

RETURNS WORKING GROUP- IRAQ

- ❖ Meeting Date: 28 June 2022
- ❖ Meeting Time: 11:00 am-13:00 pm
- ❖ Location: IOM Conference Room, Erbil & Remote connection via Teams

In Attendance: CCCM Cluster, Heartland Alliance International (HAI), UNDP, UNICEF- Baghdad, PRM - U.S. Consulate General- Erbil, USAID BHA, ICRC, IRC, OCHA, USAID/BHA, Dorcas Aid International, TdH-It, UNAMI-DSO, DG ECHO, DRC, ACTED/MCCCM -DPM, Malteser International, IOM, NRC, Heartland Alliance International (HAI), REACH, ECHO Erbil, and MERCY HANDS,

Agenda:

- 1) **Introduction and adoption of minutes:** Review of May minutes and follow up on action points.
- 2) **Context Update:** DTM Return Index 'Locations of No Returns' Report, CCCM, and RWG field updates
- 3) **NRC Presentation:** "Your house is your homeland", The impact of HLP rights on Sinjar returns.
- 4) **Updates from OCHA:** Update on Cluster Transition, Update on HNO/HRP.
- 5) **DSTWG Updates:** DSTF updates, ABC updates.
- 6) **REACH Presentation:** Ameriyat Al-Fallujah: IDP Needs and Challenges
- 7) **AOB**

Action	By who
N/A	

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

- Follow up on action Point from May's meeting
 1. Re-invite OCHA to provide updates on the Cluster Transition and HNO/HRP.
Status Update: Completed. For further information, please refer to the OCHA updates below.
 2. Re-invite NRC to present its latest report on " Your house is your homeland", which outlines the impact of HLP rights on Sinjar returns.
Status Update: Completed. the key findings and the relevant document links can be found below.

2) Context update: DTM, CCCM, and RWG field updates

DTM Return Index Thematic Series: Locations of No Return

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

- Locations of no return are those that recorded displacement during or since the 2014-2017 conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) but have either not subsequently recorded any returns or all returnees have subsequently been re-displaced.
- Locations of no return commonly have no key informant and few or no inhabitants and are therefore difficult to identify and monitor.
- As of March 2022, IOM-DTM identified 284 locations of no return across seven governorates.

Security concerns: were reported in 230 locations of no return

- Attacks by ISIL were the most prevalent concern, in 195 locations, most commonly in Hatra (44), Khanaqin (34) and Makhmur (29).
- Checkpoints controlled by armed groups were also identified as a security concern in 40 locations, most commonly in Al-Musayab, Babylon governorate and Dabes and Daquq in Kirkuk governorate.
- Unexploded ordnance and mines were a prevalent security concern in Makhmur district.

Key reasons for no return

- Residential destruction: Identified in 130
- Poor security situation: Identified in 128 locations
- Lack of services: Identified in 109 locations
- Blocked returns: Identified in 42 locations
- Drought: Identified in 20 locations
- Unexploded ordnance: Identified in 18 locations,
- Tribal and ethno-religious tensions: Identified in 16 locations

Discussion

- Question: A recent displacement of about 40 people from Ar-Rutbah to Jazirah al-Khaldiyah in the Ramadi district was perceived by the continuous military operations and the scarcity of agricultural resources. Is there any more information about that? Since intelligence anticipates the displacement of more households.
 - DTM: DTM has just completed a round of data collection on displacement. Please contact us @ iraqdtm@iom.int for additional information.
- Question: To distribute CRI in Kirkuk, MERCY HAND is conducting assessments on returns. Please provide a list of KIs from whom we may obtain information on returnees in the area.
 - DTM: Please get in touch with us via iraqdtm@iom.int to provide you with the needed information.
 - RWG: Every three months, the IRAQ RWG generates an output that provides an overview of the areas with no returns. The DTM report delves into more detail and their information could help partners better target interventions which can help resolve some of the reasons for no return.

CCCM Cluster Updates: Camps and Informal Site Update

- At the camp level, WFP is now switching to targeted modalities of food delivery. Data collecting has already begun in several camps. The targeted distribution will begin next month, with the attention reverting to the MOMD for the continuation of in-kind distribution in the same camps.
- **Informal sites:** The CCCM cluster and OCHA will host a meeting in Ramadi on the Anbar informal site to discuss the humanitarian transition strategy, the humanitarian needs of the area, and the humanitarian service delivery going forward. The purpose of the meeting is to frame together various actors to discuss longer-term needs and find solutions for the families who are in protected displacement, shifting from a humanitarian approach toward durable solutions. Following the meeting, we will develop a list of concrete action points that have been agreed upon to set strategic objectives concerning the sites. Representatives from the East Anbar ABC will be present at the conference to discuss how to proceed with government engagement. The RWG members will be kept updated.

