



Avoiding Conflicts over Water

An adequate supply of clean water in local communities in Jordan will create stable living conditions for all residents.

Jordan



Project name	Supporting Participatory Resource Management to Stabilize the Situation in Host Communities
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing organisation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Project region	Ten municipalities in the governorate of Irbid and Jerash camp
Lead executing agency	Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI)
National partners	Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ), Yarmouk Water Company (YWC), Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD)
Duration	July 2015 to December 2022
Volume	11.397 million euros

Water losses fuel conflicts

Between the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011 and the beginning of 2019 around 13.1 million people have been uprooted out of a pre-war population of just over 20 million. 6.6 million Syrians are displaced within their own country, while around 5.67 million have fled Syria, mostly to neighbouring countries. By August 2020, Syria's southern neighbour, Jordan, had officially registered more than 650,000 Syrians, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). More than 80 per cent of these refugees are living outside official refugee camps.

Host communities have to provide infrastructure for refugees which often creates almost insurmountable challenges. Providing an adequate supply of clean water, in particular, pushes many communities to their limits: Jordan is one of the most arid countries in the world. Its water supply system is outdated, poorly maintained and not fit for

purpose in many places. In some locations, up to 70 per cent of water is being lost as a result. The resulting shortages were already a challenge for municipalities when the system had only to supply Jordanian households. The arrival of refugees has substantially increased the number of consumers, and this is placing impossible burdens on municipalities. The already scarce supply of water now has to meet the needs of both the local Jordanian population and refugees, bringing a risk of further conflict in the communities affected.

Access to water for all residents

A particularly high number of Syrian refugees live alongside the local population in northern Jordan, near the border with Syria. In ten target municipalities, a project is being implemented on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to ensure that all of the 63,000 residents – among them almost 12,000 refugees – have adequate access to water. The implementing organisation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, is ensuring that dilapidated water networks are repaired, that modern water storage systems are installed in private households and that ramps allow access for all to water supply in public institutions. These improved living conditions benefit both the Syrian refugees and the local Jordanian population, preventing future conflict between the two groups.



GIZ

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Residents in the ten municipalities now also have an opportunity to become involved in their own long-term water supply. They are taking part in regular meetings with the responsible water utility and Jordanian politicians to discuss the future construction measures needed. Representatives of all groups in society are invited to play their part in ensuring that water is distributed equitably across communities and in helping to prevent conflict over this scarce resource. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contributes to the project implementation in one of the municipalities, Bait Ras. If the initiative is successful, the aim is to roll it out across the country.

An additional SDC contribution was allocated to improve water management and hygiene at household level in Jerash camp and improve access to WASH facilities for vulnerable persons with disabilities. As a result, 15,444 residents benefited from the implementation of project interventions.

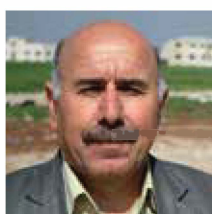


Results: New systems save water and money

Repairs to water networks will almost halve losses in the municipalities concerned. Through the previous phases the network rehabilitation and installation of water saving and storage equipment saved local communities around 505,000 cubic meters of water a year and the equivalent of some 1,000,000 euros. With the completion of the current phase 7,300 modern roof-top water tanks, 9,800 water-saving devices and 1,400 water-saving toilets will be installed, thereby improving the water use efficiency in more than 75 per cent of the private households in the project municipalities.

The project is also supporting more than 75 employees of the water utility involved in the project. In-service training is equipping employees of the state-run Yarmouk Water Company, for example, to improve the supply to local communities, to plan supply networks and minimize water losses. In all project measures, special consideration is given to those with special needs, such as children and people with disabilities.

A unique project in Foa'arah



Fayeze Al Hmoud and his family fled their home in Daraa in Syria when the war broke out. For the past four years, he and his wife, their children and their grandchildren have been living in Foa'arah in Jordan. The family finds it difficult to gain access to water. Old and dilapidated water pipes in the municipality in which they live mean that running water is a rarity, as Fayeze Al Hmoud explains:

'We get running water for just a few hours every 10 days. While the water is on, we have to try to do our laundry and clean the house but also to fill our small water tank, which is our only source of water when the main supply is off. Repairing the network and installing more tanks is improving the water supply and making our lives easier. The striking thing about the project is that it is not just improving the infrastructure. All those living in the community – Jordanians and Syrians – get together round the table and discuss the challenges we face in Foa'arah. To start with, we didn't really talk about anything other than the water problems, but after a while, these meetings have started to help us feel more and more like a community.'

Fayeze Al Hmoud, Foa'arah, Jordan

The project is part of the BMZ special initiative 'Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees', which provides short-term support to refugees and their host communities. In the long term, sustainable measures are designed to eliminate the structural causes of displacement, such as social inequality and lack of prospects. This project helps to provide water for refugees and host communities and promotes social cohesion, health and sustainable development.

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Edited by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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ment and Cooperation (SDC)

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Design
creative republic,
Frankfurt

Photos: © GIZ

As at
November 2020