



Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/WG.4/INF.1
10 March 2017
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Expert group meeting on methodologies for meeting the water-related Sustainable Development Goals at the global, regional and national levels
Amman, 22-23 March 2017

INFORMATION NOTE

I. BACKGROUND

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 sets forth an ambitious universal, inclusive and integrated development agenda. The agenda adopts 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. Water and water-dependent challenges are the subject of numerous targets, several of which are clustered under SDG6, which aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Monitoring, reporting and efforts to achieve the implementation of the SDGs and their associated targets requires coherence and coordination at the global, regional and national level. The United Nations Statistical Commission established the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to prepare a global indicator framework for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the SDG targets. Over 230 indicators have been formulated to date, with at least one indicator identified to measure progress related to each target. The indicator framework proposed by the IAEG-SDGs will be considered by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 48th Session (New York, 7-10 March 2017), and an updated version will then be reviewed at its subsequent session in March 2018. The IAEG-SDGs will then hold its fifth meeting (Ottawa, 28-31 March 2017) to continue review of the indicator classification system and work plans related to tier III indicators, consider data disaggregation, discuss the role of custodian agencies, and present the timeline for finalizing the proposals on possible additional indicators. A High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG) has been set up to support member states on statistical monitoring and reporting to this end. From the Arab region, Libya and Qatar currently serve on the UN Statistical Commission; Algeria, Bahrain and Egypt serve on the IAEG-SDGs; and the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen are members of the HLG.

Significant efforts have been also undertaken at the sector level to formulate a harmonized set of indicators and methodologies to ensure monitoring and reporting on SDG6. These efforts have been coordinated under UN-Water, which is an inter-agency mechanism that involves all United Nations organizations working on water at the global level as well as the five United Nations Regional Commission, including ESCWA. UN-Water has advised the work of the IAEG-SDGs and has three mechanisms for supporting follow-up on SDG6. These include the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) for SDG6.1 and 6.2, the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG6 (GEMI) for SDG6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6, and the Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) reports for the means of implementation identified under SDG6.a and 6.b.

That noted, the indicators put forth at the global level for SDG6 do not cover the full scope of issues included in the SDG6 targets. For example, equitable access and affordability of drinking water is targeted in SDG6.1, but is not covered by a global indicator. The challenge of service intermittency is not clearly incorporated in monitoring and reporting on water availability. Water recycling and the safe reuse of wastewater, which are important means for offsetting water scarcity constraints, are identified in SDG6.3 and as a means of

implementation under SDG6.a, but are not covered by a global indicator. Moreover, a means to measure progress towards the SDG6.4 target that aims to substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity has not yet been adopted. However, an additional indicator has been formulated that proposes measuring the “number of individuals who experience water stress or water shortages.”

Similar challenges exist related to coverage of the water sector in other SDGs. For example, while climate change adaptation is largely a water challenge, and particularly so in water stressed environments, the SDG13 targets and indicators make no specific reference to water. Meanwhile, water-related disasters are referenced in SDG11, with the indicator methodology for measuring the impact of these disasters related to mortality, economic losses and disruption in basic services. The possibility of measuring service intermittency thus may be formally reported upon under SDG11.5, but not SDG6.2.

These gaps in the global indicator framework are relevant to Arab States and other water-scarce countries, as the indicator framework should aim to cover the range of issues adopted by member States as goals and targets for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Similar concerns were raised when pursuing efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Agenda and its associated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This led the Arab Ministerial Water Council to call for the establishment of a regional mechanism for improved monitoring and reporting on the water supply and sanitation in 2009 and the launching of the MDG+ Initiative in 2010.

The MDG+ Initiative implementing partners (ESCWA, ACWUA and the League of Arab States) advised member States on the adoption of a set of regional water supply, sanitation and wastewater indicators. Data on the indicators was collected by 18 National Monitoring Teams comprised of representatives from ministries and utilities responsible for water supply, sanitation and wastewater management as well as national statistical offices. Team members received training and technical assistance based on a harmonized regional methodology. Two reports were subsequently issued in 2015 and 2016 that provide country-level data on the set of regional indicators. Funding for the initiative was provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

Three regional consultations were convened under the MDG+ Initiative in 2016 to draw lessons learned and identify issues of concern to Arab States in view of pursuing a comprehensive and coherent approach to monitoring and reporting on the water-related SDGs. Focus was placed on engaging regional stakeholders in preparations and processes aimed at achieving the SDGs with a view to regional and country-level specificities. This expert group meeting will build upon these prior consultations and focus on the priority issues raised by Arab member States to date.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The purpose of the expert group meeting is to discuss the water-related SDGs, and particularly progress and issues related to the development and application of indicator methodologies related to dedicated water goal, SDG6 and its associated targets.

The deliberations will help to inform global, regional and national follow-up on the water-related SDGs and help to foster a coherent and coordinated approach aimed at assisting member States to pursue monitoring, reporting and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

III. PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will gather the senior officials from ministries responsible for water in Arab States, as well as representatives from water utilities, statistical offices and associated stakeholders. Global and regional organizations working on methodologies related to monitoring and reporting on the water-related SDGs will inform the discussions, including UN-Water member organizations.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting is organized as a follow-up to the series of consultations conducted under the MDG+ Initiative in 2016. It is organized and funded by ESCWA in collaboration with the League of Arab States and the Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA).

