

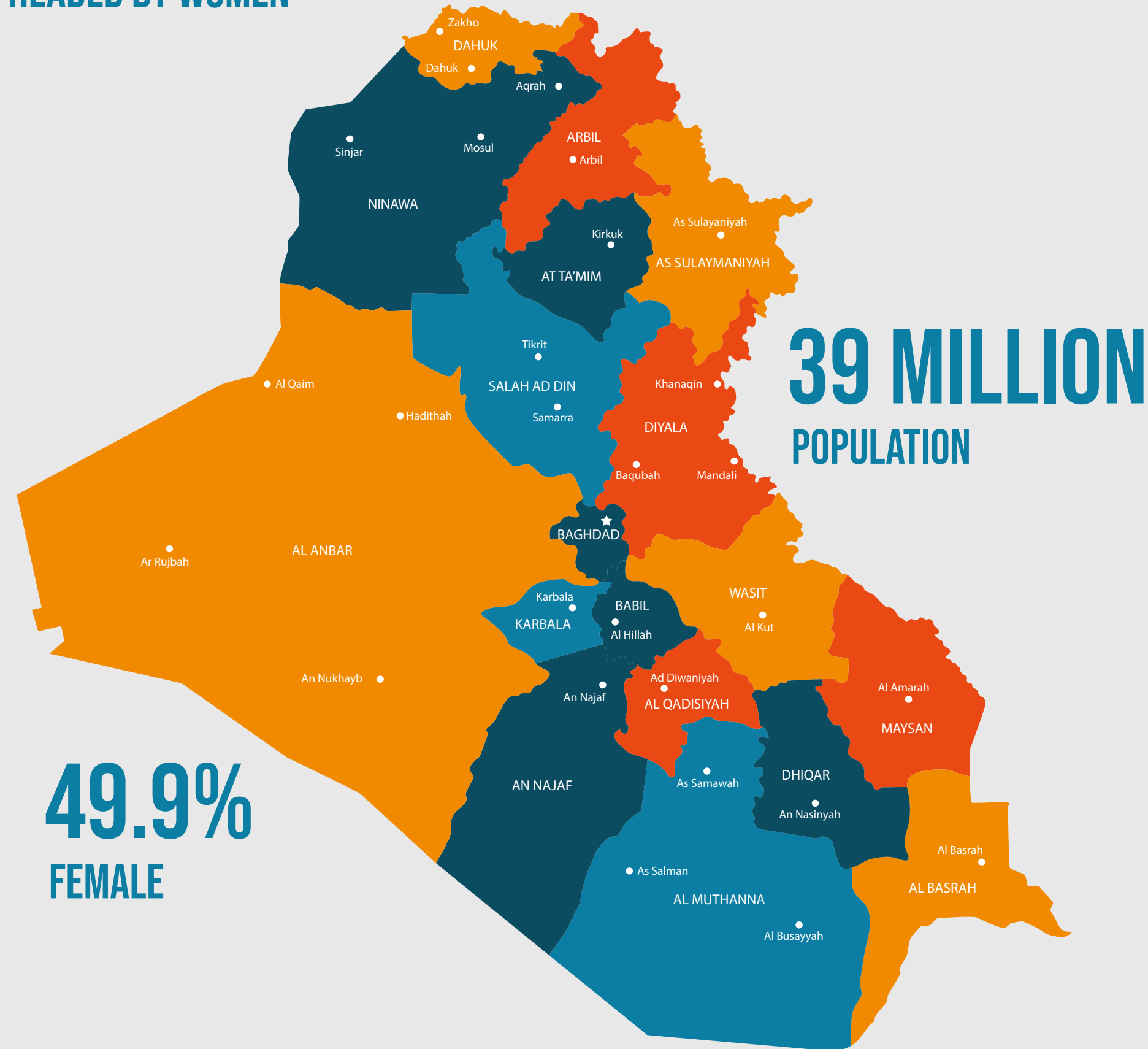


# GENDER ROLES & CHALLENGES in Al Hawizeh Marshes of Iraq

Under the umbrella of the regional SDG-Climate Facility project, UNDP initiated a pilot project in Maysan Governorate of Iraq. The project seeks to enhance climate security among returning Internally Displaced People (IDPs) to Al Hawizeh marshes, with specific attention to women's empowerment and gender equality.

