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THE JUSTICE SECTOR AND CONFLICT:

THE CASE OF IRAQ'S DISPUTED TERRITORIES OF KIRKUK AND NINEVEH PLAINS

Researchers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of this study is to provide an empirical examination and analysis of how the disputed status of Kirkuk and Ninewa Plains (Hamdaniya and Tel Keif) impacts the function of the justice sector, specifically the courts and police. It also provides a detailed and evidence-based analysis of the community's experiences and interactions with the justice system in Iraq's disputed territories. Finally, this study also aims to provide practical policy recommendations to enhance human rights standards and the rule of law in Iraq's most diverse and disputed territories. Disputed territories in Iraq include the Kirkuk governorate and the other 13 districts and three subdistricts in Ninewa, Diyala, and Salahaddin.

The impact of the disputed territories on the justice sector has not received enough attention in the existing literature. Such analysis has the potential to contribute to the work of various stakeholders, including local and international non-governmental organizations and local government authorities. This research utilized a mixed methods approach, including a survey (320 questionnaires), 48 key informant interviews, and five focus group discussions with representatives from different backgrounds, areas, and ethno-religious communities in Kirkuk, Hamdaniya, and Tel Keif, conducted from August to October 2021. The report's key recommendation is that protecting the justice institutions, specifically the police and courts, is fundamental to peacebuilding and community cohesion in these regions. Rebuilding core functions within the justice sector helps to restore professional, credible, accountable, and inclusive justice sector institutions, such as courts, prosecutors, and police officers and personnel.

In these disputed territories, the management and security situation is fragile due to the administrative vacuum and confusion over their dual alliance to two governments: the Federal Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Unclear and contested management of disputed territories' justice sector is not only a concern for individuals residing in these areas but is also a significant barrier to community cohesion and peacebuilding in this part of the country.

The disputed territories between the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the GoI cause tension and competition for control, constraining the implementation of courts' decisions or police warrants. Administration in these regions has long been complex and reflective of shifting tensions and dynamics between Baghdad and Erbil. In the absence of a mutually agreeable formula for managing the administration, including the justice sector, of these territories, competition between the two governments has taken precedence over law enforcement and, importantly, the well-being of the people living in these areas. Current administrative and governance structures have proven weak in the implementation of existing legal protections and in the enforcement of more equitable laws. Adding to this complexity is the fact that since 2003, new powers, with contradicting interests in the disputed territories, have emerged in Kirkuk, Ninewa Plains, and other disputed districts. This complex variety of powers and political interests further constrains the independence and work of the justice sector institutions.

In particular, this report presents the following major findings:

- 1- The dispute between Erbil and Baghdad over Kirkuk and areas in Ninewa governorate has created a security vacuum, the dissolution of local social contracts, and community erosion.
- 2- The conflict in Kirkuk, Hamdaniya, and Tel Keif is political, but the findings of this report also show that it has a significant negative impact on the very function of the justice sector's institutions. In addition, the disagreement over the ultimate administration and governance of the disputed territories, as well as discrimination and exclusionary practices in this sector, will seep into the communities.
- 3- In disputed territories, people have to engage with various, often competing, authorities when pursuing daily paperwork, reporting to the police and courts, and crossing checkpoints, moving within and between districts. For example, four years after recapturing these territories from the so-called Islamic State (IS), in a 10–15-minute drive, one may pass through several checkpoints, each imposing its own restrictions on local communities, experiencing subtle or, at times, overt discrimination. The restriction of movement and the associated discrimination negatively impact local communities and law enforcement.

4- The disputed status of Kirkuk, Hamdaniya, and Tel Keif render the relationship between Erbil and Baghdad central to local politics and the function of the justice sector. Conflicts between the two governments challenge the local authorities' ability to collaborate with either government. The communities therein are also divided in terms of their support for one side.

This report will firstly provide an introduction to the topic at hand, and outline the methodology and data collection methods used to develop this research. Section two then summarizes the existing knowledge and studies on the disputed territories. The following sections are dedicated to a thematic discussion of perceptions of the justice sector, women and the justice sector, and trust in the judiciary institutions in Kirkuk, Hamdaniya, and Tel Keif.

INTRODUCTION

Iraq is characterized by complex and dynamic problems between and within its diverse communities. One of the most complicated matters is the dispute over the status and administration of several cities and districts, including the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, Ninewa Plains. Each of the 14 districts that comprise the disputed regions, spread over four governorates (Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salahaddin, and Diyala), has a unique mix of people, identities, and geopolitical issues, all of which are exacerbated by competing actors and inter-communal rivalry (International Crisis Group, 2018). Eighteen years since the regime change in Iraq, and 16 since the adoption of the permanent Constitution in 2005 and further political agreements between the Federal Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the dispute over these territories remains unresolved. The dispute between Baghdad and KRG over territories dates back to the constitution-drafting process initiated following the 2003 US invasion and subsequent fall of Saddam Hussein's regime (Palani, 2021). The constitution outlined the borders of the autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)¹ but left the status of the province of Kirkuk and other districts unresolved. Referendums to decide on the fate of these disputed territories were never carried out.

Existing research on Iraq's disputed territories has heavily focused on politics, security, and conflicts within these regions. For example, Morris et al. (2015) outline different scenarios to resolve the conflict and political future of Kirkuk. Similarly, Wolff (2010) and Meier (2020) focus on the process of settling the status of Kirkuk, principally within the framework of the current Iraqi constitution of 2005 and the 2009 proposals of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). Wolff and Meier primarily consider the broader local, national, regional, and international context in which such a settlement has to be achieved. Skelton and Saleem (2019) explain how the conflict in these territories transformed from a conflict between two governments to a multi-sided competition between rival military and political groups after 2017. Van Zoonen and Wirya (2017a, 2017b, 2017c, and 2017d) detail how the disputed status of Ninewa Plains and Sinjar influenced ethno-religious communities' perceptions of conflict and peace after 2014.

1- KRI is an autonomous region that emerged in northern Iraq after the Kurdistan uprising against the Iraqi Ba'ath regime in 1991, resulting in the institution of a No-Fly Zone over the region. Since then, the KRI has developed many state-like competences, such as the control of its own security forces, to management of natural resources and border control, which have laid the foundations for its consideration as a state within a state or a de facto state (see Palani, 2019).

Recently, studies have also focused on the peacebuilding in these disputed areas. O'Driscoll (2019) provides a detailed analysis of local dynamics of peace and conflict in Kirkuk, examining opportunities and providing recommendations for peacebuilders to target interventions on the grassroots level. Shanks (2013) examines the evolution of the education system post 2003 and presents the impact of amplified ethno-politics on the reconstruction of education in Iraq. Shanks explores the significance of cultural reproduction and the link between demands for ethnically specific education, societal security, and the wider political contestation over the territory.

There is, however, a lack of in-depth analysis of how political, security, and administrative conflicts and tensions in these regions influence and constrain the rule of law, specifically in the justice sector. In this report, when discussing the justice sector, we refer to two key institutions: the courts and police. From 2003 onwards, many of the disputed territories have witnessed changes in territorial and administrative control between conflicting parties. For example, the Hamdaniya district in Ninewa Plains was under the joint control and influence of the GoI and KRG's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) from 2003 to 2014. The district was then occupied by IS after 2014, and during the retaking of these territories from IS, the district was administered and controlled periodically by the KDP. Since October 2017, after the withdrawal of the Peshmerga forces in these territories, there has been a new security and administrative condition and setting, in which groups loyal to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF)² have significant influence and presence in the district. Such a setting is not unique to Hamdaniya and can be found across disputed territories. With each change of power and administration the rule of law, specifically the justice sector, is significantly influenced and altered which ultimately impacts the lives of citizens.

According to the Constitution of Iraq (2005), the judiciary should be independent, and citizens should be treated fairly in judicial and administrative processes under Article 19, sections 1 and 6. Human rights-compliant justice would develop confidence among all Iraqi communities, who share a desire to hold the perpetrators of crimes accountable. Until this is achieved, the foundations for Iraq's long-term peace cannot

2 With the expansion of IS into Iraqi territory in 2014 and the fatwa to initiate a popular mobilization issued by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the highest religious authority among Iraqi Shia, these armed groups became part of the PMF. The loyalties of PMF armed groups are divided along sectarian, political and regional lines. Iran-aligned militias within the PMF arrived in the disputed areas of Kirkuk and Nineveh in October 2017, after they, along with regular Iraqi forces, attacked the Kurdish Peshmerga in the aftermath of Kurdistan's independence referendum. In Hamdaniya and Tel Keif, for example, Iran-aligned PMF established the 30th Brigade, dominated by members of the Shabak community, an ethnic and religious minority.

be built (UNAMI, 2020). Tensions are heightened when law enforcement and the security services are seen as partial, supporting one side of the dispute or resorting to severe measures to preserve the status quo, particularly when violence breaks out between different communities. The weakening of trust between legal and criminal justice institutions, as well as between certain segments of the population and law enforcement, is becoming more commonplace. Those who are trying to discredit the state and its forces may use this to their advantage by creating narratives and experiences of complaints and repression (White, 2018). Iraq's poor rule of law and high risk of war recurrence make public mistrust in state security forces a key policy problem and impediment to long-term peacebuilding in the country (Salloum, 2020). There is an increased risk of instability and injustice in conflict-affected areas for underrepresented, disadvantaged, and marginalized communities. The quality and parameters of community involvement are typically determined by the practice of governance and the connection between government security and justice actors and the community. Communities and justice and security sector practitioners do not hold sole responsibility for identifying and implementing solutions to crime and violence (White, 2018).

This research focuses on rule of law interventions, which have significant implications and relevance for other interventions, such as human rights, accountability, and community cohesion. The locations of Kirkuk and Ninewa Plains (Hamdaniya and Tel Keif) were selected for this research because they represent a diverse population, which is representative of many communities across Iraq. In addition, there is a complex security and political landscape in these locations, with significant implications for the rule of law and the justice sector. The main objectives of the study are to provide an empirical examination and analysis of how the disputed status of Kirkuk and Ninewa Plains impacts the function of the justice sector, specifically, the courts and police. It also provides a detailed, comprehensive, and evidence-based analysis of the function of the justice system in Iraq's disputed territories of Kirkuk and Ninewa Plains. Finally, this study provides practical policy recommendations to enhance human rights standards and the rule of law in Iraq's most diverse and disputed territories.

