



**International Organisation Development**

## **EXTERNAL REVIEW OF UN-WATER**

### **FINAL REPORT**

September 2009

**Mark Keen and Aneta Ratynska**

**International Organisation Development (IOD) Ltd**

✉  
Omega Court  
362 Cemetery Road  
Sheffield  
S11 8FT  
United Kingdom

✉  
[www.iod.uk.com](http://www.iod.uk.com)  
[www.parcinfo.org](http://www.parcinfo.org)

☎  
+44 (0) 114-267 3620

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	2
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	4
<b>2. Approach and Methodology .....</b>	6
<b>3. 'Organisational' Assessment of UN-Water .....</b>	10
a. Leadership .....	12
b. Governance Structures and Management .....	13
c. Financial and Resource Management .....	13
d. Process Management: Planning and Implementation .....	14
e. Capacity/Resourcing .....	14
<b>4. UN-Water – Evolution to date .....</b>	15
<b>5. Conclusions .....</b>	17
<b>6. Recommendations .....</b>	27
<b>ANNEX 1 - Terms of Reference .....</b>	32
<b>ANNEX 2 - People consulted .....</b>	33
<b>ANNEX 3 - Interview structure .....</b>	34
<b>ANNEX 5 - Questionnaire and Resulting Data Set .....</b>	38
<b>ANNEX 6 – 'PowerPoint' Presentation made to Stockholm Meeting .....</b>	52

## Executive Summary

This report summarises the methodology, process and main findings and recommendations of the external review of UN-Water. The review was informed by in-depth discussions with key stakeholder groups and an analysis of all relevant materials produced by UN-Water in order to provide insight into the performance of UN-Water against its mandate and objectives and propose a way forward that would ensure the sustainability and continued success of the Mechanism.

The review used an adapted ‘Results Based Management’ perspective described further in this report to assess the impact of UN-Water’s activities against desired targets. Key aspects of the approach used to carry out the review were the use of an organisational development perspective rooted in the context of maximum participation such that the final review would reflect the views of most of the stakeholders of UN-Water and be based on consensus and agreement.

Our aim was to assess UN-Water within its own terms and where possible, draw lessons from different contexts and prior experience of the reviewers, while ensuring that the final product truly echoed the views of UN-Water members, partners and donors and conclusions reached focused on future actions and potential changes that could build on the added value that UN-Water provides.

Key conclusions to emerge from the review can be summarised as follows:

- UN-Water needs to build on history of good leadership and recent upward trajectory towards achieving success.
- UN Water has increased its efficiency in recent years and is developing more effective management and communication processes
- There needs to be a shared view of the primary mandate of UN-Water and appropriate accountability mechanisms for component parts to ensure cohesion in delivery and outcomes.
- UN-Water has reached a stage of evolution where it must deliver more impact in mandate areas if it is to retain a perception of relevance
- UN-Water should proactively try and co-ordinate donors to provide funding which maximizes flexibility and impact
- UN-Water ‘centre’ and core governance mechanism must be strengthened
- UN-Water must remain a driver for change where necessary within the UN system, whilst retaining its focus on coordination and not implementation

Based on these conclusions, and an analysis of information available to the reviewers, the review recommends that:

- A permanent and enhanced UN-Water base be established which supports the Chair but does not revolve with it. A core team of 4-6 staff is tentatively suggested
- The Trust Fund be managed permanently by a neutral ‘agency,’ such as UN-Operations

- A clear framework of competencies required for the role of Chair and Technical Advisor be put together
- UN-Water continue to develop the role of the Programme Advisory board with the view towards streamlining and strengthening the work of Programmes and ensuring greater cohesion between Programme outputs and UN-Water mandate
- The mandate, expectations and ‘boundaries’ of Task forces be clarified
- The UN-Water work plan be explicitly prioritised – in particular with a focus at country level impact

## I. Introduction

Established in 2003, UN-Water is a mechanism for improving the coordination of UN agencies and organizations engaged in work related to water and sanitation whilst providing an open knowledge and information base on the sector. The objective of the Mechanism is to provide efficient, coherent and proactive coordination of the work of UN agencies and related organizations working in the water sector with the view to contribute substantially to the achievement of global water and sanitation related goals as articulated through the MDGs and JPOI.

The review aims to fulfil two main purposes:

- i. to assess the achievements of UN-Water's mandate taking into consideration evolutionary changes in operational boundary conditions including governance set-up and financial support
- ii. to provide options on the future possible configurations that UN-Water could assume in order to improve its performance in terms of operational approach and governance structure. Such options need to take into consideration the sustainability (operational and financial) of UN-Water

In addition to the formal objectives outlined above the review also seeks to assess UN-Water's planning and implementation processes (including results-based management), the quality of its deliverables, the relevance of its outputs and its impact on partners, with reference to UN-Water's purpose, goals and missions as defined by its Terms of Reference and Work Programme. The full terms of reference are attached in Annex I.

Preliminary discussions with the Chair and UN-Water Secretariat also revealed a concern for tapping into partner and donor views of UN-Water and the value that UN-Water does, and should, provide.

This has been primarily a formative review which aims to inform UN-Water stakeholders, its members and partners as they seek to learn from previous performance to build an effective and appropriate base for future development. A methodology was developed taking into consideration the aims and objectives detailed above to allow the consultants to best uncover the perceptions and opinions of UN-Water's stakeholders towards the mechanism as well as their views on the value added delivered by UN-Water. The aim of such enquiry focused very much on isolating the central success factors that will not only ensure the sustainability of UN-Water, but also increase its impact.

Interviews with stakeholders, both internal and external, have focused on assessing different aspects of the UN-Water mechanism:

- a. Leadership and the extent to which leadership has affected outcomes and impact

- b. Governance Structures and Management: both from an administrative and operational view point in terms of the 'fit' between structural arrangements and delivery
- c. Financial Management and sustainability of UN-Water operations, taking into consideration current funding levels and future growth objectives
- d. Process Management – Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of key UN-Water outputs and outcomes
- e. Resourcing and administration of UN-Water operations

In each case the central tenet of enquiry has been on the value-added of UN-Water and the impact achieved in relation to the Mechanism's goals. The suitability of governance arrangements and resourcing issues have also been explored with a view to determine how best to proceed in the future to maximise impact. A holistic approach was adopted to ensure every aspect of UN-Water, from its administration, through to its delivery, was assessed and that recommendations are themselves framed to allow the selection of an integrated set of options best suited towards delivering added value.

## 2. Approach and Methodology

This review is a relatively 'light touch' assessment based primarily on the views and perception of stakeholders and published documentation. It has aimed to be as participative as possible given the importance of inclusion, consultation and co-ordination to UN-Water if it is to fulfil its mandate. Any future changes in direction or governance arrangements require buy-in both from the 26 members and from donors and partners. As such the approach taken has been one where the reviewers have tried to reach out to as many stakeholders as possible and ensure their views and perceptions are heard and contribute to the final product.

The review methodology has involved four stages:

1. A design and consultation phase (April 2009 – May 2009) to determine the expectations of the Chair and Secretariat of UN-Water in relation to the outputs of the review, fix the scope and methods of the review, and identify key stakeholders to interview in person. This process resulted in the development of a review framework adapted from the DAC evaluation model<sup>1</sup> and focused on assessing:
  - a. the **Relevance** of UN-Water, so does it have a clear mandate and role to play and is it doing the right things;
  - b. its **Efficiency**: is it structured effectively, does it have processes and systems in place which enable it to fulfil its mandate effectively;
  - c. its **Effectiveness**: how well is it achieving its objectives, is UN Water achieving what it set out to do and
  - d. **Impact**: what difference are its activities having and is it contributing to change in its targeted areas.
2. A data gathering phase during which the review team interviewed 45<sup>2</sup> key stakeholders from among UN-Water members, partners and donors. Where possible interviews were scheduled in person (the review team held meetings in New York, Rome, London and Geneva) and other conversations took place by phone. An online perception questionnaire was also designed and sent out to all UN-Water members for completion. The questionnaire examined how respondents agreed or disagreed with statements around impact, effectiveness and sustainability of UN-Water. 75 questionnaires were sent out and 21 responses were received and coded a response rate of 28%. The data gathering stage also included an in-depth review of literature and documentation provided by UN-Water<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> We have not included sustainability as given this was a formative review (rather than evaluation) the output itself is answering the question if UN-Water sustainable and how issues of sustainability raised occur mainly in the relevance area.

