Outcomes

6th Arab Water Week and 2nd Trenchless Arabia 2023
Recommendations and outcomes of the 6th Arab Water Week:

The Participants in the 6th Arab Water Week and 2nd Trenchless Arabia emphasized the following:

- Appreciating His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal, for giving his patronage for organizing the 6th Arab Water Week and 2nd Trenchless Arabia, and for the ultimate consideration given by his royal highness to the water sector in the kingdom.
- Appreciating the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, represented by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and other concerned ministries, for the great welcoming and hospitality and their contribution in the success of the event.
- Appreciating all the supporting parties from international organizations, donors and private sector.

The Participants in the 6th Arab Water Week and 2nd Trenchless Arabia stressed the following outcomes and recommendations:

1. High-level Panel under topic Water Scarcity and Sustainable Development:
   - Focusing on the entitlement of water to prevent poverty and protect human rights, while assuring the involvement of marginalized communities especially women in the implementation of integrated water resources management.
   - Water is an important element for achieving security and peace on the other hand for creating disputes, tension and conflicts. Thus, its importance to adopt dialogue and negotiation as a method for resolving disputes.
   - Applying the principle of integrity, transparency and anti-corruption in managing water utilities and implementing water projects.
   - Improving the efficiency of water resource management by reducing Non-Revenue Water and adopting the concept of water demand management.
   - Developing policies for water uses in different aspects, such as: agricultural, industrial, high-rise buildings, and public buildings such as hospitals, schools, etc.
   - Assuring diversity in financing sources and not relying entirely on loans in implementing projects, while taking into consideration the lessons learnt from the Arab region experience.
• Increasing the financial revenues of the water utilities by reducing the operational cost through: applying energy efficiency programs, reducing Non-Revenue Water and restructuring the sector in the field of human resources.

• Improving the efficiency of Wastewater Treatment plants to reach unrestricted water use in agriculture and accordingly reduce the use on drinking water in agriculture.

• Implementation of decentralized Wastewater Treatment plants in the rural areas to reduce costs of water supply and to reuse the treated water in agriculture. These plants might be operated by water user associations under the technical supervision of water and sanitation utilities.

• House water harvesting should be part of the water policy and part of the construction codes.

• Revising the technical specifications of all plumbing and sanitary system on a house level to ensure the provision of water use.

• Developing strategies for job replacement and capacity building to reduce the risk of brain drain especially within the public sector.


A high-level delegation from Yemen, represented by H.E. the Minister of Water and Environment, H.E. the Minister of State (the governor of the interim capital-Aden), and number of high-level managements of the Ministry of Water and Environment attended to present the national strategic plan for the water sector, which was developed by ACWUA. This plan is based on science-based analysis of the risks resulting from climate change and the lack of water, human and financial resources, as well as the internal environment of the utilities. Accordingly, ACWUA developed the necessary solutions to improve the performance of the Yemeni Utilities. During this session, the participants emphasized the following:

a. The necessity of transforming the fund provided by donors from a humanitarian nature into the implementation of capital projects for water and sanitation systems.
b. The need of institutional development through adopting modern technologies in utilities management.

c. Implementation of Non-Revenue Water projects to provide additional water shares and increase utilities water revenues.

d. Addressing the high cost of energy as an operational cost while studying the possibility of using alternative energy sources.

e. The importance of finding the necessary financing sources for the implementation of projects.

3. High-level panel that organized by ACWUA in cooperation with SIWI and UNICEF-Iraq with the participation of H.E. the General Director of Dams Management, under the title of Water and Climate Change Financing Challenges and Potential Opportunities - Water Sector in Iraq, the participants emphasized the importance of finding funding sources to develop a national strategic plan for the water sector (water resources and water utilities) by developing appropriate solutions to the obstacles facing the water sector in Iraq and identifying priorities of projects necessary to contribute to raising the efficiency of water resources management and water and wastewater services.

4. Among the outcomes of the both Yemeni and Iraqi High-level panels, the participants emphasized the following:

   a. The importance of developing an investment plan to implement the projects resulting from the national strategy.

   b. Developing a financing plan (Fund Raising) based on the priorities of the projects in the investment plan.

