



Hungarian National Public Health  
Institute



## **4<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION UNDER THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH**

**13-14 September 2017**

National Public Health Institute  
Albert Flórián út 2-6  
Budapest, Hungary

### **INFORMATION NOTICE**

#### **I. Background and rationale**

In the pan-European region, the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health provides a sound framework for translating into practice the human rights to water and sanitation and for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation, in particular its target 6.1 on universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all and its target 6.2 on adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, with special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

The Protocol requires its Parties to ensure access to water and sanitation for everyone, and specifically to promote equitable access to water and sanitation “for all members of the population, especially those who suffer a disadvantage or social exclusion”.

Since 2011, the Protocol has developed several important tools and supported a number of activities to provide support to countries to improve equitable access to water and sanitation.

The publication *No One Left Behind: Good practices to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region*<sup>1</sup> presents good practices and lessons learnt from throughout the pan-European region on the policies and measures to be enacted to provide equitable access.

An analytic tool, the *Equitable Access Score-card*<sup>2</sup> supports Governments and other stakeholders to establish a baseline measure of the equity of access, identify priorities and discuss further actions to be taken to address equity gaps. It has already been applied in 9 countries of the pan-European region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, France – Paris Greater Area, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 3 regions, Portugal, Spain – Castelle and Ukraine) and additional countries have expressed interest in applying it. Based on the outcomes of such assessments, a number of countries (France, Hungary, Portugal, Republic of Moldova...) have taken measures to improve the equity of access to water and sanitation services.

The publication *Guidance Note on the Development of Action Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation*, so far used in 2 countries (Armenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) helps Governments to take a structured approach to the identification and implementation of actions to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at : [www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece\\_mp.wh\\_6.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece_mp.wh_6.html)

<sup>2</sup> The publication *The Equitable Access Score-card: supporting policy processes to achieve the human right to water and sanitation* is available at: [www.unece.org/index.php?id=34032](http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=34032)

However, experience shows that countries, even when having a clear understanding of the gaps in access to water and sanitation, encounter challenges in translating the priorities identified into action to address the equity gaps and in financing necessary measures to advance towards universal access.

## **II. Objectives**

The objectives of the Expert Meeting are:

1. To continue exchanging experiences in carrying out self-assessments of the equity of access to water and sanitation in countries / regions, and to identify additional lessons learned in organising self-assessments;
2. To identify what have been the impacts of the self-assessments in terms of the identification and implementation of actions to achieve equitable access to water and sanitation, and to identify success factors and main barriers in the identification and implementation of such actions;
3. To discuss the initial experiences in developing Equitable Access Action Plans and identify lessons learned from those processes;
4. To discuss how equitable access to water and sanitation is currently financed, and to identify useful work on this topic that could be carried out by the Expert Group;
5. To provide an opportunity to exchange information on related topics, in particular monitoring of targets 6.1 and 6.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
6. To discuss the preparation by the Expert Group of a publication capitalizing findings and lessons learnt from the work on equitable access to water and sanitation under the Protocol on Water and Health for the next session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2019.

## **III. Organization of work**

During the Expert Group Meeting, countries which are currently involved in or have already finalized assessments of the situation of access to water and sanitation will illustrate options for assessing, improving and financing equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region.

Plenary presentations and discussions will be combined with interactive working sessions in break-out groups to ensure an optimal sharing of experience. All participants will be encouraged to contribute actively to the discussions.

## **IV. Targeted participants**

Participation in the Expert Group meeting will be by invitation only. The meeting aims to gather about 30-35 participants. Participants will include primarily country representatives from the pan-European region whose work (in the environment, education, health, social protection, finance and other sectors) is related to equitable access to water and sanitation. It will also include representatives from development partners, international organizations, civil society organization and stakeholders engaged in the provision of water and sanitation services. In particular, representatives from countries which have been involved in equitable access self-assessment exercises or have expressed interest to engage in such exercise will be invited to contribute.

## **V. Partners**

The workshop is organized by UNECE in cooperation with the Hungarian National Public Health Institute and the French Ministry of Solidarities and Health.

The meeting is hosted by the Hungarian National Public Health Institute. Additional funding for the expert group meeting is provided by the French Ministry of Solidarities and Health.

## **VI. Background documentation**

The background documents for the workshop are:

- No One Left Behind: Good practices to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region
- The Equitable Access Score-card: supporting policy processes to achieve the human right to water and sanitation
- Guidance Note on the Development of Action Plans to Achieve Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation.
- Information on activities on equitable access to water and sanitation carried out under the Protocol on Water and Health available at: [http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh\\_work/equitable\\_access.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_work/equitable_access.html)
- Template for country profiles on equitable access to water and sanitation (yet to be developed)
- Concept Note for the Preparation of a Publication on Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation for MOP5 (yet to be developed)

The detailed workshop programme will be made available early August 2017.

## **VII. Practical information**

The workshop will start on Wednesday, 13 September 2017 at 9:00 a.m. and will close at 17:00 p.m. on Thursday 14 September 2017.

The working languages will be English, with whispered interpretation in Russian. All relevant documentation for the Expert Meeting will be made available in due course at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=43621#/>

Lunches will be provided. A self-paid group dinner will be organized for the dinner on Wednesday, 13 September 2017.

### ***Venue***

The workshop will take place in the premises of the Hungarian National Public Health Institute (Albert Flórián út 2-6., Budapest, Hungary).

### ***Registration***

Participants are requested to confirm their attendance at their earliest convenience and by **31 August 2017** at the latest. Please register on line using the following link <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=skYC9G>. In case of difficulties please contact the secretariat by e-mail (Cristian.olearean@unece.org).

### ***Financial support***

Eligible participants from countries with economies in transition may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the meeting. Requests for financial support should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat (Cristian.olearean@unece.org) **as soon as possible, but no later than 7 August 2017**, using the financial support request form available on the meeting webpage. No application will be accepted after this deadline due to visa and travel arrangement regulations.

***Visa***

Participants requiring entry visas should inform the secretariat as soon as possible. Since Hungary is part of the Schengen area, visa applications may take 5 weeks. If you need a personal invitation letter for visa purpose, please indicate it clearly when registering on line. Participants requiring a visa are therefore invited to register as soon as possible and start the visa application procedure **at least 5 weeks in advance**.

***Transport and accommodation***

Practical information on transport and accommodation in Budapest, is available at:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=43621#/>