



DURABLE SOLUTION
TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON
ACCESS TO SAFETY & SECURITY

JUNE 2025

Date: 3 June 2025

Location: Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Baghdad, Iraq

Hosted by: Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), in collaboration with RWG, IOM and relevant stakeholders

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), in collaboration with the Return Working Group (RWG), convened a one-day technical workshop on 3 June 2025 in Baghdad to address the safety and security barriers hindering the return and reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq. This initiative forms part of the broader effort to advance the implementation of the Iraq Durable Solutions Roadmap. Despite notable progress in facilitating returns, over 350,000 families remain displaced.

According to MoMD, major impediments include limited access to property compensation, essential services, civil documentation, and security clearances. While security concerns remain a significant obstacle to return, Internal displaced people also face challenges related to shelter and livelihoods. In some districts, these difficulties are further exacerbated by the presence of military forces, ongoing tribal tensions, and the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) by I. The workshop brought together key stakeholders from national and local governments, security institutions, and aid actors to collaboratively identify these barriers and develop practical, coordinated solutions to enable safe, dignified, and voluntary return.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

List of Participants- DS Technical Workshop on Safety & Security	
Name	Position
Kareem Al-Nouri	Deputy Minister of Migration and Displacement
Ali Jahankeer	Director General of Branches MoMD
Georgi Gigauri	IOM Chief of Mission
Mufeed Meneem Ahmad	Deputy Governor of Salah al-Din
Rebecca Catlerall	British Embassy
Hannan Al Khaleel	British Embassy
Ali Omar	Representative of Ninewa Governorate
Salih Ali Mohammed	Head of Coordination- Ninewa
Aqeel Ibrahim Khalil	Head of JCMC Branch - Diyala
Abrar Ahmad Nafea	Head of JCMC Branch - Anbar
Falah Noori Hameed	Anbar Governor Office
Ahmed Shhatha	Governor consultant for security affairs - Kirkuk
Mohammed Sahib	National Security
Mohammad Al Lami	Director General of Counter Extremism Office
Muslim Mansoor	Community Policing
Abd Sabar Abbas	Community Policing
Riyadh Ahmed	Community Policing
Omar Falah	Community Policing
Yassir Al Moussawi	Head of IDP Division/ Counter Extremism Office
Alaa Jabar	Community Police Media
Hussein Bedeyri	IDP Division/ Counter Extremism Office
Hussein Mardan	MoMD Planning DG Office
Ali Nasser Binyan	Director of Al Nahreyn Center/ ONSA
Haider Ali Sa'adon	MoMD Media Department
Iman Naji	Deputy Director General/ MOMD
Ali Ajami	Director General\ Community Policing

List of Participants- DS Technical Workshop on Safety & Security	
Name	Position
Sabri Abdullah AlOmar	Directorate of Tribal Affairs
Zeina Rashad	Director General of the Human Rights Directorate/ PMF
Ahmed AbdulRazaq	Mine Action Department
Amir Ali Joheyri	Deputy Director General/ HR Office/ PMF
Ismael Khalil Dahash	Head of NGOs Division/ MOMD
Hamoudi Mahjoub	Deputy Director General MOMD
Ahmad AbelRazzak Faleyh	Head of Information Division/ DMA
Raghad Assad Kadhim	Ministry of Environment
Ali Mahmoud Ali	Directorate of Tribal Affairs
Moafaq Taufeeq	Geneva Call
Safa Jamal	UNMAS - Baghdad
Daliborka Topic	ICRC
Sophie Marsac	ICRC
Kelsey Waxman	UNHCR
Nawal EL Kaakour	RWG
Precillar Moyo	RWG
Haidar Al Saadi	RWG
Alan Al Jaf	RWG
Karam Al Hadethee	RWG
Firas Al Salman	RWG
Yasmin Chilmeran	IOM
Stephani Sater	IOM
Abdallah Bakr	IOM
PORTALES Maria Cristina	IOM
Muneer Tashman	IOM



Figure 1: Participants of the DS technical Workshop

OPENING REMARKS AND KEY STATEMENTS

The workshop commenced with a welcoming address by Mr. Ali Al-Jahankeer, the MoMD Director General of Branches, who greeted participants representing various ministries, UN agencies, international and organizations. He emphasized the importance of addressing the issue of return as an urgent humanitarian and national priority.

