RESEARCHING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

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Roma in Iraq and Syria
On the Margins of IDP Protection

Sarah Edgcumbe
University of St Andrews
United Kingdom

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Abstract

Much research has been conducted on minority groups within the IDP / refugee arena, with such research often advocating for greater protection and support for these groups. It should be observed, however, that there is an academic tendency to homogenise minority groups, conflating minority status with marginalisation. Such interlinkage, however, is not always the case, nor is minority status uniformly experienced by all minority IDPs. It should therefore be recognised that different minority groups will have different experiences of social relations, conflict dynamics and humanitarian protection and assistance.

This exploratory article examines the relationship between humanitarian protection and a severely marginalised group of IDPs - the Roma of the Middle East - specifically of Iraq and Syria. Through preliminary case studies of Roma IDPs in these countries, it illustrates how IDP protection may be reinforcing forces of marginalisation or omitting the Roma from humanitarian provision entirely. This article will ultimately argue that recognition of experiences of marginalisation within the IDP population is just as important as a broader acknowledgement of minority status. It therefore advocates for increased targeted research, particularly with Roma IDPs, through earmarked funding, combined with subsequent targeted programming, due to the unique vulnerabilities and challenges that such marginalisation presents when combined with displacement.

Keywords

Roma; Domari; internal displacement; Syria; Iraq; humanitarian protection

Author Details

Email: sarah.edgcumbe@gmail.com; sle5@st-andrews.ac.uk

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1. Introduction

Much research has been conducted on minority groups in conflict-affected environments and within the IDP / refugee arena, with such research often advocating for greater protection and support for these groups. This body of research is commendable in many respects, but it should be observed there is an academic tendency to homogenise minority groups, conflating minority status with marginalisation. Such interlinkage, however, is not always the case, nor is minority status uniformly experienced by all minority IDPs. It should therefore be recognised that different minority groups will have different experiences of social relations, conflict dynamics and humanitarian protection and assistance. To homogenise minority groups is to overlook both inter-, and intra-group power dynamics, alongside a web of intricate social relations which often see some groups more overlooked and excluded than others.

Romani people across both Europe and the Middle East are an example of a minority group who are consistently extremely marginalised; often subject to persecution, discrimination, and prejudice at both institutional and social levels. Indeed, anti-Roma, or anti-Gypsy sentiment is commonly referred to as 'the last acceptable form of racism' in contemporary Europe, being so socially engrained and widely accepted, that critical engagement with anti-Roma commentary is notable in its absence within the media, policy and otherwise public arenas.

Despite increasing attention being afforded to the protection of IDPs as distinct from refugees, particularly since the introduction of the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[1] some social and ethnic groups remain on the periphery of the protection sphere. This article examines the relationship between humanitarian protection and a severely marginalised group of IDPs - the Roma of the Middle East - specifically of Iraq and Syria. By examining the displacement context within each of these states, combined with the socio-political status of the Roma in each context, preliminary case studies can be developed which illustrate how IDP protection may be reinforcing forces of marginalisation, or omitting the Roma from humanitarian provision entirely.

This article will ultimately argue that recognition of experiences of marginalisation within the IDP population is just as important as a broader acknowledgement of minority status. It therefore advocates for increased targeted research, particularly with Roma IDPs, through earmarked funding, combined with subsequent targeted programming, due to the unique vulnerabilities and challenges that such marginalisation presents when combined with displacement.

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[1] UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, https://www.unhcr.org/protection/idps/43ce1cff2/guiding-principles-internal-displacement.html (accessed 12th September 2021).

2. Methodology

The Roma of Iraq and Syria have been identified for the purposes of this research due to the extreme degree of the marginalisation and stigmatization they face, combined with their shared social characteristics and experiences. These factors will be analysed against the unique conflict dynamics that have affected each country; dynamics which, in turn, also affect the delivery of humanitarian protection and assistance programmes. Although this research focuses specifically on Roma IDPs, lessons learned from this, and any future research which builds upon this article, can be applied to IDP groups who face a similar degree of marginalisation elsewhere.

This research is entirely qualitative in nature, combining a desk-based review of literature with six semi-structured, remote interviews with researchers and humanitarian professionals operating in Iraq and Syria. Of these six interviewees, four are based in Iraq (these comprise of one academic and three humanitarian actors) and two focus on Syria (one is a researcher and consultant who focuses on the Middle East; one is a humanitarian worker, consultant and researcher with a focus on Syria). Several humanitarian actors, including protection cluster members, declined to participate in this research on the basis that they know nothing of the Roma in Iraq and Syria.

This in itself is poignant, as it illustrates global societies' tendency towards perceiving the Roma as insignificant, or unworthy of social assistance. Moreover, the 'decline' responses demonstrate the bias inherent within this research: those who knew about the Roma spoke, whereas those who didn't were not provided with an avenue through which to participate in this research. A survey may have been useful in painting a wider picture of humanitarian protection mechanisms as they relate to minority groups more broadly, but as explained above, such an approach would serve to neglect Roma IDPs, who experience a far greater degree of social contempt, stigmatisation and ostracization than most.

It should be noted that very little written work has been produced on the Roma of Iraq and Syria, much less on their displacement and socio-political positionality within contemporary conflict dynamics. Therefore, this research is exploratory, generating more questions than answers. It is hoped that this article will provide a foundation upon which further protection-based research and policies specific to marginalised IDPs, particularly the Roma, can be developed.

This article will not reference the Covid-19 pandemic, nor its repercussions for Roma IDPs and the humanitarian community. The reason for this is that marginalisation of Romani people pre-dates the pandemic. To muddy the waters by exploring limitations presented by the pandemic would be to obfuscate a protection gap that pre-dates it. Additionally, due to the broad nature of humanitarian action in contrast to a limited word count, this article will focus on protection only.

