



BWOC D
Better World Organizator
for Community Development



2023

Annual Report

Introduction

Trnasforming the lives of women, girls, and youth from being vulnerable to become visionaries

In 2023, our organization grew stronger by turning challenges into opportunities for positive change. We stayed focused on supporting vulnerable groups, especially women, youth, and marginalized communities, by addressing important issues like protection, mental health, economic empowerment, climate action, and peacebuilding.

With the help of strong partnerships and community-led efforts, we carried out programs that met urgent needs and created a path for long-term progress. By supporting women's and girls' leadership, we showed our commitment to inclusion and innovation.

This depoet celebrates our shared achievements and the partnerships that made them possible. As we look ahead, we remain committed to building a more equitable and sustainable future for all.



“Transforming the lives of women, girls, and youth from being vulnerable to become visionaries”

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Iraq has faced slow reconstruction and development since the conflict with ISIS ended in 2017. The country struggles with devastated infrastructure, weak governance, security issues, sectarian tensions, and ongoing displacement. Social cohesion remains fragile, and attempts at reconciliation have been largely ineffective. Unemployment rose from 14% in 2016 to 15.6% in 2023.

Iraq is also highly vulnerable to climate change, suffering from prolonged heatwaves, drought, water scarcity, and increased disaster intensity, leading to further displacement, especially in central and southern regions.



Vulnerable Groups

Women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, and displaced people are among Iraq's most vulnerable populations. IDPs, refugees, and returnees, particularly those in critical shelter or lacking documentation, face significant challenges. Over 1.1 million IDPs remain, with a large portion residing in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).



Women and Girls

Women and girls in Iraq face deep-rooted discrimination and violence, exacerbated by weak law enforcement and societal norms that limit their economic participation and access to justice. Fear of ^{vulnerable} reporting violence and lack of awareness of legal protections further hinder their rights.



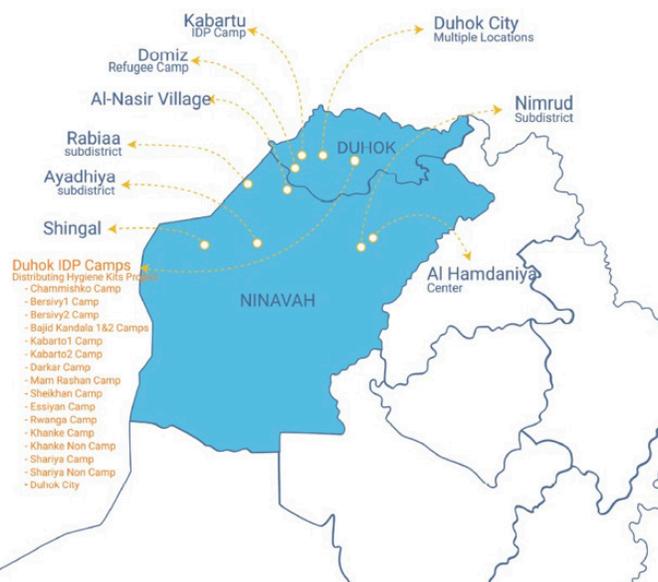
Youth

Youth aged 15–24, represent Iraq's largest demographic. They grapple with the aftermath of conflict, including disrupted education, limited job opportunities, and high unemployment. Despite growing digital activism, they face challenges in adapting to economic and social changes, highlighting the need for education, vocational training, and mental health support.