Mr. Al-Jahankeer presented a video which highlighted the Ministry's continued efforts to support displaced populations through the provision of food, medical supplies, shelter materials, and other essential services tailored to the needs of IDPs both inside and outside camps. He further underscored MoMD's active role in facilitating voluntary returns by distributing reconstruction materials, promoting income-generating initiatives, and supporting returnee families with educational supplies and rehabilitation services. These interventions, implemented across all affected governorates, reflect the government's commitment, under the directives of the Prime Minister, to close displacement camps and bring an end to the displacement file, ensuring the safe and dignified return of all displaced Iraqis.

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT – MR. KARIM AL-NOURI

Mr. Karim Al-Nouri opened his remarks by welcoming the attendees and reaffirming that the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) remains one of the key pillars of the current government program. He described the displacement file as a "central issue with security, political, and social dimensions."

He highlighted that the MoMD cannot address the displacement crisis alone and underscored the necessity of joint efforts among all relevant actors, especially considering the scale of displacement since 2014, most notably in Sinjar, which witnessed acts of genocide. He called for open and honest dialogue during the workshop to identify root challenges and propose realistic solutions.

Mr. Al-Nouri stressed the need to rebuild community trust, resolve legal issues such as children's civil documentation, and ensure the provision of essential services and security in return areas. He emphasized that reintegration requires a unified national vision, not just the closure of camps, and warned that the displacement file remains "an incomplete victory" even after a decade. He also highlighted the vital role of tribal and religious leaders in supporting returnees and preventing retaliation, and strongly cautioned against stigmatizing IDPs as extremists, urging that returnees from Al-Hol Camp be welcomed as part of a reconciliation-based approach to nation-building.

STATEMENT BY IOM CHIEF OF MISSION, MR. GEORGI GIGAURI

Mr. Georgi Gigauri began by expressing appreciation to the Ministry of Migration and Displacement for hosting the workshop and emphasized IOM's commitment to supporting Iraq's efforts in addressing displacement. He noted that while hundreds of thousands of families have returned, nearly 353,000 remain displaced, facing persistent barriers such as security concerns, tribal conflicts, documentation gaps, and explosive remnants of war. He highlighted the critical role of the MoMD in coordinating with other ministries to ensure sustainable returns and stressed that durable solutions require the active engagement of government bodies, humanitarian and development actors, and displaced communities themselves.

He recognized Iraq's leadership through initiatives like the National Plan and Durable Solutions Roadmap, supported by local committees. Mr. Gigauri reaffirmed IOM's and the international community's commitment to supporting safe, voluntary, and dignified returns or integration for displaced populations. He encouraged participants to generate actionable recommendations and emphasized collaboration to protect the rights and dignity of displaced Iraqis.

REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF SALAH AL-DIN – MR. MUFEED MENEEM AHMAD

Mr. Mufeed noted the extensive destruction that Salah al-Din Governorate has endured due to terrorism but highlighted the successful return experience in Balad District, particularly in Al-Ajeelia. He credited this progress to the strong support of the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and aid actors. He emphasized that while some areas have seen positive developments, others remain inaccessible due to unresolved issues.

He noted that Tal Al Thahab remains closed due to destroyed housing, lack of services, and tribal disputes, while political restrictions and the presence of armed groups continue to block returns to Al-Awja. He called for the involvement of the Sunni Endowment and tribal leaders to mediate conflicts and urged the participation of the Martyrs Foundation and Ministry of Finance in reconstruction and compensation efforts. Although Amirli was cited as a model of coexistence, many villages in Amirli and Al-Dour remain unreturned due to infrastructure damage and tribal tensions. He also highlighted the successful reintegration of families from Al-Hol, following coexistence initiatives and financial support.

