CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT MONITORING METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

IOM DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX

Since September 2019, the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Iraq has been implementing cross-border monitoring activities as part the Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (REMAP) project. Using DTM as its primary data collection tool, the objective of the REMAP project is to improve understanding of displacement and migration dynamics, drivers, modalities and vulnerabilities in select target countries. Specifically, the REMAP project aims to strengthen evidence-based formulation and implementation of humanitarian and development policy and programming on migration and forced displacement in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. Data collected will be used to establish numbers, locations, vulnerabilities and basic needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, returnees and host communities in the target countries, to inform government, humanitarian and development stakeholders.

The REMAP project also aims to increase the interoperability and harmonization of data collection initiatives. Through the establishment of a comprehensive DTM REMAP methodological framework, data and information will be converged across the selected target countries to produce regional analysis and information products. Country-level and regional-level analysis and information products will successively serve to support regional migration policy dialogues. In doing so, DTM REMAP will contribute to improving national migration management systems, policies and their implementation. Regional conferences and training workshops will also be carried out to strengthen capacity among humanitarian stakeholders and national authorities.

DTM will deploy five tools to enhance the availability and quality of data on displacement, migration and returns under REMAP. These include: 1) community-based area-level assessments on vulnerabilities, needs and intentions of mobile populations and host communities; 2) regular collection of information on numbers and locations of mobile population groups; 3) regular collection of information at selected border points to understand cross-border movements and profiles of mobile populations; 4) surveys on the drivers of migration and 5) studies to monitor the sustainability of return and the needs and vulnerabilities of returnees.

This document provides an overview of the main data collection exercises implemented as part of the aforementioned activity 3 (cross-border movement monitoring activities), briefly presenting the methodology behind them and detailing how these activities were implemented. In Iraq, cross-border movement monitoring has been implemented at relevant border crossings with the neighboring countries of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to identify and map the mobility patterns and profiles of migrants who enter and exit Iraq. Monitoring aims to enhance understanding of incoming and outgoing migration crossings and trends with respect to the different nationalities, drivers of migration movements as well as associated and experienced vulnerabilities. Movement monitoring involves five different activities, explained in greater detail below: 1) mapping, 2) observation, 3) registry, 4) counting and 5) survey.

POPULATION MOVEMENT MAPPING

The first exercise of the cross-border movement monitoring activity is population movement mapping, which provides the basis for identifying potential locations where subsequent cross-border activities will be conducted, including observation, registry, counting and survey activities. Based on internal data and focus group discussions with DTM teams in the field, IOM DTM was able to gain a better understanding of the main migration routes at national and local levels as well as the feasibility of data collection and accessibility of the border points.

POPULATION MOVEMENT OBSERVATION

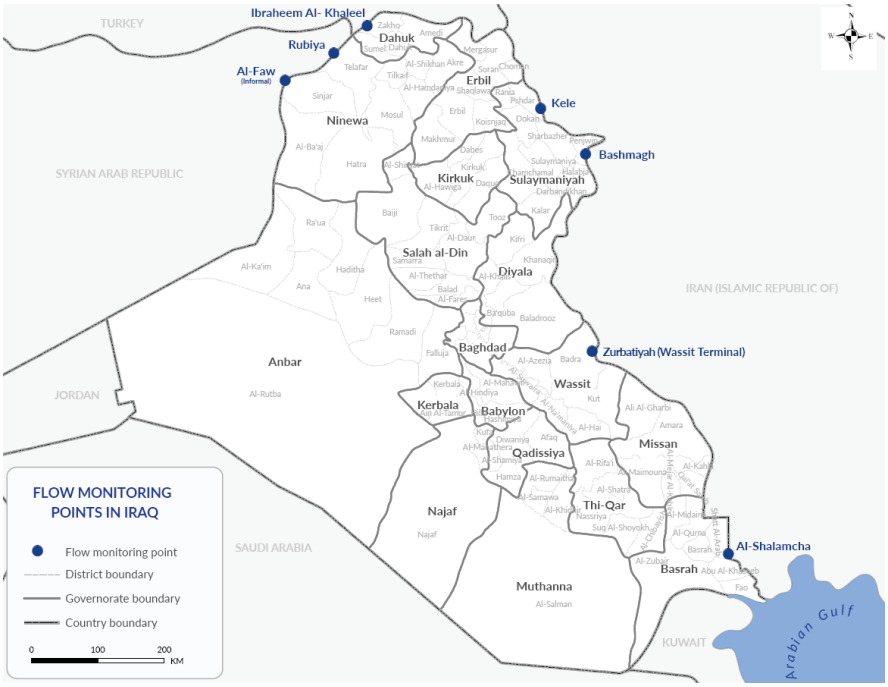
Information gathered during the first phase was then used to select points to conduct the second exercise: population movement observation in May 2019. Following the reduction of the monitoring points as a result of access issues, the field team was sent to assess pre-identified potential cross-border monitoring locations in the following governorates: Basrah, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Sulaymaniyah and Wassit.