<sup>2</sup> A number of key stakeholders were not available in the original time allocated for this phase, so interviews have continued throughout the review and are likely not to be complete until after the first draft of this report. There have been 45 interviews to date.

<sup>3</sup> Please see Annex 2 for a list of people consulted; Annex 3 for an outline interview structure; Annex 4 for a list of documents; and Annex 5 for the online survey and collated results.

3. A review and analysis of all data and presentation of a) preliminary findings in a Briefing Note sent to the UN-Water, Members Chair and Secretariat and, following feedback, and b) preparation of a final report for presentation during the UN-Water Senior Managers' Meeting in Stockholm in August 2009
4. Development of a final report after feedback and follow up discussions after the Stockholm presentation

## **Review Approach**

Assessing the impact of a mechanism such as UN-Water often involves a number of challenges. Chief amongst these are problems of attribution. UN-Water, like most networks working on development issues, aims to fulfil a coordinating role by bringing together, supporting or influencing other actors from within the institutional environment towards clear, goals, outputs or objectives, yet does not itself either undertake the activities or make the policies that lead directly to these desired outcomes. This poses a challenge in ensuring that any assessment of impact considers the true mandate of such a mechanism and links recommendations back to that mandate, rather than to operational outcomes the mechanism may not necessarily be tasked with.

Secondly, issues of governance and administration of such mechanisms need to be explored with a view towards balancing the question of structure against flexibility and consensus-building, while ultimately focusing on the impact and value of the mechanism through the activities it supports. As explored in a later section, the nature of UN Water means that an element of 'impact' is in itself the ability to keep consensus together and the processes required to do this might impinge on 'best practice' organisation design that aims for processes to maximise efficiency.

The development of a results-framework in this case has meant beginning with an assessment of what UN-Water is trying to achieve and what it actually does (from planning through to implementation) rather than looking just at the results of all actors. The approach has also taken into consideration the differences between different elements of the mechanism and its levels – from the global administrative level through to the emerging country level and also Programmes and Task Forces. Key to the framework has been the mapping of UN-Water's mandate towards goals and objectives against which progress could be assessed and the evolution of UN-Water observed.

## **Results Framework**

We have used a 'traffic light' approach to assess UN-Water across the review dimensions. We have given a green assessment where we feel UN-Water is 'on track' or has met or exceeded stakeholder expectations and/or its Terms of Reference; amber, where there has been significant progress but there is still work to be done; and red where progress has not really been made. A red 'score' does not in itself signal

failure as in many cases it can be argued that expectations have been or are too high; or that required or expected resources have not been made available. We have tried to be fair and reflect differences in opinion or perspective where they exist, in particular where we have received radically different views on similar issues. In some cases this means giving certain criteria mixed or even opposing scores. Where there are differences we have tried to explain these in the accompanying narrative

## **Impact**

Ultimately, the results framework must be structured to examine the evidence on the extent to which the actions of UN-Water have/or have not, resulted in ‘improved system wide coordinated action and coherence’. Six key ‘results’ areas within the Water sector have been drawn from UN-Water’s Terms of Reference through which to assess impact:

- Enhanced communication between UN-Water members and between UN-Water members and partners
- UN-Water contribution to enhanced UN system actions at the global level
- UN-Water contribution to enhanced UN system actions at the regional level
- UN-Water contribution to enhanced UN system actions at the Country level
- Improved coordination and coherence of the activities undertaken by UN system entities
- Added value to UN programmes and projects

The difficulty in impact evaluation terms is that results in these areas are quite intangible and initial documentation does not define what success would look like. There are no targets to ‘measure’ progress or any defined baselines which indicate a clear starting point. Our approach has been to focus on the perceptions of members and stakeholders and to triangulate with documentary evidence which outlines changes that have occurred and processes and activities undertaken. This then forms the basis of mapping out UN-Water’s impact as it has evolved to its present state and assessing, given that impact how it might evolve in the future.

## **Relevance**

This aspect of the framework focuses on an examination of the ‘niche’ in which UN-Water works and its comparative advantage in relation to other actors within the UN system and the wider international water sector. Here, the review team has drawn on its experience of evaluating the work of the Global Water Partnership, which operates in a similar space to UN-Water, so highlighting the particular characteristics, challenges and needs of the water sector; and its experience of assessing other network/non-hierarchical institutions to focus on the dynamics of assessing structures where co-ordination and coherence of others is part of expected impact as well as efficiency and effectiveness.

A key feature of the relevance aspect of the framework is an assessment of how well outputs and outcomes correspond to the majority view of what UN-Water mandate is

and should be and how it is acted upon – so is it doing the right thing. This ties in also to the idea of added value of UN-Water, and the prioritization of its work and outputs towards an integrated, value-driven system. It also helps assess how much ‘relevance’ has moved given an evolving context and whether UN-Water itself needs to change or evolve to maintain a valued role.

## **Efficiency**

In addition to looking at impact of what UN-Water has achieved, the review also examined the way in which those results have been achieved – efficiency – which supports the important question of sustainability (both human resource and financial). This in particular focuses on how resources have been utilised, the methods and processes of co-ordination of activity and the relationships and roles of each of the governing structures and their relationships to member organisations. It tries to look at what has worked and how this has enhanced UN-Water’s performance and also focuses on the Inputs/ activities that have been planned, designed and implemented towards the achievement of stated goals and objectives. The focus is on identifying the required processes to achieve co-ordination and the ‘organisational’ dimensions which characterise a successful ‘co-ordinating’ entity. The reviewers have drawn extensively from their experience in assessing similar ‘network’ organisations in focusing on efficiency and section 3 outlines the central underpinning framework on which this assessment has been made.

## **Effectiveness**

This aspect of the framework hones in on the identification of key results chain(s) evident within the stated ambition/ programming of UN-Water, followed by an examination of the extent to which:

- Outputs have been achieved, how and by whom, and subsequent utilization
- Outcomes have been realised: what have been the immediate effects of UN-Water outputs within the targeted audiences?

In identifying these ‘results chains’ the focus has been on assessing what UN-Water does – so its part in the chain – and therefore assessing its effectiveness on its own terms as a coordinating mechanism.

### 3. ‘Organisational’ Assessment of UN-Water

UN-Water is a difficult entity to assess using conventional means for addressing effectiveness, efficiency and progress towards goals. Most organisations and institutions have a clear sense of hierarchy and positional authority with ‘power relations’ where someone or some group is ‘in charge’ and accountable for strategy, the use of resources and therefore action and impact. UN-Water is part of the UN system, a unique institution with a complex power dynamic which to those unfamiliar with it, can be difficult to comprehend when understanding how things get done or can get done. The UN is comprised of different organizational configurations such as its agencies, funds, committees and central UNO functions in New York, and these all have slightly different relationships with each other, and with Member States, external partner organizations and groups. In attempting to understand UN-Water, what it has achieved and how it may go forward it is important to place this ‘co-ordinating mechanism’ within this context, in particular when thinking about how it might go forward and the processes and discussions required to make any change happen.

This does not mean that it is not possible to draw from other contexts or organisational knowledge in assessing UN-Water. IOD was selected to undertake this work because as a company it has both knowledge of the UN but also works and assesses other development organizations and those from different institutional sectors.

This review is based on an adaptation of an evaluation approach developed by Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Martha Nuñez<sup>4</sup>. Their approach was designed to focus on assessing development networks, which they define as “groups of autonomous organisations (and perhaps individuals) in two or more countries or continents who share a purpose and voluntarily contribute knowledge, experience, staff time, finances and other resources to achieve common goals”. UN-Water might, to some people, not formally be a ‘network’ but it shares some key characteristics, in particular relating to the autonomy of members and the expectations that members will contribute their own resources.

Central to the Wilson-Grau and Nuñez approach is an acceptance that the contexts in which networks operate are dynamic, complex and inherently open; and that the conventional management tools of hierarchical power or resource allocation to manage in this context are not available. This complexity is also characterised by difference: national or regional ‘hubs’ within the global context will be faced with different key environmental variables and success factors. Objectives or goals may shift at short notice and there is likely to be a necessity for flexibility and iterative planning processes within a stable but high level overarching aim, mission or purpose. Attribution is difficult because cause and effect linkages are hard to test with activities often focused on ‘influencing’ or advocacy and results being collateral or unintentional. Networks are also likely to be just one of a number of social actors in a broad effort.

