



National Policy on Displacement

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1. Introduction

The displacement of Iraqis is one of the key challenges faced by the Government of Iraq and international community. Displacement in Iraq has reached an alarming level which has attracted the attention of all Government, non-governmental and international agencies trying to find appropriate solutions and strategies to reverse the situation and swiftly address the issues.

In the years before and after the fall of the former regime, Iraq witnessed a wide variety of forced displacement. This has created large groups of displaced persons both inside and outside the country. Such a situation has created many challenges in all governorates and for all sectors of Iraqi society. As a result, displacement has become one of the most complicated and difficult issues the Government of Iraq must address immediately and in the future.

The magnitude and the nature of displacement and the dispersal of Iraqis around the country and in other states has interlinking political, humanitarian, social and economic dimensions. The complex nature of the displacement has meant any solution must extend beyond the Government and involve the wider international community. The latter has a responsibility to intervene and offer help by supporting and assisting the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi society to overcome this problem.

Hence, the Government of Iraq will implement a National Policy on Displacement through its line ministries and institutions. This policy comes with a vision for the future in order to understand the nature and size of the problem as well as to mobilize national and international efforts to develop relevant solutions and reconstruct the fabric of Iraqi society. This reconstruction should take place on the basis of citizenship or ties to the country based on long-term stay, decent living, fair distribution of wealth, enjoyment of public and private rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the Iraqi Constitution and all national and international legislations and instruments.

This Policy has been developed through wide consultations led by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), supported by the international community, with a large number of stakeholders at the local, regional and national levels in Iraq. The consultations also involved the groups and communities affected by displacement (both internally displaced persons [IDPs] and host communities), professionals working with mixed communities, national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local authorities.

Therefore, this National Policy comes as a national achievement involving many concerned actors and institutions in order to arrive at a new strategic vision to solve this national issue.

2. Context

The Policy seeks to offer a general description of the problem and identify its dimensions and scale in Iraqi society. The National Policy also identifies the basic goals and means to be pursued and achieved.

2.1 Overall Description of the Situation

Iraq has witnessed successive periods of displacement throughout modern history. The problem has continued to develop as a phenomenon of varying degrees and in numerous locations during the days of the former regime. All ethnic and religious groups have suffered as a result of this phenomenon. Following the fall of the former regime the most notable displacement occurred as a direct result of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence in Iraq.

Displacement in Iraq can be divided into two phases:

2.1.1 Phase I - Prior to 2003

It is estimated that there are 1.2 million people affected by protracted displacement over the course of 40 years up to 2003 as a result of the policies of the former governments of Iraq, of conflicts with neighbouring countries or of those among various factions within Iraq. This number includes the "transferred/relocated populations", i.e., those who were forced to leave their homes as a result of state policies.

2.1.2 Phase II - Post 2003

Many people were displaced as a result of the invasion and the conflict that followed the fall of the Saddam Hussein Regime in 2003. Since the bombing of the shrine of the Two Askari Imams (Peace be upon them) in Samara on 22 February 2006, there has been an increase in the number of displaced persons due to the ongoing conflict, sectarian violence, lack of meeting basic needs and criminal violence. By mid 2008, the total number of displaced persons has reached 1.6 million.

A large number of families were affected by displacement driven by sectarian tension, particularly families that are composed of individuals who have different religious and ethnic affiliations.

2.2. The Consequences of Displacement

1. A large number of people went into displacement inside and outside Iraq; given their forced displacement homes and assets were taken and family members were separated from each other which led to social, psychological and economic consequences that must be addressed through a consolidated national effort to provide solutions.
2. Displacement has negatively impacted the education sector: educational levels and performance of many students has deteriorated. Students were forced to leave

their schools, colleges and institutes to seek employment or have joined the long line of unemployment that has become one of the key sources of discontent that has fed terrorism undermining Iraqi society; many competent teachers/professors were also forced to leave their roles.

3. Many people lost their jobs and sources of income. Lack of employment opportunities has driven some of them into joining terrorists and other illegally armed groups.
4. The fabric of society has been negatively affected and has led to major demographic changes on all social levels and in all Iraqi areas.
5. Health and environment has deteriorated or degraded as infrastructure was unable to accommodate the continuous increase in the number of the displaced who went to areas that have no capacity to offer the required services.

