

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)  
Division for Sustainable Development (DSD)

## **Brief Workshop Concept Note**

### **Capacity Development in Advancing Water and Sustainable Development**

#### **Background**

The United Nations Conference at Rio+20 on Sustainable Development, that was held in June 2012 and the Outcome document of The Future We Want, paragraph 119, emphasizes that “We recognize that water is at the core of sustainable development as it is closely linked to a number of key global challenges. We therefore reiterate the importance of integrating water in sustainable development and underline the critical importance of water and sanitation within the three dimensions of sustainable development”. Human capacity drives all aspects of water development. Water is a crucial sector and a key resource for economic growth, social development and environmental integrity.

At national level, it is required to provide practical support focusing on policy, monitoring and reporting structures, mobilizing innovative financing mechanisms and capacity development tackling both the sectoral and nexus dimensions of water. Building on the Rio+20 outcomes and other work streams, the Open Working Group (OWG) has identified 17 goals and 169 target areas, and submitted them for General Assembly considerations. Water is Goal six and titled as “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. It includes six target areas covering water supply, sanitation, water quality and pollution, water use efficiency across all sectors, integrated water resources management, and protection and restoration of ecosystems. It also identifies two means of implementation: international cooperation for capacity building of developing countries, and strengthened partnerships. Water is also identified as enabling resource in five other goals of the SDGs.

Thus, unlike the MDGs, which were mainly focused on water supply and sanitation in relation to water under the heading of MDG7 (environmental sustainability), the independent goal under SDG with its proposed target areas of water provides for a significant increase in scope, opportunities and challenges. The current information and knowledge related to the water SDG are scattered and most developing countries are not sufficiently equipped to address the new water development agenda. Countries require capacities in policy analysis in order to establish a coherent framework that enables full integration of the three dimensions of development within these sectors and cross-sectoral dimensions. They require improved governance systems in order to leverage political will, improve their legal frameworks, and enhance planning capacities and institutional arrangements for implementation. In addition, in many developing countries, technical capacities related to indicator development, accessing pertinent methodologies and tools, developing appropriate data and statistical systems, establishing robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems are deficient and need to be developed.

On the other hand, the knowledge on new target areas at the sector level including cross-sectoral nexus issues exists within institutions such as research and specialized agencies. In order to mobilize support for national systems and enhance capabilities for implementation, it is essential to synthesize the existing knowledge, lessons learnt from the MDG’s, and generate knowledge on new areas using innovative approaches. The synthesized knowledge can be used as low-hanging fruits to enhance capacities in policy and decision-making, planning, and implementation in developing countries. As 2016, the beginning of implementation of SDGs, is fast approaching; it is critical to engage in this capacity development effort to increase the chances of success of the water SDGs at national levels.

With this backdrop, a capacity-building workshop on water and sustainable development is being organized by UNDESA, Division of Sustainable Development (DSD) through its Regional Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC) budget and with additional budget support by the UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD). The workshop is designed to



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directly benefit selected countries that need such support. The workshop is also designed to tap into existing knowledge from research and academia through engaging them to share their knowledge and potentially establish a long-term partnership within the research-policy interface of water and sustainable development. Additionally, various middle-income and developed countries are also participating in sharing their experiences of how to tackle new challenging areas in their own national contexts. The workshop date is 24<sup>th</sup>- 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 in New York at the UN Headquarters.

