

# ROUNDTABLE: SOLVING PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT IN NINEWA

## SUMMARY REPORT | 21-22 SEPTEMBER 2020

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The priority of Ninewa governorate is to ensure the closure and consolidation of camps in line with national priorities.** This was associated with achieving dignity for IDPs, as well as economic prosperity and stability for Iraq.
- **It is believed that many IDPs are trapped in situations of dependency in camps,** that it is incumbent on all actors to refocus assistance to facilitating returns and providing assistance in areas of origin. Scaling up projects supporting returns was recommended and was seen as having the potential to support the return of a significant proportion of IDPs who require basic support such as cash, transport and livelihoods.
- **Increased international support to shelter rehabilitation was highlighted as a critical priority.** This is considered one of the most significant barriers to return and is beyond the financial capacity of the authorities.
- **Nevertheless, it was also acknowledged that there are households that face more complex barriers to return** – that while most of Ninewa is secure, there are less secure areas (such as sparse desert locations), disputed territories, and households with perceived ISIL affiliation who may be ‘the last to be able to return’. It was noted that identifying a political solution to disputed territories remains a priority. In addition, participants highlighted that a focus on social cohesion initiatives in instances of tribal disputes and ISIL affiliation will lead to limited results without first increasing assistance to host communities, providing compensation to victims and ensuring access to remedies and justice. It was concluded that some camps would need to remain for more complex profiles but that, nevertheless, this challenge does not negate the need to support the many households that do not face these barriers.
- **Out-of-camp IDPs are considered to be a lesser priority,** with participants noting that numbers stated by international actors are inflated. Authorities do not categorize these individuals as people in need, and – by definition – IDPs, as they are believed to be well integrated, accessing jobs and education, living in rented homes and not dependent on assistance. Many do not plan to return and are not facing any pressure to leave their current locations. As such, authorities view local integration as inevitable and not objectionable. It was noted that relocation to a third location in Iraq, as a durable solution, was not relevant or applicable to the context. When presented with the case of IDPs out of camps in critical shelters, it was acknowledged that while a smaller group, these households may need specialized assistance.
- **The need to support returnees and strive for sustainable returns was viewed as paramount** - understood to contribute to increased returns as well as preventing secondary displacement. It was noted that many return locations require restoration of services and assistance to returnees. While the government is committed to expanding its support, once again, it was reiterated that this would require significant contributions from international actors.
- **A range of stakeholders were identified for further consultations with the view to develop a plan for solving displacement in Ninewa.** As a next step, a joint consultation approach will be developed for review and validation by participants of the round table. A plan will then be drafted based on the outcome of consultations and presented to all relevant stakeholders for finalization. This plan will fall under the overall framework of a national plan currently being developed jointly by international actors and the government, under the leadership of the Durable Solutions Task Force.

## BACKGROUND

At the end of 2019 and early 2020, prior to the establishment of the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), the Returns Working Group (RWG, led by IOM) initiated efforts towards creating durable solutions plans of action (POAs) per governorate. This built upon the IOM-led, DFID-funded project creating the Governorate Returns Committee (GRC) Secretariats, and inclusion of the plans in the HCT- and UNCT-endorsed Durable Solutions Concept Note as prepared by the Senior Advisor on Durable Solutions. The creation of POAs was envisaged to be the outcome of consultations and workshops with a range of stakeholders, outlining commitments to solving protracted displacement.

While a process began in Anbar, with a workshop convened jointly with OCHA in October 2019, a follow-up workshop planned for March 2020 was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, putting discussions on hold. In addition, efforts had simultaneously been made to hold a national level kick-off workshop, which was subsequently cancelled multiple times due to protests, shifts in government and finally, COVID-19. Concurrently, the DSTF was established, providing an overarching framework and coordination platform to lead discussions with the government - as well as among international actors - regarding the strategy and way forward for resolving protracted displacement. With the creation of the DSTF, efforts to develop plans at the governorate level were brought under the overall accountability of the DSTF.

The DSTF has spent the first few months of its inception identifying priorities, agreeing on the scope of work, drafting a broad strategy for discussion with the government, as well as formulating ToRs for coordination groups expected to support the operationalization of a national strategy. During this time, off the back of previous initial efforts to introduce the concept of plans of action, the RWG was approached by Ninewa authorities, in May 2020, to initiate discussions regarding plans for solving displacement in Ninewa. While awaiting the national strategy, the RWG organized an initial kick-off meeting, in the form of a roundtable, on the 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September, to first establish the parameters of a plan, build consensus around key issues surrounding displacement and agree on a way forward on who to engage and through which process. The roundtable was formulated around the agreed approach outlined by the DSTF draft plan (in anticipation of its imminent presentation to government counterparts). The RWG also communicated to Ninewa authorities that discussions are under way to agree on a national plan and that the objective would be to ensure that the conversations taking place in Ninewa were considered an iteration of a national plan, which was expected to be ready soon. Such a process would also serve as a template that could be replicated in other governorates later.

