PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE: IRAQI COMMUNITIES AND THE RETURN OF ISLAMIC STATE AFFILIATES

by

OLGA AYMERICH FRANCH

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Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS)

School of Government

College of Social Sciences

University of Birmingham

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ABSTRACT

In the aftermath of the occupation by, and subsequent war against, the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) in Iraq (2014-2017), geographically proximate communities with similar ethno-religious and tribal compositions, as well as shared social systems, developed different resilience responses to the return of IS affiliates. Some communities developed 'exclusive resilience', whereby communities responded to the perceived threat of return by rejecting the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS, thereby aiming to keep the perceived threat away. Other communities developed 'inclusive resilience', whereby they allowed the return of IS affiliates; this approach aimed to mitigate the perceived threat from within. Drawing on a Most Similar Systems Design method of comparative case study analysis, this study found that pathways to exclusive or inclusive resilience emerged from specific combinations of the communities' social interaction factors associated with the four-element model of Sense of Community, which is used as the framework of analysis. The study is based on original data collected through 42 in-depth interviews, 17 focus group discussions and 17 participatory mappings in six Arab Sunni communities in Iraq from June to August 2019.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study: Community resilience to the return of armed groups' affiliates

The return of conflict-displaced populations in post-conflict contexts is often considered a pathway to peacebuilding. In particular, this can be seen as a pre-requisite for, or contributor to, repairing social ties between groups who opposed each other during conflict (Black and Koser, 1995, p.5; Petrin, 2002). Notwithstanding the positive contribution that such returns can make to the rebuilding of social relations, in practice, the return of displaced populations after conflict-induced displacement seldom takes place within stable and cohesive communities. Tension between those who fled and those who remained challenges the sustainability of the return and reintegration processes (Black and Gent, 2006; Fagen, 2011; Harild, Christensen and Zetter, 2015), as well as the restoration of trust and social peace in the receiving communities (Aymerich, 2020a).

The return of armed groups' affiliates to their host communities is particularly challenging. If social peace is perceived to be threatened by the return of community members with perceived affiliations to armed groups, communities may collectively react to their return by developing resilience intended to mitigate the threat and protect the community (Aymerich, 2020b). The type of resilience developed is not homogeneous, meaning that not all communities react in the same way to the prospect of the return of armed groups' affiliates, even when the profiles of the returning affiliates are similar to those of the receiving communities (Bowd and Özerdem, 2013).

1.2 Research question

Given the different resilience responses among communities to the return of armed groups' affiliates, this thesis aims to address the following question: Why do geographically proximate communities with similar ethno-religious and tribal composition, as well as shared social systems, develop different resilience responses to the return of displaced community members with perceived affiliations to armed groups?

The case of Islamic State (IS) affiliates returning to Iraq serves as an example to illustrate this phenomenon. In the aftermath of the occupation by, and subsequent war against, the IS—which spanned from 2014 to 2017—communities in Iraq perceived the return of IS affiliates as a threat to the community's social peace and collectively developed resilience to this.

Yet, the responses developed to the same perceived threat differed among Iraqi communities. Some communities developed 'exclusive resilience', whereby they responded to the perceived threat of return by rejecting or restricting the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS. This approach aimed to keep the perceived threat away. Other communities developed 'inclusive resilience' whereby they allowed the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS, thus aiming to mitigate the perceived threat from within.

1.3 IS affiliates return to post-IS Iraq

The military campaign against IS ceased in Iraq on 9 December 2017 following three years of conflict and the displacement of nearly six million Iraqi citizens (approximately 15% of the Iraqi population). This displacement occurred in waves: some fled the initial hostilities and occupation carried out by IS, whereas others remained under IS occupation and fled during the military campaign to reclaim territory occupied by the IS group. The end of the military campaign saw the mass return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), with over 4.6 million displaced Iraqis returning to their place of origin by the end of 2019 (IOM Iraq, 2018a).

The violence associated with IS atrocities and occupation, as well as the ensuing military campaign to retake Iraq's territory from the group, generated high levels of mistrust within communities. This mistrust was frequently linked to the point at which people decided to flee. Residents who were displaced during the early stages of the crisis, fleeing immediately upon the arrival of IS or in the initial days of IS occupation, are juxtaposed with those who remained in IS-controlled territory and were displaced only during the military campaign to dislodge IS from Iraqi territory (IOM Iraq, 2017a; 2017b). The latter group—those who lived under IS occupation— often face

accusations or suspicion that they supported IS while the group was in power (Aymerich, 2020b; Genat, 2020).

There are numerous factors potentially leading to this perception and there is no unitary view or definition across Iraqi communities of what affiliation entails. Accusations of affiliation go beyond the legal aspects of armed group affiliation and tend to be collectively attributed. In fact, the concept of affiliation ranges from all those who lived under IS rule in some communities, to relatives of those who have committed certain crimes as part of the organisation in other communities, at various levels of consanguinity. More often, affiliation is attributed to first- or second-degree relatives, but in some communities, it extends to fourth-degree relatives (Aymerich, 2020b; Genat, 2020). In this regard, it is important to highlight that this study does not deal with individuals who faced criminal or terrorism charges; rather, the focus is solely on perceived IS affiliates by their communities of origin[1]. Therefore, throughout the study, the term affiliation is used to refer to 'alleged affiliation to the group', as perceived by the studied communities.

Regardless of the differences in the interpretation of the concept, the hovering accusation of affiliation has a significant impact on the return and social reintegration of community members. IS-perceived affiliates face specific challenges when they attempt to return to their place of origin and, following return, as they try to rebuild their lives. The receiving community plays a critical role in this process since it can facilitate or oppose the return of these IDPs. Divergent behaviours among communities reflect the type of resilience they have developed to the perceived threat to social peace posed by the return of IS affiliates. Communities who developed inclusive resilience accepted IDPs with perceived IS affiliation back into their fold, aiming to control the threat from within. Communities who developed exclusive resilience rejected the IDPs upon return, instead choosing to keep the threat at a distance.

[1] The field enumerators were trained to redirect the conversation when interviews with respondents were leading towards a conversation which could have potentially revealed criminal charges of the respondent or of other individuals in the community or beyond.

1.4 Conceptual framework

In this study, resilience can be understood as the capacity of a social system—here, a community—to recover following a disruptive event (including human-induced disaster such as a conflict or war) and to adapt, change and reorganise. Social systems have the capacity to learn from the original disturbance and retain memory of it; this can then be used in a reactive manner, to recover from the disturbance, or in an anticipatory manner, to protect the social system from a similar perceived threat in the future (Adger, 2000; Cutter *et al.,* 2008; Davidson, 2010; Magis, 2010; Wilson, 2012). Therefore, when a threat is perceived by the community, the community has the capacity to develop resilience with the aim of protecting itself and its members (Williams, 2013).

The community factors that allow resilience to develop when a threat is perceived are inherent to the community and can be divided into two types: place factors and social interaction factors (Chaskin, 2008; Cutter *et al.,* 2008). Place factors are the descriptive attributes of the community and include demographics (e.g., age, gender, and tribal, religious or ethnic affiliations), as well as the livelihoods of community members, the built and natural environment, the community's institutions and governance framework, and accumulated learnings from past events such as migrations and conflicts experienced by the community (Chaskin, 2008; Jacinto, Reis and Ferrão, 2020). Social interaction factors are those factors which shape daily interactions among community members and regulate how the community functions. Social interaction factors capture the nature of social ties and interactions among community members, as well as the context of norms, trust and resources where these interactions operate (Chaskin, 2008).

Different combinations of the community's social interaction factors and place factors affect the resilience response developed by the community, creating different pathways of resilience to the perceived threat.

1.5 Research design, fieldwork and framework of analysis

This research is based on original data collected through 42 in-depth interviews, 17 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 17 participatory mappings in six Arab Sunni communities in Iraq from June to August 2019. The focus is on communities that are similar in terms of location, ethno-religious background, history of conflict and displacement, and their social system (*place factors*). For such communities, differences among the resilience responses they developed to the return of IS affiliates to their communities, when such returns were perceived as a threat to the community's social peace (*perceived threat*), are examined in the aftermath of the 2014-2017 IS occupation and ensuing military campaign to dislodge the group (*disrupting event*).

Drawing on a Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) method of comparative case study analysis, this research shows how differences in the social interaction factors of a community can create different resilience pathways, which can lead to two different resilience responses. These two resilience responses are exclusive resilience and inclusive resilience. For exclusive resilience, communities respond to the perceived threat of return by rejecting or restricting the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS, thereby aiming to keep the perceived threat away. In contrast, communities developing inclusive resilience allow the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS thereby aiming to mitigate the perceived threat. The two resilience responses have divergent outcomes: the return of IS affiliates to the community (inclusive resilience), or their rejection and expulsion (exclusive resilience).

Six Arab Sunni communities located in the Iraqi governorate of Anbar were selected by their similarity in place factors (shared independent variable), and differences in outcome (exclusive or inclusive resilience). This design allowed for investigation of the differences in the explanatory independent variable under study—the social interaction factors of resilience (Bennett and Elman, 2007; Anckar, 2008).

The MSSD method of comparative case study analysis provides specific details on the social interaction factors of resilience and examines how differences in this type of community factors create different resilience pathways leading to divergent outcomes (i.e., the exclusion or inclusion of IS affiliates). In doing so, this approach makes an original and important contribution to our understanding of community resilience, addressing questions such as: 'Which factors intervene in developing community resilience?' and 'Why does the type of resilience developed diverge when a shared threat is experienced by similar communities?'.

To capture the communities' social interaction factors, the four-element model of Sense of Community (SOC) is used as framework of analysis, as conceptualised by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The four elements of SOC are membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection. Each element is composed of a set of sub-elements which, in this study, are considered as the social interaction factors under analysis. By consistently using the four elements of SOC to analyse the social interaction factors of resilience, this study contributes to the open debate on community resilience—specifically, how to best capture these types of factors, supporting the four-element model of SOC as a viable and suitable framework of analysis.

The study findings revealed that pathways to exclusive and inclusive resilience emerged from a specific combination of social interaction factors associated with the four-element model of SOC.

1.6 Contribution

Research on social resilience, including community resilience—the focus of this study—is considered to be in its infancy and remains underexplored. Beyond the lack of agreement on a common definition of resilience—one of the main caveats for conducting research in this field—three main issues require further exploration to advance the understanding of how communities develop resilience. The first relates to measuring resilience which, as a starting point, requires having well-defined indicators to capture resilience factors. This is of particular importance when assessing the social interaction factors involved in community resilience; the ways in which to

capture these types of factors remains debated. The second issue relates to broadening the understanding on how the different factors influence each other and how they interlink to create diverse pathways of resilience (Brand and Jax, 2007; Davidson, 2010; Wilson, 2012). Third, most community resilience research has been conducted when resilience develops following a natural disaster, within the socio-ecological approach to resilience. However, little work has been done on community resilience developed following social conflicts and violence (Nuwayhid *et al.,* 2011; Wilson, 2012).

This study extends the current knowledge on these three issues and contributes to filling the gap in the existing research on community resilience. First, this study offers a clear analytical framework with well-defined indicators to study the social interaction factors of social resilience using SOC. Each sub-element of SOC is analysed as one of the social interaction factors of resilience in the communities. Since these factors are checked against communities with shared place factors—the second type of factors involved in the development of resilience—social interaction factors can be isolated and the validity of the proposed framework of analysis can be tested. Since each hypothesis is built around one of the SOC elements, the role of each element in the development of resilience can be tested in isolation. In a second analysis phase, the interlink between elements can be identified. Therefore, the study brings a community psychology approach by using the SOC framework to study community resilience. This approach is applied as an alternative attempt to measure social interaction indicators, thereby providing an alternative and novel analytical framework by which the less tangible factors of community resilience—the social interaction factors—can be assessed, measured and monitored at the community level, and eventually operationalised. As Cutter *et al.* (2008) reflected on, attempts to describe and assess resilience have yet to produce a model that can be effectively operationalised, and resilience cannot yet be measured and monitored at the local level. SOC and its well-defined sub-elements could be operationalised towards this aim, as this study exemplifies, if tailored to the specific context of application.

Second, the study provides insight on how social interaction factors influence the type of resilience developed by communities. Information is gained as to how different interlinkages between SOC elements create diverse resilience pathways leading to exclusive or inclusive resilience, isolated from place factors. The research design using case studies helps contribute to this second issue. As Maguire and Hagan (2007) argue, 'we have an intuitive knowledge of what makes a resilient community, there is as yet little research that systematically sets out such indicators. Methodologically, this may involve the identification of factors that predict higher levels of resilience by comparing communities that have responded differently to similar disasters. This study does specifically what Maguire and Hagan (2007) requested as it compares how six communities who experienced the IS conflict and faced the return of IS affiliates back to their communities, which led to the development of resilience, developed different resilience pathways ending in two different resilience responses: exclusive and inclusive.

In addition, this research takes an emic perspective to the study of community resilience. Special attention is focused on reflecting how the communities define the concepts used in the study, starting with identifying the threat perceived as causing resilience. Following this, there is focus on the concept of community resilience and the different types of resilience responses observed, as well as the contextualisation of the indicators of the SOC framework used in the analysis in a localised manner (Rigg *et al.,* 2008). This perspective is possible due to the extensive qualitative data collected on the ground. Within this emic approach, the research aims to resist falling into the normative aspects of resilience. Accordingly, there is no identification or distinguishment between a 'good' or 'bad', or a preferred resilience pathway. This is despite the two identified types of resilience leading to two divergent outcomes when it comes to the return of IS affiliates to the community: their return as an outcome of inclusive resilience, or their expulsion as an outcome of exclusive resilience (Walker *et al.,* 2010).

Last, the study provides exploration of conflict-related community resilience pathways with a recent example of community resilience to the return of IS affiliates to their communities in the

aftermath of the 2014-2017 IS conflict in Iraq. This adds to the growing number of examples of community resilience in fragility contexts.

This study, beyond its academic contribution, has direct applications at both the policy and programmatic levels. Understanding the elements of community resilience to the return of IS affiliates is of paramount importance to the design, implementation and/or support of community-led projects and activities contributing to peacebuilding efforts. Such efforts aim to avert the re-emergence of disputes by reintegrating and reconstructing the society in the aftermath of conflict (Väyrynen, 1997).

1.7 Outline of the study

Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2 Community Resilience** provides an overview of the origins of, and approaches to, resilience. It delves into the concept of community resilience and provides a workable definition of the term. The chapter then examines community resilience in fragile environments. It describes how resilience develops to a perceived threat and introduces the place- and social-interaction factors involved in the development of resilience.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses extends on the factors of resilience and provides the theoretical framework that serves as the basis of this study's analysis; specifically, using SOC as a framework of analysis to assess the social interaction factors of community resilience. This chapter then outlines the hypotheses of the study. Each hypothesis builds on one of the four SOC elements: membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection.

Chapter 4 Research Design, Methodology and Fieldwork explains the selection of a MSSD method of comparative case study analysis with different outcomes as the research design for this study, by using case studies as methodology to investigate variations in the types of resilience developed by communities facing the return of IS affiliates after conflict. Three communities who

developed inclusive resilience and three who developed exclusive resilience were studied. This research incorporated 42 in-depth interviews, 17 FGDs and 17 participatory mappings which comprised the primary data for this study.

Chapter 5 Contextualizing Resilience to the Return of IS affiliates narrates the historical events preceding the IS conflict in Iraq, focusing on the post-2003 period and the rise and fall of Al Qaeda, as well as the emergence of IS in this country. An overview of the post-IS context in Iraq with regards to social cohesion and community tension in the aftermath of the conflict is provided. The social system and governance in the communities are also explained in an attempt to provide enough context to understand the specificity of the data in the context of Anbar. This chapter proceeds by contextualising the concept of resilience in the communities of study and presents insight on how IS affiliation is understood by the communities.

Chapter 6 Membership, **Chapter 7 Influence**, **Chapter 8 Needs Fulfilment** and **Chapter 9 Shared Emotional Connection** are each dedicated to one of the four hypotheses built around one of the four SOC elements. These chapters discuss, in-depth, the empirical findings of the study. The detailed descriptions provided in these four chapters, with the addition of extensive quotes from interviewees, support and strengthen the credibility of the study (Tracy, 2010).

Chapter 10 describes how the different social interaction factors of resilience interlink and interact to create pathways to inclusive and exclusive resilience.

Finally, **Chapter 11** offers a general discussion of the study's contribution to theory and practice and outlines suggestions for further research on community resilience within the framework of SOC.

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

This chapter starts by revisiting the origins of the concept of resilience and how it has been studied over time. Historically, resilience has been studied via three main approaches: the ecological approach, the socio-ecological approach and the social approach, the latter of which frames this study on community resilience. This chapter then provides the working definition for the concept of resilience used in the study before shifting the focus to explain how resilience develops in communities when a threat is perceived. The factors that intervene in the development of community resilience are also covered.

A review of previous case studies of community resilience in fragile environments follows. This study aims to complement these by examining community resilience after the 2014-2017 IS conflict in Iraq.

The last section of this chapter focuses on the particularities of this study. The return of perceived IS affiliates led to the development of resilience in the communities, as it was perceived as a threat to the restoration of social peace in the communities in the aftermath of the IS conflict. Two different resilience responses were observed to develop in communities: inclusive resilience, whereby IS affiliates returned back to the communities, and exclusive resilience, whereby returned IDPs with perceived affiliation were rejected from the community.

2.1 Resilience: origins and approaches

From the Latin verb ‘resilire’, to leap back, rebound or recoil, resilience as a concept was first introduced in the 1960s and expanded throughout the 70s. This first line of research, which had an ecological approach, focused on the exploration of ecosystem response to disturbance (Wilson, 2012). The seminal work published by Holling (1973) defines the ecological approach to resilience. Here, resilience is seen as a measure of persistence in a system and is based on the

system's ability to return to the same set of relationships between variables after the disturbance is absorbed (Holling, 1973; Brand and Jax, 2007).

The concept of resilience became rapidly widely used across social science due to the concept's ability to explain human responses to external challenges (Wilson 2012; Ledesma, 2014). From the 1970s to the 1990s, a second line of resilience research developed, this one with a socio-ecological approach, in which resilience started to be applied to social systems. Under this approach, resilience is understood as a system's capacity to absorb disturbance and reorganise in a way in which the system can maintain its functioning. Within this approach, resilience is considered as a desirable characteristic of any system, social or ecological, to confront and recover from stressors.

The socio-ecological approach to resilience, initially based on expanding the ecological approach and applying it to human systems, inquired about the interlink between ecological and social systems—this interlink encompasses most of the current work on resilience. For example, most of the work on sustainability falls under the socio-ecological approach to resilience (Cumming *et al.,* 2005). However, the socio-ecological approach presents some limitations when applied to social resilience on its own, beyond the interlink between the social and ecological systems, and on the conditions under which social resilience develops (Langridge, Christian-Smith and Lohse, 2006).

One of the main limitations of applying the socio-ecological system to social systems alone is the characteristic of non-linearity these types of systems present. Social systems are considered non-lineal, meaning that after a shock, they do not return to the same state prior to the disturbance and evolve to another functioning state if they create resilience. In contrast, ecological systems may return to their original state.

These limitations of studying social resilience within the socio-ecological approach have been addressed by a third approach, the social approach, which focuses on resilience in social systems. With the social approach to resilience, the human-environment interlink is only one of many types of human interactions which may drive resilience (Wilson, 2012).

Characteristic of this approach is the assumption that social systems have the capacity to learn from the original disturbance (*disrupting event*) and retain memory of it. This information can then be used in a reactive manner to recover from the disturbance or, in an anticipatory manner, to protect the social system from a future similar or related threat when this is perceived (Adger, 2000; Davidson, 2010; Magis, 2010). This capacity of social systems to re-organise, change, and learn to evolve into what Wilson (2012) calls a 'qualitatively different' system as a result of human or natural-induced stresses, is at the core of the social approach to resilience. Resilience can thus be described as:

> [the] ability of a social system to respond and recover from disasters and includes those inherent conditions that allow the system to absorb impacts and cope with an event, as well as post-event, adaptive processes that facilitate the ability of the social system to re-organize, change, and learn in response to a threat. (Cutter et al., 2008 p.599)

Therefore, resilience results from the adaptative process that facilitates recovery from a disrupting event and anticipates a new similar or related disturbing event as a response of learning from the event that has disrupted the community. This capacity of adapting and learning from a disrupting event and developing resilience to a perceived related or similar threat might vary according to community factors, leading to variations in the resilience response developed.

This study frames resilience within the social approach and follows the working definition of resilience by Cutter *et al.,* (2008), which emphasises the capacity of a social system—in the case of this study, the community—to absorb the event, cope in the post-event, learn from the event, and develop a response when a future similar or related threat is perceived by the community.

The community factors might influence the capacity of the community to adapt and learn from the disturbing event, shaping the type of resilience response developed. The study takes into consideration the bottom-up approach to social resilience to examine human drivers of resilience within a social system—the community—exposed to the threat of disrupted social peace linked to the return of armed-group affiliates after conflict (Wilson, 2012). Also following Cutter *et al.,* (2008, p.599), for consistency purposes and due to the adequacy of their definition to this study, communities are understood as 'the totality of social system interaction within a defined geographical space'.

By adhering to the clear definition of resilience by Cutter *et al.,* (2008), this study intends to provide greater clarity of this term; many scholars have identified the issue of a lack of consensus around the multiple definitions of resilience (Bhamra, Dani and Burnard, 2011; Khanlou and Wray, 2014). For example, Brand and Jax (2007), in their categorisation of the concept of resilience, defined 10 different definitions of resilience from an analysis of key papers published over 35 years. This was partially encouraged by their concern regarding the lack of conceptual clarity the wide use of the term was having on the practical applicability of resilience, far from the original ecological meaning in which it was coined. As the authors concluded, a clear descriptive concept of resilience facilitates its operationalisation and applicability.

However, one aspect of the social approach to resilience, which this study attempts to circumvent, is the use of resilience as a normative concept. Already present in part of the work conducted under the ecological approach and carried over the socio-ecological approach, particularly when resilience was linked to sustainability, the normative use of the concept comes with intricate implications of 'good' and 'bad' and of 'positive' and 'negative' outcomes. These are amplified under the social approach to resilience (Olsson *et al.,* 2015). Under the social approach, resilience tends to be viewed on the positive spectrum of a continuum where vulnerability is on its edge, and where desirable outcomes emanate from a resilient pathway (Adger, 2000). However, resilience has also led to negative outcomes from the perspective of

community wellbeing; for example, when corruption within a social system has proven to be highly resilient, or when a dictatorship regime has shown to be resilient over time (Wilson, 2012).

In this study, the resilience outcomes observed are not assessed in terms of their desirability from the external perspective of an outsider to the community. Rather, both exclusive and inclusive resilience are considered as either good or bad, or one type of resilience may be considered as more desirable than another. It is, however, acknowledged that Olsson *et al.,* (2015) said, 'the policy use of resilience is almost exclusively normative'. If the findings of this study are to be framed with a policy lens to debate the potential for community-led social reintegration of former affiliates, inclusive resilience might be considered as the desirable outcome for the former affiliates and the whole community. This is notwithstanding the pressure the process puts heavily affected conflict communities under.

2.2 Community resilience in fragile environments

In fragile contexts characterised by repeated cycles of violence, communities are particularly at risk of facing an adverse situation. These communities also tend to display a higher number of vulnerability indicators due to their continuous exposure to conflict (Adger *et al.,* 2004). However, as community resilience is self-organised and sustained from within, with minimal outside support, communities can develop resilience in fragile contexts where violence is widespread (Carpenter, 2008). Even in the context of direct armed conflict, communities often anticipate the risk this poses to civilians and develop a resilience response to protect themselves and the community in an effective manner (Williams, 2013).

Sustaining social systems through resilience may be detrimental to social wellbeing (Davidson, 2010). For example, when a system sustains 'resilient malign ideologies' or a 'resilient malign dictatorship' (Wilson, 2012), persistent use of violence continues—this would fall under the normative conception of 'bad' resilience. Building 'positive' community resilience, however, is generally considered a pathway to reducing violence against civilians in conflict areas and a

precursor to a context of security (Bourbeau, 2015), as well as a key resource to conflict prevention (Carpenter, 2014).

Several case studies have shown resilience responses developed by fragile communities at risk or experiencing violent civil conflict. For example, in Haiti, a strong social capital has allowed the development of community resilience responses to underdevelopment and political instability. According to the World Bank, the resilience exhibited by these communities has protected the country from civil war and widespread social collapse. In the rural communities of Haiti, strong community cohesion has reinforced high levels of trust which seem to have led to the development of increased community resilience in comparison with urban areas (World Bank, 2006).

In Iraq, the urban communities of Baghdad with a mixed Sunni-Shia composition developed resilience to the sectarian violence experienced throughout the country in the aftermath of the 2003 US-led invasion, which impacted most of the capital city. The trust built among Sunni and Shia community members through local experiences and past interactions appeared to be one of the most important factors in developing resilience to sectarian violence. The feeling of attachment to the community, which involved positive bonds between community members and an emotional connection to the place, was also an important factor (Carpenter, 2014).

In Lebanon, Shia communities in the south showed resilience through all phases of the 2006 war; this response has been described as a lesson in community resilience. Communities used displacement as a strategy to protect themselves from the threat of bombardment of towns and villages at the onset of the conflict and self-evacuated in an orderly way. During the conflict, communities showed their ability to self-organise in the displacement centres and went through an immediate post-war adaptation upon returning home once the war stopped (Nuwayhid *et al.,* 2011).

In India, Aghajanian, Justino and Tranchant (2020) built on research in civil war contexts and violence-prone settings and found evidence of a positive relationship between conflict exposure and social cooperation. These authors explored how exposure to violence from riots in urban locations can lead to greater engagement in organisations as a strategy to invest in between-group interactions to mitigate future exposure to between-group violence. This can be understood as a pathway to resilience, despite the exposure to violence reducing trust and confidence between neighbours from different social groups.

The above case studies portray examples of community resilience responses developed in a context of fragility or as a result of conflict-induced displacement. A macro-data analysis of 16 studies covering Sierra Leone, Uganda, Burundi, Israel and Georgia, among others, in the aftermath of war, also highlighted how people exposed to war-related violence behave more cooperatively after war (Bauer *et al.,* 2016). This may reflect war-affected populations developing resilience through increased cooperation to conflict. But what leads to the development of resilience and which factors intervene in its development? The next section addresses these two aspects of resilience.

2.3 Community resilience: development and factors

As aforementioned, in this study, a 'community' is described as the totality of social system interactions within a defined geographical space (Cutter *et al.,* 2008). Communities are complex systems that form a network of interconnected linkages; these linkages act in a non-linear manner to create emergent behaviour when faced with a disturbance (Bhamra, Dani and Burnard, 2011). Such disturbances can be naturally-induced (for example, climate change, earthquakes, desertification, tsunami) or human-induced. Human-induced disturbances are related to human mismanagement of the environment (for example, linked to pollution), as well as economic or socio-political disturbances, the latter of which includes conflict. Another way to classify the disturbances a community might face is by distinguishing between exogenous disturbances or endogenous disturbances—disturbances which originate from outside the community or from

within the community, respectively (Wilson, 2012). This study investigates socio-political disturbances linked to violent conflict of an endogenous nature; specifically, the threat of the social peace of communities being disrupted by the return home of IS-perceived affiliates.

Before examining the factors leading to the development of resilience, it is necessary to outline some of the differences between individual and community resilience, the latter of which operates at the collective level (Nuwayhid *et al.,* 2011). This is particularly relevant as part of the research on resilience within social systems has focused on resilience at the individual level. Community resilience goes beyond the sum of the individual resiliencies within the system. It focuses on the process by which factors at the collective level—such as social, cultural or political factors—interact in an adverse situation and strengthen the group's cohesion as a result (Kulig, 2000; Manyena, 2006). This means that a community can organise itself to exhibit resilience when faced with adversity (Chaskin, 2008). The concept of community resilience incorporates the feeling of unity generated within a community which allows for this collective action. Community resilience is the outcome of a shared reaction to the disturbance caused by an adverse situation perceived as a threat (Kulig, Edge and Joyce, 2008).

Therefore, when a community perceives an event as a threat—that is, an event that is socially constructed by the community as a danger to its survival—the community has the potential to develop a resilience response to this perceived threat with the aim of protecting the community. To emphasise, it is the perception by the community of an event as a threat rather than the event itself that leads to the development of resilience (Adger, 2000; Chaskin, 2008; Davidson, 2010). This perception is unique to the community and depends on time, context and the previous experiences of the community. As such, similar events at different moments in time might be perceived differently by the same community as the interpretation of what constitutes a threat is not static and is dependent upon time and context (Bourbeau, 2013; 2015). An example relevant to this study is that violent extremist groups may alienate communities that initially welcomed them, by introducing a level of violence post-arrival that is unacceptable to the

community. This change in behaviour may prompt a reinterpretation of the threat to the community, regardless of the initial welcoming of the group (Hafez, 2017). Even if the community shares a common ideological goal with the group, the new behaviour might cause the community to perceive the group as a threat and thereby oppose it (McCauley, Clark and Moskalenko, 2017). This also means that communities may react differently to similar events based upon previous adverse situations as those experiences act as a feedback loop to the resilience process. Thus, an event that is perceived as a threat by one community might cause no reaction by another (Kulig, Edge and Joyce, 2008). Similarly, communities may develop different resilience responses to a perceived threat. Some communities may develop a type of resilience which aims to facilitate recovery from events that disrupted the community. Others may develop resilience aimed at avoiding negative outcomes and ensuring the protection and survival of the community (Chaskin, 1997; 2008).

Two types of factors intervene in the development of community resilience: place factors and social interaction factors. Place factors are descriptive attributes of the community regarding its composition, structure and circumstance. Social interaction factors shape the daily relations among community members and make the community function (Chaskin, 2008).

Within place factors, composition factors include the demographics of the community (including the community's distribution in terms of age, gender, class, tribe, religion and ethnicity), livelihoods, the built environment, and the natural environment where the community is embedded. Structure factors include the community's institutions and governance framework. Circumstance factors incorporate the accumulated experiences from the past that contribute to learning from previous crises, as well as other context-specific factors such as migration (Chaskin, 2008; Jacinto, Reis and Ferrão, 2020).

The second set of factors contributing to the development of resilience are social interaction factors; these are the focus of most research relating to the social approach to resilience and are

the focus of this study. Social interactions among community members shape the way the community functions. Social interaction factors include the nature of social ties and interactions among community members, as well as the context of norms, trust and resources where these interactions operate (Chaskin, 2008). The context where social interaction takes place is important as a collective response at the core of community resilience is unlikely to develop in a context where rules are unclear, or where there is mistrust among community members (Sampson, Morenoff and Gannon-Rowley, 2002).

Place factors, which are based on neighbourhood literature, tend to be better defined than social interaction factors, the latter of which have been disputed on which measurements and indicators are best to use to capture them (Chaskin, 2008). A wide array of frameworks has been proposed, sometimes in a rather confusing manner. Social capital (or specific dimensions of social capital, such as trust), social cohesion, collective efficacy, community efficacy, sense of belonging and SOC, the later used in this study, have been proposed and used to measure social interaction factors within a community (Khalili, Harre and Morley, 2015), though most of the work has been framed around 'capitals' within social capital (Wilson, 2012). As Chapter 3 will argue, the four-element model of SOC, as proposed by McMillan and Chavis (1986), is a suitable framework of analysis to capture the social interaction factors of community resilience and will be used in this study.

The communities included in this study share similar place factors. This provides the opportunity to isolate and specifically examine the social interaction factors of resilience to see how differences may lead to the development of exclusive or inclusive resilience. This is possible due to the use of a MSSD method of comparative case study analysis by which the social interaction factors work as an explanatory independent variable and the place factors are the shared independent variable. This is further explained in Chapter 4. Although the core of the analysis builds around the social interaction factors of resilience, the shared place factors are also covered to provide sufficient context to understand the dynamics by which resilience developed.

Composition factors are explored in Chapter 4, where community selection is examined. Chapter 5 provides information on the structure factors when explaining Anbar's social system and tribal customs. Circumstance factors are also covered when explaining the history of conflict and related migration in the area.

Before detailing the framework of analysis, it is important to explore the threat that led to the development of resilience in the Iraqi communities included in this study, as well as the two types of approaches to resilience the communities developed: exclusive and inclusive resilience. These are examined in the next section.

2.4 Community resilience responses: exclusive resilience versus inclusive resilience

The previous section has shown that when a disrupting event occurs, the community has the capacity to adapt and learn from it. Additionally, the community can use this learning and adaptative capacity to anticipate a similar or related event perceived as a threat to the community. The perception of this related event as a threat might lead to the development of resilience to protect the community. Inherent community factors might influence the community's learning and adaptative capacity, shaping the resilience response developed to the perceived threat.

In this study, the disrupting event experienced by the communities is the IS occupation in Iraq and the subsequent military campaign to dislodge the group that spanned from 2014 to 2017.
The related event perceived as a threat by the community is the disruption of social peace linked to the return of IS affiliates to the communities during the post-IS period. This was not only due to the perception of IS affiliates as a security risk but also to the potential increase in intra-community violence linked to revenge attacks among IS affiliates and IS victims' relatives. The following quotes from representatives of the local authorities in Ebbah demonstrate this:

> *Community leaders are afraid from the return of violence if those [IS affiliates] return, and they do not want the internal fighting between families to develop into a tribal one.*

> *Firstly, I fear the clashes and violence their return will bring among community members, and secondly, they [IS affiliates] might be a link to Daesh's return, we are afraid that they might be a bridge for IS to enter the region in future.*

The fear of a spiral of violence linked to revenge is explained by the tribal custom that prevails in these communities—this custom allows for the victims' relatives to avenge the crime committed by the perpetrator by punishing the perpetrator's relatives. As Chapter 5 details, according to tribal custom, the male relatives of the victims—up to five-degree lineage, known as the *khamsa* (all those male relatives who share a great-great-grandfather)—are obliged to avenge the injury or death of a relative when there is a conflict, notably a blood feud. Reprisal by the *khamsa* can include the killing of someone of the perpetrator's *khamsa,* unless a *diya* (blood price) is agreed upon through tribal mediation and paid by the perpetrator's *khamsa* to the victim's relatives (Asfura-Heim, 2014). While mediation is taking place, the offender and his relatives might be sent away until the *diya* is agreed upon by the two families, a mechanism known in tribal customary law as *jail.* This option offers protection to the accused and their family and protects the victim's family honour.

This fear was not only explained by community leaders but also conferred by community members and the expelled IDPs with perceived affiliation. For example, the youth in Ebbah stated:

> *Some of them [members of the community] threatened to kill the families [of accused community members] if they returned, so their return was approved with the condition that they live in other homes or other places in the same area [outside the community]. This option only works for families who have a son proven to have killed and taken part in killings during IS.*

An IDP from Shaqlawiyah Centre, rejected by the community upon return, and interviewed in the Amiriyat al-Fallujah (AAF) IDP camp explained:

They thought that our return would threaten the social peace and saw our inability to integrate again to the community. Because of what they thought, we were deprived from returning to live there.

In response to this, representatives of the local authorities in Ebbah conferred:

Let me explain. They [the community] are afraid from them [IDPs with perceived affiliation] because they might allow IS to return. But we are also afraid for their [IDPs with perceived affiliation] security because the people who were hurt by IS could seek revenge from them.

In a similar manner, the interviewed youth in Albo Shejal explained:

I foresee that violence will increase if they [IDPs with perceived affiliation] return because of revenge acts and the resulting strife between them and the families of the [IS] victims).

Thus, the likelihood of, and potential for, revenge attacks is high if the return of the perpetrator's relative/s is not mediated by community leaders first. Additionally, if the compensation money is not paid to the victim's relatives, this could cause a sharp increase in violence within the community, as explained by the interviewed representative of the local authorities in Ebbah:

The families of the victims will seek revenge of their children who were killed by Daesh and so there is fear that there will be fighting between those [IS affiliates] and the families of the victims.

Although communities reacted to the same threat, the resilience responses developed differed. This was identified through the divergent outcomes among communities upon the return of IS affiliates. Some communities developed exclusive resilience whereby communities responded to the perceived threat of return by expelling or restricting the return of families with a perceived affiliation to IS, aiming to keep the perceived threat away. Other communities developed inclusive resilience whereby communities allowed the return of families with a perceived IS affiliation, instead aiming to mitigate the perceived threat from within the community. The different resilience responses resulted in divergent outcomes. The return of community members with

perceived affiliation to IS was allowed in those community which developed inclusive resilience; in communities which developed exclusive resilience, IS perceived affiliates where expelled or their return was banned.

This study argues that differences in social interaction factors inherent to the community influenced the capacity of the community to learn and adapt from the IS occupation and subsequent war against the group. This impacted the resilience responses developed by different communities with shared place factors when developing resilience to the related threat perceived in the disruption of social peace linked to the return of IS affiliates.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The previous chapter showed how the perception of an event as a threat by the community can lead to the development of community resilience, with the aim of protecting the community. Two types of factors intervene in this process: place factors and social interaction factors (Chaskin, 2008). The social interaction factors of resilience are at the core of the analysis of this study, which seeks to understand how differences in these factors lead to divergent resilience pathways in response to a shared perceived threat, generating exclusive or inclusive resilience.

The first section of this chapter explains in detail the four-element SOC model. Outlined by McMillan and Chavis in 1986, this model has since been the base of research on SOC. This section follows by justifying why the four-element SOC model is a suitable framework of analysis to assess the social interaction factors of resilience used in this study.

The second section of this chapter establishes the hypotheses this study attempts to confirm or refute. These hypotheses are targeted towards examining how different combinations of the four SOC elements at the sub-level, which capture the social interaction factors of resilience, operate to develop different resilience pathways. Such pathways lead to exclusive or inclusive resilience in the communities of Iraq when faced by the return of former IS affiliates which are seen to threaten the community's social peace. Each hypothesis is built around one of the SOC elements.

3.1 Social interaction factors of community resilience: SOC as framework of analysis

The four elements of SOC, as conceptualised by McMillan and Chavis (1986), are used in this study to capture and analyse the social interaction factors of community resilience. SOC goes beyond the community structure and attributes to explore the 'experience of community' which implies that members feel part of a group, share common values and beliefs, and have affective attachment to, and investment in, the group (Sonn and Fisher, 1996). SOC was first identified and introduced to the field of community psychology by Sarason (1974) who argued that SOC is at the

core of the self-definition of community members and thus should also be the core concept in community psychology.

Departing from a previous definition by McMillan (1976) who understood SOC as 'a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members´ needs will be met through their commitment to be together' (McMillan, 1976, cited in McMillan and Chavis, 1986, p.9), McMillan and Chavis (1986) formalised SOC as being comprised of four elements: membership, influence, needs fulfilment, and shared emotional connection. To date, these elements have represented the main framework from which to analyse SOC (Nowell and Boyd, 2014).

Since McMillan and Chavis's four-element model of SOC was conceptualised in 1986, and the SOC elements and sub-elements mapped by the authors, it has broadly been used as the starting point for research on SOC across a vast array of disciplines. It remains a 'meaningful construct across a range of types of communities' (Brodsky, Loomis and Marx, 2002, p.319), including in the analysis of community resilience. In fact, SOC has been identified as a valid framework of social resilience with high validity in the three phases (pre-disaster, response and recovery) which occur when an event disrupts a community (Khalili, Harre and Morley, 2015). As early as 1974, Iscoe suggested that variations in SOC among communities might be due to differences in both their capacity to cope with external disruptions and their ability to provide care to community members (Iscoe, 1974). These factors relate directly to the capacity of the community to develop resilience.

What follows is an introduction to each of these four elements and how they operate together. Each element, as well as its sub-elements, is further explained in the next section when the hypotheses of the study are outlined. Each hypothesis is built around one of the four SOC elements. The working definitions of SOC and its elements, as outlined by the authors, are employed as the basis for this study. This is consistent with most of the existing body of research on SOC (Nowell and Boyd, 2014).

Membership is the sense of belonging and relating to one´s community. Membership to the community sets the borders of who is and is not part of the community. Thus, it defines the 'we' and by default establishes those who do not belong to the community: the 'others'. Boundaries are also used to define a third group: the 'deviants', those members considered to have broken the common rules or who act against the rule consensus (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). The greater the sense of identification of an individual with their group, the more solid and defined the individual will perceive the groups' boundaries (Staub, 2003).

In contexts where sense of order and authority have deteriorated, frequently the case in post-conflict scenarios as in this study, deviants might be pushed out and/or denounced by the community. They become scapegoats used to strengthen and reaffirm the 'legitimate' boundaries of the 'we' (Erikson, 1966). Therefore, community boundaries are not static. They can be used to both cut out 'non-members' and become more solid, yet also expand to accommodate group members and become less solid (Marc, 2012).

Membership is composed of five sub-elements: boundaries, emotional safety, personal investment, common symbol system, and sense of belonging and identification.

Influence refers to the individual´s capacity to have a say in what the community does, as well as on the capacity of the community to influence the individual and make them conform (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Membership sparks SOC, but influence gives SOC the authoritative structure it needs to be sustained. Influence is created when a community has order, decision-making capacity, and group norms that allow leaders to influence community members and members to influence leaders concurrently. Additionally, influence occurs within communities where individuals self-conform to a set of common rules to obtain validation (McMillan, 1996). When it comes to the development of resilience, influence might determine the extent to which each

resilience strategy develops, and is subsequently implemented, when there are divergent views within the community.

Influence is composed of the following sub-elements: individual influence on the community, community influence on the individual, community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation.

Needs fulfilment relates to the material and non-material rewards an individual benefits from by being part of a community. McMillan and Chavis (1986, p.13) affirm that 'People are attracted to others whose skills or competence can benefit them in some way. People seem to gravitate toward people and groups that offer the most rewards…The main point is that people do what serves their needs.' According to these authors, a community needs to be able to facilitate a 'person-environment fit' to fulfil the individuals' needs**.**

In a post-conflict context, competition among community members for resources might occur where community resources are limited due to devastation in the areas directly affected by conflict. As explained by Staub (2003), difficult living conditions might lead to self-focus and competition over resources, which limits community bounding. In this study, it remains to be seen how depleted resources affect the development of resilience within the needs fulfilment element.

Needs fulfilment is composed of the following sub-element: ability of the community to facilitate person-environment fit.

Shared emotional connection incorporates the community´s shared past and bonding events. It brings the community together and makes its individuals identify with the other members of the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Within the element of shared emotional connection, experiences of conflict and crisis serve as strong bonding events. Previous conflict experiences can lead to victimised groups feeling vulnerable and perceiving others—particularly those

considered as deviants or outsiders to the group—as a threat, leading to the development of community resilience (Staub, 2003).

Shared emotional connection is composed of the following sub-elements: quantity of contact, quality of contact, closure of events, shared bonding events, investment, experiences of honour and humiliation, and spiritual bond.

Table 1 summarises the elements and sub-elements of SOC. For the purpose of this study, since the analysis is conducted at the sub-level, the sub-elements of SOC are considered as social interaction factors of resilience and labelled as such.

Table 1: Social interaction factors of resilience within McMillan and Chavis's four-element model of SOC (McMillan and Chavis, 1986) / *excluded from the analysis, as explained in page 38.

Membership	**Influence**	**Needs fulfilment**	**Shared emotional connection**
Boundaries	Individual influence on the community	Ability of the community to facilitate person-environment fit	Quantity of contact
Emotional safety	Community influence on the individual		Quality of contact
Personal investment*	Community need for conformity		Closure of events (related to group cohesiveness)
Common symbol system	Individual need for consensual validation		Shared bonding events (experience of crisis)
Sense of belonging and identification			Investment
			Experiences of honour or humiliation
			Spiritual bond

The four elements of SOC work together to create SOC. Each set of sub-elements (factors) work vertically to create each of the four elements, while the four elements horizontally feed each

other to maintain SOC. An example of one of the ways these dynamics might occur follows, based on the examples given by McMillan and Chavis (1986): a certain need might arise that affects some individual who organised and created a group to advocate for it (needs fulfilment). Creating a group implies membership; members meet and discuss solutions, spending time together in the group. This establishes a shared emotional connection. If a group member feels the other group members are listening to them and that they are contributing to defining a solution, they will be more willing to participate (influence).

In this study, I argue that SOC is a valid and suitable framework of analysis for the study of the social interaction factors of resilience. Further, I claim that this framework presents certain advantages in the study of community resilience. First, as plainly stated by Pooley, Cohen and Pike (2005, p.73):

> knowledge of communities and how communities operate is the domain of community psychologists…Community psychologists can offer insight into how, in what manner, and why individuals relate to systems…as community psychologists, our conceptual understanding of how individuals interact and relate to others in communities is through the concept of sense of community.

Community psychology, therefore, frames social interactions in relation to the system within which they operate. Accordingly, the definition of resilience by Cutter *et al.,* (2008) applied in this study understands resilience as the:

> ability of a social system to respond and recover from disasters and includes those inherent conditions that allow the system to absorb impacts and cope with an event, as well as post-event adaptive processes that facilitate the ability of the social system to re-organise, change, and learn in response to a threat. (Cutter *et al.,* 2008, p.599)

Here, community is recognised as the totality of social system interaction within a defined geographical space. Therefore, community psychology and its focus on how the community operates becomes a suitable field of study from which to identify a framework of analysis.

Second, compared to other constructs such as social capital and social cohesion, SOC is a well-defined and measurable concept with well-defined factors which can be used as a framework for analysis (Pooley, Cohen and Pike, 2005). Therefore, using SOC in its operationalised model of four elements provides a well-defined framework of analysis. This incorporates the understanding of community as a system hosting a network of relations and reflects the definition of community and community resilience employed in this study.

Third, although SOC was initially framed as an individual construct, by focusing on how an individual experiences community, SOC has expanded to examine SOC at the community level (Buckner, 1988; Puddifoot, 1996; Perkins and Long, 2002). This expansion has broadened the level of application of SOC and brought with it the development of new tools, scales and protocols aiming to capture community-level measures of SOC beyond the aggregation of individual-level data (Buckner, 1988; Shinn, 1990; Puddifoot, 1996; Fisher and Sonn, 1999; Brodsky, Loomis and Marx, 2002; Perkins and Long, 2002). Community resilience assumes that communities have the ability to exhibit resilience as resilient actors that respond to adversity to protect themselves (Chaskin, 2008). Therefore, the framework of analysis used to capture community resilience needs to operate beyond the individual and expand to the collective level where community resilience develops.

Fourth, SOC has not only expanded from the individual to the collective level but also to operate as a bipolar construct. Although SOC was initially conceptualised and operationalised in a unipolar manner, in which the presence of SOC was associated with the presence of protective factors in the community and the absence of SOC associated with the reduced presence or absence of these factors, it has since expanded to be used in a bipolar manner. As such, SOC is not limited to 'positive' SOC (by which individuals feel positive about the community—they feel that they belong, that their needs can be covered, that they shared common symbols and beliefs, and they feel they want to invest in it) or 'neutral' SOC (by which the individual has a neutral relationship

towards the community and their feelings towards the community are low or inexistent). Rather, SOC also includes 'negative' SOC by which the individual has a negative relationship with the community which is not necessarily linked to a negative outcome. This phenomenon was discovered by Brodsky (1996).

