



# Coordination of Water Actions at the Country Level

A Report of the UN-Water Task Force  
on Country Level Coordination

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# List of Acronyms

<b>BiH</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>UNDESA:</b>	United Nations Division for Sustainable Development
<b>CCA:</b>	Common Country Assessment	<b>UNDG:</b>	United Nations Development Group
<b>CWP</b>	Country Water Partnership	<b>UNDOCO:</b>	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
<b>DaO</b>	Delivering as One	<b>UNDP:</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>DFID:</b>	Department for International Development	<b>UNECA:</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>DPG-W:</b>	Development Partner Group- Water	<b>UNECE:</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>EU:</b>	European Union	<b>UNEP:</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>EUWI:</b>	European Union Water Initiative	<b>UNESCO:</b>	Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>FAO:</b>	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	<b>UN-Habitat:</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>GWP:</b>	Global Water Partnership	<b>UNICEF:</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>HDI:</b>	Human Development Index	<b>UNW-DPAC:</b>	UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team	<b>UNW-DPC:</b>	UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development
<b>HRBA:</b>	Human Rights Based Approach	<b>WASH:</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>ILO:</b>	International Labour Organization	<b>WFP:</b>	World Food Programme
<b>IWRM:</b>	Integrated Water Resources Management	<b>WHO:</b>	World Health Organization
<b>JICA:</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency	<b>WMO:</b>	World Meteorological Organization
<b>MDG:</b>	Millennium Development Goals	<b>WSDP:</b>	Water Sector Development Programme
<b>MDG-F:</b>	UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund	<b>WSSCC:</b>	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council
<b>MPTF:</b>	Multi-Partner Trust Fund	<b>WSSD:</b>	World Summit on Sustainable Development
<b>NGO:</b>	Non-Government Organization	<b>WWAP:</b>	World Water Assessment Programme
<b>NPD:</b>	National Policy Dialogue		
<b>NWRB:</b>	National Water Resources Board		
<b>ODF</b>	Open Defecation Free		
<b>OECD:</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development		
<b>OCHA:</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		
<b>PAHO:</b>	Pan-American Health Organization		
<b>RC:</b>	Resident Coordinator		
<b>SIWI:</b>	Stockholm International Water Institute		
<b>SWAP:</b>	Sector Wide Approach		
<b>TF:</b>	UN-Water Task Force on Country Level Coherence and Coordination		
<b>UNCCD:</b>	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification		
<b>UNCT:</b>	United Nations Country Team		
<b>UNDAF:</b>	United Nations Development United Nations Development Assistance Framework		

# Executive Summary

**The UN-Water Task Force on Country Level Coordination has commissioned this report on water related coordination mechanisms in 13 countries representing differing humanitarian and development situations and geographic locations.** The information collected has been supplemented by selected case studies on coordination provided by UN-Water Members and Partners and an examination of the literature on coordination mechanisms of government for water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and water resources management. A previous report on 5 countries from the Task Force in 2008 also contributed significantly to an understanding of coordination mechanisms.

Coordination of development activities of the UN system at country level is a high priority of the UN and has had sustained attention for over a decade. The development assistance provided by the UN to individual countries is set out in a document, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), signed with the Government after extensive consultation between the UN and the Government and other development cooperation partners. This typically covers activities in a 4 to 5 year period. Coordination of programme implementation is managed through regular UN country team meetings, and many UN offices have adopted a joint programming approach through the 'Delivery as One' initiative of the UN system, and through regular consultations with government, donors and other actors such as civil society organizations and the private sector.

However water has little visibility in most of the UN country programmes examined for this report even though all of these countries do have water projects: this is because water per se is rarely an UNDAF priority area, and therefore reporting on water projects is split over several areas. This makes it difficult for the UN and the Government to have an overall view of the work being done in this sector. In the countries examined the majority of projects focus on the implementation of water and sanitation programmes, many of these on humanitarian grounds. Leadership for these water and sanitation projects usually lies with UNICEF and coordination with other UN agencies involved, and with other country partners, is well established. However, there are different reporting mechanisms for development and humanitarian aid, and this further complicates the picture. Several Resident Coordinators expressed the need for external expertise to be able to address other water sector issues more effectively.

Coordination efforts led by government are considered to be strategically important in achieving an appropriate enabling environment of policies, laws and institutions for sustainable and efficient implementation of water resources management, water supply and sanitation and other water related programmes. UN country teams often participate in these coordination efforts although as stated earlier this is mainly in the arena of water supply and sanitation. Support to governments with water resources management and water infrastructure mostly occurs through the World Bank, other development banks and individual donor countries.

Coordination can be time consuming and resource demanding and may not be very efficient if not well managed. The report looks at some of the experiences from the countries and case studies and explores some of the lessons emerging. Coordination can assist countries take great steps forward when managed effectively to support the development of national policies and strategies for the water sector. The coordination mechanisms, whether internal to the UN or together with government and donors, are also essential to ensure that implementation is efficient and follows the guidance of national policies and strategies.

The difficulty that the UN country teams experience in getting a full overview of the situation regarding water at country level is not only to do with the way the UNDAF is constructed, or the fact that projects are split over a number of reporting areas or between development and humanitarian projects. It is also because there is no source of comprehensive informa-

tion on water in most countries. The best and sometimes only, regular reporting is around water supply and sanitation. This is a situation that needs to be addressed for effective national water governance and particularly so if the next generation of sustainable development goals takes up water in a more comprehensive way than in the MDGs.

Some opportunities have been identified for potential UN-Water involvement at the country level. The most important product of coordination at country level is the creation of an enabling environment for water management, including water users. This product of a robust government process involving key stakeholders can have far reaching impacts on access to services, economic development, efficient and effective action on the ground. In addition it will facilitate engagement at regional level on transboundary water agreements. The UN generally lacks skills at country level on water governance and national governments may find appropriate support difficult to locate. UN-Water can assist this process, targeting countries still lagging behind by facilitating experience sharing between countries and supporting UN teams in target countries with expertise. Action may be initiated with UN Development Group to promote a more comprehensive approach to water in the UNDAF. The UN-Water led development of water indicators and the internet based system for information exchange could also make important contributions to how the UN can be more effective in taking the water agenda forward.

Any coordination efforts at country level facilitated by UN-Water should take place through members and partners. However, given the very limited knowledge of UN-Water at this level, serious consideration should be given on how to comprehensively engage the staff of its member and partner organizations beyond the global level to deepen the ownership and realization of the UN-Water vision and mission.



## Section 1

# Introduction

### 1.1 UN-Water

*UN-Water was created to strengthen the joint impact of the United Nations (UN) towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. UN-Water strives to complement and add value to existing initiatives to maximize system-wide coordinated action and coherence as well as effectiveness of the support provided to Member States. It works on policy, advocacy and coordinated actions at the global, regional and country level.*

UN-Water is an inter-agency coordination mechanism that brings together representatives of the entities of the UN with a responsibility related to water. It consists of a membership of UN agencies and closely allied organizations and Partners representing a variety of major international organizations with responsibilities in the field of water. ([www.unwater.org](http://www.unwater.org))

The main purpose of the UN-Water Task Force on Country Level Coherence and Coordination is to improve and

scale up delivery of co-ordinated UN actions towards larger impact and fulfilment of WSSD and MDG goals. The TF focuses on country level coherence and coordination over the full range of UN-Water's thematic scope including water resources management, provision of water supply and sanitation services, and coping with water-related natural disasters.

#### The TF has three specific objectives:

1. Undertake a comprehensive survey of coordination mechanisms that exist in specific pilot countries, including both in-house UN coordination and how the UN system interacts with non-UN players in the water sector. The assessment should also lead to identification of constraints, opportunities, gaps, good examples and weaknesses in coordination efforts.
2. Consider the successes and constraints of the coordination mechanisms at country level and propose possible roles for UN-Water to contribute to the coherence and impact of UN System actions at country level. Key elements may include: (i) how to further strengthen the existing coordination mechanism in relation to water sector activities; (ii) how to strengthen coordination with

- non-UN partners (including national institutions); and (iii) what and how UN-Water can contribute in securing improved coordination across the water sector.
- Promote the implementation of proposed strategy through internal UN mechanisms (e.g., United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Resident Coordinator (RC) system).

The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of coordination mechanisms in place at country level and with this as a basis, propose areas where UN-Water may engage to further improve coordination and resulting coherence of water actions

## 1.2 Water in Brief

### Global water and sanitation issues in brief

Following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, awareness of the importance of water to our life and well-being has increased year upon year. Water is a pivotal ingredient for national development, providing food, energy and livelihoods and water and sanitation are now recognised as a human right. However water also has a negative dimension and causes floods, droughts and other water related disasters. Competition for reliable water supply of good quality is made more intense by increasing pollution, environmental degradation and the impacts of climate.

The conference output, Agenda 21, emphasized in Chapter 18: *The holistic management of freshwater as a finite and vulnerable resource and the integration of sectoral water plans and programmes within the framework of national economic and social policy are of paramount importance for action in the 1990s and beyond.* (UNDESA, 1992). It was this report that brought the integrated approach to water resources management (IWRM) that has been adopted globally. The most recent report on progress with the integrated approach to water resources management (UNEP, 2012) shows that while there has been great progress with legal reforms, policy and strategy development and institutional development, there still remains many challenges on the ground to fully implement an integrated approach.

Competition for water for food production, energy generation, industry, mining and most importantly drinking water supply and safe sanitation, is increasing. It is further aggravated by population growth, rapid urbanisation and uncertain impacts of climate change. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been instrumental in stimulating great progress in improving access to safe drinking water yet still in 2013 an estimated 800 million people are without access to an improved water source and many more remain without safe and sustainable water supply. The sanitation picture is much worse where an estimated 37% of the global population remain without access to improved sanitation. Improved coordination of action has been stimulated by the common goals adopted in the MDGs and this coordination is more evident in water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) than elsewhere. Governments, donors, civil society organizations and development partners have together formed the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership, access to safe water and sanitation have been adopted as a human right by the United Nations and almost all relevant countries have adopted a coordinated approach for more effective action on the ground.

The widespread scarcity, gradual destruction and aggravated pollution of freshwater resources in many world regions, along with competing uses, demands better coordination in planning, managing and using our limited water resources.

## 1.3 What is meant by coherence and coordination

### What is meant by coherence and coordination?

Coordination, the subject of this Task Force of UN-Water, can be seen as an essential activity that should lead eventually to concerted action and a coherent and fully integrated approach to the management and development of water resources. The African Regional report on the global survey of progress with integrated approaches to water resources management (AMCOW, 2012) shows that 80% of countries identified 'coordination between levels' as a water resources management issue of a high or highest priority.

"Coordination between different institutions is a pre-requisite for effective water management and development but

is difficult to achieve. It is becoming of increasing interest to water users, water managers and politicians alike as water stress increases.

It is not only in the management of water resources, but also in the delivery of water supply and sanitation services, food security and managing water risks, that demands for a more coordinated approach are increasing.

The strong concerns across countries and stakeholders about the effectiveness of coordination, with its inherent difficulties, but enormous potential benefits, suggest that it is an important issue for the coming decades" (GWP, 2013).

### **Relationship between coordination, coherence and integration.**

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines coordination as follows: "Activities of two or more development partners that are intended to mobilise aid resources or to harmonise their policies, programmes, procedures and practices so as to maximise the development effectiveness of aid resources. With regard to co-ordination several levels (international, regional, national, sub-national, sectoral) can be distinguished, as well as differences in content (policies/principles/priorities, procedures, practices) as in intensity (consultation, co-operation, collaboration)" (ESCAP, 2007)

For the purpose of this exercise a Coordination Mechanism is taken as a formal or informal mechanism where several parties, with related interests in water, cooperate to improve synergy, efficiency and impact of their water actions.

Coherence is an expected outcome from coordination. Fundamental principles that should be kept in mind when considering coherence and coordination include:

- Coordination is intended for a specific objective—avoiding overlap, maximizing synergy and thus ensuring the highest combined value-added from limited resources;
- Processes for coordination should be "light" and to the extent possible not add to existing bureaucracy;
- Coordination is a mutual responsibility between partners;
- The relative positioning and division of labour between

partners should be based on clear, distinct roles deriving from their respective mandates;

(UNRC, 2008)

### **Functions of coordination**

Adapting slightly from OCHA in defining their coordination role in Afghanistan the functions of coordination may be largely captured as follows:

- **Developing policy** – working with partners to establish policy
- **Developing common strategies** – Working with partners to define common priorities, share goals, agree on tactics and jointly monitor progress.
- **Assessing situations and needs** – Working with partners to analyse the political, social, technical and economic environment to understand the causes, dynamics and impact of any situation.
- **Convening coordination forums** – Meetings are important tools for analysing situations, advocacy, policy dialogue, sharing lessons learned and build consensus to action. Meetings also build trust, respect, transparency and accountability among actors of the coordination mechanism.
- **Mobilizing resources** – A consolidated and cost-effective approach to fundraising improves access to funding and ensures a more efficient allocation of resources. Coordination mechanisms may sometimes be primarily for this purpose.
- **Addressing common problems** – A coordination mechanism may be established specifically to facilitate smooth operation of a project or programme that has two or more partners responsible for implementation.
- **Administering coordination methods and tools** – Most commonly this will be information sharing, e-tools and specific tasks such as monitoring progress with MDGs.

### **Coordination and the UN**

At policy level, enhanced UN coordination is advocated for by the Secretary General, the Secretariat and the UN General Assembly. The strategic importance of improved UN coordination was recently articulated in General Assembly Resolution 67/226. This resolution, adopted by the General Assembly in 2013, on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United

Nations system, is strongly supportive of improved coherence and efficiency of the UN development system at both country and headquarters level. The UN Development Group (UNDG) and its executive office, the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO), are structures with the specific mandate to support country level coordination, providing strategic guidance, basic coordination and programming tools, as well as monitoring performance and results.

GA Resolution 67/226 requests the funds, programmes and agencies to consolidate support services at the country level and calls on the UN Development system, inter alia, "to improve the UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) as a strategic framework, simplify the UNDAF process and strengthen joining programming; simplify and harmonise the UNDAF and agency-specific programming instruments and process". The Resolution also calls for enhancement of the planning and coordination function of UN resident coordinators and for the strengthening of the capacity of resident coordinators' offices. The Resolution further calls for the consolidation of the Delivering as One (DaO) process, requesting the Secretary General "to come up with proposals for the establishment of common monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms on DaO implementation".

