

GWL Final Report

April 2021 – March 2024

Palestine

April 2024



Introduction – What is GWL?

A ground-breaking global initiative, the FCDO-funded “Global Water Leadership in a Changing Climate” (GWL) programme provided critical support to governments in seven low and middle-income countries (LMICs) to become international models for water leadership and to demonstrate the socio-economic transformations that can be accomplished by making climate-resilient and gender-transformative water management and water and sanitation, health and hygiene (WASH) services a political priority.

Since launching in April 2021, GWL has been working to strengthen national support for integrated water resource and services management, provide critical information and analysis to identify and resolve barriers, input into water (and/or climate) policies, and help governments access financing to transform the sector and bolster its climate resilience.

At the core of this success is a commitment to breaking down the siloes in which integrated water resource management (IWRM) and WASH operate for the development of holistic and climate-resilient solutions. To that end, GWL is implemented through a collaboration comprising GWP, UNICEF, SWA, WHO and JMP.

As the sole IWRM implementing partner, GWP has designed a set of work packages to contribute to Output 1 (Strengthened Leadership and Collaboration), Output 2 (Evidence, Norms and Standards) and Output 3 (Identifying systemic and financial constraints) for IWRM, and, where possible, climate-resilient WASH services. These Outputs contribute to generating political leadership for water at the national and international levels.

The programme was conducted in seven GWP countries spread across five sub-regions: Central African Republic in Central Africa; Rwanda and Uganda in Eastern Africa; Malawi and Tanzania in Southern Africa; Nepal in South Asia; and the State of Palestine in the Mediterranean.

The flagship product of the GWL programme is government-validated Response Strategies for addressing the most critical barriers to climate-resilient water management. Barriers have been identified by national stakeholders, who have prioritised the top 2 to 4 barriers in their respective country. Multistakeholder working groups (WGs) have been formed – one per barrier – each tasked with developing a Response Strategy to address their respective barrier. A Response Strategy contains two components: an Action Plan and a Finance Plan, and local finance consultants were engaged to assist working groups in costing their actions.



Celebrating the launch of Response Strategy in Palestine on the 10th March 2024 with both Ministers of Water Authority and Minister of Environmental Quality Authority.

GWL in Palestine

A multi-stakeholder change process has been designed and initiated in 2022, under the leadership of the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and facilitated by GWP-Med, with the participation of UNICEF-Palestine, to identify and prioritise bottlenecks and develop an integrated strategy to effectively address them, including a related finance plan.

Following the coordination with and among key governmental agencies, the multi-stakeholder GWL Consultation Workshops were organised by GWP-Med and PWA in Ramallah, to publicly launch the process. More than 23 representatives of state and non-state actors worked in plenary and in groups identifying a range of bottlenecks that hinder the implementation of inclusive and climate-resilient water management activities in Palestine. Over discussions, it was clearly witnessed that there is a massive need to better understand the paradigm of how water, climate, people and nature are interdependent and how they should, in an integrated approach, form key inputs for sustainable development in Palestine, including with focus on improved resilience, health and wellbeing for poor and vulnerable people in low and middle-income zones.

Outcomes from the discussion assisted in the prioritising and grouping the barriers, the participating stakeholders endorsed three (3) work lines and related Working Groups (WGs) that elaborated on how to best address the identified barriers within Palestine's capacities, from planning through to implementation and assessing performance. Participants also jointly designed the WGs and identified their titles, objectives, potential stakeholder members, roles & responsibilities, meetings frequency and reporting mechanism. Results from the Consultation Workshop were reported frequently to participants who commented on the outcomes and the way forward and endorsement was sought from the line minister which ensured the proper engagement and ownership of the GWL Programme outputs.

The close and frequent communications with the three WGs, GWL Focal Point, and the Financial Consultant led to developing the Response Strategy including, the financial planning to help its implementation. The joint approaches with engagement from the identified stakeholders, including authorities, academia and NGOs, helped to prioritize the identified bottlenecks and build action plans to overcome them. These plans were validated by the WGs and beyond, including a larger community of secondary stakeholders. A series of stakeholder events in Palestine, including the Launching Event, Validation Workshop and the Dissemination of the Response Strategy event as well as the global GWL Closeout Workshop, were well coordinated and achieved in timely manner, providing for gathering critical inputs from a range of partners.

The Response Strategy are fully owned by the Governmental authorities, in particular hosting and supporting the WGs meetings, chairing the WGs, endorsing the identified activities, and allocating staff time to help in designing, consulting and agreeing on activities related to the response strategies.

The ownership of the GWL project as well as of the Response Strategy was proven by the Head of Palestinian Water Authority (PWA); H.E. Eng. Mazen Ghunaim and the Head of Environmental Quality Authority (EQA); H.E. Dr Nisreen Tamimi when they together launched the Response Strategy on the 10th March 2024. Likewise, it was evidenced by the participant of H.E. Eng. Nujoud Abdu, Head of ACU at PWA when she participated in the Closeout Workshop in Malawi and addressed the participants on how Palestine foresee the implementation of the Response Strategy and the roadmap to utilize the RS in the national planning.

We launch the " Response Strategy" to mitigate the impact of climate change on Palestinian water resources and we lay the foundation for the implementation of this comprehensive strategy with the aim of strengthening and integrating our national efforts to address these challenges and take measures that would integrate water management and sustainable development for our future generation through cooperation and integration of efforts between various sectors and all our official and private institutions to work on their implementation.

H.E. Eng. Mazen Ghunaim, The Minister

Head of Palestinian Water Authority

Identifying the barriers

A series of multi-stakeholder consultations were conducted on [4 Aug 2022, 10 Jan 2023, 21 Jun 2023]. These events were attended by 27 people (on average) presenting 14 institutions. **Annex 1** includes the participant list for the Consultations.

During the 1st Consultation Workshop, Palestine stakeholders and international strategic partners including UNICEF, identified, and agreed on national barriers/bottlenecks and designed the Working Groups to elaborate on responsive strategies and actions to overcome these aligned with potential financial resourcing. The identification was interactively performed through Focus Group Discussions over 4 rounds of discussions to answer the following questions:

Q1: What are the barriers and the corresponding requirements to achieve Climate Resilience through IWRM in Palestine?

Q2: Who are the key stakeholders and what are their roles and responsibilities to meet identified priority requirements?

Q3: What are the needed instruments and the required synergies for developing, implementing and monitoring plans for each priority requirement / barrier?

Q4: What major initiatives in Palestine contribute to these?

Over discussions, with the facilitation of GWP-Med and in partnership with PWA, it was clearly witnessed that there are three different groups of barriers/challenges: first is very strategic tackling cross-cutting issues related to institutional planning within the country, a second barrier was the operational barrier related to technical implementation of agreed policies and plans, whereas the last was the need to have a performance management system explicitly designed with well-identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and set of other Performance Indicators (PIs) supported by matrix of authorities on who collects the relevant data and who reports these data set to quantify the impact of these indicators. Based on these, respective WGs have been formed.

The prioritized the 35 identified bottlenecks and decided to focus on the top rated three bottlenecks. The WGs title were revisited following the prioritization of bottlenecks that aligned with the ongoing related initiatives and projects in Palestine.

Table 1: Most critical barriers to climate-smart water management (embracing both WRM and WASH), agreed upon by participants at the stakeholder consultations.

Ultimately, the group agreed on their top barriers to climate-smart water management as provided below:

Barrier	Details about the barrier / description
Barrier 1. Absence of integrated planning tools for WRM based on climate change	Palestine identified lack of synchronized national databases and their updates as key barrier, with response strategy of developing integrated planning tool and performance management system for water resources and climate change that includes conducting assessment study of existing systems and mechanism of data sharing
Barrier 2. Lack of national performance management and related jointly defined smart key performance indicators (KPIs)	There is a national demand to align the contribution of individual institutions to national strategies and policy through setting shared performance indicators and assist the institutions to frequently report on results related to the indicators.
Barrier 3: Social behaviour restrictions on the reuse of treated wastewater and the need to involve youth, gender and vulnerable groups in the awareness programme	Cultural and social barriers increase the resistance to use the treated wastewater and to be considered as part of the national water budget.

