

Aqaba Water Company to manage Maan's water sector

AMMAN - The Aqaba Water Company will manage wastewater services in Maan Governorate in a bid to improve the weak performance in the south and reduce the high water loss, officials said on Thursday.

Under an agreement signed by the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and the Aqaba Water Company, the latter will manage water and wastewater services in Maan for five years to improve water operations and increase the private sector's participation in the water sector.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar said the company will be responsible for all operational, maintenance and customer services in Maan, in addition to operational expenditure in return for generated operational earnings.

“Maan enjoys plenty of water; the per capita rate is considered one of the highest in Jordan, but the levels of performance are weak due to the governorate's vast terrain,” he told reporters during the signing ceremony, noting that water loss stands at 56 per cent.

Under the agreement, the company is required to improve water services, reduce expenditures and carry out regular maintenance work on the governorate's water facilities and networks, the minister said.

He noted that the Aqaba Water Company was selected to manage Maan's water sector due to its “excellent achievements in the management of water services,” proximity to Maan, and the fact that several water resources are shared between Maan and Aqaba.

The minister highlighted that WAJ has the right to review the agreement at the end of each year based on the technical and financial results, adding that the authority will remain responsible for the area's capital investments.

Najjar noted that the agreement also stipulates dispatching Maan water department employees to work with the Aqaba Water Company. He noted that the latter is not allowed to terminate the services of any staff member or reduce their salaries; however, it is allowed to raise salaries and provide bonuses if technical and financial performance improve.

The minister said water services in Karak and Balqa will also improve soon after the ministry signs agreements with other private sector companies to manage billing and fee collection services.

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