5. High-level panel that organized by the Arab Water Utilities Association (AWAA) under the title of Policies, Legislations and Reform, the session concluded the following:

   a. The importance of up-to-date data availability, and its participatory use in policy and decision-making, as well as in the field of research and postgraduate studies.

   b. Since water is the key to achieving most of the SDGs, water must be included in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) plans.

   c. The need for finding a mechanism to follow up the commitments resulting from the conferences concerned with water and climate change, especially the UN conference in New York.
d. Ensuring the success of policies and legislation and their ease of application, through having them in line with the national needs and integrated with policies and strategies in different sectors and stakeholders needs to facilitate their adaptation by all sectors.

e. The need to issue water legislation to regulate the relationship between all ministries and institutions concerned with water uses to prevent duplication and conflicting policies in various fields, as well as to regulate the relationship and duties of executive institutions within ministries.

f. The need for an independent regulatory body for the water sector to ensure the implementation of the comprehensive quality of water and sanitation services provided by the utilities based on specific KPIs to measure performance according to regional and international standards.

g. Applying international standards based on excellence in evaluating water utilities and the need to stimulate utilities to be smart and agile.

h. The need to build a robust relationship based on shared duties and rights between citizens and water service providers in order to provide the best quality services with an acceptable cost.

6. The importance of participatory action between all stakeholders in water and sanitation management, from: international organizations, Arab community organizations, research centers and universities, Arab water and sanitation utilities, private sector companies and individual experts, to find solutions for the challenges that facing the water and sanitation sector in the Arab region while assuring the importance of working within the Arab political system represented by the Arab Ministerial Water Council / League of Arab States.

7. Conducting more studies and projects in the field of water, energy and food nexus.

8. Conducting more studies and finding solutions in the field of reducing the effects of climate change on water resources.

9. Adopting the governance tools, including computerized mathematical models for integrated water management: Water Allocation, Water Budgeting and Water Accounting, to develop policies in the use of water for various purposes and to enable this knowledge in the Arab region through capacity building programs and the implementation of pilot projects.
10. The importance of enabling smart and digital solutions to solve technical challenges that hinder the work of water utilities.

11. The importance of linking applied research studies in universities and research centers with the water and sanitation sector needs, to be applied by utilities.

12. Implementing of pilot projects on: integrated Water and Sanitation Safety Plan (iWSSP), Reuse of treated Water, Integrated Management Information System - ERP, and applying the comprehensive quality system in water and wastewater plants (TSM) through joint partnerships.

13. Reducing the percentage of Non-Revenue Water (sometimes exceeds 50% of drinking water) while focusing on scientific methods in determining the components of losses, especially administrative losses. Despite the implementation of Mega projects at a very high cost.

14. The need to localize Trenchless technology while implementing water and wastewater systems projects in the Arab region, which leads to a reduction in the cost of implementation and the preservation of the infrastructures.

15. A request to conduct a comprehensive survey for the needs of the water and wastewater sector with an aim of raising capacities while including training centers and experts in the Arab Region. The results of the survey should be included within the Certification Information System (CIS) which was developed by ACWUA while assuring a continuous update.

16. The need for diversification in financing tools, such as the participation of the national and international private sector, as well as the participation of national provident funds in the projects implementation.

17. Welcoming SIWI decision of launching a regional office in the Arab region, based in Amman, Jordan.

18. In implementation of the 6th Arab Water Week General Assembly recommendations, the elected BoD’s decided in its meeting held on 03/07/2023 to launch and host a platform for twinning between Arab and international water utilities in partnership with the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (UN-GWOPA).

19. In implementation of the 6th Arab Water Week General Assembly recommendations, the elected BoD’s decided in its meeting held on 03/07/2023 decided to create two
technical working groups (TWGs) that include experts from Arab water utilities to work in the following areas:

- Wastewater Treatment and sludge management and Reuse in partnership with GIZ and other concerned international cooperation agencies.
- Water and Food Nexus in partnership with the Middle East and North Africa Group for Sustainability of System of Crop Intensification.

20. In the closing session of the 6th Arab Water Week, the participants endorsed the request from the General Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council/ League of Arab States to present these outcomes at the next Arab Ministerial Council meeting and consider adopting them as part of the Arab Water Security Strategy.