Establishing the working groups

Establishing the WGs took 6 weeks to finalize as a result of border closures in Israel which did not help to advance the project as scheduled, including coordinating with PWA to liaise for communication and engagement with other public stakeholders. This activity took place following the consultation sessions with the stakeholders to agree on the bottlenecks and also to establish the relevant working groups to start working on the identified bottlenecks.

In January 2023 the WGs were convened and in June 2023 the Root Cause Analysis was completed, it then took three months to develop the Action Plans. Overall, the political instability along with its subsequence in Palestine, imposed consecutive delays over the years of the project life, while there was a peak escalation after the breakout of the war in early October 2023. Administrative related requirements to endorsing the activities by WG members and their institutions imposed some delay on convening the consultation process and on the development of the work plans that was followed by the development of action plans (technical and financial plans). To overcome such uncertainties, GWP-MED adopted alternative plans to move through protocols that would be imperative for ensuring government ownership of and investment in GWL and catch up on delays. This has led to missing some initial deadlines such as the WGs launching which was initially proposed for June 2022.

Institutional setup of the working groups

For the response strategies to have long-term viability, it was important that the WGs were positioned for success from the beginning.

PWA was the key collaborating government agency, that took the lead and assigned a Focal Point for the project who was liaising with other partnering organizations, initiating and maintaining the required correspondences internally with the PWA Minister and within other key public institutions in Palestine for the approvals and endorsement of activities and deliverables.

Several options were discussed on how to best follow up the consultation after the 1st Consultation Workshop, concluding into three scenarios:

Scenario A: Establish 3 Working Groups Model, one of focus on climate adaptation through IWRM, as follows:

1. Planning and baseline setting: to address barriers like those related to governance arrangements, baseline setting, gaps in legal instruments and policy tools, integration of new concepts, capacity building needs assessments, stakeholders' engagement processes, etc.
2. Designing and implementing: to address barriers like those related to cross-sectorial strategies development and action planning, prioritization of interventions, prioritization of piloting including for technical interventions, financing, etc.
3. Monitoring and Evaluation: to address barriers like those related to indicators, MRV systems, etc.

Scenario B: Establish 2 Working Groups:

1. Policy and Strategy Working Group (High Level Group)
2. Operational Working Group (Technical)

Scenario C: Establish 3 Working Groups:

1. Institutional Working Group
2. Operational and Technical (includes communication, advocacy and inclusion initiatives)
3. Monitoring and Evaluation

After a thorough discussion on prioritization and grouping the barriers, the participating stakeholders endorsed 3 WGs with defined mandate and frequency of meeting and reporting. Each WG was mandated to address the respective identified barrier within their capacity from planning through to designing implementation and performance assessment:

1. Institutional Planning Working Group
2. Technical Implementation Working Group
3. Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group

The participating stakeholders were also asked to jointly design the WGs and to identify their final Structure, Titles, Objectives, Potential Stakeholders, Roles & Responsibilities, Meeting frequency and Reporting mechanism. Results of this brainstorming exercise were as follows:

I. Institutional Planning Working Group

- **WG Objectives:** To foster elaboration of national responses to climate change through IWRM and identify strategic action directions were included in the responsive strategies and plans. The WG coordinated with the Technical Implementation WG ensuring the cascading between strategic and operational performances. Finally, this WG discussed the KPIs results aligning with the on-track progress and performance.
- **Stakeholders:** Governmental Institutions. Official nominations of WG members was made jointly with all stakeholders to indicate their interest in the group and to nominate their representative to the WGs.
- **Roles & Responsibilities of the WG:**
 - a) Review the Water Law for climate change alignments to ensure inclusion of responsibilities against Climate Change impacts on water resources.
 - b) Identify gaps at the institutional levels.

- c) Elaborate on and suggest development of joint action plans to foster resilience through IWRM and the Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus approach at the national level.
- d) Facilitate communication between institutions.
- e) Elaborate on developing an advocacy framework.
 - Meeting frequency: Monthly
 - Reporting Mechanism: Quarterly a brief report was submitted to the Steering Committee

II. Technical implementation Working Group

- WG Objectives: To analyse the current implementation performance, identify operational challenges through conducting situational analysis and suggest responses to feed into the ongoing and emerging strategies and plans.
- Stakeholders: PWA, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Environmental Quality Authority (EQA), Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority (PENRA), INGOs University of East Jerusalem, and Local NGOs.
- Roles & Responsibilities of the WG:
 - a) Foster implementation of action plans, including current initiatives
 - b) Assist maximizing impact of implementing projects, initiatives and tasks.
 - c) Facilitate reporting of operational outcomes
 - d) Screen and contribute to development of funding proposals, including for promoting technical solutions.
 - Meeting frequency: Monthly, for proposal development as needed, hybrid meetings took place (virtually and physically)
 - Reporting Mechanism: Quarterly a brief report was submitted to the Steering Committee.

III. Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group

- Title of the WG will be confirmed with Senior Management of participating stakeholders.
- WG Objectives: Foster monitoring of implementation progress of responsive strategies and workplans towards impact.
- Stakeholders: Governmental Institutions. PWA, MoA, EQA, MoLG, PENRA, INGOs, Arab American University, and Local NGOs.
- Roles & Responsibilities of the WG:
 - a) Suggest elements of an MRV system
 - b) Suggest performance measurement tools, benchmark exercises and impact reporting.
- Meeting frequency: Monthly
- Reporting Mechanism: Quarterly a brief report was submitted and discussed with both WGs prior be submitted to the Steering Committee

The three Working Groups WGs in Palestine with around seven members for each were chaired by the following members:

1. Institutional Working Group: Engr Beesan Shonnar, Director of Policies & Technical Support, Palestinian Water Authority

2. Technical Implementation Working Group: Engr Ibtissam AbuHija, Director of Climate Change and Drought Management Dept., Ministry of Agriculture
3. Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group: Engr Rehab Thaher, Directorate of Planning, Palestinian Water Authority.

Some of the WGs plenary meetings were organised in hotels, while individual meetings were convened at the PWA with hybrid participation of members (in person and virtual).

As indicated above, WGs members were formed from all relevant governmental institutions and one NGO; Palestinian Water Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Environment Quality Authority, Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Education, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Prime Minister Office and Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (NGO).

Similar to the initial consultations, WGs composition was intended to be multi-disciplinary and inclusive. A breakdown of working group membership is provided below, with number of representatives per institution group identified. A full list of membership is provided in **Annex 1**.

Table 2 - Composition of working groups

Working Group	Number Women	Number Men	Number Youth (35 & below)	Number of Govt Ministries	Number CSO reps	Number Private Sector reps	Number Academia reps
1	4	4	2	7	1	-	2
2	5	2	2	6	1	-	2
3	5	2	2	7	-	-	-



Conducting stakeholder session on the 10th August 2022 to agree on the workplan for the identified 3 WGs

Response Strategy Development – key highlights

Once the WGs were formed, the task at hand was to start the process of developing the response strategies. Under the GWL Programme, Response Strategies consist of two major components: an Action Plan for addressing the key barrier (and its root causes) and a Finance Plan that ensures that the actions have been costed and realistic sources of funding identified.

The emphasis on integrated financial planning makes the Response Strategies comparatively unique to similar undertakings, especially within the water community.

WGs went through four phases to develop their response strategies. The complete list of these is provided below. This section will look deeply at Phases 1 and 3.

1. Root cause analysis – Critical examination of the key barrier that helped identify what actions would be needed.
2. Solution Development – Identification of actions that would address the key barrier and its root causes. The outcome of this phase was the Action Plan.
3. Finance Plan Development – Intense work to project the costs of all activities within the action plan and identify potential sources of funding. The outcome of this phase was the Finance Plan
4. Response Strategy Finalization – The process of merging the Action Plan with the Finance Plan, reviewing the scope of activities to remove duplication and ensure coherence as well as consistency. The outcome of this phase was the Draft Response Strategy

Phase 1 – Root Cause Analysis

Upon the nomination of representative of stakeholder institutions in Palestine, GWP-MED organised a series of consultation meetings as indicated in page 4 of this report, these meetings were attended by 23 participants representing 11 entities whom had the introduction of GWL Programme, identified existing challenges related to climate adaptation and related IWRM solutions, listed on-going initiatives relevant to the GWL Programme, and identified potential ways to bring IWRM and WASH together within the local context for climate resilience objectives. Finally, the participants discussed the development of WGs to identify and prioritize key barriers and related responses.

