Funded by the European Union’s Regional Trust Fund, MADAD

Steering Committee of Headway programme promotes resilience actions for vulnerable communities in Iraq

Erbil, 11 July 2019 – The Steering Committee of the Headway programme met in Erbil on 11 July 2019, to discuss and review the implementation of actions that will benefit nearly 430,000 vulnerable people, as well as advance social stability and growth in Iraq. Launched in February 2019, Headway aims at empowering Syrian refugees, local host communities and internally displaced people (IDPs) in areas affected by the crisis through involving them in practical solutions to rebuild their lives.

The European Union’s (EU) Regional Trust Fund, MADAD, is funding the Headway programme with €10 million over a period of two years. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) are jointly implementing the programme.

The Steering Committee endorsed the programme’s workplan, identifying priority actions to be implemented in four governorates: Duhok, Erbil, Ninewah, and Sulaimaniyah. Actions include the rehabilitation of housing units and small-scale community water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in the Ninewah plains, and the financing of intensive job-generating projects to increase self-reliance of vulnerable refugees, host communities and IDPs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I).

Programme Manager of MADAD, Ms. Sarah Spencer-Bernard, reaffirmed: "The EU is a longstanding partner of your country. This illustrates in tangible terms the commitment we have to assist the authorities of Iraq to reconstruct cities and towns, to make areas safe for the return of those who have had to flee their homes and to allow communities to heal and prosper. The Iraqi people have suffered enough, and the country is on the cusp of entering into a renewed phase of state-building. This multi-pronged initiative will join the dots between the various reconstruction components, and significantly improve the resilience of host and refugee populations."

Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Ms. Zena Ali-Ahmad, said: “Building long-term resilience for vulnerable communities is one of our top priorities. Not only do we want them back on their feet after all the suffering they had to endure, but we also want to support them in leading productive and prosperous lives for the sake of their children. With critical funding from the EU and MADAD, the Headway programme will ensure we are heading in the right direction.”

Head of UN-Habitat Iraq, a.i., Ms. Yuko Otsuki, highlighted the importance of the Steering Committee meeting for the Headway programme. She stated that UN-Habitat will continue to work with the communities in the selected governorates to build the resilience through this programme and support the municipal authorities to enhance local organizational capacities for the planning and implementation of the programme.
The Steering Committee is the programme's decision-making body and is comprised of representatives of the Federal and Regional Ministries of Planning, as well as the Governors of the aforementioned Governorates where the programme is currently being implemented. Members also include UNDP and UN-Habitat, along with the EU Trust Fund, MADAD and the EU Delegation to Iraq as donor representatives.

The Governors and authorized representatives signed the Charter of Principles that sets out an agreed framework that will govern the implementation of the Headway programme. The guiding principles include participation and inclusivity, transparency and accountability, human rights, gender equality and protection of the most vulnerable.

The Headway programme’s activities are currently making steady progress as a result of close collaboration among all partners. The programme is due to run through the end of 2020.

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The programme fact sheet can be downloaded through this link: [https://bit.ly/2J4h8Ta](https://bit.ly/2J4h8Ta).

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