

For safe assign



Poverty is rampant in the Middle East, and the region's past, current and future water crisis plays a more significant role than what is shared in the major news. While the major focus of conflict is often attributed to the devastation of violent cultural war, countries that have been major victims will need rising leaders and peacekeepers to focus on the more significant issues as to begin with a strong foundation while they rebuild.

The World Bank predicts that with rapid growth, regional ; cultural instability on top of climate change, these challenges are more pressing than ever before. Water accessibility has always posed great challenges for the Middle East.

In the recent decades, the changes in both the economy and infrastructure of the Middle East have made its water challenges a growing issue, to the point where the lack of water conservation could negatively affect the infrastructure and stability of these countries in the future.

Rapid population and economic growth in urban areas, increasing and wasteful water consumption, geographical challenges and inadequate governance to name a few. According to studies, climate change is causing more severe and frequent weather events. Political and social turmoil have also worsened existing constraints of water scarcity. Currently, poverty doesn't appear to discriminate against regions, whether stable or unstable.

The water crisis in the Middle East plays a significant role when it comes to the population's hunger, food insecurity, and lack of food production. The Arab World is where 6% of the world's population is located. Only 2% of the

world's water supply is located there. Rural unemployment occurs when the amount of suitable farmland decreased and desertification increases.

As more of the population suffers from little agricultural cultivation, the Middle East sees a decrease in production, and farmers find themselves without jobs or food. The lack of security in water supplies and irrigation cannot sustain productive farmland and agriculture. With a more stable structure and plan for agriculture, climate smart agricultural practices and better irrigation methods will go a long way in conserving water.

The public must be part of the conservation effort through awareness. A focus on minimizing water waste, as well as efficient energy usage at desalination plants will reduce the environmental cost of producing water. In such an arid region, there is no denying water takes on critical importance. However, some natural sources do exist, though they attract the attention of those geographically close to them.

The issue is who gets to claim these sources. These less fortunate populations suffer due to this continuous conflict. The Golan Heights, for example, has long been a place of conflict for critical players in the Middle East. Countries like Syria, Lebanon and Israel are engaged in conflict over this area because it holds a strategic advantage.

One-third of Israel's freshwater supply originates in the Golan Heights, and promotes fertile land, which stretches from the Sea of Galilee to the Jordan River. But while this source of water aides Israel, ceding control of the Golan Heights to Syria would give Syria access to the Sea of Galilee's eastern shore and one of Israel's two largest sources of water.

In addition, Jordan and Lebanon would stand to benefit from its resources. But a lack of governed structure in place to allocate and value water in a way that is sustainable will affect the countries' ability to support a civilization that could flourish and their ability to get rid of the poverty caused from a lack of water structure. It is quoted that 60 percent of the surface water resources in the Arab region are transboundary, and all countries share at least one aquifer.

This further highlights how important all of the countries' cooperation and solid management of shared water resources. As poverty continues, so will contention. Urban water systems that are in place will continue to be targets of armed conflicts. Countries recovering from war and decimated infrastructure, for example, see leaking water pipes; meaning that some cities lose up to 40% of their water before it reaches the users.

Ultimately, entities such as ISIL, Al Qaeda, and the Kurdish forces are perpetuated by this conflict, as they leverage their advantage and control over regions with reliable water sources. With precious and limited natural resources in the hands of these entities, there is little hope of the wealth to be shared or structured. As the economic, social and political pressures mount in the Arab world, the international focus will need to shift its focus to security and communication to avoid engagement in conflict.

The above issues and nature of water scarcity and its implications for growth, prosperity and end to poverty cannot be sidelined in efforts at international dialogue and engagement.