There are other incentives for coordination, most strikingly the Millennium Declaration 2000 and the MDGs that have been a spur for coordinated action to meet basic socio-economic needs and lift people out of poverty. The target year for achieving the goals is 2015. The Human Rights Based Approach to human development is another keystone of UN development planning: a Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation was appointed in September 2008 with the task to examine these crucial issues and provide recommendations to Governments, to the UN and other stakeholders. UN and other international agreements and conventions on the environment and on water are also a support to coordinated action at country level. Those that have been signed and ratified by a government are listed and referred to in UNDAFs as a support to the development framework agreed to with the Government.



## Section 2

# Methodology

*The task force produced a first report (UN-Water, 2008) which described coordination processes and current situation in a small sample of countries. Most of these countries were visited and reported discussions with government, UN Agencies and in some cases donors. That report provided a framework for the present study and all of the countries were included and followed up.*

### **Sampling**

The focus of the TF is on coordination of the work of the UN and therefore the priority was to direct attention to UN agencies and structures. However, it is the response to country interests and priorities that are of central importance and UN coordination efforts were viewed with this in mind. Information was collected through three main routes;

- A purposive sample of countries was used and information collected about coordination using the Resident Coordinator as an entry point;
- UN-Water Members and Partners were solicited for experience of country level coordination from their own agency;
- Existing documentation on coordination provided additional independent perspectives.

### **Country selection**

The 13 countries selected for inclusion in this study cover between them the different humanitarian and development situations and geographic locations (Annex 3). They are selected from the major regions (Africa, Asia, Europe and the CIS, Arab States and the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean). They either face major water challenges and/or have active or very recently completed water projects implemented by the UN or supported by UN expertise. Countries that have implemented MDG-F Economic Governance projects in the water sector are also included. The selection includes DaO Pilot Countries, DaO Self-Starter Countries, countries in normal development situations and countries emerging from conflict or the impact of natural disasters. This group of countries also covers a wide range of population sizes, income levels and human development index levels (see Annex 3 for further details). The aim is not to compare the countries one with the other, but to find good practice examples of coordination in the water sector and to discuss with UN Resident Coordinators, and members of the UN country team (UNCT) involved in the water sector,

the challenges they are facing and how they deal with them.

The TF initiated work 5 years ago and at this time consultants visited 5 countries and prepared reports on coordination. These countries (Albania; Mozambique; Philippines; Tanzania; Uruguay) were included in 2013 to up-date the information. However the reports from these countries were not compared directly with the results from previous visits due partly to the different methodologies used but mainly because the study is designed to be illustrative and not a measurement of progress.

The types of development situation in which UN Country Teams are working vary considerably. The key variables are the income levels of the countries, their Human Development Index status, and their regional contexts. The main division regarding income levels is between high, middle and low income countries, whilst UNDP's Human Development Index divides countries into categories ranging from very high to low human development. For the UNCTs another key factor is whether or not the country is following a "normal" development agenda or whether the country has been devastated by natural or man-made disasters, calling for urgent humanitarian and peace-building work.

#### UN-Water Members and Partners experiences

Four agency examples of coordination were followed up:

- Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC); experiences with country level coordination of water supply and sanitation in four countries (Malawi, Madagascar, Nepal, India);
- UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); national policy dialogue in Kyrgyzstan;
- Global Water Partnership (GWP); national water partnerships in Bangladesh, Benin and Philippines;
- International Labour Organization (ILO): joint implementation of water and sanitation programmes in rural and indigenous communities, Panama.

#### Process and Tools:

Countries were approached through the Resident Coordinator and information solicited on coordination mechanisms including how the UN system interacts with non UN players in the water sector including the government, donor community, and NGOs. Other ex-

amples of coordination were followed up through the specific proposing agency.

A generic set of questions were identified and then adapted to suit the specific circumstances of the agency or country (Annex 2). The tools aimed to collect the following information:

- Coordination systems in place and how they work
  - o The coordination mechanisms for water being led by the UN (UNCT; humanitarian country team; thematic sub-group).
  - o Coordination mechanisms for water involving donors, NGOs and government.
  - o Types of water project being implemented by UN and affiliated agencies.
- Results
  - o Main outcomes of the coordination (demonstrating coherence)
  - o Main strengths of the coordination mechanism
  - o Main weaknesses of the coordination mechanism
- Lessons
  - o Support / conditions needed for effective coordination
  - o Benefits from coordination

#### Limitations

This is a dynamic situation and reference to specific countries is only for purposes of illustration. A limited number of countries were examined and while each situation is different, the problems are often the same and lessons valuable. To moderate this constraint experiences from recent published surveys have also been used. The data are qualitative building primarily from the views and experiences of UN staff on the ground.



## Section 3

# UN-Water Sector Programmes and Coordination at Country Level

*This chapter focuses on the UN internal and external (with Government, donors and other actors) in-country coordination mechanisms, drawing on the previous Task Force report (UN-Water, 2008) countries (Albania, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uruguay (all DaO pilot countries), and the Philippines) which have been revisited, plus an additional seven countries (Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Iraq, Haiti Lesotho, and Panama) as described in Chapter One.*

Not all the countries selected for this report have major water programmes with UN involvement. However, water is so fundamental for development that almost all UN countries teams work in this area to greater or lesser extent, and this necessitates internal coordination within the UN Country Team.

The RC in each of the 13 countries facilitated the completion of a questionnaire and was interviewed (with the exception of Uruguay RC who delegated to relevant agency staff) sometimes along with other UN staff members, to provide additional insight. The list of persons interviewed and a summary of the questionnaire responses are provided in Annexes 2 and 4.

From the questionnaires a list of reported water related projects and the lead UN agency has been compiled (Table 1). Only 1 country, Tanzania, identified the government as the lead agency for all projects. There is overlap between agencies although with the exception of UNDP the distribution of project themes across agencies is limited. World Bank is often an active partner in the water sector in developing countries. Their projects are not listed here as they were only rarely reported in the questionnaires. Any projects being undertaken by other UN-Water partner organizations are also not included as they are not part of the UNCT and no information was collected.

**Table 1. Subject and number of water projects undertaken in surveyed countries and led by a UN agency.**

Project subject	UNDP	UNICEF	WHO	FAO	UNESCO	UNHCR	WFP	ILO	UNEP
Economic Governance	2								
Management of marine and coastal areas	3						1		
WASH	3	21	4			1			
Groundwater		1							
Environment	1								1
Livelihoods								1	
Agriculture/food				2					
Water resources management	7	1			3				
Climate change adaptation	5	1	1	2					1
Dryland management	1								
Transboundary water	1								
Energy and water	1								

The 13 countries reported a total of 64 water projects that are being led by UN agencies of which over 50% were in three countries (Bangladesh, Haiti and Iraq). Of these 45% are WASH projects. A few projects were reported (not included in Table 1) that are led by government ministries. It is difficult to determine if these represent all of the current water projects under the UN but it is likely that they include the majority.

A number of positive trends, but also challenges, emerged from returned questionnaires and the interviews held with the Resident Coordinators and / or water sector staff in the thirteen countries. The first section of this chapter describes, as a background to their comments, the UN coordination mechanisms at country level, and some comments from the Director of UNDOCO are also included in this section. The second section looks at the lessons learned on water programme coordination in the Delivering as One Countries and from the implementation of MDG-F joint water projects, with some additional comments from the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. Section Three looks in more detail at the coordination practices reported by the Resident Coor-

dinators and their colleagues, using the country examples to illustrate the issues, both positive and negative, raised during the interviews. This is followed in Section Four by a review of the comments made on how the UNCT's use UN resources from regional and national levels to support water programmes, and their thoughts on what more could be done. The final section brings out the key points made in the interviews and supporting questionnaires.

### 3.1 UN Coordination at Country Level – Internal mechanisms

#### UN Country Teams and the Resident Coordinator System

The United Nations at country level works together in UN Country Teams (UNCTs) with a Resident Coordinator (RC), who is usually also the Resident Representative of UNDP, leading the work of the UN (Annex 2). Typically the RC has a small number of staff in the Resident Coordinators Office (RCO), which is supported administratively by UNDP. None of the countries sampled reported having a water expert in the RC office.

The UNCTs vary greatly in number of agencies as not all of the agencies have representation in all programme countries although they can still be involved in the capacity of non-resident agencies. One of the important agencies for water programmes, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), is usually non-resident with staff members or technical experts visiting the country as required or alternatively delegating programme implementation to agencies such as UNDP.

The RC and the UNCT are supported by, and in return report to, the UN Development Group (UNDG). The UNDG brings together the 32 development funds, programmes agencies departments and their offices over 150 countries. The development of the regulatory framework for the UNCTs is done at the request of the UN Secretary General and the General Assembly. There is regular UN country programme follow-up with standard UNCT reporting to the Secretary General through the UN Development Group.

#### Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs)

In countries where there is a humanitarian emergency, or where there is a strong possibility that a critical situation will become an emergency, in addition to the UN Country Team there will be a Humanitarian Country Team (IASC, 2009). The Resident Coordinator may also be the designated Humanitarian Coordinator. The HCT differs from the UNCT in that the relevant UN agencies are joined by international and national NGO representatives and by other organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross. The inter-agency coordination mechanisms are also differ-

ent, based on the cluster system established by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster is led by UNICEF. The IASC guidelines for the HCTs are attached as Annex 5.

In 9 of the 13 countries included in this study, humanitarian and development programmes are implemented side by side and this is a challenge for the overall coordination of water sector programmes. There are two different programming, financing and reporting mechanisms for Humanitarian and Development Programmes respectively and it can be seen from countries in our sample that this is a hindrance to united action on sustainable solutions to water issues.

Many UNCTs need to balance a development programme with occasional humanitarian work, for example in Mozambique. The **Mozambique** RC explained that in a country with a large development programme, she prioritises by *putting current relevance high on the list, and this shifts over time and between agency representatives and group leaders who prioritize across their own areas. Water is a cyclical issue and during the annual flooding season it gets very high on the agenda. This opens up the dialogue on the whole range of water related issues, not just the humanitarian response. In emergencies it is the UN that is visible, the World Bank comes in later to work on infrastructure and sector structural issues.*

It is not always easy to get the balance right between humanitarian and development work, with the transition between the two hampered by different financing and reporting mechanisms. For example, in the **Philippines**, the RC noted that: *In a country where some communities are waterless (up to 40% of them on Mindanao island) typhoons bring fresh water but the communities are not benefitting from it because it is rapidly polluted. The WASH tools do not support sustainable solutions. Five months after last year's Typhoon Pablo, I went to see a camp and the water was still being trucked in, when it would have been possible to connect the camp to the main water supply. What is missing is at a higher level – the RC/HCs cannot be reinventing the wheel in every country. There must be a better technical solution (to providing water), ones that could be sustainable.*

A similar problem was mentioned by the UN-Water specialists in **Ethiopia**. With both humanitarian and development programmes in Ethiopia, there is the possibility to work together. The Government's Humanitarian Requirements Document is updated twice yearly linked to the agriculture cycle and food security, as even in a good year for rain there can be local problems with drought or flooding. The RC noted that: *this mechanism is not able to address the sustainable water issue. Every year, every cycle, money is spent on expensive water trucking. Solving the question of how to shift to a longer-term development response is impeded by lack of strategic design in Ethiopia for water planning. More positively: everyone has the goal to increase the development work and that the Government has just adopted a new Disaster Risk Management policy that, once it has gone through parliamentary procedure, will open up potential for strategic planning for the water sector.*

#### **The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)**

At country level the coordinated work of the UN is based on the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a document that is developed jointly by the agencies in consultation with government, donors and civil society (UNDG, 2010). Development of the UNDAF is preceded by a collaborative analysis of the development situation of the country, the Common Country Assessment (CCA), which draws on the Government's own analysis as well as those of the UN agencies and the World Bank and other international organizations as appropriate. Issues that emerge from the CCA are carried forward into the UNDAF discussions with Government, the donors and civil society organizations active in the country.

The UNDAF is the basis for agency programming and, being signed jointly by the Government and the UN, it is a powerful planning and management tool. It is based on the CCA and is usually strongly tied to the Government's own development documents and plans. In each country participating in this review, the UNDAF was referred to positively as a management tool that keeps the agencies together around a shared agenda and supports reporting on results.

The UNDAF defines priority areas or pillars for the UN, generally three to five, and they are broken down into a number of proposed action areas: it is at this level that

water becomes visible. However, water projects or project components are typically spread out across several of the priority areas, for example WASH may be included in a social service delivery/poverty eradication pillar connected to schools, health and local area development, while larger scale projects may be under environment, agriculture or even energy sector projects. Policy and strategy work in water may appear under environment or governance. This splintering of water related projects across the outcome areas is a challenge for coordination of implementation and also for reporting on results because the UNDAF-related working groups are based on the pillars or outcome areas, or are grouped in defined cross-cutting areas such as gender, youth and human rights. **Kyrgyzstan** is an example of how water can appear in different internal UNCT coordination mechanisms. The RC reported that: *there are three UN coordination groups that include water in their remit: the UNCT theme group, the Disaster Risk Coordination Unit, and the WASH group which is chaired by UNICEF with UNDP, WHO, and WFP as the most important agency parties. Additionally, water is included in the infrastructure sub-group of the Partners' Coordination Panel.*

Because of this splintering of the water programmes, not all countries sampled for this report could give a clear indication of the size of their water sector work either in terms of finance or percentage of the programmes.

