IRAQ DURABLE COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

100 SOLUTIONS FOR STABILITY
HIERARCHICAL CARD SORTING REPORT

December 16, 2021

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

CCO	Community Coordination Officer
DCEO	Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities (USAID-funded project)
GESI	gender equality and social inclusion
HCS	hierarchical card sorting
IDP	internally displaced person
Marla Fund	Marla Ruzicka Iraqi War Victims Fund
MID	mixed-identity dialogue
MSC	most significant change
PWD	persons with disabilities
SID	single-identity dialogue
STTA	short-term technical assistance
TO	task order

OVERVIEW

The Learning Task Order (TO) contributes to the Iraq Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities (DCEO) project's ability to reflect and learn based on evidence, ultimately supporting informed adaptation and better delivery of conflict mitigation and improved economic well-being activities toward the overarching goal of resilient, adaptive Iraqi communities.

The Learning TO responds to learning questions that aim to support end-to-end program learning within the parameters of TO's core learning questions. The Learning TO identifies specific approaches and methods to answer these questions while remaining complexity, conflict, and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) sensitive.

As such, the Learning TO identified the need and opportunity to conduct a Hierarchical Card Sorting (HCS) exercise to support the 100 Solutions for Stability (100 Solutions) TO. This report summarizes the methodology and findings from the HCS exercise that was conducted from November 21 to November 25 in Erbil, Iraq. The exercise was designed for and delivered to four Community Coordination Officers (CCOs) who are responsible for most of the field work for 100 Solutions.

This report is intended to inform: 1) Consultants or stakeholders that might conduct a similar HCS exercise in the future. The report details the methodology and reflects on what could be improved in future exercises. 2) The DCEO management team and technical advisors, especially staff and consultants who play a role in designing the project. Findings from the HCS exercise produced recommendations for improving project design and delivery as outlined below.

OBJECTIVES OF 100 SOLUTIONS

The objectives of 100 Solutions are as follows: Objective 1 captures community dialogue and consultation activities and the processes that the TO will use to identify conflict drivers and practical solutions to cultivate increased stability. Closely integrated with Objective 1, Objective 2 focuses on building the effectiveness of community leadership to facilitate dialogue, identify resources, and support the sustainability of 100 Solutions activities. Objective 3 represents the support to beneficiaries of the Marla Ruzicka Iraqi War Victims Fund (Marla Fund) to restore livelihoods, create jobs, and invigorate economic growth among Iraqi civilians affected by conflict.

To achieve Objectives 1 and 2 above, the CCOs identify groups of interest in the targeted communities, facilitate Single-Identity Dialogues (SIDs) with each group, then select representatives of those groups to join Mixed-Identity Dialogues (MIDs). Further details can be found in the 100 Solutions TO's Implementation Plan FY 2021.

During this HCS exercise, the Learning TO focused only on the work of the CCOs that relates to objective 1 and objective 2 above. More specifically, the HCS exercise only included cases from the SIDs. Anna Bittman, director of the 100 Solutions TO, suggested that reflecting

on SIDs would inform both SIDs and MIDs in the future and can also inform the design of community action plans.

The SID Synthesis Reports that were prepared by CCOs provided valuable foundations for the HCS exercise. The Synthesis Reports include details about the groups that were discussed during the HCS exercise (e.g., factors that they have identified as drivers of conflict in their communities; attitudes of participants; examples of solutions they offered; etc.) that are referred to in the findings of this report without a great level of detail.

HIERARCHICAL CARD SORTING

Hierarchical Card Sorting (HCS) is one of many types of card sorting methods (also known as pile sorting) popularized in development interventions by Rick Davies.[1] Card sorting has been used in many contexts to support learning or critical reflection, from traditional ethnography to the modern-day business of designing usable websites. In these contexts, card sorting is typically used to elicit people's mental models: the categories they use, what belongs to these categories, and how the categories relate to each other.

In many organizations and projects people accumulate a lot of knowledge, but often it is tacit and informal in nature. As such, it is often lost in the day-to-day or difficult to capture when staff are juggling priorities and tasks. Eliciting, sharing, and capturing that knowledge is important to ensure it contributes to learning alongside routine program monitoring and similar formal data collection and reporting approaches. Card sorting exercises like HCS provide an interactive environment to help make people's knowledge more explicit and publicly available, contestable, and usable.

The HCS method asks people about significant differences: specifically, about differences which are important to them, and which have (or had) consequences. It has similarities in origin and approach with the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique. Central to the HCS is a question about the "most significant [static] difference", whereas MSC asks about the "most significant change". Both ask respondents to make observations and interpretations. The design of both tools was influenced by Gregory Bateson, especially his book "Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity" (1979), in which he argues that information is "a difference that makes a difference". In turn, many people would argue that knowledge is structured information. The HCS is about eliciting and representing people's knowledge (i.e., as a structured set of differences that make a difference).

HCS was selected as a learning exercise for 100 Solutions both due to its complementarity with MSC and due to its ability to bring to the forefront a project teams' mental models and conceptual approaches to work. This report captures the first test of utilizing it and provides foundations for a repeated exercise through the lifetime of the task order.

SELECTION OF HCS CASES

As mentioned above, this HCS exercise focused on SIDs that CCOs conducted in their respective communities. Each single-identity _group_ that CCOs had conducted dialogues with were considered as a potential HCS case. Thus, 'HCS cases' are often referred to as '[community] groups' in this report.

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[1] https://mande.co.uk/special-issues/hierarchical-card-sorting-hcs

To avoid exhausting CCOs in a lengthy workshop and to maintain their positive engagement, the Learning TO decided on a maximum of 15 HCS cases for each HCS workshop. The 100 Solutions TO Director conducted the first round of selection for each community on the basis of which SIDs would result in important lessons (e.g., SIDs that were considered successful by CCOs and SIDs in which tension arose between group members). At the beginning of the HCS workshop, CCOs were shown the full list of all groups that participated in SIDs, with the selected ones marked. They were asked to verify the selection, adding or removing groups based on which ones they thought were important to reflect on. See table below and Annex I for a list of all community groups that participated in SIDs and selected groups for HCS.

One card for each community group was prepared in advance of the workshops (see Annex B for the card template and Annex C for pictures). Cards for the selected groups were used in the workshop, and other cards were set aside.

EXHIBIT 1. GROUPS BY COMMUNITY AND CCO

CCO	COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY HAVE FACLITATED SIDS	# OF GROUPS IN SID	# OF GROUPS SELECTED FOR HCS
Saja Salam and Roua Ibrahim (grouped due to Ninewa location)	Ninewa: Mosul Old City, University of Mosul, Batnaya	31	16
Snoor Mohammed	Baharka	10	7
Abbas Yousif	Zubair	9	6
N/A	Ramadi	N/A	*This community was excluded from the analysis because the CCO no longer works on the project.*

SCHEDULE OF HCS WORKSHOPS
The table below presents the schedule of the workshops as they occurred. However, the initial plan was to conduct shorter workshop sessions. Reflection on why sessions took longer than expected and what future HCS facilitators should keep in mind when designing the HCS workshops can be found in the section below on lessons learned.

EXHIBIT 2. WORKSHOP AGENDA

DAY 1	ICE-BREAKER – ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS BETWEEN HCS FACILITATOR AND CCOS
DAY 2	HCS FOR CCOS OF NINEWA COMMUNITIES
9:00am – 9:30am	Purpose of the HCS exercise and selection of HCS groups
9:30am – 12:00pm	HCS for 16 selected groups
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch; facilitator creates tree map for HCS results in Excel; CCOs take a break
DAY 3	HCS FOR CCOS OF ZUBAIR AND BAHARKA COMMUNITIES
9:00am – 9:30am	Purpose of the HCS exercise and selection of HCS groups
9:30am – 11:30am	HCS for 6 groups of Baharka, then 7 groups of Zubair
11:30am – 11:40am	Facilitator creates tree map for HCS results in Excel; CCOs take a break
11:40am – 12:30pm	Binary exploratory questions
DAY 4	LESSONS LEARNED, SHARING AND ANALYZING FINDINGS OF HCS TREE MAPS FOR ALL CCOS
9:00am – 11:00am	CCOs present their HCS maps to each other and discuss
11:00am – 12:00pm	Extracting lessons learned
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch break
1:00pm – 2:30pm	Extracting lessons learned
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Feedback

STEP-BY-STEP METHODOLOGY FOR HCS

Step 1: Thinking about the objectives of the single-identity dialogues, what is the most significant difference between the following groups that participated in the SIDs?

<div dir="rtl">

فكر في اهداف جلسات الحوار الفردية، ما هو الاختلاف الأكثر جذري أو الأبرز ما بين هذه المجموعات؟

</div>

The HCS facilitator – a short-term technical assistance (STTA) consultant – asked CCOs the question above in both English and Arabic and asked them to split up the cards in two piles based on the most significant difference they selected.