#### **Objectives:**

The objective of this workshop is to enhance the capacity of selected developing countries integrating water and sustainable development into their national development strategies. The specific objectives include:

- increased understanding of the evolving SDGs and target areas in general and water and sustainable development, particularly including the cross-sectoral linkages;
- better understanding of policy, strategy and practice towards developing integrated sustainable development programmes;
- improved understanding of the major challenges that developing countries face in the implementation of sustainable development specifically in water and sustainable development;
- strengthened professional networking to promote active debate on water goal, target areas and cross-sectoral integration and the SD nexus as related to development of indicators, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

#### **Major Outcomes**

- Participants contribute by sharing their experiences and providing information on best practice, which will be documented for wider knowledge basis on water and sustainable development
- Participants use the programme to create enhanced awareness in their respective organizations, use the knowledge to prepare their national strategies and implementation of their sustainable development sectoral and intersectoral development programmes
- Wider sharing of the background paper and case studies as well as building network on water and sustainable development

#### **Target Groups**

The major target groups for this capacity building workshop are selected policy makers and practitioners from institutions in developing countries and countries in transition. An estimated 25 sponsored participants will be invited. The target sponsored countries are from Africa, Asia and Latin America and Caribbean, with priority to those countries already working or showed interest to work with UNDESA. The number could be increased depending on additional funding availability from partners. The specific target institutions include national ministries related to water, policy, planning, statistics, finance and economic development.

In addition, selected UN and international organizations, research and academia as well as regional institutions active in the water sector that are providing cutting edge capacity building and research on sustainable development who would also sponsor their own costs of participation would be invited, so that they share their knowledge. The list of participants will be provided separately. The draft programme of the workshop is provided below. This programme is subject to revision.

**Workshop Programme on “capacity development in advancing water and sustainable development”**

Day 1: 24 February 2015 (Tuesday)

**Opening Session (09:00-10:00 hr)**

*This session is designed mark the opening, introduce the objectives of the workshop and provide overarching presentations on Post-2015 development agenda and Goal on water*

**Facilitator: Nedy-Isatou Njie - Chief Water, Energy and Capacity Branch, Division of Sustainable Development (DSD)**

- Welcome remarks – **Nikhil Seth, Director of Division of Sustainable Development (DSD)**
- Goals and objectives of the workshop – **Seleshi B Awulachew-IRA DSD**
- Mutual roundtable introduction – **participants**

**Coffee break (10:00-10:30 hr)**

**Session 1: Context Setting (10:30-12:30 hr)**

*The session is designed to set the scene with major discussions related to Post-2015 sustainable development agenda, and to have cross-national roundtable discussions to highlight lessons learnt from the MDGs such as on water supply and sanitation, perspectives from representative panellists’ countries on what new SDG and water means in context, the dimensions and importance of water as cross-cutting sector and nexus, and expected challenges of implementation related to policy, institutions and capacity*

**Facilitator: David O’Conor, Chief, Policy and Analysis Branch, DSD**

- Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda – **Seleshi B Awulachew-IRA, DSD**
- The Critical Role of Water in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals including its Cross-cutting Roles: the Water-Energy-Food-Climate Change Nexus – **Douglas J. Merrey- Consultant**
- The Current UN-Water Progress on Indicators- **Lis M. Bernhardt, Programme Officer, UN-Water**
- **Panellists:** Five panellists from Member States provide perspectives and undertake facilitated discussions
- Discussion - participants

**Special Session with Lunch Break (12:30 to 14:30 hrs)**

Launching of report “Water in the World We Want Report”

Remarks: **Nikhil Seth** – Director, DSD;

**Jong-Soo Yoon**- Head of Office, UNOSD and

**Adeel Zafar**-Director, UNU-INWEH

**Session 2: Water Supply, Sanitation and Water Quality Sustainable Development Targets: (14:30 to 16:00 hrs)**

*This session is designed to have capacity development presentations and discussion on water sustainable development goals and targets. The session focuses on planning and policy formulation towards mainstreaming water goal and targets. It looks in to indicators, monitoring, evaluations, data needs and tools. It focuses on Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Quality and Ecosystem Services*

**Facilitator: Adeel Zafar**-Director, UNU INWEH

- Universal and Equitable Access to Safe and Affordable Drinking Water and Sanitation for All – **Sanjay Wijesekera/ Tom Slaymaker -UNICEF**
- Water Quality, Treatment, Recycling and Ecosystem Services – **Thomas Chiramba -UNEP**