Most of the participants in this study commented on the UNDAF and how water is reflected in this shared programme document. Typically, there is no priority area or pillar labelled as Water and Sanitation or Water Resources Management. In **Mozambique**, the UNDAF has: *three inter-linked areas and water is included in two of them, economic development and social development*, while in **Iraq** water is included in the Priority Area for Environment. Commenting on this question of how water is presented in the UNDAF, the RC **Bangladesh** noted that: *There is no specific water pillar in the UNDAF because water affects all areas in different ways. However, water is effectively dealt with, and addressed pretty comprehensively, in the different working groups, and there is a Water Management Group. It is difficult to place water under a single umbrella group so the Water Management and other relevant groups are strongly encouraged to work with other groups, as is the case for all overlapping areas.*

The UNDAF is developed jointly with Government and one of the outcomes of the process can be an agreement that water will not be a priority area for the UN, or that there will be specific areas for the UN and other areas left to the Government and/or the international financial institutions, most often the World Bank. This happened in **Lesotho**, with the RC explaining that: *There is no UN comparative advantage in working in the water sector. The European Union (EU) spearheads the sector and the UN has provided some technical assistance for water and sanitation but no programmes.*

There is a similar situation in **Albania**, the RC noting that: *There are other large actors in the sector such as the World Bank, Austria, and the EU so the Government does not need to ask for UN assistance regarding water.*

The UNDAF is also the instrument for allocating responsibilities among the different agencies, and this can be complicated because in addition to taking into consideration agency mandates, there is also recognition of their presence and comparative advantage in the specific country situation. Asked about this with regard to water, the **Iraq** RC explained: *UNDP is the lead agency. UNESCO is working on the second phase of an EU funded Ground Water Survey and FAO includes water and irrigation in its programme of work. WHO has an inherent interest in quality and access to water while UNICEF has continued with the post-conflict-early development work on water and sanitation together with UN Habitat. The consortium working on water in the future is therefore likely to be UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, FAO, WHO and UN-Habitat.*

The Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) recently retired Senior Water Advisor in **Panama** commented that for UN-Water sector coordination: *it is important to have clear division of roles and clarity of roles. International staff members are valued and they must receive some sort of incentive, and should be given special training on cultural sensitivity. The technology used is also important for successful implementation and sustainability of the infrastructure. The different agencies have different strengths and PAHO with WHO, ILO and UNDP have been working together.*

However, tensions can still arise in UNCTs over allocation of roles and responsibilities because the agencies can be

in competition for funding for projects. In one country the competition was between the chairs of two of the UNDAF Priority Working Groups when a donor made money available for water projects. But all UN agencies are expected to work together and with other partners at country level, and the **Bangladesh** RC noted that he is *absolutely convinced that good coordination delivers better results. It is important to have the structure, but it doesn't happen automatically. Coordination does deliver results, when we do it.*

One respondent to this study, in **Uruguay**, suggested that UN-Water might have a role to play in helping identify roles and responsibilities: *UN-Water could help identify clear roles for each agency for each topic even if this is not easy. Agencies should be forced to collaborate but there are no sanctions for agencies not working with sister agencies. We do not need new supra-mechanisms, they take lots of time and are a loss of time. We need to add to UNCT discussions the importance of water as a sustainable development goal and water as a catalyst or issue for UN cooperation.*

The UNDAF is not a static document, but is always subject to a mid-term review and may be up-dated at any time if the situation in the country changes. The RC in **Albania**, for example, noted that: *Albania is a potential Candidate Country of the EU and may well achieve that status by the end of the year and this affects the priorities with the UN helping support the EU accession agenda activities. The Iraq RC noted that: the UNDAF is under review for a proposed extension and it is likely that during the review the importance of environmental issues in general, and water and dust storms in particular, will be raised.*

### **Funding for the country programmes**

Additional to their core funding and funds donated directly by individual donor countries, some UNCTs have been successful in accessing funds for joint programmes, for example from the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDG-F), financed mainly by the Government of Spain and administered by UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF). The Democratic Economic Governance window of the MDG-F financed 11 multi-agency projects of which 10 focused on water, and one on water and energy. All the MDG-F projects had to be joint projects

between one or more agencies and this showed up the strengths but also the difficulties of joint project design and implementation which were mainly to do with incompatible administrative systems and mandate overlaps.

Being a DaO pilot meant access to extra funding, the Coherence Fund, although this did not necessarily mean that there was extra funding available for water projects. **Uruguay**, for example, reported that: *just one project seemed to have a water component (Development of instruments of environmental and territorial monitoring) and with respect to bilateral cooperation, only Spain and Japan were supporting water projects. In conclusion, the number of operational projects did not reflect the needs and the importance that the national government devotes to the use and access of water resources in the country.*

Some UNCTs have set up a country-specific UNDAF Trust Fund with the intention of doing more joint programming, but the country-specific UNDAF Trust Funds are so far quite weakly financed and most non-core project funding continues to flow from individual donor governments to individual agencies. The main exceptions to this are the DaO countries such as Albania, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uruguay where the Trust Funds have been well supported by the donors. Crisis countries such as Haiti and Iraq have also had substantial donor Trust Funds in the immediate post-crisis period and the funds may be used for joint projects.

### 3.2 Lessons Learned from Delivering as One and the MDG Achievement Fund Projects

#### Delivering as One

Since 2006, and as recommended by the UN High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence, the UN has tested a reinforced coordination structure at country level through piloting a DaO system in 8 countries. The DaO principles were One Programme, One Fund, One Leader, and added to this was One Voice and in some countries One Office. The intention was not only to strengthen UN country level action but also to increase government leadership and ownership in line with the Paris Principles. A preliminary review in 2008, a 'stock-

*taking exercise'* showed positive results and a number of other countries quickly became 'self-starter' DaOs. In 2013 new guidelines for all UNCTs have been issued based on lessons learnt from the DaO pilot countries. UNCTs can use these guidelines to strengthen their coordination systems, their implementation based on shared programming, and the monitoring of development results, particularly at the outcome level.

One of the lessons learnt from the DaO pilot countries independent evaluation is that it is not joint projects per se which are important for development results, but rather joint programming: even if each project is implemented by only one agency, the follow up and monitoring of the programmes at outcome level can show whether or not the UN collectively is having a positive impact on a particular aspect of development at country level.

Four of the countries in our sample were DaO Pilot Countries (Albania, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uruguay) and three were self-starter countries (Ethiopia, Lesotho and Kyrgyzstan), while other countries, for example Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), have recently started to apply DaO principles. The Resident Coordinators in the DaO countries are very positive about the impact on the work of the UN at country level. And in some countries it is already well entrenched, with the **Mozambique** RC noting that: *The DaO is fundamental to the way the UN works in Mozambique. It is 'natural, organic' at working level on whatever issue.*

One characteristic of the DaO piloting was the increased importance given to Government responsibility for coordination. In **Tanzania**, this is very evident with the Government working on a programme called 'Big Results Now' in which specific sectors are prioritised and water is in the first set of six. The UN RC was invited, in his capacity as Co-Chair of the Development Partners Group, to all the meetings. The Government brought together technical experts, including from the UN, to define issues and bottlenecks and then draw up an implementation plan and financial plan. UNICEF's senior water officer represented the UN at the water meetings in his capacity as the UN's senior water expert in Tanzania.

According to the **MPTF Office**, in current trust funds there is usually the phrase 'preference given to joint pro-

grammes' especially for the DaO Trust Funds, but it is not a condition. Last year (2012) there was a UNDG study of joint programmes, and another on the operation practices of the Trust Funds: *The current shift to joint programming (from joint projects) is based on the experiences of the joint projects that were all time-heavy and sometimes were not good experiences. There is a need for better guidelines and the 2003 Joint Programme Guidance is currently being revised.* New Standard Operating Procedures have been circulated to all UNCTs and while aimed primarily at the ones that have adopted DaO, they are applicable for all.

A more coherent multi-agency approach has strengthened the leadership and coordination role of the Resident Coordinator as well as the Heads of the Agencies with the BiH RC commenting that in the UNCT: *the RC is the accountable person whereas at working level the substantive leadership on behalf of the UNCT will be provided by the relevant Results Group chaired by a Head of Agency. In case of the UNCT in BiH, the water-related issues are addressed through the joint work of the Sustainable and Equitable Development and Employment Results Group headed by UNDP.*

The Secretary General's report to the Quadrennial Review and the ensuing debate at the General Assembly led to a request from the Secretary General to the UNDG to implement a number of changes that will strengthen the RC system. This includes developing a system for the UN sister agencies to share the costs of the RC system. The UNDOCO Director noted that this has just been negotiated and the cost sharing principles have been agreed. The system will be put into practice in 2014. Also from 2014 countries preparing new UNDAFs can use a new DaO based system, with results groups and an *'integrated results plan'* under the auspices of the RC with the most capable agency in the country leading the relevant groups. The funding from the agencies will be channelled via UNDOCO to the RC Offices and the RCs will no longer ask agencies locally to contribute, nor donors. Commenting on this, the Director noted that: *for the first time the RC system will have a sustainable funding base from core funding rather than from extra-budgetary sources. People at the top and regionally have come together and their roles are embedded in the system.*

However, programme funding for DaO countries is no longer easily available. Of the eight DaO pilot countries some have done well and are financially healthy as are one or two of the self-starters. But it was noted in an interview with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office that this is not the case for all of them, some are struggling. There were originally two sources of funding, the first DaO pilot country based funds, and an Expanded Funding Window, which was an additional 280 MUSD but it has been completely allocated and there are no new funds at present. Currently, there is a working group looking into a new funding source but it is not certain there will be funds available. Furthermore, the UNDAF Trust Funds that were set up by the self-starters have mostly done badly in terms of attracting funds, with the exception of Papua New Guinea and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The transaction costs of setting up the trust funds are very high so the MPTF is now looking into setting a minimum level of funding before agreeing to them.

#### **Joint water projects funded by the MDG Achievement Fund**

Concurrently with the piloting of DaO, the UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) was set up as a UN resource to finance and support national efforts to accelerate progress on the Millennium Development Goals. A specification of this fund was that they should be joint projects, thus improving coordination and cooperation between Agencies. MDG-F aimed to positively impact the status of the MDGs and tackle inequality; increase national ownership and civil society participation; and improve aid effectiveness by building on the collective strength of the United Nations. Water projects were approved under two of the thematic areas, economic governance and climate change. Among our group of countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Panama and the Philippines implemented water projects under the Economic Governance thematic area.

The projects were implemented at local level, produced good results and also opened the door to policy level dialogue and collaborative work, as explained by the Philippines RC: *The MDG-F project was actually an opportunity for the UN to get access to high-level debate in the country on water, but there is the question of how that will be maintained now that the funds are running out. There is*

*still UN access to policy dialogue in emergency situations and WHO helped the Department of Health to send out guidelines following the recent flooding of Manila.*

In **Albania**, the project was unusual in that it was a UN-DP-World Bank collaboration and this showed clearly the administrative problems that can occur when working across different agencies: project start-up was delayed for 18 months because of procedural issues regarding the World Bank being sub-contracted by UNDP. Working as a team at local level, the MDG-F implementers (UNDP and UNICEF) in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** found a huge interest by local governments in improved management and supply of water. The start-up was not problem free, the project manager noting that at local level: *the project brought together actors from two different backgrounds, technical and social, and that it took some time for them to understand the importance of both aspects of the project. However, as Joint Programme implementation progressed, links were obvious and integrated approach was recognised and appreciated among local partners.* But the success of a project was not a guarantee of further funding, nor of support from the Government.

In **Panama** the MDG-F Economic Governance project was focused on local level in a small number of communities. ILO, UNICEF and WHO jointly implemented the project. According to the UNICEF Programme Officer, this could easily be replicated in other areas and in particular to help indigenous districts suffering from severe poverty. The recently retired PAHO senior water advisor commented: *The communities involved in the MDG-F economic governance project are still using the techniques they learned despite the lack of follow-on support two years afterwards.* However, the new funding sources in Panama are from the World Bank and the Inter-America Development Bank and are no longer focused on local community needs but on emergency supplies, climate change and disaster risk reduction. The lessons learned from the implementation of the UN joint project are in danger of being lost.

With the closure of the MDG-F there have been no further global attempts by donors to provide funds with the condition that there must be joint projects. Traditional channels between donors and single agencies continue to

dominate the voluntary contributions to UN development programmes at country level.

### 3.3 Coordination with Government, donors and the international development banks

In accordance with the Paris Principles, the Resident Coordinators and UNCTs place great emphasis on government leadership and ownership of development programmes and the government's leadership and responsibilities in humanitarian crises. The donors and the international development banks, both global and regional, are also important partners and particularly for development programmes. This adds up to a many-layered coordination in the field of water and this section reflects on the challenges of coordination with the non-UN partners at local level.

Many examples were provided of how the UN, represented by the RC or another Head of Agency, participates in Government-Donor-UN coordination groups, and of how technical experts join government or donor-led substantive groups on water and sanitation. In **Bangladesh**, for example, the RC co-chairs the Local Consultative Group together with the Ambassador of the Netherlands, with 18 working groups reporting to the group. In **Ethiopia**, there are separate mechanisms for humanitarian and development coordination and the interview participants thought that it might be useful to have a government-led coordination between humanitarian and development as well as in improved information flow with the federal regions. The **Philippines** is another country with many coordinating mechanisms, with the RC commenting that they are: *a little bit overwhelming and that the answer is to delegate with some flexibility, keep track of what is happening and work overtime.*

The DaO approach has helped to strengthen Government leadership and ownership and this was commented on by all the DaO countries in the sample. The **Albania** RC noted that: *The government imposes coordination and leadership in donor coordination in general as it sees the importance and benefits and commented that without active government leadership, the UNDAF would not be followed*

*through in the same way, as One UN. Agencies would be moving all over the place doing separate things if coordination was not part of their work plans and accountabilities.*

In **Tanzania**, there is a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) for water on which UNICEF represents the One UN. The RC noted that: *The big players in the Water Sector are the World Bank, African Development Bank, DFID and JICA. The UN focuses on coordination, as there are lots of capacity gaps. In Zanzibar, UN has worked with the water authority on capacity building for sustainability of services, monitoring and evaluation and information systems. The UN is being very selective and working on the soft issues keeping the needs of girls and under-served areas in focus.*

In **Mozambique**, the RC reported that with DaO principles having been applied for 6-7 years: *it is very organic across the agencies. Coordination across sectors and between the donors, UN and World Bank is daily and automatic.* There are two groups for water, the Water Sector Donor Coordination Group and the Water and Sanitation Working Group, and the WASH Sector specialist noted that regarding coordination structures, they can: *take on lives of their own and therefore an effort is made to keep them light and reduce the number of UN working groups. On the partners' coordination side, the groups are important and necessary but they can be very heavy and take time from other activities. But people are pragmatic and manage this well.* The structures and systems have matured since the first visit of the TF (UN-Water, 2008) and the Sector Wide Approach is under implementation.

In **Iraq**, with much initial support from the UN agencies, the Government has taken over leadership from the donors and UN in the water sector. The RC reported that: *The Government of Iraq has taken on board the seriousness of the water issues, as put to them by UN-identified water experts in 2011 and in a number of meetings since then. The Government has set up two government water committees, one focused on national issues and the other on international. The two government water committees will be visiting the Murray-Darling River Basin in August, at the invitation of the Government of Australia in July this year, a river basin identified by the experts as having relevant lessons for Iraq.*

In **Lesotho**, there is a Development Partners Consultative Forum with government participation through the Ministry of Planning. The meetings are co-chaired by UNDP and the US and Ireland Ambassadors. The RC noted that: *There have been no recent discussions on water, but this may be because water is the best functioning sector within government with a water sector group chaired by Government. Over the last couple of decades, the UN and donors have worked effectively to develop the capacity of government to manage the water sector – it is a success story.*

But coordination is not always improving and can become stalled when donor funding declines and the Government leadership is not dynamic. This is currently the case in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, where against a background of stalled political processes and the EU integration deadlock in the country, the RC reported that broader country level water coordination may prove challenging taking into consideration contracting donor community in BiH and insufficient leadership capacity on behalf of the BiH Ministry of Finance and Treasury legally responsible for coordination of international economic aid. He further noted that there is a coordination subgroup specifically on Local Development that includes water, however, the water-related issues in BiH warrant a more targeted approach by the international development community through establishment of a specific ad-hoc working group.

