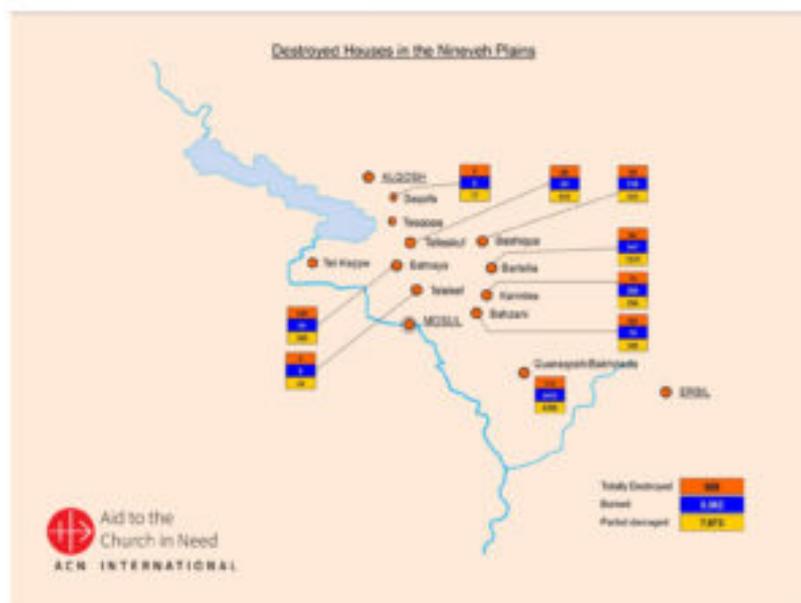


IRAQ: More than 12,000 private homes on the Nineveh plains damaged by ISIS



Aid to the Church in Need (27.03.2017) – More than 12,000 private homes in twelve Christian villages on the Nineveh plains were damaged by the “Islamic State”. A total of 669 houses were completely destroyed. These were the findings of a study initiated by the pontifical foundation *Aid to the Church in Need*. According to the study, the costs for rebuilding will vastly exceed 200 million dollars.

As part of the study, 1,500 families who fled to Erbil from the affected regions were also asked whether they intended to return to the – now liberated – places they had come from. 1,308 of these responded.

41 per cent of the respondents indicated that they wanted to return to their native villages, 46 per cent said that they were considering it. In a survey also carried out by *Aid to*

the Church in Need among 5,762 internally displaced persons in November 2016, only 3.28 per cent of the respondents wanted to return to their native villages; at that time, the security situation in the liberated region was still fragile and combat operations were still ongoing.

57 per cent of respondents reported that their possessions had been plundered, 22 per cent responded that their houses had been destroyed. The rest could not provide any information on the current condition of their houses and belongings. Slightly over a quarter (25.46 per cent) reported that their papers had been stolen by the terrorists of the Islamic State.

Currently, there are still 14,000 registered families who fled from Mosul and the Nineveh plains living in Erbil. This is approximately equal to 90,000 people, down from originally 120,000 in 2014. Of these, twelve thousand families continue to depend on humanitarian aid from *Aid to the Church in Need*.

The study, carried out by *Aid to the Church in Need* with the help of local church employees, consisted of three parts: first, the damages done to private homes by ISIS was ascertained. The findings of the investigation on the damages to social institutions such as schools and clinics as well as to church buildings will follow.

The evaluation and reconstruction process

In November 2016, *Aid to the Church in Need* agreed with the leaders of the 3 major Christian rites of the Nineveh Plains (Chaldean Catholic, Syriac Catholic and Syriac Orthodox) to hire teams of engineers who would be able to go village per village, house by house, and document the extent of damages, with the view of estimating the costs of repair.

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