



IN BRIEF



Resilience and Empowerment of Vulnerable Women: The Future of Jordan's Growth and Stability

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Princess Basma reviews Oasis Centre services in Madaba's Bani Hamidah region

HRH Princess Basma, Chairperson of the Jordanian National Committee for Women and Goodwill Ambassador for UN Women, recently visited the Oasis Centre in Jabal Bani Hamidah, Madaba. The visit spotlighted the efforts of the Oasis Centres, a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Social Development and UN Women, in empowering Jordanian women, including Syrian refugees.

She was joined by a delegation comprising key figures like Mr. Ziad Sheikh, UN Women Jordan Representative, H.E. Bernard Lynch, Australian Ambassador to Jordan, and representatives from the EU Delegation and Ministry of Social Development. Together, they highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships and international cooperation in championing women's empowerment.

Princess Basma expressed her appreciation for the holistic approach of the Oasis Centres, emphasizing their role as a bridge between various sectors and international partners. She also lauded the Ministry of Social Development for its instrumental role in uplifting women's status in the society, an endeavor further buoyed by support from UN Women, the Australian Embassy, and the EU Delegation.

Mr. Sheikh emphasized the Oasis model's significance, pointing out its unique contribution to women's economic and social recovery post-pandemic. He affirmed UN Women's commitment to ensuring that even the most vulnerable women benefit from such models.

The Australian Ambassador, H.E. Bernard Lynch, reiterated his country's dedication to these initiatives, highlighting the shared



Photo: UN Women/ Ye Ji Lee

At the Oasis Centre in Jabal Bani Hamidah region in Madaba, implemented by the Ministry of Social Development in partnership with UN Women with the goal of providing integrated living support and necessary vocational training for local women and Syrian refugee women.

vision of promoting women's rights and ensuring their active participation in socio-economic frameworks.

Ms. Mary Horvers from the EU Delegation mirrored these sentiments, praising the Oasis Centres as exemplary models of women's empowerment.

Ms. Arwa Al Zboun from the Ministry of Social Development spotlighted the tangible benefits of the Oasis initiative. Since its inception in 2020, the Bani Hamidah centre alone has provided training and employment to 789 women. Across Jordan, 22 such centres operate, underlining the country's commitment to its women.

The visit underscored the significance of collaborative models like Oasis Centres in fostering women's empowerment, with emphasis on synergies between public, private, and international stakeholders.



30,000

women and girls directly and indirectly reached with protection services, referral and livelihood support in 2022



6,293

women and girls received access to protection and livelihood support through the Oasis Programme in 2022

UN Women and ARDD's Partnership: Fostering Civic Engagement and Empowerment in Camps and Host Communities



Photo: UN Women

UN Women's commitment to enhancing civic engagement and leadership among women, as well as promoting dialogues on women's rights and empowerment among men, is set to materialize with the initiation of new activities in the first quarter of 2023. Through a partnership with the ARDD, the organization is poised to make significant strides in these areas, as indicated by the progress on their outputs for the European Union Trust Fund 'Madad.

UN Women aims to directly benefit 400 women annually, providing them with vital civic engagement and leadership services in both camp and non-camp settings. The Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS) approval was granted in the third quarter of 2022, and the preparatory work, including a comprehensive desk review and needs assessment, has been completed by ARDD. These efforts are essential in laying the groundwork for the initiative that will target women's active participation in civic matters and enhance their leadership capabilities.

Similarly, the ambition to engage 200 men annually, with an equal split between Syrian and Jordanian community members, in dialogues aimed at promoting women's rights and empowerment. This initiative is particularly noteworthy as it involves men in the conversation, fostering an inclusive approach to gender equality and empowerment.

UN Women and ARDD have completed the necessary preliminary assessments and are ready to begin this activity as well in the upcoming year. This strategic partnership underscores the importance of selecting implementing partners with the expertise necessary to navigate and overcome cultural and social barriers to program success.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in achieving gender equality and empowerment, by not only focusing on women but also by engaging men in meaningful dialogues. This inclusive approach is expected to have a transformative impact on communities.

Empowerment through Partnership: Oasis Centres' Milestone Achievement



Oasis Centres, led by the Ministry of Social Development and UN Women, have successfully helped approximately 5,000 women and girls achieve sustainable livelihoods.

The collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Social Development and UN Women have culminated in the remarkable success of the Oasis Centres, where 4,953 vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian refugee women and girls have gained increased access to essential livelihood support until September in 2022. Furthermore, the ripple effect of the Oasis programme, funded by the European Union, has indirectly benefited to an additional 24,765 individuals. This initiative stands as a testament to the power of partnership and shared commitment in creating sustainable change and fostering resilience among people in need.

From where I stand: “The Oasis Centre has now become a place where I can release my energy”

Through her work experience at the UN Women’s Oasis Centre in the Azraq refugee camp, 29-year-old Marwa Barakat has gained confidence, independence and financial stability. The Oasis model for women’s resilience and empowerment was developed by UN Women and the Ministry of Social Development with significant funding and contributions from the European Union, including in the model’s extension to community centres and related policy dialogues.

