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# **BRINGING THE MESSAGE**

**REVIEW OF THE UNO-IDfA / UNW-DPAC 2011-2015 WORK PLAN**

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## INTRODUCTION

The UNW-DPAC Office is doing increasingly well. It has found its 'niche' and it is being valued in that role. The crucial function it plays is 'extracting the key messages and enabling their communication for UN-Water and its members'. The 'content' it communicates is the content produced by UN-Water members, individually or in collaborative work via the UN-Water task forces/Thematic Priority Areas. Extracting the messages is as much a role as enabling their communication with the outside world. To succeed, the Office and its staff need to be trusted by the members of UN-Water as being capable and impartial in their role. UNW-DPAC should actively work to maintain and even strengthen this position of trust.

New and emerging communication channels, using Internet and mobile phones, allow for increasing participation and membership of stakeholders worldwide. This innovation in communication is probably the biggest change to be introduced in the processes of UN-Water members in the coming years. UNW-DPAC must be a central actor in supporting this change.

The purpose of this review is to provide recommendations for activities of the 2011-2015 Work Plan on: a) strategic directions and b) specific actions that may need to be considered in different regions; c) knowledge and capacities that may need to be developed to achieve the goals of the Office; d) monitoring and management systems that may need to be incorporated to the Office practice.

The first step taken is the appraisal of the work plan in terms of four key factors: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability.

The draft work plan 2011-2015 could be improved if a clear strategic choice were made. The current document is a reflection of the many masters (and objectives) that have to be served by the Office. The work plan should in a clear structure reflect: goals, planned results and activities. The annual work programmes should implement this strategic vision for next year, and an indicative planning for the rest of the period. The work plan should also be clear on reporting and decisions procedures.

In this review an attempt is made to summarise the analysis made of the existing 2011-2015 work plan and to formulate suggestions for a way forward. In discussions with the Coordinator, the invitation was made specifically to explore all aspects of the Office, including its fundamental structure. This point appears indeed to be of major importance and lies at the heart of this review.

To understand the current situation and explore possibilities for the future a number of people and documents were consulted (list provided at the end). Many discussions were held with the Coordinator, staff, and UN-Water senior programme managers.

Obviously the undertaking of a review like this is not an exact science, and both the observations and conclusions made are subjective. But every attempt has been made to make sure that the facts were understood as comprehensively as possible.

## THE CURRENT SITUATION

### **Objectives of the Office: a menu of options**

The objectives of the Office are specified in the contract between the Government of Spain and UN DESA:

*Firstly, to contribute to the efforts of UN DESA in coordinating and following-up the implementation of internationally agreed goals in the areas of drinking water, sanitation and integrated water resources management. Secondly, to raise awareness and create an enabling environment for achieving the ultimate goal 'water and sanitation for all'. Thirdly, to strengthen the capacities of Member States and other relevant stakeholders in addressing key obstacles impeding the implementation of the water and sanitation agenda. These objectives will be achieved by:*

- Identifying strategic issues and facilitating action oriented responses at all levels;
- Enhancing coherence, credibility and visibility of United Nations system actions in the area of water and sanitation;
- Promoting communication and collaboration with non-United Nations system partners;
- Creating an environment conducive to delivering a coordinated response by all stakeholders at all levels;
- Raising public awareness at all levels to maintain political momentum in favor of the water and sanitation agenda;
- Strengthening implementation capacities of the Member States; and
- Complementing already on-going activities and actions at all levels through further research and dissemination of results.

These objectives of the Office are so broad (certainly in comparison to the budget) that they seem to imply that the Office has maximum freedom to do whatever is considered proper to do. Moreover, they can hardly be considered objectives, since there is no chance of them ever being achieved by this project. As a result, there is a considerable risk that the organisation uses this as a menu of possible objectives and then moves in all possible directions, without ever leaving its 'mandated' objectives.

Some of the activities mentioned in the contract are simply too broad and unrealistic. They overlap and even compete with the objectives UN-Water, and they are not realistic given the capacity of the Office. The activities on capacity development and those on following up with the implementation of best practices are not implementable or are directly collude with those of the Decade programme on capacity building and with the World Water Assessment Programme. The proposed task of providing advice to UN DESA and CSD<sup>1</sup> is the responsibility of the WWAP or UN-Water as a whole.

Since the start of the project, major changes have taken place, both within UN DESA and UN-Water. The water-related capacity at UN DESA has decreased, and this may lead to more requests for support from Zaragoza. The level of organisation of UN-Water has increased, also leading to an increase in communication demands. In addition to this, the Decade has lost most of its visibility, mainly because the UN-Water members are not using it as a 'brand' for their activities. The objective of the Water Decade (launched by a UN GA Resolution in the same year UN-Water was created) was to bring together the efforts of the UN system and of the UN Member States around the common objectives of Agenda 21, MDGs and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Regarding the UN system this was to be coordinated by UN-Water, and to a large extent also implemented by this now strong UN-Water cooperation and coordination mechanism. UN-Water now has UN-Water task forces and some shared reporting mechanisms were developed under its guidance. The almost complete overlap of goals and actors between UN-Water and the Water Decade is probably also the reason why the visibility or 'brand' of the Decade has never developed: there was simply not enough drive for it among members. The recent pushes for attention for the Decade came through UN GA resolutions that were proposed by Tajikistan.

