



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
unhabitat-info@un.org | www.unhabitat.org

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

UN-Habitat and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia partner for recovery in Syria and Sudan

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) and UN-Habitat have signed a USD 3.27 million agreement to rehabilitate critical water infrastructure in Syria and Sudan, supporting more than 270,000 people.

New York, 21 September 2025 – UN-Habitat and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) have announced a new partnership to restore water services for communities in Syria and Sudan facing severe humanitarian crises. The USD 3.27 million agreement was signed in New York by Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Rabeeah, Supervisor General of KSrelief, and Ms. Anacláudia Rossbach, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat, on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 80).

At the signing ceremony, Ms. Rossbach appreciated KSrelief's commitment to alleviating human suffering and investing in long-term recovery, especially as the world faced a global housing crisis.

"Access to water and basic services is a matter of survival and dignity and a prerequisite for adequate housing," said Anacláudia Rossbach. "This partnership is aligned with UN-Habitat's strategic plan from 2026-2029 and will restore essential services for hundreds of thousands of people, helping them to rebuild their homes and communities and improve their quality of life."

After 14 years of conflict, much of Syria's urban infrastructure is damaged. The country is currently facing its worst drought since 1958, with national water availability at just half the global average and up to 70 percent of residents in some areas relying on expensive water tankers. The KSrelief-funded project *Enhancing Water Security* aims to rehabilitate central water reservoirs and towers in Al-Malihah, a town on the outskirts of Damascus, restore the piped water network, and reconstruct damaged infrastructure. The project is expected to benefit 70,000 people — including returnees, women, and persons with disabilities — by increasing water availability and reducing household dependence on tankers.

Sudan is facing the world's largest internal displacement crisis, with nearly 10 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to the IOM. The KSrelief-funded project *Emergency Support for Returnees in Al-Jazirah State* is expected to improve access to safe drinking water for 200,000 people across five high-need localities. Planned works include drilling new boreholes equipped with solar-powered pumps, rehabilitating existing wells, and training technicians to ensure sustainable operation and maintenance.

"At KSrelief, we believe that access to clean water is not just about survival—it is about restoring human dignity and enabling communities to rebuild their lives. We value our partnership with UN-Habitat as we work together to improve the quality of life for affected people in Syria and Sudan."

This USD 3.27 million investment reflects Saudi Arabia's unwavering commitment to stand with the most vulnerable, transforming lives through partnerships that deliver meaningful and sustainable change."

By combining humanitarian relief with sustainable, area-based approaches, UN-Habitat and KSrelief aim to strengthen local resilience, support safe and voluntary returns, and improve public health outcomes.

– END –

For more information, contact:

Omnia Moussa,
Communications Officer
UN-Habitat ROAS omnia.moussa@un.org

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries, supporting policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance and collaborative action. To know more, visit www.unhabitat.org or follow us on social media @UNHABITAT.

About King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief)

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief), established under the guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, represents Saudi Arabia's commitment to global humanitarian efforts. Inaugurated in May 2015, KSrelief has provided impartial humanitarian aid and relief to over 100 countries in cooperation with local, regional and international organizations. To learn more, visit www.ksrelief.org