



USAID/OFDA Final Performance Report	
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**Contact information**

Field Office:  
**Matthew Nowery, Country Director**  
 R2 161, Atconz  
 Erbil, Iraq  
 Tel: +964 770-776-8625  
 Email: [MNowery@samaritan.org](mailto:MNowery@samaritan.org)

Headquarters:  
**Caleb Drown, Regional Director**  
 801 Bamboo Road  
 Boone, NC 28607  
 Tel: +1 828-719-9316  
 Email: [CDrown@samaritan.org](mailto:CDrown@samaritan.org)

## Acronyms

BOQ	Bill of Quantities
CBT	Aquagenx Compartment Bag Test
CWG	Cash Working Group
Gol	Government of Iraq
HH	Household
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JCMC	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMT	Mobile Money Transfer
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
NCCI	NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq
NCE	No-cost Extension
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
RO	Reverse Osmosis
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure
SP	Samaritan's Purse
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WC	Water Closet
WDS	War Damaged Shelters

## 1. Project Summary

In August 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) specifically targeted the Yezidi minority people group concentrated in Sinjar District in what has since been recognized as a genocide, resulting in the mass displacement of Yezidis throughout Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Consequently, approximately 500,000 Yezidi individuals, predominantly from Sinjar, were forcibly displaced from their homes.<sup>1</sup>

As of December 2018, there were over 59,500 returnees to the Sinjar District, with approximately 292,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) still displaced.<sup>2</sup> As of February 2021, there are now 116,790 returnees to the Sinjar District, almost doubling in this three-year period. Returnees to the Sinjar District in western Ninewa have received less assistance than those in areas of the Ninewa Plains, in part because of the area's greater security concerns and lower rates of returns. As the area (particularly northern Sinjar) stabilizes, households (HHs) have

<sup>1</sup> IOM Iraq, Understanding Ethno-Religious Groups in Iraq: Displacement and Return. (February 2019).

<sup>2</sup> IOM, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). (December 2018).

been able to return. However, the destruction left by IS and years of neglect and looting have left many without adequate sustainable shelter solutions. The 2019 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) classifies Sinjar District in the category of the highest severity of need.<sup>3</sup>

In an effort to encourage the continued return of Yazidis to the Sinjar region, Samaritan's Purse (SP) implemented the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) funded **Sinjar Shelter Assistance Program**. This program began on **September 23, 2019** and ran until **May 21, 2021**, after receiving a six month no-cost extension (NCE), followed by a three month NCE. Through this project, SP completed 907 Category 1 home rehabilitations in the Sinjar District and provided hygiene promotion trainings to 923 returnee HHs.

Shelter and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) teams encountered context-specific challenges such as prolonged, government-enforced COVID-19 lockdowns, access issues for international staff, direct threats to staff, and localized militia and federal Iraqi military tensions which halted field work. This led to SP requesting an extension on the award first through March 22, 2021, then again through May 21, 2021. In this additional time, teams completed all activities, thereby contributing to the safety and security of returnees to the Sinjar region by providing Category 1 shelter repair and WASH training.

Table 1: Beneficiaries targeted and reached, in total and by sector

	Total Number of Beneficiaries Targeted	Total Number of Beneficiaries Reached: Reporting Period (Oct 2020 to May 2021)	Total Number of Beneficiaries Reached: Cumulative
Sector: Shelter and Settlements	900 HHs 9,900 individuals	513 HHs 3,712 individuals (1,910 males, 1,802 females)	907 HHs, 7,166 individuals (3,659 males, 3,507 females) who completed all shelter repairs.
Sector: WASH	9,900 individuals	3,601 individuals (1,895 males and 1,706 females)	7,223 individuals (3,682 males and 3,541 females)
Total Award Level Beneficiaries	<b>900 HHs</b> <b>9,900 individuals</b>	515 HHs 3,735 individuals (1,921 males and 1,814 females)	923 HHs, 7,223 individuals (3,685 males and 3,538 females)

## 2. Key Accomplishments

### Sector 1: Shelter and Settlements

Key accomplishments achieved from September 2019 to May 2021 include:

#### Sub-Sector 1.1: Shelter

<sup>3</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan 2019. (March 2019).