Brodsky, who pioneered the expansion of SOC to a bipolar construct, showed how negative or neutral SOC can lead to an outcome that benefits the individual. For example, in a study of resilient mothers in communities at risk, Brodsky (1996) demonstrated that a negative SOC among some community members was conducive to their development of resilience. This led to positive outcomes in communities which were considered unhealthy, unfit or dangerous. Fisher and Sonn (2007a) also demonstrated how positive SOC led to the exclusion stigmatisation of newly arrived community members, migrants and refugees in Australia.

Viewing SOC as a bipolar construct has helped broaden its application when studying at-risk communities in which conflict is recurrent. Further research on negative and neutral SOC, and how these might influence the development of resilience, has been identified as a gap in the literature that requires further study (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990). Since this study utilises SOC in its bipolar manner, it contributes to reducing this knowledge gap. Moreover, it also helps circumvent the normative ties often associated with the resilience concept when it comes to the development of community resilience (Olson *et al.,* 2015). This study applies this conceptualisation of SOC as a bipolar construct and analyses both the presence and absence of the social interaction factors included in the framework of analysis.

Finally, SOC is experienced differently by diverse population groups, such as females and youth (Pretty and McCarthy, 1991; Royal and Rossi, 1996; Evans 2007); these groups also differ in how they experience conflict. For example, women might be contributing actors to the outbreak of violence by inciting men to protect the common interests of the group, including honour and reputation (Sørensen, 1998). Such interests are factors within SOC - shared emotional connection.

The gender and youth component of SOC is a topic that could be explored further and this research does so by examining female, male and youth variations in a cross-cutting manner within each element of SOC.

3.2 Defining the hypothesis: SOC and the development of inclusive/exclusive resilience

As covered, the four elements of SOC are: membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection. Each SOC element is composed of a set of social interaction factors that lead to the development of community resilience. In this section, four hypotheses are drawn, one for each element of SOC, reflecting the contribution to the development of inclusive and exclusive resilience of each element. The underpinning mechanisms for each hypothesis are also outlined based on existing theory on each specific SOC element and its links to resilience. These hypotheses thus reflect the current knowledge and literature on SOC; however, due to the specificities of the context where the study takes place, an open-minded approach is taken to consider alternative explanations.

3.2.1 H1: Membership

Membership can be considered the first and most important element of SOC as it depicts and determines who is and who is not part of the community (Schneider, Gruman and Coutts, 2012). Membership is the feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore has the right to belong; it determines who is part of the group or the 'we', who is a 'deviant', and who is part of the 'others', outside the group (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Membership incorporates five factors: boundaries, emotional safety, common symbol systems, sense of belonging and identification, and personal investment (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

- **Boundaries**

Boundaries are a key factor within membership as they determine who belongs and who does not belong to a group (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). If, from a geographical perspective, boundaries are a functional measure that delineate an area or an administrative division from a

political perspective, from a psychological perspective, they reflect the residents' perception; thus, community boundaries might be blurred (Sharifi, 2016). From a social system perspective, boundaries serve to limit the different components that form a system and define the system's range of activity within a larger environment. When applied to a community, boundaries limit the flow of human behaviour—otherwise unlimited—that circulates within the system. Therefore, it is the behaviour of its members that determines the boundaries of a social system and community members are the ones who decide which behaviours or attitudes are considered as deviating (Erikson, 1961).

This study found interesting results regarding the use of the deviant by communities in the development of inclusive resilience (see Chapter 7). As such, further information regarding this matter is provided in the following paragraphs.

It is the conforming group members' interpretation of an attribute, as opposed to the behaviour itself, that defines it as such. This occurs through a social labelling process. In this process, community members first interpret a behaviour as deviating. Next, community members who enact this behaviour are defined by the rest as deviants. Finally, the societal reaction by which people identified as deviant become treated as such is activated. Importantly, not all of those who present a behaviour considered by the community as deviating are considered by this community as deviant; therefore, it is the differential treatment received by those 'labelled' as deviants which eventually categorises them as such (Kitsuse, 1961; Simmons, 1965). As group norms are dynamic and respond to contextual changes, someone who is initially considered and labelled as deviant at a specific time may subsequently become considered as appropriate by the group (Chan, Louis and Jetten, 2010; Jetten and Hornsey, 2014).

Within a community, deviants play a role in defining and maintaining boundaries (Dentler and Erikson, 1959) and contribute to making these solid (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). With regards to boundary definition, it is by means of comparison with the deviants that community members

establish the range of what is considered as accepted within the boundaries of the community. The blame that deviants receive serves as a scapegoat by the community to remove ambivalent attitudes and redefine accepted roles in the community (Dentler and Erikson, 1959). Therefore, derogation of the deviants is aimed at protecting and maintaining the group's identity (Hutchison *et al.,* 2008). Deviants, when they challenge the group's norms, undermine the between-group distinctiveness as much as they threaten within-group cohesiveness, reducing the clarity of the in-group boundaries (Jetten and Hornsey, 2014). In this study, which includes geographically proximate communities with similar ethno-religious and tribal composition, the between-group distinctiveness and within-group cohesiveness challenged by the deviant community members are not at the level of the communities included in the study. Rather, they occur between the Anbari communities and the IS affiliates. The IS group might embrace and accept the deviant behaviour which is rejected by the communities.

The interplay between community members with control functions in the system and deviants acts as a mechanism for boundary maintenance. Additionally, the need felt by community members to deal with deviance also contributes to bringing community members together. Through the process of punishing or apprehending deviant individuals, the community reinforces what the community is and what it can do, as well as the degree of jurisdiction that it has over such individuals (Dentler and Erikson, 1959; Erikson, 1961; 1963). Deviants tend to be less harshly considered when they exaggerate group distinctiveness than when they dilute it. This is because the group requires distinction from other groups to maintain its boundaries (Hichy, Mari and Capozza, 2008).

There is a close link between the use of deviants by communities to define and maintain boundaries, and the pressure to conform—the latter of which is one of the factors within SOC-influence. Boundary definition and boundary maintenance through deviants contribute to maintaining the equilibrium of the system and promote its stability over time. This reflects the tendency of social systems to accommodate deviance rather than eliminate it, which is done by

means of pressure to conform. Social systems have a centripetal organisation principle and the behaviour of actors is attracted towards its nucleus, creating uniformity among the social system actors. For any conduct that is not attracted to its centre by positive conformity, the community tries to attract it by means of pressure towards conformity. The members that deviate from conforming community members receive the pressure of the group towards conformity. Absorbing members with deviating attitudes further establish those defined as leaders, who have an agency control role, to their leadership roles. Contrarily, those members with deviating attitudes tend to be stigmatised and experience a hostile social response (Dentler and Erikson, 1959; Erikson, 1961). This falls under the factor of quality of contact within SOC-shared emotional connection. Deviants can also experience rejection and social isolation and their actions become prejudged. This results in increased difficult in changing the perception the community has over the deviants' actions, which have a function of social control (Simmons, 1965). This is because the conforming members want to protect the individual self-image they present to the group. Individual members of the group distance or dissociate from the deviants in order to limit the threat of being associated with the derogated members (Eidelman and Biernat, 2003; Jetten and Hornsey, 2014). The levels of shame and embarrassment that the deviant causes to individual group members is correlated with the level of their rejection (Chekroun and Nugier, 2011). Quality and quantity of contact, as well as experiences of honour and humiliation, are all factors within shared emotional connection which are explored under hypothesis 4.

In short, communities will try to absorb deviance into their systems to preserve the uniformity and consensus of the group. This occurs by exerting pressure towards the deviant members to change their opinion (Marques, Abrams and Serôdio, 2001). At the same time, to preserve the self-image of adherence to community norms, communities will stigmatise those with deviating attitudes.

However, there are two occasions in which this 'absorbing' strategy does not occur. The first is when the community perceives that the pressure to conform towards uniformity will be fruitless.

The second is when the members are perceived as dangerous to the group (Kelley and Thibault, 1954, cited in Dentler and Erikson, 1959) either because the group's identity is challenged, or the group's position is threatened. In these occasions, the deviants are more likely to be derogated than absorbed (Branscombe *et al.,* 1993; Marques, Abrams and Serôdio, 2001; Jetten and Hornsey, 2014).

- **Sense of belonging and identification**

Sense of belonging and identification relates to the expectation individuals have that they will fit into the community and have a place there. It also includes feeling accepted by the community. Sense of belonging is two-way: it is the individual faith or expectation of belonging to the community, as well as acceptance by the community. Acceptance, in turn, reinforces the attachment of the individual (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). One of the indicators to measure sense of belonging and identification is willingness to sacrifice for the community. When the lines between the individual and the in-group blur, denoting a higher sense of belonging and identification, individuals are more willing to act in defence of the group and undertake high-risk activities (Gómez and Vázquez, 2015).

- **Emotional safety**

Emotional safety entails feeling safe and secure both physically and subjectively in the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Emotional safety is enabled by the presence of boundaries as these provide a safe space where needs and feelings can be exposed and intimacy developed. Emotional safety extends beyond direct physical security to encompass the understanding, care and empathy received by the community. Community members can speak their truth and explain how they feel—this is well received by the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Feeling secure with people of one's kind who live in the same community and who protect each other in times of struggle, has been associated with experiencing emotional safety in one's community (Sonn and Fisher, 1996).

- **Common symbol system**

The fourth factor within SOC- membership is a common symbol system. This is understood by McMillan and Chavis (1986) as the agreed social conventions such as myths, symbols, rituals, language and dressing. These aspects indicate membership or allegiance to a group and can facilitate notions of separateness and belonging (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

When it comes to the link between boundaries and a common symbol system, the latter plays an important role in maintaining boundaries and serves as a vehicle to unify group members due to the strong integrative function of collective representation. Additionally, with regards to deviance, communities establish localised mechanisms to deal with this (Erikson, 1963). Rites, which are part of a community's common symbol system, are one such mechanism by which, traditionally, the deviant is formally confronted by community leaders who have a control authority role to issue a judgement; this marks the deviants' placement to this role. Compared to other rituals which mark the end of a role, such as a graduation ceremony, there is no end ritual to remove a deviant from their role (Erikson, 1961; 1963). Unless the group changes its position and reintegrates the rejected deviant, the deviant maintains this status, even if they are vindicated (Jetten and Hornsey, 2014).

- **Personal investment**

Personal investment is a feeling that one has earned a place in the group (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). This factor is excluded from the analysis in this study as here, SOC refers to communities of birth; therefore, community members do not invest in becoming members of the community. However, personal investment remains captured in the analysis through two mechanisms. The first mechanism is personal investment in terms of time and resources dedicated by a community member. This is one of the factors of shared emotional connection, the fourth element of SOC. The second mechanism is partially captured under the membership factor of sense of belonging and identification through the willingness of community members to undertake high-risk

activities in defence of community integrity. Such willingness denotes personal investment from the community member.

Hypotheses and underpinning causal mechanisms

Based on the above, the hypotheses tested in this study with reference to SOC-membership are:

- H1 (A): Communities with a clearly defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.
- H1 (B): Communities with a loosely defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

These hypotheses are based on the underpinning causal mechanism that communities with a clearly defined SOC-membership will have better-defined boundaries. Such boundaries reinforce the feeling of sense of belonging and identification, the common symbol system and emotional safety in the community. Overall, this leads to communities considering the IS affiliates as 'non-members' or 'deviants' and results in them being expelled from the community.

3.2.2 H2: Influence

SOC-influence refers to the individual´s capacity to have a say on what the community does as well as on the capacity of the community to influence the individual and make them conform (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). SOC-influence is composed of two sets of bi-directional factors. The first set of factors is individual influence on the community and community influence on the individual. The second is community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation.

SOC-influence reinforces membership in a two-way manner. The first way is via individual influence on the community factor. In particular, when the individual has multiple overlapping SOC towards several groups, individual capacity to influence the community might make one group more appealing to the individual than another. The individual might feel their opinions are

accepted and important, reinforcing the specific factor of SOC-membership sense of belonging and identification described under hypothesis 1.

The second way in which influence reinforces SOC-membership is by bringing cohesiveness and uniformity to the community through the factors of community influence on the individual, community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation. In this context, cohesiveness is understood as the result of all the forces acting on the members to remain in the group (Festinger, 1950).

The need for conformity comes from the community-side as well as from the individual-side as cohesiveness is contingent on the community's ability to influence its members and get them to conform. At the same time, the individual necessitates this conformity to validate their opinions. When this need for consensual validation makes an individual freely conform, this self-chosen conformity contributes to reinforcing community norms, included within the common symbol system factor within SOC-membership. However, when the individual feels forced to adhere to the set of common norms, and their capacity to express their individual freedom is curtailed, SOC is negatively affected.

Hypotheses and underpinning causal mechanisms

In the high hierarchic context of Anbar communities, the capacity of influence of community leaders towards the community's constituency (measured with the factor *community influence on the individual*) might be profound and highly top-down. In a strategy to reinforce their power, tribal leaders have collaborated with the Iraqi government to regulate the return process in their areas. Tribal mechanisms have been used to regulate returns and tribal peace agreements have been signed and implemented in the Anbar area (see Chapter 5 for a detailed explanation). Thus, leaders in the community appear to be interested in receiving the perceived affiliates back into their communities regardless of the perceived affiliates being perceived as non-conforming with community values and norms. Leaders might have also used their influence to impose the return

of perceived affiliates despite community members—particularly relatives of IS victims—opposing it. This dynamic would result in the development of inclusive resilience in communities with SOC-influence heavily vested in the factor *community influence on the individual* (analysed as the community leaders' capacity to influence community members). In communities where relatives of IS victims were able to influence the rest of the community to oppose the victims' return, via SOC-influence vested in *individual influence on the community*, exclusive resilience would have developed.

Based on the above, the below hypotheses referring to SOC-influence are to be tested in this study.

- H2 (A): Communities with prevalence of individual influence on the community are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.
- H2 (B): Communities with prevalence of community influence on individuals (understood as community leaders' capacity to influence their constituency) are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

3.2.3 H3: Needs fulfilment

Following the definition of needs fulfilment by McMillan and Chavis (1986), community members expect their community to meet their needs. Accordingly, communities distribute their resources and social credentials to meet the needs of community members (Lardier, Reid and Garcia-Reid, 2018). The SOC framework designed by McMillan and Chavis (1986) departs from the approach of 'community as a resource' by which the community fulfils psycho-social and physical needs. Rather, the framework explains the role of community in contributing to the wellbeing of its members, as well as the engagement of members with the community (Nowell and Boyd, 2014).

But what happens in depleted communities with limited resources available to meet community members' needs, as is the case in this study? How does competition among community members

over existing resources affect the dynamics and interactions among community members and SOC overall?

The main needs among returnees to the Anbar governorate include access to health services, drinking water, education, and employment and livelihood opportunities (IOM Iraq, 2019b). These reflect the dire living conditions present in the communities included in this study. In Iraq, perceived competition over limited resources has been shown to affect the likelihood of host community members of integrating IDPs displaced from the IS crisis into their communities. Additionally, frustration over the levels of public service provision makes community members less inclined to accept the IDPs in the long term (IOM Iraq, Social Inquiry and RWG, 2019).

Therefore, although McMillan and Chavis (1986) exclude basic needs from their initial SOC framework, in this study, basic needs are included and tested as part of hypothesis 3 related to SOC–needs fulfilment. This is because basic needs are central to the current conditions in the communities. I argue that competition over resources might affect the social dynamics in the community as well as the overall SOC. With the aim of testing this assumption, competition over resources offered by the community feed the underpinning mechanisms for hypothesis 3, in which limited resources available in the community might limit acceptance of IDPs with perceived IS affiliation. This reflects their presence increasing competition over existing resources. Communities with greater access to resources which can better cover community members' needs might be more accepting of returning IDPs with affiliation as the competition over limited resources is lower.

Hypotheses and underpinning causal mechanisms

Based on the above, with regards to SOC-needs fulfilment, this study attempts to test the below hypotheses.

- H3 (A): Communities with more resources to fulfil community members' needs are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

- H3 (B): Communities with fewer resources to fulfil community members' needs are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.

This third hypothesis is based on the following underpinning causal mechanism: when community members feel communities can cover their needs, they might be more open to accepting community members with perceived affiliation as the competition over existing resources is lower. When community members perceive the resources offered by the community are scarce, competition among community members emerges, limiting the willingness to share these resources with those members seen as affiliated to IS.

Hypothesis 3 remains framed within the 'community as a resource' approach used by McMillan and Chavis (1986) but expands it by including basic needs. This makes an important contribution to the scholarship of SOC and the attempts to expand its understanding and scope. The findings under SOC-needs fulfilment, with the addition of basic needs in a context where the community infrastructure and services have been highly damaged from the IS conflict, might also inform the growing body of literature that frames SOC within a 'community as a responsibility' approach (Nowell and Boyd, 2014). This approach tends to better explain a higher engagement towards the community through greater investment in terms of time and resources (Nowell and Boyd, 2014). This is one of the factors of SOC-shared emotional connection.

3.2.4 H4: Shared emotional connection

Shared emotional connection is the fourth element of SOC. It is made up of a set of factors: shared bonding events, quality of contact, quantity of contact, closure of events, experiences of honour and humiliation, spiritual bond and personal investment. According to McMillan and Chavis (1986, p.14), shared emotional connection can be understood to be present in communities who offer members positive ways to interact, important events to share and ways to resolve them positively, opportunities to honour members, opportunities to invest in the community, and opportunities to experience a spiritual bond among members.

- **Shared bonding events**

As emphasised by McMillan and Chavis (1986), a key factor of shared emotional connection is the set of shared events experienced by the community which become part of the community's history. With regards to these shared events, McMillan and Chavis (1986) departed from the following two assumptions based on previous work by Wright (1943), Myers (1962) and Wilson and Miller (1961):'The more important the shared event is to those involved, the greater the community bond' and 'There appears to be tremendous bonding among people who experience a crisis together.'

However, as already cautioned by Erikson in 1991, when the shared event is considered negative, such as a crisis or a disaster with the potential to cause collective trauma, it may act to weaken SOC. This is because collective trauma is considered to be a 'blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality' (Erikson, 1991, p.455).

In fact, the definition of disaster itself is 'a basic disruption of the social context within which individuals and groups function' (Fritz, 1961, p.651) that happens at the community-level and is collectively experienced by community members (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004; Norris et al., 2008). Furthermore, the community 'undergoes severe danger and incurs such losses to its members and physical appurtenances that the social structure is disrupted and the fulfilment of all of or some of the essential functions are prevented' (Fritz, 1961, p.655). This implies the negative impact a disaster might have on SOC.

More recently, disaster studies have, in fact, shown that a shared crisis might, overtime, impact the perceptions the individual had of the community and negatively affect SOC (Cope *et al.,* 2020; Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). After an initial stage immediately after the crisis in which communities

mobilise to offer social support to their members (the 'altruistic community' phase), a second phase follows in which gradually the victimised communities succumb to the overall loss and destruction. In this second phase, community members realise that the community, as it was known, no longer exists and that the resources the community used to offer are no longer available (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004; Abramowitz, 2005). This causes disruption to social bonds and affects the perception community members previously had of the community (Cope *et al.,* 2020). This second phase tends to be more impactful and longer lasting than the initial stage, causing SOC to deteriorate (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004).

Therefore, over time, solidarity and communal support fade away before the community has recovered from the crisis. What follows is the deterioration of the social networks of support previously embedded in the community. This leads to a situation in which the short-term win in community support leads to the overall disruption of social networks and deterioration in community relations (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004).

This is particularly relevant if a disaster or crisis is considered to be man-made, as is the case in this study where SOC in the aftermath of a conflict characterised by high levels of violence and the massive displacement of entire communities is examined. When a crisis is man-made and the blame cannot be attributed to an 'inexplicable' cause beyond human control (i.e., a natural disaster), the initial cohesiveness of the community resulting from members coming together to offer support during the first phase may not emerge. Instead, pre-existing conflicts and divisions might get reinforced as a result of the crisis (Cope *et al.,* 2020).

The more the community blames human agents as a cause of the crisis, the more likely it is that animosities and community tensions will emerge. Additionally, the social consequences of disasters—including the splitting of the community and the creation of antagonisms within its members—are more likely to prevail (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). This deterioration in social

relationships within the community in the aftermath of conflict links to the next factors of shared emotional connection and quality and quantity of contact.

- **Quality and quantity of contact**

With regards to the quality and quantity of contact factors of shared emotional connection, McMillan and Chavis (1986) departed from the assumptions that greater interaction among community members brings them closer, and that the more positive the interaction, the greater the bond.

Conflict tends to generate mistrust in communities. As previously discussed, after a man-made crisis, the polarisation of the community alongside mistrust might impair the quality of contact between community members. This can deteriorate perceptions of support and may weaken SOC (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). Although ties with close relatives might strengthen, non-kin relationships tend to decline in the aftermath of a crisis (Hutchins and Norris, 1989).

Quantity of contact might also decline after a crisis. Communal spaces damaged during the conflict can impede the continuity of contact among community members and lead to a decline in community participation in social activities previously enjoyed in the public sphere with relatives, neighbours, friends, or within community organisations (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). The crisis might also affect the quality and quantity of contact as community members focus on utilising their own resources to recover and prioritise their own recovery. This sense of responsibility is focused on, and social life, leisure, and contact are adjourned. The burden of recovery, scarcity of resources, and emotional and physical fatigue might all contribute to reducing the quality and quantity of contact among community members and fuel competition and interpersonal conflict (Hutchins and Norris, 1989; Kaniasty, Norms and Murrell, 1990; Kaniasty and Norris, 2004).

- **Closure of events**

Another factor of shared emotional connection which is highly relevant as it relates to the processing of a crisis is closure of events. According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), lack of closure undermines the cohesiveness of the community.

Closure of events can be interpreted by communities though collective narratives. The transmission of this collective victim narrative gets adopted by non-direct victims in the community, increasing group identification with those community members directly harmed, as well as increasing group cohesiveness; in doing so, SOC may be strengthened (Norris *et al.,* 2008; Bilali and Vollhardt, 2019). With the development of collective narratives from the violent events experienced, victim communities acknowledge the experiences suffered and aim to protect their communities from future harm (Bilali and Vollhardt, 2019).

The process of how closure develops might also be significant to group cohesiveness and overall SOC. When studying Guinean communities exposed to conflict, Abramowitz (2005) found that communities who had collectively developed narratives of resistance to violence tended to report lower levels of distress. Higher levels of distress were found among those communities who had developed narratives of violence to collectively deal with the events.

- **Spiritual bond**

Spiritual bond is the intangible connection between community members. It can be further described as the soul that bonds the community, the spiritual connection among its members, and/or the bind of sharing something in common. Spiritual bond has an important role in the formation of the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

In the case of Iraq, tribalism and tribal affiliations have been the glue of society for centuries. The paternal tribal lineage is at the centre of the kinship societal structure of Anbar and a key defining factor of identity and status within the community and the broader region (Gospodinov, 2015).

Chapter 6 (Section 6.2) expands further on tribalism and its impact on the societal organisation of communities in Anbar.

- **Experiences of honour and humiliation**

For McMillan and Chavis (1986), the attractiveness of a community is impacted by the instances of honour and humiliation community members receive within it. In this way, a community is more attractive if membership brings honour and status to its members, whereas feeling humiliated creates the opposite effect.

Honour and its opposite, shame, are of particular importance in honour-based cultures, where they act as pivotal cultural values. Honour-based cultures differ from non-honour-based cultures in their conception of honour and shame as limited, i.e., these values can be lost and must be protected (in the case of honour). This contrasts with gradual values that increase or decrease. This conception amplifies the intensity by which honour is required to be protected (Crook, 2009). Despite honour-based cultures not being exclusively limited to the Mediterranean and Middle East, these areas have such distinctive features that 'honour and shame' have become a paradigm of research in Mediterranean studies (Saunders, 1988).

Honour can be classified into 'ascribed honour' whereby one is born into honour by lineage, or 'acquired honour', which is dynamic and can be challenged and lost (Malina, 1981).

A specific characteristic of the honour and shame cultures in the Mediterranean and Middle East—acknowledging the localised understanding of what constitutes honour and what constitutes shame—is that due to their collective nature, it is the collective rather than the individual who defines what is honourable and what is shameful, as well as who honours or judges accordingly. As a collective society, communal expectations are priority over individual aspirations (Crook, 2009).

The building block of the kin-centric Arab Middle Eastern societies is not the individual, it is the family. The individual self- is conceived as an extension of the family and there is a fluid boundary between the individual self and the family (Joseph, 1993; 1996). This is particularly important as the individual's behaviour impacts the public perception of the kin itself and therefore, honour also works at the collective level. Affronts to the family's honour and reputation have a direct repercussion on the kin's honour and reputation. Therefore, the honour and reputation of one's family must be kept in order to benefit from the social network of support and to access the economic, social and security realms that the kin provides (Joseph, 1993).

However, the roles attributed within the family differ by gender. Gender, in its definition as a system, has a central role in organising societies as it serves to categorise its members, assign them specific roles, and determine their responsibilities, rights and statuses (Gagné and Tewksbury, 1998). As further explored in Chapter 6 (Section 6.1), Arab Middle Eastern societies are characterised by strict gender roles which define the power relationship between genders (ElSafty, 2003). These clearly delineated roles by gender also apply to the pivotal cultural values of honour and shame, with communal expectations of what is appropriate for males and for females. The female honour is considered to reside in her sexual purity till marriage and, after that, in motherhood, as well as in her passive social role. Within this frame, women cannot bring honour in their passivity but can bring shame. In contrast, males actively and aggressively seek for greater honour (Malina, 1981). These delineated gender roles, in the context of honour and shame, increase the pressure on women to protect the family as a building block of the patriarchal kin structure.

- **Personal investment**

As earlier explained, the personal investment factor refers to the feeling that one has earned a place in the group (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Membership analysis was excluded from this study as this research only includes communities of birth where membership is not earned.

Personal investment, however, plays another role. In addition to enhancing the membership element of SOC, personal investment also acts to reinforce shared emotional connection. A greater personal investment—in assets such as money or in time given to the community—is likely to lead to increased status within the community and contributes significantly to its shared history. When the community suffers, a greater personal investment may also lead to greater negative impact on the overall SOC since the emotional involvement is greater (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). The analysis of this study includes personal investment in its role to reinforce shared emotional connection.

Hypotheses and underpinning causal mechanisms

Within the current literature, it remains indetermined which role shared emotional connection might play in the development of resilience types in the aftermath of conflict. A potential explanation would be that a disruption to the shared emotional connection might reduce community cohesiveness and weakened its membership due to high levels of intra-community violence, as well as the long-term disruption in quantity, and subsequently quality, of contact due to the displacement of the community members to the IDP camps. As per hypothesis 1B, communities with a loosely defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

In communities where shared emotional connection has persisted (i.e., communities that have kept continuous and good quality contact among community members, where shared events related to the crisis have bonded community members together (allowing for closure), and where community members keep investing in the community), community cohesiveness has been reinforced and SOC-membership strengthened. This develops exclusive resilience (according to hypothesis 1A) within the community and perceived IS affiliates are rejected from the group.
By this mechanism, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H4 (A): Communities where SOC-shared emotional connection has been disrupted are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.
- H4 (B): Communities where SOC-shared emotional connection has persisted are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.

This chapter has shown the relevance of SOC as a framework to analyse the social factors of resilience, which are at the core of this study. It has also delved into SOC and its elements, leading to the development of the four sets of hypotheses of this study. Each set of hypotheses outlines the outcomes of exclusive resilience and inclusive resilience which are expected to be observed for each of the four elements of SOC: membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection, in the Anbar communities studied when faced with the return of IS affiliates. The next chapter shows how this framework of analysis has been incorporated into a research design that allows the necessary data to be collected and the appropriate analyses to be performed to verify or refute the outlined hypotheses.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND FIELDWORK

The aim of this study is to inquire how communities respond to the return of IS affiliates in Iraq and to determine which approach to resilience they develop to the perceived threat of their return disrupting the community's social peace.

In Iraq, geographically proximate communities with similar ethno-religious and tribal composition have developed different resilience responses to this perceived threat. Such responses have led to divergent outcomes. Some communities have developed exclusive resilience and kept the displaced community members with perceived affiliation away from the community. Other communities have developed inclusive resilience and allowed those with a perceived affiliation to return. The community is, therefore, at the core of the study and the study's aim can be best investigated by comparing similar communities with variations in their resilience responses. The study adopts case studies as its methodology and analyses six communities with shared place factors of resilience and different social interaction factors of resilience. A MSSD method of comparative case study analysis is used.

Since addressing the research question requires a nuanced understanding of the communities, the study is based on primary qualitative data collected among community members (including women and youth) and community leaders in each of the six communities. This data captures the social interaction factors in each community via SOC and applying SOC factors as the framework of analysis. Key questions include the following:

- What are the borders in terms of membership in the community (SOC-membership)?
- How do the inner-community dynamics of influence operate between the different groups (SOC-influence)?
- Are the needs of the community equally fulfilled (SOC-needs fulfilment)?
- How strong are the bonds that bring the community together (SOC-shared emotional connection)?

Community members are best placed to provide insight into these questions. In this chapter, the methodology and research design of the study are explained, as well as the fieldwork design and implementation. The study relies heavily on primary data and data analysis.

4.1 Research design and methodology: case studies

Prior to this study, three years of observations were carried out in many communities across Iraq. This data was used to examine how geographically close communities responded to the return of IS affiliates in the aftermath of the 2014-2017 conflict in the country. Whereas some communities accepted the affiliates back, others opposed their return to the community or expelled them upon return. By closely observing the divergent dynamics occurring in similar communities, it appeared that the two outcomes resulted from two different resilient responses: inclusive resilience and exclusive resilience, both aimed at protecting the community from the perceived threat the IS affiliates return posed to the fragile social peace of the community.

To understand this phenomenon, a MSSD method was applied, in which six communities with shared place factors of resilience and divergent social interaction factors of resilience were included in the study. Three which developed inclusive resilience and three which developed exclusive resilience were selected. These six communities, all Sunni Arab communities in Anbar governorate, were Ebbah, Fhelat and Shaqlawiyah Centre (exclusive resilient communities), and Karma Centre, Hessey and Albo Shejal (inclusive resilient communities).

By the MSSD method, communities were selected by similarities in selected variables examined in this study (the place factors of resilience) and differed in one explanatory independent variable under study, the social interaction factors of resilience. This design was necessary to address the differences in resilience outcomes (inclusive or exclusive) (Bennett and Elman, 2007; Anckar, 2008).

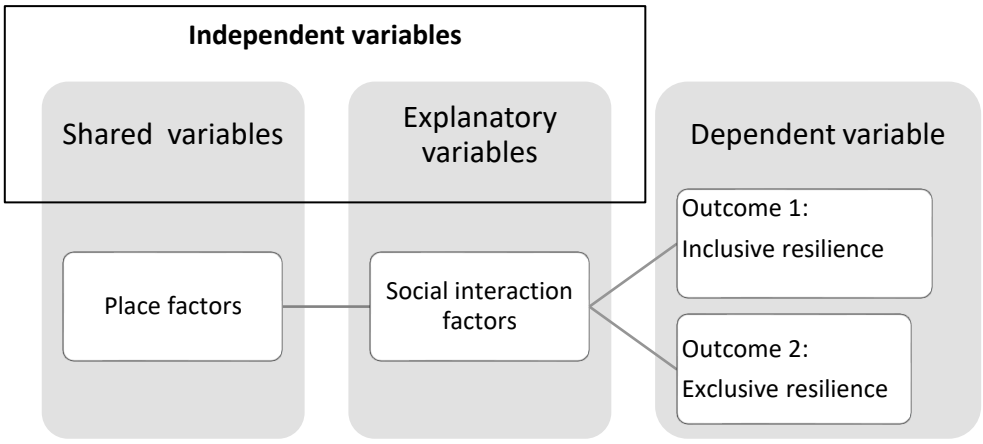

Figure 1: The MSSD method of comparative case study analysis applied in this study.

Therefore, two criteria were applied to select the communities included in the analysis. It was first necessary to identify communities with shared place factors of community resilience. Since a control experiment was not possible, all the selected cases were as close as possible in their compositional, structure and circumstance place factors (considered as the control variables). The composition place factors of resilience included demographic composition (shared ethno-religious and tribal identity), geographical location (within Anbar governorate), natural and build-in environment, lifestyle and source of livelihoods. The structure place factors of resilience were social system and tribal governance, and the circumstance place factors of resilience incorporated the past history of conflict, sequence of occupation by the IS group and subsequent military campaign to retake the area, as well as the related conflict-induced displacement from the community.

The selection of communities with similar characteristics in terms of composition, structure and circumstance does not limit the findings of the research to Anbar communities only. This is because similar community characteristics can be found in other areas of Iraq including most of Salah Al Din governorate and areas of Kirkuk and Ninewa governorates. Even outside of Iraq and the specific IS crisis, intra-community violence or conflict among homogeneous close-knit

communities and subsequent rejection is observed. This occurs in contexts as diverse as Albania (group exclusion due to intra-clan violence), or Australia (violence within the close-knit aboriginal communities) (Lumby and Farrelly, 2009; Ten Dam, 2015).

A second criteria to select communities was based on the dependent variable in its extreme values: communities which developed exclusive resilience, identified by the outcome of instances of rejection of IDPs with perceived affiliation upon their return to the community, and communities which developed inclusive resilience, identified by the outcome of instances of acceptance of IDPs with perceived affiliation by facilitating their return to the community. The two values with divergent outcomes are of specific relevance to the purpose of inquiry (Yin, 2014).

Three cases with each value (inclusive and exclusive resilience) were selected to allow for cross-case analysis within each type of case, as well as across the two types of cases. Having three cases with each outcome enables exploration regarding the extent to which each of the SOC elements and the linkage between them contributes to the development of each resilience response. Particularities of each community might lead to ad-hoc paths with a similar outcome, either exclusion or inclusion resilience. Cross-case analysis of communities with a shared outcome provides the opportunity to check for potential equifinality in the outcomes, as well as for complex causation (George and Bennett, 2005).

The choice of case studies as methodology for this study is based on the following reasons. First, this research examines a specific class of events (George and Bennett, 2005) of the IS crisis in Iraq: resilience in the face of social peace disruption associated with the return of IS affiliates in the aftermath of conflict.

Second, the communities focused on in this study are each understood as a 'bounded system', where social interactions between community members are central to understanding the development of community resilience to the return of IS affiliates, the topic of interest.

Community resilience is also understood in this study as the ability of a bounded system to respond and recover from conflict (Cutter *et al.,* 2008). Case studies are particularly well suited to examine 'bounded systems' where social interactions are at the centre of the inquiry (Stake, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Harrison *et al.,* 2017).

Third, although the study isolates and focuses on the social interaction factors of resilience, the development of resilience in Anbar communities cannot be understood without an in-depth look at other aspects. These include the sequence of conflict and displacement that occurred in each community; the demographic composition and system of governance of the community (place factors); and how the communities are affected, and their responses conditioned by, the context that surrounds them. Case studies enable a line to be drawn between what falls within the unit of study (the case), and what becomes part of the context. This provides the opportunity to focus on the relationship between case and context (Flyvbjerg, 2011). I understand the place factors in this study to be part of the context, allowing analysis of the social interaction factors of community resilience in isolation which become the case.

Using case studies, researchers can examine the succession of interconnected events happening at a specific moment and place that underline the case evolution. As in the present study, which refers to recent conflict in Iraq (2014-17) and returns in the aftermath (this time period was truncated in this study to when data collection ceased in August 2019), this succession can extend to the 'here and now', allowing the unit of analysis to be studied in a real-life setting (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Harrison *et al.,* 2017). At the same time, within process tracing allows tracking of the mechanisms that lead to each outcome: inclusive or exclusive resilience (George and Bennett, 2005). The process tracing mechanism that led to each outcome also serves to support or undermine theory by checking if those mechanisms which would be expected under each hypothesis (or those supposed to be absent) are indeed present (or not) (Mahoney, 2010). Chapter 4 outlines these mechanisms which would be expected under each SOC element and the hypotheses according to existing literature on the development of resilience.

Next, the return of displaced individuals after conflict can be linked to increased community tension between those who sided with the winner and those who sided with the loser. This is common in post-conflict settings as in the current case of Iraq (Revkin and Delair, 2019). In such settings, understanding the context is essential to identifying the target groups to interview. Interviews may be challenging as participants might fear being perceived as belonging to the 'wrong' side. Case studies are most suitable to explore complex events and situations since they cover the contextual conditions that might be relevant to the phenomenon of inquiry (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Harrison *et al.,* 2017).

Additionally, conflicts vary considerably, both among conflicts and within specific conflicts (e.g. over space and time). The dynamics of the IS conflict at the core of this study, for example, greatly differed between areas where the population was homogeneous, in terms of ethno-religious background, and areas with heterogenous populations. Case studies offer the possibility to navigate conditions in which respondents are difficult to identify, where on-the-ground conditions might be unstable, and where context tends to vary, in a better way than by using large-scale quantitative studies.

Case studies also serve to refine concepts as a smaller number of cases produce higher levels of validity (George and Bennett, 2005). As aforementioned, this study can serve to explore which SOC elements and related factors at the sub-level—considered as social interaction factors of resilience—might have greater impact on the development of inclusive and exclusive resilience in post-conflict contexts. This would generate hypotheses that could be further tested in settings beyond Anbar and the return of former IS affiliates.

Finally, despite the large body of literature on SOC in contexts such as crime prevention (Levine, 1986) or the development of resilience in communities at risk (Brodsky, 1996), the particular responses of communities to the return of community members perceived as having engaged in

intra-community violence, and how this affects community resilience, remains underexplored. Case studies help advancement towards cumulative and progressive generalisations and the fostering of new hypotheses. Relevant variables might be identified without falling into what George and Bennett (2005) describe as 'conceptual stretching' in larger statistical studies. Such studies are better suited to test indicators and variables first identified with qualitative work.

4.2 Fieldwork design and implementation

4.2.1 Community selection

To identify the communities included in the study following the two criteria explained above (a set of shared place factors and instances of one of the two resilience response outcomes (rejection or acceptance) observed in the context of return of IS-perceived affiliates), the following process was carried out.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Iraq – Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) database[2] was used to identify communities where secondary displacement had taken place, i.e., where some IDPs from that community had attempted to return but displaced once again shortly after. The information obtained from this database provided a preliminary list of communities that might have expelled returned IDPs due to their perceived IS affiliation. The information contained in the database was verified by contacting IOM staff working on the ground in the concerned area. These staff confirmed specific locations where secondary displacement recorded in the database related to security, tribal or family issues, and was linked to the perceived affiliation to IS. Communities in which the main reason for secondary displacement was the lack of basic services, house damage, or economic reasons linked to the lack of livelihood activities or unemployment, were discarded. Additionally, to triangulate the information on communities in which there had been rejection of IDPs, the UN Camp Coordination and Camp Management

[2] For further information on DTM methodology and data collection procedures see: http://iraqdtm.iom.int/MasterList#Methodology

(CCCM) cluster was contacted. CCCM confirmed the arrival of secondary displaced IDPs to the camps who were expelled from their communities due to their perceived affiliations. Social workers from local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the camps confirmed the return of IDP families with suspected affiliation from some of the same communities.

IOM Iraq also implements a community policing program. One of the components of this program is community policing forums where community members gather to discuss the security challenges they face, aiming to understand security within the broader lens of human security. In these forums, the security priorities of the community are discussed. The Community Police Officer, who belongs to the police force, is then responsible for transferring this information to the police office in charge of the community. In some instances, communities have mediated with authorities to pledge for the return of banned community members accused of IS affiliation through the Community Police Officer. Returns of IDPs blocked from returning have also been raised for discussion at the Community Police Forums. I contacted IOM colleagues working on this project in Anbar to obtain a list of communities in which the above had occurred. To assess the accuracy of information provided by IOM Community Policing on communities vouching for the return of IDPs with perceived affiliation, tribal and community leaders in those communities were contacted directly.

The combined list of communities obtained from IOM DTM and the IOM Community Policing program were triangulated with other sources to provide a preliminary list of communities where the outcomes of exclusive and inclusive resilience could be observed. Subsequent on-the-ground visits to these communities were conducted to select the six communities included in this study. During these visits, several interviews with tribal leaders, security actors and community members were held[3].

[3] Interviews took place from 17 to 18 June 2019. Respondents included a main tribal leader from Duleim confederation, a representative of the local NGO Islamic Charity Association, two representatives of the local NGO Afkar organization, interviews with local authorities and tribal leaders of the adjacent area to the camps hosting the

After these consultations, the six communities of Ebbah, Karma Centre, Shaqlawiyah Centre, Hessey, Fhelat and Albo Shejal were selected in which to conduct fieldwork. All communities are located in the western governorate of Anbar, the largest governorate of Iraq. This governorate borders Syria and contains a large number of remote communities. Anbar is the least diverse governorate of Iraq with regards to ethno-religious diversity, with the majority of the population being Arab Sunni. The IS territorial gain in Iraq initiated in Anbar where some of the most aggressive battles occurred, causing massive displacement of the population. Airstrikes and bomb attacks devasted a large number of assets and the level of contaminated land, from land mines and other explosive devices such as unexploded explosive ordnances (UXOs) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), reached 80% (IOM Iraq, 2017c).

The main characteristics of each community included in this study are outlined below[4]:

- Fhelat is a rural community of approximately 500 inhabitants, 80% of whom displaced at some point during the crisis. By December 2019, 450 had returned. The Fhelat population belong to the Albo Isa tribe. The community was under IS rule from April to September 2016.

- Ebbah is a rural community of approximately 750 inhabitants, mainly from the Jumaili tribe. This community was taken by IS in January 2014 and retaken in May 2016. Approximately 80% to 95% of the population displaced at some point during the crisis. Approximately 650 of the inhabitants had return to the community by December 2019.

majority of remaining IDPs in Anbar, and interviews with the colonel and the captain in charge of the community policing program in Anbar. This visit took place under my professional capacity as Research Officer at IOM Iraq and followed UN safety and security procedures according to UNDSS rules. The University of Birmingham was not liable for this visit.

[4] All the data used in the community profiles was extracted from Aymerich (2020).

- The rural community of Hessey has a population of 7000 to 10000 people, 6000 of whom have returned to the area following the displacement of 75% to 100% of the population during the crisis. The area was taken by IS in April 2016 and retaken from the group in September 2016. The inhabitants of Hessey mainly belong to the Albo Isa tribe although other tribes are also present, such as the Jumaili and MuhammadI tribes.

- Albo Shejal, with 8000 inhabitants, was taken in September 2014 and retaken in June 2016. This is a rural community and the Muhammad tribe is the main tribe in the area, although other tribes are also present. Approximately 7000 people had returned to the community by December 2019.

- Karma Centre, of peri-urban nature, has an estimated population of 8500 inhabitants and currently hosts a larger population than before the crisis (10,300 people). During the last crisis, 95% to 100% of the Karma Centre population displaced. The community was ruled by IS from January 2014 to May 2016. The Jumaili tribe is the primary tribe in the community although several other tribes contribute to the population.

- The urban community of Shaqlawiyah Centre, with 17,000 inhabitants mainly from the Mohammadi tribe, was taken by IS in September 2014 and retaken from the group in June 2016. During the crisis, 65% to 85% of people displaced at some point, and as per December 2019, 9000 had returned.

4.2.2 Fieldwork

The primary data for this study was collected from June to August 2019 by a team of four enumerators—two male and two female—and one team leader. Overall, the team conducted 42 in-depth interviews (Appendix 1), 17 FGDs and 17 participatory mappings (Appendix 2), broken down as follows:

- Seventeen FGDs and 17 participatory mappings with community members. In each community, one FGD took place with targeted male community members of mixed ages (older than 18 years), one FGD with youth male participants (18 to 26 years old), and one FGD with female participants (older than 18 years).[5]

- Eighteen in-depth interviews with community leaders, three in each community, within the following categories: tribal leaders, mukhtars (authorities in charge of villages and neighbourhoods), religious leaders, security representatives and civil society representatives.

- Nine in-depth interviews with IDPs who were rejected by the community upon return and were living in IDP camps at the time of data collection.[6]

- Fifteen in-depth interviews with returnees who were supported by the community in their return process.[7]

The team was trained in data collection during a two-day course prior to deploying to the field[8]. The interviews and FGDs were conducted in Arabic (Iraqi dialect) which is the only language

[5] Initially, 18 FGDs were planned, six in each community including one FGD with male participants aged 18 to 26. In two communities, the FGD with male youth was not possible to conduct; in Fhelat, the FGD with male youth was cancelled and in Shaqlawiyah Centre it was conducted among female youth instead. In a third community, Hessey, the FGD with male youth was conducted in Amiriyat Al Fallujah (AAF) IDP camp instead of in the community.

[6] All the interviewed IDPs had obtained the required security clearance to return and were not formally accused of IS affiliation or have any pending criminal charges.

[7] The snowball technique led to identifying returnees in two communities initially characterized as communities with instances of rejection. This increased the number of interviews with returnees from nine to 15.

[8] A two-day training course was delivered to the field team from June 19 to June 20,2019 at the IOM Russafa sub-office located in Baghdad. The field team has been closely working with me for the past three years doing qualitative and quantitative data collection for several IOM projects which I led in my professional capacity as IOM Research Officer. They are part of a larger team divided by geographical areas of coverage and are responsible for the central and western regions of Iraq, including the Anbar governorate. The team is familiar with the Fallujah district, the district where data collection for this study took place and has previously conducted extensive work in this area. The training included sessions on qualitative research techniques, the framework of analysis based on SOC and its factors, the research design and community selection, and on each of the five tools used during data collection. In the sessions related to the tools, we began by going through the introduction and consent form and then answered questions relating to each of the five tools, keeping in mind the target group for each tool. The team commented on

spoken in the Anbar governorate and was spoken by all participants. The team worked in pairs with one facilitator tasked with asking the questions and the other being assigned the notetaker. The notetaker did not intervene in the conversation and was fully dedicated to writing down the conversation by hand. Usually, when conducting two interviews per day, the pairs exchanged their roles to maintain concentration.

Verbal consent was obtained before any questions were asked to the participants. It was explained to participants that participation was entirely voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time with no consequences, and that their participation was completely anonymous[9]. A six-week window was given to the participants to withdraw any answer or comments shared during the data collection sessions. No withdrawals took place. Additionally, for ethical considerations, participants were asked to refrain from directly mentioning the names of any people who might have been directly involved in criminal activities. This could have been brought up when speaking about the period in which IS controlled the community. Participants were also asked not to share or repeat elsewhere what was discussed or who participated in the discussions. No incentive was offered to the participants to be part of the interviews or FGDs.

Five tools were designed which were comparable in the nature of the questions asked but were each tailored to a specific target group. The tools were: one FGD tool and one participatory mapping exercise to interview community members; one in-depth interview tool to speak with

the suitability of the phrasing of the questions, i.e., whether they would be well understood by participants, and checked the Arabic version of the tool. Additional probes to sensitive or difficult questions were added as per the team's request. The training and posteriori implementation of data collection was facilitated by the fact that the field team and I have worked closely for the past three years, and this team has experience conducting qualitative data collection, as well as being familiar with Anbar.

