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**Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to
the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes**

**Working Group on Water and Health
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Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Information paper 11

Draft Terms of Reference

**Pilot project to monitor progress in achieving equitable access to water and
sanitation**

Background

One of the main objectives of the UNECE¹-WHO/EURO² Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes is the provision of safe drinking water to everyone. The Protocol includes several provisions on non-discrimination and equity aspects.

In 2011, under the auspices of the Protocol's Working Group on Water and Health, an ad-hoc Expert Group produced the document "No One Left Behind -- Good Practices on Ensuring Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation in the pan-European Region"³. The overall objective of this activity was to promote the implementation of the Protocol in relation to facilitating access to water and sanitation for poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people and to reduce geographical disparities in access to water and sanitation through information exchange on relevant experience in countries of the pan-European region.

The 2011 document developed a conceptual framework, identified policy options, and gathered information on good practices on this area. One of its main messages is that current water governance frameworks are often "equity blind", and that ensuring equitable access requires a results-oriented action plan building on country-situation analysis and context-specific equity indicators. At their final meeting, the members of the ad-hoc Expert Group recommended as follow up work the development of a self-evaluation tool (in the form of a scorecard framework) that could be used by countries in the region to assess their progress in achieving equitable access.

¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

² Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization:

³ The document and related communication materials can be accessed at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=29170>

A new ad-hoc Expert Group has been formed to develop the scorecard framework. As part of the methodological development of the scorecard framework, two or three piloting projects will be carried out. One pilot project will take place in a country from the Eastern part of the region (with financial support from France through the Secretariat), and one or two in a country from the Western part of the region. These country pilot projects can be carried out at national or sub-national level (e.g. oblast or city/municipality level).

This document presents the Draft Terms of Reference for the pilot projects. It will be finalized at the first meeting of the new ad-hoc Expert Group in September 2012.

Objectives of the pilot project

- To undertake a self-assessment of the status of equitable access to water and sanitation in the selected country/region/city.
- To test the draft scorecard framework developed by the Expert Group and contribute to its finalization.
- To explore the possibility of establishing in the country/region/city a permanent process of self-assessment, policy dialogue, and accountability.
- To help create the momentum for the development of a results-oriented action plan on equitable access to water and sanitation.
- To derive lessons for the implementation of similar projects in other countries of the pan-European region.

Methodology

The project will start by setting up a country team (see specific section below). Once the country team is in place, the project will consist of three steps:

1) Drafting a situational analysis

- This analysis will cover the four dimensions of sector governance, geographical disparities in access, access by vulnerable and marginalized groups, and affordability issues.
- It will include a self-assessment structured according to the draft framework scorecard made available by the Secretariat and using the available information.
- In preparing the situational analysis, the country team is encouraged to add indicators to accommodate additional relevant information, issues, policy options and measures that are relevant for their country.
- The situational analysis will also include a critical assessment of the draft scorecard framework (usefulness, ease-of-use) as well as suggestions for improving the scorecard framework.

2) Organising a multi-stakeholder workshop (at the national or sub-national level as relevant). The workshop will discuss three blocks of issues:

- a) *Discussion of the results offered by the scorecard.* Questions to be addressed:
 - i) Does it offer an accurate assessment of the extent to which access to water and sanitation is equitable? What scores need to be changed? What is the justification for changing the scores? What other aspects should be included?

- ii) Does it offer an accurate assessment of the efforts being done to improve the situation? What scores need to be changed? What is the justification for changing the scores? What other aspects should be included?
- b) *Discussion of priority actions to ensure more equitable access.* Questions to be addressed:
 - i) What are the priority actions that need to be undertaken?
 - ii) What needs to happen for those actions to be undertaken?
- c) *Critical assessment of the process and of the scorecard framework.* Questions to be addressed:
 - i) To what extent is the scorecard useful to track progress?
 - ii) To what extent is the scorecard useful to encourage action?
 - iii) Is it reasonably easy to use? How can it be improved?