During this reporting period, 907 Category 1 shelters were completed: 53 in Dokry, 84 in Gohbal, 126 in Dohla, 192 in Borek, 14 in a mixed round (mud and concrete) of different villages, 117 in Zorava, 18 in Kharbat, 119 in Sharfadin, 54 in Bakra and 130 in Khanasor. The shelter team reached over 100% of the targeted Category 1 homes in Sinjar District.

A total of 16 HHs who signed contracts to conduct Category 1 rehabilitation did not complete the repairs. One HH returned to Kurdistan, while other challenges caused four of the selected HHs to withdraw from the program. Three of these HHs, after receiving the initial payment, chose to demolish their existing mud homes and begin construction of new block homes, knowing this would remove them from the program. One HH returned the money believing it was not enough to fix their mud home, and hoped to be selected for another shelter program offering more money. The remaining HHs failed to execute any items from their bills of quantities (BOQs) and were therefore not issued the final payment.

Prior to beginning work in each village, SP engineers and assessors conducted vulnerability assessments with each identified returnee HHs using the Cash Working Group (CWG) Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) tool to measure socioeconomic vulnerability. If the HH met the vulnerability criteria, they were selected to receive assistance. From December 2020 to March 2021, all BOQs, walkthroughs and payments were made to beneficiaries in Zorava, Sharfadin, Kharbat and Bakra. In December 2020, final payments were made to 14 beneficiaries from multiple different villages (Dohla, Gohbal, Borek). Throughout implementation, engineers conducted follow-up weekly and monthly progress reports to ensure goals were achieved in accordance with the BOQs.

Towards the end of the project, SP security teams re-assessed Khanasor, a village that has received less assistance because of the presence of local militias. After security deemed the area safe for implementation and notifying OFDA, the team conducted vulnerability assessments with each of the 185 identified returnee HHs. Of the surveyed HHs, 131 met the vulnerability criteria. Staff collected land ownership documents and drew up BOQs. Initial payments were made to all 131 beneficiaries in February 2021 after beneficiary agreements had been signed. All walkthroughs and final payments had been made by April 2021 except to one HH which was removed from the program because they did not execute any items from the BOQ provided by SP staff.

The table below outlines the shelter indicators agreed upon for this project.

<b>Sub-sector Name:</b>	<b>Shelter</b>	<b>Baseline Result</b>	<b>Achieved Oct 2020 – May 2021</b>	<b>Achieved and Endline Result to Date</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Indicator 1.1.1:</b>	<i>Number of targeted HHs with access to shelter</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>513 HHs have access to shelter benefiting 3,712 beneficiaries.</i>	<i>907 HHs have access to shelter benefiting 7,166 beneficiaries.</i>	900 HHs 9,900 beneficiaries

<b>Indicator 1.1.2:</b>	<i>Number of targeted HHs with access to shelter pursuant to relevant guidance appearing in the Sphere Project Handbook</i>	N/A	<i>513 HHs have access to shelter pursuant to guidance in the Sphere Project Handbook, benefiting 3,712 beneficiaries.</i>	<i>907 HHs have access to shelter pursuant to guidance in the Sphere Project Handbook, benefiting 7,166 beneficiaries.</i>	900 HHs 9,900 beneficiaries
<b>Indicator 1.1.3:</b>	<i>Number and percentage of HHs having received shelter assistance</i>	N/A	N/A	6%	>5%
<b>Indicator 1.1.4:</b>	<i>Total USD amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries</i>	N/A	\$984,062	\$1,551,559	\$1,687,860
<b>Indicator 1.1.5:</b>	<i>Number of targeted HHs investing their own resources in continued repairs to their home three months after completion</i>	N/A	N/A	86%	<10%