---

<sup>4</sup> ‘Evaluating International Social Change Networks: A Conceptual Framework for a Participatory Approach’ April 2006, Development in Practice

Wilson-Grau and Nuñez describe some defining characteristics of networks which seem applicable to UN-Water:

- a. **Participation** is central and core to what makes a network different to other organisational processes/forms. This participation should be requisite to the resources of each member. For UN Water this a key challenge given the relative sizes of members and the centrality of 'Water' as a priority sector for different entities. There is a tension between managing the expectations, needs and realities of large and small member organisations and yet maintaining effective and meaningful participation at a broad enough level to remain representative.
- b. **Motivation** – the larger social purposes targeted by networks require collective action and individuals/groups believe meaningful political objectives will not be realised working alone. Networks themselves are attractive as they clearly and demonstrably differ from the institutions they are trying to change in terms of power relations, yet still provide the collective force and security of group membership and behaviour. They are conventionally 'organisationally nimble': with limited bureaucracy and therefore action and resources may be quickly mobilised and strategies and resource allocations altered to meet changing conditions; however, action requires mandate and given the lack of hierarchy, requisite participation in decision making may slow down the ability to be truly responsive. This dichotomy of being both 'participatory' and 'nimble' is a key challenge as it is central in terms of both achieving results and in maintaining cohesion. For UN Water this is important both for the motivation of members and partners but also to potential donors who need to fully understand the realities of managing this dichotomy.
- c. Strength and sustainability of a network depends to a significant extent on its **usefulness to its members** who may well have different interests and needs in belonging to the network. Maintaining usefulness is a key element for network longevity, though it might be argued that this characteristic naturally limits how long networks should survive. What differentiates UN-Water in this regard is the role of partners and donors. UN-Water needs to maintain a very broad base of 'usefulness' and might need to manage potentially contradictory requirements.
- d. Networks operate more through **facilitation, coordination and cooperation** around the activities of its organisational components than by directing programmes and existing projects. Secretariat structures assume responsibilities for communication, co-ordination and organisation to catalyse activities, yet in a network the scope of their authority is restricted. It is important here to note how UN-Water differs here from other networks as it does run/direct some programmes. To some this is going to confuse UN-Water's mandate and may also create expectations of 'attributable' change which are unrealistic. It also significantly changes the conventional power dynamics of 'the network' leading to a need for increased leadership skill and sensitivity.

The Wilson-Grau and Nuñez framework aims to provide an approach by which networks can be assessed based on the qualities needed and the type of functions they might achieve. They have also attempted to summarise the key operational dimensions which are likely to facilitate the delivery of results based on the qualities of networks and the functions they perform. These are summarised in the table below

**Table I – Functions and Qualities of a ‘Network’**

Functions		Qualities
Manage knowledge for members		Democracy – success depends on equity in power relations
Promote dialogue, exchange and learning		
Shape agenda by amplifying ideas	←	Diversity – common values and collective purpose but different ‘realities’ and conceptions to achieve change
Convene organisations or people		
Facilitate action by members	←	Dynamism – enthusiasm, energy and drive for change through collaboration, supported by facilitated rather than directed proposals for action
Build community by promoting values and standards		
Mobilise and rationalise the use of resources		Performance – effective relationships and interactions underpin the quality of results achieved through purposeful action
Strengthen international consciousness		

## Operational Dimensions

A further element of the Wilson-Grau framework is the identification of key operational dimensions for networks. A brief assessment of these provides a useful indication as to where UN-water currently stands and key challenges it needs to face.

### a. Leadership

UN-Water currently has a revolving Chair, supported by a technical adviser, and a Secretariat. Even from initial discussions it has been clear that the success, credibility and future evolution of UN-Water relies heavily on the leadership skills of the Chair and in particular their ability to work with the Secretariat, members and other actors to maintain collective action and movement. Building up effective working relationships, using but also getting round bureaucracy where necessary, lobbying and smoothing sensitivities and egos are all key skills and attributes. They also require access to resources in order to ‘get things done’ when necessary and to continue the balance

between quick decision making and participatory processes. The Secretary is a more 'silent partner' in this leadership team with a much less 'outward facing' role as perceived by others. Managing links between UN-Water and other UNO functions is important though, and a good working relationship and balance of styles between Secretary and Chair is essential. The technical adviser also plays a leadership role in particular in harnessing the cohesion and drive for momentum created by the chair; in some ways the technical adviser is more of a CEO and it is clear that the creation of this role has gone some way to provide operational focus and leadership and to create initial steps towards accountability above and beyond participation.

### b. Governance Structures and Management

To a greater extent, UN-Water's governance structures do correlate to what would be expected of a conventional network, though how they are operationalised is slightly different and there are a couple of notable differences. Most networks have a central hub or secretariat, which support a Chair. UN-Water is unusual in that this support/operational function is split. The overall governing body which involves a full 'meeting' of all members as the key decision making body is common and in the reviewers opinions 'good practice' as it embodies the participatory nature of a network where there is no 'top down' resource control. Similarly the clarifying of 'Partner Criteria' is a welcome governance addition and is in line with how a network might define its role with different institutional stakeholders who are working to achieve similar outcomes. The setting up of task forces to address key themes/issues is also a common approach, though UN-Water does not have has rigorous accountability mechanisms for these task forces as some other networks, neither does there appear to be clear guidelines for membership or expectations of resource contribution for them to operate.

The two key differences in UN-Water's governance structures in comparison to a network archetype are: a lack of a clear, operationally consistent regional and national governance structure/coordinating mechanism; and the addition of 'programmes' with autonomous/semi autonomous management and accountability structures. The first of these in UN-Waters context would appear to involve some form of clear linkage to UN regional bodies if this is appropriate; and structured engagement with UN Resident co-ordinators and/or country 'water' networks/partnerships. The second is a reality that has been part of UN-Waters evolution, both planned and emergent and requires a clear review in particular concerning reporting lines and accountability. If programmes are to be a part of UN-Water it needs to be clear how they fit and who they are managed by and for what aims.

### c. Financial and Resource Management

Effective financial and resource management in most organisational forms concerns control, allocation and monitoring. Network management requires this to be done both with a collegiate sense of coordinating, cajoling and harmonizing and yet also a firm enough hand to ensure good management of resources is still achieved. The increase in capacity created by the Trust Fund seems to have achieved a greater sense of clear

financial management both in terms of understanding what resources are required and being more aware of how they should be allocated, where gaps are and the impact this might have.

**d. Process Management: Planning and Implementation**

The introduction of a more results focused work planning and reporting programme has greatly enhanced UN-Waters capacity to deliver. Keeping the balance between expected outputs and the resource capabilities of members is going to be crucial if UN-Water is going to maintain cohesion and meaningful engagement by all members. There is a danger of focusing on outcomes to such a degree that UN-Water might become a two-tier 'mechanism' which has 'operational members' who are likely to be the bigger funds and agencies; and 'committed observers', who participate in discussions and decision making but do not contribute operationally. Drawing up clear structures for task force participation, governance (including the roles of partners) would also clarify management processes and allow a clearer understanding of what initiatives work and why.

**e. Capacity/Resourcing**

Networks have a variety of capacity/resourcing models, some are in line with the UN's own approach by which members contribute based on their ability to pay, others on a voluntary basis (often time rather than money). Most still require external funding and often face the challenge confronting UN-Water in that potential donors want to achieve outcomes in line with what UN-Water is doing but are restricted in how they provide funds to do so. In the experience of the reviewers the most effective way for donors to achieve outcomes through supporting networks is by providing 'core' or untied funding, however, a large proportion of donors are unable to do so. This results in often a 'jigsaw' approach to budgeting where networks create 'best case' budgets (which are usually purposefully unrealistic) and then look to donors to fund acceptable pieces. In a network this often undermines the very cohesiveness, harmony and equitable principles which drives them and leaves gaps in core functions such as planning and process management. UN-Water is fortunate in that the trust fund does provide core funding; however greater donor harmonization would not only help UN-Water management but also in itself be a participatory process bringing together a number of key stakeholders to focus on shared engagement in the water sector.

## 4. UN-Water – Evolution to date

UN-Water can trace its roots to the 1977 Mar Del Plata UN Conference on Water. This conference produced an action plan that outlined an initial ‘who does what’ by mapping out the scope and nature of water-related activities undertaken by organisations from the UN system; and by setting out arrangements for ‘interorganisational co-operation at the global, regional and sectoral levels’.

