

RETURNS WORKING GROUP- IRAQ

- ❖ **Meeting Date:** 25 October 2022
- ❖ **Meeting Time:** 11:00 am-13:00 pm
- ❖ **Location:** IOM Conference Room, Erbil & Remote connection via Teams

**In Attendance:** REACH, TDH-SWISS, IVY-Japan, Save the future Organization, IOM, Dary Human, UNHCR, UNAMI, US Embassy, Baghdad, UNOCHA, GIZ, Samaritan's Purse (SP), GIZ -SSVPIL, Heartland Alliance International (HAI), ASB, Mine Action Sub-Cluster, INTERSOS, and DG ECHO.

**Agenda:**

- 1) **Introduction and adoption of minutes:** Review of September minutes and follow up on action points.
- 2) **Context Update:** DTM Master list Report (Round 127), Displacement and Returns Update (Yazidi Departures), Climate-induced displacement flows in central and southern Iraq, CCCM Update, MOMD Return Grant Update, local integration, and KR-I field update.
- 3) **DSTWG Update:** DS Updates
- 4) **REACH ReDS Assessment Presentation:** Zummar Sub-district, Telafar District, Ninewa Governorate
- 5) AOB

Action Points	By who
N/A	

**1) Introduction and adoption of minutes:** Review of previous minutes; Follow up on action points from the previous meeting

- No pending action points.
- The endorsement of the previous meeting minutes.

**2) Context update: DTM Master list Report, Yazidi Departures, Climate-induced displacement, CCCM Update, MOMD Return Grant Update and RWG Field Updates.**

**Return Index Round 16**

*(Please refer to the full presentation link for further statistics)*

- **Overall severity**
  - Out of the 2,191 return locations assessed, 468 present severe conditions hosting 12 percent of the returnee population or 598,578 individuals.

**Climate Emergency Tracking – Trends and Recent Updates**

- **Shelter**
  - Displacement to urban settings - 76%
  - 86% in private housing
  - Critical shelters: Afaq, Al-Midaina
- **Recent developments:** Water scarcity in Missan marshes
  - Death of livestock
  - Deteriorating living conditions
  - Fisheries impacted

**Monitoring of Yazidi Departures:** 2,790 Yazidi individuals were recorded crossing Ibrahim Al-Khalil from 24 August to 22 October 2022

**New Developments:**

- Some returns reported, (deportations and voluntary returns)
- Voluntary returns due to lack of funds or defrauding
- Intention to remigrate

**Discussion**

- Question: Does IOM Protection have any updates on the factors triggering the movement of the Yazidi? Perhaps from the family interviews, you conducted.
  - IOM Protection: There were no further data collection follow-ups after August. Yet, the number of camp departures has reduced due to community perspectives and information obtained from Turkey, notably the crackdown on returns and visa regulations implemented by Turkey. We are following up with colleagues on the Turkish and Greek sides to obtain additional admission information and will keep you updated. Furthermore, the weather window is closing across those irregular European routes. Winter migration will be slower, but it is anticipated to rebound in the spring of next year.
- Question: What is the source of DTM Masterlist data?
  - IOM DTM: Since the conflict-hit in 2014, DTM began collecting data, through IOM's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs) –composed of over 80 field staff– present throughout the Iraqi territory, and key informants mainly Mukhtars. Periodic updates are conducted every three months.
- Question: Please elaborate further on the map showing arrows and flows of climate-induced. Do you collect information to indicate the impact of the 67% Intra-governorate displacement, which districts strain services?
  - IOM DTM: Key Flows:  
Qal'at Saleh, Missan → Amara, Missan (1,299 families) (intragovernorate)

Al-Shatra, Thi-Qar → Al-Shatra, Thi-Qar (990 - intradistrict); Najaf, Najaf (800); Kerbala, Kerbala (356)  
Afaq, Qadissiya → Najaf, Najaf (900); Afaq, Qadissiya (393 - intragovernorate)  
Amara, Missan → Amara, Missan (468)  
Nassriya, Thi-Qar → Najaf, Najaf (453); Al-Zubair, Basrah (275)

Governorates covered, in order of caseload: Missan, Najaf, Thi-Qar, Muthanna, Kerbala, Basrah, Wassit, Qadissiya, Diyala, Babylon. This report does not cover services or living circumstances, unlike the Return and displacement index, which includes indicators of service provision. Please contact us via [iraqdtm@iom.int](mailto:iraqdtm@iom.int) for more inquiries and detailed breakdowns.

- Question: Just need clarification if all the Yazidi's crossing the borders toward the EU are through smugglers.
  - IOM Protection: To claim that all Yazidis crossing the borders through smugglers would be a little difficult. However, there are some indications of smuggling being employed to cross borders, according to the interviews.