Indicator 1.1.1:

All selected beneficiaries occupied shelters that were Category 1 war damaged shelters (WDS) according to the Iraq Shelter Cluster standards. Bills of quantities were drawn up by SP engineers, and homeowners were given 30 days after the first payment to execute all repairs listed on their BOQs to make their homes safe, habitable, secure and private according to Shelter Cluster standards. Every BOQ was completed under the supervision of an SP protection officer who ensured they reflected the needs of disabled family members, the need for private sleeping quarters within the house, and items like handrails and access ramps needed for elderly HH members. Supervision by the SP engineers proved to be successful: of the 923 HHs selected to participate in the program, 907 completed

all repairs and now live in safe, habitable, secure and private homes. Sixteen HHs did not complete their repairs due to aforementioned reasons in section 2.1. These results exceeded the target of 900 homes by 0.8%.

The target of 9,900 beneficiaries, achieved through the repair of 900 homes, was based on a shelter assessment survey that calculated an average of 11 family members per HH in 2018. This original calculation exceeded the actual average number of family members per HH for all program beneficiaries. The actual average number of family members per HH (calculated average from all program HHs) is eight.<sup>4</sup> This program focused on providing assistance to the most vulnerable members of the community, many of whom were widows or families who had lost family members to the ISIS genocide, while the survey was conducted with all families in the respective area. The difference between the projected and actual family size resulted in the program achieving 72% of the target.

Indicator 1.1.2:

A total of 907 HHs successfully completed repairs on their structures and now have access to shelter pursuant to guidance in the Sphere Project Handbook, benefiting 7,166 beneficiaries. All BOQs drawn up by SP staff adhered to the shelter cluster's guidelines for adequate shelter. Shelter cluster guidelines for repairs were directly messaged to all homeowners and all beneficiary structures were visited multiple times (during and after repairs) to ensure that repairs were in line with the shelter cluster. Engineering staff maintained constant contact with all homeowners in order to provide repair guidance pursuant to Sphere guidelines. This proved very successful, as the targeted number of homes was overachieved and all 907 met or exceeded Sphere guidelines/minimum standards.

Indicator 1.1.3:

When the program began in September 2019, the total affected population of returnees in the Sinjar region was 59,500. Over the course of the program, the number of returnees increased by 96% (57,290 additional returnees). Of all returnee HHs in the Sinjar District as of 2021 (116,790), 6% (7,166) have now received successful shelter assistance as a result of this OFDA-funded program.<sup>5</sup>

Indicator 1.1.4:

The total amount of cash in USD distributed to beneficiaries was \$1,556,547. This amount includes all initial and final payments made (923 HHs). It includes all initial payments made to beneficiaries who were removed from eligibility for final payments after failing to complete repairs or comply with program requirements. The total amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries who received both initial and final payments and successfully completed repairs on their homes (907 HHs) was \$1,540,099. The total amount (\$1,556,547) transferred to beneficiaries was 92% of the total amount (\$1,687,860) budgeted to be transferred to beneficiaries. The total amount budgeted was not transferred, even though over 100% of the target for HHs was met. This underspending is a result of a consistent BOQ average cost of \$1,700-\$1,800<sup>6</sup> (average needed to repair a Category 1 WDS to minimum shelter standards).

Indicator 1.1.5:

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<sup>4</sup> See Master Data Set average of column J (Total Family Members). Average is equal to 8.

<sup>5</sup> The total number of people affected in the target area is 116,790 returnees, according to the IOM Returnee DTM, February 2021.

<sup>6</sup> See Master Data Set average of column L, Total Payment Amount.