KIRKUK

Discrimination, in my opinion, does not start with a court; rather, it relates to the imposition of external force on a court. What we are seeing today is that no matter how qualified judges and court members are, militia forces put their will on the courts. [A local community leader, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

Kirkuk has been an integral aspect of the ongoing conflict between Baghdad and the Kurdish movements since the establishment of the modern Iraqi state in 1921. The Constitution of Iraq (2005) stipulates that a referendum on Kirkuk's future should have been conducted by the end of 2007. However, the GoI never showed willingness to implement Article 140, designed to address the disputed territories, fearing the return of Kirkuk to the KRI. Kirkuk's position as one of Iraq's major towns and its former oil capital is now contested between those seeking to include it in the autonomous Kurdistan region in the country's northeast and others determined to retain the status quo. Its multiethnic and multilingual population has historically included ethnic Kurds, Turkmens, Arabs, and, in lesser numbers, Chaldo-Assyrian Christians (Bet-Shlimon, 2012). Kirkuk is the center for the nationalist conflict between Kurds, Turkmens, and Arabs (Hanish, 2010). The Kirkuk conflict is best understood in terms of three major narratives, each of which is strongly connected to ethnic identity. According to the Kurds, who are the majority in the province, Kirkuk is legitimately a part of Kurdistan or "the Jerusalem of Kurdistan." Turkmens believe that Kirkuk is historically a Turkmen city and must retain that designation. The Arab narrative maintains that Kirkuk is first and foremost an Iraqi city and so must keep its Iraqi character (Bet-Shlimon, 2012).

To shift northern Iraq's demographics toward Arab predominance, the Ba'athist government implemented measures in the 1960s and 1970s that resulted in the forced relocation and cultural Arabization of the Kurdish community and population. Since the mid-1970s, the Ba'ath Party systematically pursued a violent removal of groups, including the burning of hundreds of Kurdish villages and the deportation of thousands of Kurds. On the pretext of protecting the oil wells, the system expelled the Kurdish population from Kirkuk, Khankin, Mandali, Makhmour, Sinjar, and Zamar and established Arab settlements in these villages.

On January 29 1976, the Republican Decree No. 41 was published, changing the name of Kirkuk governorate to Tameem province. Approximately 460–470 decisions were

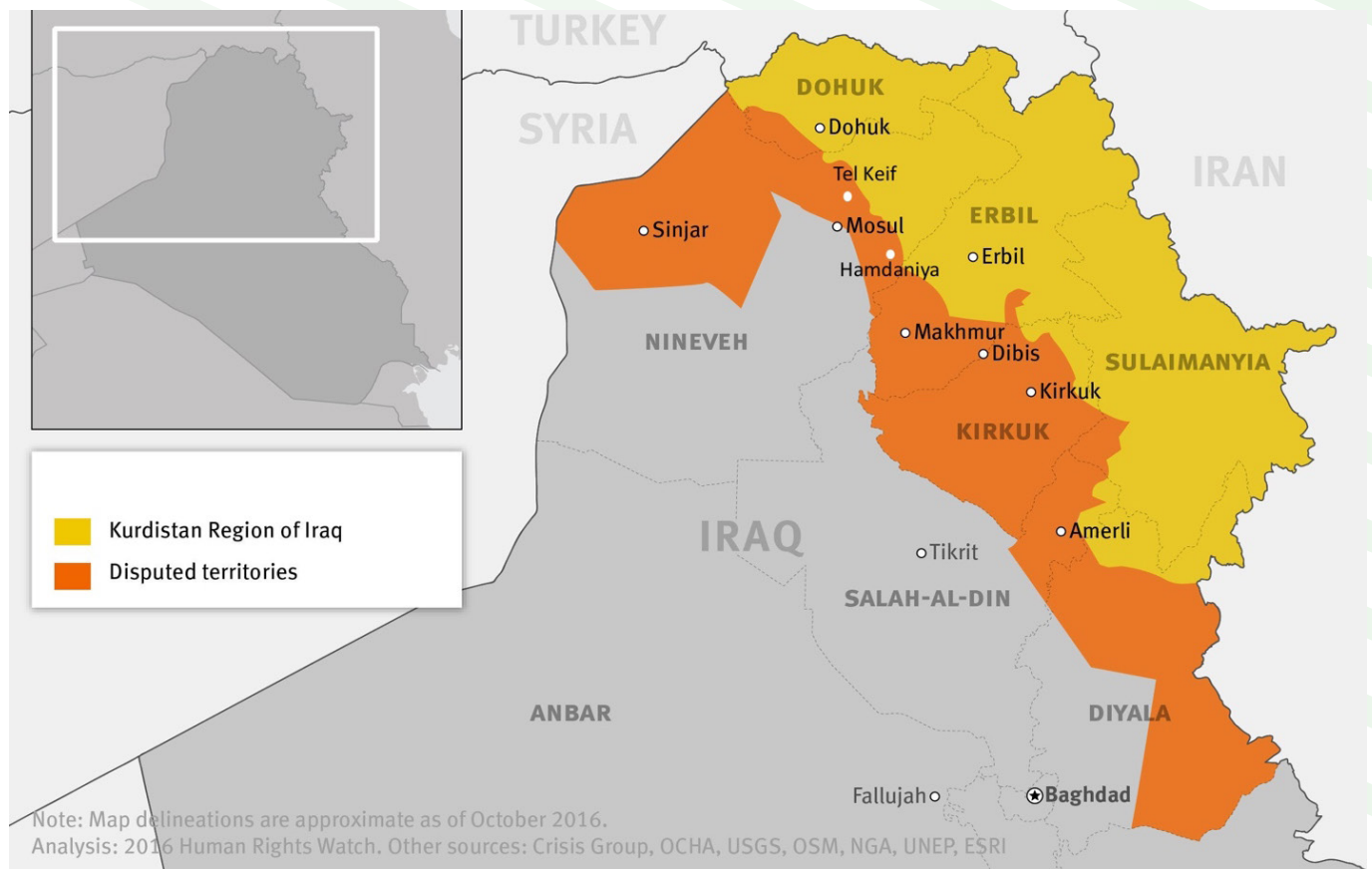
made concerning Kirkuk by the Ba'ath Party's Committee of Revolutionary Leadership via the Committee of Social Affairs. Only 20% of these laws have been repealed by the Kurds in the previous 14 years. For example, in February 2007, Decision 4 suggested the revocation of all agricultural contracts completed under the program of demographic transformation (Arabization) in Kirkuk (Abdullah, 2018). The situation in Kirkuk has never been satisfactory to its residents. According to the International Crisis Group (2020), Kurds, Turkmen, and even some Arabs have raised allegations of administrative discrimination, accusing the acting governor of serving the interests of his own family and tribe.

When Kurdish representatives left or were otherwise unavailable, the acting governor authorized Arab equivalents to fill their positions. Economic discrimination claims have proliferated as well. The governorate has prioritized Arab contractors when allocating federal and international rehabilitation funds. The interim governor has ordered to forcibly leave of many Kurdish families staying in government-owned housing in Kirkuk's Arrafa neighborhood, on the pretext of the previous administration brought them into the city, this implies that they were not indigenous to Kirkuk.

Following Saddam Hussein's ousting in 2003, Kurdish parties maintained near-total political and security authority over the disputed regions, including Kirkuk, for 14 years. In October 2017, Kirkuk saw a series of shifts in control. Baghdad entered the disputed territories in October 2017 with the Iraqi army, counter-terrorism forces, federal police, and PMF and engaged in violent confrontations with the Kurdish security forces from 15 to October 21 2017, reclaiming control of the majority of Kirkuk governorate. During Iraq's recapture of the disputed areas from the KRG in October 2017, PMF and Iraqi Security Forces troops attacked members of the Peshmerga and Asayish (Kurdish security forces) from the disputed territories (EASO, 2019). The federal government's return to Kirkuk significantly altered daily security operations and hindered possibilities to address long-standing difficulties.

Although community disputes in Kirkuk are primarily political, tensions often cross over to the civilian population. This is not a Kirkuk-specific issue; partisanship and corruption afflict all of Iraq's security organizations, which provide protection on a case-by-case basis, if at all. However, in the instance of Kirkuk, where an unsettled status fosters ethnic rivalry, an environment in which numerous military units operate under ambiguous mandates exacerbates existing tensions and hampers security cooperation. Additionally, rivalry for territory and control of diverse resources among

armed players may result in conflict (International Crisis Group, 2020). Different security units are stationed outside the city, but they are free to enter at will. After taking over as the dominant security force, PMF has used its status to fill nearly every government position that was left vacant after the departure of Kurdish leaders, mostly with Shiite Turkmen. It also has complete authority over the highways throughout the governorate and charges fines at checkpoints (International Crisis Group, 2018). Today, the Iraqi state’s primary concern is the expansion of Iranian-aligned forces under the PMF’s umbrella. It has armed forces, a legal system, and an autonomous economy and has started actively confronting the Iraqi state and its institutions via clashes between state and non-state actors (Al Jbour, 2021). The public’s safety is at risk as a result of this security configuration for three primary reasons. With military units remaining two years after major anti-IS operations ended, an environment has been established in which forces compete rather than cooperate with one another. These forces are mainly Arab and Shiite in a governorate that is ethnically mixed and predominantly Sunni across ethnic groups, which has exacerbated tensions, and the multiple groups of forces without an overarching command structure and coordination have allegedly allowed their members to participate in very lucrative criminal activities that weaken security even more (International Crisis Group, 2020).



HAMDANIYA AND TEL KEIF

When there is a problem between Baghdad and Erbil, the whole justice sector cannot function. Sometimes, relations with a third country are easier than relations between the GoI and the KRG with regards to justice procedures. [A local government official, FGD, Mosul, Tel Kief, September, 2021]

Ninewa Plains, situated on the banks of the Tigris River, is home to a varied range of religious and ethnic groups, including Sunni and Shia Muslims of Arab, Shabak, Turkmen, and Kurdish ancestry, as well as Yazidis, Christians, and Kakai. It is a culturally rich area of Iraq, owing to its multi-faith inhabitants. In the plains, Tel Keif and Hamdaniya are the most important areas. Tel Keif has three subdistricts: Wana, Fayda, and Alqosh. Each has its own respective administrations, security, and demographic makeup. While Fayda and Alqosh are under the control of the KRG, the remainder of the district is under the control of the GoI and PMF. The district is therefore disputed between the KRG and the GoI. Prior to 2014, the district's town center was under the control of the Peshmerga and Asayish, but after October 2017, the Peshmerga moved to Talasqof and Alqosh. Security forces in Tel Keif are not unified, which local authorities and local civil society organizations consider to be a great concern. This not only creates a problem for the function of the justice sector but is also the central barrier to the stabilization of the region and return of people, particularly among Christian components of Batnaya town, who have yet to return.