As part of the project and acknowledging the relationship between women's empowerment and climate action, UNDP conducted a gender analysis which took place between April and July 2021. The gender analysis aimed at identifying the economic and social conditions of women and men in the marshlands, including their roles, the challenges which specifically women face in marshland societies, and the challenges of participating in the project's activities.

## 11% HOUSEHOLDS HEADED BY WOMEN

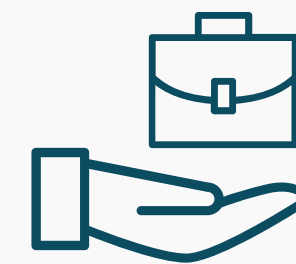


[Map statistics are drawn from 2019].

## FINDINGS FROM THE GENDER ANALYSIS IN THE MARSHLANDS



In examining Gender-Based Violence (GBV) trends in the marshes, the study found that while GBV is limited, nevertheless domestic violence trends are mostly related to verbal incidents rather than physical and/or psychological.



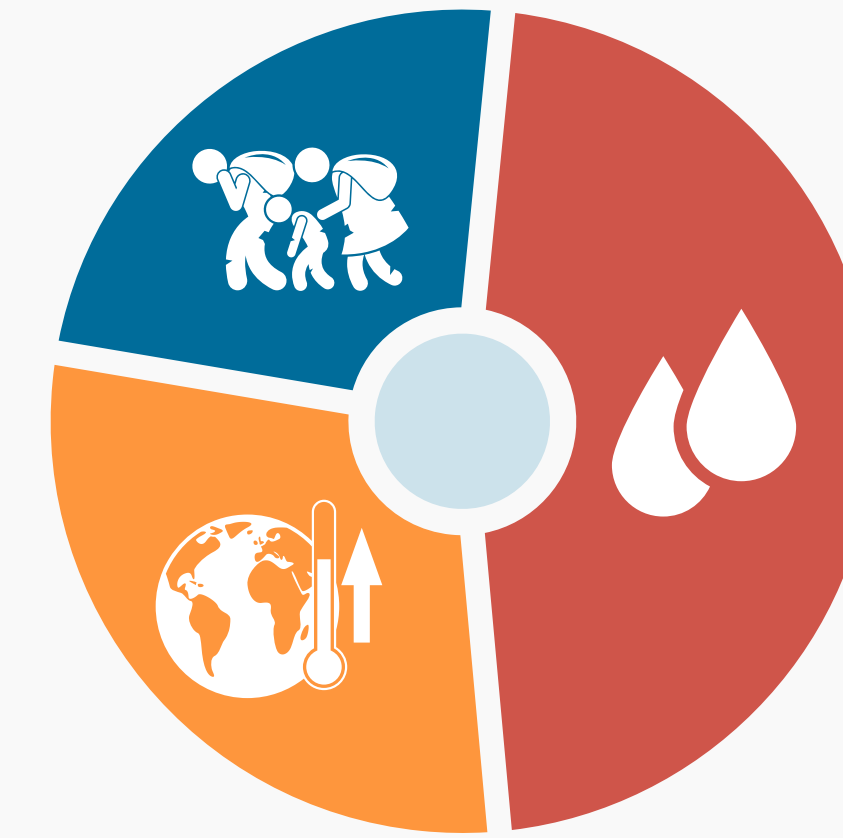
**Women** in the marshes are involved in the food industry, production of handicrafts, and in agricultural activities such as raising livestock, providing fodder, harvesting, and the ducation sector. 50% of **men** are active in the agriculture sector but mainly focus on fishing, hunting, and planting crops. They are also active in manufacturing, construction, and employment in shops. Nonetheless, none of these activities provide sufficient income for the families and barely meet the needs.



The study showed that access to education remains a challenge in the marshlands for girls and boys, due to long distances and insufficient infrastructure to reach secondary schools.