At time of writing, a joint national plan with the government and international actors remains under discussion. The RWG has presented the outcomes of the roundtable to the DSTF where it was agreed that it would be important for further governorate level consultations to be clearly understood as a part of a broader national strategy.

Prior to the workshop, RWG briefed the Sub-national ICCG OCHA coordinator to outline the approach and anticipated next steps – recognizing the potential support that would be required to engage partners and clusters through the Sub-national ICCG as well as GCM for any future planning. It was agreed that the RWG would present the general objectives at the GCM (which took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August) and a representative from OCHA would attend the roundtable as an observer.

The roundtable was conducted in Arabic. All attendees wore masks, seating was arranged to ensure social distancing, and sanitizer was available. No hand-outs were provided, to avoid exchange of paper. Finally, participants have also completed a feedback survey, results of which can be found in the annex.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Agenda & Participant List
- Day 1 & 2 Session overviews and Outcome
- Summary, Wrap Up and Next Steps

## AGENDA

The workshop took place over two days, 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September, between 9:30am-1:30pm. While initially organised to take place in Mosul on the 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August, the workshop was postponed due to a security incident, and re-organised to take place in Erbil in agreement with government representatives who had confirmed attendance. The agenda was as follows:

### Day 1

- Agreement on key challenges and issues relating to displacement in Ninewa
- Development of common understanding of IDP rights/state responsibilities (background on IDP Guiding Principles and International Frameworks on Durable Solutions – applying to Iraq context)
- Agreement on identification of key stakeholders to be involved in solving protracted displacement in Ninewa

### Day 2

- Based on key issues, discussion on solutions and suggestions for resolving displacement – with three sessions focused on a) IDPs in camps b) IDPs out of camps c) Returnees and return locations
- Agree on way forward to conduct further consultation and develop plan of action for Ninewa

## PARTICIPANTS

Ali Omer, Governors assistant for IDP affairs as well as JCMC representative, who made the initial request for a meeting, was asked to nominate key stakeholders to join an initial brainstorming and kick-off roundtable, preferably those who represent a range of government entities and authorities. It was also requested that the group be kept small to enable social-distancing and adherence to COVID-19 risk-mitigation measures.

### Facilitators from RWG Team

1. Meriwan Mustafa – Support Officer – National
2. Ahmed Riyadh Faraj – Focal Point- Ninewa and Kirkuk
3. Hanan Ali – Liaison Assistant – Ninewa
4. Ismail Abdelnaby – Field Coordination Officer

### Attendees:

1. Ali Omar Khoder – Governors Assistant for Organizations and IDPs Affairs, as well as JCMC Representative
2. Khaled Abdulkareem Ismail - Branch Manager of MOMD
3. Aiman Fakhry - Mosul National Security Service
4. Salah Mohsen Garallah - In capacity as Ninewa Police Command, Director of Police and Acting Mayor of Qawrewan
5. Rifaat Samoo Rasho - Assistant Governor for Administrative Affairs
6. Marwan Hadi Ahmed - Associate of the Representation of Ninewa

*Note: Two initially registered participants could not attend due to unforeseen circumstances: The Mosul Mayor, Zuheir Mohsin Mohammed, and the Governor's Assistant for Planning Affairs, Ra'ad Jasim Mohammed.*

### Observers:

1. Zainab Nabil – OCHA Humanitarian Affairs Officer.

## SESSION OVERVIEWS AND OUTCOMES

Please refer to accompanying presentations for full overview of content presented. The summary below focuses on discussions.

### Day 1

#### Introduction

Introduction and overview of the agenda: Facilitators outlined that the objective would not be to finalise a plan but rather agree on general parameters, who to engage and ways forward. RWG teams reiterated their support and facilitation role and importance of taking this opportunity to better understand the perspective of government colleagues. It was also noted that a session would take place regarding international guiding principles on IDP rights as well as relevant frameworks with the view to contextualise these to Iraq as well as discuss considerations for solving protracted displacement with clear focus on dignity, rights and choice of IDPs.

#### Session one: Ninewa Situation Overview

##### Session Outline and Intended Outcome

Participants were presented with information gathered from government data and other data sources (such as DTM and CCCM) regarding displacement figures, return figures (and rates of return), IDP intentions and obstacles to solving protracted displacement – followed by a discussion. The intended outcome of the session was to ensure a common understanding of the displacement situation as a prerequisite for an effective discussion around solutions.