In order to ensure broad representation of different issues and perspectives, while keeping the workshop a productive event, the target number of participants is in the order of 30-40 people. The workshop will need to include as participants a broad array of stakeholders:

- Government officials from different departments (water, health, social protection, public administration) and levels of government (national, local)
- Representatives of civil society organizations working on water and sanitation issues and/or with vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Representatives of water operators
- Representatives of academic institutions working on equitable access to public services
- Other stakeholders that the country team considers would provide critical and constructive input to the workshop discussions.

The multi-stakeholder workshop could be structured as follows:

- A plenary session to discuss the draft situational analysis
 - Working groups to discuss the situation, indicators, progress and possible additional measures in the different dimensions of equitable access.
 - A plenary session to put in common the results of the working groups and identify conclusions and recommendations
 - A high level session to relay and discuss the workshop conclusions and recommendations to high level representatives from government, private sector and civil society
- 3) An evaluation session to discuss the process aspects of the pilot project **Drafting a country report**. The country report will include a revised version of **the situational analysis** (taking into account the discussions at the workshop). In addition, it will document and critically analyse the process of carrying out the piloting exercise.

Country Team

The project will be implemented by a country team.

The country team will include:

- **A country team leader.** The country team leader is expected to devote substantial time to coordinating the project. If the government cannot secure staff time to fulfill this role, and if the country belongs to the Eastern part of the region, the Secretariat will include in the budget

for the project funds for directly hiring a country team leader. Ideally, the country team leader will attend the two meetings of the Expert Group⁴.

- **3-6 additional experts.** Ideally, the country team will include a balance of stakeholders (government, service providers, users, civil society organizations) as well as a balance of fields of expertise (urban water services, rural water services, vulnerable and marginalized groups, affordability issues).

The country team will be responsible for delivering the final output, as well as the workshop concept note and the draft situational analysis.

The country team will be supported by the Secretariat as regards advice for the elaboration of the analysis and reports, and planning and facilitation of the workshop.

Output

The final output of this pilot project will be a country report that will include:

1. A situational analysis of equitable access to water and sanitation
2. Options available to achieve equitable access in the specific context
3. A summary of workshop discussion and recommendations
4. A critical assessment of the scorecard tool and of the process of carrying out the exercise

Expected results

The project is expected to contribute to fulfill the human right to water and sanitation and to reduce inequities in access to water and sanitation through the following expected results:

- A situational analysis of equitable access to water and sanitation is owned and shared by key sector stakeholders
- The profile of equitable access issues is increased among key water and sanitation sector stakeholders and other relevant parties
- The capacities of government agencies and other relevant actors to undertake a self-assessment and to identify opportunities for improvement are increased
- The basis for establishing a permanent process of self-assessment, policy dialogue, and accountability is laid out
- The momentum for the development of a results-oriented action plan is created

In addition, the project is expected to contribute to improvements on equitable access to water and sanitation across the pan-European region; by showing to other countries the feasibility and benefits of undertaking equitable access self-assessments.

Timeline

- **September-October**
 - 15th September. A country team leader is identified.
 - 27th-28th September. Commitment to carry out the pilot project is confirmed at the 1st meeting of the Expert Group.
 - 15th October. The full country team is set up with responsibilities allocated. Work by the country team begins.
 - 31st October. A draft concept note for the workshop is available for discussion.
- **November-December**
 - 15th November. The concept note for the workshop is finalized. The workshop dates are set.

⁴ The first one is scheduled to take place on 27-28 September in Paris (France). The second one is expected to take place at the end of April (location tbc).

- 30th November. A first draft of the situational analysis is available.
- **January-February**
 - 5th January. A revised draft of the situational analysis is available.
 - 15th January-15th February. The workshop is organized.
 - 28th February. A draft of the country report is made available to the Secretariat.
- **March-April**
 - 20th March. A final version of the country report is made available to the Secretariat.
 - April (tbc). Project representatives attend the 2nd meeting of the Expert Group.