The Workshop's Focus Groups discussions were structured to get participants' prospective on the barriers at the national level, stakeholders engaged in their responses, needed instruments to address them, and, finally, the currently implemented initiatives.

Country Coordinator Insights



Validating the root cause analysis exercises with the GWL Programme local focal point

Liaising with decision makers and professionals at the stakeholder institutions was necessary. Therefore, the outcomes from the 1st Workshop on the 4th August 2022 were reported to participants who commented on the outcomes and the way forward. These were then shared with their line managers to ensure their endorsement and provided the basis for a coherent design of activities' prioritisation towards the 2nd Workshop (10th January 2023) and the future workplans and subsequent commitments to these plans such as staff time, required resources, etc.

Outcomes of the Water Tracker were presented to GWL Programme stakeholders to ensure further synergies within the national climate planning based on the use of this diagnostic tool and the integration of its results in the WGs workplans to assist Palestinian stakeholders in enhancing climate resilience.

"Root Cause Analysis is paramount in addressing the complex Palestinian water situation. By meticulously dissecting barriers, we uncover the systemic inequities and infrastructure challenges plaguing access to this vital resource. Only by understanding these root causes can we forge sustainable solutions that ensure equitable access to water for all Palestinians, paving the way for dignity, stability, and prosperity."

Eng. Beesan Shonnar, Policies and Technical Support Director

Palestinian Water Authority

The Root Causes

Table 3: The Root Causes to the Key Barriers

Barrier 1	Root Causes
Lack of integrated planning tools for water resources management based on climate change scenarios.	Lack of synchronized national databases
	Lack of data cleansing and updating
	Lack of assigned responsibilities to collect and validate datasets
Barrier 2	Root Causes
Lack of national performance system for water resources management based on climate change.	Lack of baseline studies
	Lack of national coordination to agree on quantified shared responsibilities
	Authority matrix to mandate data collection and monitoring
Barrier 3	Root Causes
Social behaviour resistance to and a lack of gender mainstreaming on the reuse of Treated Wastewater (TWW)	Religious concerns
	Health hazards
	Under-performing WWT facilities

Phase 2 – Action Plan Development

Strategic and operational alliance were made to ensure the relevance of the Response Strategy to the national master planning across the stakeholder institutions. The proposed activities to tackle each barrier, were listed and have been aligned with ongoing national related activities prior to cost estimation of these activities. Additionally, the team developed an Action Plan Framework (APF) for each WG to ensure cascading the objectives to the activity level. The related national strategic objectives were cascaded into the sectorial strategic objectives and down to objectives of the Response Strategy which then was supported by the WG objectives, these objectives were also aligned with the institution’s objectives (stakeholder institutions in Palestine) and finally the list of endorsed activities and sub activities including the responsibility of executing the activities to correspond to the identified bottlenecks. This cascaded framework acts as an instrument to assist synergies of national strategies and policies with the developed Response Strategies by GWL Programme and illustrated in **Figure 1**. The Action Plan Framework served as the basis for outlining activities and sub-activities.



Figure 1: Illustration of the strategic alliance between the Response Strategy other related national and institutional strategies in Palestine

Phase 3 – Finance Plan Development

For developing financial plan, both WG members and local finance consultant reviewed global tool and ensure the relativeness of these tools to the country context. Including a finance plan as part of the Response Strategy enables government officials to easily integrate activities into national budgets and budget planning.

The Financial Consultant worked on 3 dimensions: Attend the WG meetings to better understand the types and requirements of identified activities for the Response Strategy, provide on-job training for WG members on how to build the costing system for the identified activities, and then build the finance plan to implement the “Response Strategy”. In this regard, the Financial Consultant participated in all scheduled meetings of the three WGs and shared with group members’ ideas and opinions on the activities proposed in terms of realism and applicability. The consultant shared with WG members the cost estimates of the Action Plan activities as progressing and discussed their comments and feedback on the estimates, agreeing on the final suggestions submitted.

In specific, the proposed methodology to reach the two key deliverables of the finance assignment (ie. developing finance plan and capacity building of WG members in the area of finance) included the following procedures:

- 1) Activity Identification- What to Cost:** Active engagement with WG members in the scheduled meetings towards the development of the activities and sub-activities as described in the Action Plans and offering guidance as to details needed for their costing in terms of frequency, type, time duration and desired output. These activities were ensured to be realistic, attainable and relevant to the objectives of the response strategy.
- 2) Activity Costing- How to cost and what is cost estimated:** The consultant: **a)** presented the concepts of cost, types of cost (direct and indirect vs, fixed and variable) in the first meeting that followed the activities identification and approval, in order to familiarize WG members with costing process. **b)** proposed to WG members the initial cost estimates of each activity. **c)** discussed these estimates with WG members and ensured their reasonableness and validity ahead of approving them.
- 3) Financing Options Identification:** The consultant led discussions during the WG meetings on the potential financing sources amid the financial landscape that exists in Palestine. The consultant capitalized on the technical know-how of WG members in identifying funding opportunities. WG members were asked to propose the most appropriate financing source of each activity, and then debate these proposals until agree on them.
- 4) Drafting the Finance Plan:** The consultant consolidated and prepared the finance plan for each of the three WGs based on outputs of the 3 procedures outlined above. The developed finance plan was aligned and compile with the template proposed by the Global Finance Adviser of the GWP. However, this template was customized to better fit the work conditions in Palestine.
- 5) Finance Plan Approval:** The finance plan for each WG was approved by WG members.

The adopted criteria to identify potential resources were as follows:

1. Domestic Financing:
 - a) Public budget of implementing institution.
 - b) Private sector donations- in the context of social responsibility.
 - c) Public-Private Partnership arrangement.
2. External Financing:
 - a) Official Development Aid (ODA).
 - b) International organizations aid.
3. Blended finance-mix of different financing as available.

WGs own the Response Strategy and its Finance Plan given that they participated in the preparation of the finance plans, including in costs estimation, and approved their final version. Earmarking of available funding resources was discussed, including that by the Government of Palestine via the public budget of implementing partners (Palestinian Water Authority PWA, Ministry of Agriculture MoA, and Environmental Quality Authority EQA).



Validating the Financial Plan within the Technical Implementation Workgroup with the local Finance Consultant

Country Coordinator Insights

The appointment of International and Local Financial Consultant was proposed by GWL Leadership. The need to have a local consultant was not identified per se by the WGs in Palestine since each of the WGs partners have Finance Departments, and they could have helped and contributed to the development of the finance plan. This fact was presented by GWP-Med regional and local coordinators yet was not supported by GWL Leadership.

Despite the added value of having local consultant and considering the hardship in convening the WG meeting physically, the gained knowledge from online sessions with the Finance Consultant was limited.

The financial training sessions could have improved our knowledge and hands on developing finance plans if they were held in person. The call to shorten the delivery of project outputs 6 months earlier was not helpful to the team given the escalation of the political situation and war in Palestine.

Ibtissam AbuHajja
Chair of the Technical Working Group
Ministry of Agriculture

Impacts of the working group model

In the water community in Palestine, in general, the most common practice followed for developing new policies or updating existing takes place at the institution that owns the policy, including if it impacts its core business, has mandate for implementing its provisions, etc. i. For the GWL Programme, the Palestinian Water Authority was the owner of the project, and they appointed the national Focal Point who supervised the development of the Response Strategies, liaised with the rest of public stakeholders to nominate their representatives to the WGs, engaged a wider group of stakeholders that contributed in different phases of the project, etc. Among others, the Focal Point was updating the Minister of Water Authority on the GWL Programme progress ensuring proper coordination at the leadership scale.

