

CONTEXT AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS FOR CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING: THE CASE OF MOSUL, HAMMAM AL-ALIL, NIMRUD, AND HATRA

SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE NINEWA PROJECT



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The findings and conclusions presented in this report are informed by the contributions of stakeholders across Ninewa and are intended to support evidence-based, conflict-sensitive programming in the region.

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List of Acronyms



ANCP

Australian NGO Cooperation Program

FGDs

Focus Group Discussions

KIIs

Key Informant Interviews

IPACS

Integrating Peacebuilding and Conflict Sensitivity

Do No Harm (DNH)

Conflict sensitivity framework used to assess how interventions interact with local tensions and capacities for peace

PWDs

Persons with Disabilities

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Executive Summary

Context

This Context and Conflict Analysis was conducted to inform the design and implementation of the Sustainable and Resilient Future – Ninewa Project under ANCP Phase II. Ninewa Governorate experienced extensive violence and destruction during the conflict between 2014 and 2017, resulting in large-scale displacement, damaged infrastructure, disrupted livelihoods and public services, and lasting social and institutional impacts. While security conditions have improved significantly since liberation, recovery remains uneven and communities continue to face economic, governance, and climate-related pressures that affect resilience and social stability.

Methodology

The analysis employed a qualitative, participatory approach, combining 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted across Mosul, Hammam Al-Alil, Nimrud, and Hatra during February 2026. Findings were analysed using the Integrated Peacebuilding Assessment and Conflict Sensitivity (IPACS) framework and triangulated with relevant secondary sources.



Key Findings

- Economic pressure has overtaken security concerns as the primary driver of tension. Security has improved, but unemployment, rising living costs, weak services, and limited livelihood opportunities now shape everyday pressures.
- Unequal access to livelihoods, services, and assistance is a major source of grievance. Respondents frequently linked perceptions of unfairness to political affiliation, personal connections, geographic disparities, and unequal access to employment, services, and development assistance.
- Climate stress is intensifying rural vulnerabilities. In Nimrud and Hatra, drought, water scarcity, and declining agricultural productivity are increasing competition over land and irrigation while accelerating rural-to-urban migration.
- Exclusion remains structural. Youth, women, female-headed households, persons with disabilities, low-income households, displaced populations, returnees, and families perceived to have links to ISIS continue to face barriers to livelihoods, services, participation, and social inclusion.
- Local capacities for peace remain strong but unevenly accessible. Tribal leaders, religious figures, community leaders, and social networks continue to support dispute resolution and social cohesion, although influence and representation within these systems are not equally distributed.
- Perceptions of unfair targeting represent the most immediate programmatic risk. Respondents consistently emphasized that unclear or unequal distribution of assistance can reinforce grievances, weaken trust, and increase community tensions.

1. Implications for ANCP Phase II

Beneficiary Targeting and Accountability:

Ensure transparent, consistently applied targeting criteria supported by accessible feedback and accountability mechanisms.

Context-Specific Livelihoods and Economic Recovery:

Design livelihood interventions that reflect local market conditions, economic opportunities, and, in rural areas, water scarcity, climate stress, and agricultural constraints.

Inclusion and Meaningful Participation:

Strengthen the meaningful participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups by addressing barriers to access, participation, and livelihoods.

Community Structures and Local Leadership:

Engage constructively with tribal leaders, mukhtars, local authorities, and community networks while promoting equitable participation and minimizing gatekeeping and exclusion.

Conflict Sensitivity and Context Monitoring:

Maintain regular context monitoring and adaptive management to identify emerging risks, monitor unintended impacts, and adjust programming as local conditions evolve.

02

Methodology



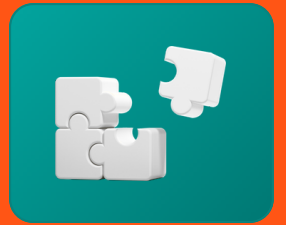
This assessment employed a qualitative, participatory approach to examine community perceptions of conflict dynamics, service delivery, and livelihood conditions across Mosul, Hammam Al-Alil, Nimrud, and Hatra. Data collection comprised 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with women, men, and youth, and 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) with mukhtars, tribal and religious leaders, sub-district representatives, and other community stakeholders conducted during February 2026. Findings were interpreted within the broader context of conflict, displacement, return, and recovery in Ninewa since 2014.

