



**PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES IN SUPPORT OF PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE
SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF WUAs IN THE PCs
UNDER THE PILLAR WATER GOVERNANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL**

ACTIVITIES PROPOSED FOR 2014 PLAN OF ACTIONS



1 PREAMBLE:

During the inception phase, Water Governance at the local level, including supporting and strengthening water users' associations was identified as one of the main priorities in Water Management in the PCs. In response to this need, The pillar; titled “Water Governance at the Local Level: Sharing Experiences from Water Users’ Associations (WUAs)” was launched for implementation as part of the SWIM-SM project activities, focusing during the first year of implementation (2012) on sharing experiences and identifying through a regional assessment concrete actions for improving local water management and reinforcing users’ participation in the region.

Based on the findings of the above mentioned assessment and the regional experts’ group workshop held in Athens in April 2012, the workplan for 2013 and 2014 was designed as one package; addressing the priority actions that were proposed by the countries. These included (a) **the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the participatory irrigation management (PIM) and irrigation management transfer (IMT) throughout the different implementation phases of the process** and the important role this would have on alerting the countries of favourable or negative variances from targeted progress and the adjustment of the process accordingly, (b) **strengthening the political commitment to the reform process**, and (c) **developing the capacity of the irrigation agencies** - to ensure effective formulation of PIM/IMT programs and the establishment of viable Water Users Associations (WUAs) – **and of the WUAs’ staff** to ensure that WUAs are managed effectively.

Accordingly SWIM-SM proceeded in **2013** with inter-alia, the development of a proposal for a regional M&E system to monitor the process of PIM/IMT. The proposed system was presented to the national and regional experts who were invited to Athens (in September 2013) for review and modification. One of the major outcomes of the meeting was the unanimous agreement on the need for the pilot implementation of the system and its further enrichment based on practical results emanating from the pilot areas.

Accordingly, SWIM-SM will build on one of its main achievements in 2013; and will focus its activities in 2014 on testing the applicability of the regional M&E system that was developed during 2013 and vetted with the project countries in two pilot countries¹; with a view to provide training for the users in the pilot countries/areas on the system, devise monitoring arrangements that match selected best practices in the implementation of M&E systems, share the experience with other project countries and disseminate the findings and the system to national partners and regional organisations.

Below is a chronological list of the activities that were carried out within the scope of the pillar “Water Governance at the Local Level”:

2012 Activities:

1. A regional assessment on the status of water users’ participation in the project countries (PCs), complemented with specific case studies from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia. The assessment has illustrated the range of experiences in irrigation water users’ participation in the partner countries, compiled information on the status of WUAs in the region, including progress achieved and lessons learnt, and identified measures to improve the efficiency of WUAs.

¹ Proposed countries are Tunisia and Jordan.



2. Organized and conducted a regional WUA experts' group workshop held in Athens in April 2012; involving international, regional and local experts from seven project countries including representatives of the partner institutions and WUAs in countries with which SWIM works. The workshop aimed to (a) present, discuss and validate the findings of the regional assessment, (b) identify the gaps and priority actions including capacity building (CB) and training that could be undertaken in the framework of SWIM-SM during its life with the aim to improve local water management and enhance users' participation, and (c) promote the exchange of experiences and best practices among the countries of the region.

3. Conducted, in coordination with H2020 CB/MEP, a 3-day regional training on "Basic Operational Concepts and Practices for WUAs' Establishment and Institutional Support" including a field visit to one of the Capitanata irrigation schemes in Italy, representing a success story for WUAs.

2013 Activities:

1. Develop a comprehensive M&E system for Participatory Irrigation Management and Irrigation Management Transfer Process that is best suited for the Project Countries.