Such a business model is foreseen effective when dealing with internationally funded projects and where diversified stakeholders from the country are contributing to activities. Other models, particularly for projects with technical implementations, would be to appoint a steering committee to the project. For GWL Programme design, with only soft components to be implemented through the three WGs, there was no need to form a steering committee and was adequate to have the Focal Point who possesses senior position at PWA to follow and assist progress and delivery of objectives set.

For policy and strategy development, a common practise for Palestine is to recruit a third party consultant through the official procurement channels whose role will be to develop the policy/strategy against pre-defined Terms of Reference under supervision of a committee from the institution; such approach may face various challenges at the validation and endorsement phase of the deliverable as for the need to align national context and priorities with the perception of the consultant which sometimes lead to ending up with stagnant deliverables that may not granted the endorsement by the line authorities.

The GWP-Med team was well aware of such challenge and set up a structured consultation process in line with the GWL methodology, regularly communicating with competent parties and convening stakeholder meetings to ensure proper stakeholder representations in the WGs, including for validating the WGs outcomes by the institutions of the participating members.

Moreover, GWP-Med proposed to train stakeholder institutions on how professionally they can develop strategies and monitor & evaluate these to ensure the proper implementation of the developed Response Strategy and also to ensure providing leaders from the stakeholder's institutions on tools and methods to develop future strategies. A related the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) training was implemented at the last phase of the project engaging 6 WGs members.

The GWL response strategy model, in which the same group of people met at regular intervals over a year to co-design and co-elaborate the output, was new to this community.

The EFQM training empowered our team to assess the business performance regularly and contributed to creating more resilient strategies as our country is under occupation and 85% of our water resources are not under our control. EFQM Trainees from Palestine.

The GWL Programme offered precious opportunity to stakeholder institutions in Palestine as they were in process of developing and updating sectorial strategies for Water, Agriculture, Energy and Environment, including for climate resilience objectives. The strategic analysis and identification of key inputs made to develop the Response Strategies were beneficial to the stakeholder institutions to build on. The outcomes from the series of stakeholder consultation sessions, and the use of Water Tracker to assess the relevant sectors, assisted Palestinian institutions to speed up the process of developing the sectorial strategies and empowered the national teams to ensure proper strategic alliance and cascade national strategies to institutional ones.



Building the national capacity of Working Group members on the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation at the European Foundation for Quality Management Programme, Amman-Jordan Feb 2024

Country Coordinator Insights

The structure of three WGs was jointly developed with participants in the stakeholder meetings. The selection nomination of WG members was then discussed with the national Focal Point and endorsed by the Minister in order to ensure the buy in and adopting of the programme deliverables and outcomes from these WGs.

The process seemed lengthy at the beginning, yet enabled the timely delivery validation, launching and dissemination of the Response Strategy.

Dr. Ghazi Abu Rumman, GWL Programme Country Coordinator, GWP-MED.

"GWL working group model was a chance to work closely and share knowledge with colleagues in different Ministries and NGO's which lead to enrich our experiences and wide our vision to more comprehensive, merging the technical and financial aspects in developing the Response Strategy give us the chance to show our expertise and inputs in a new work approach for us".

Ibtisam AbuAlHaija, Head of Climate Change and Drought Management Dept.

Ministry of Agriculture - Palestine

Response Strategy

The primary focus and output of the GWL Programme was the development of Response Strategy. To deliver that, GWP-MED built on its extensive expertise in leading national efforts to assess the water sector and utilizing tools to identify relevant strategic inputs which should be coordinated at the national level. A range of national strategies and policies were reviewed, and strategic directions were proposed by GWP-MED to the WGs, in close synergy with the Focal Point at PWA, to ensure the alliance at the national level. Upon endorsing the strategic directions, the WGs started to identify the Strategic Goals, activities and sub activities with technical support and substantive inputs of GWP-MED team, as a way of transferring the technical know-how to the national teams. GWP-MED developed also Action Plan and Action Plan Framework to assist the WGs in following the strategic alliance. The identification of EFQM as a methodology was made available by GWP-MED to empower the national teams and institutions with capacities to build on the Response Strategy for years to come.

A strategic framework for successfully delivering agreed outputs was elaborated by GWP-Med and was proposed to the 3 WGs mobilising their capacity for contributing to the alliance of GWL Programme activities to those of the National Sectorial Strategic Objectives. Based on multi-level inputs, contents of the Response Strategy was drafted by GWP-MED and validated at 3-step validation process: within the WGs during 19-20 November 2023, within the larger group of stakeholders on the 10th March 2024, and finally within the NGOs community in Palestine on the 26th March 2024.

The Response Strategy was designed to navigate the complexities of water scarcity, quality, and access, which are further intensified by the region's geopolitical dynamics. It is anchored in a comprehensive understanding of the interdependencies between water resources management and the provision of essential WASH services under the challenging climatic impacts. This Response Strategy underscores the joint commitment of Palestine stakeholders to safeguarding public health, promoting socio-economic

development, and enhancing the resilience of our water systems against the backdrop of global climate change.

This Response Strategy is built on five pillars:

1. **Enhancing Institutional Decision-Making Process:** Enhancing our water management to be more resilient against climate variability and extremes through using decision support tools to empower water leaders to adopt evidence base management style.
2. **Sustainable Water Reuse:** Focusing on engaging the stakeholders and increase the awareness of the safe reuse of treated wastewater in agriculture.
3. **Sustainable Performance Management System:** Promoting the use of performance management systems including identifying strategic and operational key performance indicators to track the progress in the water sector.
4. **Building Partnerships and Sectoral Working Groups:** Leveraging collateral approaches and sectoral managing and reviewing impacts of water on environment, agriculture, society, women, and biodiversity.
5. **Climate Financing:** Ensuring the active participation of all stakeholders to quantify the needed financial resources to support Palestine in addressing the Response Strategy and other climate responsive proposals for funding.

The Validation Workshop (10 March 2024) was conducted at the PWA with participation from 12 stakeholder institutions along with the WG members. The Response Strategy was presented and discussions on the applicability and doability of activities, including the forecasted budget and implementation timeframe, were consolidated. Upon the completion of the validation, the Response Strategy was launched by H.E. the Head of the Palestinian Water Authority and the Head of the Environmental Quality Authority, with the presence of the WGs members, and other high ranks employees from PWA.

The developed approach of the Response Strategy is rooted in several core principles:

- 1) **Sustainability:** Ensuring the long-term sustainability of water resources through efficient use, protection of natural water sources, and investment in renewable water technologies.
- 2) **Equity and Accessibility:** Guaranteeing equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation services, with special attention to vulnerable communities.
- 3) **Resilience and Adaptation:** Building the resilience of water and sanitation systems to withstand the adverse effects of climate change and other environmental stressors.
- 4) **Integrated Management:** Adopting an integrated approach to water resources management that considers the entire water cycle, from source to sea, and recognizes the interconnectedness of water, land, and people.
- 5) **Community Participation and Empowerment:** Engaging local communities in the planning, implementation, and management of water and sanitation projects to ensure their needs and priorities are met.
- 6) **Innovation and Technology:** Leveraging technology and innovation to improve water and sanitation infrastructure, enhance water quality monitoring, and optimize resource management.

The Response Strategy employs a multi-faceted implementation framework that includes policy reform, capacity building, community engagement, technological innovation, and strategic partnerships. This framework is designed to be adaptive, allowing for the integration of new insights and the flexibility to respond to evolving challenges and opportunities.

The Response Strategy included the following strategic objectives which were identified following the review of related laws, regulations, instructions, and decisions applicable in Palestine to ensure legal coverage for Response Strategy and workplan. In addition, the review aimed to ensure that there is no conflict between the provisions of such legislations to realize justice and regulate intersections with relevant government stakeholders. The strategic stakeholders and strategic risks were identified and analysed to ensure the utmost national alliance and support the sustainability of the Response Strategy. These strategic objectives are:

1. Developing integrated planning tools for water resources management based on climate change:
2. Developing integrated performance management system for water resources management based on climate change.
3. Water; Reuse of TWW in different sectors, with a focus on Women and, Youth.

The strategic objectives were weighted to ensure the contribution of each objective to the overall strategy; the response strategies for each identified barrier are details as follows:

Response Strategy for Barrier 1 – Lack of integrated planning tools for water resources management based on climate change.

