

Abstract

The study on “**Effectiveness and Enhancement of Stakeholders’ Participation in Environmental Projects**” aims at examining stakeholders’ participation in environmental projects in Jordan Rift Valley. On one hand, it assesses the ongoing processes of engaging different stakeholders in environmental projects implemented by governmental organizations, funding agencies and civil society organizations. On the other hand, it comes up with recommendations towards formulating a stakeholders’ engagement strategy within environmental projects on the national level.

The Jordan Rift Valley was selected due to the high percentage of environmental projects implemented there during 2005-2011. The water scarcity, type and size of agricultural activities, hardships associated with political violations and poor conditions of the population are only examples of the reasons behind targeting this location for environmental projects. More concretely, the study covers al Auja, Froosh Beit Dajan, Jeftlik, Jericho city, Tubas, Ein elbeida, Tammoun, Dyuk and Alnuwai’ meh.

The study covered the five stakeholders groups in environmental projects, that includes government organizations, multi and bi-lateral funders/donors, civil society organization [non-governmental organizations (local, national or international) and private sector companies], the receiving community and finally “Women” as key affecting/affected agents by the environmental projects targeted by donors.

The methodology was divided into two phases: assessment phase and recommendations' phase. Used methods served in collecting the data, analyzing the situation and providing recommendations on main components towards formulating the national strategy on stakeholders' involvement in environmental projects. Within the **desk review**; data was gathered on the recently conducted environmental projects in Palestine, along with the national and international trends followed by all parties involved in the project planning/implementation. This includes published articles and research documents on national level (e.g. national strategic plans, EIA studies, projects' technical reports, PCBS,...) papers published in refereed journals, and related books on international level (e.g. World Bank and UN reports). **Focus groups** and **personal interviews** involved representatives from the local community, environmental institutions, NGOs, ministries, funding agencies, women local councils and trade unions. The discussed implemented environmental projects, beneficiaries' selection criteria, role of women in the conducted projects, level of awareness of the importance of environmental projects, role played by the donors, civil society and governmental organizations. The **survey** focused on collecting data related to stakeholders' participation and roles in environmental projects, public awareness on importance of environmental projects and drawbacks of implemented environmental projects, focusing on three stakeholders: receiving community, women and the civil society organizations.

Main results of the study showed that there is no clear stakeholder engagement status in the environmental projects implemented in Palestine. Even more, there is

no policy, law or a strategy for proper engagement of stakeholders within the environmental projects implemented on a local level. This is why, gender differences are not effectively and efficiently addressed in the conducted environmental projects (priorities, needs, capabilities and cultural aspects), and decision making is a male duty in environmental project where women capabilities and needs are neglected in this regard. Accordingly, the study recommends formulating a national strategy for stakeholders' engagement in environmental projects that considers gender differences to be implemented in Palestine based on the national agenda and by with the assistance and involvement of the civil society organizations.