A total of 86% of beneficiaries who completed repairs remain in their homes and have continued rehabilitation using their own personal funds. This result far exceeded the expectations of <10% laid out in the program proposal. During surveys conducted in the region prior to the start of the program, motivation for permanent returns and continued rehabilitation of homes was low. It was initially hoped that providing assistance for shelter repairs would motivate <10% of the targeted beneficiaries to remain in the Sinjar region and continue repairs on their homes. Instead, 86% of program beneficiaries have decided to remain in their homes and continue repairs. This is a remarkable achievement for sustainable returns to the Sinjar region and shows that shelter assistance is a key initial step in helping displaced families return to the region, along with other modes of assistance such as livelihoods recovery and basic health services. This program's model of homeowner-led repairs rather than contractor-led repairs lent itself to a spirit of ownership and of choice for beneficiaries, which in turn led to this exceptional level of community buy-in and motivation for continued repairs.

The remaining 14% are no longer investing their own money into their homes. Many HHs in this 14% have temporarily returned to IDP camps in Kurdistan because of the recent spike in tensions in the Sinjar region resulting from Turkish airstrikes and conflicts between various militias and government forces. They expressed that they did not want to continue investing money with the potential for open conflict in the near future. Others in this 14% were granted immigration permissions to different countries, and others simply do not have the means to continue investing their own funds because they remain extremely vulnerable and without income.

## **Sector 2: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**

Key accomplishments achieved from September 2019 to May 2021 are detailed below.

During this reporting period, the SP hygiene officer, along with community hygiene promoters from each targeted village, assessed HH's water quality and sanitation practices. In addition, the hygiene officer and promoters conducted hygiene promotion trainings with 923 HHs, benefiting 7,223 beneficiaries. The team conducted one-on-one training and covered topics on best hygiene practices, hand washing, clean food preparation, women's health, COVID-19 awareness, and other WASH considerations.

With the COVID-19 pandemic still ongoing, the hygiene team followed COVID-19 protocols and conducted the trainings outside, when possible, remaining socially distanced. In each training session, the team wore masks, regularly washed or sanitized their hands and encouraged beneficiaries to demonstrate the same precautionary measures. Due to a high level of mistrust, false information, and doubt surrounding COVID-19 within the targeted communities, SP promoters focused hygiene training heavily on COVID-19 messaging.

From November 2020 through January 2021, the water sources for all program beneficiaries were tested for contamination. From December 2020 through March 2021, training was completed on the proper use, installation, benefits and maintenance of reverse osmosis (RO) filters, for HHs whose water supplies failed the water testing completed by SP. Obtaining water testing kits from the United States proved to be a logistical hurdle and the kits were not received until November. This meant that staff had to retroactively test the water sources of all beneficiary homes who had completed repairs before that time. All HHs (85) that tested positive for contaminated water were distributed an RO water filter which was installed by qualified technicians. All members of the HH were trained on the use and maintenance of the filter. The RO filter was built into the BOQ for beneficiaries whose water sources were tested in tandem with their home repairs. They were also provided with training, and proper installation was ensured by SP engineers.

### **Sub-sector 2.1 – Hygiene Promotion:**

Sub-sector Name:	Hygiene Promotion	Baseline Result	Achieved Oct 2020 – May 2021	Achieved and Endline Result to Date	Target
<b>Indicator 2.1.1:</b>	<i>Number of people receiving direct hygiene promotion (excluding mass media campaigns and without double-counting)</i>	N/A	515 HHs 3,601 beneficiaries 1,895 males 1,706 females	923 HHs 7,223 beneficiaries 3,682 males 3,541 females	900 HHs 9,900 beneficiaries
<b>Indicator 2.1.2:</b>	<i>Percent of HHs targeted by the hygiene promotion program with soap and water at a designated handwashing location</i>	25%	N/A	86%	>90%
<b>Indicator 2.1.3:</b>	<i>Percent of HHs targeted by the hygiene promotion program with no evidence of feces in the living area</i>	45%	N/A	96%	>90%

#### Indicator 2.1.1:

The SP hygiene officer, with a team of trained promoters local to each village worked in, visited each HH and provided a group session training with all members of the HH. The training topics are mentioned above. A total of 7,223 (3,682 male and 3,541 female) individual beneficiaries received direct, in-person hygiene promotion training, none of whom were double-counted or part of a mass-media campaign. As can be seen, the endline result overachieved the target number of HHs by 2.5%. The target of 9,900 individual beneficiaries was not met for reasons explained under indicator 1.1.1 in this report.