A review of the ‘ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources’ (1998 - 1999) the main body to emerge from Mar Del Plata, found that though documents were produced and meetings which brought together clear players were held, the Subcommittee was not really offering global leadership in freshwater management nor “addressing gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies in system wide water management”. Other global co-ordinating entities had emerged though none with an overall mandate for UN initiated activities.

The High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) in its 2003 meeting took the recommendations of this review and other commentators to establish UN Water with its current mandate and its role to facilitate synergies and joint efforts among the UN implementing agencies. Since 2003 UN-Water has further evolved. Table 2 provides a summary of what UN-Water has done since 2003, this summary is taken from existing UN-Water documentation.

**Table 2 – UN-Water achievements since 2003**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
2003	The first year of operations was focused on establishing work modalities and the long-term programme of work, under the guidance of the first Chair of UN-Water, the WHO. The first World Water Development Report (WWDR) was also produced by the WWAP.
2004-2005	Highlights of key activities during 2004 and 2005 included the launch of the UN-Water website during the Fourth World Water Forum and the creation of the first Task Forces. This corresponded with the development of a communications strategy to strengthen the UN-Water identity during the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” (2005-2015) for which UN-Water acts as the steering committee.
2006	In 2006 the Joint Monitoring Programme Report was prepared by the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, covering progress towards the achievement of MDG 7 and other 2015 goals.
2007	Key activities in 2007 coincided with changes in the management structure of

	UN-Water, which included the establishment of two new posts: a Chief Technical Advisor to assist the Chair and an Assistant to the Secretary. This was made possible through the support of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF). The Trust Fund was launched with budget support from UK's DFID which pledged GBP 900,000 over a three year period. Two new programmes were also launched: one on capacity development to be based in Bonn and funded by the German government and one on communication and advocacy, located in Zaragoza and supported by the Spanish government. Other important activities undertaken in 2007 included the initiation of the Global Annual Assessment on Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS), which coincided with the launch of the International Year of Sanitation. The Task Force on Sanitation provided significant input into the preparation for this initiative
2008	The entry of two new donors, Sweden and Norway, which pledged financial support to the Mechanism through the MDTF Important activities undertaken in 2008 included the preparation of the pilot report of GLAAS, and the publishing of JMP report update on sanitation. During the year, the WWAP continued preparations of the triennial WWDR and moved to new premises in Perugia, Italy. The Programme on Capacity Building developed a single entry point for accessing information on water-related capacity development activities worldwide, while the Programme on Advocacy and Communication focused on organizing the UN-Water pavilion and related activities at the Expo Zaragoza. The Task Force on Transboundary Waters released a policy brief and presented the UN-Water seminar at the World Water Week in Stockholm. The Task Force on Integrated Water Management launched a report on the status of implementation of National IWRM plans and was then combined with the Task Force on Monitoring to establish the Task Force on Indicators, Monitoring and Reporting

## 5. Conclusions

The conclusions to this report are structured around the dimensions of the review framework outlined in the methodology. Each dimension of Impact, Relevance and Efficiency is briefly assessed and then split into sub sections focusing on the key results areas. They are 'scored' using the traffic light system with a brief narrative section explaining the basis for the assessment and the main sources of evidence used.<sup>5</sup>

The review framework focused on assessing:

- a. the **Relevance** of UN-Water: does it have a clear mandate and role to play and is it doing the right things?
- b. its **Efficiency**: is it structured effectively, does it have processes and systems in place which enable it to fulfil its mandate effectively?
- c. its **Effectiveness**: how well is it achieving its objectives, is UN Water achieving what it set out to do?
- d. **Impact**: what difference are its activities having and is it contributing to change in its targeted areas?

### a) Impact

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has enhanced communication between UN-Water members and between UN-Water members and partners <sup>6</sup>		Effectiveness

Amongst members and partners there is an overwhelming sense that open communication has improved and clear contact channels have been established, in particular in the last 2 to 3 years. The Stockholm meeting is seen as a good example of how communication has become more inclusive, as are the enhancements in the website. Both interviewees and questionnaire respondents noted that the participatory process of this review further illustrates a desire to get the views of all stakeholders. The main criticisms in this area came from donors who still felt that UN-Water could be more proactive in outlining achievements and exactly what they are doing and how it all adds up. There were also some questions concerning communication at a regional and national level (in particular with Resident Co-ordinators and smaller NGOs in the Water sector) especially as some of the key communication channels require attendance at meetings which is a barrier to some partners. The review team does feel

<sup>5</sup> Annex 6 shows the 'PowerPoint' presentation made by the review team in Stockholm and this provides a summary of the conclusions

<sup>6</sup> Please note the rating on this dimension has been changed following further discussions after the Stockholm meeting – previously had been all green

these criticisms are useful feedback; however UN-Water also needs to be realistic about how much it can do with the resources it has.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN system actions at the global level		Relevance

There is a strong consensus that at the global level much improvement in coordination and system wide coherence has been achieved. There is still work to be done but the foundations are in place in particular through coordination for input into global processes; the consolidated work plan and the work of task forces. The key challenges are still in areas where there are blurred mandates amongst member agencies (in particular areas such as sanitation) and in the development of monitoring systems.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN system actions at the regional level		Relevance

This is a major gap in that little movement or evidence of value has been seen by stakeholders or members at the regional level. These working at a regional level, see little drive for a uniform 'regional approach' and other commentators are unsure if there are forums in which UN-Water can meaningfully engage with all regions. There may be some identified issues which need to be co-ordinated regionally or certain geographical areas where regional groupings are a common mechanism for addressing water related issues. If not then the practical realities of UN-Water's mandate in this area might perhaps be questioned.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN system actions at the country level		Relevance

This is the results area where UN-Water has received the most criticism from external partners, in particular all Donors the review team spoke to expected UN-Water to influence country level UN activities/planning to a much greater degree than is currently the case. To some the lack of engagement at country level is in danger of undermining

UN-Water's strong mandate. The task force that is undertaking work in this area is welcomed but expectations are high and there is a sense that UN-Water has needed a period of institutional growth to get structures in place but now there is a need for clear action and visible results in this area.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has added significant value to the activities of the many UN system entities by improving coordination and coherence of these activities		Effectiveness

There is widespread consensus among UN-Water stakeholders that the most important impact area of the Mechanism is improving coordination and coherence among UN system entities. This is seen to be by far the primary outcome of UN-Water activities and efforts and one that needs to be prioritised in the future. There is, however, some concern that whilst coordination and coherence are apparent at the global level, more needs to be done to ensure that such coordination of activities also takes place at the regional and country levels. This view needs to be balanced with a prioritisation of activities, with most stakeholders and donors supporting the strengthening of coordination and coherence at the global level first before moving onto the regional and country levels. This is consistent with the overarching UN-Water mandate.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water adds significant value to existing UN programmes and projects		Relevance

This is an area where most stakeholders feel UN-Water is not adding significant value yet. This could be partly due to the fact that most stakeholders view UN-Water as a coordination mechanism and not an entity tasked with improving existing UN programmes and projects. However, there is scope for UN-Water to improve in this dimension, even indirectly, by playing an information dissemination role. For example, the majority of stakeholders feel that more focus needs to be placed on the development of up-to-date relevant and quantifiable indicators for the water sector and a repository of information on existing UN programmes and projects in the water sector. This would help to reduce duplication of effort within the UN system and a greater coordination in existing activities and programmes, in line with UN-Water's mandate. Whilst effort has been made towards developing such indicators and mapping of activities, more needs to be done to ensure that these tools gain widespread use within the UN system. At the moment stakeholders do not yet feel that UN-Water plays a developed enough role in this area. It is important to note also that

stakeholders have expressed strong views that UN-Water should continue to act as a coordination mechanism and not take on a more operational or implementing role. As such, adding value to existing UN programmes and projects should be done indirectly and within the wider scope of improved coordination.