##### Summary of Discussion

Overall, there was general agreement over the situation although differences with estimated numbers of returnees and IDPs out of camp – both considered to be lower by the government (the government figures on in camp IDPs are similar to CCCM figures which resulted in general agreement). The key priority for authorities, as expected, is the closure of camps, however, as the discussion evolved, there was agreement that the situation of returnees and return locations was just as important, if not more important, particularly for the sustainability of returns. It was noted that it is important that international actors stop creating pull factors to camps and re-focus assistance to returnees, facilitating returns and return locations. It was also noted that out of camp IDPs are a far lesser priority with very few who are in need of assistance, many happily remaining in areas of displacement without any pressure or intention to return. The discussions are outlined below – which continued on day two in related sessions.

##### Out of camp IDPs

- There was disagreements over the figures for out of camp IDPs, largely attributed to a difference in how government counterparts would define this group, stating that the majority of out of camp IDPs are settled, integrated with hosting populations, accessing livelihoods, their children are in schools and they are free to move between their areas of origin and displacement – as per the Iraqi constitution which allows any Iraqi to travel freely across the country. While they may choose not to close their displacement file and this may mean they are defined as IDPs by the humanitarian community, the authorities do not consider these people of concern. These include:
  - 1) Governmental employees/civil servants who prefer to stay in areas of displacement due to their work

- 2) Tradesmen & businessmen who now have established business
  - 3) People who have the financial means to rent or buy property
  - 4) People with a perceived lack of long-term security and political stability with no intention to return
- This view was reinforced by another participant who noted that numbers of IDPs on paper are inflated, many IDPs have lived outside areas of origin for years and only leave their displacement file open to receive assistance.
  - Nevertheless, the MOMD representative noted that the reason for displacement is less applicable to whether a person is defined as displaced and that they would consider many of these individuals as IDPs, noting that while some IDPs may take advantage of the system by remaining on file as IDPs, they are only able to register as returnees in areas of origin and therefore cannot register in their current displacement location.
  - This issue was discussed further on day 2 – see related notes below.

### IDPs Outside of Ninewa

- Participants mentioned that 60-70% of IDPs from Ninewa are in KRI, requiring coordination with authorities in KRI. When pressed, it was noted that this is not under the direct influence and responsibility of Ninewa authorities but that it would be important to consider these groups rather than focusing on IDPs in Ninewa only.

### Returnees and Return Locations

- Authorities were pleasantly surprised by the number of returnees presented – stating this was higher than they would suggest.
- There was agreement with the figures presented on the falling rates of return, which authorities attributed to more complex profiles and challenges with tribal and social cohesion for some remaining households.
- There was general agreement on the severity of locations according to the return index, especially in terms of Scale 1 (livelihood and basic services), as many locations suffer from shelter damage, lack of basic services and livelihood opportunities. Participants felt that most areas of Ninewa are safe, however, indeed, several areas experience severe conditions in terms of Scale 2 (safety and security perceptions), such as the desert area in southwestern Ninewa which risk infiltration. In addition, it was acknowledged that areas such as Sinjar with multiple security actors may affect return conditions.
- It was mentioned that Hamdaniya district received the highest rate of returnees relative to the population, yet the highest absolute number of returnees are in Mosul and Tal Afar. .
- Participants considered Sinjar a significant priority which requires increased attention - noting that 30,000 IDP HHs from Sinjar live in Dohuk camps and 70,000 IDP HHs live in out of camp settings. The participants once again stressed that not all out of camp IDPs should be considered IDPs for the same reasons mentioned above.
- JCMC added that the COVID-19 contributed to returns from Dohuk to Sinjar, due to the restrictions put in place between Duhok and Ninewa governorates in terms of movement.

### In-camp IDPs

- There was general agreement over the situation in camps and the general figures – in line with CCCM figures. However, it was noted that Makhmour and Sheikh Khan are considered to be part of Ninewa and IDP HHs originating from Makhmour are considered to be IDPs from Ninewa. Hence Debaga, Essian, Mamrashan and Sheikhan camps are considered to be part of Ninewa.
- Participants also strongly disagreed with the presented number of in-camp IDPs in Ninewa originating from other governorates (825 HHs from Erbil, Salah-al-Din, Anbar and Kirkuk), mentioning that such numbers were from past,

and all of them have either returned to their areas of origin or were relocated to their governorates of origin. The only exception is a group of 100-150 HHs in Jed'ah camps who failed to return due to lack of community acceptance. These HHs originate from Shirqat district, Salah al-Din.