The observation exercise allowed to further reduce the monitoring points, from 16 to 7, based on the following criteria:

1. **Daily volume of crossings:** initially, locations with high volume of daily crossings were preferred, considering all border countries.
2. **Border countries**: due to logistical restrictions, the focus shifted to flows leading to each of the three border countries: the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey.
3. **Diversity of locations:** the project aimed to cover diverse locations across the target countries.
4. **Accessibility and security**: the project considered the ability of staff to reach and operate from the locations for daily data collection.
5. **Type of location:** emphasis was put on selecting different types of locations (official border posts, unofficial border posts, bus stations/terminals).

Seven border-crossing points were selected as optimal locations for subsequent population monitoring activities. These border points were Rabia and Al-Faw in Ninewa, Ibrahim Al-Khaleel in Dohuk, Kele and Bashmagh in Sulaymaniyah, Al-Shalamcha in Basrah and Zurbatiyah (Wassit Terminal) in Wassit.

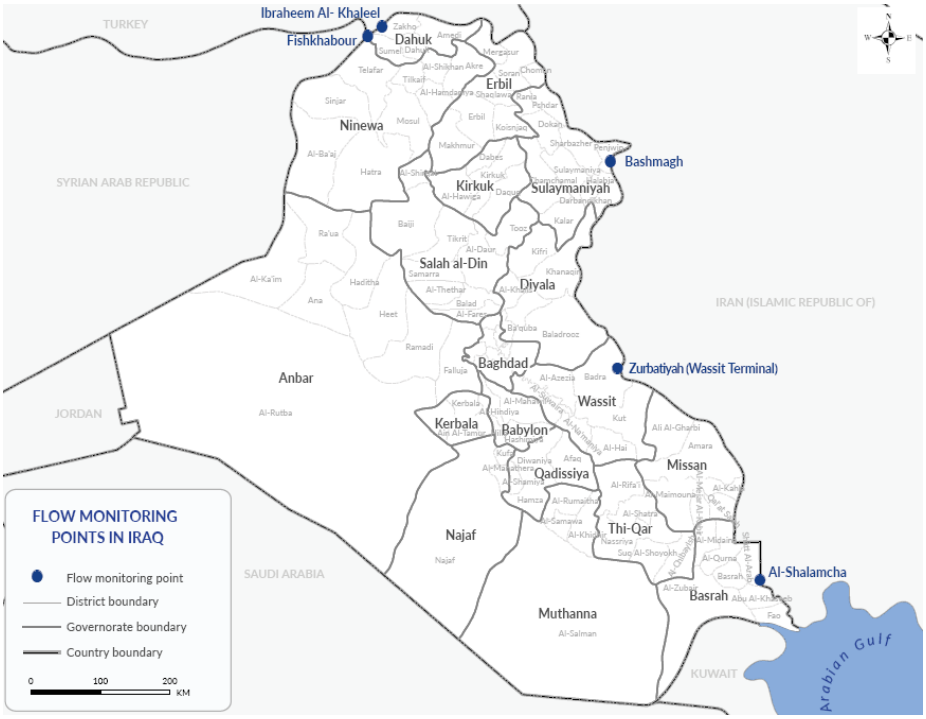
Map 1: Map of selected monitoring points during the population movement observation phase



POPULATION MOVEMENT REGISTRY

Outcomes of the first two exercises lay the foundation for establishing cross-border monitoring points where the third activity, population movement registry, is conducted. This exercise is focused on collecting population data to inform the final selection of the monitoring points. Registry data is collected through brief face-to-face interviews with travellers if they are transiting alone, or with key informants if travellers are transiting in a group and/or sharing the same means of transport. The purpose of this activity is to collect basic information from travellers crossing the selected monitoring points, including their nationality, reasons for travel, areas of origin and destination. Based on the resulting information collected during the months of August and September 2019, final adjustments to the monitoring points were made: three points (Al-Faw, Rabia and Kele), were discarded due to low migration flow, and one point (Fishkahbour) was added due to new population movements from Syria.

Map 2: Map of selected border crossing points after the population movement registry activity



POPULATION MOVEMENT COUNTING

At the selected five border crossing points, the fourth activity – population movement counting, is conducted. The activity aims at estimating the total number of all individuals crossing national borders during a specific timeframe, and establishing a reference population, that is, a sample frame for population monitoring surveys (included in the fifth activity, see the following section).
The reference population groups are:

1) travellers (Iraqis and non-Iraqis) who enter Iraq after being abroad (incoming flow);

2) travellers (Iraqis and non-Iraqis) who exit Iraq to another country (outgoing flow).

DTM Iraq conducted a set-up phase of counting exercises during the months of November and December 2019 at five border crossing points (Map 2). After the set-up phase was completed, counting is carried out simultaneously, together with the population monitoring survey starting with the month of January 2020. The set-up phase report[1] is available on the DTM Iraq portal available at: http://iraqdtm.iom.int.