At first, CCOs struggled slightly with the question and wanted more clarity. The facilitator emphasised that there is no right or wrong answer and that significant is relative. She restated that the exercise is not an evaluation of their knowledge. Instead, the purpose of the exercise is to offer an opportunity to reflect on the SIDs and their experiences with the community groups and to capture lessons learnt that can inform their work going forward.

As CCOs discussed the answer amongst themselves, the facilitator would repeat the question or parts of the question when needed, e.g., 'thinking about the objectives of the

SIDs'. She also guided them to think about the dialogues that they facilitated with these groups. This focus made sense for this exercise, because it allowed CCOs to reflect on their work with the groups and the dialogues they had with them rather than mentioning apparent differences in groups' demographic characteristics, which are largely already known and written on each card. However, the facilitator did not instruct CCOs not to select demographic characteristics as the most significant difference. In fact, as noted below, there were instances when CCOs selected demographic characteristics as the most significant difference (see below).

Step 2: Why did you select that difference? Why does that difference matter to you?

<div dir="rtl">لماذا اخترت هذا الاختلاف؟ ما معنى وأهمية هذا الاختلاف بالنسبة لعملك؟</div>

This question is slightly different than the one suggested by Rick Davies in the HCS guidance: what difference does that difference make?

When translating to Arabic, the original question sounded awkward. Instead, asking them: 'why does that difference matter to you and your work as a CCO' was suitable for the learning purposes of this particular HCS exercise. It guided the CCOs to start thinking about how these differences could lead to lessons learnt. They reflected further on their answers to 'why' in the lessons learnt session discussed further below.

Step 3: Repeat Step 1 and 2 above until there is one card in each pile
The sorting of cards became easier after the first two rounds. As mentioned above, the facilitator would often repeat the questions when needed and encourage a more detailed analysis of why the selected difference matters to them and their work.

Note-taking
During the exercise above, a DCEO MEL specialist took notes on her laptop. The facilitator captured the most significant differences and the answers to 'why the difference matters' on a flip chart, while drawing out the branches of the tree each time they sorted the cards (see pictures in Annex III below). the facilitator captured their answers in English, asking CCOs to provide the right wording as she wrote on the flip chart. She then repeated the written statements to the CCOs asking them to rephrase if needed. They would often suggest amendments for more accuracy.

Step 4: Map the trees in Excel
The facilitator digitalized the HCS tree maps by recreating them on Excel during breaks and sent the complete tree maps to the CCOs ahead of the Lessons Learned Workshop, discussed below. The complete tree maps also included the findings (ranking and scatter plots) resulting from the binary exploratory questions discussed below.

Step 5: Binary exploratory questions and ranking groups
Following a mental and lunch break, the facilitator showed the CCOs the digitalized tree maps on Excel. She went through each branch of the tree and asked the following question:

Which of these two sets do you think is the most likely to contribute to building their community?

<div dir="rtl">أي من هاتين المجموعتين تعتقد أنه من المرجح أن يساهموا في بناء مجتمعهم؟</div>

They hesitated at first, because, as above, they wanted more clarity and more specific criteria for the selection process. The facilitator encouraged them to suggest what they thought the question should focus on and advice on the selection criteria.

In the first HCS workshop, Saja and Roua challenged each other and shared their different interpretations of the question. Saja was focused on selecting the set based on who *should or could* contribute *if given the opportunity*, leading her to select vulnerable groups. On the other hand, Roua was focused on selecting groups who already have agency to create change. They also discussed whether the answer should be based on the actual participants of SIDs, or whether it was about a generalised perception of people that fit within those community groups (i.e., single identities). Additionally, they discussed whether they should select the groups based on who should theoretically be able to contribute more or who they think will actually contribute according to CCO's assessments of their personalities and motives. Following the discussion, they agreed to select the groups that currently have more agency and who they think will contribute to building their community in reality (as opposed to in principle). They also agreed to focus on the participants of the SIDs as opposed to a general idea of the community group as a whole. This interpretation was provided to CCOs in the second HCS workshop to ensure that the methodology is unified and that results are comparable.

The facilitator coloured each group they selected. For every two branches in the HCS tree map, one branch was coloured and the other was blank.

The facilitator repeated the steps above on a copy of the tree map, but asking this question instead:

<u>Which of these two sets do you think included participants that *had more positive attitudes* towards the usefulness of the dialogues and hope in creating change over time?</u>

<div dir="rtl">

<u>أي من هاتين المجموعتين برأيك تضمنت مشاركين لديهم مواقف أكثر إيجابية تجاه فائدة الجلسات الحوارية ولديهم امل في إحداث تغيير بمرور الوقت؟</u>

</div>

The original question that the Learning TO had prepared for this exercise was: which of these two sets do you think included participants that <u>changed their attitude</u> towards the usefulness of the dialogues and hope in creating change over time?

However, in the first workshop, the facilitator asked CCOs to verify if the question makes sense. They suggested modifying the phrasing, because they only conducted a maximum of two SIDs with each group, which does not allow for sufficient time or interaction to gage changes in attitudes.

As above, the facilitator coloured each group they selected. For every two branches in the HCS tree map, one branch was coloured and the other was blank.

Following the workshops, the facilitator re-sorted HCS tree maps to rank each group based on who was most likely to contribute to building their community. In an adjacent column, she also provided the ranking for which groups had a more positive attitude towards the usefulness of the dialogues and hope for creating change.

Based on both sets of rankings, the facilitator created a scatter plot for each of the three HCS tree maps in order to observe any correlations between positive attitudes towards the dialogues and who is likely to contribute to building their community.

LESSONS LEARNED WORKSHOP
The third workshop was a joint learning discussion for all four CCOs. They each presented their HCS tree maps to each other explaining what the most significant differences were and why those differences mattered to them. They also presented the rankings and discussed the scatter plots with the group.

As CCOs presented their tree maps, other CCOs asked questions and shared their opinions, as well as reflected on how the information could also be relevant for their communities. Following the presentations, the facilitator encouraged them to see patterns of similarities and differences. She asked them to consider how these findings could inform their work going forward in relation to: creating community action plans, which they are currently in the process of designing; SIDs that they will facilitate in the newly targeted communities; MIDs that they will facilitate in the current communities and in the newly targeted communities. It is important to note that at the time of this exercise, CCOs had already conducted around 3-4 MIDs for each community.

The discussion covered broader lessons learnt first. Then, the facilitator encouraged the CCOs to reflect on each tree map to capture more specific lessons learnt as well. This exercise resulted in a list of lessons learnt as presented below.

FINDINGS

The HCS tree maps below depict the differences that were selected by CCOs. The text in black describes the most significant difference. The text in red explains why the difference matters to CCOs' work. The boxes colored green are the ones that have been selected as representing the groups more likely to contribute to building their community.

ZUBAIR

The HCS tree map below reflects the views of the Zubair CCO (Abbas). The Erbil CCO (Snoor) supported him in reflecting on the differences and why they mattered.

Key findings from the HCS tree map below include:

1. The first four most significant differences selected were all related to which groups helped Abbas conduct a problem analysis/produce the systematic conflict analysis and sense-check his analysis.[2] This likely reflects Abbas' understanding that the main objective of conducting the SIDs is to identify drivers of conflict in the community.
2. From all the groups, the 'elites'[3] (i.e., prominent individuals in the community including, lawyers, teachers, Mukhtars, media personnel, writers and activists) provided Abbas with the knowledge he needed to analyze the conflict drivers and helped him in sense-checking the analysis following the SIDs. Abbas found that they were able to provide that information because they had better connections to local authorities.
3. In comparison with the volunteers, the activists provided Abbas with better information from his perspective, because they are generally more systematic in their work and in their thought processes. Volunteers, on the other hand, need guidance and are less analytical.
4. Abbas saw that SIDs with Afro-Iraqis and residents of informal settlements were less fruitful because they had less information to share about the community as a whole and were focused on their own issues, and generally had more limited knowledge. There was also a discussion about the extent that Afro-Iraqis feel that they belong to the community.
5. As apparent by the rankings and the scatter plot below (Exhibit 4, page 11), there is a direct positive correlation between groups that Abbas thinks are likely to contribute to building their community and their positive attitudes towards the usefulness of the SIDs and hope for creating change.

