

RETURNS WORKING GROUP- IRAQ

- ❖ **Meeting Date:** 27 July 2021
- ❖ **Meeting Time:** 11:00 am-1:00 pm
- ❖ **Location:** Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Dorcas, ACF, IMC, Yazda, PRM/ RIDPA, US Embassy, SIF, UNICEF, UNDP, National Protection Cluster, HLP sub-cluster, Sorouh, UNMAS, UNAMI-JAU, COMSEC, WFP, OCHA, IVY, UNAMI-DSO, WVI, GIZ, DRC, JICA, Help, Mercy Corps, Samaritan's Purse, REACH, ICRC, PUI, Ta'afi Program, SEDO, Peace Winds Japan, INTERSOS, NCCI, PAH, IOM

Agenda Items:

- 1) **Introduction and adoption of minutes:** Review of previous minutes; Follow up on action points from previous meeting
- 2) **Context Update:** DTM Update, CCCM Updates, Key governorate updates
- 3) **DSTWG update:** DSTF updates, ABC updates
- 4) **DORCAS presentation:** Sinjar Rapid Market and Needs Assessment
- 5) **AOB**

Action Points to follow up by next meeting:

Action	By who
Update on Sunni Endowment compensation scheme	RWG

Key Discussion Points/ Action:

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

- The chair gave an overview of the previous meeting after the introductions, as well as a review of the agenda items.

- 2) **Context update:** DTM Update, CCCM Updates, Key governorate updates

(Presentation attached for more details on DTM updates)

Key DTM updates:

- The data collection for ILA VI, Master List Round 122 and Displacement Index is completed, covering May, June and July
- Datasets will be available early August
- Overview of returns in Iraq in 2020
 - Between December 2019 and December 2020, the returnee population grew by 235,116, equivalent to roughly 39,186 households. This is around half the number of returnees recorded in the previous year, when 431,130 individuals returned (December 2018 to December 2019).
 - As of December 2020, Ninewa hosted the largest number of returnees (1,889,154 individuals), with 73 per cent of the population displaced from that governorate having since returned.
 - As of December 2020, 10 per cent of all returnees in Iraq live in severe conditions, equivalent to 484,548 individuals.
 - As of December 2020, 177,096 returnees reside in shelters in critical condition

- Very few hotspots recorded a significant improvement in access to services over the course of 2020, though some districts such as Telafar, Ninewa Governorate, had low severity for services across all hotspots.
- While there was limited variation in social cohesion over the course of 2020, there was a pronounced escalation in severity recorded in May and June. For the most part, this increase in severity can be attributed to a worsening in daily public life and limited freedom of movement associated with the restriction measures introduced to curb the spread of COVID-19.
- Overall, more hotspots recorded high severity for safety and security driver than for any other driver.

CCCM updates:

- Anticipated closure of **AAF camp**, but it is currently on pause. No update from authorities on a specific plan.
- **Jeddah camp**: facilitated departures planned to resume again in August

Key governorate updates:

- **Ninewa:**
 - Compensation
 - In June 2021, Ninewa received 28+ billion IQD as compensation allocation
 - Compensation department directly disbursed allocations to beneficiaries
 - 2,700 beneficiaries, out of 35,301 fully approved files, were covered by this batch
 - Beneficiaries get money from Al Rasheed Bank- Mosul branch
 - Around 22,000 files are not fully approved yet, at Baghdad level
 - Selection criteria is random, depending on correctly applied forms
 - The HLP sub-cluster mentioned that a recent meeting with the Compensation Committee confirmed that 295 billion IQD has been allocated for compensation (less than 10% allocated to Ninewa). Disbursement currently ongoing are for approved claims from 2018. Beneficiaries are reportedly disappointed with the disbursement, as the amount is low compared to the needs and claims submitted in 2018.
 - A letter recently published in social media confused the compensation fund with reconstruction fund, though they are separate funds. This letter led to beneficiaries thinking that some of the reconstruction fund would be used for compensation. More information on compensation procedures available on this [link](#).
 - 296 IDPs departed from Khazer & Hasan Sham camps to various areas of Ninewa. MoMD did not provide transportation but supported returnees with security clearance processing and movement through checkpoints.
 - Returns from Duhok to Sinjar decreased in the last few months. Authorities attribute reasons to political instability, lack/ insufficient services and insufficient assistance to returnee HHs.
 - MoMD facilitated the return of **77 individuals** from Turkey to Ninewa. This is the second return movement from Turkey that MoMD recently facilitates (**on 19 June, 70 IDPs** returned from Turkey to Ninewa as well)
- Hawija, Kirkuk
 - Hawija ABC roundtable with Kirkuk authorities was conducted on 13 July 2021.
 - Initial draft of roundtable report (Arabic) will be finalized soon. The report to be shared with authorities for feedback, and then translated into English to support in drafting Hawija ABC PoA
 - Wider outreach with non-ABC members and Hawija GCM members already conducted
 - Draft for the Hawija PoA by the ABC (tentatively next month)
- **Salah al-din**

