



## MINARET II “Empowering Municipal Governance For Climate Resilience Using the WEF Nexus approach”

### Context and Overall Objective:

Local governance structures are a key element to reach the SDGs (namely SDGs SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy, and SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities), which among other targets, aims at promoting commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction through partnerships and collaboration. Decentralized governance is an important tool to integrate population’s needs, most notably those of marginalized groups, in an effective and efficient way.

The list of sectors addressed by decentralized cooperation projects can be endless. However, some of them are more strategic and valuable to citizens than others. These include environmental concerns and sustainability including water management, energy, agriculture, and socio- economic development Natural resources- and ecosystem management requires close coordination with end-users. Local governance structures are better positioned than centralized ones to engage in dialogue with consumers of ecosystem services and natural resources.

Access to natural resources and healthy ecosystems is essential for human wellbeing, dignity and sustaining livelihoods. Sustainable natural resource management is, however, highly complex and today’s water, food, and energy availability and accessibility challenges are multifaceted. Climate change, the exploitation and degradation of scarce natural resources and the environment as well as population growth and socio-economic dynamics are putting at risk the ability to provide water, energy and food security for all, while staying within the ecological and planetary boundaries. The Water, Energy, Food security and Ecosystem Nexus approach represents a paradigm shift from sectoral development interventions towards an integrated resource-use approach, acknowledging the intricate interlinkages that arise in the usage of the resources. The Nexus approach seeks to identify possibly negative trade-offs and identify measures to maximize synergies where possible.

Early work in the first phase of the project has focused on applying a set of context-specific critical interlinkages between water, food and energy used as inputs into systems for providing essential services to habitants. These natural resources were deeply intertwined and interconnected to come out with NEXUS model that was locally and regionally applied in municipalities (Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia) for the purpose of obtaining a value and determining the future needs. In addition, MINARET succeeded to understand the developmental and consumer role of municipalities, their core mandate, opportunities, as well as challenges in order to catalyse municipalities to apply NEXUS thinking to increase resource efficiency and improve the livelihood and resilience of citizens within municipalities.

The results of the assessments conducted during the implementation of phase I showed that municipalities face several challenges due to the increased stress on natural resources and infrastructure in the area, and the limited availability of resources. Noting, for example, that energy and water grids are old and require repair and upgrading.

The challenges faced on a national level in all three countries trickle down to the municipal level. All municipalities surveyed experience a remarkable population growth within the same



range in all three surveyed countries. The tradition top-down decision making and delivery mechanism without the involvement of relevant stakeholders when determining how to secure funds and opportunities. The next step is to develop a model that combines the existing asset base and associated revenue streams with the capital and operating requirements going forward, and to apply the principles in determining how these could be financed.

RSS commits to continue its work to strengthen municipal governance structures and capacities through the MINARET II initiative “Empowering Municipal Self-Governance towards Climate Resilience”. In MINARET II, RSS will work in Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan and will spread the approach to 1-2 new municipalities per selected country. As in MINARET I, the main beneficiary will be municipalities, in particular their departments related to water, energy and food security as well as combating the effects of climate change. In MINARET II, RSS will also collaborate with a business development organization (either internal at RSS or external) in order to promote WEF Nexus solutions among private sector actors in the territorial mandate of the respective municipalities. On top of this, MINARET II seeks a strong dialogue with financiers and aims at strengthening municipal capacities in the field of investment planning in order to secure sufficient funding for identified actions.

MINARET II aims to improve people’s lives by helping municipal governments to secure the funds and develop the skills they need to deliver high-quality public services, in particular with regard to natural resources management. The project intends to build the involved municipalities’ resilience to climate change by adopting renewable energy resources, energy efficiency practices, water management techniques, and food security tools. In addition, through promoting policy dialogue, implementing capacity-building programs as well as providing inter-municipal regional cooperation to enhance good governance, the project in its second phase attempts to strengthen the institutional capacities of relevant governmental authorities involved in the project. Using a participatory approach, project stakeholders and partners developed the NEXUS Model, for use in building several demonstration projects, which were designed to respond to the needs of the municipalities and to ensure an improved sustainable livelihood status.

