

UN-Water Task Force on Country Level Engagement

Workplan 2020-2021

Background

In January 2020, an offer¹ was communicated to UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams by way of a letter from the UN-Water Chair. It was agreed that a pilot phase would be conducted, with a group of countries who expressed interest. This experience would be reviewed, and any adjustments and improvements made to ensure that UN-Water continues to play a key role in coordinating and delivering support to Member States in the context of UN Reform and the [SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework](#).

The workplan presented below covers proposed activities for this pilot phase during 2020-2021.

Pilot overview

Following the communication of the UN-Water offer, introductory calls were organized during the first half of 2020 to explore country demands with eight countries that responded to the offer: Bahrain, Costa Rica, Guinea, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Nepal, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

Based on the requests, a response outline was developed by the Task Force on Country Level Engagement (see “Summary of requests and responses”). The identified activities will be initiated in the second half of 2020 by UN-Water Members and Partners in order to fill possible gaps and strengthen the ability of the UN system to deliver in the countries. As part of the response activities, support to interagency coordination, the Common Country Analyses (CCAs), the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and integration of the human rights to water and sanitation in the countries will be supported.

As part of the pilot, UN-Water will also refine the communication between global, regional and country levels to ensure that information is shared effectively across relevant actors through the appropriate communication channels. Through a webinar with all UN-Water Members and Partners focused on UN-Water’s support to the UN Reform, UN-Water’s internal communication will be improved in relation to its country level engagement.

Following the initiation and preliminary assessments of the responses to the eight initial pilot countries, a second outreach phase of the UN-Water offer will be carried out. The second outreach phase will be targeted specifically to the 32 countries that will start implementing their UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in 2022, as well as including the 28 countries targeted in the 2020 Data Drive of the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (not yet included in the pilot).

¹ Available here: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-waters-offer-to-un-country-teams-and-resident-coordinators/>

Finally, the pilot will support the pilot countries to prepare for the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework annual moment at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2021². The preparation for the global annual moment may include SDG 6 moments also at the regional level.

An overview of the pilot activities during 2020-2021 is included below:

Activity	Who	When + Comments	
1	Develop the UN-Water offer	Task Force	Done
2	Develop and propose the best way to communicate requests and responses to UN-Water Members and Partners, ensuring transparency while maximizing efficiency	Task Force	Task Force meeting December 2019
3	Communicate the offer to the UN Resident Coordinators and their teams	TAU, UN Development Coordination Office (DCO)	Done
4	Internally forward the offer to country and regional offices.	UN-Water Members	Done
5	Monitor requests from countries	TAU	Done
6	Respond to countries requests (see Annex 1)	Coordinated by TAU	Introductory, exploratory calls conducted with 8 countries during March-August 2020
7	Monitor the interactions with countries including who and how many that respond, and estimate of TAU time for coordination	TAU	Jan – August 2020
8	Assess the first round of requests from countries – including response, time and budget implications	Task Force	June-August 2020
9	Report back to SPMs and agree on next steps	Task Force	September 2020
10	Implement response activities for the eight pilot countries, including initiation calls in each country with all relevant actors	Task Force, relevant UN-Water Members and Partners	October 2020 - December 2021
11	Organise webinar with all UN-Water Members and Partners focused on UN-Water's support to the UN Reform	Task Force	October 2020
13	Support pilot countries to prepare for the annual SDG 6 moment at the HLPF as part of the Global Acceleration Framework	Task Force, relevant UN-Water Members and Partners	January-July 2021
14	Organise country showcases and exchange of best practices at the annual SDG 6 moment at the HLPF	Task Force, pilot countries	July 2021
12	Carry out second outreach phase of the UN-Water offer (approximately 60 countries)	TAU, UN Development Coordination Office (DCO)	July - December 2021

² The annual high-level and multi-stakeholder moment will be used to discuss water and sanitation-related issues, bringing together all actors to review progress, reflect, learn, and trigger increased and better directed action.

Resource needs

From a resources point of view, UN-Water Members and Partners will be the implementers of the response and the forefront of the engagement with countries. The TAU will have a role in processing requests for information and coordinating the response, as well as ensuring synergy with the regional-level coordination activities and the broader SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. The estimated budget of the pilot phase is shown in the table below.

Budget for UN-Water's country level engagement 2020-2021

Activity	Budget
Seed funding to pilot countries for coordination activities	80,000 USD (estimated at approximately 10,000 USD per pilot country)
TAU support to the Task Force (communication with countries, facilitation of support activities, overall coordination support)	200,000 USD (calculated at 70% of a P3 position in Geneva)
Total budget	280,000 USD

Annex 1: Process for Documenting Requests and Responding to Countries

Response process

1. First exploration and problem framing call with Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) to better understand needs, objectives, existing work and partnerships, as well as presentation of UN-Water and the UN-Water Inventory. Questions to explore may include what are the processes or issues that they need support on, who are they already in contact with/who is involved. (TAU, RCO)
2. Brief summary of request developed with sufficient level of detail and initial thoughts on response design. (TAU)
3. Publish the request summary on the [UN-Water extranet](#) to ensure transparency. (TAU)
4. Setting up response team and ensuring transparency
 - a. Identification of possible organisations to facilitate the response through the UN-Water Inventory (area of work, type of engagement and geographical scope), as well as Expert Groups or Task Forces if relevant (TAU)
 - b. Share request summary and a call for expressions of interest with identified organisations. Interested organisations form the response team. (TAU, UN-Water Members and Partners)
5. Response design. Initial response options developed by the response team. Depending on the nature of the request this step might be disregarded, for example if the request is clearly defined and limited in scope, such as a review of documents. (Response team, TAU)
6. Response options shared with the Resident Coordinator's Office for reaction and response finalisation. (TAU, RCO)
7. Publish the shared response options on the [UN-Water extranet](#) to ensure transparency. (TAU)
8. Response activities initiated. (Response team)