

# DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION

## UN-Water Support to the Water Action Decade

### *Introduction:*

*General Assembly Resolution 71/222, mandates UN-Water to support the Secretary-General to implement the Water Action Decade. UN-Water Members and Partners use Task Forces (to act on a focused time-bound “task”) or Expert Groups (to act as a community of practice around an important water/sanitation issue) to organize. In this case, the needs of Decade support are Task Force oriented, however the duration of the Decade requires the on-going presence of an Expert Group. As the mandate of the Decade Task Force on planning and organizing draws to a close, UN-Water Members and Partners should reflect on how to best support the Secretary-General and Member States to advance around the three Decade objectives articulated in the Decade Action Plan. The Draft Terms of Reference are offered as a starting point for this discussion.*

## DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Background**

On 21 December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/71/222 calling for the International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Sustainable Development’, 2018-2028. In paragraph 8, the mandate for *planning and organizing* of the Decade at global, regional and country level is given to the Secretary-General with the support of UN-Water. At its 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting UN-Water Senior Programme Managers established a Task Force to plan and organize the Water Action Decade – this group concludes its work with the delivery of the Water Action Decade plan to be launched 22 March 2018.

Paragraph 11 of the same Resolution:

*Requests the Secretary-General, with the support of UN-Water, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other entities of the United Nations system, mindful of the provisions contained in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/84, to facilitate the implementation of the Decade in cooperation with Governments and other relevant stakeholders.*

To deliver on this mandate, UN-Water will coordinate Members and Partners around implementation of the Water Action Decade. Support to the Decade can be situated in UN-Water’s line of work to: “build knowledge and inspire people to take action.”

### **Tasks and responsibilities**

#### Coordination

- Coordinate the activities of UN-Water Members and Partners in support of the Decade implementation
- Facilitate information sharing between Member States, United Nations and other stakeholders, including through reports and Decade website
- Identify opportunities for the Decade to contribute to intergovernmental discussions on sustainable development

### Communication

- Provide information on new activities in support of the Decade from UN-Water Members and Partners to the Decade campaign website
- Endeavor to align the Water Action Decade's 3 core objectives with all communications efforts
- Commit to using networks to share and promote Decade promotional material
- Identify ways to align World Toilet Day and World Water Day themes with Decade objectives

### Reporting

- Report on progress biannually to the UN-Water Meeting
- Coordinate Members and Partners to prepare the Secretary-Generals mid-term review for the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly as required by *Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/84*
- Oversee inclusion of Water Action Decade update in UN-Water Annual Report

These tasks and responsibilities will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis throughout the Decade to adjust to changes in demand on the Task Force that may occur during the Decade period.

### **Membership: General principles**

Given the ten-year duration of this mandate, membership will evolve over the course of 10 years, and may be reviewed, by the SPM meetings, on a regular basis- e.g. every 2 years. The initial 2-year membership can be established based on the existing principles – for example, by sending an open call of interest to UN-Water Members and Partners, one representative from a UN entity (as was done to create the Decade planning and organizing Task Force).

One pragmatic option for establishing the initial 2-year membership, is to agree that the existing Task Force on the Decade planning and organizing remain intact for the first 2 years of Decade implementation (2018 – 2019) – subject to SPM approval of this principle, and consent from existing Task Force members. This aligns with the UN-Water work programme time frame.

The current approach of having the UN-Water Secretary serve as one of the co-coordinators should be retained given DESA's central role in the Decade Task Force organizational structure.

The Decade implementation group will interact with other UN-Water Task Forces and Expert Groups as required for the Decade implementation.

Given that support to Decade implementation falls into UN-Water's "Building knowledge and inspiring people to take action" work stream, the World Water Day and World Toilet Day Task Forces need to align with the Decade implementation. In addition, the UN-Water Communication Manager will have a central role.