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The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the letter of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, dated 17 February, 2020, has the honor to enclose herewith the reply of the Lebanese Ministry of Energy and Water, to the questionnaire concerning the progressive realisation of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 8 May, 2020.



Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10



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الجمهورية اللبنانية
وزارة الطاقة والمياه
الوزير

١١٥/١

جانب وزارة الخارجية والمغتربين

الموضوع: طلب معلومات حول الحق الاساسي في الحصول
على مياه الشرب المأمونة وخدمات الصرف الصحي
المرجع: كتابكم رقم ٨/٣٨٦ تاريخ ٢٠٢٠/٢/٢١ والمسجل
لدينا بالرقم ٢٩٥/٢ تاريخ ٢٠٢٠/٢/٢٤

بالإشارة الى الموضوع والمرجع اعلاه،

نودعكم ريثماً الاجوبة على الاسئلة المطروحة في الرسالة الصادرة عن المقرر
الخاص المعني بالحق الاساسي في الحصول على مياه الشرب المأمونة وخدمات
الصرف الصحي، والواردة بحسب برقية بعثة لبنان الدائمة لدى الامم المتحدة في
جنيف .

٢٧ نيسان ٢٠٢٠

وزير الطاقة والمياه

ريمون غجر



Question 1 :How is the concept of the minimum core obligations of the human rights to water and sanitation translated and applied in the water and sanitation sector in the country?

Answer1:

Water and sanitation are recognized as human right in the Lebanese legislation for all of the population. Lebanon provide universal access to improved drinking-water sources with a 100% coverage in urban areas (90% of the population lives in urban area). All urban and rural areas have access to and make use of drinking-water from improved sources (WHO/UNICEF 2014). Access to drinking water in schools and in health facilities is fully covered. Improved sanitation in urban, rural, schools, and health facilities is achieved with an 80% coverage.

Since two decades Lebanon has put in place policies towards improving the quantity and quality of its water resources.

The Ten year Strategy Plan, the National Water Sector Strategy (NWSS) approved in 2012 defines water as "A right for every citizen, a resource for the entire country", and the Water Code, approved in 2018 also recognizes the fundamental right of everyone to have access to water corresponding to its needs and to the basic requirements of its life and dignity. Sanitation is also recognized as an element of the right to water.

In line with the above and based on an assessment of needs carried out during the preparation of the NWSS a set of initiatives and projects to improve the situation in the short, medium and long terms have been identified and are being carried out. These relate to both water supply and sanitation projects. The NWSS is currently under review (2020).

Lebanon completed the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) report (WHO/UNICEF, 2014) for assessing the state of the enabling environment of the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. Lebanon

also completed the UNICEF/WASH report on the evaluation of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme (2013-2016) (UNICEF, 2017).

These improved access to improved water and sanitation are constantly by the regional political and humanitarian (high number of refugees) and the national financial challenges facing the country. There are however increasing water environmental challenges characterized by the increase in water demand, need to fully exploit water allocation, significant losses in public water distribution networks, increase in quantities of domestic and industrial wastewater, and the high level of water pollution. The influx of the Syrian refugees is putting increasing pressures on the potable and sanitation sectors.

Question 2: What policies and programmes are in place to ensure that those obligations are not met, please provide information on the extenuating circumstances?

Answer2:

National policies, water codes, national water plans, and standards are updated by the ministry of energy and water. Plans and programs for improving and managing the water supply services and wastewater management and improved services for sanitation are developed by the Ministry of Energy and Water, the water establishments, and the Council for Development and Reconstruction. The Water Quality Services at the Ministry of Energy and Water and the Ministry of Public Health monitor the water quality for the water and sanitation sectors.

There are also programs that are currently implemented by international organizations such UNICEF for potable water and sanitation for refugees and NGOs (e.g. Rotary for schools).

Question 3: please describe efforts made by the government in the last few years that allowed the progressive realization of the human rights to water and sanitation?

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Answer3:

Over the past few year, it had been an increase in updating of existing regulations and decrees (e.g. water code), development and implementation of water and sanitation projects (Ministry of Energy and Water , Water Establishments, and the Council for Development and Reconstruction), and development of IWRM plans (Ministry of Energy and Water).