Before commencing, a note must be made regarding labels. The Roma of both Iraq and Syria are referred to colloquially by pejorative names that have been formulated and applied by others. In the Kurdish region of Iraq (KRI) they are often simply referred to as "Gypsies",[2] but in federal Iraq, they are often referred to as "*Kawliyah*", a highly derogatory and contemptuous term which demeans the bearer.[3] Likewise, the Syrian Roma are commonly referred to as "*nawar*", which also carries connotations of disdain and inferiority.[4] Importantly, the Roma of Syria and Iraq do not engage with these terms; they may not even use the label Roma, or the alternative commonly applied to Middle Eastern Roma, which is 'Domari'. In the case of the Syrian Roma, it seems that they may identify as members of over-arching family groups rather than ethnic identity.[5]

For the purposes of this article, in an attempt to make this research as accessible as possible to readers of different backgrounds, the term Roma will be used rather than Domari, even where interviewees have explicitly used the latter term. In the small body of literature that does exist on this ethnic group in the Middle East, the labels 'Roma' and 'Domari' are used interchangeably, likely due to shared heritage. To illustrate this point, the group is commonly called Rom in Europe, Dom in the Middle East and Lom in the Caucasus.[6] By utilising the term Roma rather than Domari, it is hoped that this article will act as a catalyst for greater awareness of the displacement experience across both Europe and the Middle East in conflict-affected environments where Roma IDPs remain marginalised.

This article will essentially argue that much more work is required by the humanitarian community in terms of incorporating the most severely marginalised groups (who are often the most vulnerable in times of conflict) into the first step of the Global Protection Cluster's protection strategy: the initial situation analysis and protection assessment.[7] It will also advocate for a protection mandate which extends to all IDPs displaced by conflict and violence, regardless of the duration of their displacement, particularly in Iraq, where displacement of Roma began in 2003.

3. IDP Protection

Throughout 2020, the worldwide number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) rose by 40.5 million, reaching a ten year high.[8] Whilst globally, disasters triggered over three times more

[2] Interview with Alwand Talaat, Public Aid Organisation (PAO) Iraq, conducted 1 August 2021.
[3] Edgcumbe S, (18th June 2020), 'We're Real Iraqis: Securing Roma Rights and Integration in Post-Conflict Iraq', Middle East Research Institute, Vol 4, No. 4, p3.
[4] Interview with Thomas McGee, conducted 12 August 2021.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Matras Y, (2015), 'I Met Lucky People', Penguin Books.
[7] Ibid, p113.
[8] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), (2021), 'Grid 2021: Internal Displacement in a Changing Climate', p6.

displacements than conflict,[9] in certain countries, this trend was significantly reversed. In Iraq for example, of the 68,200 new displacements that occurred throughout 2020, 67,000 were triggered by conflict and violence, while in Syria, of the 1,847,000 new displacements, 1,822,000 were triggered by conflict and violence.

The Global Protection Cluster Working Group Handbook on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons defines protection as ‘an objective which requires full and equal respect for the rights of all individuals without discrimination.’[10] The handbook continues on to explain that ‘protection must be rights-based’,[11] requiring that all ‘policies, programmes and activities: are based on rights, as provided by international law; further the realisation of rights; and seek to strengthen the capacity of rights-holders…to claim their rights, and the capacity of duty bearers to meet their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil those rights.’[12]

Within the humanitarian and displacement response apparatus, humanitarian assistance for IDPs is divided between different pillars, with protection representing one of these. The contemporary humanitarian community is organised under a ‘cluster’ approach executed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). This cluster approach ‘aims to ensure greater leadership and accountability in key sectors where gaps in humanitarian response have been identified and to enhance partnerships among humanitarian, human rights and development actors.’[13] The cluster approach operates simultaneously at both a global and national level. Within each national protection cluster, there will be context-specific sub-clusters, most usually: child protection; gender-based violence; mine action; shelter and non-food items; and housing, land and property (HLP).

With regard to research on IDP protection that has been published to date, David Cantor and Agnes Woolley observe that ‘there is relatively little research on how IDP protection intersects with…forms of social identity, perhaps suggesting that such questions are seen as highly-context specific.’[14] This supports the fundamental argument put forward throughout this article that much greater attention is needed for marginalised IDPs such as the Roma of Iraq and Syria. Of research that has been conducted thus far, very few papers have distinguished between minority and marginalised status of IDPs. Examples of scholarship which do explicitly focus on marginalised IDPs however, include that of Roosbelinda Cardenas and Angela Santamaria,

[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid, p7.
[11] Ibid, p10.
[12] Ibid, p11.
[13] Global Protection Cluster Working Group, (March 2010), Handbook on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, p44.
[14] Cantor D and Woolley A, (June 2020), ‘Internal Displacement and Responses at the Global Level: A Review of the Scholarship’, Internal Displacement Research Programme Working Papers Series, No.1, p15.

whose work focuses on Afro-descendant and indigenous IDPs in Colombia, respectively.[15] Meanwhile, in the Balkans, the Danish Refugee Council, with the support of the Joint Profiling Service, included Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian IDPs in its 2016 research, identifying this demographic of the IDP population (alongside women) as having the lowest access to education among IDPs in Kosovo.[16]

Through examining the case of Roma IDPs in Iraq and Syria, it is possible to identify how consistent protection gaps occur that are symptomatic of both institutional and social exclusion at the national and community level. Humanitarian practitioners who participated in interviews often referred to the 'humanitarian priorities' identified within the protection cluster system, but these priorities fail to account for marginality, particularly as experienced by groups such as the Roma of Iraq and Syria who already faced significant discrimination and isolation prior to conflict breaking out in each country. Thus, a contextualised and targeted approach to humanitarian protection based upon comprehensive research with marginalised IDPs is required.

4. Iraq

4.1 Iraq's Displacement Landscape

Three significant and distinct periods of displacement can be identified in contemporary Iraq. The first was the result of the persecutory policies of Saddam Hussein between 1979 and 2003. The second was caused by the American-led coalition invasion of Iraq and subsequent destabilisation of the country as it descended into sectarian conflict. This period of displacement is widely recognised as taking place between 2003 and 2013. The third, and most recent, period of displacement dates back to 2013 / 2014 and was triggered by the Islamic State (IS) insurgency, alongside the corresponding military campaign to liberate IS-held territory.[17] Integral to the Iraq component of this research, is the observation by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) that between 2006 and 2008, persecution of minorities increased as sectarian violence escalated.[18]

[15] Both authors are cited in: Sanchez-Mojica B E. (June 2020), 'State of the Art of the Literature on Internal Displacement in Latin America', Internal Displacement Research Programme Working Paper Series, No.3, p16.
[16] Joint Profiling Service, (2018), cited in: Cardona-Fox G, (June 2020), 'Internal Displacement in Europe and Central Asia: A Review of the Literature', Internal Displacement Research Programme Working Papers Series, No.5, p9.
[17] International Organization for Migration (IOM) Iraq, (January 2021), 'Protracted Displacement in Iraq: Revisiting Categories of Return Barriers', p9.
[18] IDMC / NRC, (2018), 'Nowhere to return to: Iraq's search for durable solutions continues', p13.

