

Africa-EU Strategic Partnership

EU Water Initiative - Africa Working Group

Strategic outline

Multi-annual work plan 2009 - 2013

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Background.....	4
2.1 The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.....	4
2.2 The Africa component of the EU Water Initiative (AWG).....	5
2.3 Work programme and funding of the AWG.....	5
2.4 Rationale for updating the AWG strategy.....	5
2.5 Towards the new AWG strategy.....	6
3 AWG objectives and activities.....	8
3.1 Mission statement and working principles.....	8
3.2 Specific objectives, outcomes and lines of activities.....	9
4 The EUWI context.....	13
5 The AWG's operational structure.....	14
5.1 Groups and roles.....	14
5.2 Options for a sustainable AWG.....	15
6 Monitoring & evaluation.....	15

1 **Introduction**

The EU Water Initiative Africa Working Group (EUWI AWG) is currently operating on the basis of a 2006-2009 strategy and related work plan. Due to developments in the AWG's international environment the respective AWG strategy deemed inappropriate for tackling existing and future challenges. It was therefore decided to revise the underlying AWG strategy and to develop an adapted work plan for the coming years.

This paper documents the background of the AWG, describes the participative revision process and presents the new strategy in terms of objectives, outcomes and lines of activities. It is thus a result – but the result of a process which has not come to an end with it. The new strategy shows the specific niche of the AWG as the operational initiative of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water in the international context and provides a framework from today's point of view.

Within this framework annual work programmes will be developed in the AWG's multi-stakeholder tradition, reflecting joint views on actual needs.

We are confident that the work on this revised strategy has produced an appropriate tool for designing activities of the AWG as an political initiative in the Africa-EU context which will contribute to achieving the MDGs complementary to other stakeholders' work. We hope that this will further clarify the role the AWG should and can play, thus attracting additional stakeholders and strengthening its potential and position.

The water sector faces enormous challenges and the situation will become worse once the results of climate change become more obvious. The EU as a major donor in the water sector needs to take care that the resources it provides are used in the most efficient and effective way and along the strategies developed by its African partners and in full coordination with international stakeholders. The EU Water Initiative Africa Working Group is the logical political forum for that.

2 Background

2.1 *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*

The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 and is being implemented through the EU Water Initiative Africa Component. The purpose of this partnership is to make an effective joint (Africa-EU) contribution to the achievement of water and sanitation related MDGs.

The Johannesburg MoU specifies that this will be done through the following:

- Create a joint platform for improved coordination and communication on water related development assistance in order to increase transparency, streamline existing and future development activities and ensure more effective ODA.
- Develop joint action programmes to improve water governance and to achieve the stated targets on water supply, sanitation and water resources management.
- Support the establishment and strengthening of river and lake basin organizations and appropriate legal frameworks.
- Increase the transfer of knowledge and know-how and improve the knowledge base through institutional capacity building and targeted research programmes.
- Encourage the development of innovative financing mechanisms and develop a set of principles on user and private sector finance to maximise public funds, minimise risk and attract private sector investment and involvement.
- Develop financially sustainable strategies that work towards sector wide approaches and budget support mechanisms, and that include the implementation of policies on cost recovery which are sensitive to the needs of the poor.

After 6 years of operation the partnership has made progress towards these objectives, as follows:

- It has created an EUWI Africa Working Group (AWG) which is operational ever since;
- The Water Facility (EUWF) was created in 2004 with a total amount of €500 million from funds of the 9th EDF. Although the EUWF is not directly linked to the AWG it is an outcome of the political momentum created by EUWI and a manifestation of the importance attached to WSS by the EU;
- It has initiated support to 5 regional projects on transboundary water management in Africa;
- It has contributed to strengthen AMCOW and supported the role of AMCOW in the water policy debate at regional and international level.

