

RETURNS WORKING GROUP- IRAQ

- ❖ **Meeting Date:** 31st of Sep 2021
- ❖ **Meeting Time:** 11:00 am-1:30 pm
- ❖ **Location:** Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: PRM/RIDPA, CRS, World Vision International, REACH, SEDO, UNDP FSS, TGH, ASB, UNAMI/DSO, IOM, GIZ, SSDF, MI, DRC, PPO, CPSC, WFP, USAID/BHA, FCDO, NCCI, UNDP, CCCM Cluster, PPO

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) **Refaato presentation:** Reconstruction Fund for areas affected by terrorist operations
- 4) **DSTWVG Update:** ABC and DS Updates
- 5) **REACH presentation:** Al- Seniya REDS
- 6) **AOB**

Action Points to follow up by next meeting:

Action	By who
Update concerning the Suni Endowment compensation scheme	RWVG/ Pending

Key Discussion Points/ Action:

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

- Overview of the previous meeting minutes, review of pending action point and today's meeting agenda.

- 2) **Context update:** DTM and CCCM Updates

(Presentation attached for more details on DTM update)

Key DTM updates:

- No new return index and master list data for this month, next update will be in October.
- ILA and Dashboard will be available at the end of Sept.

Districts of Origin Factsheet

- A new Protracted Displacement Districts of Origin Factsheet will be published in the first week of September.
- Factsheet will provide information on 25 locations covering Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah-Al-Din.

- The factsheets provide information on IDPs, locations of displacement, movement intentions, return movements and situations of return, etc.
- Return index will be available early October.

Discussion:

- Question: Is this a new product and how often will it be updated?
 - DTM last did the Districts of Origin Factsheet two years ago and we will not update it until at least another year.
 - The information is already available on the DTM site but the factsheets are more accessible for those needing a quick reference.
- Will the more detailed analysis include specific information about barrier of return/causes of protracted displacement?
 - The product does have information about movement intentions but some of what you may be looking for will require reverse analysis which DTM does not do in this product. REACH does some of that in some of their products.

CCCM updates:

- AFF consolidation will take place soon, date to be confirmed with authorities.

Discussion:

- We understand that the IOM facilitated returns are pending/delayed in AAF, do we know why? And will the facilitated returns happen at the same time with the camp consolidation process.
 - The facilitated returns have been delayed due to security clearances. Further details can be provided by IOM colleagues.
 - On the facilitated returns and the camp consolidation process, the agreement with the authorities is that the facilitated returns process should be completed and then the consolidation will be done.

3) REFAATO Presentation: About Refaato, Activities and Operations

(See Refaato presentation for more details)

- REFAATO acronym stands for: Reconstruction Fund for Areas Affected by Terrorist Operations.
- The Fund was established by decree 28 of the 2015 Federal budget law. Decree 2 of 2015 established the terms of reference, restructured in 2017 and accredited by COMSEC in 2017. The fund is chaired by Dr Mohammed Al-Ani.
- Area mandate for the fund: Anbar, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, Ninewa, North Babil, Baghdad Belt (Abo Ghareeb and parts of Kirkuk).
- The Fund is the main body that coordinated between international organizations and Iraqi line ministries for reconstruction operations.

Key objectives of the Fund

- To contribute to restoring the status quo ante of areas affected by the conflict with ISIS.
- Focus is on infrastructure rehabilitation and restoration of basic services to enable displaced citizens to return to their homes and cities, revitalization of local economies and improve standard of living. These include access to water, sanitation provision, electricity, solid waste management and debris removal.

How the fund works

- Donor/Loan funded projects: Coordinates and monitors the implementation of loans provided to Iraq eg, the *World Bank loan* and the *German Development Bank loan*, which are implemented by sectoral ministries or through grants such as the Kuwaiti grant for the health sector, the Chinese grant for municipal machineries, and the Czech grant for different sectors in Hamdaniya.
 - The fund also seeks to identify grants, donations and loans
- Federal Budget projects: Direct implementation of projects presented to it from governorates from federal budget allocations.
 - Set priorities for projects in the affected governorates with local authorities
- Follow up on implementation of all projects and policy work around the implementation of these projects.

Sources of Funding

- Federal budget, loans (eg Emergency Operation for Development and Additional Funds from World Bank and KfW Bank) and grants (Kuwait grant for health sector, Czech grant for electricity and health for Hamdaniya and Ninewa, China grant for municipal machinery)

Selection Criteria for Projects

- Population density, level of damage (no projects with less than 70% overall damage are undertaken), scale of proposed project (cost and coverage of communities), level of benefit to the target communities.
- Projects with outstanding legal issues are not taken.

Linkage between REFAATO and National Plan

- The National plan includes some activities for which the REFAATO will be responsible for (particularly the rehabilitation/reconstruction of the damaged infrastructures)
- National Plan Fund should finance the implementation of projects but to date no funding has been assigned to by the Supreme Committee for relief and support displaced.
- REFAATO is a member of the Supreme Committee

Status of Projects

- Since 2016 to date, out of 996 projects 811 projects have been completed.
- Geographical coverage: Of the 811 completed projects, 311 were completed in Anbar, followed by Ninewa with 126 and Diyala with 118.
- Sectoral coverage: Of the 811 projects, the majority completed projects are in the water and sewage sector, 140 projects were for education, 114 for municipalities and 105 for roads and bridges.
- Contributing Loans: World Bank Emergency loan 123/133 projects have been completed, World bank additional loan 44/133 projects have been completed, German Loan 2/28 projects completed. Czech and Chinese projects have all be completed, 17/17. Kuwait funds 17/55 projects completed.

