

9 OCTOBER 2018, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

# Handover ceremony of the sanitary cell at Al Ekaider landfill

## AGENDA

- 11:00 am **Handover Ceremony**  
Unveiling of a memorial stone by the patron
- 11:15 am **Opening of the event**
- 11:15 am **Welcome word by H.E. Dr. Omar Al-Razzaz, Prime Minister of Jordan**
- 11:30 am **Speech by Minister of Municipal Affairs**
- 11:40 am **Speech by the EU ambassador**
- 11:50 am **Speech by Ministry of Environment**
- 11:55 am **Speech by Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation**
- 12:00 am **Short project video film**
- 12:05 am **Testimonial from one of Al Ekaider village citizens**
- 12:10 am **Signing of the new EU and GIZ agreement** for the implementation of a new socio-economic project as part of the EU-funded programme *Support to the Implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy*.
- 12:20 am **Closing of the event**
- 12:30 pm **Networking reception**



# EU hands over new sanitary cell to Ministry of Municipal Affairs

**The closing ceremony of the EU funded EUR 10 million emergency programme *EU Support to Solid Waste Management in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees* marks also the beginning of a new EUR 100 million programme: *EU Support to the Implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy*.**

**Amman / Al Ekaider, 9 October 2018**

Situated between Mafraq and the country's third largest city, Irbid, just one kilometre away from the border with Syria, Al Ekaider landfill site is one of Jordan's most problematic environmental spots (see background information). Since the beginning of the civil war in Syria in 2011, Jordan's population increased to up to 9.5 million (Jordan Census 2015), of which more than 660.000 are Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR (June 2018). Mafraq Governorate and Irbid Governorate host large numbers of refugees.

"With the rapid rise in the population since the start of the crisis in Syria, communities and municipalities faced new challenges with the provision of services, above all waste disposal. The new EU-funded landfill cell in Al Ekaider not only represents a technological advance but also tangibly contributes to reducing health risks for the workers and for people living in the surrounding municipalities." says H.E. Dr. Omar Al-Razzaz, Prime Minister of Jordan and patron of the event.

The handover of the new sanitary cell by the Ambassador of the European Union to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Andrea Matteo Fontana, was attended by senior politicians including the Prime Minister, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Minister of Environment and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation. Around 200 guests from the fields of politics, the private sector and the media also attended the handover ceremony at the landfill site, along with mayors and citizens of the beneficiary communities and municipalities.

**The handover of the new cell built by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH marks the conclusion of a EU funded EUR 10 million emergency programme**

Alongside the construction of a new sanitary cell, the EU funded EUR 10 million emergency programme also provided for new equipment including a landfill compactor and a new weighbridge, together with training in waste management for both administrative and landfill site staff. Today's formal handover of the new unit marks the conclusion of the emergency programme *Support to Solid Waste Management in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees* implemented by GIZ from 2015 to 2018 in the municipalities of Mafraq, Irbid and Ramtha and in the Joint Service Councils (JSCs) in Mafraq and Irbid Governorates.

"Working in close cooperation with municipal and regional governments, GIZ effectively delivered the construction of new infrastructures, purchase of new equipment, and the improvement of the operational capacity that improved also the planning capacity of municipalities and JSCs" said Ralf Senzel from GIZ.

**EU gives additional EUR 100 million in support for implementing Jordan's National Solid Waste Management Strategy**

The conclusion of the EUR 10 million emergency project for northern Jordan also marks the launching of the new *EU Support to the Implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy* programme.

Andrea Matteo Fontana, the EU Ambassador to Jordan stated that "The EU is proud to support the Government of Jordan in its efforts to move from the management of a crisis situation towards a sustainable and environmentally conscious management of solid waste in the country. With the project that ends today we have put a solid basis to continue improving solid waste management (SWM) under the principles of Reducing, Reusing, Recycling endorsed in a



national strategy and supported through our new programme“.

Under this new programme, the EU will provide EUR 100 million in support to the implementation of the National SWM Strategy of which 40 million will be dedicated for a budget support component and 60 million for the project component. GIZ and the French Development Agency (AFD) will be implementing the components of the programme that focus on the social aspects and awareness (GIZ) and capacity building and infrastructures (AFD).

The new EU programme adds to the on-going EU support to SWM with projects supporting the establishment of a Solid Waste Information System (implemented by the Environment Agency Austria), the SWM in Azraq camp (implemented by Word Vision), the SWM in Zaatari camp (implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) and the construction of a recycling facility in Irbid (implemented by the Italian Istituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria (ICU)). The total EU support to SWM in Jordan today is over EUR 120 million.