The meeting will be held at the Kempinski Hotel in Amman, Jordan during the afternoons of 22 and 23 March 2017. Participants are kindly invited to register for the meeting starting at 4:30 pm on 22 March. Registered participants are also kindly invited to participate in the World Water Day celebration that will begin at 7:00 pm on 22 March at the same hotel.

English will be the primary working language of the meeting. Simultaneous Arabic-English interpretation will be available.

V. REGISTRATION

Participants are kindly requested to return their completed registration form to ESCWA. Sponsored participants should submit their registration form to ESCWA no later than 6 March 2017 to allow time to make the necessary arrangements for their travel. Sponsorship cannot be assured for registration forms received beyond that date. Participants are responsible for securing their own visa for travel to Jordan.

VI. TRAVEL AND TICKETING

Air travel reservation and ticketing for sponsored participants will be arranged by ESCWA. Roundtrip tickets will be issued in economy class on the least expensive route in accordance with United Nations Rules and Regulations. Participants attending the meeting at their own cost are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. Sponsored participants traveling from outside of Jordan are kindly requested to bring with them on the first day of the meeting their passport, airline ticket and original boarding pass (bridge crossing fees receipt is requested for participants from Palestine). This will allow for processing and issuance of their daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and terminal allowance on the second day of the meeting.

VII. HOTEL

A block of rooms has been reserved for participants at the Kempinski Hotel in Amman, Jordan at a preferential room rate of US\$ 152/night for a single room and US\$ 170/night for a double room, inclusive of buffet breakfast, internet access and all taxes. The hotel is located in the Shmeisani commercial district of Amman with restaurants and coffee shops situated nearby. Kindly indicate on the registration form if you would like ESCWA to reserve a room for you at this hotel.

VIII. TRANSPORTATION TO / FROM HOTEL

Taxi services from the airport to any location in Jordan are available at fixed rates through the airport representative standing near the taxi stand that is located on the curb outside the airport arrivals gate. The airport official will provide a receipt indicating the taxi fare and assign a driver based on requested destination. The taxi ride to Amman takes approximately 30 minutes. A one-way rate from the airport to the Kempinski Hotel-Amman costs around JD 18-20 (US\$ 26-28), which is payable only in Jordanian Dinars. Foreign exchange services and an ATM are available in the airport's arrival hall.

Airport pick-up and drop-off services may also be reserved through the Kempinski Hotel-Amman. A one way taxi costs JD 30 (around US\$ 43). Participants preferring this service are requested to make their taxi arrangements directly with the hotel. Credit card details will be requested by the hotel to confirm your taxi reservation. A no-show fee will be charged by the hotel. For these arrangements, kindly contact: reservation.amman@kempinski.com

IX. DOCUMENTATION

The meeting will be informed by the following documents:

- Report of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators to the 48th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, 15 December 2016 (E/CN.3/2017/2), available in:
 - English at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/48th-session/documents/2017-2-IAEG-SDGs-E.pdf>
 - Arabic at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/48th-session/documents/2017-2-IAEG-SDGs-A.pdf>
 - French at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/48th-session/documents/2017-2-IAEG-SDGs-F.pdf>
- MDG+ Initiative High Level Meeting on the Water-related Sustainable Development Goals (Amman, 1-2 November 2016), including meeting report, available in:
 - English at: <https://www.unescwa.org/events/mdg%2B-high-level-meeting-water-sdgs>
 - Arabic at: <https://www.unescwa.org/ar/events/تحسين-الرصد-الإبلاغ-المياه-الصرف-الصحي>
- MDG+ Initiative First Report (2015) and Second Report (2016), available in Arabic and English at: <https://acwua.org/mdg+/library>
- MDG+ Initiative Regional Booklet (2016): Moving towards the SDGs in the Arab Region: Key Findings from the 2016 MDG+ Initiative Report (E/ESCWA/SDPD/206/Booklet.5), available in:
 - English at: https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/booklet_on_regional_initiative_for_establishing_a_regional_mechanism.pdf
 - Arabic at: https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/arabic_booklet_on_regional_initiative_for_establishing_a_regional_mechanism.pdf

Additional information on the UN-Water associated monitoring initiatives on SDG6 is available in English at: <http://www.unwater.org/sdgs/en/>

X. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the expert group meeting should be addressed to:

Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane
Chief, Water Resources Section
Sustainable Development Policies Division
ESCWA
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: + 961 1 978 518
Mobile: + 961 3 769 466
Fax: + 961 1 981 510 / 511 / 512
Email: chouchanicherfane@un.org

Mr. El Hadi Radwan
Research Assistant, Water Resources Section
Sustainable Development Policies Division
ESCWA
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: + 961 1 978 569
Mobile: + 961 3 231 217
Fax: + 961 1 981 510 / 511 / 512
Email: radwan@un.org