

RETURNS WORKING GROUP- IRAQ

- ❖ **Meeting Date:** 27 September 2022
- ❖ **Meeting Time:** 11:00 am-13:00 pm
- ❖ **Location:** IOM Conference Room, Erbil & Remote connection via Teams

In Attendance: REACH, Save the Children, Malteser International, SI, IOM, US Embassy Baghdad, ICRC, Samaritan's Purse (SP), IOM, SEDO, Heartland Alliance International (HAI), Public Aid org. (PAO), DG ECHO, Cordaid, UNDP/FFS, and PRM- U.S. Consulate General-Erbil.

Agenda:

- 1) **Introduction and adoption of minutes:** Review of August minutes and follow up on action points.
- 2) **Context Update:** DTM Emergency Tracking: Cross-border monitoring of Yazidi departures, and RWG Field Update
- 3) **REACH Initiative presentation:** Multi-Custer Needs Assessment (MCNA) X key findings
- 4) **DSTWG Update:** DS Updates
- 5) **REACH ReDS Assessment Presentation:** Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district, Hawiga District, Kirkuk Governorate
- 6) **AOB**

Action Points	By who
N/A	

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

- No pending action points.
- The endorsement of the previous meeting minutes.

- 2) **Context update: DTM Emergency Tracking: Cross-border monitoring of Yazidi departures, and RWG Field Updates.**

Cross-Border Monitoring of Yazidi Departures (Aug – Sept 2022)

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

- **1,861** Yazidi individuals recorded crossing Ibrahim Al-Khalil from 24 August to 24 September 2022
- **Departure point:**
 - 70% leaving non-camp locations
 - 30% leaving from camps
- **Destinations:**
 - Greece (64%), Germany (20%), Netherlands (9%), Türkiye (6%)

Flows of Yazidi Individuals: Demographic information

- **Vulnerable groups**
 - Pregnant people and people with disabilities observed (29)

IOM Protection: In order to better understand the factors driving the trend of Yezidis migrating outside of Iraq, IOM protection has conducted complementary protection assessments at a number of the Duhok Governorate sites. The lack solutions in the return and displacement areas is considered to be an ongoing factor, including conditions in Sinjar, and IDP camps in Duhok. In addition to the perceived instability in Sinjar, the drivers also included the non-implementation of the Sinjar agreement (security components) and the concern over potential future violence against Yezidi in Iraq.

Discussion

- Question: How much does it cost an average family to leave the country and travel to the desired destination?
 - IOM Protection: Bearing in mind that the protection assessment was undertaken in Duhok camps and was not indicative of how families traveled from Sinjar, it was discovered that the expense of traveling by land from Turkey to Greece ranged from 3000 USD per child to 6000 USD per adult. However, it will cost more for individuals to continue receiving assistance throughout the route to the European Union.
- Question: Is there a particular reason why people are leaving Sinjar at this time?
 - IOM Protection: It might be linked partly to the seasonal window opportunity when the weather is decent to travel through irregular routes now before winter. Additionally, it was mentioned in the responses we received from those communities that the violence experienced by the Yezidi in the May clash led to a sense of deeper instability that the situation in Iraq will not be resolved via political means.
 - DTM: A national leader encouraged Yezidi migration via a statement, and as a result, we witnessed an increase.

DTM emergency tracking shows from the May conflict, many families divided themselves between the KRI camp and places of origin, and yet stayed as it was thus also indicative of the feeling of insecurity.

- Question: There has been an upsurge in the number of returnees, are you referring to returns from Turkey to Iraq in general or from Duhok to Sinjar specifically?
 - There have been two returns from Turkey to Iraq; we have witnessed some individuals returning voluntarily after being unsuccessful, could not continue, etc., and we have also observed those who were detained and deported to Iraq by authorities.

