

# Youth Microbusiness & Livelihood Development Programme

Basra, Iraq | 2013–2015

## Executive Summary

UniHouse delivered a market-driven microbusiness and livelihoods development programme under the UNDP–Shell partnership, targeting vulnerable communities in Al Nashwa and Al Dayr, Basra Governorate.

The programme combined CSR objectives (Shell) with inclusive economic development (UNDP), focusing on entrepreneurship, MSME development, and capacity building.

Through structured market assessments, training, business incubation, and post-launch support, UniHouse enabled sustainable income generation and strengthened local economic participation in communities surrounding the Majnoon oil field.



**Community Leadership & Local Ownership**  
Engagement with community leaders in Al Nashwa and Al Dayr ensured inclusive participation and long-term ownership of programme outcomes.

## Project Objectives

- Design and implement a microbusiness startup programme for rural livelihoods
- Build entrepreneurial and business management capacity
- Enable income generation for vulnerable groups
- Strengthen local MSME ecosystems
- Support CSR-driven community development outcomes

*“UniHouse successfully delivered the Youth Micro Business Startup Programme according to the set time frames within the contract period of 12 months, overcoming challenges especially in hazard areas to the maximum extent.”*

UNDP Iraq  
Programme Manager, UNDP–Shell Partnership Project

## Context & Strategic Relevance

The programme responded to critical development challenges in Basra:

- Limited employment opportunities in oil-adjacent communities
- Weak local MSME base and service economy
- High unemployment among youth and women
- Skills gaps limiting participation in local economic activity

Despite proximity to major oil operations, communities lacked access to economic opportunities, requiring targeted, inclusive interventions.

The initiative was implemented in coordination with:

Basra Governorate	Local councils of Al Nashwa & Al Dayr	Community leaders and associations
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## UniHouse Scope of Work

### 1. Market Assessment & Opportunity Mapping

- Conducted Rapid Market Survey across 21 villages
- Identified:
  - Market gaps
  - Demand-driven business opportunities
  - Local resource advantages
- Assessed socio-economic conditions and sector viability

### 2. Community Engagement & Beneficiary Selection

- Facilitated focus groups, stakeholder consultations, and interviews
- Engaged:
  - Local authorities
  - Village leaders
  - Community representatives
- Assessed 76 potential beneficiaries
- Applied transparent, merit-based selection criteria

#### Target Groups:

Women (including widows)	Youth	Persons with disabilities
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### 3. Entrepreneurship Training & Capacity Building

Delivered structured training covering:

- Business planning and startup development
- Financial literacy and pricing
- Marketing and customer engagement
- Basic operational management

Training was supported by practical coaching and mentoring.

### 4. Microbusiness Development & Launch

- Developed individual business plans
- Supported:
  - Business setup
  - Equipment identification
  - Operational readiness
- Enabled the launch of viable, market-aligned microbusinesses

### 5. Mentoring, Coaching & Sustainability

- Provided post-launch support and monitoring
- Strengthened:
  - Business performance
  - Financial management
  - Long-term sustainability



#### From Training to Income Generation

A beneficiary applying newly acquired skills to establish a microbusiness, generating income and strengthening household resilience.

## Key Results & Outputs

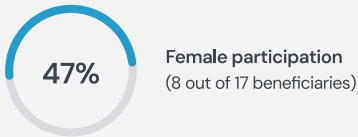
### Programme Reach



### Business Creation



### Inclusion & Gender Impact






#### Strong inclusion of:

Female-headed households

Vulnerable groups

### Economic Impact

-  Sustainable household income generation
-  Increased availability of local services and goods
-  Strengthened local economic activity

### Institutional & CSR Impact

#### Strengthened collaboration between:

UNDP

Shell

Basra Governorate & local authorities

#### Improved:

- Community–industry relations
- Local economic inclusion in oil–producing regions