At the same time as UN-Water was becoming established it leant on the Office for more operational support for a number of its specialised communication and advocacy activities: support to UN-Water task forces/Thematic Priority Areas, presentation of UN-Water in various (international) fora and conferences, and support for World Water Day (WWD). WWD and participation in fora and conferences are, in fact, part of the tasks formulated in the ToR for the Office.

As a result of these changes UNO-IDfA / UNW-DPAC is more and more approached as UNW-DPAC, or perhaps UNW-PAC.

One remnant of the less productive start to the Office is the presence of a separate UN-Water communications position at FAO – the UN-Water Communication Manager. This is an undesirable situation from an operational point of view, and should be corrected. Having two communication locations that serve the same group is confusing. Moreover there can be a conflict of

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<sup>1</sup> This is mentioned in the mandate in the sections where it describes the specific initiatives with which the Office needs to collaborate.

interest (tasks but also budget related) due to the dual position of the current person at FAO, working both for the agency and for UN-Water.

The current position of the Office is logical for UN-Water, but it may be less logical for the other parties involved in this project (e.g. the donors, UN DESA). This needs to be clarified with all partners involved (including UN-Water), otherwise a source of conflict may arise if the Office cannot meet the expectations of some of the partners in the project.

## **GENERAL APPRAISAL OF THE WORK PLAN 2011-2015**

### **General observations**

#### *A plan for many masters*

The work plan entitled 'UN-Water DPAC Work Plan 2011-2015' was presented to UN-Water for its meeting in August 2011 in Stockholm, Sweden. The document reflects the complex governance context of UNO-IDfA / UNW-DPAC. There are 'objectives', 'strategic orientation and vision' 'guidance for the Office implementation plan', as well as "UN-Water activity areas'. The document clearly reflects the complexity of the position the Office holds: servant of many masters. The Office has a role in relation to UN-Water, but is also required to support UN DESA (according to its contract). The relation with its donors (the Government of Spain, the Municipality of Zaragoza and the Regional Government of Aragon) also requires that they are given certain recognition in the activities of the Office.

#### *A temporary task structure becoming permanent:*

The general structure of the yearly work plan (advocacy & outreach, capacity building, research and communication) is based on the initial choice for the 2006-2007 plan as specified in the agreement between the Government of Spain and UN DESA, which was made at the time for '*paving the way for advancing the implementation of the Decade's agenda in subsequent phases*'. There is no explanation as to the continuation of this structure; a different structure could, and perhaps should be chosen.

The plan as presented is missing quantified information (e.g. in relation to planning and budget), making it difficult to define future goals and activities.

### **Effectiveness in achieving the goals**

As mentioned in the earlier section, the objectives for the project are extremely broad. Since 2009 the Office has been narrowing down its objectives in practice to respond better to the advocacy and communication tasks required by UN-Water. However, formally there has been no reshaping of the objectives. It must be acknowledged that achieving the specified goals is impossible, at least for the Office as a single standing project.

### *Promoting the brand*

There are a number of activities that focus on promoting the Decade as a brand. This would be highly relevant for the Water Decade, but to what extent this is 'effective' remains to be seen, considering the very low visibility in general of the Decade. This is not due to any neglect by UNW-DPAC, but a result of the total absence of reference to the Decade in the work of all other UN-Water members and partners. It is very unlikely that UNW-DPAC on its own would be able to re-vitalize the 'brand' of the Water Decade.

### *Documentation centre activities*

Specific activities undertaken by the Office are all quite effective in terms of achieving their direct results. Users and providers of information appreciate the document repository and bimonthly publications review. This activity for the first time brings all publications by UN-Water members together under one 'roof'. It has become a recognised resource as well as a recognised 'outlet'. UN agencies and programmes are progressively approaching UNW-DPAC in advance to make sure their publications are included in the repository as soon as they are published. One important by-product of this activity is that, within UNW-DPAC, there is high awareness and knowledge of current key topics.

### *The media programme*

Journalists are key communicators worldwide. Sometimes, especially in many developing countries, their position is often difficult and highly pressurised. They often need the backing from international authorities to deliver their messages. The media programme at UNW-DPAC not only results in very satisfied participants in workshops, but it also is cultivating a network of local media that support each other and receive the support of UNW-DPAC. The Office has the potential for being a one-stop shop for accessing a network of local media, both for providing information on technical water issues and on more sensitive issues, such as transparency and its role in curbing corruption or human rights issues. The complementary nature of the information programme of the Office is important. The materials provided by the Office (e.g. facts sheets, the documentation centre) give journalists easy access to authoritative information resources.

### *The campaigns*

There are and have been a number of campaigns implemented by the Office: Water Smart, Water Quality Exhibit, Water Quality Campaign and recently the Water for Life UN-Water Best Practices Award which is linked to the Decade. The Best Practices Award yields many ideas, which can become a valuable resource in themselves.

### *The annual conference and World Water Day process and activities*

As of 2011 efforts have been made to dedicate the annual conference in Zaragoza to the theme of the World Water Day. The annual conference has a strong presence of important actors. The whole WWD process is part of the original ToR of the Office. It has strong potential for developing into a flagship activity for the Office.

