

Operational guidance on response to sudden camp closures & evictions

Actions in camps, during transfer, and in areas of returns or secondary displacement

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This document provides operational guidance and suggestion for CCCM and Protection actors in Iraq working in camps and in areas of returns or secondary displacement, in response to sudden closures or evictions from camps and/or informal settlements.¹ The activities listed here are part of the Clusters’ strategies detailed in the Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) 2020/2021. The document envisages close operational coordination between camp management & protection actors in the camps, and with Protection Working Groups (PWG) at governorate level.

Table of Contents

1. In camps [CCCM & Protection]	2
1.1. Communication with communities [CCCM, supported by Protection].....	2
1.1.1. Drafting Key Messages [CCCM, with Protection input].....	2
1.1.2. CwC general guidance and considerations.....	2
1.1.3. Sharing of information on services in areas of return.....	2
1.2. Gathering intentions information & identification of families unable to return	3
1.3. Support to persons with protection concerns [Protection, supported by CCCM]	3
1.4. Departures tracking [CCCM].....	4
1.5. Protection monitoring during camp closure [Protection, with CCCM presence].....	4
2. During transit [Protection]	5
2.1. Service provision.....	5
2.2. Protection monitoring	5
3. In areas of returns and/or secondary displacement [Protection]	6
3.1. Mapping protection partners presence, services and capacities.....	6
3.2. Protection monitoring and assessment	6
3.3. Protection response	6
Annex – Tools and resources	8
4.1. Key information to know [non-exhaustive].....	8
4.2. Example tools & key messages.....	8
4.3. Reference documents	8

¹ For CCCM, it is an accompanying document to the **CCCM Cluster Camp Closure Checklist** (attached below in Reference Documents), which should also be consulted.

1. In camps [CCCM & Protection]

1.1. Communication with communities [CCCM, supported by Protection]

1.1.1. Drafting Key Messages [CCCM, with Protection input]

- Key messages for all humanitarian agencies working in the camp to use should be drafted ASAP, so humanitarian staff are able to answer questions from the community.
 - CCCM leads development of messages, with Protection input. Consultation with the authorities may be needed to obtain relevant information.
 - CCCM to ensure messages are circulated to all humanitarian partners to ensure staff receive the same messages.
 - Age appropriate messages to be developed for children and child protection partners to target caregivers and children on best practices during the move to avoid family separation. [Protection / CP to lead]
 - Key messages can also be shared with the IIC through the CCCM Cluster, for IIC operators to use.
 - CCCM to remind all partners that if staff cannot answer questions they should NOT make up or speculate answers, but instead raise these to their management to receive guidance and update Key Messages accordingly.
- Messages to be updated as needed to: a) include new information as this is available (e.g. departures process, services at destination etc.) but only if it is fully confirmed, b) answer common questions from the community.
- Messages can be either proactive (actively disseminated to whole population e.g. through community leaders, tent-to-tent) or reactive (staff are briefed to respond to questions but don't spread information).
 - *In a situation where information is rapidly changing and information from local authorities is unclear, it is recommended to have reactive messaging only – so humanitarians are not assumed to be involved in the decision to evict/close the site and do not risk sharing information which is not then true (do no harm principle).*
 - *Do proactive messaging when there is confirmed action that families can take. E.g. how to request to receive temporary residency in order to stay in the local area (caution to be applied for this approach; since Iraq experience shows that information is very rarely definitive).*

1.1.2. CwC general guidance and considerations

- Humanitarian partners should not communicate to camp population on behalf of local authorities. This is not the role of humanitarian organizations, and risks confusion that humanitarian agencies support sudden site closures / evictions.
- Camp residents should be encouraged to share concerns and raise questions directly with local authorities, if they feel comfortable doing so.
- Humanitarian partners should review key messages for conflict sensitivity and do no harm.
- Try to have reinforced ways for the community to ask questions and share concerns with CCCM/Protection staff. Whenever possible, prioritize in-person communication as the preferred way of receiving information among IDPs E.g. information desk open for longer hours in larger camps, or staff presence in smaller camps.
- If the timeline for the closure is long, Know Before You Go materials should be used (see: CCCM Checklist).

