



**UNECE**



**World Health  
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## **Information note**

### **Workshop**

#### **National consultation on the management of small-scale water supply and sanitation systems and launch of the assessment of equitable access to water and sanitation in Armenia**

Yerevan, 15 December 2015

"Regance" Hotel Complex

### **Background**

Armenia is a Signatory to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) Protocol on Water and Health (hereinafter "the Protocol"). Armenia has been actively involved in numerous activities under the Protocol, while preparing for accession to the Protocol and developing draft targets according to the provisions of the Protocol.

The Protocol aims to protect human health and well-being by linking sustainable water management and the prevention, reduction and control of water-related diseases. One of the main objectives of the Protocol is the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation to everyone. The 2014-2016 programme of work under the Protocol gives special focus on promoting equitable access to water and sanitation services for all members of the society, including those living in rural areas, poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people, as well as on supporting countries to improve management and surveillance of small-scale water supply and sanitation systems.

At the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (Geneva, 26-27 November 2014), Armenia confirmed its interest to engage in a self-assessment of equitable access to water and sanitation using *The Equitable Access Score-card* and requested assistance from the Protocol secretariat.

In response to this request, and to address the prevailing conditions of drinking water and sanitation services in rural areas, the secretariat proposed to organize a national consultation workshop for launching the self-assessment exercise of equitable access to water and sanitation and for identifying challenges and improvement needs related to management and surveillance of small-scale water supply and sanitation. The workshop is organized back-to-back with the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management (Yerevan, 14 December 2015).

### **Objectives**

#### ***Part A - Consultation focusing on small-scale water supply and sanitation***

The objective of this consultation is to review the situation of small-scale water supply and sanitation services in the country and to identify particular challenges related to such systems. Thereby, the consultation will provide ideas to inspire the future actions to improve the situation and strengthen management and surveillance of small scale systems, including possible targets that can be set under the Protocol.

The consultation will address *inter alia* the following issues:

- Review the available evidence and information on the situation of small-scale water supplies and sanitation in Armenia;
- Identify knowledge/data gaps that hinder a comprehensive assessment of the situation and potential health risks;
- Review of regulatory requirements and institutional responsibilities related to public health and water quality surveillance (i.e. monitoring and inspection), specifically for small-scale systems;
- Discuss specific challenges related to small-scale water supplies and sanitation, as well as the capacity of the government to address these;
- Review of existing and/or planned policies, programs and/or initiatives aiming at improving the situation of small-scale water supply and sanitation systems; and
- Introduce target setting process under the Protocol and discuss relevance of small systems as target area.

The following question shall guide the moderated roundtable discussion:

1. Is the situation of small-scale water supply and sanitation services a recognized public health concern in Armenia?
2. What are the main issues and challenges with respect to management and surveillance of small-scale water supply systems in Armenia?
3. What possible actions and other means of support should be implemented in the country to address these challenges in the short and long term perspectives?

### ***Part B - Launching the self-assessment of equitable access to water and sanitation***

*The Equitable Access Score-card* is an analytical tool which has been developed to help Governments and other stakeholders to establish a baseline measure of the equity of access to water and sanitation, identify related priorities and discuss further actions to be taken through a process of self-assessment.

The workshop will provide the opportunity to:

- Raise awareness on the need to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation and to progressively implement the Human Right to Water and Sanitation;
- Explain the objectives and expected outcomes of the self-assessment exercise using the *Equitable Access Score-card*;
- Introduce the steps of the equitable access self-assessment exercise and share experiences and lessons learnt from applying the *Equitable Access Score-card* in other countries;
- Help identify the broad range of stakeholders which have expertise to share in this process; and
- Discuss and agree on the country implementation process, including identification of information sources, roles of key stakeholders and timeline of the assessment work.

## **Partners**

The workshop is co-convened by the State Committee of Water Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture of Armenia and the joint UNECE and WHO/Europe secretariat of the Protocol. The organization of the workshop is supported by the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment.

The meeting is organized under the framework of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project "Strengthening Governments' and water operators' capacity to ensure equity of access to water and sanitation in countries with economies in transition in the Economic Commission for Europe region, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas", jointly implemented by UNECE and WHO/Europe, with the financial support of the French Ministry of Health, Social Affairs and Women's Rights.

## **Key stakeholders**

For both thematic areas, the following stakeholders should be involved: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Nature Protection, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Transport and Communication, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations, State Committee of Water Economy; Institute of Statistics; Red Cross; Association of Consumer's Rights; local governments; relevant NGOs in the areas of environment, gender equality, health and human rights; water and sanitation operators servicing small-scale systems in rural areas and small towns and/or relevant associations with focus on rural areas; representatives from donors, cooperation agencies and international organizations, and other relevant organizations and partners.

## **Organization of the work**

The workshop will be held on Tuesday, 15 December 2015 from 9:00 till 17:30.

Presentations and interactive discussion will allow for the exchange of experiences.

## **Venue**

The meetings will take place at: "Regance" Hotel Complex, 10/1 Davit Anghaght Street, Yerevan

## **Practical information**

The working languages of the consultation will be English and Armenian. Simultaneous interpretation will be made available. Lunch and coffee breaks will be provided.

Registration of participants will be from 9:00 – 9:30 with welcoming refreshments available in front of the conference room.

## **Contact information**

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Webpage of the meeting: [http://www.unece.org/Workshop\\_Protocol\\_Armenia\\_2015#/](http://www.unece.org/Workshop_Protocol_Armenia_2015#/)