#### Obstacles to return:

- Authorities noted that intentions surveys conducted by humanitarian actors are misleading – that they are usually based on samples and they underrepresent willingness to return compared to surveys conducted by MOMD.
- Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that IDPs do face barriers to return, the primary barriers being shelter, basic services and livelihoods. Shelter was a key concern highlighted by authorities.
- However, while noting that many IDPs simply need assistance with these obstacles, it was also noted that there are more challenging considerations including:
  - o The need for compensation as a key to resolving displacement
  - o Transitional justice, particularly in locations such as Sinjar
  - o Resolution of tribal conflict and lack of acceptance of ISIL affiliated families - noting that this is often beyond the law which focuses on first degree relatives whereas tribes often consider 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> degree relatives.
  - o Insecurity in vast and sparsely populated locations such as Hatra and Southern Ba'aj – even if most areas in Ninewa are otherwise considered safe.
  - o It was also agreed that there is a general need to build trust between authorities, security actors and the community – with more representation of local populations in these positions.
  - o Finally, while the protracted displacement framework refers to security as an obstacle, it was noted that these would also be considered political issues primarily (even if they have security consequences) e.g. disputed territories
- Overall, however, it was communicated that there are significant groups of IDPs who do not fall into the categories of more complex caseloads who could be supported with assistance – such as shelter, cash and livelihoods, to return.

## Session Two: Principles and frameworks around solving protracted displacement

### Session Overview and Intended Outcome

During this session, the IDP guiding principles, IASC Durable Solutions framework and associated principles and criteria for measuring solutions formed the basis of discussions. The frameworks were discussed within the context of Iraq – in terms of relevance, applicability. The intended outcome was to broaden the lens through which to view durable solutions, specifically to highlight a) alternative solutions to return and their necessity b) increase awareness of criteria for measuring achievement towards achieving durable solutions i.e. the issue of sustainability c) reiterating joint agreements towards the primacy of IDP rights in joint planning for solving protracted displacement d) increase sensitization towards international perspectives on these issues that may guide or influence the scope of joint planning.

### Summary of Discussion:

- Government counterparts repeatedly reiterated that IDPs have full rights as citizens, including the right to assistance, security, protection, right to health care, education and dignity. It was also noted that those out of camps have full freedom of movement. Nevertheless, authorities explained that there had to be

acknowledgement over limitations in the financial capacity of the government to fulfil all of these rights, despite their commitment to.

- It was also stated that for the sake of stability in the country, dignity of IDPs, and in line with their preferences, it was not favourable for IDPs to remain in displacement forever, that we should focus our efforts on facilitating returns and achieving sustainable returns.
- While all three potential solutions were acknowledged (i.e. return to areas of origin, remain and integrate in areas of displacement or relocate to a third location in Iraq) return was repeatedly highlighted as the primary goal of the government – particularly as reasons for not wanting to return are directly linked to a lack of support to return.
- There was general agreement that local integration is accepted, de facto, even if not preferred. It was reiterated that out of camp IDPs are normally settled and are not facing pressure to return e.g. in Mosul City there are many people who fear perceived affiliation and are able to live more freely without negative associations. For the local authorities, as long as there is not a request for assistance or dependency on assistance, this is not a concern. Nevertheless, another participant noted that some IDPs had left camps in Ninewa and were found in informal settlements in Mosul, fearing they would be evicted from camps – that this suggested that even some people out of camps were vulnerable. The general perspective of the group is that these are minority cases and can be treated in isolation rather than suggest a broad issue of vulnerable IDPs out of camps.
- Additionally, it was noted that Iraq has experienced significant waves of displacement historically, that many people do not reside in their areas of origin, and that this has not been rejected by the government. It was acknowledged that not all people will be able to return for reasons including trauma, perceived lack of security in areas of origin, lack of basic services and concerns over long-term stability and prosperity. There was general agreement among participants that while local integration should not be encourage – as this is not considered to be the best outcome for long-term stability - no one should impede or prevent it should IDPs desire that option.
- Participants noted that relocation to a third location in the country is not applicable for Ninewa – that this is something typically attributed to natural disasters and they do not see the relevance of this in the current context. Nevertheless, they reiterated the ability for any Iraqi to travel wherever they wish according to the constitution and that there was no objection to this, per se.
- Six out of the eight durable solutions criteria were considered essential to the current context of Ninewa:
  - 1) The two most important criteria to the participants were long-term safety and security, expected to solve 40-50% of current displacement issues, and remedies and justice, an integral prerequisite to facilitate the return of HHs with perceived affiliation to ISIL – noting that discussions around ‘social cohesion’ were ineffective against the backdrop of a lack of meaningful justice.
  - 2) The four other criteria (Adequate standard of living, Access to livelihoods and employment, Mechanisms for resolving HLP disputes, Documentation) were also considered vital to solving most of the displacement issues and supporting sustainable return.
  - 3) It was noted that Family reunification was perceived to be mostly applicable to refugees and migrants outside of the country, while Participation in public affairs was noted as already guaranteed by Iraqi constitution and laws.
- Based on the identified criteria, that remedies and justice and long-term safety and security were acknowledged as significant for return, that there were many households with perceived affiliation,

participants were asked how it could be feasible to easily facilitate their returns even if this was their preference or the governments priority. Participants agreed that this was a very complex group, that it would be the most difficult to resolve. Law is just one aspect of the issue, the bigger problem is a need for tribal reconciliation. The consensus was that while this is a difficult category, this should not stall broader discussions around returns, that there are many households who need basic support with shelter, livelihoods and cash, that if assistance provided in camps were taken to areas of origin, thousands would return, that this should be the current focus of efforts.