### b) Relevance

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Acceptance of the need and value of a coordinating mechanism amongst UN Agencies in the Water Sector		

All of those interviewed or surveyed felt there was a need for UN-Water. When comparing it with other UN 'mechanisms' it was clear that Water as an area did not fall under the remit of any one existing organisation but was a central component of the work of many. UN members certainly felt that there was no appetite or need to create a Water agency and this would indeed be damaging and halt progress that is being made. There were some differences in views amongst donors and partners who felt that a Water agency might have more 'clout' to get things done, but this in the opinion of the reviewers was more an expressed need for UN-Water to meet more of its mandated areas than it does currently.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water is seen as doing the right things		Efficiency Effectiveness

This result area invoked the widest range of opinions, with the greatest spectrum of views concerning the role of programmes within UN-Water. Most felt they could, if effective, add value; some believe they are outside of UN-Water's mandate and are pulling attention away from UN-Water's key mandate. Those that disagreed felt that programmes can provide profile and presence as they lead to change which reinforces UN-Water's ability to co-ordinate and strengthens the volume and value of knowledge generated in the sector. Task forces are seen as an effective way forward but there is expectation about what the country coordination and climate change task forces in particular might deliver. There is still a sense that it is at the country level that UN-Water is not delivering and that maybe a greater proportion of available resources should be focused on change at this level if sustainable progress in the water sector is to be made.

<b>Results Area</b>		<b>Secondary Framework Criteria</b>
Programmes and activities adequately address emerging trends and challenges		

Some mixed views on this. It is felt that UN-Water needs to remain at the forefront of thinking and emerging themes in the water sector and to be recognised as visionary and proactive in the sector. Main concerns are that UN-Water does not react quickly enough – so for example in putting together UN position papers on new water challenges – and whether it is investing heavily into creativity and innovation in the sector. Climate change is seen as a key example and one which will be important if UN-Water is going to be seen as a thought leader which can shape future activities rather than just follow its member agencies.

### c) Efficiency

<b>Results Area</b>		<b>Secondary Framework Criteria</b>
Leadership		

All respondents have been clear that UN-Water has been well led and that leadership has allowed the evolution that has occurred. The challenge is now to continue and grow that leadership role so UN-Water can fulfil a greater proportion of its mandate. The role of the Chair and the Secretariat as one commentator put it is 'like herding cats' and requires vision, patience, diplomacy and firmness.

<b>Results Area</b>		<b>Secondary Framework Criteria</b>
Governance Structures and Management <sup>7</sup>		

There is much support for the revolving Chair mechanism as this principle enhances the sense of a collaborative approach and ensures buy-in from agencies. The greatest level

<sup>7</sup> There has been a revision from yellow/red to all yellow since the Stockholm presentation.

of uncertainty in the area of governance and management has concerned the relationship between the Chair and the Secretariat, and the role of the technical adviser. From the outside it is not clear who is in charge and how decisions get made or resources allocated. The concern is that UN-Water performs despite its structures and not because of them and too much is dependent on the individuals who have these roles and how they operationalise them. Meetings and decision making processes though participative are still seen as unwieldy and often frustrating. Programmes need to coordinate more effectively with UN-Water if they are to work under that banner, so the role of the new Advisory group meeting will be important. Progress made in outlining partnership criteria needs to be extended to task force membership, but primarily most commentators have expressed a need for one, clear centralised hub, which co-ordinates activities.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Financial and Resource Management		Effectiveness

Stakeholders unanimously agree that the Trust Fund has significantly contributed to the progress and impact of UN-Water's activities. Some concern has been expressed over the level of funds held by Programmes and whether these could be used more effectively. This could be addressed through the development of more rigorous planning and management processes and systems to increase fund use visibility, tracking against budgets and accountability. A key issue to emerge from discussions with donors is that financial information is not visible to them, as such they do not know how money is being spent, and where it is being spent. This needs urgent attention to ensure greater donor buy-in and future commitment and could be addressed through the creation of regular updates and financial reports tracking progress, expenditures and budgets and showing where funds are being disbursed. This is an important performance tracking tool as well and should be followed by annual meetings with donors where progress is discussed and new targets and goals set.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Process Management: Planning and Implementation		Effectiveness

The planning processes currently in place, through work-plans, annual reports, and advisory groups, are widely perceived as being sufficient to ensure effectiveness in planning and implementation. There is some concern that the processes are not institutionalised sufficiently, at least in so far as reporting is concerned and monitoring of

progress. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on institutionalising and streamlining these processes (with focus being always on the mandate of UN-Water, thus ensuring coherence in planning and approach), perhaps through the work of the advisory groups such that implementation can directly be assessed against pre-determined plans, objectives and desired targets. This should also be tied to budgets.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Capacity/Resourcing		

The key issue picked up by most stakeholders with respect to capacity and resourcing is that of the role of the Secretariat. Most feel that it could be expanded to manage more effectively. However, there is the danger that expanding the Secretariat would turn it into an agency, something that all stakeholders feel very strongly should not happen. Some stakeholders have suggested instead the formation of a smaller support unit to provide back up to the Secretariat. The creation of the Trust Fund and donor support has helped in terms of increasing capacity, but there exists a need to assess what capacity gaps persist, especially if UN-Water is to do more work at country level, for example, or be productive in delivering policy papers. It may be worthwhile for UN-Water to consider balancing bringing in consultants as happens in task forces or bringing in seconded staff as appropriate, to fill capacity and resourcing gaps. Some stakeholders have also expressed the view that agencies should perhaps consider contributing financially to the work of UN-Water to support the donor funding.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Following its initial establishment in 2003 UN-Water has shown it can successfully evolve as a sustainable mechanism		Relevance Effectiveness

There is a tendency in review processes for stakeholders to be critical; however, all those who have participated in this review have noted the progress UN-Water has made. It has a foundation on which to build and a sense of the mandate to be performed. At present there is a degree of optimism that UN-Water has the capability to make the next stage of its transition, based on the changes that have taken place in particular concerning increased communication opportunities for partners and the planning and management tools and processes in place.

#### d) Effectiveness

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has developed coherent and comprehensive monitoring and reporting towards water related targets		Impact Relevance

This is an area where significant work needs to be done by UN-Water, and where most stakeholders have expressed a need for action to be taken. It is worth pointing out that stakeholders agree that this is one area where UN-Water could add significant value in line with its mandate and something that all stakeholders, including donors, would like to see evolved. It also falls in line with commentators' expressed wish to evolve UN-Water into a repository on all water-related issues and information and a pioneer of a comprehensive mapping system. It is similarly important that monitoring and reporting guidelines and frameworks are developed in consultation with donors and key stakeholders to monitor and report on UN-Water's own progress towards its objectives.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has successfully facilitated inter-agency information exchange, including sharing of experiences and lessons learned		Impact

Most stakeholders have commented positively on the usefulness of the UN-Water website and it serving as an important portal for information exchange. They also perceive the opportunity that UN-Water provides for the sharing of experiences and information exchange as being one of the added values of their participation in UN-Water. However, most also feel that much more could be done to improve this role, especially in terms of facilitating dialogue between agencies and the dissemination of lessons learnt and sharing of experience. Interviews suggest that stakeholders would like to see UN-Water as a one-stop shop for all their water-related information needs, but expressed an opinion that at the moment the information available is not updated as regularly as it could be, and there are information gaps that should be filled before UN-Water can assume that role.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has successfully put together task forces to address key issues <sup>8</sup>		Efficiency

The notion and concept of task forces as a mechanism to address important issues seems to have common agreement. There is still some uncertainty as whether it is clear what a task force is supposed to do and the parameters of these activities. Initially it was assumed that task forces would be time-bound but discussions around for example a task force on climate change means this appears difficult to operationalise. Performance seems varied and there needs to be a clearer agreed set of terms and reference and governance. When they work well they are productive and because they can involve partners, bring together key players with a real motivation for action; when not they are perceived to be 'talking shops' where lots of good discussions are held but with little end product.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has successfully served as a clearing house for policy relevant information, assessment and advice		Impact Relevance

In this area there have been some divergent views mainly revolving around a notion of UN-Water being a 'one stop shop' for information on Water activities and entry to relevant UN actors in the sector. Some partners in particular appreciate this role and have praised recent developments in the website as a good foundation for this. Donors in particular, feel that UN-Water is still a little passive in being mainly a 'receptacle' of information and could do more to publicise and inform others proactively.

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has promoted effective communication and collaboration between the UN system and civil society and private sector partners		Impact

This is an area where partners see and value improvement, though still feel there is a little more to go. Inclusion in meetings (such as at Stockholm) and the spirit in which

<sup>8</sup> This assessment has slightly changed from yellow/green to all yellow since the Stockholm presentation.

the opinions and perspectives of 'outsiders' are heard and acted upon is appreciated. It is still felt that greater involvement is possible, in particular at the national and regional level, though those that participate in task forces feel that this experience allows them to communicate a sense of what UN-Water is and the constraints in which it works under (i.e. how things get done in the UN) to other civil society actors.