RWG Field Updates: Return Movements from/ to Ninewa

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

J1 Departures (3 Sep 22)

- 47 HHs (203 ind.)
- Anbar (23 HHs) Nineva (10 HHs) Kirkuk, SAD, Baghdad & Erbil (3 HHs each) Sulay (2 HHs)
- 19 Sep 22, 4 HHs departed, mainly to Nineva

IOM Support to Local Communities – Barzan Village, Zummar (13 Sep 22)

- Return of Barzan village, Zummar 108 HHs
- FVM supported by IOM
- AoD: Markaz Zummar & Ray Al Jazeera informal settlement

Discussion

- Question: What is the difference between the support that is provided to the families who lived in Harmat and the ones who went to Hamdaniya and the ones who went to Barzan, as for the ones who went to Hamdaniya and Barzan, there are details about temporary removals, livelihood support but as for Harmat families such details are not available? What distinguishes these communities from one another?
 - IOM FVM: The difference between the communities for Harmat informal site, there are households who have returned to different destinations as it can be seen in the displayed data. As the families return to many different communities, making it hard for IOM to operate in all these locations and provide support on the household or community level, while for the other two locations like Hamdaniya and Barzan, IOM was working in these locations since the earlier stages and we work in these specific communities on a community level targeting the host community and IDPs in that region (IOM communities). The selection methodologies are different in each location as in Hamdaniya the communities selected due to the reason of higher number of displaced households were able to implement projects in the areas of origin so that we encourage returns, hence why we were able to offer more support to specific communities. While for Harmat informal site, we support the households that can return, however, the families are not from an IOM community it becomes more difficult to provide community-level services.
- Question: regarding J-1 returns, asking about the details regarding who provided transportation for the families who returned on September 3rd? and do we track those families after they have returned to their areas of origin? Do we have any means of determining if they have returned to their original locations or undergone a second displacement?
 - Regarding the first question related to transportation support, the returns are self-supported in that sense facilitated by the governments in Iraq and households typically receive a few days' notices from J-1. They are required to have a sponsor who supports their departure and who also registers with MOMD and relevant authorities at J-1 camp and so typically in terms of transportation what we are seeing as these households leave in the company of their sponsor to return to their areas of origin or to relocate to another location. In terms of tracking the returnees in the second question, IOM is conducting monthly post returns protection monitoring with these households and this has been done ever since the departures commenced in J-1 in September 2021 and IOM continues to do that on monthly basis. The intention for that is to pick up on conditions of return including basic needs and reintegration among host communities but also to pick up on any critical protection needs that may arise including harassment by security authorities, difficulties in obtaining civil documentation, and other similar challenges, through this process IOM keeping track on relocations after returns from J-1 and IOM also trying to monitor that while providing ongoing support through IOM facilitated grounds and provision of services including legal assistance, protection, and MHPSS in the areas of return or relocation. So, IOM is tracking that population and they continue to receive both monitoring and follow-up assistance as required.

3) REACH Initiative presentation: Multi-Custer Needs Assessment (MCNA) X key findings

(The full presentation will be shared in due course)

Data Collection Methodology:

Survey



- In-person surveys with randomly selected households about their (cross-) sectoral needs, vulnerabilities, and intentions.
- Circa 150 questions: some at individual -level (e.g., schooling, disabilities), most at household-level Access to civil documentation

Protection - Child Protection

- 26% of households reported using violent disciplinary measures against their children, among households with children.
- 1% of households with a reported presence of child marriage.

Health - General

- 100% of households with primary healthcare (health clinic and/or hospital) within one hour reach from their dwellings by normal mode of transportation.
- 36% of households reported having had at least one person with an unmet health care need within three 3 months of data collection, among households with a reported need.

Livelihoods- Unemployment

- 7% of households reported head of household was unemployed and seeking work.
- 24% of households reported having at least one adult (18+) unemployed and seeking work.

Discussion

- Question: When it comes to access to documentation, there are various documents that IDPs need, when the data reports access to documentation which documents are the most crucial, and do we know which one's respondents are lacking? For example, PDS?
 - REACH MCNA: Access to PDS nationwide is 96-98% for all population groups and it's quite consistent so there are no worries there. We are also going to look closely at the data we have on civil documentation and will share an output with more information that looks more closely at the situation.
- Question: What is the situation on the lack of job opportunities for women, if this option has been recently added to the tool or it was present in the previous tools in previous years as well, and do we have a way to compare them?
 - REACH MCNA: Yes, this question was available in previous versions as well, and many people chose it. While it was the same or slightly higher last year, it ranged from 14 to 19% this year. So, certainly, it is a frequently cited reason. Additionally, this tool's query is a multiple-choice one, and households are free to provide any number of responses.