## Session three: Stakeholder mapping

### Session Outline and Intended Outcome

This session was a small group exercise, followed by a group discussion. Participants were assigned one facilitator per group of 2 and brainstormed a) national level b) governorate level and c) local level stakeholders that should be engaged for planning around solving protracted displacement. Following small group discussions, each group presented to the wider group. The intended outcome was to build consensus around the necessary stakeholders for an inclusive approach to durable solutions planning.

### Summary of Discussion

- Overall, there was general consensus on all stakeholders that should be included – see specified stakeholders below.
- Facilitators probed on the inclusion of IDPs as key stakeholders that had not been mentioned. Authorities noted that mukhtars, community leaders and tribal leaders act as IDP representatives. It was also noted that, within camps, Mukhtars/sector leads could be representatives of IDPs, while out of camps would depend on the nature of the area e.g. in an urban centre such as Mosul it could be a selection of profiles e.g. intellectuals or professionals who are IDPs.
- It was noted that while these discussions should take place and be owned at the governorate level, that any planning is initiated directly from COMSEC or the Prime Ministers office to ensure legitimacy and buy-in from all stakeholders.
- Unfortunately, due to time constraints there was limited opportunity to discuss exactly how each of these stakeholders would be engaged – given the significant number of individuals and groups identified. Instead (as indicated in next steps), the RWG will outline a consultation plan for approval by government counterparts, striving for feasible, yet meaningful engagement.

### National level stakeholders Identified:

- Prime Minister (PM)
- PM's office
- COMSEC
- Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Justice, additional ministries e.g. Health, Agriculture, Education
- MoMD

### Governorate level stakeholders identified:

- Ninewa Governor (the most important person on the governorate level)
- Governor's office, including all Governor deputies and assistants (engaged in displacement and returnee files)
- Mayors of all districts and sub-districts across Ninewa (31 stakeholders were identified)

- Ninewa Operations Command (NOC) & West Ninewa Operations Command (WNOC), including all security actors who handle security, security clearance and movement through checkpoints.
- Governmental directorates such as MoMD, Directorates of Water, Electricity, Health, Municipality, Education & Real Estate (Tapoo) that provide basic services.
- Courts, Compensation Department and The Martyrs Foundation because they are primarily responsible for compensation, justice and remedies.
- Clergymen, tribal leaders, mukhtars, community representatives, intellectual figures, politicians and political parties, as they are the decision makers and have influence over populations and tribes.
- International community and local partners.
- Representatives of IDPs.

### Local level stakeholders identified

- Local mukhtars and sub-district managers
- Sheikhs
- Tribal Leaders
- Managers of local directorates responsible for basic services
- Active local organizations
- IDP representatives.
- Head of local police

## Summary and Wrap Up

The key outcomes and agreements from day one were summarized, with an overview of how these issues will be brought forward for further discussion during day two.

## DAY 2

See accompanying presentation for further information on session content

### Introduction

A recap of day one was provided as well as an outline of day two, where, building upon discussions in day one, there would now be an opportunity to brainstorm solutions for resolving displacement for in-camp IDPs, out of camp IDPs and addressing needs and priorities of returnees and gaps and needs in return locations.

### Session one: Potential Solutions for In-Camp IDPs

#### Session Outline and intended Outcome:

The session was organized as a group discussion – with probing questions such as what are the main obstacles for solving protracted displacement of in-camp IDPs, how do we prioritise among these, what are potential solutions, who can work on these solutions and so forth. The intended outcome was to better understand government perspectives and expectations around identifying solutions, to be used as the basis for developing the broad framework of a plan as well as for further exploring in subsequent consultations