Similar security and administrative settings are in place in the district of Hamdaniya, which is a disputed region between Baghdad and the KRG. The district is divided into four subdistricts: Khabat, Bartella, al-Namrud, and Qaraqosh. The latter is the location of the largest Christian city. Similar to Tel Kief, each subdistrict in Hamdaniya has its own respective security and demographic makeup. The Hamdaniya district is home to many minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, Kaka'is, Turkmen, and Shabaks. Across subdistricts and towns, there is competition between different forces and administrations. For example, in Bashiqa, the Peshmerga forces safeguard less than half of the villages, while the majority remains under a group affiliated with the Shabak component (Brigade 30) of the PMF. Local authorities struggle to coordinate and navigate between factions and wish to see a unified effort between Erbil and Baghdad. There is well-established literature on the impact of the disputed status of Ninewa Plains (including Hamdaniya and Tel Keif) on communal tensions and peace within

and among the communities (see, for example, Van Zoonen and Wirya 2017a, 2017b, 2017c; Wirya & Fawaz, 2017). Additionally, with the arrival of IS in Ninewa, including the Ninewa Plains, in summer 2014 and the displacement of this region's population, the focus of research on this region and its people has shifted to include, among other issues and sectors, post-IS reconstruction, recovery, stabilization, reconciliation, transitional justice, compensation and documentation, housing, land and property disputes, and internally displaced persons' (IDP's) return (for example, see Gaston, 2017; Middle East Research Institute [MERI], 2020a and 2020b; Salloum, 2020; Siddiqui & Guiu, 2021; United States Institute of Peace [USIP], 2020; Social Inquiry, 2020).

Van Zoonen and Wirya (2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d) provide a comprehensive empirical explanation of how the disputed status of Ninewa Plains and Sinjar has influenced ethno-religious communities' perceptions of conflict and peace after 2014.

Social Inquiry and USIP's (2021) exceptional research examines community perceptions of the legal sector in Hamdaniya, Telafar, and Sinjar. The study measures issues of trust with the local police, the influence of different stakeholders on the legal and civilian administration, access to the legal system, and whether people utilize the police to resolve their issues and disputes. To measure this, Social Inquiry and USIP (2021) developed a set of 92 indicators to monitor conflict and stabilization across five inter-linked vectors: governance, reconciliation and justice, social cohesion and well-being, the rule of law, and safety and security. These indicators are specifically designed for ethno-religiously diverse communities, with data collection occurring over multiple rounds.

While Social Inquiry and USIP's research provides an up-to-date empirical examination and assessment of people's perceptions of the legal system in Hamdaniya, it does not address how the disputes between KRG and Baghdad factor in the functioning (or dysfunction) of the legal system and justice sector in the region. In addition, it only covers Hamdaniya and excludes the district of Tel Keif, although Tel Keif has a different context and power dynamics.

METHODOLOGY

This research took place in Kirkuk governorate, as well as in Hamdaniya and Tel Keif districts in Ninewa Plains. These areas were selected because they are some of the most controversial disputed areas and have been governed by both the KRG and central government. As this study is concerned with understanding the reality of the justice sector in the disputed areas, it uses both quantitative and qualitative data. This methodology was selected because mixed methods research draws on the potential strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The study also adopts a descriptive research design, which is useful, as it helps to obtain information that describes the existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, and values. It is also suitable for researchers whose previous literature is limited.

Our field study team included six data collectors and a research assistant in the Kirkuk governorate and Ninewa Plains. They were split into two teams, each comprising male and female members to guarantee equal gender representation in the research sample.

The study adopted a questionnaire and interview guide as instruments for data collection in a joint quantitative and qualitative approach. Information was gathered from 320 people in disputed areas using the survey questionnaire (Appendix A), 48 individuals were interviewed, and five focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted using the interview guide (Appendix B). Due to the different methods of data collection, we employed both purposive and probable sample strategy. The purposive sample consisted of all key informants (KIs), such as judges, police officers, community leaders, and activists, who were interviewed and participated in the FGDs, and the probable sample was made up of 320 citizens who were randomly selected from different components in the targeted population in the disputed areas. Half of the citizens selected were from Kirkuk governorate and the remaining half from Ninewa Plains. Throughout the data collection process, researchers strove to ensure that there was an equal number of male and female respondents. The categories of those who participated in the study were carefully determined because the prominent actors in this sector are in a sensitive position; therefore, the way of communicating and reaching out to the participants was considered for the sake of obtaining original information.

We employed a questionnaire to measure respondents' perceptions of and experience with the justice sector. A questionnaire was selected, as it is a reliable and quick method to collect information from multiple respondents in an efficient and timely manner. This is particularly important in large projects with several complex objectives (Bell, 2005). We asked respondents who had experience with the justice sector over the past year to complete the questionnaire; these individuals were ordinary citizens and had transactions in this sector for various operations. The questionnaire consisted of 25 closed questions, including six demographic questions that reflected the experiences and perceptions of the sample of the disputed area toward this sector. Structured interviews were administered to complete the questionnaire to standardize how the questions were asked and recorded.

To provide a full picture of the implications of disputed territories and the justice sector, we also decided to explore the perspectives judges, lawyers, investigators, community leaders, activists, and officials. Interviews and FGDs, in addition to as qualitative methods were employed for these respondents. Interviews were selected, as they provided the opportunity for more in-depth, open discussions and informal, free interactions between the interviewer and interviewees (Sarantakos, 2013). FGDs were used to gain an in-depth understanding of issues from a chosen group of individuals from the aforementioned categories. In each FGD, there were eight to ten participants who were selected through local networks and contacts. One FGD in each province was devoted only to women to enable them to speak about their own concerns about this area rather than just discussing the broader issues.

The researchers combined quantitative and qualitative approaches when analyzing the collected data. The information gathered was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques to interpret the perspectives of the respondents. Because there are connections between the questions used in each method, we were able to connect and compare the various types of information gathered. To begin, we created some simple tables from the quantitative data to present the results; these were then matched with the codes and themes identified in the qualitative data.

Ethical consideration is a crucial aspect and has been regarded in this study, as the field team ensured that all respondents participated voluntarily, and the information collected will remain confidential. The field team described the study's goal to participants clearly and assured them that their identities would remain anonymous

and that their participation would not jeopardize their safety. Female participants received additional guarantees due to the sensitivity of their position in certain locations. With the exception of focus groups, interviews and questionnaires were performed individually to build participants' confidence. This research encompassed numerous limitations:

- Some participants were reluctant to record the audio because they were frightened to speak about political problems for fear of jeopardizing their region's stability;
- Government and military organizations had instructed some participants not to express their perspective frankly;
- The Court of Appeal's president banned judges from making remarks to any other party without the president's consent and with explicit constraints;
- Moving between different areas is difficult due to the numerous checkpoints and multiple controls;
- With the lack of trust and caution that prevails in these regions, some of the respondents wanted to answer properly, but could not tell the facts.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following table summarizes the demographic characteristics of the survey sample. We attempted to strike a balance between diverse groups that represent the society in which this study was conducted as much as possible. As noted in the methodological section, the individuals included in the sample are citizens of the areas covered by this study. Due to the lack of reliable and official demographic data, the sample was built based on estimates and references to previous research. The collected data from the three areas has been aggregated, as there was little distinction between the locations.

This research aims to ensure that its findings reflect the varied experiences of different sectors of the population. For example, close to 40% of participants were female, in order to reflect demographics and assess their perceptions on the justice sector. Furthermore, young people account for the majority of the study's sample. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Planning, the youth comprise more than half of Iraq's population; therefore, over half of the participants (54.23%) are

between the ages of 26 and 35. Additionally, data demonstrates that young people engage in more transactions in the justice sector and have visited judicial institutions in the last year. In terms of education, the majority of people included in the sample (62.69%) have two-year diplomas and bachelor's degrees. This is due to a considerable growth in the number of people who hold certifications, and for the purposes of this study, this group is better equipped to communicate their ideas. As with other variables, where associations are made with economic level, identity, and occupation, we have attempted to maintain a balance that is appropriate with the inhabitants' composition.

Demographic Characteristics			
1	Age	Number	Percentage
	25-18	50	15.67
	35-26	173	54.23
	50-36	76	23.82
	+ 50	20	6.27
2	Gender		
	Male	186	58.31
	Female	126	39.50
	I prefer not to say	7	2.19
3	Educational level		
	Illiterate	12	3.76
	(Primary education (literate	35	10.97
	Secondary education	60	18.81
	Two-year diploma	61	19.12
	Bachelor's degree	139	43.57
	(Higher education (master's and above	12	3.76
4	Income level		
	Very low income (less than 80,000 dinars per month per (person	46	14.42
	Low income (less than 110 thousand dinars per month (per person	60	18.81
	Middle income (between 110 thousand dinars and 200 (thousand dinars per month per person	85	26.65
	High income (more than 200 thousand dinars per month (per person	128	40.13
5	National or religious affiliation		
	Kaka'i	25	7.84
	Shabak	23	7.21

	Sunni Arab	62	19.44
	Shiite Arab	10	3.13
	Kurdish	78	24.45
	Sunni Turkman	22	6.90
	Shiite Turkman	10	3.13
	Christian	51	15.99
	Yazidis	10	3.13
	Prefer not to say	28	8.78
6	Current employment status		
	Employed in the government sector	96	30.09
	Employed in the private sector	63	19.75
	Independent business owner	87	27.27
	Housekeeper	33	10.34
	Retired	10	3.13
	Student	30	9.40
26	Location		
	Hamdaniya	78	24.45
	Tel Keif	82	25.71
	Kirkuk	159	49.84

THE DISPUTED STATUS AND JUSTICE SECTOR

I am the Mayor and still sometimes I cannot travel within my district. Imagine how the situation is for ordinary people. [A local government official, September, 2021]

The sentiment that the disputed status of Hamdaniya, Tel Keif, and Kirkuk affects the justice sector, courts, and police stations was widely shared in FGDs and key informant interviews (KIIs). Respondents were asked whether the disputed status of their city impacted the justice sector. In response, 90% of the participants answered “yes,” while only 7% responded “no” (Figure 1). Respondents also reported feeling and experiencing the conflict between the GoI and the KRG over the administrative and territorial control of these regions daily. The data also demonstrated that 84% of the survey respondents believed that there was a conflict between the two governments, while only 9% said that there was no conflict.