- As of 15th July 2021, 239 IDP HHs have received the security badge to facilitate their return to Sayid Ghareeb,
- Return to Channel 34
- No developments regarding Ahbab Tal Al-Thahab, Al-Auja, Al-Asriyah neighborhood and 50 villages in Seniyah
- Eviction of women and their children by relevant security authorities from Shirqat/Eitha village and MoMD to Jadaa 5 camp
- **Anbar**
 - Following the fire incident in Ashty camp in Suly las week, the MoMD has asked for more efforts from the operational agencies in Anbar to support the return of the IDPs from the camp back to their AoOs. No time has been identified for potential camp closure
- **Babylon:**
 - Official announcement was made by the head of Al-Azim political alliance on 23rd July 2021 to announce for a regular, studied and well-prepared return of IDPs to Jurf Al-Sakhar.
- ABC Roundtable discussions held with key governmental stakeholders in East and West Anbar, Diyala and Salah al-Din
- Timelines have been set for the initial version of the DS POAs – End of August 2021
- **National update:** The Sunni endowment has established a committee responsible for providing compensation and cash support to IDPs, the TORs/structure/way forward are not finalized yet. National budget has allocated 40 billion IQD for grants to IDPs and additional 10 billion IQD for reconciliation-related compensations

Discussion:

- Question: 1) What are the challenges in classifying the issue of 177,000 returnees with shelter concerns compared to people who have achieved return as a durable solution; 2) Is there/ could there be work done on understanding the intentions of those people to return or if return was the preferred option; and 3) Is there is more information on the challenges faced in services (i.e. specific concerns and breakdown)?
 - When approaching the issue of critical shelter, DTM asks key informants to provide them with the number of returnees in a given area and their shelter type, from which it could be determined whether those returnees live in critical shelter and are in a vulnerable situation. However, DTM does not have the opportunity to approach individual IDPs and ask about intentions as that would require household level data collection, but it was mentioned that a section focusing on services within the Return Index (and RI dashboard) on the DTM website provides more information on governmental services, including water, electricity, health, education.
- Question: Is there more information on families transferred from Al Hol to Jadaa 5?
 - CCCM explained that they can refer partners separately to people/ organizations who have information on Al Hol returns.
- Question: Does IOM have an updated list for the number of IDPs from Jurf al-Sakhar since late 2014?
 - The new dataset will be available early August with the relevant information.
- Question: are there any advocacy efforts or updates regarding the families who were evicted to Jadaa 5?
 - NPC explained that the HC had raised this issue with relevant authorities and MoMD, adding that in cases where a decision is taken by authorities, those authorities, and not the humanitarian community, are responsible for transporting people to the camp. Upon arrival at the camp, IDPs are entitled to assistance as needed. Should a trend be seen in the transfer of these households to the camp due to similar issues surrounding perceived affiliation, these households will become entitled to assistance on the basis of vulnerability. The need for assistance arose from the authorities permitting these families to only take clothing and IDs with them. More information is expected as the HC continues negotiating on this issue.

- Question: How does the endowment disbursements fit in with the existing compensation mechanism and other grants provided to IDPs?
 - RWG to share any information once more updates are received in this regard.
- Around 286 HHs initially expected to return to Jurf al Sakhr. However, this number is subject to change at any time due to the fluid situation.

