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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

Eighth meeting

Geneva, 21 and 22 October 2015

Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**Implementation and prospects for the programme
of work for 2014–2016**

Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work*

Prepared by the secretariat

Summary

In accordance with its terms of reference (ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2–EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2), the Working Group on Water and Health is responsible for the implementation of the programme of work adopted under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The Working Group oversees and directs the activities of the Protocol's subsidiary bodies and any other activities carried out under the programme of work. It also examines experience in implementation and proposes modifications to the programme of work to adapt to changing conditions, and reports to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol thereon.

The present document was prepared by the secretariat to facilitate the Working Group's review of the implementation of the programme of work for 2014–2016. It gives an overview of the progress achieved thus far and examines success factors and challenges encountered, as well as their consequences for the future work under the Protocol.

* The present document was submitted on the above date owing to the need to consult with partners.



I. Background

1. At its third session (Oslo, 25–27 November 2013), the 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 adopted the Protocol's programme of work for 2014–2016 (ECE/MP.WH/11/Add.1–EUDCE/1206123/3.1/2013/MOP-3/06/Add.1). The present document presents a review of progress in implementing the programme of work as of 21 August 2015. It highlights the progress achieved and examines success factors and challenges encountered, as well as their consequences for the future work under the Protocol.
2. The annex contains a workplan for 2015 and the status of its implementation as of 21 August 2015, including an overview of resources required for implementing it.

II. General overview

3. As of 19 August 2015, the following 26 countries are Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine. There have been no changes in membership since the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.
4. Since the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (Geneva, 26–27 November 2014), capacity-development activities having been carried out in support of accession in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and in support of target setting in the Republic of Moldova and Serbia.
5. The Protocol's subsidiary bodies carried out their activities as planned.
6. Activities have been carried out in all areas of work with the support of the lead Parties, other countries and organizations as well as the joint secretariat provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe).

III. Success factors and opportunities for future work under the Protocol

7. Success factors that also offer opportunities for further work under the Protocol include:
 - (a) A number of countries are in the process of accession or are considering accession to the Protocol, in particular in the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. Activities on the ground in the subregion have shown concrete results and offered opportunities for replication in other countries;
 - (b) Support to countries in implementing the Protocol through targeted capacity-development activities has been very well received, and there are many requests for further activities of this kind;
 - (c) The development of several guidance materials and concrete tools that are used by Parties and non-Parties to the Protocol, such as the *Water safety plan: a field guide*

*to improving drinking-water safety in small communities*¹ and the *Equitable Access Score-card: Supporting policy processes to achieve the human right to water and sanitation*.² The usefulness of such tools is demonstrated by the high number of countries that are using them or have expressed an interest in doing so;

(d) The important guiding role played by lead Parties, other countries and organizations in the implementation of activities under the programme of work;

(e) The provision by Parties and international organizations of voluntary donations, as well as in-kind contributions, to support implementation of the programme of work, while noting that to date the contributions received are inadequate to enable its full implementation;

(f) Established partnerships and cooperation with intergovernmental organizations within and outside the United Nations system, development agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the component of the European Union Water Initiative for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and the National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) in those countries, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the network of World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centres and NGOs such as International Water Association (IWA), MAMA-86, Oxfam GB and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF);

(g) The growing recognition and increased visibility of the Protocol among international partners achieved through intensive promotional work by the joint secretariat, Bureau members and the Protocol's focal points;

(h) Strengthening links to the relevant regional and global processes and commitments, such as the European Environment and Health Process, the human right to water and sanitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IV. Main challenges

8. The following challenges are among the possible obstacles to successful future work under the Protocol:

(a) The lack of financial resources, which has a direct impact on the human resources within the joint secretariat, creating the need to focus on fundraising rather than on substantive and practical tasks;

(b) The late provision of financial resources by the Parties, which affects the implementation of planned activities;

(c) In a few cases, the limited engagement of lead countries and organizations in the respective programme areas, which slows down the advancement of activities;

(d) Changes in government structures, which interrupt accession procedures in interested countries thereby slowing the growth in the number of Parties to the Protocol;

¹ Bettina Rickert and others (Copenhagen, WHO/Europe, 2014). Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/water-safety-plan-a-field-guide-to-improving-drinking-water-safety-in-small-communities>.

² ECE/MP.WH/8. Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/pub.html>.

(e) The fact that a number of Parties have not yet fulfilled their obligation to set targets and target dates;

(f) The limited awareness of the Protocol and its activities and tools, as well as the lack of a clear understanding of the legal obligations that it entails, which persists in certain countries and organizations.

9. The annex contains a workplan for 2015 and the status of its implementation as of 19 August 2015. It includes an overview of the resources required for implementing the 2015 workplan, which shows progress in some areas but also financial gaps that are hampering the implementation of certain activities.

10. In addition to the resources required for the implementation of activities as highlighted in the annex, secretariat costs under the Protocol are mostly unfunded.

