

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION

Proposed next steps and future work

This document presents possible options for future work to be carried out under the Protocol on Water and Health to promote equitable access to water and sanitation and the progressive translation of the human right to water and sanitation into practice. The proposed next steps and future work on equitable access for 2014-2016 described in this document are taken from the Draft programme of work for 2014 – 2016 (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2013/L.1–EUDCE/1206123/3.1/2013/WGWH/04) to be presented at the sixth meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (Geneva, 4-5 July 2013). The proposed future activities have been designed as a continuation of the work on equitable access to water and sanitation that has been done so far. It proposes to build on the exchange of experience between countries/regions which have already used the score card and new countries/regions which are interested in carrying out such a self-assessment exercise.

Suggestions and comments are welcomed.

Objectives and expected outcomes:

Promote the implementation of the Protocol in relation to facilitating access to water and sanitation for poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people and contribute to the progressive implementation of the human right to water and sanitation through:

(a) raising awareness on the challenges faced in the pan-European region in achieving equitable access to water and sanitation and on the need to adopt equity-oriented governance frameworks;

(b) supporting the development of national and subnational situational analyses;

(c) supporting the development of action plans;

(d) supporting the exchange of experiences in developing situational analyses and action plans, and implementing specific measures to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation.

1. Raising awareness

Awareness will be raised on the challenges faced in the pan-European region in achieving equitable access to water and sanitation and on the need to adopt equity-oriented governance frameworks through the organization of national and subnational workshops, the co-organization of dedicated sessions in international events (e.g., World Water Week, 2015 World Water Forum), and the organization of one regional workshop in early 2016 to evaluate work undertaken and analyse further challenges and needs.

2. Assessing equity of access to water and sanitation

The development of coordinated baseline analyses on equity of access to water and sanitation at the national and local levels, on the basis of the self-evaluation tool (scorecard on equitable access developed in 2012–2013), will be supported through twinning of countries/municipalities that have already carried out a self-assessment and countries/ municipalities that want to carry out the self-assessment using the scorecard.

The process and outputs of the self-assessment exercises will be used to promote political awareness on existing inequities and to clarify the specific responsibilities of the different authorities and other stakeholders in addressing them. Moreover, experience will be exchanged among all pilot project participants and other relevant partners through the organization of expert group meetings.

In addition, findings of the equity assessment of access to water and sanitation by income groups carried out by WHO in the framework of JMP will be disseminated and discussed during the exercise and expert meetings.

3. Developing action plans for equitable access

Priority action plans at the national or local level to address inequities in access to water and sanitation will be developed. While action plans may take different forms according to the country context, they will be designed based on the outcomes of the baseline analyses (self-assessment) and also taking into account the findings of the JMP equity assessment by income groups. Such priority action plans will include resource mobilization strategies and will build on the clarification of the specific responsibilities of different authorities and other stakeholders.

Upon request, specific workshops targeting different stakeholders (such as water operators, State agencies, local authorities and donors) will be organized to promote equitable access to water and sanitation and to discuss and agree with the stakeholders their specific responsibilities in progressing towards achieving equitable access to water and sanitation.

Possible partners:

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, WHO headquarters (Water, Sanitation and Health unit), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Global Water Solidarity (GWS), water operators, national NGOs working on the right to water and sanitation.