Discussion

- Question: Is the upcoming meeting on Ramadi informal sites a bilateral meeting between the two entities, CCCM and OCHA? Could you please share the meeting link with the interested actors to join?
 - CCCM: The conference will be hosted by the CCCM cluster and OCHA, as well as key site actors including WASH actors, and Primary DS actors namely IOM, and DRC. The minutes and agreed-upon action items will be shared

widely so that any recommendations may be implemented moving forward. The meeting will be held in person in Ramadi, and it will primarily involve the operational actors.

RWG filed Updates:

KR-I Updates:

Reverse returns from Sinjar:

- Reverse returns from Sinjar: From January 2021 up to the 9th of June 2022, DMCR received 743 requests from the families who want to re-admit to Dahuk.
- The requests to return increased in May, after the conflict in Sinuni which witnessed the highest number of returnees since the beginning of reverse return in 2021.

Erbil returns movements: Return from Erbil camps remains shy and limited despite increased conflicting information about MOMD and WFP decrease of assistance.

Centre South Updates:

National Update – Emergency Food Bill

Executive Summary: Iraq's members of parliament voted for the "Emergency Support to Food Security and Development" bill on June 8, the bill will allow the government to use public funds for urgent food security and development needs.

According to a **brief statement** on the parliament's website, the law aims "to achieve food security, curb poverty, achieve financial stability in light of urgent global developments, to continue providing services to citizens." The new law seeks to be a partial alternative to the **official budget for 2022**, whose approval has been so far hampered by the political crisis in the country.

Ninewa Updates

Sinjar Context

- As of mid-June 2022, civilian demonstrations are ongoing, requesting the government and international community to interfere and stop/ prevent clashes between ISF and other armed groups
- Return movements are notably decreasing, DMCR reported 16 HHs (93 ind.) returned in May 2022
- A committee (MoMD, DMCR & BCF) was established to follow with the 670 IDP HHs whom displaced Sinjar and remained in Dahuk due to the recent conflict and decide whether to re-admit them to Dahuk camps or look for other solutions
- Drought is negatively impacting Sinjar; water sources are decreasing while water trucking price is increased

Discussion

- Question: regarding the 2,400 HHs return plan to Babil – does that refer to families from Jurf Al Sakar?
 - RWG Field: we're referring to the families who were displaced from the al Iskandaria villages. Making a distinction between the two circumstances is crucial (Jurf Al Sakar, and al Iskandaria). The Jurf's situation is so delicate, there is no hope for the family to return home currently. There are, however, a few positive signs that the al Iskandaria families would eventually return.
- Question: Given that we are now in the translation stage, ACTED is working in the informal sites and has contributed to the development of some of the existing strategies under the eco-livelihood project. Do you deal with a certain focal point? Would you mind providing the contact details? Please elaborate further on the funds designated for social affairs that you mentioned.

- RWG Field: The UN and MoLSA are in high-level discussions on initiating the registration process for those who have returned from the Jeddah center, including the formation of a committee. Due to the fact that the majority of the returnees are households headed by females, frequently experience ignorance from the host community and the government. RWG is advocating for vulnerable families, especially FHHs who meet the minimum threshold required by MoLDA. Hopefully, the same approach will be considered for all camps and the informal sites' households. Further information will be shared in the upcoming meetings.
- Regarding returnees from Turkey - are they being directly transferred to their AoO? In that case, are they encountering any bottlenecks in terms of community acceptance? what kind of expenses government is taking care of?
 - RWG Field: Yes, they are travelling to to AoOs. No, they typically do not have any problems with community acceptability. As far as I know, individuals have been returning from Turkey for years with no connected obstacles. According to our knowledge, MoMD offers transportation.

3) NRC Presentation: Your House is Your Homeland, How Housing, Land, and Property Rights Influence Returns in Sinjar

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

Accessibility—or inaccessibility—of HLP is a significant factor in return decisions to Sinjar:

- 89% of returnees report owning a home
- 71% of IDPs indicate that they do not own their own home
- Sunni Arabs report both higher rates of home ownership and higher rates of documentation than Yazidis, which of course makes sense given the historical barriers to land ownership for Yazidis.