1.1.3. Sharing of information on services in areas of return

- In order to avoid spreading misinformation, humanitarian partners should NOT share information about assistance or services in areas of return that is not confirmed.
- IIC hotline number should be shared with all departures: 800 69999
- CRC (Community Resource Centre) contact details should be shared where CRCs are active in districts of destination, to be able to potentially refer families to assistance. CCCM Cluster can provide contact details.

- Referrals to assistance in destination locations should be discussed at local level. Direct service referrals as well as case management file transfer for high-risk cases should be facilitated by PWGs and thereafter conducted bilaterally between protection actors in camps and at location of destination (see 1.4). Broader information sharing about presence and services of protection actors in areas off destination to be coordinated by PWGs (see section 3).
- Information about potential referrals to multi-sectoral assistance should be provided based on updated service mappings / 3Ws as developed and updated by governorate-level ICCG (if available).

1.2. Gathering intentions information & identification of families unable to return

- Usual intentions surveys should not be conducted when a site is at risk of sudden closure / eviction, as questions are not necessarily appropriate, and may be misunderstood as humanitarian involvement in decision-making on closure.
- Suggested alternative mechanisms:
 - Community discussion: example tool is attached.
 - Identification of individual families with major obstacles to leave the camp to be identified jointly by CCCM/Protection partners. Protection actors in camp are usually aware of who these persons are through past protection monitoring and individual case management. Within boundaries of confidentiality and do no harm, protection partners can help identify individuals / HH facing specific obstacles, working with individual families on solutions and advocate on their behalf to authorities.
 - Additional HH-level assessment should not be conducted to avoid creating unnecessary expectations and additional confusion for the concerned individuals.

1.3. Support to persons with protection concerns [Protection, supported by CCCM]

- CCCM to share with PWGs and protection partners information about households with generic vulnerabilities, e.g. persons with disabilities, female headed households, child headed households, older persons etc. (from camp population databases, intentions surveys, exit surveys).
 - Information should include numbers of households, their areas of origin (AoO) and/or their expected destinations (if known) as well as their contact details (if consent has been obtained). PWGs to inform and mobilize partners in anticipated areas of destination to follow-up and provide protection services in AoO or secondary displacement (see section 3).
- Protection actors in camps to identify specific HHs or individuals with severe protection issues or exposed to particular risks / high priority cases. Identification can be done by reviewing existing case management databases and the results of previous HH-level protection monitoring exercises. For general protection cases, protection partners in camps to prepare a list of priority cases (case codes, expected areas of destination, risk level etc.) and share it with the PWGs, who then identify a case management agency in areas of destination based on partners' presence and capacity. Bilateral inter-agency referrals to take place thereafter between protection partners in camps and in areas of destination.² For child protection cases, CP partners to transfer open cases through CPSC-CMWG to partners in expected locations of destination and GBV actors to identify safe shelter options for survivors upon departure from camp.
- To avoid creating unnecessary expectations and additional confusion for camp residents, and to avoid stretching resources in light of operational and contextual constraints, it should be avoided to conduct new or additional HH-level assessments.
- Civil documentation: whenever feasible and depending on the timeline for camp closure, Protection to coordinate with the Civil Affairs Directorate and MoI to expedite the delivery of civil documents to

² The process requires to obtain the informed consent of the person if the case management agency at the area of destination is different from the one at the camp. If the case management agency remains the same, the person needs to be informed and be communicated the contact details of the new case worker. Whenever possible, file transfer should occur on the same information platform (internal to the case management agency or a common platform). File transfer between different information platform or database should be conducted in line with data-protection protocols.

households whose documentation has been processed prior to camp departure, to mitigate risks of arrest while in transit and facilitate access to government assistance, including compensation, in areas of origin. If not possible, coordinate mobile CAD missions to AoO (see section 3).

- Mine action: List of likely areas of return to be shared by CCCM with PWG to share with Mine Action partners ahead of time so they can assess the level of contamination in AoO and provide relevant information in camp prior to departure if possible -) and follow-up with more comprehensive Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in areas of destination (see section 3).
- Psychological First Aid (PFA): Depending on operational context (timeline for departures, presence of humanitarian actors in camps, camp size etc.), Protection actors to provide PFA on an *ad hoc* basis to persons showing particular signs of distress.³ Persons who are threatening to cause harm to themselves or others should be referred to MHPSS actors for specialized services.

