

# Assessing equitable access to water and sanitation

## Experience in Castelló, Spain

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5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON EQUITABLE ACCESS

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Session 2



# Background and objectives of the equitable access assessment

## \* Background:

- Previous **experience in the rural context** in low-income countries: characterization of vulnerable groups (not served) at the community level.
- Increased interest in peri-urban context in the Mediterranean region: **small research-action initiatives** in Castelló, Barcelona and Lima.

## \* Twofold objective:

- **Gain knowledge** about the level of water and sanitation services delivered to those most in need from a HR perspective in a **Mediterranean context**.
- **Test and implement a well-known methodology** based on the **participatory analysis** with voluntary experts and local stakeholders from different backgrounds.

# Process: Applying the Equitable Access Score-card

- \* **Lead organization:** “Engineering Sciences and Global Development” (EScGD) research group, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya
- \* **Partners:**
  - “Community Psychology and Cooperation for Development” research group (University of Jaume I)
  - City Council of Castelló de la Plana
- \* **Participants (15):**
  - Civil society (Cáritas, Red Cross, Medicus Mundi)
  - Water utility (FACSA)
  - Academia (UPC, UJI)
  - City Council (Councillor of equality and housing)
- \* **Scale of the project:**  
Local (City of Castelló)



# Process: Applying the Equitable Access Score-card

## \* Timeline

Activity	Date
Initial contact with the City Council, agreement to undertake the diagnosis and identification of actors.	January 2016
First workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Introductory presentation about the SDGs and the international framework of HRtWS.</li><li>- Application of the two first parts of the score-card (governance, and access and geographical disparities).</li></ul>	April 2016
Second workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Summary of the results achieved in the first workshop.</li><li>- Application of the two other parts of the score-card (vulnerable groups, and affordability).</li></ul>	May 2016
Discussion about key findings with the participants.	June 2016
Dissemination of final results amongst the participants.	July 2016
Dissemination to third parties (UNECE, OECD)	March 2017

# Outcomes of the assessment: main findings

## Situation of equitable access to water and sanitation



- ❖ Existence of a strategic plan to ensure equitable access (e.g. municipal urban plan and agricultural legislation).
- ❖ Existence, to some extent, of an integrated approach to support the provision of water and sanitation services in peri-urban areas.
- ❖ High perception of the respondents about access to water and sanitation of the different vulnerable groups (except for the poorest fifth of the population).



- ❖ Great unawareness amongst the population on the principles and approaches included in the HRtWS.
- ❖ Lack of targets, responsibilities or coordination mechanisms between authorities in order to achieve equitable access to water and sanitation.
- ❖ Few mechanisms to induce suppliers to implement equitable investment plans.

# Outcomes of the assessment: lessons learnt from the process

	Process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Awareness-raising amongst the participants on the HRtWS and their normative components, and knowledge about the score-card.</li><li>❖ Positive experience for the governance of the water sector:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Qualitative information that could help orienting and improving the policies around water.</li><li>- Innovative practice that can be adopted and implemented to involve social actors.</li></ul></li><li>❖ Multidisciplinary partnership between research groups for the promotion of joint research.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Lack of interest of policy makers / formal service providers (ignorance or misunderstanding of HRtWS), also by civil society.</li><li>❖ High difficulty in obtaining data related to the provision of services (from organisational such as contract or concession, to operational like the quality of water provided).</li><li>❖ Difficulty to find economic support for this kind of research-action initiatives.</li></ul>

# Communication of the findings

## \* Sectorial dissemination:

- UNECE – Projects in countries to improve equitable access.
- OECD – Implementing the OECD Principles on Water Governance: Evolving water governance practice.
- OECD – Water Governance Webinar: The new role of cities in urban water governance.

## \* Academic dissemination:

- Scientific paper in work for the “X Congreso Ibérico de Gestión y Planificación del Agua” (Portugal, 6-8 September 2018).



Urban Water – Castelló de la Plana: Participatory diagnosis on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation in small towns

A. Pérez Foguet, S. Ruiz Cayuela and R. Guit-Gariga

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July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

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Evolving water governance practice  
Assessing access to water and sanitation services of vulnerable stakeholder groups: The case of Castellón (Spain)



Promoter of the practice:  
Institution: Polytechnic University of Catalonia  
Contact point: Agustí Pérez Foguet  
Email: agusti.perez@upc.edu



Location: Castellón de la Plana, Spain



Scale (s): Local



Timeframe: 16 January 2016 → 31 July 2016



Water function(s): Safe drinking water  
Sanitation and water quality

Stakeholders involved	
Local Government	• Castellón de la Plana Council
Science, Academia and research centres	• Polytechnic University of Catalonia (UPC) • Jaume I University • Càritas • Medica Mundí • Red Cross
Civil Society	

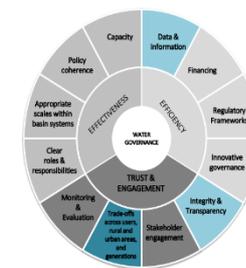
### Brief description of the practice

In Castellón (Spain), the Polytechnic University of Catalonia reports to have produced evidence among local stakeholders on the distributional consequences of water and sanitation services policies on rural and urban populations. The diagnosis is reported to have a twofold objective: first, to acquire knowledge on the provision of water and sanitation services analysed through a human rights perspective in a Mediterranean city; second, to test a methodology to measure a access to water services based on participatory analysis. A report *Urban Water – Castelló de la Plana* presents the results of the participatory diagnosis.

### Governance gaps in implementing the practice according to the practice promoter

- Insufficient water-related information to design policies that address inequalities of vulnerable stakeholder groups
- Lack of transparency on information related to water and sanitation services

OECD Water Governance Principle (s)



# Planned next steps

- \* Further collaborative research through a network of excellence:
  - **Bring together knowledge**, experiences and best practices acquired at national level in the area of **water poverty**.
  - **Forum for academics** that will engage **other relevant stakeholders** within the value chain (e.g. users organizations, informal/formal service providers, public authorities, civil society organizations...).
  - Coordinate efforts dedicated by the academia to **consolidate ongoing initiatives** and **identify future potential areas** where to research, develop, pilot, evaluate and deploy solutions regarding pro-poor delivery of water services.

## Water and Poverty Network WAPONET



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# Thank you for your attention.

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