## Summary of Discussion:

- According to the participants, there are five main categories of in-camp IDPs:
  - a. IDPs remaining in displacement to receive aid. Many of these IDP households are reportedly split between areas of origin and camps, where they continue to receive assistance.
  - b. IDPs who need financial assistance and access to livelihood opportunities in proximity to camps
  - c. IDPs facing a lack of shelter and need for rehabilitation of homes
  - d. IDPs originating from disputed areas
  - e. IDPs with perceived affiliation to ISIL
- According to the participants, the first two categories can be resolved with greater ease. IDPs in the first category are not considered genuine IDPs from the perspective of authorities – it was also mentioned on a side note that camps had been instructed to prevent people from moving in and out of camps to their areas of origin for the purpose only of taking assistance (HAA, Salamiya,). It was noted that there have been challenges with camp management entities that refuse to acknowledge that these groups exist in the camps, making it difficult to resolve issues relating to this category. Relatedly, there had been instructions to prevent any new arrivals to camps.
- MoMD mentioned that some IDPs from Sinjar leave the camps without following procedures which would allow MoMD to track their return.
- It was noted that the second category fit the criteria of those who have either been supported, or intend to be supported by IOM and UNHCR return projects – noting that this should be scaled up so that more households benefit.
- The third category, with shelter challenges, was noted as being the most important priority for the government for two main reasons: 1) the highest number of IDPs fall under this category and 2) neither the central nor local governments have the capacity to rehabilitate private houses or build new ones. Therefore, there are high expectations for support from the international community.
- The fourth category, relating to disputed territories, was acknowledged to be a political issue. It was noted that Ninewa authorities have already started coordinating with KRI to solve the issues regarding contested areas in early 2020. The local efforts are strongly supported by the central government through the direct engagement of the Iraqi PM and MoMD Minister. However, it was noted that the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down the process.
- It was noted that the fifth category, relating to ISIL affiliation, requires the most time and may need to be addressed after other categories have been supported.
- Camp closure is considered a top priority for Ninewa authorities. It is perceived that closing the camps will help to improve security, economy, prosperity and social life in general. It was noted that IDPs inside camps may have the basic necessities of life but they do not have dignity, which is not acceptable for the government. It was considered a source of shame that IDPs are still living in camps three years after liberation from ISIL.
- MoMD is proceeding with their plan of camp consolidation and camp closure across the country – it was indicated that this directive had been received from higher level authorities. In Ninewa, the current intention is to close one of the camps in November 2020 (name of the camp was not given), with the view to consolidate with remaining camps in recognition of more complex return challenges for some households with social cohesion issues. Meetings and coordination are ongoing with ISF, Ninewa authorities and, reportedly, humanitarian partners.
- MoMD is also working on closing Jabal Sinjar camp by encouraging HHs there to return to their villages, which are reportedly do not have significant damage. Joint efforts have already led to support to 900 IDP HHs who have returned to areas of origin in the south of Sinjar. MoMD will support those HHs for a year with post-return assistance

- reportedly following consultations with households who noted that they would return if they knew they would be assisted.
- It was noted that there should be more efforts to facilitate go-and-see visits, that if IDPs in Dohuk from Sinjar were provided with these visits, they are confident many would return (with further emphasis on the fact that Sinjar deserves more attention).
- When it was noted that some IDPs have faced challenges with security clearance, the security representative stated that as long as approvals are obtained, and the governor coordinates with Operations Command, return is supported.
- For the fifth category of IDPs (perceived to be ISIL affiliated) (The National Reconciliation Committee was considered the most crucial actor in solving this issue. There were plans to arrange reconciliation before COVID in Mosul between the victims' side and the accused side, but were stalled due to the pandemic. The participants hoped that representatives from the national reconciliation committee are involved in future discussions and meetings. It was mentioned as an additional point that if compensation was provided to the victims, this will increase the feasibility of reconciliation.
- The chief of police insisted that if ISIS affiliated families returned, the law would be followed and innocent families would be allowed back, but they cannot control tribal customs and tensions. Tribal leaders and families of victims may not be convinced to accept their return. Furthermore, the ISIL conflict is fresh in the memory and they will need more time to recover mentally.
- Overall, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:
  - o Reduce and halt assistance to IDPs in camps who are not in need – while focusing more on areas of origin which would support returns.
  - o Activation of the compensation department in the governorate and swift processing of compensation files.
  - o MoMD to distribute the return grant as soon as possible.
  - o Focus more on shelter rehabilitation needs.
  - o Provide constant post-return assistance for returnees.
  - o Improve security and basic services in areas of origin.
  - o The Iraqi judicial system to make final decisions regarding justice and remedies.
  - o Activation of reconciliation and peacebuilding committees.

## Session two: Potential Solutions for Out-of-Camp IDPs

### Session Outline and intended Outcome

The session was organized as a group discussion – with prompting questions such as what are the main obstacles for solving protracted displacement of out-of-camp IDPs, how do we prioritise among these, what are potential solutions, who can work on these solutions. The intended outcome was as noted for session one.