2.2 *The Africa component of the EU Water Initiative (AWG)*

The above objectives of the Africa-EU partnership are achieved through activities of the EUWI Africa Working Group (AWG), which is the result of merging the former separated IWRM and WSS groups in 2006. Members of the AWG are representatives from AMCOW-TAC, EU Member States (MS), European Commission (EC), civil society both in Africa and Europe, specialised organisations (e.g. GWP, ANBO) and the private sector.

It is co-chaired on a rotating basis by the acting AMCOW-TAC presidency and an EU MS. Members of the AWG are working as a multi-stakeholder platform on water and sanitation related development issues in Africa. AWG operates within an agreed framework of multi-annual plans and annual work programmes.

So far the AWG has initiated amongst others:

- **dialogues** in some countries aiming to assist partner countries in the development and implementation of policies, strategies and priorities for the water and sanitation sector; however, there has been mixed success in developing these Country Dialogues and they are no longer pursued;
- a thematic dialogue on sanitation, resulting in **the Africa-EU statement on sanitation**, aiming at more and better sanitation programmes in Africa;
- the **disaggregation of water supply and sanitation** in the OECD DAC statistical system for ODA flows;
- a study on the **mapping of European aid to Africa**, to support the objective of **better donor coordination** in order to contribute to more effective and better targeted aid. The study has generated evidence on the status of “aid effectiveness” of ODA from EC and MS in the Water and Sanitation sector. It has thus contributed to document the need for better aid targeting to African countries and a more prominent inclusion in the agenda of the AWG and the EU MS.

2.3 *Work programme and funding of the AWG*

The current multi-annual plan was agreed in 2006 and covers the period 2006-2009. It describes planned activities and related budgets. Until 2007 funds came only from EU Member States. In 2008 and 2009 there was a mixed funding from the EU-ACP Water Facility and the EU Member State working as the EU co-chair of the AWG.

2.4 *Rationale for updating the AWG strategy*

1) EU-ACP WF ROM exercise

In November 2008 EuropeAid initiated a results-oriented monitoring (ROM) of the support to the AWG through the EU-ACP Water Facility which presented some observations and recommendations valuable for the future AWG development.

The major conclusion of the ROM is:

“There is insufficient clarity as regards to roles, responsibilities and procedures in the project and insufficient ownership of the project plan.”

The following measures are suggested in the ROM report:

- Redesign the plan/LFM in a participative workshop with all stakeholders and facilitated by a neutral, experienced expert well-versed in Project Cycle Management. This process should not break the momentum of the AWG and preferably be preceded by a participative monitoring exercise;
- Clarify the roles, responsibilities, procedures within the project in order to strengthen ownership;
- Continue to search for ways to improve communication and responsiveness from partner countries;
- Align Monitoring & Evaluation, as well as other controls and reporting methods.

2) Remarks from AMCOW executive secretary

During the London AWG meeting in December 2008 Bai-Mass Taal, the Executive Secretary of AMCOW, made some remarks about his perception of the AWG. Below is a quote from the minutes of that meeting.

“The challenge is how the AWG should work together to redefine its status. Furthermore, the AMCOW ES feels that the AWG should concentrate on its role and its added value in relation to AMCOW. The agenda of the AWG should reflect more on the AMCOW TAC agenda so that it can be linked better with the work plan of AMCOW. It is urged that AWG should be a vehicle for resource mobilization and become an instrument for the partnership EU-AMCOW. Lastly, AMCOW would like that the AWG should help make the AMCOW secretariat more operational and that there should be more bilateral talks between the secretariat and the AWG to help strengthen the secretariat, as it has a big role to coordinate the different initiatives.”

2.5 Towards the new AWG strategy

The results of the ROM were shared in the AWG meeting in London (December 2008). There it was discussed and agreed how to respond to the recommendations of the ROM. The most significant decision made was the need to re-visit the existing AWG strategy in such a way that the major findings of the ROM could be addressed. A process for reformulation of the AWG strategy with involvement of all stakeholders was agreed upon.

It is anticipated that the revised strategy will serve as the new framework for the AWG in the coming years (2009-2013). It will also be the basis for (multi-)annual work plans and applications for specific funding (e.g. this revised proposal for the EU Water Facility).

