

Build Hope, Earth Prize 2026 Middle East Winners, featured in UNRWA video at UN conference in New York



▲ Video still of Tala Mousa and Farah Mousa, of Build Hope, featured in UNRWA video

- 17-year-old Tala Mousa and 15-year-old Farah Mousa are the founders of Build Hope - Palestine
- The project turns rubble into reusable blocks, employing the principles of circularity and bringing young people together to rebuild their communities
- The sisters received mentoring and resources to develop their project and were named Winners for the Middle East region in May 2026
- The sisters were featured in an UNRWA video shown during the 2026 UNRWA Pledging Conference at UN Headquarters in New York

GENEVA, Switzerland - Sisters 17-year-old Tala Mousa and 15-year-old Farah Mousa, who are the founders of Build Hope - Palestine and The Earth Prize 2026 Middle East Winners, have been featured in a video campaign by the United Nations Relief and

Works Agency (UNRWA). The video was presented during the 2026 UNRWA Pledging Conference at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The video opens by introducing Build Hope and the sisters' story as The Earth Prize winners, including footage of Tala and Farah transforming rubble into reusable blocks. It then highlights their connection to UNRWA, noting that both sisters studied at UNRWA schools before showcasing the organisation's work.



Watch the video of Tala and Farah on UNRWA's instagram

[instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com/unrwa)

The feature has been shared across social media and was presented at the UNRWA Pledging Conference, held on 30 June 2026, which brought together UN Member States and senior UN officials. The conference took place in the presence of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, President of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly Annalena Baerbock, and UNRWA Commissioner-General ad interim Christian Saunders.

Tala and Farah developed 'Build Hope - Palestine' as participants in The Earth Prize 2026. Living in Gaza amid ongoing conflict, and after their house was bombed, the sisters set out to develop a practical solution that could work within the constraints around them. Their project transforms rubble from damaged buildings into reusable, non-load-bearing blocks for applications such as garden beds, pavements, and partitions. Using simple, locally available materials, the process involves crushing and sieving debris, then mixing it with binders such as clay, ash, or glass powder before moulding and drying it into blocks. By giving building rubble a second life, the project reduces waste while creating a practical new use for materials that would otherwise be discarded.



After submitting the concept to The Earth Prize, the team was selected as one of 35 Scholar teams across the world to receive mentoring and resources to develop their project further. In May 2026, they were named Regional Winners for the Middle East and won \$12.5K to scale their project.

Now Build Hope aims to run workshops for at least 100 young people to produce at least 200 blocks, while giving them the skills to share the process and reach more than 1,000 people. Designed to be scalable, the project is hoped to be replicated in other regions experiencing conflict.

The UNRWA campaign adds another milestone to the sisters' journey since developing Build Hope - from creating a practical solution, to receiving international recognition and sharing their story with a global audience.

About The Earth Prize

The Earth Foundation is a Geneva-based non-profit that empowers, educates and inspires young people to tackle environmental challenges. Founded in response to the 2019 student-led climate rallies, it launched its flagship initiative, The Earth Prize, the world's largest environmental competition and 'ideas incubator' for young people. The competition aims to inspire and empower the next generation of environmental innovators, supporting participants with the tools they need to develop eco solutions for real-world impact, including one-on-one mentoring, learning resources and \$100,000 shared funding for the winners. Since 2019, The Earth Prize has reached over 21,000 students across 169 countries and territories, and awarded over \$500,000.

The Earth Prize: <https://www.theearthprize.org/>

The Earth Foundation: <https://www.earth-foundation.org/>

Impact PDF: <https://tinyurl.com/tep2026>

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