



A Guide to

UN WATER



This is UN-Water

UN-Water is a mechanism to strengthen co-ordination and coherence among all UN bodies dealing with water-related issues, from health to farming, environment to energy, food to climate, and sanitation to disasters. It was set up in 2003, through a decision by the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations. UN-Water evolved from many years of close collaboration among UN agencies and a firm belief that still more can be done to strengthen the UN system in its effort to work more effectively on water and sanitation issues, which are among the most urgent challenges of our time. UN-Water is not another agency. Instead, UN-Water adds value to existing UN programmes and projects and fosters more co-operation and information-sharing among UN agencies and outside partners.



UN-Water in Action

To tackle the global water challenge and to meet the ambitious development and environment targets set by the international community, the United Nations recognized through the establishment of UN-Water the need to co-ordinate and use its resources for maximum impact and efficiency. UN-Water monitors progress towards water and sanitation targets and in particular those of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In concrete terms this means: **Providing** information and policy briefs, targeting not only those who work specifically with water issues but also those whose decisions have an influence on various water uses.



Acquiring more knowledge of water issues through efficient monitoring and reporting systems and facilitating easy access through regular reports and the web.

Identifying challenges in global water management and providing a platform for system-wide discussions on how to tackle them.

Taking an active role in presenting analyses and information as a basis for the global policy debate on water.

How UN-Water Operates

UN-Water Task Forces

Much of UN-Water activities are carried out through time-bound Task Forces established to focus on specific areas of interest or emerging issues. Current Task Forces deal with indicators, monitoring and reporting, gender, drinking water and sanitation, trans-boundary water challenges, climate change, integrated water resources management and country level co-ordination of UN activities.

UN-Water Reporting

UN-Water is tasked to provide co-ordinated reporting on key trends and challenges related to water resources and water and sanitation services. There are three reporting mechanisms in place that combined presents a comprehensive picture of global water issues and challenges and also provides the essential information for the follow-up of global targets.

The World Water Development Report (WWDR)

The triennial WWDR is a knowledge base including indicators, case studies and a wealth of scientific data that can assist decision-makers at all levels. Co-ordinated by the World Water Assessment Programme, the development of the WWDR is a joint effort of the 25 UN agencies and entities which make up UN-Water, working in partnership with UN-Water Partners, governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders. The first assessment report was presented in 2003 and the second in 2006. The next report will be published in March 2009.

The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) Reports

The reports from the JMP are the official mechanism of the UN system mandated to monitor global progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on water-supply and sanitation. They aim to inform policy makers, sector personnel and civil society of the status of use of safe drinking-water supplies and basic sanitation services in every country in the world. The reports are based mainly on nationally-representative household surveys and censuses and provide a clear picture of the status of use of improved drinking-water supplies and sanitation services overall, split into rural and urban areas.



The Global Annual Report on Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)

The Global Annual Assessment on Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) will report on the capacity of countries to progress towards the MDG water and sanitation target and on the effectiveness of external support agencies to facilitate this process. GLAAS will complement the WWDR and JMP reports as it will analyze the institutional and the financial capacity in relation to status and trends in drinking-water and sanitation service levels. It will, for example, compare improvements in service levels against institutional or policy changes or fluctuations of external support funds. The first report will be published in Autumn 2008.



UN-Water Governance

Specific activities and programmes are hosted by the individual member agencies on behalf of UN-Water, as UN-Water itself is not an implementing body. Senior programme managers from UN-Water member agencies meet twice a year. An elected chair and a vice chair rotating among UN agencies usually every two years represents UN-Water at international conferences, major fora and processes, and oversees the implementation of the UN-Water work programme. A permanent Secretariat, hosted by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) in New York, provides administrative and logistic support. UN-Water has close collaboration with the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB). While members are from the UN family, UN-Water partners represent civil society and various non-governmental organizations.



While the co-ordination function of UN-Water is supported through internal resources provided by UN-Water members, some specific activities are partly supported through donors trust funds. The main capital, however, are the members and partners who take part in various activities implemented primarily through time-bound Task Forces and UN-Water Programmes.

UN-Water Programmes

There are four specific programmes, each with its own work plan, budget and an executing agency co-ordinating the implementation.



The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) synthesizes data and information gathered from UN-Water members and presents its findings through the World Water Development Reports. These reports offer decision- and policy-makers advice and options on how to manage water resources, applicable to their unique economic and social objectives. The programme examines the nature of the water crises, how countries are equipped to deal with them, how well water policies and management strategies are working and suggest indicators that are needed to monitor progress. The WWAP is hosted by UNESCO and will move to its new seat in Perugia, Italy in 2008. For further information, please refer to www.unesco.org/water/wwap

The UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) fosters co-ordination, coherence and the effectiveness of UN-Water members' capacity-development programmes. It brings together stakeholders in the capacity-development field and creates added value for their programmes from strengthened collaboration. The programme was launched in August 2007 and is located in Bonn, Germany and is hosted by United Nations University. For further information, please refer to www.unwater.unu.edu

The UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC) is implemented by the United Nations Office to support the International Decade for Action Water for Life 2005-2015. It focuses on information flows related to water, both within the UN system as well as with external stakeholders and develops advocacy and information materials. Targeted information campaigns aim to inform about the benefits of sound water management for poverty reduction and lead to actions in implementing effective water policies. The programme promotes the visibility of UN-Water's work. The programme, launched in October 2007, is based in Zaragoza, Spain and hosted by UNDESA. For further information, please contact: fernandez-jauregui@un.org

The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) that was established in 1990, followed on earlier monitoring activities carried out by WHO since the 1960s. Its objectives are to provide regular global reports on water and sanitation coverage to facilitate sector planning and management, to support countries in their efforts to improve their monitoring systems, and to provide information for advocacy. For further information, please refer to www.wssinfo.org



UN-Water at a Glance

- UN-Water is a mechanism to strengthen co-ordination and coherence within the UN system.
- UN-Water was established in 2003 by the High Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations, which consists of senior-most programme managers of the organizations.
- UN-Water has 25 members from the UN system and many external partners representing international organizations and civil society.



- UN-Water has a rotating chair, vice-chair and a small secretariat.
- Most activities of UN-Water are carried out by time-bound Task Forces and Programmes.
- A number of flag-ship reports are produced through UN-Water: the World Water Development Reports, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme Reports and the Global Annual Assessment on Sanitation and Drinking Water.

- While the co-ordinating function of UN-Water is carried out by the members, some specific activities and programmes are supported by Donors Trust Funds.
- UN-Water plays an important role in addressing emerging issues and provides a platform for developing inter-agency responses to tackle them.



Find out more on UN-Water

Visit: www.unwater.org

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