3. Goal of the National Policy

The goal of this National Policy is to find durable solutions and to set an effective, realistic and comprehensive framework to respond to the needs of the displaced persons regardless of whether their displacement is characterized as protracted or recent. The wide scope of displacement in Iraq requires a unified response at all levels of Government that will include the following activities:

1. Set up a comprehensive, effective and realistic workplan based on facts and respond to all basic needs to deal with all aspects of displacement.
2. Provide adequate protection and assistance to displaced persons at all levels.
3. Specify coordination structures among all state institutions to provide protection and assistance in a more effective manner to the displaced persons and returnees, and covering needs during emergencies.
4. Allocate funds and develop relevant financial procedures for the implementation of this Policy.

4. Technical Definitions

In order to provide the necessary clarifications, this section seeks to present some definitions for the terminology used:

1. A Policy: a guiding and informed plan of action that aims at arriving at desired goals.
2. A Strategy: a term derived from the word "policy" (in Arabic) that involves tangible and realistic tools used to carry out that policy.
3. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.
4. A Refugee: is (a) a person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality or habitual residence and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection

of that country, and who is not excluded from protection; (b) is a person who owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or country of nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality.

5. Durable solutions: durable solutions are based on three elements – long-term security, restitution of or compensation for lost property and an environment that sustains the life of former displaced persons under normal economic and social conditions.
 - Return: the term is used to describe the process of a person's return to his or her home or place of habitual residence; returnees are former displaced persons or refugees who returned to their homes or places of habitual residence.
 - Local integration: the term describes the process through which the formerly displaced persons settle into the social, economic, cultural, and political fabric of the community where they initially found temporary refuge.
 - Resettlement: the term describes the process whereby former internally displaced persons or refugees start a new life in a community that is neither their home of origin, place of habitual residence nor where they have found initially temporary refuge.
6. Emergency/Contingency: an emergency is a sudden unforeseen crisis usually involving danger, and requires immediate actions; emergencies can be natural or man-made disasters.
7. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: these principles bring together the rights of IDPs and the responsibilities and roles of national governments and non-state actors. Although these principles are not binding like a treaty, they are based on and reflect existing standards of international law, which are binding. The Guiding Principles apply to all stages of internal displacement, i.e., before, during and after displacement.

5. Ensuring the Rights of IDPs

Displaced persons, like all other residents of Iraq, enjoy basic rights guaranteed by the Iraqi Constitution, national legislation and international law. The aforementioned legislation and instruments stipulate the basic rights, principles and standards which this National Policy seeks to stress, including from the following legal and constitutional facts:

1. Emphasizing that the Republic is an independent and fully sovereign state as stipulated in UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, the most recent of which is Resolution No. 1790 of 18 December 2007.
2. In accordance with the provisions of UNSCR 1770 of 10 August 2007, the United Nations is bound to offer aid and assistance to the national elected government regarding legal and constitutional matters as well as other issues pertaining to displacement and migration.
3. Taking directions from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, approved during the UNGA 54th session in 1998, which became part of international law.

4. Knowing that the 2005 Iraqi Constitution endows the Iraqi citizens with many rights and freedoms including for the displaced and migrants, entrusts the federal authority with the task of maintaining the unity of Iraq (article 109), and recognizes that Iraq is a country of multiple ethnicities, religions and sects (article 3), adopts the rule of law (article 5), considers all Iraqis to be equal without any discrimination based on sex, race, ethnicity, origin, color, religion, sect, faith, or opinion (article 14); the constitution also grants every citizen the right to life, security and freedom (article 15), guarantees every individual's right to personal privacy (article 17), gives every citizen the right to take part in public affairs and enjoy political rights (article 20), considers work a right for all Iraqis (article 22), deems private property protected (article 23); it prohibits all forms of violence, arbitrariness and economic exploitation of children (article 29), affirms the right of Iraqis to social security and health insurance (article 30), emphasizes the provision of care for the disabled and people with special needs (article 32), guarantees the right to education (article 34); the Constitution highly recognizes the public liberties of the freedom and dignity of humans and protection against intellectual, political and religious coercion and military labour (article 37), as well as the right to the freedom of thought, telling apart what is right or wrong and belief (article 42) and emphasized the status of Iraqis when moving, traveling or residing inside and outside Iraq while not denying them their right to return home (article 44).
5. The Iraqi penal legislation has also guaranteed all citizens (including the displaced and migrants) their rights to property (a house or an apartment) and protection of their assets and property; such legislation includes Resolution No. 36 of 2 April 1994 issued by the now dissolved Revolutionary Command Council that penalizes individuals living in a house or apartment without the owner's prior consent. Other pieces of legislation in this regard include articles 440-446 of the Penal Code No. 1/1969.
6. Further rights of relevance for IDPs result from international conventions and instruments Iraq has ratified or acceded to. These instruments include the following: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. The rules and regulations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) are binding under all circumstances. They oblige both state and non-state actors participating in the conflict.