However, the trend reported by the 13 countries is overall a positive one, with active coordination mechanisms increasingly led by the Government and with UN participation based on agency presence and relevance in the water sector and the UNCT agencies being represented in general and water specific coordination groups by the RC, an agency head or a technical specialist.

### 3.4 External support for a coordinated approach to UNCT water programmes

The UN Resident Coordinators and the UN Heads of Agency at country level work as senior managers and although they may have some background in WASH or other aspects of water, they rely in the first hand on their staff for knowledge and skills required for water programming and implementation, both for humanitarian and development programmes. However, not all UNCTs have all the competencies needed for work in the water sector and are reliant on outside expertise. We asked all the participating RCs and other interview respondents where they turn for external advice and the questionnaire also asked about where the UNCT looked for water expertise.

The first contacts were reported to be the regional offices of their specific agencies, or a specialist unit within their agencies. There was patchy knowledge about UN-Water reported in the questionnaires, and the Resident Coordinators were open about the difficulties that they could have in identifying sources of expert help. For example, the **Bangladesh** RC, who was relieved to hear that UN-Water was not another agency. On hearing about UN-Water, he commented that what he would like from them are *guidelines on how to think about water in a comprehensive way and help with how to think about water in the context of UNDAF and its implementation.*

Answering the same question in **Ethiopia**, an OCHA staff member commented that: *it would be wonderful to hear from other countries with similar situations and experiences of isolated drought and flood problems. We want to learn from other countries and across the board, not just WASH, as the local water problems are acute in Ethiopia: we have been talking about this for years but without progress.*

Some of the RCs noted specific areas where they would need expert advice. For example, the **Mozambique** RC commented that: *Policy issues arise and we do get best practice advice but there could be better collaboration between UNCTs and UN-Water. For example, the entrance of private sector actors in the water sector is a current issue. The UN needs advice on how to manage this when the UNs own standpoint is to see water from a human rights perspective.*

Finding the right expertise is sometimes a matter of happy circumstance, as happened for **Iraq**. The UNDP Country Director narrated how they found the people needed for dialogue on water issues with the government: *UN-Government of Iraq cooperation on Water Policy started at the Stockholm International Water Week in 2010 where I attended the seminar on the Tigris Euphrates river basin together with Iraqi senior officials. Contact was made with David Grey, Oxford University and through him with Don Blackmore. The two experts then visited Iraq and their report from the meeting became the basis for the UN-Government of Iraq work on water resources. The UN side of the cooperation is led by UNDP with FAO and UNESCO support. The following year .... they proposed that Iraq set up a high level committee and a multi-disciplinary technical institute to build up the information base and prepare for regional negotiations. Their proposal has now been accepted by all parties in Iraq: water is an existential problem in Iraq and needs the highest possible level of political attention. The work of the two experts was funded by UNDP-HQ and SIWI was also involved. In Iraq, as a result of the experts' advice, the legislation to establish a National Water Council is now in Parliament for a second reading, two water committees have been established and in the interim a small technical team is being set up in the office of the Prime Minister's Advisory Council with a Economist, a lawyer and a water expert on UNDP contracts. They will subsequently move to the Prime Minister's Office to become the Secretariat of the Water Council.*

**Albania** has also benefitted from the Stockholm Water Week. The UNDP Water Programme Officer who participated in the interview explained that he was at World Water Week in 2012 with the Head of the Albanian Regulatory Agency for Water, and they made a presentation from the consumer protection angle. There have also been contacts with the Water Governance Facility in Stockholm, as well as the UNDP Regional Office in Bratislava and some support from the UNDP Teamworks knowledge-sharing platform.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, a key actor has been the UN Economic Commission for Europe. The RC commented that: *regarding external actors, UNECE has an expert role and supports communication across the region but they do not have a representative in Kyrgyzstan. The Director General of UNECE, Sven Alkalaj, was on a recent visit and met the Pres-*

ident. The DG pushed for regional water conventions to regulate water: The ECE is doing a very good job. The RC further noted that: in Kyrgyzstan water is not just an issue in terms of health and environment, but includes political, economic and regional dimensions. The Department of Political Affairs is involved, not just the development agencies. Regarding the future it is difficult to say what will be the support needs, but we may need to find support for the government to develop legal instruments for water.

A further source of support for the UN in Kyrgyzstan is the Regional Centre for Central Asia in Turkmenistan, looking at water issues and promoting mechanisms for managing water relations. This centre was created by the Security Council and is connected to the Special Representative on Preventative Diplomacy.

In the Philippines, the RC emphasised that: *“In the Philippines it is all about water”* and went on to explain that: *a project on adaptation would be perfect. Such a project would give the UN access to the whole range of actors and get them involved in the development of legislation etc. A proposal will be made to the climate change fund but it is still under development.”* And asked: *Where can expertise be found to assist with this?*

In Bosnia and Herzegovina a rather different approach is being taken: *Water expertise is sought on the open market through networks of contacts, particularly regional. A new source of consultants is the experts in Croatia and Slovenia who helped with the accession to the EU process and possess significant expertise in this area which, taking into consideration the BiH's aspirations to become an EU member, can be highly beneficial.* However, in putting together the MDG-F project proposal on economic governance (water), the UNCT was supported by UNDP as well as the UN regional offices for Europe and UN Headquarters.

The question was raised by the PAHO senior water expert in Panama as to whether UN staff present in the country have the skills to support coordination: *It is important to have people with coordination skills in the UN system, not just the Resident Coordinators but also programme coordinators. The UN is needed to facilitate coordination. And internal UN coordination is so time consuming that it needs people trained to facilitate the coordination.*

MPTF explained that: *Work is on-going on developing a Results Based Management system for the MPTF Gateway. There is an inter-agency working group but progress is slow. This is an area where UN- Water members could help. There are issues with the strategic positioning of the UN regarding water as there are so many vertical and horizontal cross-overs that it is confusing.*

### 3.5 Key points on the benefits and challenges of country level coordination

In the interviews with the Resident Coordinators and water specialists in the thirteen countries, and in the replies to the questionnaires, a pattern emerged of progress made regarding the coordination of the water sector but also of challenges. Some of these, as reported above, are linked to the structures of the UN and the rules and regulations of the funds, programmes and agencies implementing water sector programmes and projects. There are also issues, positive and negative, related to internal UN coordination mechanisms at country level and to government and donor led coordination of the water sector. A particular problem was bridging the knowledge and programming gap between humanitarian and development programmes in the water sector. Another issue is how and from where the UNCT members can access specialist information and expert advice on water.

On the plus side can be seen the following:

- The UNDAF has been developed into an effective planning and coordination tool
- Lessons learned from the piloting of Delivering as One have been analysed and new coordination tools developed based on the lessons and shared with all UNCTs: there is a new emphasis on joint programming (as opposed to joint projects). The MDG-F projects contributed to the understanding of how coordination works at country level.
- Internal UN coordination fora for Water, Sanitation and Health programmes at country level are strong on the humanitarian side, while on the development side it was more often integrated with donor and government coordination mechanisms

- Sister agencies such as the World Bank, as well as regional UN bodies, are represented on UNCTs and this should facilitate water sector coordination.
- Coordination with government and external partners is strong and progress has been made in strengthening and handing over coordination responsibility to the government
- Some excellent, multi-agency work was done in the water sector with financing from the MDG Achievement Fund, providing models for future action.
- The MDG agenda means that attention is paid to water in different contexts and progress reported in the national MDG reports, even if these do not give an overall picture of the water situation
- External support from the UN is requested and availed by the UNCTs with water as part of their programmes

**However, there are also a number of challenges, often the reverse side of the positive outcomes listed above:**

- Water is usually spread over the pillars or priority areas of the UNDAF and this impacts negatively on the coordination of UN-led water projects in a country and means that UN coordination on the development side is weaker than on the humanitarian side
- There is still a divide between humanitarian and development water projects which works against the funding of sustainable development solutions in the water sector
- DaO countries received extra funds which supported UN coordination and joint programming, while other programme countries have few funds for coordination through the RC office despite recent efforts to strengthen the RC system and the establishment of country specific UNDAF funds.
- In a number of countries, the coordination mechanisms have proliferated and might now be too expensive in terms of time needed from agency staff, measured against overall results.
- Positive outcomes from MDG-F-financed, multi-agency projects have not been replicated or adapted for larger scale implementation due to lack of funding
- Without a specific MDG on water or comprehensive national reporting systems, the reporting is fragmentary and it is difficult for UNCTs to build up an overall analysis of the water and sanitation situation in each country
- Knowledge of possible sources of regional and global UN expertise in the water sector is patchy and not always drawn upon when key decisions for the water sector are being made.



## Section 4

# Government and Other Coordination Systems for Water at Country Level

*Coordination of the UN across agencies is important to improve efficiency but the UN also has to coordinate with national governments and the many other country actors to ensure that programmes remain relevant, follow national policy and strategy, and do not duplicate actions of others.*

There are many coordination mechanisms outside the UN that operate at country level and of particular importance are those established by government. By their very nature, developing countries are in a state of transition with policies, laws strategies and plans under varying stages of development and implementation. These processes are very demanding in terms of consultation across political and government levels and also with the general population. Add to this the many external agencies and NGOs taking up an implementation role, engaging in policy, offering advice and funding, and the challenge of coordination is a daunting one.

Regarding water, most countries have responded to the call for more sustainable development that came from the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (UNDESA, 1992) and have

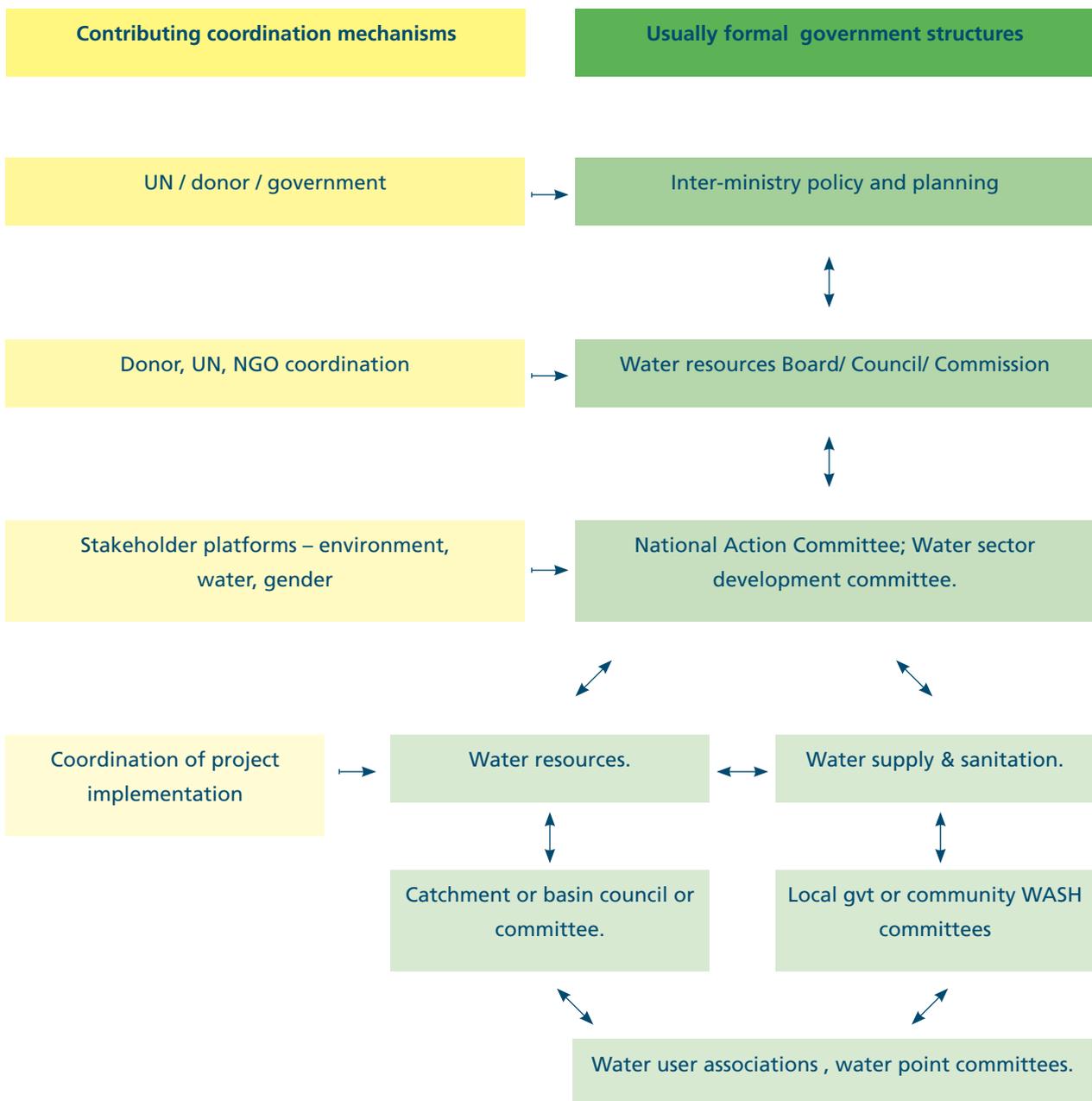
taken measures to reform the way water is being managed. Efforts to introduce a more integrated management system which takes into account the interests of the large number of stakeholders have resulted in a number of formal and less formal coordination mechanisms. A UN-Water report for Rio+20 on the progress with the integrated approach to water resources management (UNEP, 2012) shows that 82% of countries have changed their water laws in the past 20 years and 52% of countries are implementing mechanisms for cross-sector management of water resources.

These reforms to water resources management aim to decentralise management to the lowest appropriate level and propose that water should be managed at the basin level. The result in most countries are a series of structures that allow for multi-stakeholder participation and effectively act as coordination mechanisms that bring together views of various stakeholders in e.g. policy development, basin planning and water allocation.

