



**UNITED NATIONS
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
Sixth meeting**

Geneva, 3 and 4 July 2013

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

INFORMATION PAPER 8

Progress report on the work on small scale water supplies and sanitation

The cross-cutting issue “Small-scale water supplies and sanitation” was approved by the second 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 in Bucharest, 23-25 November 2010, as part of the work programme of the Protocol for 2011-2013. The activity, as outlined in the programme, focuses on 4 activity areas:

- Development of a policy and guidance document
- Improvement of the evidence base on the current status of small-scale water supplies
- Water safety plans and water and sanitation plans for schools
- Networking and sharing of experience

Germany, the Czech Republic and the non-governmental organisation Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) lead this activity.

I – Dissemination of questionnaire on small scale water supplies

The lead Parties finalised a questionnaire for requesting information on the situation of small scale water supplies from countries in the pan-European in February 2012. The WHO/Europe secretariat facilitated translation of the questionnaire into Russian and dissemination to ministries of health, ministries of the environment, and WHO Country Offices of the European region in June 2012. The deadline for responding to the questionnaire was 10 October 2012.

At the time of writing this progress report, 50 questionnaires from 43 countries have been returned (return rate of 81 % of the countries). Country responses received in Russian were translated into English to facilitate assessment. Preliminary, statistical assessment of the questionnaires has started, and selected information has been included in the draft policy guidance document.

As dissemination of the questionnaire was delayed and as questionnaires were still returned after the deadline, and due to the large extent of detailed text answers, completion of data analysis and assessment is now assumed to be completed by end of 2013.

II – Drafting of the policy guidance document

Based on the comments received during and after the meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health in November 2011, the lead Parties developed the outline of the policy guidance document “Small-scale water supplies and sanitation (SSWSS) in the pan-European region: Policy instruments and programs towards improvement” further. Members of the expert group on drinking water and sanitation, which was established at the extended lead Party meeting (Berlin, June 2011) have started drafting chapters for this document, and development of chapter texts and case studies is ongoing. Collaboration has been established with the programme areas on equitable access and on target setting and reporting, with representatives of those activities actively contributing to the development of the document.

A second extended lead Party meeting took place in Berlin, 17-18 June 2013. At this meeting, the draft of the policy guidance document was critically reviewed, restructured, options for significantly shortening the current draft text discussed and steps towards final publication and responsibilities defined.

Lead Parties agreed to prepare an extended outline, including brief notes on the contents of each chapter, to be presented to the Meeting of the Parties in November 2013. Lead Parties envisage that a consolidated, peer reviewed draft of the policy guidance document will be presented to the next meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health in 2014 for adoption. The envisaged timeline for finalisation of the document, as well as the amended outline are attached to this briefing note.

Since this activity was started, progress has been slower than initially expected. Lead Parties of the activity assume that this is, amongst other reasons, due to a lack of resources which makes voluntary contributions of members of the expert groups challenging. The lead Parties of this activity would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the document.

III – Translation of WHO guidance on Water Safety Planning for Small Community Water Supplies

In July 2012, WHO headquarters published the guidance document “Water Safety Planning for Small Community Water Supplies: Step-by-step risk management guidance for drinking-water supplies in small communities” in English. The manual is designed to engage, empower and guide rural communities in the Water Safety Plan (WSP) development and implementation process, and to capacitate responsible government institutions to support WSP. The WSP approach, as recommended by the WHO Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality, presents the most effective means of consistently ensuring the safety of drinking-water supplies.

In order to better facilitate the application of the WSP approach in small scale water supplies in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) region, Germany has initiated and funded the translation of the document into Russian. The funding was provided under the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and realised together with WHO/Europe. WHO/Europe facilitated translation of the document, review/editing by the technical programme and quality check by linguistic department.

Electronic versions of the document can be downloaded in English and Russian at http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/2012/water_supplies/en/index.html and

http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/2012/water_supplies/ru/index.html, respectively.

IV - Field projects and further activities

According to the current Protocol's work programme, it is planned to conduct a number of field projects. However, the lead Parties rate them as optional due to budget constraints. Nevertheless, a number of field projects on small-scale water supplies and sanitation could already be initiated or finalised, respectively.