[9] Verbal consent was chosen over written consent to ensure the privacy, anonymity and safety of the participants. This meant there were no records of their participation in case the team was stopped by local authorities or security forces at check points and requested to show their transcripts. This did not however occur. With the same purpose, no written records of participants such as participant lists or participant sheets were used during the fieldwork. All the data collected was anonymised immediately with the notetaker directly using a code to refer to participants in the first draft of transcripts.

community leaders, and; a set of two mirror tools: one to interview IDPs and one to interview returnees, both groups with perceived IS affiliation.

The interviews and FGD were designed to question respondents on the SOC elements as defined by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The phrasing of the questions built upon the measurement and application of SOC by Glynn (1981). At the point of data collection, respondents were asked about their experience of SOC in three different periods of time: before the arrival of IS, during IS rule and in the post-IS period, at the time of data collection[10]. Despite their wide use in social science

[10] An extensive and fruitful discussion took place with the field teams on the use of language to refer to the following concepts linked to SOC elements and how these concepts would resonate in the tribal context of Anbar.

- Honour (الشرف): initially formulated as '*What would you do to protect your honour or the honour of the(your?) family? And the honour of the community?':* The team considered that the use of the 'word' 'honour' sounded too strong, as it is commonly associated to female honour—actions and behaviours from or towards female members of the family—in the tribal context of Anbar. Thus, it is considered '3ib',a concept that relates to shame, to directly ask about honour. As an alternative, the questions on honour were rephrased with the word 'name' (الاسم): '*What would you do to protect your name or the name of the family? And the name of the community?*'. The word 'name' retains the meaning of honour but refers to it in an indirect way.

- Humiliation (الإذلال): *'Are you afraid of being humiliated in front of other community members?' 'Has there been any event or situation in which people from the community were humiliated in front of you?'*. This was the only set of questions that was dropped from the initial tool. According to the teams, humiliation has a stronger connotation than the concept of shame. The teams were wary it could create animosity among the respondents as it is a very strong concept to ask directly about. Moreover, they believed that none of the respondents would actually admit to being humiliated even if they experienced it as it would diminish them in front of other tribal members.

- Shame (العار): *'Are you afraid of doing any action that would bring shame to the community?' 'Has there been any event or situation in which people from the community brought shame?' 'Has there been any event or situation in which you feel your community was shamed as a whole?':* According to the team, it was possible to ask questions that refer to shame. Shame can be generalizable to a broad set of situations, including those small in nature. '*You can bring shame if you don´t visit your elder parents*' was one of the examples brought up by one team member.

- Sacrifice (ضحى): *'What would you be willing to sacrifice to protect the community?'*. As an alternative to 'sacrifice', I proposed to the teams the following wording: 'What would you be willing to do to protect the community?'. Taking into consideration the area and the topic, the teams considered that it was better to use the word 'sacrifice' as it is already commonly used in the local narrative when speaking about instances of tension or conflict. For example, '*our tribe sacrificed X number of martyrs to the conflict',* or *'I scarified X acres of land to settle the issue*'. Referring to tribal dispute resolution is an example of how the word is used by Anbaris.

surveys, retrospective questions can result in recall bias. Answers might be affected by the respondents' attempts to be consistent in their answer over time, and by inaccurate recollections of memories. To mitigate the effects of recall bias, bounding measures were added which clearly specified the time-period the respondents were asked about (Van der Vaart, Van Der Zouwen and Dijkstra, 1995).

The FGD and the in-depth interview tools were designed to be used in a structured manner, giving the facilitator the control over the topics of discussion. Since different field enumerators conducted interviews and FGDs, standardized interviewing was considered as the interviewing technic that could yield the best results since standardized interviewing reduces variation in behaviour across the field enumerators. Also, standardized interviewing allows to obtain higher levels of comparability across communities and across respondents. Non-directive probes were added in the tools to facilitate the field team rephrasing difficult or sensitive questions (Morgan 1993, 1996).

To interview community members, FGDs were preferred to individual interviews in order to obtain the "group effect", meaning to get an insight on the community view rather than the sum of individual perceptions. Obtaining this group effect was possible by focusing on the interaction between participants and the level of consensus or diversity in their opinions (Morgan 1993, 1996).

- Trust (ثقة) versus respect (احترام): There was a set of questions that inquired about both trust and respect towards community leaders. '*Do you respect these decision makers? (…) And do you trust them?*'. I asked the team if the two concepts were different enough for the respondents to understand the difference. According to the teams, the concepts are different enough and while respect is mostly perceived as a horizontal relationship in a hierarchy, trust is perceived as vertical.

- Community and/or society rules (قواعد المجتمع): The teams found the translation of community rules confusing and requested it to be changed to ''*the traditions in the society*'' (تقاليد المجتمع).

FGDs have long been used to discuss sensitive topics and with marginalized groups (Morgan 1996). The questions included in the FGDs on feelings of SOC during IS rule in the community as well as on the return of IS-perceived affiliates fall into this sensitive category. Participants to the FGDs are from an area considered long time marginalised by the government of Iraq, live in extremely dire conditions as a result of the recent conflict might also be socially marginalised by the communities where they reside, whether in displacement or in return areas; this is particularly true for those with perceived affiliation.

Segmentation was applied to the FGD according to age and gender. One FGD in each community targeted male community members of mixed aged (18+), the second FGD included young male participants (18 to 26 years old), and the third gathered the views of female participants of mixed age (18+). A set of inclusion and exclusion criteria in selecting participants for the FGDs was also applied. To seek geographical homogeneity of the sample, participants for the FGDs had to be originally from the community of study and must have lived in the community prior to the 2014 IS crisis. Another inclusion criterion was that they had to have lived in the community at some point 'during the events'. No specific time limit was included as some IDPs might have left during the first months the group was there, when there was still room to leave, or they may have stayed and cohabited with the IS group. Age and sex characteristics ruled the exclusion criteria to the FGDs.

Segmentation has two main advantages: it allows comparisons between groups and facilitates discussions among participants who might feel more similar to one another. The latter was particularly relevant to this study as the topic of discussion was sensitive and it was discussed in a recent post-conflict context (Morgan, 1996; Krueger and Casey, 2014).

Anbar society is hierarchic and patriarchal. Traditional norms based on the respect of elders could limit youth participation in expressing their opinions in an open manner, if these differed from the ones expected by the community. Moreover, the young generation has been the focus of

recruitment, not only by IS, but by the several armed actors involved in the current crisis. The older generation has historical memory of the previous waves of conflict which affected the county and as such, the current conflict might have impacted them differently. Thus, this study design provided access to the opinions of two different generations whose experience of conflict differs.

The society also follows a strict gender segregation of space and roles, making mixed FGDs inviable. To ensure their participation, female enumerators only conducted interviews and FGDs with female respondents. No men were allowed in these sessions. A further consideration is that women experience conflict differently from men (Popovich, 2008). Their security needs, perception of insecurity, and role in conflict and post-conflict differ from that of men. Female views need to be captured, particularly in a post-conflict context, where they play a greater role in shaping the identity, perceptions and views of the new generations. The role of females in shaping the post-conflict views of future generations does not necessarily lean towards non-violence (Stewart, 2010).

The number of participants in the FGDs was set from five to eight individuals. The standard range of eight to 12 participants in FGDs was reduced following Morgan (1992, 1996) who suggested a smaller number of participants when discussing emotionally charged topics. The same participants who responded to the guided questions of the FGDs contributed to the participatory mapping. As in the FGDs, participants were asked to first recall and describe three situations that had caused tension in the community and were related to the return of families with perceived affiliation. They were then asked to illustrate the situation they considered to have the greatest effect on the community to understand, in depth, the actors involved and the dynamics between these actors. Figure 2 shows one of the participatory mappings conducted by male youth participants in the Ebbah community as an example of the outputs obtained through the participatory mapping process. These maps are accompanied by the narrative of the discussion

that took place during the session[11].

[11] For each of the three situations, participants had to explain what had happened—including reference to when and where—and the actors involved in the situation. For each actor, they were asked to specify whether it contributed to easing the situation, fuelling the situation, or both, and how it did so. Additionally, they were asked to identify the reasons they believed each actor had to act in the way that it did. Finally, the participants had to explain how the situation resolved, the impact the event had on the community, and the impact it had on the affected IDPs.

Next, the participants mapped the one situation they agreed as having had the deepest impact on the community. Through a simple system of symbols, they mapped the actors who contributed to easing the tension in the community (in circles) and the actors who fuelled it (in circles). Triangles and circles sometimes overlapped over an actor if participants believed it did both. Bigger symbols represented greater involvement of the actor. Arrows showed the connection among actors. Participants also signalled if actors were part of the community—by drawing them inside a larger circle representing the community—or outsiders, by placing them outside the large circle.

To select the three situations, the facilitator clarified that the situations not only included mean violent events, and that participants could refer to observations, personal experiences, perceptions, stories they heard or anecdotes. It was then up to the participants to decide which three situations they wanted to raise for discussion.

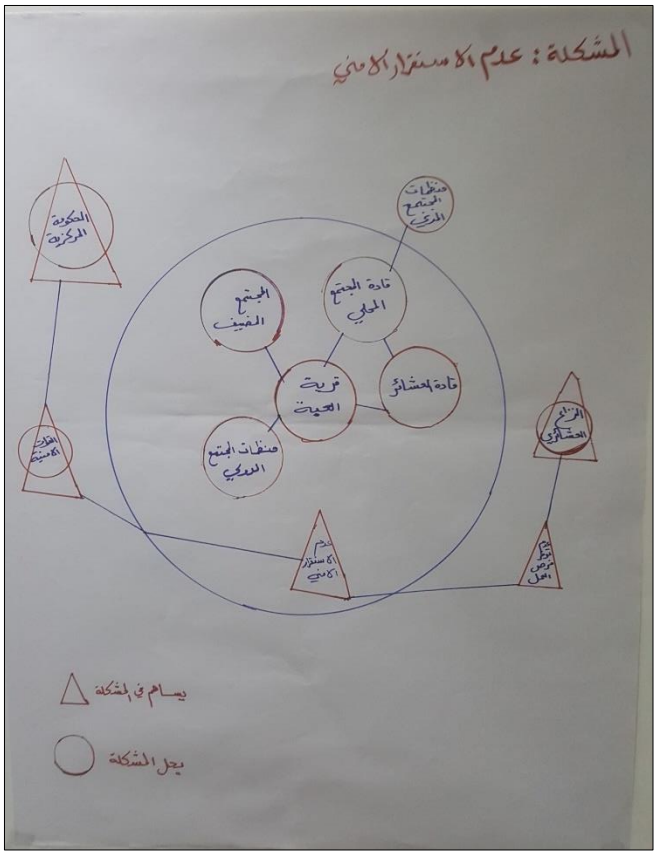

Figure 2: Participatory mapping in Ebbah with youth male respondents on the following identified problem: ‘‘The security situation is unstable, due to unemployment and lack of financial allocations, there have been problems that have developed into tribal conflicts, which increases the feelings of insecurity.’

Participatory mappings have several strengths. First, they allow researchers to gain insight into the distinct particularities of each community. In this study, insight was gained on the specific instances of tension linked to the return experienced by each community, as well as the mechanisms used by the existing community to solve these instances of tension. Second, by drawing, participants can focus on a specific feature of the map. In this case, they were able to focus on the arrows connecting actors, helping to elucidate the network of decision-making actors in the community (Emmel, 2008). Third, the participatory mappings create an interaction between participants different than that of the FGDs and allow for the active participation of less outspoken respondents. From my previous research experience in Iraq, participatory mappings work particularly well to engage participants with lower education levels—who might be sidelined

in the FGDs if the other participants use a formal speaking style instead of a popular style of speaking—and younger women, who tend to be less outspoken than their elder counterparts.[12]

For the in-depth interviews with community leaders, the same geographical inclusion criteria used in the FGDs was applied. The community leaders interviewed in each community needed to be one of the following: a tribal leader, a mukhtar, a security representative or a leader from civil society.

The information obtained from community leaders was different to that provided by community members. Community leaders hold specific information on the population that comprises the community, such as population figures prior to 2014[13], displacement figures and timeline of displacement. Therefore, questions related to demographics and displacement movements were added to complement the questions on SOC, decision-making processes in the community, dynamics of return of IDPs perceived as IS affiliates, and community mechanisms to resolve tension related to the return of those IDP families.

The two in-depth interview tools (one to interview IDPs expelled by the community upon their return due to their perceived IS affiliation and who displaced once more to the camp, and the other to interview returnees with perceived affiliation who had been supported by the community in their return process) were built as mirror tools with modifications to adapt to the IDP or returnee situation. Interviews did not target convicted IS affiliates (one of the exclusion criteria)

Snowball technique questions included in the tools led to identifying returnees in two communities initially identified as communities with instances of rejection. This added invaluable

[12] Reflections from fieldwork conducted as part of Parry and Aymerich (2019).
[13] The last census in Iraq was conducted in 1997. Since then, Iraq´s Central Statistical Office has provided population estimates, the most recent of which is for 2014. Local authorities, mukhtars and tribal leaders tend to use their own registration systems to keep track of the population in the community.

information to the analysis by helping to identify the boundaries of exclusion to the community.

4.3 Analysis

To assess SOC among community members, community leaders, and IDPs and returnees with perceived affiliation interviewed in this study, a matrix of indicators was developed tailored to the specific context of Anbar in the post-IS crisis. The matrix of indicators within the four-element SOC model formed the basis of analysis for this study. The full matrix of indicators with examples of questions for each indicator is enclosed as Appendix 3. As an example, Table 2 shows the indicators and examples of questions used for SOC-influence.

Table 2: Matrix of indicators and example of questions used in the analysis of individual influence on the community factor SOC-influence.

INFLUENCE - INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE ON THE COMMUNITY FACTOR			
Indicator	**Question example 1**	**Question example 2**	**Question example 3**
Community members feel they have a say in the community	Do you think you have a say about what goes on in the community?	Provide a recent example where you were involved, or that you know of, in which community members influenced a decision involving the community	
Decisions made by community leaders are influenced by community members	Can people influence the community leaders' decisions? (If yes) How can people influence the decisions? Through which mechanisms?	Provide a recent example in which you believe the community leaders/actors you mentioned made an important decision for the community without consulting the people?.	Did you influence the community to help facilitate your return?
Community members feel the values and opinions of	In general, in the community, how much are people concerned about the opinions of others?	Do you feel other community members are interested in what you do?	

other community members matter to them			

A grounded approach to the analysis was taken. This began with line-by-line reading of the interviews that allowed for initial coding of the data. In this first cycle of coding, data was coded according to the matrix of indicators. This was followed by a more interpretive process of focused coding by which codes were revisited and then collated into teams (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011; Pokorny *et al.,* 2018). In the second cycle of coding, magnitude coding was applied to each text segment coded to check for its intensity: strong or mild (Saldaña, 2021). Additionally, the field teams were contacted to provide clarification on the context and the answers provided by the respondents when needed. The two-cycles of coding allowed for the analysis of data as visualised in the tables concluding the empirical Chapters 6 to 10. Here, the frequency and intensity of quotes by community are visualised. It is important to note that, when creating the tool, the number of questions were not equally distributed by the number of factors. Additional questions and props were added depending on the context on the ground and the sensitivity of the questions to ensure safe data collection. Therefore, frequency cannot be assessed across groups of factors, only within factors across communities. Only intensity can be considered across factors.

4.4 Ensuring the validity of the study and mitigating bias

A processual approach to validity was taken throughout the phases of the research process to ensure the quality and robustness of the study (Hayashi, Abib and Hoppen, 2019). Prior to the collection of data, previous immersion in the field facilitated the delimitation of the research scope and design. Another measure taken before data collection was piloting of the tools by the field teams, enabling the tools to be adapted to the context of the communities in which they were to be implemented.

During data collection and analysis, triangulation of data was consistently applied. During data collection, triangulation of sources took place by adding multiple and diverse sources to the pool of respondents that participated in the FGDs and interviews. This included youth, female and male respondents from different socio-economic backgrounds and education levels, and key informants from the location. These measures ensured that different views were captured in the data. Analyst triangulation was applied during data analysis, with consultation with the field teams on the content and meaning of the data gathered (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014). In addition to source triangulation and analyst triangulation, the amount of data collected in each of the communities provided a certain degree of saturation during data analysis. The data analysis took a recursive approach by which preliminary findings were compared against new data to check if they were to be sustained, modified or dropped.

Certain measures were also put in place to address potential forms of external bias. Social desirability bias relates to the tendency of respondents to accommodate their opinions and to reflect their social context in a way they believe would be more socially acceptable. This type of bias is more likely to be prevalent when the respondents are providing information on topics which might be deemed sensitive, as well as in highly collectivist societies with high conformity and adherence to collective norms and values. To pre-empt and mitigate social desirability bias in this research, which deals with a highly sensitive topic in a collectivist tribal-based society, extensive indirect questioning, probing questions, and a request to respondents to provide specific examples, were included in the tool. Additionally, enumerators were trained to identify potential cases of social desirability bias, as well as to use the alternative questions in the tool to try to overcome this during the data collection process. Such measures have proven to help reduce social desirability bias in qualitative research (Bergen and Labonté, 2020). Similar questions in the tool were also worded differently, and some key questions intersected in different parts of the tool, to mitigate habituation bias.

Another potential bias that this research tried to mitigate was related to the conduction of data collection through IOM field teams, which could be seen as a form of sponsor bias. The role of IOM as a UN agency could have led to some respondents answering in a manner which they considered could increase the likelihood of receiving assistance from the organisation. To mitigate this potential bias, the consent form clearly stated that no material benefit or compensation would be provided to participants in the interviews or FGDs.

Confirmation bias was mitigated by including and considering all data obtained in the analysis and by continuously re-evaluating responses, as well as maintaining a constant awareness of this bias. Taking an inductive-abductive logic approach, disconfirming evidence was also actively sought during data analysis, and codes and themes redefined accordingly, to mitigate the tendency of the analyses to focus on commonalities (Booth *et al.,* 2013; Antin, Constantine and Hunt, 2015; Willig and Rogers, 2017).

To mitigate self-bias as an outsider to the Iraqi context in interpreting, coding and analysing the data, the field enumerators were frequently consulted with to brainstorm and clarify respondents' answers and to ensure they were framed within the local context.

The addition of multiple rich quotes from the interviews to the analysis also acts to enhance the credibility of the study (Noble and Smith, 2015). Detailed information was provided to complement the quotes and to provide readers with the necessary information to understand them within their context, as a measure of thick description (Pandey and Patnaik, 2014).

A peer reviewed paper from the preliminary analysis upon which the current research builds, was published in 2020 in the Refugee Survey Quarterly (Aymerich, 2020b). The peer reviewing process, external to the University of Birmingham, complemented the continuous feedback provided by Prof. Stefan Wolff and Dr. Asaf Siniver, the supervisors of this thesis.

Additionally, this study necessitated an introspection of my own identity and experiences, as these can directly affect any phase of the research cycle, from inception to design, tool creation, data collection and analysis. I understand reflexivity as a self-assessment of who the researcher is vis-à-vis the community being researched and have been mindful of this through this study. Reflexivity helps mitigate self-bias and offers the audience the opportunity to clearly understand the research space and put the research in context (Dodgson, 2019). Kai Thaler (2021) states ‘‘to omit reflexivity is in fact to introduce or fail to counter bias in the collection and analysis of data’’. Furthermore, although reflexivity is important in any research and across various fields, it is considered to be particularly important when conducting research in conflict-affected areas (Thaler, 2021). This incorporates the current study, which relies heavily on primary data collection through continuous engagement with respondents in the aftermath of conflict.

As a researcher studying Iraqi communities, my background as a Mediterranean woman working for the humanitarian community and an outsider to Iraq conditions influences the way I conduct fieldwork and analyse and interpret data. For me, there is no separation between ‘field’ and ‘home’. I have been embedded in this context for five years which, on one hand, reduces the feelings of dislocation that emerge from analysing data in a different setting to where it was collected. However, on the other hand, this adds difficulty to discerning what can be shared or published outside of Iraq, and how it will be understood by the ‘home’ audience (Thaler 2021).

Coming from a peaceful background, I am also aware that my positionality when it comes to experiences of violence and conflict has changed. For the past 10 years, I have tried to actively listen to populations who have lived, and on occasions supported, armed groups such as Al Qaeda in Yemen or IS in Iraq. Such populations are often neglected, marginalised, or have experienced violence by their own governments; this has also broadened my views of the socio-political environment where the groups thrive. The black and white view of victim/perpetrator and wrong/right has blurred, and I am able to emphatically approach and try to understand the mindsets of victims and perpetrators.

I remain doubtful of being able to fully override the bias caused by my own positionality. However, being aware of and scrutinizing my experiences, attitudes, and identity vis-à-vis the research setting through introspective reflexivity (Patnaik, 2013) is a first step in mitigating, if not preventing, such bias.

CHAPTER 5: CONTEXTUALISING RESILIENCE TO THE RETURN OF IS AFFILIATES

The previous chapter argued that understanding context is a key aspect in the production of case studies. Therefore, understanding the context in which resilience to the return of IS affiliates developed in Anbar is essential to the purpose of this study. This chapter contextualises resilience to the return of IS affiliates by first providing an overview of the historic events spanning from post-2003 to the post-IS period in Iraq. The social system in which the communities of study operate is then described, focusing on both the societal role of tribalism as well the IS affiliates return process.

The information provided in this chapter facilitates the understanding of the historical context and the social dynamics that led to the development of resilience in the communities. Upon return to their communities of origin, IS affiliates had the outcome of being either accepted or rejected.

5.1 Historical background

The violent advance of IS to Iraq´s territory and ensuing military campaign to retake IS-controlled areas has been the latest in the waves of conflict Iraq has experienced since 2003. To understand the emergence of IS in Iraq, and the support this group received by parts of the Sunni population in the country, it is necessary to consider the Sunni political discontent in the post-2003 period, as well as the rise and fall of Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) preceding IS. This section details these two periods of Iraq's history before examining the 2014-2017 IS conflict and the post-IS crisis context in Iraq.

5.1.1 Iraq post-2003: Sunni political discontent and the rise and fall of AQI

Prior to 2003, Iraq was ruled by an autocratic regime led by Saddam Hussein. This regime was characterised by being representative of a single societal sector: the Arab Sunni (Barak 2007), and by being highly reliant on Arab Sunni tribal loyalties to cling to power, reinforcing tribalism in the

country. Although the Arab Sunni Saddam´s Baath party—of Arab nationalist ideology—was, in principle, opposed to tribalism, at the early stages of his rule Saddam appointed members of his closest tribes to top posts of the state and security apparatuses. The loyalty of other powerful Arab Sunni tribes was ensured by means of generous patronage, which kept the Sunni Arab tribes empowered in the country. These tribes benefited from extended authority over their territories, direct material benefits, and involvement in the lucrative business of smuggling along the Western Iraqi border (Long, 2008; Phillips, 2009).

This favourable power-sharing system dominated by the Sunni minority and favourable to the Sunni Arab tribes remained in place until 2003, when the system collapsed following the US-led military campaign against Saddam's regime. The campaign not only toppled down Saddam´s regime but also stripped the country from its ruling elite (Mueller, 2005), turning the odds against the Arab Sunni minority.

The security vacuum that followed the campaign further reinforced the role played by the tribes. This vacuum was partially due to the dismantling of Iraq´s national security sector by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the transitional government of Iraq, and allowed for the rapid proliferation of new armed groups formed along religious, ethnic, and tribal lines (Pouligny, 2004). Without a powerful and unified central state that could win the allegiance of the population, Iraqi citizens pledged their loyalties along sectarian and tribal lines, should the state fall apart (Boyle, 2009).

The Iraqi tribes also played a role in the growing Sunni insurgency which emerged in this context. Composed of tribes, as well as nationalists, previous Baathists, and Islamist groups, the main goal of the Sunni insurgency was to expel the 'occupier'—as the US forces were perceived—and to restore the balance of power existing prior to 2003 which was favourable to the Arab Sunni population. As part of the Sunni insurgency, AQI was established. Unlike the other groups at the core of the Sunni insurgency, which were locally formed and supported, AQI was a foreign

organisation. It was formed and led by Al Zarkawi, of Jordanian origin, as an Al Qaeda franchise in Iraq and was composed of deracinated members: non-Iraqi Arabs in the higher ranks and Iraqi youth living in urban areas far from their local and social environments in the lower (Fishman, 2008; Phillips, 2009).

At the first stage of its formation, the Sunni tribes of Anbar welcomed AQI. The common goal of expelling US troops from the country made Sunni tribes and AQI natural allies (Zelin, 2014). For the local insurgency, AQI provided major tactical advantages in terms of military skills in guerrilla warfare and large amounts of funding (the smuggling networks and previous patronage system the tribes had relied on had been affected with the fall of the regime). Furthermore, additional foreign fighters traveling to Iraq to wage jihad aligned with the global AQ ideology. For AQI, aligning with local tribes and armed groups provided the necessary local knowledge to operate, a safe haven far from the coalition forces, geographical access to international borders (Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia) to enhance logistics, as well as access to five different Iraqi governorates representing areas to strike (McClure, 2010).

However, tension between the Sunni tribes and AQI soon emerged due to differences in their aims. The Sunni tribes had a restorationist goal: to restore the privileges they had under the Saddam regime. AQI's goal was revolutionary: to use Iraq as a battleground where to wage global jihad and advance towards the 'salvation of the *ummah*' (Michael, 2007; Phillips, 2009). Differences in aims between the Anbari tribes and the group coupled with AQI´s predatory behaviour towards the host communities. AQI, pursuing its ideology, imposed a rigid Salafi-oriented observance of religion and moral conduct, condemning the local ways of practicing religion as un-Islamic (Phillips, 2009). Additionally, reciprocating AQ strategy in Afghanistan, AQI tried to entrench into the local community by means of marriage. This attempt created high animosities among the local tribes, for whom marrying an outsider of the tribes is taboo and for whom traditions and local religious practices serve as strong tribal bonds and are highly valued. Tribal sheiks were also reluctant to share their main source of income, the smuggling business,

with the newcomers (Fishman, 2008). As a result, tribal revolts against AQI unfolded in 2005. AQI reacted by harshly punishing the population, killing tribal leaders and imposing stricter codes of conduct, which further alienated the tribes to a point of no return (McClure, 2010).

Another point of dissonance between AQI and the Sunni insurgency was the Sunni participation in the political process. The transition from the US appointed CPA to an Interim Iraq Government allowed for greater Sunni participation in the political process. However, the January 2005 parliamentary elections were boycotted by Sunni groups who did not participate, partially due to the intimidation campaign carried out by AQI to those Sunni leaders opposing the boycott. AQI was against any participation in a man-made form of government and considered it an affront to divine law (Katzman, 2009; Phillips, 2009). As a result of this campaign, Sunni groups were excluded from the drafting of the new Iraqi constitution—done by Shia and Kurdish parties—as well as from the new Iraqi government, led for the first time by Shia politicians. Sunni tribal and religious leaders realised that boycotting the election had been a mistake since, as a result, Sunni were marginalised from the government. They then started to advocate for active Sunni participation in the political arena (McClure, 2010).

With the Sunni marginalised from the political and decision-making process, and bullied by AQI at home, tribal leaders saw the US as the only potential partner to break their impasse. In September 2006, the first public meeting of the 'Awakening" was held in which several Anbari tribal leaders publicly threatened AQI to leave their areas or be confronted. One month later, AQI staged a last attempt to impose its power by self-proclaiming the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) with its capital in Ramadi. The ISI was to be the only legitimate governing institution in Sunni-majority areas and AQI called upon all the tribes and armed groups to unite under its rule. However, this move was badly received at home and abroad (Phillips 2009; McClure, 2010). The official change in the US counter-insurgency strategy in February 2007, aimed at benefiting from the fragmentation among the Sunni insurgency and the negative perception of AQI among the Sunni communities, allowed for a formal alliance between the US coalition forces and Anbar´s tribal

leaders who were part of the Awakening. With US financial sponsorship and support from the American military, tribal leaders succeeded in expelling AQI from its territorial base and the group suffered a high number of casualties (Phillips, 2009).

In 2009, provincial elections were held. This time, Sunni candidates participated, but the traditional Sunni coalitions of parties were highly fragmented and poor results were obtained. A further issue for Sunni political aspirations occurred ahead of the 2010 parliamentary elections, when several election slates of prominent Sunni candidates were invalidated for their alleged support of Baathism. Sunni leaders threatened to boycott the elections once more and, although they did finally participate in the elections, Sunni resentment started to simmer. Al Maliki's refusal to integrate the Awakening Sunni combatants known as 'Sons of Iraq' who had cooperated with US forces in the Iraqi Security Forces, as previously agreed, added to the discontent (Katzman, 2009).

In the new power sharing system dominated by a Shia government, feelings of marginalisation felt by the Sunni community in the post-2003 period might have conditioned the sentiment felt towards their own group, creating either feelings of resentment towards the Sunni leadership or strengthening bonds among the Sunni Arab population via the shared sense of alienation from the other ethno-religious group in Iraq. At the same time, AQI's brutal campaign among Sunni Arabs who had first welcomed them in their territory, might have created feelings of mistrust towards those who supported and those who fought against the group, inherited later in the new wave of conflict linked to the emergence and fall of IS. The role of the tribes in expelling AQI and filling the security vacuum might have also contributed to the feeling of attachment around the tribe. Together these factors influence the sense of community experienced by community members in Anbar.

5.1.2 The emergence of IS: capitalising of Sunni resentment

From 2009 onward, Sunni discontent started to grow. This was expressed in the form of large-scale demonstrations demanding better political representation, living conditions and access to employment. At the same time, ISI (later renamed as IS) started to re-organise and launched a series of attacks against Shia civilians and governmental infrastructure. The rebirth of IS was contained when in April 2010, its top leader was killed in a targeted attack. The replacement leader, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, transformed ISI into a powerful organisation over a four-year period. Learning from past mistakes, Al-Baghdadi appointed Iraqi nationals—former Baathist military members—to top ranking posts, making it an Iraqi organisation, and rebuilt the group military and administrative capacities. Growing tension between the Sunni population and a dysfunctional Shia-led Iraqi government benefited the growth of the group (Hashim, 2014).

Sunni resentment exploded in April 2013. Massive demonstrations spread across Sunni majority governorates, including Ramadi, Mosul and Fallujah, ahead of the provincial elections—the first provincial elections after US withdrawal in 2011 (Schweitzer, 2016). The Sunni population accused the Al Maliki government of discriminatory practices and political marginalisation in central government policies (BBC News, 2013). Protests continued throughout the year. In December 2013, security forces violently cracked down the main protest camp in Ramadi, one day after arresting the charismatic MP Alwani, from the Duleim tribe, one of the main supporters of this camp (Gulf News, 2013; The Daily Star Lebanon, 2014). This event triggered the reaction of Sunni tribal forces which allied with IS to overthrow the Al Maliki government. The Al Duleim tribe—the largest confederation of tribes in Anbar—allowed IS to expand in Anbar, and they consequently took control of the governorate main cities: Ramadi and Fallujah (Al Arabiya News 2014; Al-Qarawee 2014). The Iraqi Security Forces, ill-trained and poorly equipped, collapsed and withdrew from vast areas of the territory, posing little resistance to the group´s advance and leaving behind large amounts of heavy military equipment which fell into the hands of IS (IOM Iraq, 2017a).

Eight months after the beginning of the violent advance of IS, the group had captured two-thirds of the country´s territory—the west Sunni-majority areas and the contested areas of Iraq—and had defiantly reached the outskirts of the capital Baghdad. As a result, more than six million Iraqi citizens fled their areas (IOM Iraq, 2018a).

The advance was only contained once the Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF) were formed following a call in the form of fatwa issued by the Shia Iraqi leader Grand-Ayatollah Al-Sistani. An estimated 60,000 to 140,000 men joined the PMF (Mansour and Jabar, 2017), a conglomeration of different armed groups with marked allegiances to specific political and religious Shi'a figures representing an intersection of military and political power (Humanitarian Foresight Think Tank, 2017). The PMF were able to end the IS territorial advance and gradually started to retake parts of the territory together with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Peshmerga, the military forces of the Kurdistan Federal Government.

On 10 December 2017, the Iraqi Prime Minister al-Abadi officially announced the military defeat of IS, marking the official end of the crisis.

5.1.3 The post-IS context in Anbar

In Anbar, almost half a million people fled from the group at the onset of the crisis and following the group's territorial advance in early 2014 (IOM Iraq, 2018a). Some of Anbari citizens stayed in the areas ruled and controlled by IS, either voluntarily or by force. Some of those who remained in IS-controlled territory and cohabited with the group fled at a later stage, when the military campaign to regain IS-held territory reached their communities. These citizens often carry the perception of affiliation due to their cohabitation with IS. The end of the military campaign allowed for the return of displaced community members; however, community tension and mistrust between those community members who displaced first—fleeing from the IS advance—and those who displaced later—fleeing the military campaign to retake the area—ensued (Aymerich, 2020a). After an initial increase in returns following the military campaign to retake

IS-controlled areas and the cessation of violence, where almost half a million Anbaris returned home in 2016, the flow of returns gradually slowed (IOM Iraq, 2018).

The IS-perceived IDPs and returnees fear facing marginalisation and discrimination and are concerned they might be expelled or rejected by their communities. They are also wary of potential retributive attacks by the relatives of IS victims, due to their perceived affiliations to the group (Genat, 2020). The communities of origin of these IDPs have introduced strategies to support the return of IS-affiliated families and to mitigate increases in community tension, that could once again disrupt the social peace of the communities, following their return.

Such strategies are built around the tribal fabric of the communities. Tribal leaders have had a prominent role in navigating both the return of IS affiliates and pre-existing tribal conflict resolution mechanisms which have been contextualised to address this specific issue (Aymerich, 2002; Genat, 2020). Therefore, the role of the tribes in Iraq extends beyond the political and security arena, and their involvement in the development of political and security affairs in Anbar. They are also prominent in the social sphere, navigating community dynamics related to the IS crisis, on occasions facilitating the return of IS affiliates, preventing revenge and retaliation attacks towards them, and addressing security concerns among community members linked to the return of affiliates.

As such, a deeper understanding of the social system that regulates community dynamics in Anbar, with tribalism as a backbone, is needed to contextualise this study. This is explored further in the following section.

5.2 Anbar's social system and the role of the tribes

This section helps to contextualise resilience to the return of IS affiliates. First, the social system in which the communities of study operate are described, as well as the role of tribes and tribal customary law in Anbar. Next, the issue of IS affiliates return is examined and insight is offered

into the tribal-facilitated return process of IS affiliates as well as the tribal-adapted mechanisms that facilitate their return in Anbar, specific to the class of events analysed within the IS conflict. The section concludes by reflecting on what the complex concept of IS affiliation entails, as understood by Iraqi communities.

5.2.1 Understanding the social system of Anbar

As in most Arab Middle Eastern social systems, the social pattern that defines Anbar communities can be described as a patriarchal kin contract (Joseph 1993). Following Joseph (1996, p. 14), a patriarchal kin contract is defined as the 'prioritising of the rights of males and elders (including elder women) and the justification of those rights within kinship values which are usually supported by religion'. This contract establishes a hierarchy which is gender-based, with men dominating over women, and age-based, with adult males holding decision-making power over youth (Olmsted, 2005).

The patriarchal contract in Arab Middle Eastern societies, including in Anbar, is centred around kinship related to the tribe. Kinship, which marks actual or perceived decent, unites individuals around the tribe and establishes tribal societal structure. The patriarchal kin contract defines the position of each community member towards the self and their position within the community. The contract is, therefore, a key defining factor of identity and status within the community (Joseph, 1996). In addition to a sense of belonging to the kin, which acts as a main building block in the individual's identity, within the patriarchal kin contract individuals obtain protection and support from their kin, the tribe, including social, economic, and affective support. In exchange, members need to favour the kin over the individual self, which is done by contributing to the tribe with material resources, labour and by preserving the kin's honour. The latter is particularly important as the individual's behaviour impacts the public perception of the kin itself (Joseph, 1993; 1996; 2008).

Another characteristic of the Arab Middle Eastern patriarchal kin contract is its patrilineal nature, whereby male descent determines primary identity and family affiliation throughout life. Married women are still considered to be members of the kin group and male relatives are responsible for the wellbeing of females in the absence of a husband. This system establishes a power relation in which elder males hold political, social and economic authority, as well as decision-making power over women and youth within their lineage (Joseph, 1996). The power relation between genders is strengthened by the clearly delineated gender roles that have permeated the socialisation process in Arab Middle Eastern societies since the early ages (ElSafty, 2003).

The centrality of the kin steams from the primary building block of society, which is the family and not the individual (Joseph, 1996). Family is not only considered the building block of societal relations but also the main pillar of the Islamic institution, and gender roles play a key role in protecting and safeguarding this institution (Abugideiri, 2004).

Gender has a central role in organising societies as it serves to categorise its members, assign them specific roles, and determine their responsibilities, rights and statuses (Gagné and Tewksbury, 1998). Within the Islamic discourse[14], gender equality is assumed at the spiritual level; however, this equality does not imply non-differentiation of roles and functions within the family and, by extension, the community. Men become in charge of the economic, social and protection aspects, whereas women are granted a primary role within the family and a secondary role in society. In their primary role as 'wife-mother', women are expected to protect their family from any threat that could lead to its moral decay, whereas men are spared from this responsibility (Abugideiri, 2004). As Abugideiri (2004, p. 244) describes:

> The woman is accorded greater responsibility over marital, domestic and societal harmony, despite the rigidified space from which to achieve this. To be sure, Muslim women, especially

[14] As noted by Abugideiri (2004), within the Islamic discourse, liberalist, traditionalist, and Islamist thinkers converge on the frame used to debate gender.

> mothers, are entrusted most emphatically as the moral protectors of Islamic society from any kind of corrupting threat, including any threat that their own bodies and behaviours may pose.

The central role attributed to family and the role of gender to protect this institution lead to gender roles becoming more difficult to contest. There is also major pressure on women as they are in charge of protecting the family institution.

5.2.2 Tribalism and tribal law in Iraq

As covered in the previous section, the paternal tribal lineage is at the centre of the kinship societal structure of Anbar and is a key defining factor of identity and status within the community and the broader region (Gospodinov, 2015). Iraqis, including Anbaris, are most strongly bound by tribal ties. Tribal affiliation tends to be above ethnic or religious affiliation which, in a country marked by cyclic sectarian conflicts based on religion and ethnic background, reflects the importance of the tribe in Iraq's social structure. An estimated seventy-five per cent of Iraq's population are members of tribes or have tribal ties. Adherence to tribal traditions, customs and norms prevails and these are culturally relevant to most of Iraq's population. This includes urban areas as tribal affiliation has persisted rural – urban migration (Hassan, 2007), and tribalism has dominated the country´s social life (Marr, 2017). Many Iraqis rely on their tribe for physical protection, economic resources, and dispute mediation on a day-to-day basis.

The patriarchal patrilineal structure that organises tribes in Iraq is comprised of four hierarchical levels. At the highest level is the confederation of tribes (*qabila*) with a shared lineage. Each confederation is formed of a large number of tribes (*ashira*). Each *ashira* is made up of several clans (*fakhd*), with each clan comprised of several houses (*bayt*). The *bayt* is the smallest grouping in the kin structure and represents the extended family, of several hundred members (Gospodinov, 2015). As explained by the female respondents interviewed in Fhelat community:

A2[15]: Most of the inhabitants in this region are from Al-Bu Issa tribe. There are other tribes who are living in areas adjacent to our village. A4: So, the community consists of a tribe and the clan consists of sub-tribes and the sub-tribe consists of large families and then smaller families and so on.

The *khamsa,* which includes up to five generations of male relatives, is an important part of the *bayt* structure due to its role in conflict resolution within and among tribes. The main role of the *khamsa* is to defend the *bayt*'s honour and thus in resolving disputes (Gospodinov, 2015). Each of the four levels, from *qabila* to *bayt*, is led by a trusted and respected male leader, the sheikh, who is responsible for mediating the settlement of disputes within or among tribes, protecting the tribe, and advising its members on social matters (Otterman, 2005).

Despite the four clearly separate organisational levels, on the ground, the self-defined tribal affiliation is less organised and the boundaries of the levels are blurred. In some areas, the clan is described as the strongest level of tribal identification; in others, the *bayt* or the *ashira* are considered the strongest, depending on the size, power of influence, and past or ongoing disputes between and within levels of the tribal hierarchical structure[16].

When a conflict or dispute arises, a tribal mediation process begins. For serious crimes, the representing sheikhs from the parties involved decide on the tribal settlement, which typically involves the payment of an amount of money known as 'blood money'. This settlement seeks to compensate for the crime committed and to avoid retaliation from the *khamsa*, who would have the right to revenge if a settlement is not reach. That is also why the *khamsa* from the perpetrator's side usually goes away from the community until the dispute is settled. Typically,

[15] A2 refers to the code assigned to this respondent of the FGD. Codes were assigned to respondents according to their seating position.

[16] Based on the lessons learned from experience in large-scale surveys aiming to define tribal affiliation, as well as qualitative data collection conducted on the ground in Iraq in my professional capacity as a Research Officer for IOM Iraq from 2016 to 2021.

each tribe has a collective pot where members contribute on a voluntary basis to collectively cover the payment of tribal settlements (Carroll, 2011; Asfura-Heim, 2014; Genat, 2020). These practices are widespread in Anbar, where tribal law is commonly practiced and followed for the purpose of mediating disputes.

Tribal law and customary law work complementary to each other. Tribal leaders coordinate with security forces to address crimes, and security forces might refer certain cases to be dealt with through the tribal mediation system (Carroll, 2011; Bobseine, 2019). Certain cases are addressed simultaneously through tribal mediation and the court (Genat, 2020).

In the aftermath of the IS conflict, tribal leaders adapted concepts and processes from tribal mediation practices to facilitate reconciliation among those who are seen as having sided with IS and the victims of the group. This is particularly challenging since, by the tribal concept of collective responsibility, kinship ties to IS perpetrators are considered sufficient cause for retaliation by IS victims (Revkin, 2018). Sheikhs and community leaders act as mediators between families of the victims and those perceived as IS affiliates to facilitate the process using tribal resolution mechanisms adapted to the specific case of IS-affiliate return. This is further explored in the next section.

5.2.3 The tribal-facilitated return of IS affiliates

The role of tribal leaders in managing the return process of those displaced community members with perceived affiliation has been particularly significant. The return process for IS affiliates starts when the IDP obtains security clearance allowing for legal return to their community of origin. After obtaining security clearance, IDPs can, in theory, return to their community of origin. However, IDPs with perceived affiliation most commonly adhere to tribal mechanisms that might facilitate their safe return to the community, or potentially initiate the process of obtaining sponsorship.

Three mechanisms from tribal customary justice have been adapted to navigate the return of community members with perceived affiliation to IS: disavowal, denouncement and return to a nearby area. These mechanisms have been broadly applied by the communities included in this study. They are used and accepted not only by tribal leaders but also by community members who have been impacted by the violence resulting from the IS-related crisis and/or related displacement.

The first mechanism, disavowal, can be understood as the act of formally denying any allegiance to the group and pledging to having done no harm to the community in front of the community or tribal leader. Once the disavowal has taken place and the community members have denied any responsibility to the group's acts or allegiance to the group, they obtain sponsorship from the local tribal leader. Obtaining the tribal leader sponsorship grants them access to the procedure of requesting security clearance permitting their return to the community.

Disavowal of IS has been broadly used to facilitate the return of IDPs who stayed under IS rule but who have no proven direct association with the group and no first- or second-line relatives facing criminal charges or accusations of IS membership in a core role. Disavowal has wide support among local tribal leaders.

Although widely used, this mechanism has some drawbacks. First, requiring IDPs to formally renounce IS implies indirect acceptance of having been involved with the group; often, the displaced person in question has no direct ties to IS. Second, there have been instances in which requiring a formal sponsor to ease return has been exploited by tribal leaders who may ask for bribes or some form of payment to initiate the process (Aymerich, 2020a). This is demonstrated by the following quote by a female IDP from Shaqlawiyah Centre:

> *When I returned home, I found a vandalised house. My cattle and livestock were stolen. The tribe's elder told me I would have to leave if I did not pay the required money (10 000 United States dollars)…The army, the sheikh and the tribes refuse our return. To be able to return, we have to*

> *pay huge amounts of money that we do not have; this is as a bribe to the tribe's sheikh to sponsor us and talk to the army and the police, so they let us return…All of them hinder our return because they are asking us to pay a lot of money to give us the clearance. We do not have such money.*

The second mechanism is *tabriya* or denouncement of a relative. Also considered a form of disavowal, *tabriya* refers to expulsion or eviction from the community whereby a person rejects a family member who, in some way, dishonoured the tribe by committing a serious crime. After *tabriya* is performed, the relative is no longer considered a member of the tribe and the tribal members are no longer obliged to protect him or contribute to pay the compensation money for the crime committed. The rejected individual becomes *dam mahdur* (worthless blood) and they are casted out from the tribe and community (Genat, 2020).

In the context of IS affiliates return, *tabriya* has mostly been used by IDPs who have first- or second-degree relatives who allegedly joined IS and where the relatives have formally accused the concerned relative of being an IS member and committing crimes punishable by law. As explained by a female interviewee in Hessey: 'The families whose sons joined IS were not allowed to return until they made a pledge of denouncing their sons.' The religious leader in the same community conferred:

> *Some of the elderly, tribal sheikhs and clerics coordinated with local authorities to facilitate the return procedures [of IS affiliated families] by making the pledge of denouncing their sons who were affiliated to IS and placed these families under the supervision of community leaders*.

Despite some community members viewing this practice as a way to avoid potential retaliation against relatives of those accused of having IS ties, some interviewed IS affiliates expressed their reluctancy to formally accuse their relatives of IS affiliation. This was because the denouncement could potentially be used against the accused in a future trial or as criminal proof against a relative who is still alive. A female interviewee in Shaqlawiyah Centre explained:

> *I wish to return to my house in Shaqlawiyah, but I do not have a permit to return. My brother is detained. My father is an older man of 65 years who has many diseases. We tried to return, but I hate to go back and disown my brother. How can I return to my area without my brother?*

In the wake of the increased return of IDPs with accused first- and second-line relatives, the mechanism of denouncement has evolved in some of the communities studied and has become slightly easier to accept by IDP families. As explained by the tribal leader in Karma Centre:

> *Now, the mechanism has become easier without issuing a case; it is performed by only signing a document of entry and taking the consent and assurance of the sheikh and the mayor without mentioning the name of the person who was accused of being affiliated with IS. When these procedures are completed, the family can return*.

Although this remains a highly problematic approach, mentioning the name of relatives accused of involvement with IS is no longer required.