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[2] CCOs were tasked by the project to produce a systematic conflict analysis map for each community they work with. They often refer to this process as 'problem analysis' phase of the project. The conflict factors in each map are based on factors that participants of SIDs have highlighted. They were then tasked with sense-checking these maps and their analysis with selected group representatives during the MIDs.
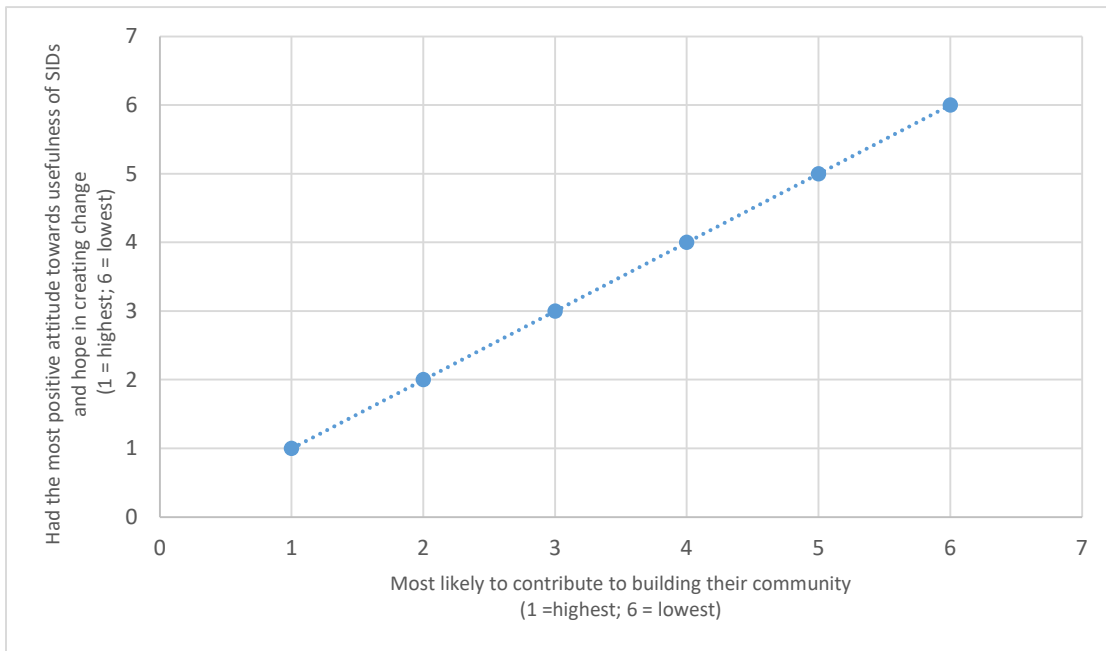[3] This group is referred to in older project documents as 'community representatives', but they are now referred to as 'elites'.

EXHIBIT 3. ZUBAIR HCS TREE MAP

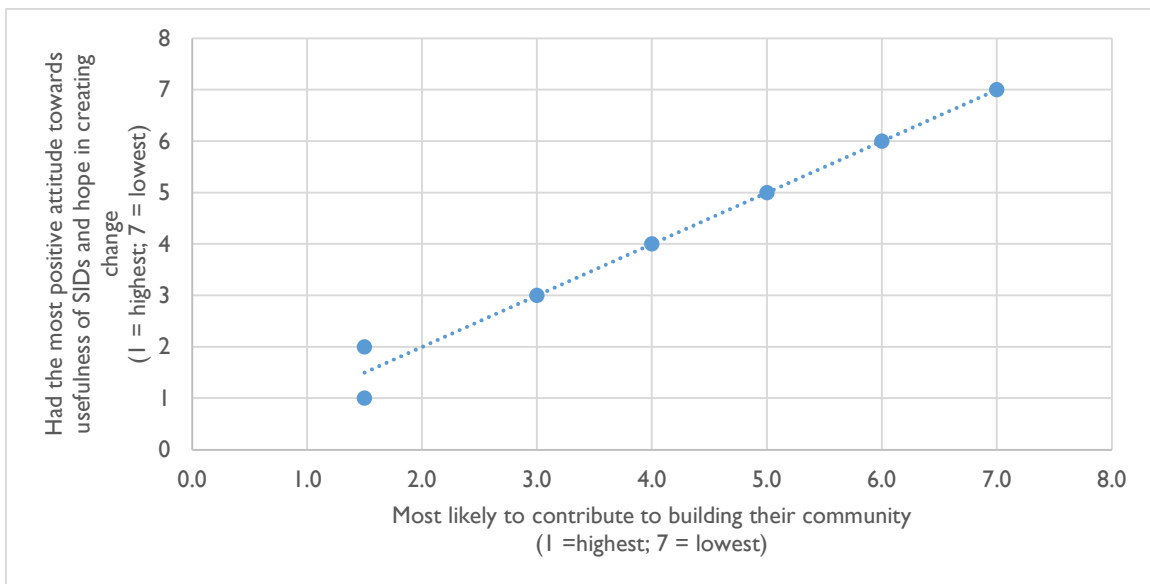| Zubair				SID groups chosen for HCS	Most likely to contribute to building their community	Most positive attitude
Selected groups that attended SIDs in Zubair	Have knowledge about community context and problems because they are from community. The information they provide is more useful for the 'problem analysis' phase of the project.	Participants in SIDs from these groups included females and males. These groups helped CCOs analyze the problems better because they provided different perspectives and a gender lens.	Have better knowledge about problems and solutions because of their connections to local authorities. This group is more useful to help CCO in sense-checking the conflict analysis map that CCOs are creating.	Elites	1	1
			The knowledge they have is more specific to their areas of work and they need support because they have limited connections to authorities.	More systematic in their thinking and the information/analysis they provided in dialogues because they're more systematic in their work. This group can provide more accurate information about problems and solutions and can help project with implementation because of their experience and resources.	Activists	2	2
				More random in their thinking because in their volunteer work they are more responsive to guidance and less analytical.	Volunteers	3	3
		Participants in SIDs were females only.		Women	4	4
	Have limited knowledge about community because they're from outside of the community or are focused on minority-specific issues.	Feel discriminated against. Project needs take into consideration this information and target them in a sensitive, tailored way to create social cohesion/inclusion.		Afro-Iraqis	5	5
		Feel they do not belong to the community.		Residents of informal settlements	6	6

EXHIBIT 4. ZUBAIR SCATTER PLOT

BAHARKA

The HCS tree map below reflects the views of the Erbil CCO (Snoor). The Zubair CCO (Abbas) supported her in reflecting on the differences and why they mattered.

Key findings from the HCS map above include:

1. Similar to Abbas, the first two most significant differences selected by Snoor were related to which groups provided her with information useful for creating a systematic conflict analysis map.
2. The four other differences selected were in relation to how various groups can contribute to building their community and how they would play different roles in implementing solutions.
3. Host-community youth stood out for Snoor. They have in-depth knowledge about the community problems, have a positive attitude towards the dialogues, and are hopeful about creating change.
4. Some of the government employees that participated in the SIDs have decision-making power and can contribute to building their community, but they are less hopeful in general about change and less motivated to contribute.
5. Snoor views the students as a group that has a key strength for the project: they have the opportunity (by having time) to contribute to change.
6. The IDPs that participated in the SIDs are not representative of their wider group in Snoor's opinion. Those who participated in the SIDs seemed highly motivated to creating change, but Snoor believes that most IDPs feel that they do not belong to their communities and are hence likely to feel less motivated to creating change in their host community. Snoor selected the IDPs that she felt were motivated, for participation in the SIDs.

7. On the other hand, the females who head households feel they belong to the community. Hence, in principle, they should be more willing to contribute to building the community, as opposed to the IDPs. However, these women have numerous commitments and responsibilities that would prevent them from contributing to building their community and are less motivated.

8. PWDs are the most vulnerable group. More importantly, they feel that they are 'useless'. They did not speak much during the SIDs. The family members that accompanied them spoke on their behalf. Both PWDs and their family members feel that they cannot contribute to building their communities and that they need support. Snoor believes that everyone can contribute and that the project could work with them to encourage them to contribute and not feel useless.

9. Similar to Abbas' analysis for the Zubair groups, Snoor's rankings translated to a direct positive correlation between who is likely to contribute to building their community and who had a more positive attitude towards the usefulness of the dialogues and hope in creating change (Exhibit 5, below).

