

OVERVIEW

To advance durable solutions in Iraq, in 2019, IOM, in partnership with the Government of Iraq (GOI) and a network of humanitarian, stabilisation and development actors, initiated a programme to support internally displaced persons (IDPs) in addressing their displacement situation. This has principally been done through facilitated, sustainable and voluntary returns and relocation. Participation in the programme is completely voluntary, and IDPs are supported in making informed decisions until they determine whether to return or relocate.

In an effort to improve conditions in areas of origin as a means to promote sustainable returns and reintegration, programme interventions are multisectoral in nature with returning IDPs and vulnerable host community members benefiting from support. Services provided can include shelter, livelihoods, restoration of access to basic services in areas of return, and social cohesion/peacebuilding activities.

To achieve these objectives, IOM worked closely with other organizations to develop several tools and approaches, aiming at joint implementation of activities as described below, depending on the capacity and presence of organisations in a given location.

Many of the tools have been developed jointly with clusters, working groups, and other actors, including the Cash Working

Group, the National Protection Cluster, the CCCM cluster, the Returns Working Group, the Peace and Reconciliation Working Group, the Iraq Information Center.

After the establishment of the Durable Solutions Task Force and technical WG, IOM has been co-chairing a technical inter-agency sub-group focusing on Facilitated Voluntary Movements that focused its work on the establishment of a Comprehensive Toolkit for Facilitated Voluntary Returns and as of 2021 has been focusing on approaches to promote DS for IDPs living in informal sites.

Since its creation in 2019, IOM co-leads and coordinates closely with the Durable Solutions Task Force at policy level as well as the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) and the Returns Working Group at a technical level. Implementation modalities include:

- Joint implementation by both IOM and partners, including partners funded by IOM;
- Innovative ideas and approaches are more easily and quickly developed, tested, and standardized for scale-up;
- Lessons learned are shared in real time among partners, helping to avoid repetition of mistakes and development of solutions to common challenges.

OBJECTIVE

IOM coupled with its partners believe that facilitating access to durable solutions pathways through safe, informed and voluntary processes will advance the goal of sustainably ending displacement in Iraq.


The overall objective of IOM's facilitated movements and durable solutions programming is to advance durable solutions for IDPs and returnees.

The strategy is built around the Returns Working Group Protracted Displacement Framework, including providing movement support to IDPs with category 1 barriers to return, and advocacy efforts for IDPs with categories 2 and 3 barriers to return.

Through internal and external coordination IOM strives to provide support to IDPs, including those with more complex cases, such as families with a perceived affiliation to ISIL or others in category 2 or 3. Lastly, the programme operates as a component of IOM's wider recovery and stabilization programme, in order to strengthen provision of services and assistance upon return or relocation.

Where possible, IDPs who can return and wish to do so are supported; in other cases, clear evidence of the nonviability of return can be used for advocacy purposes to support IDPs in pursuing alternative solutions that are not included in current government plans, in line with the IASC Framework.



CATEGORY	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
	SERVICE OR MATERIAL ISSUES	COMMUNITY RECONCILIATION, DIALOGUE AND SOCIAL ISSUES	SECURITY AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES
Return Obstacles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaged / destroyed housing Lack of economic opportunity / jobs Lack of basic services (water, electricity, education, health, etc.) Mental health issues ERW / UXO / IED contamination Lost, damaged or invalid civil documentation, and housing, land and property documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethno-religious tension, or tribal disputes Perceived affiliation to extremists (allowed to return by authorities but fearful of revenge, reprisal, lack of community acceptance, including women and children) Other issues preventing acceptance of returnees by communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas blocked (militias) Perceived affiliation to extremists (blocked from return by authorities) Lack of security clearance House occupation (by armed groups) IDPs originating from disputed territories

PRIORITY BENEFICIARY GROUPS

In line with the DSTF strategy, IOM focuses on vulnerable IDPs and returnees with tailored approaches to address their specific challenges.

The programme focuses on several priority population groups:

- IDPs in camps who have voluntarily registered for the facilitated movements programme;
- Out-of-camp IDPs, including IDPs residing at informal sites;
- Recent returnees who present a high degree of vulnerability, particularly those in “critical shelter”;
- Vulnerable host community members in areas of return of the other groups.