The Institutional WG reviewed the available tools either for diagnosis or planning purposes and agreed on the best tool to be used by member institutions in Palestine to ensure the national alliance of water sector in changing climate. There was also a quantification of required competencies needed to institutionalize the use of the selected planning tool.

Strategy	Actions	Estimated Cost (EUR)	Funding Source(s)
Developing integrated planning tools for water resources management based on climate change	Review available tools, i.e., MYWAS, Water Tracker, WEAP, EFQM and STRATEAU Inventory taking, validation, and endorsement	43 613	Domestic, external and blended finance
	Implementation of the selected tool based on the conducted study. Capacity building, piloting and implementation		Domestic, external and blended finance

This barrier was tackled through the activities and sub activities listed under this strategic objective; the main identified activities are:

1. Review available tools, i.e., GIS, Remote sensing, MYWAS, Water tracker, WEAP, EFQM and STRATEAU

In order to achieve this activity, the following tasks were identified:

- 1.1. Conduct inventory taking of available applied tools based on TOR.
- 1.2. Organize a workshop to present and validate the study findings.
- 1.3. Endorsement and E-distribution
2. Implementation of the selected tool based on the conducted study.

In order to achieve this activity, the following tasks were identified:

- 2.1. Capacity building of human resources to be involved in the implementation.
- 2.2. Piloting the tool in some partnering institutions
- 2.3. Implementation

Response Strategy for Barrier 2 – Lack of national performance system for water resources management based on climate change.

Palestine, like many other countries, has a set of individual KPIs for each public institution which provide an insight into their achievements whilst addressing the climate change impact on water resources is sectorial mandate. The WG strived to mitigate the prevailing lack of having an overarching and coordinated monitoring and evaluation programme to ensure the cascade of KPIs from the national scale into the line institutions and entities. Within these, it is recognised that the fulfilment of National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) would require a national consensus on relevant KPIs and agreed upon weights for each stakeholder’s contribution to achieving these targets and results.

Strategy	Actions	Estimated Cost (EUR)	Funding Source(s)
Developing integrated performance management system for water resources management based on climate change.	Developing an integrated performance management system. Assessment of existing, validation and testing applicability	17 890	Domestic, external and blended finance
	Implementation of approved SMART KPIs Capacity building and application		Domestic, external and blended finance

Response Strategy for Barrier 3 – Social behaviour resistance to and a lack of gender mainstreaming on the reuse of Treated Wastewater (TWW)

The WG promoted the social acceptance to the reuse of Treated Wastewater (TWW), including by dully considering the involvement of youth, gender and vulnerable groups in the suggested awareness program. The WG considered societal consensus for ensuring the adoption of this new water source into the various

sectors in Palestine. This approach would require a National Awareness Strategy that leaves no one behind to design a consolidated collective public awareness activity, and to ensure the safe reuse of this new source.

Strategy	Actions	Estimated Cost (EUR)	Funding Source(s)
Mainstreaming social acceptance and use of Treated Wastewater (TWW), With a focus on Women and, Youth	Multi-sectoral barriers and knowledge in TWW reuse: Gaps, Needs and Assessment Study, validation and assessment report	106 840	Domestic, external and blended finance
	Preparation of Awareness and Advocacy Campaign Materials based on the findings and recommendations of the assessment report		Domestic, external and blended finance
	Implementation of Awareness Campaigns for Decision Makers and Main Stakeholders in different Sectors		Domestic, external and blended finance
	Development of two Policy papers on: Gender Mainstreaming in the Reuse of Treated Wastewater (TWW) in different Sectors and TWW Reuse in different Sectors as tool to improve the adaption to Climate Change		Domestic, external and blended finance

Response Strategy Sustainability

While completing, validating and launching the Response Strategy is the primary deliverable against which programme success will be evaluated, government demonstration of ownership, uptake and integration of these response strategies is almost as equally important.

Government ownership of the process has been emphasized throughout.

Government ownership has been carefully cultivated at all steps of the Response Strategy development progress. Starting from the WGs, who took the ownership and framed out the whole process of formulating a Response Strategy including the finance plan, and their collaborative approach to ensure the buy-in from their public institutions, donors, the private sector and other public sources of financing, so that Response Strategy are assured of the backing they require to succeed.

PWA hosted the WG meetings, the validation of deliverables, the Response Strategy launch and also the Response Strategy Dissemination Workshop as they strongly believe in the alliance and harmony of these deliverables to the national needs and priorities. The commitment from 6 institutions to allow senior staff to

participate in the capacity development programme organised by GWP-MED to support the development of strategies and to design M&E framework to track the Response Strategy execution was also another evidence on Response Strategy ownership and activation of its components.

Following the presentation of the Response Strategy, FCDO and few other donors showed interest to support the implementation and PWA along with strategic stakeholders are organizing meetings to seal potential financial supports. Importantly, the commitment made by the PWA Minister to include financial resources into the Public Budget immediately after the War on Gaza is set on ease.

PWA in their communication strategy included objectives supportive to the Response Strategy by many tools, like launching of Response Strategy, circulating the Response Strategy to stakeholders and international donors, hosting workshops, publishing on the PWA official website and social media channels.

Finally, The Response Strategy ownership was proven by the H.E. Eng. Mazen Ghunaim and H.E. Dr Nisreen Tamimi when they both launched it. Likewise, it was evidenced by the participation of H.E. Eng. Nujoud Abdu in the Closeout Workshop in Malawi addressing the participants on how Palestine foresee the Response Strategy and the roadmap to utilize the Response Strategy in the national planning.

A solid methodological approach assisted Palestine's stakeholders to develop the Response Strategy and ensured leaving no-one-behind. The alignment of the Response Strategy with national policies and strategies, the authorities' ownership including the ministerial close follow up and allocation of public financial resources to support its implementation, are among evidence on the relevance of the GWL Programme deliverables to the national needs.

Vangelis Constantianos, Regional Coordinator, GWP-MED.



Hosting the validation of the Response Strategy at the Palestinian Water Authority with high level participation from strategic stakeholders from the governmental institutions

Post-GWL implementation of the Response Strategies

The following actions were taken to ensure that the Response Strategies are firmly embedded in national priorities in Palestine:

1. **Stakeholders' engagement:** ensure the range of relevant stakeholders, including Government institutions, NGOs, and private sector, contribute and committee to support for the Response Strategy implementation
2. **Resource Mobilization:** secure the necessary resources, including funding and personnel to effectively implement the Response Strategy, building national competencies to develop, monitoring and evaluate strategies (after the war in Gaza).
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, identify challenges, and make necessary adjustments.
4. **Communication and Awareness:** include the Response Strategy in the PWA communication plan to raise awareness about its importance among the general public and key stakeholders.
5. **Coordination Mechanisms:** establish clear coordination mechanisms to ensure effective collaboration among different agencies and PWA involved in implementing the Response Strategy.
6. **Include the Response Strategy in the drafted sectoral strategies developed by different stakeholders like the cross sectors ministries, Ministry of Agriculture, EQA, PENRA, PMO.**

Accountability

"We are dedicated to aligning the implementation of the Response Strategy with the priorities of the water sector, ensuring that it effectively addresses the most pressing challenges and delivers tangible results."

Nujoud Abdo, Head of Aid Cooperation Unit

Palestinian Water Authority

Achievements by Output

While completing, validating and launching the Response Strategy is the key focus of the GWL, additional activities that created an enabling environment for the Response Strategy and leadership in general were undertaken via distinct work packages, aka Outputs. Achievements organized by Output are provided below.

Output 1 – Strengthened water leadership and collaboration

Formal obligations to Output 1 were not included in the original proposal approved by FCDO but inserted into the programme at later dates.

Support to the SWA Sector Ministers Meeting (SMM) in May 2022

Requests from FCDO and GWP Leadership to support government participation in this event were only offered in late March 2022, not leaving a lot of time for teams to leap into action.

-The GWL Palestine Team assisted in opening the consultation workshop and HE Engr Nujoud Abdo addressed the participants on behalf of HE Engr Mazen Ghunaim, the Minister. 23 senior representatives from 11 different governmental and non-governmental organizations attended the workshop. The final report was shared with representatives whom in return shared with their line ministers for endorsement.