EXHIBIT 5. BAHARKA SCATTER PLOT

X-axis: Most likely to contribute to building their community (1 = highest; 7 = lowest)

Y-axis: Had the most positive attitude towards usefulness of SIDs and hope in creating change (1 = highest; 7 = lowest)

Baharka				SID groups chosen for HCS	Most likely to contribute to building their community	Most positive attitude
Selected groups that attended SIDs in Baharka	Have information about community context. These groups can help analyze the problem and provide solutions for the project more than the other group.	Focused on problems facing the whole community (inclusive of male and female). Information provided by this group can lead to a better analysis because they are not neglecting females/a segment of society.	Want to contribute to building their community, have a positive attitude about dialogues, and are hopeful about change. This group can play a more active role in project implementation/follow-up/continuity of solutions.	Host community youth	1,5	1
			Are not motivated to support community despite having decision-making power. This group would play a more passive role because they are less hopeful about change in Iraq and have less incentives to participate in project. One reason for that is that they have fixed salaries and tasks as Gov. employees and might not want the additional work or value it. Another reason is that they have negative experiences (i.e., have not seen many successful initiatives and/or have seen the complexity of the problem).	Gov. employees	1,5	2
		Focused on problems specific to their group as men.		Business owners	3	3
	Have limited knowledge and needed encouragement to share during SIDs.	Do not feel useless but feel vulnerable (i.e., do not have their basic rights, e.g., speaking up about their needs.)	Have more opportunities to contribute to building community because they have more time/less commitments. Because they have opportunities, they can support project in community action plan follow-up, versus the other group that does not have the opportunity or willingness to do this.	Students	4	4
			Have limited opportunities (time/resources) to building their communities. — Feel they do not belong to the community	IDPs (only male)	5	5
			Feel they belong to community Theoretically, they can contribute to creating more sustainable change because they belong to the community. CCO needs this knowledge to see how project can target them in different ways.	Female heads of households	6	6
		Feel useless and can't contribute to building communities; feel they need to receive, rather than give help. This difference means that the project needs to target this group in a different way by building their capacity or encouraging them to feel that they can contribute to the dialogues. Project must be inclusive.		Persons with disabilities	7	7

NINEWA

The HCS tree below reflects the agreed, joint views of CCOs Saja and Roua. They have both worked in the three targeted communities in Ninewa. However, Saja conducted all the SIDs and Roua joined the project more recently and has been more involved in the MIDs. They are both very knowledgeable about the three communities and discussed the differences and why they matter at length before taking a joint decision.

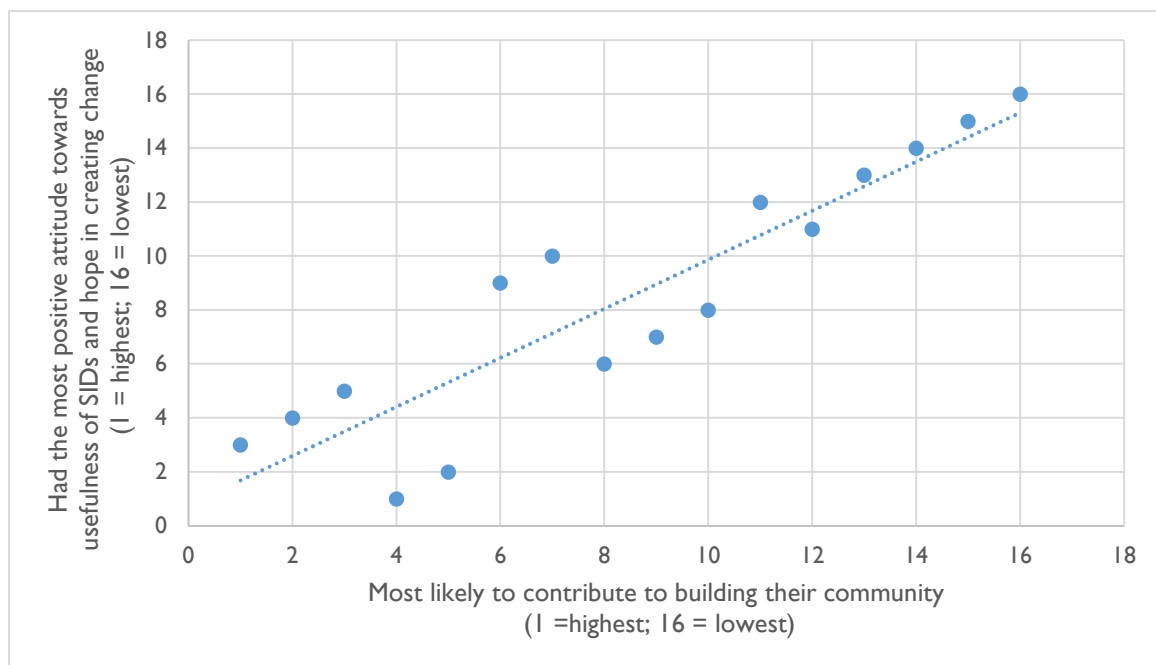Key findings from the HCS tree map below include:

1. Similar to the two other CCOs, Saja and Roua selected the first most significant difference in relation to which groups helped them create the systematic conflict analysis map.
2. Compared to Snoor and Abbas, Saja and Roua selected most (nine) other differences based on how those differences translated to: different types of solutions; different approaches required by the project; and which solutions the project can or cannot implement. For example:
   - In two instances, early in the exercise, they said the differences they selected mattered because solutions proposed _or implied_ by one group would entail a government-led approach while those for the other set of groups would entail a community-led approach. Saja and Roua saw that government-led solutions are harder for the project to implement.
   - They also saw that solutions related to improving management and administrative processes that were supported by political parties were harder for the project to tackle.
   In their opinion, the project can work directly with influential groups, because they have the agency to create change. On the other hand, groups that are less powerful require a more indirect approach, because they might not have the necessary capabilities or opportunists to create change. Therefore, solutions are needed that target them indirectly and create change by influencing those around them.
   Solutions that address social norms might also address problems associated with religious affiliations, but not the other way around. This is because many social norms are based on religious beliefs and practices.
   - Project cannot target Telskuf IDPs directly, because they live outside of the target area for the project, but the project can target them indirectly by working with other groups that play a role in the issues facing IDPs.
3. In three instances, the difference they selected mattered because it determined their selection of participants from each group to join the MIDs. In two of those instances, the difference was between conservative and non-conservative group members. Conservative men and conservative women would not accept to join MIDs with the other gender. This posed a challenge to CCOs because rather than selecting representatives from each group based on the agreed criteria (e.g., has leadership potential, etc.), they had to select the less conservative members of the SIDs who would accept to join the MIDs. In another instance, community members would not agree to be part of a discussion with the Mukhtars because they see that they are part of the problem.

4. In two other instances, the differences they selected related to difficulties in achieving social cohesion:
   - They compared how Yazidis feel compared to Christians in Ninewa. While both groups suffered and are traumatized because of how they were targeted by ISIS, CCOs explained that Yazidis suffered more and are more traumatized. They are thus less willing to forgive the Muslim community and accept them. These deep grievances make it harder to enhance social cohesion.
   - CCOs also found that it is harder to enhance social cohesion when groups feel they do not belong to the community or have no loyalty for the community. This was the case when they compared the Christians that returned to Mosul and now live there, versus the Christian students who do not live in Mosul, but only complete their studies at the University of Mosul.
5. Saja and Roua often emphasized at multiple times during the exercise that the differences they selected are important because they help them understand the root causes of the problems facing these different groups.
6. The scatter plot showed a positive correlation, but it was not as strong as the ones recorded for Zubair and Baharka groups. The correlation was particularly strong for the groups that had both the least positive attitudes towards the usefulness of the dialogues and were thought to be the least likely to contribute to building their communities. Interestingly, all five female-only groups had higher scores for positive attitudes compared to their scores for 'likely to contribute to building their community based on the agency they have'. Conversely, the two male-only groups scored higher on 'likely to contribute to building their community based on having agency' compared to their scores for positive attitudes towards usefulness of dialogues and hope for creating change. CCOs think that the rankings might be more accurate if exercise is conducted for each community separately.

EXHIBIT 7. NINEWA SCATTER PLOT

EXHIBIT 8. NINEWA HCS TREE MAP

Ninewa				SID groups chosen for HCS	Most likely to contribute to building their community	Most positive attitude
Selected groups that attended SIDs in Batnaya, Old City Mosul, and The University of Mosul	More focused on identifying solutions and are more hopeful (i.e., have a more positive perspective).	Solutions proposed by groups are mostly government-led solutions.	Solutions proposed were focused on maintaining the Maslawi identity and bringing back the Mosul markets. Working on these solutions would lead to community cohesion and bring back Maslawis to the area.	Old Market Traders in Old City	1	3
			Solutions proposed were focused on improving management processes. Working on these solutions would lead to better cohesion between community and authorities. → Management processes/decisions that require attention are not directly made based on political affiliations of authority figures.	Educated and employed in Old City	2	4
			Solutions proposed were focused on improving management processes. Working on these solutions would lead to better cohesion between community and authorities. → Management processes/decisions that require attention are currently made based on political affiliations of authority figures. Difficult for project to work on these solutions because of the political complexities.	University professors at University of Mosul	3	5
		Solutions proposed by groups are mostly community-led solutions. Project can work more with this group because their solutions link more directly to community cohesion and because the project has limitations on working with government.	Group members are decision makers and more influential. Project can work directly with decision makers to create change, addressing their own problems.	Women in Batnaya	4	1
			Group members have weaker influence. Project must work with other groups to create change for the less influential groups like this.	Female Maslawi students	5	2

