

Multi-Actor Response to the Internal Displacement of Iraqi Nationals

A Field Study on Coordination of the Humanitarian
Emergency Response in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

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Abstract

In the summer of 2014, about one million Iraqis were forced into internal displacement in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) following successful incursions of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant into bordering areas. To mobilize assistance and respond to the immense humanitarian needs, the UN assigned the situation its highest level of emergency, L3. This thesis investigates the emergency response coordination structure that had evolved four months later between the Kurdistan Regional Government, the UN, and non-governmental organizations, and analyses factors that constrain efficient coordination.

Through a field study made in the KR-I, and based on approximately 50 key informant interviews, this thesis found that the emerged structure was so complex, non-uniform, and unsystematized that few understood or trusted it. Coordination at all levels of the response was insufficient, leading to both gaps and overlappings: inconsistencies and redundancies. Characteristics of organized anarchies (i.e. fluid participation, unclear technology, and problematic preferences) help explain the low level of coordination. Furthermore, weak leadership as well as dispersed and inadequate resources—financial and human—intensified competition among the actors involved, which further impaired incentives for coordination (e.g., lack of information sharing). This, in combination with uncertainties regarding future funding and security, poses challenges to meet the needs of the internally displaced Iraqis in a systematic, coordinated, and sustainable manner.

Key words: coordination, emergency response, field study, IDP, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, UN

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Acronyms

3RP	Regional, Refugee and Resilience Plan
4W	Who, what, where, when (system for dividing roles and responsibilities)
ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
BCF	Barzani Charity Foundation
BoDM	Bureau of Displacement and Migration
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CCM	Camp Coordination Meeting
DMC	Development Modification Center
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General
DTM	Displacement Tracking Index
EC	Emergency Cell
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
ERC	Erbil Refugee Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GCLA	Global Cluster Lead Agency
GoI	Government of Iraq
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International NGO
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRP	Immediate Response Plan
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JCC	Joint Crisis Center
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KR-I	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
KURDS	Kurdistan Reconstruction and Development Society
L3	Level 3 Emergency
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MERI	Middle East Research Institute
MIRA	Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
MoDM	Ministry of Displacement and Migration

MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Multiple Streams Framework
MSB	Myndigheten för Samhällsskydd och Beredskap (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency)
NCCI	NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PDS	Public Distribution System
SC	Save the Children
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SRC	Sulaymania Refugee Center
SRP	Strategic Response Plan
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organisation

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1 Introduction

In the summer of 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) made rapid and significant territorial gains in northern Iraq, forcing nearly 1.2 million¹ Iraqis to flee. (IOM 2014-08-23) Such a massive wave of internal displacement, together with existing vulnerabilities in the country,² created a complex, chaotic and overwhelming humanitarian crisis with hundreds of thousands of people in desperate need of protection, shelter, food, water, and medical care. (cf. HNO 2014)

In August, the United Nations (UN) designated the situation a Level 3 emergency (L3), its highest level, to “facilitate mobilization of additional resources in goods, funds and assets to ensure a more effective response to the humanitarian needs of populations affected by forced displacements” (UN 2014-08-14). Six weeks earlier, on 30 June 2014, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had contributed USD 500 million to the UN—the largest single contribution of its kind for UN humanitarian operations—for scaling up operations and providing humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced Iraqis. (SHF 2014)

By August, around 1 million newly internally displaced persons (IDPs) had sought refuge in the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I),³ already host to more than 200,000 Syrian refugees. As IDPs and funds were moving towards the KR-I, so were international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and the scaled-up UN Iraq operation, which was being evacuated from Baghdad to Erbil, the KR-I capital, owing to a worsened security situation.

Last spring, in my position at KPMG,⁴ I audited an INGO with on-the-ground projects in Erbil. At that time, before the current turmoil, its projects were mainly funded by the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) and linked to the protection and assistance of Syrian refugees. It was already then obvious that the management and coordination of efforts to receive, protect, and provide assistance to these refugees posed a challenge, both within and between various institutional entities.

Following developments that summer, I could not help but wonder how efforts to respond to this overwhelming influx of Iraqi IDPs would be organized and coordinated given the myriad of actors involved. The best way to find out was to visit the source: the KR-I.

¹ Quantifying the number of IDPs has constituted a challenge for humanitarian actors as well as government authorities, since many continue displacing themselves, are not required to register with local authorities (cf. refugees), and live in informal settings. The IOM Displacement Tracking Index (DTM) is considered the most reliable source of information on internal displacement, and is updated bi-weekly. (<http://iomiraq.net/dtm-page>)

² Vulnerabilities such as complex ethno-sectarian divisions as well as already scattered internally displaced Iraqis around the country, a legacy of the 2003–2011 war. (cf. HNO 2014)

³ See Appendix A for an illustration of the waves of internal displacement during 6 June–18 August 2014.

⁴ KPMG is a global network of professional firms providing audit, tax and advisory services.

1.1 Actors and Responsibility in the IDP Crisis

According to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, national governments and authorities have “the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction” (UN 2004). Although the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) governs the KR-I, the region is a federal entity of Iraq—not yet an independent state—and largely dependent on budget allocations from the Government of Iraq (GoI) in Baghdad. This is a source of deep dispute between the two administrations, and for several months in 2014, for example, the GoI withheld payment of the KRG budget⁵ after the regional government brokered an oil export deal with Turkey. (HNO 2014:20)

Ultimate responsibility for protecting and assisting Iraqi citizens—including those in the KR-I—lies on the GoI. However, to efficiently respond to IDP needs in the KR-I, the GoI must coordinate with KRG. The focus of this study was to find out what was really happening on the ground: who was coordinating and leading the response in the KR-I? Was it the GoI, as it should be; or the KRG; or—perhaps—some other humanitarian actor or group of actors?

From the perspective of the humanitarian community, no one agency is assigned to protect IDPs. Although fleeing for similar reasons, since they have crossed no international borders, displaced Iraqis in the KR-I have no refugee status,⁶ nor are they entitled to protection by the UNHCR. Due to the influx of Syrian refugees, however, this agency already had a vast presence in the KR-I before the summer, in contrast to other humanitarian agencies—mainly UN entities—responsible for emergency responses under the umbrella of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). The IASC is the primary inter-agency coordination mechanism for humanitarian assistance in emergencies such as this one, tasked with bringing together governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental actors to ensure an efficient and coordinated response.⁷

1.2 Statement of Purpose

Crisis management literature reports that emergency responses are often complex and large scale, involving both public and private actors from dissimilar response organizations, which normally cooperate poorly, if at all. (cf. Boin et al 2012; Chen et al 2008) It is widely acknowledged that efficient coordination of

⁵ The GoI allocates 17% of the federal budget to the KRG. (Guiu 2014)

⁶ See the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees.

⁷ See section 2.1 and chapter 5 (specifically section 5.2) for how humanitarian emergency responses should be coordinated (in theory) and have actually been coordinated (in practice) in the KR-I.

emergency responses is vital, but highly demanding. Despite this, academic research in the political science field remains remarkably scarce⁸ and more, in-depth research could greatly benefit future situations.

The topic of coordination in the unfolding IDP emergency in the KR-I—L3 status has been extended to May 2015, and will most likely be extended further—has yet to be addressed in full in the literature. To my knowledge only two reviews⁹—done by IASC members—have discussed coordination. But these only touched on the humanitarian coordination mechanism and thus excluded the main actor—government; they did not survey and clarify the coordination structure of the entire response.¹⁰

Thus, the research question explored in this thesis was:

Has overall coordination of the IDP response actions between the government, UN agencies and NGOs in the KR-I been efficient? Why, or why not?

To answer this, the study sought to clarify:

The coordination structure emerging from responses of the three actor categories to the massive influx of IDPs into the KR-I

Factors contributing to inadequate coordination between these actors within the currently emerging structure

1.3 Context and Scope

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq is a complex and rapidly changing emergency that cannot be explained simply as arising from ISIL gaining control over large territories and forcing large masses of Iraqis into displacement. The situation in Iraq is not an isolated event but has links to, for example, the Syrian crisis and other regional developments, to *realpolitik*, and to failures of Iraqi nation-building and internal ethno-sectarian politics that have caused conflicts for decades.

In all, 5.2 million people in Iraq are currently (March 2015) in need of humanitarian assistance; and this includes IDPs as well as host communities,

⁸ Information is rather to be found within the management (e.g., Boin et al 2012) or engineering/systems field (e.g., Chen et al 2008; Comfort et al 2004) or from the practicioning field itself (e.g., UN articles, donor assessments etc.).

⁹ *Iraq Humanitarian Coordination Review*, OCHA, January 2015 (HCR 2015); and *Iraq – Duhok Governorate IDP Camps and Unfinished Buildings*. WASH Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment Team. January 2015 (IRAT 2015).

¹⁰ Stakeholders who inputted to the Iraq Humanitarian Coordination Review explicitly requested a map of the entire structure. (cf. HCR 2015)

refugees, and other vulnerable groups. (SRP 2014:4; OCHA 2015-02-28) Of the over 2 million IDPs in the country today, around half reside in the KR-I; the rest are in the southern and central parts of the country, many of them in areas no longer controlled by the GoI but by armed groups such as ISIL, and thus difficult for either governmental or humanitarian actors to access.

The scope of this thesis, however, is limited to coordination of the *IDP* response in the *KR-I*, due to security reasons and access to information, and does not specifically look at how the IDP and refugee responses are connected.¹¹

To study coordination of this unfolding IDP response is in itself an ambitious task; it is difficult to fully grasp, and impossible to reproduce in a thesis of this size. Thus, this thesis claims to be neither all-encompassing, nor up to date by the time of printing, due to the rapidly changing nature of the situation. So, instead of a detailed, precise description of the situation, this study investigates the complexity and mechanisms of emergency response coordination, and the issues characterizing this specific case. The aim was to paint an overall perspective—the big picture—of response coordination between the government¹² (KRG), UN agencies (under the IASC umbrella), and NGOs as implementing partners. Most stakeholders lack this overview, and without such, the risk is that valuable resources will be squandered. This study thus largely excludes actors such as the GoI, the host community, donors, and the private sector.

This thesis is based mainly on empirical material collected during a field study in the KR-I from November 2014 until January 2015. It covers two of the three KR-I governorates: Duhok, since it has received the largest share of IDPs; and Erbil, the regional capital and Iraq's humanitarian hub. Materials and Methods describes the field study in more detail.

¹¹ Since the IDP and refugee responses are interlinked, and a harmonization of these is ongoing, this will however be discussed briefly.

¹² If not stated otherwise, the term government in this thesis refers to the KRG, since—although a regional government—it is the government that has the vaster presence in KR-I and so has been the main government involved in this study.

2 Defining Emergency Coordination

Coordination is stressed to be imperative in governance arrangements in general (cf. Bevir 2009; Peters 2002) and in emergency responses in particular.

Effective coordination is the hidden force multiplier in emergency response. With coordination, one plus one plus one does not equal three; it equals five, or ten. It reduces duplication and competition, and allows different agencies and organizations to complement each other and give added value. (Amos in OCHA 2012a)

This widely used term—coordination—is seldom clearly defined. Evaluating its efficiency then becomes difficult. Academically, coordination in its general sense occurs “whenever two or more policy actors pursue a common outcome and work together to produce it”. (Bever 2009:56f) In itself, coordination is not a given in a governance structure (such as the IDP response one), but rather, as Bever puts it, “both a driving force of governance and one of its goals”. (ibid.)