As of the end of 2020, there remained 1,224,000 IDPs in Iraq,[19] with over half of these languishing in a state of protracted displacement of three years or more.[20] OCHA reported that approximately one million IDPs now live in out-of-camp settings, often in situations of secondary displacement.[21] Two thirds of out-of-camp IDPs are unable to meet their basic needs.[22] Of significance for the case study of Roma IDPs in Iraq, many of whom migrated to the KRI as a result of their displacement from federally governed Iraq,[23] is that in the KRI, there exists 'habitually a significant gap in meeting the needs of out-of-camp IDPs.'[24] OCHA reported that throughout 2020, humanitarian partners were 'able to reach 291,000 out of the 429,000 out-of-camp IDPs targeted.'[25] What is not clear is whether Roma IDPs were included within the target group. This question is amplified by the fact that several individuals from the protection cluster in Iraq declined interviews on the basis that they knew nothing about the internal displacement of Roma in Iraq, or in some cases, even their existence.

The OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan stated that throughout 2021, the shelter and non-food items (NFI) cluster planned to 'ensure that the most vulnerable conflict-affected people benefitted from improvement of adequate shelter.' It continued on to state that 'among the most vulnerable, the shelter and NFI cluster will prioritise…marginalised groups.'[26] The Shelter and NFI cluster's Vulnerability Criteria defines marginalised groups as 'those who cannot return to their area of origin and/or to their residential property due to tribal, ethnic, sectarian, political reasons and affiliations…'.[27] Iraqi Roma fall squarely within the definition of a marginalised and vulnerable group for the purposes of humanitarian protection and assistance. However, as will be seen below, there is currently a significant disjuncture between protection objectives and protection practice where Roma IDPs are concerned, largely due to the under-researched nature of their community. This is symptomatic of their complete marginalisation, which has resulted in widespread failure to recognise their status as IDPs fleeing conflict and violence.

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[19] IDMC Country Information: Iraq, https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/iraq (accessed 12th September 2021)
[20] OCHA, (November 2018), 'Humanitarian Needs Overview: Iraq', p7.
[21] OCHA, (February 2021), 'Humanitarian Needs Overview: Iraq', p38.
[22] Ibid, p39.
[23] This migration movement was identified by Alwand Talaat, interview conducted 1 August 2021; Zahra Albarazi, interview conducted 5 August 2021; and Dr Hamied al Hashimi, interview conducted 8 August 2021; See also: Dosky A K, (8th June 2012), 'Iraqi Kurdistan's gypsies want to vote: No more singing and dancing', EKurd Daily.
[24] Ibid, p49.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid, p85.
[27] Shelter Cluster Iraq, (2021), 'Vulnerability Criteria for Shelter Cluster – 2021', p2, footnote no.3.

4.2 Iraq's Roma: Post-invasion Persecution

The Roma population of Iraq is estimated to be between 50,000 – 200,000.[28] Geographically, they have historically lived in 'isolated villages in southern Iraq, primarily in al-Qadissiya Governorate',[29] as well as 'isolated villages and neighbourhoods around major cities, including Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, and elsewhere in southern Iraq'.[30] There is also a significant Roma population in the KRI, particularly around the outskirts of Dohuk.[31] Historically, the Roma of Iraq have gained employment as entertainers – singing, dancing and playing music at events such as parties and weddings, while some have also participated in the selling of alcohol and sex work. Roma have been present in Iraq for centuries,[32] but with the post-Saddam regime rise in extremist militias and the institutionalisation of religious conservativism, the Roma have been increasingly portrayed as un-Islamic and therefore a threat to the morality of majority society.[33]

Due to entrenched institutional and social stigmatisation, the presence of Roma in Iraq is not reported upon, nor are they explicitly mentioned in humanitarian literature as a vulnerable or marginalised group. This omission stands in stark contrast to the European Asylum Support Office's (EASO) recent description of them as 'among the most vulnerable, disfavoured and at-risk of all the marginalized groups in Iraq'.[34] Furthermore, EASO warns of 'a disturbing lack of information about the circumstances of the Roma community in Iraq' as identified by the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues to the UN Human Rights Council.[35] Iraqi Roma have been omitted from population censuses since the formation of the Iraqi state.[36] In conjunction with stigmatization and social ostracization, such discrimination has resulted in the presence of Iraqi Roma being erased from both the national and international narrative. When compared to the situation of the Iraqi Yezidi, who rightfully received much international attention in the wake of IS establishing a so-called Caliphate, the silence and lack of research surrounding the Iraqi Roma and their post-2003 persecution in Iraq is baffling.

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[28] Minority Rights Group International, https://minorityrights.org/minorities/roma-21/, (website updated November 2017; accessed 11th July 2021); EASO, (March 2019), 'Country of Origin Information Report: Iraq – Targeting of Individuals', p151; and interview with Dr Hamied al-Hashimi, sociologist and Iraqi gypsy specialist, interview conducted 8th August 2021.

[29] Minority Rights Group International, https://minorityrights.org/minorities/roma-21/, (website updated November 2017; accessed 11th July 2021); and interview with Dr Hamied al-Hashimi, interview conducted 8th August 2021.

[30] EASO, (March 2019), 'Country of Origin Information Report: Iraq – Targeting of Individuals', p151.

[31] Dosky A K, (8th June 2012); 'Iraqi Kurdistan's gypsies want to vote: No more singing and dancing', EKurd Daily; and interview with Dr Hamied al-Hashimi, interview conducted 8th August 2021.

[32] Edgcumbe S, (18 June 2020), 'We're Real Iraqis: Securing Roma Rights and Integration in Post-Conflict Iraq', Middle East Research Institute, Vol 4, No. 4, p2.

