



**Economic Commission for
Europe**

**World Health Organization
Regional Office for Europe**

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

Seventh meeting
Geneva, 26 and 27 November 2014
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
Small-scale water supplies and sanitation

INFORMAL DOCUMENT

Implementation of activities under programme area 3 on small-scale water supplies and sanitation

- Progress report -

- Since the third session of the Meeting of the Parties, the work focused on the further development of the best practice document for policy makers, strengthening the evidence base of the situation of small-scale water supplies in the WHO European Region, and networking within the region.
- In order to support decision makers and regulators at national and sub-national levels in defining policies and programs addressing small-scale water supplies and sanitation, a draft of the guidance document “Small-scale water supply and sanitation systems in the WHO European Region: good practices for policy-makers” has been developed for comments by the Working Group on Water and Health. The document addresses, amongst others, legislative, organizational and financial aspects, as well as good practices for improving the situation of small-scale water supplies and sanitation. It makes extensive use of case examples of good practices for sharing positive experiences of instruments already applied to improve the situation of small-scale water supplies and sanitation within the WHO European Region.
- The expert group which had been established under the 2011-2013 programme of work held two meetings (Berlin, January 2014; Bonn, June 2014) which were both funded by Germany. The meetings’ objectives were to critically review, revise and advance the draft guidance document. A limited peer review process of the draft document was conducted in April – May 2014, and the feedback was taken into consideration for revision of the document. Numerous case studies were added and revised, and information from the questionnaire exercise (see below) incorporated into the document. The consolidated draft guidance document is presented to the Working Group on Water and Health as an information paper under agenda item 6 for

commenting, including feedback on the country-specific information included in the case examples of the document.

- In order to improve the evidence base in the pan-European region, lead Parties developed a questionnaire addressing the situation of small-scale water supplies. The questionnaire was disseminated to ministries of health, ministries of the environment and WHO country offices. Lead Parties assessed the information of the 50 questionnaires returned from 43 countries. The draft analysis report of the questionnaire is presented to the Working Group on Water and Health as an information paper under agenda item 6 for commenting.
- In order to facilitate access and contributions of Parties and non-Parties to the WHO-hosted Small Community Water Supply Management Network, particularly for countries in eastern Europe, the Caucasus and central Asia the, WHO organized a Network meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 26-27 June 2014, financially supported by Germany via the Advisory Assistance Programme. At the meeting, participants discussed good practices to regulate and manage small-scale water supplies to protect public health.
- To support water safety plan (WSP) adoption in rural areas, WHO has published the guidance document *Water safety plan: a field guide to improving drinking-water safety in small communities*¹ in English and Russian, which was launched at the WSP capacity building workshop (under programme area 4) that was held back to back with the Network meeting. The document was developed based on results of pilot project implementation of WSP in small-scale water supplies in rural areas in Tajikistan conducted under the 2011-2013 programme of work.
- In order to support water and sanitation safety planning approaches in rural areas, the nongovernmental organization Women in Europe for a Common Future has developed a compendium². It emphasizes the linkages between public health and safe water supply and sanitation, particularly in rural communities, and aims to increase knowledge about adequate water and sanitation systems, pathways of contamination and associated health risks. The compendium aims to enable small communities and schools to improve water and sanitation planning and assess the quality of sanitation facilities. The compendium has been prepared in the framework of the project “Water and sanitation safety plans in rural areas of Romania and the [Former Yugoslav] Republic of Macedonia“, funded by the German Environment Foundation.

¹ WHO Regional Office for Europe (2014). *Water safety plan: a field guide to improving drinking-water safety in small communities*. World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen (available at: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/water-and-sanitation/publications/2014/water-safety-plan-a-field-guide-to-improving-drinking-water-safety-in-small-communities>).

² WECF (2014) *Developing a water and sanitation safety plan in a rural community: compendium in three parts* Women in Europe for a Common Future, Munich (available at: <http://www.wecf.eu/english/publications/2014/WSSP-Publication.php>).