

Symposium on Women and Water Security
for Peacebuilding in the Arab Region
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GENEVA

**WATER
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**HYDROPOLITICS TOWARDS
PEACE & SECURITY**

Empowering women in water diplomacy; a basic mapping of the challenges in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan

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Why ?

- New Age Diplomacy of the 21st century developed to be multi-lateral, multi-dimensional;
- Benefits of transboundary water cooperation in post-conflicts and as a bridge to peace are well researched and recognized;
- Women, water, peace, and security linkages recognized better within the past 2 decades; UNSC resolution 1325, Agenda 2030 and SDGs 3, 5, 6, 11 & 16

Why ?

- A large number of researches and studies on Gender equality at the political and economic levels, yet the role of women in water sector and in water diplomacy has not been explicitly studied;
- Added value of women negotiators- "women tend to be effective as multi-disciplinary thinkers who can consider and pursue several avenues of thought and action at the same time
- Facing the “internal” obstacles- WE ARE NOT VICTIMS

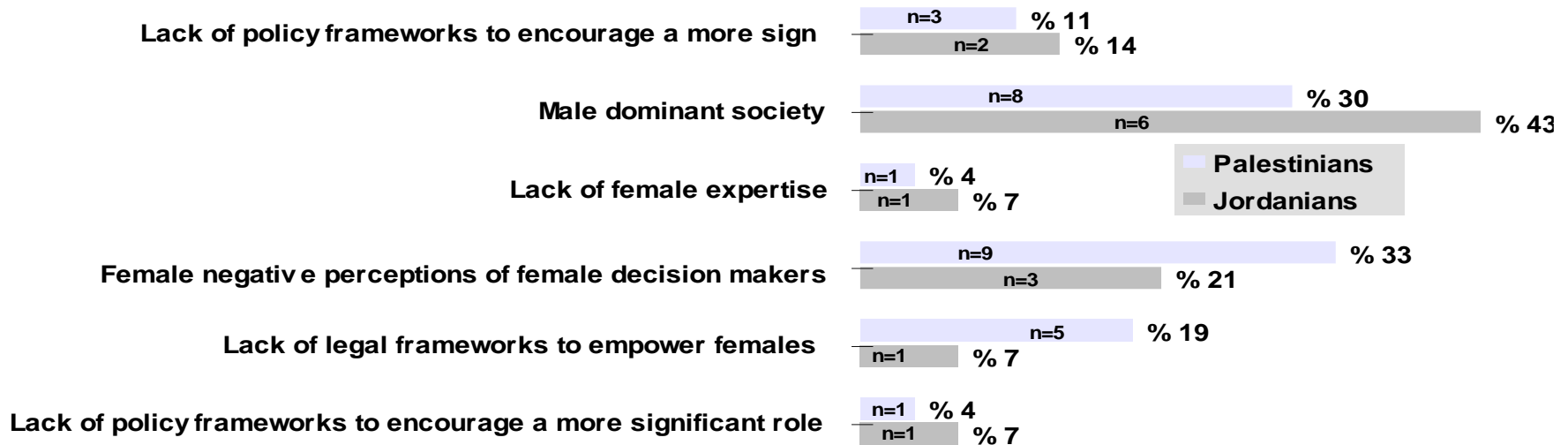
Choice of Geographic Area

- Presence of transboundary water resources
- Signatories to the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational uses of Transboundary Watercourses (UNWC) and are respectful to the principles of customary international water law;
- The Jordan River Basin is one of the most researched basins, in which different modalities of cooperation have been proposed as early as the 1950s, yet today a basin wide agreement among the 5 riparians has not been achieved;
- The statistics on female share of employment in managerial positions for the 3 countries is limited;
- There is an untapped potential and benefit to empowering women in water diplomacy , in a region in which water security is at core of and high on the agendas of line Governments.