	More focused on identifying problems and have a more negative perspective because they think solutions are too complex. This group is more beneficial for CCOs in terms of analyzing conflict drivers.	Dialogues focused more on lack of trust amongst different community groups within Ninewa. Leads to community-led solutions.	Dialogues focused on problems associated with cultural and social norms. Helps identify root cause of problems and scope of problem and scope of solution (i.e., wider than religion).	Group members are male.	Male members had less conservative attitudes towards females.	Male Youth in Batnaya	6	9
					Male members had more conservative attitudes towards females. CCOs had to choose the less conservative members who accepted to join the MIDs with females, rather than selecting the group representatives based on other criteria.	Male students from rural areas at the University of Mosul	7	10
				Group members are female. Males and females do not get along; males see that females have more opportunities (respect, jobs, services, etc.); females see that males are the problem.	These younger women have simpler problems from the perspective of CCOs (e.g., problems are related to their freedoms). — Less conservative; can accept discussions with men.	Female youth in Batnaya	8	6
					These younger women have simpler problems from the perspective of CCOs (e.g., problems are related to their freedoms). — More conservative; cannot accept discussions with men. Do not accept to be with men in MIDs which is challenging for project because selection for MIDs is based on who would accept rather than other criteria.	Female Shabak students at the University of Mosul	9	7
					These women have bigger problems from the perspective of CCOs (e.g., they are not accepted by the community; older/divorced/widowed). Required solutions from perspective of CCOs are harder and more complex.	Women (divorced or widowed) in the Old City of Mosul	10	8
			Dialogues focused on problems associated with religion. Helps identify root cause of	More willing to forgive and accept the wider community.	Feel belonging towards Mosul.	Christian returnees to the Old City of Mosul	11	12

		problems and scope of problem and scope of solution (narrower than social norms).		They lack trust and loyalty towards Mosul. Creates difficulty for them to integrate and to communicate with rest of the community (i.e., harder to achieve community cohesion).	Christian students at the University of Mosul	12	11
				More traumatized and less willing to accept the wider community. Makes it more difficult to achieve community cohesion; require a more sensitive approach by CCOs and project.	Yazidis at the University of Mosul	13	13
		Dialogues focused more on lack of trust between the community and the government. Leads to government-led solutions, which are harder for the project to target because of limited resources and they're more complex.	Part of the problem from community's perspective.		Mukhtar in the Old City Mosul	14	14
			Groups perceived themselves as victims of government. They have no acceptance for Mukhtar and cannot be in the same discussion group as the Mukhtar, because they see them as part of the problem.	Group members live inside of the community.	Uneducated and unemployed in the Old City Mosul	15	15
				Group members live outside of the community. Project cannot target them directly but can target their issues indirectly by working with other groups.	Telskuf IDPs in Batnaya	16	16

LESSONS LEARNED: CHALLENGES FACING THE CCOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHALLENGE 1: ACTIVITY-LEVEL PRIMARY VERSUS SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

CCOs discussed extensively primary versus secondary objectives of the SIDs and the MIDs. These objectives are narrower than the overall 100 Solutions TO objectives. Specifically, CCOs discussed whether the primary objective of conducting SIDs was:

- For them to identify root drivers of conflict to feed into their in-depth systematic map of conflict drivers.
- To serve as an introductory session which allows them to build trust and rapport with community members.
- That group and community dialogues are considered as a mean for directly enhancing community cohesion, and that the purpose of the SIDs and MIDs is thus to enhance dialogue culture, strengthen skills for conducting dialogues, and create platforms for group and community dialogues.
- To identify opportunities for quick wins/rapid solutions that can be implemented to increase community's trust in the project.

The debate centered around the fact that all of these are important factors. The debate was shaping which one of these was the primary objective and the others secondary objectives, benefits, or not an objective or benefit at all. This arose from several considerations discussed during the HCS exercise. For example, such as the fact that some CCOs felt that two SIDs with each group were not sufficient for an in-depth analysis of drivers of conflict, especially since the first session was virtual for many groups and did not yield an in-depth discussion. However, they had acknowledged that a dialogue is valuable for building rapport even if it was not conclusive, and therefore considered what else may aid rapport-building in less conclusive dialogues.

This was a useful discussion to determine the multifaceted nature of the dialogues. It also highlighted that the CCOs would benefit from the opportunity to discuss this with leadership, or perhaps the task order may consider an alternative approach to dialogues in the next phase.

RECOMMENDATION SET 1
There is a need for the following:

1. **A group discussion involving CCOs and project designers to agree and clarify the *objectives* versus the *benefits* of each activity**, including SIDs, MIDs, systematic conflict analysis, rapid solutions, and longer-term solutions. This kind of clarification will help the CCOs differentiate between the primary objective of dialogues and any additional benefits of value. Similarly, clarity on the scale, budget, and timelines of rapid versus longer-term solutions should be provided. When clarity is not available, it would be beneficial for that to be transparently communicated and discussed with the CCOs. This clarity will help CCOs inform

project design better and would help them manage expectations and communicate clearly with community members.

2. **Considerations for agile activities based on the agreed objectives for each dialogue**. Rather than a fixed structure for dialogues, a more agile approach that allows the CCOs to focus on the objectives and gives them the flexibility to manipulate the design of the dialogues to meet those objectives might yield better results. Dialogues might look different for each community or for each single-identity group. The way dialogues are designed for each community might also change over the lifetime of the project. Illustrative examples of what this could look like (depending on specified objective of a dialogue) from the HCS discussion are below:

   a. If the objective is to identify drivers of conflict from the perspective of different groups within a community, then holding several SIDs within a community might be appropriate. However, CCOs will consider carefully how many participants are needed in each SIDs and will not raise the expectations of the participants in those groups but will clarify the purpose of the SIDs is focused on problem analysis and will not raise their expectations by discussing in detail MIDs and implementing solutions, since they might not be involved in further phases of the project. This relates to the need for managing expectations (for example, discussing MIDs extensively may mean those not selected feel 'not good enough'). In some instances, it might be appropriate for CCOs to conduct smaller group SIDs or individual interviews with members from the community that would be able to provide the drivers of conflict from the different perspectives.

   b. If the objective of a specified MID is to sense-check the systematic conflict analysis map that CCOs produced, then rather than presenting the analysis to a big group of community representatives, CCOs might find it more appropriate to conduct individual or small-group dialogues with those whom have extensive knowledge about the community and have the skills to grasp and contribute to the conflict analysis map (e.g. 'elites' and activists in Zubair; host community youth in Baharka; etc.). In some MIDs, participants asked CCOs to sense-check the map in individual rather than group sessions.

   c. If the objective is to enhance dialogue culture within and amongst groups in a community, then CCOs would consider restructuring the dialogues and focusing on building participants skills to conduct/participate in dialogues. It would also be appropriate to conduct a higher number of dialogues.

   d. If the dialogues are believed to be a means in themselves for enhancing community cohesion, then CCOs might design MIDs that involve different groups of the community that might benefit from hearing the perspectives of each other. For example, if there is tension between male and female youth groups, CCOs might conduct a MID for only those two groups (if it is culturally

acceptable for participants). Likewise, if minorities are neglected in the community, then CCOs might consider a MID that involves a minority group and the more powerful groups within a community. If older women are more empowered than younger women in a community, CCOs might conduct an MID for those two groups to encourage the younger women to learn from and be encouraged by the older women. CCOs would structure each dialogue based on the desired outcomes.

e. If the objective of dialogues is to identify rapid or longer-term solutions, CCOs might focus on several individual and/or smaller group dialogues. They would structure the dialogues based on the strengths of each individual and group, since each could contribute to the solutions in different ways (e.g., by having time, being motivated, having agency, have connections to authorities, having knowledge about other ongoing projects, etc.). If ideas for rapid solutions need to be collected from SIDs, CCOs will carefully not raise expectations of participants, especially those who will not be involved further in the project during MIDs or solution implementation.

f. Overall, CCOs would consider consulting a wide range of community members for understating drivers of conflict and proposing solutions, because CCOs need to hear the views of the various groups in order to analyze the problem adequately. However, CCOs can rely on those who are more knowledgeable (i.e., the experts) when sense-checking the problem analysis. They would then consult those who have agency and opportunists to carefully design and implement feasible solutions[4].

It is important to note that there is nothing that prevents the dialogues from having multiple objectives and benefits. However, discussion and clarity would still be required and flexibility in designing the activities on a rolling basis to meet those objectives and achieve the desired benefits.

3. **A discussion with CCOs about feedback from community members** about their participation in the project and their views on the project would be beneficial. Concerns related to expectations management were raised a few times above. Moreover, a systematic method for collecting feedback from community participants and their recommendations for the project could prove valuable for the project as it becomes increasingly adaptive and agile.