### *Water Decade website*

This website was originally set up by the UN Department of Public Information in UN Headquarters, New York. Content has been provided by the Office since 2008; however, the Office only took over the direct management of the website in 2011. Already considerable changes are taking place, making the website much more dynamic. Specific capacity and experience is being developed for maintaining the whole website as an information and knowledge platform.

### *Other strategic activities*

Other strategic activities of the Office have included the development of the UN-Water communication strategy, and support in the development of strategies, messages and derived products for the UN-Water task forces/Thematic Priority Areas: climate change, wastewater, sanitation.

### **Efficiency in implementation of programmes and activities**

Considering the current activities, it should be concluded that the Office is very efficient given the small number of staff and the very diverse and extensive work it performs.

The quality of the current work cannot be appraised from occasional observations and anecdotal information. But there is an increasing demand for support from the Office, which could indicate a satisfaction from its partners.

### **Relevance**

This section examines the relevance of the strategies, programmes and projects included in the Plan in relation to the Decade, UN-Water and the mandate of the Office.

Having very broad objectives as a project, it is easy to be relevant with respect to the Office's mandate. Overall, it should probably be said that the work of the Office is 'potentially highly relevant'. Communication is a key part of almost the entire UN-Water agenda. Open communication between all parties involved is vital when working together at local, national and basin level. Communication is essential for the behavioural change processes that are crucial in sanitation and water supply. Communication is an important tool in developing transparency when fighting corruption. Finally, open and effective communication between UN-Water partners is crucial for achieving collaborative results.

### *UN-Water requiring an expert Office*

All these functions require expertise in communication and the need for a specialised institution was acknowledged within the UN-Water family. However, the current Work Plan does not 'frame' the UNW-DPAC in this 'expert role', hence the conclusion that the work of the Office is 'potentially' highly relevant.

### *Achieving greater relevance*

The current activities of the Office focus on providing communication services, organising a major annual conference, as well as a second smaller annual meeting, separate activities – campaigns – for specific target groups, a more universal document repository and a best practices award. All of these activities contribute to the broader water agenda, and are relevant. The question is whether the relevance could be higher, and how to achieve this.

- The communication support could be shifted to a strategic level, with implementation mainly done by commercial actors. It is often the specific knowledge on how to do the communication that is unique, not the physical product.
- The annual conference is now part of the World Water Day preparation. Being in charge of the WWD communication, in partnership with the lead agency of each WWD edition, would increase the relevance of the Office.
- Activities focused on target groups should be in partnership with other agencies, and be temporary. Permanent links should be avoided; the other agencies should take over the ownership. UNW-DPAC could maintain an advisory role.
- The document repository is highly relevant within the framework of a permanent UN-Water role.
- The capacity to advise on the use of new media could be developed. The Office should be prepared for emerging and 'soon to appear' media (see also below).
- The Water Decade website should be integrated with the site of UN-Water.

### **Sustainability of the achieved results**

The achievements of UNO-IDfA / UNW-DPAC mainly relate to providing services, developing a media/journalist-aimed approach and a network of journalists and media representatives, developing a publication repository, creating a process around World Water Day and creating a best practices award. Apart from the direct support to conferences, all of these 'products' are sustainable as mechanisms, provided funding continues.

Working with specific groups should be based on 'temporary involvement', with the process started and maintained by another UN-Water member / UN agency. The Office should offer support in starting up an advocacy or communication process, but should later withdraw, thus maintaining its role as advisor. The water operators network is an example of such an activity, where the Office should hand over communication activities to the leading UN agency.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## Choices to make

The suggestions in this section are mostly conditional. If 'this', then the Office could... The reason for this conditionality is the very complex situation that has developed over the years between contract, donors and operational actors. The three elements that are singled out in this respect are: (1) mandate, (2) project or programme, and (3) administrative organisation. The biggest strategic choice would be a reformulation of the 'mandate'.

The Office would be at an advantage if it had a clear organisational structure, with a clear 'chain of command'. Its current mix of 'bosses' from UN DESA, UN-Water and to some extent the donor (in the contract there is reporting by UN DESA to the donor and biannual meeting to monitor progress in relation to the mandate/contract) creates confusion and distrust. It is recommended that a clear choice regarding its future role and position is made.

### Administration

The administration is a separate point of concern. The operational quality would likely improve if the Office had more direct control over its administration, contracting and budget. Currently it is a UN DESA project and this creates avoidable administrative procedures. These procedures do not allow the Office to implement some specific activities as per its mandate in a time efficient manner. The delays that result from these administrative procedures lead to undesirable consequences, for example participants being unable to attend the conferences organised by the Office, or staff of the Office being unable to attend events where they are supposed to appear and participate. The substantive controls in UN DESA do not seem to be appropriate since the project activities are established clearly in the mandate and work plan with the endorsement of UN-Water. Substantive oversight should reside with UN-Water.

### The need to move from a Project to a Programme?

Currently UNO-IDfA is a project, but a number of its activities have a permanent character, such as the document repository. A project is time-bound, while a programme has a permanent character and in this case would be function- and result-bound. The implications of this distinction are probably significant. With a project, ending by 2015, the Office is likely to start losing its key staff by 2014 or even earlier. There are also implications for the tasks that will be assigned to the Office, and the investments that will be made. For example, the time-bound project status was mentioned as a justification for keeping the UN-Water website in Rome and the AIWAS information system in Bonn.

