



Jordan

Insights Worth Pondering

The third EMPOWERS year witnessed a wide range of activities in the Jordan country programme: Local water development strategies were finalized while significant progress was made in the governorate water strategy and governorate information management system; a capacity building programme was organized for stakeholders from CBOs; work on participatory water planning cycle has started in three new selected local communities; first group of pilot projects in the three "old" communities was implemented; stakeholders and partners took part in several EMPOWERS and non-EMPOWERS events and workshops.

The rich and diverse nature of the third year activities was so informative that it left an impact on planning for the final phases of the project. Among the insights provided by these activities:

- Planning takes a lot of time and people do not always fully accept to volunteer in such a process, unless they find a clear role for them combined with a personal benefit. Pilot projects make it more appealing to them to participate.
- Government employees can understand the complexities of procedures (tendering process) and can deal with a long and challenging process but local community members are not familiar with this issue and simply expect to go on with the plans and then implement directly. Long process and complicated procedures influence in a negative way the locals' trust in the planning and the team ability to guarantee the funding of community's proposed projects.
- Women are more committed to participate in such a planning process. They find it interesting to develop their own plans and spend time on useful matters. Many of them sought to present to the project team ideas for micro projects that need funding.
- Local CBOs commitment to their strategic plans seemed stronger than that of government employees. They can feel the benefits that they will gain like tangible outcomes and strong relationships with government officials. Government employees are less interested because there are already multiple plan offers for projects, and many donors propose and implement different methodologies. They argue that they take some tools from each suitable methodology and incorporate them into the existing systems.

- The participatory strategic planning at the governorate level is a very useful tool to increase communication and information flows between government departments.
- Working on establishing a new CBO is not a simple matter, but takes a long time and hard decisions. Resistance to change was so hard sometimes that the project team decided to stop working with a community facing deep internal conflicts. The intervention and tolerance of some young people in the community, however, has helped the team to endure and continue till they reached a situation where the CBO became ready and willing to work for the common good.
- A participatory approach cannot be achieved unless suitable skills are being acquired such as facilitation, negotiation, appreciation of information, the art of dialogue and acceptance of others. These skills can be acquired during the process but need a lot of patience and understanding of the local customs and



of power relations. It needs a good level of trust and respect for the working team.

- There is a general lack of capacity, for the collection and assessment of data, for their transformation into useful information and for their dissemination. There is also need for improved coordination of environmental, demographic, social and developmental data and of information activities at the intermediate and national levels.

Water Management Information System in Balqa Governorate

Goal statement

Balqa Governorate will have efficient management information system to support evidence-based decision making at all levels and enhance transparency and excellence among its stakeholders.



The first pilot project at the governorate level was the development of a water management information system (WMIS), consisting of all information related to water issues.

This system shall increase the efficiency of the management and planning processes, enable data transfer horizontally and vertically, and improve the decision making processes through stakeholders dialogue and concerted actions and participatory water planning cycle approaches.

In the past months, important emphasis has been given to strengthening the institutional frameworks in the Balqa governorate and improve coordination and planning by identifying roles and responsibilities, adopting a joint planning framework, agreeing to share information and work collaboratively. Moreover, the capacities of different stakeholders at the governorate and national levels were built as to be capable to use EMPOWERS approaches and to develop and implement the Governorate Water Development Strategy and the WMIS.

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