## **CONTACT**

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# The solid waste management sector in Jordan

Syrian refugees are only one of the groups in Jordan seeking to escape conflict. Recent decades have seen a major influx of refugees from other neighbouring war-torn countries, including particularly Palestinians and Iraqis seeking long-term protection.

Although Jordan is not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention) agreed in Geneva, it is hosting around 1.4 million Syrian nationals (Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016–2018), including more than 660,000 registered as refugees (UNHCR, June 2018) since the civil war broke out in 2011. This is equivalent to more than 10% of its own population. The Jordanian Government has given refugees unrestricted access to the country's healthcare and education systems and to basic services (food, accommodation and energy).

This has led to deterioration in the provision of many services to refugees and Jordanians alike. Key examples include schools teaching children in double shifts, bottlenecks in healthcare, and epidemics in refugee camps. In particular, municipalities and communities near the border with Syria are finding it difficult to meet their social, economic and institutional responsibilities. This is causing resentment towards the Government and refugees among the Jordanian population.

## NEED FOR ACTION: WASTE ENDANGERS HUMAN LIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The waste management system is a particularly contentious issue. Refugee influx combined with marked growth in the young population and an increasingly modern lifestyle has led to a rapid increase in the amount of waste produced by settlements. Waste management was already a weak point for the Jordanian Government even before the refugee crisis. Now, it has become a major challenge for local communities.

The situation in northern Jordan is particularly dramatic. 33% of the refugees live in the Mafraq Governorate, which comprises 18 municipalities near the borders with Syria and Iraq. A further 22% live in the Irbid Governorate. Cities like Mafraq and Ramtha have seen their populations even double at times.

Among the local municipalities in Irbid and Mafraq, municipal solid waste management (MSWM) was considered as the most affected urban service in 33 of the 36 municipalities and the influx of refugees is estimated to have resulted in around 340 tonnes of additional daily MSW in 2013 (Needs Assessment Review of the Impact of the Syrian Crisis on Jordan, MOPIC-UN, 2013). As a result, the baseline capacity of the local municipalities was insufficient to face the dramatic increase in the daily MSW and was disposed of shortages of equipment and of labour; the over usage of existing assets resulted in higher maintenance costs and accelerated the depreciation of the equipment.

## EU: EMERGENCY PROGRAMME FOR NORTHERN JORDAN

The three municipalities of Mafraq, Irbid and Ramtha were heavily polluted and had desolate landfills, vulnerable to fires in some cases, inadequate equipment and poor waste collection vehicles. The handover of the new sanitary cell in Al Ekaider 2018 marked the conclusion of the EUR 10 million emergency *Support to Solid Waste Management in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees* programme. The programme was implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the EU between 2015 and 2018.

### The key measures included:

- Construction of an orderly sanitary cell at the Al Ekaider landfill site
- Provision of equipment, spare parts and vehicles



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 33 training courses for 882 employees from municipalities and Joint Service Councils at both institutional level (covering organisational structure, standard procedures and planning) and individual level (covering technical expertise, IT applications, management, finance, and health and safety)
- Support to the development of three municipal waste management plans
- Support to the development of a regional solid waste management plan (RSWMP) for the northern region based on the National Solid Waste Management Strategy
- Support to the review of the feasibility study for the large-scale upgrade of the Al Ekaider landfill site
- Development of a computer-based monitoring system for the follow-on projects.

Representative surveys commissioned by the Jordan Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project in 2014 and again by GIZ in 2017 show that the levels of satisfaction within local communities regarding the cleanliness in their municipality have increased from 30% to 93% in Irbid, from 42% to 79% in Mafraq, and from 20% to 66% in Ramtha.

### FROM EMERGENCY PROGRAMME TO SUSTAINABLE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

After having tackled the emergency situation caused by the influx of refugees, the EU will continue supporting the sustainable management of solid waste and will provide an additional EUR 100 million to support the implementation of Jordan's 2015 National Solid Waste Management Strategy. GIZ has created the conditions across the entire northern part of the country for the successful implementation of the new programme, *EU Support to the Implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy*.

The overall objective of the action is to improve health, environmental conditions and quality of life of the population by developing environmentally and financially sustainable systems for solid waste management. Its purpose

is to ensure in the coming five to seven years, the efficient, safe and sanitary disposal of municipal solid waste in the country.

#### The specific objectives (SO) are to:

- **SO1:** consolidate the existing regulatory framework to bring it in line with the objectives set in the national strategy;
- **SO2:** improve the transfer and disposal management system in the central and northern regions;
- **SO3:** improve the socio-economic well-being and health status of waste pickers working in dumpsites;
- **SO4:** raise general awareness, understanding and knowledge about key municipal solid waste management issues amongst concerned segments of the society.