My transaction either stops in the central government departments or in the departments of the KRG. I can't belong to both parties. Both of them obstructed my transactions, and I remained without identification papers. [A Kaka'i informant, September, 2021]

Indeed, what you are seeing today between Erbil and Baghdad is a horrible policy that has a negative impact on ordinary people in our city; it causes me to despise a neighbor of another ethnic group, which is not acceptable to humanity. Now, I believe that a large proportion of the Kirkuk population is like that. Regrettably, why is this? It is a result of political and economic competitions between Arabs and Kurds. Allow me to state so since the subject compelled me to declare Kurds and Arabs! This is a conflict between national and sectarian warring factions. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

A city like Kirkuk is a multi-ethnic one, and the citizens of this city have a certain amount of empathy for their people and their country, so when it comes to legal processes against a person from the same nation, he or she is unable to do so. Since nationhood is more vital than law, why did it exist? Because of the warfare in this city. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

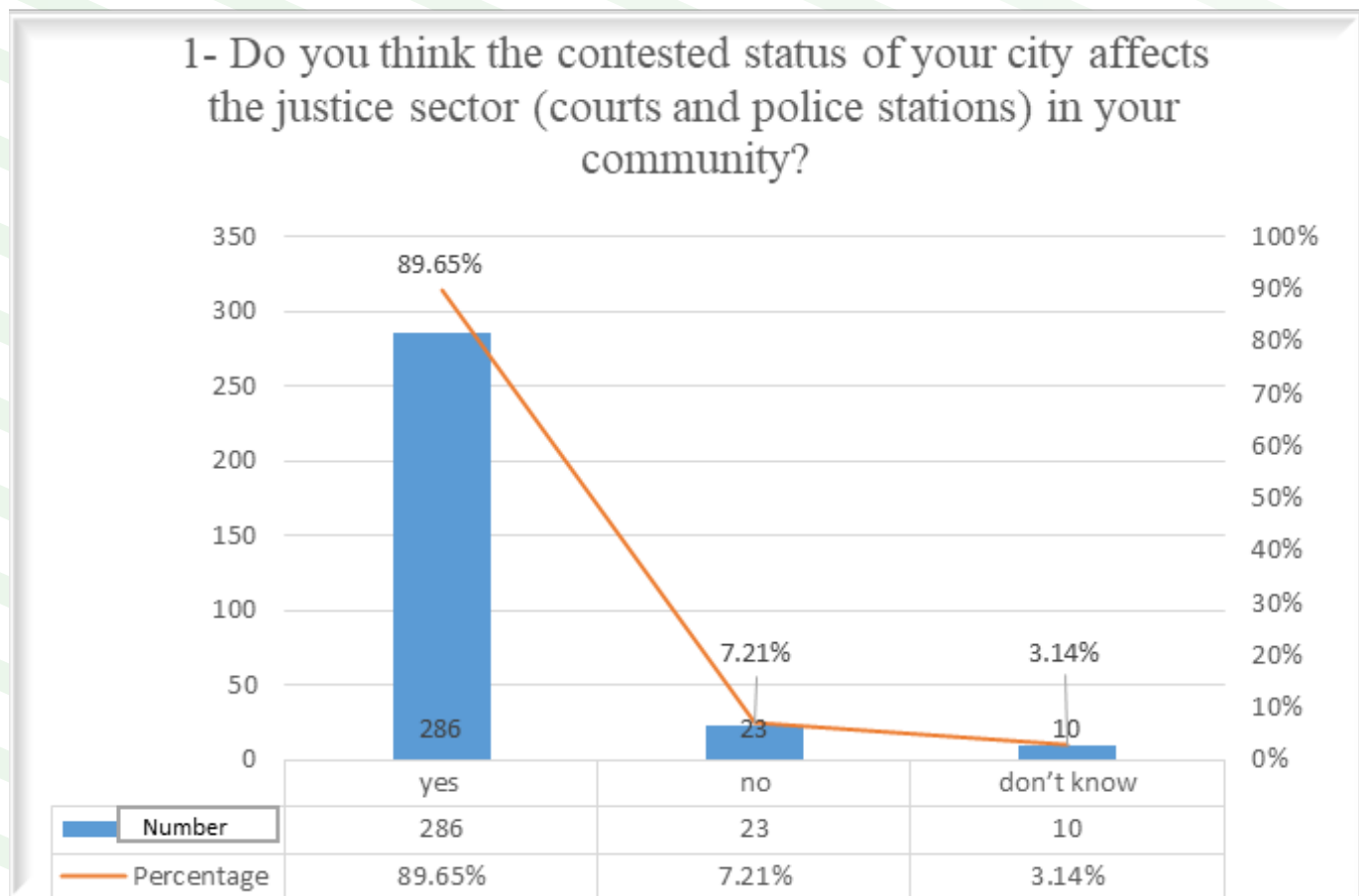
This dispute is seen as being between two dominant ethnic groups: Arabs and Kurds. This negatively impacts the many ethno-religious communities living in the disputed Ninewa Plains and exacerbates discriminatory practices. Respondents were asked, “is there discrimination in the justice sector based on ethnic and religious identity?” In response, 62% (197 respondents) replied “yes,” while only 28% (90 respondents) said “no” (Figure 3).

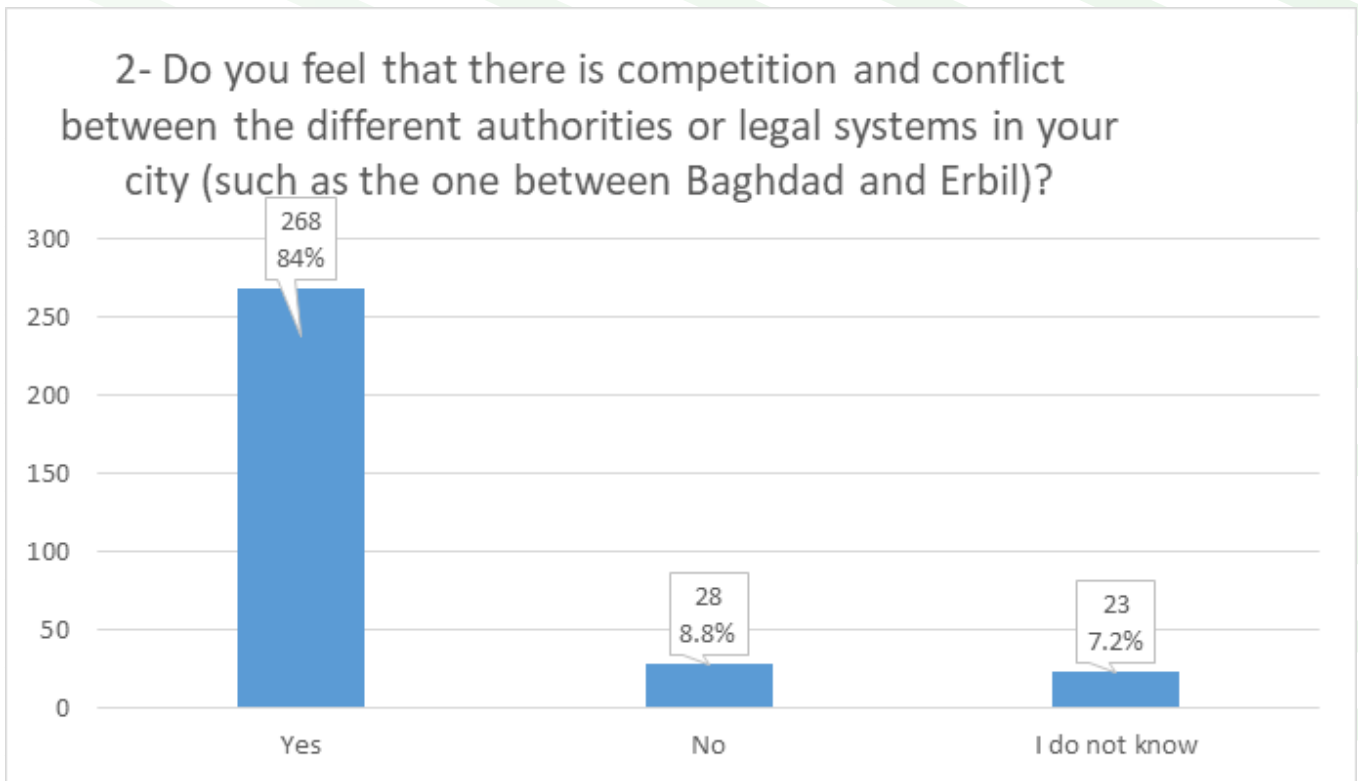
In addition, respondents were asked whether the law is implemented and enforced equally; 45% (142 respondents) “agreed” with the statement, 18% (58 respondents) “strongly agreed” (Figure 4), and only 10% (3 respondents) stated that they “disagreed.” However, 25% (81 respondents) responded “neutral.” A possible explanation to this is that some people experience the equal enforcement of laws on certain issues but discrimination in other areas. Similarly, there are different experiences and behaviors in different justice institutions. This demonstrates that respondents believe that the law is not equally implemented, and law enforcement differentiates between different communities. This was emphasized by two KIs in Kirkuk:

Kirkuk's multiethnic population makes it impossible to apply the law fairly. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August 2021]

The laws cannot be executed equally since they don't apply to politicians or people in positions of authority. [A female KI, in person, Kirkuk, September 2021]

According to the majority of the respondents (77%, 246 participants), this discrimination and differential treatment will lead to societal tensions among and between communities (Figure 5). Only 4% (9 respondents) responded that this will not increase societal tensions.



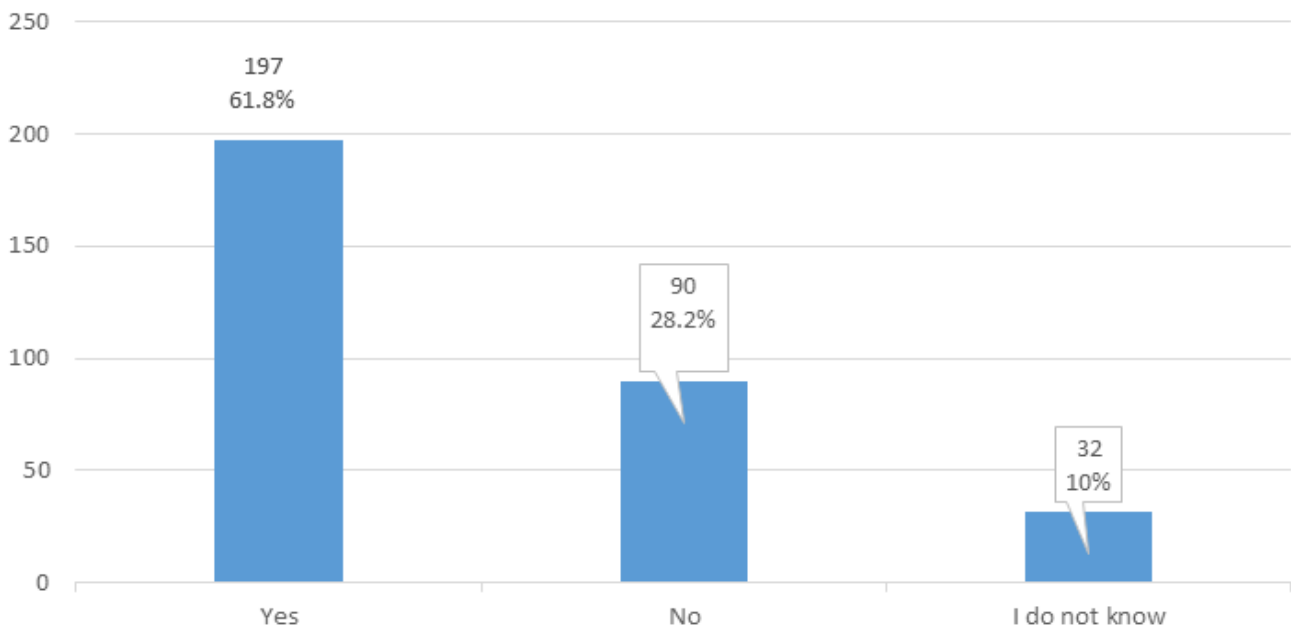


According to people who work in the justice system, a distinction should be made between the judiciary and the executive authorities. Most of the court employees interviewed noted that the court had maintained its independence from external interference. These respondents reported that decisions were made fairly and independently. Nevertheless, these decisions were not necessarily implemented equally.

