



**Technical Session TS3.8:
Initiative for
Empowering Women in
Water Diplomacy
in the MENA:
moving into action**

18 October 2022,
16:00-17:30 CET, Room: ALFLILA A



Organised by:



Zoom link for online participants (requires registration that is free of charge):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkd-urqDgvEta-R0BOUBXrgK9FWrJnLs0A>

Technical Session TS3.8: Initiative for Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy in the MENA: moving into action

Date: 18 October 2022

Time: 16:00-17:30 CET

Location/Room: ALFLILA A & online

Background

Strengthening the skills of the 21st century female water diplomat is crucial for having more women in leadership and decision-making positions in water diplomacy and transboundary water cooperation settings, that aspire to peace building. This was the view of the almost 100 women water experts from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine, who contributed to the in the elaboration of a Comparative Study on Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy in the MENA region. In the 21st century, women's reflections and contributions to peace are poorly taken in decision making and negotiations.

The Initiative that has grown out of this work, responded to the call for tailored capacitation and conducted in 2021 the 90-Minute series: a set of interactive Q&A sessions with prominent diplomats and transboundary water cooperation experts, covering themes carefully drawn from the findings of the Comparative Study and built around an experiential learning process, as one of the most effective ways to promote professional integration and develop leadership skills.

This innovative process provided the Initiative's diverse and dynamic informal network of female water experts, with a safe and neutral environment to engage, share practical and hands-on experiences, and learn directly from experienced professionals and practitioners, all involved pro bono. Through emphasis on core and managerial skills, but also interpersonal, communication and key leadership skills, the network members were supported in strengthening and further developing a competent career path and enhancing the opportunities for more leadership roles in water management and diplomacy-related careers in their respective countries. Dedicated communication material has been produced, capturing the context and key learning points from this innovative process. More importantly, this has emphasised

both the need and the value for capacity building and mentorship of women for active participation in decision-making on water and transboundary cooperation issues.

The Initiative is committed to actively work for making a change in the promotion of the role of women in water diplomacy in the MENA Region. It is led by the 6 co-authors of the Comparative Study - Eng. Charafat Afailal, Ms. Mey Al Sayegh, Dr. Anthi Brouma, Eng. Natasha Carmi, Dr. Tahani Moustafa Sileet and Ms. Maysoon Zoubi - with the institutional coordination and support of GWP-Med and the Geneva Water Hub.

Within this framework, and following the tradition of holding sessions during the Cairo Water Weeks already since 2020, a session is organised during the 5th Cairo Water Week with the aim to share the latest developments of the Initiative, including testimonies from those involved in the experiential learning process. Furthermore, and with a forward-looking outlook, the key elements of the Initiative's next phase of work will be shared, also benefitting from interactive feedback from the session's participants through the use of online tools. Importantly, this part of the session will benefit from the reflections of a panel of targeted experts and practitioners regarding the specific action needed for moving towards a gender transformative MENA. These reflections will come from a spectrum of stakeholders representing different segments of action, including representatives of international organisations, civil society networks, youth, media.

Technical Session (TS 3.8); Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy in MENA: Moving into Action
Tuesday, 18 October 2022, 16:00-17:30 CET, Alfila A & online

Conveners: Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) & Geneva Water Hub

<p>16:00-16:30</p>	<p>Welcoming and Opening Segment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Mr. Vangelis Constantianos</i>, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) ○ <i>Dr. Mark Zeitoun</i>, Director General, Geneva Water Hub (online) <p>Honorary speakers facilitated by Ms. Charafat Afaïlal, former Minister in charge of Water in the Moroccan Government (2013-2018), currently Expert on Water Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh</i>, League of the Arab States, Assistant Secretary General, Head of Social Affairs Section, League of Arab States (tbc) ○ <i>Mr. Almotaz Abadi</i>, Deputy Secretary General for Water, Environment and Blue Economy, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat
<p>16:30-17:15</p>	<p>Our journey to date & moving forward</p> <p>The Initiative on Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy in the MENA: past, present and beyond (15min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Dr. Anthi Brouma</i>, Deputy Regional Coordinator, Theme Leader on Diversity, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) (online) ○ <i>Eng. Natasha Carmi</i>, Lead Water Advisor, Geneva Water Hub, former Policy Advisor on Water at the Palestinian Negotiation Support Project <p>Interactive segment with session participants (physical and online) (5min)</p> <p>Hearing from the experts: what targeted action for moving towards a gender transformative MENA? (25min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Dr. Jasmine Moussa</i>, Legal Counsellor, Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Egypt ○ <i>Eng. Ziad Khayyat</i>, Economic Affairs Officer, UN-ESCWA ○ <i>Dr. Azza Kamel</i>, President and founder of Appropriate Communication Tools for Development (ACT Egypt)/ Kamara ○ <i>Dr. Tobias Schmitz</i>, Editor in Chief, The Water Diplomat ○ <i>Ms. Amira Sayed</i>, founder of the Egyptian National Chapter of the World Youth Parliament for Water
<p>17:15-17:30</p>	<p>Hearing from the ones involved: testimonies from Initiative’s Network members from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine (10min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Samaa El Baroudy</i>, Senior Water Resources Engineer, Ministry of Water Resources & Irrigation, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt

- *Dalal Eliwah*, Secretary General advisor for Donors and contracts, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan (online)
- *Silva Kerkezian*, former Project Coordinator for Capacity Building Programme on Water Integrity at Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, AUB, Lebanon (online)
- *Fairouz Zriouli*, Young Executive in the Cooperation Division, Ministry of Equipment and Water, Morocco (online)
- *Beesan Shonnar*, Policies and Technical Support Director, Palestinian Water Authority, Palestine (online)

Take away messages and closing (5min)

- *Dr. Anthi Brouma*, Deputy Regional Coordinator, Theme Leader on Diversity, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) (online)
- *Eng. Natasha Carmi*, Lead Water Advisor, Geneva Water Hub, former Policy Advisor on Water at the Palestinian Negotiation Support Project