Introduction to the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

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Workshop

Enhancing transboundary water cooperation in the MENA region:
Progress, challenges and opportunities

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Transboundary water cooperation

➔ Any action or set of actions by riparian States that leads to the enhanced management or development of the transboundary water body to their mutual satisfaction.
Why transboundary water cooperation is useful at basin level?

1) Address climate change effects in a more efficient way

2) Create enabling conditions for investments at basin level and help countries in mobilizing funding for activities

3) Establish/strengthen appropriate basin institutions and agreements that reinforce regional stability and integration

→ Transboundary water cooperation can therefore help in preventing conflicts, consolidating peace and stabilizing societies.
1- Contribute to the efficient resilience of shared basins to climate change.

Transboundary water cooperation offers opportunities to better address climate change effects and impacts as it:

• Allows for exchange between countries
• Contributes to a wider knowledge base
• Enables larger planning (basin wide approach)
• Prevents negative impacts from unilateral measures

→ All riparian countries and their society therefore benefit from adopting a basin-wide approach to climate change.
2- Create enabling conditions for mobilizing funding for investments and activities at basin level

- Reinforce regional stability and integration and therefore reduce perceived investment risks

- The multiple other potential economic, environmental, social and political benefits to be generated from transboundary water cooperation build the case to further attract financial resources to implement water cooperation solutions and related activities (joint action plan)
3- Establish/Strengthen basin institutions and agreements to reinforce regional stability and integration

Initiating transboundary water cooperation can be a first step to:

→ Develop **bilateral or multilateral agreements** which define/frame the sustainable and cooperative management of shared waters at transboundary level (predictability)

→ Establish **river basin organizations/joint bodies** that enhance trust between riparian countries and ensure the application of agreements in place
Transboundary water cooperation can generate multiple types of benefits!

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<tr>
<th>From improved water management</th>
<th>Economic benefits</th>
<th>Benefits beyond economic activities</th>
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| Economic benefits              | • Expanded activity and productivity in economic sectors  
• Reduced cost of carrying out productive activities  
• Reduced economic impacts of water-related hazards (floods, droughts) ... |
| Social and environmental benefits | • Health impacts  
• Employment and reduced poverty impacts  
• Improved access to services (electricity, water supply..)  
• Preservation of cultural resources or recreational opportunities.  
• Avoided/reduced habitat degradation and biodiversity loss |

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<th>From enhanced trust</th>
<th>Regional economic cooperation benefits</th>
<th>Peace and security benefits</th>
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| Development of regional markets (for goods, services & labour)  
Increase in cross-border investments  
Development transnational infrastructure networks | • Strengthening of international law  
• Increased geopolitical stability  
• Reduced risk and avoided cost of conflict  
• Savings from reduced military spending |
Some tools exist to support countries in identifying/assessing transboundary benefits

“Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of transboundary water cooperation: Identification, assessment and communication”

- Help countries to realize the full range of potential benefits of transboundary water cooperation
- Provides step-by-step guidance on how to carry out a benefit assessment exercise
Thanks for your attention!