[33] Bassem W, (27th April 2015), 'Iraq's Gypsy Communities Face Discrimination', Al-Monitor, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2015/04/iraq-gypsies-dance-parties-prostitution-discrimination.html

[34] EASO, (March 2019), 'Country of Origin Information Report: Iraq – Targeting of Individuals', p151.

[35] Ibid, p152.

[36] Edgcumbe S, (18 June 2020), 'We're Real Iraqis: Securing Roma Rights and Integration in Post-Conflict Iraq', Middle East Research Institute, Vol 4, No. 4, p4; and interview with Dr Hamied al Hashimi, conducted 8 August 2021.

Since the American-led coalition invasion of 2003 and the subsequent rise of extremist militias, the Roma of Iraq have experienced horrifying levels of brutal persecution, which have resulted in thousands of Roma being killed and displaced,[37] with some Roma villages being razed to the ground.[38] Though nearly twenty years on, Iraq's Roma continue to be stigmatised and securitised on the basis of "immorality" to such an extent, that their human rights are being severely curtailed, and they are leading extremely precarious lives. Roma who were displaced over a decade ago may still remain unable to return home due to fears for their safety, or because security checkpoints[39] may refuse them access. These checkpoints may prove to be particularly problematic for Roma refugees returning to Iraq from Syria. As Dr Hamied al Hashimi, a sociologist and specialist on the Roma of Iraq explained: many Iraqi Roma fled to Syria after 2003 when they became targets for Shiite militias, particularly the Mahdi Army. When Syria's conflict escalated, the best Roma singers, dancers and musicians migrated to the Gulf states, but many simply returned to Iraq, including the KRI.[40] An interview with Zahra Albarazi, an independent researcher and consultant on statelessness in the Middle East confirmed Dr al Hashimi's findings. Albarazi explained that the Iraqi Roma experienced 'quite a big backlash in Iraq in 2003 / 2004, because they were seen to be pro-Saddam. When the fall of Saddam came about, many of them [fled] to Syria…and now have been re-displaced. Most of them have now [returned] to Iraq.'[41] Despite the combination of forced displacement of Iraqi Roma, the recent return of Iraqi Roma refugees from Syria, and their status as one of the most vulnerable ethnic groups in the country, there is little awareness of the complex socio-political position they inhabit within contemporary Iraq, if indeed their existence is acknowledged at all.

4.3 Obstacles to Securing Protection for Iraqi Roma IDPs

Two primary obstacles prevent Roma IDPs in Iraq from being able to access sufficient humanitarian protection and assistance. The first is the lack of attention they receive. As Mr Alwand Talaat from the Public Aid Organisation (PAO), an Iraqi non-governmental organisation (NGO) explained, the Iraqi Roma 'are marginalised by the government…[and] rejected by society – society has stigmatised them. The public rejects them, so in every conflict or crisis they are at most at risk because they are already vulnerable and marginalised by the government'.[42]

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[37] Interviews with Dr Hamied al-Hashimi (interview conducted 8th August 2021); and Zahra Albarazi, (interview conducted 5th August 2021).

[38] Latif N, (23rd January 2013), Your Middle East; and Zeidel R, (2014), p80, cited in Edgcumbe S, (18 June 2020), 'We're Real Iraqis: Securing Roma Rights and Integration in Post-Conflict Iraq', Middle East Research Institute, Vol 4, No. 4, p4.

[39] Dr Hamied al-Hashimi stated that checkpoints have been placed at the entrances to many Roma villages in federal Iraq, particularly in Kenaan, Baquba and Diyala (interview conducted 8th August 2021). Local reporting under the headline 'Iraq's Gypsies Blockaded by Police, Harassed by Authorities' posted on Niqash looked specifically at this issue in a Roma community in Basra. However, after a notable period of time online, it was recently removed.

[40] Interview conducted 8 August 2021.

[41] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.

[42] Interview conducted 1 August 2021.

This vulnerability is exacerbated by their invisibility. Dr al Hashimi noted that the Roma of Iraq are consistently excluded from the national collective memory of conflict and suffering,[43] despite the fact that they continue to be targeted for persecution and discrimination today. This erasure of Iraq's Roma from social narrative has extremely negative consequences, as without adequate recognition, funds are allocated and humanitarian programmes designed in such a way as to reinforce their marginalisation.

Institutionalisation and mainstreaming of exclusionary policies and practices towards the Roma of Iraq have grave implications for Roma IDPs. Al Hashimi, Albarazi and Talaat all described the poverty experienced by Roma communities in similar terms: extreme in nature, affecting all elements of life and exacerbated by marginalisation and stigmatization by both the public and authorities. They are shunned by the public, including Syrian refugees,[44] perceived by public officials as non-citizens[45] and under-researched by the humanitarian community.[46] An Iraqi humanitarian worker employed by an international NGO, who wished to remain anonymous, explained that 'the [Roma] are considered not to be nationals. They have a lot of issues. They don't have any documentation.'[47] Moreover, he described how they are completely stigmatised by society, stating that 'they are totally forbidden as marriage partners. There is a lot of discrimination against them. Society will not accept them and will not engage with them. The [government] won't engage them in schools or social activities. It is considered to be shameful to work with, or marry, a [Romani]. It's a big shame. This is still the case today.'[48]

Whilst not all Iraqi Roma are IDPs, many likely are, and their enforced positionality on the absolute margins of society renders them extremely vulnerable. This leads to the second primary obstacle standing in the way of accessible humanitarian protection and assistance: lack of contextual, Roma-specific research; a problem the humanitarian community has not yet sought to remedy. An example of the problematic consequences of this lack of research-based knowledge can be seen in the current lack of understanding among the humanitarian community regarding the relationship between Roma IDPs and existing humanitarian priorities. As Talaat explained: 'I do believe that [the Roma] receive little attention from the humanitarian community. If you [adhere to] the humanitarian priorities, IDPs are the humanitarian emergency [in Iraq], for both the humanitarian community and the government as well. We are now in a new stage of humanitarian priority which is recovery and redevelopment of areas of return. For now, I have observed that returnees are the most prioritised group of people in humanitarian action

[43] Interview conducted 8 August 2021.
[44] Interview with Thomas McGee, conducted 12 August 2021.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Interview with Zahra Albarazi, conducted 5 August 2021.
[47] This observation is supported by interviews with Zahra Albarazai, Thomas McGee, Dr Hamied al Hashimi and anonymous interviewees, and triangulated through various news reports referenced in: Edgcumbe S, (18 June 2020), 'We're Real Iraqis: Securing Roma Rights and Integration in Post-Conflict Iraq', Middle East Research Institute, Vol 4, No. 4.
[48] Interview conducted 19 August 2021.

response… I believe that [the Roma] are not a priority for humanitarian actors. I haven't seen any specific programme for them. I actually do not see or hear much about them.'[49] The lack of comprehensive, targeted research on the Iraqi Roma (or sufficient exchange of information between researchers and humanitarians) is evidenced in the humanitarian community's apparent belief that Iraqi Roma do not represent a proportion of the IDP nor returnee population.