To study and evaluate IDP response coordination in the KR-I, a clearer and more operationalized term is needed. Sources in the operational emergency field use more practically oriented definitions. Both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) stress that coordination in emergencies should encompass (1) assessing the situation and needs (identifying gaps, etc.), (2) agreeing on common priorities, (3) developing common strategies (e.g., to mobilize funds and other resources), (4) defining roles and responsibilities, and (5) monitoring and evaluating progress. (OCHA 2015a) For response coordination to be efficient, it should entail the lowest possible cost and the fastest possible transition from emergency, to relief, and finally development. (Tofvesson 2015)

2.1 The Cluster Approach – Inter-Agency Standing Committee Coordination in Emergencies

International humanitarian coordination has evolved significantly in recent decades and today involves numerous (UN and non-UN) actors along with an established coordination system that is activated in case of emergencies. The goal

of this system is to improve the effectiveness of responses by “ensuring greater predictability, accountability and partnership”. (OCHA 2015a)

On the global level, the ERC¹³ is responsible for overseeing all emergencies requiring UN humanitarian assistance and also heads the IASC. In a country affected by conflict or disaster, the ERC may appoint a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) to ensure that response efforts are appropriate and well organized in relation to the specific country. This is done together with, or as head of, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)¹⁴, which comprises UN agencies, IOM and INGOs. The work of the HCT includes identifying which *clusters* need to be activated, as well as which agency is most suited to leading that cluster. (OCHA 2015b; OCHA 2012a)

Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations—everyone is welcome¹⁵—involved in response activities in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action.¹⁶ Heads of lead agencies of clusters are members of the HCT and are responsible for overseeing the establishment of coordination mechanisms and the dissemination of cluster specific information to the HC and the HCT. They also serve as the main contact for government and should also act as “provider of last resort” in their respective cluster.¹⁷ (OCHA 2012b)

A *cluster coordinator*, usually employed by the lead agency but working on behalf of and solely for the interests of the cluster, is responsible for operational coordination and leadership of the clusters (cf. the coordination characteristics above). Clusters can exist on various levels in a country—national, sub-national and local—which also require coordination within these. How clusters are set up in a country is context specific; clusters should reflect government levels and have government counterparts. (IASC3)

At national level, OCHA operates as the secretariat and supports the HC and the HCT, for example, advising on appropriate coordination structures. OCHA is also responsible for inter-cluster coordination, such as establishing forums for discussing strategic and operational decisions on a joint inter-sectorial basis and drafting endorsements to avoid siloization. (OCHA 2012b:2)

¹³ The ERC is also the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. UN resolution 46/182 (adopted in 1991) created the ERC to coordinate humanitarian assistance in response to emergencies in need of it. (OCHA 2012a:35)

¹⁴ The HC is the head of the HCT.

¹⁵ Wide, representative participation in clusters is desirable, but too many short-term actors can negatively impact cluster efficiency. The IASC has thus specified minimum requirements for cluster participation. (See Appendix C for these.) (OCHA 2015b)

¹⁶ See Appendix B for an overview of global clusters and cluster lead agencies.

¹⁷ The “provider of last resort” represents a commitment of cluster lead agencies to do their utmost to ensure an adequate and appropriate response. It is contingent upon local context, namely access, security, and availability of funding. Where there are critical gaps in humanitarian response, it is the responsibility of cluster leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address these. If this fails, then the cluster lead as “provider of last resort” may need to commit itself to filling the gap. Wherever there are significant gaps in the humanitarian response, cluster leads are responsible for continuing advocacy efforts and explaining constraints to stakeholders. (OCHA 2012b)

Global IASC-produced tools, methodologies, best practices, standards and requirements are available to clusters and OCHA in emergencies, to ensure a structured, effective, and accountable response. Examples of these include:

- Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessments (MIRA)¹⁸
- Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNO)¹⁹
- Strategic Response Plans (SRPs)²⁰

Roles and responsibilities are divided in the clusters through the 4W system (*who* is doing *what*, *where* and *when?*). (OCHA 2015c)

¹⁸ A MIRA is a joint needs assessment that should be conducted during the initial two weeks of a crisis.

¹⁹ An HNO is a more comprehensive assessment than the MIRA, addressing the impact of the crisis and needs of the affected population.

²⁰ An SRP should draft strategic objectives based on the HNO to address needs, with accompanying activities and projects.

3 IDP Response Coordination in Theory

Theoretically, since neither thematic nor geographic aspects of this study's topic have been well investigated in the literature, an eclectic approach will be used. The theoretical toolbox must take account of factors such as policymaking under uncertainty, involvement of numerous actors and interests—governmental as well as non-governmental at different levels—operating in complex fast-changing contexts, with evolving (formal and informal) relational response structures.

This thesis uses explanatory variables from two complementary theoretical lenses to address these issues: network theory and multiple streams framework (MS).

3.1 Networks: Actors and Interdependence

To study coordination between actors, network theory provides insights on how formal as well as informal institutional arrangements, and type of interaction within these, affect the policy process and policy change. As Bevir (2011:17) writes, as the world is becoming more complex, responses to it also may need to be devised, assumingly with "modes of governance that are increasingly hybrid and multijurisdictional, linking plural stakeholders in complex networks".

Network theory assumes pluralism; thus one (state) actor cannot control policy processes alone. Rather, it is the interactions between state and non-state actors that characterize policy subsystems—actors dealing with specific policy issues. And these interactions are increasingly complex and diverse. (Adam—Kriesi 2007:129; Bevir 2011:29) It has been argued that to be effective, or at all influential, networks must be connected to or include the government function that is responsible for policymaking for that policy subsystem. (Pierre—Peters 2005:78) Börzel and Panke (2007:157) take this further and argue that when traditional hierarchical governing is ineffective, governments can use networks to mobilize resources dispersed among public and private actors, from international to local levels.

Although network theory acknowledges hierarchical, or vertical, coordination structures (with clear chains of command), it tends to explain horizontal and decentralized governance relations. Kenis and Schneider (1991:301) observed an increasing "scope, sectoralization, decentralization, fragmentation and informatization (i.e., increasing importance of information)" of policymaking. This, along with blurring boundaries of public and private spheres, hint that actors who are formally responsible for political decisions might not be the only—or even most influential—ones. (Adam—Kriesi 2007:131f) Also, control, steering, and

coordination become increasingly elusive for policymakers in such complex networks. (Bevir 2011:12)

Policy networks are seen as constituting fairly stable patterns of interaction between a diversity of *interdependent* actors, which take shape around policy problems (Kickert et al 1997:6). Interdependence is the explanatory motor in this theory; actors are mutually dependent on each other and cooperate because they need each others' resources—whether financial, constitutional-legal, organizational, political, or informational—to realize their respective goals. Networks often emerge when power and resources are dispersed among actors in a field. (Enroth 2011:28) However, Bevir (2011:59) writes that for actors in a network to really coordinate, it seems like *trust* in the network by participants is also needed, “in the context of interdependence”.

The ability of a network to produce policy change depends on a number of factors: (1) size and complexity, (2) mode, (3) capacity, and, (4) access. Less integrated—thus more fragmented—networks are more complex and larger in size, have a competitive mode (since power and resources are fragmented), lower administrative capacity, and open access; while more integrated networks are smaller and simpler, have a consensual mode, higher capacity, and more restricted access. Access can also relate to the degree to which networks are self-referential; the more homogenous the actors in the network are, the less they will take note of steering signals from outside. (cf. Kickert et al 1997:56)

As addressed by both Adam and Kriesi (2007:145) and Zahariadis (2007:72f), a proponent of the MS (presented below), more integrated networks have higher potentials to reach agreement and functioning coordination. However, to produce policy change—in a larger policy subsystem—all relevant actors must naturally be involved, requiring a more open-access network. (ibid.)

3.2 Policymaking under Ambiguity: Elements of Organized Anarchies That Constrain Efficient Coordination

Network theory is attentive to complexity and context when studying policy-making, but has interdependence as explanatory factor for coordination among actors. In this study, additional theoretical tools that address coordination in conditions of ambiguity and uncertainty are needed. Appropriately enough, Kingdon's (2014) MS deals with this.

With this theoretical lens, governance arenas as well as organizational actors can be characterized as *organized anarchies*, with these defining elements:

Problematic Preferences

Instead of following rational and clearly defined goals, actors often act in absence of such due to, for example, time constraints. (Zahariadis 2007:67) Individual actors might have consistent preferences (cf. interdependence in network theory), but those in the decision-making structure, as a whole, do not. (Peters 2002:9)

Unclear Technology

Members of an organized anarchy do not know or understand the processes in the organization. They might be aware of their own role and responsibility within the structure, but they do not see how their contributions fit into the larger organizational picture nor, thus, *why* they are doing what they are doing. Kingdon (2014:84) means that organized anarchies often operate by trial and error and pragmatic intervention in emergencies. The structuring of the system largely occurs by adaptation rather than proactive and strategic planning from the center. Thus, as Peters (2002:11) writes: “just as the goals of governing may emerge rather than being imposed [...] so too are the means of achieving those ends also likely to be emerged rather than planned.”

Fluid Participation

Staff turnover in such organizations is high, and participants tend to drift from one decision to the next. The time and effort that actors are prepared to devote to various subjects vary. Membership in such an anarchy or network might be problematic, if organizational boundaries are fluid and the decision-making process tends to be poorly defined. Peters (2002:11) describes participation as a game-like process (similar to in network theory) where participants might not totally ignore possibilities of involvement, but level of involvement depends on what they get out of it. Therefore, who shows up for a meeting and their degree of activity during the meeting, for example, has a big impact on outcome. (Kingdon 2014:84)

The main assumption in MS is that, rather than being solely rational or predictable, decision making is often a result of an accidental confluence of opportunities, individuals and ideas—no one actor controls the process (Zahariadis 2007:66). This coincides with the pluralistic network theory arguments of blurring governance boundaries, in a world that is less clearly governed through authority and hierarchy. MS views the outcome of a policy process as a confluence of streams of possibilities rather than a search for the best solution to the problem, which may explain, for example, *ad hoc* and reactive decision making as well as non-decision making. Indeed, Peters (2002:14) acknowledges that in the absence of coherent preferences and a top-down mechanism for driving action ahead, avoidance is a common outcome of decision making in or by organized anarchies.

Despite these characteristics, such governance arenas do function, but hardly as efficiently—concerning either costs or time—as would be desirable. (Kingdon 2014:85)

However, at critical times, policy windows open up for policy change in these governance arenas: a problem is recognized, a solution is available, politics and other possible constraints are not severe. (ibid.:165) The literature mentions crises as possible policy windows. The question is whether this has occurred in the KR-I, with the IDP crisis creating a policy window for efficient response coordination and decision-making among actors.

MS contends that individual actors—so-called policy entrepreneurs—play a key role in producing action during these policy windows; making sense of

ambiguous or uncertain information, attaching solutions to problems, overcoming constraints by redrafting proposals and taking advantage of events. Even crisis management literature points to the need for individuals to keynote and define the nature of the crisis before effective organizational action can proceed. (Peters 2002:14)

3.3 Theoretical Compatibility and Implications

Both theoretical approaches highlight informal, context dependent, complex and constantly evolving decision making arenas, where network theory explains interaction systems that are rather stable and structured—due to interdependency—and MS stresses the randomness, fluidity, timing and role of individuals in policy-making. However, Kingdon (2014:206) does acknowledge a degree of pattern, such as institutional arrangements, rules of procedure and budget constraints—and he does stress the importance of policy communities and networks as arenas for finding solutions to problems. Thus, I consider these approaches compatible and complementary.

What Boin *et al* (2012:60) stress, however, is the importance of clear leadership in the event of an emergency, which fosters coordination by defining direction, enforcing decisions, and dividing roles and responsibilities. The issue of leadership or authority is not particularly well captured in the chosen theoretical approaches; rather, they explain horizontal governance where management and control is elusive since power is not in the hands of one single actor. Also, rational and linear policy making—required to live up to the requirements of efficient response coordination, where problems are identified and strategies to address these are jointly developed and executed—is not possible, according to these theories, except during a policy window.