### Summary of Discussion

- The discussion on out of camp IDPs was brief – the participants reiterated that this was not a priority group although when probed noted that there was little difference between the obstacles of IDPs in camps and out of camps.
- There was acknowledgement that IDPs in critical shelter, such as settlements, were of concern, with participants noting that these groups required assistance from the government, from MOMD and from partners to maintain a minimum standard of living which is not sustainable. Therefore, similar interventions should support these households as those identified in the first session. Notably, one participant did perceive that some IDPs in critical shelter chose

to remain in those conditions to access assistance, despite possibility to rent housing – i.e. stressing the need to address dependency on assistance.

- When probed on the rights of IDPs in locations that are not their own – e.g. access to documentation, rights to purchase properties and so forth, it was noted that IDPs have the same rights as Iraqi's [*Note: For future discussion, it would be beneficial for facilitators to be equipped with case studies and information on ways in which IDPs living out of camps may face barriers to local integration in areas of displacement*].

## Session Three: Potential Solutions for Returnees and Return Locations

### Session Overview and Intended Outcome

As with previous sessions, guided by probing questions of critical issues and challenges facing returnees, and needs in return locations, participants provided inputs and suggestions of potential solutions for addressing the needs of returnees and needs in return locations, with the view to achieve sustainable returns.

### Summary of Discussion

- While returnees had not been the focus of initial conversations, by day two, participants noted that support to returns is critical for the following reasons:
  - o To achieve sustainable returns & avoid secondary displacement
  - o Create conditions which increase feasibility of more IDPs to return
  - o To support the acceleration of camp closures and voluntary returns
- MoMD noted that they are providing ongoing support to returnees and are not focusing only on IDPs, stressing that there has been a recent shift to support returnees on a larger scale, especially in 2020.
- Local authorities are reportedly leading a high level of coordination with all the relevant directorates to improve basic services in the areas of return, while security actors are facilitating the return movements as much as possible.
- The government is seeking support from international actors for shelter rehabilitation and livelihoods – noting that while they are grateful for the support currently provided, far more is needed.
- Local authorities are advocating for more return grants and compensation budget to support returns – it was generally noted that while the government will lead efforts and interventions in areas of return, there is a need for significant support from international actors given financial constraints faced by authorities.
- In terms of priority interventions to support returnees, the following was identified:
  - o **Security** in the areas of return is the top priority, as that would directly impact around 40% of locations.
  - o **Provision of basic services** (water and electricity as a first-degree priority, followed by health and education).
  - o **Rehabilitating shelter**: The government can only provide tents within its current capacity and would need to cooperate with development partners to rehabilitate shelter as that would require more funding.
  - o **Compensation**: This is important for ensuring a sense of justice and sustainability of returns
- According to the participants, the Ninewa unapproved budget is 25 million USD, which is not enough to cover large scale interventions. It was also stated that giving people loans has been a challenge as many people refuse to take loans due to religious reasons.
- The security representative mentioned that most areas in Ninewa are safe, but security forces will struggle to control vast, desolate areas with low populations (e.g. areas in Hatra).
- Finally, households with perceived affiliation were discussed once again.
  - o It was acknowledged that facilitating their return would be the most difficult part of any plan.

- MoMD estimates the four camps of Ninewa (HAA, Salamiyah and Je'dah 1 and 5) to host 400 households with direct affiliation (where the ISIL member used to live in one house with the rest of the family) and over 1,000 households with indirect affiliation (the ISIL member is either a relative/ cousin, belongs to the same tribe or is a father/ brother but was living in an independent house).
- All agreed that the return of households with perceived affiliation will require a tailored approach by area of origin and this would likely be the last group to return. It was also agreed that due to the difficulty in guaranteeing the safety of families with perceived affiliation upon return, a few camps will need to remain open to host these families
- In summary, the following conclusions were reached:
  - Households with perceived affiliation will not be able to return soon to most areas of origin.
  - A camp or two will likely remain open for these households for at least a year (most likely more).
  - The return of these households is highly linked to assistance provided to host communities, victims and compensation.
  - Access to remedies and justice is considered an integral part of the facilitation of the return of households with perceived affiliation.

## Summary, Wrap Up and Agreed Next Steps

All participants thanked the workshop facilitators for a fruitful discussion, noting that the roundtable format had given meaningful opportunities for discussions and they hope that this can be replicated in future.