Exacerbating this humanitarian oversight of Iraqi Roma IDPs, is Iraq's protection cluster mandate, which extends only as far back as the IS insurgency in 2014. An individual from Iraq's protection cluster who wished to remain anonymous explained that 'we intervene in conflict-affected governorates - conflict meaning the IS conflict - not whatever happened before.'[50] This interviewee continued on to explain how the post-2014 displacement landscape in Iraq 'is a situation of protracted displacement because the situation has not been solved. There are still people in camps, or who are secondarily displaced in out of camp locations.' This begs the question, if protracted displacement is recognised as inherently problematic in terms of protection, why does the mandate only extend back as far as 2014, while many members of the Iraqi Roma community have quite likely been living in protracted displacement since 2003 onwards?

4.4 Unrecognised Displacement

While most international humanitarian actors interviewed (or sent an interview request), had never heard of the Iraqi Roma, national humanitarian staff had. However, the Iraqi Roma's status as IDPs displaced by conflict and violence from 2003 onwards, including by IS from 2014 onwards, was only explicitly recognised by the academics and researchers interviewed. This suggests the existence of a vast protection gap which could easily be addressed through increased dialogue and coordination between the academic and humanitarian community.

Various humanitarian practitioners interviewed argued that if Roma IDPs are accessed by humanitarians in a context of displacement, they will receive assistance. However, this broad approach to aid distribution and provision is potentially discriminatory if adequate efforts are not made to specifically locate and identify Roma IDPs, who are likely to be positioned on the absolute periphery of urban and peri-urban areas due to being unwelcome among other IDP populations. In the absence of mainstream national and international humanitarian NGO assistance, Dr al Hashimi warns that Roma IDPs and their communities are being targeted by religious groups who seek to alleviate perceived immorality rather than suffering,[51] by providing conditional aid and assistance. Not only is this discriminatory and harmful for Roma culture and identity, but it is also a potential pathway for radicalisation. Of fundamental difficulty here is one

[49] Interview conducted 1 August 2021.
[50] Interview conducted 3 August 2021.
[51] Interview conducted 8 August 2021.

anonymous interviewee's assertion that 'government employees don't cooperate with the organisations who are helping the [Roma], because they understand neither the issues affecting them, nor the need to recognise [Roma] as citizens and nationals of Iraq'.[52]

Historically, Romani people were nomadic, though in contemporary Iraq, many have been settled for generations. The extent to which Iraqi Roma continue to be perceived by the Iraqi authorities and public as migratory peoples remains unclear, as does any repercussive effect this misperception may have on the provision of humanitarian protection and assistance. The distinct lack of ethnicity-based or targeted research focusing on Roma IDPs in the Middle East is symptomatic of their more general marginalisation. The IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix[53] composes a population profile for IDPs in Iraq, but a confluence of factors means that the Roma likely aren't registered as such. Firstly, because of the stigmatization and persecution experienced by the Roma, they often identify as a different ethnic group, such as Kurdish, Arab or Turkmen.[54] This attempt at assimilation is often a survival mechanism rather than a genuine affiliation with the other named ethnicity. Furthermore, if the majority of the humanitarian community fails to recognise the existence of Iraqi Roma, or their presence among the IDP population, Roma (or Domari, or Gypsy) will not be presented as an option on surveys. Roma IDPs will therefore have no choice but to identify as part of a broader group, such as Kurdish or Arab. This identity erasure will potentially result in the obfuscation of the unique protection issues which Iraqi Roma IDPs face.

A protection cluster member who requested anonymity, had not heard of the Iraqi Roma, but when discussing collection and disaggregation of data on IDPs, she explained that 'when we refer to 'minorities', we usually refer to Yezidis because of what happened [during the IS insurgency], and some other minor minorities. If you ask me, the main group [of beneficiaries] we record as a minority is the Yezidi.'[55] It is interesting that the Yezidi are widely recognised as having been persecuted by IS (and rightly so), yet the Roma of Iraq; a group synonymous in the public psyche with music, dancing, prostitution and selling alcohol, are not. This is despite the historic presence of Roma around the outskirts of Mosul, and despite their contemporary persecution by extremist militias due to their perceived immorality.

Using the colloquial term for IS, Dr al Hashimi explained: 'Daesh[56] would have targeted [the Roma] for more than one reason, because [Daesh] are extremists; the most extreme movement. They would target them because of the prostitution and their lifestyle, and…because [Daesh] banned music. We saw some videos and pictures of Daesh destroying records and TVs. So of course, they wouldn't accept all of that. They wouldn't trust the Roma because their lifestyle,

[52] Interview conducted 19 August 2021.
[53] https://dtm.iom.int/
[54] Interview with Zahra Albarazi, conducted 5 August 2021.
[55] Interview conducted 3 August 2021.
[56] The colloquial Arabic used for IS.

attitude and beliefs are different from theirs. If [Daesh] were suspicious of you or suspected you, they wouldn't accept you. They would kill or expel you.'[57] Dr al Hashimi went on to describe how in several cases, the Roma didn't wait for IS to attack them, but rather fled before their arrival, saying 'the Roma used to live in a village called Sahaji [near] Mosul. In Sahaji I'm sure they didn't wait until Daesh reached their village.'[58] The fact that the Roma pre-empted yet more attacks by an extremist group, and therefore fled before the arrival of IS in Mosul, does not diminish their status as IDPs in need of protection and assistance. Meanwhile, the stigmatization they face by majority society renders them more vulnerable than most.