OUR PROGRAM AREAS



OUR TARGET LOCATIONS



OUR TARGETS IN 2023

TOTAL TARGETS



Direct
21,499
Total



In Direct
128,994
Total

SEGREGATED BY



7,746
Women



7,444
Girls



2,681
Men



3,628
Boys



1st PROJECT

Enhancing Safe Environment in Vulnerable Families from Host-community

Starting in September 2021, our project aimed to enhance safety for vulnerable families from the host community. We coordinated closely with the General Directorate of Care and Social Development and the General Directorate of Education in Duhok, conducting activities in their safespaces (social centers) and schools.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- Strong Collaboration and Coordination: Established robust partnerships with the General Directorate of Care and Social Development and the General Directorate of Education in Duhok, conducting all activities in their safe spaces (social centers) and schools.
- Parent Inclusion: Implemented awareness-raising and psychosocial support (PSS) programs, such as "Safe Families" to engage parents and enhance family cohesion.
- Family Counselling: Developed a specialized curriculum in collaboration with the Directorate of Care and Social Development and conducted Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions for government and BWO staff, facilitated by a hired specialist.
- Structured Psychosocial Programs: Offered a variety of structured psychosocial programs, including Youth Resilience, Adolescent Girls Toolkits, HEART (Healing and Education Through Art) Reading Clubs, and Robotic Clubs, to support the emotional and social well-being of Youth, Children and Adolescents.
- Business and Financial Support for Women: Provided business training using the "Get Ahead" program, along with financial support and coaching for women running small businesses, empowering them economically.



Through these efforts, the project successfully created a safer and more supportive environment for vulnerable families, promoting their well-being and empowerment.



2nd PROJECT

GBV prevention and response services for women and girl's returnee, IDPs, refugees and host community living in Mosul.

In July 2021, we launched a project focused on GBV (Gender-Based Violence) prevention and response services for women and girls who are returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and members of the host community.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2023

- Established and maintained safe spaces for women and girls, providing a secure environment for them to seek support and services.
- Implemented effective GBV case management services, ensuring that survivors received timely and appropriate assistance.
- Conducted numerous psychosocial support programs, helping women and girls heal and build resilience.
- Organized and facilitated vocational training sessions, empowering women and girls with skills for economic independence and self-sufficiency.
- Carried out extensive awareness-raising activities and programs addressing critical issues faced by women and girls, contributing to a shift in negative social norms.
- Strengthened the capacity of government and non-GBV actors on GBV core concepts, PSEA, and referral pathways, ensuring a well-informed and responsive support network.
- Established and maintained effective coordination with government entities, specifically schools, to conduct activities benefiting students and teachers, fostering a supportive community environment.



Through this project, we aimed to create safe, supportive, and empowering environments for women and girls, ensuring they have the resources and support needed to thrive and overcome the challenges posed by GBV.



3rd PROJECT

Strengthening Women's Rights Movements on the Women, Peace and Security agenda in three fragile contexts

In August 2022, with Care Iraq we launched a project to empower Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) in Ninewe. Our main goal is to increase their influence on the UNSCR 1325 agenda on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) at local, national, and multi-country levels.

This project aims to strengthen the strategies, capacities, and networks of WROs and excluded groups, helping them to organize, participate, and influence decision-making spaces related to the WPS agenda, Iraq national action plan.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2023

- Strengthened institutional capacity, increased resource mobilization, and improved strategic plans of Women's Rights Organizations to be more representative of and accountable to excluded groups of women and girls.
- Enhanced engagement of Women's Rights Organizations and excluded groups of women and girls with decision-makers on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) priorities.
- Fortified networks of Women's Rights Organizations and excluded groups of women and girls to exchange and amplify learning on the WPS agenda at local, national, and multi-country levels.

Through this project, we aim to ensure that WROs have the tools and resources to engage with decision-makers, improve their strategic plans, and work together to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for women and girls in the targeted regions.



4th PROJECT

Empowering Young Females Skills in Technology for Sustainable Development in IDP and Host Communities in Duhok Governorate

From October 1st to December 31st 2023, our project aimed to empower young females from IDP and host communities in Duhok Governorate through technology and environmental education, promoting their participation in sustainable development.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- **Diverse Participation:** Empowered 20 young females from Kabartu 1 & 2 camps and Duhok, with diverse religious backgrounds (Yazidi, Christian, and Muslim).

- **Technology Training:** Conducted a 25-day intensive program on robot creation, coding, and phone applications using the LEGO Mindstorms Robot Inventor kit, sparking interest in STEM fields.

- **Climate Change Education:** Provided the young girls with a training on climate change, covering terminologies, causes, effects, and eco-friendly practices.

- **Mobile Application Development:** Developed a mobile app with the girls, featuring climate change information and awareness-raising short films in Kurdish, aimed at educating children.

- **Delegation Visit:** Hosted a German Consulate delegation from Erbil, showcasing the project's impact and engaging with participants.