4 Materials and Methods

4.1 Qualitative Case Study

In its analysis of IDP response coordination in the KR-I, this qualitative study of a specific case provides rich, in-depth descriptions of complex phenomena that consider context, structures, and agency. (cf. Lundquist 1993:71) In its approach to the empirical material, the analysis also allows for relative openness. (Mahoney 2007:132) This is in line with the exploratory approach used in this study, where the focus is empirical reality.²¹

By exploring the possible theoretical explanations of the specific case, this study tests the explanatory power of MS and network theory concepts in a new context. (Eckstein 1992:139) The case presented here is mixed, with both international and national (governmental) actors operating in an eruptive, non-western, and complex political environment. Indeed, both theories have mainly been used to explain policymaking in democratic and western contexts. (cf. Bevir 2007) However, the theories have not been chosen for the sake of testing but for their explanatory variables that help explain the case at hand.

4.2 Field Research and Data Collection in the KR-I

Since the study attempted to capture a critical and ongoing phenomenon, materials must be collected on the ground. In emergencies, decision making processes and policies tend not to be formalized and documented as would ideally be the case, so qualitative interviews seemed to be the obvious source of both formal and informal information on how actors responded to the emergency. Between November 2014 and January 2015, I conducted approximately 50 interviews in the KR-I.²²

²¹ Furthermore, both chosen theories are empirically oriented and have mainly been applied in qualitative case studies. (cf. Zahariadis 2007; Adam—Kriesi 2007)

²² See Appendix E for the complete list of interviewees. Most interviews were conducted in English or Swedish, and one in Arabic. A few interviews used Kurdish-English interpretation; although this added another link in the chain between the interviewer and the interviewee, and the risk is loss of information, I have no reason to believe that this had a substantial impact on the substance of the material.

4.2.1 Stakeholder Mapping

A mapping of the network of actors and how they relate to each other was necessary to form an overview of the coordination structure of the entire response. So, before traveling to Iraq for the field study, I identified the main key actors,²³ and chose to focus on the UN, NGOs, and the KRG as they are organized entities, easy to identify, operate in the KR-I, and should be involved in IDP response coordination.

Initially, the aim was to hold workshops with the various actor categories for social network mapping²⁴ in order to interactively discuss and map the network of actors, discuss interlinkings, power constellations, and so on. Due to the ongoing emergency, this task failed; however, individual qualitative interviews enabled mapping of the IDP response coordination structure.²⁵ The interviews yielded valuable information about the mechanisms—both formal and observable as well as informal and unobservable—which underpinned the interaction and coordination behavior of the actors. (cf. Cederman 2005:867f)

4.2.2 Interviews

Before traveling to Iraq, I met with the KRG representative to Sweden to discuss the proposed study and the IDP situation in the KR-I. Mr. Rahem was very positive to the plans and offered unreserved support, which opened the doors to the KRG. In the KR-I, administrators at the Department of Foreign Relations helped me arrange meetings with persons, departments and ministries important for this thesis: for example, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Relations; the Governor of Erbil; and the Vice-Governor of Duhok, responsible for the IDP response there.

In the humanitarian community, many interviewees were selected strategically (e.g., cluster coordinators, large NGOs and OCHA representatives) while others were selected more randomly through personal contacts and recommendations (so-called snow ball selection [Esaïasson 2007:291]) or meetings in the field. Most interviewees were involved in response coordination mechanisms and had been chosen for their centrality; however, some sources were considered interesting because they were not involved in these mechanisms and could provide a valuable outside perspective. National NGO representatives, researchers, and UN representatives not involved in response activities are examples of such sources. In all, it was surprisingly easy to access people; although this study took place

²³ The main actors identified were the GoI, the KRG, UN bodies (under IASC), international organizations and donors, NGOs as implementing partners, and “others” (e.g., private sector, host community, and churches).

²⁴ The social network mapping exercise was designed to facilitate discussion among the stakeholders on topics such as: (1) *Who are the involved actors?* (2) *How are they linked? (financial flow, advisory relations, conflicting interests, political pressure, etc.)*, (3) *What are their goals/preferences/characteristics?*, and (4) *How influential are these actors?* (cf. Shiffer—Waale 2008)

²⁵ See Appendix D for a map of the IDP response coordination structure in the KR-I.

during an L3 emergency, key stakeholders in all three actor categories took time to meet me.

Key informant interviews were conducted to collect prime information about processes, policies, roles and responsibilities, coordination, and implemented activities. The interviews also gave space for personal reflection. (cf. Esaiasson et al 2007:296f) Written material not accessible to the public was also made available. The interviews were exploratory since they followed no strict pattern or structure. (Kvale 1997:117) The peculiarity of each interviewee and the intention to allow each informant to steer the direction of the interview made this necessary. The interviews were not completely unstructured, however; some common questions were asked in all interviews.²⁶ Additional queries tailored to each interviewee allowed information to be maximized and limited off-topic conversation. This open approach probably allowed for more unexpected responses and profound reasoning to surface than strict adherence to a basic questionnaire would have.

The interviews took place under varying circumstances and settings—in IDP camps, cars, hotel lobbies, offices, and cafés, for instance—and often on short notice. Interview character and length (from 20 minutes to 2 hours) also varied. Due to the complexity and shifting nature of the issue under loop in this study, and since actors at all levels of the response are involved in—or affected by—coordination, it was conducted under the principle *the more interviewees the better* to attain theoretical saturation and greatest possible understanding. It should be mentioned, though, that given the changing nature of the situation and its infrastructure where committees, meetings, structures, and people come and go, complete coverage is not possible. Furthermore, the high turnover of staff—especially within the UN and INGOs—complicated the search for information on initial response efforts since few had been there at that time.

The field study made clear that “everything” in the KR-I “is politicized” (NGO3) and that all actors have an interest in portraying their results in the best light. Interdependency between actor categories has also affected responses. Some respondents answered “by the book” or repeated the official stance, rather than giving a more candid view. Others demanded anonymity²⁷ in order to be able to speak more unreservedly. This was particularly striking among NGO representatives, of whom many were dependent on funding from the UN and therefore normally quiet in their views. This study is independent. But the simple fact that Sida—a large donor to the UN, INGOs, and indirectly the KRG—contributed to the funding of this study might also have affected responses.

Besides the one-to-one interviews, my participation in field trips to IDP camps, coordination meetings, and cluster workshops further clarified the inner workings of emergency response coordination. These were incredibly valuable for verifying the results of the interviews. I also contacted several interviewees more than once to clarify information and validate stakeholder mapping.

²⁶ See Appendix G for the interview guide.

²⁷ All interviewees participated in this study on a voluntary basis.

**Since a large number of interviews was done, and theoretical saturation, on the whole, was attained, references to specific interviewees will be made for quotations or for unique material. Otherwise, reference will only be made to the actor category.*

5 IDP Response Coordination Structure

To create an overview of the IDP response coordination structure in the KR-I—of both government and humanitarian actors—a stakeholder mapping²⁸ and a survey of IDP meetings at different levels and in varying forums²⁹ was done. Despite (or due to) the complexity of these documents, they illustrate the interlinkings between actors along with a profound lack of simplicity, and thus efficiency, in the IDP response coordination structure. Of course, many decisions and interaction forums are taken in an informal context, which such mappings cannot capture. Criticism that the mappings are not wholly current is valid; new committees, working groups and so on are continuously being established, while others exist on paper alone or have no mandate. (NCCI1;MERI2;KRG10) Nevertheless, no overall coordination structure of the entire KR-I response has yet been published, and stakeholders have been calling for just such an overview (cf. HCR 2015).

The following section describes the IDP response coordination mechanisms and meetings, as per the mappings. Government (the KRG) is discussed first, followed by the UN and NGOs. Brief mention is also made of the GoI and donors, who are influential players.

5.1 Government

5.1.1 The Government of Iraq

As the prime responsible party for providing protection and humanitarian assistance to all its citizens, irrespective of religion, ethnical association, or destination of refuge within the country (including the KR-I), the role of the GoI in the IDP response must be addressed. Although the GoI has provided some assistance to the KR-I, such as funding for some camps and cash to registered IDP families, most respondents agree that the GoI has not fulfilled its responsibility. By refusing to approve and allocate funds for the 2014 KR-I budget and—due to the crisis—suspending the Public Distribution System (PDS) for all citizens in the

²⁸ See Appendix D (1) for the stakeholder and coordination mapping of the IDP response.

²⁹ See Appendix D (2) for the mapping of formalized IDP meetings for the three actor categories.

KR-I,³⁰ resources among the regional government as well as IDPs and host community have been strained.³¹ Thus, the inadequate response of the GoI in the region has worsened the situation and forced the humanitarian community and international donors to shoulder a larger role than might have otherwise been necessary. (cf. HNO)

On the national level, the GoI formed a High Committee in 2014 to respond to the IDP influx. The Committee comprises multiple ministries and includes the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM).³² The Deputy Prime Minister chairs the Committee and meetings are arranged on a needs basis. According to interviews, the High Committee has branches (Operation Cells) in all KR-I governorates (KRG12;GoI1), but it is unclear what it really does. Apart from KRG Governors, who explained that cooperation between the High Committee in Baghdad and governorates is good, ministry interviews revealed that KRG receives limited, or no, information about actions and decisions taken by the GoI in response to the IDP emergency. (e.g., KRG2;10) Information sharing and coordination thus seem fragmented.

The MoDM is represented in all three KR-I governorates, and also has daily contact with the High Committee Operation Cells. Alya Albazaz, Head of MoDM representation in Erbil, however, says that these are very political and—although inexperienced concerning displacement issues—do not ask for advice from the MoDM: “The result is that decisions are taken on a trial-and-error basis, for which the IDPs are suffering.”

5.1.2 The Kurdistan Regional Government

The KRG is a young government³³ comprising 19 ministries and several departments and, as many interviewees have stressed, is “a capable government”. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers head the KRG.

Several ministries and departments are in some way involved in the IDP response, but no designated functioning body with a mandate and responsibility for the IDP response (e.g., to manage information, coordinate actions on the inter-ministerial level, and cooperate with the international humanitarian community) is yet in place. According to interviews, the Ministry of Planning (MoP) and the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) are the main ministries involved in response actions at the regional level; they report on humanitarian and security issues, respectively,

³⁰ The PDS was set up in 1995 as part of the UN’s Oil-for-Food program and is the basis for assistance to all Iraqis (with a monthly salary of maximum 1 million Iraqi Dinar), providing essential food and non-food rations. (KRG10; IRIN 2007)

³¹ For example, government officials, teachers and even peshmerga (Kurdish militia fighting ISIL) received no salary for several consecutive months in 2014.

³² The MoDM was established in 2007 in response to the growing size of the internally displaced population. One of its main duties is to register IDPs and to provide IDPs food and non-food items. (GoI1)

³³ The KRG was established following parliamentary and presidential elections in 1992. Iraqi forces had left the KR-I—following a Kurdish uprising against the GoI—and the region gained *de facto* autonomy. (KRG 2015b)

to the Cabinet. The three governorates—main implementers of the response—fall under the MoI, to which they report.

At the time of this study, decisions concerning the IDP response were mainly taken during Cabinet meetings. A High IDP Committee³⁴ had also been established in the KRG for discussing and preparing material so that the KRG Cabinet of Ministers could decide on IDP-related issues; the Committee itself could not take decisions. (KRG10;MERI2) There seems to be inadequate coordination between the national and regional high committees; “no one knows what comes out of those and how they are interlinked. No written policies or strategies are produced there.” (KRG7)

In addition to KRG High Committee meetings, joint KRG-UN meetings are held on an *ad hoc* basis with relevant UN agencies to discuss the IDP response. For example, the MoP collaborated with OCHA in setting up Immediate Response Plans for the KR-I (IRP1 and IRP2).³⁵

On the regional level, the Bureau of Displacement and Migration (BoDM, under the KRG MoI) has a mandate similar to that of the MoDM³⁶. The BoDM does not seem to be specifically involved in either High Committee or the joint KRG-UN meetings. Furthermore, in the eyes of the UN and NGOs, confusion exists regarding the difference, and even existence, of separate MoDM and BoDM. As Ms. Albazaz says: “the arrangement between MoDM, BoDM, High Committees and Operational Cells and also governorate emergency cells is not tidy, good, clear or efficient”.