-A conference session is being proposed at the 4th Arab Water Conference organized by Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) whereby Ministers from PWA, Environmental Quality Authority (EQA) and Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority (PENRA) participate in panel discussion to address identified challenges facing the integrated water resources management in Palestine and how GWL Programme can support Palestine to foster gaps and empower local institutions in aligning the national efforts to address the identified gaps.

-It was agreed to dedicate one of the three working groups to be an Institutional Planning Group focusing on the cross-cutting issues within the country so to ensure the holistic responses and the jointly developed strategies and policies to address these issues, as an example: synergies between IWRM and WASH, impact of climate change on water allocation within the various sectors, etc.

Support in providing unified WRM and WASH messaging for COP-27 (Egypt, November 2022) and/or the United Nations Water Conference (NYC, March 2023)

Discussion with Palestine ministers of stakeholder institutions and other partners took place at the 4th Arab Water Conference, with the commitment and support clearly indicated by their Excellencies.

AGWA supported a representative of PWA to present a case study from the Water Tracker analysis in Palestine at events like the Cairo Water Week 2022 and the COP 27 Water Pavilion (along with case studies from Egypt, Morocco and Jordan).

Support to other leadership initiatives, such as Stockholm World Water Week 2022 and/or 2023, COP-28 (Dubai, December 2023) and other national or regional events.

Members of the 3WGs participated in the COP28 (Dubai, November 2023) and it was an opportunity to meet with the global GWL Project Coordinator and to attend roundtable discussions related to the project and to the overall national overview of the project contribution and the need to impose adaptation measures.



Engaging the governmental stakeholders in discussing workplan, activities and sub-activities of the GWL Programme

Output 2 – Evidence, norms and standards

This Output evolved a lot during the programme.

Output 2.1 – Water resource snapshots developed by GWP and used to inform national policy and plans

Four consultation workshops were convened with multi-stakeholder group to agree the most critical barriers to climate-resilient water management in Palestine. Three WGs were set up to co-develop the Response Strategy: the institutional working group, the technical working group and the monitoring & evaluation working group. Together they identified 35 barriers, out of which the following 3 were determined to be the most pressing.

In June 2023, the root cause analysis was completed which determined the following causes of the barriers:

Barrier 1: caused by a lack of synchronized national databases, a lack of data cleansing and updating, and a lack of assigned responsibilities to collect and validate data sets.

Barrier 2: caused by insufficient baseline studies, a lack of national coordination to agree quantified shared responsibilities, and an authority matrix mandating data collection and monitoring.

Barrier 3: caused by religious social concerns, health hazards and underperforming wastewater treatment facilities.

Output 2.2 – AAC Water Tracker supported by GWP and scaled up to inform climate policies and plans

Palestine was one of the original adopters of the Water Tracker tool to facilitate the understanding of water as a source for the effective implementation of actions to address climate change impacts. The Water Tracker helped identifying the approach and process of including water in climate plans, provide guidance to strengthen water sensitive adaptation commitments, connect multi-sector water resilience projects to climate finance, promote understanding of water resilience across sectors, institutions, policy frameworks & levels of governance, provide clarity in evaluating the ambition and effectiveness of climate planning & action; and promote tools and frameworks designed to enable water-sensitive mitigation, adaptation and climate proofing projects across sectors.

Insights on the Water Tracker process were provided to the larger team during the global GWL Kick-off Workshop in Dakar in March 2022. AGWA supported a representative of PWA to present a case study from the Water Tracker analysis in Palestine at events like the Cairo Water Week 2022 and the COP 27 Water Pavilion (along with case studies from Egypt, Morocco and Jordan).

Output 3 – National Systems and Financing

This work remains the heart of GWL.

Output 3.1 – Snapshot

This work activity was shifted to Output 2.1 towards the end of Year 1. Original numbering was maintained to reduce potential confusion, so there was no Activity 3.1 from Year 2 moving forward.

Output 3.2 – Facilitate in-country multi-stakeholder change processes on integrated water resources management (in conjunction with UNICEF-led process on climate-resilient WASH services)

Close and regular interaction was maintained with PWA, as the main counterpart of the GWL Programme in Palestine. Several occasions were organized to facilitate the multi-stakeholder change process including:

- Material of the Launching Workshop, including draft concept note, main questions to facilitate multi-stakeholder discussions towards identifying a limited number of WGs, draft agenda and a tentative list of invitees, was prepared by GWP-Med and shared with PWA as well as with UNICEF for feedback. Roles and responsibilities for the WGs was developed by GWP-MED and discussed during the stakeholder consultation.
- The Launching Workshop was organized in August 2023 to advance progress and sustain the consultation on technical issues related to the workplan with key Palestine counterparts (e.g. PWA, Ministry of Agriculture, Environmental Quality Authority, Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority).
- A group discussion was established with GWP and UNICEF proposing to hold on the establishment of the proposed Project Steering Committee and revisit the subject at a later stage (for example, after the conclusion of the launching event) for reasons including:
 1. Agreeing on project Thematic Working Groups (WGs), their members and chairpersons, who may be invited to the WGs.
 2. Ensured better representation of GWL stakeholders concerning the IWRM and WASH related to climate resilience as managed by both project partners (GWP-MED and UNICEF).

- GWP-MED and UNICEF discussed the outcomes from UNICEF project “Groundwater vulnerability assessment” at the Technical Implementation Working Group (one of the three WGs established) whereby the most relevant stakeholders are part of this WG.
- Following the close interaction with PWA, the opportunity to (co)support a GWL Programme side event in the context of the 4th Arab Water Conference (organised by PWA and the League of Arab States, December 2022, Cairo) was investigated to be organised with the UNICEF Regional Office for MENA as such event includes decision makers within the water sector in Palestine. Facilitating multi-stakeholder platform where representatives from the water community, the policy- and decision makers from Arab states and the international water community which is supposed to help identifying joint solutions and agree on priorities to address climate change impacts on the water resources and their financing options. This proposal and organisation was not supported by GWL Leadership, GWP-MED advanced the side discussions with the multi-stakeholders at the event with own resources.

It was a pleasure for me to be the head of M&E group for preparing the response strategy in cooperation and participation of colleagues from the relevant ministries and institutions in Palestine. In principle, our methodology was working together at home in full coordination and collaboration, we go for this track since it is a more efficient, accessible, and doable approach rather than relying on international consultants. We as a local team are more aware of our concerns, needs and we can make a constructive dialogue between all stakeholders and move forward."

Eng. Rehab Thaher, Strategic Planning Dep.

Palestinian Water Authority

Output 3.3 – Support advancing climate resilient plans and policies for water

The promotion of climate-resilient or climate smart water management did not exist solely within the Response Strategy Development process. Parallel complementary activities were undertaken under the banner of climate action as noted below.

Inserting water concerns into climate policies and/or plans

GWP-MED proposed to jointly develop with UNICEF a Policy Brief on IWRM & WASH alignment for climate resilience objectives in Palestine. The policy was welcomed initially by UNICEF but due to lengthy approval process and the limitation in project timeline, GWP-MED advanced the policy brief which elaborated on related barriers/challenges, possible solutions and suggested action points towards more coherent IWRM and WASH action planning and implementation, concluding with key messages to policy makers, and including the related contribution of the GWL Program. Also, the policy brief received inputs from the GWL multistakeholder Working Groups that are working on developing response strategies. The Policy Brief is attached in **Annex 4**.



GWL local coordinator and member of WG presenting findings of sectorial analysis using Water Tracker

Inserting climate resilience into water policies and plans

GWP-MED adopted the use of Water Tracker to diagnose the national climate resilience and their inclusion in the water policies and plans. All the reviewed documentations reflected the clear commitment of Palestine towards climate action and include water considerations to some degree. They each have important initiatives, but none presented them all at once. Valuable principles and ideas were mentioned throughout the documents but sometimes they were not strongly reflected in the proposed actions. The key findings by section (water in national climate plans, water in national planning and governance, water and climate connections in specific sectors, and links to climate financing and project implementation climate were reported) were matched with sets of high-level policy recommendations.