Through these achievements, the project successfully promoted technology skills, environmental awareness, and social cohesion among young females in Duhok Governorate.



5th PROJECT

Strengthening the Resilience of Kabartu 1 and 2 Camps Community through Psychosocial Support Center.

Starting on January 15th 2023, the "Strengthening the Resilience of Kabartu 1 & 2 camps Community through Psychosocial Support Center" project achieved significant milestones in delivering comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2023

- Enhanced Emotional Well-being: Conducted drawing and music activities, providing creative outlets for emotional expression and stress relief.
- Support for the Elderly: Established an Elderly Persons Support Group, fostering social connections and providing emotional support.
- Increased Mental Health Awareness: Raised awareness on mental health and suicide prevention through group discussions and educational sessions, reducing stigma and promoting understanding.
- Delivered Psychological First Aid (PFA) training to equip participants with skills to support peers in crisis.



- **Language Skills Development:** Offered informal learning sessions in Kurdish, Arabic, and English, improving language proficiency and communication skills among participants.
- **Cultural Celebrations:** Organized celebrations for religious, national, and international occasions, enhancing cultural understanding and community cohesion.
- **Handicrafts and Skills Training:** Provided handcraft activities and embroidery courses, developing practical skills and fostering creativity.
- **Physical Health and Teamwork:** Organized sports activities, including football, basketball, and volleyball, promoting physical health and teamwork.
- **Life Skills Training:** Delivered life skills training sessions, equipping participants with essential skills to navigate daily challenges and improve their quality of life.
- **Support for Young Children:** Implemented the Little Friend Program, engaging young children in supportive activities and providing a nurturing environment for their development.
- **Community and Volunteer Engagement:** Actively involved the community in the design, planning, and implementation of activities, ensuring their needs and preferences were addressed.

Encouraged volunteer participation in community-based activities, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration.

- **Vocational Training:** Provided vocational training to enhance participants' skills and promote economic opportunities, empowering



Through these achievements, the project successfully promoted mental health, social cohesion, and community resilience among IDPs in Kabartu 1 and 2 Camps, contributing to their overall well-being and empowerment.

6th PROJECT

Strengthening the Capacity of Young Women for Meaningful Participation in Decision Making in their Communities

In partnership with Cordaid we implemented this project where we aimed at empowering young women to actively participate in decision-making and conflict prevention within their families and communities. This project, spanning IDP and host communities, focused on enhancing the leadership capabilities of women and raising awareness about the critical role women play in these processes.

TODAY A READER
TOMORROW A LEADER



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2023

- Capacity Building Training: Training sessions for young women across five target locations (Duhok, Sarsink, Sheladiz, Kabartu and Khanke camps. Training topics included life skills (communication, problem-solving, decision-making, leadership, critical thinking), conflict resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, and UNSCR 1325.
- Formation of Women Councils: Established active women councils in each location, comprising five selected women per council, to participate in decision-making and peace processes.
- Advanced Training for Council Members: Provided advanced training for selected women, covering advocacy, community and resource mobilization, networking, teamwork, leadership, community development, and participatory approaches.
- Community-Based Initiatives: Supported each women council in implementing one community-based initiative aligned with INAP 1325, targeting at least 50 community members per initiative.
- Outreach and Awareness: Designed and printed leaflets about UNSCR 1325 and the role of women in decision-making. Conducted door-to-door outreach in each location to disseminate these messages.
- Closing Event: Organized a closing event where the five councils presented the impact of the project on their skills and the outcomes of their initiatives to relevant stakeholders. This event also facilitated the sharing of lessons learned and success stories for future collaboration.



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Through this project, we created an environment where young women empowered to lead and make significant contributions to decision-making and conflict prevention in their communities. By building their skills and fostering supportive networks, we sought to ensure that women are recognized as key actors in shaping their communities and addressing conflicts effectively.