The revision of the AWG strategy has been carried out through a participative process in several stages. It is carried by a dedicated task team with African and European members as agreed during the World Water Forum in Istanbul.

Stage 1 – Abuja workshop

30. July 2009, before the AMCOW EXCO meeting. 24 participants of this bi-lingual workshop (18 persons from Africa, both governmental and CSOs, representatives from the U.S., the G8 and the AfDB) developed the basis of the revised strategy in terms of objectives and activities.

Stage 2 – post processing Abuja

The Abuja results have been edited and resulted in an input note for Stockholm.

Stage 3 – Stockholm workshop

On Sunday, 16.8. a second workshop was held at the venue of the Stockholm Water Week. Due to different reasons African participation was low but strong contributions from EU MS (troika and others), U.S. and G8. As a result an input note for the AWG meeting 3 days later was produced.

Stage 4 – AWG meeting at Stockholm World Water Week (19.8.)

Beside the usual update on AWG activities the approximately 50 participants focused mainly on discussing the presented input note and developed recommendations for suitable AWG activities under the defined key strategic objectives. The work was organised in a "world cafe" setting with strong African participation at the 4 tables (accounting for the 4 objectives), during the two rounds of discussion and during the a plenary presentation afterwards.

Stage 5 – consolidation after Stockholm

Building on the results from Stockholm the strategic framework has been edited and consolidated.

Stage 6 – AWG meeting Johannesburg

In the AWG meeting in Johannesburg just before the African Water Week (8.11.2009) a final draft of the new AWG strategy will be presented for final approval. A suitable monitoring framework is still lacking but will be developed and added asap. The revised strategy will be used as a framework for the annual work plans.

3 AWG objectives and activities

3.1 *Mission statement and working principles*

AWG mission statement

The AWG is a platform for policy dialogue in the water sector open to all stakeholder groups and contributing to reaching the MDGs in Africa through advocating for sufficient financial means and their efficient and effective use.

AWG working principles

Inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach

AWG aims to include all stakeholders relevant for specific activities encompassing EU Member States, the European Commission, partner countries, CSOs and the private sector from Europe and Africa as well as non-EU donors. The possibilities and potential roles of AWG depend upon the active involvement of its membership, striving for productive involvement of as many stakeholders as possible. In order to foster broad active engagement AWG may establish time-bound task teams to take forwards specific issues and activities.

Europe focused

As the Africa component of the European Union Water Initiative, the AWG focuses on the harmonisation and coordination of European level activities in the water sector of EU Member States and the European Commission

Demand led

AWG aims to act according to demand expressed from the various stakeholders. AMCOW in its function as a STC of the AU plays a pivotal role in expressing this demand and is the logical African counterpart to the EU Member States.

Pro-active

While committed to a demand-led development of its work programme AWG through its operational bodies (MS troika, task teams) is also ready to actively initiate activities where it seems appropriate and in line with objectives.

Geographical focus

The AWG - being the Africa component of the EUWI - is focusing on Sub-Saharan African countries. The northern African countries are mainly covered under the MED component of the EUWI and an appropriate level of coordination and exchange will be sought with this group.

Thematic focus

Resulting from the above working principles and experience to date the following broad topic areas are seen as priorities:

Sanitation, water governance, IWRM, transboundary WRM, financing. These broad activity areas are set within the objectives framework that follows.

3.2 Specific objectives, outcomes and lines of activities

Objective 1: Implementation of declarations

Declarations both from the African and the European side are implemented with a significant contribution of European support.