Dispute resolution mechanisms differ between return and displacement:

- Both IDPs and returnees prefer informal customary mechanisms when asked to compare
74% of Yazidi returnees indicated that they would rely on formal dispute resolution mechanisms, and that customary methods are unavailable because community dispute resolution social structures remain displaced
- By contrast, Sunni and Yazidi IDPs indicated that they would rely on customary dispute resolution mechanisms and that formal mechanisms are slow (Yezidis) and discriminatory (Sunnis)

Discussion

- Question: It was mentioned that you have interviewed 1250 Yazidis and 179 Suni Arabs, which makes up the 1/7th of the Yazidis numbers, does this affect the finding of this research?
 - NRC: Given that there is a huge number of social factors that are specific to this community, there are different ways you could interpret this research. One reason that was chosen to introduce such a large number of Yazidis, while to have a comparison group primarily between the Yazidis who have stayed in displacement and Yazidis who have returned and there are a few identified Suni returnees. The focus of the survey was the Yazidi community.
- Question: Was the research focusing on specific parts of Sinjar or it was across all the different locations that are in Sinjar?
 - NRC: Regarding the locations, the survey was mainly conducted in Markaz Sinjar and in the displacement area, Khankey Camp and the surrounding areas for that camp. Certainly, the barriers are different for Sunis and the Yazidis. The Yazidis are suffering from the lack of services, a uniting feature that was shared in the presentation that both communities are concerned about the lack of social cohesion and the security situation. That was a factor across all communities although Yazidi IDPs tend to focus more on the lack of services.
- Do you think that the provision of loans would address some of the challenges that have been highlighted in the research?

- NRC: Without knowing more about how that might be received in the community, it would be difficult to predict whether that would come after the other concerns, which are typically now primarily security-related, and the studies indicate that they will be able to access protective mechanisms since they didn't feel the court treated them fairly or security groups that support them. For the people who are living in Sinjar are those who have returned because they haven't been able to find a solution, while for the people who have decided to not return to Sinjar, the lack of security was more of a reason than a lack of services which would suggest that people aren't willing to gain back access to their lands back and rebuild their houses there.
- Question: In the past, there used to be quite a huge issue of a secondary occupation of housing. Did that feature at all in the research?
 - NRC: Tremendously, although it wasn't included in the presentation slides. However, a significant percentage of the local population—nearly 50%—is believed to be living in someone else's home. However, the majority of the homeowners who participated in the study stated that they knew the name of the occupiers of their property. If the owner attempted to regain the property, it doesn't necessarily follow that they would leave; moreover, there is little risk of a future dispute.

4) Updates from OCHA: Update on Cluster Transition, Update on HNO/HRP.

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

Humanitarian Response in Iraq 2022 Priorities and Targets

- The Humanitarian Country Team aims to provide lifesaving and life-sustaining assistance to 991,000 IDPs and returnees in 2022.
 - Target: 33% reduction from 2021 (1.5M)
 - PIN: 41% reduction from 2021 (4.1M)
 - Acute PIN: 61% reduction from 2021 (2.4M)
- **Overall People In Need & Severity:** "Severity expresses the degree of unmet needs - it describes 'how bad' (i.e. the intensity) the situation is for different groups or in different geographic areas, while the PIN expresses the overall magnitude of needs by the number of people affected." Magnitude refers to the number of people affected, while Intensity is the degree of severity. Acute PIN are the number of people, facing needs that reach extreme or catastrophic levels.
 - Sinjar (ranked 18 in 2020) and Hawiga (ranked 13 in 2020) are new to the top 5.
 - Mosul, Erbil, Sumail, Falluja were in the top 5 last year.
 - Falluja and Hawiga driven by the needs of returnees

Update on Transition

Re-cap of transition process to date

- Ongoing government engagement at federal, regional, governorate and local levels since late 2021
- Three retreats for inclusive discussions on parameters of transition
- Establishment of Transition Advisory Group and Localization Working Group
- Ongoing engagement with DSTF, DSTWG, ABCs on linkages and referrals
- Development of Draft Strategic Transition Roadmap, Cluster Transition Roadmaps, Transition Key Messages and Cluster Risk Analysis
- Draft Roadmaps on camp-specific solutions and prioritization of informal sites

Cluster Intentions for Coordination Structures

- CLA Leadership in New Form:
 - CCCM (CLA internalized)