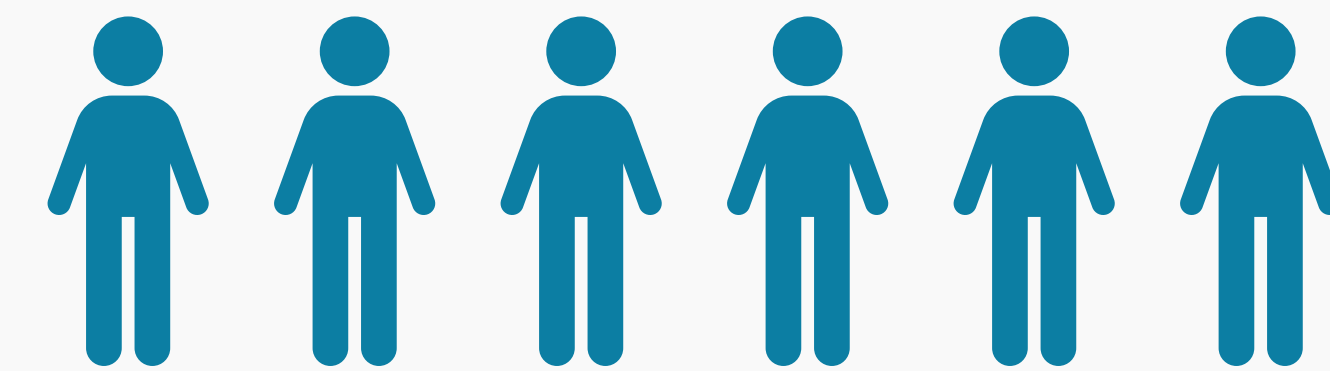


Despite the presence of national policies that support women's participation in the public sphere, the study showed that this remains somewhat limited both at the national and local levels. 12% of women indicated that they cannot access these assets, and men indicated that they are the main decision makers in immediate and extended familial matters.

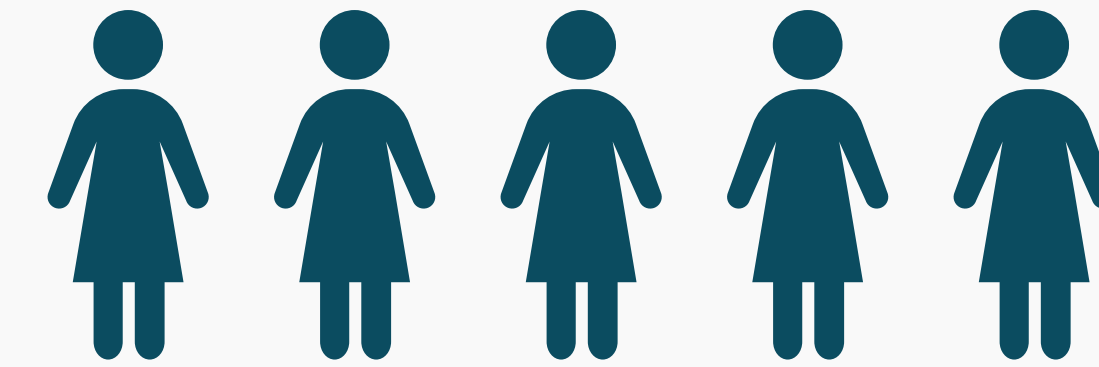


The study concluded that both men and women in the marshlands are severely affected by environmental degradation and climate change. The rising temperatures, water scarcity and deterioration in its quality, has impacted livelihoods and the ability to work in farming, hunting and animal husbandry, thus worsening the economic situation for the community at large and multiplying the threats posed on other aspects of their daily lives. These climate related challenges are also leading to forced migration to urban areas from the marshlands.

## 11 INFORMANTS AND 55 PARTICIPANTS



30 MEN



25 WOMEN

Participants came from 4 villages near the marshes: Abu Khassaf (22 responders), Um Saa'a (4 responders), Abu Al Khanazeer (10 responders) and Al Dibin (19 responders).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Creation of employment opportunities for women in the ecotourism sector

Provision of transportation to give women the opportunity to join capacity development workshops

Implementation of similar pilot projects in other parts of the Marshlands

## EXAMPLES OF GENDER EQUALITY & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT POLICIES IN IRAQ



1986 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

1995 - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Bejing+25 - prepared by Iraq reports on issues and progress made on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.