

Minutes of the MUS Group meeting

FAO offices, Rome

24-25 Aug 2009

Day 1: 24 Aug

Welcome and introduction to the meeting

The meeting started with a word of welcome by Daniel Renault (FAO), as host of the meeting. After that, all participants briefly introduced themselves. The full list of participants can be found in Annex 1.

Pasquale Steduto (FAO and Chair of UN Water) then also provided a word of welcome. He mentioned the importance of MUS in reaching the MDGs, which was reflected at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul. He praised MUS as a grass-root, community level approach in addressing poverty. In view of this, he vouched for the continued support of MUS from FAO. He ended by considering an invitation to set up a task force within UN Water to deal with MUS. Such a task force would have to be task-specific and time-bound. He invited the Group to consider this and develop a possible ToR for this. Johan Kuylenstierna (UN Water) would provide more information on this.

After these words of welcome, John Butterworth (IRC) provided some more background to the group, giving an historical overview how the group started and evolved over time. He also explained the organisation and governance of the Group. He mentioned that Barbara van Koppen (IWMI) will take over his coordinator role, an issue to be discussed more in detail on the second day of the meeting. He ended by saying that the increased interest in the topic and membership of the Group has also meant that the Group is now receiving some more financial support for its operations. Again, these would be discussed in detail the second day. After that, he introduced the agenda.

Block 1: indicators

In Istanbul various people asked for more clarity on indicators for multiple-use, both at the system level (performance indicators) and national and global level (indicators on access to create awareness). The first block of presentations aimed to stimulate discussion on this. All presentations are available at <http://www.musgroup.net/page/1136>.

The first presentation was by Daniel Renault on **assessing performance indicators in large irrigation systems**, and the development of auditing methodology to that effect, with inclusion of multiple-use indicators: MASSCOTE. His work also looked into the degree of integration of MUS in management and governance of the systems. In response to his presentation, various issues were raised:

- A key aspect in the MASSCOTE approach is defining attributes of services (quantity, timeliness, etc) to different users. However, managers don't often see that they are providing a service. So a first step is to define these service dimensions. This can help in moving towards more sustainable service-oriented water management. Ecosystem services are more difficult to define, as there is not a specific client for these services. Different user communities place different values on the ecosystem services.
- The concept of service delivery remains thus central in MUS. Related to that, are then service levels, as for example defined in the water ladder. It would be interesting to expand on that, and add costs and benefits to different service levels, as method for valuation.
- When thinking about indicators, we shouldn't only think about cost-benefit indicators. Indicators should have an objective. Cost-benefit indicators can show benefits. Other indicators, for example related to service level, can be used to improve performance
- It was concluded that we need to develop different types of indicators, and make these as generic as possible, probably following a service delivery framework.

A second presentation was made by Karen Frenken (FAO). She explained the **Aquastat** database and the possibility to include data on multiple-use in this. After a short introduction on what Aquastat is and how it is organised, she came up with a series of questions to the group on the type of information the members would need and how Aquastat could collect and present those. Questions that followed were directed at getting clarity on the type of information currently included, such as areas covered by informal irrigation, seasonality and user groups. The discussion highlighted some key points:

- Probably, information on multiple-use is already hidden in some statistics. For example, municipal water use is partially dedicated to productive use, and agricultural water extractions may in fact be partially covering domestic uses. However, we need to make MUS visible in statistics.
- One way of making MUS more visible is through the glossary. There Aquastat can explain database users how data, such as on municipal abstractions, can be interpreted and how MUS can play a role in that.
- Another way of doing that is through thematic studies. Thematic studies are done in cases where there are not have enough data to add certain variables or indicators into the AQUASTAT database. Some data, at the moment, is difficult or almost impossible to capture this information in national-level data or indicators. Therefore certain studies are undertaken, such as at the moment for example a thematic study on gender-disaggregated data related to water and agriculture, to see what can be done at a pilot scale. Based on that eventually something can be done at a national level. For MUS a similar situation may apply.
- Finally, it may be good to see how to combine with other global datasets such as the JMP and GLAAS report. These may provide information on access to MUS. This could be something to be taken up in the UN Water Task Force