The third mechanism is an adaptation of *jali* or exile. This is considered one of the 'calming' mechanisms in tribal dispute resolution aimed at preventing blood feuds and an escalation of violence once a crime occurs and before mediation can properly start. By *jali,* the perpetrator and their family abandon the tribal homeland to a distant area outside of their tribal territory, sometimes accompanied by the *khamsa. Jali* serves two purposes: it protects the perpetrator's family from retaliation and it protects the 'honour' of the victims' *khamsa.* These act to prevent avenge of the crime before the tribal mediation process starts, which may occur if the perpetrator and/or their relatives were within the own tribal territory (Asfura-Heim, 2014).

Jali has been adapted to the context of IS affiliate return whereby IS affiliates have been allowed to return to a nearby location or to the outskirts of their community. This mechanism has been employed on two occasions. First, when the families of victims have accused one member of the IS affiliated families of committing a crime that, according to tribal custom, can be avenged, and

a tribal mediation process has started to settle the case. In this case, and while mediation is taking place, the family of the alleged perpetrator is sent away until a settlement is agreed on between the two families. This first scenario is in line with the custom of *jali*, differing in that returns have taken place within the IS affiliates' tribal territory and not within another tribe's homeland. Residing in a nearby area is understood to be an intermediary step before IDPs are allowed to return home. In theory, this is aimed at ensuring their safe return home as once the case between the families is settled, the victim's family cannot take revenge. However, if the relatives of the alleged perpetrator do not have enough resources to settle the payment of 'blood money' to the victim's family and the tribe is not willing to cover the payment—for example, where the victim and perpetrator are from the same clan—this temporary displacement carries the risk of being protracted.

The second occasion relates to the fact that in some communities, certain community leaders have been actively involved in facilitating the return of women and children from the camps, but upon return they reside in separate areas of the community and are secluded from community affairs. As explained by the tribal leader in Karma Centre:

> *There are families who are expelled from the region because of the proven charges against their children who belong to IS…Some of these families disowned their children and we therefore allowed them to return, others were accepted only by part of the community. To avoid this situation, we have allowed them to live in homes other than their homes so that there will be no contact between them and the affected families, at least for a period of time that will allow the wound to heal and hearts to calm down.*

Despite the three mechanisms put in place to facilitate the return of IS-perceived affiliates, once the return takes place, the IS-affiliated families might remain in the community or be expelled. Families tend to be expelled when a victim's family directly complain about the return or threaten to commit revenge. As explained by an interviewed female community member in Hessey: *'*A number of families returned to the area and after a while they were expelled because the families

of the victims wanted their sons' blood avenged.' In these occasions, the family is expelled either indefinitely from the community or temporarily while a mediation process takes places between relatives of the victims and perpetrators, facilitated by the tribal leaders.

Another instance where families are requested to leave the community occurs if the family breaks the disavowal and contacts the first- or second-degree relative who is considered an IS member. This is illustrated by the following quote from the Mukhtar in Fhelat:

> *There was a case that happened with an old man. He was displaced in Amiriyat al-Fallujah camp. He has [sic] no one to help him as his wife is dead and he has one son belonging to IS. This old man has asked to return to the region to his house and he told everyone that his son was killed in the fighting that took place to liberate the region from IS. After a while, it was revealed that his son was not dead and he came to visit him more than once until he was arrested. Anyway, this made us ask this old man to leave the region.*

Families with perceived affiliation can also be harassed or directly threatened by community members to make them leave, as explained by an IDP rejected from Ebbah (this is further explored in Chapter 10 with regards to the quality and quantity of contact factor):

> *Some of my neighbours accepted my return while others have opposed it. The reason for rejecting my return is I was present in the area during IS's occupation. Some of them said "whoever was not displaced and remained is considered as affiliated to IS.". However, this is not correct at all. I was exposed to harassment and verbal abuse. My children were at work and harassed. Of course, my family and I felt threatened. My house was hit more than once by live bullets. I do not know who opened fire on my house.*

5.2.4 IS affiliation as understood by communities

A fundamental question at the core of this analysis is: what does affiliation entail? Affiliation to IS as perceived by Iraqi communities is a complex concept, which has different interpretations in each community and area. While some communities consider all those who lived under IS-

controlled areas and did not flee as 'affiliates' (regardless of voluntarily or involuntarily staying in the area), other communities have developed a more nuanced understanding of what affiliation entails (Aymerich, 2020a).

In some communities, having cohabited with the group is reason enough to be considered an IS-affiliate. In other communities, families are perceived as affiliates of IS when one family member joined the group, even if this was under coercion. The level of consanguinity also differs; most commonly, first- and second- degree relatives are perceived as affiliates but, in some communities, this reaches up to fourth-degree of consanguinity (Genat, 2020).

In Anbar, including the communities where this study was carried out, entire families are considered as IS affiliates when one first-degree relative was, allegedly, a member of the group. This can extend to second-line relatives, although that is less common. Therefore, IS affiliates did not necessarily directly participate in the group's actions or have a formal role in the group, they just held a kin relationship with an alleged member.

The fact that members of the same Sunni tribes sided partly with IS and partly with the Tribal Mobilisation Forces created to support the military campaign to regain territory under the group's control, has profoundly shattered the social unity of the area, dividing villages and even families (Parry and Aymerich, 2022). The territorial advance of IS was not only linked to the tactical control of territory from a military point of view, it also aimed to establish a Caliphate in accordance with the Salafist interpretation of Islamic governance. Therefore, the group not only recruited fighters, but it also established structures characteristic of a state. Local civil servants voluntarily or involuntarily swore allegiance to the group and joined the parallel state structure put in place by IS (Revkin, 2018). Most often, these civil servants did not perform military tasks or carry weapons, further complicating the concept of affiliation.

In the early stages of IS withdrawal there was an attempt led by prominent Anbari tribes to set the guidelines to 'rebuilding the social fabric that was destroyed by Da'esh's malicious ideology and criminal acts, which made disobedience the defining relationship in the single family and the total rehabilitation of the community' through the signing of the People's Covenant of Anbar in July 2016 by leading tribal leaders and community actors (Committee for Disputes Settlement, 2016). The Anbar Covenant aimed to set the mechanisms to guarantee tribal support to the rule of law, to prevent collective punishment and revenge acts, and to regulate the return of families with perceived affiliation in a safe manner. Article 11 specifically refers to the return of IS affiliates and offers a classification of whose affiliates are allowed or not to return:

> In order to facilitate the return of the displaced families safely and to preserve the civil peace, it's imperative to lay down regulations for families around whose children hovers suspicion of affiliation or collaboration with the terrorist organisation Da'esh. These regulations are:
>
> a) Persons and parties that promoted the Da'esh project through media channels, who were the cause of misleading public opinion and disrupting the security forces, leading some of them to breakdown. The return of these people—as individuals not families—is not welcomed at this point. Charges first need to be looked into and established by committees.
> b) Families whose members joined Da'esh terrorist gangs and provided shelter, hideouts, or support, must not be allowed to return at this point; [they may return] when the situation is stable and their charges are looked into. As for their relatives who dwell in another house, they are not included in the provisions of this item unless they were involved in similar actions.
> c) Families whose children joined Da'esh without their consent and didn't offer support and assistance to the criminals, will not be penalised but can return home safely after disclaiming their affiliated-with-Da'esh children by taking the oath.
> d) Families around which or around whose children hovers suspicions of supporting or collaborating with Da'esh, but evidence to indict them for the charges of affiliation with Da'esh lacks at this point, cannot return home unless they are vouched for by a person known for 'their national allegiance', guaranteeing their good conduct in the next phase.

> Sponsors are required to bring those whom he/she vouched for to justice or subject them to punishment according to tribal common law in cases of finding evidence about previous involvement in criminal activities.

However, tribal-led attempts to regulate the return of IS affiliates and, with it, to prevent a spiral of revenge between opposing sides and foster social cohesion in the area, did not occur on the ground and the regulations did not reflect the reality of returns. The 2018 amendment to the covenant (Sanad for Peacebuilding, 2019), emphasising the need to reject the collective punishment of IS affiliates' families and the commitment to identify and prosecute IS members through legal channels instead of tribal law, is merely proof of the failure of the covenant to be implemented. Although it is not possible to quantify the number of IS affiliates due to differing interpretations of affiliation among communities, the vast extent of the issue and the division in the social fabric of Anbar likely contribute to the failure of the top-down agreement.

Additionally, when Iraqi law has indeed been applied, suspected IS members have been charged and eventually judged under Iraq's Federal Anti-Terrorism Law. Serious concerns have been raised on the trials conducted for alleged IS members, mostly sentenced under Article 4 of this specific Anti-Terrorism Law, which allows for wide interpretation and uses the concepts 'membership' and 'association' to a terrorist group as a basis of convicting individuals. This has led to the 'de facto' classification of able males who cohabited with IS as 'members', and prosecuted as such, and children, females and elders as 'affiliates' (United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, 2020).

The following quote from a local tribal leader from Albo Shejal hints to the Anbar covenant being seen as a process external to local tribal leaders which does not reflect the granularity on the ground. It also questions the fairness of the application of Iraq's law by the judiciary.

> *A number of sessions were held by tribal sheikhs with the state. A commitment document was signed, the 'Anbar Covenant', signed by many tribal sheikhs in the presence of the Speaker of the*

Iraqi Parliament…By this agreement, the families of the perpetrators involved with IS terrorists were considered involved and no one should mediate and recommend them or pay bribes and leave it to the judiciary, otherwise they will be treated as perpetrators. This agreement took place in 2016 with the participation of all tribal elders in Ramadi…)A number of laws have also been issued, including the Anti-Terrorism Law, which stipulates that anyone who collaborates with IS will be accused of the charge of Terrorism 4 and he will be sentenced to 15 years in prison….there are many who were arrested without any justification or a crime, but they were sentenced for crimes of terrorism.

The inadequacy of the Iraqi law, as interpreted by the Central Government in Baghdad, coupled with the failure of the prominent tribal leaders to manage the extent and granularity of the IS affiliates return, has translated to a situation on the ground in which each community has navigated the return of IS affiliates according to its own understanding of affiliation. Such understandings are highly contextualised. The role of local tribal leaders who rely on tribal law has been more prominent in the return process than that of the prominent leaders who were signatories of the agreement.

Additionally, it is interesting to consider the quotes below from rejected female IDPs from Shaqlawiyah Centre hosted in IDP camps. These show that the use of Iraqi law as a framework to prosecute alleged IS members has not stopped the collective punishment of their first-degree relatives, as the covenant requested.

I am not allowed to go back due to the fact that I am rejected by the tribe because my brother is accused of belonging to Daesh and he is currently imprisoned for 15 years - the charge of Terrorism 4.

I did not gain the approval from the sheikh as he has rejected me because my husband is accused of belonging to Daesh. He is currently being held in prison on charges of Terrorism 4.

The way in which the studied communities defined affiliation differed between the two types of communities: those who developed inclusive and those who developed exclusive resilience. This is analysed in detail in Chapter 7. Overall, the understanding of IS affiliation in inclusive resilient communities tends to be nuanced, meaning that community members and community leaders distinguish who is and who is not an affiliate according to the role their first- and second-degree relatives (considered to be IS members) had in the group or the actions their relatives committed. Individual circumstances tend to be taken into account for relatives of IS members to be exempted from being considered as IS affiliates; for example, in those cases in which they opposed the decision of the relative to join the armed group. On some occasions, communities with inclusive resilience tend to be more accepting of women and children, having moved away from collective blame.

In contrast, in exclusive resilient communities, the understanding of affiliation by community members and leaders is broader and tends to include those who cohabited with the group, regardless of both their role in the group and individual circumstances.

CHAPTER 6: MEMBERSHIP

As elaborated in previous chapters, this study aims to understand the differences in resilience responses developed by geographically proximate communities, with very similar ethno-religious and tribal composition, to the disruption of the community's social peace linked to the return of IS affiliates in Iraq. This chapter is the first of four empirical chapters analysing variations in the social interaction factors within the four-element SOC framework and their role in the development of resilience responses to the disruption of social peace linked to the return of IS affiliates in Iraq.

As such, this chapter and the three succeeding it will analyse the role and variations across communities in the social interaction factors within the four SOC elements of membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection. This is done using the original data collected in the field which consists of 42 in-depth interviews, 17 FGDs and 17 participatory mappings in six Arab Sunni communities of Iraq from June to August 2019.

This chapter starts by outlining the hypothesis for SOC-membership to be tested and its underpinning mechanisms as defined in Chapter 3. Following this, a detailed explanation of findings on SOC-membership is provided for each factor: boundaries, sense of belonging, emotional safety, and a common symbol system. These are described as either present or absent in the eight communities and across population groups. The final section brings the findings together to analyse how different combinations of social interaction factors within SOC-membership contribute to the outcomes of exclusive or inclusive resilience linked to the return of IS affiliates.

Membership is considered the most important element of SOC as it determines three groups: the 'we', the 'deviant' and the 'others' (McMillan and Chavis, 1986; Schneider, Gruman and Coutts, 2012). This study departs from the assumption that presence of membership is more likely to be found in those communities who developed exclusive resilience. Communities with a major

presence of membership have better-defined boundaries, which reinforce the felt sense of belonging and identification, common symbol systems, and emotional safety in the community. Overall, these lead to such communities considering IS affiliates to be 'non-members' or 'deviants' and they are subsequently expelled from the community. Therefore, the hypotheses the study aims to test are:

- H1 (A): Communities with clearly defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.
- H1 (B): Communities with loosely defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

As this chapter shows, the analysis points to the opposite direction. Fluid boundaries, combined with the absence of both sense of belonging and emotional safety, as well as an unshared symbol system, signal an outcome of exclusive resilience. The findings also emphasise the contributing role a well-defined deviant group has in the community, reinforcing solid boundaries, and how this influences the outcome of inclusive resilience.

6.1 Boundaries

Within membership, boundaries facilitate the delineation of three groups: those who belong to the community, those who are deviants to the community, and those who are not members (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Particularly important is the second group: the deviants, as they have a role in creating and maintaining boundaries (Dentler and Erikson, 1959). The deviants are the scapegoat of the communities and by derogating them, the group's identity is reinforced (Hutchison *et al.,* 2008). It is the opinions of community members towards certain actions of deviants which define them as deviant, rather than the actions per se. Therefore, the deviant label is dynamic and differs over time (Chan, Louis and Jetten, 2010; Jetten and Hornsey, 2014).

Pressure to conform, one of the social interaction factors within SOC-influence, explored in detail in the next chapter, is used by communities to absorb deviance due to the tendency of a system to seek uniformity and consensus (Marques, Abrams and Serôdio, 2001). But deviants are more likely to be derogated if community members feel that pressure to conform will be fruitless, or if the deviants have the capacity to challenge the identity or position of the group (Branscombe *et al.,* 1993; Marques, Abrams and Serôdio, 2001; Jetten and Hornsey, 2014). In this study, boundaries are considered as solid boundaries when there is a clear definition if or whose IS affiliates are considered part of the community, and as fluid boundaries when it is unclear whether IS affiliates continue to be considered as community members. Special attention is given to the deviant group, due to the role of deviance in boundary definition and maintenance, as well as on deviance being 'absorbed' or 'derogated' by communities. These aspects could have implications on the development of each resilience type in this study.

6.1.1 Solid boundaries

A priori, inclusive resilient communities and exclusive resilient communities presented very similar levels of references to IS affiliates no longer being part of their communities. Such references were slightly higher in inclusive resilient communities. A major difference, however, was found within the two types of communities.

In exclusive resilient communities, respondents tended to consider those who stayed under IS's occupation and cohabited with the group as no longer belonging to the community. This was without consideration of individual circumstances. Therefore, respondents in these communities considered a broader view of IS affiliates as no longer belonging to the community. As referred to in the FGD among male community members in Ebbah, an exclusive resilient community, '*Those with affiliation [to IS] are no longer part of the community…they were part of this community, but they came out by joining Daesh*.' This opinion was shared by the female community members in Shaqlawiyah Centre, also an exclusive resilient community, who explained '*We do not want anyone who is related to IS*' and '*If they return, we will report them*

because they took our sons. They are not part of the community anymore' (A6). This view was conferred by their male counterparts who stated: '*Those who belong to IS are considered outcasts because they are a group of killers and traitors.*'

Individual interviews with community leaders and authorities in exclusive resilient communities also appeared to support these views, as can be seen in the following quotes by a mukhtar in Shaqlawiyah Centre: '*They harmed the community. They are not part of this community anymore'*; by a representative of the tribal Sunni militia in Fhelat: '*No one wants them back, neither do I, because they were hurting people and they will keep doing this if they return. They are not part of this community and they have nothing to do with it'*; and a representative of the local authorities in Ebbah: '*If you mean the families whose relatives belong to Daesh, these families are no longer part of the community*.'

Conversely, in inclusive resilient communities, there was a more nuanced differentiation between those who belonged and those who did not belong to the community, with regards to the IS-affiliate group. Such communities made use of the alleged roles IS members had in the group and alleged actions committed by IS members to determine who was and was no longer part of the community. This was demonstrated by the following quote from the FGD with youth community members in Karma Centre: '*The extent to which we accept our neighbours depends on the neighbour's actions during the events*' and conferred by male community members in the same community: '*It is not possible or fair to accuse those who were forced to stay as affiliates with IS.*'

With regards to roles, the communities considered IS affiliates to be the relatives of IS members who occupied a core role in IS, such as being appointed *mukhtar* or by being an active combatant. Those who were forced to join the group as members but had no decision-making powers are excluded in this classification. This applies to those civil servants who pledged allegiance to the group in the area under IS control. Since the IS project included the establishment of a Caliphate to rule over the territories it gained control over, the group operated its own institutions and

absorbed control over existing services, including the running of hospitals and schools. The employed local civil servants were forced to swear their allegiances to the group and worked under its umbrella to provide such services (Revkin, 2018).

This nuanced understanding in exclusive resilient communities, according to the roles undertaken in the group, is illustrated in the following quotes by a tribal leader in Karma Centre and by male community members in Hessey:

> *In general, the people of the region know each other well and from the beginning, they knew who those community members were who welcomed IS and loved them and those who were obliged and forced to stay and deal with them. Therefore, after the liberation and our return to the community, community members did not hesitate to forgive and deal with the people oppressed by Daesh and expel and hand over to the security forces those who were an element of Daesh (meaning an IS member). (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, Tribal Leader)*

> *For those who have harmed the community and its members, I don't want them to return, but the regular people forced to work for them, they are our people and our brothers.' (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD male)*

For actions committed against the communities, the communities focused on two crimes committed during the time IS controlled the area and under the name of the group: 1) the alleged killing of another member of the community, and 2) the destruction (most commonly by means of burning as referred to by the respondents) of land or property of another community member. The following quotes illustrate this sentiment in inclusive resilient communities:

> *The rejected families are divided into two groups. Some supported IS but did not commit crimes and these [families] will be accepted. The second group is those who killed and bombed, and these [families] are not allowed to return. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, Religious Leader)*

> *Some of them [community members displaced to the camps] have a tribal issue which prevents them from returning: one of their relatives are [sic] suspected to belong to IS and killed people in*

the community and became fugitives wanted by the authorities (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD male)

We do not want the return of those who killed us and destroyed our homes. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)

Interviewees also spoke about the agreement among community members and community leaders to keep them away from the community:

The majority of the community agreed not to allow families whose sons had committed murder and bombed houses and so those families were expelled and asked to displace to other areas. These are only families whose sons have committed murder against members of the same community, and they cannot return permanently according to tribal law. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, Religious Leader)

There are specific families who were not allowed to return, especially those whose sons committed murders and bombings of police officers People agreed not to receive anyone whose hands are stained with the blood of the crimes their sons committed. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, Religious Leader)

A lot of the youth and women who live in the camps wish to return to their homes, but the involvement of their sons with IS prevents them from returning. The sheikhs decided to keep them away because of the abuses [sic] their sons caused, such as killing people or other crimes, and so their return was stopped. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)

The position of the community leaders—sheikhs, security officials and notables of the community—is that no one who had a role in destroying the area will be allowed to return. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)

Subsequently, in these communities, first-degree relatives of IS members who had decision-making powers in the community, or who committed violence against another community

members by killing or burning land or property, tended to be regarded as the sub-group of IS affiliates who were no longer part of the community.

Another distinction was made among relatives of IS members who actively supported their decision to join the group (i.e., they ideologically sided with IS) and those who did not. This was explained by a representative of the local authorities in Karma Centre:

> *I do not consider them to be part of this community. Please note that I am talking about those families who supported IS intellectually and morally. There were some families whose sons were part of IS despite the parents not allowing their sons to join the group.*

Therefore, inclusive resilient communities have more effectively delineated their deviant group. The deviant group includes IS affiliates whose first-degree relatives were IS members who killed or burnt property of another member of the community, who hold a core position within the group, and/or who encouraged their relatives in their decision to join the group.

As covered, it is the differential treatment that the deviant receives from the conforming members that converts them into a deviant (Simmons, 1965). For inclusive resilient communities, not allowing the return of, specifically, IS affiliates whose relatives were involved in killing or burning property in the community, and allowing the return of the other IS affiliates, is what classifies this group as deviant.

Following Kitsuse (1961), the communities first interpreted the killing and burning of property in the community as the deviant action. They then identified the relatives of those who committed these acts as those to blame, alongside the IS member who committed the crime. The relatives were, therefore, defined as deviants. Last, the community accorded to those identified as deviant with the treatment the community considered appropriate for the deviant group: to deny their return to the community. Therefore, IS affiliates who do not fall under this criterion established by the community, despite being considered as deviating from the conforming members due to

their affiliation, and being pressured into conformity, are not considered deviant; subsequently, their return can be allowed. This pressure towards conformity of IS affiliates in inclusive resilient communities is further explored in Chapter 7. In exclusive resilience communities, the IS affiliates whose relatives committed similar crimes did not receive differential treatment from the rest of the IS affiliates. Therefore, they cannot be considered a deviant group (Kitsuse, 1961). Deviants are used by communities to better delineate and maintain the community's boundaries, as well as contribute overall to solid boundaries. As such, the highest level of definition of the deviant group in inclusive resilient communities can be understood as a sign of more solid boundaries in this type of community.

Not surprisingly, most of references on (non-deviant) IS affiliates considered as community members come from inclusive resilient communities, as the below quotes exemplify:

> *I consider those who have not returned to the community because of their affiliation to IS as part of this community, despite what they have done and the harm they have caused to the community. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *They [IS affiliates] belong here; they are not strangers, they are neighbours, relatives and friends and they lived with us for many years, but the events caused differences between them and us. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, Returnee 3)*

> *They are part of the community because they were born and raised here…they can be considered part of the community despite the harm they have cause [sic] to it. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)*

Moving away from collective blame seemed to facilitate the acceptance of IS affiliates as members of the community, which created more acceptance towards their return. In this regard, inclusive resilient communities tended to refer to two population sub-groups: the women and the children of IS-members, both exempted from carrying the guilt of their relatives who joined the group. This was explained by female community members in Albo Shejal: '*We want them to*

return, women and children, but we do not want their sons belonging to IS', in Karma Centre: *'Children and women have no guilt of what their parents have done'* and the representative of the local authorities in Albo Shejal: *'If a person belonging to IS was killed, then I do not see there is a need to punish his children and his family who have nothing to do with that.'* Therefore, if there is no pending tribal claim against them, IS affiliates may be able to return, as explained by the representative of the local authorities in Karma: *'There is also a widow who had four children members of IS, she wanted to return, and her four sons were killed in the liberation operations. This woman returned to the community where a colonel in the tribal crowd sponsored her and allowed her to return to the community.'*

An exception occurred among community leaders in Ebbah, an exclusive resilient community. Here, community leaders have also attempted to define members who are no longer part of the community, similar to in inclusive resilient communities, by differentiating relatives who supported the decision of an IS member to join, and ideologically followed the group, and those who did not. This was explained by the Mukhtar of Ebbah:

> *There are people who lived here and who are no longer part of this community…and who did not return because of its affiliation with IS, either directly or indirectly. These are divided into two parts: the first part are those parents of Daesh members who join the group without the permission of their parents, and who had no authority over them. They [the parents] can return after obtaining the security clearance and having a sponsor. The second part is those who belonged to Daesh, and their parents supported them and encouraged them to do so; therefore, those [parents] are not welcome, and some have been expelled upon their return, and this decision was made by community consultation.*

Attempts to define the deviant group in Ebbah appear to be having an impact on the community, as commented by a female interviewee in Ebbah: *'The community is starting to realise that each individual is accountable for the sins they commit, and not the group.'*

Regardless of communities delineating a deviant group, members with deviating attitudes—in the case of this study, the IS affiliates—might face a hostile response and be stigmatised or socially isolated (Dentler and Erikson, 1959; Erikson, 1961). This is because the other members fear being associated with the deviants. By treating them harshly and putting distance between the community and the deviants, community members try to dissociate themselves. This serves to protect their individual image and limits the likelihood of appearing to side with the 'guilty' ones and subsequently be casted in the same way (Eidelman and Biernat, 2003). The negative treatment received by IS affiliates as deviating members in the community, in both exclusive and inclusive resilient communities, places the deviants at risk of social isolation and marginalisation. This is further explored in Chapter 9).

6.1.2 Fluid boundaries

In exclusive resilient communities, without a well-established deviant group, references to IS affiliates or subsets of this group as part of the community tended to be unclear and contradictory at times, reflecting a lack of clarity regarding who is or is not part of the community. This was expressed by the representative of the local authorities and the mukhtar in Ebbah:

> *I don't know if they are still members of this community or not, or if expulsing them was positive or negative, and the reason is that these families are either cousins or relatives born here and the community is small and we are all related, so the issue is not simple at all. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)*

> *Some consider these families [IS affiliates] to be part of this community because they were born here and carry their traditions. Others refuse to consider them as part of the community because of the harm they caused during the crisis. There are conflicting opinions on this issue. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Mukhtar)*

This lack of clarity seemed to come from the struggle respondents had, inherent in the concept of community, between understanding community as a place (i.e., the physical space where members were born and raised) or as a social unit. Respondents usually referred to IS affiliates as

'technically' part of the community because they were born and lived there but that they are not currently part of the community, in terms of the social unit due to their IS affiliation. As mentioned by the mukhtar in Fhelat, *'Certainly, they are part of the community because some of them are relatives, friends and neighbours. But currently, I do not know if they are still part of this community or not.'*

A few exceptions were found in exclusive resilient communities where respondents stated that IS affiliates belonged to the community. In Ebbah, this happened occasionally among some of the respondents and community leaders. For example, one mukhtar mentioned *'They are part of this community no matter what happened.'* Another mukhtar commented '*They can be considered part of the community despite the harm they have caused to it'* and a female interviewee stated *'They belong to this community, regardless [of] the fact that some of them or their relatives belong to Daesh.'*

Also, in Shaqlawiyah Centre, some community members, male and female, considered the IS affiliates to be part of the community, despite being reluctant to allow them to return. This was not, however, the case among community leaders. A female respondent commented *'They are considered part of the community as they have kinship relations and their houses are still here, but we want to leave things as they currently are.'* A male respondent mentioned '*They belong to this community for a number of reasons, including their birth in this community and that they hold the values of this community.'* In Fhelat, the third exclusive resilient community, no references were made to IS affiliates as belonging to the community.

6.1.3 Summary of findings

A narrowly defined deviant group has resulted in the creation of more solid boundaries in inclusive resilient communities. The deviant group includes the first-degree relatives of those IS members who killed or burned property of another community member, and those IS affiliates viewed as having actively encouraged their relatives to join the group.

Respondents in inclusive resilient communities—which have a well-defined deviant group—most often considered IS affiliates outside of the deviant group as community members, particularly women and children.

For fluid boundaries, in exclusive resilient communities, the blame attributed to IS affiliates as a collective restricts the communities' ability to concretely define who is and is not a member of the community; it also acts to delineate a specific deviant group. An exception was found among some community members and community leaders in Ebbah, and among some community members in Shaqlawiyah Centre, excluding community leaders. This might reflect varying degrees of rigidity in community boundaries among communities.

6.2 Sense of belonging and identification

Sense of belonging and identification is understood as the expectation of community members that they fit into the group and have a place there, as well as the feeling of being accepted by the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). It also involves willingness of community members to sacrifice for the community. Community members might feel identified with the community and that they belong to it, or these feelings might be less prevalent or even absent.

6.2.1 Presence of sense of belonging and identification

'The home is dearest than the son.' This quote, by a female community member in Fhelat, encapsulates the feelings of sense of belonging and identification. In this regard, overall, respondents tended to refer to fitting into the community and feeling accepted by the close-knit nature of the communities they reside in, where neighbours know each other, as well as to the kin ties that unite them. As the youth in Ebbah explained: *'Acceptance is definitely something positive and you can find it here among the people because we all know each other; we are neighbours or relatives, or we are from the same tribe.'* The mukhtar in Albo Shejal stated *'We have tribal ties, we are familiar with each other and socialise together, of course, because we are*

mostly from one tribe.' Thus, the sense of belonging and identification directly interlinks with the factors spiritual bond, via the tribe, and quality and quantity of contact. These are explored in Chapter 9.

Sense of belonging and identification was found at similar levels across communities, both exclusive and inclusive. In Hessey, this factor was more frequently referred to, although the references denote a similar intensity as in the rest of the communities. When it comes to population groups, sense of belonging was present in all respondent types currently living in the community, including the women and youth. The following quotes from different community types and population groups exemplify this feeling:

> *A1: We all belong to the same tribe. A3: We are all relatives and cousins. A5: 'Here is where our family and relatives live and we are neighbours since our childhood, we love our neighbours, and they love us; we have lived together for a long time…We accept our neighbours because we are as a family; we love each other. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *I feel comfortable here because my neighbours and relatives and my parents live here, almost [all] of the inhabitants are from Al Jumaili tribe, so there is intimacy and mercy among people. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *Definitely I feel very attached to the community and I am an important part of it. A1: It is difficult to measure, but I would say that I belong to this community very much. A6: I also belong to my community very much. A2: Definitely, I belong to the maximum, there is an acceptance from neighbours and others in Ebbah. A7: Yes, acceptance and forgiveness can be found in here with our neighbours and with the rest of the community. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *We returned immediately after the conflict and we were very happy because this is our home to which we belong to. We accept our neighbours because we are like a family; we love each other. A5: There is no reason not to accept our neighbours. (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, FGD male).*

However, differences across communities emerged for the returnee subgroup within inclusive resilient communities. In Hessey, although sense of belonging and identification was expressed by returnees, this population sub-group less commonly referred to it. Sense of belonging and identification in Hessey was mainly expressed by community leaders and male respondents, followed by women. As mentioned by a returnee in Hessey:

> *I am very comfortable among the community members because I honestly consider them more than just community members; they are the people with whom I grew up and played when I was a kid and then I grew up with them.*

Conversely, in Albo Shejal and Karma Centre, the returnees were the group that most commonly and strongly expressed sense of belonging. A returnee in Albo Shejal mentioned *'Yes, certainly I belong to this community, and I did not feel as not being part of this community even when I was away from it [in displacement], we know each other well.'* This was conferred by another returnee to the community: '*I do feel accepted and there is no obstacle regarding this issue; there is nothing that makes the community not to accept me.'* The following quote from the third returnee from Albo Shejal explains in detail this feeling of sense of belonging:

> *My belonging to the village of Albo Shejal is very strong and there is nothing that will ever change that…everyone here is my relative, whether from the first degree or relatives from within the same tribe…I feel very comfortable because I consider them my family and my friends and the individual feels comfortable when he is surrounded by his people and his friends.*

In Karma, a returnee explained that *'*everyone welcomed us well and we never felt unaccepted*'.* In some cases, acceptance translated to specific actions, as explained by another returnee in Karma:

> *When I returned, I was welcomed by the neighbours who prepared me lunch, more than once, when I was cleaning the house, which shows that I am accepted by the other community members.*

The situation before the crisis was excellent, especially the social relations…I belong to Karma and nothing is going to change that.'

In Karma and Albo Shejal, community members and community leaders were in favour of IS affiliates return, which might have deepened feelings of belonging among returnees in these two communities. In Hessey, community members initially rejected the return. The intervention of community leaders contributed to convincing community members to accept affiliates return. As Chapter 7 explains, the influence measures used by community leaders to convince community members on this issue created a more hostile environment for the returnees, as their return was tolerated but initially unwelcomed. This may have weakened sense of belonging among this population sub-group. Indeed, and as is explained in detail in Chapter 9, Hessey presented one of the highest instances of negative quality and quantity of contact towards perceived affiliates.

In exclusive resilient communities, sense of belonging was also expressed by some IDPs, despite their situation of displacement and even though their return was often rejected by the community. This is reflected in the following quotes by IDPs from exclusive resilient communities. Sense of belonging expressed by this subgroup was however, less than that expressed across the other population sub-groups.

Q: Do you feel accepted by the community? A: Yes, certainly, in all ways. We have been living through the better and the worse and share the difficult times and joys because we are the people of the region and most likely relatives of the same tribe or lineage, as I mentioned earlier, and generally the majority have been living in the region for a long time. No one is a stranger to the region. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, IDP)

Yes, I am accepted by most members of the community and I have no hostility with anyone because I do not look for problems at all. I am a peaceful person and I like people and I like to feel that they feel good towards me.' (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, IDP)

Despite the recent conflict, community members also displayed a willingness to sacrifice for the community, one of the indicators of sense of belonging and identification. Respondents expressed their regret for, what they considered to be, abandonment of their communities when they fled from IS without fighting back. This was consistent across communities with one clear exception, Fhelat, which is further commented on in the next sub-section.

This willingness to sacrifice for the community was also found across respondent types. Female community members in Ebbah commented '*I would sacrifice with everything to protect the community. And, if the time goes back, I would have never left the community even if I had paid it with my life.'* Other community members in Albo Shejal mentioned *'I would sacrifice for my community with my blood and everything I have.' A2: 'We learned our lesson which we will never forget, we would sacrifice everything to protect our region.' A6: 'We have the will to sacrifice everything to protect our community.'*

The youth conferred to this, as illustrated in the following quotes:

> *A2: I will sacrifice all my belongings for my region and my family, and I will not allow the events to happen again even if it is at the cost of losing my life, and also the community is ready to sacrifice for me. A6: For sure I would sacrifice my life, if necessary, for the last events never to repeat, so is the community, because of the harm done to our people by those monsters who are not human beings. A4: With all I have, I would sacrifice my family, my tribe and my neighbours. And yes, they are also ready to sacrifice for the community. A7: Sacrifice by my life is the least I can do, for my family, my relatives, friends and loved ones, and certainly the community is also ready to sacrifice. Sacrifice must be mutual; each of us sacrifices for the other. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *If there is something more precious than the soul, I would sacrifice it for my community. But I do not know if the community deserves it, it is no longer as it was in here. I am telling you the truth. A3: I disagree with brother A7, we must distinguish between the good and the bad. Indeed, there are those in the community who hurt us, but this cannot make us abandon our sacrifice for our*

community. On the contrary, we should sacrifice to the last drop of blood we have, and the community will do the same for us. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)

Amongst returnees, in Hessey, respondents commented *'I am fully prepared to sacrifice for my family firstly and my community second. I will sacrifice my life, if needed.'* In Albo Shejal, a returnee expressed '*I would sacrifice for my community to the fullest extent because it is my safe sanctuary, where I have a stable life and where my future and the future of my relatives and children lies.'* In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a returnee mentioned: *'I would sacrifice my life for the sake of my family and my community as far as you can imagine as this is the most important principle that characterises any man, because if I defend my community, others will be motivated and defend the community with me, and this will spread among the rest of the community and the sacrifice will be shared and not limited to a particular individual.'*

6.2.2 Absence of sense of belonging and identification

Sense of belonging and identification was present at similar levels across the two types of communities. However, absence of this factor was found at higher levels in exclusive resilient communities, particularly in Fhelat. This community presented a high concentration of references to absence of sense of belonging, compared to the other communities. In Fhelat, where community leaders and members were both against the return of IS affiliates, the IDPs—the group which less commonly expressed the presence of sense of belonging—did not feel accepted by the community. This feeling of non-acceptance by the Fhelat community was found at higher levels than in the other two exclusive resilient communities.

The following quotes are from interviewed female IDPs originally from Fhelat who were rejected by their community upon return, and who are currently living in Amiriyat Al Fallujah IDP camp:

The community did not accept me and my family because we were accused of belonging to Daesh.

The people of the region did not accept us when we returned and they also accused us of joining Daesh since that time…They did not oppose explicitly, but we felt that from the way they treated us, they rejected us such that dealings with us to the point that I did not go out of my house except for the very necessary cases. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, Female IDP)

Frankly speaking, I have nothing left to sacrifice. I have lost my children, my house, my money, my health, and my energy. I have no energy to sacrifice anything more. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, Female IDP)

Honestly, I do not know, but currently I have nothing except my honour and my children and I cannot forsake them for any reason, especially after what happened to us and that no one supported us from our tribes. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, Female IDP)

For the other population sub-groups in Fhelat, high levels of intra-community violence experienced by the community during the IS conflict seems to have taken a toll and curtailed sense of belonging among residents. Fhelat is the only community in which the indicator 'community members are not willing to sacrifice to protect the community' was found, especially among female respondents who expressed: *A4: 'We have nothing left to sacrifice for. I sacrificed my son and my husband.' A3: 'We sacrificed with our sons and our money, what shall we sacrifice now?'*

This feeling was not exclusive to the female respondents. Male respondents in Fhelat also expressed: *'We have nothing to sacrifice; our houses, our livestock and our money were all destroyed.' A8: 'I am not ready to sacrifice if the previous situation repeats, I will leave immediately, I do not have anything left except my parents. We got nothing from the community, no job, no work, and our future is unknown.'*

Among inclusive resilient communities in Albo Shejal and Karma Centre there was hardly any reference to negative sense of belonging; when it was expressed by community members, it

tended to be associated with the lack of job opportunities in the community, especially among the youth. As illustrated by the youth in Albo Shejal: '*I feel I belong [sic] to a smaller degree and the reason is the fact that I am young and I want to work but here there are no job opportunities and I do not see any hope to stay here.'* This is further explored in Chapter 8.

However, some references to negative sense of belonging were found in Hessey, the community with the highest level of presence of sense of belonging. Here, the references to absence of sense of belonging tended to express discontent towards community members pressured into accepting the return of IS affiliates. One male respondent stated: *'My belonging to this community has gotten bad because the community received some families belonging to IS and I was hurt by them.'* Thus, the decision of accepting IS affiliates back into the community has had a negative impact on the sense of belonging of some community members, often direct victims of IS crimes, who were against the return.

As discussed, returnees in Hessey also presented lower levels of sense of belonging than returnees in the other two inclusive resilient communities. The major pressure to conform (SOC-influence) to the decision of allowing IS affiliates to return weakened sense of belonging (SOC-membership) among community members opposed to the return and created a more hostile environment for the returnees (SOC-shared emotional connection).

6.2.3 Summary of findings

Sense of belonging was found across the two community types and across population sub-groups, with IDPs from exclusive resilient communities the group that less frequently expressed sense of belonging. Among inclusive resilient communities, returnees in Hessey presented lower levels of sense of belonging than those in Karma Centre and Albo Shejal.

When it comes to the absence of sense of belonging, this factor was highly concentrated in exclusive resilient communities, most markedly in Fhelat. The high levels of intra-community

violence Fhelat experienced during the last conflict seem to have fuelled this absence of sense of belonging. IDPs were the population subgroup who most often felt unaccepted by community members in Fhelat. Also, community members living in this community were unwilling to sacrifice for the community, the only community where this occurred. Despite the recent conflict, in the other communities, this willingness to sacrifice for the community was found.

Hessey was the only inclusive resilient community with absence of sense of belonging. This was found among some community members. Hessey also had the lowest levels of sense of belonging among returnees when compared to the other inclusive resilient communities. The mediation process implemented by community leaders to convince community members on the return of IS affiliates seemed to negatively impact sense of belonging in the community.

6.3 Emotional safety

Emotional safety, which can be understood more broadly as emotional and physical security (Sonn and Fisher, 1996), was defined by respondents in two ways. First, physical security was linked to being or not being afraid of exposure to direct violence. Second, emotional security was linked to community members feeling comfortable or uncomfortable when surrounded by other community members.

6.3.1 Presence of emotional safety

For presence of emotional safety, exclusive resilient communities more commonly and strongly referred to presence of emotional safety than inclusive resilient communities did. This feeling was shared across population groups in exclusive resilient communities. Male community members in Ebbah commented '*I feel safe and comfortable because we know the people of the region and we are from the same tribe.' A6: 'Ebbah community is generally peaceful and so the sense of safety and comfort.'* In a similar manner, the youth of the community stated that *'The feeling of safety exists because the community that we live in is peaceful, avoiding troubles and almost consisting of one tribe, and so I feel comfortable.'*

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, the youth agreed on this feeling of safety: *'We all agree that the community is currently safe and that we don't feel afraid.'* This was also referred to by interviewed returnees in the community who mentioned *'I feel safe and comfortable and the most important reason for this is the fact that the person feels safe only when he is between his family and relatives.'* Also, *'I feel very comfortable when I am among the community because the person cannot find the security and reassurance except when he feels that his people are around him and they are gathered together to support him and help him in everything.'*

The third exclusive resilient community included in the study, Fhelat, was where both community leaders and community members opposed the return of IS affiliates. This was the exclusive resilient community where presence of emotional safety was most commonly expressed by all respondents' groups, including female community members who mentioned *'We feel safe with each other. All people here are peaceful and do not harm anyone.'* Male community members explained '*The community is completely safe now and there are no people threatening the security.'*

However, for IDPs, IDPs in Fhelat tended to refer to the pre-IS period when speaking about feeling safe in the community. This was not the case among the rest of the community members who also referred to the post-IS period in the same way. As an interviewed IDP explained: *[Speaking about the period before IS] 'Of course, we were friendly neighbours, and there were no problems except for tribal problems, which are easy to solve naturally, and occurred occasionally. Other than this, the region was safe, we were living peacefully among each other.'*

However, to a lower degree, presence of emotional safety was also found in the three inclusive resilient communities and across population sub-groups, as the next quotes exemplify. In Albo Shejal, a returnee stated *'I feel safe and secure, and I have no worries about being hurt by anyone.'* The youth agreed on feeling safe and comfortable in the community:

I feel comfortable and safe, I am between my family and my people who form the community. A6: I feel safe and comfortable, and the reason is that I am in my community; it is the safety valve for everything. A8: Certainly I feel safe and comfortable and the reason is because this is my community where my family, relatives and friends are all in it.

In Hessey, female community members conveyed experiencing similar feelings of safety, related to being surrounded by family and neighbours: 'We feel safe among each other, no one from inside the area would hurt us; people know each other.' This was similarly expressed by the male FGD interviewees:

I feel safe and comfortable because I am between my family and my people. A3: I feel safe and comfortable here because it is my region and I consider everyone as a brother to me. A4: I feel comfortable and safe towards everyone because I know them well and they are good people. A5: I feel comfortable, safe and secure among members of the community.

Similarly, in Karma Centre, the male community members explained *'I feel safe among my family and friends.' A3: 'I feel safe here in this community and there are no security breaches.'*

6.3.2 Absence of emotional safety

As with presence of emotional safety, exclusive resilient communities also presented higher levels of absence of emotional safety. Here, the difference between the two community types was more profound, with inclusive resilient communities presenting very low levels of absence of emotional safety overall.

Absence of emotional safety was expressed by the respondents around two narratives. The first was fear of IS returning to their communities. The below quotes exemplify the fear of IS returning to the communities which contributed to feelings of insecurity within the community. This feeling was shared across population groups.

I think they [IS affiliates] are dangerous even though their men are not with them, but their women are also willing to carry out terrorist operations because all the family holds this thought. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD male)

They are dangerous because some of these families still have contact with their sons and sometimes they visit them in secret. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD male)

We are afraid of their return. Because security incidents can return as well, the armed group can attack us and kill us without being helped by anyone. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD female).

The second narrative was fear of increased intra-community violence from the chain of revenge acts that the return of IS affiliates would have between the relatives of IS victims. As seen in Chapter 2, this led to the development of resilience in the first place but also contributed to negative emotional safety. The two narratives appeared equally distributed, meaning there was no fear in any community that appeared more often than the other in a significant manner.

Fhelat presented the highest levels of absence of emotional safety. The higher levels of absence of emotional safety in this specific community, as compared to the other exclusive resilient communities, was attributed to one population sub-group: the IDPs, who more consistently expressed their concerns about their safety and of being subjected to direct reprisal attacks in the event of their return to the community. This was explained by two interviewed IDPs from Fhelat who were rejected by the community upon their return and displaced once more to the IDP camps:

I will not be surprised if they tried to hurt me or hurt my family if we decide to return…as I said earlier, I did not feel safe when I tried to return. I was afraid that my family or I would be harassed, but I went out before anyone get [sic] to hurt us, after losing our men. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, IDP female)

I displaced again because I did not feel safe, no one threatened me explicitly, but I would not be surprised if they tried to hurt me or my family if we decide to return again….I did not feel safe, just thinking about the return makes me feel worried and insecure, I do not know how I risk that in the first time. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, IDP female)

As mentioned above, overall, inclusive resilient communities displayed very low levels of absence of emotional safety, although this factor was present. For example, in Karma Centre, the female community members interviewed felt uncomfortable with the return of IDPs with perceived affiliation:

A1: Some families here have members arrested for their affiliation with IS and have returned. Now we feel uncomfortable cohabiting with them of their existence. A4: I am with A1, I can confirm this. A6: Yes, we feel uncomfortable among those members.

In Albo Shejal, youth were forecasting an increase in violence within the community linked to the IDPs with perceived affiliation return, which concerned them:

Yes, I see that the violence will increase because of the revenge and the resulting problems between them [IS affiliates] and the families of the victims. A2: Yes, the sons of some of them committed crimes against the community and their return will have a negative impact of the possibility of a clash between them and the families of victims as a result of the terrorism they have committed…IS's return is very probable and they of course threaten the future of the community…we fear a future threat if these people facilitate the return of IS and this has a very high probability that it will happen.

One exception to the low levels of absence of emotional safety in inclusive resilient communities was found among the interviewed community leaders in Hessey. In this community, community leaders lobbied for the return of IS affiliates in a context where most of the community members strongly opposed their return. The community leaders succeeded in convincing the victim's relatives to accept this, despite concerns around the return of IS; however the key concerns were

around a potential increase in revenge attacks happening in Hessey, as the following quotes demonstrate:

> *The community does not want these families to return because they are afraid of them as these families, as I mentioned before, supported IS with all they have so the extremist ideology will remain permeated in them and they may continue to harm the community and threaten its future, which is still unknown. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, Religious Leader)*

> *[There might be] revenge from those who abused them, destroyed their homes and destroyed the agricultural lands on which the community was depending…the community is afraid of the revenge attacks to take place if they [IS affiliates] return and so there will be endless problems between the conflicting parties. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, NGO Representative)*

> *Retaliation actions will increase with their return as they killed many people, the security situation might deteriorate with their return as a result. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, Mukhtar)*

6.3.3. Summary of findings

Presence of emotional safety was found in the two community types: exclusive and inclusive resilient communities, with slightly higher levels in exclusive resilient communities. Fhelat, presented the highest levels of presence of emotional safety. Presence of emotional safety was also found across all population sub-groups, regardless of gender or displacement status. Presence of emotional safety tended to be attributed by respondents to the close-knit nature of the communities, in which everyone knows each other and are related by kin.

