

Terms of Reference

Iraq Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG)

Terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis

Background

Operating under the direction of the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), and overall leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) will be the main technical and operational platform through which durable solutions will be advanced in Iraq, among international and NGO humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding actors. The group will ensure close linkages with government, existing entities, IASC Clusters and the Priority Working Groups of the UNSDCF, recognizing the broad set of stakeholders involved in the achievement of durable solutions.

DSTWG is intended as a small body, with a select number of members from representatives of different groups of stakeholders as further outlined in membership criteria below. The group will develop tools, approaches and propose projects to support the operationalisation of efforts to support the achievement of durable solutions. The group will guide and steer the implementation of projects which will take place at the area-level, ensuring harmonisation in approaches and standards. Area-level groups will lead the operational coordination and implementation of projects, reporting up to the DSTWG. Where possible, existing groups or committees will serve as the platform to coordinate area level interventions but, where relevant, new groups may be established in agreement with members and government authorities.

DSTWG will ensure close linkages to, and collaboration with, government, at technical and operational levels, promoting, in particular, principled approaches to durable solutions. Specifically, the work of DSTWG is focused around the implementation of durable solutions, which includes (1) development of operational strategies for durable solutions; (2) coordination and steering of area-level interventions; (3) technical assistance to government; (4) technical methodology, tool and process development; and (5) reinforced advocacy, under the leadership of the DSTF, on the full range of durable solutions, as defined in the IASC Framework. DSTWG will work in close concert with the Returns Working Group, which serves a complementary function to DSTWG, providing a broader platform to ensure that approaches and tools developed by the DSTWG can be brought forward to a wider group for further inputs and feedback, as well as general updates on durable solutions in Iraq.

The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) established eight criteria for the achievement of durable solutions, which include approaches to ensure long term safety and security; non-discrimination; adequate standard of living; access to livelihoods and essential services; access to documentation; family reunification; participation in public affairs; and access to justice and effective remedies including the restoration of housing, land and property rights. Former IDPs, regardless of whether they return, locally integrate or settle elsewhere in the country, should be able to access rights on an equal standing with those who were not displaced. DSTWG recognizes that the implementation of effective and lasting solutions requires tailoring policies and approaches that are specific to the Iraq context.

The Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) and the Returns Working Group (RWG) report to the Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF) and form the core of the international community's durable solutions architecture in Iraq, seeking to operationalize the continuum between the humanitarian (Cluster) and development (UNSDCF) coordination architectures. All three mechanisms are designed to work in concert, with DSTF providing overall strategic direction and coherence at political level; DSTWG serving as a technical forum developing and overseeing methodologies and operational plans, with a more limited membership; and RWG providing a broad-based platform for information sharing and dissemination. There will be a standing agenda item for DSTWG to provide updates at RWG meetings to effectively enable linkages and communication between the groups and ensure that DSTWG updates can be channelled to a wider group for inputs and feedback as relevant.



Membership Criteria and Selection

The DSTWG is intended as a small technical working group focused on:

- Development of operational strategies for durable solutions;
- Provision of technical guidance and capacity to stakeholders in Iraq;
- Technical methodology, tools and process development; and
- Overall steering and technical guidance of DS implementation and coordination at area level.

As such, membership criteria have been developed to ensure that technical discussions can take place with technical actors that have specific expertise and related work in the implementation of activities aimed to achieve durable solutions, while ensuring that the group is also inclusive and functional.

Durable solutions activities are inter-sectoral and range across humanitarian, stabilization, recovery, development and peacebuilding. Therefore, there is potential for a large number of actors indicating their ability to make technical and operational contributions to achieving durable solutions. As such, it is proposed that the membership includes select numbers of representatives from different groups of stakeholders as follows, totaling 24 seats:

- UN agencies - 6 seats (with at least four with substantial development, stabilization, recovery or peacebuilding programming);
- NGOs (national and international) - 6 seats (of which at least four with substantial development, stabilization, recovery or peacebuilding programming, and at least two must be national NGOs);
- ICCG / Clusters - 3 seats;
- UNSDCF Priority Working Groups - 3 seats;
- Other WGs - 3 seats (stabilization, development, recovery or peacebuilding WGs);
- Other entities (private sector, RC/RC movement, etc.) - 3 seats.

DSTWG co-leads, along with NCCI, will lead the selection process, subject to validation of the choices by DSTF. Interested entities will submit an expression of interest confirming their commitment to send 1 dedicated representative on a consistent basis. Each seat should be occupied by one person only, with one replacement in case of absence.

For the UN and NGO seats, preference will be given to agencies with ongoing, funded activities and experience specifically related to the implementation of durable solutions in Iraq. Preference will also be given to organizations and agencies that have programming / expertise in multiple specific or sectoral areas of relevance to DS.

This approach is intended to ensure a range of expertise, a balance of stakeholders and the ability to maintain a group size that is conducive to technical and operational discussions. Agencies occupying seats will rotate on a bi-annual basis, following an expression of interest and vote.