METHODOLOGY

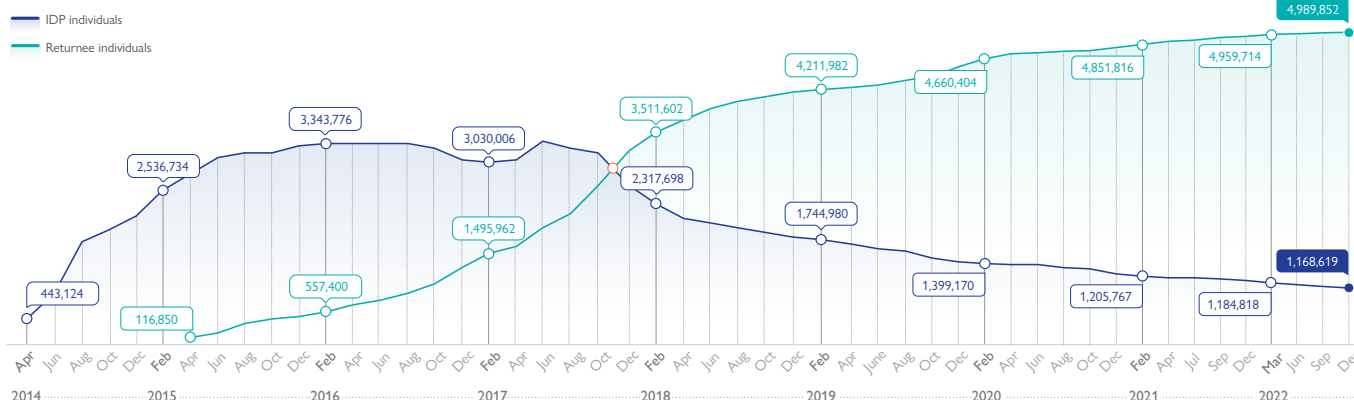
Returnees

Community-led, multi-sectoral, area-based approaches in order to improve conditions in areas of return to increase the sustainability of returns and reduce the likelihood of secondary displacement.

SIZE

592,338 (12%) returnees living in ‘high severity’ areas of return.

104,154 returnees living in critical shelter outside of “hotspot” areas of return.



IDPs

Facilitated voluntary movements are linked closely with community-led, multi-sectoral, area-based approaches as described above, in order to support durable solutions for those remaining in displacement, initiate voluntary return and integration elsewhere in the country.

- According to the CCCM Cluster there are 180,000 IDPs in camps (individuals).
- 70,000 IDPs out-of-camp living in critical shelter.

PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

The strategy is built on the experience, presence and sectoral expertise of IOM and on the collaboration with other organizations that are present and active in the areas of displacement and origin targeted by the programme.

More details on the steps in the process are included in the non-prescriptive nature of the workflow. The workflow is

flexible, allowing for tailoring and contextualization to suit specific operational contexts. Where possible, IDPs who can return and wish to do so are supported; in other cases, clear evidence of the nonviability of return can be used for advocacy purposes to support IDPs in pursuing alternative solutions that are not PreFramework.

1 SENSITIZATION

Sensitization is initiated through site-wide dissemination of information with details of the project. Sensitization takes place between IOM, government counterparts, and households that may have interest to participate in the programme. During the sessions, participants receive information on registration processes, departure support services, and other activities.

2 HELP DESKS: REGISTRATION

Registration is conducted through help desks established at IDP sites to register households who may wish to participate in the FVM programme. During registration, prospective areas of origin, or areas where IDPs would integrate or settle, and barriers to return, are collected..

3 HOST COMMUNITY SENSITIZATION

Engagement with authorities takes place at the district, subdistrict, and community levels. Community level leaders are also engaged in the sensitization through printed key messages and information sessions.

Go and See & Come and Tell Visits: Households have the option to participate in visits to their areas of origin prior to return to see conditions first-hand and to engage in dialogue with local authorities. When visits may not be possible households can participate in 'Come-and-Tell' visits of authorities from their areas of origin to the site for dialogue sessions with households.

