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Implemented by:



Water - Jordan

The fight for water

Jordan has hit its limits. An estimated one million Syrian refugees have now crossed the border into Jordan, not including earlier waves of refugees from the Palestinian Territories and Iraq. This enormous influx of newcomers to the country, in total around a fifth of the Jordanian population, creates huge problems for Jordan, starting with the lack of accommodation, schools, medical facilities and job opportunities and ending with the major challenge of supplying water. Ultimately, Jordan figures among the world's top ten countries with the least available water. To support the country in this acute crisis, KfW has once again increased its commitment to the current water sector programme.

Context

The Jordanian government announced that it will do all it can to supply the refugees well. Yet supplying such a huge amount of people with drinking water on a daily basis presents enormous difficulties for the country. While Germany has 1,900 cubic metres of water annually per capita, Jordan has to limit itself to just 120 cubic metres. As a result, water is rationed in many towns. On average, running water is available twice a week, in summer just once and in some areas only once a month. The population save water in containers on their roofs. When it runs out, households have to manage by purchasing water from a costly water supplier. And the situation is getting worse, because every year the groundwater table is falling by a metre. Even without the most recent influx of refugees from Syria, Jordan's water resources are already overstretched. Jordan needs international assistance in order to supply both its own citizens and newcomers to the country with

sufficient drinking water, and in avoiding conflicts between the two groups.

Project approach

For many decades, KfW has been cooperating with Jordan in the water sector, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The aim of the work has been to stabilise the situation in the area of water. KfW is currently managing 20 projects with a total volume of EUR 270 million. In view of the current crisis situation, the German government has increased these funds again by

Project name	Wastewater treatment Greater-Irbid Drinking Water Supply System Syrian Refugees I and II Water Resource Management Programme I and II
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Country/Region	Jordan
Lead executing agency	Water Authority of Jordan





Searching for leaky pipes. Source: KfW / Photothek.net

EUR 23.5 million to support the refugees. Amongst other items, the construction of new deep wells and the repair of old ones are to be financed with these funds. The wells will deliver fresh water for the supply network in northern Jordan, supplying drinking water to the towns of Irbid, Ramtha and Mafraq, which accommodate particularly high number of refugees. Approximately 1.7 million people, locals and Syrian refugees, depend on this supply.

In the past, water from the distribution network did not reach every household. Houses at the end of the pipes and on hills were previously not able to benefit. To remove these distribution bottlenecks, larger new pipes will replace the old undersized ones. Additionally, KfW is carrying out the construction of a canalisation system in Bait Ras – an EU-financed project. Old, leaky slurry pits which contaminated the groundwater and damaged house foundations through water seepage will be replaced. KfW is supporting the building of a further wastewater canalisation system in Mafraq using its own funds. The slurry cannot leak into the ground here because of the clay base. The pits have to be emptied on an ongoing basis, which is very costly.

Impact

In Jordan water is very scarce, and water management is inefficient too. Despite the critical water situation, there is still a lack of awareness of how to use this precious resource sparingly. Much of the little water available is wasted, illegally siphoned off, or is lost on its way

to the consumer due to leaky pipes. The national water authority does not receive income through fees for an estimated up to 45 percent of the water it provides, and therefore lacks funds for expanding infrastructure. To reduce water losses, KfW is active in various governmental districts for rehabilitating outdated water pipes, exchanging defective water connections and water meters and providing capacity building to aid management in commercial operations.

Wastewater treatment is a further important starting point for preserving dwindling water resources. The majority of the sewage is treated and used for irrigation, but even more investment is necessary here to expand existing plants and to add sewage treatment levels. KfW is supporting Jordan in enlarging two wastewater treatment plants in the vicinity of Irbid. A third one was finished at the end of 2013. The plan is to supply the farmers in the Jordan valley with treated water for irrigation purposes. The fresh water which was previously used for this and seeped into the fields will in future be available for the provision of drinking water.

In addition to water, Jordan also has an energy problem. Improving the energy supply is therefore a central aspect of the German commitment to the water sector. For instance, a biogas facility in the new Wadi Shalala wastewater treatment plant near the town of Irbid is to produce enough energy to cover a large part of the energy needed for the plant. A hydropower station is also being planned which will make use of the waterfalls on the way from the plateau to the Jordan valley for additional energy generation. The treated water will be used in three ways: it will produce power and food and secure the livelihoods of farming families in the Jordan valley.



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