REMARKS BY THE BRITISH EMBASSY

The representative of the British Embassy reaffirmed its close cooperation with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement in supporting the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Syria and reiterated its commitment to working with both international and national partners. The representative expressed interest in the theme of the workshop, noting that the focus on safety and security barriers to return is of critical importance.

The representative expressed appreciation for the high caliber of participants, many of whom are key decision-makers in this field and emphasized that this level of engagement reflects the seriousness and urgency of the topic. The Embassy also expressed interest in supporting the implementation of safety and security programs in Iraq, underscoring its broader commitment to durable solutions for displacement.

Session 2: Inputs by representatives from the Governorates

INPUTS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF NINEWA GOVERNORATE – MR. ALI OMAR

Mr. Ali Omar outlined the complex nature of displacement in Ninewa Governorate, which includes internally displaced persons arriving from Duhok, returnees from Al-Hol Camp, and those returning from the Hasan Sham and Khazir camps. Each group faces distinct challenges and may need tailored responses to address their key barriers. For those from Sinjar, the suspension of return authorizations over the past year has prevented more than 10,000 individuals from returning despite their willingness, resumption of approvals would allow dignified return. For many, compensation remains the most pressing issue, with only 12,000 of the 132,000 submitted applications being finalized, and just 5,000 beneficiaries receiving payments, speedy disbursement of compensation claims would assist families to rebuild destroyed homes.

He highlighted several initiatives aimed at addressing these challenges, including inviting subdistrict directors to IDP camps to provide accurate information about return areas (as done by IOM) and collaboration with UN-Habitat to develop low-cost housing for those unable to return. Mr. Omar noted the political complexities affecting returns to Hassan Sham and Khazir, stemming from tensions between the Kurdistan Region and the federal government and that political engagement could facilitate return of the displaced families. He stressed that Ninewa bears a disproportionate burden in managing returns from Al-Hol Camp, despite facing significant political, service-related, and infrastructural obstacles. Financial and human resource allocations to the governorate and areas of return could better enable sustainable reintegration.

INPUTS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF KIRKUK GOVERNORATE- MR. AHMED SHHATHA

Mr. Ahmed highlighted that internally displaced persons from Kirkuk are among the most economically vulnerable groups in Iraq pointing to the extensive destruction in areas such as Al-Hawija District where physical damage has left many families without homes or basic infrastructure.

He further emphasized that the lack of legal documentation continues to obstruct the return process, particularly affecting children's access to education and the employment of teaching staff. Despite the defeat of ISIS, returns remain stalled due to the ongoing absence of essential services and unresolved legal documentation issues. Prioritization of the most affected areas through poverty level considerations and improving access to civil documentation for displaced people could help move things forward.

REMARKS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ANBAR GOVERNORATE- MR. FALAH NOORI HAMEED

Ms. Abrar noted that while all formal displacement camps in Anbar have been closed, challenges remain for those in informal settlements. One such area, Bzibiz, hosts 1,486 families displaced by Jurf al-Sakhar, highlights the ongoing need for sustainable return and reintegration strategies.

She emphasized that weak community awareness programs continue to hinder reintegration efforts. To overcome this, authorities should strengthen outreach and education initiatives that support social cohesion and informed decision-making among displaced populations.

Ms. Abrar also highlighted that Anbar has received only 10% of its allocated compensation entitlements. She called on the government to accelerate the release of these funds to ensure displaced families can begin rebuilding their lives. Additionally, she pointed out that Anbar has received the lowest level of return grant funding from the Ministry of Migration compared to other regions. She urged the Ministry to revise its funding allocations to ensure fair support for returnees in Anbar.

REMARKS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF DIYALA GOVERNORATE- MR. AKEEL IBRAHIM

Mr. Akeel emphasized Diyala's strategic importance due to its proximity to Baghdad, its international borders, and its socially and ethnically diverse population. The weak infrastructure continues to hinder the return of displaced families and requires urgent investment and rehabilitation by the government.

