

March 2023

## BACKGROUND & RE-CAP: THE IRAQ DURABLE SOLUTIONS ARCHITECTURE

The Iraq Durable Solutions architecture is spearheaded by the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), a senior steering committee consisting of UN agencies, donor representatives and NGOs, providing overall strategic direction of the mechanism and engaging in high-level discussions with the national government. To facilitate the varying levels of coordination required to achieve DS outcomes, the DSTF is supported by two additional national-level groups, the Returns Working Group (RWG) and the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG). The RWG, with open membership, has been brought under the DS umbrella, offering a wider platform for information exchange and updates on DS interventions and plans. The DSTWG is a smaller operational & technical platform to design durable solutions tools, programmes and approaches, acting as the main vehicle for steering the operationalization of DS plans in Iraq. The group has been expanded to 30 seats, occupied by representatives from stakeholders including UN, LNGOs, INGOs, working groups, clusters, and other entities, as an outcome of a nomination and voting process.

Localized DS planning and implementation is guided by the DSTWG through 8 area-based coordination (ABC) Groups. Groups are steered by focal points, assigned from operational actors in the area, and include any partners who are active in supporting DS interventions for a defined area. The ABCs link closely with the government at the local level, via new and existing committees, in recognition of the leading role of authorities.

Two years after its establishment (at the start of 2022), the DS Mechanism in Iraq has: (1) an established architecture (see above), (2) eight area-based coordination mechanisms (ABCs), (3) eight area-based plans of action covering the eight ABC targeted areas, (4) A DS Strategic and Operational Framework, (5) An analysis of needs and current response covering around 600 villages/towns across Iraq, (6) A strategy and guidelines on how to conduct coordination under the ABCs, (7) A specific Priority Working Group under the UNSDCF including a funding mechanism.



*IOM/DSTWG workshop on social cohesion and conflict sensitivity*

## NEW PHASE FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN IRAQ

In June 2022, the UN Secretary General issued his Action Agenda on internal displacement calling for stepped-up collective action on durable solutions. The Special Adviser on Solutions identified Iraq as one of the 16 focus countries with the conditions for a concerted push for government-led and development-led solutions, which consequently calls for a re-orientation of the approach and efforts in Iraq.

This re-orientation is needed due to the rapidly changing context in Iraq. Following the return of five million IDPs over the past seven years, efforts are shifting towards focusing on the “last mile” challenge to resolve protracted displacement for the remaining caseload. Additionally, with the deactivation of the humanitarian clusters in December 2022, the establishment of a new government in Iraq, and a rapidly changing funding landscape in the country, **the DS architecture in Iraq is entering a new phase focusing on a more government-led and development-led solutions approach.**

To this end, a new strategy for DS in Iraq is being developed in the form of a **DS Compact**, which is currently being developed by the office of the RC through engagement with the Government of Iraq (Federal and KRG). The Compact

will include a costed plan with clear priorities and concrete deliverables over the period of 2-3 years, with specific commitments by the Government and the UN. It would build on, concretize, and operationalize the National Plan, the Interagency Strategic Framework, and Pillar V of the SDCF. The RC would oversee the Compact on the UN side, supported by an adjusted Durable Solutions coordination mechanism, and accompanied by stepped-up political engagement at the federal, governorate, and municipal levels.

In order to shift towards a more government-led approach, adjustments to the DS architecture will aim for increased participation of government authorities within the different DS forums. This may include inviting colleagues from relevant ministries to periodically co-chair DSTF meetings to increase the engagement between the current co-chairs and national authorities, as well as inviting governorate-level authorities to co-chair ABC groups to increase coordination and local ownership at the governorate, district, and local level.

Specific arrangements regarding the DS architecture are yet to be concretely decided, and further information will be disseminated once final decisions are made.

## QUARTERLY REVIEW: JANUARY – MARCH 2023



*IOM/DSTWG workshop in Mosul on CSO engagement*

- IOM/DSTWG organized a workshop on social cohesion and conflict sensitivity, and focused on considering conflict-sensitive approaches to programming and community consultations. The participation of ABC focal points in this workshop was designed for them to reflect the knowledge acquired in the 2023 revision of the Plan of Action.

- **IOM/DSTWG also organized a workshop in Mosul on CSO engagement.** The aim of this workshop was to develop an understanding of the civil society landscape in Mosul in relation to activities that align with the Durable Solutions Strategic and Operational Framework.

- **The Livelihoods sub-group convened their first meetings**, following the endorsement of the sub-group in December 2022. Topics discussed included discussions surrounding the chairmanship of the group, as well as a proposal to hold a workshop with members of the subgroup around sustainable livelihoods and interlinked topics.
- **The Humanitarian Transition Overview**, consolidated by OCHA on behalf of the Iraq Humanitarian Country Team and partners, was published and can be found [here](#). This document provides an overview of the remaining humanitarian needs and priorities in 2023, while outlining the humanitarian transition structure and planning for 2023.

- **The Monitoring and Assessment sub-group circulated an updated TOR**, broadening its scope to now include the group’s function beyond the creation of the M&A framework. The updated TOR has been endorsed and can be found [here](#).
- **The Kirkuk, West Anbar, and East Anbar, Sinjar, Ba’aj, and Mosul ABC groups convened roundtable meetings with authorities** to discuss priorities, needs, and gaps in their respective ABC areas, and the 2023 plan of action revision.
- **The Plan of Action revisions** are currently being drafted by all ABCs to update the original POAs completed in 2022. Meanwhile, Kirkuk ABC is also drafting the first POA for Debes & Daquq, after these locations were requested by authorities to be covered by the ABC.