The analysis applied the Integrated Peacebuilding Assessment and Conflict Sensitivity (IPACS) framework, incorporating Do No Harm (DNH) and Positive Peace principles to examine dividers, connectors, and the interaction between programming decisions and local dynamics. Findings were triangulated with relevant secondary sources, including previous assessments, contextual analyses, and publicly available information, to identify consistent patterns and areas of convergence across locations.

Limitations:

Findings are perception-based and derived from purposive sampling; they provide strong directional insight into local dynamics but are not statistically representative of the wider population. In some cases, KI notes were summarized rather than fully transcribed, which may limit the level of detail captured. Variations in respondent profiles and experiences may also influence how issues are perceived and articulated.





Conflict Dynamics and Main Dividers

3.1 Conflict Dynamics at a Glance:

- Economic pressure has become the primary driver of tension across all locations, overtaking direct security concerns.
- Unequal access to jobs, services, and assistance is the most consistent source of grievance.
- Climate stress is intensifying competition over land, water, and agricultural livelihoods, particularly in rural areas.
- Exclusion remains structural, with youth, women, persons with disabilities, and low-income households facing persistent barriers.
- Local dispute resolution mechanisms continue to support stability but do not consistently address underlying inequalities or ensure inclusive participation.

Across the assessed locations, conflict dynamics are shaped by the interaction of economic pressure, unequal access, climate-related stress, and exclusion rather than direct insecurity. In rural areas, declining agricultural productivity and water scarcity intensify competition over land and resources, while urban areas are more affected by market fragility, debt, and limited livelihood opportunities. Across both contexts, perceptions of unfairness are reinforced where access to jobs, services, or assistance is influenced by personal connections, local power structures, or geography.

FGDs and KIs also indicate that local actors and mediation systems perform a dual role. Tribal leaders, community leaders, and local authorities contribute to dispute resolution and social stability, but they may also influence access to opportunities and representation. As a result, women, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced populations, low-income households, and other less connected groups often experience weaker voice and more limited participation within local systems.



3.2 Livelihood Pressure and Competition

Across all assessed locations, tensions are closely linked to livelihoods. Limited employment opportunities, unstable incomes, and rising living costs have created sustained economic pressure, shaping social relations and increasing competition over opportunities.

In Hammam Al-Alil, competition over employment and income is a recurring source of tension, particularly among daily wage earners and low-income households.

In Hatra, respondents highlighted how rising prices, weak services, and limited livelihood opportunities contribute to community-level friction.

In Nimrud, livelihoods remain highly dependent on agriculture, where drought, water scarcity, irrigation disruption, and limited access to productive resources have intensified competition and increased pressure on youth, many of whom face barriers to employment, land, and capital, contributing to migration toward urban areas.

In Mosul, economic pressures are driven by unemployment, market saturation, weak purchasing power, debt, and low market liquidity, compounded by wider economic uncertainty, including exchange-rate fluctuations, customs tariffs, and regional instability.

Respondents also noted that similar income-generating activities often compete within limited market demand, increasing the risk that poorly differentiated livelihood interventions may reinforce competition rather than create sustainable opportunities.

Across all locations, the findings indicate that program impact depends not only on the type of livelihood support provided, but also on how well interventions respond to local economic conditions and market realities.



3.3 Unequal Access and Perceived Unfairness

Scarcity alone does not explain the tensions observed across the assessed locations. Rather, respondents consistently emphasized that access to resources, services, employment opportunities, and assistance is uneven and often influenced by geography, social connections, and local power structures.

In Hatra, participants highlighted disparities between urban centres and surrounding villages.

In Hammam Al-Alil, perceptions of favouritism affecting employment, public services, and assistance were prominent.

In Nimrud, respondents described unequal access to irrigation, agricultural resources, financial support, and basic services, particularly in villages farther from central areas.

In Mosul, access was frequently perceived to depend on networks, location, and the ability to navigate institutional systems.

Across several locations, uneven access to assistance and development investments reinforced perceptions of neglect and exclusion, while in some rural areas limited humanitarian and development presence was itself viewed as a source of grievance.

Across all locations, perceived unfairness in service delivery and aid distribution emerged as one of the most consistent drivers of frustration, mistrust, and community tension.



3.4 Climate Stress and Resource Tension

Climate-related pressures are a defining feature of conflict dynamics in rural areas, particularly in Nimrud and Hatra.

Drought, reduced rainfall, and water scarcity are undermining agricultural livelihoods, increasing competition over irrigation and land, and weakening household resilience.

In Nimrud, respondents described growing tensions between farmers and livestock herders, declining agricultural productivity, and increasing pressure on youth to migrate due to limited livelihood opportunities.