He pointed to several ongoing challenges, including delays in budget allocations and called for the Ministry of Finance to assign a representative to directly address the issue and ensure timely disbursement of funds. He also highlighted environmental factors such as desertification and declining soil fertility, which must be addressed through targeted environmental recovery programs to enable returns to northern Al-Muqadadiya.

While the return to Al-Khilaniya villages was cited as a successful example of cooperation between security forces, the Sunni Endowment, and tribal leaders, ongoing tribal conflicts and lack of employment opportunities remain major barriers to reintegration and require coordinated efforts to promote reconciliation and job creation.

Session 2: Inputs and Remarks by the Directorates in Baghdad

REMARKS BY DEPUTY DG HAMOUDI MAHJOUB HAMOUDI OF BRANCHES AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT MOMD

The Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) presented a comprehensive overview of its efforts to address Iraq's displacement crisis, which began in 2014 following ISIS attacks that forced nearly five million people from their homes. The presentation highlighted the scale of displacement, with a peak of over 892,000 families between 2014 and 2016 still live in camps or informal settlements without access to essential services, adequate housing, or civil documentation, and continue to face security risks that must be urgently addressed.

MoMD has disbursed financial grants to support returning families and facilitated the reissuance of lost civil documents to restore legal identity and access to services. It has also launched income-generating projects aimed at promoting self-reliance and economic recovery in return areas, but these efforts must be scaled up and sustained to meet the ongoing needs of displaced populations.

MoMD also addressed the widespread infrastructure damage, including the destruction of villages in Kirkuk and Salah Al-Din, and the continued military zones in areas such as Jurf al-Nasr and Al-Awja. Thousands of families remain without compensation, and urgent action is needed to process their claims. MoMD called for activation of compensation committees, the organization of tribal reconciliation conferences, and stronger coordination with local and federal authorities to remove access and security barriers that are delaying returns. It also proposed gradual returns to military zones following security clearance and the development of low-cost housing solutions for those unable to return to their original homes.

REMARKS BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE – COUNTER-EXTREMISM DIRECTORATE

The Director General emphasized the National Security Service's active role in overseeing the return process of displaced families, from their departure from camps to their reintegration into areas of origin. He acknowledged the challenge of limited human and financial resources, which currently restricts the service's ability to monitor more than half of the returnee population, highlighting the need for increased staffing and budget support to expand coverage.

He also pointed to potential security threats in certain complexes, such as Al-Hawasim in Al-Qayarra, which host families from Salah al-Din, Anbar, and Ninewa, and require enhanced security coordination to ensure safe and stable reintegration.

He stressed the urgent need for community reintegration and awareness programs in both camps and return areas. The Directorate operates under Diwani Order No. 40 and works closely with the Ministries of Migration, Culture, and Youth & Sports. It maintains detailed tracking reports on returnee movements and sustains communication with families both within Iraq and abroad, including those in Turkey and detention centers.

REMARKS BY THE DIRECTORATE OF MINE ACTION – MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

The Head of Information Management at the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), outlined the agency's mission to manage humanitarian mine action in liberated areas, operating under national and international standards. Since the ISIS occupation in 2014, northern governorates have experienced severe contamination, with over 2,400 km² still in urgent need of clearance to enable safe returns. Despite this, DMA has made significant progress through active collaboration with national and international partners, including the clearance and handover of more than 4,724 km² of land. The DMA continues to implement a comprehensive approach combining non-technical and technical surveys, clearance operations, and mine risk education, all aimed at reducing threats and accelerating the safe and dignified return of displaced populations.

The DMA highlighted persistent challenges. These include technical obstacles like dense contamination and lack of mapping, institutional gaps such as weak coordination and limited funding, and broader security, economic, and social barriers that continue to delay returns.