### UN-Water programme or UN DESA project.

The Office is run under a project contract between Spain and UN DESA, and the project's ToR contains quite a mix of tasks and goals (see earlier). After five years, the main operational line is the link with UN-Water, but there have been intermittent requests from the side of UN DESA regarding the need to

focus on the Water Decade. Still, as explained in the Water Decade report, the work of the Office for UN-Water and its thematic task forces/Thematic Priority Areas is in fact a contribution to the Decade, due to the fact that the programme of UN-Water fully complements the goals of the Water Decade.

#### Global or not?

The contract between Spain and UN DESA states that there should be a special regional focus on Africa and Latin America. For a UN-Water programme, that is a problem. Having a limitation in the places it can work, the 'UN-Water' role is affected.

#### Digital innovation

Communication is a two-way process. The shift to Internet and mobile phones makes this a possibility for an ever-larger part of the world. New and emerging communication channels, using Internet and mobile phones, allow for membership and participation in an increasingly global communications network.

This innovation in communications is probably the biggest change to be introduced to the processes of UN-Water members in the coming years. People are not merely readers or listeners; they follow you on Facebook or Twitter, they participate in your conference via the Internet, they co-create on Wikis and blogs, and they respond to you through their mobile phone. Social media is now stronger than ever, as proven by recent events in North Africa and the Middle East.

This two-way interaction represents a fundamental change in the way communication processes occur. It requires a very conscious design of communication strategies, where the analysis is not only about the key messages, but also about the process for engaging with the audience as active participants. UNW-DPAC must be a central actor in supporting this change.

#### National / regional role

Some details from the ToR for the Office are probably no longer fully applicable (e.g. the 2008 Expo organisation is mentioned as a participant in the annual conferences).

Having the presence of a UN-Water office increases the visibility of Zaragoza, Aragon and Spain. There is the possibility, and wish, to involve dignitaries such as ministers, regional water managers and the authorities of Zaragoza. The Office should also do its best to engage with host country citizens. It is potentially easy to make existing material and activities of the agencies in UN-Water available for those in Spain that are interested. Water-oriented materials in Spanish of the UN-Water members are accessible on the UN-Water Decade website. However, it should also be clear for the host country that the Office is a global UN-Water initiative, with a focus on communications for all countries of the world.

## **Proposals for direction of the Office**

To answer the aforementioned questions, a clear direction should be chosen. It is suggested that a scenario for the future is chosen that considers the issues mentioned here, to create an alignment between the mission/terms of reference, the activities, the capacity and the chain of reporting.

Two clear scenarios and a 'do nothing' option are described below.

### Scenario 1: UN-Water support centre

Here the team would opt for a permanent role in the UN-Water frame, and create the necessary changes (mandate, administration, staffing, among others). This seems to be the direction that the Office has taken and is proving to be fruitful.

This scenario would justify a number of claims in the direction of roles for UN-Water. It would also result in a clear 'line of command' with the necessary autonomy that all UN-Water programmes have to implement their mandates, once their work plan is approved.

The current 'separate' communication position at FAO (UN-Water Communication manager and activities) is integrated in the UNW-DPAC.

This scenario requires a change in the mandate or a clear agreement with the donor on the emphasis that the Office should give to the different aspects of the existing mandate. It will also mean a shift from 'project to programme' with a number of permanent 'service functions' (although in reality none of the UN-Water activities have permanent financing, and most have a shorter financing horizon than UNW-DPAC).

It would preferably also mean a change in administrative organisation, limiting Zaragoza-Headquarters (New York) procedures by increasing the operational mandate of the Coordinator.

### Scenario 2: 'GRANDE FINALE'

This would mean acknowledging the time-bound character of the UNO-IDfA project, and work in accordance to it towards a meaningful result by the end of the Water Decade in 2015.

Some elements of such a finale could be: support to existing large events, already planned by others, as well as some specific outputs to be implemented / finished by 2015.

This choice would create clarity for the team regarding the duration of their position. This choice would also require an adaptation to the current agreements between the donor and the UN, or at least an agreement on the restriction, since the total list of activities can never be achieved with the existing capacity and budget. It would be a clear choice for the Office as a 'project' with a time-bound, result-oriented format.

Here too, administrative arrangements would need to be adjusted to optimise procedures.

It would also mean transferring all 'permanent / long-term tasks' to other structures that have a more permanent status.

### Scenario 3: maintain the current structure

This scenario is kept, to illustrate clearly what it would mean to continue in the current direction. In sum, this scenario would see the continuation of three controlling structures (donor, UN DESA, UN-Water), no clarity on the existence beyond 2015, and a double administration with no control by the Coordinator. It also includes a very mixed agenda for the staff who have limited capacity to carry this. There is a risk that the Office will slowly dissolve through a mixture of staff leaving and a disintegrating plan.

### **The proposed choice: UN-Water programme**

The proposed choice is the UN-Water programme scenario, since this is the most active structure that has the most operational opportunities and obvious links to the Water Decade. The choice is also motivated by the forthcoming end of the Decade as a brand in 2015, which is a direct consequence of the expansion of the UN-Water brand as a unifying banner for UN activities linked to water and sanitation: working for the Water Decade means working for UN-Water. Acknowledging and linking to the increasingly strong UN-Water brand will increase the relevance of the Office's work.