#### CCCM Updates

#### Camp Updates:

- By the end of September, 26 formal IDP camps were open in Iraq, hosting a total of 179,5047 individuals. meanwhile, 1110 individuals were recorded as new arrivals during September, out of whom, 389 individuals arrived at Sharya Camp and 105 at Mamrashan camps, 100 in Chamishko camp administrated by Duhok governorate. Furthermore, a total of 1255 people were recorded to depart the camps throughout September, with 359 of whom departing J5, which is administered by the Ninewa governorate. 107 departures from Hassan Sham u2 and 107 from Hassan Sham u3, Erbil administrated. Similarly, 107 people departed Chamishko, and 62 Sharya camps, administered by Duhok.
- Camp consolidation is being discussed in the KRG. In Erbil, there is a plan to consolidate the Baherka and Harsham camps, followed by the Khazir MI, with a total of 2200 residents. Families will have the choice of either returning to AoO, relocating elsewhere, or relocating to the Hassan sham U2 and Hassan sham U3 camps. There is no set timeline as of yet. Both the IOM and the UNHCR are following up with the relevant government entities, namely the JCC and the DMCR.
- Similarly, in Sulaimanya, an inter-agency meeting with Garmiyan officials was held on October 18 to discuss the relocation of 79 houses from Quarto to the Tazade camp, which is home to 155 families. The deadline given is the end of the year. Families in Quarto could either return to AoO, primarily to Diyala and other parts of the central south, or relocate to Tazade camp, where there are approximately 250 prefab houses ready to accommodate the 79 households from Quarto camp. UNHCR and the humanitarian partners are striving to prevent any forced returns.
- As was previously noted, the governor of Duhok approved the shelter upgrade, essentially allowing IDPs to replace tents with concrete block or mud shelters, in June 2022. There was a formal communication from JCCC concerning shelter upgrades in the Chamikso camp, where 4000 households were residing. In response, DMCR Zakho, Zakho independent administration, UNHCR, and others met to discuss authorization of that, where Zakho's independent administration requested technical assistance from UNHCR for the launching of shelter upgrade, whereas UNHCR advocates for this as a durable solution for these families.

#### Informal Sites Update:

#### Balad Train Station: 68 HHs

#### Evictions:

- No eviction notices were issued in October. Although no forced eviction took place since September individual departure movements were seen. 12 HHs (out of 22 initially under threat of eviction) from the Balad Train Station sub-building have departed the site returning to areas of origin in "Said Gharib". According to our team, they are staying in tents, unfinished buildings, and critical shelters and they are in need of support.
- On 22 Oct, 4 HHs/12 Individuals originally from Al Rashed Area in Balad arrived at BTS. The ISF at the entrance of the site guided them to live in the Sub building in one shelter. All the families are relatives and don't have the necessary approvals to access their AoO. With this, the total number of HHs in the sub-building raised to 14 HHs.

#### East Anbar Sites: AAF – 257 HHs/ 1259 individuals

- 218 registered, the governor of Anbar issued a directive to Anbar Operational Command to start looking into the security clearance and approval of letters required to facilitate the departure of these families.

Sinjar Mountain: Business, as usual, IOM TRD is validating the data collected through blanket registration.

#### Kirkuk (Hay Al Askary): 187 HHs

- In September, approximately 60 houses received an eviction notice and some houses were even demolished. Yet after the engagement of the Kirkuk Governor and several Iraqi parliaments the demolishing action was stopped.
- However yesterday, a committee returned and demolished the fences of about 40 houses. The IDP committees in this site tried to communicate with the Kirkuk governor to stop this demolition, but it was found that he and his assistant are outside the country.
- IOM involved OCHA and in return, OCHA is coordinating with Mr. Ali Hamadi, Kirkuk Governor's Assistant for Technical Affairs who assured OCHA that he will discuss the eviction with the Mayor of Kirkuk district and investigate the cause of the action. Mr. Hamadi also promised to halt the demolition at Hay Al Nedaa until

the government finds an alternative solution, or to at least give the families enough time to relocate if their housing is interfering with the construction of new projects and community infrastructure.

### Samarra 3 collective centers evictions:

- 8HHs depart AL Murabaa Mosque under the pressure of eviction from the landowner (4 HHs rented shelters in the city and 4 HHs moved close to the mosque in metal containers).
- on 17 Oct, 10 HHs living in Atwar Bahjat School received a call from MoMD rep. to leave the school without mentioning a certain date, those people were originally from Aziz Balad. No family departed yet.
- 8 HHs living in AL Ferdwas school received another call to leave the school ASAP, otherwise, they will be forcibly evicted. People originally from Tal Al Thahab which still blocked Area. No departing recorded.

### ACTED is working in 32 informal sites in both MSL and TAL: Risk of eviction

- **Talafar:** Ray Al-Jazeera informal site all the families left the side except 1 family because the family is not from Barzan village. IOM is looking into supporting this family through the voluntary return program.
- **Mosul:** In October, the deadline for the eviction notice issued to the resident of Al-Tameem informal site near Fatima Alzahraa school/ East Mosul was extended to Jan 2023. Currently, there are 24HH, 115 individuals on this site majority are from 70%from Wana TelKaif district, 12% from Sinjar, and 8% Al-Synya -Baiji district.
- In October, residents of Malvid school AL Zahraa neighborhood informal settlement 10 HH also received an eviction notice from the contractor. Since then, 8 families have been evicted, and the other two are currently searching for a place to stay. All 8 families that were evicted have found rental places near the informal site, however, they need support especially in terms of cash for rent for the short term. ACTED today going to support the evicted families in Cash for eviction one round of 440,000 IQD.