5.1.3 Governorates

In the KR-I, the governorates had primary responsibility for managing on-the-ground emergency response activities in the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The governorates are to a large extent self-governing and have separate directorates corresponding to the KRG ministries, working more operationally with their respective issues (e.g. education, health, and electricity).³⁷ This may explain why governorates have managed the IDP response in different ways and why “decisions in Erbil can be taken without a *go* from the governorate level” (IASC3).

Below is an account of how the Erbil and Duhok governorates have coordinated the IDP response.

³⁴ The KRG High IDP Committee includes the Minister of Planning, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Trade and Industry, the three KR-I governors, the Garmian and Rapareen Administrations, and members of the Presidency Office. (KRG10)

³⁵ See section 5.2 and 6.3 for response plans and strategies.

³⁶ The MoDM and BoDM do share IDP registration database. (GoI1)

³⁷ Mayors and sub-Mayors who are responsible for their respective districts and sub-districts are also important actors involved in the IDP response at the local level. The Mayors are not, however, included in this study. (See Appendix D (1) for the mapping of the response structure.)

Erbil

In the Erbil governorate, the Governor has tasked the Erbil Refugee Council (ERC)—an emergency coordination cell—to coordinate IDP and refugee responses. Before summer, ERC capacity sufficed to manage the Syrian refugee situation. With the sudden influx of IDPs, however, the workload of the six employees at the ERC became overwhelming, where they also work cross-functionally (liaising between the various directorates and with UN agencies, NGOs, the MoDM, and the BoDM). “We need resources internally to be able to coordinate and participate externally. Now we are more ‘extinguishing fires’ than having a structured approach”. (KRG9) The ERC has no policy or ToR on which to base its work.

Sometimes, the ERC hosts planning meetings to which directorates, ministries, and the Governor are invited to plan response activities. These are scheduled on a needs basis, just as bilateral meetings with UN agencies, NGOs and other governmental bodies. The ERC has a strong presence due to its head, Vian Rasheed, who has the professional and personal capacity to coordinate the work and also connections with the right people within the KRG. Since, in most cases, Ms. Rasheed has a decision-making mandate, the ERC functions. (Meeting6) Many interviewees, however, complain that dealing with the Erbil governorate is difficult and slow, though the KRG is generally perceived to have speedier processes than the UN.

The governorate is responsible for the management and administration of IDP camps. Since neither the ERC nor the Erbil governorate in general has the resources to manage the four IDP camps in Erbil, ERC has assigned responsibility for this to various NGOs. For example, the Barzani Charity Foundation (BCF), a national organization, manages several camps. According to NGO interviewees, coordination with the Erbil governorate is most effective at the camp level, either through the camp manager who is in direct contact with the ERC or directly with the directorates responsible for the specific issues that need to be addressed. (NGO9;NNGO2)

All partners—the KRG at the governorate level, UN agencies, and NGOs—are expected to participate in camp coordination meetings.³⁸ These meetings are the lowest level coordination meetings in the cluster approach. Several interviewees stress that the camp coordination meetings are the most useful, as the problems to be addressed are there in the camp. (e.g. NGO5;10)

But even at this level, gaps and unclear roles and responsibilities between clusters, NGOs, and their sub-contractors (who often execute much of the work, like constructing shelters and drainage systems) as well as between the UN and government exist (NGO9;Meeting6). Compared with in refugee camps, coordination and planning for and within the IDP camps seems problematic: donors and partners operate under varying standards (e.g., tents vs prefab caravans for shelter) with few or no lines of communication; IDPs arrive while camps are still

³⁸ Camp coordination meetings are the responsibility of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster, led by the UNHCR. The camp manager (e.g., an NGO or a governorate representative) heads these meetings and a UNHCR representative acts as co-chair. (Meeting6)

under construction; and the UNHCR and UNICEF do not coordinate on shelter or water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, which should all be in place before occupation. This type of miscommunication, along with too many actors, prolongs processes and worsens outcome. (NGO9)

Duhok

Duhok is the smallest KR-I governorate³⁹ and has been receiving most of the IDPs (about 850,000 individuals). (MFA 2014) In the summer of 2014, the host community assumed the main responsibility for the IDPs (providing food and shelter), when the KRG and humanitarian community were unable to act⁴⁰.

Responding to the overwhelming situation—though with limited resources owing to the Baghdad budget cut—the governorate established an Emergency Cell (EC) in August, tasked to deal with response efforts and coordination. The EC has coordinated the response with a firm hand. Chaired by the Vice-Governor, it invites all UN agencies, clusters, and NGOs to weekly IDP coordination meetings, to discuss response measures (e.g., IDP needs, milestones, gaps, and strategy). (IASC4;KRG4)

All representatives from the various actor categories stress that the governorate leads emergency operations and coordination in Duhok; the EC is the focal point of the response, in direct contact daily with all mayors (who in turn have contact with their sub-mayors) as well as directorates, UN agencies, NGOs, and so on. In Duhok, all IDP matters must be coordinated with, and approved by, the mayors and the EC (which has frustrated many partners); “but processes are quick here, so it seems to work”. (IASC2) As Andrei Kazakov, senior field coordinator at the UNHCR, expressed:

I have worked for UNHCR for 21 years, and I have never before seen this level of ability of authorities to [...] coordinate with us, and have the capacity to respond to a crisis. Their capacity is outstanding! [...] UN and NGOs are around, but it is really as a support to government.

Although operating with an insufficient budget, the governorate has taken the lead in building IDP camps and has built six camps (with capacities for 3,000 families each), in a shorter time, for less money, and with a higher standard than the UN or INGOs have managed.⁴¹ (MFA 2014)

The Duhok governorate runs all IDP camps through its Development Modification Center (DMC), which employs more than 200 engineers, camp managers, and the like, and has been in place since the Syrian refugee response began. This differs from in Erbil, where NGOs have been tasked to manage camps, although the UNHCR also supports camp management in Duhok. (KRG6)

³⁹ The Duhok governorate has about 1.3 million inhabitants compared to Erbil’s 2 million inhabitants (2013). (KRG 2015a)

⁴⁰ Initially, the UN and INGOs had only a limited presence in Duhok.

⁴¹ Such as less bureaucracy, shorter procurement processes, local knowledge and staff. (MFA 2014)

5.2 The Humanitarian Coordinator and the UN Operation

The UN currently has an integrated mission in Iraq comprising the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI, the political leg) and the HCT (the humanitarian leg, supposedly apolitical and consisting of all UN agencies operating in the country),⁴² led by the humanitarian coordinator (HC).⁴³ Both UNAMI and the HCT were operating in Iraq before summer 2014. In its refugee response operation, ongoing since the start of the Syrian war, the UNHCR leads *sectors* similar to the *clusters* that are activated in emergencies.⁴⁴

What several interviewees stress is that even before summer, the UN operation in Iraq was huge, inflexible, and “a bit over the top”. (KRG7) When the emergency was elevated to L3, the operation should have been simplified and streamlined. Instead, all UN agencies remained in the country, and OCHA was brought in to coordinate the IDP response: to support the HC and the HCT, the activated clusters, and other partners such as governments and donors. Interviews reveal that, as the largest UN agency in Iraq, the UNHCR was unwilling to let the HC and OCHA take the lead on the IDP response, although this division of labor had been clarified in a joint IASC-UNHCR paper on roles and responsibilities in a mixed situation⁴⁵ (UNHCR-OCHA 2014). This led to internal squabbles and affected the response negatively. In the situation that emerged, parallel sectors and clusters, often with the same members, operated. What interviews revealed is that although OCHA, under the umbrella of the HC and HCT, is responsible for coordinating the IDP response, most government contacts concerning IDPs are still made with the UNHCR. (KRG4;9;12)

There are ten clusters in this response,⁴⁶ organized on three levels: national, regional (more strategic), and governorate (operational). So in Erbil, for example, three shelter cluster meetings are regularly held: one that supposedly discusses all of Iraq, one for all of the KR-I, and one for the Erbil governorate. In reality, the lines have blurred, resulting in numerous meetings with much discussion of the same topics and little result.

Clusters should be set up to link to government mechanisms. But some clusters have found that difficult:

⁴² There are 22 UN agencies operating in Iraq. During HCT meetings, also the IOM participates, as well as donors and selected NGO representatives (See further, section 5.3.).

⁴³ The HC is also the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG) and thus reports both to the head of UNAMI (the Special Representative of the Secretary General, SRSG) and to the global ERC, head of the IASC. (ToR 2011) The role of the DSRSG is therefore not completely separate from the political mission. (cf. HNO 2014)

⁴⁴ The sectors are led by the same agencies leading clusters globally. But if the sector lead agencies do not manage to finance sector activities, the UNHCR acts as a “provider of last resort”, with overall responsibility for the emergency response (e.g., NGO8).

⁴⁵ *Mixed situation* refers to a situation where both IDPs and refugees are in need of assistance.

⁴⁶ See Appendix D (1) for the activated clusters, in the stakeholder mapping.

... at the KR-I level it has been difficult to find a consistent counterpart, speaking for the whole of KRG. Therefore, both clusters and government have connected back to governorates. The emergency cells [e.g. ERC] are however multi-sectoral, which means that ministries/directorates are hardly ever involved. (NGO8)

How clusters operate has, in the case of Iraq, been up to the clusters and their coordinators, for example, regarding government involvement in the cluster, how needs assessments are done, and how duplication of effort as well as gaps are avoided. There are tools and mechanisms developed globally for how clusters should work; however, they have not been properly applied in the KR-I, owing to lack of both leadership and guidance from OCHA as well as from the global cluster lead agencies (GCLA) for the respective clusters. (e.g., IASC13;15) In January 2015—six months after L3 went into effect—several clusters still had no operational strategy or workplan. (NGO8;IASC11)

All actor categories have criticized OCHA for its role in the IDP response. Although it has indeed been difficult to enter as a junior player and manage this response, it has not fulfilled the basic requirements of its role. For example, no MIRA was done in the KR-I. (Meeting3;NGO5;7)

OCHA's role is to supply the HC and HCT with accurate information for decision-making—OCHA itself has no decision-making mandate—but interviewees are critical of its ability to track, manage, and above all analyze information. “Many scattered assessments have been done by NGOs, but nothing has come out of it. UN says that the data can be used and analyzed by anyone. But it has not been analyzed by the UN.” (NGO5)

OCHA also seems not to have followed standard guidelines for drafting response plans. After L3 was declared, the SRP seems to have been revised almost overnight⁴⁷—with little involvement of the KRG or GoI—and with core cluster teams adapting objectives, activities, and so on, to new circumstances within 48 hours (so as to be able to receive feedback from cluster participants within 24 hours) in templates not adapted to the Iraq context (NGO12;IASC15).⁴⁸ Despite being an “absurd process” concerning assessment, analysis, and priority-setting concerning time, as one interviewee expressed it, OCHA “let all clusters dream”: every imaginable project was included in the final SRP, and OCHA did not question the figures or set limits. (IASC15) The result was an SRP for USD 2.2 billion which “all donors rejected” because it “lack[ed] strategic thinking”. (NGO12;KRG7) As the British Department for International Development (DFID) clarified, an SRP should include needs assessments with corresponding response strategies and a detailed budget, none of which had been done at a satisfactory level in Iraq. (DFID 2014)

⁴⁷ An SRP for Iraq was done in spring 2014, following the crisis in Anbar in January of that year.

⁴⁸ It has been difficult to form a comprehensive picture of how the SRP process did indeed proceed, due to high staff turnover within OCHA and the humanitarian community as a whole. Few interviewees were both in the KR-I and participants to the drafting of the SRP in September 2014.