This last point formed the bridge to the last presentation in this block, by Johan Kuylenstierna (UN Water) on how **MUS could be addressed within UN Water**. Johan gave a brief background of UN Water and explained how task forces work. He explained the potential interest in UN Water in MUS, as there is pressure within UN Water to look at IWRM, and MUS looks at IWRM at a practical level. In order to collaborate with UN Water, MUS must build more interest with other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNDP etc. A task force would need to bring together a number of the UN agencies from UN Water, and is task-focused and time-bound. Budget for tasks forces is only \$100-200K. The discussion led to the following considerations:

- One entry point is to work on global indicators on MUS, by joining forces with JMP and GLAAS. UN Water could be a platform where these can be addressed.
- Another entry point for a task force is the focus on IWRM. It is clear that MUS is not IWRM, but rather its application in service delivery.
- Impact at country level. UN Water is more and more asked to make a difference at country level. This is difficult, because how do you measure impact of coordination.
- Apart from thinking on what such a task force could do, there was discussion on the relation between the MUS Group and UN Water. It became clear that the MUS Group would remain something separate and a task force is within UN Water. There is some overlap but it is important to remain separate.
- Finally, it was emphasised to consider whether there is an added value in establishing a task force on this. If you only want to target two or three agencies, better do that separately, as there is lots of work involved. Also, first sound out real interest and build in some go/no-go moment in establishing such a task force

Block 2: MUS in programmes

The second block looked into how different organisations are trying to include MUS in their work programmes, and the issues encountered in this. This included presentations by:

- Kirsten Neke (RAIN Foundation) on MUS through rainwater harvesting
- Zemedede Abebe Zewdie (HCS/RiPPLE) on MUS in the HCS and RiPPLE programmes in Ethiopia, and the technical exchange visit done to RAIN
- Martin Keijzer (Plan Netherlands) on an effort to include MUS in a programme being developed by the WASH Alliance, an alliance of Dutch NGOs working on WASH, who are preparing a bid for funding from the Dutch government
- Audrey Nepveu (IFAD), who has taken a look at past and present IFAD programmes to see to what extent MUS is reflected in those.

After short question-and-answer rounds on each presentation, a more general discussion evolved of what the Group has offered to the members in developing their programmes, and what else the group could do. The following emerged:

What has the Group offered you?

- Internal advocacy within member organisations. In some cases, only one staff from an organisation is involved with the Group, and then the Group can provide material to advocate for MUS with colleagues. Moral support is very important in this.
- Access to results of studies and documentation, on various issues related to MUS, from the mapping done by Winrock to case studies
- Networking with other members and resource centres
- Knowledge about scalable experiences

What else should the Group do?

- Indicators for impact assessment and frameworks for valuation. There is little experience in this. In order to develop programmes, such indicators should be known.
- Resource persons. In country programmes, there is often need for a few resource persons who can provide inputs into these programmes. The Group could make these contacts available, for example by mapping and surveying the membership for possible contact persons in country.
- Follow up on the task force to the UN.
- Consider taking more a country-focused approach. That is where programmes are implemented and where capacity needs to be built for such implementation. That means, having also country-specific contacts and documentation available.
- Updating the website structure and reviewing its content.
- Developing guidelines and focusing on the how to provide multiple-use services

The brainstorm was ended with the open question whether we should reinvent ourselves. The Group has expanded and aims to work at different levels: from global to country and local level, and has different interests. Yet, most of the interests can be reconciled by profiling the Group as a resource centre on MUS.