7th PROJECT

Enhancing Stability, Well-being, and Resilience of Women and Girls 15+ and Conflict-Affected Communities in Iraq

We have signed a three-year partnership with Norwegian People Aid. Launched in December 2023 and running through September 2026, this project is focusing on laying the groundwork during its first year.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2023

- Completed comprehensive preparations for the project, setting the stage for effective implementation.
- Established foundational structures and processes to ensure the successful delivery of mitigating violence against women and girls response services, economic development opportunities, and stabilization efforts.
- Developed strategic plans to enhance access to psychosocial support and economic opportunities for women and girls in Mosul, and to empower women in Sinjar for stabilization contributions.

These initial steps are crucial for achieving the project's goals in the coming years.



8th PROJECT

Provision of Income Generation Opportunities for Vulnerable Families in the Field of Agricultural for Economic Development

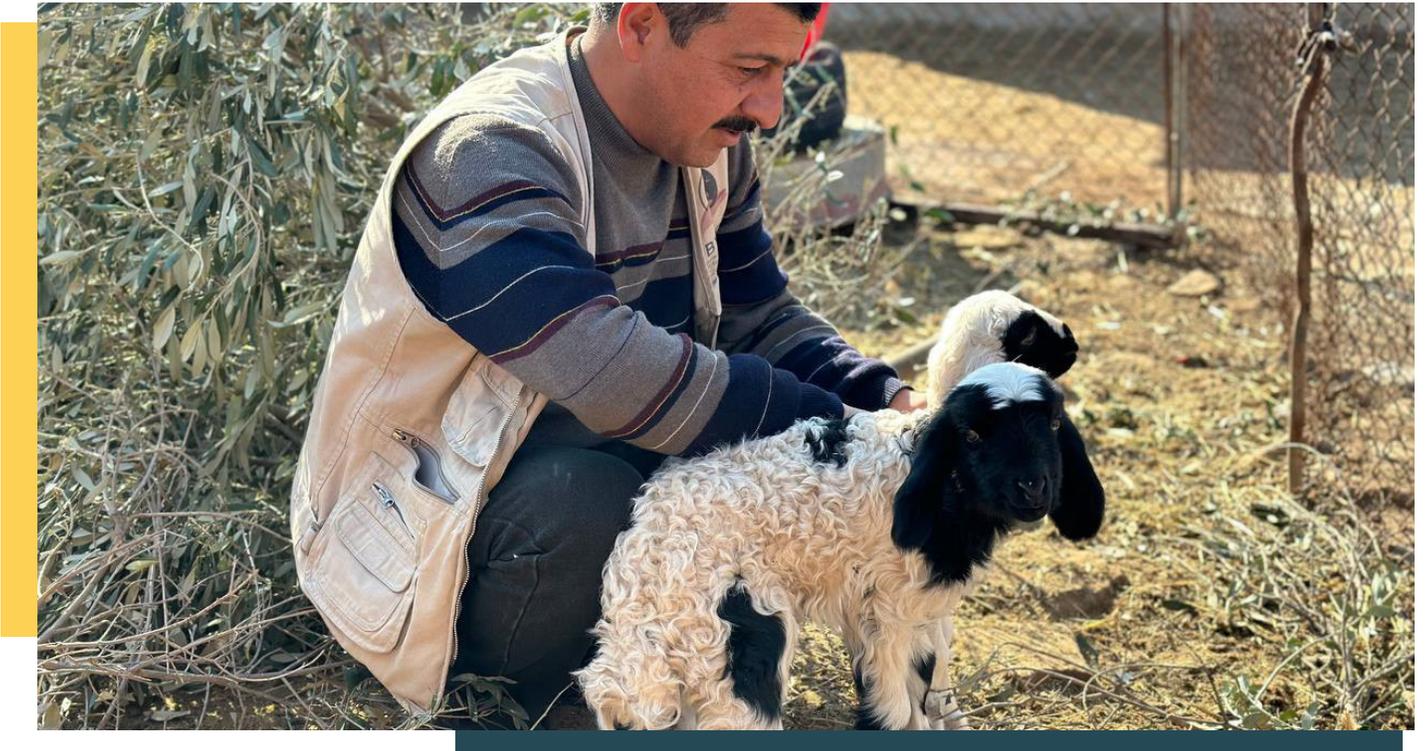
Through this project provided income generation opportunities for vulnerable families in Kar Khosh and Nasir villages through sustainable agricultural development. The project focused on utilizing natural resources efficiently, building capacity, and fostering social cohesion.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PROJECT

- Rehabilitated agricultural infrastructure: Reconstructed 47 farms in Kar Khosh and Nasir villages that were damaged, allowing farmers to restart their agricultural activities.
- Sustainable resource use: Promoted efficient use of natural resources such as water and soil by training farmers in composting, biopesticides, and water harvesting techniques.
- Capacity building for women and youth: Delivered technical training and capacity-building programs to women and youth, enhancing their skills in agriculture and creating opportunities for economic empowerment.

