CLIMATE ACTION FOR HUMAN SECURITY
IRAQ'S AL HAWIZEH MARSHLANDS

KEY CHALLENGES:

Al Hawizeh marshes and its communities are facing political, socio-economic and security challenges that could adversely impact efforts to promote sustainable development. The following challenges, coupled with the adverse impact of climate change, hinder the return of the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) from other governorates:

- Severe environmental degradation and a near total absence of the infrastructure required to support everyday life of communities.
- Lack of power supply.
- Lack of sewage treatment facilities, schools, clinics, and other public facilities.
- Lack of access to clean water supply or wastewater treatment or disposal.
- Lack of livelihood opportunities.

THE ISSUE:

Climate change poses a mounting threat that exacerbates the above challenges.

Recent climate trends averaged over the 1980-2017 period show that average maximum temperatures have increased in the marshes at the rate of about 0.27°C per decade, while monthly precipitation has decreased at the rate of about 0.66 mm/month per decade[1]. As a result:

1. Men will continue to be forced to leave the marsh homelands and their traditional occupations to seek employment in urban centers, leading to further fracturing of family and social networks.
2. Climate change will lead to numerous adverse impacts on returnees including exacerbation of water pollution/scarcity, intensification of disaster shocks, and threats to public health.
3. The combination of these factors layered onto the baseline socioeconomic fragility of returning IDPs will further undermine social cohesion in the marshlands as many communities can be expected to experience an intensification of societal disruptions, property losses, and livelihood uncertainty.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

The project supports crisis-affected communities with a special focus on women's empowerment through:

1. Deployment of innovative clean drinking water supply and wastewater treatment systems.

2. Support livelihoods diversification and ecotourism activities consistently in coordination with government's natural resources management plans.

Thus the project will address the following interlinked development challenges:

Social cohesion **Gender equality**

Women's agency **Stability**

1 Hashim, B., Maitham Abdullah Sultan, Mazin Najem Attyia, Ali A. Al Maliki, and Nadhir Al-Ansari, 2019. Change Detection and Impact of Climate Changes to Iraqi Southern Marshes Using Landsat 2 MSS, Landsat 8 OLI and Sentinel 2 MSI Data and GIS Applications, Applied Sciences, 14 pages. And derived on the basis of plots of trends of temperature and rainfall for Chibayesh in the Central marshes and Suq Al Shoyokh in the western Hammar marshes that are found on pages 11-12.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The overall objective of the project is to enhance climate security among returning Internally Displaced Peoples to the Al Hawizeh marshes.

OUR WORK:

1. Fifteen off-grid solar PV systems for drinking water purification and waste management installed, directly benefitting at least 1,500 people (50% women).

2. Six tourism facilities compatible with local heritage & values constructed, directly benefitting at least 128 households who will experience reduced displacement pressures.

3. Gender-responsive train-the-trainers programme on solar PV energy systems developed.

4. At least 1,000 people (50% women) benefit from training and awareness raising.

5. The project will enhance livelihoods and income diversification and empower women by providing job opportunities through environmentally and socially responsible ecotourism in the Marshlands.

TARGETED SDGS:

QUICK INFORMATION:

Project timeframe: 36 months

Grant: USD 922,000

Targeted areas: Al Hawizeh Marshes located in the Missan governorate in southeast Iraq east of the Tigris River.

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