UN-Water Task Force on Country-level Engagement

Terms of Reference
(December 2018)

Background

The external review of UN-Water in 2018[1] suggested the following:

> **Recommendation 9:** UN-Water to prepare a strategy for engagement with countries that have water as a priority within their UNDAF, setting out options for specific ways in which UN-Water can add value to the in-country work by the different UN entities, including monitoring and reporting of progress against SDG 6.

In response to the recommendation, UN-Water has created a Task Force to develop such a strategy on country-level engagement. The decision was:

"To respond to External Review recommendation nine (UN-Water to prepare a strategy for engagement with countries that have water as a priority within their UN Development Assistance Framework…), the SPMs decide to create a Task Force to develop a strategy on country-level engagement co-coordinated by UNDP and UNICEF and including FAO, OHCHR, IFAD, ILO, UN Environment, UNESCO and the UN Global Compact. The Task Force is requested to report on progress at the 30th UN-Water Meeting."

The Task Force will evaluate how UN-Water might add value to the country level in view of the UN reform process, also building on previous findings of the former UN-Water Task Force on Country-level Coordination.[2]

The following options have so far been discussed internally for how UN-Water could possibly support the reformed UN Resident Coordinators system and UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO) at the country level:

- Access to expertise: UN Country Teams can access expertise through UN-Water, enabling them to access knowledge also from non-resident agencies (e.g. normative support).
- Access to data: UN-Water tools for SDG 6 monitoring can support the UN Country Teams to have overview of national status and progress.

[1] http://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-external-review-2018/
[2] http://www.unwater.org/publications/coordination-water-actions-country-level/

- Assist country-level coordination: UN-Water can provide guidance to Resident Coordinators and UN country team leaders on engagement and coordination with non-UN actors, and support them in advocacy and strategic positioning of the UN at country level on water & sanitation.
- Policy and technical advice: UN-Water can provide coherent advice and be 'one voice' also at country level.

The Task Force was established in August 2018, will report on progress at the 30th UN-Water Meeting in January 2019.

Composition of the Task Force:
The Task Force is co-convened by UNICEF and UNDP, and the following organizations are members – UNEP, ILO, IFAD, SWA, OHCHR, UNEP, CEO Water Mandate, UNESCO and the Global Water Partnership (GWP). Potential additional members are the World Bank and Women for Water Partnership.

Proposed Terms of Reference:

The purpose of the UN-Water Task Force on country-level engagement will be to prepare a strategy for the way that UN-Water could and should engage at the country-level, especially with countries that prioritise water in their national planning and in their United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and in the context of the UN Reform Process.

The draft strategy will be submitted for approval to the UN-Water Senior Programme Managers group.

This strategy will:

- Build on previous initiatives, in particular the work of the former UN-Water Working Group on country coordination and the High-level Panel on Water;
- Complement the work of UN-Water members and partners;
- Support the central role of UN Member States, as primary duty bearers for the management and delivery of all water, sanitation and hygiene-related services;
- Build on the opportunities offered by the ongoing UN reform, in particular strengthening of the role of the Resident Coordinators;
- Address all the water, sanitation and hygiene-related targets of the SDGs, including those addressed under Goal 6.

The intention is that the strategy be actionable, easily understood, flexible enough to apply to a range of national circumstances, and represent an efficient and effective use of available resources.

Activities and timeline:

- First meeting of Task Force (by phone): 2nd week of December 2018
- Report on progress to UN-Water meeting, January 2019
- January 2019 – August 2019, development of draft strategy (overview of objectives, content) and proposal for strategy development
- Presentation of draft strategy to UN-Water meeting, August 2019
- Approval of finalized strategy at UN-Water meeting, January 2020
- Implementation of activities identified in the strategy throughout 2020
- Seek feedback from Member States on the perceived added value of UN-Water at country level at the UN High-level meeting on water and sanitation in 2021.

Background documents and sources of information

- Outcome report from previous Task Force on Country-level Coordination
- Information on the UN reform, including on the adopted resolution and the implementation plan for the Resident Coordinator reform
- Summary of the UN-Water retreat
- "Making Every Drop Count", High-Level Panel on Water Outcome Document
- Website on UN reform: https://reform.un.org/
- Implementation plan for UNDS repositioning: http://un.org.me/UNDS_repositioning/20180831%20-%20Implementation%20Plan%20-%20FinalDraft%20%2831%20August%202018%29.pdf