Similar pressures were observed in Hatra, where resource scarcity and uneven service provision compound existing vulnerabilities.

Even in Mosul, climate stress indirectly affects livelihoods through rising food prices, supply chain disruptions, and migration from rural areas, while respondents in Hammam Al-Alil reported more localized impacts related to reduced rainfall and agricultural inequality.

Overall, climate stress acts as a conflict multiplier by deepening existing economic vulnerabilities, intensifying competition over natural resources, and increasing pressure on livelihoods and local services.



3.5 Exclusion and Vulnerability Patterns

Vulnerability is not evenly distributed. Across all assessed locations, youth, women, persons with disabilities, low-income households, displaced populations, returnees, and other marginalized groups experience disproportionate economic pressure, limited access to services and livelihoods, and exclusion from decision-making.

Youth are among the most affected, although the nature of exclusion varies. In Nimrud, limited access to land, capital, irrigation inputs, and employment opportunities restricts productive livelihoods and contributes to frustration and migration.

In Hatra and Mosul, unemployment and limited participation in local decision-making were identified as key concerns.

Women, particularly female-headed households, also face persistent barriers to livelihoods and participation, with social norms and economic pressures limiting their access to opportunities and decision-making processes.

Persons with disabilities face additional structural barriers, particularly in Hatra, where inaccessible infrastructure, non-inclusive services, weak communication methods, and discriminatory attitudes restrict both participation and livelihoods.

Discussions with persons with disabilities highlighted that genuinely inclusive programming can strengthen social cohesion, whereas symbolic or inaccessible interventions risk reinforcing exclusion.

Across locations, limited access to financial capital, land, productive inputs, and startup resources emerged as a common barrier to inclusion.

Respondents noted that training alone is often insufficient where individuals lack the resources needed to establish or sustain livelihoods.

Older persons and widows were also identified in some locations as facing additional barriers related to mobility, health, and household support.

Overall, exclusion is embedded within local systems and extends beyond social norms to include practical barriers such as limited information, time constraints, and unequal influence over local decision-making.

These factors shape who participates, who benefits, and who remains excluded from development opportunities.

3.6 Nature of Local Conflict

Conflict across the assessed locations is characterized less by large-scale violence than by recurring, localized tensions that are generally managed but not fully resolved.

Common disputes relate to land boundaries, irrigation access, employment opportunities, unpaid debts, and access to services. Tensions also arise between returnees and host communities and among groups competing within local markets.

Disputes are primarily managed through tribal leaders, mukhtars, community elders, local authorities, and informal reconciliation mechanisms, with formal complaint channels more commonly used for administrative and service-related issues.

In practice, these systems frequently overlap, helping to prevent escalation but not necessarily addressing the underlying drivers of grievance and inequality.

The findings indicate that local capacities for peace remain strong. Tribal mediation systems, kinship networks, shared economic activities, and community initiatives continue to support social stability. However, access to these mechanisms and influence within them is uneven.

Women, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced populations, low-income households, and less connected community members often have more limited participation in local decision-making and mediation processes.

As a result, while these mechanisms contribute to stability, they do not necessarily ensure equitable access, representation, or opportunity.



3.7 Actors, Power, and Local Influence

Conflict dynamics across the assessed locations are shaped not only by scarcity and exclusion, but also by who influences decisions, access to resources, and dispute resolution.

Across all locations, local authorities, sub-district administrations, mukhtars, tribal elders, religious figures, and, in some areas, security actors and economically influential individuals form the main interface between communities, services, and local problem-solving.

In Hammam Al-Alil and Nimrud, tribal elders, mukhtars, and local authorities play a central role in mediating disputes, facilitating communication, and managing access to services, assistance, and livelihood opportunities.

Respondents consistently identified these actors as important local capacities for peace. However, influence and representation within these systems are not always equally distributed, particularly for women, youth, low-income households, and less connected groups.

In Hatra, respondents described similar governance structures but reported greater centre–village inequalities and uneven responsiveness.

In Mosul, the actor landscape is broader and more institutional, with government institutions, security actors, markets, and civic actors playing more prominent roles, although respondents similarly noted that access and influence remain uneven.



3.8 Governance, Accountability, and Perception Gaps

Local governance structures are present and functioning across the assessed locations, but their effectiveness and responsiveness are uneven.