#### The key outputs and results are presented below

- **For SO1:** objectives and principles of the national strategy incorporated in the regulatory framework through new and amended regulations and instructions;
- **For SO2:** increased capacities for safe and sanitary disposal, improved cost recovery for solid waste disposal, improved institutional set-up of local and regional levels, a national monitoring system is established;
- **For SO3:** the health status of informal waste pickers is assessed as well as their access to education and social services; actions to address child labour are implemented; if assessed feasible, local associations / cooperatives are formed.
- **For SO4:** a national audience research is conducted; three small-scale pilots in the three regions are implemented; a national action plan is developed;

Implementation of SO2 will include labour-intensive work programmes through the closing of small dumpsites and the piloting of material recovery schemes.



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### WASTE GENERATION, COLLECTION & TREATMENT

Jordan currently generates an estimated 2.7 million tonnes of MSW per year, of which 5 % are generated by Syrian refugees. In 2034 it is estimated to reach 5.2 million tonnes.<sup>1</sup> MSW collection coverage is estimated at 90 % for urban areas and 70 % for rural areas. Organic waste represents the biggest share of MSW: about 60 % are food waste, 14% paper and cardboards and 10% plastics.

After collection, MSW is generally transported to a transfer station, a sanitary landfill or an open dumpsite. Only one of the 18 existing final disposal sites in the country, is an engineered sanitary landfill. In Jordan, 48% of MSW is landfilled, 45% is openly dumped and 7% recycled (Country Report on the solid waste management in Jordan, SWEEP-NET and GIZ, April 2014. Horizon 2020 Mediterranean Report, Joint UNEP-European Environment Agency Report, 2014). Recycling is undertaken by formal and informal waste pickers during collection and disposal as there is no operational recycling facility in the country. The rate of MSW generation ranges from 0.80 to 1.07kg per capita/day.

### SWM LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Jordan does not yet have specific policy and legal frameworks for MSWM. In 2014, the Ministry of Environment (MoEnv) and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA) have embarked on the formulation of a National Strategy for MSWM in Jordan. The National MSWM Strategy was launched in May 2015; including short, mid, and long term planning, and proposed actions for the MSW pre-collection, collection and transfer, treatment, and disposal methods.

The national strategy aims at shifting over from an old, inefficient, costly and environmentally unstable municipal solid waste management system towards a modern and integrated one that will be based on the Three R's approach (Reduce – Reuse – Recycle). In particular, it seeks to reduce the amount of landfilled bio-waste by 75% until 2024 (against the 2014 baseline).

The national strategy was developed with the support of national and international technical experts financed by the World Bank. The process was steered by a national technical committee composed of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

### SWM INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Based on the current institutional structure of SWM in Jordan, the MoEnv is responsible for the solid waste policy and planning. The SWM is performed by the MoMA through municipalities and Joint Service Councils (JSCs). Local municipalities are responsible for day to day MSW collection services within their municipal boundaries, and JSCs are in charge of managing the final disposal sites. JSCs represent the MoMA at the regional level (Governorates). Further actors are the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), which regulates and operates MSWM in Amman, the Ministry of Health (regulates medical waste management), Ministry of Agriculture (regulates agricultural waste management) and Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (regulates the renewable energy market).

### CONTEXT OF THE LOCAL EU SOLID WASTE MASTER PLANS

MSWM is considered a complicated problem for the national government and relevant local authorities, and it is difficult to ensure an effective and sustainable SWM.

The EU delegation in Amman accomplished an appraisal mission to the Northern Governorates of Mafraq and Irbid in early 2014. This was in order to improve the overall MSW performance and to develop specific local Master Plans for optimising the current MSWM. The mission indicated that the current MSWM services in the Governorates of Mafraq and Irbid have been severely affected by the population increase. The urban environment was massively littered. The collection systems were deteriorated with damaged equipment and vehicles, street

<sup>1</sup> No Management Information System exists at central level for registering the quantities of MSW generated in the country. MSW quantities have therefore been estimated. With regards to MSW composition, several studies conducted in the past years lead to inconclusive results.



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

cleanings were inadequate and there were shortages in MSW containers in the household and commercial areas, regular inspections, spare parts, and maintenance. In addition, any recycling was absent or inappropriate and dangerous waste disposal activities were conducted in the main landfill of Al Ekaider.

By mid-2014, local SWM Master Plans were formulated for the local municipalities of Greater Irbid, Greater Mafraq and Ramtha as baseline for the EU-funded project *Support to SWM in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees*, which aimed to identify gaps in the inter-municipal infrastructures and to propose appropriate mitigation measures in order to channel potential future allocations properly. The EU local SWM Master Plans have offered the municipalities short and mid-term planning frameworks for improving the local MSW systems, and upgrading the overall infrastructure.

