

UPDATE ON UNHCR-LED CLUSTER TRANSITION IN IRAQ

In July, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) decided to formally end all Clusters by the end of the year and not to present an HRP in 2023, but only a light strategic document presenting the remaining humanitarian needs (without funding requirements, not targets) as well as a document on the transition to development interventions. This decision is in line with the UN move towards transferring core humanitarian delivery functions to other structures of leadership (government and development partners).

Below is an overview of the transition plan for each Cluster led by UNHCR:

PROTECTION CLUSTER

The transition map for the Protection Cluster will see the creation of a Strategic Forum – *the Protection Platform* - co-led by UNHCR and OHCHR with the participation of UN entities as well as one INGO and one NNGO representatives. Focal points from each UN Agency and entity contributing to support the strategic priorities under the UNSDCF will be members of the core group of the Protection Platform. For non-members of the platform a quarterly meetings/needs basis with key, I/NGOs/CSO and donors working on protection and on rule of law and human rights issues in Iraq will be established. The Platform will cover all populations residing in Iraq including IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees, migrants and vulnerable and minority groups, and will maintain a strategic advisory role at the national level, including regarding advocacy and technical guidance/support. At the operational level, in areas where the Area Based Coordination group (ABCs) exist, created under the IOM and UNDP co-led Durable Solution Task Force (DSTF), the Platform will support ABC members to ensure protection related strategic guidance/advice/objectives are followed and taken into consideration.

CCCM CLUSTER

Functions will be absorbed primarily by UNHCR (lead-agency) and co-chair (IOM) with respect to the remaining 25 IDP camps in KR-I – while IOM will remain the lead for informal settlements. UNHCR will take over the relevant coordination, strategic, and information management cluster functions to sustain this support to government management. This will include UNHCR continuing camp coordination support to local authorities at a governorate level, and continuing engagement and strategic leadership at KR-I and national level – including longer-term planning and transition options for the camps to become formal settlements services by relevant public institutions.

CCCM cluster functions identified as relevant after 2022 in informal sites will be absorbed by CCCM actors (NGO and IOM). At governorate level, NGO CCCM partners will take on engagement and advocacy through the durable solutions ABC mechanisms; at the national level, IOM will take on remaining information management functions and representation of informal sites issues in national-level forums as relevant.

The Shelter/NFI Cluster

Some of the functions of the Shelter/NFI cluster will be incorporated into the housing, land and property subgroup of the DSWG under the leadership of UNHABITAT. At the ABC level, shelter/NFI cluster sub-coordinators will be focal points at the area level, ensuring proper coordination between the response of the humanitarian and durable solution. Of note, all critical shelter interventions should have been finalised by in early 2023 although current low level of funding is affecting progress to meet this target.

In the absence of a single-line ministry that could take on all activities, the Shelter/NFI cluster is seeking a sustainable transition by gradually handing over key cluster functions to different actors and continuing to develop the capacity of local partners: some functions will be handed over to the government, some will be integrated into the UNSDCF, some will remain with UNHCR in relation to IDP in camps in particular such as shelter self-upgrades, and some will cease.