You must establish a distinction between the judiciary and the executive. I have no idea what is happening in the police station. Occasionally, we heard that the legislation is not being followed in certain areas, and we have taken legal action against those responsible. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

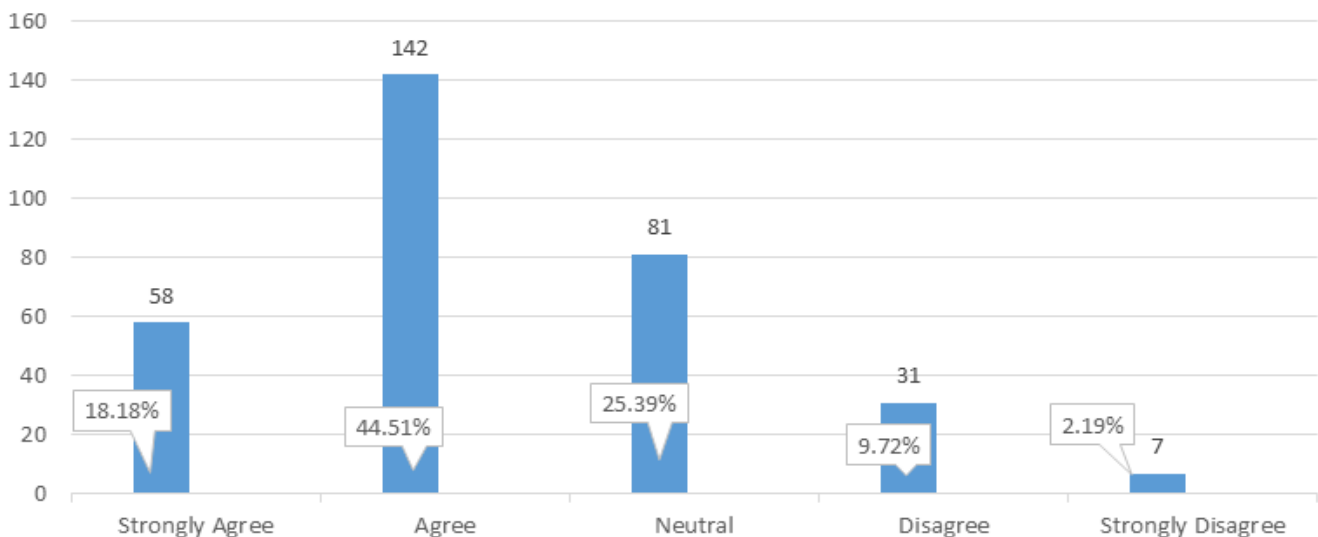
Although there are ethnic and religious conflicts in Kirkuk between the various components, these conflicts haven't permeated into the courts and haven't impacted on the judiciary. Regarding police stations, they are indeed complained about a lot at all times. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

3- Is there discrimination in the justice sector based on ethnic and religious identity?



Although the trend of the survey responses demonstrates that there was discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and religion, there were some indications of positive cross-ethnic and religious relations. A judge interviewed in Kirkuk stated: “As an Arab judge, I often tell my friends to complete transactions [paperwork] of Kurdish people in order to avoid sentiments of being excluded or discriminated”.

4- To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “There is an advantage in applying the law in your city in favor of one group over another?”



The majority of KIIs from different groups reported that all ethnic and religion groups have faced some degree of discrimination in different areas, when it comes to law enforcement, based on which group rules over the city. Since the events of October 16 2017 when Kurdish Peshmerga retreated from disputed regions under the pressure of central government forces, particularly the PMF, Kurds are dissatisfied with the current state of affairs. The Kurds interviewed stressed that they have been marginalized and disappointed by law enforcement in Kirkuk and all disputed areas following the events of October 16. The respondents reported that the PMF increased their interference in all affairs as a result of their control over area. According to one KI, the PMF interfered and released a rapist who had been sentenced to life in prison for the rape of a Kurdish woman. This perspective was, however, echoed by respondents who reported that the Kurdish forces similarly misused their power prior to the events of October 16. A KI reported:

Discrimination exists, but it is not only attributable to the judicial power; it may also be a result of the manner in which this area is governed, the region's history, and the dominant attitude. Although it has become a common practice among people, it has not been addressed in the judiciary or other sectors that have this discrimination based on nationality and religion. For example, half the city's population is Kurdish, but most of the judges are Arabs, so that is one example of discrimination. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

I speak as an affiliate in the police sector. In the Kirkuk court, there are things that we don't see, apparently. There are defendants who are released for a certain amount of money, and there are people who were not originally accused who have been sentenced for years and bring false witnesses to testify. There is great discrimination, and money determines the ruling. [A male participant, FGD, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

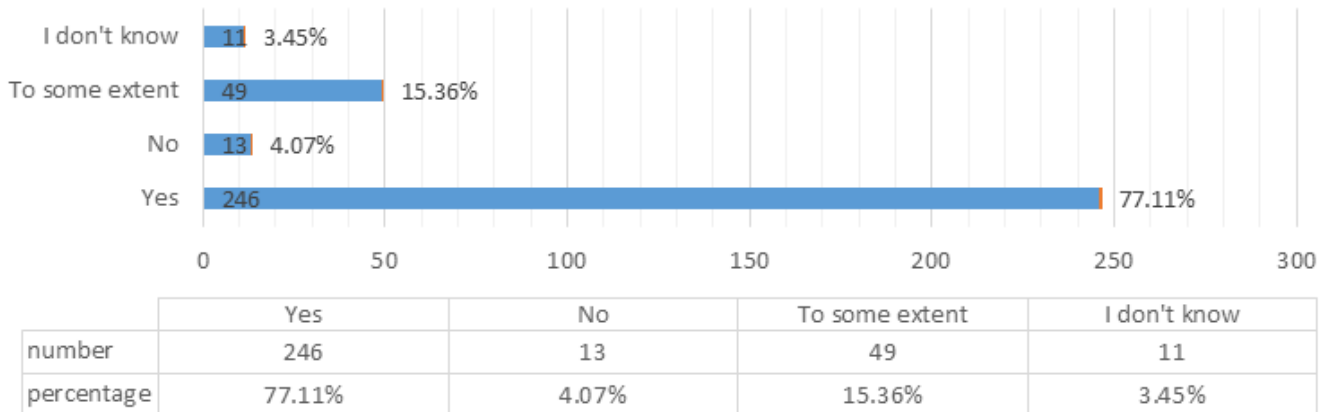
Some participants contend that both multiethnicity and religion are themselves factors for the judiciary's injustice.

Judges and police officers are split by political parties, and each political party is affiliated with a particular ethnic or religious community; as a result, judges and cops have discharged persons found guilty but [who are] members of their groups or political parties. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

In the event that someone makes an overt allegation of unfairness or discrimination and fails to provide evidence to support their claim, they may be held liable for any resulting legal charges. This is especially true if the evidence isn't available for inspection.

Discrimination is not so apparent and frequent; there may be times [when it occurs], but it has not been so noticeable. It springs from the fact that individuals in Iraqi society have always been educated to think about personal relations and to pay more attention to these relations instead of religious and sectarian differences. If we claim that discriminatory practices happen at police stations, we will need evidence, but I would say that I hope the investigation process isn't done in the police stations. Instead, [the] judicial investigation department in the courts can do it more professionally. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

5-Do you think discrimination in the justice sector contributes to societal tensions?



The contested nature of these regions exacerbates the discrimination and division among communities; for example, justice officials, especially police, are known to be affiliated with different powers and governments [A male KI, in person, Tel Kief, August, 2021.] In this way, religious, political, and community conflicts affect each other and simultaneously impact the conditions for peace and community cohesion, as some of these identity fault lines become linked to security dynamics and power rivalries. According to KIs across communities, persistent confusion around administrative

decisions and a security vacuum contribute to a strong sense of uncertainty and feeling ignored. The two quotes below, for example, summarize the situation of Kaka'is in Hamdaniya.

There are earthen berms (alsaatir alturabiu in Arabic) that separate different parts of a village. People don't know who to send the request [to]. Militarily, our area is part of the Bardarash district but administratively belongs to the Hamdaniya district. In our own land, we feel we are strangers. Sometimes, they reject our request and refuse to receive it. When there is a file against a person, the person will ask to transfer the case to another government [Baghdad or Erbil]. For this reason, the procedural issues cannot be completed. One of the cases has been [ongoing for] three years, and up to now, it has not been solved. [A male KI, in person, Hamdaniya, August, 2021]

We suffer a lot when we visit the police and court, even for basic documents, such as marriage, birth, or death certificates. There are two governments and two departments for each district, constituting duplication of processes and requirements. It has become heavy on the citizens, even in economic terms. The earthen berm has cut the road between us and Hamdaniya. Now the people are forced to travel 60 km, passing through four checkpoints and unpaved stone roads, while the road is direct and very close. [A male KI, in person, Hamdaniya, August, 2021]

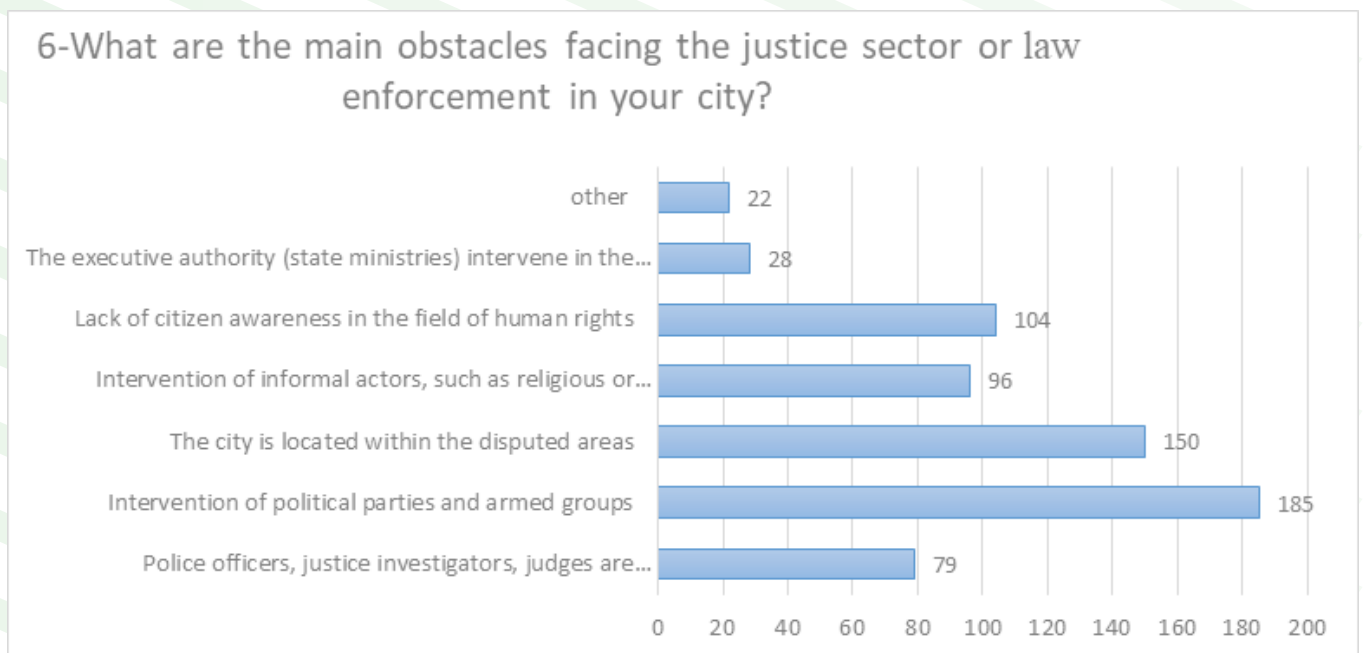
Most of the participants in the interviews in Kirkuk emphasized the role of the police in the mishandling of cases, reporting that they prevent lawsuits and take bribes.