4. **Stakeholder mapping** for community members could prove to be a useful exercise as it will allow CCOs to analyze how the various individuals they have interacted with could contribute to enhancing community cohesion in different ways and how the project can target the various groups in a tailored way.

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[4] Some CCOs mentioned that empowering the most vulnerable might not lead to change. Instead, what is needed is to address the root causes of conflict and instability.

CHALLENGE 2: TIME SPENT ON ANALYZING PROBLEMS IS NOT PROPORTIONATE TO TIME SPENT ANALYZING SOLUTIONS AND NOT PROPORTIONATE TO THE SCALE OF SOLUTIONS THE PROJECT CAN IMPLEMENT

CCOs mentioned they received extensive training on how to complete a systematic conflict analysis map. Moreover, they spent extensive time with community members to discuss drivers of conflict and validate their analysis. However, the process for coming up with solutions has been less structured and less rigorous.

CCOs felt that they have not spent sufficient time on brainstorming and analyzing solutions compared to time they spent on identifying and analyzing the problems.

Also, in relation to expectations management, many of the quick wins that should have happened early in the project, happened late or are yet to happen. A large part of this relates to standard and unavoidable requirements like EMMPs, or USAID requirements for the implementation of the quick wins. However, the long timeline might harm the reputation of the project because participants expected that quick wins would happen faster.

RECOMMENDATION SET 2

In the 'design thinking process'[5] shown below, it seems that the project is performing very well in the 'empathize' phase which entails CCOs gaining a deep understanding of the emotions, ideas and needs of the targeted communities through the dialogues and engagements they have with the community members. The project is also rigorous in its approach for the 'define' phase, as evident in the CCOs' extensive work on analyzing the drivers of conflict and defining the root problems hindering community cohesion in the targeted communities. However, based on information shared by CCOs within the parameters of HCS[6], the project seems to be performing less well in the 'ideation' phase. This phase entails different approaches for brainstorming solutions and prioritizing them, such that selected ideas progress to becoming 'prototypes' by investing more time designing them before they are then 'pilot tested'.
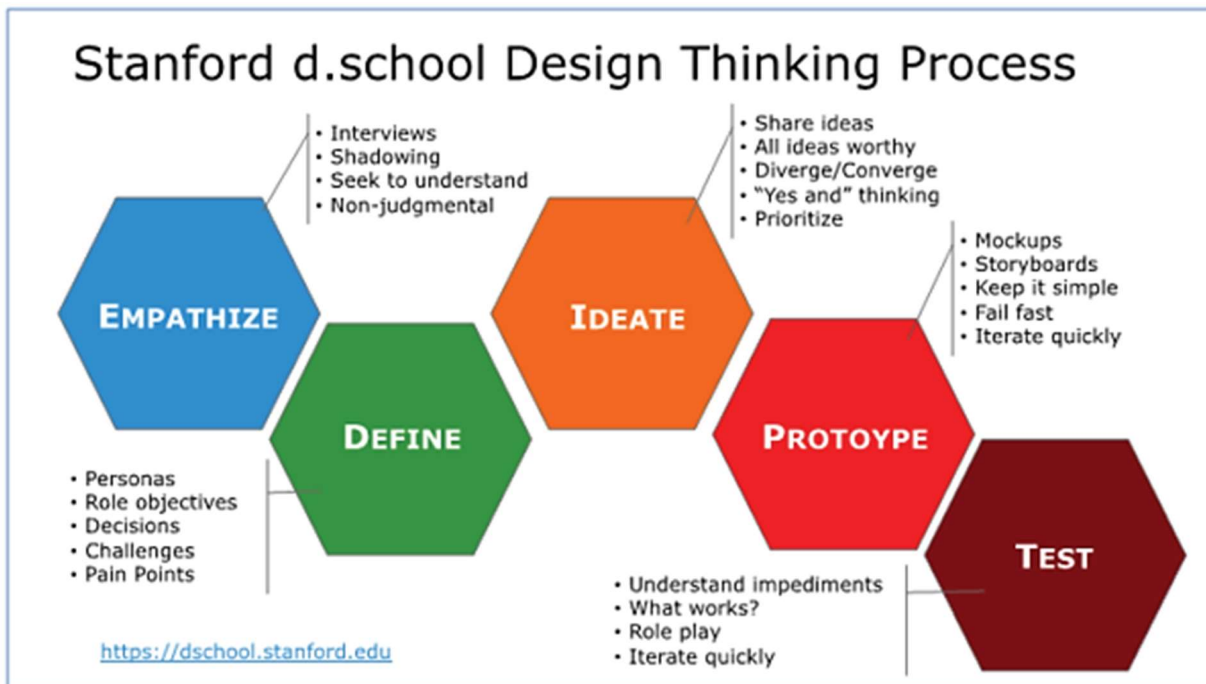
Nonetheless, it is advisable for STTAs to develop workshops with CCOs to collectively design more rigorous processes and tools for brainstorming solutions.

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[5] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335391703_Visual_Learning_--_A_Year_After_Visual_Learning_Lab_Papers_ed_by_Andras_Benedek_and_Kristof_Nyiri

[6] This is an observation made by the HCS facilitator, but it is not based on sufficient information nor analysis (e.g., HCS facilitator did not discuss this issue with STTAs nor the management team).

EXHIBIT 9. DESIGN THINKING PROCESS MAP

Stanford d.school Design Thinking Process

EMPATHIZE
- Interviews
- Shadowing
- Seek to understand
- Non-judgmental

DEFINE
- Personas
- Role objectives
- Decisions
- Challenges
- Pain Points

IDEATE
- Share ideas
- All ideas worthy
- Diverge/Converge
- "Yes and" thinking
- Prioritize

PROTOYPE
- Mockups
- Storyboards
- Keep it simple
- Fail fast
- Iterate quickly

TEST
- Understand impediments
- What works?
- Role play
- Iterate quickly

https://dschool.stanford.edu

CHALLENGE 3: CCOS FIND SOME PROPOSED SOLUTIONS DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT
Based on Ninewa's HCS tree map, CCOs feel that government-led solutions are harder for the project to implement.

RECOMMENDATION SET 3
When community members suggest government-led solutions, there are two potential options (or a combination of both):

1. Collect these proposed solutions and systematically feed them to other DCEO teams that can further analyze and consider these solutions (or with other programs in Iraq who work directly with government officials). This will need to be accompanied by careful expectations management by CCOs to avoid raising expectations of community members that the project can address these problems.
2. CCOs need to learn and practice a method for facilitating the discussions that are focused on solutions. For example, they can learn how to guide participants to consider addressing the same problems through community-led solutions or brainstorm solutions that are feasible for the project by providing them with specific criteria for what the project can and cannot implement. This idea further highlights and complements Recommendation Set 2 above.

As mentioned earlier in the section, if brainstorming solutions is beneficial in its own right, regardless of what the project can or cannot implement, that should be made clear to the CCOs in order for them to facilitate the dialogues accordingly and

encourage participants to find other means of implementing solutions that the project cannot implement.

ADDITIONAL LESSONS LEARNED EXTRACTED BY CCOS

1. There are some groups that could be used in solution implementation, but the process for implementing solutions is not in the hands of the CCOs. CCOs are not in contact with those implementing and do not play a role in feeding them information and utilizing the community representatives that could contribute to the implementation (for example, youth who may want to volunteer and help the painting of a school). There seems to be a gap between those two phases of the project.

2. Engagement with individuals prior to conducting SIDs and over the course of different project phases is beneficial and helps the CCOs address any of their individual concerns and encourages them to participate.

3. CCOs might avoid problematic groups that will hinder project progress. Abbas gave the example of religious leaders and tribal leaders that 'are like a sword with two edges'. On one hand, they have power to contribute to project objectives, but on the other hand they also have power to hinder progress.

LESSONS LEARNED REGARDING HCS DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Sometimes the most significant difference would encompass more than one main concept. In most instances, the HCS facilitator pushed slightly for them to select one concept rather than multiple concepts, but they often made associations and struggled to narrow it down. In those instances, the facilitator recorded the differences as were mentioned, making any associations between multiple ideas explicit.

2. Longer times should be booked for workshops to allow participants to take the time they need to think and discuss their findings. Some workshops might be shorter than others. This depends on personalities of participants. CCOs might get frustrated if they are told workshops would take three hours but take five instead, so it is preferable to dedicate the whole day for the workshop, knowing that they can finish early.