DMA called for increased national funding, stronger inter-agency coordination, expanded training, and adoption of modern technology in clearance operations. It also urged the alignment of mine action with reconstruction plans and greater involvement of local councils in risk identification to accelerate safe and sustainable returns.

REMARKS ON COMMUNITY POLICING – ROLE IN REINTEGRATION AND SOCIAL STABILITY

The Director General of Community Policing outlined the unit's proactive role in supporting the reintegration of returnees and maintaining stability in areas of return. Police forces have actively mediated disputes, resolved land conflicts, and facilitated access to civil documentation by escorting returnees to relevant offices. They also protect vulnerable groups women, children, and persons with disabilities—and promote social cohesion through forums, workshops, and anti-extremism campaigns.

Recurring issues like tribal tensions, lack of documentation, family violence, and vulnerability of returnees were identified as systemic concerns. In response, police have used restorative justice approaches, resolving many disputes through dialogue. Their coordination with NGOs and government agencies has improved aid delivery, while community events and training sessions have strengthened social reintegration.

REMARKS BY THE TRIBAL AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE

Brigadier General Sabri emphasized the important role of the Tribal Affairs Directorate in maintaining civil peace in areas of return. He noted that no major tribal conflicts have been recorded in these areas, crediting ongoing efforts to foster dialogue and strengthen cooperation among local communities.

However, he also pointed out that delays in compensation and insufficient support for host communities have triggered social tensions. These issues have fueled perceptions that returnees are being prioritized over long-term residents, which could undermine social cohesion and erode trust in government and humanitarian initiatives.

REMARKS BY THE POPULAR MOBILIZATION FORCES – HUMAN RIGHTS DIRECTORATE

The representative from the Human Rights Directorate of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) described the Directorate's role in facilitating the return of displaced families through active coordination with governorates and support in expediting security clearance procedures. These efforts aim to reduce administrative burdens on returnees and ensure a smoother reintegration process.

The Directorate acknowledged ongoing challenges, including legal obstacles and the persistence of hate speech, which continue to hinder safe and voluntary returns. In addition to its administrative role, the PMF contributes to mine clearance efforts and leverages its expertise in community reconciliation and interfaith dialogue, both of which are critical for strengthening social cohesion in return areas.

SESSION 3: GROUP WORK – IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS TO RETURN

As part of the workshop's interactive segment, participants were divided into three thematic groups to analyze key challenges and propose actionable solutions. Group One focused on access-related obstacles to return, including security, political, and social barriers, particularly in areas still closed or heavily affected by conflict. Group Two focused on the threat of landmines and ERW, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable funding, stronger coordination, and victim support to enable safe and informed returns. While Group Three focused on barriers to freedom of movement and access to civil documentation, it called for streamlined procedures, better coordination, and targeted support for vulnerable groups.

GROUP ONE: ACCESS OBSTACLES

- Inconsistent and restrictive security clearance procedures are causing major delays in the return of displaced families.
- Inadequate infrastructure and lack of basic services in return areas continue to obstruct reintegration.
- Financial constraints, including delayed compensation and limited return grants, are slowing down recovery.
- Unaddressed social and psychological trauma among returnees is undermining long-term reintegration.
- Political tensions and poor coordination among authorities are complicating the return process.
- Limited engagement from international and local organizations is leaving critical gaps in support.
- Systemic barriers prevent families despite their willingness to achieve durable solutions.
- Complex legal and social challenges remain around the return of individuals associated with ISIS, convicted persons, and those seeking "Tabriia."
- Areas Still Closed to Return: Al-Awja, Jurf al-Sakhar, Tal al-Dhahab, Tuz villages, Amerli, Hamrin villages, Other front-line zones, Sinjar (due to political divisions and unresolved disputes)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Engage security authorities to facilitate returns to closed areas such as Al-Awja, Jurf al-Sakhar, and Tuz villages.
- Increase support from local governments for high-need areas like Sinjar, Salah al-Din, and Western Anbar.
- Deploy psychological and social support teams with centralized approval to assist returnees.
- Accelerate compensation processes and increase financial allocations from federal and local governments.
- Strengthen international support for stabilization and recovery in return areas.
- Allocate targeted funding to the Ministry of Migration and Displacement for return grants and blood money cases.
- Prioritize Sinjar, focusing on reconstruction projects due to the extensive destruction, the severe needs and crimes committed against the Yazidi minority

