AL-KARAK MUNICIPALITY

World Water Week, Stockholm, August 28 – September 2, 2016
Throughout its history, the city of Al-Karak has been strategically significant due to its geographical location. It lies 140 km south of Amman on the ancient King's Highway and is set on a hilltop about 939 m above sea level, surrounded on three sides by a valley.

- The city had a total population of 317,000 in 2015
- Its main activities are agriculture and industry.
AL-KARAK in pictures

Al-Karak Castle, dating back to 1140, is one of the biggest crusader castles in the Levant. It is the city’s most important tourist attraction and historical landmark.
Al-Karak looks over the Dead Sea, one of the world’s most spectacular natural landscapes. The Dead Sea is the lowest point on Earth and the world’s richest source of natural salts. It is home to many wonderful treasures that have accumulated over thousands of years.
The Al-Karak region has a semi-arid climate. Average temperatures in the city range from 3 to 15°C in winter and 25 to 37°C in summer.
The local community

Al-Karak has historically enjoyed excellent inter-religious relations between Muslims (75 percent of the population) and Christians (25 percent, the largest Christian population in Jordan).
The mayor of Al-Karak Municipality presents the municipality logo to the Patriarch of Jerusalem (Church of the Holy Sepulchre) and the Imam of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
Mu’tah University is the only university in Jordan to have two wings: one military and one civilian.

Al Balqa Applied University offers both bachelor’s degree and diploma programmes.
Karak Secondary School for Boys is the oldest school in Jordan. It was established in 1889.
Folk dancing in Al-Karak
The Arab Potash Company, established in 1956, is the most important industrial company in Al-Karak. It is the eighth largest potash producer in the world by volume of production, and the sole producer of potash in the Arab world.
Water in Al-Karak

Ain Sara Spring is the main spring in Al-Karak, supplying about 2,400 m$^3$ of water per day.
Water supply in Al-Karak Municipality depends mainly on groundwater resources, which form 89 percent of the total water supplied each year.
The Wadi Bin Hammad hot spring is hidden deep inside a large valley with lush vegetation, hanging gardens, palm trees, and an abundance of water running through the narrow Siq gorge.
Al-Karak’s water-related challenges

- Renewable water resources are very limited: the available supply is around 174 litres per capita per day.
- Only about 35 percent of households are served by a sewerage system due to the limited financial resources for sewerage infrastructure.
- Water is not used efficiently: there are no projects for rainwater harvesting or for the reuse of grey water; and no water-saving tools at municipality, territory, household, institution or large owner level.
- Water loss in Al-Karak is about 61 percent due to the ageing pipeline infrastructure in the municipal water network and the illegal use of water.
Al-Karak and the WATER SUM project

- A local water security action plan was drawn up using a new and unique methodology. For the first time, the municipality and water sector stakeholders were genuinely involved in the process of water security planning, contributing to prioritisation within a framework agreed by all concerned partners.
The main theme and strategic actions of the Greater Al-Karak Municipality Local Water Security Action Plan 2016–2021

Adequate and sustainable clean water supply for better lives and a safe environment

**Action 1**: By 2018, provide high-efficiency water-saving devices for municipality buildings and public parks.
Action 2: Build collecting tanks in each new building and household to collect roof water for use in irrigation, car washing etc.
**Action 3:** Implement a water harvesting project in five public parks and in Karak Castle to provide sufficient water for public park and roadside irrigation, and also to protect the walls of Karak Castle from water-related damage.
**Action 4:** Increase water harvesting projects for the purposes of flood protection, such as the Terracing Bunds and Gabion Structure projects.
**Action 5:** Explain the critical nature of water shortages to school and university students, members of civil society organisations and householders by means of workshops, environmental clubs and public awareness campaigns to explain the benefits and safety of grey water reuse.
Action 6: Activate mosques and churches to play a role in raising awareness of the importance of water conservation.
**Action 7:** Conserve and monitor springs and groundwater protection zones.
**Action 8:** Coordinate with Al-Karak water authority to increase household connectivity to wastewater networks and other sanitary disposal facilities.

**Action 9:** Develop incentives to encourage efficient water use.
The WGS Initiative can contribute to water-related stability and growth in Al-Karak by:

- encouraging regional cooperation and engagement in identifying viable tools and solutions at local level; and
- raising awareness of global water management systems and their impact on water sustainability.
Al-Karak Municipality

Greater Al-Karak Municipality, established in 1893, is the focal point of all the city’s development efforts. It is mainly responsible for city planning and zoning, the building of infrastructure (e.g. roads, playgrounds and gardens and storm water protection), the acquisition of land for public needs, traffic management, issuing building permits, the construction and management of public markets, shop licensing and the control of street vendors, the control of signs and advertising, waste collection, hygiene control in residential buildings and public spaces, the development and management of parks, the provision of land for cemeteries and cemetery management, the demolition of unsafe buildings, the control of animal markets, and the management of municipality assets.

Al-Karak Municipality is highly cooperative and will make every effort to support revitalisation projects. It is ready to give priority to projects that reinforce and diversify the attractiveness of the city.

The municipality uses community participation as a tool for local planning. With some additional capacity-building efforts, these mechanisms can improve planning, including water planning, at local level. In this context, Al-Karak Municipality has launched numerous local initiatives in cooperation with local NGOs. The municipality undertakes regular activities with organisations of young people and women and has created an advisory board to deal with services-related issues, including water-related problems. This institutionalised, multi-stakeholder platform has a positive impact on the legitimisation of the public’s demands and on dialogue with central government.
Karak Castle
Wadi Al-Karak
Roman ruins in Rabba
One of Al-Karak’s natural attractions
Traditional carpet weaving
Folk game (glool)
Folk heritage: Preparing *Saaj* bread
Serving traditional coffee in Al-Karak
Traditional flour milling
Baking bread (*ajeen*)
Collecting spring water
Spinning yarn
Traditional pottery
Thank you for your attention!