Officers play a bad role in preventing the lawsuits from reaching court because they take bribes, or tribally, they solve the problem, which in turn negatively reflects the courts' jobs. As we've heard, it's become like a business place; when you have a job at [a] police station, officers make it difficult, and they won't do your job until you pay, or they may accuse [you] and force you to bribe them' [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021.]

Especially, the police stations are more like a business where you have to pay to run the business. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

There are several police station directors [that have been] involved in major crimes, such as drug trafficking and prostitution, selling land, and trading in state-owned property, but no one prosecutes them. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, September, 2021]

Some respondents believed that the accusations against the police cannot not be levied against the courts, as they are relatively independent. As it appears in the words of most KIs throughout communities, the main obstacles facing the justice sector and law enforcement in Hamdaniya, Tel Keif, and Kirkuk were the interference of political parties and armed groups, as well as the disputed status of these areas. This confirmed data as “Interference of political parties and armed groups” was viewed by 185 of the respondents as the central barrier facing the justice sector, followed by “the disputed status of these regions” (150 respondents) and the “lack of citizen awareness in the field of human rights” (104 participants) (Figure 6).



Interventions from political parties, armed groups, and tribal persons were also referred to as an obstacle to this sector functioning properly. KIs reported that problems are addressed outside the judiciary, which makes the role of the court weak and leads to issues being resolved illegally through political, partisan, and tribal interference. One interviewer witnessed this during an interview with a police officer, as he was being summoned by an armed group and urged to halt the processing of a case so they could

resolve it on their own. One respondent clarified that:

Interventions are the most obvious obstacle in front of the courts; sometimes, they work on the judges' decisions, especially political and military intervention due to their force and power gained. In those cases that are heavy crimes, and [when] the criminals belong to a powerful political party, they are intervened [in] directly and aren't brought through their legal process. [A male KI, in person, Kirkuk, August, 2021]

WOMEN AND THE JUSTICE SECTOR

Existing studies on Ninewa have shown that women have different priorities than men for the rebuilding of Ninewa and different perceptions of conflict and social cohesion (Norwegian Church Aid and Church of Sweden, 2019). The improved quality of life in the KRI was a recurrent theme in KIIs and the FGDs with female participants. According to a study conducted by the Middle East Research Institute (MERI) (2020) the majority of Yazidi and Christian IDP women were convinced that women enjoy better protection and new windows of opportunity since their displacement, due to improved protection mechanisms, educational facilities, vocational training, and work opportunities.

According to the survey respondents, the discrimination in the justice sector was not solely driven by ethno-religious differences, but gender also impacts the access to justice (see Figure 7). Of the participants, 63% (202 participants) believed that there is gender-based discrimination in the justice sector in their community. Only 27% (85 participants) responded that gender had no bearing on this. The excerpts below further highlight the relevance of gender when assessing the justice sector in these regions.

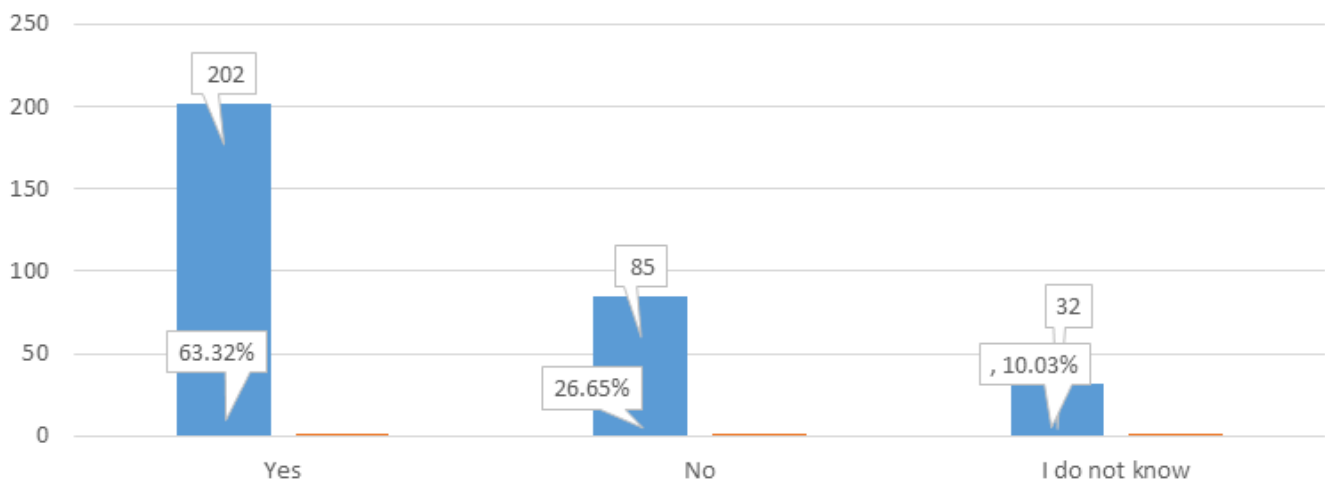
Women don't feel safe in police stations. I was asked for a bribe to open a very small clothing store [A female participant, FGD, September, 2021].

There are many cases of divorce between ethno-religious groups because the land has become divided. There are areas for Arabs and others for Kurds. This creates problems, as the wife and husband each prefer to live in their own area. As they do not agree, they will separate, displacing their children [A female participant, FGD, September, 2021].

When a woman asks for divorce, the first thing her family tells her is that the judiciary will not give back her full rights [A female participant, FGD, Kirkuk, September, 2021].

Most victims are women. [In one] case of divorce, [they are] from the same village and the same housing card, but the family of the wife is in Khabat, and the husband is in the village, [so] each party complained about the other to a different government. The wife complained here, and the husband complained there.[A male KI, in person, Hamdaniya, August, 2021].

7-Is there discrimination in the justice sector and access on the basis of gender (women or men)?



The barriers for women accessing the justice system have been exacerbated by the cultural and traditional perceptions that exist for women. According to a police officer, “our primary issue is ingraining habits and norms into families, rather than confrontation; women are scared to approach the police station for fear of being convicted or violating social conventions.” Elected officials likewise share this perspective, as a female participant in Kirkuk’s FGD reported:

One day, I sat in a judge’s room in Kirkuk court. We were discussing women’s rights, and I had a case concerning a woman, and there were lawyers sitting there. The judge told me that it was due to the harm caused by women that

Abu Jahl³ was burying the girls alive [...] I had a case [involving] a woman beaten by her husband; her face was wounded, and she had bruises. When she went to the police station more than [once] to file a case, they told her that you are a woman, and it is shameful that you come here every day [A female participant, FGD, Kirkuk, September, 2021].

In suburban places, accessing the justice system is even harder for women. Tribal values prevent their cases from reaching the court and police, and while judicial institutions may be found in every location, women are unable to find shelter in them because they are afraid of their relatives' interference in their cases. It is not only women who are at risk in this instance but also those who handle their cases. This was described by a female lawyer, who participated in the FGD in Kirkuk. It is evident from this perspective that women are victims of both institutional shortcomings and gender discrimination.

Moreover, women with a perceived affiliation to IS, widows, and divorcees also face additional challenges, as they are vulnerable and subject to exploitation. Participants in the FGD for female participants reported:

Women with perceived affiliation to IS cannot go to the police stations because they will look at her as an IS wife [A female participant, FGD, Mosul, September, 2021]

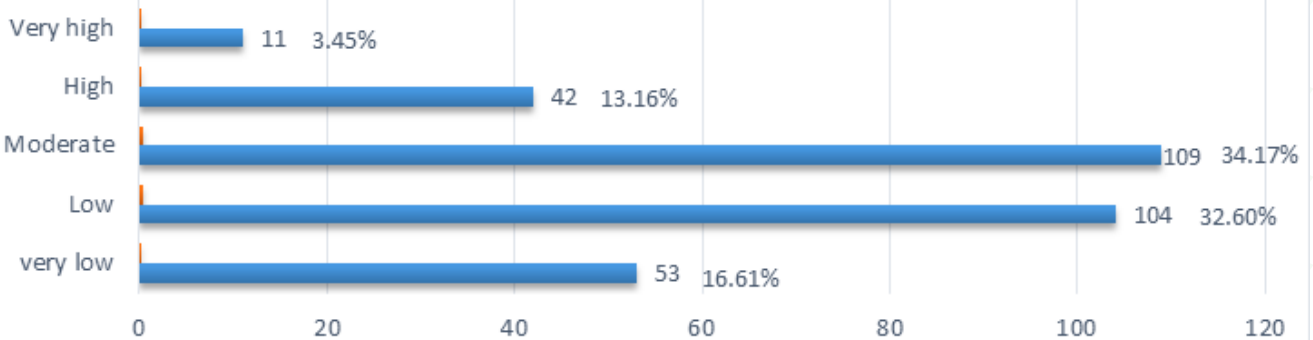
There is no state authority; clans, religious groups, and political parties with multiple loyalties all rule, so the situation is chaotic in the Ninewa Plains [A female participant, FGD, Mosul, September, 2021]

Female respondents also reported not feeling safe visiting and reporting to courts and police stations (see Figures 8, 9, and 10). Figure 9 shows that the trust and feeling of safety is lower in police stations. This problem is not confined to Kirkuk, Ninewa Plains, or the disputed status of the region but is a common problem throughout Iraq (IOM, 2019). However, the existence of different authorities and the conflict between them have further increased women's vulnerability.

3- Amr ibn Hisham al-Mahzumi (570–624) is known to Muslims as Abu Jahl (the Father of Ignorance). He was one of the polytheist pagan leaders in Mecca and was known by his enmity to Islam's Prophet.