- **Social cohesion:** Fostered community collaboration by creating knowledge-sharing networks and hosting field days, where farmers could share best practices and learn from each other.
- **Sustainability:** Developed detailed agricultural plans and conducted assessments to ensure long-term sustainability of agricultural activities in both villages.



Through this project, we empowered vulnerable families by promoting sustainable agricultural practices, supporting infrastructure rehabilitation, and strengthening community bonds to ensure long-term economic development.

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN 2023

In 2023, we were pleased to contribute to the well-being of children and families through several additional activities despite of our specific project agreement with our donors . As following:

- Under the theme "Welcome Back to School," we collected donations and distributed essential school supply packs to 160 students at a primary school in Duhok. Earlier in the year, we also provided 40 school packs to participants in our various activities, ensuring they had the necessary resources for their education.

We organized donation to purchase Eid clothes for children in Duhok and held campaigns to collect and distribute clothing to those in need. These small efforts aimed to bring a bit of joy and support to families within our community.



These efforts were aimed at making a positive impact in our community. We believe that every child deserves to grow up in a safe and supportive environment, and we are dedicated to continuing our work to support children and families. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to their well-being and are committed to doing what we can to help those in need

VOICES FROM THE FILED

Before I started sessions with the psychiatrist and began therapy sessions, I felt as if I was barely alive, just existing. Nothing interested me, nothing made me happy, and I had no hope for the future. Suicidal thoughts overwhelmed me constantly. But after seeking help, I feel like I've been given a second chance. When I reflect on those dark days, it feels strange now—I see a huge improvement in my life.

Joining the sewing course has further strengthened this change. It gave me a reason to wake up each morning, excited to learn new skills and meet new people. The course not only helped me grow but also brought me comfort and a renewed sense of purpose."

Sumaya, 35 Years Old woman, Participant from Kabartu2 Camp



"With the support of the organization, I finally felt safe enough to express my feelings and share experiences I had never dared to before. Opening about the hardships I endured brought me relief, and it was comforting to be listened to and understood. This encouragement gave me the strength to take an important step forward. I made a vow that my four children—two daughters and two sons—will never have to endure the same struggles I did."

Hamida, born in 1985, is a mother of four living in Badriya, a neighborhood



"I joined the Adolescent Girls Toolkit program for eight days, while my mother attended sessions for two days. Through the program, I started individual support sessions with the caseworker, where I shared the challenges, I face at home. These sessions have really changed how I feel emotionally and brought me a sense of comfort because of the support I received.

I am thankful to Better World Organization and UNICEF for providing this help. They gave me a safe space to express my thoughts and work through my emotions. By sharing and learning, I began to see the possibility of change in my life, and I am grateful for every opportunity that has helped me navigate these challenges."



Reem, born in 2010, lives in Badriya, a neighborhood in West Mosul.



"The exhibition of my paintings, held during an important event organized by BW OCD, was a milestone in my artistic journey. It drew a diverse audience from both inside and outside the camp, and the positive feedback I received were incredibly encouraging. This experience marked a significant achievement in turning my dreams into reality, filling me with pride and a sense of accomplishment

Alia, a 33 years old girl from Kabartu, participated in art therapy sessions.

"When the robotics course started, I was excited but also a little nervous. During the course, I learned how to build and program a robot, and met new friends from different religions and backgrounds. We discovered that, as young people, we share the same interests and face the same challenges. I used to be shy about speaking in front of others, but that changed when I presented our robots at the Women's Day event. Although I was nervous before going on stage, I kept telling myself, 'I can do it.' Speaking in front of delegates from the German and Dutch Consulates, the Governor of Duhok, and a large audience made me feel proud and confident."