GWP-MED developed a policy brief outlining the need to ensure having a resilient climate change management approach in the water policies and plans, **Annex 4**.

Identifying opportunities to leverage climate finance for climate-resilient water management

GWP-MED along with the national financial consultant has been engaged in the 3WGs meetings and developed the followings:

- Templates for the three action plan frameworks (APF) that contributed to the developing of the Response Strategy. Further development on the APF took place to identify the detailed logistics for each activity and the anticipated timeline for implementation, and this was supported by the Financial Consultant who developed the associated financial plan for these strategies.
- On-job training on developing the Finance Plan was realized for the 3WGs along with the development of the finance plan.

- Financial Plan was prepared through costing the sub activities that exist in the action plan.
- Identifying potential financing sources amid the financial landscape that exists in Palestine. The consultant capitalized on the technical know-how of WG members in identifying funding opportunities. WG members were asked to propose the most appropriate financing source of each activity, and then debate these proposals until agree on them.

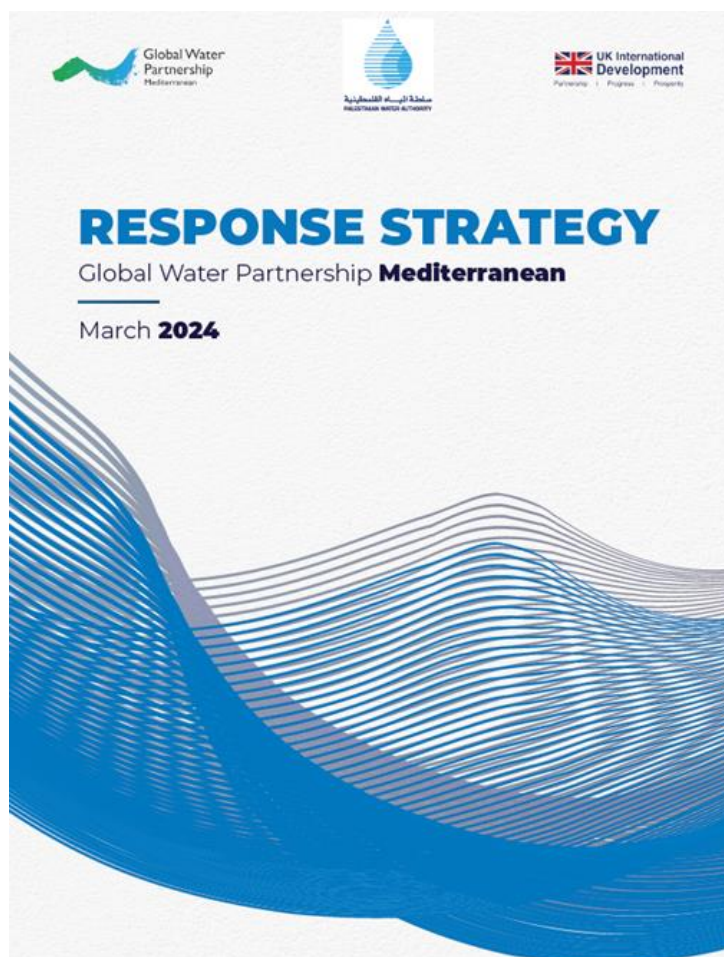


Figure 2: Cover page of the launched and disseminated Response Strategy

Output 3.4 – Develop capacity (intelligence on available international finance flows, readiness to access – and effective integrated financial and policy planning that anchors water, to absorb said finance), share knowledge and communicate results

Most of the focus of capacity development was steered toward finance and costing, including the on-job training on developing the Finance Plan for the 3WGs along with the development of the finance plan and templates for the three APFs that contributed to the developing of the Response Strategy. Further development on the APF took place to identify the detailed logistics for each activity and the anticipated timeline for implementation, and this was supported by the Financial Consultant who developed the associated financial plan for these strategies.

Relevant to GWL objectives and aimed outputs, GWP-MED facilitated water professionals from Palestine who were WG members to attend capacity building programme offered by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) to empower their national institutions to enhance development of aligned Response Strategy and designing the M&E protocols. This training, that took place in Feb. 2024, in Amman, empowered the national team to improve organizational processes, leadership, and overall performance using the EFQM framework, contributing to the sustainability of GWL results and impact upon completion of the project activities. The EFQM's core concepts of leadership, strategy, and results directly correlated with essential aspects of Response Strategy development and particularly assisted them in:

- Assess the alignment of response strategies with national and organizational strategies and values including the alignment with leadership's commitment.
- Analyse the effectiveness of strategy deployment in addressing specific challenges or crises.
- Measure the results and impact of response strategies on organizational performance and resilience.

GWP-MED developed a concept note and discussed it with GWL Global Coordinator and this was approved by both GWP and FCDO; concept note is attached in **Annex 8**.

Related to Output 2.4.2, the GWL Programme focused on developing and activating gender transformative solutions. The launching of the developed Response Strategy was co-organized with the Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN) to ensure the contribution in finalizing, designing and disseminating the Response Strategy to their members. The mandated tasks and responsibilities to PWWPN were:

- Co-organize dissemination session for the GWL Programme Response Strategy
- Invite female, water professionals to attend the second launching event.
- Design the Response Strategy for publication purposes and dissemination.
- Develop communication reports, media, leaflets, banners, outlines and advertisement including social media channels and official website of PWWPN.
- Convene the meeting and provide a recording of a document, the feedback from stakeholders.

Finance Plan Development

The Finance Plan was a required component of the Response Strategy, and GWL Global coordinator decided to engage a local consultant to coach working group participants in co-developing the finance plans as a capacity-building activity. Onboarding of the National Financial Consultant was done in May 2023, he started to engage with the WGs involved in the meeting held in PWA following the WGs scheduled meetings where he presented his responsibilities in the project, specifically in the preparation of the response strategies was introduced to the chairs of the 3 WGs. The following tasks were provided to support the Response Strategy development:

1. Development of the Action Plan for each of the three working groups, where the activities are fully detailed and justified.
2. Based on the Action Plan, the Finance Plan is developed, which consists of estimating the costs, making initial proposals for the financing sources (or options) for each activity.
3. Developed concrete recommendations for future financing proposals based on an understanding of the financial landscape in the country and opportunities that may exist.
4. A consolidated finance report was shared with WG members and other relevant stakeholders for further review and feedback.
5. Financing sources were identified including an assessment of how realistic they are, confirm likelihood and identify the steps that would be needed to access the finance sources.
6. Submission of final financial plan which was approved by the relevant authorities.

Reflecting on my experience as a participant in the working group, collaborating with the finance consultant has been instrumental in broadening my understanding of financial mechanisms and enhancing my confidence in handling finance-related matters. The guidance provided by the consultant has significantly bolstered my ability to navigate complex financial landscapes with greater ease and clarity.

Working closely with the finance consultant has not only equipped me with the necessary knowledge but has also instilled a sense of confidence in my approach towards finance plans. Through insightful discussions and practical examples shared during our sessions, I have gained a comprehensive understanding of various financing mechanisms, which has expanded my repertoire of skills and expertise in this domain. In the future, if approached to speak about or work on finance plans, I am now better prepared to offer informed insights and contribute meaningfully to the discussion. The valuable lessons learned, and the strategies acquired through this collaboration have equipped me to tackle future finance-related challenges with confidence and competence.

Nisreen Abu Kishk, Director of Gender Equality's Policies Department

Ministry of Women Affairs

WRM and WASH integration

While completing, validating and launching the Response Strategy is the key output of the GWL, its theory of change depends upon strengthened leadership and collaboration between water resources and WASH decisionmakers to develop and implement inclusive and resilient policies and strategies for water management and service provision.



Figure 1 - Global Water Leadership Programme Theory of Change

Breaking down the longstanding IWRM and WASH silos is a process that takes effort, much like the investment of time and resources that were required to develop the Response Strategy. GWP collaboration with leading WASH organizations such as UNICEF and the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership (SWA) was built into the programme design as a method for forging these less traditional relationships.

