

GIZ Gender Competition 2016

GIZ Water Program Palestine



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1 | Promoting Gender Equality

The importance of involving women and men in provision, management, and safeguarding of water is recognized globally. Therefore the GIZ Water Program in Palestine includes **gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in all activities** and supports key partners in mainstreaming gender in the water sector.

The Israeli occupation and its various policies, controlling and prohibiting access to land and water of the Palestinians, are the most important factors for the **degradation of the environment and the scarcity of the water resources**. Arduous coordination and agreement processes with the Israeli authorities are partially responsible for the lack of environmentally compatible sanitation systems in many localities which create health risks and adversely impact the environment.

Despite the challenging conditions under the Israeli occupation, the Palestinian Authority, the civil society and various international organizations have strived to improve the situation in the water sector. Even though **Palestinian women play an essential role in the water sector in Palestine, their role is still mainly at the household level. In leadership and management in the water sector the role of women has yet to be strengthened.**

In 2010, the GIZ Water Program supported a **baseline study** to assess gender-related challenges in the water sector in Palestine. The study revealed that women are highly underrepresented in the sector. Only 8 % of the employees at water service providers are female. Moreover, only 2% of these women reach the management level and none of them the top-management. Challenges encountered by women are mainly apparent in the stigmatization and exclusion of jobs due to a traditional division of labor. Further obstacles are lower salaries for same jobs, limited access to training opportunities and information as well as lower participation in decision making processes. Women's needs, priorities and capabilities are not given sufficient attention by decision makers. Furthermore, the evaluation of the institutions policies revealed a lack of gender-sensitive tools and mechanisms and that guarantee a mainstreaming of gender participation.

Based on the study results, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and other relevant ministries developed a **National Gender Strategy** for the environmental sector with focus on water and solid waste. The objectives were formulated on three levels:

- i. **Policy Level:** promotion of gender-responsive policies
- ii. **Institutional Level:** promotion of gender equality in sector institutions
- iii. **Community Level:** women empowerment in decision making processes with regards to project planning, implementation and monitoring

In November 2012 the Palestinian National Cabinet of Ministers endorsed the strategy entitled "**Gender Strategy for the Environment Sector with Emphasis on Water and Solid Waste 2013 – 2017**".

After achieving this milestone the Ministry of Women's Affairs led a steering committee which consisted of the main sector stakeholders to develop two action plans: one for the water sector and another for the solid waste. After initial difficulties in the implementation, in May 2014 **GIZ supported the steering committee** to organize a reflection workshop in order to revive the dialogue. The workshop allowed stakeholder to redefine the action plans, set priorities and focus on practical approaches towards their implementation. GIZ support also enabled the steering committee focus on the needs of potential partners in the implementation.

As a result, six of the largest Palestinian water service providers declared their willingness to implement pilot activities. Results were presented during a workshop in February 2015 with an active participation of all relevant stakeholders and the GIZ Water Program. When the **operational plan for 2015** was developed, all partners committed to its implementation. The intervention area covers water institutions in the **West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip**. Especially the active participation of the Gaza Strip stakeholders, despite their challenging conditions, is highly appreciated.

The implementation of the gender activities in the water sector are conducted through a technical steering committee called “**Gender-Follow-Up-Committee**”. Their members are governmental institutions, service providers and representative of the civil society. The committee is led by the **Palestinian Water Authority**. In cooperation with GIZ, they raise awareness for a better involvement of women and create sensibility for gender issues on the management and technical level of the water providers.

These are the **highlights of activities in 2015** supported by the GIZ Water Program Palestine:

- In June, GIZ Water Program Palestine arranged a practical training course for Palestinian water service providers on “Gender and Water” to Jordan. The study visit aimed to get to know the Jordanian initiative “Water Wise Women” regarding the impact of women for an improved water resource management and water service delivery. The exchange was organized in cooperation with other regional GIZ water programs (Jordan, Yemen, and Tunisia).
- In August, the Gender-Follow-Up-Committee organized a workshop for decision makers in the water sector, which was attended by 19 participants including representatives of the ministries. The participants recognized the importance of mainstreaming gender issues in the water sector and asked for further events. Then, in December a workshop for technical and administrative employees was conducted regarding the gender-sensitive preparation of working and budget plans in the water sector.
- The implementation of the action plan in the water sector requires a functioning gender unit in the Palestinian Water Authority. Terms of Reference in order to institutionalize the gender work in the PWA were established during the year 2015.
- In order to strengthen the political commitments in the governmental stakeholder’s institutions, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding with PWA, Environmental Quality Authority, Ministry of Local Governance and Solid Waste Management.

In November 2015, the Palestinian Water Authority conducted a planning workshop regarding the **joint activities for 2016** with the support of GIZ. The main planned activities are:

- final institutionalization of the gender unit in the Palestinian Water Authority
- conducting a gender audit
- implementation of an awareness campaign for water service providers, for technical trainers and for the public including broadcasting through TV, film and radio
- awareness campaign during the World Women’s Day (e.g. film on the role of women in the Palestinian water sector).