In autumn 2014, two immediate response plans (IRP1 and IRP2) targeting the KR-I were set up—together with the KRG—to address the most immediate needs and vulnerable groups (also for the winter). These plans had no clear links to the SRP and were just as “generic and difficult to work from” as the SRP. (IASC11) Furthermore, it has not been clear to donors or other stakeholders how these plans are related, which has raised questions about the accuracy of the figures.⁴⁹ As the response plans have produced little funding compared with what was desired, clusters and UN agencies have begun to bypass OCHA and appeal directly to donors for financial support. In January 2015, the major UN agencies (e.g., WFP, UNICEF, and UNHCR) were facing lack of funding by March, which would also affect the NGOs these agencies supported. (IASC5;15)

OCHA itself has no funding and does not implement projects;⁵⁰ it only coordinates. Besides managing information and supporting appeals processes, OCHA chairs national inter-cluster meetings weekly. These are supposed to prevent siloization between the clusters and facilitate inter-cluster responses. All cluster coordinators participate in these and are responsible for feeding back information to the cluster; there is no formal reporting mechanism. They should also brief their heads of agencies⁵¹ on concerns and developments in their respective clusters, so that these in turn can take the message further to the HCT. Only heads of agencies participate in the HCT meetings, and meeting minutes are only shared with HCT members, which means that vital information might never reach either cluster coordinators or clusters. Likewise, cluster information might never reach the HCT. (NCCI1;IASC14)

5.3 Non-Governmental Organizations

A large number of national and international NGOs give aid to IDPs in the KR-I; some have much experience from dealing with emergencies elsewhere, and others not. Some were already operating with the refugee response, but many arrived specifically for the IDP response.

Many INGOs participate in the clusters at some level, but very few have sufficient resources to commit themselves to appropriate cluster participation (e.g., INGOs send different representatives to cluster meetings [discontinuity], or attendance is sporadic).⁵² A few clusters have INGO representatives as co-chairs

⁴⁹ In addition to the SRP and the two IRPs, there is also the 3RP (Regional, Refugee and Resilience Plan), drafted by the UNHCR in response to the Syrian crisis.

⁵⁰ Other UN agencies contract both NGOs and other implementing partners for projects, and also the government itself.

⁵¹ This means that e.g. the cluster coordinator of the shelter cluster should brief the head of UNHCR before HCT meetings.

⁵² It is questionable whether cluster participants live up to the minimum requirements (cf. Appendix C) in the KR-I, or if cluster coordinators even require this. (Meeting3;5;7)

(e.g., the shelter cluster), enabling them to participate in inter-cluster meetings where there is no further NGO representation.

The NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI)⁵³ is mandated to facilitate coordination among NGOs as well as information sharing and NGO advocacy. Although the NCCI is not well-known to all partners, it organizes coordination meetings to address common issues which it can take to the HCT for action. The NCCI is a member of the HCT, along with five NGOs,⁵⁴ and participates in HCT meetings. These meetings, however, are irregular (often scheduled only 2–3 days in advance), which makes it difficult for the NCCI to arrange preparatory meetings with its NGO members for valuable input.

Yet again, there are also many NGOs—international, but especially national—who do not coordinate with the UN (through the clusters), and hardly with the KRG, and set up their own projects with no consideration of the bigger picture; “they act as if it is their mission to be here, although no one asked them to come”. (MERI2) This creates confusion and frustration within the clusters and government since plans, policies, and needs priorities are disregarded.

⁵³ The NCCI, established in 2003, has 80 members, of which 2/3 consists of INGOs and 1/3 of national NGOs.

⁵⁴ The NGO HCT members include the NRC, DRC, MAG, IRC, and SC. (NCCI1;IASC5)

6 Factors Affecting Coordination

The overall message from all actor categories—with some exceptions—is that coordination is insufficient at all levels in this response: on both the horizontal and the vertical level, and thus, both within as well as between the actor categories (e.g., between governorates and the KRG at ministerial level, between different ministries, UN agencies, clusters and NGOs). Although the stakeholder mapping might give the impression that the response structure is a well integrated network—with clear lines of reporting and flows of information and funding as well as assigned roles and responsibilities and well-thought-out decision-making processes—this is not the reality. Rather, there are many gaps and overlappings in this structure, on both the KRG and the humanitarian side. The IDP response structure could be viewed as a fragmented network that contains many sub-networks—like specific clusters and governorate emergency cells—some of which are more integrated and operate better than others (e.g. the EC in Duhok); but on the whole, as a policy network dealing with the IDP response, it seems to operate poorly.

The factors—both exogenous and endogenous—responsible for the weak coordination among the actors involved in this complex response are many and interrelated. Below follows an attempt to address the main ones discovered during the field study.

6.1 Weak Leadership, Unsystematic and Dysfunctional Structure

From the sides of both the UN and the government,⁵⁵ leadership in terms of a formal strategy and policy at the top level that steers the work of the agencies, governorates, and clusters has been lacking. The only steering documents appear to be the SRP and IRPs, which most interviewees consider to be only appeal documents and difficult to work from. This has resulted in actors going their own way and acting in a reactive *ad hoc* way, rather than planned and systematic. Observing the two governorates, which use completely different approaches, or the clusters, which have each developed their own working methods, makes this clear.

⁵⁵ This applies to both the GoI and the KRG.

For example, roles and responsibilities in the clusters and in the camps should be clearly laid out in the 4W system. But implementation of the 4Ws is inconsistent, both between and within the clusters;⁵⁶ there is no common tool that all partners use,⁵⁷ so compilation of data, follow-up of gaps, and so on is difficult at both the cluster and the overall level. To avoid duplication and gaps, the 4Ws must be more detailed and quantifiable, and all partners must update and feed in, but due to lack of resources and time as well as for competitive reasons,⁵⁸ it does not appear as if this will happen. And even if the division of labor is clearly laid out in a cluster meeting, “you cannot always find the effect in the field”. (NGO9) Both within and between clusters, siloization is apparent and coordination weak; no 4Ws for inter-cluster coordination exist, although they are needed because the fine lines between clusters are sometimes unclear.

“It is difficult to lead a cluster when you don’t know how it should work.” (IASC13) This statement captures the problem of unclear technology that many cluster coordinators have faced in the absence of tools, training and previous experience. The result has been weak leadership also at the cluster level—often biased toward the head UN agency, which fails to create a sense of equal partnership—that reduces trust, and participation and information sharing by cluster participants. Several interviewees have also expressed that they do not know what the cluster meetings are for: “waste of time”, “they give nothing”, “just NGO representatives showing off”—too little time is spent on real IDP needs and how to address them. (e.g., NGO6;10;11;KRG4)

In the absence of more formalized and systematic information channels between actors, the response has been very person dependent. Clusters with strong, unbiased, and experienced cluster coordinators have worked well; but according to interviews, many persons at top positions in this response have not been strong individuals (e.g., the HC and the head of OCHA), which has had a negative impact on the whole response. Personal chemistry and trust between counterparts play a vital role when information is to be shared and agreements made. The lines of information within and between clusters, as well as vertically (to/from HCT), depends solely on individuals; and in this response, high staff turnover at the UN agencies and the INGOs has been a major problem. Of course, networks and informal information channels never get a chance to become institutionalized—and thus reach high levels of effectiveness—when the people enabling them are continuously changing.⁵⁹ All these factors that lead to discontinuity also have a negative impact on how donors as well as the government or NGOs perceive accountability in the UN coordination system.

⁵⁶ The 4Ws can be structured on a geographical, activity or thematic level, for example, and with varying degrees of detail. (IASC13)

⁵⁷ The clusters usually use Excel files, which cluster participants update. There is also the Activity Info portal, which for example, many camp managers use and the KRG likes, but it has not been adapted to the needs of all clusters, which makes some clusters hesitant to use it. The food security cluster, for example, has its own information management tool, which was globally developed specifically for the food security cluster. (IASC10)

⁵⁸ See further section 6.2 for competitive elements.

⁵⁹ OCHA staff, for example, have had short deployments of 4-8 weeks.

What interviewees have further stressed is a general anomaly of the cluster system: OCHA's role. Cluster lead agencies are accountable for their own clusters—and should fill any gaps if no implementing partners are able to do so—“but this responsibility does not go further up [to OCHA or the HC/IASC]”. (IASC8;NGO8) Furthermore, as OCHA has no decision-making mandate, it cannot delegate tasks to cluster lead agencies. Thus, perhaps not only IASC leadership has been weak in the KR-I; perhaps the structure of the humanitarian response itself is inadequate, in which the roles of the HC and of OCHA lead to further fragmentation and dispersment of power in the network.

6.2 Competition, Scarce Resources, and Many Actors

Lack of resources—human and financial—has echoed throughout the field study as the main constraining factor in the IDP response. Due to the insufficient budget, the KRG finds itself in a continuing financial crisis and dependent on external assistance to meet the IDP needs. Thus, interdependence between the KRG and the other actor categories exists, since “you must have government buy in to get things done” (NGO5). Compared to in a refugee response, where most funding goes through the UNHCR who “coordinates by directing tasks to implementing partners” (NGO8), funding of an IDP response can flow through any UN agency or directly from donors to NGOs or other partners. Distribution of resources is therefore fragmented, and hence also power (the government aside, without funding, an agency has no role in the response and no means of survival).

Besides being dispersed from the hands of diverse actors, funding has been insufficient.⁶⁰ As network theory explains, the fewer the resources and the more fragmented they are, the more competitive the mode of the network becomes. And, according to experienced emergency responders interviewed, this element has been extreme in the KR-I; between UN agencies and the NGOs, competition for resources is so intense that they neither cooperate nor speak with each other.⁶¹ Further, due to the dearth of qualified, experienced staff,⁶² actors also compete for staff, recruiting from each other. This competitive element—together with the unsystematized and dysfunctional coordination structure addressed above—has a

⁶⁰ Interviewees speak of donor fatigue—due to global financial constraints as well as simultaneous emergencies (e.g., Ebola)—in addition to skepticism about the content of the appeal documents in Iraq. It has been stressed that donors perceive Iraq as a middle-income country that should be able to fund the IDP response itself. Most interviewees emphasize that this is problematic, considering the context-specific circumstances, such as the GoI-KRG conflict; the war against ISIL; and the fact that in addition to the IDPs and refugees, many Iraqis still live in poverty. The global drop in oil price has not improved the GoI budget, as Iraq is a highly oil-dependent economy.

⁶¹ In emergencies where more funding has been available, cooperation between actors has been better, for example, in Haiti. (NGO8)

⁶² Recruiting emergency staff to Iraq appears to have been difficult, especially for longer engagements. Other ongoing emergencies reduce the personnel available for Iraq, so many INGOs work with a skeleton staff. (NGO8;IASC15)

negative impact on any trust participants have for the response coordination, and affects their participation (e.g. not sharing information, boosting their own data and results, fluid participation, etc.). This in turn causes a situation where the trustworthiness of information and the situational picture (number and location of the IDPs, their needs, and who is providing assistance) is questioned, further hampering coordination within and between all actor categories.

6.3 Differing Perceptions and Priorities

Related to the issue of competition between actors are individual objectives and strivings, and varying views on how to respond to the emergency. For the KRG—which is simultaneously experiencing a financial crisis, a dispute with the GoI, and most importantly, fighting and financing a war against the ISIL—providing basic assistance to the IDPs is a secondary priority, primary is security against terrorism and security for the host community. But for the humanitarian community, IDP needs and a sustainable solution for the IDPs should be first priority. (KRG3;7)

These differences in preferences and priorities—also given the uncertainty in when and if the IDPs can return, or if even an additional IDP influx can be expected⁶³—has an impact on where IDP issues stand on the agenda, and on the solutions that are deemed best suitable to address these. The KRG has viewed the IDP presence in the KR-I as temporary⁶⁴—that the IDPs will soon be able to return to their homes—which has given rise to a strategy of building camps for IDPs outside city limits, separate from the host communities.⁶⁵ The humanitarian community was initially against this idea, because experience has shown that this option is problematic and unsustainable since IDPs are not integrated, and managing camps is expensive over time.

