

New initiative to boost Tafileh Governorate water supply

AMMAN - Water supply in the southern Tafileh Governorate, where water loss amounts to 56 per cent, will be improved under an \$18 million project that entails construction of reservoirs and rehabilitation of deteriorated networks, according to officials.

To this end, the Japanese government on Wednesday granted Jordan \$560,000 for drawing up detailed designs of the Rehabilitation and Improvement of Water Facilities in Tafileh project.

Officials said yesterday that the project also entails establishment of a water distribution zone, installation of a pressure reducing facility and a water distribution monitoring system, and optimisation of the transmission pumping plant.

During the signing of the exchange of letters yesterday, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Jafar Hassan said the project is part of a national agenda designed to rehabilitate water networks across Jordan and upgrade infrastructure in the south.

Hassan, who signed the agreement with Japanese Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Hisashi Tokunaga, noted that the project will also improve water management in Tafileh.

In addition, the project seeks to ensure optimum water distribution management in the governorate by reducing leakage, the Japanese official said, underscoring that it will also improve the water supply and increase actual water availability in Tafileh.

"Jordan has one of the lowest levels of water resources availability in the world, and the severe imbalance between demand and supply of water in the country is serious and urgent," he said yesterday.

The project's detailed designs are expected to be completed this year, Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar said yesterday, noting that implementation of the project is scheduled to begin early next year.

"Current water loss in Tafileh Governorate is 56 per cent... this project, among other initiatives, seeks to cut down the rate to the international levels of 12-15 per cent," he told The Jordan Times.

According to Najjar, the project is expected to be completed two to three years after the designs are finalised.

Official figures indicate that Japanese assistance to Jordan since 2004 totalled \$220 million, of which \$161 million is in grants and \$60 million as soft loans, in addition to the technical assistance extended through the Japan International Cooperation Agency to support various sectors in the Kingdom.