Basic Mapping- indicative

- Questionnaires and interviews (9 in Lebanon); qualitative and quantitative; response rate of 60%
- The questionnaire was formulated to provide responses in relation to four main issues:
 - a. Current status of female respondents in the Water Sector in their national countries
 - b. Their perceptions on the role of water diplomacy
 - c. The main bottlenecks/factors holding them back
 - d. Linkages between the Sustainable development Goal 6 and Sustainable Development Goal 5 in their daily work
- The total number of questions was 19; 12 were closed questions, 2 open questions, and the rest combined.
- The total number of respondents was 33 out of 55 , i.e. 60% (12 from Jordan, 6 from Lebanon and 15 from Palestine).
- *Women have the technical capacities , and sometimes higher educational degrees than their male counterparts, hold mainly middle management positions.*
- *Decision making in water sector is still the “playfield of the boys’ club”*

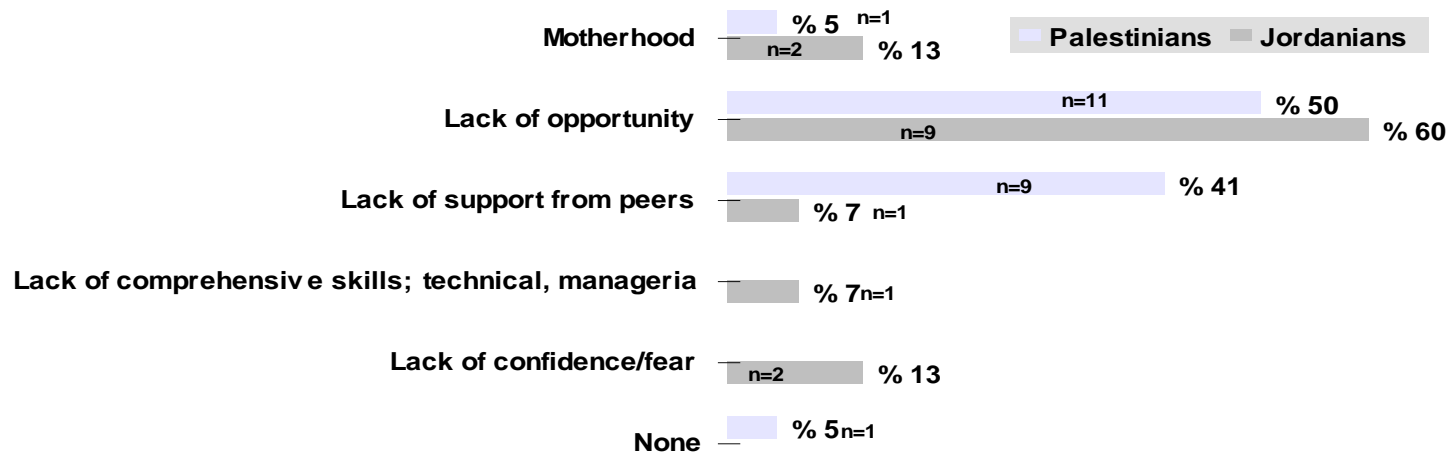
What factors contribute to the existing male-female ratio in the water sector?



Main 2 dominant factors are a male dominant society, as expected, and the female negative perceptions of female decision makers; (Maria on need for women's support, Soumaya on women's belief that they are either agents of change or trouble)

Changes in mind-sets of both men and women as agents of change rather than victims and vulnerable groups.