Some NGO representatives, however, feel that the KRG has managed to promote its interests with the UN and made the IRPs into “KRG blueprints”; they include only the clusters prioritized by the KRG. (NGO8;12) One view is that the KRG is using the response coordination network to mobilize resources—through the UN and INGOs—to fund the solutions that they consider best (cf. network theory). NGO representatives imply that the HCT has become political in its

⁶³ In the interviews, it was stressed that planned interventions of the Peshmerga and the coalition against the ISIL (e.g., to take back Mosul) would likely have the initial effect of more IDPs fleeing to the KR-I, as a minimum. (KRG6;12)

⁶⁴ Recently, the KRG has begun to realize that it will take years to return the infrastructure to a state that will allow the IDPs to return to their homes, even with an ISIL defeat. (KRG6;10;12)

⁶⁵ Although the IDPs are Iraqi citizens, many are Sunni Arabs—not Kurds; this is a complicating element and a perceived security threat due to the ethnical and political makeup of Iraq. Paradoxically, the refugees from Syria—Kurdish Syrians—have been treated better, on the whole being more well integrated and receiving more citizenship rights, than many of the IDP groups (which include Christians, other minority groups, and Sunni Arabs). (MERI1;2)

dealings⁶⁶—and the UN mission is indeed integrated (including both political and humanitarian legs)—which has a humanitarian cost; “the response has suffered from the sovereignty issue”. (NGO12) NGOs have also been requesting more transparency on how decisions between the UN and the KRG/GoI are made.

Furthermore, NGOs feel that little attention is being paid to their views in this response; “the UN does not really listen to the NGOs. They pay lip service, but in reality, they have no influence”. (NGO12) The humanitarian voice and the real, on-the-ground needs are not considered enough; this is visible, for example, in the focus of the response on camp areas, while large groups of IDPs continue to live in areas outside of the camps, and with unidentified needs.

With these varying perceptions and priorities, it becomes more and more difficult to find a common ground that the three categories of response actors can agree on. And what has become apparent is that the NGOs, especially those independent of UN funding, continue to act autonomously, without coordinating, within and outside of the camps.

On the other hand, others express that the UN and the KRG—whose relations are said to be good by an overwhelming majority—only pretend to coordinate and in reality have separate coordination mechanisms. Thus, stemming from actors’ varying priorities and objectives, separate response mechanisms—formal and informal—arise.

6.4 A Self-Serving and (Cost) Inefficient Mechanism

Bureaucratic procedures, long supply chains, inflexibility, “template thinking”, non-transparency, and (cost) inefficiency are expressions constantly used to describe UN efforts in the KR-I. Both the KRG and the NGOs have aired their frustration about the UN lack of adaptability, acting as business-as-usual in a situation of emergency.⁶⁷ For example, it has taken up to six months to receive UN funding for NGO project implementation. (Annex 2014) Still, most donors choose to fund through the UN (e.g., all Saudi funds went to UN agencies, filtered by OCHA⁶⁸, to further contract partners [e.g. NGOs] for project implementation). This makes the UN a major actor in coordinating this response.

Several interviewees stress that funds would be spent more efficiently—more reaching the beneficiaries sooner—if they were allocated directly to the NGOs

⁶⁶ Some interviewees feel that the UN has taken sides in the GoI–KRG dispute; some clusters invite the KRG but not the GoI to their meetings. (NGO12)

⁶⁷ Also, separation of the IDP and refugee responses stems from UN inflexibility, which failed to combine a solution to the developing IDP situation with the one already in place for Syrian refugees. Instead, the UN created a second, parallel response coordination structure that addresses similar needs and involves the same actors, with constrained resources and time.

⁶⁸ Still, many interviewees—especially NGO representatives—request a thorough account of how the Saudi donation has been spent. It was not done through the clusters, and UN agencies like UNESCO—not directly involved in the emergency response—received funds. Interviewees complain about lack of transparency within the UN apparatus. (KRG7;NCCI1;NGO12)

(international or national). Of donations to or through the UN, 25%–45% disappear in high salaries and other administrative costs. Because the contracted INGOs also have high administrative costs, only a small share of funds now reach the IDPs. (NNGO2; KRG7; IASC16)⁶⁹ Cutting out the UN would eliminate at least one middleman.

Funding the KRG directly was another proposed alternative; although funding a regional government in a country where corruption⁷⁰ is widespread might be politically sensitive to international donors, some interviewees—and not only KRG representatives—felt more of the funds would reach the IDPs. Haval Amedy, Head of the Emergency Cell in Duhok, expressed that, “if we got 30% of the donations, we could solve the IDP problems. We are confident about that, with very tight monitoring on us”. Except for cutting costs,⁷¹ national stakeholders know the culture and the market (where to find suitable and cheap material) better, but most importantly, they will stay on the ground, whether the UN is there or not.

Very few national NGOs receive funding from the UN or are involved in the clusters. Both the KRG and some cluster representatives have stressed that involvement and capacity building by the national NGOs and the government are crucial for the long-term sustainability of this response, in view of a UN pullout at some future date (depending on financial and political conditions). Such requests are “not sweet music in the ears of the UN”, (KRG9) since it has MoUs with the large INGOs (e.g., NRC and DRC) that they involve in responses worldwide. Because the UN mainly contracts the same INGOs, which are usually the most active cluster participants, UN-led clusters risk becoming self-referential coordinating mechanisms. Thus, the UN and these INGOs reinforce each other in the response, knowingly or unknowingly shutting out other actors.

The self-serving characteristic of the humanitarian response is voiced by many interviewees; rather than discussing the needs of the IDPs, discussions often center on the needs of the organizations. Some interviewees found it remarkable that all UN agencies were maintaining a presence in the KR-I—and receiving funding for the emergency—despite the shortage of funding. In January 2015, two months before the Saudi funds would run out, the UN had made no cuts in staff, although far from the most basic needs of the IDPs were being met. (IASC15; KRG7)

⁶⁹ In a best-case scenario, if administrative costs at the UN were 25% and at the INGOs, 25%, roughly 56% of a donation reaches the intended recipient: the IDPs. In a worst-case scenario, if administrative costs were 45% at the UN and at the INGOs, only 30% of the original donated amount would reach the beneficiaries.

⁷⁰ Corruption in the KRG is not perceived to be as bad as in the rest of Iraq. However, that is a small accolade, given that Iraq is ranked 170st/175 in Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index (2014).

⁷¹ E.g. government already pays staff salaries, and national NGOs have lower salaries and security arrangements.

7 Concluding Remarks

The complexity of the humanitarian emergency in the KR-I—of which the IDP situation is a large part—cannot be underestimated. And to coordinate a response that meets the needs of IDPs whose number, location, and condition are continuously changing can never be simple. However, the overall IDP response coordination structure⁷² that emerged in the KR-I—between the government, the UN, and the NGOs—appears to be an unnecessarily non-uniform, unsystematized, bureaucratic, and largely person-dependent *ad hoc* arrangement. The structure has both gaps and overlappings, and most implementation occurs on the governorate level.

The UN operation and its cluster coordination system appear to be too complex and inflexible, and indeed too cost-inefficient, to adequately respond to the emergency in the KR-I. Weak central leadership—from the sides of both the UN and the KRG—has negatively impacted coordination at all levels, where governorates, clusters, and individual actors are responding to the emergency in their own ways. Among the actors, this has decreased trust in the coordination system itself as well as in the capabilities and objectives of other stakeholders. Characteristics of organized anarchies, such as unclear technology and problematic preferences, depict some of the major constraining elements to efficient coordination.

In a situation of such uncertainty as this one, it is admittedly difficult to have rational, fully informed objectives. Still, perceived solutions for action in this emergency response vary widely among the actor categories—probably due in part to the various roles they play—and the line between politics and humanitarian needs often becomes blurred. Apart from making cooperation more difficult, lack of consensus complicates joint policy and strategy making, as does lack of a consistent, long-term strategy for how to respond to the emergency.

Fluid participation is another problem; the short-term deployments within the UN and the INGOs constrain continuity, especially in the absence of formal systematized structures. Inconsistency in cluster coordination participation, owing to factors such as time constraints, understaffing, and the feeling that cluster meetings are unnecessary and “too many” is prevalent. National NGOs, who could safeguard continuity and be responsible for more long-term interventions, have so far, by and large, been excluded from the clusters and coordination structure.

What has become obvious is the competitiveness imbuing the whole response; all individual actors (from UN agencies and ministries to the NGOs) compete for

⁷² See Appendix D for an overview of the IDP response coordination structure.

funds, projects, and staff. Since these elements are incredibly scarce, and distributors are many because no one agency is responsible for IDP needs (besides the government, which has no funds), the response coordination structure could be typified as a fragmented network of sub-networks (e.g., clusters and governorate emergency cells). The few sub-networks that seem to be more integrated and well-functioning than the rest is largely due to strong individuals (policy entrepreneurs) who are solution-oriented and able to adapt to new situations.

Overall, however, fragmentation is comprehensive with few consistent KRG-UN-NGO counterparts, which might explain why no one has a complete overview of the response structure (who is doing what, and who is funding who). The high competitiveness that characterizes most groups is another constraining element; actors tend to hoard information, and not share, which makes impossible a complete analysis of IDP needs, gaps, and joint strategies for addressing these (fragmented policies). Government, however, is the highest authority responsible for rule of law, and all should coordinate with it to get things done. Interviewees in all categories believe that the response has been led by the KRG, despite its limited financial resources.

The current humanitarian emergency could be viewed as a policy window, a chance for policy change and increased coordination between involved actors. Relations are indeed closer now than before last summer, and joint cooperation has emerged. But for the reasons discussed in this thesis—and due to the complexity of the situation in the KR-I itself (e.g., the KRG–GoI dispute, the budgetary crisis, the ISIL war, and spillover from the crisis in Syria)—meeting the huge needs of the IDPs in a planned, sustainable and coordinated way remains a great challenge.⁷³ Still, compared with the attempts at IDP responses in the rest of Iraq, response coordination in the KR-I functions relatively well. As one interviewee stated: “no theory can fully explain the case of Iraq.” (NGO2)

7.1 Future Questions

The outcomes of this study raise questions about the efficiency of the current approach to coordinating and executing an IDP response. Is it really efficient for such a large number of (UN) agencies to be involved, who compete against each other and are coordinated by an actor that cannot be held accountable for the response? Empiricism and theory suggest that a more streamlined and transparent response structure, with one responsible lead agency to coordinate funding and lessen competition, would be more efficient. Would efficiency be increased even more if donors funded the NGOs and local agencies, or even the government, directly without using the UN as an intermediary?

Future enquiries will tell. The rising number of IDPs around the world is significantly higher than of refugees, and the issue of how to best respond to IDP

⁷³ See Appendix H for recent, more optimistic developments that give reason for a slightly improved outlook.

needs is pressing, especially in situations where government is unable to respond adequately—as in the KR-I—or is the cause of their displacement.