1.4. Departures tracking [CCCM]

- Camp management to track the number of departing families and destinations. During sudden closures or evictions, departure figures & intended destinations to be shared by camp management on a daily basis with:
 - CCCM Cluster, for onward sharing including with IOM-DTM
 - Governorate ICCG & OCHA to facilitate the tracking and monitoring of people by protection during transit (see section 2) as well as the mobilization of partners in areas of destination to provide multi-sectoral assistance (see section 3 for protection).
- Exit Survey to be conducted by camp management or a Protection partner (depending on the agreement in each camp), to track families' destination locations and receive consent for referral to humanitarian assistance if available. Tool & training available from CCCM Cluster where this is not already in place.
 - Exit survey normally done prior to departure. If departures are threatened or coerced, Exit Surveys should be done by phone 1-2 weeks after departure, to avoid adding additional stress.
 - Exit survey data is then passed to IIC by the CCCM Cluster for follow-up calls to consenting families. Destination location is passed to IOM DTM.

1.5. Protection monitoring during camp closure [Protection, with CCCM presence]

- Ensure presence of humanitarian organizations (CCCM / Protection) in the camp to provide on-site monitoring and deter acts of violence by authorities and security actors through dialogue, advocacy and visibility.
 - Note: staff safety is of primary importance; threats or presence of security actors may require withdrawal from the site & remote monitoring though increased contact with focal points inside the camp instead.
- Monitor protection issues and incidents occurring during camp closure and evictions, [Protection only] including the presence of security actors, excessive use of force and other forms of abuse and violence and:
 - Report any immediate protection concern and issue to the PWG for follow-up and advocacy.
 - Report specific incidents through the NPC Protection Monitoring System, using the *Civilian Character of Camps Tool* and the *Rights Violations for People with Perceived Affiliation Tool*.

1.6 COVID-19 transmission risk minimization [CCCM]

- CCCM to ensure minimization of crowding in the camp wherever possible – e.g. at security screenings or camp management offices for issuance of departure letters. Queuing systems should be set up to ensure 2m distance between individuals, and handwashing stations provided if feasible.
- PPE (masks): inform departing families to ensure to come ready with their own masks if they are using shared MoMD transportation (buses). CCCM to advocate with other partners / MoMD / DoH on provision of PPE. If needed, identify partner to provide masks.

³ Psychological First Aid: Guide for field workers. WHO, WarTrauma Foundation, World Vision.

- Advocacy with MoMD on respecting COVID-19 physical distancing on MoMD-provided transportation to areas of origin – request support of OCHA, WHO and DoH
- Advocacy with MoMD on safe transportation of any individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (i.e. not on shared buses) – request support of WHO/DoH

1.7 Administrative actions [CCCM]

- Departure letter issuance: must be ensured for all departing families requesting the letter.
- For asset management, data protection and confidentiality (securing records and documents), and decommissioning and site handover to the authorities: see *CCCM Closure Checklist*.
- During the process of closure, camp management may need to centralize lists of humanitarian assets to share with local authorities via OCHA to ensure security in the camp and to facilitate assets being transferred out.

2. During transit [Protection]

2.1. Service provision

- Interventions should be limited to life-saving assistance to address the most immediate needs and risks while not facilitating forced returns or transfers, or be perceived as involved in forced movements by IDPs, security actors and authorities. Recommended interventions include:
 - Limited material assistance (food, water etc.) at checkpoints, only if security actors and other authorities are unable or unwilling to provide it.
 - If accessible, safe and feasible, *ad hoc* presence by protection actors at checkpoints to minimize risk of civil documents confiscation, arbitrary arrest and detention, etc.
 - Provide PFA throughout the process and/or at checkpoints to alleviate stress and anxiety. To be done in person if transit points are accessible and if contact with HHs is permitted, or remotely by phone while conducting remote protection monitoring.