Outcomes and related activities

1. Improved coordination amongst EU donors and implementers

- A I) Clarify the roles and approaches of European donors with respect to declarations in the water sector.
- A II) Simplify and disseminate declarations and action plans within the EU, both on the levels of head quarters and country delegations
- A III) Define a role for AWG in the AfricaSan task force
- A IV) Support the coordination of efforts to develop institutional and human capacities needed to implement the relevant declarations
- A V) Link to G8 and the GF4A

2. Effective contributions from African partners in coordinating and streamlining the intra-African processes for implementing the declarations

- A I) Simplify and disseminate declarations; translate it for the local levels
- A II) Workshops in Africa on specific themes from declarations (e.g. Sharm el Sheikh) for different stakeholder groups

3. Additional finance available for the implementation of declarations

- A I) Support African partners in the mobilization of finance, including contributions to the design of the EUWF under EDF 10
- A II) Closely align with FWG when dealing with financial issues, promote their work in Africa and align activities
- A III) Lobby with main financing parties and institutions to streamline available funds according to the needs for implementing the declarations

4. Improved monitoring of ODA on water and sanitation

- A I) Contribute to optimise the data base on ODA for the water sector, both in the past (disbursed) and the future (committed, planned).
- A II) Contribute to developing principles, criteria and indicators to track progress of implementing declarations (in close cooperation with AMCOW)
- A III) Contribute to mapping of declarations and their state of implementation, specifically the EU contribution (in close cooperation with AMCOW)

Objective 2: Aid effectiveness & efficiency

European ODA for water and sanitation reaches high levels of effectiveness and efficiency in order to fulfil the objectives defined in the frame of MDGs and the African Vision 2025.

The AWG contributes through promoting harmonization and alignment of EU and non-EU parties that are engaged in development in Africa, in the frame of MDG7 and Vision 2025.

While building on the Paris Agenda and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), and acknowledging the magnitude and diversity of the many programmes and initiatives, the AWG strives for coherence, complementarity and added value between and within the many activities.

Outcomes and related activities

1. Better insight in H&A and aid effectiveness with respect to water & sanitation

- A I) Identification of financing obstacles vs. financing needs and assist stakeholders understanding the funding requirements
- A II) Mapping and dissemination of the status of specific aspects (e.g. Status of in-country coordination, sanitation)
- A III) Analysis of the complementarity of different types of financing (grants, loans, etc) in the water sector and how they link to country financing mechanisms

2. Positive effects of H&A efforts visible at the country level

- A I) Include input from the donors' missions when developing common views. Disseminate results on the country level to ensure harmonisation of donor activities at the international and at mission level
- A II) Analysis of outcomes of the total aid coming from the EU at country level and the potential for improvements
- A III) Analysis of the potential for the AWG to provide methodological support on the country level with pilot character (preferably with partners)

3. Better informed decision making for improved H&A enabled through clarifying existing knowledge gaps

- A I) Contribute to clarify implications of enhanced division of labour for the water sector in Africa including analysis of potential impact on "donor orphans", the barriers preventing flow of finance and possibilities for improvement
- A II) Enhance dialogue with African institutions (e.g. AfDB, AfWFac, RECs) and identification of priority intervention axes

4. Common positions on H&A issues adopted through dialogue platform for the EU and other donors

- A I) Organise events on African water sector issues for developing common positions
- A II) Facilitate information on common positions (policy note, seminars etc.)
- A III) Active encouragement of non-EU donors' participation in developing common positions

Objective 3: Ownership & Multi-stakeholder partnership

The improvement of the African water sector can build on vibrant partnerships between stakeholders from donor and recipient countries at all levels (regional, sub-regional, national).

The AWG strives to strengthen the EU-Africa partnership on water at all levels by providing a platform for policy dialogue, planning and learning through a multi-stakeholder approach.