This proposal would mean a much more permanent contribution of Spain to the global water agenda, allowing for more long-term tasks and functions, while also creating more long-term security for staff. The temporary arrangement with FAO regarding the website management of UN-Water would be finalised and the function would be transferred to the Zaragoza Office.

The Office prepared a communication plan / strategy for UN-Water in 2011. If the proposed choice were agreed, the Office would logically take on the following tasks:

- External presentation of UN-Water (including its electronic presence)
- UN-Water Communication expert (the expert role mentioned earlier)
- Support the external communication for the UN-Water task forces, Thematic Priority Areas, reports and projects of UN-Water
- UN-Water document repository
- World Water Day campaign
- Journalists water information centre
- UN-Water media activities

One original task in the contract of UNO-IDfA / UNW-DPAC was the organisation of the World Water Day campaign. This consists of organising an annual campaign each year with another UN partner and coordinating its

internet presence. This would probably be THE visible activity for the Office, gradually developing links with the agencies at an operational level.

The Office should be extremely selective in taking on permanent tasks. The preferred operation for 'communication support' should be that of external advisor and/or temporary 'outboard engine' for creating new communication capacity in UN-Water members and partners.

In general, the work involves 'providing expertise in communications, linked to water'. This also means that the content will come from others: the UN-Water members.

There will be innovation coming from the Office, where it concerns application of communication tools, both the more traditional and modern types. The landscape of communications is already shifting, with internet and mobile phones becoming increasingly important. The infrastructure for making this possible is rolling out with enormous speed, and it is one of the first things people invest in at a personal level in both developing and developed countries. The Office will play an important role in supporting the adoption of emerging communication tools amongst UN-Water members.

## **MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS**

In this part, a number of proposals are outlined for UNW-DPAC, assuming its role as a UN-Water support programme.

### **Knowledge and capacities**

Whatever the choice made, a serious investment in capacity will be needed. The capacity needed will depend on the chosen direction.

Currently the capacity of the Office is limited. The five experts that were initially proposed have not yet arrived. The result is that it is very difficult to deliver anything more than basic requirements. If one person leaves, there is no back up.

If the proposed choice mentioned earlier is made, and enabled by the current parties in the project agreement, a more clear definition of future capacity would be as follows.

There would be more capacity for supporting UN-Water communication work.

In the original proposal, five experts were supposed to work in the Office. It is suggested that the existing team are complemented accordingly. An expansion of the current team of four into a future team of six is recommended.

Current technical team:  
Coordinator / Water Expert

Water Expert  
Communication Expert  
Information Management and Awareness-Raising Expert

There are several changes that should be considered, both in terms of size of the team and in the responsibilities of the individual members.

In a proposed work plan with the World Water Day as a core responsibility, the Office will have the opportunity to develop a 'flagship product'. This requires a proper organisation and dedicated (experienced) capacity. Each year three relations need to be managed: a new partnership needs to be operationalised, the ongoing 'year' needs to be implemented, and the 'old year' needs to be properly closed. The activities include the annual conference in Zaragoza and the promotional activities undertaken in conjunction with the involved UN-Water members and partners.

Recruiting a second communication expert is proposed, acknowledging the increase in work that could be expected if the proposed tasks in relation to UN-Water materialise.

A separate water expert in the Office (apart from the Coordinator) is likely to become isolated. Water expertise should be complemented with active experience in international communication.

The function of 'new media specialist' is of importance to the maintenance of the UN-Water digital processes (both the general website and the taskforces). It is also of importance for supporting the communications of UN-Water members.

In the recruitment of new staff members, the international character of the Office's remit should be emphasised as much as possible. It is strongly advised that the Office looks for experts from outside Europe, to increase the cultural and perhaps also the language base of the organisation.

The proposed 'future team' would therefore be:  
Coordinator / Water Expert  
A World Water Day Coordinator  
Communication Expert  
Information Management & Awareness Raising Expert  
'New Media' Specialist (use rather than the technical side)  
Communication Expert 2

A point that is related to the capacity question is that of the security of the Office. This is an important but expensive aspect of being hosted in Spain. The costs of the security should be covered by the host, Spain, according to the agreement, but are in fact covered by the trust fund, thus reducing the available funding for expertise. This situation should be corrected if the Office is to deliver the intended results. The budget would cover half an FTE (12% of the current capacity).

## **Broadening the financial base through project funding**

The Office can use its more focused role as advisor to UN-Water to identify specific projects that come with additional financing. The selling point to donors is that UNW-DPAC is an advisor to all UN-Water members, and as such has significant capacity for leveraging ideas that are developed through its Office.

Typically, projects can be staffed through a mix of permanent staff, external capacity (consultants) and interns. UNW-DPAC has quite some experience in implementing activities through such mixed teams. What would be new is the additional funding, complementary to the current budget. An example of such a project is given in the annex: ADVICE ON NEW MEDIA AT UNW-DPAC.

## **Monitoring and management systems that may need to be incorporated to the Office practice**

Rather than proposing a system, it is suggested that the operational efficiency of the organisation is increased. To this end, the responsibility for decisions regarding day-to-day administration of the agreed budget should lie with the Coordinator. The current arrangement is inefficient. It causes delays that threaten to undermine the activities and achievements of the organisation. The capacity for this administrative process within the Office is already largely in place. Quite a generous part of the budget is available for administration (7.5%), probably allowing for additional capacity if needed. The change proposed here is an increase in the decision-making power of the Coordinator, allowing for the management of operations to take place directly in the Office.