3. The purpose of the HCS exercise was not clear to the CCOs at first. Some struggled with the idea of retrospective learning and how it could lead to improvements in project design and implementation going forward. They also questioned how the HCS exercise fits with the theory of change and the systematic conflict analysis. However, the purpose and benefits of the exercise became clear in the lessons learned workshop when CCOs presented their tree maps, reflected on similarities and differences, and actively extracted lessons learnt. This workshop was essential, because CCOs needed the additional reflection time in a separate day after they have conducted the exercise.

4. The HCS exercise can be conducted with each CCO individually. However, having two CCOs in a single HCS exercise is probably the ideal number. Although it takes longer to have two CCOs conduct the exercise together, the advantage is that they bounce their ideas off each other and challenge each other. The conversations they had in this HCS exercise are beneficial in their own right (without being documented

in this report or relayed to others on the project). These discussions gave them time to critically think and deeply reflect on various aspects of their work.

5. It is preferable for the HCS exercise to cover one community at a time (e.g., CCOs should conduct a separate HCS exercise for cases in Batnaya, University of Mosul, and Old City Mosul separately). While they were grouped for ease of facilitation and in consideration of time, separation might yield more accurate results, especially when cases are ranked.

6. It would be interesting to compare how ranking scores would differ if: a) CCOs are given a list of cases and asked to rank them first based on a specific criteria; b) CCOs are asked to select each branch in the HCS tree map based on their answer to a binary question (as they have done above).

7. If possible, the facilitator should have a day after each workshop for report writing or should schedule workshops in the afternoon to spend the daytime writing.

FEEDBACK FROM CCOS ON HCS

The CCOs would like a similar HCS exercise after completing each phase of the project. Ideally, they would have benefited more from this exercise if it was completed after the SIDs and before the MIDs. The next HCS iteration should be scheduled for after the MIDs have been completed and the next phase is about to start.

When asked: 'From 0-10, how beneficial did you find the HCS exercise?'

- Snoor: 6
- Abbas: 7[7]
- Saja:7
- Roua: 9.5

They mentioned that the exercise helped them think systematically and produced evidence to guide their future work. It served as a tool to inform their work. Some CCOs suggested including the STTAs in this exercise in the future since they are heavily involved in how the activities are designed and have also attended multiple SIDs and MIDs. Saja and Snoor also recommended that the HCS exercise should be done for each community in Ninewa separately.

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[7] But during the MSC exercise the next day, Abbas wanted to correct the score to a higher one.

ANNEX A. SINGLE-IDENTITY COMMUNITY GROUPS

BAHARKA

Social Group	Description
Host community youth	Baharka males and females Active graduated youths.
Female headed household	Host community female head of households, employees, and business owners.
Business owner	Host community male business owners\small and moderate business.
People with disability	Diverse People with physical disability kinds from host community of Baharka.
Unemployed youth	Jobless Educated Youths from 18 to 35 years old.
Volunteers	Graduated youths, working for free to get experience and future work opportunity
Governmental employees	Educated adults from host community are working in Governmental sector.
IDPs	Internally displaced people are living in Baharka camp and center of Baharka
Refugees	Displaced from Syria-Iran, male & female educated and non-educated adults
Students	High school and university students are from Baharka.

ZUBAIR

Social Group	Description
Educated (Male & Female Youth)	Zubair youth - High school and above.
Afro-Iraqi	Employees, Media, Humanitarian workers, Retired, activists
Volunteers	Mixed (Male and female), activists, housewife, employees, private sector, High school and above.
Zubair Women	Zubair female, Activists, Employee, Educational supervisor, Housewife, Primary and High school.
Activists	NGOs such as Durer Al Iraq foundation, Tatweer Org, Marbid volunteers' group, member from labors union, Development and building youth assembly and PAO Org.
Mukhtars	Representatives of neighborhoods, High school and above.
Informal settlement residents	Labors, taxi drivers, unemployed.
Farmers	Owners of farms in Zubair
Community representatives	Lawyer, teacher, notable, Mukhtar, Media, Writer Activist

BATNAYA

Social Group	Description

Educated - Male & Female Youth	Batnaya Returnees and Telskuf IDPs- High school and above.
Female Youth	Batnaya female (Returnees) with Primary and High school education level.
Batnaya Women	Employed, Unemployed and Householders.
Male Youth	Batnaya male (Returnees) with High School education level and above.
Telskuf IDPs	IDPs in Telskuf with Primary and High school Education level
Skilled Youth	i.e., Farmers, electricians, blacksmiths, and bakers.
Batnaya Male	Employed & Unemployed.
Batnaya Committee	Representatives of Batnaya community.

MOSUL OLD CITY

Social Group	Description
Uneducated and Unemployed	Who loss the work and didn't complete the education- from Mosul Old City and live there.
Educated and Employed	Teachers, school directors and government employees - live and work in Old City.
Women	(Householders, Divorced, Widows) from Mosul Old City and live there.
Youth Female	High School, Institute and University
Volunteers Team	Volunteers from the old city doing community initiatives there.
NGOs Staff	Local organizations that work in Old City and have centers there.
Old Market Traders	Traders who have business and shops in the old markets.
Community Leaders	Community representatives in the Old City, who are known and trusted and liked by the local community and who contribute to solving conflict/problems. These were the first people to come back to the location i.e., Lead Imam, Founder of a Volunteers Group who distribute aid, Head of a known family of returnees, a popular / known owner of property in the Old City, School principal, etc.
Mosul Council- Social and Service مجلس الموصل	A council in Mosul made up of those original owners of a good number of properties in Mosul and who are trying to preserve the traditions and Identity of the space. The Council provides support on social issues and community needs especially when it comes to property related conflict. They are perceived to be somehow exclusively supporting Mosul original dwellers which makes them someone disliked by non-Mosul original dwellers
Mosul Family Council مجلس اسر و عوائل الموصل	A council that includes representatives from Mosul families (Only Urban), working on social issues.
Mukhtar	Old City Mukhtar
Christians Returnees	Christians who return to old city.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MOSUL

Social Group	Description
Female Shabak Students	From different colleges

Male Shabak Students	From different colleges
Maslawi Male Students	Maslawi Students from different colleges
Maslawi Female Students	Maslawi Students from different colleges
Yazidi Students (Male & Female)	From different colleges
Christian Students (Male & Female)	From different colleges
Male Rural Students	Male students from rural places in Mosul
Female Rural Students	Female students from rural places in Mosul
Graduate Students (Male & Female)	Master & PhD. students
University Staff (Academic, and dept directors) (Male & Female)	Employees from different departments (Student activities dept, Quality Assurance dept, and Registration & Students affairs department, etc.)
University Professors (Male & Female)	Associate professors, Assistant professors, and Lecturers from different colleges

ANNEX B. HCS CARD TEMPLATE

[Unique card No.]