A consistent finding is the gap between institutional perspectives and community experience. While key informants linked to local authorities generally described governance and service delivery positively, community members more frequently highlighted weak services, slow responses to complaints, and unequal access to water, electricity, health care, infrastructure, and, in some locations, education.

Decision-making on services and development interventions was widely perceived as top-down, with influence concentrated among a relatively small group of formal and informal actors.

This contributes to perceptions of exclusion, particularly among youth, women, low-income households, and less influential community members.

The contrast was especially evident in Hammam Al-Alil, where official respondents emphasized stability and service improvements, while community members more often highlighted favouritism, unequal access, and the marginalization of less connected households.

Complaint and accountability mechanisms exist through local authorities, mukhtars, tribal leaders, community structures, and, increasingly, social media. However, respondents across several locations reported that responses are often slow, inconsistent, or influenced by personal connections, limiting equitable access to redress and weakening trust in institutions.

Overall, governance deficits are experienced not only as technical shortcomings in service delivery, but also as issues of fairness, responsiveness, and representation.

The findings reinforce the importance of triangulating institutional and community perspectives and ensuring that targeting, accountability, and participation mechanisms are grounded in community experience rather than institutional assumptions.



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Connectors and Local Capacities for Peace

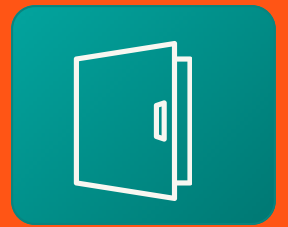
Despite the challenges identified across the assessed locations, respondents consistently highlighted a range of local capacities that help maintain stability and manage tensions. Tribal mediation mechanisms, mukhtars, religious leaders, kinship networks, community leaders, local authorities, and informal support networks continue to play an important role in dispute resolution, dialogue, and community cooperation.

Schools, youth activities, community gatherings, local civic initiatives, and, in Mosul, markets and trade networks were also identified as important spaces for interaction, strengthening relationships and cooperation across different groups.

While these local capacities do not eliminate underlying grievances related to livelihoods, services, or exclusion, they continue to prevent escalation and strengthen community resilience.

At the same time, respondents noted that influence and participation within some of these structures remain uneven, underscoring the need to engage existing local capacities in ways that promote broader inclusion and representation.





Program Implications and Do No Harm Risks

The findings indicate that ANCP Phase II will operate in a context where tensions are driven less by direct insecurity than by livelihoods, unequal access, and perceptions of fairness. Program impacts will therefore depend not only on the type of support provided, but on how interventions interact with existing systems of access, influence, and exclusion.

The most consistent risk across all locations is perceived or actual unfairness in targeting and assistance distribution. Respondents repeatedly linked tension to situations where support was viewed as favouring individuals or groups through influence, social connections, or geographic proximity.

Closely related is the risk of elite capture and informal gatekeeping. While tribal leaders, community representatives, and local authorities are important for stability and dispute resolution, reliance on these actors without appropriate safeguards may reinforce existing inequalities and exclude less visible groups.

A further risk is the unintended exclusion of vulnerable groups, including youth, women, persons with disabilities, returnees, and low-income households. Respondents emphasized that exclusion often results from program design that does not adequately address barriers related to mobility, social norms, access to information, infrastructure, or financial capital, rather than from deliberate discrimination.

Weak communication and limited transparency also emerged as recurring risks. Unclear eligibility criteria, project objectives, or selection processes can generate misunderstanding, rumours, and mistrust, particularly where expectations are high.

Finally, interventions that are poorly aligned with local economic and environmental conditions may unintentionally reinforce existing pressures. In Mosul, market saturation and economic volatility require livelihood support that reflects market demand, while in Nimrud and Hatra climate-related constraints, particularly water scarcity and declining agricultural productivity, should inform livelihood programming.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that interventions can either strengthen social cohesion or reinforce existing tensions depending on how they are implemented. Transparent targeting, inclusive participation, context-responsive livelihoods, effective communication, and adaptive management are therefore essential to ensuring that ANCP Phase II contributes to resilience and social cohesion while avoiding unintended negative impacts.

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Scenario Outlook

The findings suggest that ANCP Phase II will operate in a context that is more stable than in earlier post-conflict years but remains exposed to economic, climatic, and governance-related risks. Future tensions are more likely to arise from worsening livelihood pressures, unequal access, resource competition, and exclusion than from renewed large-scale violence.