2 | Gender as a quality feature of our work

The gender activities of GIZ Water Program concentrate on the provision of **consultancy services** for water sector institutions, in particular for the Gender Unit of the Palestinian Water Authority. Moreover, the program provides the stakeholders and partners with **capacity development and trainings**. These activities are accompanied through **national and international knowledge exchange, study visits and public relations**.

The **Gender Focal Person of the Water Program**, Mr. Qasem Saleh, advises Dr. Thomas Riekkel, the principle program advisor (AV), on promotion and advocacy for gender equality in the water sector. Moreover, Mr. Qasem Saleh supports the AV in identifying gender-related bottlenecks within the scope of contract management and in defining priorities for action. He also ensures the flow of information on gender issues within the program.

Moreover, gender equality is promoted in GIZ through a gender strategy based on five complementary strategic elements:

1. **Political will and accountability:** Managers demonstrate their support for gender equality and follow up the implementation of the strategy.
2. **Corporate culture:** GIZ establish patterns of behavior and codes of conduct that help ensure gender equality.
3. **Gender equality within the company:** GIZ ensure that men and women work together on equal terms and that there is a balanced gender ratio across all hierarchical levels and fields of responsibility.
4. **Gender competence:** GIZ ensures that the staff knows about imbalances in gender relations and ways of how to correct these.
5. **Processes:** The procedures and instruments are gender-sensitive, especially in relation to commission management and quality management.

3 | Gender and Result Based Management

Enhancing gender equality in the water sector is basically realized through the empowerment of relevant Palestinian institutions in promoting gender equality. The gender achievements are measured by this **indicator**:

“Three relevant sector institutions (e.g. PWA, WSRC, UPWSP, WSP) have implemented measure (e.g. Gender Audit in the PWA, Gender Code in similar WSP reporting of the WSRC, Gender Advanced Training of the UPWSP for members of the association on gender sensitive client orientation) to promote the implementation of gender equality in the water and waste water sector.”

The GIZ Water Program applies a **mixed-method approach of monitoring and evaluation**:

- A technical steering group, the so-called Gender-Follow-Up-Committee (see paragraph 1 & 4), meets regularly and is responsible for the **implementation** and **monitoring** of the gender strategy. The committee is led by the PWA Gender Unit.
- To ensure the progress on the institutional level, a **Gender Audit** will be introduced to PWA as a pilot in 2016. This audit is designed to help understand how well the organization is integrating gender and helps to identify organizational strengths and challenges to integrating gender in the organizational system, operations, programs and projects. Next the Gender Audit will be extended to water service providers and water utilities.
- The **Quarterly Reports of the GIZ Water Program** covers three month activities and allows a comparison of planned/actual data. The Water Program provides its partners with the reports to improve the transparency, to enhance the stakeholder dialogue and to maintain the participative approach at any time of the program phase.
- For internal purpose GIZ Programs in Palestine use the **monitoring system WebMo** to visualize the projects key data and current status. WebMo enables the Gender Focal Person to quickly identify critical developments and needs for action.

4 | Cooperation

GIZ Water Program strongly believes in **technical steering structures to strengthen ownership and members' self-reliance** through a culture of participation and negotiation. Wherever possible, the Palestinian Water Authority takes the leadership within the structures.

The Gender-Follow-Up-Committee is led by the PWA Gender Unit and is responsible for the implementation of the gender strategy. **The Gender-Follow-Up-Committee is comprised of governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders including representatives of ministries (e. g. PWA, MoA, MoLG), NGOs (e.g. Palestinian Hydrology Group) and academic institutions.**

The committee sets the strategic orientation, approves the operational plans and approves monitoring reports. Moreover, the decision on adjustment of strategic and operational plans is obliged to the Gender-Follow-Up-Committee. All decisions are made on broad-based communication, which take into account the variety of perspectives of the stakeholders.

In addition, GIZ Water Program coordinates its gender activities with other GIZ programs, in particular with the Local Governance and Civil Society Program. Regarding the **World Water Day 2016** with the theme "Water and Jobs", the two corresponding GIZ programs (TEP and Water) bring their Palestinian partners together to exchange experiences and knowledge on a local level. Each GIZ program will encourage their partners to conduct activities that link the educational, labor and water sector.

Annex



Launching the Gender Strategy and signing four Memorandums of Understanding with related ministries (in the picture the Minister of Women's Affairs and the Head of Environmental Quality Authority)



Ministerial meeting with related Ministries. Head of PWA, Minister of Local Government, Head of the Solid Waste Management Team, Minister of Women's Affairs to discuss and approve the strategy before going to the Cabinet.



Joint Gender Planning Workshop in February 2015 with participation of Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, Palestinian Water Authority and the Union of Palestinian Water Service Providers

Abbreviations

AV	Auftragsverantwortlicher
MoA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
PWA	Palestinian Water Authority

UPWSP	Union of Palestinian Water Service Providers
WSRC	Water Sector Regulatory Council
WSP	Water Service Providers