The Government of Iraq recognizes that the protection of IDPs and returnees lies within its legal responsibility/mandate and pledges to work towards making available all government facilities to effectively solve this problem (displacement) while taking into consideration the nature and scale of displacement.

The Government of Iraq welcomes the constructive efforts of the international community to help Iraq to solve this problem, particularly in the field of humanitarian assistance and relief of the IDPs, and the support of the international community to Iraq in this regard. The Government of Iraq emphasizes that it adopts a policy to solve the problem of Iraqi IDPs while taking into consideration all international

commitments and pledges. Hence, the Government of Iraq – in collaboration with its partners - will consider what is compatible with Iraqi law, International Humanitarian Law, the International Law of Human Rights, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN Principles Related to Housing and Property Restitution as a leading guidance for the adopted policy.

6. IDP Rights

6.1 Right to Participate in Decision Making and Implementation

The Government of Iraq recognizes that it is important to involve displaced citizens in selecting their government and leaders of the country through free and fair elections; the Government of Iraq also recognizes that displacement should not be used as an excuse to deny citizens their right to run for office during elections.

When it comes to finding solutions, displaced persons and host communities should be involved in planning, designing and implementing appropriate strategies and programmes concerning their return, integration or resettlement.

Vulnerable groups such as women, children, youths and elderly should participate in developing the aforementioned strategies, programmes and activities and take part in the decisions that directly affect their lives, taking into consideration the information provided by the displaced persons because they know first-hand the situation on the ground and are, therefore, most fit to determine their actual needs.¹

6.2 Right to Non-Discrimination

As far as fulfilling any of these rights and freedoms is concerned, IDPs shall not be discriminated against on the basis of their being displaced. Article 14 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution stipulates the principle of non-discrimination regardless of sex, race, origin, colour, religion, faith, sect, belief, opinion or socio-economic status.

The Government of Iraq will ensure all assistance be offered on the basis of humanitarian principles without any discrimination.²

Such assistance will neither be diverted nor transferred for any political or military reasons; under no circumstances shall this assistance be used as a political weapon.

6.3 Right to Protection against Arbitrary Displacement

Every human being has the right to be protected from arbitrary displacement from her or his house, land or place of habitual residence. The Government pledges to undertake all basic steps to integrate the protection from displacement in its

¹ Principle 22 of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Guiding Principles).

² Principles 1 and 24 of the Guiding Principles; and article 14 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.



legislation including the prohibition of forced eviction, destruction of houses and agricultural areas and expropriation or confiscation of land.³

6.4 The Legal Status and Official Recognition as IDPs

The Government of Iraq commits itself taking all official measures to facilitate the registration of the displaced persons whether they are in urban or rural areas or camps. The Government shall issue all necessary documentation to IDPs so that they can enjoy their legal rights; such documentation includes passports, personal IDs, birth, marriage and nationality certificates, and professional licenses.⁴

6.5 Right to Property Protection and Compensation

The Government of Iraq guarantees the displaced persons their rights to property, ownership and compensation of property in case of displacement, demolition or destruction. All displaced persons will have the right to reclaim any housing and/or land and properties they might have been arbitrarily or unlawfully deprived of; or they shall have the right to compensation for any housing and/or land and property that cannot be practically reclaimed as decided upon by an independent and impartial commission to be formed for this purpose.