Presentation of outputs

The first day ended by the presentation of two products:

- Barbara van Koppen presented two final outputs of the MUS Project: a book with the experiences from India and Nepal, written by IDE, and an overall synthesis book from the CPWF-MUS project. She explained the main thrust of the book. Stef mentioned that the core members will all receive a couple of copies of the synthesis book. Besides, bigger piles of boxes will be sent to country partners.
- Josie Tucker presented a briefing paper, developed by ODI/RiPPLE, as follow up to the MUS Symposium in Addis Ababa. After this, some questions were raised about the process under which the brief was developed, some of which were clarified as well. Two points emerged for the future:
 - o There is still need for a high-level policy document

- There is need to have clarity of the ownership of the documentation of future group activities

Day 2:

As an ice-breaker, the day with a short video from Winrock's work in Niger. It is available at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwqUtVRKNIQ> (in English) or

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKQaAmIYJP8> (in French)

Stef explained that in September a technical exchange visit will happen to Winrock's project, and we hope to hear more details at a future occasion.

Block 3: activities of the Group

Barbara then introduced the agenda for the day. She did a short recap of issues that came up the day before, such as the interest to work further on indicators and the possibility to establish a task force within UN Water. To guide our further discussion on priority activities of the group, she refreshed participants on the mission of the Group and the activities as currently mentioned in our governance guidelines. These would act as point of reference for our discussion, while at the same time recognizing that always adjustments can be made to the mission and activities of the group.

Publication on MUS by FAO

At an earlier stage, Daniel Renault had circulated a profile for a publication that FAO is keen to develop in collaboration with the MUS Group. A first round of comments was received on this note. In the meeting, Daniel introduced again the background to the document. The idea is to publish a report as part of the FAO Water Report series. The idea behind making this a collaborative effort is that it helps in creating institutional ownership of the product, and avoids duplication with existing documents. The objective of the FAO Water Report series is to provide a synthesis and generic knowledge, focused on the practical level. He then introduced the concept note for the publication. A long discussion ensued, discussing issues such as target audience, the focus of the book, the structure, whether or not to partition the book according to type of system, and even the format of the book. The following agreements emerged:

- Target audience: implementers and managers at middle level, but with an executive summary for policy makers
- Focus: very much on the what and how; but one cannot do that, without giving background to the why
 - In the what section, the book should provide an overview of the spectrum of MUS situations (homestead, large-scale irrigation), and have specific sections dedicated to each type of system, but not split it up too much, as that would defeat the purpose of bringing it all together.
 - The why section should provide the rationale, but not only based on cost-benefit relations. This should also avoid big new mapping exercise. There is already a sufficiently clear rationale for mus.
 - In the how to section, a suggestion was made for a generic decision-tree. It will be difficult to balance between providing generic guidance and being specific. It is probably not possible in such a document to provide technical guidance. Better refer to existing documents, and emphasise MUS as a way of thinking.
- Focus: synthesis of existing knowledge; there is no scope for additional research.
- In terms of process, two-pagers with the main thrust of each section will be developed by end Sept. In that, also lead and contributing authors can be identified. See division of work below.

Still concerns exist on a number of issues:

- Length; there is always a tension between being comprehensive (making it long) and keeping simple (practitioners don't read fat books). However, the book could be set up in a modular way, so readers can be guided to the sections of their interest
- Logos. Sometimes many organisations contribute and not all logos can go on the cover. Need to be clear and open on how to go about that.
- Funding. FAO has funds for printing, and English language editing. However, it cannot cover the costs of authors. Various members expressed that they don't have the time to make major contributions. They will check with their home organisations how much time they can commit to this.

