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Excerpt: Message from Princess Lamia AlSaud, UN-Habitat Goodwill Ambassador for Arab States



“International Women’s Day: In order for us to have a more sustainable future, we must first empower women to enable them to become positive change-makers in society.”

As the world heals from the pandemic, global economic recovery efforts have brought to life how the most vulnerable individuals in society continue to be left behind. Women and children make up the majority of the world’s poorest and are, as a result, increasingly recognized as more vulnerable to climate change impacts than men are. In order for our recovery plans to develop a more resilient and equal world, it is crucial that women become just as involved in the collective action leading to a more sustainable world as men are. To do this, we must recognize the crucial role that women can play in developing a sustainable economy and society, empowering them as change-makers.

We are helping to provide safe and secure housing and job opportunities in Iraq and Yemen, where many women and youth have been left displaced as the result of recent conflicts. These new communities are being built with equality in mind as we create a strong foundation that will allow a sustainable future to flourish. This is done partly through assuring good housing and access to basic services, such as the rehabilitation of sixty damaged houses in Iraq and connecting 218 houses to the water network.

The challenges we see across the world, both in developed and developing nations, have increased drastically in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the response has shown our ability to bring together communities and act to change.

However, to reach our ability and goals for sustainable development, we must understand its close ties with gender equality and the need to tackle both jointly.

Those who are among the most vulnerable and marginalized experience the deepest impacts, and their involvement in decision-making and engagement is pivotal to creating an enduring recovery plan that balances the disparities seen in current economic security efforts which lack of their contribution.

It is through Alwaleed Philanthropies and UN-Habitat’s work that we are contributing to bridging this gap and empowering women and youth to build a sustainable future.

EU visit to Mosul showcases progress in rehabilitation of houses and flood protection initiative in Matahin

UN-Habitat’s Mosul team welcomed European Union’s delegation from Baghdad for a site visit to the Matahin neighbourhood where we have completed the rehabilitation of 37 conflict-affected houses and a critical flood protection intervention in partnership with the Ninewa Sewage Directorate that will improve the living conditions of some 3,000 inhabitants.



Vocational Training equip locals in Tel Afar with better livelihood opportunities

As a part of the project "Support for Urban Recovery and Peacebuilding in Western Ninewa" project funded by the European Union, UN-Habitat in partnership with the Caritas Czech Republic, completed vocational training sessions for 412 participants (251 Males & 161 Females) in Tel Afar. Also, under the same project, UN-Habitat, in partnership with Al-Hub Wa Al-Salam Iraqi Global Organization, is conducting a COVID-19 awareness campaign targeting 10,000 people in Tel Afar.

Completion of 95 housing units in Sinjar for vulnerable households returning to Sinjar

UN-Habitat has recently completed the reconstruction of 95 housing units in Sinjar under the project titled "Support to Reconstruction and Peacebuilding of Liberated Cities in Iraq – Phase III" funded by the Government of Japan. The original houses were fully destroyed during the war against ISIL. Female and male graduates of vocational training under the same project have been engaged in some of the construction works, including painting and electricity wiring. Approximately 1,100 beneficiaries have been handed the keys to their new homes so that they can settle back in their area of origin.



Newly rehabilitated Al Shuhada Kindergarten to welcome 400 children in Telafar

Marking the conclusion of three months of intense rehabilitation works, on 31 March local authorities jointly cut the inauguration ribbon to the renovated Al Shuhada Kindergarten in Tel Afar. During ISIL's (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) occupation, the building had been hit by a rocket that perforated its roof and torched most of its interior spaces. The project will allow over 400 children to return to their newly equipped classes from April.



UN-Habitat building Mudhifs in Mesopotamian Marshes to support tourism

The construction of two large traditional reed structures near the entrances to the Eastern Hammar and Hawizeh marshes, in Basra and Maysan governorates respectively. The buildings will be equipped to serve as Orientation Centres for tourists, along with other services for local communities.



UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, is the focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system and is mandated by the UN General Assembly (beginning in 1975) to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. Its mandate is further derived from other internationally agreed upon development goals, including SDG11 of the Sustainable Development Goal, a goal dedicated for urban development, and the New Urban Agenda, an action-oriented document signed by member states which sets global standards of achieving SDG11. UN-Habitat has been active in Iraq since 1996.