4 DEPARTURE

Following confirmation of household-level freedom of movement and return intentions, departure support services begin, including: information sharing with households on departure-related logistics, explanation on the modalities of self-facilitated return, of transportation grants and guidelines for asset removal, and notification of local authorities of departures for ease of movement. Upon arrival, returns are registered by MOMD and households are supported with departure and reinstallation cash grants from IOM to address immediate needs.

5 MULTI-SECTORAL AREA-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Household and community level activities take place using community-led approaches. This also includes support to host community populations following household profiling to assess needs and levels of vulnerability. IOM and partners provide shelter support (rehabilitation or reconstruction, HLP support and explosive hazard removal), livelihoods support (cash assistance and sustainable livelihoods), restoring basic services and protection assistance. Where required, social cohesion, safety and security and MHPSS programmes are also available.



Shelter and Housing

- Rehabilitation of damaged housing
- Demining and debris removal of destroyed housing
- Reconstruction support for completely destroyed houses
- HLP support services



Livelihoods

- Cash assistance including reintegration grants Cash-for-work
- Sustainable livelihoods support (individual and SME)



Basic services

- Rehabilitation of community infrastructure (water, electricity, schools, clinics)
- Referral to service providers in key sectors Support to provision of government services



Protection

- Protection and post-return monitoring
- Civil Documentation renewal and replacement
- Protection case management (including child protection and SGBV)
- Legal assistance, representation and counselling
- Community-based protection



Social Cohesion and Support to Peaceful Coexistence



Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS)

6

POST RETURN MONITORING AND RESPONSE

Through close coordination with protection actors present in the area, referrals are made for protection monitoring. In addition, Initial check-in calls to households are carried out 1-2 weeks after arrival, and then again after 3 and 9 months. Referrals are made to partners for household-level services.

Durable Solutions Toolkit

IOM and a number of organisations collaborated under the name of Durable Solutions Network (DSN) during 2019-2020, to develop an Iraq-specific “Durable Solutions Toolkit.” The Toolkit was designed to ensure that methodologies and tools are developed in a collaborative way. The first volume of the Toolkit, focusing on Facilitated Voluntary Returns was finalized in the framework of the Facilitated Voluntary Return sub-group of the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group, and was endorsed by the DSTWG in July 2021. The Toolkit has been published and it's publicly available, and IOM is committed to support organisations interested in making use of the approaches and tools. The Toolkit is non-prescriptive, meaning the methodology may be used together, or as stand-alone components.

- The Toolkit is divided into four phases: ensuring informed and voluntary decisions, Community assessment and planning, facilitating safe departures and supporting progress towards solutions
- Each phase contains a description of activities, as well as tools and guidelines for implementation.
- The interventions described in the Toolkit are based on community participation and voluntariness principles
- The Toolkit strives to mainstream protection, as well as gender, age and disability throughout processes and tools
- The toolkit is a living document and will be adapted as programming for Durable Solutions continues to expand in Iraq

PROTECTION SAFEGUARDS

Protection is a central element of facilitated voluntary returns and relocations, building on the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs, the Iraq Principled Returns Framework, Iraqi and international law. The operational framework includes a number of safeguards to ensure physical, legal, and material safety, and non-discriminatory, voluntary, dignified, inclusive, informed returns. Departures are supported only when key activities in the preparatory process detailed below have been completed.

To achieve these objectives, IOM has developed several tools (in conjunction with clusters, working groups, and other organizations) and approaches, summarized in the table below. The implementation of the full package of activities.

described below is dependent on the capacity and presence of other organisations, with priority given to communities with higher rates of returns.