#### Indicator 2.1.2:

Through the provision of handwashing stations in tandem with in-person hygiene training, 86% of program beneficiaries showed behavioral change in their handwashing practices. An initial baseline survey of the target

population showed that only 25%<sup>7</sup> of those surveyed had a designated handwashing station with both water and soap present and in use. After this program and its hygiene trainings, 86% of HHs that completed their repairs now has a handwashing station with both soap and water present.

#### Indicator 2.1.3:

The results of the initial baseline survey showed that only 45% of beneficiary homes had no signs of feces in the living areas, while the other 55% were contaminated with livestock or human feces. As a result of in-person intensive hygiene trainings focused on the health risks and dangers posed by allowing feces to contaminate the living area, 96% of beneficiary homes that completed their repairs displayed no evidence of fecal matter in their living areas. These endline results significantly overachieved the target of >90%, and these targeted HHs have shown a strong commitment to maintaining a cleaner living area free of fecal contamination.

#### **Sub-sector 2.2: Sanitation**

During this reporting period, 95%<sup>8</sup> of HHs (865) made sanitation-related repairs. The majority of HH repairs focused on replacement of fixtures such as taps, sinks, toilets, and showers.

The repair of handwashing stations was a major focus of SP WASH and Shelter staff, as sound knowledge of proper handwashing techniques and hygiene practices was lacking. The repair of handwashing stations was paired directly with in-person trainings for each HH and proved very successful, as reported above.

A number of shelters had damaged or destroyed cesspools, which had become a major health concern and risk. Leaking cesspools contaminated groundwater sources and led to the spread of disease and illness within the assisted communities. Accordingly, the SP team focused on repairing and rebuilding cesspools alongside plumbing (i.e., grey water pipes), to ensure proper drainage. In addition, many HHs in the area have rudimentary or no water drainage systems. Engineers included grey water pipes in BOQs, where needed, to ensure proper drainage away from shelters and living areas and into cesspools.

<b>Sub-sector Name:</b>	<b>Sanitation</b>	<b>Baseline Result</b>	<b>Achieved Oct 2020 – May 2021</b>	<b>Achieved and Endline Result to Date</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Indicator 2.2.1:</b>	<i>Number of people directly utilizing improved sanitation services provided with OFDA funding</i>	N/A	N/A	865 HHs 6,804 beneficiaries 3,477 males 3,327 females	900 HHs 9,900 beneficiaries

<sup>7</sup> See Master Data Set columns Y and Z, Section 2.1.2.

<sup>8</sup> Indicator 2.2.1 of the Master Dataset Tracker.

<b>Indicator 2.2.2:</b>	<i>Percent of HHs targeted by latrine construction/promotion program whose latrines are completed and clean</i>	N/A	N/A	86%	95%
<b>Indicator 2.2.3:</b>	<i>Percent of latrines/defecation sites in the target population with handwashing facilities that are functional and in use</i>	N/A	N/A	85%	95%

Indicator 2.2.1:

While all 923 HHs were given in-person hygiene training, not every HH was in need of sanitation related repairs. Some beneficiaries had completed their water closets (WCs) and bathrooms to shelter standards before receiving assistance from SP. For the majority of HHs, repairing the WC and bathroom was the highest priority and was completed before receiving assistance. These HHs were instead assisted with rehabilitating their living areas, kitchens and common rooms to shelter standards. For this reason, 865 HHs and 6,804 beneficiaries are directly utilizing improved sanitation services instead of the target of 900 HHs and 9,900 beneficiaries (see further explanation under indicator 1.1.1 of this report).