## 6. Recommendations

The following is a list of recommendations that have emerged from the review process. The recommendations, based on discussions with key stakeholders, are mainly a reflection of the views and opinions around areas where consensus could be reached. If they are based primarily on the views of the review team this is made clear.

The list of recommendations centres on several key issues:

1. The mandate and objectives of UN-Water
2. Governance and management structure of UN-Water
3. The work of Programmes and Task Forces
4. Engagement at global, regional and country levels

### **Recommendation 1**

*It is recommended that the Technical Advisor not rotate with the Chair.*

This is the almost unanimous view of interviewees and one which the review team strongly supports. The main reasons for this is to ensure continuity between leadership changes, continue the improvements made in operational planning and managements and to support the retention and build up of institutional memory.

### **Recommendation 2**

*Establish a permanent and enhanced UN-Water ‘base’ which supports the Chair but does not revolve with it.*

This base does not have to be physically located in the same building, given communication approaches possible using new technology, however if geographic proximity is considered important then Geneva might be a possible location. This is due to the number of UN Agencies with bases there plus also the close proximity of a number of significant partners. It is important that such a base does not become too administratively heavy as this would alienate potential new donors if funds were being perceived to cover large overheads. A core team of 4-6 staff is tentatively suggested. For coherence and consistency it is suggested that a clear link with the Secretary be maintained, or a DESA representative be seconded to the team.

In addition, it is recommended that the Trust Fund be managed permanently by a neutral ‘agency,’ such as UN-Operations for example. An internal financial management system should also be developed to track expenditures against pre-determined outputs and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be monitored on a regular basis.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Develop a framework of competencies to inform the Chair and Technical Advisor selection process.*

One of the key messages to emerge from the review so far has been that the two most recent Chairs have been very good at managing relationships and strong individuals. These strengths and personal qualities have been much admired by those the review team have spoken to. There is also an adjacent concern that sustainability of the UN-Water mechanism hinges to some extent on the continuation of these personal qualities in subsequent Chairs.

To ensure such continuation it is recommended that a clear framework of competencies required for the role of Chair and Technical Advisor be put together to recognise the personal qualities and strengths, as well as contextual knowledge and expertise in the water sector and the UN in general. The institutionalisation of such a framework could aid in formal selection processes. Although such formalization of the leadership role may not be practicable, it is important that this aspect of UN-Water's success be addressed given the centrality of leadership to the success of UN-Water activities and impact as expressed almost unanimously by all stakeholders interviewed.<sup>9</sup>

### **Recommendation 4**

*Reformulate and streamline Programmes*

There has been some concern expressed that Programmes are being perceived as taking UN-Water's focus away from its core coordination function.

There is a need to ensure much clearer co-ordination between Programmes and the Secretariat/Chair/Technical Adviser and the dissemination of Programme outputs under the UN-Water brand. This would mean continuing and building the role of the recently created Programme Advisory Group. UN Water needs to have some level of authority over Programmes or at least be able to hold them to account for performance and not undertaking overlapping activities. There exists consensus among stakeholders that Programmes can potentially play a very important role in the continued success of UN-Water work, but their activities need to be refocused towards playing a more fundamental support role to the wider UN-Water activities. Particular success could be achieved by refocusing Programmes towards supporting the expansion of UN-Water work towards national (or regional) levels or towards supporting the work of Task Forces, whether through dissemination of results or by acting as a repository of information to guide the work of Task Forces. Formulating stronger ties between the Programmes and Task Forces would also strengthen brand cohesion.

---

<sup>9</sup> Given the new Chair has now been selected we recommend that the previous chair (and maybe his predecessor be involved in an initial induction/mentoring process to allow the new incumbent to reflect on their approach to the role and possible challenges.

It is important to highlight that not all Programmes are perceived as equal. In particular, the WWAP has received general praise from stakeholders who believe that the WWDRs are a very valuable tool. However, concern that the process of developing the reports is not as inclusive as it could be, and that indicators are overly reliant on anecdotes and repetitive, has been echoed among several stakeholders. On the other hand, other stakeholders have expressed concern that the process of generating the reports is overly subject to negotiation with each individual member, making the process more cumbersome than it need be, especially where members either take a long time to respond to requests for comments or the engagement with members becomes more of a negotiation process than a consultation. We recommend that an in-depth assessment of the tool is undertaken to determine how it can be improved to become a niche UN-Water product, which could strengthen UN-Water's visibility in the water sector and how ownership and buy-in from members can better be achieved. This should be done irrespective of whether option one or two is implemented above as such a report is viewed as being core to UN-Water's function of knowledge management.

An assessment of the work plans, objectives and deliverables of all Programmes is, however, also recommended, with the view towards informing their reformulation.

## **Recommendation 5**

### *Streamline and strengthen Task Forces*

Another key message to emerge from the review consultation process is that Task Forces, when they work well, do add real value. However, there is concern that their mandate and objectives are not adequately clear and that the question of Task Forces being firmly time-bound should be addressed.

With this in mind, we propose that the role, objectives and timelines of Task Forces be clarified. In cases where Task Forces cannot be easily time-bound (some have suggested that this may be the case with the Climate Change Task Force), Task Forces should propose and formalise clear and time-bound outputs to be monitored at regular intervals prior to actual engagement.

There is wide-spread acknowledgment that Task Forces need resources to be effective, as often the best way for any activity to be undertaken is through the commissioning of consultants as they can be held to account for work agreed, whereas agency staff (who report to own agencies) cannot. This may be overcome through the creation of a clear budget for each Task Force and activity and the engagement with partners, especially as far as access to area experts and specialists is concerned. Given fund availability, this may raise questions as to whether the number of Task Forces should be limited below the current six so as not to overstretch UN-Water. The issue of prioritisation has come up repeatedly in interviews and consultations, suggesting a need for clear guidance linking Task Force activities to UN-Water objectives and budgets.

Leadership of Task Forces is also important and has been recognised by stakeholders and Task Force participants as being a critical determinant of the success of Task Forces. This raises the question of Task Force governance structure. It may be worthwhile to develop a ‘governance’ framework which outlines the expectations of task force membership (e.g. number of meetings held, resource expectations, leadership) to inform membership selection and operational management.

## **Recommendation 6**

### *Develop a mechanism of cooperation at the local level*

Many questions have been raised among stakeholders about the need for UN-Water to address impact at the regional and local levels. The team have concerns that not including additional country level engagement in UN-Water’s work plan could undermine some of the value it is perceived to deliver to donors. They would like to see a mechanism of cooperation similar to that in existence at the global level develop at the country level (and maybe regional) in time. As such, we suggest the development of a mechanism of cooperation ‘on the ground’. This could be strengthened through an effective engagement with UN-Water partners that have strong regional and national networks. A pilot or series of pilots could be undertaken maybe using a representative from the ‘One UN’ pilot countries and one from elsewhere where water is seen as a central issue to determine whether (and how) greater coordination of UN engagement on water issues at country level can be achieved.

It is important that any mechanism that results from these efforts does not rely solely on large agencies that have widespread presence on the ground, but that entry points for smaller agencies and partners are created and maintained. An assessment of the work being carried out by the Task Force on Country Level Coordination should be undertaken to determine how best to position the Task Force for delivering success at the local levels and put in place clear deliverables and monitoring frameworks.

Potential areas of engagement ‘on the ground’ through the Task Force (with the support of partners and Programmes, for example) under the rubric of coordination and coherence include the following:

1. structured engagement with UN country representatives and direct linkage where appropriate to the UNDAF
2. establishment of indicators and monitoring frameworks
3. mapping of mandates, activities and identification of gaps
4. indexing of agency and organizational roles of those actors currently engaged at both levels
5. further strengthening of collaboration with the World Bank, which has significant presence and activities developed at the regional and country levels
6. development of stronger in-country information systems
7. support for the creation of communities of practice between country teams to ensure access to lessons learnt and the promotion of dialogue

8. positioning of Programmes to provide guidance and an information repository to country teams

There is recognition among stakeholder groups that UN-Water's mandate should remain focused on ensuring coordination among UN agencies and organisations working in the sphere of water. It is imperative that any extension of work into regional and local levels maintains that focus on coordination and that UN-Water not be seen as an implementing or operating body of any kind 'on the ground.'