Following a wrap up and summary of discussions, the following steps were agreed upon:

1. RWG to facilitate consultations with all relevant stakeholders, in collaboration with round table attendees [RWG will prepare a consultation plan for validation and inputs with roundtable attendees]
2. Following consultations, an additional roundtable will be conducted
3. A draft plan will be prepared for inputs by stakeholders
4. A plan will be finalized and presented to relevant stakeholders

Notably, it was emphasized by participants that the situation is fluid, numbers of returnees and IDPs are changing, and any development of a plan will need to be quick but also flexible and adaptable. It was also noted that decisions regarding budgeting will be evolving in coming months. It was agreed that the process should be completed in

## ANNEX: FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS

Participants were asked to fill a feedback survey following the completion of the roundtable – 7 participants in total (including one OCHA observer):

### Summary

- Overall, attendees found the workshop to be very useful and well facilitated, with the most popular sessions focused on brainstorming solutions for solving displacement for IDPs in camps, as well as mapping out the relevant stakeholders to engage in next steps and consultations for the development of a plan.
- The least favourite sessions were discussing solutions for IDPs out of camp (in line with indications during the workshop that this was not seen to be a general priority), as well as discussing Durable solutions and frameworks.

For the latter, further contextualizing for Iraq and bringing in case studies and examples from other contexts (as was suggested as an improvement for future roundtables), may increase the level of engagement in the session

- All participants indicated that they view international actors as performing a support role to the government for solving protracted displacement, as well as providing financial assistance and programmes.
- All agreed with the statements that by the end of the roundtable the participants were more aware of the factors that need to be taken into consideration for developing a plan to solve protracted displacement, and that there was a clear agreed way forward for developing a plan for Ninewa.
- Finally, it was agreed that, following consultations with the agreed stakeholders, another round table should be conducted, based on the consultations, to finalise the plan.

## Results

### 1. Ranking of usefulness of each session – with options of very useful, useful, neutral, not useful, not at all useful

- *Discussing the overall situation in Ninewa:* All participants found this useful, with three finding it 'very useful'
- *Overview of durable solutions and international frameworks:* All found this useful, four selected 'very useful'
- *Stakeholder mapping on key people to involve for DS plans:* All found this to be useful, five selected 'very useful'
- *Discussion on solutions for IDPs in camps:* All found this useful, six selected 'very useful'
- *Discussion on solutions for IDPs out of camp:* Six found this useful, one selected not useful.
- *Discussion on solutions for returnees and return locations:* All found this useful, three selected 'very useful'

### 2. Favorite sessions

The participants selected the following as their favorite sessions (2 selections per participant, 14 in total):

- Discussion on solutions for IDPs in camps – 6 participants
- Discussion on solutions for returnees and return locations – 3 participants
- Stakeholder mapping on key people to involve in durable solutions plans – 2 participants
- Discussing the overall situation in Ninewa – 2 participants
- Overview of durable solutions and international frameworks – 1 participant

### 3. Least favorite sessions

The participants selected the following as their least favorite sessions (2 selections per participant, 14 in total):

- a) Discussion on solutions for IDPs out of camps – 5 participants
- b) Overview of durable solutions and international frameworks – 4 participants
- c) Discussing the overall situation in Ninewa – 3 participants
- d) Discussion on solutions for returnees and return locations – 1 participant
- e) Stakeholder mapping on key people to involve in durable solutions plans – 1 participant

**4. Time management:** Five participants believed the time management of the sessions to be very good, while the rest of the participants believed it was generally good. Only one additional comment was provided in this section, which stated that the time was well managed and that there was a good level of interaction and understanding.

**5. Facilitation of the roundtable:** All participants indicated the facilitation was good - five participants selecting 'very good'.

**6. The participants believed the following to be the role of international actors in supporting durable solutions:**

- Cooperate with the government and various official actors to achieve successful and sustainable return
- Support the role of the central or local government in returning IDPs by supporting IDPs and motivating them to return, as well providing financial and logistical support to the IDPs. Furthermore, international actors may provide information and reports that would be useful to the government
- Support local and federal government plans to support durable solutions
- Provide support and financial assistance as part of their work towards durable solutions
- Support the government's efforts in return areas through go and see programs
- Providing support with current efforts and enhancing stability in the region

## 7. Agreement on a way forward

Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement: “By the end of this discussion, we agreed on a way forward to develop a Ninewa plan for addressing protracted displacement”, to which everyone agreed (four participants strongly agreed, while the other four agreed).

## 8. Factors when developing a plan for protracted displacement

Participants were asked the extent to which they agree with the statement: “By the end of this discussion, I am now more aware of the different factors to take into account when developing a plan for protracted displacement”, to which everyone agreed (three participants strongly agreed, while five agreed).

## 9. Suggested changes or improvements to the roundtable

- Better control over discussions when they diverge from the topic.
- Participation of other relevant partners
- Study some cases of displaced people in other countries
- Invite stakeholders and decision makers in governmental institutions as well e.g. directorates of health, water etc.
- The presence of security decision makers for accurate analysis for future planning
- Inviting influential people in their communities and proposing sustainable future projects for displaced and returnee youth

**10. Additional/ final comments** Only two additional comments were given, both of which called for the need to conduct another workshop once consultations are complete and when there is more clarity on the budget.