

High-Level Outline of a Potential Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI)

This outline is a non-binding technical recommendation for how to manage the Disi aquifer sustainably for a long term. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) is not required to follow this, but it is meant to be looked at as part of its national water governance mandate. The ESMF would work with the project-specific ESMP to address long-term and cumulative aquifer risks that go beyond the project's current scope and timeline.

1. Purpose and Scope

- Establish a long-term institutional governance structure to ensure the Disi aquifer is managed sustainably.
- Discuss the long-term social and environmental impacts of continuing abstraction through 2065 and beyond.
- Encourage adherence to pertinent international standards and national water strategies.

2. Institutional Roles and Responsibilities

- MWI: National water planning, regulatory enforcement, and strategic oversight, Stakeholder engagement.
- Project Company: operational monitoring, and reporting in accordance with the ESMP.
- Additional Stakeholders: regional organizations (for example, transboundary coordination), academic partners, local governorates, and the Ministry of Environment.

3. Key Components

- **Policy and Regulation:** Supervision of aquifer protection regulations, and abstraction limits.
- **Data management and monitoring:** Long-term tracking of social and environmental indicators; data utilization to guide adaptive policies.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** includes public outreach, grievance resolution, and collaborative planning with impacted communities.
- **Transboundary Coordination:** Regional collaboration on common aquifer systems, including data sharing and, when appropriate, cooperative governance.
- **Water Quality Management:** Regular evaluation of treatment and blending plans to guarantee adherence to WHO and national regulations.
- **Aquifer drawdown-affected communities** are identified and supported (for example, through restoration or compensation mechanisms) through livelihood and community measures.

4. Implementation and Financing Considerations

- May need phased implementation, backed by national budgets, outside technical assistance, or donor engagement;
- to be developed at MWI's discretion, based on institutional capacity and national priorities.

5. Review and Update

- To guarantee applicability and efficacy, it is advised to conduct a periodic review every five years or whenever new hydrogeological or social data becomes available.

6. Disclaimer

MWI or any other government agency is not bound by the terms of this outline. It is offered as a technical guide to help guide upcoming institutional planning for aquifer governance.