Indicator 2.2.2:

A total of 869 beneficiaries received funding to repair their latrines or to install new latrines/cesspools. Of these beneficiaries, 86% fully repaired their latrine facilities and maintained their cleanliness. Many of these latrine facilities are used by the entire HH of 8-12 people, and maintaining a clean latrine has proven to be a challenge for these HHs, resulting in an achievement of less than 95% in the endline results. However, having 86% of latrines functioning and clean in an area with previously low rates of function and cleanliness is a significant achievement.

Indicator 2.2.3:

Of the 869 beneficiaries selected for latrine repairs, 551 were paired with a handwashing station repair. The results of the endline survey show that 85% of these 551 latrine/handwashing station repairs are clean and in use. This result correlates closely with Indicator 2.1.2 (percent of HHs targeted by the hygiene promotion program with soap and water at a designated handwashing location) which showed an endline result of 86%.

**Sub-sector 2.3: Water Supply**

From November 2020 through early February 2021, SP tested a total of 911 HH water sources<sup>9</sup> in Gohbal, Dokry, Dohla, Borek, Zorava, Kharbat, Sharfadin, Bakra and Khanasor with the Aquagenx Compartment Bag Test (CBT), which detects E. coli and total coliforms in a 100 ml sample.

As reported above, all HHs who failed the water test were either distributed an RO filter retroactively (for HHs who had already received final payments) or had an RO filter built into their BOQ, the cost of which was covered in the initial and final payments. All RO filters are warranty backed for a year by the supplier, and each HH was provided with a year's supply of replacement filter cartridges for the RO system.

Sub-sector Name:	Water Supply	Baseline Result	Achieved Oct 2020 – May 2021	Achieved and Endline Result to Date	Target
<b>Indicator 2.3.1:</b>	<i>Number of people directly utilizing improved water services provided with OFDA funding</i>	N/A	N/A	6,345 beneficiaries	9,900 beneficiaries
<b>Indicator 2.3.2:</b>	<i>Percent of HHs whose drinking water supplies have 0 fecal coliforms per 100 ml sample</i>	74%	N/A	100%	>90%
<b>Indicator 2.3.3:</b>	<i>Percent of water points developed, repaired, or rehabilitated that are clean and protected from contamination</i>	N/A	N/A	94%	95%

#### Indicator 2.3.1:

Through the repair of various water services/water points in 812 beneficiary homes, SP helped 6,345 people utilize improved water services with OFDA funding. The endline results are lower than the targeted number of beneficiaries for reasons mentioned under indicator 1.1.1 of this report and because not all homes were in need of repairs to water services as the homeowners had already completed these repairs.

#### Indicator 2.3.2:

<sup>9</sup> Households in Gohbal, Dokry, Dohla and Borek who did not complete repairs/receive the final payment (12 HHs), did not have their water sources tested as they were no longer eligible for assistance.

Staff performed water testing on all program beneficiaries' water sources, and according to the baseline data gathered, only 74% of these water sources were clean and uncontaminated (0 fecal coliforms per 100 ml sample). Through the provision of RO water filters, 100% of beneficiary water sources are clean and clear of contamination according to endline water testing results. This is a significant overachievement of the targeted 90% and has positively impacted the health and safety of each of these HHs.

#### Indicator 2.3.3:

Of the 907 HHs who successfully completed all rehabilitations, 812 made repairs (as prescribed in their BOQ provided by SP engineers) to water point(s). According to endline survey data, 94% of the targeted 95% of these HH water points are rehabilitated, clean and protected from contamination. These water point repairs, paired with the RO filter installations, provided beneficiaries with a holistic rehabilitation of their water sources and have successfully provided 94% with consistent access to clean and uncontaminated water for cooking, cleaning, hand washing, bathing and drinking.

### Capital Expenditures

There were no capital expenditures for this program.