3) **DSTWG update:** DSTF updates, ABC updates

(Presentation attached for more details)

Key points:

▪ **UNSDCF updates:**

- As mentioned previously, priority 5 of UNSDCF
 - After the Joint Steering Committee (7-8 April), an additional Strategic Priority Area was included for Durable Solutions.
 - Alignment with national level priorities, plans and frameworks.
 - UNSDCF can contribute up to \$1.8 billion towards development related Durable Solutions programming for UN agencies (2020 – 2024)
 - Activities under UNSDCF will be implemented in the same priority areas; two additional locations (Baghdad and Babylon) under the National Plan.
 - The signing ceremony of the UNSDCF is scheduled to take place in September.

▪ **DSTWG and ABC updates**

- Local authority roundtables completed in Anbar, Ninewa, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and Diyala.
- Currently, outreach and consultation underway with partners and communities in those five governorates.
- Sinjar Plan of Action (PoA) draft I is close to complete pending final edits This will be followed by feedback sessions with the local government authorities, civil society, non-governmental stakeholders, translation and layout prior to circulation
- Additional PoAs for the other areas are being drafted now. Completion of the PoAs anticipated by end of September, allowing sufficient time for review, consultation, translation, etc.
- Feedback from DSTWG members
 - While PoAs have been drafted following local government and partner consultations, we will share the finalized Sinjar PoA and feedback from DSTWG members
 - We welcome review on substantive elements (geographic and sectoral priorities, gaps, etc.), we are especially interested in normative elements, e.g., input on format, key elements and sections to include, etc., such that the POAs respond to the needs of all stakeholders
- Next steps:
 - Looking into the expansion of geographical areas
 - Procedures to create a new ABC group (mapping, selection criteria, etc.)

Discussion:

- Is the \$1.8 billion or funding required for the intended activities in UNSDCF Pillar 5 secured?
 - DSTF mentioned that most of the funding is not yet confirmed but is in the process. Therefore, the budget refers to the required funding including confirmed and yet to be confirmed funding.

4) **DORCAS presentation:** Sinjar Rapid Market and Needs Assessment

(Presentation attached for more details)

Key points:

- Purpose and objective of Rapid Market and Need Assessment (RMNA):
 - RMNA, in general, focused on evaluating the overall situation among the IDP, returnee, and host community of Sinjar district (Sinjar center, Sinuni sub-district, and sardashte), with particular emphasis on economic reality within the locations. The evaluation of economic reality focused on different subjects that included material and human needs in order to improve different production sectors by focusing on agriculture, livestock, poultry, and short and long-term small business grants (SBG) in particular.
- 4 FGDs were conducted among the groups of people in the locations; (two FGDs in Sinuni, one in Sinjar, and one in Sardashte).
- 6 KIs were conducted in the locations with Sinuni Sub mayor, Sinuni and Sinjar DOAs, Sardashte, a Mukhtar in Sinuni, and a shop owner in Sinjar).
- 173 individual HH interviews conducted.
- Females (Girls and Women): Generally vulnerable groups, such as FHHs and widows do not have access to job opportunities
- Males (Boys and Men): Lack of job opportunities, despite available manpower
- People with Disabilities (PWDs): Have access to job opportunities but this depends on their gender and physical ability (if they have skills, able bodied and culturally acceptable).
- Cash for work activities are considered as the most suitable work for youth and adult males.
- The suitable and preferred businesses for young and adult women were sewing and beauty salons, while for youth & adult men, barber and electrical skills were considered as the most suitable and preferred.
- Seasonal and multi-seasonal businesses are considered the most important sources of income in Sinjar and Sinuni only. In general, the suitable and preferred groups of people to work under this activity were youth, adults, and the elderly for both genders.
- Livestock farming was considered a suitable business for all groups of people and ages.

Discussion:

- Question: Were there any other sectors affecting how people could access employment? For example, does access to water have any links to a business or farms' ability to start up/ operate? And what can partners do to address some of the needs in this regard?
 - Dorcas explained that this assessment was done for specific reasons, focusing mainly on food security and livelihoods, where the findings would inform Dorcas' future plans. During their visit to these areas and the FGDs conducted, it was found that further development was needed in all areas, such as farming, machinery, and irrigation and to find solutions to tackle dry seasons. Manufacturing and factories were also perceived as needing development, with support from authorities.

AOB