[Group Name]
[Community]
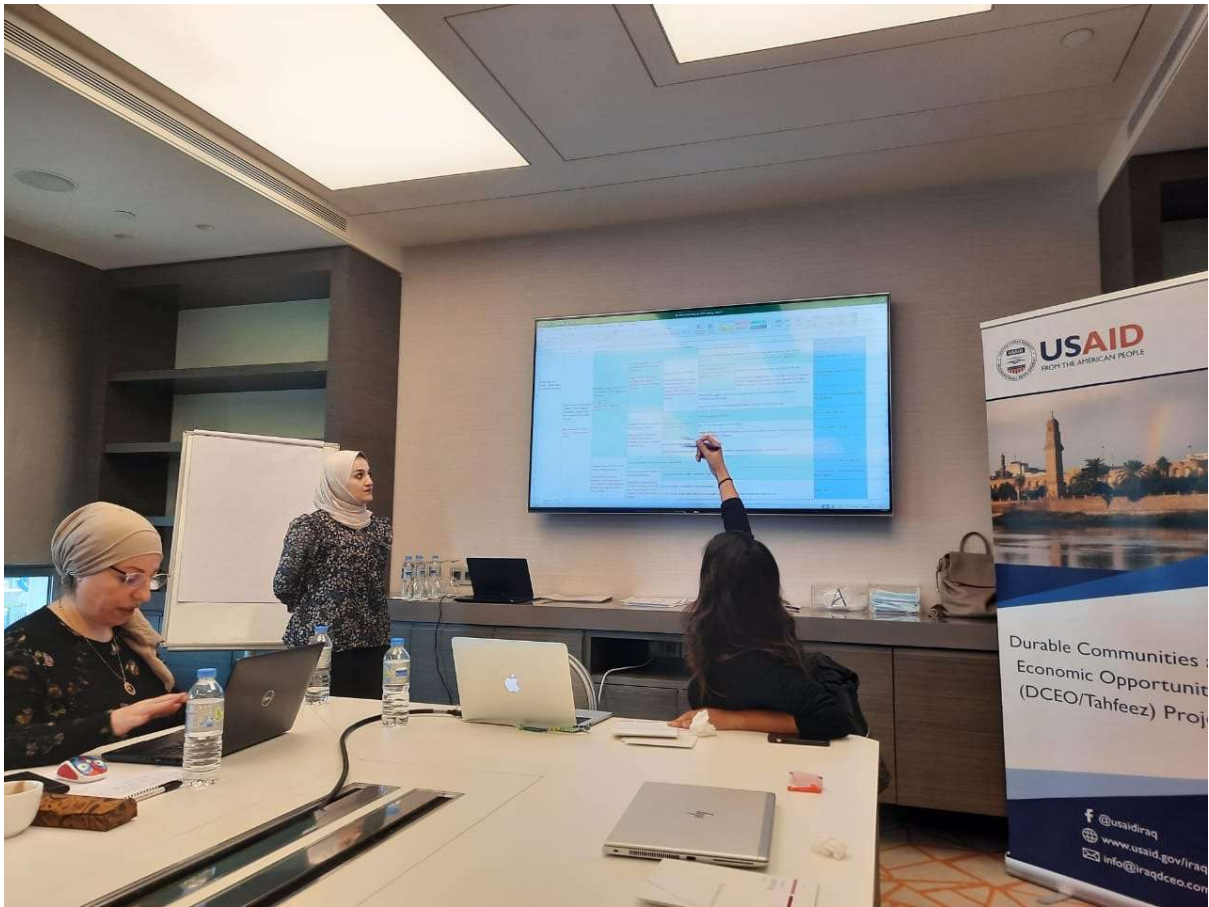[1-3 sentences describing the characteristics of the group.]
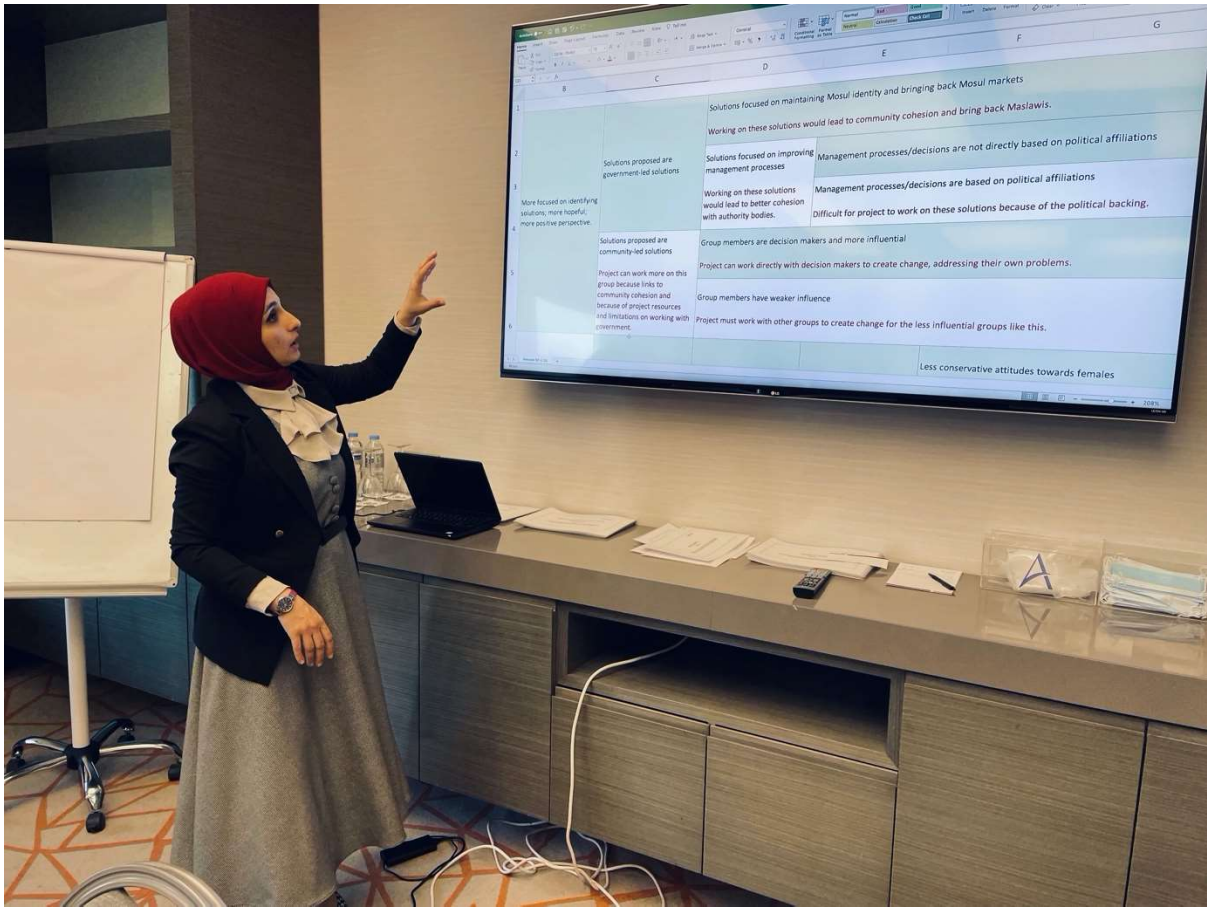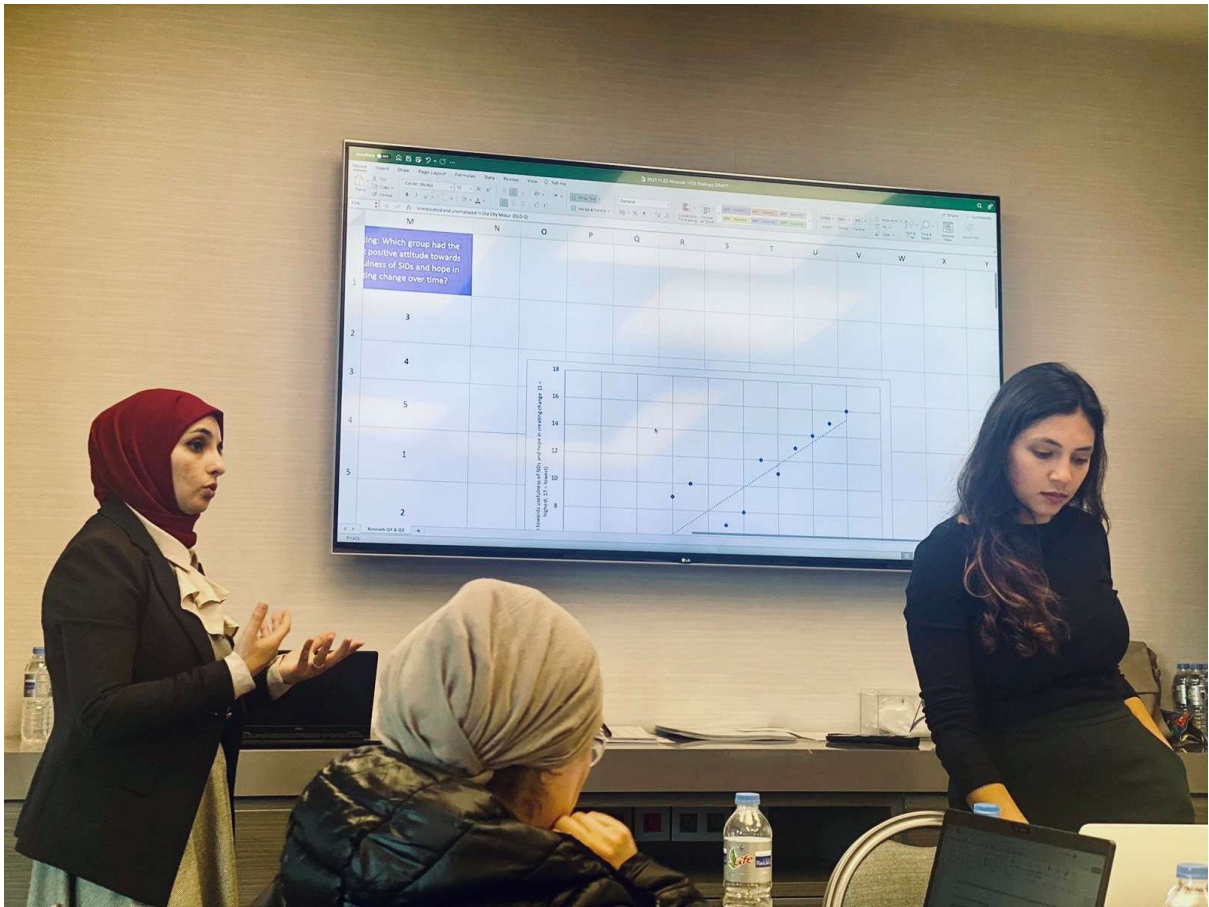
ANNEX C. PICTURES FROM THE WORKSHOPS