MINARET II with its innovative tools continues to improving living conditions for people affected by environment and climate change through environmental improvement, reduced climate impact and increased resilience to environmental impacts, climate change and natural disasters. It offers a framework of a coherent and inclusive regional strategy to support local authorities, municipalities, the community-based organizations and civil society in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency, clean water accessibility and food security by applying the “NEXUS” approach. NEXUS schematically achieves a sustainable livelihood where a household achieves “well-being”; this means:

1. **Survival:** households have secure access to basic services (e.g., food, water, and energy) to sustain their primary needs.
2. **Well-being:** The next step for households to secure access to additional important (e.g., job access) that improve their lives and make them less vulnerable to sudden shocks (e.g., economic, climate change).



## Approach:

### 1.) Component One:

Climate resilient municipalities: Membership in Covenant of Mayors – Strengthening municipal capacities to plan and manage climate change adaptation and mitigation measures (development of SECAP)

### Objective:

Municipal Action Plans aimed at climate resilience and integrated natural resources management (via cross-sectoral working groups) are developed.

### Activities/Milestones:

Activities	Milestones
Identify municipalities	5 municipalities identified (1 in Egypt, 2 in Tunisia, 2 in Jordan)
Hold kick-off meetings with relevant stakeholders to discuss way forward (logistics, communication etc) with concerned staff at municipalities	
Identify, collect data and develop baseline for energy, water, food/agriculture, transportation & GHG emissions at the national and municipal level;	
Validate and update the baseline study through meeting / workshop with each municipality in each country and finalize final baseline report	In total, 5 baseline studies are developed per municipality
Conduct WEF Nexus training (how to integrate cross-sectoral planning into Action Plan development and other relevant processes & identification of NIA tools that can be introduced)	
Develop SECAP technical plan through a cross-sectoral working group and using the spatial planning/landscape approach	In total, 5 mandate descriptions of the cross-sector working
	groups have been elaborated (or minutes of meeting are elaborated for the convening of these cross-sector working groups)
Conduct consultation workshops in each municipality in JO, TU, and EG to validate and update the final SECAP Report	In total 5 SECAP plans have been developed through cross-sectoral working groups and using the landscape/spatial-planning approach  *their financial viability is also secured through targeted advisory support provided through Component 3
Covenant of Mayors (COM) registration process	CoM registration is completed for all municipalities



Set up SECAP implementation plan with municipalities	In total, 5 SECAP implementation plans are developed
Monitoring and evaluation plan for SECAP implementation progress	In total, 5 M&E plans are developed

## 2.) Component Two: Horizontal and vertical knowledge management and outreachwork

### Objective:

Results and lessons-learned from cross-sectoral planning and project development in the context of climate change are disseminated to the national and regional level

### Activities/Milestones:

Activities	Milestones
Support multi-stakeholder policy dialogue and knowledge transfer through networking events between municipalities in a country, between municipalities and associated ministries at national level as well as at regional events through the League of Arab States	<p>2 regional meetings targeted at inter-municipal and regional knowledge sharing have taken place with the aim to maximize municipal capacities to plan, implement, monitor and scale project activities and effectively implement a scalable &amp; replicable NEXUS model and with the aim to disseminate the approach to the national and regional level</p> <p>Existing WEF Nexus training material will be adapted to the needs of municipalities and made widely available for the replication of the approach by other municipalities</p>
Develop municipal-led Communication Action Plans (5-municipalities)	Action plans developed with at least 70% of relevant decisionmakers



Conduct WEF Nexus training at national level (as part of the policydialogue) (1 advanced training/each municipality)	<p>Enhanced capacities of Project municipalities &amp; key stakeholders specifically with regards to the ability to plan, implement, monitor and scale Project activities and effectively implement a scalable &amp; replicable NEXUS model.</p> <p>80% of participants confirm relevance of the training. The training is integrated into an ongoing process to identify synergies between WEF Nexus sectors.</p>
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### 3.) Component Three: Finance readiness

#### Objective:

Funding is secured for integrated projects targeted at climate resilience facilitated through an increased dialogue between financiers and public and private project developers, capacity development and targeted advisory support