4.5 Erasure through Categorisation

All humanitarian practitioners operating in Iraq who were interviewed stated that IDP protection and assistance is administered according to broader criteria than ethnicity. On the one hand, this is admirable, but on the other, Iraqi Roma IDPs pose unique challenges to the humanitarian community, which necessitate a very contextualised and targeted response. An example of such a challenge in the Iraqi context was provided by Talaat, who observed that the Roma are a very closed community, and thus are difficult to access.[59] Talaat pondered whether this difficulty in accessing the community explains the lack of humanitarian assistance provided to Roma IDPs. This is certainly a question that should be given serious consideration within the national protection cluster in Iraq. In Talaat's opinion, 'I personally believe that [Roma] people and any other marginalised communities should be listed as a humanitarian priority and provided with support – especially for children and women'.[60] Likewise, Dr al Hashimi argued that 'we should first look at the poorest and most fragile communities of people or areas, then work our way up. We need to prioritise the weakest; the Roma'.[61] Explicitly identifying the Roma as an at-risk community of IDPs would be an important first step for the humanitarian community.

5. Syria

5.1 The Syrian Displacement Landscape

Syrian Roma suffer from the same socio-political erasure from discussion of conflict and displacement as the Iraqi Roma. The similarities in positionality and experience between the Roma of Syria and Iraq are many, and several salient parallels can be drawn. However, for the purpose of advocating for improved humanitarian protection in both countries, it is first important to briefly examine the displacement context in which Syrian Roma IDPs reside.

[57] Interview conducted 8 August 2021.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Interview conducted 1 August 2021.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Interview conducted 8 August 2021.

As of the end of 2020, there were 6.7 million IDPs living in Syria.[62] This is a staggering amount and particularly concerning given that 90% of the Syrian population lives below the poverty line[63] while 52% of IDPs are in 'extreme and catastrophic need'.[64] OCHA reports that the conflict has now displaced 12.3 million people since it started in 2011, with the number of IDPs increasing by 6.1 million throughout 2020. IDPs in Syria now represent one third of the overall population,[65] with nearly one third of them living in 'last resort sites including informal settlements and camps, planned camps, collective shelters and transit centres'.[66] Additionally, a significant proportion of IDPs also reside in damaged housing,[67] with the conflict having destroyed one third of all homes in Syria.[68]

Four phases of displacement can be distinguished throughout the conflict,[69] each resulting from distinct stages of conflict dynamics. Both the Syrian regime government (SRG) forces and opposition militias have been responsible for displacement,[70] while the politicisation of aid has significantly impacted humanitarian operations.[71] The first phase of displacement resulted from the repressive actions of the SRG in response to anti-Assad and pro-democracy demonstrations. The following phase of displacement occurred as opposition groups began to take and control their own territories with Syrians fleeing government reprisals seeking refuge in these areas. These rebel-held territories however, soon elicited heavy handed, indiscriminate attacks from SRG forces,[72] and so once again many Syrians fled – this time often crossing the boundaries of their own governorates to safer areas. The final and most recent phase of displacement was triggered by the continual shifting of frontlines in the conflict between SRG-backed forces, opposition forces, forces of the Turkish occupation of Afrin[73] and extremist militias.[74] It is against this landscape of protracted and multiple displacements that two thirds of IDP households report being unable to meet the basic needs of all household members.[75]

[62] OCHA, (March 2021), Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syria, p6.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid, p32.
[65] Ibid, p14.
[66] Ibid, p32.
[67] OCHA, (March 2021), Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syria, p26.
[68] NRC, (March 2021), 'The Darkest Decade: what displaced Syrians face if the world continues to fail them', p9.
[69] Ibid, p8.
[70] IDMC / NRC, (21 October 2014), 'Syria: Forsaken IDPs Adrift Inside a Fragmenting State', p1.
[71] The SRG authorities have refused to allow the distribution of aid in opposition-held areas throughout much of the conflict to date. See: Ibid.
[72] Such attacks have been well documented, particularly by Syrian and international human rights groups. An example of reporting on such an indiscriminate attack against civilians is: Human Rights Watch, (30 July 2014), 'Syria: Barrage of Barrel Bombs', https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/07/30/syria-barrage-barrel-bombs
[73] Proctor R A, (15 September 2021 'Afrin's Syrian Kurds Continue to Pay Price of Turkey's Occupation', The Defense Post,), https://www.thedefensepost.com/2021/09/15/syrian-kurds-afrin/
[74] IDMC / NRC, (21 October 2014), 'Syria: Foresaken IDPs Adrift Inside a Fragmenting State', p8-9.
[75] OCHA, (March 2021), Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syria, p32.

5.2 Syrian Roma: Under-researched and Unrecognised

It is estimated that prior to 2011 and the start of the civil war, the Syrian Roma population numbered more than 300,000.[76] It should be noted that similarly to the Iraqi Roma, 'it is not possible to determine the exact size of the [Roma] population in Syria, as most members of the community tend to hide their identity due to fear of discrimination and because population statistics in Syria are not disaggregated by ethnicity.'[77] As Albarazai explained, when interacting with officials, Syrian Roma will often identity as Turkmen, Kurdish, or Arab in order to avoid discrimination.[78] The largest Syrian Roma communities have historically resided in Aleppo, Damascus, Latakia, Saraqib, Hama and Homs,[79] meaning that they have certainly experienced displacement. Indeed, Albarazi stated that Syria's Roma community has been displaced two or three times. She explained that their attempts to return to their places of origin are often frustrated by a combination of their lack of national identification documents, combined with the fact that prior to the conflict they often lived in informal settlements on squatted land, and therefore are often not recognised as having HLP rights.[80] Complicating matters, Yesim Yildiz reports that some Syrian Roma lived settled lives prior to the war, especially in Aleppo, whereas others settled for the winter only.[81] Until the increased securitisation of the Syrian border with Lebanon, many Syrian Roma frequently crossed the border between the two countries.[82]

Humanitarian reports on Syria have neglected the Roma. OCHA, in its 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Syria, warned that 'vulnerable, marginalised or socially excluded people and groups' are disproportionately affected by protection issues,[83] but the report stopped short of identifying such groups by name. In 2014, a joint report by the IDMC and NRC cautioned that 'in opposition areas, the rise of hundreds of extremist groups left very little space for minorities…who have been targeted on the basis of their identity.'[84] The report referred to Christians, Shiites, Druze and Yezidis in these areas as examples of minorities at risk, but again, no mention was made of the Roma. This is troubling due to the lack of research examining their positionality within conflict and displacement dynamics. Yildiz, for example, describes how Syrian Roma 'have been subject to decades-long discrimination and marginalisation due to their ethnic identity and lifestyle, both in Syria, and across the rest of the region.'[85] Supporting this