GROUP TWO – LANDMINES AND ERW:

- Widespread contamination from landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continues to threaten the safety of returnees in liberated areas.
- These hazards are obstructing safe resettlement and putting lives at risk.
- The lack of a sustainable national budget for demining has severely limited progress in clearance operations.
- Weak coordination between the Ministry of Environment, implementing partners, and affected communities is slowing down response efforts.
- Many displaced populations lack awareness of mine and ERW risks, increasing their exposure to danger.
- Inadequate support systems for mine victims are hindering reintegration and limiting access to essential services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Allocate a sustainable national budget for demining, integrated into broader reconstruction efforts.
- Expand demining operations through partnerships with international organizations and increased support for the Mine Action Directorate.
- Launch comprehensive mine risk awareness campaigns in camps and return areas.
- Enhance coordination between the Ministry of Environment, operational entities, and local beneficiaries.
- Strengthen assistance and reintegration programs for victims of mines and war remnants.



Figure 2: Group Two – Landmines and ERW

GROUP THREE – FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND CIVIL DOCUMENTATION:

- The process of issuing civil documentation remains complex and fragmented, requiring better coordination among government and international actors.
- Vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, and survivors of violence face additional barriers in accessing documentation and safe mobility.
- Inconsistent enforcement of legal procedures by government institutions complicates access to services.
- Movement between areas and governorates is often restricted by security authorities and territorial control dynamics.
- Lack of awareness among IDPs and service providers about the protection of personal information and civil documentation increases risks of misuse or exclusion.



Figure 3: Group Three – Freedom of Movement and Civil Documentation

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Strengthen inter-agency cooperation to streamline the issuance of civil documentation, including activating the role of the Bar Association in supporting families.
- Ensure all government institutions comply with applicable laws related to documentation and service access.
- Accept housing confirmation letters in place of housing cards for school enrollment to ease access to education.
- Establish a multi-ministerial committee to address the needs of vulnerable groups, ensuring confidentiality and safety in service delivery.
- Direct security authorities and territorial controllers facilitate freedom of movement across regions.
- Organize awareness sessions for IDPs, humanitarian staff, and community police on protecting personal data and civil documentation, in coordination with the Ministry of Migration.

Recommendations and Closing Remarks by MOMD

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A follow-up workshop with the Ministry of Interior, the Supreme Judicial Council, and the Ministry of Migration and Displacement to address issues related to legal clearance (“Tabriaa”).
- Invite and involve the Ministry of Finance and the Martyrs Foundation to address challenges related to the compensation process.
- Specific closed areas, such as Jurf al-Nasr, Rabia, and Al-Awja, were noted as requiring high-level political and security decisions to facilitate return
- Intensify efforts with local authorities and engage proactively with the existing committees established for this purpose, including local committees and those formed by the Prime Minister’s Office. These committees should be tasked with addressing security-related barriers to return, particularly in blocked areas. The approach would involve reviewing each affected area or village individually to identify specific obstacles and develop tailored solutions that facilitate safe and voluntary return.

CLOSING REMARKS BY MOMD

- It was emphasized that some return-related statistics may be inaccurate, as a number of IDPs do not officially register their return despite having returned or periodically moved between camps and their areas of origin.
- The workshop recognized notable success stories, including the restoration of legal documentation and the return of thousands of families, including professionals such as doctors and specialists, demonstrating the potential for reintegration and the reinvestment of human capital.
- The outcomes and recommendations of the workshop will be submitted to the Council of Ministers and relevant sponsoring entities, with close follow-up on their implementation, particularly concerning compensation, restoration of services, and the reopening of closed areas.

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