

## **Terms of Reference Iraq Returns Working Group (RWG)<sup>1</sup>**

*Terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis*

### **Background**

Operating under the direction of the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), and overall leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, the Returns Working Group (RWG) will be the main information sharing and dissemination platform through which durable solutions will be advanced in Iraq among international and NGO humanitarian, development, stabilisation and peacebuilding actors. The group will ensure close linkages with government, existing entities, IASC Clusters and the Priority Working Groups of the UNSDCF, recognizing the broad set of stakeholders involved in the achievement of durable solutions.

RWG is intended as a broad-based platform with a large membership<sup>1</sup>. Its members will actively contribute to information, dialogue, data collection and dissemination, analysis and other topics directly relevant to durable solutions in Iraq, including humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding actors. RWG also functions to ensure close linkage and collaboration with government at technical and operational levels, promoting in particular principled approaches to durable solutions. Specifically, the work of RWG is focused around broader coordination, information sharing, data, issues related to durable solutions. RWG works in close concert with the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG), which serves a complementary function to RWG.

The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) established eight criteria for the achievement of durable solutions, which include approaches to ensure long term safety and security; non-discrimination; adequate standard of living; access to livelihoods and essential services; access to documentation; family reunification; participation in public affairs; and access to justice and effective remedies including the restoration of housing, land and property rights. Former IDPs, regardless of whether they return, locally integrate or settle elsewhere in the country, should be able to access rights on an equal standing with those who were not displaced. RWG recognizes that the implementation of effective and lasting solutions requires tailoring policies and approaches that are specific to the Iraq context.

### **Structure, Leadership and Membership**

Both the Returns Working Group (RWG) and Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) report to the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF) and form the core of the international community's durable solutions architecture in Iraq, seeking to operationalize the continuum between the humanitarian (Cluster) and development (UNSDCF) coordination architecture. All three mechanisms are designed to work in concert, with DSTF providing overall strategic direction and coherence at political level; RWG providing a broad-based platform for information sharing and dissemination and general coordination; and DSTWG serving as a technical forum developing and overseeing methodologies and operational plans, with a more limited membership. There will be a standing

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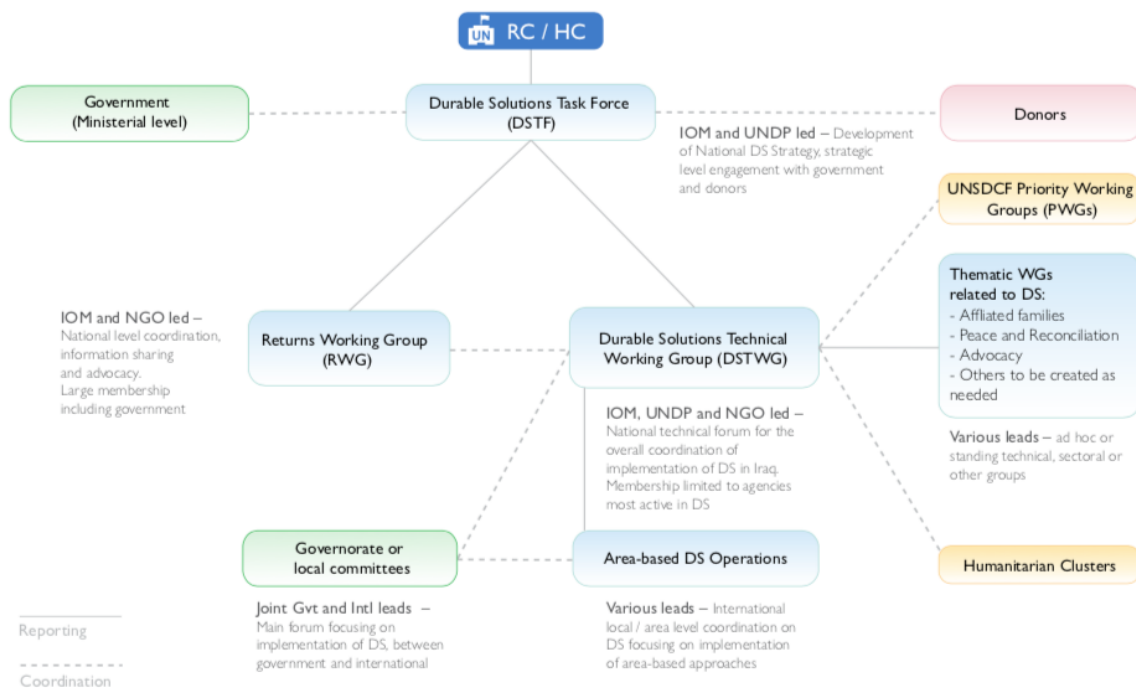
<sup>1</sup> The Returns Working Group (RWG) was initially created under strategic objective 3 of the 2016 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan "to support voluntary, safe and dignified return". As the context has evolved in 2020, the role and reporting line of RWG have been adjusted below to avoid duplication with other mechanisms and to formally incorporate RWG into the DS architecture in Iraq.

agenda item for DSTWG to provide updates at RWG to effectively enable linkages and communication between the groups and ensure that DSTWG updates can be channelled to a wider group.

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## DS Coordination Mechanism

حلول دائمة في العراق  
Iraq Durable Solutions



### Leads

The lead agencies of RWG are IOM and a non-governmental organization, selected on a bi-annual basis through an expression of interest and voting process, and endorsed by DSTF. The co-leads operate on the basis of equal partnership with financial independence to the extent possible and clear TORs. Lead agencies will undertake secretariat functions, including agendas, minutes and action points.

### Membership

Membership in RWG is open to the following entities: UN Agencies, national and international NGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, other working groups and Clusters, donors, embassies, private sector, CIMIC actors and the Government. Furthermore, RWG will strive to have among its members organisations representing the humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding sectors.

RWG will maintain observer status on the ICCG to feed into discussions with HCT, and join other working groups or platforms as observer as required.

## **Objective and Priorities**

RWG serves as the national level forum open to all interested partners to share and disseminate information, develop common positions and discuss key issues relevant to durable solutions in Iraq, encompassing humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding activities, and based on the strategic direction decided by DSTF.

Specifically, RWG will perform the functions as outlined below:

### Coordination

- Form linkages between actors to support the achievement of durable solutions, highlighting needs, gaps and priorities in areas across Iraq, with information fed from the DSTWG and area-level groups, where relevant;
- Form linkages between actors to support the achievement of durable solutions, highlighting needs, gaps and priorities in areas across Iraq, with information fed from the DSTWG and DSCGs where relevant; and
- Support DSTF-led joint resource mobilisation efforts to support durable solutions programming in Iraq.

### Information sharing and dissemination

- Produce and disseminate situation reports on returns and durable solutions;
- Produce and disseminate governorate-level snapshots and information regarding situations in areas of return;
- Share information in a timely fashion to inform humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding strategy development; and
- Share alerts or updates of new governorate directives or initiatives relating to returns and other durable solutions.

### Advocacy

- Under the overall advocacy strategy outlined by the DSTF, and linked closely to advocacy efforts led by DSTF and DSTWG, support advocacy in consultation with members and provide a space to coordinate advocacy initiatives of members of the WG decide to pursue; and
- Promote the coordination and sharing of an evidence base on DS through coordinating and facilitate data sharing or research projects.