq now.

Finding: The overwhelming majority of Sunni Arab IDPs feel a strong sense of belonging to Iraq, a sentiment somewhat echoed by Eyzidi residents but rejected by a majority of Eyzidi IDPs.
POLITICAL MODERATION AND GOVERNANCE

GOAL: Political elites and communities are not polarized on the basis of their identities.

INDICATOR: % of people who feel belonging more to their component than to national Iraqi identity.

QUESTION: Comparison between feelings of belonging to Iraq and to component now.

Finding: Relatedly, Eyzidis, whether resident or displaced, are more attached to their ethno-religious identity than to a national one, while those from the Arab community feel a sense of belonging to both a national and communal identity at once.
GOAL: Citizens believe that the most effective way for their group to advance its political aims is through a political process instead of the use of military power.

INDICATOR: % of people who believe military power and/or armed groups are the most effective way to advance political aims

QUESTION: What is needed today for your component to advance its political rights?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Having an armed group or military power</th>
<th>Having a strong civilian leadership</th>
<th>Protect my own community</th>
<th>Having international or regional backing</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding: Sunni Arab IDPs and Eyzidis from Sinuni have opposite views on what is needed to advance their respective component’s political rights, with the former emphasizing military power and strong leadership, and the latter the backing of strong international and regional actors.
GOAL: There is a desire and need for reconciliation.

INDICATOR: % of people who think a reconciliation process is needed and possible

QUESTION: How possible is reconciliation between components now in the district? (Question asked to those who previously answered reconciliation was ‘very necessary’ or somewhat necessary’)

Finding: Sunni and Eyzidi’s are split in their view on whether or not reconciliation between components in the area is feasible
POLITICAL MODERATION AND GOVERNANCE

GOAL: There is a desire and need for reconciliation.

INDICATOR: % of people who are ready and willing to compromise with members of other identity groups in their district.

QUESTION: Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?

Finding: Both communities believe their respective component should make compromises in order to achieve peace with other groups.
Summary findings:

• Findings for rule of law paint a picture characteristic of post-conflict areas: the absence of formal legal mechanisms – either perceived or real – that are able to effectively address grievances among and between communities.

• Trust in these institutions is also extremely low, regardless of the community, though there are nuanced differences in the reasons why.

• Despite the little faith in the criminal justice system by both communities, Arab IDPs feel more strongly about the existence of mechanisms to resolve conflict non-violently in the current environment than Eyzidis. This points to the stronger tribal dynamics and customary dispute practices among Arab communities that are active when formal legal mechanisms are not present.

• Not only are the issues tied to reconciliation in disagreement, but each community highlights different reasons as to why reconciliation is unlikely to occur, which mirror more or less their perception of existing power dynamics.
GOAL: The criminal and civil justice systems perform essential functions effectively.

INDICATOR: % of people that feel that the legal system is biased against their group now.

QUESTION: If you see the criminal and civil justice systems as ‘somewhat trustworthy’ or ‘untrustworthy’, why? (check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>It discriminates against my component</th>
<th>It is corrupt</th>
<th>It is incompetent</th>
<th>It is not independent</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Question not asked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding: The majority of returnees and IDPs do not believe criminal and civil justice systems are trustworthy, with the majority of Arab IDPs viewing them as discriminatory.
RULE OF LAW

GOAL: Local police forces exercise effective control of law enforcement in the sub-districts.

INDICATOR: % of people that report a crime or a dispute to the local police or formal court (first)

QUESTION: If you face a crime, security issue or dispute, who do you feel most comfortable to speak to and report first?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>Ezidi HC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tribal sheikh or mukhtar</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army / PMU / Peshmerga</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formal court</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious leader or imam</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no response</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding: Eyzidi returnees overwhelmingly turn to the police first when faced with a crime, security issue or dispute.
GOAL: The legal system (formal and informal) provides non-violent mechanisms for the resolution of disputes.

INDICATOR: % of people who believe there is an unwillingness of the tribes to engage with the formal law on conflict-related issues, crimes, and reconciliation.

QUESTION: What are the main impediments to reconciliation between components in your district? (check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>Lack of tribal will</th>
<th>Lack of political will</th>
<th>Lack of knowledge/incompetence</th>
<th>People don’t want it</th>
<th>Foreign interference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding: Arab Sunni IDPs and Eyzidis differ in their views on the main impediments to reconciliation between their communities.
**RULE OF LAW**

**GOAL:** Housing, land, and property disputes are resolved, or at least, do not lead to tensions.

**INDICATOR:** % of people with unresolved HLP issues.

**QUESTION:** Do you have any unresolved house, land and property issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sinuni</th>
<th>Yes, from pre-2014</th>
<th>Yes, from post-2014</th>
<th>Yes, from pre- and post-2014</th>
<th>None at all</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi HC</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezidi IDPs</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab IDPs</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finding:** Unresolved housing, land and property issues (HLP) are mainly impacting Arab Sunni IDPs from the area, though this could reflect a misunderstanding by Eyzidi respondents given difficulty in registering their property. **Note:** The survey tool will be revised in the second round of data collection to more accurately get at this issue.
GOAL: There are no groups marginalized by the rest of society through collective punishment and discrimination.

INDICATOR: % of people who believe they or their group are being collectively judged or labelled in a discriminatory way

QUESTION: Do you feel you or your component is judged or labelled negatively because of the actions of others who have the same identity as you?

Finding: There is a widespread feeling among Eyzidis and Arab Sunni IDPs that their component is collectively judged or discriminated against, though this feeling is more pronounced among Arab Sunnis in the sample.
GOAL: There are no groups marginalized by the rest of society through collective punishment and discrimination

INDICATOR: % of people who recognize collective judgment of labelling is applied to other groups

QUESTION: Do you feel other components different from your own are judged or labelled negatively because of the actions of others who have the same identity as them?

Finding: At the same time, Arab IDPs acknowledge that other ethno-religious groups from the sub-district, i.e. Eyzidis, are also collectively discriminated or negatively judged, a feeling not shared by the majority of Eyzidis in the sample.
SOCIAL WELLBEING and LIVELIHOODS

GOAL: There are no group-based inequalities across identity groups that cause conflict.

INDICATOR: % of people who perceive that group-based inequality is a source of tension

QUESTION: How concerned are you that differences between components in their ability to financially advance could serve as source of tension?

Finding: Eyzidis do not believe financial inequality exists between components, a view not shared on the whole by Arab IDPs.
SOCIAL WELLBEING and LIVELIHOODS

GOAL: There are no group-based inequalities across identity groups that cause conflict.

INDICATOR: % of people who perceive that group-based inequality is a source of tension

QUESTION: How concerned are you that differences between components in their ability to financially advance could serve as source of tension?

Finding: Eyzidis do not believe financial inequality exists between components, a view not shared on the whole by Arab IDPs.
SOCIAL WELLBEING and LIVELIHOODS

GOAL: Public expectations for the provision of essential services are met equally across populations.

INDICATOR: % of people who feel reconstruction or service provision is provided not very equally or completely unequally in the subdistrict

QUESTION: Are service provision and reconstruction provided equally across locations in the district?

Finding: Both components view the distribution of service provision and reconstruction as unequal.
GOAL: There is a sense of trust and reciprocity in society among individuals and groups.

INDICATOR: % of people citing that they are mistrusted by others within their subdistrict

QUESTION: How much mistrust do you think others have of your component in your subdistrict?

Finding: Eyzidis and Arab Sunni IDPs both overwhelmingly believe the other component mistrusts it.