## **Actions for specific regions**

One question that was asked in the terms of reference of this review is: 'describe specific actions that may need to be considered in different regions'. It is recommended that the regional specificity of the Office is reduced. As previously mentioned in an earlier section, this will allow the Office to adopt a much more global role as a UN-Water programme. Over time, this could for instance mean an increase of activities in the direction of Asia in addition to Africa and Latin America, which are the current focus of the Office activities.

## **PROPOSED STEPS**

These are the immediate 'proposed steps', to implement the suggested changes:

- Detail the work plan together with a proposal of the amended ToR, adding capacity and budget (end of 2011)

- Discuss the amended Terms of Reference and work plan with the donor and UN DESA (end of 2011)
- Recruit new staff (beginning of 2012)

**Detail the work plan together with a proposal of the amended ToR, adding capacity and budget (end of 2011).** This will require that the remaining activities be planned in detail for the coming year, and more broadly for the years after. The already planned and initiated activities can be included first, complemented with the activities listed under 'UN-Water communication'. It is strongly suggested that the actual activities and the required budget and capacity be critically scrutinised. In the beginning, some additional temporary capacity may be required to undertake all the work. It may be necessary to separate out specific activities as 'projects' for individual financing, outside the current budget (although this does run the risk of losing the activity to others).

**Discuss the amended Terms of Reference and work plan with the donor and UN DESA (end of 2011).** This is a process that can take several shapes. It could be a very formal process with new contracts, or it could be a simple conclusion of the bi-annual meeting between the donor and UN DESA. Probably the latter is the wiser option. It is suggested that the sole and focused task of supporting UN-Water (as a de-facto support to the Decade) is acknowledged and confirmed as the role of the Office. A more detailed agreement on the annual conferences in Zaragoza can easily be maintained.

**Recruit new staff (beginning of 2012).** As soon as there is clarity on the Terms of Reference and role, the Office can start to build its capacity. The existing strategy of working with a mix of staff, consultants and interns is helping to get things done. Having a permanent presence of interns is useful for producing outputs. In an earlier section a future composition of staff was proposed. The recruitment of the additional staff should start as soon as an agreement is reached on the (interpretation of the) ToR.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

The UNW-DPAC Office is doing increasingly well. It has found its 'niche' and it is being valued in that role. The crucial function it plays is 'extracting the key messages and enabling their communication for UN-Water and its members and partners'. The 'content' it communicates is the content produced by the UN-Water members and partners, individually or collaboratively via the UN-Water task forces/Thematic Priority Areas. Extracting the messages is as much a role as enabling their communication with the outside world. To succeed in this role, the Office and its staff need to be trusted by the members of UN-Water as being capable to do the job, but they also need to be trusted by members of UN-Water as being capable and impartial. UNW-DPAC should actively work to maintain and even strengthen this position of trust.

The Office must make a choice regarding its proposed future role. Out of the possible scenarios outlined in this review, a supportive role to UN-Water has the greatest potential for results. The current communication plan of UN-Water provides a good basis for revising the work plan of the Office. In combination with this choice, the Office would logically take up a number of possible roles and activities, some of which have already started.

New and emerging communication processes, using Internet and mobile phones, allow for the increasing participation and membership of stakeholders worldwide. This innovation in communication is probably the biggest change to be introduced in the processes of UN-Water members in the coming years. UNW-DPAC must be a central actor in supporting this change.

The Office should increase its activities in accordance with the activities of UN-Water.

For major new initiatives, additional financing can be sought from other sources. A proposal was suggested for doing so in the field of new media.

The future team of the Office would consist of:

Coordinator / Water Expert

A World Water Day Coordinator

Communication Expert

Information Management & Awareness Raising Expert

'New Media' Specialist (use rather than the technical side)

Communication Expert 2

For additional recruitments, the international the Office's remit should be acknowledged as much as possible. It is strongly advised that the Office looks for experts from outside Europe, to increase the cultural and perhaps also the language base of the organisation.

It is suggested that a larger part of the administration is transferred to the Office. At present the Office is losing time and resources due to delays in administrative procedures which take place elsewhere. This endangers the credibility of the Office, and causes a waste of resources, as twice the work is done.

These are the immediate 'proposed steps', to implement the suggested changes:

- Detail the work plan together with a proposal of the amended ToR, adding capacity and budget (end of 2011)
- Discuss the amended Terms of Reference and work plan with the donor and UN DESA (end of 2011)
- Recruit new staff (beginning of 2012)

## List of institutions and documents consulted

As part of the review, people were consulted from: GWP, WHO, IFAD, UNW DPC, FAO, CAPNET, SIWI, UN DESA, UNESCO IHE, AKVO, UNICEF, UNDP.

The following documents were consulted:

UN-Water, 2011, communications strategy 2011-2013

UNW-DPAC, 2011a, Draft summary report of activities 2010

UNW-DPAC, 2011b, UN-Water DPAC Work Plan 2011-2015

UN DESA, 2006, Agreement between the United Nations and the Kingdom of Spain Concerning the Establishment of the United Nations Office to Support the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015

UNO-IDfA, 2011a, Draft Work Plan for 2012

UNO-IDfA, 2011b, Project Annual Report 2010 project INT/06/X01

UNO-IDfA, 2011c, Project Progress Report 2011 project INT/06/X01

# ANNEX 1, Proposed project

APPLICATION OF NEW MEDIA IN UN-WATER, a draft proposal

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is a 2-way activity. The shift to Internet and mobile phones makes this a possibility for an ever-larger part of the world. The new communication processes, using Internet and mobile phones, allow for participation and membership.