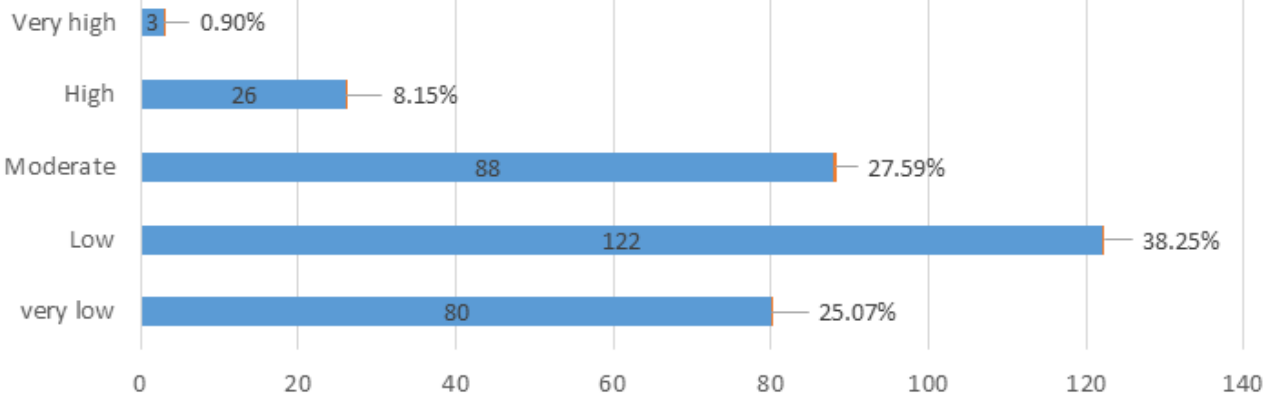
According to a study conducted by IOM, most women are uncomfortable reporting to the police or allowing female family members to report problems to the police (IOM, 2019). However, as many interviewees pointed out, they would be significantly more willing to report problems to police if they had the option of reporting to a female police officer. Of the estimated 18,000 officers currently within the Ninewa police, approximately 20 are women (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2018). These women are mostly assigned to police directorates and are only deployed when high-level personalities visit the city and female officers are needed to conduct body searches of civilian women present. Despite receiving the same training as their fellow officers, women in the Ninewa police force do not participate in arrests, cordon and search operations, or checkpoint duties. Increasing women’s participation in police and security is an area that requires long-term investment and advocacy from local and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) (Hayder and Palani, 2021).

8-Do you think women feel safe when visiting the courts?



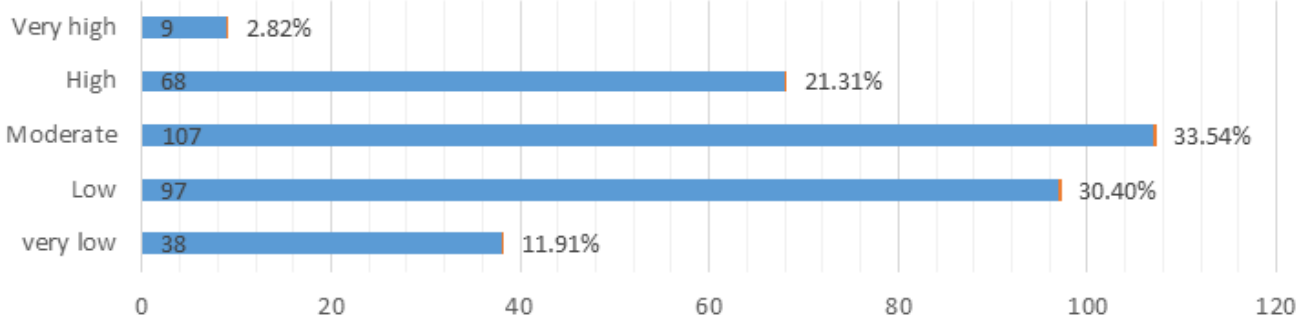
	very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
percentage	16.61%	32.60%	34.17%	13.16%	3.45%
number	53	104	109	42	11

9-Do you think women feel safe when visiting police stations?



	very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
number	80	122	88	26	3
percentage	25.07%	38.25%	27.59%	8.15%	0.90%

10-Do you feel safe when reporting to the courts or the police? (male and female)



	very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
number	38	97	107	68	9
percentage	11.91%	30.40%	33.54%	21.31%	2.82%

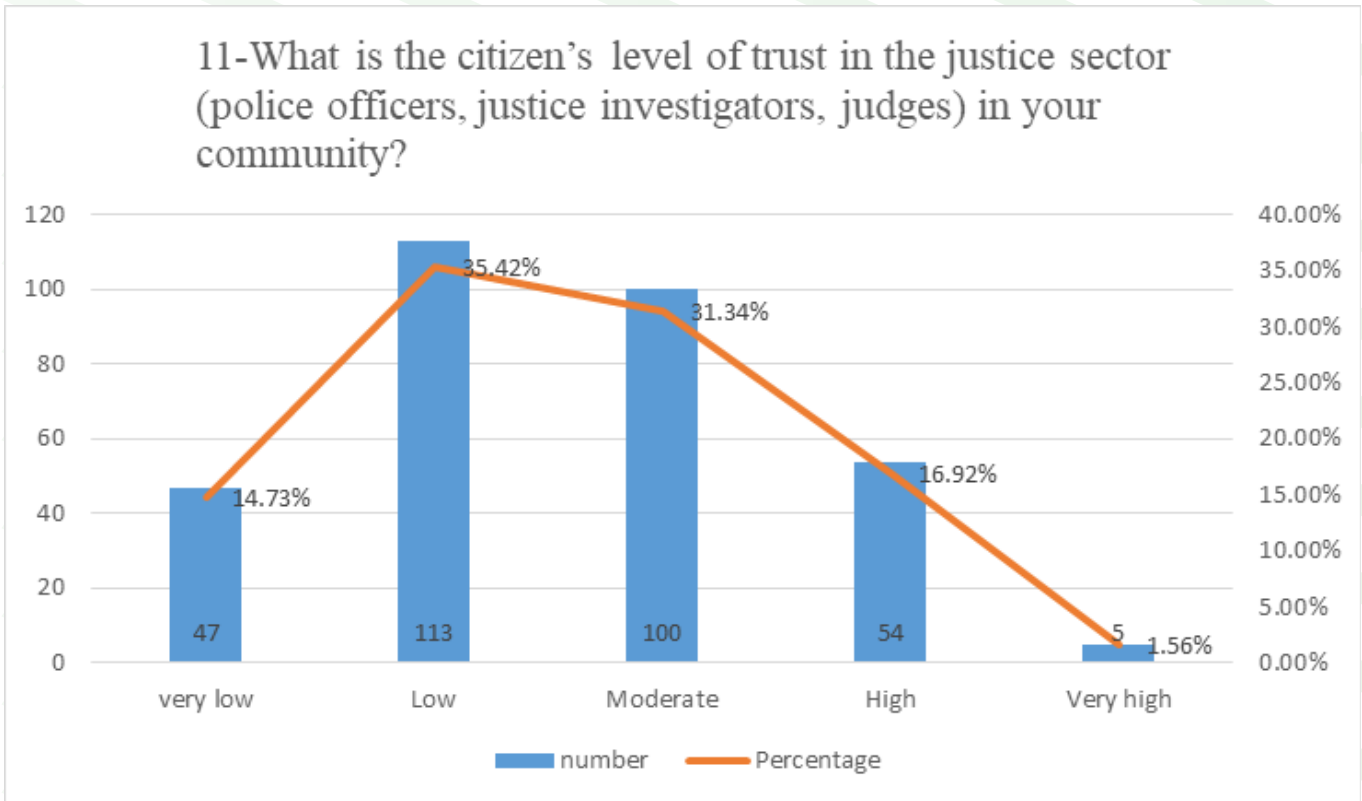
Cross-Table (1)

What level of safety do you feel when reporting to the ?courts or police	Gender		
	Female	Male	Not specified
Very low	14	21	3
	11.11%	11.29%	42.85%
Low	44	53	0
	34.92%	28.49%	0.0%
Moderate	40	66	1
	31.74%	35.48%	14.28%
High	27	38	3
	21.42%	20.43%	42.85%
Very high	1	8	0
	0.8%	4.3%	0.0%
Total	126	186	7
	100%	100%	100%

To demonstrate the disparity between the levels of confidence men and women have in the courts and police, the data has been disaggregated accordingly. As we can see in Cross-Table (1), there is only a slight difference between male and female respondents. Only a small difference of approximately 5% is seen for male and female respondents who reported not feeling safe in these agencies.

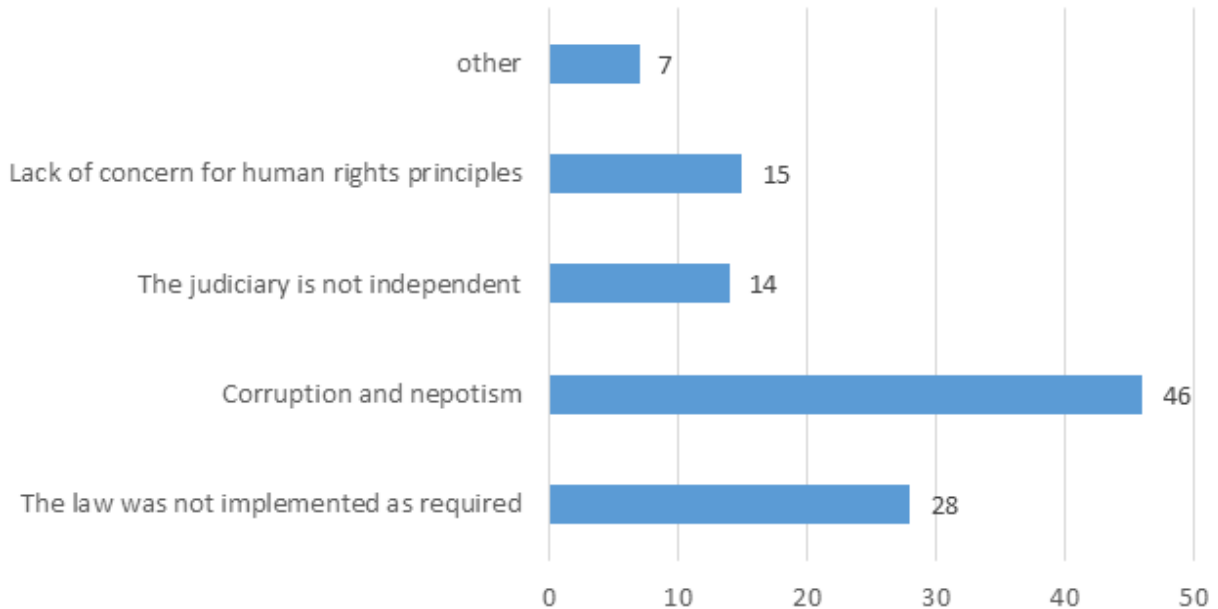
MEASURING TRUST IN THE JUSTICE SECTOR

Figure 11 demonstrates that 35% of participants responded that their level of trust in the justice sector (police officers, justice investigators, judges) is “low,” 14% responded “very low,” and 34% (100 respondents) selected that they have “moderate” trust in the justice sector. When asked why people do not trust the court to protect their rights, corruption and nepotism was cited as the major reason (46%), followed by “the law is not implemented as required” (28%), “lack of concern for human rights principles” (15%), and “the judiciary isn’t independent” (14%) (see Figure 12). These findings are aligned with the findings of Social Inquiry and USIP (2019).