#### Activities/Milestones:

Activities	Milestones
<p>Conduct a capacity needs assessment of municipalities with regards to investment planning and project development</p> <p>Conduct the affiliated capacity development event</p>	<p>A capacity needs assessment is available for the beneficiary group including a proposed TA programme*</p> <p>A total of 3 capacity development events will be carried out*</p>
<p>Provide targeted advisory support to the beneficiary group (municipalities) for the development of the SECAP plan (providing advise and technical assistance on the financial feasibility of the projects; identification of adequate business models; identification of measures to create an enabling environment for public sector engagement) and support the beneficiary group to develop at least 1 project proposal for a WEF Nexus project (deriving from an action in the SECAP) per municipality to present to a financier</p>	<p>A total of 5 financially viable SECAP plans are developed</p> <p>A total of 5 WEF Nexus project proposals (having undergone a pre-feasibility assessment) are developed and presented to a financier</p>



Facilitate dialogue sessions between investors/financiers (local and international) and beneficiary group (as well as other necessary stakeholders from the private and public sector, civil society organization etc) and propose policy actions to accelerate funding/financing of (integrated) projects to strengthen the climate resilience of WEF Nexus projects at a decentralized level	At least 3 access to finance dialogue events have taken place (1 in each target country); including financiers and relevant stakeholders from public and private sector as well as CSOs
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\*These two milestones will be carried out in close cooperation with the mission 'Accelerating investment for integrated natural resources management' carried out by RES4Africa. In general, RSS commits to close cooperation with RES4Africa for the implementation of component 3. This cooperation will include amongst others integrating RES4Africa input (i.e. presentations, trainings) in workshops and dialogue sessions organized by RSS in the context of MINARET II. RSS will also leverage financing expertise from relevant RSS units where it deems necessary.

### Monitoring and Evaluation:

Activities will be systematically monitored and periodically assessed, especially with regard to its relevance to the needs, effectiveness of implementation of objectives, and efficiency of activities.

Capacity development of local governance structures is a key element of this mission and will therefore be taken into account in the overall M&E system (including assessing capacities before the action, during and after completion of the action in order to have before and after data for comparison and determination of success).

### Cross-cutting Intervention:

Gender: MINARET II is committed to reflecting the principles of the Sustainable Development Goal on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and to assisting the municipality to realize the goal, of increasing women's economic participation as a key element of the country's sustainable development. Therefore, the second phase will give preference proposals that demonstrate the potential to advance women's economic inclusion, participation and empowerment. All investment proposals will be evaluated and scored with respect to their impact on the following aspects of women's inclusion, participation and empowerment:

a) The extent to which the activity proposed will increase women's access to or control over productive economic resources. b) The extent to which the women can access or benefit from social services that facilitate their economic participation and empowerment. Social services are defined as those provided specifically to empower women and girls.

Social Inclusion: MINARET II through adopting the bottom-up approach will be giving local stakeholders within each municipality a voice in determining the details of the planning and implementation of their development projects, developing increased awareness of the benefit of sustainable development, encouraging changed behaviours in sustainable practices, and establishing Our approach will also assist and support authorities, the private sector and civil society in reducing poverty, improving living conditions and empowering local group, women, youth, and other marginalized groups. It will build capabilities, resiliency, and economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability around renewable energy, water management and food security for inhabitants.



### Cooperation:

With regard to **Component 1**, MINARET II will build on experiences gathered in MINARET I as well as support through a close collaboration with related initiatives by third party organizations such as IUCN MENA (for the implementation of the spatial-planning/landscape approach), the Nexus Regional Dialogues Programme (NRDP) MENA (for WEF Nexus training) and the Clima-MED Programme (for monitoring and evaluation work).

With regard to **Component 2**, MINARET II will leverage on events organized by third party organizations such as NRDP MENA as well as the League of Arab States.

With regard to **Component 3**, MINARET II will rely on the work carried out by RES4Africa in the context of its mission 'Accelerating investments for integrated natural resources management projects' aimed at strengthening municipal capacities in investment planning and identifying adequate financing mechanisms for integrated natural resources management actions. On top of this, RSS will leverage inhouse expertise in the field of 'financial readiness in order to mobilize and utilize all necessary technical assistance needed to carry out the mission successfully.

### Risk and risk-mitigation measures

The risk of COVID-19 persists and could lead to the delay of activities. The selection of municipalities will be done in a way to consider municipal capacities (i.e. safety measures in place) to manage the pandemic and all activities can be executed in a virtual manner. The overall activity plan is subject and prepared to accommodate changes related to COVID-19 restrictions in the respective target countries.

The mission relies on the support of third-party actors. RSS will ensure for a strong coordination of activities from the start of the mission in order to ensure for the timely and aligned implementation of activities.