For absence of emotional safety, two narratives contributed to this factor: fear of IS return and fear that the return of IS affiliates would lead to a cycle of renewed violence in the community as a result of revenge attacks by the relatives of IS victims towards the relatives of IS members to avenge for the crimes committed during the times IS controlled the territory, and as per tribal custom. These two narratives were equally expressed in the two types of communities and across population groups.

Absence of emotional safety was mostly found in exclusive resilient communities, particularly in Fhelat, which also presented the highest levels of this factor in its positive form. The higher levels of absence of emotional safety in Fhelat were due to this factor being consistently expressed by the IDPs from this community.

Inclusive resilient communities presented very low levels of absence of emotional safety, only found at significant levels among community leaders in Hessey. The decision of these communities to mediate the return of IS affiliates against the initial will of community members seems to have fuelled their concerns about potential revenge attacks occurring in the community and of IS infiltrating back, which could be seen as a consequence of their decision.

6.4 Common symbol system

This section analyses the presence of a common symbol system. A common symbol system, which integrates community members through shared rites, traditions and social conventions, as well as language and dressing, serves to distinguish members against non-members (McMillan, 1996).

Overall, the analysis points to the presence of a common symbol system in all communities. As means of comparison, it presents the respondents feelings of a shared symbol system with the community and with IS. It then focuses on two specific rites, adapted from tribal custom: disavowal and *tabiya* (denouncement), introduced in Chapter 6, and here specifically used by communities to mark the end of IS affiliation.

Last, the analysis focuses on the unshared symbol system felt in some communities, among specific population groups.

6.4.1 Shared common symbol system

A unifying and deeply rooted common symbol system was found in all studied communities and shared across population groups.

In Hessey, the youth mentioned that:

> *Love, tolerance, mercy and helping others, these are the values that build the community and the people as well, and these (values) are very similar to the ones of our neighbours, our relatives and everyone else.*

In a similar manner, in Ebbah, the youth commented that:

> *All here in [the] Ebbah area, whether neighbours or relatives, are carrying the same values and principles because we are from one religion, one doctrine and one tribe, and I feel positive towards that. There are no people among us with different values.*

In Karma, the youth conferred to this and explained:

> *A1: Everyone who lives in Karma has the same values and principles, and all of them belong to tribes and clans that hold the same qualities and values. AX: All of us have the same values and principles, there is no difference, because everyone belongs to one denomination and one religion and the tribes and clans that live in this region all have the same values. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

Women in Fhelat expressed:

> *Everyone is similar in customs and traditions. We have the same values and the same traditions. [enumerator note: all women nod in agreement] We all have the same values and the same morals and customs.*

This is consistent with the male respondents' opinion in the same community:

> *Most of us have the same values which are commitment to tribal customs and the teachings of the Islamic religion. We respect the values of others if they are within the limits of morals and religion. We respect freedom of opinion, freedom of religion and freedom of thinking if it is not extremist or harmful. We are defined by generosity with our guest, respecting the elderly, obeying the head of the family, and protecting women, widows, and orphans. Most of the people are committed to these customs and traditions because we were raised with them.*

Community members considered the common symbol system necessary for the safeguarding of the community and for its smooth running. They mentioned that without it, the community would become dysfunctional. *'The rules from tradition are very important in our daily lives, if they did not exist, the community will not survive'*, explained a returnee from Ebbah, and a male in the community conferred: *'We follow these traditions and it is important to us as they organise the everyday life of the community…These values organise the community and take care of its own issues, so we respect these values.*' The youth in Ebbah provided examples on how this translates to daily life:

> *The basis of life in any community is to respect the laws and the traditions, these are what make the community walk in the correct path. An example of respecting these traditions is that the youth cannot leave the house wearing an inappropriate dress, which is short or indecent, as we are a tribal conservative community. A4: Regulating the life of the community is only done by following the community laws and traditions, knowing that the traditions originally encourage people to respect the law and not to harm the neighbours. A7: In Ebbah, we follow the laws of the tribes that regulate our lives and, in any community not governed by traditions and customs, a mess will spread.*

In Karma Centre, a returnee was of the opinion that *'Traditions are important to regulate daily live in the community. They are for the interest of the community and to deter those who think to harm the community or its members.'* The male interviewees explained *'In rural and tribal communities, customs and traditions are very important and following them is a duty for everyone. They are important because they regulate the daily lives of the society.'*

In Hessey, a returnee from Hessey explained *'With norms and traditions life is regulated and if there are no traditions, life will become a mess.'* In Fhelat, a female IDP commented *'In my opinion, the similarity of values among people leads to understanding between them, in addition to affability and harmony among them.'* Also in Albo Shejal, respondents were of the same opinion when it came to the contribution of norms to safeguarding the community, as explained by the youth: '*Here in the village of Albo Shejal, we follow the laws of the tribe which regulate our life and we cannot leave these traditions behind. Any community, if it is not governed by traditions and custom, will become chaos.'* In Shaqlawiyah Centre, the returnees explained *'If the community is not governed by the laws, life will not move easily or smoothly.'* Furthermore, *'it is very important that the values are compatible with the values of the community for the purpose of peaceful coexistence through which all things of life are completed'.*

Respondents considered the common symbol system to be inherited from their ancestors, as commented in Hessey by the male respondents: *'Traditions have existed for a long time in the Arab countries. We inherited if from our fathers and grandparents and today we will pass it to our children.'* A returnee in Shaqlawiyah Centre commented *'These traditions have been followed since very long time, since the life of our fathers and grandfathers. I strongly agree in following them.'* This showed their willingness to pass traditions on to the new generations. *'We did not think to abandon our habits; we are raising our children on it'*, commented women from Fhelat, and a female IDP from the same community expressed *'We have [been] raised on these values and we raised the generations that follow us on it [sic] also.'*

Additionally, the common practices and traditions were positively viewed by the community members not only as contributing to the wellbeing of the community, but also as having a positive effect in the community members' daily life at the individual level, as explained by male community members in Shaqlawiyah Centre*: A4: 'These traditions and customs exist to serve the community and the individual',* in Hessey: '*These traditions regulate the individual in the community and make him a straight person in his dealings with people, as he will be honest and*

will not cheat', and in Shaqlawiyah Centre A3 commented: '*Custom is followed by people because it maintains its dignity (…) They are followed and applied literally'*, and A4 added: *'These traditions and customs exist from ancient times; it is to serve the individual.'*

Considering the opinions of respondents towards the set of common norms they share, it comes as no surprise the willingness to maintain them without confronting or changing them, as referred to by a returnee in Shaqlawiyah Centre:

> *Shaqlawiyah community is regulated by the customs and traditions, so we are keen to follow them not to drop from the community. We don't need to confront these traditions because these are the ones we were raised since childhood and I do not see anything that requires to confront or trying to change them.*

Respondents were also reluctant towards diversity in their communities and preferred to cohabit with community members who shared the same values as them. This was illustrated by the youth in Hessey, Karma Centre and Ebbah:

> *My values are very similar to the ones hold by the rest of community members and my feeling about it is positive. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *We have very similar values and my feeling about it is positive and joyful. A4: The similarity between values exists between me and my neighbours and my feelings about this is positive. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *A6: We all have the same values, even if we name them differently, and I feel positive for this similarity, no one has different values, and I do not want to live here in Ebbah with people who contradict these values and principles. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

Some respondents specifically referred to the IS affiliates and pointed out that they shared the same common symbol system. Youth in Albo Shejal mentioned that *'The families that joined IS are not strangers, we cannot classify them as such, all people carry the same morals, values and*

ethics.' In Hessey, the men explained *'Their values are similar with our values, but they ruined that because of what they have done'*, pointing at similarities in values as not been enough to be accepted by the community.

However, respondents also considered that some community members stepped out of what is considered as the common symbol system during the times of IS. They considered the IS affiliates as 'weak' or 'tempted' for having joined IS custom, which is illustrated by the following two quotes from female respondents:

> *Everyone has the same principles and traditions, but there are those who swept by the temptations of life and became looking for power, so they belonged to IS. (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *Everyone is committed to the traditions except the weak souls who joined IS in that period. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

This point is further analysed in the next section on absence of a common symbol system.

Interestingly, the strong presence of a common symbol system in all six communities contrasted with the feelings expressed towards the symbol system IS exhibited when the group controlled the communities. The group was perceived as alien to the customs and traditions of the community and forcefully imposed their traditions, as the following quotes demonstrate:

> *The traditions of IS did not represent the community in any way and that was known to all… Everyone who remained there was forced to follow the traditions which were imposed to us and because of fear and greed the community, at that time, had to adapt to these traditions, because it was forced to do so. (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *During IS time traditions changed because the IS terrorists threatened to harm whoever does not abide by these traditions. They changed because of the IS group entry and imposition of their principles which were applicable by force. Because they have what is known as 'Hesba', which is a*

law enforcement police. I did not fit with these traditions, but I was obliged to follow them. My values are different, a lot different. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, Returnee 1)

This resulted in a temporary change of traditions while the group controlled the communities. A male in Hessey explained how *'the community and its traditions changed during IS and all that was known became vague and the new traditions did not represent the societal traditions of the region in any way'*. In Albo Shejal, a returnee also commented *'The norms, traditions and freedom of expression have all changed with the entry of these monsters into my area. I did not adapt or endure anything while they were here.'*

Similarly, in Ebbah, the male respondents reported:

During the events [referring to IS period], these traditions have changed and the traditions of Daesh that are alien to our community become the dominant traditions, where pursuit of money became the common act among people and these traditions had never represent our community, which is characterised by kindness and generosity….during the times we stayed [under IS control before displacement], we did not fit in with these traditions because they are the opposite of what we have learned from our community.

To note, all six communities referred to the IS symbol system in this way, and this perception was shared across respondent types, regardless of their displacement status or perceived affiliation to the group. The next quotes, one from a returnee in Shaqlawiyah Centre and the other from an IDP with perceived affiliation from the same community, demonstrate this:

Everything changed, not only the traditions, because as I told you they as if landed from the moon, they were different in everything, I did not cope with them at all. Certainly, their values are fundamentally different than mine. (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, Returnee 1)

That IS had completely different ideas. Therefore, I never dealt with them or adapted their ideas at all. Their traditions were strange and we had never heard of them before. (Shaqlawiyah Centre, exclusive resilience, IDP 1)

The change in the common symbol system affected the visible aspects of the community such as clothing for men and women, and socialisation practices and celebrations. For example, IS banned social gatherings and regulated the way women and men had to dress. This was narrated in detail by women in Karma Centre:

> *We didn't have the right to practice our daily routine; for example, young people used to meet at cafes, and IS banned cafes… AX: At that time IS imposed Niqab on women, and her guardian—the brother or husband—may be whipped and judged by IS if women didn't abide by wearing Niqab. The Niqab was imposed at women from age of 18 to 45. A6: IS imposed its laws; for example, compulsory recruitment for young people, it banned smoking, the short outfit (for men), and lengthen the beard for men and passed a number of laws, including whipping in the street in front of pedestrians*.

Women in Albo Shejal and Fhelat also commented on this:

> *We left all our traditions during that period. People used to follow the customs and traditions that they (IS) imposed by force, such as wearing Niqab for women, not shaving the beard and wearing short thoub for men. No one in here fit the rules of IS. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *Some traditions changed during the events, such as banning smoking, banning some clothing for young people, and forcing old women to veil. These were imposed by IS and alien to our community. …IS entered the region and forced the people to do things strange to our community, such as forcing people not to shave the beards and wear certain clothes. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD female)*

The youth in Ebbah added:

> *During the events while Daesh was here, a lot of traditions changed and new ones were introduced to the community, for example, imposing a new way of dressing on women and men (…) A1: …and also weddings, they took place widely and publicly, and Daesh prevented this tradition. A7: Agree, it has changed, and new things were imposed on the community which did not represent the community traditions. A3: We have old women, our mothers, or grandmothers, we do not impose*

anything on them, but Daesh did when it forced them to wear the entire veil (referring to Niqab), and these women were not used to do so. A2: The study for girls was also forbidden during Daesh time, and girls were not allowed to go out of the house except with one of their family members, their father or brother, and we were not used to do these things in our community. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)

The traditions imposed by Daesh were difficult and not commensurate with what we knew before. Imagine, playing football or other games was forbidden, in addition to the phone, it was forbidden too. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth).

IS's vision of Islam also felt foreign. Respondents referred to this vision as 'un-Islamic' or 'extremist' and considered that IS used religion as a tool to achieve the group's goal. As explained by female community members in Hessey *'They [IS] used religion to spread their extremist ideology, but religion is not to blame for what they are*.' In the same community, a returnee explained that *'All beliefs and traditions changed; IS imposed a policy of intimidation, and it came with definitions and traditions which it said is Islamic and in fact it is not. We adopted their ideas because we were forced to do so.'*

In Karma Centre, the youth commented *'We don't share anything with them, as they hold extremist ideas different from what we've learned from our fathers and ancestors.'* The tribal leader explained *'They [IS] soon began to impose their thoughts and laws that are not related to Islam, and it represents their goals to destroy the community and achieve their goals*.' This emphasised the utilitarian use of religion by the group.

Similarly, respondents in Ebbah considered IS customs as 'intimidating' and 'non-Islamic', as explained by one interviewed returnee: *'All our beliefs and traditions changed. Daesh had an intimidation policy and came up with definitions and traditions all of which it considered as Islamic. In fact, those were not Islamic, but we were forced to adopt them, I cannot express the horror I felt inside.'* They also considered IS customs to define the group by means of opposition

to the community members when it came to honour and religion, as another returnee expressed *'We are a tribal community and honour is very valuable. Honour is what distinguish us from the rest of the people and Daesh has no honour and no religion.'*

The newly imposed system of values and symbols were negatively felt by respondents, who also pointed out that despite pretending to follow the IS values, privately, they adhered to the community's values and traditions. Youth in Ebbah expressed how *'Everyone felt oppressed and subjected to pressure because of the inadequacy of those rules with our customs and traditions.'* In Ebbah, the female interviewees explained how *'despite our cohabitation with Daesh and their attempt to make us join them in every dirty way, we remained firmed in our values and the traditions we believe in'*, as well as how *'the people who joined IS followed the customs of IS, but the rest of the people they were just pretending to follow IS customs'*. In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a returnee expressed the difficulties coping with these new traditions: *'Everything changed in the community, because IS changed everything and it established new laws for the community to regulate its daily life, I could not cope with it, because they are different from what I believe and the traditions I was raised with and lived on.'*

As discussed, rites, which are part of the common symbol system in communities, are an important mechanism used by communities to place community members considered as deviants in this role. Rites used with deviants tend to mark the entry to deviancy and usually, there are no rites marking its end (Erikson, 1961; 1963). In this study, however, the communities utilised a set of rites, adapted from tribal custom practices, to mark the end of IS belonging. This facilitated the return of IS affiliates to the community.

These rites included the practice of disavowal and *tabriya* (denouncement), previously explained in Chapter 5. To recap, disavowal is the act of disowning IS in front of a tribal leader, denying any allegiance to the group and pledging to having done no harm to the community (Aymerich, 2020a). *Tabriya* is a process of denouncing first- or second-relatives' allegiance to IS and pledging

to cut any bond with them. If an individual has committed a 'shameful' act and is expelled by the community, its relatives are expected to perform *tabriya* to remain part of the tribe. Once the relatives have performed *tabriya* and disowned their relative, the tribe is no longer obliged to offer protection to the expelled member of the tribe. This puts the person at risk of *thar* (revenge from the offenses committed by the victim's relatives) (Genat, 2020).

As seen in Section 6.1, inclusive resilient communities developed a better-defined deviant group. Defining a deviant allowed for the rest of IS affiliates who did not fall under this group to be considered as community members. In this type of community, disavowing IS or performing *tabriya* displays the regained status of IS affiliates as community members by renouncing IS and are sine que non of return. It is a symbolic step that IS affiliates must undertake to be accepted back home. To note, the community intentions to punish a deviant diminished when the deviant expressed remorse and willingly abandoned the deviant stand (Carlsmith, Darley and Robinson, 2002; Chan, Louis and Jetten, 2010). Performing *tabriya* contributes to publicly expressing both. The following quotes demonstrate the extent to which the practice of disavowal and denouncement was widespread among the studied communities and markedly top-down, from the leaders to the IDPs with perceived affiliation, as referred to by the interviewed youth in Hessey: *'Community leaders want the return of the families of IS, but on the condition that they pledge to disown their sons.'* This was in accordance with the claims of community leaders in the various communities. In Karma Centre, the tribal leader claimed '*If they have a connection with Daesh, I will not allow their return, unless they disown Daesh and their relatives belonging to Daesh.'* In Albo Shejal, the representative of the local authorities commented *'There are families who were expelled from the region because of the proven charges against their children as IS members. Other families disowned their children and so we allowed them to return. …We do not allow their return, unless they disown Daesh and their relatives belonging to the group.'*

In a similar manner, the Local Authorities Representative in Karma expressed:

> *I do not want these families [IS affiliates] to return, especially the group that supported the Daesh terrorist group. As for the families who did not support the affiliation of their children with Daesh, there are conditions for their return, such as disowning them and getting a sponsor from the community.*

In these communities, *tabriya* seems to have also contributed to enhanced feelings of emotional safety. This linkage between safety and performing *tabriya* was particularly felt in Hessey. As explained by the interviewed religious leader:

> *They do not pose a threat to the community because they have made a pledge not to contact the group and their sons are either killed or imprisoned by the authorities and these families will be under the control of the community.*

The youth agreed:

> *I do not fear violence will increase if they come back because these families made a pledge to the security forces to disown IS and it was confirmed that there is no connection for them with the group.*

However, considering IS affiliates as community members, coronating this step with the use of disavowal, and allowing their return to the community does not remove their affiliation per se, and IS affiliates might still be subjected to social isolation and marginalisation due to their 'deviating' attributes, as illustrated by female community members in Hessey: 'The families whose sons joined IS were not allowed to return until they made a pledge of disowning their sons. Some of them returned, but there is no communication between them and the community.' This point is further explored in Chapter 9.

The practices of disavowal and *tabriya* were not limited to inclusive resilient communities. Respondents in exclusive resilient communities also made use of these mechanisms. The outcome, however, was different. If, in inclusive resilient communities, they had fortified the

understanding of an important segment of IS affiliates as non-deviant, which is linked to a major acceptance of this group as community members, in exclusive resilient communities—where the deviant group was ill-defined—these practices mostly failed to secure the return.

Ebbah was the only exclusive resilient community in which, on some occasions, performing *tabriya* and disavowal of IS had facilitated the return of IS affiliates, in very specific cases, and when this return had the direct support of a high-rank security official or community leader. However, in other occasions, performing *tabriya* failed to secure the return of IS affiliates to Ebbah, a highly polarised community when it came to accepting the return of IS affiliates, as demonstrated by the following quotes:

> *I know a woman whose four sons were elements of Daesh and they were killed by the security forces and the crowd [tribal Sunni militias] during the liberation. When she returned to the region, the people of the area refused her, and attacked her to hurt her, because her sons had killed these people children and destroyed their homes. But a security official sponsored her, and prevented anyone from hurting her, after she officially disowned her sons. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, IDP)*

> *I know an example for that, it happened with one family, the father prevented his son from joining Daesh, the son refused and threatened to kill his father if he repeated this matter again. So, this family has not done anything to be punished about and they have already disowned their son, and the security forces allowed them [the family] to return, but the community did not accept their return. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)*

In Fhelat, disavowal and *tabriya* were seen with suspicion by community members who believed IS affiliates were nonetheless in contact with their relatives who belonged to IS. According to interviewed men in the community: *'Some of these families claimed to have disowned their sons, but they remained in contact with them.'* Interviewed women conferred: '*Some of these families made the pledge of tabriya from their sons in front of the authorities, but they returned to contact their sons.'* One of the community's interviewed mukhtars stated:

> *We knew from some sources inside the camp [IDP camps] that these families cannot abandon their sons even if they disown them, and this is dangerous if true because their sons were not ordinary elements belonging to IS, but they were leaders in IS, and this is in itself is very dangerous.*

Thus, in Fhelat, performing these practices has failed to secure the return of IS affiliates, as explained by another of the community's mukhtars: *'Frankly, some IS affiliates met all the conditions, they obtained the security clearance, went to the judge and disowned their sons. Also, some of them paid the diya (blood money), but they were also expelled.'*

There were fewer references in Shaqlawiyah Centre regarding the use of the practices of denouncement or *tabriya*. This might be due to the urban character of the community and the weaker adherence to tribal laws found here. In the occasions it was mentioned, it also appeared as leading to failed returns, as indicated in the following quotes by the male community members interviewed:

> *There are some families that have been able to return despite the affiliation of one or more of its members to IS where they disowned them in court. These families were forced to flee again due to the psychological pressure and because that some of them were threatened.*

6.4.2 Unshared common symbol system

Instances of an unshared common symbol systems were highly concentrated in exclusive resilient communities, mainly in Fhelat, as illustrated by the following quotes from a returnee to Shaqlawiyah Centre: *'Those who belong to IS have their ideology which is against what I believe, it is fundamentally different from mine'*, the interviewed female members in the same community: *'The community rejects their beliefs. There is no compatibility in traditions and that members of the community'*, as well as female interviewees in Fhelat: '*The families who supported IS are different from us. They hurt the community and they are not afraid of God. … They have extremist thinking, they called for Islam, but they basically do not apply it. We don't know what their beliefs are'.*

References were also found in inclusive resilient communities but to a lower extent, as expressed by the youth in Karma Centre*: 'They hold extremist ideas different from what we've learned from our fathers and ancestors'*, and a religious leader in Hessey: *'The families of IS are an incubator of extremist ideology.'* Such references were almost absent in Albo Shejal.

Differences among communities were also found when it came to how the unshared symbol system was understood. In Hessey (inclusive resilience) and Ebbah (exclusive resilience), IS affiliates were mostly perceived as having adopted the new customs and beliefs brought by IS, external to the community before the arrival of the group. This is demonstrated by the following quotes:

> *When they followed IS, they abandoned the traditions of the community. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *IS changed these families intellectually as well as in their traditions and customs. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, NGO representative)*

> *Some of them [IS affiliates] have the same values [as the community] and others don't, they were having them but because their association with Daesh, they changed their values. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *Daesh has controlled these people and its bad and sick thoughts are rooted in their minds and so we cannot easily get rid of it…whoever was with Daesh and took from his ideas and beliefs will not be easily able to get rid of them and so they are a danger to the community. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative 3).*

In Fhelat (exclusive resilience) and Karma Centre (inclusive resilience), however, community members considered that the differences in beliefs and customs of IS affiliates predated this conflict and where already held by the IS affiliates before the arrival of the group to the

community. They tended to also consider that the IS affiliates would not adapt to the common symbol system of the community in the event of their return, as illustrated by the respondents:

> *When it comes to the IS families, we will not be comfortable with their presence because they have an inherent terrorist ideology…We will not feel safe, even women can pose a threat because the whole family has a terrorist ideology. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *Before IS, these families were bad and their behaviour was bad and they did not respect people. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD male)*

> *The individuals who joined IS were wrongly raised from the beginning and when the organisation came, they found an incubator where to develop their extremist ideology. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD youth male)*

> *There is an intellectual and ideological belief connecting them…I mentioned it earlier, they belong to IS not for material purposes or any kind of profit, but for their ideological affiliation; they believe in their extremist ideology and they cannot easily give it up. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD Mukhtar)*

> *Some had religious tendencies that fit with the IS beliefs, like Jihad, and joined IS for this. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD female).*

> *There are families who supported IS either by joining them or by providing them support and assistance and the reason was that IS ideology is similar to theirs and so they joined Daesh and helped them. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative 1)*

However, respondents did share the opinion that IS affiliates would not adhere back to the communities' common symbol system in the event of their return to the community, regardless of the IDPs ideology prior to the group's arrival, as shown by the below quotes:

Those who were with Daesh, they have ideas, customs and traditions that are against the community, and so they will not follow the traditions of the community. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)

These are extremist terrorists who will never change their ideas. There is no point in letting them return. Even if we give them a chance, they will return to their terrorist acts…They followed IS traditions because they believed in it. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD youth male)

These families supported IS with all what they have so the extremist thoughts will remain permeated in them. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)

When the IDPs will return, I don't think they will follow our traditions. A6: No, they will not follow. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD female)

Daesh has planted radical thought in the minds of these families, and they cannot give up this thought easily. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)

Some of these people [IS affiliates] belong to Daesh intellectually and ideologically and it is not easy to change them, so I think that following back the [community] traditions will be difficult for them. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)

These people are a threat because of the ideas planted in their minds by IS, which will not be easily removed. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative 1)

6.4.3 Summary of findings

There was a strong presence of a common symbol system in all communities and across groups that served to integrate community members together. This contrasts with the system of symbols imposed by IS during the time it ruled the territory, viewed as alien to the communities.

In inclusive resilient communities, performing *tabriya* or disavowing the group were rites that marked the end of IS-belonging. These rites contributed to defining the 'deviant group' by means of excluding from it those who, despite their affiliation, were still considered community members and who no longer belonged to the group. The rites also acted as a safe valve towards the threat the IS affiliates were perceived to pose to the community and contributed to strengthen the feeling of emotional safety in these communities. In exclusive resilient communities, however, where the deviant group was not well defined, the practice of *tabriya* and disavowal failed to secure the return of IS affiliates, which were less often considered as community members. Some exceptions were found in the case of Ebbah.

There was a major concentration of an unshared common symbol system in exclusive resilient communities, mainly in Fhelat. While in Hessey and Ebbah, IS affiliates were considered to have adopted new beliefs and customs from IS; in Fhelat and Karma Centre, respondents considered that the IS affiliates held similar beliefs to the group prior to the IS period. Overall, there was the view that IS affiliates would keep their own symbol system and not adhere to the community's shared common symbol system in the event of their return.

6.5 Unpacking the role of SOC-membership to community resilience

The initial hypothesis of this study stated that communities with clearly defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop exclusive resilience, and communities with a loosely defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop inclusive resilience to the return of IS affiliates. SOC-membership was also predicated to be less likely to be found in communities who develop inclusive resilience.

However, the findings did not appear to support this, suggesting the opposite occurred. These showed the role that mainly four factors of SOC-membership have played in the development of each resilience type, namely: solid boundaries – understood as a well-defined deviant group, absence of sense of belonging, absence of emotional safety and an unshared common symbol

system. Solid boundaries, which contributed to a clearly defined SOC, were more commonly present in inclusive resilient communities. Absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety and an unshared symbol system, which indicate a loosely defined SOC-membership, were mostly found in exclusive resilient communities. This contradicts the initial hypothesis.

The community of Albo Shejal stood out for not presenting significant levels of absence of sense of belonging, absence of emotional safety or of an unshared symbol system. Similarly, Karma Centre, only showed low levels of an unshared common symbol system, and the rest of the factors were absent.

In Hessey, the absence of sense of belonging and the absence of emotional safety seem to be a consequence of the mediation process implemented by community leaders to convince community members of return, which created such feelings among some of the convinced community members and among the returnee population sub-group. Some community members also felt the returned affiliates might not adhere to the shared common symbol system. However, these factors were specific to certain sub-groups and were not found across the majority of the community.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Fhelat presented the highest levels of absence of emotional safety and negative sense of belonging. The high levels of intra-community violence had an impact on the sense of belonging experienced among community members and fuelled feelings of insecurity, particularly among the IS affiliates who were wary of revenge attacks that could be committed against them due to the crimes attributed to their relatives, members of IS. Feelings of an unshared symbol system were also found in the community, predating the IS crisis.

Ebbah was the only exclusive resilient community where the deviant group was well-defined but only by community leaders. Absence of emotional safety and absence of sense of belonging and

of an unshared common symbol were found in this community, as well as in Shaqlawiyah Centre, but to a lesser extent than in Fhelat.

Therefore, from the eight social interaction factors analysed under SOC-membership, four presented significant differences when analysed according to the type of community: inclusive or exclusive. The four factors are: the presence of a well-defined deviant group which allows for solid boundaries, absence of sense of belonging, absence of emotional safety, and an unshared common symbol system. Table 3 shows the different combinations of these four factors of SOC-membership that appear relevant in the analysis to the development of exclusive or inclusive resilience.

Table 3: Key SOC-membership factors relevant to the development of resilience by the community.

COMMUNITY	**MEMBERSHIP**				**OUTCOME**
	Solid Boundaries (deviant group)	**Absence of Sense of Belonging and Identification**	**Absence of Emotional Safety**	**Unshared Symbol System**	
Albo Shejal	+	·	·	·	Inclusive resilience
Hessey	+	(+)	(+)	(+)	Inclusive resilience
Karma Centre	+	·	·	(+)	Inclusive resilience
Ebbah	(+)	+	+	+	Exclusive resilience
Fhelat	·	++	++	++	Exclusive resilience
Shaqlawiyah Centre	·	+	+	+	Exclusive resilience

++	Expressed frequently and strongly by respondents
+	Expressed frequently but mildly by respondents
(+)	Expressed infrequently and mildly by respondents
·	Not expressed by respondents

With regards to the interlink between the different factors of SOC, the findings suggest a link between lower levels, or absence, of sense of belonging and identification (SOC-Membership),

and negative quality and quantity of contact (SOC-shared emotional connection). This appears to be fed by a high influence of community leaders on community members (SOC-influence), which is further examined and explored in the upcoming chapters on influence and shared emotional connection.

CHAPTER 7: INFLUENCE

The previous chapter provided an in-depth analysis of the role SOC-membership and its factors play in the development of resilience types for the return of IS affiliates to Iraqi communities with shared place resilience factors. The findings showed how solid boundaries, through a well-defined deviant group, supported the development of inclusive resilience. Furthermore, it was seen how communities with more fluid boundaries, absence of sense of belonging and identification, absence of emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system tended towards exclusive resilience. The findings also indicated that lower or absent sense of belonging and identification within the community (SOC-membership) may have been fed by a higher influence of community leaders on community members (SOC-influence).

Continuing to explore the social interaction factors of resilience and their role in the development of exclusive and inclusive resilience through the SOC framework of analysis, this chapter reflects on the second element of SOC: influence. Here, the role of SOC-influence and its factors in the development of exclusive and inclusive resilience are explored.

To recap the information provided in Chapter 4, influence can be defined as a two-way dynamic by which the community member influences the community and the community influences the individual. Additionally, the community member has a need for consensual validation, fulfilled by the community, and the community has a need for conformity, sought by its members. This definition of SOC-influence encapsulates its four factors: individual influence on the community, community influence on the individual, individual need for consensual validation, and community need for conformity (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

The hypothesis for SOC-influence is built on a scenario which considers the high hierarchic context of Anbar communities, with a profound capacity of community leaders to influence their constituencies. Tribal leaders might impose the return of IS affiliates to the community. The victims' relatives, however, might use their capacity to influence the community to lobby towards

the banning or expulsion of IS affiliates upon return. Therefore, the hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

- H2 (A): Communities with a prevalence of individual influence on the community are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.
- H2 (B): Communities with a prevalence of community influence on individuals (understood as community leaders' capacity to influence their constituency) are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.

What follows in this chapter is a detailed explanation of the presence and absence of SOC-influence factors in the studied communities. This explanation includes how these factors are understood by the communities in day-to-day life, as well as the role of the factors in the development of exclusive or inclusive resilience with regards to the return of IS affiliates potentially threatening the community's social peace. The analysis identifies variances according to the type of community and respondent group.

Following the analysis, the last section of this chapter brings together the findings on SOC-influence to describe which factors of SOC act on the development of inclusive and exclusive resilience, and how this occurs. The findings suggest a combination of positive community conformity, individual need for consensual validation, and presence of community influence as contributing to the development of inclusive resilience. Negative individual influence, combined with lack of positive community conformity and lack of individual need for consensual validation, relate to the development of exclusive resilience.

7.1 Community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation

This section describes the findings on community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation from the analysis of data collected in this study. These two factors are highly interrelated and work in a bidirectional complementary manner: from the individual to the community in the case of individual need for consensual validation, and from the community to

the individual in the case of community need for conformity. As such, this section analyses these factors in succession. First, findings related to when the two factors appear as absent in the communities are detailed, followed by findings from when they are present.

7.1.1 Absence of individual need for consensual validation

With regards to the absence of individual need for consensual validation, no significant variances were found across the two types of communities: inclusive resilient communities and exclusive resilient communities. However, striking differences appeared when assessing the lack of this factor across respondent types. Youth, followed by women, were the respondents who most commonly and most strongly expressed not fitting into the community rules and not being able to freely express individual freedoms.

This held true across communities, as the following excerpts from the FGD with youth respondents from Albo Shejal, a community who developed inclusive resilience, and from Ebbah, a community who developed exclusive resilience, exemplify. In these two communities, youth used very similar narratives to describe their feelings of negative individual need for consensual validation.

> *We cannot express freely, and generally young people here cannot express anything freely or give any clue regarding whatever is inside us because we have to respect people who are older than us and not to add anything after what they say or decide. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD male youth)*

> *I agree with the traditions, but I do not feel free I can express a particular idea or something new to the community as it will be rejected. All these things are hindered by the way of life in the community. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD male youth)*

> *We all agree here that the youth in Ebbah area do not have the right to express their opinions…and this is not acceptable. We suffer a lot of this problem and when we object, they tell us that we have to respect and obey those who are older than us. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD male youth)*

I am compatible with the traditions, but I do not feel free to speak. When a person speaks of his or her own thoughts or about something new to the community, he will be rejected. It is time we become more open and change some of the prevailing tribal concepts. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD male youth)

The most common examples given by the youth respondents when asked about situations where they cannot freely express their individualities, referred to their choice of clothing and hair styles, and eating habits. This shows how the absence of consensual validation is felt on a daily basis. A youth community member in Albo Shejal explained 'Here, we are a tribal community which imposes on the youth things that he does not want when it comes to clothing or eating.' This was conferred by the youth interviewed in Ebbah:

We are a tribal community that imposes many things on the young, such as what you wear or what you eat, who to marry or who to vote for, or any other personal issues. This is imposed to me by people who are close, such as my father or my mother, and also by far relatives such as uncles.

The experience of displacement has exacerbated these feelings among the youth, who became exposed to a different set of cultural and social norms. This was particularly relevant among those who displaced to urban locations and who have since returned to their close-knit and rural communities of origin. Such youth felt challenged by the newly acquired habits they adopted while displaced, as expressed by a youth community member in Ebbah:

Personally, I have cultural ideas learned through social media in the area of displacement and some of these ideas are not accepted by the community, such as the way of dressing or the dissemination of a particular idea among young people.

As the following quote shows, in the highly hierarchic society of Anbar, the youth attributed the lack of consensual validation to the gap in decision-making power between the older generation, the 'elderly' (who hold the decision-making power), and the younger generation, who do not.

A8: There is a problem and a large gap between the elderly and young people and this gap is caused by the difference in civilisation and age and the development of time among generations. A4: Compatibility and acceptance will not be achieved unless there is harmony between age groups in the community and so the community must change to openness and civilisation, and it must change some of the prevailing tribal concepts. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD male youth)

A second respondent group that expressed this absence of individual need for consensual validation was the women group; however, this expression was to a lesser extent than for the youth group. The narrative by which women articulated their lack of freedom to express their individual differences differed from the youth group. For women, it related to the fear that showing certain individual differences would tarnish their reputation. This directly links to the pressure on women to conform to certain community norms and expectations. This is further explored in the following section on negative community need for conformity.

In Anbar, a collectivistic kin-centric society, free expression of member individuality can be seen as privileging the individual over the kin. This may lead to a reduction of the support and protection obtained by the kin to the most vulnerable members/population groups in the patriarchal kin contact: women and youth. Male respondents did not express experiencing absence of individual consensual validation. This was the case regardless of their perceived affiliation as expelled IDPs or accepted returnees.

7.1.2 Negative community need for conformity

The findings on negative community need for conformity—captured by the pressure on community members to conform to common norms—were similar to the findings for absence of individual need for consensual validation, with no significant differences found within inclusive and exclusive resilient communities. In both types of communities, respondents narrated how community members are pressured to adhere to the community rules, and described adhering to these rules as 'inevitable'. Not following them was described as 'impossible'.

A youth in Albo Shejal commented: *'There is no one who does not follow the traditions in rural areas, this is impossible'*; a female interviewee from Fhelat expressed: *'We all adhere to tribal custom and no one dares to violate it'*; a returnee in Shaqlawiyah Centre commented: *'Traditions are something immutable and fixed in the community and they can never be confronted'*; and a tribal leader in Karma Centre stated: *'Everyone is committed to follow the decision, and in [a] case [where] someone did not obey [this], he will be killed.'*

Despite the overall feeling among community members to conform to the community rules, as for negative need for consensual validation, women and youth were the groups who most strongly expressed feelings linked to this factor of SOC.

In the case of absence of individual need for consensual validation, the youth group was the most affected, followed by women; however, for this factor, women, followed by youth, were the ones who most often expressed feeling directly pressured to conform with the genderised set of community rules that apply to women.

Women respondents spoke about the direct pressure they received to conform and attributed the source of this pressure to the community in abstract terms. Due to this pressure, women refrained from conducting any act considered as going against the established roles women are expected to follow in society. In Fhelat, the interviewed women expressed: *'We do not do anything that may break the customs and traditions even if that put us under pressure.'* In Karma Centre, they mentioned: *'The opinions of others are very important as we live in tribal areas and we need to be careful of 'people's talk', especially us women.'*

An explanation for the major pressure felt by women to conform comes from exploring gender roles in the studied communities. Female respondents described the responsibilities attributed to them within the frame of 'wife-mother' (Abugideiri, 2004). In relation to the patriarchal kin contract, which defines the social system of Anbar, Chapter 6 described the role attributed to

women in safeguarding the family, including its values and reputation, in a context where family is the central building block of society. This translates into a greater social pressure on women to conform, which was also found in the current study. As the female respondents of the FGD in Hessey narrated: *'Women are keener than men to preserve their honour and avoid any action that does not fit with our habits' (A5); 'We are distinguished by honour and strength' (A1); and 'Women are patient and sacrificing as I am a mother' (A2).*

As was the case with the youth, the displacement linked to the IS conflict exacerbated these feelings among women. The interviewed women explained how living in camps presented challenges in maintaining their reputations, due to the inadequate design of the camps to cultural sensitivities—with, for example, shared toilet spaces for men and women—and exposure to harassment, as explained in the following quote by a female IDP from Shaqlawiyah Centre:

> *Of course, keeping my honour is challenging. How can I enter the camp bath in the middle of the night with the inappropriate words that I hear, especially since I am a single woman who is harassed badly by words? I was forced to set up a small bathroom next to our tent, made by me and my sister's husband, which is not fully meeting our needs. But how can a tribal girl use a mixed bath for women and men? Can you imagine that?*

The issue of honour and reputation is further explored in Chapter 10.

A particular sub-group of women identified by respondents as being under higher community pressure to conform were the women widowed during the IS conflict, either at the hands of IS or as a result of the military campaign to retake territory from the group. As explained by a female interviewee in Albo Shejal: *'After the loss of the breadwinner, they have become more responsible for themselves and their reputation. They have become more cautious towards what people say…, they are without a breadwinner, and they are vulnerable to the pressures of the community.'* A female IDP from Shaqlawiyah Centre, perceived by the community as being affiliated with IS,

explained: *'Of course I care about what others say about me, because we are a tribal community and we are afraid about what people will think and say as it has an impact on our reputations.'*

Particularly in settings where women are vulnerable to violence, women have conformed to the set of genderised common norms that define them as a 'good woman' in order to seek protection from their male kin (Yount, 2011). The results of the study indicate this, since in the aftermath of the IS conflict there was major conformity among women who had lost their husbands and were therefore in more vulnerable social and economic positions.

For the youth, community pressure was felt on aspects that ruled the social relations of the community, such as on decisions related to marriage, choice of professional job or praying practices. In contrast with the women who pointed to the community in abstract terms as the source of this pressure towards conformity, the youth attributed this pressure as coming from other male relatives in the community. This was most commonly from first-degree male relatives, such as brothers, fathers or uncles, as illustrated by the following quote:

> *These cases [who to marry, number of times to pray and who to vote for in the election] are imposed on us and this is not acceptable. We suffer a lot from this problem and when we object, we are told that we must respect and obey those who are older than us. (…) If we want to talk about something we are convinced of, the adults, such as the father or the elder brother and even the rest of the relatives and neighbours, will object, so that these things come with negative results and their impact on the future is negative. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD male youth)*

Fear was the most common strategy the community used to pressure its members into conformity. For youth, this fear translated into the fear of being expelled from the tribe, which links to the membership component of SOC. Moving away from the shared set of norms could eventually lead to being disowned by the tribe; in those instances, norms are challenged to their extreme. Disownment by the tribe implies losing the social protection network provided by the tribe as per the kin patriarchal contract. This includes economic and social support, as well as

(most importantly, in highly vulnerable settings to violence) the kin's direct protection, as explained by male respondents in Karma Centre: *'No one dares to violate these customs'; and 'The violator might get disowned by the tribe if he doesn't follow' (A6).*

For women, it was fear associated with honour killings which was used by the community to seek their conformity, as illustrated by an interviewed woman in Fhelat: '*Here we are all women, respectful and committed to customs. Women are killed if they do something that brings shame to the community' (A6).* As mentioned, in settings vulnerable to violence, women enact the 'good woman' role to ensure protection from the kin. If they comply with the 'wife-mother' role attributed to women based on safeguarding the extended family through protecting their honour, the kin must offer them protection as per the patriarchal kin contract.

The findings of this analysis are consistent with research by Gospodinov (2015) on Sunni Tribes in Iraq during the prior conflict post-2003:

> Traditions and customs are some of the most important features of the daily life of people within the tribe, and they guide the interaction between different tribes and tribesmen. Adhering to these unwritten laws is obligatory and if a tribal member strays away from the accepted norms he or she is ostracized. Since being part of the tribe, gives not only identity to the individual but it also gives protection, if one is to be removed from its structures than he or she can no longer rely on the safety his tribesmen provided. (Gospodinov 2015, p. 15-16)

7.1.3 Positive community conformity and presence of individual need for consensual validation

Instances of positive community conformity and the presence of individual need for consensual validation appeared interwoven in the respondents' answers. This was not surprising as McMillan and Chavis (1986) highlighted that uniformity stemming from community conformity and individual validation is a transactional force that comes from both the group and the individual. This serves to agree on the shared set of common norms as well as to consensually validate the group members (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). These two factors of SOC-influence, which

complement each other and appeared intertwined in the respondents' answers, are therefore analysed together in this section.

Positive community conformity and individual need for consensual validation mainly revolve around the willingness of community members to follow the rules of the community, without being pressured to do so, as well as on community members feeling that they adhere to the community rules but can also freely express their individual differences. This was explained by an interviewed male in Albo Shejal: *'We are a committed tribal community and we all practice the same traditions. There is no one who doesn't follow them, so that's why we can all live peacefully*.' The male respondents in Hessey stated: *'I can express my individual differences with my neighbours and the rest of the community'*; and *'I consider myself different from the rest and I don't feel annoyed or feel that anyone is upset about me' (A4).* A female respondent in Albo Shejal expressed: *'We are a tribal community and we as women respect our customs and traditions for the good of everyone.'*

When analysing positive community conformity and individual validation, most instances were concentrated within inclusive resilient communities. Despite the answers being clustered in Hessey for references leaning towards individual validation, and in Albo Shejal for references leaning towards community conformity, references were found in all three inclusive resilient communities. This was not the case for exclusive resilient communities, where the three exclusive resilient communities presented very few and vague instances of both positive community conformity and presence of individual need for validation.

This concentration of positive community conformity and individual validation in the inclusive resilient communities differed from the negative community conformity and individual validation factors of SOC, which were present in all communities and at consistent levels. The analysis of positive community conformity and presence of individual validation also showed that these factors of SOC-influence were highly concentrated in one respondent group: the male

respondents, regardless of their status as perceived IS affiliates. This concentration on male respondents was consistent across the three inclusive resilient communities. In contrast, the analysed instances of negative community conformity and absence of negative individual validation were highly concentrated among youth and female respondents.

Under the patriarchal kin contract, the male cohort benefits the most from the shared set of norms reinforced by community conformity and this grants them increased influence over the community. Male respondents might feel positively towards community conformity due to these advantageous norms which validate their viewpoint. Similarly, women and youth respondents may feel negatively towards it due to the restrictions imposed on their individual freedoms. The divergence of respondent types that felt positive community conformity and individual validation, and those who felt these two factors of SOC in their negative or absent forms, support the findings.

7.1.4 Summary of findings

Overall, no significant variances were found between inclusive and exclusive resilient communities for the absence of individual need for consensual validation factor of SOC-influence. The narratives used to describe the feelings of not fitting in with the community rules and of not being able to freely express individual differences were shared across communities. The population groups showing absence of consensual validation and that were affected by these feelings were also consistent across communities: the youth were the most affected group, followed by women, to a much lesser extent. The patriarchal kin contract by which the communities of the study were organised might explain this major affectation of negative individual need for consensual validation among youth and women.

For negative community need for conformity, there were also no differences found across community types. The same groups, youth and women, were the most exposed to negative community need for conformity; but here, it was women who felt the most pressure to conform.

This was attributed to women being expected to fit the 'wife-mother' role by which they are seen as the protectors of the family institution through keeping their honour and reputation.

Variation across community types occurred when analysing positive community conformity and individual need for consensual validation. These two factors were concentrated in inclusive resilient communities and within the male population group.

7.2 Community influence on the individual

7.2.1 Presence of community influence

Overall, presence of community influence on the individual was understood by respondents as the capacity of community leaders, who represent the community, to influence individual decisions. A religious leader in Hessey explained:

> *When a problem occurs, the elderly and the tribal sheikh intervene and talk to the person involved in the problem to convince him to accept a solution, even if we are forced to use courtesies in our speech so he is satisfied and the problem gets solved, and in order to reduce tension between the conflicting parties. The meeting is held in the tribal sheikh office with the presence of all parties in addition to the rulers [elderly and tribal sheikhs] or in the home of the victim to let him be satisfied and solve the problem. (…) The elderly and the sheikh of the tribe are the ones who have the final say in solving the problems based on their power of influence. (…) We are initiating the mediation and the convergence of views because it is our legitimate duty, we must protect families.*

Instances of community influence in the studied communities were highly concentrated in one of the inclusive resilient communities: Hessey. This was demonstrated by the following quotes from a tribal leader and a mukhtar on problem-solving in Hessey:

> *Community elders and mukhtars deal with problems to be solved in four days by bringing the dispute parties together and agreeing on the payment of blood money, an apology, or on reconciliation efforts. The aggrieved person initiates the discussion and the tribal leaders incite the offender. The problem is discussed at the diwan of the tribal leader. A dispute resolution*

committee, formed by the tribal leader including religious and community leaders, make a decision and issue an accredited legal document signed by both parties with the presence of witnesses. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, mukhtar)

Those who take the initiative are the leaders of the community in which the problem occurs. The invitees are the parties to the problem wished to be solve. The place of gathering is either the house of the sheikh of the tribe or the house of one of the parties of the problem. And the tribal sheikh is the one who has the final say because people respect him and listen to him. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, tribal leader)

To a lesser extent, community influence on the individual was also present in the other two communities who developed inclusive resilience: Albo Shejal and Karma Centre, as well as in Ebbah and Fhelat, exclusive resilience communities. A mukhtar in Albo Shejal explained: *'They [community members] come to us in order to solve the problems and take the necessary actions.'* In Karma Centre, a tribal leader explained:

I deal with the real source of the problem and I try to overcome the difficulties by calling the real party in it; for example, the 'owner' of the main problem, and then I try to convince all parties through opening a productive dialogue to solve the problem.