Challenges

- Lack of sufficient financial resources versus needs
- IED contamination in several locations
- Coordination with partners on ground

- Smart solutions on Capacity building of REFAATO's governorate-based staff

Recommendations

- REFAATO proposes 3 workshops with the ABCs to enhance coordination at governorate level and exchange information on needs/gaps/challenges
- Partners are free to contact the fund via the email refaatoiraq@refaato.iq

Discussion:

- Does REFAATO rehabilitate residential structure/shelter? And is there any relationship between the fund and the MOMD return grants
 - No, the fund does not rehabilitate housing/shelter, it follows a strict methodology depending on the grant/loans.
- Does REFAATO have any plans for IDP populations who are still displaced in camps?
 - Each project has a specific objective. We do however have outcomes which would hope that IDPs return to their areas of return with available services provided by our projects.
- One of the criteria for project selection appears to be population density, what is the position of the fund for those situations where other factors influence sustainable return for example Sinjar, where IDPs will not return until there are sufficient basic services available, yet the return numbers would not be adequate to qualify for selection?
 - We sometimes have elected officials who approach REFAATO directly to motivate for certain locations to be selected, the information they provide us might not be precise, but we still consider this in collaboration with local authorities and the grants we receive.
- Can the fund also consider plans which include child friendly spaces?
 - Many departments are involved in the projects we implement, we don't have a specific approach on this and would need information to come from the local government. There may be 2 options for the issue of child friendly spaces to be considered: (1) Make recommendation to the Ninewa local government. Bear in mind that the fund does not implement 'new projects' we only reconstruct what existed in the past eg rehabilitation of a nursery school or local park. (2) An advocacy note to Refaato for presentation to the Supreme Committee.

4) DSTWG update: DSTF updates, ABC updates

(Presentation attached for more details)

Key points:

Welcome and introduction to UNDP co-chair Rene Dierks who has arrived in country.

- **ABC updates**
 - Sinjar first draft was finalized and shared with extended partners for further feedback. .
 - Ba'aj drafting is in progress.
 - Hawiga zero draft started, East of Anbar zero draft currently with DTM team, West Anbar zero draft will start next week SAD zero draft to be ready by end of 2nd week of September, Diyala draft zero to be completed next week and shared with DTM team for support.

- WFP is providing infographic support for the POAs.
- ABC Mosul call for interest, deadline was extended to 31 August. Focal point and member decisions to be announced next week.

Discussion:

- Any update on the corporation framework? Where does it currently stand?
 - The framework was validated in June and it was submitted to government for feedback. There is a signing ceremony scheduled for September.
- How many ABC groups are expected after the current 7?
 - With ABC Mosul there will be 8 but there is no limit, and the establishment of other ABC will depend on what the government recommends and the needs for such groups to be established in other areas. There have been discussions with local authorities for example in Salah Al-Din who have proposed the establishment of an ABC group in Southern SAD.

5) REACH Presentation: Al-Seniya REDs

(See Presentation and links for more details)

Key points:

Why Al-Seniya?

- Hotspot location under return index.
- Area of return for many IDPs from forced camp and informal site closures between October and December 2020, esp Al Karama.
- Priority location for SAD ABC group.

Key Findings

- Recent movements, recent returns non-camp areas such as Sulay, Erbil, Kirkuk and Tikrit, reasons for return included increased sense of security and family reunification.
- KIs reported that some 90plus families had failed to return due to destroyed housing, lack of livelihoods and lack of basic services.

Access to Housing

- KIs reported that majority of returnees have ownership documents while a few did not have particularly heirs deed, housing endorsement certificate and housing property document.
- Main challenges related to HLP included limited compensation support from authorities, lack of private financial sources to rehabilitate, high level of housing destruction.

Access to Basic Services

- High level infrastructure damage
- Specialized staff remain in displacement
- Insufficient funding for infrastructure rehabilitation by government
- remaining in displacement; and,
- Lack of financial allocations from the government for rehabilitation.

Livelihoods

- Some of the main challenges relate to lack of decent job opportunities, financial support for start-ups and limited work in construction

Safety and security perceptions

- All KIs reported feeling safe, with men, women, girls and boys having the ability to move freely at night.

Discussion:

- What is the significance of Al Seniya in the big picture of conflict and displacement in SAD?
 - Al-Seniya is a hotspot and also a priority location for the ABC groups. Reach has also assessed other locations within SAD including Tuz
- Does the REDs tell us any improvement implications for affected populations?
 - Some KIs report on what has motivated returns and what specific DS indicators have improved in a location esp those related to access to basic services, safety perceptions and livelihoods.
- Under livelihoods does the shifting availability of job opportunities mean there is more or less availability?
 - Yes, it must also be noted that 2 key informants reported that non-state actors are involved in livelihood creation.
- Which vulnerability ranking of the HH is Reach using? And are HH involved in reconstruction of shelter? The REDs is done at a community level and not at a HH level, the assessment does not use a vulnerability criteria.
- When was the data for the report collected and how often is it collected?
 - The data was collected between June and July 2021. We do not do the same location; we change locations for each assessment depending on the information gaps highlight by partners and the location criteria used.

AOB