Each country has its own interpretation of its institutional needs and priorities for coordination with a similar diversity in nomenclature. For the purposes of this report a very sim-

ple interpretation of some key points in water management where coordination takes place is provided in Fig 1. Also shown is a sample of the coordination mechanisms outside formal government structures that are commonly found supporting or responding to government management systems for water. The names given to these structures vary across countries and so only examples are given.

**Fig 1. Broad framework of coordination mechanisms for water at country level**



## 4.1 Types of coordination mechanism.

Coordination at country level can be complex, imposing an administrative and financial burden. Within national governments, and sometimes duplicated across states in a federal system, there are usually many points where coordination may be considered necessary. The integrated approach to water resources management is founded on effective coordination and countries following this path have a more structured coordination system, usually built into the water laws. It can be challenging to establish the necessary coordination without it becoming a problem rather than a solution – e.g. during the UNDAF review there was an attempt to map out the coordination structures in Ethiopia and this was shelved after three weeks effort and conclusion that it was “nearly impossible”.

The National Water Sector Development Strategy in **Tanzania** defines a new institutional arrangement for the sector that broadly follows Fig 1 in terms of mechanisms for coordination. This institutional framework comprises (a) the National Water Board; (b) Basin Water Boards; and at the community level (d) Water User Associations. There are similar structures in many countries that have adopted the integrated approach to management of water resources. All are multi-stakeholder structures which, when fully operating, are intended to provide the basis for improved decision making and greater coherence of action. However for many countries progress with establishing all these structures has been slow (UNEP, 2012 pg 21).

### With reference to Fig 1:

*National planning and policy development* at the highest government level is carried out by planning and finance ministries in collaboration with politicians and with inputs from various ministries. It is at this level also where the UN-DAF is negotiated and specific agreements for development assistance may be established with development banks or donors. Water may only be part of the National planning process which is carried out by government at specified intervals. Many countries have set up specific, and often time limited, inter-ministerial structures to manage water sector reforms.

*An apex body for water* can be identified in most countries with several key ministries and agencies participating, sometimes with civil society representation, in a National Water Resources Board or Commission. Government led coordination structures for water management are usually chaired by the responsible ministry or department but there are examples where the chairmanship is held jointly with a development partner, often a UN agency (**Bangladesh, Mozambique, Lesotho**). At this higher level of government the main purpose of coordination is to agree broad government policy and strategy for water and hence the members tend to be from related, relevant ministries and departments. In the **Philippines** a National Water Resources Management Council has recently been established in the Office of the President to bring coordination to a very complex water sector. **Albania, Tanzania** and many other countries have an apex body for water with an inter-ministerial composition. Below the apex body coordination may occur across all or part of the water spectrum depending upon the relative importance and status of sectors as well as established mandates.

*A national action committee* may bring together views of most water users and interest groups to develop and agree broad strategies. Nevertheless it is often found that operational strategies and plans are developed in sub-groups reflecting the specific needs of e.g. water resources management, water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), agriculture. Coordination in this case is necessary to agree how social, economic and political objectives will be achieved in practice thus guiding implementation and defining outcomes. Donors, and particularly UN agencies, are sometimes closely involved in these coordination mechanisms. **Bangladesh** is an example where coordination of development is managed through a Local Consultative Group (LCG). The UN RC is the co-Chair with the Senior Secretary of Economic Relation Division of Ministry of Finance, of the whole LCG coordination mechanism. The UN organizations are co-Chairing 6 out of 18 Working Groups.

*Subject specific entities* coordinate the input of key players into strategy development, planning and often also into implementation. Approval of such strategies and plans at a higher level facilitates coherence of implementation by all stakeholders. **Malawi** has a WASH working group under the Sanitation and Hygiene National Coordination Unit

while in **Madagascar** there is WASH coordinator (supported by WSSCC) who is elected from the 22 regions. **Nepal** has a National Sanitation and Hygiene Coordinating Committee bringing together government ministries, UN agencies and NGOs on a bi-monthly basis.

*Subnational and community coordination structures* have long been recognised as key to effective implementation of farming systems and WASH although only more recently becoming common for water resources management. Water resources management recognises the importance of the river basin approach, involving stakeholders in the basin in planning and management. As a result formal coordination structures such as Catchment Councils / River basin organizations are being established with water user associations at the community level. For WASH, multi-stakeholder committees at various levels have served to coordinate action down to the community and similarly farmers associations have long played a role to interface with government.

The above sample of structures and levels of coordination represent those commonly found in developing countries. They are often empowered by law although this is less likely at the level of community structures.

*Contributing coordination mechanisms* interact with these formal coordination structures established by government. The United Nations increasingly presents a coordinated approach to government under the programme 'Delivering as One' and follows an agreed development assistance framework (UNDAF). Representatives of external support agencies may meet together or together with government to agree support programmes, strategies and plans. For example the government of **Albania** imposes coordination and takes leadership in donor coordination in general as it sees the importance and benefits.

Some stakeholder concerns are well represented through coordination mechanisms representing specific issues (e.g. gender, environment, water user groups) and such structures can facilitate government consultation with stakeholders. In most of the **Bangladesh** Water Partnership sponsored programs partner organizations and individual members actively participate. In many cases honourable Ministers and Secretaries of the relevant Ministries attend

such events which effectively promote inter-ministerial and inter departmental coordination.

One common coordination mechanism is project coordination, the practical requirement of partners to a project to sit together to coordinate implementation. These are usually temporary mechanisms and formed for a time specific project or a longer term programme of work. An example of project coordination is given by the experiences of ILO in **Panama**. The project entailed employment generation alongside provision and management of water and sanitation services for neglected rural populations. The collaboration involved several UN organizations (PAHO / WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO) as well as government ministries (Ministries of Health and Education) local authorities and communities (municipalities, township representatives, traditional indigenous authorities and community organizations). This was referred to above as one of the MDG-F joint projects.

These examples of coordination mechanisms for the water sector are by no means complete and there are often parallel systems at various levels for related sectors/ issues such as environment, agriculture, climate change and health. Responsibilities within the water sector may be scattered creating challenges for coordination (the **Philippines** has over 30 agencies concerned with water). Usually water resources and water supply may be under separate agencies but other components may be separated due to ministerial responsibilities (e.g. pollution management, irrigation, hydropower) or perceived differences in technical solutions (e.g. urban / rural water supply and sanitation) and in federal systems these challenges are further multiplied. Groundwater management should be considered alongside other water resources but may have different structures in countries where there is little surface water or for large aquifers. In **Kyrgyzstan** the formation of associations and federations of water users in the irrigation sector is considered as a more significant achievement than for water resources as they maintain the majority of on-farm irrigation systems. The rural public associations of drinking water users are also widely spread throughout **Kyrgyzstan**. Indeed the adoption of a more integrated approach to water resources management comes late and better coordination between interest groups can be found most often amongst influential water users such as WASH, water utilities, agriculture and health.

## 4.2 Purpose of coordination.

National governments regularly engage in coordination simply because of the complexity of the governance process, the complications of overlapping mandates, and for some political systems the need to ensure transparency and accountability.

Some of the main reasons for establishing coordination are:

- a. To establish consensus on the present situation and agree on desired policy, strategy and implementation processes;
- b. To bring coherence to a complex situation, for example funding; multiple implementing agencies; cross cutting issues;
- c. To ensure consistency of policy and strategy through to implementation.
- d. To establish a common voice around an issue and influence decision making.

The purpose of the coordination should determine the coordination strategy and who should be involved. However these issues are not always optimised as is discussed in a later section.

Examples are given below of coordination mechanisms established for such purposes drawing on the cases examined and emphasising the role of the UN.

### 4.2<sup>a</sup> To establish consensus.

Coordination mechanisms may be used to speed consensus on action when preparing for water sector reform or in processes such as accession into the EU. National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Water Supply and Sanitation are the main operational instrument of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) Component for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. They have been established in 9 countries with the support of UNECE and OECD. In the case of **Kyrgyzstan** the NPD was adopted as a catalyst to speed the stalled water sector reforms (Kyrgyz, 2013). National steering committees were established to develop policies and strategies and their success has led to other countries requesting support for a similar approach.

Coordination mechanisms are often necessary to help resolve conflicting interests as well as to ensure all points of view are taken into account. However decision making by coordination mechanisms can alienate members who feel threatened or not given adequate recognition hence they tend to make decisions by consensus (see **Albania** Box) or only be empowered to make recommendations.

#### Albania Competency of the Environment Commission.

The Environment Commission, chaired by the Prime Minister, is intended to be the driving force behind the implementation of the Environmental Strategy. Whilst it cannot and should not in any way undermine or interfere with the competencies of individual Ministries, it should allow the burden of implementation to be shared and for efficiency gains to be made. In particular the Commission will be given powers to create Inter Ministerial Task Groups which will support the Commission and the Ministers in undertaking tasks which are of concern and within the legal competence of more than one Ministry. Ministers will also be supported by the Environment Units and Environmental Officers within their own Ministries.

(Source – National Environmental Strategy, Albania, 2006).

A Task Force visit to the **Philippines** noted that the main components of the water sector in the **Philippines** are distributed across more than thirty agencies and offices, each dealing with a particular aspect of water resources development (UN-Water 2008). Each agency undertakes programmes and projects exclusively within its own field of responsibility. The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has the responsibility to coordinate the activities of some of these (irrigation, hydropower, flood control, navigation, pollution, water supply, waste disposal, watershed management).

NWRB is not an implementing and decision-making body and the different governmental bodies belonging to the board are responsible for decisions and implementation. Some of the key institutions missing from the Board have crucial roles in the sector such as agriculture water management, energy and industry and water supply and sanitation

in Manila and elsewhere. In addition, according to the view of many actors, the fast decentralization process that has been carried out in the country has caused some constraints in the delegation of the responsibilities particularly in the water sector. There is still limited connection between Local Government Units and national government and local Government Units have limited responsibilities due in particular to a lack of financial resources.

#### 4.2<sup>b</sup> To bring coherence.

Donors and UN agencies often establish coordination groups with, or separate from, government. When government takes the lead it is to try to bring a complex situation under control (PROAGRI in **Mozambique**). Governments in developing countries have frequently sought to bring donors to a regular meeting in order to agree common strategies of funding and implementation.

The **Philippines** Development Group Sub-Working group on water supply and sanitation includes a broad range of country actors from government (e.g. National Economic and Development Authority, Local Water Utilities Administration, National Water Resources Board, Department of Environment and Natural Resources), donors (Asian Development Bank, AusAid, GIZ), UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, WHO) and the World Bank. It is both an operation and consultative group with the aim of discussing water supply and sanitation sector issues and set common goals, strategic directions, priority plans and programs. Moreover it coordinates the respective development programs of the Government of the Philippines, development partners and the private sector for the water supply and sanitation sector under a common platform and promotes complementarity and synergy among the different ODA-funded activities for the water supply and sanitation sector.

The Philippines Development Forum (PDF) is the primary mechanism of the Government for facilitating substantive policy dialogue among stakeholders on the country's development agenda. It also serves as a process for developing consensus and generating commitments among different stakeholders toward critical actionable items of the Government's reform agenda. It has been co-chaired by the Philippine Government (Department of Finance)

and the World Bank with stakeholders such as civil society, academia, private sector, and legislative representatives. It was a general opinion that the PDF is good consultative mechanism but lacks operational capacity. The frequency of meetings (every 18 months) is not adequate to deal with the emerging challenges in the water sector. Nevertheless, sub-working groups meet and consult more frequently.

#### 4.2<sup>c</sup> To ensure consistency.

In **Tanzania** the National Water Board which comprises stakeholders from different sectors has been established to integrate inter-sectoral planning, coordinate basin planning and management, resolve inter-sectoral / inter-basin conflicts and determine investment priorities and financing patterns as provided by the Water Resource Management Act of 2009.

The mandate is clear and the Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP) is the main instrument of coordination of the water sector among the various actors involved (government, UN entities, donors, NGOs and the private sector). Within the Ministry of Water the Director for Policy and Planning is responsible for the provision of technical and administrative support and coordination of the WSDP.

Coordination of donors in Tanzania took place through the Development Partner Group, Water (DPG-W) which met regularly and its main role was to align efforts by UN entities and donors in the water sector in Tanzania (UN-Water, 2008). The DPG-W conducted a regular "donor mission" within the framework of the Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP) to monitor performance in the water sector.

#### 4.2<sup>d</sup> To establish a common voice.

Local interest groups may establish a forum through which a common position or strategy can be developed and communicated. Such examples include the Global Water Partnership (GWP) Country Water Partnerships (see Box) which bring together a wide variety of interest groups from civil society, the private sector, NGOs and government. For example the Philippines Water Partnership is represented on

the National Economic Development Authority planning sub-committee to represent NGOs and in Bangladesh the CWP has been a strong advocate and attributes the recent formal inclusion of IWRM in the national planning document at least in part as due to its efforts. These coordination mechanisms are often structured around issues such as gender or environment. No examples were found of UN engagement with these groups suggesting that it is not common practice. Stakeholder structures are more vulnerable to funding constraints than formal government structures and all of the CWPs report this as a limiting factor.

### 4.3 Examples of outcomes and impacts

#### Tanzania and donor coordination

The Government of Tanzania signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the Government (Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Water, and Ministry of Finance) and the development partners (KfW, World Bank, and French development agency) commit themselves to the principles of the WSDP and create a so-called Basket Fund to finance the activities in the WSDP. The MoU clearly spelt out the engagement of development partners with the government and vice versa. Coordination through the WSDP is supported by common tools such as a project implementation manual and working groups that serve to guide a common approach to implementation and a joint sector review that periodically brings together all partners across government, civil society, donors and the UN to review progress, identify issues and agree actions.

This demonstrates very clearly that the outcomes of high level coordination can have far reaching impacts for efficiency and coherence. Nevertheless, it was noted by some of the people interviewed that some development partners engage on a bilateral basis with the Government and circumvent at times the efforts and established coordination frameworks. (UN-Water, 2008)

#### National Policy Dialogues

The National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) have provided an entry point at the highest level of government to assist in developing the consensus across stakeholder interests for progress in water resources and WSS management.

Slow progress, e.g. in Kyrgyzstan, reflect the challenges in bringing competing interests to the table and the successes achieved show the long term value of supporting such initiatives. The NPDs on IWRM provide practical assistance to strengthen IWRM implementation in countries of the sub-region (UNECE, 2013).

