

Blue Peace Middle East: Innovating Water and Sanitation Solutions



Country / Region

Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran

Partners

Cewas Middle East, BORDA, Rotary, Berytech, GIZ and many other local institutions

Background information

The Middle East is facing an ongoing humanitarian crisis with millions of displaced persons, diminishing natural resources and mismanagement of water and waste as well as high youth unemployment across the region.

Project objective

Create and enhance a regional entrepreneurial ecosystem that enables the initiation and implementation of innovative solutions to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Beneficiaries

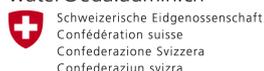
Direct: Entrepreneurial ecosystem actors (from finance, business and academia), local water and sanitation entrepreneurs, WASH practitioners
 Indirect: Refugees and host communities in the MENA region

Costs & Duration

CHF 1,665,788
 01.2019 – 12.2021

Contact

Global Programme Water
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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

The Middle East is an increasingly water-scarce region. With the highest number of refugees per capita globally, it is also facing a rapidly changing economic and environmental landscape. In an effort to support innovation and sustainability around these challenges, cewas Middle East empowers young entrepreneurs initiating and implementing high-potential business ideas, enhances the entrepreneurship ecosystem and trains WASH practitioners to generate demand for more sustainable products and services.



No resource is more important than water. It directly affects peace and economic stability, and those linkages are highly visible in the Middle East, a region becoming more arid as climate change progresses. In terms of employment opportunities and the innovation economy, it is uncommon to think of the potential of the water sector. Water is dominated by the public sector and NGOs, with only marginal participation of the private sector.

In 2013, cewas Middle East was established to foster innovation and sustainability in the water and sanitation sector through the development and implementation of entrepreneurial approaches. Cewas Middle East is a branch of the Swiss NGO cewas, which founded the world's first dedicated water and sanitation start-up incubator for young innovators in 2011. By offering year-long training programmes, Cewas Middle East has supported over 60 start-ups across the region, and has developed a Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management (SSWM) curriculum to enhance knowledge among water and sanitation actors and generate demand in humanitarian and development markets.

During the current project phase 2019-2021, cewas Middle East continues to advance water and sanitation entrepreneurship on the following levels:

Based on its experience in specialised business development programmes, Cewas Middle East establishes now further mechanisms through which start-ups can initiate high-potential ideas, develop their sustainable businesses and bring them to the market. Upon identification of new start-ups, established companies and organisations, Cewas Middle East offers a year-long incubation programme as well as tailored business development trainings, individualised coaching, mentoring and access to finance. Cewas Middle East actively builds the com-

munity of entrepreneurs and facilitates professional network support through technical and business experts. By involving media experts, communication around role models and their change-making solutions supports awareness and demand creation.

To ensure entrepreneurs' efforts yield results, and to enhance the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem for SSWM, cCewas Middle East works together with key stakeholders from the entrepreneurship sector, the financial sector and academia. Hereby, a particular focus is set on improving the following three ecosystem conditions: 1) Financial Support Systems, 2) Business Support Services & Intermediaries, 3) Young Talent Growth in SSWM.

SSWM Entrepreneurs highly depend on the capacity of the markets they operate in, which are mostly limited to NGOs and donors' efforts, or niche sectors of environmentally conscious consumers. Through short- and long-term trainings, innovation workshops and the provision of bilingual knowledge tools, Cewas Middle East capacitates practitioners and decision-makers to move from project-based to more sustainable water and sanitation interventions, considering market-based approaches that can mobilise environmental solutions adequately adapted to the cultural and local context, and supporting local economies.

 Additional information:
 Website: www.cewasmiddleeast.org
 Website: www.cewas.org
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cewasMiddleEast/>
 LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cewas-middle-east/>