

## Urban gardens of Amman

Building resilience in local communities

## Overview

The pandemic and its associated lockdowns have uncovered an acute need for food security in urban areas. To address this need, Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) in Jordan has embarked on several projects to foster urban gardening in the capital Amman, in coordination with various associations, funding agencies, and the local community.



## Background

Promoting urban gardening in cities is key to the process of recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. Urban gardening has positive impacts on the economy, the environment, and food security. It provides a local food source that is not vulnerable to long supply chains, and it also increases access to affordable and healthy food. Urban gardens also contribute to enhancing social cohesion by increasing green spaces, leisure and recreational spaces for local communities. To this end, GAM in cooperation with UN Habitat has launched the "Community Mobilization and Logistical Preparations for the Community Resilience Priority Actions to Flash Floods" project. A significant component of the project was the vocational training that aims at raising the awareness of the local community to the importance and potentials of urban gardening activities.

## Objectives

- Raising community's awareness to the importance of rainwater harvesting, utilization of rainwater in agriculture activities, and deflecting rainwater from the drainage system of the city center that causes flash floods in the raining season.
- Building resilience of local communities by enhancing their skills in recycling household and agricultural waste, enhancing social cohesion among its members including refugees, and contributing to women's empowerment.



## Activities

- Theory-based training: The content of the training included an introduction on permaculture, water harvesting techniques, and local harvesting methods. Furthermore, technical advisory on how to utilize composting methods in households was provided.
- Field visits to a school and a farm in Al-Majidiya area (southeast Amman), to put the acquired knowledge into practice. The field visits also included a demonstration of implemented wicking beds and water harvesting techniques. The participants included members of local community as well as representatives of Madaba and Ma'an municipalities.

## Effects

- At Al-Majidiya school, wicking beds were implemented with the participants, teachers, and students. The wicking beds were also connected to a water harvesting system from the roof of Al-Majidiya preliminary school. The same exercise was repeated at a farm in Al-Majidiya area, to emphasize the fact that such an activity can work in dry conditions and show the importance of rainwater harvesting and rainwater utilization techniques.
- As part of encouraging the local community to apply the training on ground, wicking beds were constructed at two of the participants' homes.
- Launching a "Zero Waste Home" initiative that aims at promoting the production of organic fertilizers to use and sell them and minimizing waste discarded on streets.



## Conclusions

The bottom-up approach of this project highlighted the importance of engaging the local community to support municipalities in overcoming the challenges related to urban agriculture. This is demonstrated by the high interest of the local community, especially women, in implementing urban gardening activities in their homes and any available nearby vacant land. Feedback from the beneficiaries revealed the benefits of such trainings as it would help supply households with fresh produce, as well will enhance their skills and provide new job opportunities.

