

IRAQ DURABLE SOLUTIONS NETWORK

SUPPORTING DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO DISPLACEMENT - VOLUNTARY RETURNS

Initiated by IOM and in partnership with the Government of Iraq (GOI), a network of humanitarian, stabilisation and development actors (the "Iraq Durable Solutions Network"(DSN)) is providing direct support to internally displaced populations in addressing their displacement status, principally through facilitated, sustainable and voluntary returns, while also advocating for relocation and local integration where possible. DSN approaches build on the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs, the Iraq Principled Returns Framework and the Iraq Returns Working Group Protracted Displacement Framework,¹ and include a number of operational safeguards to ensure physical, legal, and material safety, and non-discriminatory, voluntary, dignified, inclusive, informed, and durable departures from areas of displacement.

The support is multi-sectoral in nature, including shelter, livelihoods, restoration of access to basic services, MHPSS, social cohesion / peacebuilding and safety and security, with protection mainstreamed as a central element of the operational framework. Processes outlined below therefore form a comprehensive strategy that includes effective responses to the immediate needs of populations whilst ensuring long-term investment in solutions to displacement. Interventions are designed to respond to household-level, short-term needs and at the same time contribute to longer-term community-level recovery. As such, both returning IDPs and vulnerable host community members in areas of origin benefit from the multi-sectoral support described above. More details on the steps in the process are included below, noting the non-prescriptive nature of the workflow, allowing for tailoring and contextualization to suit specific operational contexts.

SENSITIZATION

1

Following a planning meeting with camp management, sensitization is initiated through camp-wide dissemination of printed information material and frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding details of the project. This is then followed by an open information session between DSN partners, government counterparts, and households that may have an intention to depart the camp. During the session, participants receive information on registration processes, departure support services, and other activities.

REGISTRATION AND HOUSEHOLD ASSESSMENT

2

Registration is facilitated through help desks established in camps to register households that may wish to depart OR participate in go and see visits. During registration, prospective areas of destination are determined, household level needs are assessed, and processes to facilitate freedom of movement by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD) are initiated. Where help desks cannot be physically present in camp, help lines can be used to register households remotely.

HOST COMMUNITY SENSITIZATION

3

Multi-level engagement with authorities takes place at the district, subdistrict, and community levels, following stakeholder mapping to ensure that return will not create or exacerbate tensions. Community level leaders are also engaged in the sensitization of the wider population through printed key messages. Host community sensitization is supplemented with key informant interviews to assess the identification of community level conditions, return related risks, the presence of explosive hazards, and the degree of social tensions. All information collected informs community-level planning.

Go and See/ Come and Tell Visits

Households have the option to participate in visits to their areas of origin prior to departing camps to see conditions first-hand and to engage in dialogue with local authorities. When visits may not be possible households can participate in 'Come-and-Tell' visits to the camp by authorities for dialogue sessions with households

DEPARTURE

4

Following confirmation of household level freedom of movement and return intentions, departure support services are initiated. This includes information sharing with households on departure-related logistics, including asset removal, transportation and potential NFI needs, as well as notification of local authorities of departures to ease movement from camps to areas of destination. For property owners in locations where shelter interventions may be taking place, households participate in shelter specific information sessions and HLP support services. Upon arrival, returns are registered by MOMD and households are supported with 'departure and reinstallation cash grants' to address immediate needs.

MULTI-SECTORAL AREA BASED INTERVENTIONS

5

Household and community level multi-sectoral operations are initiated in the areas of destination. This also includes support to host community populations following household profiling to assess needs and level of vulnerability. DSN partners provide support related to shelter (rehabilitation or reconstruction, including HLP support and explosives removal; livelihoods support, including cash assistance and sustainable livelihoods; restoring basic services; and protection. Where required, social cohesion, safety and security and MHPSS support is also available.

POST RETURN MONITORING AND RESPONSE

6

Initial check-in calls to households are carried out 1-2 weeks after arrival, through the Iraq Information Centre (IIC). Referrals to partners are facilitated for household-level, multi-sectoral services based on assessment findings. Where necessary, more in-depth sectoral assessments take place. Within 3-6 months after arrival, post-return monitoring surveys at the household and community level are used to detect exposure to protection risks, monitor tensions and safety, and assess the durability of departures based on a household's ability to re-integrate and other factors.

¹ Under the Returns Working Group Protracted Displacement Framework obstacles to return faced by internally displaced persons have been grouped into three categories, each with a set of activities and intervention types. Category 1 focuses strictly on resource related obstacles, category 2 focuses on social cohesion and reconciliation, and category 3 looking at security and blocked returns. The framework however acknowledges that IDPs can fall into more than one category.