4) DS Updates: DSTWG, and ABC Updates

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

General DSTWG and DSTF Updates

DSTWG Meeting #22 14 Sep 2022

- DSTWG TORs of new livelihoods subgroup for member review (endorsed)
- DSTWG to draft joint gov-hum-dev transition plan, ensure adoption of nexus (ongoing)
- Social Cohesion sub-Group discussed with NCCI to onboard NGOs to join Sep meeting and discussion on localization of meetings at DS / national levels to be held in Arabic

Transition

- Cluster Focal Points: the following clusters have focal points within the ABCs, Health, CCCM, Shelter and NFI
- National Protection Cluster and DSTWG conducted a joint workshop on the centrality of protection in working towards durable solutions
- Draft Joint Transition Plan Outline presented at the HCT/Donor meeting of 20 September and endorsed

Discussion

- In the light of not having ABCs in KRI and having 10 refugee camps how does the strategy paper look at this.
 - The document endorsed at the HCT is just an outline which will be fleshed out and takes into account the government national plan, the Interagency DS Framework, the UNSDCF and the POAs. The DSTF meeting in August discussed the issue of ABCs in KRI and more specifically Duhok as a potential ABC location, UNHCR is engaging with authorities on behalf of the DSTF. When it comes to the drafting of the fuller transition document, the plan is to work through the Supreme Committee which has representation of KRI and GOI representatives. In addition, POAs such as the Sinjar and Salah Al-Din draw links between areas of origin and areas of displacement, so Sinjar POA refers to IDPs who are displaced in Dahuk and the SAD POA notes the IDPs in Sulaymaniyah and those in Erbil.

5) REACH ReDS Assessment Presentation: Markaz Al-Hawiga Sub-district, Hawiga District, Kirkuk Governorate, Preliminary Findings Presentation

(Refer to the Presentation link for more details)

Access to Durable Solutions Assistance: The top four frequently reported activities/projects implemented:

- Livelihoods,
- Water, sanitation and hygiene,
- Reconciliation and social cohesion, and
- Food assistance.

Access to Housing and Type of Tenure: The majority of households reportedly had housing, land, and property (HLP) documents proving ownership. However, a few KIs reported that some IDP households lacked these documents.

Reported Proportion of Damaged Housing: 29%-38%

Perceptions on Social Cohesion: Reported strategies or initiatives to improve social cohesion:

- Initiatives promoting access to work for all,
- Seminars, awareness sessions, and conferences,
- Initiatives promoting community inter-relationships, and
- Advocacy to promote further returns.

Discussion

- Question: We understand that generally few assessments done by partners have assessments of child consultations, we wanted to find out to what extent children are being consulted in the ReDS assessments?
 - REACH ReDS: The design of the questions is not directed at children as a practice, but we do include questions that look at education, family separation and other issues that affect children. We rely on our key informants and subject matter experts to share certain perspectives with us, but we do not interview children.
- Comment: Concerning the social cohesion activities, UNDP continues to empower the community in areas of displacement. Recently, 95 community leaders, including women and religious leaders, were trained in Beiji, Rumana Subdistrict Al Anbar, Baily Salah ad Din, and Tal afar Ninewa in order to prepare the communities for their reintegration upon their return.

AOB

- REACH CCCM: Annually, REACH conducts camp profiling and intentions surveys, which are being done concurrently with MCNA. The analysis and data published are either available via the REACH resource center or by contacting us directly. In terms of publications, Factsheets for Intentions by Area of Origin and by Governorate of Displacement will be released by the end of October. While the camp profiling outputs will be published in November. Additionally, Camp infrastructure maps for 22/26 camps can be found [here](#).
- Next RWG meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2022.