Outcomes and related activities

1. Improved policy dialogue within the EU donor community

- A I) Enter into dialogue with the EU-Af strategic partnerships, especially those on MDGs and Infrastructure, to disseminate what AWG is doing and to explore options for strengthening the attention to water
- A II) Support the formation of task teams to allow the active involvement of a larger group and to focus on specific results
- A III) Development of policy notes documenting European views (or wider if possible)
- A IV) Broaden the AWG basis by actively involving more MS
- A V) Use enhanced visibility of the AWG to develop a sustainable operational and financial concept

2. More inclusive policy dialogue and coordination with other donor groups actively involved with water in Africa

- A I) AWG members also active in other initiatives (G8, G20, GF4A etc.) facilitate cooperation
- A II) Develop a concept for effectively supporting AMCOW in close cooperation with all (EU and non-EU) involved stakeholders
- A III) Discussion and coordination with non-EU donors on upcoming issues

3. Involvement of African stakeholder groups in policy dialogue widened and strengthened

- A I) Convene at least one annual AWG meeting / workshop in Africa
- A II) Deepen relationships with African networks (e.g. ANEW, ANBO, RECs)
- A III) Offer opportunities for wide stakeholder involvement (e.g. e-conferences)
- A IV) Mobilise resources to secure the active involvement of African stakeholders in AWG activities (facilitation of workshops, travel support)
- A V) Organisation of training and support for African CSOs to get involved in the next EU-ACP WFac call for proposals

Objective 4: Advocacy & knowledge sharing

The water sector receives sufficient attention and means on all levels (Africa, Europe, partner countries, international).

The AWG advocates at all levels for supporting Africa in reaching MDG7 and supports lobbying for concerted and increasing efforts to accelerate the present rate of progress and development.

Outcomes and related activities

1. Outcomes of the AWG are widely acknowledged within the EU development community, within and without the water sector

- A I) Production of communication materials for addressing specific target groups to supported AWG activities
- A II) Develop a communication strategy towards new partners from outside the water sector, especially on the political level (e.g. Parliamentarians, council groups, presidency)

2. Material produced by the AWG or directly related to its activities is used by the relevant stakeholder groups in advocacy for the water sector

- A I) Collected, edit and disseminated facts and data supporting AWG's messages and the water sector as such (e.g. from DAC, JMP etc.)
- A II) Topics supporting lobbying for the water sector are identified and activities producing suitable output are started (e.g. Studies, pilot exercises)
- A III) Maintain a lean and attractive web-site
- A IV) News service
- A V) Bi-lingual operation
- A VI) Link to other networks to materialize synergies in communication efforts (AMCOW, RECs, ANEW, GWP, WSP, donor groups)
- A VII) Contributions to water events (e.g. Stockholm, Af. WW etc)
- A VIII) Contributions to events outside the watersector (e.g. climate change)

4 The EUWI context

The specific objectives of the AWG are clearly aligned with those of the EUWI as indicated in the table below. In the first column the 5 EUWI objectives are shown, to indicate the relationship to the 4 key objectives of the AWG.

	Implemen-tation of declarations	Aid effectiveness & efficiency	Ownership & Multi-stakeholder partnership	Advocacy & knowledge sharing
reinforcement of political commitment towards action and innovation oriented partnership	X	X		
promotion of improved water governance, capacity building and awareness	X			X
Improved efficiency and effectiveness of water management through multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination			X	
Strengthened co-operation through promoting river basin approaches in national and transboundary waters		X	X	
Identification of additional financial resources and mechanisms to ensure sustainable financing		X		X

Furthermore both the EUWI Coordination Group and the Multistakeholder Forum have an advising and overseeing role and are thus influencing the development of the AWG within the broader EUWI picture.

The EUWI Coordination Group is an EU forum for representing the broad multi-stakeholder interests in the EUWI. As such amongst other roles it tracks the achievement of the objectives of the EUWI, promotes dialogue between the EUWI Working Groups and provides feedback on the annual work-plans and progress reports from the Working Groups.

Organised by the European Commission, the annual EU Water Initiative Multistakeholder Forum is an open forum to debate the EU Water Initiative, to comment on its performance and to discuss its strategic choices.

5 The AWG's operational structure

The Africa Working Group is a political initiative with a dedicated multi-stakeholder approach. In the years since the AWG has been started a mode of operation has developed. Below the major groups and functions are described.

5.1 ***Groups and roles***

AWG members

The members of the AWG provide advice, direction and legitimacy for the plans and activities of the AWG. Over the years, three AWG meetings per year have served as a true multi-stakeholder platform under the objective of the EU-Africa partnership.