In Ebbah, the representative of the local authorities commented:

The chairman of the council is the one who initiates the discussion. All the members of the local council, the army officer responsible for protecting the area, the tribal elders of the two parties, the complainant parties, and the complaining person, are invited to participate. These problems are usually solved either at the local council headquarters or in the house of one of the parties of the problem, and surely the final word and the last decision is for the tribal sheikh and the council chairman.

Shaqlawiyah Centre was the only community where instances of community influence being present in the community were barely referred to.

To note, presence of community influence was felt by all the population groups that formed the communities—women, youth and male respondents—in a cross-cutting manner and independent of their displacement status. For example, women expressed high levels of trust and appreciation towards community leaders and their role in problem-solving, as the below quotes illustrate:

> *A6: People obey the decision of the elders of the region and the sheikhs of the tribes voluntarily and not by force because the sheikh of the tribe represents the opinion of the individuals and demands what is good for the sake of the region. A5: We respect the decisions of the tribal elders and notables because they represent the opinion of members of the tribe, and they demand the rights of the region in front of the local and the provincial council. A7: We trust them, they are doing their best. (…) A3: If anyone has a problem, the person informs the tribal leader or the mayor then they will go with him to the concerned authorities to solve the problem, whether it is a security problem or a problem with other individuals. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *A6: Sheikhs and tribal leaders are the only ones who make decisions. A7: We respect and trust the decisions made by sheikhs, the community council and tribal leaders, who all sit together to make these decisions. (…) The sheikh of the clan shall have the right to make decisions and resolve individual disputes that may arise because of land or other problems that occurred after the conflict. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *A6: There are frequent meetings between the dignitaries and the elders, as well as between the elders and the sheikhs of the neighbouring regions to discuss the situation and solve problems (…) A4: The sheikh of the tribe is the closest to the people and he helps to solve problems in peaceful ways. A7: People trust the sheikh of the tribe more because he does not go against the person who caused the problem; on the contrary, he intervenes to solve the problem. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD female)*

Youth also expressed trust towards the community leaders, as demonstrated by the following quotes:

A7: The sheikh of the tribe, he is the most important person in decision-making in the region, and yes, the community follows his decisions and respects them, and also there is trust towards him (…) the community follows these decisions and also respects them. Certainly, I respect decision-makers and I respect what the tribe leader says more than anyone else; I trust him. (…) A3: As the brother has said, the sheikh of the tribe is the most influential person in decision-making and people follow their [his] decisions and respect them. I respect and follow these decisions. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)

Most people whom we listen to are the tribal leaders and certainly people listen and obey their decisions, and yes, respect exists, and it is a must, and about how much we trust them, trust is very high and positive. (…) The tribal and community leaders have a special position and impact on the community, and everyone follows them, no one can be outside this framework. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)

The community is currently facing problems and difficulties and there must be men who make correct and respectable decisions The most important person whom we respect his decision is the sheikh of the tribe, and we certainly trust him. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)

Also, returnees in all communities who developed inclusive resilience mentioned instances of community influence, as well as IDPs from exclusive resilience communities. For example, in Albo Shejal, an inclusive resilient community, one returnee commented:

The elders of the region such as the tribal elders and their representatives, as well as the mayors and members of the local councils, are the decision-makers and everyone listens to them and implements their decisions because they are for the benefit of the community.

One of the IDPs rejected from Fhelat (exclusive resilience) explained:

The tribal leader and the elders of the tribe are the ones who decide the fate of everyone in consultation with the people of the community and everyone applies what they say because it is in their best [sic] usually.

This was conferred by an IDP expelled from Shaqlawiyah Centre: *'As for societal problems, the sheikh of the tribe cares about them and solves them.'*

Given the absence of individual validation felt by youth and women, who also experienced negative community need for conformity and absence of individual influence, the appreciation of community leaders by women and youth might be unexpected. This is attributed to the high levels of adherence to tribal resolution mechanisms in problem solving in Anbar and the ensuing influence that community leaders—particularly tribal leaders—have over the community members. Additionally, as is explained in the section on individual influence on the community, communities have mechanisms in place, entrenched and validated by the community, which allow these groups to reach community leaders.

Of particular importance for this study, the return of IS-perceived affiliates was discussed in the communities through tribal mediation and resolution channels. Community leaders acted as mediators between those IDPs accused of IS affiliation, who were not welcome to return home, and those community members who were rejecting the return. Despite decision makers in the community having the last say on the return or rejection of perceived IS affiliates, the scenarios in which the mediation took place differed.

To untangle the dynamics by which the positive community influence of the SOC component played a role in this process, according to the different scenarios, and eventually impacted the development of inclusive or exclusive resilience, it is important to recall how the return process, leading to the IDPs either staying in the community or being expelled from it, took places. Also important is the role different actors played in the process. As described in Chapter 6, the role of tribal leaders in securing the safe return of IS affiliates to their communities of origin is paramount; tribal leaders are in charge of sponsoring these families to obtain the required security clearances by which returns are allowed. Tribal leaders also mediate between families of

victims and families of alleged perpetrators. Settling the claim of the victim's relatives through the payment of blood money increases the likelihood of the safe return of IS affiliates to the community.

In Hessey, the most common opinion among community members was to reject the return of perceived IS affiliates, in line with the opinion of the victims. Community leaders, however, were in favour of allowing the return, which eventually happened. How did the community leaders in Hessey convince community members, including victims of IS, to agree to the return? Hessey had the highest levels of positive community conformity which, as described above, is understood as the willingness of community members to be influenced by community leaders. It is also understood as the degree to which the decisions taken by community leaders are respected by community members and that the community members do not feel these decisions are imposed on them.

Greater community influence is manifested in an increased number of attempts to influence other members in the community and in an increased readiness to being receptive to this influence. This eventually leads to individuals changing their initial position on an issue. A considerable change of opinion is particularly the case if influence is exerted in a strong and consistent manner (Back, 1950). In Hessey, the community leaders took an active role in convincing community members on the importance of allowing the return of perceived IS affiliates and working towards reconciliation to prevent future waves of conflict and violence. These efforts were successful, families of victims and community members were convinced, and the return of IS affiliates was eventually allowed despite the initial reluctance of the community. A religious leader in Hessey explained:

> *A group of tribal elders and influential relatives intervened and went to the families of the victims and the angry individuals and convinced them to accept the return of these families (…) We are initiating the mediation and the convergence of views. Because this is a legitimate and humanitarian duty, we have to protect families (…) If we narrowed the divergences in views, they*

would return back. When a person refuses the return of a wanted person, we convince him to allow the return of his family only, and not the wanted person himself. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, religious leader)

The influence exerted by community leaders led to this change in opinion, even among the most reluctant group: the victims of IS. Therefore, high levels of positive community influence might have played a key role in the resilience response developed by the community. The same religious leader in Hessey explained: *'There are families who returned after influential members of the community (sheikhs and community elders) succeeded to mediate between the rejected families and some angry parents.'*

In the Hessey scenario, community leaders used their greater influence to convince community members and the relatives of IS families to allow the return of perceived IS affiliates. But what occurs when positive community influence is less preponderant, with community leaders and members agreeing, but not the victims? Festinger *et al.* (1952) found that in more highly cohesive groups characterised by a stronger pressure towards conformity, there was a major influence exerted over those individuals in the community who disagreed the most, and a greater readiness among these members to change their opinion and agree with the prevailing opinion in the community, leaning towards conformity. As previously described in Section 7.1.3, positive community conformity was clustered in inclusive resilient communities.

In Karma and Albo Shejal, the community leaders were in favour of the return of IS affiliates. The overall opinion of the community members also leaned towards allowing the return, as the following quotes, one from each community, illustrate:

I am not carrying a grudge against anyone and I welcome all the displaced families and the reason is the fact that they are our people and our neighbours and we must forget the past and forgive the families that hurt us during the crisis (…) Forgiveness should exist because this will make us

move on and we should be generous and forgive as at the end we are all humans who make mistakes. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, FGD youth male)

Regarding the families whose sons are suspected of being with IS and they have not been killed, those families returned normally after disowning their sons. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, mukhtar)

In these two communities, it was the victims of IS and their relatives who, by opposing the return of IS affiliates, diverged from the dominant opinion of the community. They were, however, convinced through community influence on the individual. The efforts from community leaders to mediate the return of IS-affiliated families were successful and the IS victims agreed to the return of the families. This was usually via their claims being dealt with through tribal law and compensation being paid as blood money to the victims or their relatives. This led to the eventual return of the IS-affiliated families.

Therefore, in all three inclusive resilient communities, the community influence on the individual—through the use of community pressure for conformity—appears to have intervened in the development of inclusive resilience. However, as Chapter 10 shows, in Hessey—where community leaders not only influenced relatives of IS-victims but also community members towards accepting the return of IS affiliates—the negative treatment received by the returned IS-affiliated families was higher than in Karma and Albo Shejal.

For exclusive resilient communities, Ebbah served to stress the importance of the presence of community influence factor of SOC in an exclusive resilience response. In Ebbah, the community was highly polarised in their opinions regarding the return of perceived IS affiliates: some community members strongly supported the return and others strongly opposed it. To note, Ebbah was one of the smallest communities studied with regards to population size (700 to 800 inhabitants) and had a high percentage of IS affiliates within the community.

One of the key informants interviewed explained:

> *The community is divided because some of these families were not at fault for the actions of their sons because these sons, who belonged to Daesh, were not able to be stopped by anyone and they did not accept advice. I know an example for that [sic], it happened with one of these families, when the father prevented his son from joining Daesh, the son refused and threatened to kill his father if he repeated this matter again. So, this family has done nothing to be punished and they have already disowned their son in front of the judge and so the security forces must forgive them and allow them to return. But parts of the community did not accept their return. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, Local Authorities Representative)*

This polarisation clearly appeared during the FGD in Ebbah among youth. When speaking about the rejected families, the following conversation took place:

> *A4: The [IS-affiliated] families who moved away from the community (…) were subjected to great pressures; in some cases, they were threatened by their lives [sic] if they did not leave by the families that were affected by Daesh. A1: [these families] were expelled cruelly and the decision was taken by the families of the victims and the head of the tribe.*

To which other respondents replied:

> *A3: I cannot hear their voices and I do not want to see them because they belong to these criminals. They need to be punished, either by law or by the tribe. A7: I do not want to see any of them, and I hope I will never see them.*

As mentioned in the previous section, in Ebbah, community pressure to conform was low—this might explain the polarisation the community had towards the return. For presence of community influence, there were a few instances expressed by respondents and these were weak with regards to community members' adapting their decisions as a result of influences from community leaders and other community members.

In Ebbah, community leaders first accepted the return of IS affiliates and facilitated this as per the request of those community members in favour of the return. However, the community leaders overturned their decision afterwards, as requested by community members who were against the return. This is explained in the following quote by the representative of the local authorities:

> *[With regards to] the issue regarding the return of families whose sons belonged to Daesh, the [tribal] council decided to allow the return of some of them, but we were surprised that part of the community was rejecting their return, and so the decision was changed after voting and the result was to prevent these families from returning now.*

Thus, community leaders, failed to convince those community members who were against the return, including the victims' relatives. This demonstrates the low levels of positive community influence in Ebbah, a community which also presented absence of community conformity. Absence of community conformity might have influenced this absence of community influence on the individual, or vice-versa. In the case of Karma and Hessey, the victims' relatives were convinced to accept the return. Differently in Ebbah, community leaders initially allowed returns however victims' relatives and those community members opposing the returned lobbied against this until the decision was overturned.

For the example, a youth in this community expressed:

> *The decision of expelling those [returnees with perceived IS affiliation] was taken by the victims' families as well as the community leader. They did not consult with anyone who disagreed [before making this decision]. They decided on their own to expel them because of revenge and the return of rights [to the victims' relatives], as they call it.*

The interviewed men in Ebbah explained: '*There are groups expelled from the community because of belonging to Daesh and supporting it, knowing that the community leaders are the ones who made the decision upon their [IS affiliates] return.'* According to their mukhtar: *'The demands of*

the population opposing the return succeeded in keeping this group in their places of displacement (the camp) and not returning.'

In Fhelat, community leaders and community members agreed on keeping the IS-affiliated families away from the community. Despite instances of presence of community influence being identified in the data, they did not relate to the return of IS affiliates. Therefore, these dynamics cannot be analysed in depth, as in the case of the other four communities presented above. Shaqlawiyah Centre, the only community with no presence of community influence, was also the only urban community included in the study. The social dynamics in urban communities, with weaker social ties among community members as felt by the respondents, might reduce the capacity of influence tribal leaders have on their clan, as well as their role in dispute resolution. Though tribal customary law is still heavily entrenched in urban communities, and often the preferred system for problem solving, there are alternative justice mechanisms to abide by and other actors who might take upon the mediation role, such as the local police (Revkin and Aymerich, 2020).

7.2.2 Absence of community influence

Absence of community influence occurs when the decisions of community members are not influenced by community leaders. There was hardly any reference to absence of community influence among the respondents, regardless of the respondents' category and community type. The exception was in Ebbah, where low levels of presence of community influence occurred-.

As explained in the previous section, in Ebbah, community members were polarised when it came to the return of IS-affiliated families. Part of the community favoured acceptance, with the other part favouring rejection. The latter group's opinion was more similar to that of the victims' relatives, who strongly opposed the return. The rejection pole successfully lobbied against the decision taken by the community leaders of allowing the return. As a result, the IS-affiliated families who had returned thanks to the intervention of community leaders, were expelled.

Community members were also pressured towards the rejection pole, as well as community leaders who did not interfere on behalf of the rejected families.

Therefore, community members in favour of the return were pressured not to testify in favour of the expelled families and community leaders were pressured not to further interfere in the return process. As explained by a youth in Ebbah: 'Community leaders could decide about the return but also they are under pressure not to interfere with the return.' An IDP from Ebbah shared a first-hand experience: *'I tried to contact friends who knew my son was not associated with IS and, despite my success to reach them, they refused to testify in my favour for fear of threats*.' The representative of the local authorities stated:

> *I will be frank with you in the answer: people are divided regarding this issue, not all the leaders of the community want them to return but some of them want them to return but they do not declare this in public as they are afraid of the feelings of families who lost their children because of Daesh.*

In Ebbah, community members in the opposing pole went against the decision of community members to oppose the IS affiliates return and eventually succeeded in imposing their decision towards this matter within the community. This was despite the initial return of IS-affiliated families facilitated by community leaders.

In the other communities, instances of absence of community influence are understood as the after-effect of the way positive community influence dynamics operated in these communities, rather than this factor operating on its own. For example, in Hessey, where presence of community influence was strongest, the few references to the absence of community influence were made by referring to those individual cases in which the mediation process between the families of the victims and the families of the alleged perpetrators turned out to be unsuccessful. As explain by a religious leader in Hessey: *'I was with a group of influential people and tribal sheikhs to convince the families of the killed to give up their right [of retaliation], but that did not work.*' This was later reiterated by the same respondent:

There are some families whose sons were killed by IS and who threatened not to allow the families of IS who committed the crimes to return despite the intervention of the parties [community leaders] to convince them, so the community leaders cannot impose the decision of such return cases on them according to the tribe law.

As in the case of presence of community influence, the established role of community leaders in dispute resolution within the community, and the high levels of adherence to tribal law, might also explain the low levels of absence of community influence across five of the six studied communities.

7.2.3 Summary of findings

Community influence on the individual was found concentrated in inclusive resilient communities and was present in exclusive resilient communities to a lesser extent. However, the dynamics of how this factor of SOC-influence operated in each community differed. When presence of community influence was stronger, this influence could be used by community leaders to convince divergent community members, including the victims' relatives, of their opinion (Hessey). When the community members and community leaders leaned towards the same opinion on the return of IS-perceived affiliates, the positive community influence served to influence the victims towards the community´s uniform opinion (Karma and Albo Shejal).

In communities with low levels of community influence and the absence of negative community influence, the negative community influence seemed to neutralise the positive one.

No significant variances were found in population sub-groups for the presence and absence of community influence factors. This was attributed to the prevalence of the tribal conflict resolution mechanism as the preferred, and most commonly used, problem solving mechanism.

7.3 Individual influence on the community

7.3.1 Presence of individual influence on the community

Individual influence on the community was consistently present across communities, within both exclusive and inclusive resilient communities. This was explained by the overall acceptance of tribal dispute mechanisms among both community leaders, who used a consultative process among their constituencies when a problem arose (as explained in community influence on the individual), and by community members, as further explored in this section and as the following quotes illustrate:

> *Usually a problem in the community is solved by gathering all the parties of the problem in the house of either the tribe sheikh or the mayor of the region for the purpose of counselling and also consultation in order to solve this problem. Of course, if such a problem does not need to go to the police or the judiciary, as in this case, the solution is easy and the problem can be solved friendly and by mutual consent. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, NGO representative)*

> *The initiation of the discussion is either done by the elders and sheikhs of the tribe or by the one with the problem in order to discuss it and solve it. The invited people are those who are involved or are part of the problem in the presence of tribal elders of both parties [if they are from different tribes], and these meetings are usually held in the house or the office of the tribal sheik. The tribal sheikh will have the final say after he listens to all parties concerned. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, Local Authorities' Representative)*

> *When a particular problem pertaining [to] the community occurs, consultation is done before making any decision and this is necessary for all parties of the problem. And for this reason, usually the population adheres to the decisions taken, as the population have their opinion and their right to influence, but in accordance with the controls imposed by the type of the problem and also what community leaders decide. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, NGO representative)*

> *When a problem occurs, the stakeholders are gathered, and the leader of the session, the general sheikh of the tribe, begins to speak and opens the debate. All parties related to the problem are*

invited. It is discussed in the guesthouse of the sheikh of the tribe, the final say is for the sheikh of the tribe, and this is what our customs and traditions order. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, Mukhtar)

Hessey presented the highest levels of individual influence present in the community. Community members felt they had a say in the community and that the decisions taken by community leaders were influenced by community members. This was consistent across groups, including the returned IDPs with perceived affiliation. In Hessey, IDPs felt they were listened to in their pledge to community leaders to initiate the mediation process between families of victims and families of perpetrators which eventually led to their return. As explained by an IDP who returned to Hessey:

Many people did not accept our return to the region first, and so we asked for a reconciliation session with the presence of the sheikh of the tribe and the notables of the region for the purpose of reconciliation and forgetting the past.

It is worth noting that Hessey also represented the highest levels of presence of community influence, where community members' decisions were influenced by community leaders. This reinforces the overall component of SOC-influence, as both elements feed each other to contribute to the overall cohesiveness of the group.

Ebbah follows Hessey as the community with the next greatest positive individual influence. However, for Ebbah, most of the references to positive individual influence related to the opinions of others being important, as exemplified by the following quote from a youth in Ebbah: *'I see that the opinion of others is important because sometimes a person might not take the right decision and consultation from friends is needed.'* However, no specific references were made to the issue of IS affiliate return. As in Ebbah, in the rest of the exclusive resilient communities, references to presence of individual influence were unrelated to the return process of IS-affiliated families. In contrast, references to absence of individual influence were specific to this return process.

When analysing presence of individual influence, it was apparent that this was felt consistently across the population groups, including youth and women. Women and youth experienced high levels of negative individual need for consensual validation, absence of community need for conformity, and absence of individual influence. As such, they felt unable to freely express their individual differences and opinions. These groups were also pressed to adhere to community rules and did not have a say in the community. How, then, are women and youth able to experience presence of individual influence?

As seen, tribal dispute mechanisms were highly rooted in the studied communities as a way of solving community problems. For youth, and especially women, the figure of the broker plays a key role. When women cannot access community dispute mechanisms directly due to genderised rules that do not allow for direct interactions between women and community leaders, such interactions take place through a trusted figure: the broker. The broker, who serves as a bridge between actors when those two actors lack a direct connection to one another (Spiro, Acton and Butts, 2013), is typically the husband or male first-degree relative of the woman who has a request or complaint to be made. However, the broker can also be the wife of the community leader she is trying to reach or another male community leader of lower rank (usually the mukhtar or the clan sheikh). Such personnel play an intermediary role between women and other community leaders of higher authority (such as the tribal leader) or formal institutions such as the police or the judiciary (Parry and Aymerich, 2019). As explained an interviewed woman in Hessey:

> *If any of us [women] have a problem, we inform the tribe leader or the mayor then they will go with us to the concerned authorities to solve the problem, whether [it is a] security problem or a problem with other individuals.*

The only exception seemed to be Shaqlawiyah Centre, where women did not express presence of individual influence on the community. The urban nature of this community has loosened tribal

dispute mechanisms and the decisions of tribal leaders are less likely to be respected by the community members. Women have borne the brunt of this process as they are less likely to be able to access the new community resolution mechanisms for problem solving while the old mechanisms they used to rely on are less respected. For example, women tend to feel less comfortable directly reporting a problem to the police and are generally not allowed to report problems to the local police on their own (Revkin and Aymerich, 2020).

7.3.2 Absence of individual influence on the community

Absence of individual influence on the community occurs when community members do not feel they have a say in the community, when decisions made by community leaders are not influenced by community members, and when community members feel the values and opinions of other community members do not matter to them.

Overall, exclusive resilient communities presented higher levels of individual influence being absent than inclusive resilient communities. Fhelat was the community where absence of individual influence was most commonly and most strongly felt. As explained by the mukhtar:

> *The community leaders decided that their return at present is difficult and they cannot be allowed to return (…) the community did not interfere in the decision of expelling the families except for some neighbours, they did not participate.*

Shaqlawiyah Centre and Ebbah, also exclusive resilient communities, followed. For example, the youth in Ebbah explained: *'If the decision is taken, everyone shall obey (…). Decision-makers do not consult the community.'* One youth commented:

> *The most important example that decisions are made without the intervention of the community is their [community leaders] meeting a while ago to discuss not allowing the return of people who belonged to Daesh and this decision was made without referring to the opinion of the community because it is an important decision, and the decision is right, and it serves the whole community.*

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, the tribal leader expressed:

> *The final say is for influential leaders in the community. The population adheres to the decisions taken and it does not matter if the population does or does not agree because the decision will be applied, and people cannot influence the decision-makers.*

A mukhtar conferred:

> *I can discuss the problems submitted by the community members with them while solving the matter, but the issues that I discuss in the district directorate I cannot consult people or take their opinions regarding them, because they are undebatable, and they should be implemented. (…) The community was unaware that I initially refused their return [of IS affiliates], but I told them later (…). I think the opinion of the community members about this is identical to my personal opinion; therefore, I took the necessary action without referring to people.*

Similarly, a female IDP expelled from Shaqlawiyah Centre explained her particular case:

> *The community is unable to decide whether to let me stay or leave, and I cannot stay because I did not gain the approval from the sheikh. (…) They [community members] have no decision. The control is for tribal sheikhs, and every sheikh has his own advisers, and no one can intervene in their decisions negatively or positively. (…) I am a woman, and I cannot interfere whether now or before, women have no right to interfere in decision-making (…) I am a vulnerable woman, how can I change their decision [to be expelled from the community], no one can influence the leaders of the community except the tribal sheikhs.*

Another difference between community types related to the population groups affected by absence of individual influence. In inclusive resilient communities, negative individual influence was only expressed by women, to a higher degree, and youth. However in exclusive resilient communities, where there were higher levels of this factor, individual influence was also expressed by men (in Ebbah and Shaqlawiyah Centre) and IDPs (in the three exclusive resilient communities).

Furthermore, in both exclusive and inclusive resilient communities, women and youth tended to express absence of individual influence in general terms, and complained about their exclusion from the consultative process that leads to community decisions. The following quotes by women and youth illustrate this:

> *No one consults women. A5: I agree with her. A6: Yes, we as women have no voice here. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *We as women have no opinion. Men are the ones who make the decisions. (…) Women do not have an opinion on what is happening in the community because women do not interfere in community affairs and this role is the role of men only. (Hessey, inclusive resilience, FGD, female)*

> *Women have no saying in what is happening. (…) I cannot express myself because no one hears the opinions of women even if we speak. (…) We do not have an opinion; the men are the ones who decide our fate. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, FGD female)*

> *Women, in general, in our tribal community do not interfere in decision-making, although we [women] are the most affected by these decisions. The last opinion is of the elders of the tribes and this issue includes men only and we do not interfere as women in these things. (Fhelat, exclusive resilience, IDP female)*

> *I have no opinion because it is the responsibility of people who are older than us and who interfere in these decisions. A2: We, as young people, have customs and traditions that govern us in this region, and one of these is that we cannot object to something taken by adults. A5: Interfering and giving an opinion about something in the community does not exist. No, because we are governed by the customs and tribal traditions. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

> *We are considered young in age and have not enough maturity intellectually to interfere in decisions. We have no right to interfere by expressing our opinions regarding important issues of the community, as the greatest role of that is done by the elders and notables of the region. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, FGD youth)*

I cannot personally influence the made decisions because I am still young. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, Returnee 1)

Expressing opinions here in Ebbah is exclusively for the adults, the elders and the tribal sheikhs. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD youth)

In Shaqlawiyah Centre and Ebbah, the contributions expressed by IDPs and male respondents were directly related to the return of IS affiliates. As described above, in Ebbah, there was strong polarisation among those community members who accepted and those who rejected the return of IS-affiliated families. In Shaqlawiyah Centre, community members were split, some were in favour of return and some against; but both opinions were expressed in a more nuanced way than in Ebbah. To note, the need for community conformity was absent in this type of community, allowing for diversity of opinions. Here, men, who are often included in the community's decision-making process, felt that the decisions taken by community leaders were not influenced by those community members whose opinions did not align with the final decision.

We have seen how in Ebbah, the community leaders were supportive of the return but changed their initial decision when pressured to do so by the victims' relatives. This indicated low levels of positive community influence and the presence of negative community influence.

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, the situation was different as the community leaders opposed the return and directly blocked it without consulting the community members. As discussed, Shaqlawiyah Centre was the only community where positive community influence—whereby decisions taken by community leaders are influenced by community members—was absent. A mukhtar commented:

We know who belonged to IS and who was harming the community and its members. Therefore, we refused them from the beginning and we did not accept their return. I think the opinion of the community members about this is identical to my personal opinion; therefore, I took the necessary

action without referring to people, because I know what is good for the community (…) because the return of these families will negatively affect the security of the community and I know that my behaviour may be selfish, but I took part in the liberation operations and I saw what Daesh did.

Similarly, a female IDP explained:

Previously, we used to plant our land and we had cattle. Whereas now, if we returned, I would start everything from scratch because we have nothing to live, and our lives will be threatened by the sheikh. The local community cannot help me. They have no role in our return. (…) They have no decision. The control is for tribal sheikhs.

Fhelat differed from Ebbah and Shaqlawiyah Centre as it was the only community included in the study where the return of IS affiliates was clearly rejected by community leaders and members. This explains why the high absence of individual influence that relates to the return of IS affiliates was concentrated only in the IDP group. Thus, the interviewed IDPs expressed how their opinions had not been taken into consideration on the issue of their return to the community. To note, most of interviewed IDPs in Fhelat were female; this, combined with their status of IDP, might have further curtailed their influence capacity. As explained by a female IDP from Fhelat: *'[The decision to return] is not in my hands (…). I, or anyone like me, will not be able to influence or change that.'* Another female IDP conferred:

Frankly speaking, I do not think that trying to convince community leaders or the community on my return will work, perhaps because I do not have concrete evidence to deny what they are accusing me, my children and my family with, and perhaps because I am a woman, and the nature of the community does not take my words.

7.3.3 Summary of findings

Individual influence was consistently found across communities, in both exclusive and inclusive resilient communities, and across population groups. This might be due to the rooted tribal system employed in conflict resolution, which includes the figure of the broker to channel the requests of women and youth, who have less decision-making power in the community.

Absence of individual influence was most strongly found in exclusive resilient communities. This is because, although absence of individual influence was found across the two types of communities at similar levels for women and youth, exclusive resilient communities also presented absence of individual influence among males and IDPs. The answers of these latter groups concentrated around the narrative of IS affiliates returns. In Shaqlawiyah Centre and Ebbah, communities with divergent opinions on the return, male community members in favour of the return felt excluded from the ultimate decision taken by community leaders of rejecting the return. IDPs felt excluded in all exclusive resilient communities.

7.4 Unpacking the role of SOC-influence on community resilience

The initial hypothesis considered that the capacity of influence from community leaders on their constituencies (community influence on the individual) might lead to the development of inclusive resilience and the presence of individual influence on the community might lead to exclusive resilience. This hypothesis is partially true, though a more nuanced interplay of the different factors and their interactions seem to be significant in the development of resilience type.

As the results showed, the factors of community influence on the individual and individual influence on the community indeed played important roles in the development of resilience type, but not as standalone factors. Community influence requires the combination of the factors of community conformity and individual validation to operate. As such, positive community influence likely contributes to the development of inclusive resilience, combined with community conformity and individual validation. The lack of these factors, or their negative presence, likely contributes to the development of exclusive resilience. The rejected IDPs also presented negative individual influence, with no power to influence the community decisions; however, it is not possible to tell if this was as a consequence of been rejected, or if this negative individual influence on the community pre-dated their expulsion from the community.

Additionally, the departing assumption, whereby community leaders in all communities would be in favour of return, was also shown to be incorrect. As the findings indicated, the initial positioning towards allowing, or not, the return varied across community members and leaders, with some communities containing community members with divergent opinions on the matter.

In **Karma** and **Albo Shejal**, the victims' relatives, who were mostly opposed to the return of IS-families, were co-opted to agree on the return through strong community influence and community pressure to conform by communities who were mostly in favour of returns.

In **Hessey**, community members (including the victims' relatives) were more inclined towards rejecting the return of IS affiliates and community leaders were more inclined to support this. Here, the high prevalence of community influence from community leaders combined with community pressure to conform led to a change in the initial opinions of both the community members and the victims' relatives, who ended up agreeing on the return.

In Ebbah and Shaqlawiyah Centre, the absence of community need for conformity combined with the absence or low presence of community influence led to diversity in opinions towards the return or rejection of IS affiliates, in a polarised (Ebbah) or nuanced (Shaqlawiyah Centre) manner.

In **Ebbah**, community leaders were in favour of return but did not manage to convince the community members rejecting this. Ebbah had the strongest absence of community influence by which community members' decisions were not influenced by community leaders. Therefore, in Ebbah, the absence of community influence seems to have neutralised the already low presence of community influence. Also, instances of absence of individual influence seem to have captured the opinions of those community members in favour of return.

In **Shaqlawiyah Centre**, where community leaders were against the return, these leaders imposed their decision to reject returns without consulting those community members in favour of returns. Those not consulted expressed absence of individual influence.

In **Fhelat**, the only community where community leaders and community members both had the opinion of not allowing returns, the high levels of absence of individual influence related to the returns appeared clustered within the IDP group.

Consistent with the findings discussed in the previous sections, Table 4 shows that the presence of community conformity and individual need for consensual validation were concentrated in inclusive resilient communities. Presence of community influence was also concentrated in this type of community. Combined, these three factors allowed for major uniformity among the communities on the issue of returns.

There were significant differences in five out of the eight factors of SOC-influence according to the type of community. These factors were: presence of individual need for consensual validation, positive community conformity, presence of community influence, absence of community influence and absence of individual influence. Table 4 presents a summary of the initial positioning of community members and leaders on the issue of IS affiliates return, regardless of whether the return was eventually allowed.

Table 4: Key SOC-influence factors relevant to the development of resilience by community and initial opinion on IS affiliates return among community leaders and community members.

COMMUNITY	**INFLUENCE**				**INITIAL OPINION ON RETURNS**		**OUTCOME**
	Positive community conformity + presence of individual	**Presence of community influence**	**Absence of community influence**	**Absence of individual influence**	**Community members**	**Community leaders' initial opinion on returns**	

	need for validation						
Albo Shejal	++	+	·	·	Accepting	Accepting	Inclusive resilience
Hessey	++	++	(+)	(+)	Rejecting	Accepting	Inclusive resilience
Karma	+	+	·	·	Accepting	Accepting	Inclusive resilience
Ebbah	·	(+)	+	+	Highly divided	Accepting	Exclusive resilience
Fhelat	·	+	(+)	+	Rejecting	Rejecting	Exclusive resilience
Shaqlawiyah Centre	·	·	·	+	Neutral	Rejecting	Exclusive resilience

++	Expressed frequently and strongly by respondents
+	Expressed frequently but mildly by respondents
(+)	Expressed infrequently and mildly by respondents
·	Not expressed by respondents

The findings also indicated a potential link between the presence of community influence and negative quality and quantity of contact towards returned perceived affiliates. This related to instances when community influence was exerted by community leaders to convince those members (beyond the relatives of IS-victims) with divergent opinions to their leaders and who opposed the return of IS affiliates. This is further explored in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 8: NEEDS FULFILLMENT

Following on from the findings in the two previous chapters, regarding the role of social interaction factors within SOC-membership and SOC-influence in determining the community resilience response to the disruption of social peace perceived in the return of IS affiliates, this chapter focuses on the factors within SOC-needs fulfilment. Needs fulfilment relates to the community members' perceptions that their needs will be met by the community, and that the community will distribute the resources and social credentials among its community members, contributing to their well-being (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

With regards to SOC-needs fulfilment, the study aims to test how competition over resources among community members in highly depleted communities after conflict might affect the development of resilience types. The hypotheses proposed are:

- H3 (A): Communities with more resources to fulfil the community members' needs are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.
- H3 (B): Communities with fewer resources to fulfil the community members' needs are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.

These hypotheses are based on the underpinning mechanism that communities with more resources to fulfil the community members' needs are more likely to develop inclusive resilience as competition over resources will be lower and community members might be more willing to share them with the returned IS affiliates. Conversely, communities with fewer resources to fulfil the community members' needs are more likely to develop exclusive resilience as competition will be higher and community members will be more opposed to sharing these limited resources with the perceived IS affiliates.

The findings indicated this competition over resources to be absent in both exclusive and inclusive resilience responses. Blame for the uncovered needs was mainly targeted towards the

government, not the community, for its inability to provide for the required needs. Additionally, no competition among community members, or between community members and IS affiliates, was found in the analysis. Therefore, it is not possible to claim that such competition played a role in the development of resilience response types. It is yet to be seen, however, how the inability of the community to fulfil the members' needs (SOC-needs fulfilment) combined with other SOC elements and factors in the development of resilience types.

8.2 Fulfilment of community members' needs

Fulfilment of community members' needs by the community consists of both the community's ability to meet the community members' needs, and the community's competency in solving community problems. This also includes the community members' readiness and willingness to provide help to other community members and to easily receive help from them. The following sections separately analyse these two sides of SOC-needs fulfilment and the extent to which they are present or absent in the six communities included in the study.

8.2.1 Ability of the community to fulfil community members' needs

With regards to the perceived ability of the community to fulfil community members' needs, two interrelated indicators—community competency in problem solving and community members' readiness to help each other and to obtain help from other community members—were consistently expressed in all six communities and across population groups. As explained by an IDP from Fhelat: 'There is solidarity; community members cooperate together to solve problems.'

No difference was found across communities regarding the type of examples provided, and respondents in all six communities easily described concrete examples of their communities coming together to solve a problem or to help community members. In Albo Shejal, a woman explained a monetary issue:

There were several problems between two people from the same tribe because of borrowing money. The sheikh solved the issue by collecting that amount of money from the tribe members and giving it to the borrower, and so the issue was solved.

A youth described an accident that happened to one of the community members:

For example, the drowning that happened to one of the youths in the village of Albo Shejal. People gathered and cooperated together to recover the body of that young man from the Euphrates and they also helped the family to move on and confront their son's death.

The same incident was also explained by one of the returnees to Albo Shejal:

If there is a problem in the community, certainly it will be solved. For example, one day a problem occurred between two families, it was regarding the amount of water allocated to the land used for agriculture, the conflict got worse, and it almost led to using weapons, but the elders of the region and the tribal leader intervened to solve the problem. And the most important incident which gathered the community, when one of the youth drowned in the Euphrates River near here, it is worth referring and appreciating it because all of the youth in the region gathered to search for the body of this drowned young man and they were able to find him; without their intervention and cooperation, that could not have happened.

The fact that different respondents described the same occasion in which the community came together to help, as with the story of a drowning youth in Albo Shejal, is a sign of how negative events contribute to the shared history of the community and bind its members together. This is further explored in Chapter 10 focussing on the specific events linked to the most recent IS conflict.

In Hessey, one of the male interviewees explained a first-hand experience where he received help from the community:

I once had a problem. When I was working, I fell from the second floor and I broke my hand and some ribs in my chest. And, with the help of the people here, I was taken to the General Hospital in Fallujah.

A youth referred to the IS entering the community to exemplify how community members helped each other:

During the events [IS conflict], there was a lot of cooperation among the whole community, they helped each other to face what happened. The members of the community are the ones who participated in all manners, and the result of this cooperation was positive as it reduced people's losses during the events.

A woman referred to the cooperation in the aftermath of the conflict: *'There are many unexploded bombs. The men met with security forces, tribal elders and officials to clean up the area.'* In Karma, a female respondent explained: *'We collected a sum of money to help a person in need due to a medical condition.'* One of the returnees also stated: '*The community here is ready to provide help. I am sure the community will help even if this creates hardship on the community.'*

In Ebbah, one of the IDPs explained:

Yes, there were several problems that required people to come together to solve. For example, one of the neighbour's house was exposed to theft; we all offered to help when we heard them screaming.

Another IDP mentioned:

One day, the electricity transformer in the area got burned and the weather was very hot. We did not wait for anyone to ask for help, we contacted the fire department and evacuated the affected houses. We knew that one of the houses was completely damaged and the family could not stay

in it, so we welcomed them in our house and they stayed more than a week until they renovated their home and returned to it with honour and dignity.

Also, referring to the IS crisis, one returnee commented:

When the army approached, Daesh asked us to pay a sum of money to let us go out [leave the area], but I did not have this amount and so my brothers [referring to other community member, not to relatives] helped me and we all left together. They saved me from a proper death.

In Fhelat, respondents referred to their current situation and the willingness to help despite the dire economic situation. A male respondent commented: *'People gather to collect money for electricity to pay for the public generator, or to renovate the school, despite our bad financial situation.'* A woman explained: '*The community helped the families who displaced. Most of the families returned and found no furniture, so we tried to help them as much as possible.'*

Similarly, in Shaqlawiyah Centre, an IDP commented:

Certainly, the community cooperates together in solving any problem, not only the big ones. For example, one of the families had a son who was hit by a car and died in that accident, and the wise intervention of community leaders and tribal leaders solved the problem with the person who had caused the accident.

A returnee explained: *'If there is any problem, we resolve the issue between us and if the victim is a member of the community, we pay the money collected from all the members of the tribe.'*

These quotes show that cooperation among community members still existed in the communities, despite the pressing needs.

This willingness of community members to help each other in all types of communities, regardless of perceived affiliation in those communities who developed inclusive resilience, reinforces the

findings of Chapter 7 (membership). As seen in Chapter 7, solid boundaries allowed the inclusive resilient communities to move away from collective blame which, in turn, contributed to the acceptance of IS-perceived returnees, particularly the women and children. Sense of belonging and identification remained present in inclusive resilient communities after the return of affiliates. This was with the exception of Hessey, where, as described in Chapter 8, the community leaders used their influence to push for the return of IS affiliates against the will of the community. This might have triggered a reduction in sense of belonging.

Despite the willingness to help each other, as stated by members in all of the communities, there was evidence that the communities lacked in covering for the community members' needs overall. This is further explored in the following section.

8.2.2 Inability of the community to fulfil community members' needs

All six communities were currently struggling to meet the community members' most basic needs, according to the respondents. Lack of access to water, electricity and health care; house damage; and lack of job opportunities were the challenges most commonly reported by the respondents. Other challenges included access to affordable building material to use in rebuilding houses, receiving compensation from the government for house damage, access to health care, and the removal of UXOs and IED from agricultural lands to restart agricultural activity. These issues were consistent across respondent types and communities.

In Albo Shejal, a female interviewee explained:

> *We are suffering from the bad economic situation…we are suffering from many things such as the lack of sources of income and the poor services. (…) Currently, we are in a situation of extreme poverty, we suffer from great poverty and lack of services, water and electricity, high prices and lack of employment.*

The men conferred:

There are no jobs, source of income and the services are very poor (…) A1: There are no services here and we cannot get anything. A2: We suffer from unemployment, especially the graduates. A6: Compensations have not been paid so far [referring to government compensations for house damage]. We suffer from poor services in general in the region. A7: Everyone suffers from lack of services in the area.

A youth also stated: *'The community needs jobs, financial support and new projects so that the community can rise again after the events it has gone through.'*

In Hessey, the female respondents mentioned:

There are no services, and the community is not able to provide anything. A5: There is no clean drinking water and no desalination plants. We asked for a health clinic and they promised us to rebuild it but they didn't. A2: People whose homes were destroyed were not compensated. A1: The schools are very far away and are not well equipped, there are not enough teachers, and we always submit complaints, but it is useless.

Similarly, the men commented:

A1: Now, at this time, the community cannot provide even for the most basic needs (…) A3: The community currently needs new infrastructure or at least maintenance of the existing one. A1: And basic services such as electricity and non-potable water.

A returnee also stated: *'Because of the crisis with IS, the community itself cannot provide for the most basic needs, I regret to say that currently the community is unable to provide for the needs of its inhabitants.'*

In Karma Centre, a male explained:

We only get electricity and water and even the power plants are not able to meet the needs of the community because most of the electrical wires are worn out and the transformers are missing or damaged or unable to supply low voltage properly. (…) Community members used to work in

agriculture or in factories on the outskirts of Karma, now all the agricultural lands are burned and it need huge amounts of money to rehabilitate them, same for the factories.

A youth commented: *'The lack of job opportunities and [governmental] financial allocations has reduced our ability to purchase. The community cannot provide work or income.'*

In Ebbah, a youth mentioned:

The community does not live from food and water only! We suffer from many shortages; we need electrical appliances, for example, which we cannot afford to buy. (…) Most of families living here are in a very difficult economic situation.

The youth later elaborated:

AX: We need building materials to rebuild the houses destroyed during Daesh occupation and during the liberation of the area by the security forces. Many houses are destroyed and cannot be rebuilt because people have no money to buy the very expensive materials they need for the reconstruction. A4: Also, job opportunities are missing and only people who gets a salary or money from rent or from selling their crops during the season can cover the needs of their family, but the others cannot because of the lack of employment opportunities and widespread unemployment among the youth. A3: I cannot meet my needs and the community as well cannot meet them due to the lack of money and government support. Every house here in Ebbah has needs: food, removing the remnants of war [referring to UXOs and IEDs], house reconstruction. These are all important needs that must be solved.

In Fhelat, the situation was similar, and the women commented:

A6: There are no basic services, no clean drinking water. A1: Electricity is bad, and they don't bring generators to us and there is no fuel to run them. Basically, families cannot pay the fees of the generators.

The men conferred*:*

A5: The region lacks the most basic services: drinking water and electricity, those are provided less frequently than in the rest of the regions and job opportunities are lacking. A2: Agriculture is no longer the same and there is no support for the agricultural sector; we suffer from extreme poverty and we have a lot of orphans and widows without a breadwinner. A3: Drinking water is salty, there is no purification, the internal roads are very bad and unpaved except the main road and there is no nearby clinic; the nearest clinic has no medicines or medical supplies. A1: There is no transportation, we suffer a lot from this problem. A5: There are no jobs, previously people used to depend on agriculture and now there is no land for cultivation as it has not been cleared of mines. Some young people go to the city to work but only a few days as daily wages.

Last, in Shaqlawiyah Centre, the female interviewees commented:

A5: The community needs to rebuild the houses that got destroyed as a result of the war between IS and the army. (…) A2: The war caused a lot of destruction to the region and caused us to suffer from lack of services and destruction in the infrastructure, even the water is cut and unsuitable for drinking.

Similarly, the men explained:

A6: Poverty is common here. A1: I could get what I needed from the community—food and everything—before the crisis but after that this became very difficult. Housing and jobs for the unemployed people are what the community cannot provide (…) A4: There is no health centre to treat patients and the nearest health centre is in the city of Fallujah, where there is only paracetamol and the situation now is the same as in the time of IS [referring to the lack of medicines].

References to housing are not surprising given house damage in the areas occupied by IS is a major challenge for Iraq's recovery. According to the World Bank, 37% of the total estimated damage caused by the IS conflict, amounting to 45.7 billion USD, was counted as house damage or house destruction (16 billion USD) (World Bank Group, 2018). Since 2003, the Government of Iraq has had a compensation scheme for citizens who were directly affected by acts of terrorism

or military operations. This includes compensation for house damage, which accounts for the vast majority of applications under the scheme. The scheme covers damages to private houses, shops, companies, farmland, vehicles and furniture (IOM Iraq and Georgetown University, 2019). In 2019, the year data collection for this study took place, the number of applications was 14,419 (HLP Sub-cluster Iraq, 2018). However, compensation claims are difficult to submit and are processed very slowly. In addition to the lengthy administrative process on making a decision about a claim, if the claim is accepted, the actual disbursement of funds might take years to be received by the claimant (IOM Iraq, 2021).

A labour and market assessment conducted in the Fallujah district of Anbar governorate, where the six communities are located, concluded that the destruction, burning and looting that occurred from 2014 to 2016 in the area ravaged the industrial sector and decimated the markets from the previous largest employers. Businesses also reported stolen or burned machinery, damaged equipment and the destruction of factories (IOM Iraq, 2019a).

For agricultural land, IS maintained agriculture production in the territories under its control as a source of income. It is estimated that income related to agriculture production contributed up to 7% of IS's total income. The group also controlled agriculture production to maintain food availability in the areas under its control, where access to food was rationed by the group as a form of coercion to control the population (Fick, 2014; Jaafar and Woetz, 2016). However, as IS was retreating from the areas under its rule, including Anbar, the group sabotaged infrastructure and contaminated the agricultural land under its control in order to delay the military advance against the group, as well a statement of revenge on its way out. The group looted and destroyed 90% of the water infrastructure used for irrigation, and looted, burned and destroyed agricultural machinery in its retreat (Regional Food Security Analysis Network, 2016; Food and Agriculture Organization 2017). IEDs and UXOs were planted in agricultural lands as the group was retreating. In 2017 alone, mine clearance operations destroyed 2,212 IEDs in Anbar; however, the extent of contamination remains classified as 'heavy' by Iraq Mine Action (Iraq Mine Action, 2018).