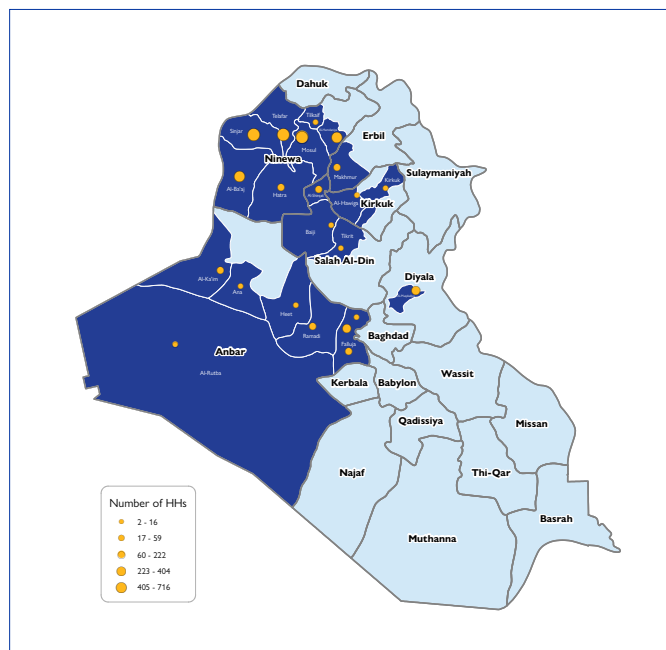
- **Safety and response mechanisms** are put in place during all stages of intervention to support households exposed to protection risks after return including emergency help lines and referrals to protection actors .
- **Sensitization** in areas of displacement and return to ensure populations are aware of assistance available.
- **Help desks** are established in locations of displacement and return to facilitate outreach, register households for participation in facilitated movements, and provide direct assistance for household to address their immediate needs.
- **Assessments of needs, risks and tensions** are carried out in areas of origin, including the identification of priority needs and gaps and the presence of explosive hazards, social tensions, power dynamics and other risks.
- **Go-and-see visits** are organized to support displaced populations in making informed decisions about their departure. They involve visits to areas of origin and engagement with local authorities and host community members.
- **Vulnerability-based beneficiary profiling and in-depth sectoral assessments** of displaced and host community populations take place to assess household level needs and vulnerabilities, and include shelter, livelihood, and protection assessments to facilitate service provision and case management.
- **Housing, land and property (HLP) services** are provided for returnees and host community members for matters related to ownership documentation and compensation. Information dissemination to sensitize the population on compensation processes can also take place before IDPs depart areas of displacement.
- **Community and government-inclusive joint action planning** is carried out independently and through the coordination of Area Based Coordination groups to create plans of action with local authorities, community leaders, sectoral actors, and community members to address conditions in the areas of origin and re-integration needs.
- **Host community engagement** is facilitated to ensure populations are aware of channels to communicate concerns related to upcoming returns. Vulnerable host community members also benefit from community recovery projects and assistance, along with returnees.
- **Post-return monitoring mechanisms** including post-return monitoring surveys are used to detect exposure to protection risks, monitor tensions and safety, and assess the durability of return based on a household's ability to re-integrate and other factors.
- **Feedback and accountability mechanisms** include accountability desks, complaint platforms through SMS, helplines, and complaint boxes in areas of displacement and areas of origin
- **Social cohesion and peacebuilding** activities provide key support to peaceful coexistence, reconciliation, and advocacy, especially for households with complex social profiles.



CURRENT STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

As of April 2023, IOM has facilitated the voluntary return and relocations of 6,195 households from AAF camp and informal sites in Anbar, Bersive 1 camp in Duhok, and of Salamiya, Jeddah 5, and Jeddah 1 camps in Ninewa, and from out-of-camp locations in Ninewa and Diyala. Families that departed returned or moved primarily to Ninewa and Anbar Governorates, as well as to Salah Al Din, Diyala, Kirkuk, and Baghdad.

IOM has been approached by local and national government officials, as well as by other organisations, to expand the approach in other governorates. On this basis, IOM is currently expanding Facilitated Voluntary Return and Relocation activities to camps in Erbil, informal sites and various villages in Anbar, Ninewa, Diyala, Salah al Din and Kirkuk.



	2020-2021	2022	2023 (until 30 April)
 HHs Registered at Help Desks	4,464	3,793	341
 HHs who have returned	3,709	1,580	606
 HHs who have relocated	142	170	154
 Cash grants distributed	3,215	2,042*	1,104*
 Livelihoods support	725	222	259
 HHs with completed housing repair and reconstruction	73	550**	251***

* Households who departed late 2021 and 2022 received cash grants in 2022 and 2023 respectively.
 ** 39 housing reparation and reconstruction works still ongoing in 2023.
 *** 141 housing reparation and reconstruction works still ongoing in 2023.

SUPPORTING DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO DISPLACEMENT FACILITATED VOLUNTARY MOVEMENTS MAY 18, 2023

Supporting IOM's work on Durable Solutions in Iraq



Implemented by