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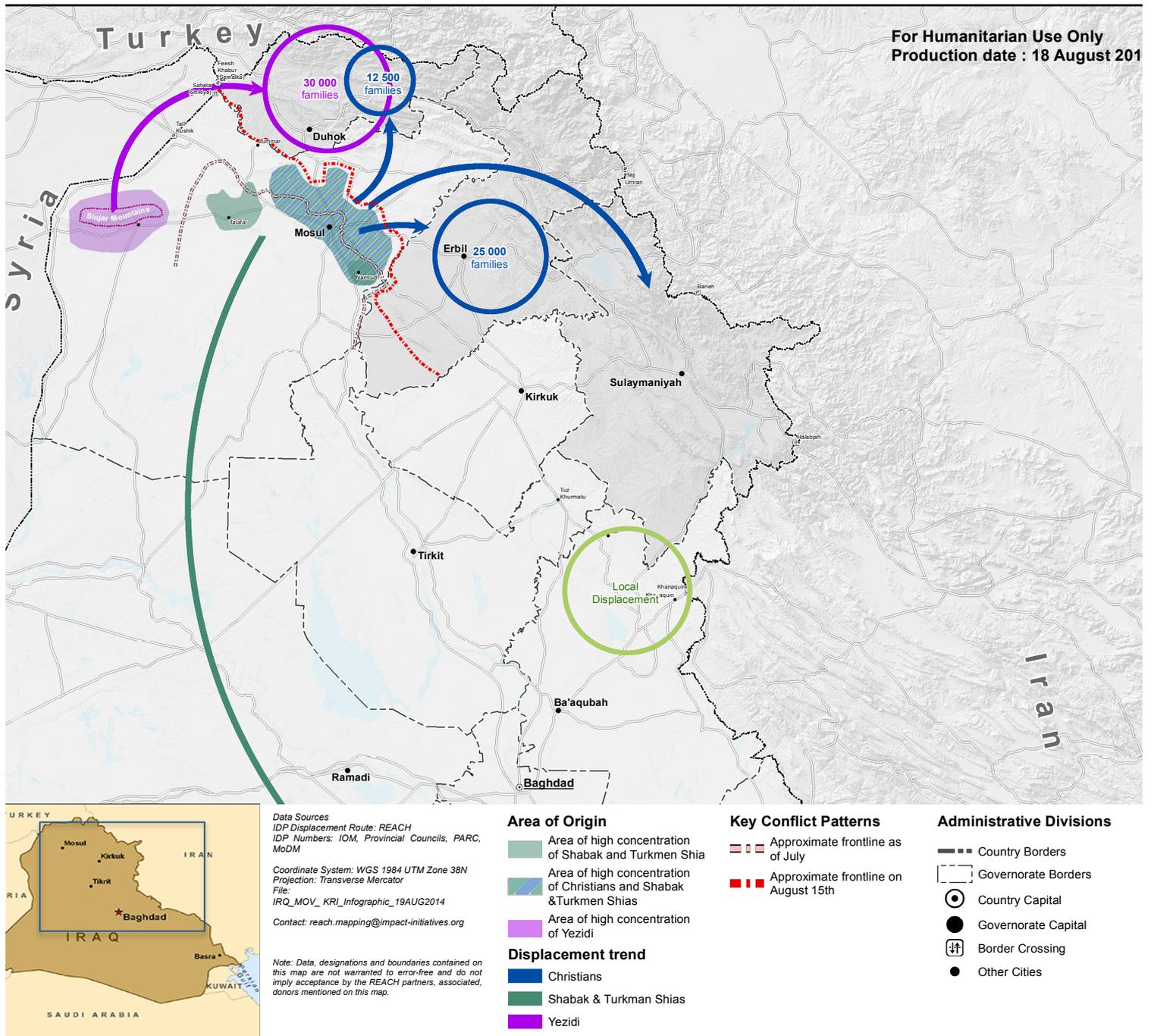
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Appendix A: Internal Displacement Trends to the KR-I

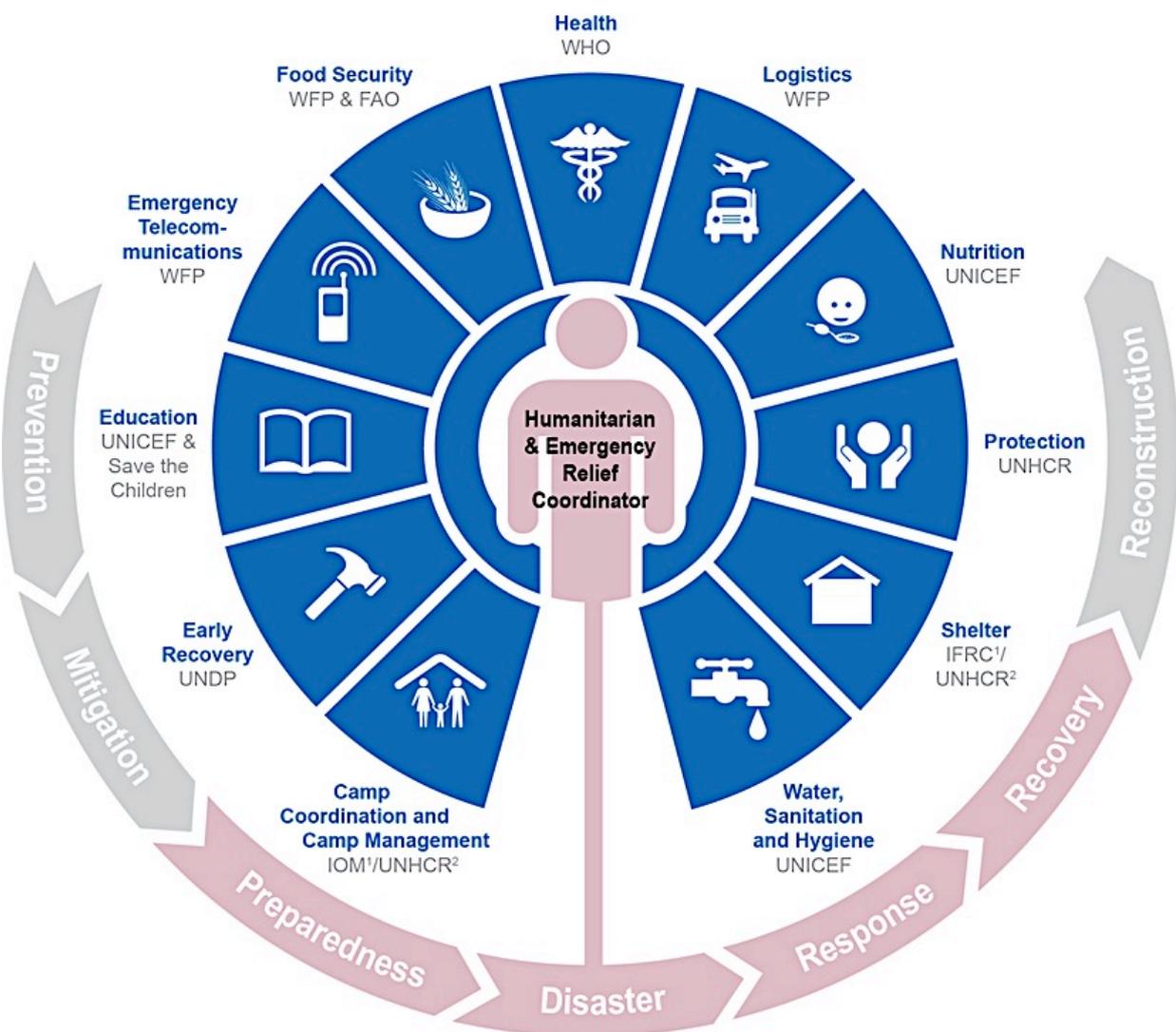
Key observed displacement trends to the KR-I (6 June to 18 August 2014).



Source: REACH

Appendix B: Clusters

Below is an overview of all global clusters and cluster leads (both UN and non-UN agencies). Clusters are activated on a needs basis; not all clusters are active in each emergency.⁷⁴



Source: OCHA

⁷⁴ See Appendix D (1) for the clusters activated in the emergency response in the KR-I.

Appendix C: Minimum Commitments for Participation in Clusters

Below are the minimum commitments required for participation in clusters (by all partners, such as NGO representatives, other implementing partners, and government representatives).

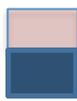
- A common commitment to humanitarian principles and the Principles of Partnership
- Readiness to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected populations.
- Commitment to consistently engage in the cluster's collective work, and capacity to contribute.
- Commitment to ensure optimal use of resources, and sharing information on organizational resources.
- Willingness to take on leadership responsibilities as needed and as capacity and mandates allow.
- Contribute to developing and disseminating advocacy and messaging for relevant audiences.

Source: IASC

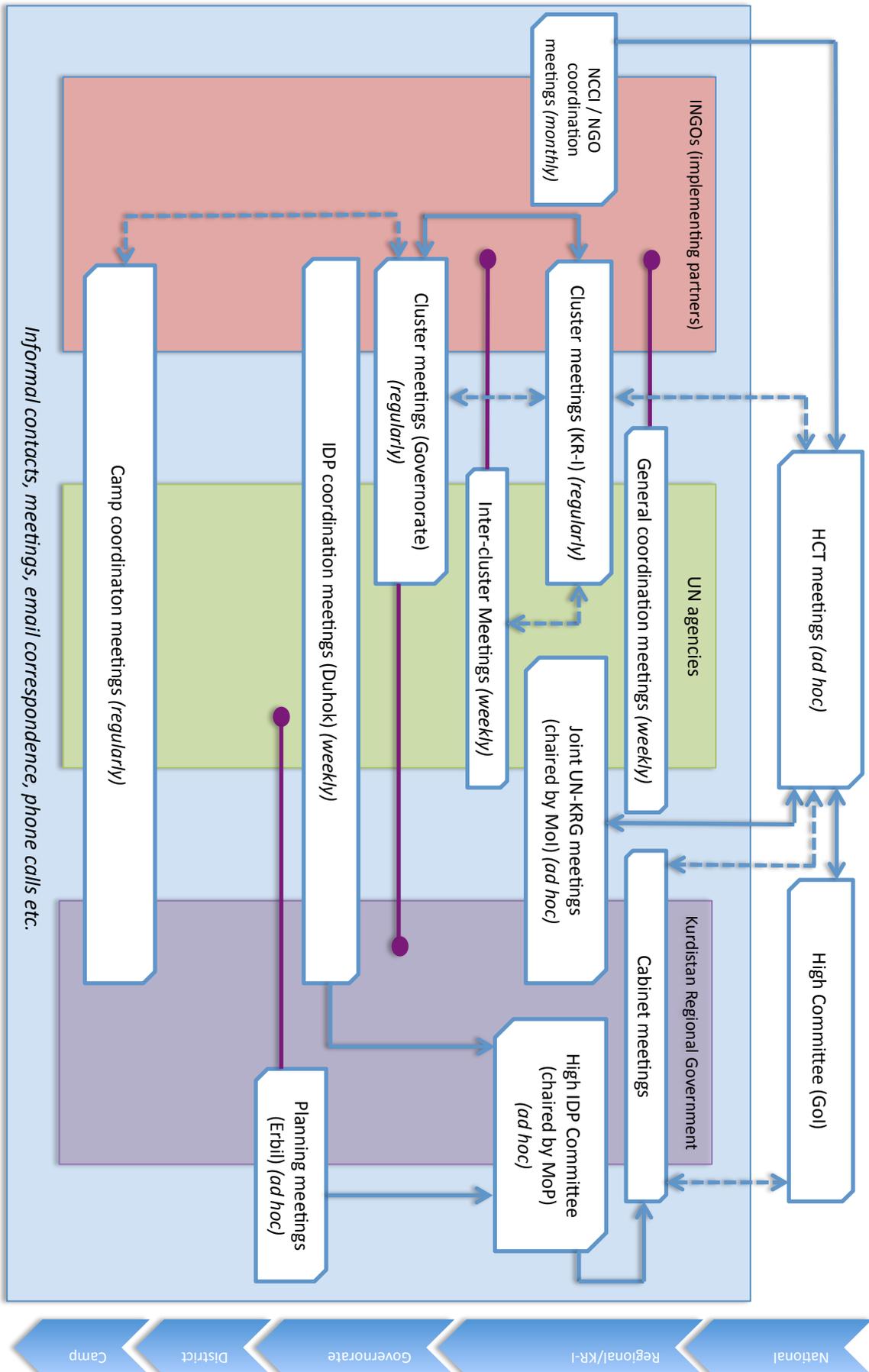
Appendix D: IDP Response Coordination Structure in the KR-I

The following two pages present (1) a stakeholder mapping of the response coordination structure (including interlinkings) and (2) a mapping of the formalized IDP response meetings including the three actor categories.