- Protection (strategic forum)
 - Food (Agricultural WG)
- Government-led Sector:
 - Education
 - Health
 - Child Protection
 - GBV
 - Mine Action
 - WASH
- DSTWG/ABC Role?
 - CCCM (informal sites)
 - Health (collaboration)
 - Protection (coordination)
 - Shelter (coordination)
 - Mine Action (linkages)
 - Cash WG (linkages)
- Question: How did you measure the needs and determine where to intervene in terms of priority indicators?
 - OCHA: All figures are available online via the links below. A thorough analysis predicated on the REACH MCNA data. 17 intersectoral indicators were collectively chosen. To support the planning process, each cluster had its own analysis based on resources other than MCNA, by population and district, as well as a breakdown of the activities.
- **PIN and Severity Estimates Dashboard ([here](#))** – Provides a breakdown and comparison of PIN and severity by district. The dashboard offers a map visualization of the intersectoral and cluster estimates of PIN and severity, which can be viewed by PIN and acute PIN, population group, and severity.
- **Iraq HRP 2022 PIN and Targets Dashboard ([here](#))** – Provides a breakdown of PIN and target (in the same view) by district. The dashboard offers a map visualization of the PIN, acute PIN, and targets, which can be viewed by district, population group and cluster.
- **Needs Comparison Dashboard ([here](#))** – Provides the percentage of households acutely affected by each indicator of need at a national, governorate or district level. The dashboard enables governorates and districts to be compared side by side, and shows what indicators are driving the estimates of People in Need (PIN) and people targeted for humanitarian assistance for the selected area(s).
- HNO: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/document/iraq-humanitarian-needs-overview-2022>
- HRP: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/document/iraq-humanitarian-response-plan-2022>
- Humanitarian Bulletin on the transition: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/document/iraq-humanitarian-bulletin-may-june-2022-en>

5) DSTWG Updates: DSTWG, and BC Update

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

General DSTWG Updates

- DSTWG presented at HCT retreat
 - Transition: clusters mostly handover to Gov / some coordination/tech guidance workflows into DS.
 - DSTF will consider the inclusion of cluster/sector focal points among the membership of the ABCs
- ABC focal points
 - The next DSTF meeting will endorse the nominated focal points for the following ABCs: Kirkuk (2); Baaj (1); Diyala (1); SAD (1); W-Anbar (1)

6) REACH Presentation: Ameriyat Al-Fallujah: IDP Needs and Challenges

(Refer to the Presentation link and factsheet for more details)

Assessment Methodology:

- Multi-sectoral assessment tool, which combined qualitative and quantitative data.
- Data collection was done in-person between 8 and 9 February 2022.
- Due to the sampling methods used for the assessment, findings should be considered as indicative.

Concerns and Provisions for Support

Concerns:

- Access to Humanitarian Assistance.
- Household Finances and Expenditure.
- Other Concerns include; Housing conditions in AoO/ AoD, Access to basic goods and services, and Access to legal services.
- Movement restrictions.

Assistance Needed

- Provision of financial support.
- Ensuring livelihood opportunities.
- Distribution of food assistance.
- Improved access to basic services, particularly healthcare.
- Shelter rehabilitation for families, either in their AoD or AoO.
- Access to legal assistance.

Potential Needs Outside AAF

- **Livelihoods:** Some HoHHs relayed that they required assistance to secure livelihoods outside the site.
- **Cash Assistance:** The majority of HoHHs reported that they required cash assistance to facilitate their stay outside AAF.
- **Shelter and Housing:** Most HoHHs noted that they required shelter rehabilitation in their AoOs.
- **Personal Documentation:** Some HoHHs shared that their family members did not have valid personal documentation, at the time of data collection.

Changes to Basis Services since AAF Camp Closure

- Since AAF's reclassification, almost all HoHHs experienced changes in accessing food due to the cessation of food assistance programmes.
- Changes in access to healthcare, water, and education were not commonly reported.

Discussion

- Question: could you please clarify if just 3 out of 25 reported on the unavailability of formal schools in AAF because there are three formal schools functioning in addition to the distance learning during the COVID-19 lock down.

- REACH: The head of household interviewed reported that access to the school remained unchanged. Some schools are operated by partners. Nonetheless, there are a number of challenges encountered, that which REACH attempted to outline within the report.
- Question: Have the intentions results been validated against other intentions data (e.g. CCCM)? The survey indicates a significant change in intentions since the last IOM Sweep Survey results, we saw last year in which the majority indicated they had no intention to return (only 20% had intention to leave in the upcoming 6 months). So, it would be interesting to unpack more what conditions have contributed to these shifting perceptions in the interim.
 - REACH: The intentions data for the AAF report was extracted from the REACH Intentions Survey conducted yearly in coordination with the CCCM cluster. This assessment was conducted in August 2021, almost a year ago and before the reclassification of the site. These may be some of the reasons to have different reported data, in addition that IDP households' plans could have shifted after the reclassification of the site. We are happy to discuss internally how can we further analyze what conditions have contributed to these shifting perceptions for IDP households in this specific site. For additional general information, please find [here](#) the REACH Intentions Survey Report for August 2021 at AoO level, and [here](#) the report at Governorate of displacement level.

AOB

- IRAQ RWG reminded participants that there will be an online Kurdish training on Introduction to Durable Solutions, scheduled to take place on Monday, July 4th, 2022. The applications are to be submitted by Today COB, June 28th, 2022. We anticipate to have further trainings in English and Arabic this year.
- Next RWG meeting scheduled for July 26, 2022.