Specifically, the accomplished SWM Master Plans have evaluated the inventory and the status quo (staff, equipment, facilities, and budget) for each of the local municipalities of Greater Irbid, Greater Mafraq and Ramtha, in addition to the JSCs of Irbid and Mafraq. Furthermore, the local Master Plans have recommended a number of technical, financial, and institutional measures for each targeted municipality, in order to improve the overall current situation of MSW systems, operations, and management.

### PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

Involvement of the private sector in solid waste management, through either contracting out or public-private partnerships, is limited. Only the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) (biogas plan, landfill gas recovery), the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) (municipal cleaning), the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA) (municipal cleaning) and some JSCs (mainly recycling) have engaged with the private sector, mainly through sub-contracting services. Until the promulgation of the Public-Private Partnership Law in 2014 and the revised Municipalities Law in 2015, the policy environment was indeed not conducive to stimulate private participation in infrastructure development.

### PRIORITY AREAS FOR SUPPORT / PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Overview of the issues that need to be addressed in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of MSW operations in the country:

#### – Lack of an appropriate regulatory framework

The most important gap regarding the existing regulatory framework is the absence of clear directions or purposes of MSWM, the absence of legislation prohibiting the co-management of MSW with hazardous or special solid waste streams, and the absence of technical specifications for the management of MSW.

A set of recommendations are put forward in the national strategy to bring the current regulatory framework in line with the proposed policy measures. Most of these will require issuing new instructions and regulations, or amending existing ones.

#### – Lack of proper final disposal facilities and related health concerns

The existing MSW collection system is considered to be adequate in urban centres, but services tend to be poor or non-existent in small towns and rural areas. This includes absence of source separation and recycling. Municipal and industrial solid waste generated is mainly dumped at dumpsites.

#### – Lack of cost-recovery policies for financial sustainability

For all forms of industrial pollution (liquid, solid and atmospheric), there is no positive or negative “penalty” for the generation of pollutants. Detailed financial data in this respect are difficult to obtain, but in 2013 the total cost of the MSW system was estimated at JD 51 million and the total revenues at 23.6 million. Cost recovery reached 60% in Amman and only 30% in the rest of the country.

In practice, full cost recovery cannot be realistically achieved in the medium-term period given the current socio-economic context. The Government opted to achieve partial cost recovery, i.e. increasing the current cost recovery rate by 20% in the next five years.

# Blue sky, better sleep

## **Landfill worker Basheer Al-Sharaa describes how the project *Support to Solid Waste Management in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees* has improved his life**

Thick smoke covered the sky above the village of Al Ekaidar, which borders the landfill. The Al Ekaider landfill on the Jordanian-Syrian border has become a flashpoint in northern Jordan. And the situation has worsened due to the influx of refugees since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria in 2011.

“The year 2015 was wretched enough. The whole village was full of mountains of garbage. Children were particularly affected, and we had to bring them to hospital time and again. But the situation was bad even for us adults – the air would burn our eyes and we could hardly sleep because of the stench and respiratory problems,” says Basheer Al-Sharaa from the village of Al Ekaidar.

The garbage left lying around in the village and the overflowing of Al Ekaider landfill, only a few kilometres away, had started to pose a real risk to human health and to the environment.

Toxic gases from hazardous waste in the landfill were released into the air, industrial wastewater seeped into the groundwater – and the village was full of insects and stray dogs searching for leftover food.

Not to mention the working conditions at the landfill itself. As the main landfill serving the Governorate of Irbid, as well as several communities in the governorate of Mafraq, Al Ekaider is also a site of employment for many in the area. Basheer Al-Sharaa has been working at this landfill for four years and his work helps him provide food for his family.

### **THE EU PROJECT HAS IMPROVED LIFE AND WORK**

As an official employee of the Joint Service Council, Basheer had to experience and

to suffer the alarming situation together with another 75 colleagues who also work here.

The EU responded to these catastrophic conditions in 2015 with the project *Support to Solid Waste Management in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees*, which was implemented between 2015 and 2018 by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and completed in June 2018 with the construction of the new sanitary landfill cell.

However bad the situation had been at the start, landfill worker Basheer Al-Sharaa was also able to experience at first hand the positive results of the EU emergency programme. The mountain of garbage from the village can now be brought back to the landfill, there are functioning vehicles and equipment, and the work has become easier.

“We landfill workers assume that the toxic gases at the landfill have been reduced significantly. Finally everyone can breathe freely again, the air is much cleaner and the constant smoke from the village has disappeared,” reports Basheer. And he adds with relief that he and the other families in the village now finally no longer need to worry about their children’s health. “We’re sleeping better again – and wake up looking at a clear sky above.”



**Basheer Al-Sharaa (33 years old) from the village of Al Ekaidar has worked at the Al Ekaider landfill for four years.**