The NPDs on WASH provide practical assistance to countries of the sub-region through improving the legal, institutional and regulatory framework in WASH and overall sector governance, in line with international best practices and OECD expertise. In addition to their original function of supporting the development of policies on IWRM and WASH, in several countries the NPDs and their Steering Committees have become national coordination mechanisms for water-related projects carried out under the auspices of international organizations (e.g. the EU, UNECE, UNDP, the World Bank and OECD) and donor countries (e.g. Finland, Norway, Switzerland and the United States of America). This contributes to a more efficient use of available funds. International and donor organizations, such as the European Union (EU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and bilateral donors are invited to the policy dialogue meetings.

#### Kyrgyzstan

Over the past five years one of the key roles of the NPD was as an effective mechanism to coordinate water-related projects implemented with the support of international and donor organizations. Regular meetings of the Steering Committee created the conditions for a broad discussion on a number of project proposals, progress and final results of the implementation of specific international projects. Herewith, it was possible not only to correct some problems, but to avoid duplication within various projects and to bring together various projects for more effective results with minimum costs.

*"The National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in the Republic of Tajikistan has proved to be a useful platform for discussion of the most urgent water policy issues, such as the water sector reform strategy,*

*inter-sectoral coordination, and development of water and energy cooperation with neighbouring countries.” Rahmat Bobokalonov, Minister of Melioration and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan*

**Azerbaijan** NPD adopted a draft National Water Strategy. **Kyrgyzstan** NPD outcomes featured two policy packages, including a regulation for the establishment of a River Basin Council for the Chu River Basin and an action plan to achieve the water-related MDGs through the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health. Moldova NPD on IWRM started in 2006 and resulted in policy packages adopted in 2009–2010. These included a Governmental Order on wastewater discharges from municipal sources, and a Draft Order on the establishment of river basin management authorities and river basin councils.

The role of international agencies is important as demonstrated in the NPD. The NPDs on IWRM are successfully building on multiple UNECE activities, including (a) activities under the UNECE environmental conventions, in particular the Water Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health; (b) the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme; and (c) UNECE projects and activities on the ground, such as those implemented by the Regional Adviser on the Environment. Direct contacts and regular cooperation of UNECE in different United Nations forums with the Governments of the countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia help to achieve the political commitment of these Governments to NPD implementation and ensure their long term sustainability.

#### **Mozambique:**

In **Mozambique** there is a UNCT sub-group on WASH although as UNICEF is the main agency active in this field there is little work in the group apart from the preparation of consolidated reports on the achievements of the three active agencies UNICEF, WHO and UN-Habitat.

UNICEF is the secretariat to a National Department of Water (DNA) led WASH technical group which brings together the main actors on a monthly basis to exchange experience. This gives various players the chance to showcase their programmes and discuss different themes each month. The technical group provides a useful tool for keeping everyone informed although it is not a decision making body. The

most significant coordination event is the annual sector review which takes place over 3 days and addresses WASH and water resources management. Key players from government, NGOs, the donor community and front line workers gather to review progress for the year and to discuss the programme for the coming year.

In **Mozambique** there is a donor group of four (Swiss Development Agency, **Netherlands**, DfID, and UNICEF) who have pooled their support to the WASH programme through a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) where funds are channelled through the treasury. The four meet regularly and the feedback to DNA is through the chair of the group (Netherlands). This SWAP facilitates donor coordination with government and is considered to be effective because it is well targeted. However several other agencies and large NGOs have opted to continue working in a more traditional route.

#### **WSSCC and WASH**

The interests of **Madagascar** communities in WASH services has been facilitated through a WASH coordinator, supported by WSSCC but elected from the 22 provinces. Through the coordination of the Ministry of Water, the WSSCC were able to influence the national strategy for water, sanitation and hygiene. That is to say that the national visions, goals, strategies, are based on proposals presented from the National WASH coordination with WSSCC. Another achievement of the coordination was a successful proposal to the Global Sanitation Fund.

#### **Malawi WASH**

In Malawi the sector working group is the highest coordination mechanism for WASH with different stakeholders like government, development partners and NGOs. It enables everyone to be on the same page as far as the developments in the sector are concerned. Going there as a representative of a group like the WES (Water and Environmental Sanitation) network, an umbrella organization for NGOs in the sector, means we are also mobilized at a lower level. It gives us a direction on what are the issues others would want to hear from us, and what we should be working for, what we should provide. And then we also represent the NGOs within the donor coordination

group. Which enables us to input into the agendas for the donors and they are able to give us feedback on what we are doing. So it's that cross-fertilization that is happening.

*Ngabaghila Chatata, National Coordinator, Malawi*

The development partners in **Nepal** are all committed to reducing environmental health risk from open defecation through the ODF (open defecation free) sanitation movement. **Nepal** has a national target to make the country ODF by 2017 and on an almost daily basis districts and villages are declared ODF. *“One of the greatest, positive things in Nepal is the very strong coordination among the development partners. Especially led by the government, and it is specifically structured, not only at the national level but it also has a sub-national structure.”* (Guna Raj Shrestha, National Coordinator Nepal)

### **ILO Panama**

The establishment of coordinating bodies at different levels from national to local was found in **Panama** to be a key element in the implementation and sustainability of the project. The collaboration of various institutions facilitated the understanding of the concept of joint responsibility which was valued by local stakeholders and facilitated dialogue. Also critical was the Coordinator role to help build threads that link the work of the agencies and partners. Frameworks were used, such as memoranda of understanding to empower the traditional players and make them partners and not merely beneficiaries. Also, a written document helps manage expectations of the various stakeholders, their responsibilities, contributions to the joint program, etc. Lesson from this project: *It is important to take into account and respect the time and traditional processes of consultation and dialogue. You have to adjust work plans to incorporate these times to not misunderstand as “low performance” or delays in the implementation of programs. Eventually these “delays” transform to become sustainability. An important lesson learned was the mutual respect of multiculturalism - to communities and communities to agencies, partners and the PC itself.*

### **Country Water Partnerships**

The **Bangladesh** CWP has succeeded in bringing together organizations from across government and civil society.

Senior members of government participate in CWP activities and the CWP has carried out capacity building of both government and non-government personnel. The inclusion of IWRM into the new 6yr plan of the Planning Commission was considered a success of the Partnership. In the **Philippines** the CWP has not achieved such a high profile but nevertheless represents NGOs on the National Economic Development Authority planning sub-committee.





## Section 5

# Incentives and Constraints to Good Coordination

*To a large extent strengths and weaknesses of coordination are opposite sides of the same coin and are addressed together.*

### **Appropriate membership**

The need to engage in a coordination process can result from a directive to coordinate such as happens when the president of a country establishes an inter-ministerial committee to lead a process of water sector reform. Another example is the decision of the United Nations to pilot the Delivery as One initiative at country level. In these cases the

participants are required to participate in the process. However in many situations parties relevant to a coordination process are independent and a 'higher authority' either does not exist or has not directed that the coordination process takes place. UN-Water is one example of this situation and at country level the Country Water Partnerships, community water committees, and donor coordination are other examples. One of the first challenges to coordination is therefore how to get relevant people/ organizations to come to the table and to continue coming until the purpose has been achieved.

### **Lessons from UNOCHA in emergency situations:**

- Coordination mechanisms established under normal operational circumstances tend to favour a broad participation and an information-sharing approach.
- In times of crisis, coordination mechanisms with a strictly limited participation are more effective as long as pressure for enlargement can be resisted.

(UNOCHA, 2002)

Cooperation at the national level is often more difficult than at the lower levels of basin management and this was recognised by Australia which felt it *"necessary to develop a national agenda to encourage a cooperative approach between all tiers of government and various stakeholders. The Council of Australian Governments, the nation's peak intergovernmental forum, was selected to initiate the development of a framework for a national IWRM agenda alongside consultations with the wider Australian and international communities. This has proven effective, with the generation of the Australian National Water Initiative,*

*with the policy progress of States scrutinized by both the National Water Commission and the National Competition Council.” (UNEP, 2012)*

Leadership and the commitment of national actors are important for successful implementation of NPDs. The involvement of representatives of parliamentary and governmental bodies is crucial for the discussion and adoption of the new policy packages. NGOs are important drivers for policy reform discussions and should be actively involved in the dialogue processes. (UNECE, 2013)

The membership of the **Bangladesh** CWP includes almost all the public sector agencies and some leading NGOs, community based organizations, universities and research organizations working in the field of water, agriculture, environment, climate change, disaster management etc. In addition some prominent professionals (about 50) working in the above sectors are also members in their individual capacity. The fact that membership is considered prestigious helps to bring people together and facilitates the CWP to achieve its objective as a forum for exchange of experiences and views.

In the **Philippines** one of the most critical issues characterizing the water sector is the lack of an appropriate institutional framework to address issues of development and management of water and related resources. This context also affects the coordination of the other development partners (UNCT, Donors, NGOs) which deal and dialogue with governmental agencies in an independent and fragmented way. The government does not deal and collaborate with the development partners as unique entity.

The various agencies and departments separately dealing with different water-related sub-sectors imply a fragmented approach to water management bringing about an overlap of work and conflicts among agencies that result in fractional water management plan that does not adequately meet the requirements for sustainability. Many projects are being implemented in many cases without considering the interactions between the different sectors (domestic, agriculture and industrial) and between hydrological and economic system, thus, resulting in inefficient resource use, economic and social losses, and environmental degradation.

Coordination is not only about getting the right organizations to the table but frequently is also dependent upon having the right level of seniority and competence. This allows the coordination process to reach a consensus on action and become effective.

### **They are effective**

There are success stories (**Uganda, Mozambique** flood and drought management, **Brazil, Australia**) but it seems that integrated approaches do not arise by decree but from mutual trust, appropriate mechanisms and gradual acknowledgement of the benefits.

The NPD experience demonstrates that the dialogues respond to countries needs and are much requested. Countries in which the NPDs were supposed to end have requested continuation and countries that were not initially interested have in several cases requested the start of NPDs (**Kazakhstan**). Donors and international organizations show a considerable interest in NPDs as a platform to share expertise and coordinate initiatives. Implementation of policy packages (e.g., new governmental regulations) is one of the key objectives of the NPDs. At the same time, individual policy packages should be well-defined and not overly ambitious e.g. products that demonstrate effectiveness and have downstream impact.

### **Able to influence action**

In **Mozambique** the majority of stakeholders interviewed were well aware of the decentralized and participatory mechanisms set in place, through which basin stakeholders' voices are heard by government structures. For instance, both civil society-based organizations and government institutions interviewed, showed a great satisfaction and expectation on the existence of River Basin Committees, since these are platforms where local players come together for joint planning and implementation of development programs. It is important to highlight that while all stakeholders recognized that there is a joint planning among stakeholders, joint and coordinated implementation of these planned interventions are rarely seen on the ground. (Level 2 report, UNEP, 2012)

**Bangladesh** CWP has become one of the leading independent platforms for coordination of the professionals and organizations and has earned respect in the areas of

its area of work and most professionals feel comfortable with its coordination. This is attributed to their neutral role which is appreciated by government and non-government alike. It also has a high profile executive committee 50/50 government and non-government. However there are constraints and with 12 ministries and 26 departments involved with water they haven't been able to bring them all on board as yet. In contrast, the **Philippines** CWP has few active members and works in a very complex environment of many agencies with responsibilities in water. The ability to influence action in this context is small and requires persistence.

### Have the necessary resources

Coordination actions can be many and time consuming, consuming human as well as financial resources. A challenge is to know when a coordination mechanism is necessary and when it should be closed down or realigned. The lack of political stability in some target countries is one of the major concerns for sustaining coordination. Supporting and re-establishing a policy dialogue, for example in the case of changes in government, is a long and resource-consuming process. Flexibility in planning is necessary to ensure the most efficient use of resources as coordination takes time and deliberation before relevant coordination members can be brought on board. In the implementation of the national Policy Dialogues the UNECE has found that liaising with a wide array of policymakers in each country, and engaging EC delegations are ways to mitigate the consequences of political instability in countries of the sub-region.

There are many reasons that organizations may join in a coordination process. A significant one is the opportunity of the coordination mechanism to improve access to funds while others may include prestige, protecting one's interests from adverse decisions and the opportunity to influence the future direction. In the reverse direction a coordination mechanism may not be supported if an organization feels its power base or budget is being threatened or if it feels there is nothing to gain from the process.

A lack of resources, usually funding, is reported as negatively affecting achievement and impact of several coordination mechanisms: the WSSCC WASH coordinator in **Madagascar** lacks resources for communication across the 22 regions; funding of the WASH coordination mecha-

nism is fragile (**Malawi**,) the country water partnerships in **Bangladesh** and **Philippines**, are dependent upon modest financial allocations from the global GWP and Bangladesh CWP are unable to reach out to rural communities for lack of funds. However there is a general lack of information on the cost of coordination and any analysis as to the cost benefit.

### Good management

Good leadership is essential as coordination between different agencies touches on sensitive ground and can be fraught with problems. This may start even with the selection of a chairperson and given that coordination often requires arbitrating different interests then neutrality may be one of the important criteria.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the UNCT has evolved well over the last 4 years with steady adoption of a more coherent multi-agency approach which foresees greater leadership and accountability of the RC but also of the Heads of Agencies. In practice, this would imply RC being accountable for the overall leadership and coordination of the UNCT whereas at working level, the substantive leadership on behalf of the UNCT would be provided by the relevant Results Groups chaired by a Head of Agency. The role of the Chair of the Results Group is significant – planning, coordination, leading and reporting the UNCT's activities in a particular focus area – with the RC remaining accountable and arbitrating any disputes. The main difference from previous practice is that apart from mandates and agency priorities, capability is recognised when selecting lead agencies. In case of the UNCT in BiH, the water-related issues are addressed through the joint work of the Sustainable and Equitable Development and Employment Results Group headed by UNDP.

**Bangladesh** RC – “absolutely convinced that good coordination delivers better results. It is important to have the structure”. But it doesn't happen automatically. For over a year that the RC has been in Bangladesh there have been changes in coordination. The RC co-chairs Executive Committee of the Local Consultative Group (LCG) together with the Netherlands ambassador. His agenda has been to:

- a. strengthen engagement of the LCG with government and increase the number of meetings with Government to 4 per year (had only met once the previous year)

- b. Aid effectiveness had been the central agenda item but was not sufficient to maintain the memberships interest so attendance was declining. This needed changing
- c. put at the centre of the meeting agendas the critical substantive issues where coordination is a challenge (water not seen as one of the issues that needs tackling). First off was Social Protection
- d. raise the level of performance of the 18 Working Groups of the LCG. Some were fine, others not performing at all well. Minimum standard is now that each group meets, has up-to-date membership list, and define strategic priorities.