The sub-division of tasks would be:

- Chapter 1: to be done later
- Chapter 2 (what is MUS): the two pager to be done by Stef (lead), with Gerardo
- Chapter 3 (why MUS): the two pager to be done by Josie (lead), with Daniel
- Chapter 4 (how to do MUs): the two pager to be done by Barbara (lead) with Zemed
- Chapter 5: references, at a later stage
- Martin, Kirsten and Audrey are happy to review the two pagers
- Daniel will be the coordinator of the activity

Action point: identified persons to provide two-page documents by 30 Sept to Daniel

Planned activities of the Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF)

Sophie Nguyen-Khoa provided an update on the CPWF, now that it is entering into its second phase. Two issues are of particular relevance: MUS as topic of research to be addressed in basins, and a Topic Working Group, leading cross-basin research. Barbara van Koppen will lead this TWG. After the presentation, there were some questions for clarification. The key issues that emerged from this are:

- The first way through which members can engage with the CPWF, is by developing proposals with a MUS component in response to calls for proposals in the basins. For example, IWMI, RiPPLE and ODI are preparing a proposal for Ethiopia.
- The second way is through engagement with the TWG. There is an overlap between the TWG and MUS Group. MUS Group members can be brought into the TWG and vice versa. Besides there can be synergies with meetings, side events and publications. MUS Group members can contribute to the TWG as advisors on specific issues, or through commissioned research, but also in setting the research agenda. As part of Barbara's ToR as leader of the TWG is her role as coordinator of the MUS Group.
- Through the TWG we can identify also additional funding. For example, GWP is potentially interested in channelling funds for research through CPWF. We could prepare a concept note for that.
- The research agenda for MUS has been developed through a topic synthesis paper. This provides a synthesis of CPWF-funded research on MUS (and other research) and identifies new research issues. Various members provided inputs into an earlier draft. There is now scope to review this document. Sophie and Barbara will lead that. They will circulate among core members. Stef will upload the draft document on the Group's website.

Action points:

- Barbara and Sophie to circulate draft topic synthesis paper and ask for comments from Members
- Stef to upload topic synthesis paper on the MUS Group website.

Round of update from members:

Before going into the larger discussion on how to take certain of the emerging issues forward, we first had a round of update from members on the activities they plan to do around MUS.

- Daniel: Developing auditing methodology for large irrigation systems, including mus. Two workshops in India and Vietnam were held but more work is needed, particularly to bring in domestic issues. He invites one of the members to work with him on a next workshop. It is suggested he fills out a request for a technical visit for that. A point of follow-up from Istanbul is that the Government of Karnataka will review its irrigation policy to encourage multiple use. He also shared the document with the 5 high-level policy recommendations from Istanbul.
- Stef: The journal Waterlines will issue a special edition on multiple use. A couple of members have submitted papers. Besides, there will be a book review and a section with resource material.
- Gerardo: is very active with LNV on water for food and ecosystems and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration. He will see with them what are opportunities for WUR to play a role in the MUS Group, particularly for multiple functionality of water at higher levels of scale. Gerardo will check with his department to become a core member of the Group. John mentioned that another WUR colleague published an interesting paper on multiple-use of water in large irrigation in Uzbekistan.
- Martin: should we think also about the topic of reuse of water as a Group. Furthermore, he will see how the MUS Group can provide further advice on MUS in the WASH alliance.
- Josie: RiPPLE has come to end for first set of research issues. A bunch of publications is coming out of these soon, including on MUS issues. Interested to develop further funding opportunities and partnerships. IWMI, ILRI and RiPPLE are putting in proposal for rainwater management to the CPWF call. Not specifically on mus, but there will be a mus component.
- Zemed: apart from the products coming out of RiPPLE a next activity will be to support the Ministry on operationalising issues of MUS.
- Kirsten: Very interest to take the issue of performance indicators forward, together with her colleague Robert Meerman. She also mentioned the 3R project, focusing on water storage. The report of the technical visit by Zemed is to be finalised and the follow-up to be identified. She mentioned, she will leave RAIN in next few months, but will identify one of her colleagues who will join meetings.
- Barbara: official request from FAO to become core member is on its way.

Action points:

- Gerardo to check with his Department to become a core member

Other activities for the coming year

After this round, we discussed the emerging groups of activities in terms of next steps.