[76] Karabiyik E & Bayraktar S, (2016), 'Dom Migrants from Syria Living at the Bottom: On the Road Amid Poverty and Discrimination', p42; Yildiz Y Y, (2015), 'Nowhere to Turn: The Situation of Dom Refugees from Syria in Turkey', p13; and interview with Zahra Albarazi, conducted 5 August 2021.
[77] Yildiz Y Y, (2015), 'Nowhere to Turn: The Situation of Dom Refugees from Syria in Turkey', p13.
[78] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.
[79] Ibid, p16; and Karabiyik E & Bayraktar S, (2016), 'Dom Migrants from Syria Living at the Bottom: On the Road Amid Poverty and Discrimination', p42.
[80] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.
[81] Yildiz Y Y, (2015), 'Nowhere to Turn: The Situation of Dom Refugees from Syria in Turkey', p42.
[82] Interview with Thomas McGee, conducted 12 August 2021.
[83] OCHA, (March 2021), Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syria, p56.
[84] IDMC / NRC, (21 October 2014), 'Syria: Foresaken IDPs Adrift Inside a Fragmenting State', p9.
[85] Yildiz Y Y, (2015), 'Nowhere to Turn: The Situation of Dom Refugees from Syria in Turkey', p9.

observation, Kemal Tarlan observes that 'when the Syrian civil war began, [Roma] communities, which lived in the poor neighbourhoods of towns throughout the country, were already facing discrimination'.[86]

During interviews both Zahra Albarazi and Thomas McGee discussed the degree of prejudice Syrian Roma are subjected to. Much like the Iraqi Roma, the Syrian Roma are often not provided with national identification documents,[87] rendering them *de facto* stateless and unable to access humanitarian or governmental aid or assistance in many instances. Additionally, 'they are socially and economically stigmatised, with society [perceiving] them [to be] of a low social and moral status. [As a result, they have often] been subjected to hostility and open aggression',[88] thereby increasing their vulnerability when displaced. Albarazi explained that in her specialist field (statelessness), the Roma are consistently the most under-researched community. She stated, 'I don't think [Roma IDPs] are deliberately excluded by the humanitarian community, but something that is heard a lot in Syria is "they never had shoes to begin with, why would we get them shoes now?"' She continued on to explain 'There is a real [feeling] that "they weren't living a particularly good life anyway, so what's the difference if they're displaced". They're not considered to be a priority because their standard of living hasn't changed; this is problematic on all levels, but also not true. This is a common feeling, I think even among humanitarians, that "they were living in a tent before, and they're living in a tent now… what's the difference?"'.[89]

McGee, a humanitarian worker, consultant and researcher supported this theory, describing how 'there is a resistance to considering that these communities have been impacted by displacement. It's often believed that "they were moving already, so we can't consider somebody who has a non-fixed base as being displaced".[90] Additionally, McGee observed a lot of distrust of Roma by both public and officials due to their ability to speak multiple languages fluently. He explained 'This multilingual ability is something there is a lot of prejudice around, with perceptions of shape-shifting. There is an attitude of "they have their own language, but they know all of our languages, they can pretend to be Turkish if they go to Turkey, they can pretend to be Kurdish in a Kurdish community, they can be whatever they want – this is not ok"'.[91]

As has been discussed above, Syrian Roma will certainly represent a proportion of the internally displaced population, meaning significant reflection is required within the humanitarian community operating in Syria. The social and institutional discrimination the Roma face is resulting in a humanitarian protection gap which needs to be addressed, primarily through increased targeted research and subsequent targeted protection provision. In discussing whether

[86] Tarlan K, Middle East Gypsies website: Syria page, (updated 2015, accessed 13 July 2021), http://www.middleeastgypsies.com/syria/
[87] Interview with Zahra Albarazi, conducted 5 August 2021.
[88] Yildiz YY, (2015), 'Nowhere to Turn: The Situation of Dom Refugees from Syria in Turkey', p16.
[89] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.
[90] Interview conducted 12 August 2021.
[91] Ibid.

Syrian Roma IDPs receive adequate protection, Albarazi stated 'definitely not. They are excluded. The non-existence of their name in conversations about displaced people indicates this. We need more research on them, we need a greater understanding of them… The social stigma also doesn't help…. The [Roma] would be right at the bottom of the priority list for organisations working on HLP rights because [before the conflict] they were living in informal settlements anyway'.[92] A news article written in 2019 seems to support Albarazi's assertion, as speaking to a Syrian journalist, a Roma man in northern Syria complained that his camp near Raqqa was not provided with any humanitarian assistance, despite the non-Roma village nearby receiving support.[93]

McGee didn't paint quite such a bleak picture, though it was far from reassuring. He explained, 'I know for sure that sometimes [the Roma] are recipients of humanitarian assistance. I've spoken to families who have come forward and been registered in the catchment area. But it was inclusion without necessarily…. being documented. It very much depends on staff on the ground'.[94] Similarly, a humanitarian worker employed by an international NGO that operates in Syria stated that Roma IDPs receive very little or no assistance from Roma-specific programmes, but as they are IDPs, they will receive assistance through being part of a broader displaced population.[95] As was discussed in the section on Iraq above, this assumption that all IDPs will receive adequate protection on the basis of their IDP status alone may not prove true when those IDPs exist on the absolute periphery of society due to severe social and institutional marginalisation.

