Enabling Environment for Knowledge Sharing and Technology Transfer

Committee on Middle East Questions
Second Roundtable on Water: From words to actions
6 - 7 July 2017 IPU Headquarters Geneva, Switzerland

Rose Osinde Alabaster
Program Director, WaterLex
r.osindealabaster@waterlex.org
MENA region - most water scarce region in the world - average of 656 m$^3$ of renewable freshwater per capita...

- Most water scarce region
- Lowest productivity of water in the world.
- Among the lowest water tariffs in the world.

Governments give the highest level of subsidies globally – approaching 2 % of GDP on average

BUT

Benefits are disproportionately captured by the wealthiest quintile of the population.
Effective Management and Governance

Water Quality, Availability and Sustainability

- Effective management of natural resources across the region, human and economic development
- Strengthened decision-making processes
- Effective institutions
- Alignment with key governance principles
  (participation, access to information, accountability, sustainability)
Enabling Environment for National Priorities for SDGs

- Laws
- Policies
- Implementation mechanisms
- Monitoring and Compliance

SDGs adoption
Not legally Binding

BUT it’s a Political commitment

Onus is the States to set their development priorities
Legal Policy Assessments

- The Transformative Agenda 2030 Imperative to "leave no one behind"
- Each country needs to proceed in adopting the main principles in national legislation, or, where possible or necessary, in the constitution.

- For SDGs to succeed, legal implementation on the national level is required
- Parliamentarians need to translate SDGs into actionable, sound legislation
Integrating the SDGs agenda in established national strategies requires cooperation between the legislative and executive powers. Through practical and technical support for the agenda adopted by the parliament, alignment between its international commitments and its national development priorities is crucial — reducing the monitoring/reporting burden.

International & Regional Commitments to National Priorities

WaterLex
Practical and Technical support

- Targets 6.a and 6.b, Goal 17 lay out seven building blocks
  - Mutually reinforcing and interdependent
  - Means of implementation

- Successes & Good Practices?

- Enabling environment includes:
  - Laws and policies
  - Knowledge Sharing
  - Technology Transfer &
  - Innovations
Inadequately articulated laws and policies have cumulative impact:

- Distort signals of scarcity
- Undermine incentives for innovations in water management or technology
Political Support for Legal – Policy Reform

- LAW-Policy Reform
  - Takes time
  - Establish baselines
  - Identify and share good practices
  - Making concrete recommendations to fill existing gaps

- Regional co-operation
  - Build political support for reforms
  - Institutional arrangements for collaboration.
Financing

- Water is not tradeable, but when you trade in agricultural products, you are trading water.
- When countries trade with and invest in each other, they need to cooperate with each other...

SDG implementation will require forging partnerships and collaboration between a range of actors.

Build on governments work with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and academia.
United Nation sees engagement of private sector, investor, academics and institution as an important step in implementing the SDGs

SDG framework offers no definitive framework for monitoring the activities of private sector - compliance and accountability

Parliaments can facilitate investments and cooperation through legislation e.g. in favour of fair trade
State and Non-State Actors

- Strengthened decision-making processes
- Alignment with key governance principles
  - participation, access to information, accountability, sustainability
Knowledge Sharing & Technological Innovations

- Where is the Knowledge?
- Terms for knowledge-sharing & transferability
- Adaptations needed
Enabling Environment

Knowledge-Sharing, Technology Transfer, Innovation

- Cost-effective technological solutions
  - Readily available and implementable
- Challenge - sustainable solutions
  - Enabling environment
- Legal, policy and regulatory frameworks
  - Clear mechanisms & structures for operationalisation
  - National programme and project levels
Inclusive Partnership, Innovations and Accountability

- How can laws, policies, procedures and instruments be adapted to create incentives for engagement and partnership?
- Operations and value chains of the private sector involved should comply with UN Guiding Principles for private sector engagement.

- Inclusive partnerships
- Innovative modalities and partnerships for development
- Accountability & respect for human rights
Overall there is a need to establish conditions for accelerated and inclusive growth to foster tangible wealth for ordinary people.

1. **Renewing the social contract**

   To generate a new development models that are built on:
   - greater citizen trust
   - more effective protection of the poor and vulnerable
   - inclusive and accountable service delivery
   - a stronger private sector that can create jobs and opportunities for MENA’s youth

2. **Regional cooperation**

   - Particularly around regional public goods and sectors such as education, water, and energy so as to foster greater trust and collaboration across Middle East countries
   - Incentivise private-sector job creation and/or improve the quality of public services
Thank you!