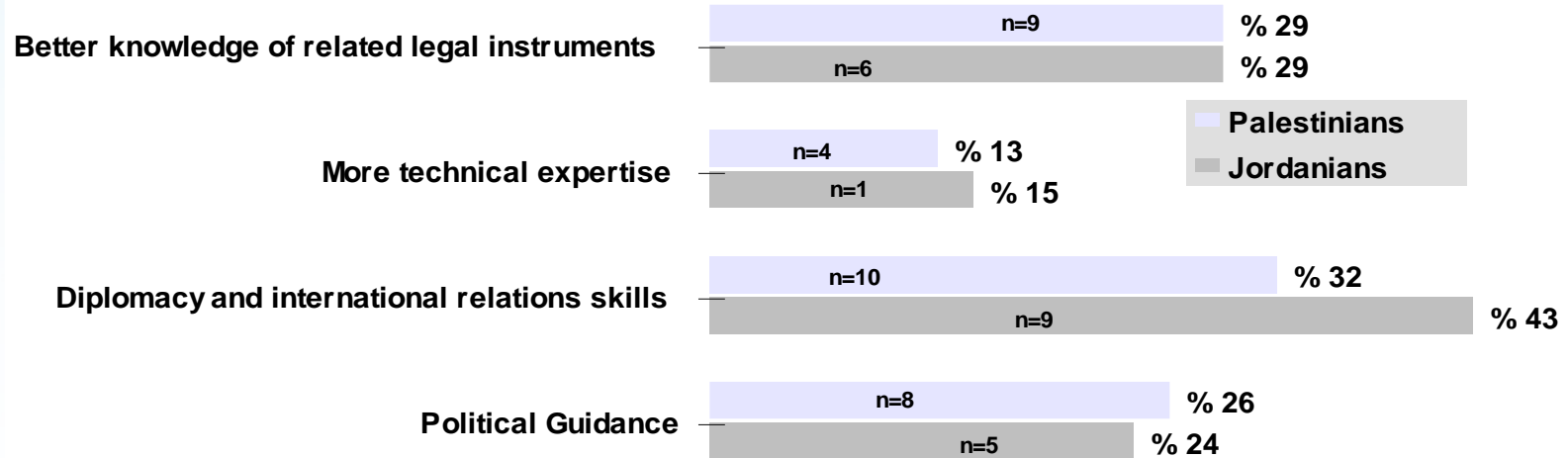
What holds you back from accepting a decision making position?



Initial Perceptions:

Lack of Opportunity, and lack of support from peers = Social obstacles

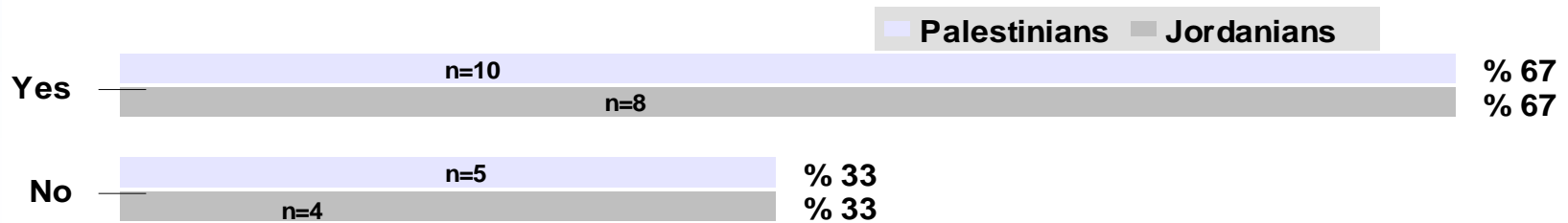
Skills needed to better qualify to lead in water diplomacy



Are the obstacles REALLY Social? Societal? Male dominant society imposed?

Debunking the claim against women being promoted due to family “obligations”

Would you accept a position which requires longer hours and more travelling?



Question 18: In your opinion, what is required to engender SDG6 for real implementation?

policies and strategies, action plan and detail investment plan for IWRM including transboundary cooperation	gender oriented		policy modification, action plans, specific indicators and goals
Raise gender awareness in decision making	include women		include women in planning process as well
Include gender specialists in technical teams	Identifying gender gap		equal opportunities for men and women
Fair use to meet needs of women, children and marginlaized groups			
sustainable use of water and sanitation in all consumer sectors	surveys to get real statistics		
six disaggregation data			
Legal frameworks			
More education at elementary and secondary levels	support of education systems		
exchange experience and knowledge			
empower teams in water sector			
Attainment of water rights and control of water resources			