### Discussion

- Question: Is the decision of shelter self-upgrades in Duhok implemented consistently across all camps. We have heard from partners that there are inconsistencies - in certain camps, the management is still against the decision.
  - CCCM: Yes, it is not yet implemented in all camps, but that is the plan.
- Question: Have the families in Baherka and Harsham camps been given the option to be locally integrated into Erbil Urban areas?
  - CCCM: No, that was not among the options proposed by the KRG authorities.
- Question: Please provide more information regarding J5 camp departure and their destinations. Was the departure facilitated by sponsorship?
  - CCCM: The J5 departure is scheduled for October 26th and is facilitated by the IOM program (Facilitated Voluntary Movement). More information will be provided as soon as we acquire it.
- Question: Have the movements, particularly the returns, of refugees from Koya, Soran, and Jazhnikan been tracked, given the shortage of partners on the ground?
  - CCCM: In the RWG meeting, we do not address the refugee caseload. Nonetheless, please direct any questions to Erbil UNHCR colleagues.

### RWG Field Updates: KR-I

*(Please refer to the full presentation link for further statistics)*

#### **East-Mosul Camps**

- The EMCs are experiencing steadily growing numbers of IDP departures mainly due to prevailing humanitarian conditions. In September, a total of 36 households, and 253 individuals returned to areas of Origin where the main destinations of return were highlighted as Ninewa and its vicinity, including Hamam Al-Alil, Tal Afar, East, and West Mosul.

### MOMD Return Grant Update, local integration

#### **Supreme Committee Decisions: Local Integration**

- Resolution 888 (Supreme Committee for the relief and Support of the Displaced)
  - Assign MoMD to close the files of IDPs who are not willing to return and prefer to remain in areas of displacement and integrate into the society in accordance with directions of GOI to find appropriate solutions for them.
  - Databases to be created for IDPs wanting to locally integrate.

### Discussion

- Question: Do the Supreme Committee Decisions and the Directive on Local Integration apply to Mosul and Sinjar?
  - RWG: According to the information gathered, the MoMD has sent the directive to all branches inside the country excluding the KRI. Only the governors of Diyala, Kirkuk, Kerbala, and Baghdad have agreed. However, the other governors have yet to confirm.
- Question: Has this directive been received as an FYI or request for support?
  - RWG: RWG has been engaging closely with MOMD to advocate for more choices for pathways to solutions beyond return but also to include local integration and relocation. The return grant is provided for families who return to areas of origin but there hasn't been a once-off grant for families who do not intend to return or who are unable to return. For further information, please refer to the Arabic version of the resolution link. The resolution from the Supreme Committee for IDPs is open information. Our understanding is that for now, MoMD is planning to pilot local integration in the southern governorates such as Najaf, Basra etc, and then roll out the process in other governorates once everything is in place.

### 3) DS Updates: DSTWG, and ABC Updates

(Please refer to the full presentation link for further details)

#### General DSTWG and DSTF Updates

##### DSTWG Meeting #23 12 October 2022

- DSTF Meeting Feedback
- DSTWG subgroup updates
- Social Cohesion sub-group presented on concept note and social cohesion themes
- Livelihoods subgroup to open call for interest and next steps

##### DSTWG Strategic Planning Retreat (26-27 October 2022)

Objectives:

- Discuss DSTWG planning for 2023 and beyond (priorities, transition etc.)
- Develop a 2023/2024 DSTWG Workplan

#### 4) REACH ReDS Assessment Presentation: Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district, Hawiga District, Kirkuk Governorate, Preliminary Findings Presentation

(Refer to the Presentation link for more details)

#### Recent Returns and Barriers to Return

##### Barriers to return

- The most frequently cited barriers for further returns included:
  - Lack of/limited jobs in AoOs;
  - Damaged/destroyed housing and challenging access to rehabilitation;
  - Lack of/limited access to basic public services, primarily healthcare and water;
  - Security concerns in AoOs; and
  - Missing personal documentation, namely IDs.

Access to Housing and Type of Tenure: Reportedly, most households in the sub-district resided in owned houses and had housing, land, and property (HLP) documents proving ownership.

Reported Proportion of Damaged Housing: 43%-50%

Perceptions on Social Cohesion: Reported strategies or initiatives to improve social cohesion:

- Organising seminars, awareness sessions, and conferences.
  - Suggested topics: cooperation and peacebuilding; discrimination; security and extremism; and social cohesion between different ethnicities.
- Initiatives promoting access to work for all; and,
- Initiatives promoting community inter-relationships.

#### AOB

- REACH: Aishah Karim and Cristina Carrandi will be leaving REACH Iraq Mission. Noteworthy, Cristina will remain in country.
- Next RWG meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2022.