Persons who were deprived of their homes shall have the right to have their property returned, and the Government and all its security and military apparatuses shall respect this right. The Government shall reserve the right to develop policies for the allocation of lands in order to provide durable solutions for IDPs, including devising policies for the purpose of constructing housing compounds for IDPs and returnees who do not own any land. According to the circumstances, such policies might involve the payment of adequate compensation.⁵

6.6 Right to Social Care

Overall, displaced families may suffer adverse psychological effects caused by the acts of violence committed against them and which forced them into displacement in the first place. Therefore, the state has to form social care teams to check on these families and follow up on their conditions with particular emphasis on the youngsters since such events will remain present in their memories. Such check up visits should be periodical as the social work should compliment other efforts in order to arrive at a common understanding of the needs of these displaced families to offer them the best services possible.⁶

³ Principles 6, 10 and 29 of the Guiding Principles, articles 17.2 and 23.1 and 2 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

⁴ Principle 20 of the Guiding Principles; articles 18.1 and 3.a of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

⁵ Principles 7, 21 and 28 of the Guiding Principles, and articles 23.1, 2 and 3 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

⁶ Principle 18 of the Guiding Principles, and articles 29.1.b and 30.1 and 2 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

6.7 Right to Health Care

When it comes to full access of health care, displaced persons have the same rights as those enjoyed by other citizens. Every IDP, particularly pregnant women, children, persons with disabilities and those who suffer from chronic diseases have the right to access health care services. Special emphasis should be placed here on offering integrated health services to all IDPs, particularly to the poorest.⁷

The Government of Iraq shall respect, protect and ensure this right as long as it is in line with applicable laws and legislation and as maintained within the Iraqi Constitution and international conventions and instruments that address this issue while factoring in the urgent nature of some IDPs' health conditions, particularly during and after displacement.

6.8 Right to Freedom of Expression and Access to Information

All persons, including the displaced, have the right to give or obtain information and thoughts; no IDP or organization shall be deterred from searching for or accessing any information.

The Government shall make the necessary efforts to make information available and notify IDPs of their right to access humanitarian and social assistance as well as to compensation they are entitled to. They shall also be notified of the options they have as far as durable solutions are concerned, apart from being given the necessary information on how to obtain required documentation and get legal assistance.⁸

Important information that pertains to the displaced persons shall be disseminated through local and national government offices as well as in the local and national media; such information will also be accessible through community-based organisations/NGOs, mosques, information centers. The Government shall use these means to disseminate and enhance the concept of national reconciliation and dialogue among the sects and ethnicities. The Government also confirms that the media shall not be used as propaganda or to incite violence.

6.9 Right to Freedom of Movement

The competent authorities have the responsibility to ensure that the IDPs enjoy the right to move freely and choose their place of residence. It also includes the right to return and rehabilitate themselves in their places of origin or habitual residence, local integration or resettlement in other places in Iraq.

No person will be arbitrarily or unlawfully forced to remain within a certain territory, area or region, nor shall he or she be made to leave a certain land, area or region. The Government ensures that a person's freedom of movement and choice of place of residence will not be subject to any restrictions save those maintained by the law as

⁷ Principle 19 of the Guiding Principles, articles 30.1 and 31.1 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

⁸ Article 36.1 of the Iraqi Constitution and Principle 22 of the Guiding Principles.

they are deemed necessary for reasons pertaining to national security, public order or health, morals or other people's rights and freedoms.

The governorates and local authorities shall not prevent IDPs from residing in their areas, and they shall not create obstacles to that effect. The Government of Iraq realizes the consequences that resulted regionally from imposing internal obstacles on those who have been seeking safety.

6.10 Right to Family Unity

The competent authorities will protect the integrity of the family and community. In this respect, special efforts will be made to trace and reunify unaccompanied minors with their families.

Those children who cannot be reunited with their families shall receive care in their original communities. The relevant authorities will facilitate inquiries made by family members and co-operate with the work of humanitarian organizations engaged in assisting family reunification.

Given the importance of family unity, mechanisms will be established which permit husband, wife and family members of different nationalities to stay together as families during and upon return.

Displaced persons have the right to obtain information on the destiny of their missing relatives including the children who were separated from their parents during displacement; the Government shall provide the required information needed in this regard.⁹

6.11 IDP Families' Right to Rehabilitation and Job Opportunities

IDPs have the right to access job opportunities without being discriminated against on grounds of their being displaced or on the basis of religion, ethnicity or sect while taking into consideration the needs of IDPs and the host communities, and ensuring equal access to work and services.