2.2. Protection monitoring

- Prior to departure, protection partner in camp to collect the phone number of Key Informants or focal points (this may be a small and limited number of HHs) and obtain their informed consent to conduct protection monitoring during transit and at areas of destination (see sections 2 and 3).
- Protection partners to monitor protection incidents and concerns throughout the transit. Protection monitoring may be done on site at checkpoints or any other transit points if accessible and safe, either through observations or interviews if they can be conducted without exposing both the concerned individuals and staff to harm. Alternatively, or in addition, monitoring can be done by maintaining regular phone contact with KIs or focal points among families evicted from camp throughout the transit and returns process to obtain details on transport, track movement and receive information about protection incidents and concerns. It is advisable for protection partners in camps to carry out monitoring interviews by phone during transit, considering the level of trust they have already established with KIs and focal points. This monitoring should be brief and informal and thus does not require the use of any established data collection tool. It aims to complement but does not replace/duplicate other information management mechanisms, such as CCCM exit surveys when conducted post-departure (see section 1.5) or DTM movement tracking.
 - Report any immediate protection concern and issue to the PWG for follow-up and advocacy.
 - Report any incidence of separated or unaccompanied children to CPSC for action and follow up
 - Report specific incidents through the NPC Protection Monitoring System, using the *Civilian character of camp* Tool and the *Rights Violations for People with Perceived Affiliation* Tool.

3. In areas of returns and/or secondary displacement [Protection]

3.1. Mapping protection partners presence, services and capacities

- Protection partners to keep their presence and information about services available update in the NPC Service Advisor for use by the IIC and protection actors.
- Whenever necessary to effectively coordinate the response, PWG to conduct *ad hoc* and rapid services mappings in areas of return and/or anticipated secondary displacement to complement Service Advisor and feed into inter-sectoral services mapping by the ICCG. Information to include partner's presence (including community centers), type of services, capacities to respond (e.g. if external referrals are accepted, duration of partners' presence and services etc.) and contact details. Services mapping to be conducted at the sub-district level and, if possible, at the village level. PWGs to use the attached rapid services mapping tool if and when relevant.

3.2. Protection monitoring and assessment

- Protection partners to use the *NPC Protection Monitoring system –Community level monitoring* and conduct KIIs within the first month after camp departure in both areas of return and secondary displacement. Partners should ensure that KIIs from groups and communities who have been affected by camps closure and who have recently returned to AoO or been secondarily displaced to other locations are included in the monitoring exercise, along other KIIs previously identified (including members of the host community as relevant). Protection partners are able to access and analyze their own data directly and independently from the NPC through the NPC Kobo server. NPC to produce ad hoc analysis (timeline and geographical scope to be determined) at the request of PWGs and as relevant, in addition to the regular quarterly cycle of analysis.
- Specific incidents should be reported through the NPC Protection Monitoring System, using the *Civilian character of camp* Tool and the *Rights Violations for People with Perceived Affiliation* Tool.
- Protection monitoring and assessment at the HH-level to be conducted only if protection partners have sufficient capacities to effectively respond to immediate protection needs and if other sectoral actors have sufficient capacities to respond to basic and immediate needs related to their sectors. If there are insufficient protection and/or multi-sectoral response capacities, protection monitoring and assessment at the HH level should not be conducted since referrals to services are ineffective / impossible, which may cause harm and generate frustration among the assessed population.

3.3. Protection response

- When developing a response to the most immediate issues and risks facing new returnees and secondarily displaced persons within the first weeks following departure from camps, the following activities may be considered by partners as priority activities. **However, this list is merely indicative and, ultimately, partners are expected to mobilize the complete range of protection activities within the HRP to address identified issues and needs:**
- Case management: Ensure follow-up of high-priority cases between camps and areas of return or secondary displacement, including through bilateral referral or file transfer within or between case management agencies in the concerned locations (see section 1.4.). This applies to GP, GBV and CP cases and is contingent on bilateral referral or file transfer between the concerned agencies. If in-person follow-up and comprehensive case management services are not feasible, regular follow-up by phone is recommended to ensure a minimum level of support and continuity in service provision.
- Psychosocial support: Immediate support to address issues of trauma, stress and anxiety compounded by sudden camp closure and involuntary returns and secondary displacement. Individual counselling to be integrated into a broader case management process. Group-based PSS activities to be conducted with/through community groups to support the PSS capacities of local communities, especially where direct implementation or regular presence of PSS providers is not possible.