This innovation in communication is probably the biggest change to be introduced in the processes of UN-Water members in the coming years. People are not just readers or listeners, they follow you on Facebook or Twitter, they participate in your conference via Internet, they co-create on Wikis and they respond to you through their mobile phone. Social media are stronger than ever, as proven by recent events in North Africa and the Middle East.

This two-way character is a fundamental change in the communication process. It requires a very conscious design of communication, where the analysis of the communication is not only about the key messages, but also about the process for involving the outside world in being active participants. UNW-DPAC has to be a central actor in this change.

It is obviously vital for UNW-DPAC to be 'in the loop' for these developments, and to be able to advise the UN-Water members on their potential. To enable this, UNW-DPAC wants to develop its capacity and its product, and mobilize the capacity inside and outside the UN-Water network.

### Goal / objective

#### capacity

For the 'capacity' it is suggested to hire a staff member who has knowledge of possible uses of these new media. This person will be complemented with temporary assistance to enable a relatively fast development of products. The temporary assistance will consist of experienced consultancy to deliver the brains, and support staff. The fourth way to increase the capacity is through partnering with specific groups and institutions. For this, the network of KM4DEV is mentioned, as well as a specialized group, AKVO ([www.akvo.org](http://www.akvo.org)). A crucial part of the capacity is the serious experience that exists within various UN-Water members such as UNESCO IHE, FAO, WHO, UNICEF, WSSCC and others. They should be part in developing the concentration of experience as well as in providing future assistance.

#### product

The product of UNW-DPAC will be a service that is a combination of expertise, tools, coaching and 'permanent innovation'.

To develop the service, the tools need to be identified, and the possible applications as well as existing applications linked to water.

A network needs to be approached and involved, consisting of UN-Water members and partners that are already active in this field, as well as other organizations.

There also needs to be a 'service model' for making the knowledge available. This is likely a model of 'co-creation' where the user will be involved in developing a communication application. Eventually, the user will be doing this him/herself, with perhaps some coaching from UNW-DPAC. The resulting (increasing) group of 'clients' may turn into a community of practice, supporting each other.

The 'permanent innovation' element is vital: developments in technologies and rollout of networks are constantly changing the communication landscape. This requires a forward looking function, identifying approaches that may become applicable at scale in the near future.

For developing the product, it is suggested to experiment with the use of new media, and to use 'action research' approaches to identify the key lessons from these experiments.

## RESULT OF THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

The concrete results of the development phase would be:

- A first presentation of new media application for UN-Water members
- Application in 3 concrete cases
- A service model for UNW-DPAC support
- A structure for involving UN-Water expertise
- An innovation approach for securing 'constant innovation'
- A basic understanding in the whole UNW-DPAC team on the use and potential of new media formats
- A clear connection with non-UN-Water partners in this niche

## PROJECT STEPS

To develop the capacity, a step-wise approach is followed, where the UNW-DPAC office develops an initial package, with the assistance of specialized expertise.

UNW-DPAC, to generate experience in the whole team, to produce case-material for development and a portfolio for presenting to partners, will apply the tools and approaches. It is suggested to develop at least three separate applications.

A recruitment process will be run in parallel to bring on board a permanent capacity to the team.

## DRAFT TIMELINE

Preparing detailed ToR, 2 weeks

Recruiting consultant: 1.5 month

Developing package: 6 months

Support staff will be recruited from the start, to allow their presence during the start of the package development

Recruitment of permanent staff will start as soon as financing is secured, to allow involvement in the package development

## DRAFT BUDGET

	Amount	Cost per unit	Total
Expert support development phase	3 months	€15.000	€45.000
Supporte staff	2x6 months	€4000	€8000
Time current staff	2 months		€12.000*
Development: small workshop budget for harvesting at existing conventions (side-events)		€15.000	€15.000
Subtotal development:			€68.000 / €80.000*
Permanent staff member	2 year	€70.000	€140.000
Permanent: small workshop budget for harvesting at existing conventions (side-events)	2 year	€15.000**	€30.000
Permanent: expert support in operation	2 months per year	€15.000	€30.000
<b>Total:</b>			<b>€280.000</b>

\* if including costs of current staff, \*\* with 2 years of permanent expert, assistance & budget

## Annex 2 PROPOSED ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

### WORK PLAN 2012

Name of Main activity	Activities	Monitoring Benchmarks	Partners and targets
<b>1 UN-Water Communication</b>			
1.1 Organize UN-Water presence in events, organize events and pavilions	Implement Communication and advocacy activities in major events. - World Water Week (Stockholm): co-organize event with UN Water - World Water Forum - Rio + 20 - EUWI events - Other global events Implement support to UN Water on Communication efforts	Organize water day in Rio+20 Contribute to Stakeholder Dialogue in WWW Prepare and update calendar of events	UN-Water Secretariat and members
1.2 Audio visual materials on UN-Water events	Audio visual materials for events	Videos on the Stakeholder dialogue in WWW and Zaragoza Conference	
1.3 Organize annual UN-Water Zaragoza Conference	1 major conference	2012 Conference on Water and Cooperation (media consultation)	