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## i further information

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## Contact

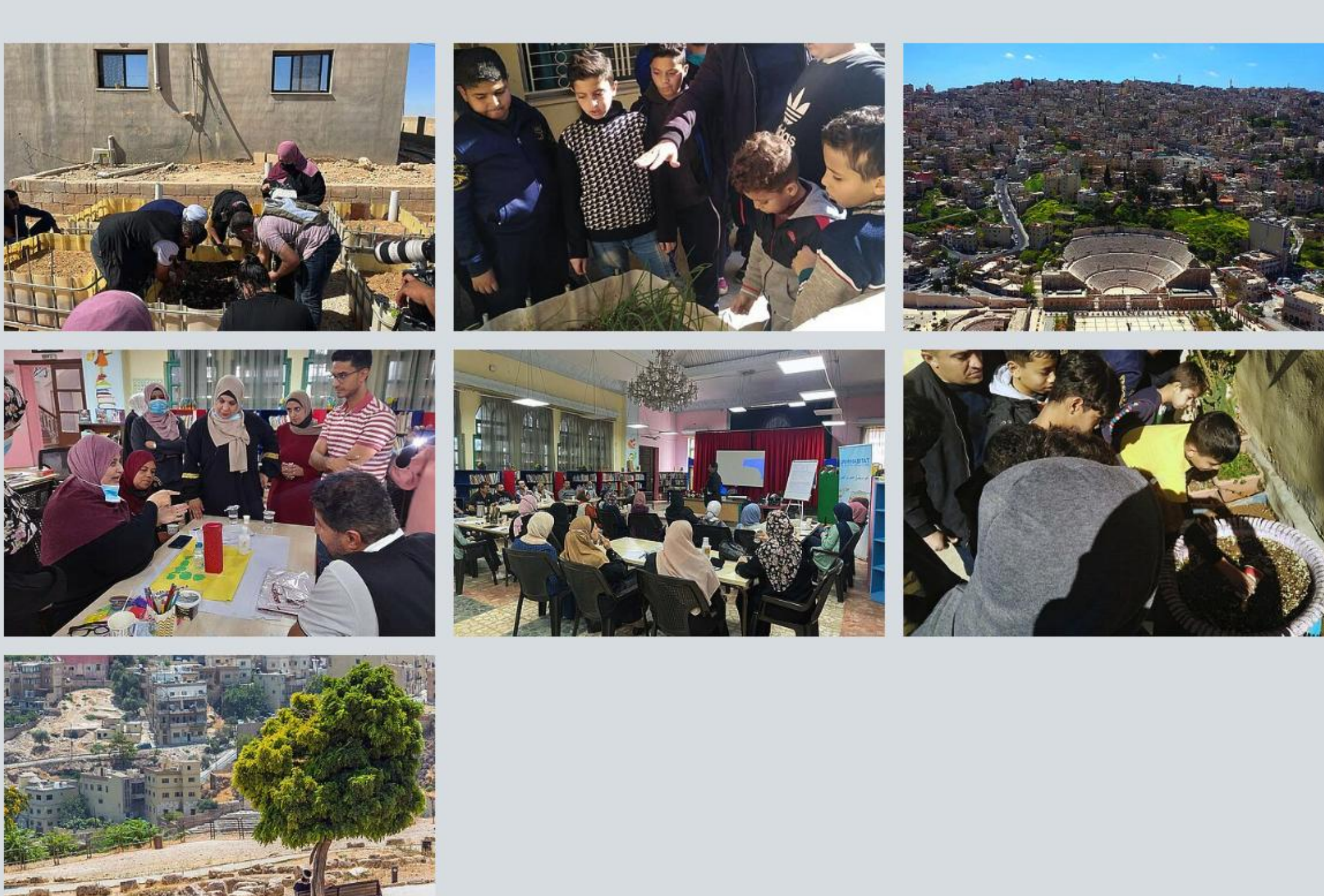
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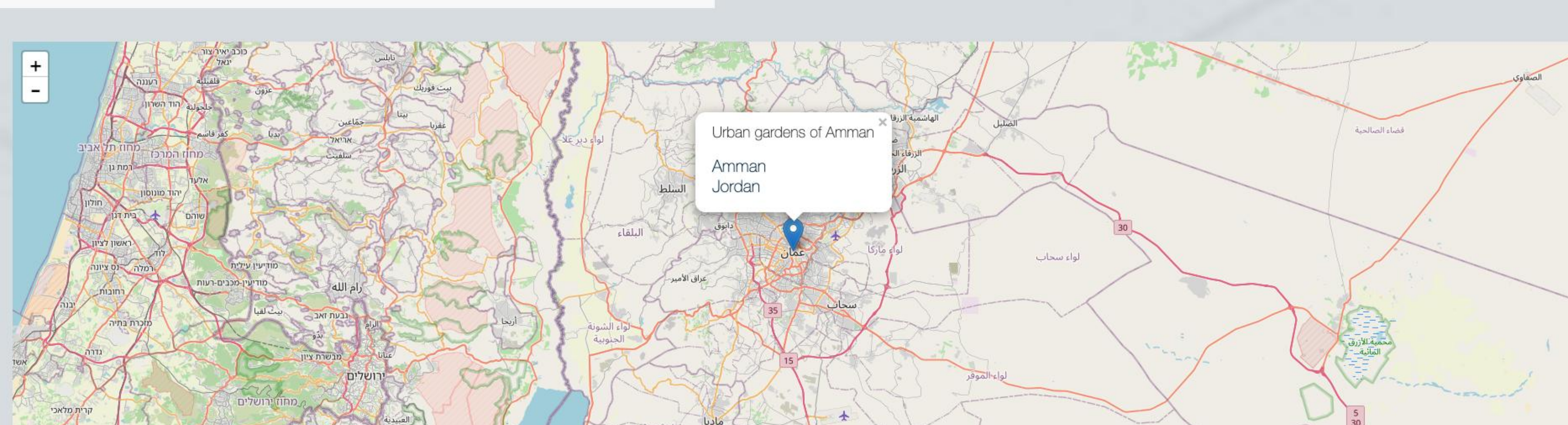
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