### Cost Effectiveness

Exchange rate fluctuations were not a factor in the program as expenditures were made in USD. Inflation rates were normal during the implementation period of the program, despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on local economies, given the bank's ability to properly manage its foreign debt capacity. As such, despite multiple impacts of the global pandemic on programming, 2,640,560.44 USD had been spent by the project end date of May 21, 2021, which represents almost 90% of the total budget. These expenses do not include the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) amount.

The full budget was not spent for a number of reasons, the first being that operational costs were not as high as projected. Throughout the duration of the program, the team was never fully staffed. It proved difficult to find qualified individuals to fill the position of Shelter Coordinator, and therefore it was never filled. It also proved a challenge to retain staff, particularly Administrative Assistants and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officers. Since the program was only meant to be implemented for one year, the current staff left SP when they were offered more permanent or longer-term positions with other organizations. For this reason, there were often between one to three empty staff positions. This resulted in a significant amount of savings.

The total amount (\$1,556,547) transferred to beneficiaries was 92% of the total amount (\$1,687,860) budgeted to be transferred to beneficiaries. The total amount budgeted was not transferred even though over 100% of the target for HHs was met. This underspending can be explained by fluctuations in the market cost for certain items and a consistent BOQ average cost of \$1,700-\$1,800.<sup>10</sup>

## 3. Challenges, Adaptations and Lessons Learned

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<sup>10</sup> See Master Data Set average of column L, Total Payment Amount.

Despite the successes of the program, several challenges were encountered during the period of the award that resulted in adaptations and lessons learned, which are summarized below:

#### Shelter and Settlements and WASH

- Access to Sinjar District has remained a challenge throughout the reporting period. On December 2, 2019, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC) informed the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) that the issuance of Government of Iraq (GoI) access letters to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had been suspended until further notice. Access letters were granted on limited basis in June and July. However, consistent access was not available until August. As access letters expired, SP was dependent on local authorities to grant temporary access and continuation of activities in project areas. This caused some delays in access to Sinjar and disrupted staff's ability to travel to targeted communities in Sinjar District. International staff were not able to return to Sinjar until August 10, 2020.
- COVID-19 continued to create major access issues for international and national staff through September 2020, as both the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and GoI periodically closed borders between governorates, preventing staff from returning to the Sinjar region. Local lockdowns in the Sinjar region continued through March 2021, with all travel being restricted from Friday-Sundays for weeks on end. This resulted in delays because staff could only complete four-day work weeks.
- During the period, SP field staff received several threats from residents in Dohla, Gohbal, Zorava and Khanasor who were upset over not being selected. As a result, SP staff were forced to withdraw from these communities each time. While all situations were resolved with the help of local community leaders, the project was delayed several days each time as a result. Threats were dealt with by meeting with local authorities and the problem individuals, and these issues were settled peacefully without involving the local police.
- Access to Khanasor village proved to be a constant issue from November 2020 until January 2021. After multiple meetings with the mukhtars of different neighborhoods within the village, it was decided that SP would select beneficiaries from a section of Khanasor with predominantly Category 1 WDS and the most vulnerable population. In October 2020, the GoI and KRG agreed to a deal in an effort to oust the local militias in Sinjar by increasing the central government's security forces' presence in the district. As federal police forces began implementing the deal, programming in towns in which local militias had a significant presence was delayed due to security concerns. This, in addition to direct threats to staff, delayed the planned interventions in Khanasor. Adaptations were made to the existing standard operating procedures (SOPs), and timelines for payments and repair periods were shortened in order to meet deadlines for the first 60 HHs in Khanasor before receiving the second NCE. Threats were dealt with by meeting with local authorities and individuals, and these issues were settled peacefully without involving the local police.
- Recruitment for program positions remained a challenge throughout the period. Due to the displacement following the ISIS invasion and the remote nature of Sinjar, it proved difficult to identify or recruit qualified staff for open positions. Most qualified Yezidis in Sinjar have a plethora of NGO jobs to choose from, and those outside Sinjar do not want to relocate due to security, remoteness and other factors. During the duration of the program, two engineering assessors, an M&E officer and two administrative assistants left the program. The shelter coordinator position was never filled, due to a lack of qualified and experienced engineers. One engineering assessment officer was promoted to program engineer, leaving his previous position open for recruitment (which was never filled). To mitigate this problem, the program manager and program coordinator invested time in training the existing staff to increase their capacity, skillsets and productivity. This issue was also overcome by accepting assistance from engineers from other SP programs who aided the OFDA program during high workload periods.