Counting is run on five days per week (weekdays only) from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, with a lunch break of 30 minutes any time between 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm. Counting is conducted by observation, using tablets to record the type of flow (incoming/outgoing), the time period of crossing (hour, day, minutes) and the number of travellers by means of transport (private car, taxi, bus or minibus – up to 15 seats). Counting is conducted

[1] IOM (March 2020), Cross-Border Monitoring. Available online at http://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/Remap/20200413336802_cross_border_monitoring_march_2020.pdf

separately for incoming and outgoing flows through IOM's enumerators, composed of over 14 staff members deployed across Iraq (35% of enumerators are female).

Due to this restriction, the obtained data is representative of the individuals crossing at each of the selected border points separately only during a specific period of time. Data should not be generalized and does not represent a full picture of inter- and intra-regional migration, but rather of migration flows at the selected border points monitored. Data collected in assessed border points should not lead to assumptions about border crossings in non-assessed border points or areas without monitoring points.

To estimate the total number of incoming and outgoing flows, the weight was applied; that is, the 'counted' number of individuals crossing national borders was uplifted to estimate the total number of incoming and outgoing flows during a specific timeframe at the selected border crossing points. The reporting period of estimates was set at one month. The data was weighted according to the distribution of travellers per hours of data collection throughout the day, days of data collection throughout the month and type of flow.

POPULATION MOVEMENT SURVEY

The fifth activity – population monitoring surveys is carried out simultaneously together with counting, starting with the month of January 2020. This activity aims at estimating the core demographic characteristics of incoming and outgoing travellers (sex, age, nationality, country of habitual residence) and reasons for travel. In addition, it is designed to estimate main characteristics of incoming and outgoing migrants, that is, the demographic and socio-economic profile (marital status, education level, employment status), mobility profile, mobility history, reasons for travel, travel arrangements, problems and vulnerabilities related to mobility/journey of travellers entering/leaving Iraq for more than three months.

The survey is carried out five days per week (weekdays only) from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, with a lunch break of 30 minutes any time between 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm, and is conducted through face-to-face interviews, using tablets to record the above-mentioned information. Travellers are selected randomly through the adoption of a 'systematic step/interval' – i.e. travellers are systematically selected at fixed intervals from the start of the workday. The interval was fixed at 1:5 (one in every five individuals will be selected for an interview). All travellers aged 18 years and older who were crossing borders were eligible for an interview, regardless of their nationality. The survey is conducted separately for incoming and outgoing flows through IOM's enumerators, composed of over 14 staff members deployed across Iraq (35% of enumerators are female).

Each sampled passenger is asked core information – the means of transport (on foot or by bus, minibus, taxi, car, or motorbike), gender, age, country of habitual residence, nationality and purpose of travel. To focus on migrants, each sampled passenger is asked a screening question on the length of travel to check whether he/she satisfies the criteria of three months. Only if this is the case, he/she will be asked to answer the full questionnaire, including questions on demographic and socio-economic profile (marital status, education level, employment status), mobility profile, mobility history, reasons for travel, travel arrangements, problems and vulnerabilities related to mobility/journey.

The sampling frame is based on the counting. Ideally, between 1,000 and 3,000 face-to-face interviews should be carried out to conduct the analysis. This 'minimum' sample size guarantees that the sample estimates are

reasonably accurate. A single month for travellers and quarter for migrants is a minimum period through which a sufficient sample size for analysis of the data can be made.

To estimate the characteristics of travellers and migrants, the sampling weight was applied. The sampling weight for survey was calculated as the inverse of the selection probability of an individual in the sample, based on the estimated number of incoming and outgoing travellers at each specific border point.

The obtained data is representative of the individuals crossing at each of the selected border points separately and only during a specific period. Data should not be generalized and does not represent a full picture of inter- and intra-regional migration, but rather of migration flows at the selected border points monitored. Data collected in assessed border points should not lead to assumptions about border crossings in non-assessed border points or areas without monitoring points.

NEXT STEPS

The data collection exercises presented in this document will continue until 2021. Data collected during this timeframe will be used to produce a variety of outputs. Based on the data collected through the counting exercise, DTM will be able to provide the estimation of the total number of people and vehicles transiting through each border crossing point during a reference period, tracking the time of the day, mode of crossing and type of flows. Moreover, data collected through the surveys enhance understanding of the demographic characteristics (sex, age, nationality, country of habitual residence) of travellers crossing the selected monitoring points and their reasons for travel. The report on travellers' profile[2] is available on the DTM Iraq portal available at: http://iraqdtm.iom.int. On a quarterly basis, survey data will also be used to provide greater insight into drivers of migration and associated decision-making process, migrant/returnee vulnerabilities.

[2] IOM (April 2020), Cross-Border Monitoring. Available online at http://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/Remap/20204133432706_cross_border_monitoring_april_20202.pdf