Inclusion of inputs and expertise of additional actors

Recognizing the relevance and applicability of interventions and approaches contributing to DS to a wider range of actors, RWG will become a forum where activities and proposals developed by DSTWG can be brought forward for wider inputs and feedback. This will allow for the attendance and contribution of, as well as accountability to, a larger group of stakeholders. Based on these inputs, the DSTWG will reconvene for further discussion. In addition, DSTWG will be a standing invitee to the ICCG to ensure linkages with humanitarian coordination, and other working groups as decided later.

Reflecting sector and specialized expertise

It is recognized that time-bound, task based, smaller technical groups (or “sub-groups”) may be convened to develop guidance and approaches to specific thematic areas – such as assessment methodologies, developing guidelines relating to livelihoods interventions, shelter activities or social cohesion. These groups will be initiated, in agreement with the DSTWG, as required, while preference will be given to channeling related discussions through existing working groups rather than creating new platforms, as long as the working group membership has a range of representatives not exclusive to any specific category noted above (i.e. includes a range of NGOs, stabilization, recovery and development actors and so forth) or can ensure inclusion and inputs from additional stakeholders not typically present.

Area-based Coordination Mechanisms

While at the national level, DSTWG will focus on strategies, approaches, tools and technical guidance, at the local level, area-level coordination will be required for the implementation of plans and approaches which may require coordination at the local level. Where feasible, attempts should be made work through existing platforms, so long as they include a range of actors from the different aforementioned stakeholders and provided that they can lead and coordinate implementation of inter-agency or multi-stakeholder plans and programs. If not, new groups may be created, in agreement with government counterparts, and participation should include actors that can commit to supporting the implementation of proposed approaches. These groups will work under the overall guidance and direction provided by the DSTWG for harmonization of approaches and sharing of best practice/lessons learned across areas.

Area level groups that exist or are created are expected to link closely with existing platforms at the local level as relevant, as well as with government counterparts as appropriate. Linkages with government will either result from direct participation of government counterparts in area-based groups or through the most appropriate platforms, such as GRCs.

The lead agencies and members of area-based coordination mechanisms will be selected by DSTWG and DSTF, among agencies active in DS activities in those areas. DSTF or DSTWG lead agencies may also designate staff or resources to support their functioning. As required, separate TORs for area-based coordination mechanisms will be created by DSTWG, subject to the endorsement of DSTF.

Objective and Priorities

DSTWG serves to organize and coordinate the implementation of durable solutions activities in Iraq, encompassing humanitarian, development, stabilisation, recovery and peacebuilding activities, and based on the strategic direction decided by DSTF. Furthermore, DSTWG, under the direction of DSTF, will seek to strengthen engagement with Government on the issue of durable solutions, including in the provision of technical assistance to maximize Government’s leadership on this issue.

DSTWG will have a dedicated team that will be responsible for carrying out secretariat functions including agendas, meeting minutes and action points and that will also be responsible for several functions as outlined below, including technical assistance to government, drafting and development of projects and approaches, in coordination with members and to provide support to coordination at the area level. DSTWG members will be engaged in inputting into these processes and will focus on

supporting and monitoring the implementation area-level projects through the development of technical tools and methodologies to be made available to organisations engaging in programming for durable solutions.

Specifically, DSTWG will perform the functions as outlined below:

Development of operational strategies and plans for durable solutions

One of the principle vehicles for implementing durable solutions is area level durable solutions plans, which serve as the implementation / operational strategies at the sub-national level. DSTWG will be responsible for the development of such plans, following a consultative process and in coordination with a broad range of actors and working groups. DSTWG, either directly or through area-based coordination mechanisms, will oversee and coordinate the implementation of these plans.

Technical assistance and liaison

- Facilitate training and capacity building initiatives at national and governorate level related to durable solutions;
- Support national and local government with review and mapping of existing durable solutions processes, such as return process mapping, planned intentions surveys, communication with communities relating to returns and other durable solutions such as local integration and settlement elsewhere;
- Work closely with and strengthen Governorate Return Committees or other governorate- or local-level mechanisms related to durable solutions;
- Assure governorate-level liaison with governorate-level coordination mechanisms and government;
- Under the direction of DSTF and in line with agency priorities, link with similar international forums, discussions, initiatives and mechanisms; and
- Coordinate technical assistance to national and local government, capacity building or related activities.

Technical methodology, tool and process development

- Develop tools, methodologies and processes related to durable solutions programming, including planning, implementation and monitoring. This includes, where required, coordination with other technical committees, clusters and working groups which may have related initiatives;
- Share and document best practice on implementation of durable solutions programming, including supported returns processes, local integration, settlement elsewhere, community planning, and broad efforts to support the resolution of protracted displacement;
- Develop and implement training and guidance on durable solutions, in line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, IASC guidelines and other tools to build collective awareness and understanding of principles relating to DS, facilitate collective monitoring of progress towards DS across the country, in support of planning, implementation and advocacy around durable solutions.