## **ANNEX I - Terms of Reference**

## EXTERNAL REVIEW OF UN-WATER

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Background

Established in 2003, UN-Water is a mechanism for improving the coordination of the United Nations (UN) agencies and organizations engaged in work related to water and sanitation while being a source of knowledge on the water sector open to all. Its goals are to provide an efficient, coherent and proactive mechanism for coordinating the work of UN system agencies and programmes in these areas and to contribute substantially to the achievement of global water- and sanitation-related targets and goals. UN-Water's efforts give emphasis to the targets and goals articulated through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) arising from the United Nations General Assembly Millennium Summit in 2000 and the Johannesburg Programme of Implementation (JPOI) from the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

UN-Water complements and adds value to existing UN programmes and projects by facilitating synergies and joint efforts among the implementing agencies and in the water sector more widely. In doing so, UN-Water seeks to:

1. **improve the coherence** in UN system actions at all levels, and in particular at the country level;
2. **contribute to the global policy debate** on water-related issues through active participation in global policy fora and events and through the production of assessments and policy reports for informed decision-making;
3. **contribute to increased knowledge** on water-related issues through relevant monitoring and reporting systems, and serve as an entry point for water-related indicators, data and information;
4. **identify emerging issues** related to global water challenges and provide a platform for UN system strategic discussions on how to prepare for and cope with them more effectively; and
5. **increase the capacity of stakeholders** through the provision of relevant information and policy advice, available through the extensive experience of UN-Water members and partners.

The expected outcome is improved system-wide coordinated actions and coherence, as well as increased effectiveness in the support to member countries in their efforts towards achieving time-bound goals, targets and actions in the water sector.

UN-Water also has a specific responsibility to act in response to the call to the United Nations General Assembly to deliver a coordinated response to the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005–2015. The goal of the Decade – to place a greater focus on water-related issues at all levels – concurs with UN-Water’s terms of reference. Two UN-Water programmes are directly linked to the Decade and provide specific support for its implementation. UN-Water has also identified a number of central themes for the “Water for Life” Decade: scarcity; sanitation access; disaster prevention; pollution; transboundary water issues; gender issues on water and sanitation; capacity building; financing; valuing; integrated water resources management; and Africa: a region for priority action. Specific International

Years are also declared within the context of the Decade such as the 2008 International Year of Sanitation.

UN-Water has undergone progressive positive changes. A strengthened management structure is in place, with the addition of two staffed posts: a Chief Technical Adviser, providing support to the Chair (currently based at FAO), and a Water Advisor, providing support to the Secretary (based at UNDESA). This has been made possible through donor support to a multi-donor trust fund (established in March 2007), which is a testament to the renewed and enhanced donor commitment to UN-Water's role and mandate. Current donors are United Kingdom (since 2007), Norway (since 2008) and Sweden (since 2008). Resources made available by the trust fund enable UN-Water to respond to identified needs and emerging substantive focus areas. As a result, UN-Water is evolving into an increasingly proactive platform for dialogue among UN agencies, partners and other stakeholders on water-related issues.

Since 2008, UN-Water has operated from a Work Programme, which covers 2 consecutive years but which is updated annually. In addition, UN-Water Operational Guidelines and UN-Water Partnership Criteria have been developed to guide UN-Water operations and relationships with partners. The Focus Areas stipulated in the 2008-2009 Work Programme are:

#### **1. Coordination and coherence among UN-Water members and partners at all levels**

This focus area aims to enhance coordination and coherence among UN-Water members and partners in various areas and at all levels.

#### **2. Monitoring and reporting progress towards water related MDGs and JPOI targets**

UN-Water is responsible for providing coherent and reliable data and information to external stakeholders on key water trends and management issues. Its three major reporting initiatives, combined, provide a comprehensive picture of the state of global water issues.

#### **3. Communication and advocacy**

This focus area aims to increase the communication and advocacy role of UN-Water (beyond the assessments and reports), make information more accessible and contribute to a more coherent and coordinated UN involvement in major activities and at international conferences.

#### **4. Addressing emerging trends and challenges**

A range of current and potential global changes and challenges will undoubtedly influence the water agenda and therefore, potentially, the priorities of UN-Water and its members and partners. UN-Water has, therefore, identified a need to work more proactively in identifying emerging trends and challenges and seeking potential collaborative response actions from its membership.

The work programme, operational guidelines and partnership criteria are annexed to these Terms of Reference.

## **Overall scope of the review**

The overall scope of the review is to: (i) assess achievements of UN-Water's mandate considering evolutionary changes in operational boundary conditions, including governance set-up and financial support; and (ii) provide options on future configurations that UN-Water could assume in order to improve its performance in terms of operational approach and

governance set-up. Such options should consider the sustainability of longer-term operations of UN-Water (including financial aspects).

## **Specific Objectives of the Review**

- Assess overall progress and achievements of UN-Water, since it was established in 2003 until present day. Particular attention should be given to progress and achievements in relation to human and financial resources, internal UN resources as well as external, which have been available to the Mechanism, and in relation to stipulated targets.
- Review the Mechanism's planning and implementation processes (including results based management), the quality of its deliverables, the relevance of its outputs and its impact on its partners, with reference to UN-Water's purpose, goal and mission (as defined by the Terms of Reference and Work Programme).
- Review the current governance structure.
- Assess current (potential) strengths and weaknesses of the mechanism, with reference to UN-Water's purpose and goals.
- Based on the above, provide recommendations/options for the further enhancement and improvement of both governance and the performance of UN-Water, including providing input to the development of UN-Water's Results Framework, and options for securing necessary and more long-term sustainability.

## **Methods, time-frame and logistical issues**

The potential reviewer(s) is expected to prepare a draft proposal on methods and process for the review as part of the bid. The proposal will be discussed and finalized together with the selected reviewer(s).

The review shall involve, among others, direct interviews with the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, the existing staff (Chief Technical Advisor to the Chair and Water Advisor to the Secretary), a selected number of Senior Programme Managers of UN-Water member agencies, Coordinators/Directors of UN-Water Programmes, selected partners and representatives from current donors. The reviewer(s) should also propose additional stakeholders and clients which have a relationship with UN-Water for possible additional interviews. In addition, the review shall contain a questionnaire allowing all UN-Water members a chance to provide comments and substantive inputs to the review. The reviewer(s) is also expected to analyse existing documents, such as the Terms of Reference, Work Programme, Annual Report(s), Reports to donors, Reports of the UN-Water Senior Programme Managers Meetings, Operational Guidelines, Partner Criteria, etc.

Based on the above information, the review should result in a document presenting concrete recommendations and suggestions (multiple options when appropriate) as to the potential further development of the mechanism; including both activities and its governance structure (*modus operandi*). The Consultant(s) should also attempt to comment on cost-effectiveness and sustainability of UN-Water.

Finally, the review should also include an assessment of UN-Water's overall resources --- human, physical, information-based and financial--- that is currently available and compare against targets and outputs. It should present concrete recommendations on future direction of the Mechanism and of the required human and financial resources as well as governance structure.

Some travel is expected for the review process, for face to face meeting with selected key persons (to be determined) and the Consultant(s) may be requested to attend a UN-Water Senior Programme Managers meeting held in August 2009.

The Chief technical Advisor (linked to the Chair) and the Water Advisor (linked to the Secretary) of UN-Water will backstop logically the review process. The reviewer(s) shall be provided with a full set of UN-Water documents/publications.

The review should be completed no later than 1 June 2009. A draft report should be made available for comments no later than 10 May. If the reviewer(s) is requested to attend the UN-Water Senior Programme Managers meeting in August 2009, this will be calculated as an additional activity requiring a maximum of 2-3 days.

## **Expected output**

The reviewer(s) is expected to present a concise report, responding to the specific objectives of the review listed above. The report should also include an executive summary which should include key recommendations. When appropriate, different options should be presented. The report should also clearly describe the review process.

## **Requirements**

Interested parties should submit a bid containing:

1. A draft proposal on methods and process for the review
2. The name(s) of the reviewer(s)
3. A summary of relevant experience(s)
4. CV(s) of proposed reviewer(s)
5. Time frame and budget

The reviewer(s) is expected to have relevant (and documented) evaluation/review experiences, have a good understanding of the UN system, have experience from governance and financing modalities within development cooperation as well as international water-related processes and proven management experiences. The reviewer(s) is also expected to be an excellent report writer. The language of the report should be English.