“I arrived in the Azraq camp in 2016, with my mother-in-law and my three children. The situation in Syria was very difficult and dangerous, and the passing of my husband in 2014 put more responsibility on me to look after our family. We heard that Jordan was providing services to Syrian refugees, which led our family to leave Eastern Ghouta, Syria.

Before my husband passed away, I had no work experience. However, after I became a widow and the sole provider of my family, I worked at a cheese factory for one year until I was able to save enough money for me and my children to come to Jordan. While we managed to arrive at the Azraq camp, the struggles did not end. I needed to find an opportunity in the camp to cover the expenses of my family.

Luckily, I found an opportunity to work at the Oasis Centre, despite having only basic knowledge of tailoring and cutting. I quickly grasped the skills taught at the Oasis Centre, and now work in the tailoring sector to produce baby suits that are distributed inside the camp.

“Raising my children on my own put a lot of stress on me, and as an introvert I did not have the courage to interact with others. However, the Oasis Centre has now become a place where I can release my energy.”



Photo: UN Women/Tamara Abidin

Marwa Barakat, 29, works on baby suits at the UN Women Oasis Centre in the Azraq refugee camp.

My experience at the Oasis Centre built my character and my self-esteem, [and willingness] to learn and interact with others. It is a place of comfort, a community that helps me relieve my stress and allows me to get a breath of fresh air. It feels like a home, a place where I rebuilt my new life. It made me feel more capable and empowered.

I tell the women that everyone who enters the Oasis benefits. Here, one finds safety, trust, and a strong sense of community. We not only benefited financially but also became self-confident and learned more about our rights as women. There are many things we were unaware of that we learned here. You contribute, and you carry away experience with you.”

Eng. Musa Al-Ma’aitah Honored for Pioneering Gender Equality Initiatives in Jordan



Photo: European Union

H.E. Eng. Musa Al-Ma’aitah honored for advancing gender equality, pictured with top Jordanian officials.

On June 7, 2022, a significant celebration took place, honoring H.E. Eng. Musa Al-Ma’aitah, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Independent Election Commission and former Chair of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Women Empowerment (IMC). This prestigious event was attended by notable figures including H.E. Wafa’a Bani Mustafa, Minister of State for Legal Affairs and current Chair of the IMC, and H.E. Dr. Muawieh Radaideh, Minister of Environment. The Gender Partners Coordination Group presented the accolade to Ma’aitah, acknowledging his substantial contributions to advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment in the region. His unwavering dedication and collaborative efforts with key organizations such as the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the European Union in Jordan, UN Women, and other vital stakeholders have been instrumental in driving significant progress in these crucial areas. Ma’aitah’s efforts have greatly enhanced gender-related initiatives, demonstrating his commitment to creating a more equitable and inclusive society.



Photo: UN Women/ Ye Ji Lee

The Oasis centres stand as a testament to the collaboration between UN Women and the European Union, offering online education to many. This essential alliance guarantees that the flow of knowledge remains undisturbed, even amidst the trials brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Undoubtedly, education acts as a primary mechanism to uplift and empower women in our society. Within the confines of the Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps, these Oasis centres play a crucial role, presenting vulnerable Syrian refugee women with the chance to acquire valuable skills and craft sustainable futures for themselves.



Photo: EFE Jordan

Congratulations are in order for the alumnae who have successfully completed the "Self-Employment" training, a commendable initiative implemented by EFE-Jordan in partnership with UN Women and funded by the European Union in Jordan under the "Building Women's Capacities with Technical Skills and Entrepreneurship" programme. Delivered in Irbid, this training provided participants with invaluable entrepreneurship and marketing knowledge, empowering them with the essential skills to launch and manage their own micro-businesses. This accomplishment not only signifies personal growth but also contributes to economic development, as these women take confident steps towards self-sufficiency and community enrichment.

Empowering Women Through Employment: Milestones and Successes



Photo: UN Women

The UN Women Oasis program, supported by the EU Trust Fund 'Madad', continues to be a beacon of empowerment and opportunity for women, with a noteworthy achievement in supporting their transition into the workforce.

In the last quarter of 2022, an impressive count of 354 women gained employment or started their own ventures. Notably, 87 of these were assisted through job placement services and were all Jordanian citizens. A significant number, 267 women, are estimated to have initiated their projects, a venture sparked by their own entrepreneurial spirit and an assessment by the partner, Education for Employment.

These successful job placements span a variety of sectors, including customer services, data analytics, wholesale, retail, tailoring, security, and social media, reflecting the diverse skill sets and interests of the women involved. The governorates where these placements occurred—Ajloun, Jerash, Karak, Ma'an, Amman, Tafileh, Irbid, and Mafraq—highlight the geographic reach and inclusivity of the program.

As we celebrate the total of 378 women who have been empowered since the beginning of the project, we also acknowledge the 45% of beneficiaries reached during Madad Phase II. Our ongoing assessments, including perception surveys and evaluation reports, continue to guide and refine our strategies to ensure we are meeting the needs and maximizing the potential of every woman we serve.

We are inspired by the stories of these women who have turned opportunities into tangible success and thank our partners and supporters who make these life-changing achievements possible. Together, we are building a more inclusive and equitable future, one job at a time.