Moreover, when farmers fled the IS advance, they left behind their livestock, which was looted or slaughtered by IS, and no longer there when they returned (Regional Food Security Analysis Network, 2016). All these factors have hampered the restart of agricultural activity in rural communities in Anbar.

The respondents often commented nostalgically on how the community was able to cover for their needs in the period before IS, as the below quotes exemplify:

> *Everything was available before IS entered Anbar, such as doctors, houses, electrical devices and others. (Albo Shejal, inclusive resilience, returnee)*

> *At that time everything was available, food, medication, transportation between other communities and within the same community. (…) That was before 2014, everything was available in Karma, food, health and medical services, construction materials. And, if anything was not available, we could go and get it in Falluja or Baghdad. (Karma Centre, inclusive resilience, returnee)*

> *Before the crisis, I could get all what I needed from the community. Everything was available such as building materials, food, etc. (Ebbah, exclusive resilience, FGD male)*

Respondents, however, did not blame the community for its inability to meet their needs and tended to accuse the central government of neglecting the area. This blame towards the central government was already present in the period leading up to the IS occupation. In fact, resentment towards the Shia-dominated government for what were seen as discriminatory practices and political marginalisation policies, which had simmered in the Sunni-majority areas (including Anbar) for over a decade, exploded in April 2013 leading to widespread protests. The violent crackdown on the protesters triggered the reaction of the Sunni tribal forces who saw in IS an ally to overthrow the Al-Maliki government. This facilitated IS's initial advance into the Anbar governorate (BBC News, 2013; Al Arabiya News, 2014; Al-Qarawee, 2014; Schweitzer, 2016).

This blame towards the central government's inactivity was shared across communities who, themselves, lacked the means to rebuild the area. In Karma, a youth stated:

> *I am not satisfied with the situation here as the unemployment has increased and there is a lack of government support for the area; it is very little and does not fit with the population needs and this consequently generates dissatisfaction.*

A returnee in Ebbah mentioned:

> *Before 2014, everything was available in the community, especially all the foodstuffs. We used to harvest and sell to the market. The economic situation was excellent. But now our agricultural land was burn and we don't have the money to start from scratch. The government should provide us with funds to restart cultivating our land, but this is very difficult because we are talking about a government that is swamped by corruption.*

A youth in Albo Shejal commented:

> *The community cannot provide the necessary funds for the purpose of repairing the destroyed infrastructure because this requires considerable effort and money that is exclusively in the hands of the central government*.

In Hessey, an NGO representative expressed a similar view:

> *The community cannot fulfil the community members' demands but those are the responsibility of the local and central government. The community is exhausted from the displacement and there is nothing that it can provide due to the lack of government support.*

8.2.3 Summary of findings

The analysis of findings showed that there was no variation in the communities for SOC-needs fulfilment. All communities presented similar levels of presence of SOC-needs fulfilment for the community's ability to problem solve, as well as for the readiness of community members to assist each other. They also showed an absence of SOC-needs fulfilment with regards to the

community's ability to meet the needs of its community members, linked to the dire conditions in the aftermath of conflict. This was regardless of the resilience response adopted by the community.

8.3 Unpacking the role of SOC-needs fulfilment in community resilience

The 'competition over resources dynamics' that other studies showed to take place in Iraq among host communities and IDPs did not appear to play a role in the event of IDPs returning to their communities of origin, as derived from the findings described above. Community members were ready to provide help to each other, could easily find support in other community members when needed, and came together when there was a problem affecting them that required solving. These were true for both types of communities regardless of the resilience response developed. For both community types, the community was not able to cover for the members' basic needs. Additionally, the lack of information provided by the respondents regarding non-basic needs does not allow for the analysis of whether non-material needs fulfilment impacted the type of resilience response.

Table 5: SOC-needs fulfilment factors by community.

COMMUNITY	**NEEDS FULFILLMENT**		**OUTCOME**
	Community's ability to fulfil needs (problem solving at the community level and readiness to offer help by community members)	**Community's inability to fulfil needs (community's ability to meet basic needs)**	
Albo Shejal	+	+	Inclusive resilience
Hessey	+	+	Inclusive resilience
Karma Centre	+	+	Inclusive resilience
Ebbah	+	+	Exclusive resilience
Fhelat	+	+	Exclusive resilience
Shaqlawiyah Centre	+	+	Exclusive resilience

++	Expressed frequently and strongly by respondents
+	Expressed frequently but mildly by respondents
(+)	Expressed infrequently and mildly by respondents
·	Not expressed by respondents

Despite low levels of service provision and high levels of infrastructural and housing damage, resulting in insufficient basic and recovery needs for the communities, community members did not blame their communities. Rather, they tended to blame the conflict in a broad manner, or the neglect of the central government. Respondents generally considered that this was a problem beyond the scope and responsibility of what the community could or was supposed to offer them. Respondents also did not blame other community members, including the IS-perceived affiliates. Related to this, competition over resources between community groups was also not identified in any of the communities, inclusive or exclusive, indicating that the relevant hypothesis did not hold.

The lack of variation in the findings does not allow for the role of needs fulfilment in the development of inclusive or exclusive resilience to be determined. An alternative analysis, framing the community as a responsibility instead of as a resource, as proposed by Nowell and Boyd (2014), would lead to a similar outcome. This is because all communities positively assessed the presence of needs fulfilment for the indicators—readiness to help other community members and readiness to obtain help—which could be associated with civic responsibility.

Although the relationship between SOC-needs fulfilment (as a standalone element) and community resilience cannot be determined at this stage, it remains to be analysed in combination with the other three elements of SOC, and their varying degrees. For example, the factor of personal investment within SOC- shared emotional connection explored in Chapter 9 might bring further clarity to this issue, as it is linked to the community members' willingness to help and contribute to the community's capacity to provide to its members.

Additionally, the above findings on the presence of SOC-needs fulfilment confirm McMillan and Chavis's (1986) association between shared values and needs. According to these authors, the needs of the community are defined according to the values the community holds; therefore,

there is a link between the extent individual values are shared among community members and the capacity of the community to prioritise and meet these needs.

Since the source of these needs comes from the community values, there is an association between the extent to which individual values are shared among community members and the ability of the community to prioritise the needs it covers (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). As shown in Chapter 8, all communities presented a consistent presence of SOC-membership sense of belonging and identification, and SOC-membership common symbol system, the two factors that are more closely linked to shared values. All the communities also showed presence of SOC-needs fulfilment.

CHAPTER 9: SHARED EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

The previous three chapters provided the study findings for membership (Chapter 6), influence (Chapter 7) and needs fulfilment (Chapter 8). This chapter analyses the fourth element of SOC: shared emotional connection, in proximate communities in Iraq which developed resilience to the potential disruption of social peace linked to the return of IS-perceived affiliates. Shared emotional connection is understood as the community´s shared past and bonding events which bring the community together by making members identify with each other (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Shared emotional connection consists of the following factors: spiritual bond, experiences of honour and humiliation, shared bonding events, closure of events, quantity and quality of contact[17] and personal investment.

For the role of shared emotional connection in the development of resilience pathways, this study tested the following hypotheses:

- H4 (A): Communities where SOC-shared emotional connection has been disrupted are more likely to develop inclusive resilience.
- H4 (B): Communities where SOC-shared emotional connection has persisted are more likely to develop exclusive resilience.

These hypotheses are based on the assumption that disruption in shared emotional connection is linked to conflict and displacement that occurred in the communities during the IS occupation and subsequent war to retake the territory, and that this might have reduced community cohesiveness and weakened its membership. As per hypothesis H1(B), communities with loosely defined SOC-membership are more likely to develop inclusive resilience. In communities where shared emotional connection persisted (where community members maintained good quality

[17] Quantity and quality of contact are two separate factors of SOC-shared emotional connection. They are grouped in this analysis as most of the respondents referred to quality and quantity of contact in the same quotes in an interlinked manner.

contact among community members, shared events related to the crisis served as bond opportunities among community members (allowing for closure), and where community members kept investing in the community), community cohesiveness was reinforced and SOC-membership strengthened. This led to the development of exclusive resilience (consistent with H1 (A)) and perceived IS affiliates were rejected from the group. With this underpinning mechanism, SOC-shared emotional connection acts as to reinforce SOC-membership.

At this point, however, the findings outlined in Chapter 7 have already shown that the initial hypotheses for SOC membership (stating that this element is more likely to be present in communities who develop exclusive resilience to the return of IS affiliates, and less likely to be found in communities who develop inclusive resilience) does not hold true. In fact, the findings indicated the opposite, with solid boundaries more commonly present in inclusive resilient communities, and absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety and an unshared symbol system mostly found in exclusive resilient communities. Thus, if shared emotional connection indeed acts as to reinforce membership, a continuation of shared emotional connection would be expected, most likely leading to inclusive resilience (and its disruption leading to exclusive resilience).

The analysis shows how the conflict experienced by the community during the 2014-17 period, as well as the shared hardship associated with displacement have served to bind community members together. These members were already unified by the spiritual bond shared through their tribal affiliation. The analysis also examines the role of negative instances of honour in defining the deviant group (SOC-membership boundaries) in inclusive resilient communities, when joining IS was perceived by the community as an act implying the loss of one's acquired honour. The findings show that negative instances of quality and quantity of contact, associated with harassment and threats of revenge, were found in communities which developed either type of resilience, but not in all communities. Such instances might need to be considered in relation to other factors to understand the role they play in developing exclusive or inclusive resilience.

The findings also indicate a major need in exclusive resilient communities for closure of events through reconciliation, and this closure was conditional to allowing the return of IS affiliates.

9.1 Spiritual bond

The spiritual bond factor of SOC can be described as the soul of the community, which bonds all its members together through a spiritual connection (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

In Anbar, tribal affiliation plays this bonding role among the members of the community. The tribe is a unifying identity factor stronger than religion or ethnicity, in a region predominantly Arab Sunni. As explained by a female FGD participant in Albo Shejal:

> *We are all relatives of one tribe, we form the basic building block of the village ruled by one tribal sheikh, we respect and cooperate with each other (…) we are members of one tribe, we share social ties, familiarity and brotherhood.*

A returnee to Ebbah stated: *'This is my area and it is normal to return to it, here is my home, my work and my tribe.'*

Tribalism, understood as the community's spiritual bond, was present in all six communities included in the study. Nonetheless, differences existed among communities as well as among respondents; these are outlined in this section. Spiritual connection was also linked to the factors of emotional safety and sense of belonging and identification within SOC-membership, as well as with the factors of quality of contact within SOC-shared emotional connection. The following findings demonstrate this.

With regards to prevalence within the communities, the spiritual bond through the tribe was particularly salient in Albo Shejal. A male respondent in the community explained: *'We are relatives of the same tribe; we form the basic building block of the village ruled by one tribe sheikh and the mayor*.' This was conferred by the mukhtar: *'We have tribal ties, we are familiar which*

each other and socialise together, of course, because we are mostly from one tribe.' The community has kept close knitted through the use of land, as explained by the tribal leader in Albo Shejal: *'Everyone who lives in this community is from one tribe, we don't even sell our lands to strangers from another tribe.'*

This spiritual bond influenced the return process. One of the interviewed returnees to Albo Shejal explained: *'Everyone was welcomed regardless of whether he was a neighbour or a mayor because the inhabitants of this village are all relatives of the Mohammadi tribe.'* Returnees in Albo Shejal felt community members were willing to help due to the existing bond among them. Another returnee was asked if there were people in the community other than closest family and friends that care about him, he responded: *'Yes, there are such people in the village of Albo Shejal; everyone here is my relative, whether first-degree or relatives from within the same tribe. Everyone here is ready to help since we are all from one tribe.'*

Three other communities followed Albo Shejal in their prevalence of spiritual bond through the tribe: Hessey, Ebbah and Fhelat. In Hessey, a man in the FGD mentioned: *'In general, all members of this village are relatives, whether from the same family or the same tribe, which creates trust among its members.'* As in Albo Shejal, the impact of spiritual bond to returns was also present in Hessey. When a returnee in Hessey was asked why returnees with perceived affiliation were helped by community members to return, his answer referred to this bond: '*What were the reasons these community members were helped? Because we belong to one tribe.'* To note, both Albo Shejal and Hessey are inclusive resilient communities.

In Fhelat and Ebbah, exclusive resilient communities, the spiritual bond was present at similar levels as in Hessey. A male respondent in Fhelat explained:

> *If someone wants to change his place of residence, he will not find the welcome and support they have here, as here he is between his family and his tribe. The period of displacement is the best proof of that. (…) In Fhelat, people are affected by what happens to others. We are all relatives*

here, most of our family and friends live here, we are members of one tribe.

In Ebbah, the youth reported:

> *A4: The community consists of members of different tribes, it is the nucleus of the local community (…) A2: Acceptance is positive among neighbours or the community because it is a small area, everyone knows each other and almost of the same tribe, but this is of course according to degrees of kinship among them.*

Last, Karma Centre (inclusive resilience) and Shaqlawiyah Centre (exclusive resilience) were the communities with fewer references to the tribe as contributing to the spiritual bond among its members. In Karma Centre, a tribal leader explained:

> *The community is in general very conservative, and it is based on tribal customs and traditions, and the existing tribes and families have been living in the region for a long time and inherited their homes from their fathers except [for a] few of them, and they are also relatives. (…) The tribes that represent the community currently are the same as they were 10 years ago and the same as they were 20 years ago.*

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, an IDP commented: '*The tribe is considered the most important part that forms the community.'* Shaqlawiyah Centre had the only negative reference associated with the spiritual bond found across the analysis of all interviews. This was from one of the female FGD participants: *'A3: the community has changed despite the fact that we are from one tribe (Muhammedi); the trust has become less than before.'* This quote denotes how a weaker spiritual bond, as compared with the other communities, might have allowed for a reduction in trust levels related to the conflict. There was a concentration in the number of references to the tribe as a spiritual bond among female adults, followed by their male counterparts. For example, in Albo Shejal, a female respondent explained:

> *A3: The community consists of one group. Most of us are from one tribe, we are one component. That's why all the people of the region were displaced and returned together (…) all our social*

values are the same since they are from one tribe and one area with the same customs and values. We are from one tribe, interconnected with the same tradition.

In Hessey, women explained:

A3: We are from Albo-Hawa tribe which is a part of Albo-Essa tribe (…), we all belong to the same tribe, we are all relatives and cousins. A5: Here, our family and relatives live, and we are neighbours since our childhood, we are from one tribe only.

In Fhelat, female respondents commented:

A4: Most of the inhabitants of this area are from Albo Issa tribe. A6: The community is diverse: there educated people with diploma, government employees and farmers, but we all have similar customs and traditions, there are no different values. All the people who lived here are committed to customs and traditions; we are from one tribe.

However, this SOC-shared emotional connection factor was barely present among the youth respondents, with only youth respondents in Ebbah directly referring to it: '*The feeling of safety exists because the community that we live in is peaceful, avoiding troubles and almost consisting of one tribe, and so I feel comfortable.'*

With regards to interlinkages with other factors, the spiritual bond was commonly referred to as being connected with four factors: quality of contact within SOC-shared emotional connection and emotional safety, sense of belonging and identification, and common symbol system within SOC-membership.

For spiritual bond and quality of contact, the male interviewees in Albo Shejal explained:

A4: We have beautiful relationships with the members of our tribe. A5: Families are interconnected and we still maintain common social relations. A2: Everyone is cooperative; we are trying to visit each other.

In Fhelat, one of the IDPs commented:

> *[before displacement] certainly our lives were beautiful; there was coexistence and each neighbour was sharing the sadness and joy with his neighbour in addition to helping the needy, and we did not face any problems. On the contrary, we were supporting each other because we are the people of the region since centuries, we are relatives of the same tribe or lineage.*

In Hessey, the spiritual bond related to quality of contact as well as to sense of belonging and identification (which was measured through indicators of acceptance). This was referred to by a female FGD respondent: *'We feel accepted because we belong to one tribe. (…) We love our neighbours and they love us; we have lived together for a long time*.' In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a female respondent commented: *'Kinship on the tribe level made us more accepted by each other.'* In Karma Centre, a female FGD participant explained: *'I accept and cooperate with my neighbours. We as a tribe assist and like each other, there is great compassion among us.'*

The spiritual bond was also linked to emotional safety, as explained by a male FGD respondent in Ebbah: *'I feel safe and comfortable because we know the people of the region and we are from the same tribe.'* Another commented: *'There are people apart from friends and family who care about me in Ebbah community, especially because of the large number of members in Al-Jamilat tribe.'*

Tribalism also fed into the shared common symbol system factor of SOC-membership. As explained by a youth in Karma: *'A1: Everyone who lives in Karma has the same values and principles, and all of them belong to tribes and clans that hold the same qualities and values.'* This was conferred by a youth in Ebbah: *'All here in Ebbah area, whether neighbours or relatives, are carrying the same values and principles because we are from one religion, one doctrine and one tribe, and I feel positive towards that. No, there are no people among us with different values.'*

9.1.1 Summary of findings

The spiritual bond around tribalism was present in all communities. What is remarkable is the role spiritual bond played in reinforcing the quality of contact factor (within SOC-shared emotional connection) and the SOC-membership emotional safety, sense of belonging and identification, and common symbol system factors. The spiritual bond acted to reinforce these other factors which presented variations across communities where one or other type of resilience response was more likely to develop.

9.2 Experiences of honour and humiliation

As explained in Chapter 4, instances of honour and humiliation experienced within the community impact community attractiveness, and therefore the overall SOC (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Anbar has an honour-based culture where honour and shame are pivotal cultural values collectively attributed to community members at the kin or tribal level. As explained by a male respondent in Fhelat:

> *The reputation of the family or tribe is an extension for the reputation of our parents and grandparents, as they have built a history which we are proud of among the other tribes and we will not allow anyone to harm it.*

There were three components by which honour, and its counter-values shame and humiliation, were portrayed in the interviews by the respondents. First, honour and humiliation were referred to as being linked to two bonding events: the experience of displacement and IS occupation of communities. Second, references were made to the 'ascribed honour', the type of honour one is born into by lineage. These mainly related to the fear that losing that honour would negatively impact the family and the tribe and lead to negatives consequences such as being expelled from the community or killed by the tribe. Third, honour and humiliation were referred to by the respondents as those who joined IS as bringing shame to the community—this relates to 'acquired honour', described in the literature as a dynamic type of honour which can be challenged and lost (Malina, 1981).

The first component linked greatly to the shared bonding events factor of SOC-shared emotional connection and is further explored in the next section of this chapter. Nonetheless, it is important to outline here the two bonding events referred to in the interviews that brought with them references to humiliation. The first was the experience of displacement, related to the living conditions in the camps and the treatment received by authorities and security forces. As narrated by a male respondent in Albo Shejal*: 'We cannot forget the sufferings that occurred with us during the displacement, everyone suffered humiliation because of the crisis that took place during the period of displacement.'* A female in Fhelat stated: '*In displacement, we felt humiliated, as if we are not Iraqis.'*

The second component was the IS occupation of the communities, and this linked to the treatment community members received by the group. As explained by a returnee to Shaqlawiyah Centre: '*Frankly, the occupation of the region by IS is the biggest humiliation the community has ever experienced and we have never been in a crisis like this*.' A youth in Albo Shejal contributed:

> *It happened at the time of IS occupation of the village, when IS elements were targeting families who did not displace and also who had no loyalty to IS; they were harassed and humiliated by IS.*

In contrast with the SOC narrative by which experiencing humiliation might weaken SOC, in those occasions, the shared experiences of humiliation at the community level seems to have reinforced SOC through strengthening the shared bonding events experienced by the community. This is therefore consistent with the argument by McMillan and Chavis (1986) which states that negative bonding events have a strong impact in bonding the community together and therefore strengthening SOC.

The second component related to 'ascribed honour'. Overall, inclusive resilient and exclusive resilient communities referred to the importance of protecting the kin's honour at similar levels.

Most often, keeping the individuals' honour was seen as a duty to protect the name of the family and the tribe. A returnee to Albo Shejal explained:

> *We learned from the tribe that the family name is associated with the honour of the individual belonging to this tribe and the honour is a big issue here in Anbar, so I am ready to sacrifice myself for the sake of the family name.*

One of the interviewed IDPs from Fhelat conferred:

> *The family name is the first thing we are proud of. We are the people of Anbar. This is the name we will be asked about before being asked about our names, so I try in all ways and circumstances that surround me and my family to preserve my family name and reputation.*

In Hessey, a male respondent explained: *'Everyone is ready to do anything to protect his name and his honour because a man without honour and family is not worth to live.'* This highlights the importance that honour has within the Anbari communities. In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a returnee explained:

> *Honour is very important, as the person is known among people through the name of his family. If it [honour] has any impurity, he will find it difficult to coexist with the community. About defending my honour, this is certainly taken for granted even if I have to sacrifice my life for it.*

Often, the narrative used by the respondents was that of fear for what losing one's honour would imply. Youth in Albo Shejal, for example, commented: '*Everyone is afraid of bringing shame to his family and community and the solution is to avoid and stay away from those things that bring shame.*' In Hessey, a male commented: *'I am afraid of any action that would hurt my name, I am afraid to bring shame.*' In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a male respondent explained: '*I'm afraid to be in a situation where people says that I brought shame to my house.*'

Men risk being expelled from the community or killed whereas women speak about the possibility of being killed. As explained by women in Hessey:

A3: The individual who insults the reputation of the tribe will be expelled. A3: We can and do not do anything that may bring shame to the community, this is a must. A6: Here we are all respectful women, and we are committed to the customs. Women are killed if they do anything that brings shame to the community.

In Karma, male respondents explained:

A3: I'm afraid of bringing shame to me and to my family. A5: Shame is a big word in tribal communities, and anyone who lives in these communities is afraid of any action that would disgrace the family's name. A6: Agree, as brother A5 said, when someone is accused of being a disgrace or brought shame to the family, the tribe will disown him or what we call in our dialect, 'cut his root'.

Also in Karma, the youth respondents conferred:

A7: God forbids, the punishment for bringing shame is death in the tribal customs of the Karma community (…). A5: Yes, I am very afraid to do anything shameful to me or my family or community; if this happens, the punishment will be done by the tribe and then the community. A6: Fear exists and it is sure that a person will not bring shame only to him and his family but also to his homeland.

They later added:

A2: Shame is a big word and I'm keen not to get into trouble that would bring shame to my family and my tribe, and the one who does so will be punished, expelled and excluded from the community. A4: Me too, I am very afraid to be involved in a problem that will bring the shame to my family or my tribe, as this has great consequences because we are a tribal community and the community's reaction for such acts is cruel.

Fear of the consequences of harming one's honour was therefore used to prevent such affronts. This is the same strategy that was used by communities to impose conformity, particularly among women scared of tarnishing their reputations for exhibiting individual differences (see Chapter 8, Section 8.1 for further information).

Although exclusive and inclusive communities used the same narrative to refer to honour and presented similar levels of references to honour both in the number of quotes and their intensity, what differed among communities was the respondent type most commonly referring to this factor. In all communities, women referred to honour and often portrayed themselves as the gatekeepers of the family's reputation as well as being tasked to teach the next generation how to protect this honour. For example, women in Albo Shejal commented: '*We are distinguished by honour and strength. A7: Thanks to God, we preserved our family name and our honour despite our stay in the camps*.' In Hessey, the women explained:

> *A5: Women are keener than men to preserve their honour and avoid any action that does not fit with our habits. A3: The most important thing for us is our reputation and the reputation of the region. (…) A5: We do not allow anyone to harm the reputation of the tribe, and the family and the neighbours intervene to prevent anyone from insulting the tribe. A4: We raise our sons and daughters to respect the reputation of the family and the tribe.*

A female returnee commented:

> *We are in a tribal community and everything we do, whether negative or positive, affects the reputation, even if the woman is fifty years old she is held accountable by everyone for her actions.*

In Fhelat, a woman explained: '*Women must maintain themselves and their honour. We do not do anything that may bring shame to the community, this is a settled issue*.' A woman in Shaqlawiyah Centre stated: '*The name of the family and its honour is more important than our lives.'*

The third component by which honour was portrayed in the interviews by the respondents related to 'acquired honour'. This type of honour can be lost if the community stipulates that certain acts committed result in such an outcome. In the context of this study, joining IS was clearly defined as an act that brought shame to the family and the community in inclusive resilient

communities, as well as in Ebbah (exclusive resilience). To reiterate, the Ebbah community was extremely polarised regarding the return of perceived IS affiliates.

In Albo Shejal, males claimed: '*Each one who belonged to IS has brought shame to himself to his family. A5: Each one who belonged to IS has destroyed his reputation and his family.'* A youth explained: *'[IS] families were accused of bringing shame to their community and to themselves*.' In Hessey, a male explained: '*Belonging to IS, harming people in general, disrespect the old people and not committing to the traditions and customs would bring shame to the individual who violates the teachings [of Islam].'* Referring to a first-hand experience, a youth interviewed in Hessey explained: *'I feel and do not feel comfortable at the same time [in the community] because of my brother who belonged to IS and who did shameful things that made me hate myself and ashamed in front of people*.' This reflects how honour operates at the kin level.

In Karma Centre, the third inclusive resilient community, the female interviewees stated: *'Several community members brought shame to their families by affiliating with IS and killing innocents. A4: Many women as well joined [IS] and brought shame to us.'* The males conferred: '*Those who joined IS have brought shame to themselves and to their families (…) A4: They brought shame to themselves and we do not want them here.'* A youth in Karma Centre explained how staying away from IS was the best way to protect their honour: '*As to how to protect my name and the name of my family and my community is by not belonging to any extremist organisation that brings shame to us.'*

In Ebbah, the exclusive resilient community where joining IS was also considered as shameful by community members, a female respondent explained: *'[joining IS] brings stigma to those who join, and unfortunately because of the traditions and customs it will affect their families and the tribe as well'*. During the youth FGD, the respondents deeply discussed this issue as reflected in the following quotes:

A1: Not belonging to extremist groups is the best way to protect my family name and the community name. A7: Agree, joining terrorist groups is a shame in itself, and if it happened, the punishment will be fateful either the murder or imprisonment, and what happened during the events [when IS took over the community] is that some young men who were seduced by Daesh and joined the group and by doing this, they became a shame to their families and their community. A1: Yes, I have one of my relatives who belonged to Daesh and his fate was that he got killed during the liberation battle of Ebbah, he was a shame to his family and even his tribe disowned him. A6: Me too, I had neighbours close to my house whose one of their sons belonged to Daesh and during the liberation of the city he was arrested by the security forces and sentenced to 40 years' imprisonment because of the shame he brought to his family and his community.

Last, an IDP rejected from Ebbah narrated his own experience: *'I was accused by my neighbours of being an IS associate and put me in trouble. Frankly speaking, whoever is linked with IS is considered as bringing shame to the community.'*

As only 'acquired honour' was reported at different levels across community types, and this directly relates to the events covered in this study, the cross-community analysis limits this factor to 'acquired honour' by which joining IS was perceived by community members as an act that brought shame to the family and community. Table 6 captures only this specific perception of 'acquired honour'.

Of note, female respondents were less likely to report this type of honour, which was mostly referred to by men and youth. In contrast, 'ascribed' honour was most commonly referred to by women. Therefore, there was a strong gender differentiation whereby women were seen as the passive protectors of the family's honour, and the men as the active avengers of acts which were an afront to the kin's honour. This is consistent with the work of Malina (1981), Joseph (1994) and Abugideiri (2004).

9.2.1 Summary of findings

In summary, communities presented similar views for 'ascribed' honour. However, differences appeared with regards to the loss of 'acquired honour' in the last crisis. It appeared that the categorisation of joining IS as a shameful act, within 'acquired honour', helped to define the deviant group in inclusive resilient communities, and Ebbah. Defining the deviant, as explained in Chapter 6, was key in helping to delineate the boundaries of the community as it defined who was and was no longer part of the community. Defining the deviant group facilitated the return of those IS affiliates who did not fall under this category and therefore influenced the development of inclusive resilience. This study limited the analysis of experiences of honour to 'acquired honour' by which having joined IS was perceived as an honour afront.

9.3 Shared bonding events

McMillan and Chavis (1986) suggested that experiencing negative bonding events together reinforces SOC. Disaster studies, however, have shown how despite an initial phase where support is received by the community after the community suffers from a man- or nature-made disaster, gradually some of the most affected populations feel alienated from the community. This is related to diminishing support over time and increased competition over limited resources within the community (Kaniasty and Norris, 2004; Abramowitz, 2005; Cope *et al*. 2020).

In the analysis of the interviews, and as referred to in the previous section on honour and humiliation, two negative bonding events were particularly mentioned by community members across communities: the experience of displacement and hardships it involved, and the takeover of their communities by IS. In all communities except Fhelat, community members expressed how, despite these events being considered as negative and impactful to the well-being of the community, they brought members together.

In Albo Shejal, for example, a youth explained:

> *The positive was the assistance among the community during the process of displacement (…), the solidarity and mutual assistance between the villagers during the displacement process, and also the return.*

In Hessey, a youth mentioned: *'The rural tribal community prevalent in Hessey urges people to gather in joys and sorrows*.' One of the returnees narrated how he displaced with other community members: *'[I] fled with them and lived the most difficult circumstances with them so I consider them my second family'.*

In Karma Centre, a woman commented: *'We supported each other during the past events [IS occupation] and this increased our cohesiveness*.' Another later added: '*The community has gone through many challenges during, prior to IS, or even during or after displacement. Such crisis didn't affect the traditions but strengthened our following of the traditions.'* An interviewed male community member in Karma Centre also commented: '*My belonging to the community increased after the events and the reason is that living in the camps was very hard and I'm grateful that I have returned.'* The youth in Karma Centre explained the positivity within the negative events during their FGD:

> *A7: The day of displacement, the events that occurred during Daesh attack, that was a tragic situation. A1: But on the positive side, the community was unified as one hand, to help settle during the displacement, everyone was helping the other.*

In Ebbah, a male respondent expressed: 'My loyalty to the community is excellent, especially after the events because when any human passes through conditions of displacement, he becomes more loyal.' Speaking about IS's entrance to the community, a youth in Ebbah explained:

> *A4: During the crisis, the events were quick and surprising for all. Things were confused, but the assistance was there, everyone participated in it because it was not the problem of a certain group, it was the problem of everyone, and they helped each other, and the result was positive.*

Later they added:

> *A2: The most important event to the community is the day it was occupied by Daesh and the people were confused about what they will do, but the result was that they all met to help each other in order to overcome this great crisis. A6: During the period of displacement and during the escape from Daesh I saw a lot of families helping each other in order to escape.*

A returnee conferred:

> *I am thinking now of what happened, the real suffering that occurred because of Daesh and the displacement that have made us more connected and made us feel the value of the other. Our suffering in the camps, poverty and fear have made us stand together. (…) The local community has become more interdependent and loving among themselves.*

Last, in Shaqlawiyah Centre, one of the returnees explained:

> *When IS attacked the region, the crisis brought together all the community members in order to solve it. The result was that everyone helped each other, all the members of the community even women and girls participated in order to minimise damage as much as possible.*

Another returnee gave a more specific example on how community members supported each other:

> *Families shared their cars for the purpose of transporting them out of the region because there was a small number of cars in that period and when the families arrived to the areas of displacement, they helped each other. This is what my friends who were displaced at the beginning of the events told me, the result was very positive and fruitful.*

An interviewed IDP from Shaqlawiyah Centre also explained:

> *People helped each other in order to escape from the area, it was very confusing. People who participated in this were the people of the area themselves, and certainly the result was positive because many families were able to escape from IS because of that help.*

No references to specific bonding events that brought the community together were found in Fhelat, from the recent crisis or from the period before. Indirectly, though, one of the IDPs from Fhelat commented: '*We have been living through the better and the worse and share the difficult times and joys because we are the people of the region and most likely relatives of the same tribe or lineage.'* This relates to the connection between spiritual bond and shared bonding events. The lack of references, however, does not allow for further analysis within Fhelat's community.

9.3.1 Summary of findings

Overall, in five of the six communities, the negative events experienced by the community seem to have created greater SOC-shared emotional connection and strengthened the bonds among community members. This supports the argument by McMillan and Chavis (1986). However, it might be too early in post-conflict period to determine whether this bond endures long term, or if competition over resources ensues. The findings on quality of contact presented in Section 10.5 help to further elucidate this point.

9.4 Closure of events

The closure of events after a crisis allows the community to collective interpret the event suffered. Lack of closure impacts community cohesiveness and impedes creating a narrative of the event by which it can be collectively dealt with (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Bilali and Vollhardt, 2019). These narratives are important as they allow recognition of the victims' suffering and help to protect the communities from future harm through lessons learned (Bilali and Vollhardt, 2019). Distress is most common in those communities who create narratives of violence instead of resistance (Abramowitz, 2005).

Since 2003, Iraq has experienced cyclical violence following the US military intervention. There were peaks of violence in 2006 after the Samarra bombings, which caused widespread civil unrest, as well as from 2014 onwards with the arrival of IS. According to the quotes of the respondents on these past events, closure has yet to take place. Respondents spoke about periods of 'rest' in

between these periods, and how the community suffered from the emanating violence. But it is all spoken as a continuum which denotes a lack of closure. As explained by a community leader in Shaqlawiyah Centre:

> *There have been many changes in the community of Anbar in general, since the American occupation and up to this day. It began with the emergence of fighters who were against America, and this made American forces more brutal towards the citizens. And then Al-Qaeda appeared almost in 2006, and it was also showing hostility to the American forces, but they were actually against the citizens in Anbar. Then, the community had a rest from these groups, but the government had another saying as the army was in control of Shaqlawiyah and it hurt and humiliated the citizens until the people decided to demonstrate and claim their rights. But no one knows what happened in that period except those responsible for it and then it is known what happened [meaning IS ruling the community].*

A representative of the local authorities in Karma Centre also explained:

> *Anbar was exposed to various types of periods and most of them were very difficult to the community. The period of occupation was followed by another difficult period, which is the period of Al-Qaeda, where we did not know who they are or what their agenda is. After a period of prosperity, the demonstrations demanding reform at first began, but were the cause of the arrival of the armed groups which were more deadly and evil than their predecessors: IS. There are no words to describe the ugliness of the actions of this organisation and the rest are known. After that, people began to recover gradually.*

Despite this narrative of continuum, there were calls for closure. As stated by a male interviewee in Karma Centre:

> *This community has been through a lot of hard times in the past, like the American invasion, which was very hard on the Iraqi people in general and on the residents of Anbar especially., But the hardest period was in 2014 and what follows it. This period revealed how people in this area thinks, and if they had more understanding and more intellect, they wouldn't have been dragged to this situation. Still, we can't blame the residents alone, but the government is to be blamed hugely,*

because it didn't give the simplest rights to the nationals. Finally, I would like to say that what happened was a lesson to me and to the people and I hope we learned this lesson and we start fresh and clean.

Community members spoke about time and its power to heal wounds within the community as a way of closure. In addition to time, there were calls for reconciliation efforts to occur, to seek closure from the 2014-2017 period. This call for reconciliation, shared across communities, might relate to the communities' requests for more specific actions than in the past to deal with the violent events and restore social cohesion within the communities to enable a better future.

In Albo Shejal, a female interviewee expressed: *'These problems must be solved patiently and perhaps the time will be the one which will let the souls be relieved*.' This was conferred by the mukhtar: '*The events have left a lot of pain that will not be healed easily, only over time*.' On reconciliation, a youth stated:

The feelings of non-acceptance [to IS affiliates] must end and there should be reconciliation. (…) This is the most important thing in my opinion, the reconciliation between the families who have disowned their sons belonging to IS and the families of the victim, this reconciliation must take place.

A tribal leader commented:

After the suffering we have been through because of crises, we are trying to discuss with the leaders of the community the issues pertaining to facilitating the return of all, living in peace and the adoption of the reconciliation law.

In Hessey, a representative of the civil society mentioned:

To help the families we need to activate a very important thing which is reconciliation and spreading it among all these families so that the peace prevails. I always demand that the

reconciliation should be open to these [IS] families to prevent such things happening again in the future.

However, the community may not yet be ready for reconciliation talks. A youth with perceived affiliation explained how calls for reconciliation had been declined:

Many people did not accept our return to the region and so we asked for a reconciliation session with the presence of the sheikh of the tribe and the notables of the region for the purpose of reconciliation and forgetting the past, but many families refused to do so.

A tribal leader commented:

It is better for them [IS affiliated families] not to return in the present time until situation gets better. The affected families can't accept the suspected individuals. But time can heal everything. Reconciliation efforts are taking place, I am helping with reconciliation and with solving issues related to retaliation.

In Karma, the tribal leader explained:

There are families who were expelled from the region because of the proven charges on their children of belonging to IS participating in combat operations, destroying the city, killing, and torturing its people, and stealing and destroying their properties. Some of those disowned their children and so we allowed them to return, others were accepted by part of the community only and the other part rejected them. To avoid such cases, we have allowed them to live in homes other than their homes [meaning in the outskirts of the community] so that there will be no contact between them and the affected families, at least for a period of time that let the wound be healed and the hearts be calm.

Another tribal leader commented: '*To make the community live safely, reconciliation must take place and then people will return because the disputes will have been resolved peacefully*.' In Shaqlawiyah Centre, one of the rejected IDPs commented: '*In life there should be convergence, reconciliation and acceptance among people.'*

In Ebbah and Fhelat, however, the communities appeared to go a step further, and a reconciliation process that could lead to event closure among rival community members was perceived as conditional to allowing the IS affiliates to return. It was this particular understanding of closure, whereby closure encompasses previous conflicts that occurred across communities, that seemed to be significant in the development of exclusive resilience when it was present in the communities. This is exemplified in the following quotes.

In Ebbah, one of the rejected IDPs commented:

> *I could return but first and at the beginning there must be reconciliation and rapprochement between the adversaries. They [community members] are not obstructing the return. They say there must be a comprehensive reconciliation process, after which the decision to return is made.*

Regarding the returns being conditional to this reconciliation process that might allow for closure, the representative of the local authorities also mentioned:

> *If there is no comprehensive reconciliation, they cannot return because of fear of retaliation and revenge. (…) The whole community, its leaders and notables are obliged to participate, and the subject should be adopted by international organisations and the central government for the purpose of setting a plan through which to lay the foundations for reconciliation and compensation for the families who have lost their children. And then, the reaction of the community will certainly be positive to get rid of the effects of the past.*

Another local representative conferred:

> *The most important thing is to launch a comprehensive initiative of reconciliation and forgiveness, and this is the most important thing to do to get rid of the effects of the past and without this condition nothing can be achieved.*

Similarly, in Fhelat, reconciliation also appeared conditional on allowing returns. One of the interviewed mukhtars explained:

The most important thing in all of this is that there would be an expanded meeting involving all parties through which the activation of the reconciliation will take place, for the innocent families only who disowned their sons belonging to IS, and who are not guilty in all of this. The most important participants are the families of the parties of the conflict, the community leaders, the mayor and the army leaders. If reconciliation takes place, the initiative will be welcomed by the community.

A second interviewed mukthar mentioned:

I cannot help them [IS affiliated families] return, only the National Reconciliation Law can do so, and then the leaders of the community will agree on their return. At that moment, I can help them.

9.4.1 Summary of findings

The findings indicate that in Fhelat and Ebbah, exclusive resilient communities, closure of events through reconciliation was sine qua non of allowing the return of IS affiliated families. In Karma, Albo Shejal and Hessey (inclusive resilient communities), there were calls for reconciliation, but reconciliation was not conditional on allowing returns. There was not enough data on Shaqlawiyah Centre to assess the community's stand on this issue. The particular understanding of closure as a reconciliation process appeared to be relevant to the development of exclusive resilience, at least until this closure is achieved, keeping in mind that resilience responses are dynamic in nature and evolve over time (Clutter *et al.,* 2008). Therefore, the cross-community analysis considered lack of closure when a reconciliation process was stated as conditional to allowing returns only (Table 6).

9.5 Quality and quantity of contact

According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), the greater the interaction between community members, and the more positive this interaction is, the greater the bond formed. However, in the aftermath of conflict or a man-made disaster, mistrust among community members and competition over limited resources might follow which can weaken the social ties among

community members. After an initial phase where altruistic support is provided, a second longer-lasting phase begins where there is a decline in community participation in social activities, and a retreat to focus on one's own recovery (Hutchins and Norris, 1989; Kaniasty, Norms and Murrell, 1990; Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). In this section, quality and quantity of contact in the six communities in the aftermath of the IS conflict is analysed across communities and respondent types.

9.5.1 Positive quality and quantity of contact

In all communities, good and frequent interactions among the community members was reported. Community members spoke about harmonious relations, frequent visits to friends and neighbours, and of been able to find people in the community to talk to and who would listen to them, beyond close family and friends. These findings were consistent across communities and respondent types, as demonstrated by the following quotes.

In Albo Shejal, a returnee narrated his daily interactions with friends: 'All my friends live here in the village of Albo Shejal and I meet them every day to talk and have fun.' The female interviewees explained:

> *A6: I agree with them that there are social relations between us and the neighbours. A4: We have good relations with our neighbours. A1: We are members of one tribe; we cooperate with each other.*

The males conferred:

> *A4: We have beautiful relationships with the members of our tribe. A5: Families are interconnected and we maintain common social relations. A2: Everyone is cooperative; we are trying to visit each other often*.

Speaking about the specific return experience, an interviewed returnee to Albo Shejal mentioned: *'Our neighbours hosted us until we arranged our house and could return to it, and they kept visiting us and asking if we need anything.'*

In Hessey, the female FGD participants explained: '*We love our neighbours, and they love us; we have lived together for a long time*.' The returnees to the community commented in their interviews: '*I'm used to visit my neighbours every day and if I don't see them, I call them to ask if they need anything'* and '*We visit each other and help each other; the rich help the needy. There is compassion among us (…), I have a lot of neighbours and acquaintances; they love me and I love them.'*

In Karma, a female interviewee commented*: 'I accept and cooperate with my neighbours'*, and a male interviewee explained: '*I often speak with friends, but family are also available to talk and I can find people to talk straight away if I feel like*.' A returnee explained how '*we meet with my friends almost every day at leisure time'.*

In Ebbah, a male respondent explained:

> *AX: Affection is widely spread among the community members. There is mercy and love and strong ties between us, friends, relatives, and people in the community. Myself, I have friends to talk to and tell them what is actually in my heart, to relieve myself.*

Another commented: '*I have some friends who have returned from displacement and we meet on a daily basis. Most of my friends are actually here in Ebbah and we always meet*.' A returnee also expressed: '*Thanks God I have many friends; they love me, and I love them*.'

In Fhelat, a male respondent commented: '*Most of our family and friends live here and we always see them.'* An IDP said: '*My family, relatives, friends, and my husband 's family, we meet continuously, depending on how much free time we have and on family commitments.'*

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, a female respondent commented: '*We, as women, like to mingle. We have friends and acquaintances and we help and visit each othe*r.' A returnee commented: '*I am always in touch with my friends and almost every other day I call them and they also call me*.' One of the IDPs from Shaqlawiyah Centre also explained how she kept in touch with her friends regardless of her being displaced: '*My friends live in Shaqlawiyah, I call them and they call me once a week*.'

Good quality and quantity of contact appeared to be linked to the sense of belonging factor of SOC-membership, captured through acceptance indicators, as the following quote from a returnee to Albo Shejal exemplifies:

> *Yes, I am accepted by my neighbours and their repeated visits evidence that the neighbours accept me. (…) Everyone here is my relatives, whether from the first degree or relatives from within the same tribe. So, I am very comfortable because I consider them my family and my friends, and the individual feels comfortable when he is surrounded by his people and his friends.*

9.5.2 Negative quality and quantity of contact

More interestingly, variations were found for negative instances of quality and quantity of contact for SOC-shared emotional connection.

In the Karma and Albo Shejal communities, there were barely any references to negative instances of interactions between community members or limited contact among members; any such references related to a deterioration in the quality and quantity of relations in the return period after conflict. This was consistent with prior findings within disaster studies which point to a deterioration in social relations in the aftermath of disaster where, after a first wave of altruistic help, community members focus on their own recovery first. This is due to limited resources, emotional fatigue, and a sense of responsibility to prioritise recovery over socialising with other community members (Hutchins and Norris, 1989; Kaniasty, Norms and Murrell, 1990; Kaniasty and Norris, 2004). For example, in Albo Shejal, the mukhtar explained:

The community social relations between family and relatives have become somehow non-existent because after the events, people had no trust in anyone and they became afraid of the unknown.

In Karma, a male interviewee commented: '*Everyone is now busy with his affairs, even friends don't care anymore.'* Still, the number of positive references to quality and quantity of contact far outnumbered the references to negative instances in both communities.

In the polarised community of Ebbah, where references to negative quality and quantity of contact were also little frequent, these related to a deterioration in social relations after conflict, as was the case in Karma and Albo Shejal. The youth in the community explained:

A4: During the events, our neighbours were very cooperative and we helped each other. About other community members in Ebbah, it differs, there are those who are isolated and do not want to meet anyone. Or those who are busy with their families. A1. Agree, we accept our neighbours, the rest of the people in Ebbah, the situation varies from one person to another because some of them are busy with their own troubles, concerns and family and so they decided to stay away from the community.

However, retaliation acts against IS affiliates were also mentioned. These can be seen as instances of bad quality contact among community members involving violence, and as a warning to cut relationships between IS affiliates and other community members. One of the returnees stated: *'The community had a hand in rejecting the suspects, especially with the retaliations*.' This was conferred by one of the male interviewees: '*Certain clans of some tribes did not return to the community because of their association with Daesh; they left because of the way people treated them.'*

This negative quality and quantity of SOC-shared emotional connection towards IS affiliates was exacerbated in two other communities: Fhelat and Hessey. In these communities, where references to negative instances of quality interactions and restricted contact were more commonly mentioned than in the other communities, all references involved the treatment of IS-

perceived affiliates in the community. Limited contact was mentioned, as well as direct harassment.