Current trends indicate distinct risk patterns across locations. In Nimrud and Hatra, drought, water scarcity, and declining agricultural viability continue to increase pressure on households and natural resources. In Mosul, risks are more closely linked to market fragility, debt, weak purchasing power, and wider economic uncertainty, while in Hammam Al-Alil perceptions of favouritism and influence over access to opportunities remain important fault lines.

Three broad scenarios appear plausible over the next one to three years.

Scenario 1: Relative stability with uneven recovery

Security conditions remain broadly stable and economic activity gradually improves, although recovery continues to be uneven across districts and social groups. Under this scenario, ANCP Phase II should maintain a strong focus on transparent targeting, accountability, and livelihood support tailored to local conditions.

Scenario 2: Continued stagnation and pressure accumulation:

Economic recovery stalls, unemployment remains high, and climate-related pressures continue to erode rural livelihoods while constraining urban labour markets. Increasing migration, particularly among youth, places additional pressure on services and employment in receiving areas. This scenario requires adaptive programming, strengthened grievance monitoring, and continued attention to exclusion and equitable access.

Scenario 3: Deterioration driven by economic or climatic shock

A significant economic downturn, worsening drought, increased migration, or wider regional instability intensifies pressure on communities and institutions. Tensions around employment, service access, aid distribution, and local legitimacy become more pronounced, requiring contingency planning, strengthened conflict sensitivity monitoring, and flexibility to adjust implementation approaches.

Across all three scenarios, the central dynamic remains consistent: future instability is more likely to emerge through livelihoods, governance, and perceptions of unfairness than through direct conflict. ANCP Phase II's ability to monitor changing conditions and adapt programming accordingly will be critical to strengthening resilience while avoiding unintended tensions.



Strategic Recommendations

The recommendations below translate the analysis into practical actions to ensure ANCP Phase II strengthens resilience and social cohesion while avoiding unintended negative impacts.

7.1 Targeting and Fairness:

Targeting should be treated as a core conflict sensitivity measure rather than an administrative process. Selection criteria should be transparent, clearly communicated, and consistently applied to reduce perceptions of favouritism and exclusion. Beneficiary verification should combine community-based inputs with independent validation to reduce bias and limit informal gatekeeping. Direct community engagement and accessible feedback mechanisms should complement engagement with local leaders to strengthen transparency and accountability.

7.2 Livelihoods and Economic Programming:

Livelihood interventions should be tailored to local economic conditions. In Nimrud and Hatra, programming should prioritise climate-resilient agriculture and livestock production while addressing water scarcity and declining productivity. In Mosul, interventions should avoid saturated markets and focus on diversified, demand-driven livelihood opportunities. Across all locations, livelihood support should combine skills development with realistic access to capital, productive inputs, and financial services, recognising that these are essential for sustainable economic recovery rather than secondary considerations.

7.3 Inclusion and Participation:

Inclusion should be operationalised throughout program design and implementation. Programming should proactively address barriers facing youth, women, persons with disabilities, low-income households, returnees, and other marginalized groups by adapting activity locations, timing, communication methods, and eligibility criteria. Schools, youth spaces, and other community platforms should be used where appropriate to strengthen participation, inclusion, and social interaction.

7.4 Governance and Local Engagement:

Programs should engage constructively with tribal leaders, mukhtars, community representatives, and local authorities while avoiding overreliance on existing power structures. Community consultations, inclusive planning processes, accessible feedback mechanisms, and engagement beyond dominant local actors should be integrated to strengthen transparency and equitable participation. In contexts such as Nimrud, traditional gathering spaces, including mudhifs, may also provide appropriate venues for dialogue, mediation, and community consultation.

7.5 Communication and Accountability:

Clear communication and responsive accountability mechanisms are essential to managing expectations and reducing tension. Communities should receive timely and accessible information on project objectives, eligibility criteria, targeting processes, and available support. Complaint mechanisms should be accessible, transparent, and responsive, with clear timelines, visible follow-up, and consistent handling of feedback regardless of a complainant's influence or social connections. Existing formal and informal channels, including local authorities, community leaders, and social media, should be strengthened through improved responsiveness and regular communication with communities.

7.6 MEL and Adaptive Management:

Conflict sensitivity should be integrated into routine monitoring and adaptive management rather than treated solely as a design principle. In addition to outputs and participation, monitoring should track perceptions of fairness, exclusion, grievance trends, complaint resolution, and unintended impacts across locations and groups. These indicators should be used as early warning signals to identify emerging tensions and inform timely adjustments to targeting, implementation, and community engagement.