This included the following tasks:

- A review of the existing M&E systems in the PCs that are used by the countries to monitor and evaluate the PIM/IMT process with a view to identify existing gaps and good practices in M&E implementation (whenever such a system is available) and the availability of relevant statistical data and information needed to develop a regional M&E system **(Completed; awaiting EC approval)**

- A review and compilation of international experience in the development and implementation of M&E systems, and in monitoring and evaluating WUAs formation and support; focusing respectively on used/recommended practices and suitable indicators. **(Completed; awaiting EC approval)**

- Based on the above two reviews, a proposal for the regional M&E system was prepared and vetted with the project countries during a three-day experts meeting group workshop which was held in Athens between 2 and 4 September 2013. **The workshop also presented the results of the two above mentioned reviews and their possible implications on the design and implementation of the M&E system. (Completed)**

- Refinement of the M&E system based on the workshop results **(under finalization)**

2. Conduct a high profile Study tour involving officials from the authorities concerned with the implementation of WUAs in the project countries, to raise their awareness on the role of the political commitment and enabling environment in the successful implementation of the PIM and IMT (Completed).

The study tour to Turkey (Izmir) was preceded with **two-day training** on the formulation of PIM/IMT programs and the establishment of viable WUAs with special emphasis on the importance of the enabling environment.



2 OBJECTIVES OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR 2014.

As indicated above, SWIM-SM will focus its activities on completing the work that it started in 2013 with the aim to conceive a tested M&E system that can be handed over to the PCs and relevant regional organisations. The objective of this activity is to:

1. Design and implement a **user-friendly regional M&E system application** for the monitoring and evaluation of the PIM/IMT and customize it to suit the national² and local conditions in two pilot areas.
2. Enable national³ and local authorities in addition to WUAs in two pilot areas to examine and explore the applicability of the M&E system with due consideration to the country's particular context³/ local specificities,
3. Document the approach and the lessons learnt during implementation for potential replication within the same and/or in other countries and disseminate the findings and the system to the partner countries and relevant regional organisations.

3 EXPECTED OUTPUTS:

1. A regional M&E system - involving a list of indicators which correspond to recommended best practices in the implementation of the PIM/IM process - is designed, installed and customized to the national context and/or local conditions in two pilot countries/areas.
2. The application of the M&E system is examined and explored by national/local beneficiaries
3. Selected best practices in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems are applied in two pilot areas.
4. 25-30 relevant users are with improved capacity in monitoring and evaluating the performance of PIM/IMT process including the WUAs' and in applying best practices in implementing M&E systems.
5. Lessons learnt throughout the pilot implementation are documented and disseminated for potential replication.
6. System is disseminated to the partner countries and relevant regional organisations.

4 SCOPE:

1. Meet with the National representatives to (a) familiarise them with the system, (b) agree on the implementation approach including the best practices to be applied in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation system and to select the pilot areas, (b) identify stakeholders and focal points and (c) define roles and responsibilities of the focal points including the role of SWIM-SM.
2. Jointly with the stakeholders (a) select the indicators that match the national context (if applicable) and the local conditions and (b) identify the arrangements for monitoring including data flows and clarification of responsibilities for data collection, storage, processing and evaluation.

² Since the proposed M&E system includes modules that will assist governments in monitoring their progress towards PIM/IMT implementation, SWIM-SM will explore with the relevant national government agency its interest in applying these modules at the central level.

³ This depends if the relevant government organisation responsible for PIM/IMT is willing to participate in pilot implementation.



3. Prepare the TOR for the system developer including defining the M&E system requirements and subcontract the implementation of the system application.
4. Design and program a user friendly system application, and prepare users' manual. Customise the system based on local specificities
5. Apply the system in the two pilot areas (and at the national level if desired by the government). Develop reporting template to capture the lessons during implementation. Follow up implementation with the partners and document approach and lessons learnt to extract those elements that can be replicated within the same and/or in other countries.
6. Conduct in each pilot area, a 3-day self-evaluation workshop involving the stakeholders with the objective to (a) analyse the monitoring and evaluation results, (b) identify any recommendations for system refinement and (c) evaluate the pilot implementation **(August and Sep 2014)**
7. (Provisional): Based on the pilot implementation, and depending on the actual progress, and availability of time, modify the M&E system and its application to account for the experience of the partners at the national/local levels, and follow up implementation of the changes with the subcontractor; as applicable.
8. Prepare a report on the implementation approach, results, problems, and lessons learnt
9. Organise and conduct a one-day regional meeting to (a) present the system to the partner countries and relevant regional organisations involved in supporting governments in the formation and establishment of WUAs, and (b) share the experience and disseminate the findings and lessons learnt of the pilot implementation. **Proposed place: Athens (October 2014)**