Breaking down silos: Change over time

The GWL programme actively promoted WRM-WASH collaboration over its three-year existence. Change can be measured in outputs and activities but should also be reviewed from a lens of dismantling established patterns of compartmentalization.

Both WRM and WASH partners should have involved in the design of activities related to GWL Programme to ensure the harmony in delivering joint services. The professionals on ground were not involved in the design of GWL Programme outputs across countries and the design of outputs including responsibilities were left vague as it was done remotely by HQs.

Collaboration with UNICEF

1. A joint GWP/UNICEF work plan for GWL in Palestine was elaborated, consulted and agreed, based on the respective updated GWL Work Plans.
2. GWP-MED local representative attended the stakeholder meeting to discuss the vulnerability assessment report developed by UNICEF and presented to PWA.
3. GWP-MED developed with UNICEF-Palestine a joint presentation which was delivered at the global GWP-UNICEF progress meeting on the 14th June 2023.
4. Several online exchanges and coordination through personnel communications were held to harmonize the work.
5. Involvement in the joint UNICEF-GWP annual progress review session.
6. GWP-MED invited UNICEF to join the development of Policy Paper
7. GWP-MED invited UNICEF to join Climate Financing Proposals

Gender transformation

While completing, validating and launching the Response Strategy is the key output of the GWL, supporting said strategies to actively evolve into gender transformative, climate-resilient policies and plans for the sustainable management of freshwater resources is a key ambition of the initiative. Addressing the acknowledged differentiated impact of water management and climate change upon women and girls through coordinated and intentional policy development and action planning has been a priority.

By design of the three WGs for the GWL Programme, their Chairs were females from competent stakeholder institutions. All GWL related awareness sessions and training activities took place in Palestine with help and support from the Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN). A representative of the Ministry of Woman Affairs was included in the Capacity Development Programme (EFQM).

Details can be accessed through: <https://pwwpn.phg.org/articles/view/28/en>

Gender and stakeholder analysis

GWP-MED in partnership with PWA and other strategic stakeholders reviewed the existing documentations related to Gender and stakeholders analysis, particularly the Palestine's Gender Responsive Water Assessment Report which was published by the FAO with detailed inputs and endorsement from both GWL Programme partners namely: Palestinian Water Authority and Ministry of Agriculture; the decision was to adopt the already existing analysis and to build further on the report.

“The participation of Palestinian leadership women within the GWL response strategy development process highlights the significant role on mitigating gender oriented - environmental pressures on Palestinian women either through their participation and formulation of environmental strategies and policies to mainstream gender issues to become more gender sensitive on the national level or within the rights of Palestinian women in obtaining an environmental nexus of food security and clean water all in a healthy environment. Where the UN Women 2022 have declared that “it is now widely recognized that environmental - related risks and threats are not gender -neutral; on the contrary, women and girls are disproportionately affected by climatic change, environmental degradation, and biodiversity loss”

Eman Duwaik, Project Coordinator

Palestinian Women Water Network

External approaches to enhance and promote gender

The Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN) partnered since the design of the project and was recruited to ensure the contribution in finalizing and disseminating the Response Strategy to their members through several activities including: co-organise dissemination session for the Response Strategy to local NGOs, invite female, water professionals to attend the second Consultation Workshop, design the Response Strategy for publication purposes and dissemination by female graphic designer, develop communication reports, media, leaflets, banners, outlines and advertisement including social media channels and official website of PWWPN and finally, convene the meeting and provide a recording of a document, the feedback from stakeholders. Organized the dissemination of the Response Strategy to NGOs in Palestine a total of 60 e-copies on memory sticks were distributed to NGOs in Palestine.

Internal approaches to enhance and promote gender

Being effective champions and agents of change in gender transformation requires regular attention to self (and staff) learning and openness to continual growth.

By design of the three WGs for the GWL programme, their Chairs are females from competent stakeholder institutions,. GWL related awareness sessions and training activities will take place in Palestine with help and

support from the Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN). A representative of the Ministry of Woman Affairs was included in the Capacity Development Programme (EFQM).

"By prioritizing internal gender transformation initiatives in Palestine, GWP is poised to drive significant societal change, potentially enhancing the sustainability and inclusivity of future water resource management programs throughout the region".




One of the 3 female chairs of WGs presenting the Response Strategy at the Dissemination workshop

Recommendations

The set of recommendations were generated as a lesson learnt from the implementation of the GWL Programme in 7 countries through a consortium, it was essential to encapsulate strategic insights, successful outcomes, and forward-looking guidance. Here is a list of these recommendations:

- 1. Sustain Political Will and Engagement**
Despite the high political turbulence, GWP-MED succeeded in maintaining GWL dialogue with policymakers and governmental agencies to ensure ownership of the programme at all its phases and to address national priorities; however, it would be of high value to include those policy makers in earlier phases of the design of the programme to ensure a proactive approach for aligning the political agenda in the implementing countries.
- 2. Institutionalize the advocating approaches:**
The three Working Groups established through the GWL Programme were representatives of the governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Yet, to ensure achieving policy changes and support the implementation and monitoring of the agreed Response Strategy, there should be a dedicated business unit, possibly combining human resources from line Authorities and Ministries, which reports to Prime Ministry to ensure the needed top-down guidance and follow ups. Such a business unit should guide future activities, ensuring that the program's objectives continue to be met effectively and sustainably.
- 3. Enhance Data Collection and Monitoring**
The Working Groups on development of monitoring and evaluation and on the identification of Key Performance Indicators should have been supported by establishing knowledge hub to ensure promote data collection, data cleansing and analysis prior to report on KPIs. This is of high interest given the diversity in data inputs from the governmental stakeholders.
- 4. Secure Sustainable Funding**
GWL Programme assisted Palestinian authorities in identifying bottlenecks and helped in developing the associated budgets to implement the Response Strategy., Thus, it paved the way for a GWL Programme Phase II whereby further building national competencies to raise fund and concretely address additional funding channels, including the Green Climate Fund. This would assist working towards establishing a mix of funding sources, including government support, and private sector partnerships, to ensure the longevity of developed initiatives, and explore opportunities for impact investments that focus on sustainable water management as a critical area for climate resilience and development.
- 5. Foster Regional Cooperation**
Other than the GWL launching in Senegal and Closeout in Malawi, including the online meetings to report activities, there could have been a common platform among GWL countries to encourage the exchange of knowledge, policies, and best practices among the implementing countries. Overall, it seems crucial to establish a cross-country, including in a regional format, forum for addressing climate impacts on water management issues and promoting cooperative efforts to launch resilient Response Strategies and success stories to manage shared water resources.
- 6. Focus on Scalability and Replicability**
GWL Programme assisted in identifying, through a structured multi-stakeholder process,



bottlenecks which exceeded 30 in some countries. However, including due to the limited Programme duration, prioritization of these bottlenecks was conducted to work on the top 3 ones, while all the rest remain pertinent and in the focus of countries. So, it would be of value to scale up the development of Response Strategies to manage the identified remaining bottlenecks and to advance the lesson learned from phase 1 into future GWL phases, also to replicate these strategies in other countries and regions facing similar challenges.

Annexes

- Annex 1: Participants list for all working groups
- Annex 2: Root Cause Analysis reports
- Annex 3: The Response Strategy
- Annex 4: Policy Brief
- Annex 5: Consultation Workshop reports
- Annex 6: Water Tracker Diagnostic Report
- Annex 7: National Enablers List
- Annex 8: Outcome Report from EQFM Training
- Annex 9: Palestine's Gender Responsive Water Assessment Report (FAO).

About the Global Water Leadership (GWL) Programme

Effective and equitable water management is becoming increasingly complex, and increasingly important, as climate change impacts add new uncertainty to policy decisions and financial investments. The Global Water Leadership in a Changing Climate programme (GWL) is working intensely in ten countries, bringing together key stakeholders and decision makers from two water management pillars – water resources and water and sanitation – to develop holistic, integrated policies and plans to enhance national water and climate resilience. The programme is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and implemented by Global Water Partnership (GWP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership (SWA) and the World Health Organization/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP).



gwp.org/en/global-water-leadership-programme



gwl.gwptz.org