Bearing in mind this multi-stakeholder approach cooperation with and support for African CSOs shall be strengthened in the future. The importance of their role has been confirmed in many meetings but it also appeared that lacking financial resources are a major constraint for them to take up this role and should thus be tackled by the AWG.

This refers both to supporting their capacities to contribute to strategic or thematic discussions in the framework of the AWG and to support their participation in AWG related meetings and activities (see revised work programme). ANEW will probably be a major hub for this.

EU MS troika

The European side of the water-partnership with Africa is represented by the annually rotating EU co-chair of the AWG. To enhance continuity the chair is supported by the outgoing (previous year) and the incoming (next year) chairs, together forming the EU troika.

Practically the troika together with representatives from the EC (DG DEV) steer the European part of the AWG jointly (comparable to a kind of management team or board), coordinating itself through regular e-mail communication and monthly telephone conferences. EU MS and the EC are represented by the respective institutions responsible for development cooperation on the technical level.

Partners

The AWG troika plus EC DG DEV continuously team up with the African partners, mainly through the African AWG co-chair (the acting chair of AMCOW TAC) and the AMCOW Executive Secretary, thus securing the alignment of AWG activities with African interests and plans.

In the future this ambition should become easier to fulfil because the new AWG strategy has been developed in a participatory process with major contributions from Africa. Thus major activities are also agreed already and can be followed up.

Co-chairs

The AWG co-chairs are responsible to oversee and steer the implementation of the envisaged activities in accordance with the AWG strategy and along the contractually agreed work programme.

Beside that they also have to ensure the development of new work programmes in due course, building on the AWG strategy, the multi-annual work plan, demand from the partners' side and results of on-going activities.

Secretariat

Working capacities of the troika have always been enhanced through technical consultants provided by the acting chair.

In addition a group of senior staff at IRC has for several years provided support for the operations of the AWG. Major tasks are the preparation of agendas and minutes, preparation and facilitation of physical and virtual meetings, updating of the AWG website and communication with AWG members. Currently this support group activity is part of the support project from the EU Water Facility.

Technical support to the co-chair together with the IRC group are forming something similar to an AWG secretariat. Primarily it is responsible for the implementation of the annual AWG work programme. Practically it is also very much concerned with the administration of the various sources of current and future funding for the AWG (e.g. EUWF contract, EC thematic budget).

5.2 *Options for a sustainable AWG*

In earlier consultations it has been stated that sources of more flexible funding and additional working capacities on a continuous basis could further strengthen the AWG's ability to deliver output.

Right from the beginning and up to 2008 the AWG was much hampered by uncertainty and unpredictability about its financial resources for a multi-annual work plan. The situation improved significantly when funding from the EU-ACP Water Facility became available in 2008. However, the practical usability of these funds is restricted by the formal EU-ACP WF requirements and the related inflexibility. Furthermore, the functionality of the AWG still depends heavily on the rotating EU co-chair and its willingness to provide (changing) resources for the AWG activities under its chairmanship.

An option to overcome this situation would be the installation of a dedicated AWG (pooled) fund, receiving contributions from supporting AWG members and thus forming the budgetary basis for the AWG's operation, e.g. executed by a fully fledged secretariat with suitable technical and organisational capacities.

In the coming year, this option and other possibilities need to be examined in view of the long term sustainability of the AWG.

6 Monitoring & evaluation

The revised AWG strategy with clear objectives, outcomes and lines of activities provides a good basis for improved monitoring and thus for enhanced accountability.

However, more work is needed for developing suitable indicators on all levels, and also for explicitly stating the assumptions and risks for achieving the envisaged outcomes and objectives.

It is a common view that the monitoring under the current EUWI framework is not applicable for a political initiative such as the AWG. This aspect came to the fore during the EUWI multi-stakeholder forum in 2008 (SWWW) and it was agreed that a revision of this monitoring system is needed and will be initiated.