

About the AWG

The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation was launched 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-Europe) contribution to the achievement of water and sanitation related MDGs. The strategic partnership has created an Africa Working Group (AWG) consisting of representatives from AMCOW-TAC, EU Member States, EU Commission, civil society and the private sector working as a joint platform on water-related development issues.

Highlights of 2010 in brief

This second newsletter in 2010 aims to update you on the activities of the Africa Working Group (AWG), since the previous AWG Newsletter (February 2010) and the last email update (June 2010).

First of all, we have had two AWG meetings: the first on 26th of July in Cape Town (SA) and the second on 9 September in Stockholm (SW). Both meetings took about 4 hours, were well attended and focused on the further alignment and synchronizing of the new AWG multi-annual workplan with the AMCOW plans. The minutes of the Cape Town meeting were shared earlier with AWG members and if you are interested: they are available (in EN and in FR) on the EUWI web-site (<http://www.euwi.net/wg/channel/document/21244>) or through the AWG Secretariat at IRC. The minutes of the Stockholm meeting are about to be sent to all AWG working group members.

Secondly, we are making good progress in the implementation of our workplan 2010. Four activities form the core of this workplan: the preparation of a CRS guidance paper, a sanitation mapping study, a study on the implementation of the EU Code of Conduct and preparations for a learning and sharing workshop on SWAps. By the end of November –during our next AWG meeting in Addis Ababa - we expect to be able to update you more by presenting the intermediate results. As an extra activity to

our workplan, we have been organizing during Stockholm water week –together with the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) – a very successful seminar, on the subject of aid effectiveness. The report of this meeting will also be shared with you shortly from now.

Thirdly, the preparations for the continuation of the AWG in the coming years are in full swing. On the financing side, the thematic budget from the European Commission (EC) has been officially granted, with a value of 1.025 million euro. Note that the funding is targeted at supporting the Africa –EU Partnership, with the official project name of “*EUWI - Policy Development and Implementation for Sustainable Water Management in Africa*”. For the management of this project, the EC has contracted UNDP as the international implementation agency. They are working on an Inception Report which will be ready before mid-November and presented in the next AWG meeting. This inception report will serve as the framework for the new AWG workplan 2011, based on the existing AWG strategy. During the previous two AWG meetings, the AWG members have already been giving inputs and priorities for the coming years: especially on IWRM/TWM and on aid effectiveness, specific suggestions have been drafted which will be included in the plans for the coming years.

The next AWG meeting and the 3rd Africa Water Week

Please pencil in your agendas the dates and location for the third Africa Water Week (AWW-3): 22-26 November 2010 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). The theme is *"Africa's Water and Sanitation Challenges and Opportunities to implement the Africa Water Vision and the MDGs"*. More information can soon be found on the AMCOW's web-site. The third and last AWG meeting in 2010 will be held in Addis Ababa, back-to-back with the third Africa Water Week. The main topics of this meeting will be: presentation and discussion on the intermediate results of the ongoing studies on sanitation mapping and the Code of Conduct, discussion on the AWG 2011 workplan and the UNDP Inception Report. Although a date for our AWG meeting has not been confirmed yet, we strive for a convenient timing just before or at the beginning of this Africa water week. As soon as we know the exact date, we will let you know, including the information on the registration etc. During the AWW3, the AWG together with SWA, AfDB and AMCOW will also organize a seminar on aid effectiveness related to the '5 year drive for sanitation'.

Review of Governance and Management of the AWG

By 2011, the AWG will enter into a new phase of its existence with the start of a new support contract (to be implemented by UNDP, 2010-2012), under a new thematic funding by the EC thematic budget line. Also, the political and economical environment within which the AWG operates has changed. Therefore, a review was deemed appropriate by the end of 2010. Currently, the Troika of the AWG is selecting an international consultant to execute this 'rapid assessment'. The assessment will focus on the governance and management of the AWG, taking stock of lessons learnt and the drafting of

recommendations for further improvement. The outcome of the review will provide important lessons and recommendations for the major African and European stakeholders of the AWG; especially for AMCOW, the EU member states and civil society organisations. In addition, the review will be an important input for the UNDP team that will be implementing the EC contract "EUWI - Policy Development and Implementation for Sustainable Water Management in Africa". The results of the review are expected by early December 2010.

SWAp learning and sharing workshop planned in November (location t.b.d.)

The workplan 2010 of the AWG identified SWAp as one of its key activities. As the SWAp concept is rather complex it was also concluded that further inputs are needed from AWG members to define the SWAp activity in more detail. To this purpose an ad-hoc working group was established during the AWG meeting in Cape Town (July 2010). This group met in Cape Town and in Stockholm to decide on the SWAp activity to be implemented in the last part of 2010. The working group decided to organise a sharing and learning workshop on experiences with implementation of SWAps, back-to-back with another regional meeting. Options for this are a regional meeting organized by ANEW and AMCOW, in November in Mozambique, or the Africa Water Week, also in November in Addis Ababa. The workshop will promote (sub-)regional sharing and learning and provide stepping-stones for further SWAp activities, in the coming years under new resources (like from the EC thematic budget). At this moment (5 October) we are awaiting confirmation on the date and location of the workshop; information will be shared asap.

Communications and participation

Reacting to signals from our members, we have taken steps to improve the communications to the major stakeholder groups of the AWG and increase participation of AWG members in the day-to-day running of the AWG. We have compiled a Troika-Plus mailing list consisting of the regular Troika members (European Commission and the incoming, present and outgoing European Chairs), the AMCOW-TAC members, the water experts from EU member states and representatives from CSO. This "Troika-Plus" will be sent on a regular basis the agenda and minutes of our troika telephone conference meetings and will be asked for comments on documents like concept notes, ToRs and for other planning or operational issues related to the AWG. In the Review of AWG Governance (mentioned above) communications and participation will be given extra focus to seek further improvements.

Troika composition

As you may remember from the previous newsletter, the Troika of the AWG has been in close contact with Sweden as the potential next incoming Troika Chair. Regrettably, we have recently been informed that SIDA is not in a position to take on this assignment and has declined our request. The present on-going re-organisation at Sida has been the main cause for this. The Netherlands and the other current Troika members (UK, Austria) have offered an additional 3 months extension of their Troika membership to provide some extra time to look for an alternative to take over the chair's role on the EU side. We hereby invite all EU member states to consider this role and take up this prestigious position.



Contact us

If you have any comments on this newsletter, or suggestions for the next one, please send them to the IRC Support Group of the AWG, attention of Ghislaine Heylen (heylen@irc.nl, tel +31 703044021) or Erma Uytewaal (uytewaal@irc.nl).

The next newsletter is scheduled for Spring 2011. This newsletter has been prepared by Dick van Ginhoven, Erma Uytewaal and Paul van Koppen on behalf of the Troika of the Africa Working Group.