Jobs of IDPs who were former state employees shall be transferred or relocated to the new place of displacement or necessary efforts shall be made to find them alternative government jobs. In all circumstances, IDPs' pension benefits as well as other entitlements shall be transferred to their new locations without delay.

6.12 Right of Having the Needs of Persons with Special Needs Met

Persons with special needs are the ones who suffer from mental or physical disabilities, such as the blind and persons who suffer from physical impairment in their upper or lower limbs. It is possible that some IDP families might include members with special needs who meet the above mentioned definition. As the name

⁹ Article 42.1 and 2 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution, and principles 14 and 15 of the Guiding Principles.

suggests, these are people who have special needs that might sometimes be costly to attend to. In case of IDP families, it will be difficult for them to provide for the needs of that group since they are families that already have difficulties in accessing and attending to their own normal needs. Hence, this group's life will be jeopardized. It has become necessary to develop swift mechanisms to identify and classify those needs due to their big variation from one family to another given the cases in each household; classifying them in groups would facilitate offering services to this group.¹⁰

7. Meeting the Needs of IDPs and Returnees¹¹

The needs of IDPs and returnees should be addressed based on the international "Sphere" standards¹² that emphasize the need to meet the basic needs of life according to the minimum level of assistance that the Government or civil society actors can offer to Iraqis who are displaced inside or outside Iraq. These basic needs include the following: food, shelter, potable water, sanitation, health care and education.

What follows is a description of the nature of the needs of Iraqi IDPs:

7.1 Food

Given the nature of displacement and the adverse impact on the IDPs' economic conditions in terms of having to leave work, becoming unemployed and losing the monthly income, people's diets are disrupted and important nutritional sources are lost. Likewise, even the food ration system (PDS) that guarantees every person a specific ration becomes almost absent as a monthly source of food due to displacement. Activating the food ration card system (PDS card) for IDPs faces many obstacles; losing the card itself and difficulty in accessing areas where eligible PDS beneficiaries are staying due to violence and deterioration of the security situation as well as fear of being endangered if IDPs return to their places of origin. Many IDPs who moved from one governorate to another were not able to transfer their PDS food ration card registration to their new areas of displacement. Administrative requirements such as having to return to one's place of origin to obtain required documentation make it difficult for IDPs to return and transfer the registration of their cards knowing that they originally had to leave the area due to security conditions.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning food outlined above:

¹⁰ Article 32 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.

¹¹ These mechanisms do not need new law to be promulgated as they fall under the mandate and jurisdiction of his Excellency, the Prime Minister as stipulated in article 77 of the Constitution in addition to the cooperation and assistance of other entities and bodies. There are also proposals left to the discretion of the nationally elected Government to implement them fully or in part, or to add other suggestions; these are already part of the ministries' and official agencies' mandate, including MoDM and the Cabinet-formed IDP Ministerial Committee.

¹² A set of international standards relating to relief persons exposed to crises or disasters; such standards represent the minimum level of humanitarian needs which must be provided to such individuals.

- Work towards providing the necessary facilitation needed to transfer the PDS food ration card from one governorate to another and upon return.
- Coordinate the work of MoDM and the Ministry of Trade to ensure that IDPs receive their PDS rations in their places of displacement.
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to provide adequate funding to meet key food items and other needs.
- Have government actors or bodies establish official relief centers that provide specific and regular food rations.
- The Government to take feasible measures to ensure delivering such services in a timely fashion and through secure means by facilitating free exchange of products.
- Coordination between government bodies and humanitarian agencies capable of distributing food items as a stop-gap measure to displaced persons before they are enrolled in the PDS in their place of displacement.

7.2 Shelter

The displacement that Iraqis suffered from has created many adverse effects that caused many families to leave their homes and move into camps, abandoned buildings and other settlements (such as camp-like areas and residential compounds) or moving in with their relatives. IDPs also suffered from lack of stability and inability to live in suitable accommodation due to the high costs they had to bear to keep their families safe and alive. On many occasions, IDPs had to live in over-crowded settlements and camps that lack the very basic standards of services.

The Government of Iraq recognizes that shelter remains the most serious challenge and that it is a priority concern for those who left their homes. Some areas have become so overpopulated that they can no longer provide the basic needs as a result of the limited capacity of infrastructure to deliver basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity.