Annex

Workplan for the Protocol on Water and Health for 2015 and status of its implementation

<i>Body/programme area and lead Party(ies)</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>ECE- or WHO/Europe-led</i>	<i>Required financial resources (before 13% programme support costs)</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>	<i>Availability of resources as of 19 August 2015</i>
Meeting of the Parties	—	—	—	—	—
Bureau	14th meeting of the Bureau (Geneva, 1 July 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded from residual funds
	15th meeting of the Bureau (Geneva, 23 October 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	US\$ 1,000 required for financial support to meeting participants	Work in progress	Funds awaited
Working Group on Water and Health	8th meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 21–22 October 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	US\$ 36,000 required for financial support to meeting participants	Work in progress	Funded by Norway
Programme area 1 — Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures <i>Lead Parties:</i> Switzerland and Romania	8th meeting of the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting (Geneva, 2 July 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded from residual funds
	Informal Review Group under the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting (Oslo, 8 May 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded from residual funds
	Informal review group under the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting (Geneva, 1 July 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded from residual funds
	Informal review group under the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting (Bonn, 7 October 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	US\$ 4,000 required for financial support to meeting participants	Work in progress	Funds awaited

<i>Body/programme area and lead Party(ies)</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>ECE- or WHO/Europe-led</i>	<i>Required financial resources (before 13% programme support costs)</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>	<i>Availability of resources as of 19 August 2015</i>
	National workshop in Uzbekistan (Tashkent, 23–24 June 2015)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded by Switzerland
Programme area 2 — Prevention and reduction of water-related diseases	First expert group meeting on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools (Budapest, 15–16 April 2015)	WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded by Hungary
<i>Lead Parties:</i> Norway and Belarus (for surveillance); Hungary and Georgia (for schools)	Regional workshop on water quality surveillance (Oslo, 6–7 May 2015)	WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded by Norway
	Second expert group meeting on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools (Bonn, 8–9 October 2015)	WHO/Europe	US\$ 30,000 required for financial support to meeting participants	Work in progress	Funded by Germany and WHO/Europe
	Advocacy document on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools	WHO/Europe	US\$ 25,000 required for document preparation	Work in progress	Funded by Germany
	Finalization of review of water-related diseases	WHO/Europe	US\$ 10,000 required for editing, layout, translation and printing	Work in progress	No funds available
	Finalization of school landscape report	WHO/Europe	US\$ 10,000 required for editing, layout, translation and printing	Work in progress	No funds available
	Training materials on water-related disease surveillance	WHO/Europe	US\$ 20,000 required for preparation of materials	Not started	Likely to be funded by Norway
	National capacity-building workshops on water-related disease surveillance	WHO/Europe	US\$ 20,000 required for workshops	Not started	Likely to be funded by Norway

<i>Body/programme area and lead Party(ies)</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>ECE- or WHO/Europe-led</i>	<i>Required financial resources (before 13% programme support costs)</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>	<i>Availability of resources as of 19 August 2015</i>
Programme area 3 — Small-scale water supplies and sanitation <i>Lead Parties:</i> Germany, Serbia and WECF	Finalization of good practice document	WHO/Europe	US\$ 20,000 required for editing, layout, translation and printing	Work in progress	Funded by Germany and through the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project
	National workshop in Kyrgyzstan on small-scale systems (Issyk-Kul Lake, 21–22 September 2015)	WHO/Europe	US\$ 35,000 required for workshop	Work in progress	Funded by WHO/Europe and through UNDA project
	Country consultations on small-scale systems in Serbia (Belgrade, 8 December 2014), and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Skopje, 17 June 2015)	WHO/Europe and ECE	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded by WHO/Europe and through UNDA project
Programme Area 4 — Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems <i>Lead Parties:</i> Portugal and IWA	National capacity-building workshops on water safety plans in the Republic of Moldova (Chisinau, 5–6 November 2015), Ukraine (Kyiv, 11 August 2015) and Uzbekistan (Tashkent, 23–24 June 2015)	WHO/ Europe and ECE	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented in Ukraine and Uzbekistan Work in progress for Republic of Moldova	Ukraine: funded by WHO/Europe Uzbekistan: funded by Switzerland Republic of Moldova: funded by WHO/Europe and through SDC project
	Scoping study (e.g., on wastewater)	WHO/Europe and ECE	US\$ 15,000 required for consultancy costs (<i>could seek in-kind support from partners</i>)	Not started	No funds available

<i>Body/programme area and lead Party(ies)</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>ECE- or WHO/Europe-led</i>	<i>Required financial resources (before 13% programme support costs)</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>	<i>Availability of resources as of 19 August 2015</i>
Programme area 5 — Equitable access to water and sanitation: translating the human right to water and sanitation into practice <i>Lead Parties:</i> France and Hungary	Self-assessment exercises in Hungary (ongoing), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (launched in Skopje, 16–17 June 2015) and Azerbaijan (to start in October 2015, to be confirmed)	ECE and WHO/Europe	See overview of expenditures ^a US\$ 20,000 required for consultancy	Work in progress	Hungary: in-kind support from the Hungarian Government and support from France through WHO/Europe The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: funded by France Azerbaijan: funded through UNDA project
	Third meeting of the expert group on equitable access (Paris, 11–12 May 2015)	ECE	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded by France
Programme area 6 — Assistance to support implementation at the national level	Coordination with partners and supporters	ECE and WHO/Europe	US\$ 10,000 required for missions	Work in progress	Funded from residual funds
Programme area 7 — Compliance procedure	11th meeting of the Compliance Committee (Geneva, 24–25 March 2015)	ECE	See overview of expenditures ^a	Implemented	Funded from residual funds
	12th meeting of the Compliance Committee (Geneva, 19–20 October 2015)	ECE	US\$ 25,000 required for meeting costs	Work in progress	Funds awaited

^a An informal document, “Overview of contributions and expenditures related to the Protocol and resources required up to the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties”, will be made available in due course on the website for the meeting (http://www.unece.org/env/water/8th_wgwh_2015.html#/).