

In this newsletter, we highlight key achievements from the last months of 2023, drawing special attention to how the projects under development, donors, and partners are committed and aligned with UN-Habitat's mandate and Iraq's development path.



HONOURABLE MENTION

Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Isaczai, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, addressed the UN-Habitat Executive Board meeting in November 2023, emphasising UN-Habitat Iraq's contribution and performance within the UN Country Team. His message was screened during the meeting opening when he expressed:

"UN-Habitat is leading the UN reform at the country level, and its leadership in urban recovery is an invaluable asset to the UN family. I have full confidence in its continued success in contributing to our shared UNCT goals in the implementation of SDGs."

The UN-Habitat Iraq Programme team appreciates these words and is committed to maintaining exemplary work in 2024.

URBAN REGENERATION

In Anbar and Ninewa Governorates, UN-Habitat progressed with the construction of two Women's Protection Centres and subsequently handed over two Excellence Health Care Centres for Families, fully rehabilitated and expanded. These initiatives were carried out under the UNFPA-led project titled "Restoring Women, Youth, and Health Services in Iraq," funded by the Embassy of France and the British Embassy in Iraq.

Moreover, with the support of the Government of Japan, the Al-Til Co-education School in Al-Til village, Solagh, Sinjar, has been rehabilitated, resuming activities and welcoming 70 students.



Celebrating the 10-year completion of the Global Public Space Programme, the UN-Habitat headquarters' report highlighted accomplishments in Iraq, including the rehabilitation of Al Yarmouk Park in Mosul and Al-Shuhada Garden and Al-Buari in Telafar, made possible with the support of the European Union.

REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF HOUSES

The rehabilitation of 153 houses in the most underserved villages in Sinjar (Old Tel Banat, Mam Elias, Nisryiah, and Shihabyiah) started in the last 3 months of 2023, under the KOICA-funded project. Throughout the year, UN-Habitat initiated the rehabilitation of 200 houses, completing 47 of them in Jafriyah and Old Tel Qasab in Sinjar.

Additionally, in Sinjar, specifically in Solagh village, 50 damaged houses were rehabilitated under the Government of Japan-funded project. Salwa Sabri Khalaf and her family benefited from the project and managed to return to their origins after years of displacement.



FORMALIZING HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS IN IRAQ

UN-Habitat Iraq engaged experts to implement the legal decree to formalize the land rights of the Yazidi minority. The initiative involves training government counterparts and enhancing Iraq's capacity to manage land governance, ensuring lasting security of tenure for all Iraqis.

With the support of the Government of The Netherlands through LAND-at-Scale, the project titled "Policy Dialogue on Legislative Reform to Improve Land Governance and Secure Tenure Rights" has started. It aims to enhance the security of tenure by supporting the registration and resolution of Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) rights claims in Sinjar. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen the Government of Iraq's land management system through policy dialogues to reform the existing legal framework.



SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Funded by the Government of Japan, the construction of a marketplace in Sinjar was completed and handed over to the municipality for administration. Spanning 500m², the marketplace features 14 shops, complete with toilets, an electrical room, and all necessary maintenance equipment. It serves as a central trade hub, facilitating local farmers in commercializing their products and bolstering food security for the Sinjar population with access to fresh, high-quality food.



In terms of capacity-building, a hundred unemployed young women and men from Sinjar have successfully graduated from the vocational training provided by UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Japanese international organization Peace Winds Japan, and have secured employment opportunities to contribute to the development of their communities.



WASH INFRASTRUCTURE

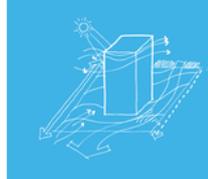
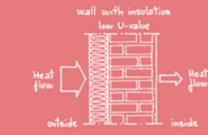
The Potable Water Network in the eastern Al-Nasir neighbourhood of Sinjar, spanning 2,350 m has been completed. This project, supported by the Government of Japan, has provided over 15,000 residents in the area with consistent and reliable access to clean and safe water.

Furthermore, during a meeting with UNICEF, collaborative efforts to enhance the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure in Mosul were discussed. UN-Habitat partnered previously with UNICEF, with the installation of the wastewater treatment plants in social housing complex in Mosul, constructed by UN-Habitat and funded by the Government of Japan.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

To commemorate the 2023 Urban October, centred around "Financing Sustainable Urban Future for All," UN-Habitat Iraq launched a social media campaign promoting Smart Ways to Adapt to Climate Change. The campaign showcased materials and techniques implemented since 2020 in most of our constructions and activities, including, Solar Protection, Daylighting, Renewable Energy, Building Opening, Building Materials and Building Orientation. This material drew inspiration from the Charter for Sustainable Building and Neighborhood Design, produced by UN-Habitat.

As an example of our commitment, supported by the Government of Japan, all 50 houses, marketplaces, and the Al-Til Co-Education school, rehabilitated in Sinjar, were fully equipped with photovoltaic (PV) panels. Additionally, within the same project, a public outreach campaign was conducted in Sinjar, reaching 1,000 returnees to promote awareness and engagement in climate change adaptation.

<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>BUILDING ORIENTATION</h3>  <p>Design the long axis of the building to be along East-West to minimize direct solar radiation penetration in the building and reduce heat gain.</p>	<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>RENEWABLE ENERGY</h3>  <p>Integrate solar energy (thermal and electricity) such as photovoltaic and solar water heaters; wind energy, biogas and other available renewable energy systems into the building design.</p>
<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>SOLAR PROTECTION</h3>  <p>Use sun shading devices e.g. roof overhangs, vertical & horizontal shading elements, balconies, screens, & vegetation (green walls) to minimize heat gain.</p>	<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>DAYLIGHTING</h3>  <p>Design buildings according to climatic region, with openings on North and South walls, narrow plans to maximize daylighting, use clerestories & light shelves in deep spaces; staircases, toilets, & Kitchens to be day-lit</p>
<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>BUILDING MATERIALS</h3>  <p>Always consider the carbon footprint content while choosing building materials and give preferences to locally available building material that are more appropriate with low energy content.</p>	<p>SMART WAYS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE</p> <h3>BUILDING OPENING</h3>  <p>Window sizing to be designed according to prevailing climatic conditions, and placement preferably on North and South walls; wall to windows ratio should not exceed 40%.</p>





STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

In November 2023, as part of the European Union-funded project in Basra, UN-Habitat's field staff hosted a monitoring team from the EU and guided them on the components currently under implementation. In collaboration with the International Labour Organization, the project's implementing partner, the team visited the activities held to support employment for youth in Basra.

In early December, the project's third Steering Committee Meeting took place with the presence of European Union representatives, partners, and multi-level stakeholders in Basra –the meeting aimed to share the progress of the project.

FAREWELL, Mr Wael

In October, UN-Habitat bid farewell to our esteemed head, Mr Wael Al Ashab, after 24 years of dedicated service. In his final three years as Head of the Iraq Programme, he steered the country team towards excellence.

His presence was an honour, acknowledged, and respected by colleagues worldwide. UN-Habitat Iraq will uphold his legacy and benefit from the valuable lessons learned under his guidance.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Authorities: Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Construction, Housing and Public Municipalities, Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Planning, Ninewa, Basra and Anbar Governorates representatives.

UN agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC and ILO.

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* UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, is the focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system and has been active in Iraq since 1996.