Question 19: Do you think further assistance is needed from private sector/women CSOs

or others to empower women and strengthen link SDG5 & SDG6 ? Explain your YES

joint efforts, comprehensive

sector, water/economy/politics

sustainability based

on total integration, create awareness

policies for private sector

continous coorindation among line authorities

Better resources of private sector

PS main employer of labour force

PS essentail partner in increasing women's economic empowerment

benefit to companies that foster gender equality

Use of experience of private sector

Conclusions wrt mapping exercise

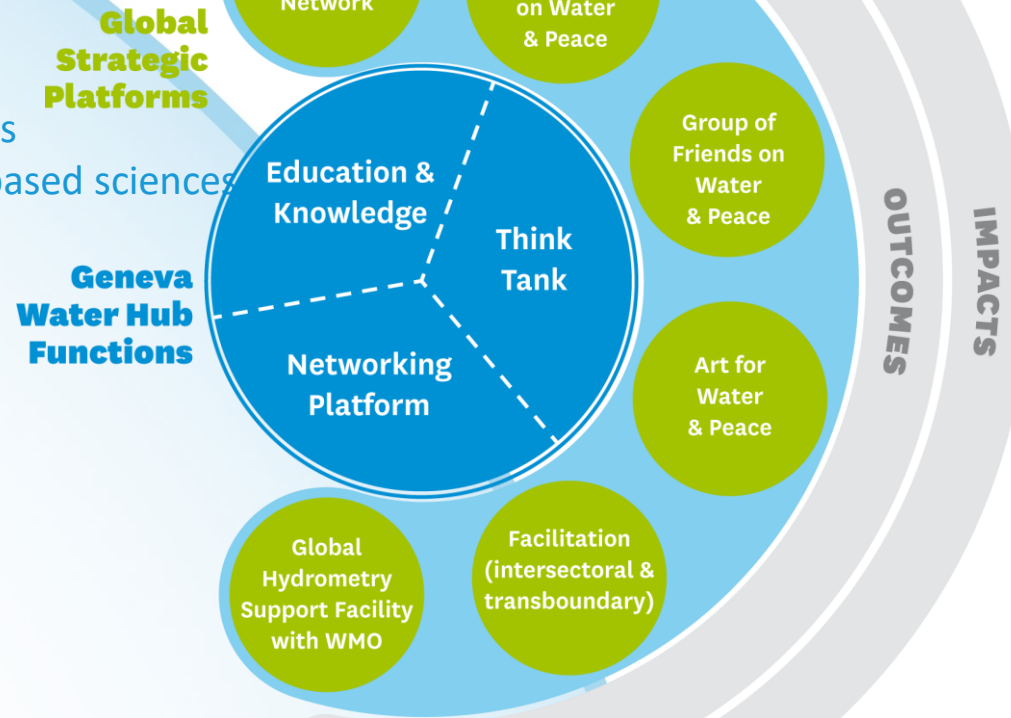
- Conduct a second-level statistical analysis of the main findings
- Expand the number of female respondents in the target countries
- Share the results of this basic mapping with the female respondents and formulate focus groups to discuss and expand the scope
- Design a questionnaire targeting male respondents in the water sector on their perspective of empowering women in water diplomacy in their national countries
- Assess the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the target countries
- Conduct a more in-depth desk review of all Jordanian, Lebanese, and Palestinian initiatives that involve women in water diplomacy.
- Review the legislations and regulations governing the role of women in water diplomacy.
- Expand the SDGs related analysis to include SDGs 3, 5, 11 and 16
- Prepare a policy brief

Conclusions wrt women empowerment

- Capacity building fields of politics, diplomacy, and customary international water law;
- To develop a global perspective to local issues,
- To understand yet overcome the social stigmas about successful women;
- To initiate a campaign to lobby for governmental policy intervention, led by universities and women movements, to raise awareness and highlight the importance of the Water Sector to attract more women,
- To call for a wider role for universities and schools to encourage and direct young women to pursue more science-based degrees and to diversify specialization into other fields of water science, beyond water engineering to include among others, hydrology, hydrogeology, modeling;
- To combine the implementation of related SDGs in national action plans;
- For women in leadership positions, to promote the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making in order to empower them.

GWH: Women, water and peace

- Capacity Building- Legal and diplomacy aspects
- Role of universities to pursue more science –based sciences
- Role of UNSC
- SDGs Agenda
- Changes in Perceptions
- Production of Policy Brief(s)
- Safe Space
- Art for Water and Peace
- Groups of Friends on Water and Peace
- UNIGE campaign



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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