The scale of the problem can be understood once it is recognized that such places cannot be appropriate settlements or provide adequate housing; IDPs must have sufficient financial means to find appropriate housing or at to at least plan to. However, with their monthly income gone, IDPs face a great dilemma where they have either to give up and take whatever low standard housing is available, or work to obtain money by any means possible, so as to provide for decent housing.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning shelter outlined above:

- Various government actors, UN and other agencies should collaborate to overcome this problem through constant coordination to locate the most suitable locations for IDPs to reside and provide appropriate land to build temporary camps and settlements.
- Explore alternative means to provide temporary housing for IDPs and homeless returnees by preparing places for them to stay with friends, relatives and others in order to mitigate the impact of the problem.

- Develop and adopt an appropriate mechanism by the government to provide rent allowances for IDPs and returnees who are incapable of meeting their financial obligations due to the hardships they are undergoing.
- Develop a social housing policy that addresses the needs of IDPs and returnees, particularly those who have no land or home and are thus susceptible to becoming homeless.
- Develop a policy to control rent costs and follow up on IDP returnee tenants to identify their basic needs and financial ability to pay rents.
- Work to develop a programme to ensure that IDPs obtain decent housing and that they are not evicted from state or private-owned housing without offering them an alternative solution.
- Develop a database of the IDPs' former and current housing places, document their properties to guarantee their rights and take into consideration the possibility of handing back property occupied by others to their original owners.
- Provide adequate support and alternative housing for IDPs who currently reside in public buildings or those who have illegally built their own homes on publicly-owned land and are threatened with eviction.

7.3 Health

The conditions IDPs live in, lack of food and potable water and other factors lead to a variety of health problems, particularly for women and children. An additional factor is that the new places they moved to lack the necessary health infrastructure; as a result, large groups of IDPs suffer from diseases, epidemics and serious and chronic illnesses that are expensive to treat. The assistance and aid provided in this regard is insufficient and does not correspond to the health needs of IDPs.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning health outlined above:

- The Ministry of Health to oversee the provision of proper healthcare to IDPs, and improve the health services offered in places where IDPs stay so as to best serve them, as well as the returnees and host communities.
- Establish a special emergency health programme for the community in general and pregnant women in particular who, alongside their children, require nutritional care and vaccination.
- Establish emergency health plans and make available material and medical supplies and procedures in case of disease and epidemic outbreaks.
- Establish social and psychological counseling programmes, particularly for individuals who suffer from depression and psychological and neurological diseases, and create conducive healthy and psychological circumstances to boost the morale of families that have members who suffer from such diseases; such programmes should serve both the IDPs and host communities.

7.4 Education

As a result of displacement, many displaced persons were prevented from accessing educational facilities either moving to areas where no schools or universities are

available or due to lack of money or inadequate state capacity to providing the schools and materials needed. Such a situation has resulted in poor educational performance among many IDPs. Others who are displaced abroad suffer from high tuition fees for schools or universities.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning education outlined above:

- IDP children have the right to enjoy the same opportunities that are the privilege and freely accessible to other children.
- Establish a flexible programme in line with the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Recovery (INEE) in the field of education by which no IDP student should be denied access to school for any reason; even when IDP students have not regularly joined schools in their places of residence, they should be enrolled and assisted to obtain all needed documentation.
- The government should provide the funds needed to support educational programmes in addition to the streamlined ones to deal with displacement; it should coordinate with MoDM, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education to consolidate their work as part of the national efforts to solve the problem.
- Establish local educational programmes and awareness activities that encourage IDP parents to enroll their children in school and learn.
- Prepare high-level coordination programmes to provide all basic requirements needed for the success of such procedures, especially in terms of materials, documentations, alternative documents, as well as alternative and temporary schools.
- Facilitate the reintegration of children upon returning to their former schools.
- Implement and improve the procedures to recognize certificates that students have earned abroad as well as those of professors/teachers who received their training there.

7.5 Water and Sanitation

The issues surrounding displacement have been compounded due to the lack of access to basic services, particularly to water, power and sanitation services. This suffering was further complicated due to the deteriorating security situation, including targeted attacks by pillagers/looters and saboteurs and damages incurred as a result of military operations that destroyed the infrastructure of water, power, electricity and sanitation networks. Consequently, large areas and IDP populations were cut off from sanitation, water and power grids.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning water and sanitation outlined above:

- Build the capacity to make clean water and sanitation available for IDP populations through allocating the required funds and expanding and developing water and sanitation projects.