In Hessey, the religious leader explained in detail the situation in the community with regards to the quality and quantity of contact received by those with perceived affiliation:

> *People who are not hostile to the IS families do not mind their return, but there is no desire to communicate with them. People do not want to mix with them due to psychological reasons, because they were the cause of what they suffered from, the displacement and the abuse. These [families] are allowed to return, but there is caution against mixing with them because they hold extremist thought and it is better to try to change their ideology.*

He later reiterated:

> *The community does not mind their return but without mixing with them because they do not trust them…the community looks at the families who supported IS negatively and they do not communicate with them.*

Another religious leader in Hessey commented:

> *There are some families who have accepted the return of the IS families but without dealing or communicating with them. (…) Families who supported IS and have not committed crimes can return, but the community looks at them negatively and has limited communication with them (…). There is no mixing between the families of IS and the rest of the community, even at the level of women.*

The female interviewees conferred:

> *A3: They don't affect us, but we do not interfere with them. A1: We don't talk to them because we don't trust them. A7: We wouldn't feel comfortable because their sons have caused harm to the area.*

In Fhelat, there was a similar situation, and community members avoided contact with families with perceived affiliation. A female interviewee in Fhelat explained: '*We have nothing to do with them. If they want to return, they can do so, but we don't want to talk to them*.' One of the IDPs who return to Fhelat and got expelled by the community recalled:

> *Neighbours who are not first-degree relatives [of IS affiliates], who did not go through what we have been through, avoided us and avoided mixing with us, perhaps because they were afraid from the other residents in the community or the security officials.*

A female IDP also explained: '*They [community members] do not annoy me or hurt me, but at the same time, they deal among each other but do not deal with us.'*

This ill treatment in Fhelat was often described by the IDPs expelled from the community, and it appeared to be one strategy used by community members to push the IDPs out of the community, as the two following first-hand testimonies narrate:

> *We felt badly treated, even when I say hi to my neighbour, he does not reply. I no longer tolerated how the community treated me, and my family was feeling sad for how people treated us so badly. I did not when I return. I was afraid that my family or me would be harassed, that's why I left before anyone gets hurt.*

> *The people in the community complicated my life because I live without a man in the house, which made me a prey easy to be exploited, in addition to harassing my children by accusing their father [my husband] of belonging to IS. (…) They did not oppose our return explicitly, but we felt that from the way they treated us, they rejected dealing with us to the point that I did not go out of my house except for the very necessary cases. I think they did not insult me or beat or other means of violence because I am a woman and because my husband is not with me and the customs and traditions in the area forbids anyone from insulting a woman no matter the reason. But they made our lives and our return difficult.*

As mentioned in Chapter 7 (Section 7.1.1), community members isolated and stigmatised IS affiliates in an attempt to disassociate themselves from their behaviour, considered as 'deviant'. Other reasons for doing this included protecting their individual images and limiting the likelihood of being accused of siding with the 'deviants' (and, therefore, being casted away) (Dentler and Erikson, 1959; Erikson 1961; Eidelman and Biernat, 2003). Interestingly, despite inclusive resilient communities better delineating the deviant group in the community, the negative treatment IS affiliates received in terms of quality and quantity of contact was not concentrated in inclusive resilient communities—it was present in Hessey (inclusive), Fhelat (exclusive) and, to a lesser extent, Karma (exclusive).

Last, Shaqlawiyah Centre presented no references to negative interactions among community members. This community also presented a weak spiritual bond and no instances of loss of acquired honour by affiliates. The urban character of Shaqlawiyah Centre, where community members know each other less personally than in smaller communities, might explain this dynamic. Revenge acts were personal and tribal in nature and limiting contact with a community member only occurred if this contact existed previously. In Shaqlawiyah Centre, *tabriya* and other tribal mechanisms were also less frequently applied, and adherence to tribal law was weaker (see Chapter 7 Section 7.4.1). These aspects were attributed to the urban character of the community.

9.5.3 Summary of findings

All communities shared the positive aspects of positive and frequent relations with their neighbours and community members, which was also consistent across respondent types. However, differences were found for negative instances of quality and quantity of contact, particularly when it came to the treatment of the 'deviant' group: the families with perceived affiliation. Negative instances of quality and quantity of contact were concentrated in two communities: Fhelat (exclusive resilience) and Hessey (inclusive resilience). They also occurred in Ebbah (exclusive resilience) to a lesser extent. Community members spoke openly about their unwillingness to communicate with IS affiliates and made reference to revenge attacks. The

expelled IDPs referred to instances of marginalisation and social isolation they experienced when they tried to return to the community, which partially pushed them to displace once more to the IDP camps. In Hessey, reconciliation among groups occurred and was accepted among community members, whereas in Ebbah, polarisation among community members on the issue of return remained high. In Fhelat, there was one of the strongest oppositions to returns. Based on these findings, the concentration of negative quality and quantity of SOC-shared emotional connection in these three communities needs to be analysed in relation to other factors and contextualised for each community. The analysis of additional factors might bring more clarity on how this specific factor acts in combination with others in the development of exclusive or inclusive resilience.

9.6 Personal investment

Personal investment, in terms of time and/or resources by community members to the community, increases their status in the community and their contribution to its shared history, strengthening the overall SOC felt by community members (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Chapter 9 has shown how, in all the communities, there was willingness by community members to help each other. This links to the personal investment the community members are also willing to contribute.

Before analysing this factor, it is important to consider that the data for this factor was limited. From the existing data, all the communities presented negative and positive references at similar levels for personal investment. Examples were provided regarding how the community was investing in recovering from the crisis and, at the same time, retreating from helping others.

For example, in Albo Shejal, the youth commented: '*I see some members of this community who do not care about others or even about the community*.' They later described the community by saying: *'We are one community that helps each other and we will do the impossible to defend our community*.' This contradiction was also mentioned by a youth in the same FGD:

> *I would sacrifice the last drop of blood for the community and the community will do the same for us. I would sacrifice it, but I do not see who deserves that any more as the community is no longer as before.*

The male respondents had a more positive view and one commented: '*We are working to revive the life here gradually, to return to normal.'* Similarly, the returnees commented: '*Aid is still provided to those who need it, such as giving a meal or a place to sleep'*, and '*The community cares about me and takes care of me.*' In Hessey, the male respondents were asked: '*If something needs to be done, does the whole community come together to get it done?'* They answered: '*A1: Depending on the type of need, my answer is either yes or no. A5: Yes, everyone is sharing what they can. A4: I agree with Brother A1's answer, it depends.*' But later A1 explained: '*People here like to help but because of recent events people have changed.'* The religious leader conferred:

> *There is cooperation between people to provide the needs, for example, when there is an emergency to go to a hospital or outside the region, a car is provided by other people as there is mercy between them; but helping others has been reduced among people after Daesh.*

The mukhtar also offered a positive example of personal investment: '*In terms of reconstruction, the government only funds 10% while the rest have been collected by community members to buy electricity transformers or other essentials.'*

In Karma, there was a similar feeling, where a female interviewee mentioned: '*People have changed, even siblings are not quite cooperative*' and a male commented: '*A3: in the past, yes, people would gather to do what was needed, but now, no',* to which a youth conferred: '*The spirit of assistance ended between people.'* But another youth also explained: *'The people of Karma are dominated by the nature of helping others, they are good people (…) the families are sharing basic necessities among them to cover everyone's needs.'* A returnee also explained: '*The community here is ready to provide me the help I need.'*

In Ebbah, a returnee explained:

> *When my neighbours ask me for help in a certain thing, I never hesitate. When we returned, we cleaned their houses before they arrived and we encouraged them to return. I work to serve them. I try to help everyone who needs help (…) everyone here is working together to rebuild the business and houses, helping is a duty.*

A youth commented: '*When an emergency happens, everyone cooperates but in a limited way'*, and a female mentioned: '*The community members do not contribute to the community, otherwise the area would not have been destroyed.'*

In Fhelat, a woman said: '*We have nothing to add. We sacrificed with our sons and our money, what shall we sacrifice now?'* A male conferred: *'We have nothing to contribute; our houses, our livestock and our money were all destroyed (…) if the previous situation was repeated, I will leave immediately*.' An IDP explained:

> *Nobody cares about what I am doing, every person is busy with his stuff, and no one cares about the others. Since the crisis, everyone has his own interests, which is not to care about anyone except his family. Really, no one cares.*

At the same time, respondents from Fhelat provided examples of investment to the community. A female respondent explained: '*The people of the region agreed to form night patrols in order to protect the community because it is exposed from the side of the desert, and it is possible for IS elements to infiltrate.*' A man commented:

> *People have become increasingly aware of the importance of cooperating together to protect the region because everyone is on the same ship (…) The men of the region met and agreed to collect donations to establish a hall in the community. Those who had no money contributed with work and finally the hall was built for the benefit of everyone.*

In Shaqlawiyah Centre, an interviewed IDP explained: '*Certainly, the community cooperates together in solving any problem.*' But another IDP thought differently and commented: *'No one cares about what I do or about me.'* A young female respondent also added: '*The lack of assistance at the current time has made women only concerned about providing a living for their children, and they do not have time to help or visit or accept others.'*

9.6.1 Summary of findings

Overall, the trend across the communities indicates that personal investment from community members in time and resources to help others was still present, but to a lesser extent than before the crisis. These findings are similar to those on SOC-needs fulfilment, which highlighted the willingness of community members to help in both community types, and regardless of the presence of IS-perceived affiliates in the community. However, the lack of further data limits the analysis of how personal investment influences the development of resilience pathways in the communities.

9.7 Unpacking SOC- the role of shared emotional connection in community resilience

The hypotheses tested for shared emotional connection were formulated on the basis that shared emotional connection reinforces membership.

The findings have shown that indeed, two of the social interaction factors within shared emotional connection—negatives instances of honour and (lack of) event closure—played a role in this regard. However, another social interaction factor within shared emotional connection, negative quality and quantity of contact, also contributed to developing specific resilience pathways aside from this reinforcer dynamic. This factor was interlinked with the social interaction factors within SOC-influence. Regarding the remaining factors, most of communities presented similar levels of the remaining social interaction factors: spiritual bond, shared bonding events, positive instances of quality and quantity of contact, and personal investment.

For negative instances of honour, this factor was shown to indeed work as a reinforcer of the factor of SOC-membership boundaries. As shown in Chapter 6, a well-defined deviant group was key to the delineation of boundaries leading to the development of inclusive resilience. Perceiving IS affiliates as having 'lost their honour' facilitated the process of defining the deviant group, reinforcing community boundaries in communities which developed inclusive resilience. Having a well-defined deviant group leads to solid boundaries, as seen in Chapter 6. Contrarily, in exclusive resilient communities, joining IS was not perceived as an act implying loss of honour, which has subsequently not contributed to the definition of a deviant group. In turn, this has left these types of communities with more fluid boundaries. The use of negative instances of honour might not be the only strategy applied by inclusive communities to define the deviant group, but it has certainly facilitated this process.

Regarding the lack of closure of events, in two exclusive resilient communities, Ebbah and Fhelat, the need for closure through a reconciliation process was made conditional to discussing the return of IS affiliates. Exclusive resilient communities also presented a greater absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system, all of which are social interaction factors within SOC-membership. The lack of closure experienced by the exclusive resilient communities might have fuelled these other factors. For negative instances of honour, the sequencing is clear; however, for lack of closure of events, the sequencing remains unclear. Here, lack of closure experienced in exclusive resilient communities might fuel the absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system, or the need for closure might come as a result of these.

Beyond the issue of sequencing, negative instances of honour and lack of events closure were interlinked and reinforced certain social interaction factors within SOC-membership, creating different pathways to resilience.

The case of negative quality and quantity of contact was different. Despite no unitary behaviour being observed according to community type, variance in the presence of this element appeared to relate to the interlink it played with factors within SOC-influence. For inclusive resilient communities, Hessey—the community where community influence on the individual was used to exert pressure over the IS-affiliate returns by community leaders to the full spectrum of community members (beyond just relatives of IS-victims)—presented many instances of negative quality and quantity of contact towards returned IS affiliates. These negative instances of quality and quantity of contact seemed to come as a consequence of the higher prevalence of community influence on the individual.

In the other two inclusive resilient communities, these negatives instances of quality and quantity of contact towards the perceived affiliates were less common. In addition to a more favourable initial opinion on the return among community members in these two communities, the higher need for community conformity and individual validation (also factors within SOC-influence) might also explain why these negative instances were less frequent. This relates to those remaining community members who might not be in favour of return perhaps feeling pressure to not publicly mistreat or act against the returned affiliates. Therefore, this reduced presence of negative quality and quantity of contact also results from the interlink of this factor with factors of SOC-influence.

In exclusive resilient communities, Fhelat—where no influence was exerted to lobby for the return of IS affiliates as both community leaders and members opposed the return—had the greatest prevalence of negative instances of quality and quantity of contact. The lack of support towards the IDPs with perceived affiliation—the population sub-group which concentrated the instances of absence of individual influence on the community—allowed for the ill-treatment of the IS affiliates. This treatment was refrained in the other two exclusive resilient communities, where community members were neutral (Shaqlawiyah Centre) or polarised (Ebbah) about the return.

Table 6 presents the differences in these three factors that appeared relevant to the development of inclusive and exclusive resilience pathways by the community: negative honour understood as loss of 'acquired honour' linked to IS affiliation, negative quality and quantity of contact, and lack of events closure understood as a reconciliation process conditional to discussing the return of IS affiliates.

Table 6: Key SOC-shared emotional connection factors relevant to the development of resilience by the community.

COMMUNITY	**SHARED EMOTIONAL CONNECTION**			**OUTCOME**
	Negative honour (understood as loss of 'acquired honour' linked to IS affiliation	**Negative quality/quantity of contact**	**Lack of events closure (understood as a reconciliation process conditional to discuss IS affiliates return)**	
Albo Shejal	(+)	(+)	·	Inclusive resilience
Hessey	+	++	·	Inclusive resilience
Karma Centre	+	(+)	·	Inclusive resilience
Ebbah	+	+	+	Exclusive resilience
Fhelat	·	++	+	Exclusive resilience
Shaqlawiyah Centre	·	·	·	Exclusive resilience

++	Expressed frequently and strongly by respondents
+	Expressed frequently but mildly by respondents
(+)	Expressed infrequently and mildly by respondents
·	Not expressed by respondents

CHAPTER 10: PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE: SOCIAL INTERACTION FACTORS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESILIENCE TYPES

The previous four chapters have examined the social interaction factors within each SOC element which played a role in the development of one or the other resilience type. These factors presented variations across community types and are summarised in Table 7 at the end of this chapter.

This chapter consolidates the findings from the previous four chapters to reveal the pathways to exclusive or inclusive resilience which emerged as a result of specific combinations of the communities' social interaction factors associated with the four-element model of SOC. This is in the context of when the return of IS-affiliates was perceived as a threat to the community´s social peace (perceived threat) in the aftermath of the IS occupation and subsequent war to dislodge the group from 2014-2017 (disrupting event).

As such, the chapter shows how the combination of solid boundaries, positive community conformity and presence of individual need for validation, presence of community influence, and negative honour are the social interaction factors of resilience most likely to lead to the development of inclusive resilience. On the other hand, absence of sense of belonging and identification, combined with absence of emotional safety, an unshared symbol system, absence of individual influence, absence of community influence, negative quality and quantity of contact and lack of events closure are the social interaction factors most likely to lead to the development of exclusive resilience.

The findings in Chapters 6-9 have also shown the prevalence of the identified key factors of inclusive and exclusive resilience in each community. This provides insight into the spectrum of responses within each type of community and was possible due to the use of the MSSD method of comparative case study analysis employed in the study. In addition, the methodology allowed

for the development of an outline of the set of complex casual mechanisms operating in the development of inclusive or exclusive resilience. Both issues are explored below.

10.1 Putting the pieces together

The study findings revealed that pathways to exclusive or inclusive resilience to the perceived threat of social peace being disrupted by the return of IS affiliates emerged from a specific combination of the communities' social interaction factors associated with the four-element model of SOC.

The analyses showed that a total of eleven[18] social interaction factors analysed under the SOC framework presented significant variations across community types and were significant to the development of one or other resilience type. These factors are presented in Table 7. The remaining analysed factors, although important to understanding the context in which the communities navigate their internal affairs and regulate community social dynamics, did not significantly vary across cases. To note, this does not rule them out for contributing to the development of community resilience, and they should still be included in the analysis of resilience that builds on the SOC framework. However, for this specific threat perceived in the potential disruption of social peace linked to the IS affiliates return, they did not appear to influence the balance towards exclusive or inclusive resilience.

The below analysis across community type also excludes the factors under SOC-needs fulfilment. As discussed in Chapter 8, the two types of communities are highly depleted due to the conflict they endured; therefore, the indictors related to needs fulfilment appeared equally high in all communities, which blurred their role in the development of each resilience type. It was also not possible to specifically define the role they played in relation to other factors.

[18] Note that some factors have been grouped during the analysis in previous chapters as they appeared interlinked in the respondents' answers. This applies to negative quality and quantity of contact, positive community conformity and individual need for validation.

When assessing the information in Table 7, it is important to highlight that, as explained in Chapter 4, magnitude coding was applied to assess the intensity of the coded text segments, as expressed by the respondents. This allowed the analysis to assess frequency and magnitude of the codes by community. Frequency, however, was only applied within each factor across communities, and not across factors.

Table 7: SOC factors relevant to the development of inclusive and exclusive resilience. Frequency can only be read along rows and not vertically. Magnitude can be read vertically and horizontally.

	Inclusive resilience			**Exclusive resilience**		
	Albo Shejal	**Hessey**	**Karma Centre**	**Ebbah**	**Fhelat**	**Shaqlawiyah Centre**
Membership	Solid boundaries	Solid boundaries	Solid boundaries	Solid boundaries	Solid boundaries	Solid boundaries
	Absence of sense of belonging and identification	Absence of sense of belonging and identification	Absence of sense of belonging and identification	Absence of sense of belonging and identification	Absence of sense of belonging and identification	Absence of sense of belonging and identification
	Absence of emotional safety	Absence of emotional safety	Absence of emotional safety	Absence of emotional safety	Absence of emotional safety	absence of emotional safety
	Unshared symbol system	Unshared symbol system	Unshared symbol system	Unshared symbol system	Unshared symbol system	Unshared symbol system
Influence	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation	Positive community conformity + presence of individual need for validation
	Presence of community influence	Presence of community influence	Presence of community influence	Presence of community influence	Presence of community influence	Presence of community influence
	Absence of community influence	Absence of community influence	Absence of community influence	Absence of community influence	Absence of community influence	Absence of community influence
	Absence of individual influence	Absence of individual influence	Absence of individual influence	Absence of individual influence	Absence of individual influence	Absence of individual influence

Shared Emotional Connection	Negative honour	Negative honour	Negative honour		Negative honour	Negative honour	Negative honour
	Negative quality + quantity of contact	Negative quality + quantity of contact	Negative quality + quantity of contact		Negative quality + quantity of contact	Negative quality + quantity of contact	Negative quality + quantity of contact
	Lack of events closure	Lack of events closure	Lack of events closure		Lack of events closure	Lack of events closure	Lack of events closure

	Expressed frequently and strongly by respondents
	Expressed frequently but mildly by respondents
	Expressed infrequently and mildly by respondents
	Not expressed by respondents

10.2 Pathway to inclusive resilience

As Table 7 shows, solid boundaries, positive community conformity and individual need for consensual validation, community influence and negative honour are salient social interaction factors in the development of inclusive resilience. The output of this resilience type is the return of IS affiliates to their communities of origin and potential future social reintegration into the community.

Solid boundaries were identified as one of the key factors in the development of this resilience type. The presence of solid boundaries in the community facilitating the return of IS affiliates is perhaps somewhat counterintuitive, as one might think that fluid boundaries would allow for an easier entry point to the community. However, the analysis of data has shown a complex causal mechanism that explains this dynamic: a better delineated deviant group in inclusive resilient communities translated into more solid boundaries.

Adding to this complex casual mechanism, a second factor facilitated the delineation of the deviant group, thus reinforcing solid boundaries. This second sub-element was negative honour, which, in two inclusive resilient communities, was used to define the deviant group when IS

membership was perceived as an act implying loss of one's honour, creating a nexus between the social interaction factors of honour and boundaries. As seen from the analysis, the deviant group was defined as first-degree relatives of IS members who killed or burnt property of another member of the community or held a core position within the group. It also included those IS-affiliates who encouraged their relatives in their decision to join the group.

For potential sequencing between negative honour and solid boundaries, at this stage the findings indicate that negative instances of honour—by which community members associate IS membership to an act implying loss of one´s honour—facilitated the delineation of the deviant group which, in turn, contributed to solid boundaries. Further research, however, is needed to corroborate this sequencing as an alternative explanation would be that the presence of solid boundaries via a well-defined deviant group meant that IS membership was perceived as an act of loss of honour.

Positive community conformity, individual need for consensual validation, and community influence (understood as the community leaders' capacity to influence their constituencies) were social interaction factors that were also most prevalent in inclusive resilience communities. The interlink between these three elements contributed to uniformity of opinions on the issue of IS affiliates return in inclusive resilient communities. Relatives of IS-victims were co-opted in their initial positioning of rejecting the return, made possible by this combination of SOC-influence factors in two of the inclusive resilient communities. The uniformity brought by these four factors also contributed to solid boundaries, though it is not possible at this stage to identify the sequencing among these five factors.

It is important to examine the presence of community influence sub-element, as it appeared to explain the positioning of Hessey at the lower region of the spectrum within inclusive resilient communities. In contrast to Albo Shejal and Karma Centre—where the departing opinion towards the return of IS affiliates was favourable among both community members and community

leaders and mainly opposed by the IS victims' relatives—in Hessey, community members were more inclined to oppose the return, which was supported by community leaders. Hessey presented the highest levels of presence of community influence across inclusive resilient communities. This major concentration of community influence enabled the community leaders to convince the majority of their constituencies against the return to eventually accept it. Not surprisingly, Hessey was the only inclusive resilient community with high levels of negative quality and quantity of contact directed towards the returned IS affiliates. This might be linked to the initial reticence among community members, still reticent to the return. Negative quality and quantity of contact should, in this case, be viewed as following from community influence on the individual when it comes to sequencing.

In the two other inclusive resilient communities—where the predominant view was accepting the return—the sub-group of IS victims' relatives opposing the return might have been curtailed from engaging in negative quality and quantity of contact, absent in the communities, by means of community conformity and need of individual validation.

10.3 Pathway to exclusive resilience

Absence of sense of belonging and identification, absence of emotional safety, an unshared symbol system, absence of individual influence and lack of events closure were the social interaction factors concentrated in exclusive resilient communities, as shown in Table 7.

Absence of sense of belonging and identification, emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system were interrelated. The perceptions that the return of IS affiliates would disrupt the social peace in the community and bring insecurity were reinforced by the feelings that the IS affiliates did not share the same common symbol system with community members—in two communities these feelings extended back to before the conflict began—and that the returned affiliates would not adapt to the community. In turn, IS affiliates felt less accepted in the community and community members perceived them as no longer belonging to the community.

This combination of lack of emotional safety, unshared symbol system, and sense of belonging and identification might also explain why the boundaries in the exclusive resilient communities were fluid. It also links to the impossibility of defining a deviant group among IS affiliates which, in inclusive communities, facilitated the return of those affiliates who felt left out of this deviant group. Despite negative honour being present and of concern in exclusive resilient communities, the above combination of factors also hindered the dynamics by which specific accusations of loss of honour associated with IS belonging were used to define the deviant group. This strategy occurred in inclusive resilient communities. The unshared symbol system also contributed; in inclusive resilient communities, certain rites such as tabriya were accepted as marking the end of IS affiliation which also contributed to defining which affiliates could return. In contrast, in exclusive resilient communities, these tribal practices, despite occurring, did not facilitate the return.

The analysis of data also identified another complex casual mechanism. This related to the nexus between lack of closure and absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system (the three of them SOC–membership factors). The lack of closure salient in exclusive resilient communities with regards to event closure from previous conflict appears to have not allowed the necessary healing among rival community members. This, in turn, has fuelled the absence of sense of belonging, negative emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system in exclusive resilient communities. This need for closure was so strong that it was made conditional to allowing the return of IS affiliates in this latest conflict in two of the exclusive resilient communities. The lack of data in the third exclusive resilient community was not sufficient to determine whether lack of closure was a necessary condition for an exclusive resilient pathway or, alternatively, if closure was necessary for an inclusive resilient pathway.

For the interlink between lack of closure and the SOC-membership factors leading to exclusive resilience, the sequencing in which these operate was not possible to identify due to lack of evidence from the collected data. It may be that lack of closure led to absence of sense of

belonging, negative emotional safety, and an unshared symbol system. Alternately, these three factors may have made this need for closure so prevalent. If the first explanation holds true, lack of closure would be placed highly in a hierarchy of elements as it would influence all the SOC-membership factors involved in the development of inclusive resilience. Further research is needed to investigate this potential sequence of factors and the hierarchy.

Exclusive resilient communities were also characterised by lack of individual influence. Here, the identified complex casual mechanism worked in a divergent manner from the mechanism which led to the development of inclusive resilience. The absence or low levels of community influence combined with the lower levels of community need for conformity and individual need for consensual validation allowed for a major diversity of opinions among community members on the issue of IS affiliates return. In two of the exclusive resilient communities, community members did not have a unified view on the matter. The absence of individual influence linked to this incapacity of community members in favour of IS affiliates return to convince the rest of the community members on this issue—in the case of Shaqlawiyah Centre—, or to influence community leaders against their decision to reject the return, in the case of Ebbah.

Analysis of exclusive resilient communities showed that Fhelat was at the higher end of the spectrum of communities which developed exclusive resilience, i.e., Fhelat scored the highest levels in four out of the five distinct factors of exclusive resilience. These results might explain why Fhelat was the only community where community members and community leaders agreed on both opposing the return of IS affiliates and the ill-treatment of IS affiliates by the community.

Overall, in the development of resilience pathways, the findings of this chapter highlighted that the cumulative presence of social interaction factors of resilience was less significant than the interlinks between factors. Furthermore, the findings showed how this interaction of factors took place at the sub-level, with the interaction of certain SOC factors (rather than SOC elements)

identified as most relevant in the development of community resilience, with different combinations creating different pathways to different types of resilience.

CHAPTER 11 DISCUSSION

This concluding chapter reflects on the contribution the study has had to the development of community resilience and to the understanding of SOC. It identifies the study's limitations and explores new lines of research for future work in this area.

In its inception, this study was built with the objective of exploring an existing gap in understanding resilience, particularly with regards to our current knowledge of community resilience from a social approach. Approaching community resilience from a social perspective remains under-researched, but in a world where both human and natural stresses are recurrent—as the latest COVID 19 pandemic has demonstrated—it is increasingly important to understand how communities learn, adapt and evolve in the face of adversity. With the community as the unit of analysis, and community resilience at its core, this study has aimed to contribute to this knowledge gap on community resilience within the social approach. This has been done through the investigation of the development of resilience at the community level, from a human-induced stress endogenous to the community.

This study also stemmed from the premise that there is insufficient knowledge on the interconnection between resilience and fragility, and a lack of information about the complex social dynamics of community resilience in the aftermath of conflict or violence. Communities in fragile environments are particularly exposed to adverse situations. After conflict, the social fabric of these communities tends to be shattered and the toll of conflict presents serious challenges to the restoration of social peace in the affected communities. Even under these challenging circumstances, communities are able to develop resilience and create strategies to protect themselves from the threats they are exposed to before, during or in the aftermath of conflict. Conducting field research following conflict is often challenging, but obtaining information from the conflict-affected communities first-hand is key to obtaining greater insights into the communities' perceptions, particularly if the aim is to understand how and why community resilience develops.

Building on an extensive body of primary data collected immediately following the crisis, when the development of community resilience—a dynamic and evolving process— took place, this research adds to the increasing number of case studies that focus on resilience in fragile contexts by inquiring about the development of resilience among Iraqi communities exposed to the perceived threat of disrupted social peace linked to the return of armed-group affiliates after the IS conflict. Moreover, the disrupting event that led to the development of resilience in the studied communities (i.e., the disruption of social peace upon the return of affiliates from a violent extremist group) is a pressing topic. The expansion of extremist armed groups controlling swats of territory occurs not only with the self-proclaimed IS in Syria and Iraq but in contexts beyond this and as diverse as Nigeria with Boko Haram, Mozambique with the IS, and Al-Shabaab in Somalia. Following the group's withdrawal in such conflicts, the communities are then exposed to the 'what's next?' stage. This involves dealing with the community members who sided with the group and who might be perceived as a threat by their own communities.

Although localised, the findings of this study on the Arab Sunni communities of Anbar increase understanding of how different pathways to resilience emerge dependent on the social interaction factors inherent to the community, and how these factors influence responses to particular threats perceived by communities.

A further major contribution of this study to community resilience comes from using SOC as the analytical framework. Studying resilience from a social approach has been limited by the lack of a clearly defined set of measures and indicators (Adger, 2000; Davidson, 2010). Several frameworks have been tested in the study of resilience most of which are framed around social capital and related concepts (Wilson, 2012). Particularly open to debate is the measurement of social interaction factors of resilience. Several frameworks have been tested to capture the community dynamics that intervene in the development of resilience, which define the interactions among community members. This study has demonstrated that SOC is a valid and suitable framework to capture these indicators in a comprehensive and nuanced manner. This

adds to the findings of previous studies which have already identified SOC as a framework to measure resilience prior to, during and after an event disrupting the community. (Khalili, Harre and Morley, 2015).

Hence, this study has provided a clear analytical framework for assessing the social interaction factors of resilience at the community level, based on the four well-defined elements of SOC: membership, influence, needs fulfilment and shared emotional connection, applied at the sub-level. The well-defined factors within the SOC framework have allowed the inner social dynamics in the studied communities to be captured and analysed, providing a robust understanding of the social interaction factors at play in the development of resilience. These indicators can be collected and assessed at the community level—as the study has proven—and have the potential to be monitored over time and operationalised. Finding a model of resilience that meets this goal was, and remains, a challenge (Cutter *et al.,* 2008) although this study has contributed towards a solution for this.

This study has also demonstrated the need to adapt the SOC framework to the context and to apply its factors and indicators in a contextualised manner, taking into consideration the localised dynamics of the study area. The emic approach applied in this study has helped to conceptualise the concepts and indicators used according to the community views and dynamics specific to Anbari communities. As such, the data analysis stemmed from the adapted understanding of each factor as provided by the communities. This emic approach was made possible by the qualitative primary data collected for the study, which provided empirical evidence on the development of resilience pathways, highlighting the strengths offered by a qualitative approach to best assess the development of community resilience in a contextualised and nuanced manner.

The study has also signalled the need of adapting certain indicators when applying SOC to the study of community resilience in fragility settings. For example, in the aftermath of direct conflict, when communities have been largely destroyed and social relations in communities need to be

rebuilt, the needs fulfilment indicators should be adapted to extend beyond non-material needs and include basic needs. In addition, experiences of honour, which under the four SOC elements also include experiences of humiliation, might be too sensitive to ask immediately after conflict without a referral mechanism in place to back up the researcher.

In addition to the contribution this study has had on examining community resilience from a social approach—adding to the growing number of studies on community resilience and fragility and proposing and testing SOC as a novel analytical framework for measuring the social interaction factors of resilience—it also contributes to expanding the existing understanding of SOC in three distinct ways.

First, it contributes to broadening the understanding of SOC at the community level. SOC has usually been presented as an individual construct, based on the assumption that 'community exists', and focusing on how the individual experiences it and how it is described at the individual level (Buckner, 1988; Puddifoot, 1996; Perkins and Long, 2002;). This is despite the increasing amount of research that frames SOC at the community level and calls to broaden the understanding of SOC and how it develops at the collective level (Puddifoot, 1996; Fisher and Sonn 1999; Perkins and Long, 2002).

Studying SOC at the community level requires new tools and protocols, which include true community-level measures of SOC beyond the aggregation of individual-level data and making the construct less reliant on psychometric assumptions (Buckner, 1988; Shinn, 1990; Brodsky *et al.,* 2002; Perkins and Long, 2002). A qualitative approach has been proposed in this regard, which would also help reinforce the ecological and cultural validity of research on community-level SOC (Chavis and Pretty, 1999). Broadening the understanding of SOC at the community level is of particular importance if it is to be used to measure the social interaction factors of community resilience. This is because measuring attributes at the collective level eases the analysis of issues

affecting communities as a whole and facilitates the design of interventions for social change (Buckner, 1988).

This study followed the above recommendation and applied a qualitative approach to assess the identifiable and assessable factors of SOC. These factors made SOC a useful framework to capture and measure the social factors of resilience, yet SOC was an abstract term understood differently by each community. The qualitative information obtained from the interviews and FGDs provided an understanding of the complexity of SOC, contextualised within the community, which facilitated an understanding of collective SOC.

Second, the study has highlighted how, in the development of different resilience pathways to a similar perceived threat by communities, the cumulative presence of SOC elements is less significant than the interlinks between the SOC factors at the sub-level. Working at the sub-level provided a detailed and nuanced assessment of how the different interactions across SOC factors created a pathway to inclusive or exclusive resilience in a specific community. These findings contribute to broadening the understanding of how the different factors of social resilience influence each other to create diverse pathways of resilience, a gap in the study of community resilience (Brand and Jax, 2007; Davidson, 2010; Wilson, 2012). Additionally, with regards to the study of SOC, the findings present a new opportunity for research as most current studies are quantitative and utilise scales that capture SOC at the element level. Expanding these scales, as well as the measurements and indicators used to capture SOC at the sub-level, and adding a qualitative approach to the study of SOC at this level, would contribute to broadening the understanding of SOC. Additionally, focusing on the interlinks between factors and how the factors operate to influence each other, instead of thinking of SOC elements in a cumulative manner, might also open new directions for research on SOC.

The research design, using a case study with a MSSD method, contributed to this second issue. The comparison of communities which developed the same type of resilience allowed the

observation of specific complex causal mechanisms at the sub-level that stemmed from the interplay among factors. The comparison across community types provided identification of the specific social interaction factors of resilience that were more efficient in configuring an inclusive or an exclusive resilience pathway.

A third contribution of this study to expanding knowledge on SOC relates to conceptualisation in the analysis. SOC was first conceptualised and operationalised in a unipolar manner, measuring the presence of SOC and linking this to a positive outcome. Brodsky (1996) pioneered in expanding the construct and investigated the effects of lack of or negative SOC in communities. This author showed how positive outcomes can result from a negative or neutral SOC and also demonstrated how negative SOC can lead to resilience in fragile communities (Brodsky, 1996; Brodsky *et al.,* 2002). These studies opened the door to much needed research on lack of or neutral SOC to understand the social dynamics among community members (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990), and how variations in the social interaction factors of resilience might lead to the development of resilience pathways. This study utilises this wide concept of SOC and reduces the knowledge gap on the absence of SOC as a contributor to the development of resilience. Therefore, it builds on the work of Brodsky (1996) and Brodsky *et al.* (2002) as it outlines how the absence of specific SOC factors contribute to the development of resilience pathways in a fragile setting. The absence of certain factors appears to be as important, if not more, than the presence of other factors. The study also broadens the exploration of 'absent – neutral – present' SOC by applying these at the community, rather than the individual, level.

In addition, the qualitative analysis examining each of the SOC factors yielded sub-level specific findings that support the initial four-element model of SOC defined by McMillan and Chavis (1986), but which fell off the radar in the vast body of SOC studies which followed. For example, within SOC-membership, the study provided interesting findings on the role of the deviant and emphasised this role in defining the community borders, within the sub-element boundaries. The deviant figure, when labelled as such, facilitates defining who is part of the community and who

is excluded. Lack of definition on the deviant group blurs the categories of 'we' and 'other', leading to fluid boundaries.

For SOC-influence, the study provided insight on how the different groups that form the community influence and lobby each other to seek uniformity in their opinions. Community members, community leaders and relatives of IS-victims often began with different viewpoints on the issue of returns but converged in their opinions; this influenced the resilience type eventually developed by the community. The analysis closely followed the insights of Festinger *et al.* (1950) as their findings on the processes that influence individuals in group situations were already considered by McMillan and Chavis (date) when initially framing SOC theory. In this study, this approach led to clear insights on how the influence process took place within the communities. Extending the study of SOC-influence by checking inner-influence dynamics following the work by Festinger et al. (1950), as the current research has done, could revamp the understanding of SOC-influence factors.

In the SOC-needs fulfilment component, the four-factor model by McMillan and Chavis (date) focuses on the role played by reinforcers—such as competence or status—in bonding community members together for the association to be rewarding when basic needs are covered. However, following conflict, communities are typically depleted and unable to cover these primary needs. As the analysis showed, basic needs were the most common type of need identified by community members when replying to the questions on SOC-needs fulfilment. Furthermore, these basic needs defined the relations of respondents towards other community members and towards the community. As aforementioned, the findings were inconclusive regarding the role played by the SOC-needs fulfilment factors in the development of resilience pathways. This reinforces the need to redefine this group of factors when assessing SOC in the aftermath of conflict or in those fragile contexts where the basic needs, assumed to be covered by the community in the four-factor model, are not fully met.

For SOC-shared emotional connection, the findings highlighted the role of this aspect in reinforcing community cohesiveness and strengthening community membership, as suggested by McMillan and Chavis (1986). Shared emotional connection was also seen to play a role in defining the deviant group, which is a new insight from this study and links to the previous point on the role of the deviant within SOC membership. However, further testing and revised hypotheses in settings beyond Anbar, are needed to increase the validity of these findings.

There are limitations to this study, but these, nonetheless, present opportunities for future research. This study examined how individual factors contributed to one or the other type of resilience. Patterns among factors were revealed, which indicated a potential casual sequence. However, the existing data did not allow for the corroboration of this. Complementing the sequencing of factors is the issue of hierarchy among these factors, which was not able to be established from the obtained data and the analyses conducted. Exploring the sequencing and hierarchy of factors relevant to the development of each resilience pathway would be the most relevant next step for this study.

Second, this research took a linear approach to the study of community resilience, meaning that the threat of disrupted social peace by the return of IS affiliates was understood as leading to the development of resilience. This is because, as explained in Chapter 4, the study was designed using the MSSD method of comparative case study analysis, where the two outcomes of resilience were considered when selecting the communities. This linear approach cut and analysed a specific timeframe of this process, leaving the remaining parts of the resilience cycle unexplored. In future research, a circular approach could be taken by which the type of resilience developed by the community conditions the perception of the threat. This would, in turn, reinforce a certain resilience response in a circular manner. Using this approach, the social interaction factors of resilience captured by SOC would be reinforced by the specific approach to resilience taken by the community. Systematically investigating the non-linear links between the perception of threat and resilience would provide an overarching understanding of the phenomena.

Third, it is known that resilience responses are dynamic and evolve over time. As such, future research could focus on investigating how changes in various factors affect the type of resilience response developed in the short- and long-term, and whether changes in community composition influence the resilience type developed over time.

Finally, a further line of research that could further be explored is regarding how multiple SOC experienced by the community members, towards the community and towards the armed group, might have impacted the development of each resilience pathway. These involves addressing questions such as: Is a lower level of SOC towards the community a predictor of armed group affiliation? Or of certain factors? Is it possible to experience positive SOC towards the group and towards the community at the same time, despite the harm caused by the group to the community? Do higher levels of negative SOC towards the group by non-affiliated community members play a role in the development of one or other resilience pathway? Such questions could generate further hypotheses to be tested in the study of resilience to the perceived threat of the return of armed group affiliates to their communities.

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APPENDIX 1 LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews		
#	**Community**	**Category**
1	Karma Centre	Tribal Leader
2	Karma Centre	Tribal Leader and Civil Society Representative
3	Karma Centre	Local Authorities Representative
4	Karma Centre	Returnee (Male)
5	Karma Centre	Returnee (Male)
6	Karma Centre	Returnee (Male)
7	Ebbah	Local Authorities Representative (Director)
8	Ebbah	Local Authorities Representative (Assistant Director)
9	Ebbah	Mukhtar
10	Ebbah	IDP* (Male)
11	Ebbah	IDP* (Male)
12	Ebbah	IDP* (Male)
13	Ebbah	Returnee (Male)
14	Ebbah	Returnee (Male)
15	Ebbah	Returnee (Male)
16	Albo Shejal	Tribal Leader
17	Albo Shejal	Local Authorities Representative
18	Albo Shejal	Mukhtar
19	Albo Shejal	Returnee (Male)
20	Albo Shejal	Returnee (Male)
21	Albo Shejal	Returnee (Male)
22	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Tribal Leader
23	Shaqlawiyah Centre	School Director
24	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Mukhtar
25	Shaqlawiyah Centre	IDP* (Female)
26	Shaqlawiyah Centre	IDP* (Female)
27	Shaqlawiyah Centre	IDP* (Male)
28	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Returnee (Male)
29	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Returnee (Male)
30	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Returnee (Male)
31	Hessey	Mukhtar
32	Hessey	Religious Leader
33	Hessey	Local NGO Representative
34	Hessey	Returnee (Female)
35	Hessey	Returnee (Female)
36	Hessey	Returnee (Male)

37	Fhelat	Tribal Mobilisation Forces Leader
38	Fhelat	Mukhtar
39	Fhelat	Mukhtar
40	Fhelat	IDP* (Female)
41	Fhelat	IDP* (Female)
42	Fhelat	IDP* (Female)

*Conducted in Amiriyat al-Fallujah (AAF) IDP camp

APPENDIX 2 LIST OF FGDs AND PARTICIPATORY MAPPINGS

FGDs and Participatory Mappings		
#	**Community**	**Participants**
1	Karma Centre	Male Community Members
2	Karma Centre	Female Community Members
3	Karma Centre	Male Youth Community Members (18-26)
4	Ebbah	Male Community Members
5	Ebbah	Female Community Members
6	Ebbah	Male Youth Community Members (18-26)
7	Albo Shejal	Male Community Members
8	Albo Shejal	Female Community Members
9	Albo Shejal	Male Youth Community Members (18-26)
10	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Male Community Members
11	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Female Community Members
12	Shaqlawiyah Centre	Female Youth Community Members (18-26)
13	Hessey	Male Community Members
14	Hessey	Female Community Members
15	Hessey	Male Youth Community Members (18-26) *
16	Fhelat	Male Community Members
17	Fhelat	Female Community Members

*Conducted in Amiriyat al-Fallujah (AAF) IDP camp

APPENDIX 3: MATRIX OF INDICATORS AND EXAMPLES OF TOOL QUESTIONS

Element	Factor	Indicator	Question Example 1	Question Example 2
Membership	Boundaries	Community members have a clear opinion on who belongs and who does not belong to the community	What are the different groups that form this community? Has the community changed over recent years?	Are people from this community who are still displaced part of the community?
		Community members do not have a clear opinion on who belongs and who does not belong to the community		
	Emotional Safety	Community members feel safe in the community	When you are among other community members, how safe or unsafe do you feel? What are the reasons? (ANSWER) How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel? What are the reasons?	How safe or unsafe would you feel among IS affiliates from this community if they eventually returned? (ANSWER) How comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel? What are the reasons?
		Community members do not feel safe in the community		
		Community members feel comfortable when surrounded by other community members		
		Community members do not feel comfortable when surrounded by other community members		

	Sense of Belonging and Identification	Community members feel they belong to the community	Do you feel you belong to this community? On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you feel that you are part of the community?	When you are among other community members, how comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel?
		Community members feel they do not belong to the community		
		Community members feel accepted and comfortable among other community members	Do you feel accepted by your neighbours?	When you are among other community members, how comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel?
		Community members do not feel accepted and comfortable among other community members		
		Community members are willing to sacrifice to protect the community	What would you be willing to sacrifice to protect the community?	
		Community members are not willing to sacrifice to protect the community		
	Common Symbol System	Community members willingly share a common symbol system with	When the IDPs return, do you think	During the events, did these common rules change?

		other community members	they will follow the shared rules?	Do you think those rules represented the shared rules of the community?
		Community members do not share a common symbol system with other community members, or this is imposed on them		
Influence	Individual Influence on the Community	Community members feel they have a say in the community	Do you think you have a say about what goes on in the community?	Provide a recent example where you were involved, or that you know of, in which community members influenced a decision involving the community
		Community members do not feel they have a say in the community		
		Decisions made by community leaders are influenced by community members	Can people influence the community leaders' decisions? (If yes) How can people influence the decisions? Through which mechanisms?	Provide a recent example in which you believe the community leaders/actors you mentioned made an important decision for the community without consulting the people?
		Decisions made by community leaders are not influenced by community members		
		Community members feel the other community members' values and opinions matter to them	In general, in the community, how much are people concerned about the opinions of others?	Do you feel other community members are interested in what you do?
		Community members feel the		

		other community members' values and opinions do not matter to them		
	Community Influence on the Individual	Community members' decisions are influenced by community leaders	Do you trust them [the decision-makers]?	Do you respect these decision-makers? Which one do you respect the most? What are the reasons?
		Community members' decisions are not influenced by community leaders		
	Community Need for Conformity	Community members willingly follow the community rules without being pressured to do so	When it comes to these situations, how free are you to decide, and how much influence does the community have, on: •Where and how many times a day you pray? •Who you marry? Or who your daughter marries? •Where to buy a house? •Who to vote for in the elections? •Whether to defend your community in times of conflict?	Is there any group in this community that does not follow these common rules?
		Community members are pressured to adhere to the community rules		
	Individual Need for	Community members feel they	Each of you, personally, how much	How would you describe your values?

	Consensual Validation	fit within the community rules	do you fit in with the community rules?	What are the values of the community?
		Community members feel they do not fit within the community rules		
		Community members feel they can freely express their individual differences with other community members	Do you feel you can freely express your individual differences in this community?	
		Community members feel they cannot freely express their individual differences with other community members		
Needs Fulfilment	Fulfilment of Community Members' Needs	The community is able to meet its members' needs	Can you get what you need in this community?	Which needs is the community unable to help you fulfil?
		The community is not able to meet its members' needs		
		The community is competent in solving community problems	If there is a serious community problem, do people come together to solve it?	If something needs to be done, does the whole community come together to get it done?
		The community is not able to solve community problems		

		Community members help each other to overcome difficulties	If you are in trouble, can you get help from the community?	Are you ready to help other community members even if this creates hardship for you?
		Community members do not help each other to overcome difficulties		
Shared Emotional Connection	Amount of Contact	Community members interact with each other frequently	Did most of your close friends live in [community name] when the [IS] group was ruling there? How often did you see them?	
		Community members avoid interacting with each other		
	Quality of Contact	Interactions between community members are perceived as positive	Do most of your closest friends live in this community?	If you feel like talking to someone, can you find someone to talk to right away?
		Interactions between community members are perceived as negative		
	Event Closure	Reconciliation efforts have started to take place among conflicting groups	Do community leaders want the blocked IDPs to return? Have they done anything to help them return?	Are you aware of any cases in which community leaders or community members have interfered to stop the return of IDPs?
		Reconciliation efforts have not taken place among conflicting groups		
		Community members displaced	During the events, did the community come	I want to ask you about the last events, when

		together or helped each other to displace	together to face the crisis?	the [IS] group came to [community name]. Can you narrate what happened?
		Community members did not displace together or did not help each other to displace		
	Shared Bonding Events	Community members support each other to return to the community	Did someone help you return? Did anyone help you to obtain the necessary documentation?	Are you aware of any cases in which other displaced community members received help from the community or community leaders that facilitated their return?
		Community members do not support each other to return to the community	Did someone oppose your return?	Are you aware of any cases in which community leaders or community members interfered to stop IDPs from returning?
	Investment	Community members participate in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the community (with time and/or resources)	If something needs to be done, does the whole community come together to do it?	Why did you decide to help in supporting their return?
		Community members do not participate in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the community		

	Experiences of Honour or Humiliation	Community members have not experienced instances of humiliation by the community	Do you fear being harassed by community members?	Do you fear being accused of bringing shame to the community?
		Community members have experienced instances of humiliation by the community		
		Community members feel their honour and/or the honour of their family is maintained	What would you do to protect your name or the name of your family?	Are you concerned of what people might say about you or your family members if you return?
		Community members feel their honour and/or the honour of their family has been affronted		
	Spiritual Bond	Community members feel they are bonded to the community	What would you be willing to sacrifice to protect the community?	Do you feel you belong to this community? What are the reasons?
		Community members do not feel bonded to the community		