The UNECE-WHO-Europe Protocol on Water and Health
A framework to improve equitable access to water and sanitation

Francesca Bernardini
Co-Secretary of the Protocol on Water and Health
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Equitable access under the Protocol on Water and Health

The **Protocol** key objectives:

(a) Access to drinking water for everyone
(b) Provision of sanitation for everyone

A specific focus on *equitable access*:

“Equitable access to water, adequate in terms both of quantity and of quality, should be provided for all members of the population, especially those who suffer a disadvantage or social exclusion” (art. 5)
Equitable access under the Protocol on Water and Health

- **Safety**: Ensure «adequate supplies of water free from [...] substances which constitute a potential danger to human health»

- **Implementation strategy**: Set targets and target dates, develop plan for achieving the targets, provisions for public participation

- **Monitoring**: Establish arrangement for monitoring achievement of targets, Compliance Committee (possibility of communication from public if non compliance)

→ The Protocol: a practical **instrument to progressively implement** the human right to water and sanitation and contribute to the SDGs implementation
Activities on equitable access to water and sanitation

2011
Collection good practices

2012-2013
Development & piloting of self assessment tool

2014-…
Support to assessments and development of action plans

2012
No One Left Behind

2013
Equitable Access Score Card
No One Left Behind

- Identifies key challenges in ensuring equitable access to water and sanitation
- Analyzes national governance frameworks and options for them to address equitable access
- Presents concrete good practices and lessons learnt on policy options and measures to address inequities
Inequities to be fought on 3 fronts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Inequities in access to water and sanitation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographical disparities:</td>
<td>Certain areas of a country (rural areas, poor urban neighborhoods) have no physical access or have access of lower quality than other areas</td>
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<td>water resources, WSS</td>
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<td>infrastructure</td>
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<td>Social disparities:</td>
<td>Within areas with good access, certain groups do not have access because they don’t have private facilities, the public and institutional facilities they rely on are not adequate, or suffer unintended or intended discrimination</td>
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<td>vulnerable and marginalised groups</td>
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<td>Economic disparities:</td>
<td>Within areas with good access, the water and sanitation bill represents too large a share of disposable income for some households</td>
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<td>affordability issues</td>
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Need to steer governance frameworks to ensure equitable access

Good water governance and management
- transparency and access to information
- inclusive participation
- efficiency incentives for operators
- accountability and redress mechanisms

“Equitable access lens” to speed up progress
- country situation analysis (indicator-based)
- action plan (results-oriented)
Checklist

1. Reflect international commitments in national legislation
2. Allocate responsibilities and financial resources
3. Set equitable access targets
4. Promote the adoption of an “equitable access lens” among policymakers and operators through capacity development
5. Invest efforts in better understanding the linkages between equitable access to different public services
6. Develop programmes to raise awareness among users of their rights and the mechanisms to enforce them
7. Analyze and publish the progress in closing equity gaps
8. Develop accountability mechanisms to identify violations and seek redress
9. Create national or local spaces for discussion and coordination between competent authorities
10. Ensure that institutional mechanisms monitor and enforce coverage, quality and cost targets and standards
The Equitable Access Score-card

• A self-evaluation analytical tool…
• … that can be used by governments (and other stakeholders) in establishing a baseline, tracking progress, and prompting discussions on further actions needed to achieve equitable access to water and sanitation…
• … in order to support the implementation of policies and practices to uphold the human rights to water and sanitation under the principle of “progressive realization”.
Progress in assessing equitable access

- **Pilot projects (2012-2013):** France, Portugal, Ukraine

- **Finalized assessments:** Republic of Moldova, Hungary, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- **On going assessments:** Azerbaijan, Armenia

- **Upcoming assessments:** Serbia, Albania?, Bulgaria?
The Oslo 2014-2016 programme of work

- Improving governance for water and health
- Prevention and reduction of WRD
- Small-scale water supply and sanitation
- Safe and efficient management
- Equitable access

- Awareness raising on equity-oriented governance frameworks
- Assessing equity of access to water and sanitation
- Developing action plans for equitable access

Strategic note on the development of action plans