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President Abdul Latif Rashid receives the delegation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

On 8th of January, the Head of the UN-Habitat Programme in Iraq Wael Al-Ashhab, met with Abdul Latif Rashid, the President of Iraq, and briefed his excellency on UN-Habitat’s work and achievement in Iraq and also discussed the future collaboration and the way forward to formalize Yazidi’s land rights after the approval of the legal decree. "The President stressed the need to start work and focus efforts on implementation in order to return all the displaced to their cities and homes, in a way that secures a decent, free, safe and stable life", stressing that "no IDPs should remain in the camps."



UN-Habitat and UNICEF jointly inaugurate the newly installed Water Treatment Plant in the Bab Sinjar Housing complex in Mosul



The ceremony, held on 18 January, was attended by the head of Mosul Sewage Directorate. Fully operational since a couple of months, the Plant serves 4 of the 9 medium-rise housing blocks of the Bab Sinjar Complex, whose 324 apartments host 2,300 vulnerable returnees from the Old City of Mosul. The Plant is powered by a large photovoltaic system installed on the roofs of an adjacent buildings, ensuring its environmental sustainability and efficiency. This innovative WASH initiative aims not only to reduce the quantity of wastewater to be disposed of but also produces clean water for the irrigation of the surrounding public green spaces. Through such projects UN-Habitat aims to assist the local authorities in addressing the housing challenges related to the country’s rapid urbanization and to help build the resilience of Iraqi cities against the effects of climate change and water shortage.



Paving of 3 km of sidewalks in the area of the newly realised Baiji Park

As part of its local area development project in Baiji, funded by the European Union, UN-Habitat is currently investing in the paving of 3 km of sidewalks in the area of newly realised Baiji Park. The new sidewalks provide improved pedestrian safety to 700 residents, dozens of shopkeepers and their customers. The design of the sidewalks addresses the needs of people with disabilities and wheelchair-bound individuals, whose movements have been challenged by nearly a decade of very poor road conditions, and contributes to the sustainable return of IDPs to their respective homes and activities. The project is being implemented in partnership with Baiji Municipality who has planned to pave the roads by mid-2023.

Combatting Transboundary Sand and Dust Storms in Southern Iraq and Kuwait

On 28 January 2023, the project inception workshop for "Improved Resilience to Transboundary Sand and Dust Storms in Kuwait and Southern Iraq" was successfully held in Basra with over 50 participants from both countries. The workshop marks the starting point for the project's activities in 2023. Iraq is counted among the 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change in the World today. Severe heat, droughts and the proliferation of sand and dust storms have a significant impact. This project will be implemented over the next 4 years and is fully funded by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) with a total budget of 13 million USD



Ongoing construction of Al-Ghadeer Park in Basra

With generous funding from the EU, UN-Habitat has just started the construction of Al- Gadeer Park Jurf Al Meleh neighbourhood, located in Shat Al Arab District, Basra city with an approximate area of 12,000 sqm with a playground, football pitch, sitting area, food stands and exercise area to provide a safe, children and women-friendly space for the community. In this project, UN-Habitat considers a sustainable irrigation system using treated sewage water, hot-climate-friendly plants and a solar system. Also, the design concept resembles the Old Basra City, known for its water streams and palm trees.



Improving returnees' lives in Tel Qasab, Sinjar District, Ninewa

"We are grateful to your organization for building this house for us. We are very happy. Without this house, we would be unable to return to our place. This project is very important for people like us whose houses were destroyed. People like us cannot build a room for themselves without help." This is just one of many recognitions the UN-Habitat team has received for improving returnees' lives in Tel Qasab, Sinjar District. Following comprehensive selection criteria and socioeconomic vulnerability assessment, as a part of the EU Madad fund, UN-Habitat is providing core housing units for more than 900 vulnerable people whose houses were destroyed as a result of conflict during the ISIL occupation.



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.