Banita ,17 Years old girl from Duhok.



"I am Fatah, a 30-year-old man battling cancer, which has made it difficult for me to work. Living with my brother left me feeling like a burden, leading to a significant loss of self-worth. My health struggles intertwined with family issues, affecting my self-esteem and causing conflicts at home. When I reached out to the organization team, I was connected with a social worker who helped me manage stress, improve my communication, and navigate family dynamics. They also provided financial support for necessities, which eased some of my immediate pressures."

Fatah, a 30 years old man, Cancer Patient from Duhok

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Global Recognition

Our efforts were acknowledged at an international level, our director participated in One Young World Summit in Belfast, North Ireland as a delegate speaker. Through her speech she presented the significant work Better World organization is doing to transform the lives of women, girls and youth from being vulnerable to becoming visionaries.



Procedures and Capacity Building

We improved our procedures to align with advanced standards, ensuring greater efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, we supported our employees and volunteers in participating in various capacity-building programs, both nationally and internationally.

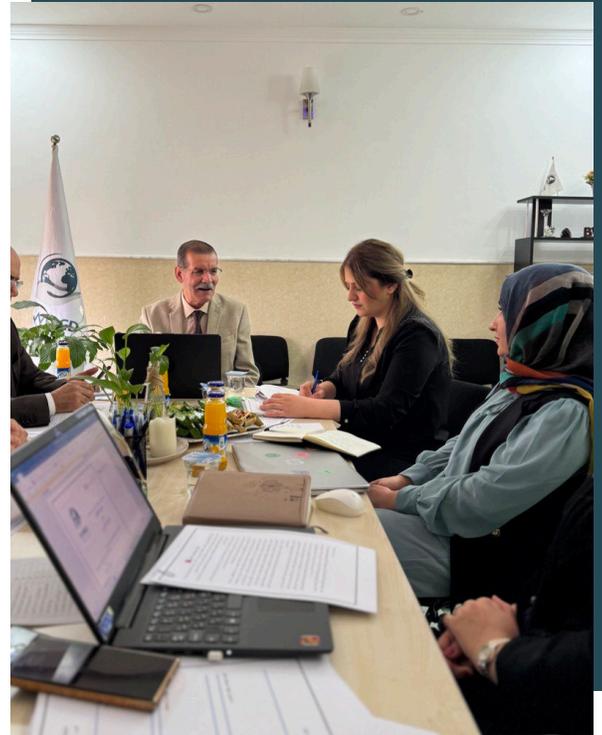
Successful Events Organized

This year, we successfully organized three key events: International Women's Day (IWD) celebrations and impactful closing events for two of our outstanding projects.



STAKEHOLDER

We strengthened our relationships through active coordination with government bodies and our memberships in various coalitions and networks, enhancing our collaborative efforts for community development.



STRATEGIC PARTICIPATION

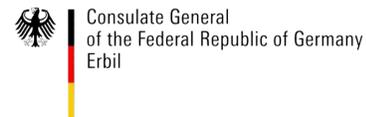
We were selected as one of only five organizations in the MENA region to participate in the International Medical Corps program funded by USAID/BHA "The Strengthening Operational Capacity of Local and National NGOs for Better Response and Coordination During Humanitarian Crises" project, aimed at enhancing the capacity of local and national NGOs.



Network Expansion

Our organization has successfully broadened its network while maintaining ongoing partnerships with UNICEF, SOS, HIA, Care, and IOM. We have formed new collaborations with donors, including Medica Mondiale, the German Consulate in Erbil, and Norwegian People's Aid. The positive feedback and appreciation we've received from all our partners have made this year even more remarkable.

Award from the Duhok Governor: Better World Organization received an award from the Duhok Governor in recognition of our impactful work in the community.



We are thankful for the unwavering support of our donors, partners, employees, volunteers, and participants. Their passion and commitment to making a positive change were crucial to our success.



BWOOD

Better World Organization
for Community Development

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Phone: +964 (751) 548 1650

Website : www.betterworldngo.org

Email: betterworld@betterworldngo.org

Address: Nahing Road, Malta, Duhok, Kurdistant, Iraq