1. In Georgia, a project on rapid assessment of drinking-water quality in small scale water supplies in Georgia has been completed in 2012. The project established a baseline analysis with respect to drinking-water quality and sanitary conditions in small-scale water supplies in two pilot districts. As part of this project, local authorities were trained, awareness-building materials developed, outreach programmes to the communities conducted and WHO guidance documents translated and disseminated to relevant stakeholders. The project was implemented through WHO/Europe and funded by the German Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia of the BMU, and technically supported by the WHO Collaborating Centre (CC) for Research on Drinking Water hygiene at the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA). The results of the assessment are described in a detailed project report and will serve as an evidence base for future development of legislation and norms on drinking-water quality. They will also be used to bring the issue of capacity building for drinking-water quality surveillance and prevention of water-related diseases, particularly for small-scale water supplies, on the priority agenda of the national and local government.

2. In Tajikistan, a project on implementation of WSP demonstration projects in small-scale water supplies in rural areas has been completed in 2012. The project aimed at developing two pilot WSP, building respective capacities in national authorities, training facilitators for further WSP implementation and developing adapted supporting tools for the national context. The project was funded by Germany under the BMU project on climate change and health. It was implemented by WHO/Europe and the WHO country office Tajikistan and technically supported by the WHO CC at UBA. As a key outcome, a booklet documenting advantages of WSP application and national success stories as well as providing practical guidance and tools supporting WSP implementation has been developed in Tajik and English. The booklet is currently being finalised. If funding becomes available, translation of the materials into other languages of the European region, printing and dissemination would be desirable.

3. In Bulgaria, WECF together with the Bulgarian partners Earth Forever and EcoWorld2007 has been implementing a WSP project in 5 Bulgarian villages with the involvement of the local schools and authorities from August 2011 to October 2012. One of the outputs is a WSP compendium in a ring binder with 19 educational modules in English and Bulgarian. This document provides detailed background information on several water, sanitation and WASH issues and guidance for the implementation of WSP for small scale water supplies in rural areas. The target groups of the project were schools, youth groups and NGOs. The WSP compendium will be further adopted for usage by the administration of small communities and water user unions and will be complemented with a stronger sanitation part as well. The project received financial support of the German Federal Environment Foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt - DBU). An electronic version of the document can be downloaded in English and Bulgarian at <http://www.wecf.eu/english/publications/2012/water-safety-plan.php>

In order to facilitate enhanced regional networking among those responsible for regulating small scale water supplies and sanitation, currently, lead Parties are exploring options for holding and

funding a meeting of the WHO International Small Community Water Supply Network (ISCWSN) in the EECCA region.

IV - Way forward

Lead parties will continue working towards finalisation of the policy guidance document, assessment of the questionnaire data and running pilot projects (e.g. developing water and sanitation safety plans involving schools).

Lead parties and contributing parties will continue to identify options for funding and hosting of future meetings of the established expert groups.

Lead parties and contributing parties will continue to identify options for funding of field projects.

Annex I: Suggested next steps and timeline towards finalisation of the policy guidance document

September 2013	Draft introductory chapters developed according to new structure, circulated and reviewed within the extended lead-Party group
October 2013	Revision of other chapters
November 2013	Extended outline, including brief notes on the contents of each chapter, to be presented to the Meeting of the Parties in November 2013
	Pre-review of improved draft and circulation of consolidated revised draft (2 nd draft) within the expert group
January 2014	Next extended lead-Party meeting
March 2014	Revised draft (3 rd draft) developed
April 2014	Review of 3 rd draft within extended lead-Party group
June 2014	Circulation for peer review
August 2014	Comments addressed
October 2014	Revised final draft (4 th draft) for Working Group on Water and Health

Annex II: Amended outline

Foreword

A) “Problem statement”

B) “Encouragement statement”

C) Baseline analysis & target setting

D) Enabling environment

D.1 Legislation

D.2 Organizational framework and partnership arrangements

D.3 Financial aspects

D.4 Design and management standards

D.5 Networking

D.6 Education and qualification

D.7 Awareness raising

E) Application tools

E.1 Water and Sanitation Safety Planning

E.2 Resource protection

E.3 Sanitation zoning

E.4 Surveillance