This has been a time-consuming and complex process but is seen by the RC as a good investment for programme cohesion.

### Communication

Ensuring transparency with the members has been important in ensuring the success and acceptance of the Bangladesh CWP. **Bangladesh** is a conservative Muslim society and so they have had to take special action to involve women. Men were invited along at the beginning so that they understand and accept what the women are doing (training activities).

Coordination can be inhibited by lack of willingness to share information as identified in the global survey of progress with IWRM (UNEP, 2013). *“There must be a system of generation and evaluation of data, where all institutions are required to share information.”* **Costa Rica**. *“The most part of agencies still do not accept the idea of fully “open” data. Currently the “data availability” is not widely applied at the government and every department decides on its own whether to exchange data or not.”* **Armenia**.



## Section 6

# Conclusions

*The importance of good coordination is demonstrated by the benefits outlined in this report, whether it is from bringing more coherence to action of the UN agencies in a country or whether it results in development of policies, laws and strategies by government. Uncertainties may always lie around efficiency and effectiveness of coordination - is there too much or too little and who should be involved; and for these reasons coordination should be seen as a dynamic process under regular review. Coordination is used as a management tool as with the regular UNCT meetings and it is also used quite differently by governments to assemble different views in the equivalent of a National Policy Dialogue.*

The UNDAF is well established as the basis of the UN programme at country level, with a results framework specifying who should do what and who should take the lead in specific areas (UNDAF outcomes). However water, if included, is often in more than one of the UNDAF pillars or outcome areas. The UNDAF is also negotiated based on UN competencies with most water actions being directed to WASH.

The pilot programme of the UN to strengthen coordinated action at country level, Delivering as One, is reportedly very successful, highly appreciated and has improved coordinated and coherent action through the UNCT. The DaO approach has also been adopted by other countries. The UNDAF, DaO and the regular UNCT meetings have therefore been effective tools for coordination of action at the country level.

Only 4 countries reported the presence of a sub-group of the UNCT focused on water (Haiti, Iraq, Mozambique and Tanzania). In most cases therefore, water is considered to be adequately addressed through the regular meetings of the UNCT or the sub-groups structured around the UNDAF pillars, or through participation in government or donor led water groups.

Overall, the countries surveyed report a definite emphasis on WASH with UNICEF taking the lead in the majority of these projects which make up 40% of the water projects being led by UN agencies in the countries studied. The majority of projects are taking place in countries vulnerable to disasters (Bangladesh, Haiti and Ethiopia) or post conflict (Iraq). Out-

side these situations where humanitarian programmes are predominant the number of water projects being led by UN agencies is generally less than 5 per country.

It may be interpreted therefore that the modest portfolio of UN led water projects in most countries is adequately coordinated through existing systems represented by the UNDAF, the UNCT and the DaO approach which is gradually being extended across countries. However there are indications of a disconnect between the 'normal' UN programmes and the humanitarian programmes. They have different coordination structures, although with overlaps of agencies, and the main problem cited arises from the lack of attention to sustainable solutions for water supply and sanitation in the humanitarian programme. Nine of the 13 countries studied have a humanitarian programme most of which are not responding to a current crisis but are ready to react to on-going annual threats from droughts, floods or food shortages. These latter situations do offer the opportunity to consider sustainable solutions which may arise from better coordinated planning between all parties.

The UN does tend to be engaged with higher level policy and strategy work with government as shown by the participation of UN agencies in coordination structures of government, often as a co-chair of a group. There are other big players regarding development cooperation support to Water, especially the banks (WB, regional banks) and bilateral agencies, so the UNCT not only has internal mechanisms for coordination of water projects but also participates in structures aimed at coordinating donor activities chaired by Government/ donor or donor/ Government.

Recent surveys have shown that the majority of countries are in a process of adopting a more integrated approach to water resources management and that processes of integration remain a big challenge. The need for coordination is therefore increasing not decreasing. Water governance issues like policy and strategy, river basin management, support to development of regional water-sharing agreements, participation of stakeholders, competition among stakeholders/ sectors and the human right to water are only some of the issues that call for consultation and coordination.

Attention to integrated water resources management has a much shorter history than WASH and the global survey of progress (UNEP, 2012) showed that 50% of low and medium HDI countries lack implementation or development of plans for water resources management. The UN at country level generally lack specific expertise in this area as there is no obvious agency able to engage with government on IWRM as UNICEF does on WASH policy and strategy. In general it is the World Bank and specific bilateral donors who are providing expertise and leadership on water resources management at country level. UNCTs and RCs therefore need technical support on water governance to make their country level presence credible with government and partners. This has implications when the UNCT assesses its comparative advantage during UNDAF development and plays a role in the extent to which water, other than in the context of WASH, is addressed in the UNDAF.

Specific reports, for example the GLAAS and JMP reports are limited to WASH and UNCTs raised the problem of the lack of an available comprehensive overview of the water sector due to the lack of comprehensive reporting systems. The UN in a country does not necessarily have a full appreciation of actions and challenges in the water sector if agencies are not engaged. The recent production of the country briefs (UN-Water, 2013) and the analysis of progress with integrated approaches to water resources management (UNEP 2012) provide an excellent basis for planning action if they are available and read at country level. However they rapidly become out of date and the initiative of UN-Water to develop indicators for the water sector may provide a better long term basis for up to date information.

Government structures for coordination are many and can impose a burden on the UN in terms of human resources thus requiring careful management on the part of the UN. By far the most important coordination structures are those at higher levels of government where policy and strategy are determined. There is ample evidence of the benefits for implementation of water and sanitation programmes that follow from clear policies and strategy, accompanied by an enabling environment of law and institutions, and there are several positive examples of WSSCC and UNICEF engagement in this process.

Government coordination structures below this policy and strategy level become increasingly operational addressing details of implementation and drawing more stakeholders into the coordination process.

The central platform for coordination is a core set of national tools – enabling law, national policy and national strategy with an in-built open, regular review process. Successful country experiences show that these tools enable coordination around an accepted framework, facilitate coordination of external support, lead to more relevant, targeted and effective action on the ground.

The reasons for establishing a coordination process are simple in conception but difficult in practice, especially when there are many different interests and options possible. Consensus on the present situation and agreement on desired policy and strategy requires assembly of information from many sources and can benefit from the neutrality of the UN when making critical proposals that will need political support and possible new legislation. Coordination also helps bring coherence to a complex situation, for example when several donors or implementing agencies are involved in similar activities. Coordination mechanisms ensure policy and strategy are being followed with resulting consistency in implementation.

Strengths and weaknesses of the coordination process are difficult to summarise. However there are key points for coordination to be successful. The first is that all of the key players have to participate or else recommendations from the coordinating group stand the risk of immediate rejection. Coordination across different organizations requires effective communication and progress is delayed significantly, if not reversed, by poor communication. Clear objectives to the coordination process are essential to good participation. If outcomes are not being achieved, have no likelihood of being accepted or are not clear then participation will decline making the coordination ineffective. Similarly, once the objective has been achieved the coordination process should be ended or adjusted or else participation will gradually decline. Power relations often predominate and it is difficult to bring powerful groups into a coordination process as they feel they have no benefits to gain and all to lose. Leadership is therefore important and a defined scope for the coordination, attention to seniority and iden-

tified benefits from the process all assist. At all levels of government senior officials have to understand and accept the process before staff will participate.

Work is on-going regarding the development of a new generation of targets to replace the MDGs which conclude in 2015 and this time they will be focused on Sustainable Development. The High Level Panel appointed by the Secretary General submitted their report to the Secretary General, advocating a New Global Partnership to eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development. The High Level Panel findings, which also draw on a global consultation process, are set out in terms of “five transformational shifts” and the report gives examples of new goals and measurable targets. The General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in the progress report on its first four sessions conclude that there is a broad support for a dedicated water sustainable development goal and suggested that targets could cover: equitable, universal and sustained access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene; sustainable development, management and use of surface and groundwater resources respecting ecosystem requirements; reduction of water pollution and collection and treatment of used water and wastewater; reduction of exposure and impacts from floods, droughts and other water-related disasters; and enhanced water cooperation and improved water governance. The statement from the recently concluded Budapest Water Summit reinforces this message. Post 2015 sustainable development goals are very likely to include a broad range of water issues, whether as a single goal or incorporated into other goals. Actions by UN-Water to improve coordination of all water related action at the national level will facilitate response to these goals whatever their final form.





## Section 7

# Observations and Potential Areas for UN-Water action

The first TF report identified the need for greater coordination at the country level and among other things identified UNDAF as one entry point and improved coordination with government and other stakeholders as another (UN-Water, 2008). This report has clarified some of the strengths and weaknesses of UN coordination and the related competencies of the UN at country level to address the full scope of the water agenda. In addition, potential areas for action by UN-Water are proposed below where appropriate.

- The DaO approach and the UNCTs are mechanisms to improve coordination and coherence between UN agencies (sometimes including the World Bank) at country level. Outcomes are difficult to measure but the DaO is deemed to be successful and has been adopted by countries beyond the initial pilot group. There is probably little added value from UN-Water engagement in this process of coordinating UN Agencies water activities at country level.
- The UNDAF generally has few references to water and these are spread across the principal pillars of the UNDAF. The UNCT does have to consider its own competences in the development of the UNDAF and without specific

guidance (for example the guidance note to UNCTs on Integrating Climate Change Considerations in the Country Analysis and the UNDAF) water may not emerge as an important issue. UN-Water may explore with UNDG the development of a similar guidance note to address water in the UNDAF paying specific attention to creation of the enabling environment (laws, policy, and institutions) and emphasising the human rights based approach to water. Furthermore, water could be considered for inclusion as an element of annual UNCT reporting.

- The UN has no focal agency for expertise on water resources management/ water governance. A dynamic roster of experts, particularly on water governance may assist UNCT to engage with national governments. UN-Water may assist with this by drawing on regional and national expertise and considering the wider scope of UN-Water Partners and beyond when assembling this register. UN-Water is itself a coordinating body drawing all global expert water agencies together action is needed for this coordination to penetrate down from global to regional and national level through the membership.
- The most important product of coordination at country level is the creation of an enabling environment for wa-

ter management, including water users. This product of a robust government process involving key stakeholders can have far reaching impacts on access to services, economic development, efficient and effective action on the ground. In addition it will facilitate engagement at regional level on transboundary water agreements. As mentioned in the previous bullet, the UN generally lacks skills at country level on water governance and countries may find appropriate support difficult to locate. UN-Water can assist this process, targeting countries still lagging behind (as determined in the global survey of progress) by facilitating experience sharing between countries and supporting UN teams in target countries with expertise.

- UN country teams lack ready access to information on water and UN-Water can act as a portal for better information sharing. The teamworks e-sharing is one good initiative that can be used to share and dialogue not just in a responsive way but also to be proactive and solicit inputs on e.g. target and indicator development, data availability, monitoring and reporting, and expertise.
- A dialogue with OCHA and other humanitarian response agencies on the importance of early planning of sustainable water solutions within emergency response, and their linkages to longer term sustainable development, could help bridge the gap between humanitarian and development work at country level.

Any coordination efforts at country level facilitated by UN-Water should take place through members and partners. However, given the very limited knowledge of UN-Water at this level, serious consideration should be given on how to comprehensively engage the staff of its member and partner organizations beyond the global level to deepen the ownership and realization of the UN-Water vision and mission.

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## Annex 1. List of Interviews

**Albania:** Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun, UN Resident Coordinator, and Eno Ngjelo, UNDP Water Programme Officer, 2nd August 2013

**Bangladesh:** Neal Walker, UN Resident Coordinator, 24th July 2013. Dr Azhar Ul Haq, Country Water Partnership, 1st September 2013.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH):** Yuri Afanasiev, UN Resident Coordinator, 9th July 2013, and Igor Palandric, UNDP National Programme Manager and Coordinator, 3rd July 2013

**Ethiopia:** Claire Balbo, UNDP Programme Analyst, Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation; Martha Getachu, UN OCHA Humanitarian Affairs Officer; Seifu Kebede, UNESCO Water Specialist; Julie Lillejord, UN RC Office Coordination Specialist; Michal Ullmann, UN Affairs Officer, 6th August 2013

**Haiti:** Guido Corno (UNDP Chief Technical Advisor for Climate Change), and Moustapha Niang, UNICEF Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Manager, 11th September, 2013

**Iraq:** Jacqui Badcock, DSRS/RC/RR, 3rd July 2013, and Peter Batchelor, UNDP Country Director, 8th July 2013

**Kyrgyzstan:** Alexander Avanesov, UN Resident Coordinator, & Aleksandr Temirbekov, UNDP Environment Programme Officer, 21st July 2013

**Lesotho:** Karla Robin Hershey, UN Resident Coordinator, 6th August 2013

**Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office:** Ms Henriette Keijzers, Deputy Executive Coordinator and Ms Dawn del Rio, Senior Portfolio Manager, 9th August 2013

**Mozambique:** Jennifer Topping UN Resident Coordinator, Angelina Xavier UNICEF, Chief of WASH and WASH Specialist (UNCT water coordinator), Silvia Frias Nebra, UN RC Office Coordination and M&E Specialist, 12th July 2013. Mark Henderson, 9/10/13.

**Panama:** Raisa Ruiz, UNICEF Regional Programme Officer, 6th August, 2013, and Ivan Estribi, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) Focal Point (interpretation by Katherine McAleer, UN RC Office Panama), 15th August 2013.

**Philippines:** Luiza Carvalho, UN Resident Coordinator, 28th August 2013. Rhodora Gamboa, Leonora Cleofas and Yolanda Gomez, Country Water Partnership, 1st September 2013.

**Tanzania:** Alberic Kacou, UN Resident Coordinator, 16th August 2013

**UN Development Operations Coordination Office:** Debbie Landey, Director, 9th August 2013

**Uruguay:** Zelmira May, UNESCO, and Martin Costanzo, UN RC Office, 14th August 2013

## Annex 2. About UN Country Teams

(Source: UNDG Website)

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) exists in 136 countries, covering all of the 180 countries where there are United Nations programmes. The UNCT encompasses all the entities of the UN system that carry out operational activities for development, emergency, recovery and transition in programme countries.

The UNCT ensures inter-agency coordination and decision-making at the country level. The main purpose of the Country Team is for individual agencies to plan and work together, as part of the Resident Coordinator system, to ensure the delivery of tangible results in support of the development agenda of the Government.