Group Discussion

Plenary Discussion

**Coffee Break (3:30-4:00pm)**



**Session 3: Regional Perspectives (16:15-17:45 hrs)**

*This session deals with the regional level capacity development opportunities and challenges as economic communities, river basin organization and nexus issues*

**Facilitator: Prof. Jy S Wu, Director, INES Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program, University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

- Water and Sustainable Development Opportunities and Challenges in ESCAP region – **Hong Peng Liu – Chief of Section, Environment Division, ESCAP**
- Water and Sustainable Development Opportunities and Challenges in ECLAC region – **Caridad Canales- Economic Affairs Officer, ECLAC**
- Water and Sustainable Development Opportunities and Challenges in Africa region – **Stephen Maxwell Donkor – MESA CEMAC – AUC Consultant**
- Water and Sustainable Development Opportunities and Challenges in ESCWA region – **Carol Chouchani Cherfane- ESCWA and Sami Areikat – DSD**
- Plenary Discussion

**Special Session: Launching of report “Water in the World We Want Report” (17:30 to 18:30 hrs)**

Facilitator: **Corinne Schuster Wallace – Water and Human Development Programme, UNU-INWEH**

Remarks: **Nikhil Seth** – Director, DSD; **Jong-Soo Yoon**- Head of Office, UNOSD and **Adeel Zafar**-Director, UNU INWEH,

**Day 2: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 (Wednesday)**

**Session 4: Water Resources Sector Efficient Use, Management and Institutions (09:00 to 10:30 hrs)**

*This session is designed to have capacity development presentations and discussion on water sustainable development goals and targets focusing on water use efficiency, IWRM, Transboundary Cooperation*

**Facilitator: Jong-Soo Yoon, Head of Office, UNOSD**

- Water Use Efficiency across Sectors, Sustainable Withdrawal and Scarcity – **Meredith Giordano - Advisor, Research Strategy and Management, IWMI**
- Water Governance and Institutions – **Douglas J. Merrey, Consultant**
- Integrated Water Resources Management including Transboundary Cooperation – **Jonathan Lautze – Senior Researcher, IWMI**

Group Discussion

Plenary Discussion

**Coffee Break (10:30-11:00)**

**Session 5: Cross-Cutting Themes and Recent Studies (11:00 to 13:00 hrs)**

*This session deals with cross cutting areas covering water economics, financing and technology as well as actual case study in selected countries, presents aspects of capacity development with respect to means of implementations*

**Facilitator: Ndey-Isatou Njie, Chief Water, Energy and Capacity Branch**

- Water Development and Management Capacity: Economics and Finance - **Dimple Roy –Water Director, IISD**
- Data Transformation and the Water Goal – **Leila Rohd-Thomsen, UN Division of Statistics**
- Climate Data Transformation and Potential Lesson in Water – **Tufa Dinku, IRI, Columbia University**
- Recent Case Studies on Water and Sustainable Development in 11 Countries – **Corinne Schuster Wallace – Water and Human Development Programme, UNU-INWEH**

Plenary Discussion

**Lunch Break: 13:00 to 14:30 hrs**



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**Session 6: Conclusion (14:30 to 16:00 hrs)**

*The final session focuses on conclusion covering the knowledge and capacity gaps to be addressed in short and long terms, mechanisms to enhance partnership, and recommendations on the way forward. Participants provide recommendations on implementation of water and sustainable development. The session will be facilitated through group and plenary discussion to define the key points discussed during the two-day workshop in terms of Water and Sustainable Development*

**Facilitators: Seleshi B Awulachew and Douglas J Merrey**

- Plenary discussion on partnership for advancing water agenda and capacity development
- Wrap up and closing - **Ndey-Isatou Njie, Chief Water, Energy and Capacity Branch**

**Departure: 16:00** onward participants depart