- Repair and expand water and sanitation networks in areas that witnessed an increase in population as a result of the influx of IDPs.
- Collect and dump garbage in appropriately designated places.
- Raise awareness on health issues.
- As part of planning for the return, ensure that return areas have access to potable water and sanitation facilities.

7.6 Social Protection and Safety Nets

Social protection is a key system that proves to be even more important for IDPs in their areas of displacement, particularly when it comes to employment programmes for those who have no monthly income or cannot access their benefits. Activation of the social protection system is required to assist and provide services for those with special needs, elderly and other vulnerable categories among IDPs.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning social protection and safety nets:

- Establish joint coordination programmes between MoDM and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the area of social protection; such programmes should be flexible to include IDPs and provide them with social protection and employment services regardless of their place of residence.
- Allocate required funds to support social programmes, adopt monitoring systems of performance and include in these services all sectors, groups and areas where IDPs stay in or move to.
- Ensure that IDPs and returnees access their social rights and benefits regardless of their location of displacement.

7.7 Employment

After moving to new areas, IDPs unemployment becomes more common especially for those that were previously self employed. As it becomes difficult for IDPs to find new jobs, unemployment and poverty rates increase in these areas. Inflation and unemployment have impacts on the host communities in general. Finding new job opportunities for those previously self employed is one key requirement for the successful management of internal displacement and the reduction of the increasing financial burden, especially if the displacement is a protracted one.

The following activities are recommended to mitigate the issues concerning employment outlined above:

- Facilitate the granting of loans to set up small enterprises.
- Develop IDPs' skills by involving them in labor-market-oriented training courses.
- Facilitate the transfer, appointment and secondment of IDP employees in departments of the same ministry or among the various ministries.
- Provide IDPs and returnees with information on social and employment programmes in their areas of displacement or upon return.



- IDPs and returnees in rural areas who wish to farm should receive the necessary means such as land, seeds, fertilizers, tools, poultry, cattle and, if necessary, provision of assistance from those with agricultural experience and skills.
- Develop and implement procedures to recognize professional certificates and diplomas acquired abroad.

8. Conclusion

The demographic upheaval experienced by Iraq in recent history has impacted every facet of Iraqi society and disrupted family and community bonds at all levels. The widespread and protracted displacement has had adverse effects on the right of Iraqis to access basic services.

Within such a context, the National Policy on Displacement provides a framework for the rights of displaced Iraqis before, during and after displacement as enshrined in the Iraqi Constitution and national and international laws, and signals the Government of Iraq's intent to ensure that every displaced Iraqi is guaranteed the same human rights and access to assistance and services as the rest of the Iraqi people, while working towards durable solutions for the displaced.

In order to address the needs of IDPs and returnees, the Government of Iraq will mobilize the necessary resources domestically and, where needed, internationally. Equal access of IDPs and the rest of the population to services and assistance shall be ensured without any discrimination. In this respect, the internationally accepted "Sphere" standards will be applied as a minimum when offering assistance.

The Government of Iraq is committed to exert all available efforts throughout all ministries to respond to any human rights violations; it shall take all necessary measures to ensure the implementation of the National Policy in its entirety. The National Policy on Displacement will guide the Government of Iraq to allow for the return of IDPs and refugees in safety and dignity. In particular, it will give special attention to the issue of protecting IDP and returnee women and children as well as other vulnerable groups from all types of exploitation and violence.

Further, the Government of Iraq will strengthen its judicial and administrative system to be able to respond to the requirements of IDPs and returnees. As part of this, the Government of Iraq will strengthen and enhance the role of the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) or a national human rights committee.

Through the Committee of National Reconciliation and other channels, the Government of Iraq will encourage reconciliation and dialogue among IDPs, returnees and the host communities in order to reduce tensions and minimize the potential for violence and to build a society based on understanding, tolerance and acceptance during and after displacement.

The National Policy on Displacement outlines the major themes, pillars and rights that have to be approved and supported by all stakeholders to ensure the creation of an Iraqi society that is able to protect and serve all of its members on an equal basis.



Imam Ali (Peace be upon him) once said,
"People are either one of two categories: they are either your brother in faith or your fellow human counterparts."