Water and Environment Sector

JORDAN WATER MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE (WMI)

# BACKGROUND

**Project Snapshot**

Duration: 2016-2021

Total Funding: USD $29.5 Million, plus $6 Million available for equipment and tools

Geographic Coverage: Nationwide, including Amman, Zarqa, Yarmouk Water Company service area (Ajloun, Irbid, Mafraq and Jerash), Aqaba, Ma’an, and the Jordan Valley.

Implemented by: Tetra Tech

Subcontractors: Orient Engineering Consulting and Design; Jordan Social Marketing Center; SEGURA Consulting; and Water for Life Solutions.

Focus: Improved water sector management and governance

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Jordan has one of the lowest levels of per capita water resource availability in the world. In addition to water scarcity and over-extraction, non-revenue water (NRW) in Jordan’s water utilities is estimated to exceed 50%. The influx of refugees from regional conflicts and increasing energy prices have complicated sector challenges and placed additional burden on the currently stressed water and wastewater infrastructure. Even the arrival of Disi aquifer water poses challenges, as old networks strain under increased pressure and operate on an intermittent basis. New challenges pile on top of daily duties and water sector leaders operate in crisis mode, unable to address systemic technical and institutional challenges. The World Health Organization (WHO) projects Jordan will enter a state of “extreme water poverty” by 2025 if no major advancements are made. Extreme water poverty will affect living conditions, increase resource management challenges, and can lead to social unrest. A well-managed, performance-oriented response is needed.

The Government of Jordan (GOJ) has formally committed to improve efficiency and reduce financial losses in the sector as part of agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) has taken bold steps to decommission illegal wells, renew focus on NRW including high profile prosecution of illegal connections, upgrade wastewater treatment plants, and pursue new supply options in collaboration with international partners. Through the Water Management Initiative (WMI) Activity, USAID/Jordan is capitalizing on this window of opportunity to support the GOJ in implementing its ambitious National Water Strategy (2016-2025) through provision of technical assistance to achieve critical short term priorities and longer-term reform goals.

# project overview

The Water Management Initiative (WMI) Activity supports the GOJ to address its most pressing needs, including compliance with IMF commitments, while developing critical capacity, improving sector performance, and developing broad-based support for immediate and longer-term reform. WMI’s purpose is to support the GOJ to achieve measurable improvement and greater sustainability of the water sector. An emphasis is given to strengthening preconditions to change, such as building service provider autonomy, increasing performance-based accountability, and moving toward commercialization at the service level, all enabled by strong public outreach. It is built on the understanding that transformational and sustainable change must originate from broad-based local support in a process owned by all relevant stakeholders. WMI is partnering with the GOJ to meet these challenges through planning and implementing a suite of focused, catalyzing activities that a) produce substantial improvement in the water sector over the five-year project life, b) can be implemented under existing Jordanian law and national policy, and c) lay the groundwork for broader sector reform.

Through targeted technical assistance and capacity building, WMI supports implementation of improved utility management practices, including reduced NRW and improved cost recovery. WMI also supports improved groundwater and irrigation management, enhanced wastewater treatment performance and water quality protection, sector regulation and governance, and increased water use efficiency. Capacity building, behavior change and strategic communications activities support all facets of program implementation, including a focus on gender mainstreaming and youth engagement.

WMI works in close collaboration with GOJ through the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI), the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and its Performance Management Unit (PMU), the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), water utilities including Miyahuna, Zarqa Water Authority (ZWA), Yarmouk Water Company (YWC), and Aqaba Water (AW), Water User Associations (WUA) and civil society organizations. The Activity collaborates with other GOJ ministries, agencies, and municipal authorities, as well as other bilateral and multi-lateral donor programs.

# Activities

The four WMI Components and primary activities include the following:

**Water Supply Systems:** Support development and implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan to improve YWC’s financial performance; support implementation of the IMF Structural Benchmark Action Plan to Reduce Water Sector Losses; support improvement of ZWA’s utility’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); and improve operational performance of Ma’an Water Administration.

**Water Conservation and Demand Management**: Support GOJ to strengthen utility demand-side management and support behavior change communication (BCC) in the sector.

**Water Sector Governance:** Support water sector policy development and implementation; enhance utility internal governance and overall governance environment to improve performance; support improvement of irrigation management; develop and support sector regulation; and support the integration of strategic communications, advocacy, gender inclusion, and youth engagement within the water sector.

**Protection of Water Supply:** Develop a groundwater management framework and sustainable monitoring systems; strengthen wastewater treatment performance and compliance; and improve water quality management.

# Expected results

Key results of the WMI Activity are expected to include:

* Achievement of ambitious targets for increased revenue, cost recovery, and NRW reduction for the water sector at large and within individual utilities (notably ZWA and YWC) while improving service quality.
* Improved utility management and governance with capacity to sustain performance improvements.
* Institutionalized process for planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and improving the National Water Strategy and Policy.
* Improved irrigation management, governance, and cost recovery in the Jordan Valley.
* Increased understanding of critical water scarcity issues among the public, and improved capacity and emphasis on strategic communications within GOJ institutions and service providers.
* Enhanced water use efficiency and increased reuse of treated wastewater.
* Increased number of women and youth engaged in water sector planning and management.
* Improved wastewater treatment efficiency by reducing operational costs and improving quality of effluent.
* Improved standards, procedures, and capacity in groundwater management at lower cost, along with increased awareness of groundwater scarcity, increased enforcement actions, and reduced over-extraction.
* Adoption of WHO Water Safety Planning (WSP) model within Jordanian water utilities.