A majority of KIs reported that when visiting government institutions, especially the courts, the administration progresses very slowly; however, if they have a networks within the institution or are affiliated to a party, their needs will be met quickly. This indicates that people do not trust these institutions to treat them fairly.

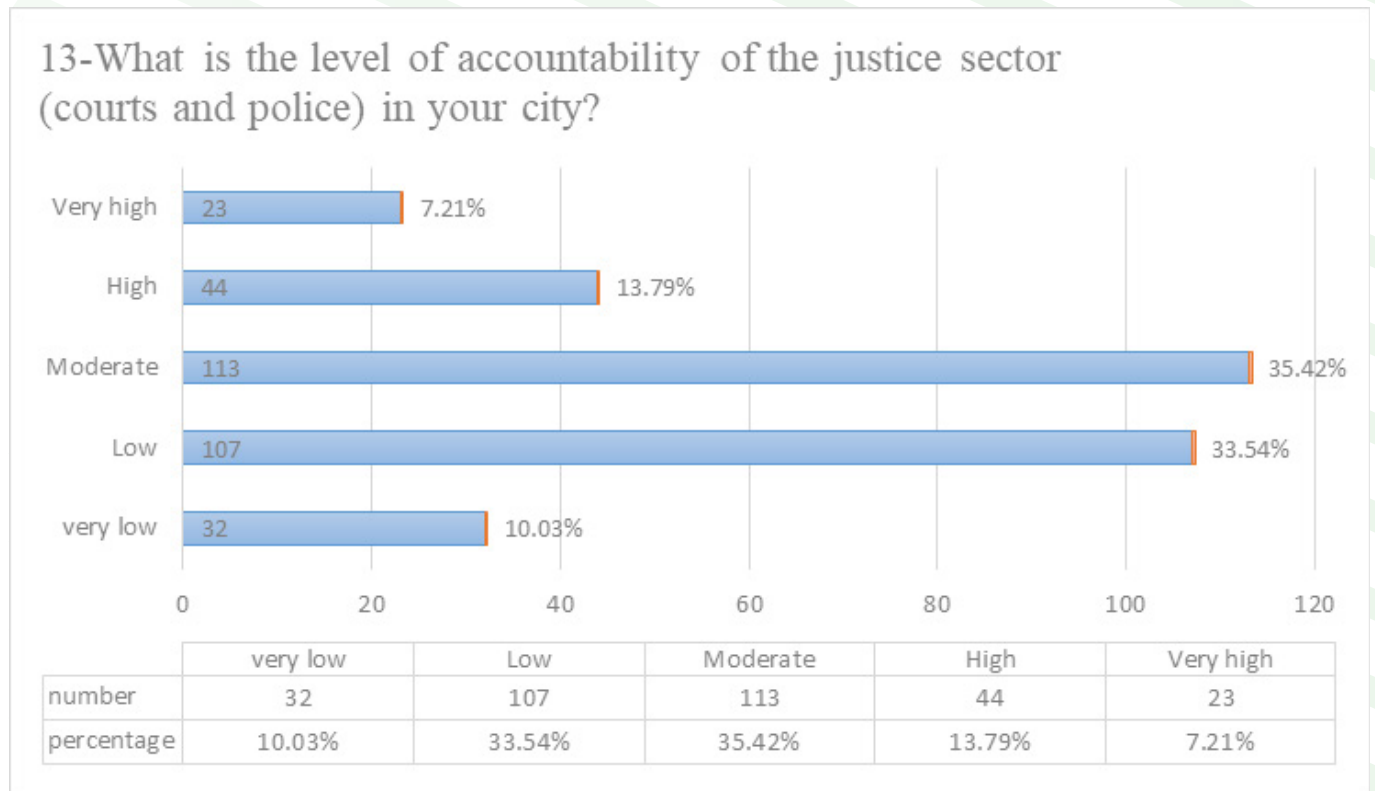
12-Why don't you trust the courts in your city to protect your rights?



This data highlights the fundamental problem of the lack of trust between citizens and the justice sector. The high levels of distrust should drive officials and power holders to work to reduce this gap by ensuring public satisfaction and confidence and ultimately constructing legitimacy. Moreover, the data also suggests that 34% (107 respondents) felt that the level of accountability is “low,” and 10% (32 participants) believed that the level of accountability the justice sector institutions had to the people was “very low” (Figure 13). Of the respondents, 35% (113 respondents) believed that there was a “moderate” level of trust, with 14% (44 respondents) claiming there was a “high” level and 7% (23 respondents) having “very high trust.” KIs reported high levels of distrust toward the armed non-state actors, as they were rarely accountable for acts of violence, and these groups had impunity to act outside the law. FGD participants from local authorities expressed that constitutional violations occur regularly and without accountability [FGD, face to face, Mosul, September, 2021.] According to local civil society representatives within the FGDs, the exploitation practiced by security personnel and the impunity with which those violations were handled were central issues in relation to stabilization. The disputed status of the region and the conflict

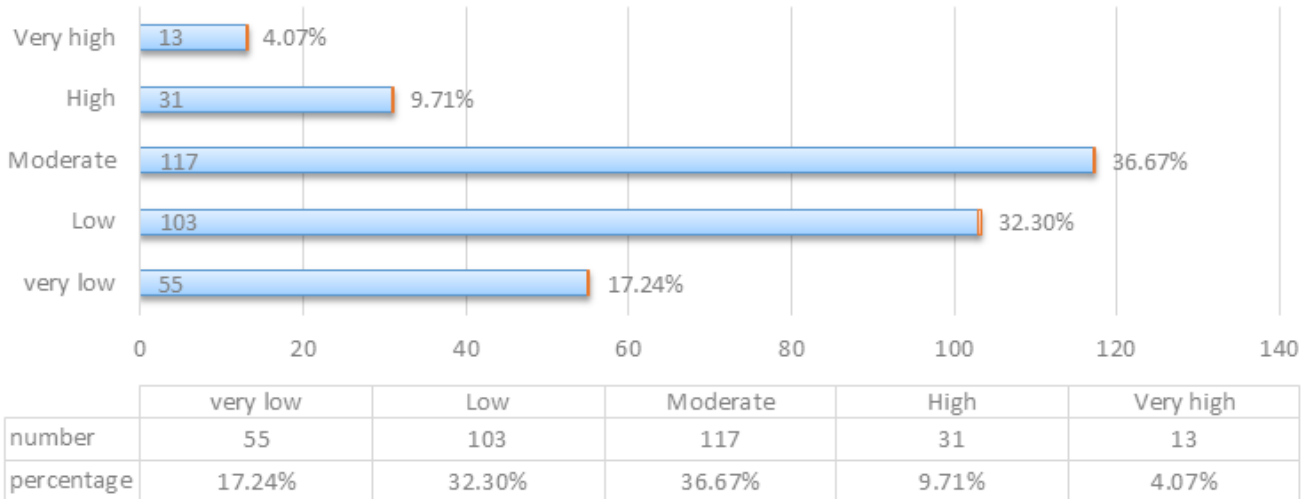
between the parties politicized and militarized the justice sector.

“The police members have never complained that someone has violated their rights, but these days, they often come and report transgression committed by the armed groups.” [A male participant, FGD, Mosul, September, 2021.]



The survey respondents also reported that respect for human rights in the justice sector was “low” (32%) and “very low” (17%) (Figure 14). Of the respondents, 37% (117 respondents) believed that there was a moderate level of respect for human rights in the justice sector. Half of participants stated that human rights were not considered during either an investigation or a trial. While a small number of respondents thought that human rights are upheld in the courts, the majority believe otherwise. Nevertheless, slightly more than a third (35.54%) of survey respondents believe that, to a modest extent, human rights concepts have been incorporated into the judicial sector process, particularly throughout the investigation and trial process; this demonstrates that despite the sector’s many issues, some individuals still have a favorable impression of it.

14-What is the level of respecting for human rights in the justice sector, such as a fair trial (eg the publicity and speed of the court, non-extraction and invocation of statements through torture, etc.)?



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the GoI

- People and local authorities demand greater dedication from Baghdad, particularly to support the justice sector and courts to be capable and independent. The GoI should commit to the independence of the justice sector across disputed territories. This will not only lead to the guarantee and protection of human rights, but can also greatly contribute to building local communities' trust in the GoI in general and the justice sector in particular, which remains weak years after the defeat of IS. In addition, the independence of the justice sector would present an opportunity to mitigate sentiments of discrimination based on identity and renew trust and relations between communities.
- The GoI should ensure that the federal police are inclusive of all groups at a senior level in Iraq's disputed territories. These territories should be protected by a diverse security and police force that reflects the ethno-religious diversity in these areas. Senior positions in the federal police should be accessible to all on the

condition that professional qualification requirements are met. Undertaking such measures would increase levels of confidence in the police and assist in alleviating fear and tensions on the community level.

- Importantly, there is a need for the GoI and the KRG to present durable solutions to the displacement of minority groups in the disputed territories.
- Citizens of disputed areas need certainty about the future status of their administration and territories, such as the implementation of Article 140. This can only be achieved when there is an agreement between Baghdad and Erbil, preparing the region for such a resolution. Compensation of people who were victims of the Ba'ath regime's exclusionary policies is a step towards building trust among and between communities.

Recommendations for the KRG

- Erbil-Baghdad relations are seen as key to the implementation of laws and function of the justice sector in disputed territories. Coordination at all levels is important, particularly in disputed territories such as Kirkuk.
- It is highly recommended to differentiate between political disputes and the work of the police and courts.
- Addressing the obstacles to the justice sector in disputed territories requires the willingness of both the GoI and the KRG to address their long-lasting rivalry over the disputed areas, as well as a commitment to ensure accountable legal apparatus. While these are long-term objectives, in the short term, both governments can work on providing shared procedures and codes of conduct at different institutions under their control.

Recommendations for international actors

- The presence of various security forces undermines the peacebuilding efforts implemented by local and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). This highlights a key dilemma: local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and

INGOs are required to deal with local stakeholders, including security actors, but they are a key obstacle to scaling up initiatives at the local level.

- In parallel to their development and peacebuilding efforts, INGOs should advocate at national and international levels to unify the legal and security administration in disputed territories. The presence of various security forces with their contradicting and securitization agendas undermines the soft measures of peacebuilding implemented by local NGOs and INGOs in both the short and long term.
- Ensuring political representation to communities, especially marginalized groups, such as women, should remain a key focus of INGOs' interventions.
- Local police officers and court members should be trained in general standards of human rights protection and the prevention of discrimination.

Recommendations to local governments

- Strengthening collaborations with local NGOs and INGOs to advocate at national and international levels would unify the security administration in Kirkuk, Hamdaniya, and Tel Keif and remove obstacles to the freedom of movement.



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