The UNCT membership, roles and responsibilities must also be laid out clearly within each UNCT. These will include accountability to each other and the Resident Coordinator, taking responsibility for elements of the RC/UNCT work plan, particularly in oversight of subsidiary groups, mobilization of resources for the UNDAF and UNCT plans, and taking part in mutual assessments. This will not prejudice their relationship with their own agency.

The UNCT is led by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC), who is the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General. The RC reports to the UN Secretary-General through the Chair of the UN Development Group.

As international civil servants, all UNCT members are expected to comply with the UN Charter and Standards of Conduct of the International Civil Service and indeed as leaders, UNCT members are expected to exemplify the highest degree of compliance possible. This includes an expected set of personal qualities (such as inclusiveness, integrity and ethics, respect and trust, respect for diversity, non-discrimination, freedom from harassment, promotion and protection of human rights, and creativity) and also business process standards (such as teamwork, transparency and accountability, participatory management, open communications, timely dissemination of information, quality performance and oversight, and results orientation) for the UNCT.

All UNCT members have direct-line accountability to their own organization, as well as collegial accountability to the RC and rest of the UNCT for producing results under the UNDAF, recognizing that a well-functioning UNCT allows each organization to be more effective than acting alone. The UNCT will assign various leadership roles to its members on programmatic and management issues.

This summary and the sections below are based on the Guidance Note on Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team Working Relations. For more information, please visit the RC System Policies & Guidelines page.

### UN Country Team Membership

According to the ACC guidelines on the functioning of the RC system, “the UNCT is composed of representatives of the UN funds and programmes, specialized agencies and other UN entities accredited to a given country. It could also include representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions (see GA resolution 53/192, preamble 6).” The UNCT will ensure full participation of all other UN entities active in a given country in the decision-making process concerning strategic and programmatic issues.

UN Country Team meetings will include all representatives of the UN funds and programmes, specialized agencies and other UN entities active in a given country. It should also include representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions. These representatives must be a UN staff member, be nominated by their agency to represent, and be empowered with decision-making authority. Mechanisms should be established to ensure all agencies can fully participate in the UNCT consultations and decision making processes and are informed through regular communications and information sharing. Some UNCT topics (e.g. common services, security) and actions (e.g. 180 degree assessment) only pertain to Representatives resident in the country so those topics will only be discussed by those individuals.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The UNCT may wish to set out specific Terms of Reference for particular roles undertaken by – or for – the UNCT. For

example: Overseeing development and implementation of the UNDAF, endorsing the annual work plans; oversee work of Theme Groups (and participate and lead specific groups); overseeing the work of functional groups such as Communication, Monitoring & Evaluation and the Operations Management Team (OMT); reviewing the overall performance of the UNCT and proposing and taking action for enhancing its performance based on agreed management performance indicators.

The UNCT makes decisions through a consultative process, at least once a month. UNCT members develop operational programmes for development to support UNDAF priorities, noting that additional activities may be required complementary to UNDAF priorities for sector priorities. The UNCT will help develop proposals regarding pooling country level fund raising and joint financing, based on the agreed needs and priorities of the country, as expressed in the UNDAF.

### Accountability

All UNCT members, including the RC, are accountable for their roles in the team, particularly those members that take on leadership roles (e.g. in Theme Groups). RCs and UNCT members will be appraised on their substantive performance in their contribution to the team by an inter-agency appraisal meeting of the RDT/RMT, which includes designated HQ officials. As part of this appraisal process, RC/UNCT working relations will be assessed using the 180-degree assessment mechanism.

### Towards this end, UNCT Members will:

- a. Plan annual key results as a UNCT and as individuals and agree on results for the RC;
- b. Participate in 180 degree assessments;
- c. Report on results in appraisal forms in reviewing their own progress and for appraisal of RC; and
- d. Support each other and the team in improving competencies identified in the 180 degree assessments and appraisals of the RC and UNCT by the RDT/RMT.

### RC System Support

A UNCT compact should set out the specific parameters for UNCT Coordination Support/Unit and workings of sub-groups (especially Theme Groups) of the UNCT. The following might be included:

#### Resident Coordinator Office

To coordinate the work of the UN system at the country level, each RC/UNCT should have a Resident Coordinator Office to support these roles and demands. UNCT members will actively support the RC within the context of the UNDAF results framework, including in technical support to achieve agreed UNCT results and in analysis, planning, tracking and reporting processes, information management, communication and advocacy. This Office should have the minimum staffing and resources required to complete this important coordination function. Technical expertise on substantive issues should be provided by agency staff, rather than the RC Office, which should have a supportive/facilitative role. When the UNCT agrees on an activity an agency with the requisite capacity should be identified to implement on behalf of the team.

#### Theme Groups and other subsidiary groups of the UNCT

As tasked by the UNCT, the UN Theme Groups carry out programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for each of the UNDAF priorities. The UNCT member leading the Theme Group assumes responsibility and is accountable for the agreed work plan results and follow-up on results. The Chair of the UN Theme Group should report to the UNCT on a regular basis to brief, discuss and agree on any proposed actions and follow up. Other groups / networks of the UNCT might cover Monitoring and Evaluation, Communication or Common Services.

## Annex 3. Key Characteristics of the selected countries

Region	Population	Income	HDI	HDI	Dev/Hum	DAO	DAO	WRM	WRM	Study One	MDGF
Country	Est. 2012	Level	Rank	Level		Pilot	Self Starter	Survey	Interview		Water

### Africa

Ethiopia	91.73	L	173	L	H/D		Yes	Yes			
Lesotho	2.05	LM	158	L	D		Yes	Yes			
Mozambique	25.2	L	185	L	D	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tanzania	47.48	L	152	L	D	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	

### Asia

Bangladesh	154.7	L	146	L	D			Yes	Yes		
Philippines	96.71	LM	114	M	D			Yes		Yes	Yes
Europe / CIS											
Albania	3.16	UM	70	H	D	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BiH	3.83	UM	81	H	D			Yes			Yes
Kyrgyzstan	5.58	L	125	M	D		Yes				

### Middle East

Iraq	32.58	UM	131	M	H/D			Yes			
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### SA/Carib

Haiti	10.17	L	161	L	H/D			Yes			
Panama	3.80	UM	59	H	D			Yes			Yes
Uruguay	3.4	H	51	H	D	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	

### Sources:

Population and Income Levels: World Bank 2012 Open Access Website. Population Estimates for 2012, Income levels: Low, Lower-Middle, Upper-Middle, High

HDI: Human Development Index Report 2013, UNDP. Report 2013. Global Ranking and human development status: Low, Medium, High (Very High)

DAO: Delivering as One Pilot Countries: UN DOCO

DAO: Delivering as One Self-Starter Countries: UN Secretariat publication

WRM Survey and Interviews: UN-Water Report on Water Resources Management 2012

MDGF Water: Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, Economic Governance Window MPTF Website

## Annex 4. Summary of UN RC responses to Questionnaire

Country situation	Number of countries 13	Comments
UN Agencies involved in water projects	UNDP (11); UNICEF (7); UNESCO (6); WHO (5); FAO (4); WFP (1); UN-Habitat (3); World Bank (2); UNEP (2); UNHCR (2); UN-OCHA (2); OMS (1); UNOPS (1); PAM (1); UNAMI (1); PAHO (1); ILO (1); WFO (1)	WB active in many countries but apparently not always a member of the UNCT
Water sub-group of UNCT present	Yes 4; No 9	
With a Humanitarian Country Team	Yes 9; No 4	
WASH sub-group of HCT present	Yes 8; No 1	
Government/ donor / UN coordination group	Yes 9; No 4	
Chaired by	Gvt 2; Gvt + donor 4; Gvt + UN 2; Donor 3	Bangladesh has two donor groups, one for water resources and one for WASH
UNDAF includes water	Yes 8; No 5	
UN project plans respond to UNDAF on water	Yes 7; No 1	

### Water projects:

Economic Governance	2	
Management of marine and coastal areas	4	
WASH	29	
Groundwater	1	
Environment	2	
Livelihoods	1	
Agriculture/food	2	
Water resources management	11	
Climate change adaptation	10	
Dryland management	1	
Transboundary water	1	
Energy and water	1	
Support received from	UN-Water 2; UNDP Water Gov Prog 2; Siwi 5; UN Reg Offices 7; UNHQ 6	

# Annex 5. Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams

<https://clusters.humanitarianresponse.info/document/iasc-operational-guidance-humanitarian-country-teams>

## INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

This guidance note has been developed pursuant to the request made by the IASC Working Group at its 73rd meeting on 18-20 March 2009. It supersedes guidance on developing a broad-based humanitarian country team issued by the Emergency Relief Coordinator to Humanitarian Coordinators on 20 February 2006.<sup>2</sup> It is not meant to be prescriptive, but aims to provide guidance that can be tailored to each country situation, as necessary.

### Purpose

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC),<sup>3</sup> is the centre-piece of the new humanitarian coordination architecture established by Humanitarian Reform. The HCT is composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements.<sup>4</sup> Its objective is to ensure that the activities of such organizations are coordinated, and that humanitarian action in-country is principled, timely, effective and efficient, and contributes to longer-term recovery. The overall purpose is to alleviate human suffering and protect the lives, livelihoods and dignity of populations in need.

The HCT is ultimately accountable to the populations in need. Appropriate and meaningful mechanisms should be designed and implemented at the local level to achieve this goal.

The affected State retains the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.<sup>5</sup> Whenever possible, the HCT operates in support of and in coordination with national and local authorities.

### Guidance

**While the responsibilities, composition and modus operandi of the HCT should be tailored to the specific country situation, the following guidance should be respected:**

#### 1 Establishment and disestablishment

1.1 An HCT is established in all countries with an HC position. In countries where there is no HC position, an HCT is established when a humanitarian crisis erupts or a situation of chronic vulnerability sharply deteriorates. An HCT is also

<sup>1</sup> Endorsed by the 75th IASC Working Group on 18 November 2009.

<sup>2</sup> See the IASC document "Update on the Humanitarian Reform Initiatives" (OT/0602/1371/7).

<sup>3</sup> In the absence of an HC position, the Resident Coordinator (RC). The term "HC" refers to both RC/HCs and stand-alone HCs.

<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian action includes relief, early recovery and protection activities in the response preparedness and response phases in either disasters or complex emergencies.

<sup>5</sup> See UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991.

established to steer preparedness activities, if no other adequate coordination mechanism exists.

- 1.2 In countries where there is no HC position, the decision to establish an HCT is taken by the Resident Coordinator (RC), in consultation with relevant operational agencies and the Emergency Relief Coordinator.
- 1.3 The HCT may be disestablished in the transition phase if and when other coordination mechanisms are considered more effective and appropriate.
- 1.4 The decision to disestablish the HCT is taken by the HC or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC, in consultation with the HCT and the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

## 2 Responsibilities

The HCT is responsible for:

- 2.1 Agreeing on common strategic issues related to humanitarian action in-country. This includes setting common objectives and priorities, developing strategic plans,<sup>6</sup> agreeing on the establishment of clusters and the designation of cluster lead agencies,<sup>7</sup> providing guidance to cluster lead agencies, activating resource mobilization mechanisms,<sup>8</sup> and advising the HC on allocation of resources from in-country humanitarian pooled funds, where they exist.
- 2.2 Agreeing on common policies related to humanitarian action in-country.
- 2.3 Promoting adherence by organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country with humanitarian principles,<sup>9</sup> Principles of Partnership,<sup>10</sup> IASC guidelines, and policies and strategies adopted by the HCT.

## 3 Composition

- 3.1 The HCT is composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements. These may include UN agencies, the International Organization for Migration, non-governmental organizations,<sup>11</sup> and, subject to their individual mandates, components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.<sup>12</sup>
- 3.2 The size of the HCT is limited, to allow for effective decision-making.<sup>13</sup>
- 3.3 Membership criteria are clear, generally accepted and well-known. The main criterion is operational relevance.
- 3.4 Members are represented at the highest level (Country Representative or equivalent).
- 3.5 In addition to their own organization, members may represent one or more organizations that are not members of the HCT, at their request.
- 3.6 Representatives of Cluster Lead Agencies represent their cluster(s) in addition to their organization.
- 3.7 The Head of the OCHA Office participates in the HCT, and OCHA provides secretariat support to the Team.
- 3.8 When appropriate, other institutions and agencies may be invited to participate in HCT meetings.

## 4 Chairmanship

- 4.1 The HCT is chaired by the HC or, in the absence of an HC position, by the RC.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. common planning framework for contingency planning, Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP).

<sup>7</sup> This may include designating non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as cluster co-lead agencies/co-chairs/ co-facilitators.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. CAP, Flash Appeal, CERF grant applications.

<sup>9</sup> These are humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

<sup>10</sup> These are equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility, and complementarity. They were endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform in July 2007. See [www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org)

<sup>11</sup> Both national and international NGOs.

<sup>12</sup> Among the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC attends Humanitarian Country Team meetings in an observer capacity. It will continue to coordinate with other humanitarian actors to the extent necessary to achieve efficient operational complementarity and a strengthened response for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence.

<sup>13</sup> If not all organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country are included in the HCT, the HC (or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC) is responsible for convening a separate, inclusive forum to ensure periodic interaction among such organizations. Such a forum is chaired by the HC (or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC), and may be co-chaired by a non-UN organization.

## 5 Modus operandi

- 5.1 The modus operandi of the HCT is governed by the Principles of Partnership.
- 5.2 The chairmanship style is consensual and facilitative, and the membership style is collaborative and constructive.
- 5.3 Meetings are strategic in purpose, focused on clear objectives, action-oriented, and produce reality-based decisions that are followed up.
- 5.4 The HCT periodically carries out performance reviews to ensure it is achieving its goals and objectives.

## 6 Interface with other in-country coordination mechanisms

- 6.1 The HCT and the UN Country Team coexist and do not replace each-other.<sup>14</sup> The HC or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC is responsible for ensuring complementarity between them.<sup>15</sup>
- 6.2 Where a UN Disaster Management Team (DMT) exists at Country Representative level, the HC or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC is responsible for avoiding duplication with the HCT.<sup>15</sup>
- 6.3 Whenever possible the HCT complements government-led coordination structures.
- 6.4 The HCT interfaces with the UN Security Management Team as appropriate.
- 6.5 In the transition phase, if the HCT is maintained, the HC or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC is responsible for ensuring complementarity with other coordination mechanisms.

<sup>14</sup> On the functioning of the UN Country Team, see the Guidance Note on Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team Working Relations adopted by UNDG on 29 January 2009.

<sup>15</sup> If the HC is not also the RC, such responsibility befits both the HC and the RC.