- **UN Water Task Force:** Following on the discussions from the day before, it was agreed to first sound out interest with both some of the UN Water members as well as with Johan. Daniel will first talk to Johan and Pasquale. John, Barbara, Daniel and Audrey will then come up with ideas on how to go about this, and include that in a two-pager, which also includes some go/no-go moments.
- **Resource persons:** in order to know a bit more about our membership and ways of linking them, it is agreed that a survey of the members is to be done before the end of the year. Stef will develop a questionnaire to that effect.
- **Technical visits.** So far, the technical exchange visits have been considered positive. Daniel is interested in inviting a technical visit for his auditing work. He will fill out a request. Stef will include budget for two visits in the proposal for WSSCC support
- **Indicators:** Following up on the heated debate on indicators, CPWF is keen to stimulate research on this, with some remaining funds, which need to be spent by the end of the year. The suggestion is to organise a “roundtable” with some experts from the sector, who can brainstorm for two days around a framework. A consultant can be hired to facilitate the roundtable and elaborate the results of this. The suggestion is to focus it on three levels:

cost-benefit indicators, performance indicators and even national/global indicators. Barbara and Sophie will define the ToR for this work, but also check with donors on their flexibility in the timing of the use of the funds. John and Kirsten expressed interest in co-organising it.

Action points:

- Daniel to discuss task force idea with Johan and Pasquale. After that, John, Barbara, Daniel and Audrey: develop a two-pager on how to go about engagement with UN Water
- Stef to develop questionnaire for membership survey
- Daniel to fill out technical request form for support to the MASSCOTTE workshops
- Sophie and Barbara: develop ToR for indicator study and sound out flexibility in timing in use of the funds.

Block 4: organisation of the Group

In this final block, we reviewed the support to the organisation of the Group, and the review of the ToR of the Group officers.

Support from FAO and WSSCC to the MUS Group

Daniel explained background to the FAO support to the secretariat. They are keen to support the well functioning of this secretariat. The proposed use of the funds was circulated at an earlier stage, and confirmed during this meeting. Barbara and Stef as officers of the Group will provide accountability of the use of the funds to the Group. It was made clear that this support also allows for other interested members to take up certain secretary tasks. Stef clarified that IRC will still continue to provide a matching fund for his and John's staff time, but that John will focus more on the activities of the Group.

Stef then continued providing a narrative report on the use of the WSSCC funds. A financial report is not ready as not all activities have been concluded. After this presentation, Stef was asked to update the website with information on the organisations who provide funding support to the Group, apart from the members own contributions.

Action point: Stef to update the website with information about funders.

ToR for group officers and governance note

As mentioned earlier, Barbara will take over the coordinator role from John. This is then a good moment to review the governance guidelines anyway, as the membership has expanded and the focus of the group (e.g. in terms of levels has changed). Various points were raised to be addressed in this review:

- Explicitly profile ourselves as resource group in the field of MUS
- Take out reference to homestead level only, but state that we work on MUS at different levels of scale
- Dissemination can be made more explicit among the tasks of the group

Action point: members were asked to send any additional comments on the governance guidelines in the next two weeks. Barbara and Stef will then finalise reviewed guidelines by end Sept

Topic, date, place, venue of meeting

The next meeting of the Group would be scheduled in the first quarter of 2009. One option is to hold it back-to-back with the World Bank Water Week, where some members may be present.

One option for a location is Washington, as Mary has expressed interest in hosting the Group. However, that may limit participation from Europe-based partners. This will always remain difficult.

Topics for the agenda for the next meeting are:

- Results of the indicator workshop and study to be undertaken by CPWF
- Resource centres for mus; RiPPLE would want to grow into resource centre for Ethiopia and also dealing with MUS. There are many other resource centres part of our network, and focusing on that may be useful to move to country level
- FAO Publication
- In terms of organising ourselves, should we think about working groups on specific activities.

Action points: Stef to send around 2-3 options for dates and location

With that, the meeting was closed by Daniel, who thanked everyone for coming to Rome. Barbara thanked Daniel for the excellent hosting and facilities at FAO.

Annex 1: Participants list

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