- Cash for protection: Short-term support to address immediate protection issues and risks, including to support short-term rental for persons in critical shelter conditions, without resources or support network, or with specific vulnerabilities (FHH etc.) and at immediate risk of using emergency negative coping mechanisms (begging, child labor, child marriage, transactional sex etc.). Refer to the NPC Guidelines on cash for protection. A careful analysis of the potential risks associated with providing cash for protection (misuse, robbery, retaliation etc.) should be conducted for each individual case to avoid creating harm for the concerned individuals. Given the highly vulnerable and sensitive situation of recent returnees and secondarily displaced persons, the usual standards of adopting a discreet, low-visibility and case-by-case approach are of particular importance. Amount to be decided by partners on a case-by-case basis. HLP actors to support with securing tenure (e.g. rental agreement, etc.) to minimize the risk of eviction. *Note: this cash for protection does not replace cash for rent (under Shelter Cluster's guidance).*
- Community-based protection: Essential to mitigate protection risks for returnees and secondarily displaced, including risks related to physical safety and social integration, such as returns being blocked, notably due to issues of perceived affiliation. While community-based protection usually requires time and investment, existing community-based groups and CSOs may be mobilized to facilitate dialogue between community leaders, tribal leaders, returnees and host communities.
- Legal assistance: For HHs whose civil documentation has been processed by CADs while in camps but could not be delivered prior to departure, legal partners in camps and in areas of returns or secondary displacement to coordinate and organize mobile missions to ensure the swift delivery of civil documents in areas of destination.
- Explosive Ordinance Risk Education: Essential to minimize the risk of death and injury caused by explosive ordinances. Sessions to be conducted remotely targeting at-risk populations both in return or secondary displacement areas affected by EO, until in-person sessions are authorized by the authorities.
- Dignity Kits distribution: Essential to support the physical and psychological well-being of women and girls in the context of acute crisis and displacement, including in terms of personal hygiene. As per existing GBV SC standards on kits composition.
- GBV information dissemination: Share guidance with humanitarian actors on how to support GBV survivors when there are no GBV actors in an area and share information with GBV survivors on specialized services where available. Use the GBV Pocket guide for non-GBV actors and set-up facilitation desks for women and girls to receive information on services available.

Annex – Tools and resources




4.1. Key information to know [non-exhaustive]

- What details have the community been told by local authorities about the plans to close the site?
- How was this information communicated?
- Are families able to request clarifications from the authorities on the specifics of the plan if needed? (e.g. dates, options other than return, etc.)
- Does everyone have access to this information (e.g. elderly persons, women, children as well as men)
- What are the key dates? E.g. closure date of the site, dates for transportation?
- Will transportation be provided? If so, by whom, to where, and how do people sign up?
- Are security clearances in place for this transportation? Can or should any organized movement be monitored (remotely) by protection agencies?
- What options are available for families who cannot return to their areas of origin (e.g. local integration, move to another camp)? Who is organizing this? How do families who cannot return make this known, and how can they choose another option?
- Are all necessary security clearances for families' destination locations in place?
- If local integration is possible, how can families secure the necessary permissions?
- Will any security agency or police be present in the site during this time? If so, which agency?


4.2. Example tools & key messages

<i>Example Full CwC plan – when clear information available from the authorities</i>	 EXAMPLE_CwC plan_DRC_Airstrip clo
<i>Example Key Messages – sudden closure announced by the authorities, with very little information shared</i>	  EXAMPLE_Key messages_DRC_AI Al for the closure of HAA
<i>Example community discussion guide – if and when individual household information-gathering is not possible</i>	 EXAMPLE_Sudden Closure_Group Discus

4.3. Reference documents

<i>CCCM Cluster Minimum Standards for Camp Consolidation & Closure</i>	 1. Minimum Standards Camp Cons
<i>CCCM Cluster Closure Checklist & Timeline – please refer to this for processes that should be conducted for any camp closure</i>	 2. CCCM Camp Closure Checklist & Ti
<i>Movement Severity Scale – HCT-approved tool for describing and classifying the voluntariness of IDP movements in Iraq</i>	 Movement Severity Scale_revised_21.10.2

4.4. Rapid Services mapping and movement tracking

<i>NPC Rapid services mapping and movement tracking (for PWGs when appropriate)</i>	 Movement%20tracking%20and%20services'
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