PRESS RELEASE
Launch of the first regional Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change brings an Arab perspective to collective climate action

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BAKU, Azerbaijan, November 15, 2024 — Foundations and civil society organizations working across the Arab region have pledged to take action on climate injustice by signing the Arab Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change (APCCC) today at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Launched by the Arab Foundations Forum (AFF) in collaboration with the global Philanthropy For Climate movement led by WINGS, and with support from the Ford Foundation, this Commitment represents a critical step towards addressing the economic, social, and environmental impacts of climate change from a uniquely Arab perspective. As the movement's first-ever regional commitment, it is designed to mobilize philanthropic resources, foster regional cooperation, and drive climate action across the Arab world, which is disproportionately vulnerable to climate impacts.

"The Arab region is warming nearly twice as fast as the global average, and low-income countries are particularly affected by the dire effects — including desertification, flooding, displacement, and hunger," says Naila Farouky, AFF CEO. "This Commitment showcases the power of collaboration between organizations as they come together in a strong Arab coalition to work towards a sustainable, low-carbon future that is fair and inclusive."

At last year's COP in Dubai, AFF announced it would lead the development of the regional commitment based on the framework of the International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change and adapted to the Arab context. Over the year that followed, a Working Group of one dozen philanthropic organizations operating in the region tailored the APCCC to serve as a guide to help organizations curb climate injustices as they continue to advance the public good.

"We're very excited about the regional Commitment and commend the Arab Foundations Forum for bringing Arab philanthropy together and creating a pathway towards addressing the climate emergency," says Erika Miller, Head of Climate at WINGS. "Only when we align strategies and work together, within and across borders, can our sector's impact be transformational towards a safer future for all people and the planet."

The Commitment is made up of seven pillars: Education and Empowerment, Commitment of Resources, Integration, Endowments and Assets, Operations, Advocacy and Policy Change, and Transparency and Accountability. It takes into account region-wide characteristics — such as Awqaf, the long-standing practice of faith-based institutionalized giving — while also acknowledging the Arab world is made up of countries that each have their own cultural, economic, and sociopolitical circumstances. The APCCC encourages organizations to implement the pillars in whatever way they can based on their capacity and resources.

With this Commitment, the Arab region joins a growing group of networks in the Philanthropy For Climate movement, including those based in Brazil, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. Together, they are catalyzing long-term, just, and equitable philanthropic action on climate change around the world, with over 800 foundations already committed globally. The first three signatories to the Arab Commitment are the King Hussein Foundation, the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD), and Greenpeace MENA.

“As an evidence-based philanthropic organization that seeks to reduce multidimensional poverty and empower agents of change, we are gravely concerned about the effects of extreme weather, resource scarcity, and the rising vulnerability to hostile environmental conditions affecting communities we serve,” said Laila Hosny, Executive Director of SFSD. “We see climate change as a crucial cross-cutting challenge [and] we look forward to further organizing and mobilizing resources towards realizing a higher collective resilience against climate change vulnerabilities.”

This launch of the Arab Philanthropy Commitment and pillars is the first phase in developing a comprehensive framework to help organizations across the region integrate climate action into their work. The Working Group will now turn to developing an Implementation Guide focused on the Arab region, with the aim of launching that document at COP30 in Brazil. The guide will outline suggested actions that organizations can take based on the seven pillars, inspiring and supporting each signatory on their climate journey.

“It’s been a long road so far, but there is more work to be done,” says AFF’s Deputy Director, Walid Nagi. “We encourage all Arab philanthropic organizations to sign the Commitment and start making changes that will help tackle climate injustice. Climate change is one of the most urgent problems facing the region today. We can combat it sustainably and fairly, but only if we do it together.”

For more information, please contact Walid Nagi, AFF Deputy Director at nagiw@arabfoundationsforum.org

About the Arab Foundations Forum

The Arab Foundations Forum (AFF) is a nonprofit membership-based association of philanthropic organizations, donors, funders, and other actors in the philanthropy sector, based or working in the Arab region. AFF was established in 2006 and has grown to include a regional network across the region, with members in more than a dozen countries and growing. Its vision is for an effective and strategic philanthropic sector in the Arab region that engages with all aspects of society towards growing social responsibility and investment while advancing the public good.

About WINGS

WINGS is the only global network of philanthropy support and development organizations. It is a community of more than 200 thought leaders and changemakers across 58 countries who are committed to growing and strengthening philanthropy to ensure that it reaches its fullest potential as a catalyst for social progress. WINGS is committed to ending inertia, breaking down silos, challenging conventional wisdom and creating an enabling environment for philanthropy to flourish. Its goal is to encourage collaboration and ignite potential – to rally philanthropic actors everywhere to build a more just, equitable and sustainable world.

APCCC Working Group

Secretariat