- Obtaining water testing kits from the United States proved to be a logistical hurdle and the kits were not received until November. This meant that staff had to retroactively test the water sources of all beneficiary homes who had completed repairs before that time.
- Branding was foregone for a number of reasons. Following the invasion of ISIS, a large number of Iranian-backed militias gained a foothold in the Sinjar region as they led counterattacks that eventually pushed ISIS out. Iranian-funded militias do not react positively to any United States related branding or markings in the area. For this reason, it was decided that beneficiary homes/villages would not be branded with the USAID/SP logo so that beneficiaries would not be harassed or confronted by these militias.

#### 4. Success Stories

##### Sector: General

Previously an inaccessible area due to security restrictions, Khanasor has been a priority town in significant need of humanitarian assistance since 2014. Samaritan's Purse successfully coordinated with local officials and mukhtars to rehabilitate 130 homes with no major security incidents or community backlash. This has opened the doors for further SP programming in Khanasor and has been received as a successful program implementation precedent in the area by other NGOs and humanitarian actors.

##### Sector: Shelter and Settlements

Shahab Abas Saido of Oeseva (close to Sharafadin village) and his brother Murad Abas Saido<sup>11</sup> both received cash grants from SP OFDA to repair Category 1 damages to their homes. Both of these brothers had fled from the ISIS invasion with their families in 2014, leaving behind their home and farm. During this period, their home fell into disrepair and their fig tree farm suffered severe damage from neglect.



<sup>11</sup> Names changed to maintain beneficiary confidentiality.

Both brothers successfully completed all repairs listed on the BOQs created by SP engineers/assessors and began investing their own personal funds in the continued improvement of their homes. As a result of their home repairs being covered by SP OFDA, both brothers were able to expand their fig tree irrigation system with the money they had originally set aside for home repairs. With a dry 2021 rainy season, this irrigation system will allow the brothers to maintain and re-establish their fig trees as well as water their livestock and ultimately sustain their livelihood for this dry year. Without the irrigation system, they would certainly lose a large number of their fig trees and the remaining trees would not produce a good harvest. With the home repairs provided by OFDA, the brothers will now be able to comfortably support their families with a fig harvest unaffected by the dry rainy season.

### Sector: WASH

In August 2014, Hussein Abas Qasim<sup>12</sup> fled with his family, narrowly escaping the massacres carried out against the Yezidi community by ISIS. Hussein and his family's flight and consequent displacement has been extremely difficult, as one of his daughters has severe physical disabilities. She has spent much of her life in a wheelchair, needing the assistance of her family to use the WC, to bathe, and to eat. Hussein and his family returned to Khanasor village in 2019, resettling in their damaged and neglected shelter. Hussein remained unemployed at this time and was unable to install the much-needed access and protection items to make the WC and bathroom accessible and useable by his daughter.

During a site visit by an SP engineer and protection officer, these necessary items were worked into the BOQ of repairs for Hussein's house. The WC and bathroom were fitted with a western-style toilet, handrails and a concrete access ramp for the wheelchair. Following these successful repairs, Hussein's daughter can easily access the WC and bathroom without assistance from her family members and, as a result, her daily life is safer, more comfortable and less vulnerable.



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<sup>12</sup> Names changed to maintain beneficiary confidentiality.