7.7 Flexibility and Adaptation:

Given the evolving economic, climatic, and social context, programming should remain sufficiently flexible to adapt activities, targeting approaches, and implementation modalities as conditions change. Annual reflection and review processes under ANCP Phase II provide an opportunity to assess emerging risks, review implementation experiences, and adjust programming to ensure interventions remain relevant, conflict-sensitive, and responsive to community needs.

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Conclusion

The assessment demonstrates that the context across Mosul, Hammam Al-Alil, Nimrud, and Hatra has evolved significantly since the period of active conflict. While security conditions have improved, underlying vulnerabilities continue to shape daily life and local stability. The primary drivers of tension are no longer direct insecurity, but economic hardship, unequal access to opportunities and services, climate-related pressures, and persistent patterns of exclusion.

Across the assessed locations, livelihoods, fairness, and access emerged as the issues most influencing social relations and perceptions of stability. Climate stress continues to undermine rural livelihoods, while urban areas face market fragility, unemployment, and growing economic pressure. At the same time, perceptions of unequal access to resources, services, and assistance continue to weaken trust and reinforce frustration, particularly among youth, women, persons with disabilities, low-income households, and other marginalized groups.

The assessment also highlights the importance of local capacities for peace and resilience. Tribal leaders, community structures, social networks, and local institutions continue to play a critical role in managing disputes and supporting social cohesion. However, these mechanisms do not always ensure equitable participation or representation, underscoring the importance of engaging existing structures while promoting broader inclusion and accountability.

For ANCP Phase II, conflict sensitivity should be embedded throughout program design and implementation. Transparent targeting, inclusive participation, context-responsive livelihoods, effective communication, adaptive management, and strong accountability mechanisms will be essential to ensuring that interventions strengthen resilience and social cohesion rather than inadvertently reinforcing existing tensions.

Ultimately, Ninewa's recovery remains a work in progress. Continued progress will depend on addressing the interconnected challenges of livelihoods, inclusion, governance, and climate resilience while maintaining programming that is responsive to evolving community priorities and local conflict dynamics.

Annex 1

Operational Conflict Sensitivity Matrix (District-Level Summary)

Table A1. Operational Conflict Sensitivity Matrix (District-Level Summary).

The matrix below summarizes how conflict dynamics differ across locations and translates these patterns into key operational considerations for ANCP Phase II programming.



District	Key Dividers	Key Connectors	Main Risk for ANCP Phase II	Opportunities to Strengthen Peace	Operational Focus
Hamмам Al-Alil	Unequal access driven by influence; limited jobs for youth; exclusion of low-income households; family and land disputes; restricted participation of women	Kinship and intermarriage; shared livelihoods; tribal and religious mediation; local authorities	Reinforcing patronage and excluding less visible groups through influence-based targeting	Transparent and visible targeting can build trust; livelihood support for poorer households can reduce resentment; inclusion of women and youth can widen participation	Apply clear targeting criteria; diversify verification; avoid overreliance on intermediaries; strengthen direct community engagement and complaint mechanisms
Nimrud	Drought and water scarcity; irrigation and land disputes; farmer–herder competition; youth exclusion from land and capital; weak infrastructure	Tribal leaders, mukhtars, mediation spaces; collective action; community participation	Livelihood support failing if water, inputs, and capital constraints are not addressed; exclusion through dominant systems	Irrigation can reduce competition; climate-adaptive livelihoods can stabilize income; youth inclusion can reduce migration pressure	Prioritize irrigation; combine training with inputs and capital; include landless youth and women-headed households; avoid relying only on dominant local intermediaries in beneficiary selection
Hatra	Service inequality between center and villages; water and land scarcity; unemployment; returnee–host tension; stigma; exclusion of PWDs and women	Tribal mediation; community committees; schools; CSOs; shared markets; social norms	Reinforcing spatial and social inequality through uneven targeting and non-inclusive design	Inclusive targeting can improve relations; accessible services can build trust; livelihood support can reduce pressure on vulnerable groups	Ensure rural inclusion; adapt services for PWDs; include women, youth, and returnees; use community platforms
Mosul	Unemployment; weak purchasing power; liquidity and debt pressure; market saturation; service inequality; exclusion of vulnerable groups	Markets and trade networks; civic identity; social networks; youth initiatives	Livelihood interventions failing or increasing competition if not aligned with market conditions	Market-aligned support can strengthen inclusion; integrating vulnerable groups into viable roles can improve participation; service support in peripheral areas can reduce grievance	Use market analysis; avoid saturated sectors; include peripheral areas; design viable livelihood pathways