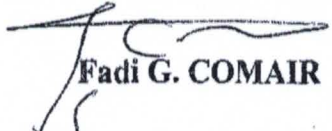
There is an increase in the coordination with all Lebanese governmental authorities led by the Ministry of Energy and Water and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry Public Health. Coordination is also identified between the Ministries and the local governorates and municipalities. Several ministries and institutions share the lead for providing potable water and sanitation services. Improvements can be achieved in increasing the level of coordination and between ministries and institutions in the water and sanitation sectors.

The Ministry of Energy and Water, the water Establishments, and the Council for Development and Reconstruction as well as local authorities (e.g. municipalities on a smaller scale) develop and implement water and sanitary projects such as building dams, reservoirs, and wells; the rehabilitation and implementation of the water supply systems , wastewater networks , wastewater treatments plants, and development of irrigation networks.

Data for water and sanitation are collected by different governmental authorities (e.g. Water usage and water quality by the water Establishments and the water quality services at the ministry of Energy and Water, Water data by the Litani River Authority, Water quality and sanitation indicators by the Ministry of Public Health). While data are used for assessing the performance of the services there is an increasing need for effecting monitoring programs.

Question 4: Please describe how planning in the water and sanitation sector is guided by the principle of progressive realization of the human rights to water and sanitation , and how it reconciles the two priorities increasing levels to access

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to services on one hand, and reducing inequalities between different groups on the other ?

Answer4:

As described earlier the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation is part of the Lebanese legislation and Lebanon provide universal access to improved drinking-water sources with a 100% coverage in urban areas where 90% of the population lives. The improved sanitation in urban, rural, schools, and health facilities is achieved with an 80% coverage. There is an increase in the development of national strategies and management plans for the drinking water and sanitation sectors. There are some gaps and certain constraints the could be identified. Gaps are mostly related to increasing the coordination between the different organizations working in the water and sanitary sectors. As stated before there are no discrimination in Lebanon between the levels to access to services not there are any inequalities between different groups. Constraints are similar nationwide and are mostly related to increasing the availability of water availability and reducing water pollution.

Question5: Please describe methods of budgeting and budgetary planning which aims to ensure that the maximum available resources are utilized for the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation for all. Please include the process of allocating budget as well the output of achieved buy the utilization of the budget.?

Answer5:

Budgetary planning for the water and sanitary sectors in Lebanon is mostly achieved at the level of the Ministries and the Council for Development and Reconstruction. Budgeting and budgetary planning is approved by the Council of Ministers. It is worth noting that while there are plans for the water and sanitary

sections there are difficulties in allocating budget and an insufficiency in funds to meet the targets in increasing water supply and achieving higher level of sanitation (currently sanitation coverage is around 80% for all sectors nationwide).

A list of the Government of Lebanon water and wastewater sectors priority programmes are provided in the Government of Lebanon Capital Investment Program CEDRE (2018). These programmes and projects are equally distributed nationwide and cover all governorates in Lebanon.

Question 6: Please describe how the non-financial resources have been utilized to progressively realize the human rights to water and sanitation including the process of utilization and the output.

Answer 6:

Lebanon relies heavily on the support of international organisations and NGOs (both National and International ones) to contribute improving its water and sanitation sectors, such as UNICEF, UNRWA, EU, bilateral donors etc. These organizations implement specific projects in collaboration with the pertinent authorities or support those with expertise.

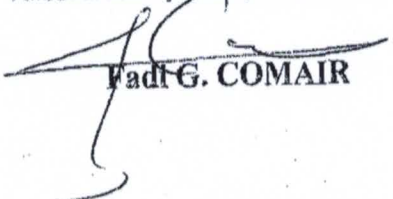
Question 7: In case where trade-offs with resources usage on other national agenda and implementation of other rights were required, please provide the circumstances and the decision taken as well as reasoning behind the decision?

Answer7:

As mentioned above available public and National funds are not enough to carry out all needed investments and the Government relies strongly on foreign aid. Resources provided through foreign aid are often channeled to specific projects based on the donors' agenda and capacities.

References

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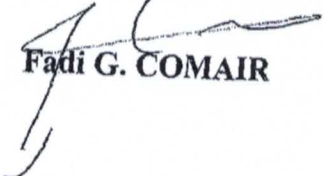
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