<b>2 Support The External Communication For The Un-Water Task Forces, Thematic Priority Areas, Reports And Projects</b>			
2.1 Preparation and contribution to Communication Strategy for the Task Forces and TPAs	Implementation of Communication Strategy for CC Support Task Forces in preparation of communications strategies Prepare thematic publications Prepare Prepared publications tailored to specific audiences and processes Organize thematic sessions and events	To be agreed with task forces and TPA leaders DWMF on education and water Prepare strategy for Social Media Impact of Communications Perception analysis Information and communication matrix for TPAs	Task Forces and TPAs
2.2 Network of Communication officers	Update and maintain	Continuous activity	UN-Water Members and Partners
2.3 Flagship publications	Dissemination and outreach for major reporting products (JMP, GLAAS, and WRM) and country policy briefs	To be agreed with task forces and TPA leaders	WHO, WWAP, FAO
<b>3 UN-Water Repository and Information Center</b>			
3.1 Collection indexation, summaries of publications	Maintain data base and establish search mechanism	Throughout the year	UN-Water Members and Partners Major libraries and UN repositories
3.2 Preparation of Readers, and other materials	Prepare readers and materials for WWDAY, Green Economy, and water cooperation	22 of March June October	UN-Water Members and Partners
3.3 Bimonthly	6 bimonthly	Every two months	UN-Water Members and

			Partners
3.4 Exhibits	Exhibit on water and food security Exhibit on Water Cooperation	Exhibit for 22 March WWDAY 2012 Exhibit for Zaragoza Conference, October 2012	FAO, UNESCO, UNECE, DESA
3.5 Translations	Translations in Spanish	Throughout the year	-
3.6 Social media and publications newsletter	Maintain social media  Implement new social media project	Throughout the year  Media Project start in June 2012	UNW-DPAC and members publications officers and Task Forces
3.7 Prepare thematic publications and thematic pages	Update existing pages	Throughout the year	UN-Water Members and Partners
3.8 Decade and UN-Water Web page	- UN Decade Documentation Center and of the Repository of UN publications. - Decade's and UN-Water e-newsletter	Throughout the year	UN-Water Members and Partners
<b>4 Media water information center and materials</b>			
4.1 UN water web site media corner Organized and classified UN visual materials	Improve accessibility to existing resources: audio materials, video library and photo library, quotes, facts and figures, photo banks, UN experts directory on specific themes	Throughout the year	UNW-DPAC And members communication officers

4.2 Preparing Audio-Visual materials: Thematic videos	Providing web access to the UNW video library Produce 1 additional thematic documentaries on water and health in Haiti	Throughout the year	UN-Water Members and Partners
<b>5 Media Activities and journalists programme</b>			
5.1 Media relations: Press relations/press conferences/press releases for UN Water events and other.	Update and extend interviews Prepare press notes on the occasion of events. Disseminate them through media databases of members. Specific Media coverage for the Chair (Vice Chair and Secretary) Improve reaching to media and specifically certain types of media Insure participation of task forces in media events	Throughout the year	UNW-DPAC And Members and communication officers
5.2 Media training workshops (written and visual media)	Organize workshops in the DWMF on education Coordinate contents of media training workshops with Task Forces	June	
5.3 UN system Communicators networks and specialized Journalists Networks.	Develop integrated media database Identify major media events Coordinate media activities	Throughout the year	

5.4 Other media activities	Prepare opinion editorials, news and articles Prepare interviews and testimonies	Throughout the year	
<b>6 World Water Day and other campaigns</b>			
6.1 World Water Day Campaign	World Water Day 2012 on Water and Food Security and 2013 on Water Cooperation	22 March SMAGUA 8 <sup>th</sup> of March	UNW-DPAC and lead agencies and Task Forces
6.2 Other Campaigns	Water for Life Prize Water Smart and other campaigns Series of Conferences with the Cervantes Institute	22 March Throughout the year	
6.3 Prepare and update advocacy guides	Update WWDay advocacy guide and tailor for specific audiences Prepare guidelines for the celebration of WWDAY	February 22 March	
6.4 Local Visibility activities	Participate in educational and other activities organized by host country partners	Throughout the year	
<b>7 Administration /Institutional</b>			
7.1 Partnership and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and contact partners</li> <li>- Maintaining liason and organising meetings with the Host Government for reporting, planning and implementation of activities representatives.</li> <li>- Streamline procedures and establish working modalities with HQ-DESA.</li> <li>- Prepare and participate in UN Water Meetings</li> <li>- Participate in institutional meetings in</li> </ul>	Throughout the year	UNW-DPAC, host country, DESA and UN-water Secretariat and members

	host country.		
7.2 Prepare quarterly and annual reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report covering activities completed, implementation constraints etc.</li> <li>- Prepare draft implementation plan 2012-2015.</li> <li>- Biannual report.</li> </ul>	Throughout the year	
7.3 Personnel, internship programme and contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare ToR and advertise and reception of applications</li> <li>- Selection by office and approval by DESA.</li> <li>- Implementation and follow up of interns and JPO and preparation of letters of recommendation.</li> <li>- Preparation of Terms of Reference and contracting for the implementation of different activities.</li> </ul>	Throughout the year	