The symbols below are used to facilitate reading and understanding of both documents.

-
-  Level of decision-making
 -  Blue-marked figures represent GoI (the lighter the shade, the lower the level)
 -  Purple-marked figures represent KRG (the lighter the shade, the lower the level)
 -  Green-marked figures represent IASC/UN (the lighter the shade, the lower the level)
 -  Red-marked figures represent NGOs (and other implementing partners)
 -  Figures marked in light-red and dark-blue are not included in the study, but are included in the response. Donors in particular fund large parts of the humanitarian response.
 -  Meeting forum
 -  Main financial flow
 -  Organizational linking
 -  Main information flow
 -  Dashed arrows indicate questionable, weak or non-existent flows of funds or information.
 -  Actor category marked with a purple dot connected to a meeting forum has limited participation in this.

**For more information about the 17 additional KRG ministries not specified in the mapping, see KRG's official website.



Appendix E: List of Interviewees

The interviewees are listed by category group, sorted by date.

Government of Iraq

GoI1 Ms. Alya Hussain Albazaz
Head of the MoDM Representation in the KR-I, Erbil (2015-01-27)

Kurdistan Regional Government

KRG1 Mr. Shorsh Kadir Rahem
KRG Representative to Sweden (2014-11-06)

KRG2 Mr. Hoshang Mohamed
Senior Director (Head of the Joint Crisis Center [JCC]), Directorate of
KRG Offices Abroad (2014-11-24)

KRG3 Mr. Karwan Jamal Tahir
Deputy Minister of Foreign Relations, Department of Foreign Relations
(2014-12-01)

KRG4 Mr. Haval Mohammed Amedy
Head of the Emergency Cell, Duhok Governorate
(2014-12-02)

KRG5 Mr. Ismail Mohamed
Vice-Governor of Duhok (2014-12-03)

KRG6 Mr. Idris Saleh
Head of the DMC, Duhok Governorate (2014-12-04)

KRG7 Mr. Archie D Lightfoot, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Interior (2014-12-
10; 2015-01-18)

KRG8 Ms. Vian Rasheed
Head of the ERC, Erbil Governorate (2014-12-09)

KRG9 Mr. Peter Jochi
Emergency Response Advisor to the ERC, Erbil Governorate (DRC)
(2014-12-09)

- KRG10 Mr. Hayder Mustafa Saaid
Director General of Development Coordination and Cooperation,
Ministry of Planning (2014-12-11; 2015-01-21)
- KRG11 Mr. Shokr Yassen
Director of Bureau of Migration and Displacement, Ministry of Interior
(2014-12-15)
- KRG12 Mr. Nawzad Hadi Mawlood
Governor of Erbil (2014-12-18)

IASC / UN Agencies

- IASC1 Ms. Azhee Amin
National Program Officer, Integrated Coordination Office for
Development & Humanitarian Affairs (ICODHA), UNAMI
(2014-11-19)
- IASC2 Mr. Vincent Matteau
Shelter and Settlement Programme Support Officer, IOM, Duhok
(2014-12-02)
- IASC3 Ms. Wan Sophonpanich, Shelter and Settlement Programme Officer, IOM,
Duhok (2014-12-03)
- IASC4 Mr. Andrei Kazakov
Senior Field Coordinator, UNHCR, Duhok (2014-12-03)
- IASC5 Ms. Diana Gee-Silverman
Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA (2014-12-08; 2015-01-28)
- IASC6 Mr. Lado Gvilava
Head of the IOM Regional Hub – Northern Iraq, Erbil (2014-12-09)
- IASC7 Anonymous 1
UN agency representative, with outside perspective on Clusters
(2014-12-10)
- IASC8 Mr. Geoff Wordley
Senior Operations Coordinator/Inter-Sector Coordinator, UNHCR
(2014-12-11)
- IASC9 Mr. Abel Augustinio
Inter-Agency WASH Rapid Assessment Team (IRAT) Coordinator,
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
(2014-12-14)

- IASC10 Mr. Paolo Romano
Information Management Officer, Food Security Cluster, FAO (2014-12-18)
- IASC11 Anonymous 2
IASC member, actively involved in Clusters (2015-01-23)
- IASC12 Ms. Özgül Özcan
Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA (2015-01-24)
- IASC13 Mr. David Alford
Information Manager Officer, Global WASH Rapid Response Team (2015-01-25)
- IASC14 Anonymous 3
Member of Protection Cluster (2015-01-28)
- IASC15 Dr. Alaa Abou Zeid
Health Cluster Coordinator, WHO (2015-01-28)
- IASC16 Mr. Ali Al-Khateeb
WASH Specialist, UNICEF (2015-01-29)

INGOs (including other implementing partners)

- NGO1 Mr. Johan Robertsson
Team Leader for the establishment of the JCC, Security Advisor, MSB (2014-11-17)
- NGO2 Mr. Tom Robinson
Director, RISE Foundation (2014-11-19)
- NGO3 Anonymous 4
NGO representative, not involved in Clusters (2014-11-22)
- NGO4 Mr. Sema Panboon
Team Leader for setting up IDP Camp Shaykhan, Duhok, MSB (2014-11-25)
- NGO5 Anonymous 5
NGO representative also actively involved in Clusters (2014-11-26)
- NGO6 Mr. Bernd Körber
Head of Mission, THW (Federal Agency for Technical Relief) (2014-12-01)

- NGO7 Anonymous 6
NGO representative, involved in assessment work (2014-12-10)
- NGO8 Anonymous 7
NGO representative also actively involved in Clusters (2014-12-11)
- NGO9 Anonymous 8
NGO representative also involved in Clusters and funded by the UN (2014-12-17)
- NGO10 Anonymous 9
NGO representative also involved in Clusters and funded by the UN (2015-01-20)
- NGO11 Mr. Hani Chatila
WASH Program Manager, World Vision (2015-01-21)
- NGO12 Anonymous 10
Senior NGO representative, involved in Clusters (2015-01-29)

NCCI

- NCCI1 Mr. Craig Anderson
North Field Coordinator, NCCI (2014-11-26; 2015-01-26)

National NGOs

- NNGO1 Mr. Hemn Farid
General Manager, Kurdistan Organisation for Volunteers (OVK) (2014-11-27)
- NNGO Mr. Musa Ahmad
Deputy Head, Barzani Charity Foundation (2015-01-20)

Researchers

- MERI1 Mr. Roger Guiu
Research Fellow (Economics, Energy and Environment), Project Leader for the project *Impact of Displaced People on Kurdistan Region*, Middle East Research Institute (MERI) (2014-11-24)
- MERI2 Ms. Lahib Higel
Research Assistant, involved with the project *Impact of Displaced People on Kurdistan Region*, MERI (2014-11-24)

Appendix F: Field Visits and Meetings

Field visits and meetings are listed by date.

- Meeting1 General coordination meetings, chaired by OCHA
UN Compound, Erbil (2014-11-23; 2014-12-14; 2015-01-18; 2015-01-25)
- Meeting2 Field Visit to Baharka IDP Camp
Erbil (2014-11-30)
- Meeting3 Education Cluster Meeting
Ministry of Education, Erbil (2014-12-01)
- Meeting4 Field Visit to Shaykhan IDP Camp, organized by MSB
Duhok (2014-12-02)
- Meeting5 WASH Sector/Cluster Consultations, organized by UNICEF
Saad Palace, Erbil (2014-12-16)
- Meeting6 Camp Coordination Meeting, Baharka IDP Camp
Erbil (2015-01-15)
- Meeting7 WASH Sector/Cluster Gap Workshop, organized by UNICEF
Directorate of Surrounding Water, Erbil (2015-01-19)

Appendix G: Interview Guide

Below are the main common questions asked in the interviews.

- In what way is your organization [department, agency, etc.] involved in the IDP response?
- Are you/your organization involved in the clusters?
 - o If not, why?
 - o If yes, do you find it a useful coordination forum?
 - What is discussed there?
 - Who and how many participate during cluster meetings?
 - Are roles and responsibilities clearly divided?
 - Are gaps and overlappings identified and mitigated?
 - Monitoring and follow-up?
 - Is there a workplan or operational strategy that guides cluster work?
- How do you see IDP response coordination between:
 - o The KRG and the GoI?
 - o The KRG and the governorates?
 - o The KRG and HCT/UN?
 - o Various UN agencies?
 - o Clusters? (Inter-cluster coordination?)
 - o The UN and the NGOs?
- Do you feel that you [or the cluster, the KRG, or the UN] have a comprehensive picture of the IDP situation? (Number of IDPs, locations, needs, etc.?)
 - o Information sharing?
 - o Analysis?
- Is there a comprehensive plan or strategy to respond to this emergency, in your view?
 - o SRP/IRPs – do these response plans guide your work/projects?
- How do you view OCHA's coordinating role in this emergency response?
- Who would you say has taken the leading role in the IDP response in the KR-I? (the GoI, the KRG, or the UN?)

- Do you think that the relationship between the KRG and the humanitarian community has changed due to the emergency?
- How do you find the IDP response in general?
 - o Successful?
 - o Efficient? Are resources well spent? Do actors coordinate?
 - o What could have been done differently? Lessons learned?
 - o Looking ahead, what are the challenges concerning the IDP response and its coordination?

Appendix H: Looking Ahead - Streams of Light?

This study has touched upon a complex topic that changes daily. Although the outlook for responding to the needs of the IDPs in the KR-I—and especially in a coordinated way—is not bright, some developments since the beginning of 2015 give reason for hope.

Stabilized staffing and stronger leadership

The extreme turnover in staff has stabilized and new, stronger, leadership within the UN has been installed. For example, the HC and the head of OCHA are new.

Harmonization of IDP and refugee responses

Harmonization of the IDP and refugee responses is taking shape. For example, sector/cluster meetings are held jointly and a common information-sharing tool is being used. Harmonization aims to reduce the number of meetings and increase use of the vulnerability-based approach, which addresses those with the greatest need first, regardless of other factors.⁷⁵

KRG Joint Crisis Center

Since January, the KRG has initiated a Joint Crisis Center (JCC) on the ministerial level, under the MoI, (with the support of the Swedish MSB) responsible for all crisis coordination within the KRG.⁷⁶ The JCC has direct linkages with involved ministries as well as with the three governorate emergency cells. Furthermore, two seconded UN staff are working at the center and contacts are established with the HCT.

The JCC has the potential to fill the leadership vacuum concerning IDP response coordination at the ministerial level, and to be a clear KRG counterpart to the UN. Thus it has the potential to tighten the coordination network, as long as it receives long-term funding. (MFA 2014;NGO1;KRG10) The JCC establishment is another clear indication that the KRG takes the initiative in leading and coordinating the IDP response.

⁷⁵ Harmonization can never be total, because, for example, IDPs and refugees have different legal statuses and aid budgets and responsible agencies for the two groups differ.

⁷⁶ The JCC will be responsible for the coordination of all kinds of civilian crises, thus not only the IDP one, although that is currently the most pressing one. (NGO1)

Budget release

KRG–GoI relations change daily, and even though an agreement for the GoI to release 2015 budgeted funds to the KRG had been reached in January—the KRG has still not received them (March 2015). Release of the budget and resumption of the PDS will have a significant, positive impact on the response, increasing the financial capacity of the KRG and of the host community. Thus, political solutions are vital to affect a long-term solution of this response.

The role of the host community

It is important to mention that, although not included in the scope of this study, the Iraqi host community has been the main supplier of assistance to IDPs in all areas of the country (including the KR-I). One report⁷⁷ shows that up to 75% of support to the IDPs has been provided by the host community and not by the UN or the government. Whether this should be seen as a failure of formal institutions, or a strength of the host community and informal structures, is another question. But this does put the issue in perspective.

⁷⁷ Not verified by the author; information received during an NGO interview.