



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



World Youth
Parliament
for Water



International
Water Resources
Association

The Future of Water Jobs: Post Covid-19 Opportunities for Youth in the Mediterranean December 10th, 3:00-4:30 PM (CET)

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The global pandemic we are living in today will leave a lasting impact on economies in the Mediterranean region and worldwide. One of these effects has been the growth of unemployment on one hand, yet the emergence of new kinds of jobs another. This change will require countries to adapt by means of an increased digitized economy, paving a road that is fundamental for worker employment and public health. While the immediate response of the coronavirus was to adapt by working remotely and through teleconferencing, new normal for working and for the economy will continue to be established.

In response to these challenges, an opportunity arises for new job markets to be developed, especially in the Mediterranean region. As part of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) member countries, the region enjoys a large youth population which must be prepared for an expanding water sector job market in response to COVID-19 and beyond. In particular, the MENA region is made up of 200 million young people (between the ages of 18-24 years). However, despite a large youthful population, unemployment rates of this age demographic are the highest they have been in nearly 25 years, reaching 30% in 2017.

Despite these additional challenges that compound the current COVID-19 workforce challenges, youth has the potential to play an instrumental role in leading efforts to address the complex water challenges of the future. This includes responding to shocks similar to COVID 19, in addition to implementing the highly interconnected 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. A few barriers still exist which might challenge this possibility. These barriers could include: 1) inconsistency between educational training and job market needs, 2) lack of internet infrastructure preparedness to allow switching to a digitized economy, and 3) lack of environments which allow for this segment of the population to be an active contributor to the economies of the future.

Young water professionals currently find themselves in need of better understanding the landscape of future jobs in the water sector and how to best build the necessary capacity to be prepared for them. Given this reality, this webinar aims to open discussion to better understand where the future of water jobs is opening up post COVID-19, as well as identify key emerging job opportunities for youth in the sector.

Key Webinar Objectives:

1. Identify opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship in the water sector
2. Outline opportunities in the post COVID-19 water job market and the skills necessary to be prepared for it
3. Provide an overview on the need for systems thinking in addressing the interconnected water challenges of the future



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Webinar Agenda

3:00-3:10 Opening and Setting the Scene

- **Almotaz Abadi**, UFM-Water Managing Director

3:10-3:15 Summary of survey

Panel 1: Opportunities for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Jobs in the Water Sector Post COVID-19 (40 min)

Moderated by: **Lindsey Aldaco-Manner**, World Youth Parliament for Water

- **Josh Newton**, Josh's Water Jobs
 - **Ramy Bou Jaoudi**, Berytech
 - **Sara Dia**, Water Innovation Lab
- Q&A**

Guiding Questions:

1. *What key trends do you see emerging in the water job market post COVID-19?*
2. *How can water youth be job creators, not only job seekers?*
3. *What opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship in the water sector currently exist in the region?*
4. *What is your advice for water youth looking for their next opportunity?*

Panel 2: Systems thinking for achieving the Water-Energy-Food Sustainable Development Goals in the Mediterranean (30 min)

Moderated by: **Bassel Daher**, International Water Resources Association

- **Jauad Kharraz**, Water Energy Climate Experts Network
 - **Roula Bachour**, American University of Beirut
- Q&A**

Guiding Questions:

1. *What are the critical links between water challenges and other resource challenges in the region?*
2. *What role can academia play in building capacity in this direction? What other non-traditional sources can help in building that capacity?*
3. *What skillsets are necessary for water youth to acquire as they prepare for the job market of the future?*

4:25 - 4:30 Closing remarks

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