## ABC ROUNDTABLE MEETING KEY TAKEAWAYS

### WEST ANBAR

- Lack of jobs in areas of return such as Qaim and Rummaneh districts, as most families work in farming and need support with the provision of farming materials and the cleaning of irrigation water channels.
- Lack of/limited basic services in areas of return such as health, water, electricity, and education.
- Some communities have banned families with perceived ISIS-affiliation from returning, meaning extensive efforts are needed to activate peace and reconciliation committees in districts such as Haditha and Qaim.
- Approximately 1,400 IDPs are in Bizibiz and AAF informal settlements and cannot return due to their areas of origin being blocked such as Ewessat in Amriyat al-Falluja, and Akkashat in Qaim.
- The mayor committed to addressing access issues at checkpoints to facilitate the movement of ABC members.
- Agreement to conduct meetings on a more regular basis for increased collaboration between local authorities and ABC members.



## KIRKUK

- A government DS committee was formed, composed by 14 local authority members.
- The security situation is the main barrier for partners to implement activities.
- Key challenges in return areas include unemployment, demolished shelters, the security situation, and the lack of



reconciliation for families with perceived ISIS affiliation.

- War remnants and mines remain in some liberated areas, with local authorities emphasizing the need for demining activities as a priority.
- Local authorities indicated that encouraging the return of families in informal settlements is a priority.



## EAST ANBAR

- The deputy governor noted that the Anbar authority is committed to working with partners to finding durable solutions for the whole population displaced from Anbar.
- ABC partners acknowledged the declining donor funding environment and called on the government to fill crucial gaps which cannot be covered by partners.
- Relocation and local integration were extensively discussed as durable solutions pathways, as there remain IDP cases who cannot return due to reasons including security and economic reasons.



- The human rights manager from the Anbar Governor Office underlined remaining unresolved issues for families who returned from Al-Hol camp, which need collaboration between the government and partners to address and for their reintegration to be facilitated.
- The deputy governor formed a committee comprising of government officials and the ABC to follow up on action points, and suggested quarterly meetings to follow up on the full implementation of the DS Plan of Action.



## MOSUL

- The ABC group provided information on how the displacement context has changed in Mosul over the past year, as well as the accomplishments of the group in terms of projects and ABC-level coordination.
- The group also provided an overview of its priorities for the upcoming year, as well as insights from community consultations on DS projects.



- The local authorities presented their completed activities over the past year, and engaged in a discussion with ABC members regarding key priorities such as plans to address the closure of Jeda'a 5 camp and supporting families with perceived ISIS affiliation
- MoMD was also present at the meeting and presented on their priorities for the upcoming year.



## SINJAR

- The ABC group presented the key elements of the DS structure in Iraq, how the work of the group fits into this structure, and key accomplishments over the past year in terms of projects and ABC-level coordination.
- The group also provided information regarding the changes in the displacement context in Sinjar over the past year.



- The local authorities presented their completed activities over the past year, and planned activities for the next year which focus on the rehabilitation of roads, electricity, and water networks.
- The local authorities also engaged with ABC members about key priorities, including continuing and supporting projects such as IOM's facilitated voluntary movement.



## BA'AJ

- Livelihoods and basic service restoration were highlighted as the main gaps by local authorities in Ba'aj, and Qahtaniya subdistrict in particular.
- Initiatives supporting the enhancement of agriculture and WASH were highlighted as crucial by authorities, as water security and food security continue to be problematic throughout the district.
- Local authorities stated that they will appoint a focal point to attend future ABC Ba'aj meetings to increase engagement between the government and the international community.
- The ABC group presented their current response, with 18 partners active in Markaz Ba'aj and 10 partners in Qahtaniya subdistrict



## RECENTLY PUBLISHED REPORTS/RESOURCES

- [ReDS Governorate Profiles](#) – This presentation reviews data gathered through the ReDS assessments to summarize findings at the governorate level.
- Governorate profiles for [Ninewa](#), [Salah al-Din](#), [Diyala](#) – Each profile provides findings to support humanitarian and development actors to promote durable solutions for returnees and IDPs.
- [MCNA X Factsheet on Movement Intentions Among Out-of-Camp IDP Households](#) – This factsheet provides an updated overview of out-of-camp IDP movement intentions, including intentions to integrate, movement intentions, barriers to return, and failed returns.
- [MCNA X Brief – Humanitarian Needs in Times of a Transition](#) – This brief provides an overview of the key findings of the MCNA X.
- [DTM Master List: Report 128](#) - These findings provide displacement and returns information, with data for this round collected from 1 October to 31 December 2022.
- [DTM Displacement Index Findings: Round 5](#) – These findings provide an overview regarding the living conditions of IDPs, between October and December 2022 across 18 governorates, 103 districts, and 2,662 locations in Iraq.
- [DTM Return Index Findings: Round 17](#) – These findings measure the severity of conditions in locations of return between October and December 2022 across 9 governorates, 39 districts, and 2,198 locations.

Upcoming Meetings		
RWG	Monthly	Every last Tuesday of the month (open)
DSTF	Monthly	(DSTF members)
DSTWG	Monthly	Every second Wednesday of the month (DSTWG members)
ABC	Monthly	Varied depending on ABC (ABC members)

For further details, and if you would like to send relevant resources to be included in the next edition of the newsletter, please feel free to contact Mohamed Osman at [mohameosman@iom.int](mailto:mohameosman@iom.int).