Mirroring the situation in Iraq, Albarazi observed that 'there are lots of less-formal, mostly religious-based charities [operating in Syria]. They tend to receive most of their funding from individual donors rather than [institutional] donors who require boxes to be ticked, so they are much more flexible with the way they spend their funding. Those are the organisations - I wouldn't necessarily call them organisations - but those are the people from which these [Roma] communities can access their humanitarian assistance and their aid. Often these [charities and] individuals are based within religious communities, or a mosque, or similar. I think there is an element of proselytising that drives this assistance to the [Roma]. Especially in the north. A lot of [Roma] live in rural areas of Aleppo, and this is where a lot of these organisations work as well'. Given the stigma attached to the Roma by society, alongside their extremely precarious existence, this omission of Syrian Roma from mainstream humanitarian provision makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse and radicalisation by such individuals and charities, who often operate

[92] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.
[93] Al-Khalil M, (9 December 2019), 'Gypsies in northern Syria retract in the decorated tents away from the war parties', North Press Agency, https://npasyria.com/en/blog.php?id_blog=1253&sub_blog=12&name_blog=Gypsies%20in%20northern%20Syria%20retract%20in%20the%20decorated%20tents%20away%20from%20the%20war%20parties
[94] Interview conducted 12 August 2021.
[95] WhatsApp message received from an NGO worker who wished to remain anonymous, 21 August 2021.

without oversight, driven by the compulsion to address what they perceive as Roma “immorality”.

5.3 Obstacles to Securing Protection for Syrian Roma IDPs

Much like the obstacles which are currently inhibiting adequate humanitarian protection for Roma IDPs in Iraq, a confluence of detrimental factors is also at play in Syria, aside from the severe levels of poverty, discrimination and marginalisation the Syrian Roma face. Syria is one of the most dangerous countries for aid workers[96] and so many international staff work remotely from Jordan and Turkey. There is recognition that Roma communities in Syria, as in Iraq, are insular and difficult to access. Albarazi explains that ‘access to them is a real issue - for obvious reasons their trust of organisations and people around them isn’t very high, and so without finding someone from their community, or who can act as a real focal point, that’s a problem. Figuring out access is a big thing’.[97] Likewise, McGee identifies how ‘among humanitarians, the biggest challenge, I would say is, that [the Roma] are a very difficult community to target. Especially in settings of internal displacement, and especially in places like Syria where a lot of the programming is remotely managed’.[98]

Compounding the difficulty of accessing Roma IDPs is the existing programmatic imperative for humanitarian workers to conform to pre-designed registration templates and mechanisms for implementation. This lack of flexibility immediately presents an obstacle when registering families and communities who engage in collective, or more fluid, approaches to parenting. Anecdotal evidence from McGee suggested that this might be the case for the Roma. McGee described a scenario whereby he and a colleague were conducting research among Syrian Roma refugees in Lebanon. The close-knit nature of the community resulted in demographic data defying the pre-ordained categorisation that they had initially intended to apply. In McGee’s words, ‘we visited one house; a corrugated iron house which didn’t feel very substantial. There were about nine men and about thirty young children. They’d agreed to be interviewed. When it came to taking basic demographic information, it didn’t fit the boxes that had worked perfectly well when we’d been interviewing the Bedouin earlier. We asked the size of the family, and the men responded ‘what do you mean?’, so we asked how many children each man had, and the response was ‘look around’. We pointed out nine men and thirty children. We asked the men, ‘for the purposes of our form how do we divide these children up?’ The men just didn’t. One guy was saying ‘ok this is definitely my child, I think this one is mine, this one I’ve adopted…For them, (I heard a lot about this from legal aid practitioners processing ID applications) there are huge [complications] around parentage. They’d be asked to do a DNA test, and it would be explained to them that the DNA test would give concrete proof of parentage. The parents would

[96] OCHA, (March 2021), Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syria, p11.
[97] Interview conducted 5 August 2021.
[98] Interview conducted 12 August 2021.

say 'yes, yes, that's fine' then the test would come back and not only is the claimed father not the father, but neither is the claimed mother.' This anecdote illustrates how unorthodox, but nevertheless functional family units may be discriminated against, because in certain instances these Roma IDPs would be perceived as too difficult, or time consuming, to register and include in humanitarian programmes. Such a response not only directly contributes to a protection gap for Roma IDPs, but it also reinforces harmful social stereotypes which paint the Roma of Iraq and Syria as 'other'.

6. Conclusions

As discussed during the introduction, this research is fundamentally exploratory, providing a first step towards greater exploration and analysis of the Roma IDP experience in Iraq and Syria. What seems to be obvious, however, is that given the degree of stigmatization and ostracization the Roma face, it is perhaps negligent to assume that they are automatically included as beneficiaries of humanitarian protection and assistance, simply through virtue of being displaced. Much greater attention is required for invisible and marginalised communities in conflict-affected areas.

A rights-based approach must be maintained at the forefront of all protection activities concerning displaced Roma. Key to sufficient implementation of such an approach will be increased earmarked-funding for research which specifically targets Roma IDPs, alongside subsequent Roma-specific humanitarian programming.[99] Such targeted programming is acutely necessary given the combination of marginalisation, difficulty of access, and unique community attributes which mean the Roma do not necessarily fit a template approach to protection. All efforts must be made to ensure that social and institutional discrimination against the Roma of Iraq and Syria is not inadvertently reinforced by the humanitarian community.

A contextualised approach to IDP protection is vital for the Roma community, not least in Iraq, where multiple phases of displacement prior to 2013 / 2014 are currently not included in the humanitarian protection cluster mandate. Humanitarian protection is required for all IDPs in Iraq, regardless of the length, or cause, of their displacement. There is evidently a network of researchers, academics and consultants whose work focuses on Iraq and Syria, and who are knowledgeable about the Roma of Iraq and Syria. The humanitarian community must seek out these individuals in order to initiate and facilitate an exchange of information which can be built upon in IDP protection-specific terms, in order to benefit both the Roma and other marginalised groups of IDPs.

[99] Zahra Albarazi voiced her support for such earmarked funding during our interview, conducted 5 August 2021.

Finally, it is well recognised that the Roma community of Iraq and Syria lived in conditions characterised by dire poverty, stigmatization and ostracization prior to each respective conflict. The goal should not be to return Roma IDPs to such environments, nor to restore the status quo. As Geraldine Chatelard points out, there is a need to shift the focus of the humanitarian lens from short term protection, 'to one that addresses the mid-to-long term needs of both protracted refugees and vulnerable host communities',[100] if sustainable durable solutions are to be achieved.

[100] Chatelard G, (2011) Iraqi Refugees and IDPs: From Humanitarian Intervention to Durable Solutions, cited in Asfour H, (2020), Internal Displacement in the Middle East: A Review of the Literature, Internal Displacement Research Programme, Working Paper No.4, p8.

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