Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment for Enhanced Water Security

Nedjma Koval-Saifi
Jordan Context - Water

• 40% - Jordan shares main surface waters with other countries (Yarmouk, Jordan Rivers);
• 54% - 12 renewable groundwater aquifers depleted at more than twice the recharge rate (247% of sustainable yield);
• National Water Supply = 900 million m$^3$ while Demand is 1200 million m$^3$. 
Jordan Context - Population

• Refugee influx of 1.2 million people – doubling population in North Jordan overnight;
• Youth bulge – 78% of population is under the age of 30;
• Fertility rate is 3.5 children per woman;
• Water shortage – 90 m³ per capita by 2025.
Jordan Valley Water Vulnerability

- Jordan Valley Case Study
  - Farmers have reduced dependence on agriculture due to water shortages, and are largely tenant farmers;
  - Increased use of child labor in the fields;
  - Poor women work as day labor on large farms;
  - Garden farming is needed to supplement consumption needs;
  - Large families with elderly and child dependents;
  - Limited access to alternative sources of income;
  - Lack collateral for to obtain loans for farming investments.
Women in Jordan Valley

– Only 44% of women headed households own land due to limitations on land ownership (vs. 68% of male HH);
– Women have less access to credit (21%) than men (44%);
– Women are responsible for household, and often fieldwork and animal husbandry;
– Women do not always have decision-making authority on key water purchase, use, efficiency and allocation issues.
Mafraq Water Vulnerability

• Mafraq Case Study
  – Higher cost of water due to shared metering placing them in a higher tariff bracket (6.9% of income spent on water)
  – Rationed water supply means additional pumping costs
  – Buying water to feed deficit – up to 30% of income
  – Intermittent supply impacts water flow, quality and contamination
  – Wastewater discharge is poor or non-existent leading to contamination of groundwater aquifers
  – Poor water quality leads to worsening public health
Women in Mafraq

• Women and children are usually ones responsible for water-related activities in the home and gardening;
• Women store water, clean using water and wash;
• Women regulate water reuse, bathing frequency;
• As caregivers, women ensure water is healthy and tend to sick – water-borne diseases;
• Yet women have limited voice in household infrastructure decisions.
Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment

• How can we ensure that the SDG 5 and SDG 6 implementation will produce mutually complementary results?
• What are the most significant roadblocks in inclusion of gender-related targets in the national SDG implementation of water-related targets? Water policies?
• What are some of the best ways to mobilize resources to achieve gender equality and water security at the same time?
Ideas with Merit

• **Household – Water Manager Level**
  – Women as plumbers (Water Wise Women – Plumbers - GIZ)
  – Women as household water auditors;
  – Awareness through Female Community workers (WWW-GIZ);
  – Programming targeting women as water managers (health, hygiene, storage, WSDs, etc).

• **Policy Level**
  – Land ownership by women;
  – Access to credit by women;
  – Increased participation in WDM;
  – Increased recognition of the role of women as water managers.