

# MENA Water World Café 2015 Issue Paper

## Water Governance (Group 1)

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### Brief problem description:

Water demand in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region constantly increases due to population growth, agriculture and industry development, and other water uses. The limited water resources are unable to satisfy human needs and the gap between the demand and supply is increasing, which becomes an important limitation for the social and economic development of the region.

Although considerable progress has been made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the targets to achieve improved access to key basic services during the first 15 years of this century will not be fully reached. MENA region remains among the most water-stressed in the world and the negative trends are accelerated by political instabilities and climate change.

The Water Governance issues in the MENA region are various, but mostly common for its countries. The key issues can be grouped as: Insufficient institutional skills in applying the IWRM approach and adaptation to climate change; Insufficient understanding how impacts of policy instruments in water management can affect the economy and growth; Limited application of the holistic approach in water policies, multi-sectorial involvement and coordination of roles and responsibilities; Hesitant transboundary cooperation in promoting sustainable and equitable development of a shared watercourse; Unsatisfactory cooperation and joint research actions and knowledge share.

To encourage better management and protection of water resources, many countries in the region have initiated water sector reforms, while engaging stakeholders in policy-making and decision-making processes. Therefore there are commonly accepted needs for the development and empowerment of human resources at various levels, development of institutional and technical capacities, research and development acceleration and technologies transfer in water sector.

### Objective:

To define water governance gaps in MENA region and propose sound and viable policy development and capacity building solutions.

### Expected outcomes:

1. How MENA countries can contribute to meet water related SDGs?
2. Water & food & energy nexus characteristics in MENA region
3. How to foster dialogue and build trust between decision makers concerning regulatory frameworks, infrastructure and services, and enhance the performance of responsible public authorities and their water operators?
4. Needs for strengthening knowledge transfer and skills development?

### Key messages – Strengthening water governance:

1. MENA countries contribute to meet new water related SDGs
2. Need for cooperation among water authorities and practitioners to promote IWRM approach;
3. Modalities for fostering dialogue and building trust between decision makers should be improved;
4. Suggested capacity building programs at national and regional level