Key documents and further information on UN-Water can be found at [www.unwater.org](http://www.unwater.org).

## ANNEX 2 - People consulted

Name	Agency/Organisation
Daniel Klasander	SIDA
Semund Haukland	NORAD
Andre Liebaert	EUWI
Andrei Jouravlev	UN ECLAC
Aster Gebremarian	UN ECA
Bert Diphorn	UN Habitat
Daniel Zimmer	WWC
David Molden	IWMI
Adeel Zafar	UNU Director, UNU-INWEH
Jack Moss	Aquafed
Jean-Marc Faure	FAO
Le Huu Ti	UN ESCAP
Lifeng Li	WWF
Martin Walshe	GWP
Oliver Cumming	WaterAid
Pradeep Aggarwal	IAEA
Wilhelm Struckmeier	International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH)
Christoph Merdes	BMZ
Manuel Dengo	UNDESA
Vahid Alavian	World Bank
Joakim Harlin	UN Water
Francesca Bernardini	UN Water
Olcay Unver	UN Water
Johan Kuylenstierna	UN Water
Pasquale Steduto	UN Water
Nicoletta Forlano	FAO
Giulia Bonanno di Lingualessa	UN Water
Frederik Pischke	UN Water
Nikhil Chandavarkar	UN Water
Andrew Hudson	UNDP
Clarissa Brocklehurst	UNICEF
Arthur Askew	International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)
Robert Bos	WHO
Anne-Leonore Boffi	WBCSD
Eva Zabey	WBCSD
Jon Lane	WSSCC
Avinash Tyagi	WMO
Dinesh Shrestha	UNHCR
Tobias Salathe	Ramsar
Yuichi Ono	UN ISDR
Salvano Briceno	UN ISDR
Abel Mejia	World Bank
David Boys	PSI
Guy Howard	DFID
Francois Guerquin	UNSGAB

## **ANNEX 3 - Interview structure**

Personal interviews, whether conducted in person or over the phone, aimed to address similar questions posed to stakeholders through the distribution of the electronic questionnaire, while providing a more open and less structured format of questioning, focused instead on a discussion of the key aspects of performance of UN-Water deemed most relevant to each individual respondent.

Broadly, interviewees can be grouped into the following categories:

1. Members
2. Partners
3. Donors
4. Task Force Coordinators (sub-category)
5. Programme Coordinators (sub-category)

A general framework of questions was established to be extended to all of the above groupings, although questions were customized to each category so as to elicit the most useful information and feedback.

The general line of questions revolved around the following key areas:

- a) Evolution of UN-Water: what has worked and what has worked less well?
  - Key success factors
  - Key challenges
  - Key areas of improvement
- b) The unique value proposition of UN-Water:
  - What is its competitive advantage
  - How best to enhance that advantage towards impact and value creation
- c) Outputs: Programmes and Task Forces (with a focus on drawing out)
  - Added value
  - Assessment of performance
  - Management Structure
  - Relationship with wider UN-Water body and mandate
- d) Planning and Implementation Processes and Monitoring of Results
  - Assessment of the planning of activities and outputs within UN-Water decision-making processes
  - Translation of plans into implementable action
  - Monitoring of results, outputs and outcomes
- e) Governance & Management Structures
  - The role of leadership in the evolution of UN-Water

- The role of leadership as a success factor
- The suitability of governance and management arrangements towards delivery and impact
- Overall assessment of whether the current governance structure is best suited towards sustainability

f) Resourcing

- Discussion of the resource availability (both human and financial) and role in the success of UN-Water

g) Future Sustainability

- Discussion of the key factors that will determine future success of UN-Water and its sustainability

h) Key Challenges and Opportunities

- Open-ended discussion of the perceived challenges and opportunities that exist both within the UN-Water system and in the outside water environment that shape UN-Water's progress and success

i) Recommendations, Thoughts

- Open-ended discussion of any other issue perceived as important by the respondent in relation to the review, including seeking advice for the review process itself

Partners were also asked about their engagement with UN-Water, and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of that engagement. Discussions into an improvement of engagement towards enhanced effectiveness of UN-Water activities were also covered.

Questions towards donors were more heavily slanted towards exploring the value that UN-Water is perceived as delivering to the donor community and the critical success factors that encourage donor support. An assessment of past and current activity was discussed and future improvements towards greater effectiveness were explored.

Task Force coordinators were especially asked about the role of their Task Forces and relevance to the overall mandate of UN-Water. Discussions focusing on improved effectiveness and engagement with UN-Water at the management level were also pursued to determine how Task Force effectiveness could be enhanced from the perspective of the larger UN-Water mechanism and its structure.

Programme managers were invited to discuss a similar set of issues as Task Force coordinators, with a greater emphasis placed on the perceived level of coherence between Programme activities and the UN-Water mandate.

## **ANNEX 4 - List of Documents consulted**

- UN Water -Terms of Reference
- UN Water Member Business Meeting Report Afternoon 12 August at Stockholm
- Thematic Summary of UN-Water Meetings
- 1<sup>st</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Geneva; 11-13 May 2004
- 2<sup>nd</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Rome; 28 September – 01 October 2004
- 3<sup>rd</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Paris; 16 – 18 February 2005
- 4<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Bonn; 27 February – 1 March 2006
- 5<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Stockholm; 21 August 2006
- 6<sup>th</sup> UN Water Meeting, Bonn; 17 – 19 January 2007
- 7<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Stockholm; 11 – 12 August 2007
- 8<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Rome; 15 – 17 January 2008
- 9<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Stockholm; 16-17 August 2008
- 10<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting, Perugia; 03-05 February 2009
- UN-Water Meeting May 11-13 2004 WHO Geneva
- Report of UN Water Meeting September 28- October 1 2004 FAO, Rome.
- UN-Water Annual Report 2007
- UN-Water Annual Report 2008
- UN-Water Annual Report 2008-9
- Report of 1st UN-Water Programmes Advisory Group Meeting Teleconference 23 June 2009
- Terms of Reference, UN-Water Programmes' Advisory Group
- UNW-DPC Annual Report 2007-2008
- United Nations Office to Support the International Decade for Actions 'Water for Life' 2005-2015 – UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communications. Project INT/06/X01 Project Progress Report July 2009
- The United Nations Organizations and Water 1977 Mar Del Plata Conference – 1982 Briefing note for Resident Co-ordinators/ Resident Representatives, Country Representatives and Project Managers affiliated with individual Organizations.
- UN-Water Operational Guidelines
- UN-Water Partner Criteria
- Review of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources by Margaret Catley-Carlson
- Global Water Partnership Joint Donor External Evaluation Final Report. By the PARC (IOD Ltd) Julian Gayfer, Nigel Haworth, Richard Hoare, Juliet Pierce, Kari Sann and Bert Van Woersem
- DFID, Meeting Our Promises 2009. The fifth Update on DFID's work in water and sanitation since the 2004 Water Action Plan.
- Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation. Special Focus on Sanitation. UNICEF, WHO
- Water and Disaster. High-Level Expert Panel on Water and Disaster/UNSGAB March 2009
- UN-Water Report "Status Report on Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency Plans". Prepared for the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development – May 2008

- Water-Related Capacity Development: A survey of UN-Water members' and partners' activities. Edited by Reza Ardkanian and Virginie Aimard. Mapping No. 1 UNW-DPC Publication Series.
- UN-Water Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS). WHO 2008 Pilot Report.
- UN-Water Report. Water Monitoring. Mapping Existing Global Systems & Initiatives. Background document – August 2006. Prepared by FAO on behalf of the UN-Water Task Force on Monitoring Stockholm 21 August 2006.
- The Toolkit. “Sanitation Matters: what you should know, and what you can do”.
  - The United Nations World Water Development Report 3: Water in a Changing World. UN-Water. UNESCO Publishing.
  - Coping with Water Scarcity. 2007 World Water Day 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007. UN-Water
  - Shared Waters. Shared Opportunities. World Water Day 2009
  - The United Nations World Water Development Report 3: Case Studies Volume. Facing the Challenges. World Water Assessment Programme. UNESCO Publishing.
  - Sanitation: a wise investment for health, dignity, and development. Key messages for the International Year of Sanitation. UN Water.
  - Factsheet 1. Sanitation is vital for Human Health.
  - Factsheet 2. Sanitation generates economic benefits
  - Factsheet 3. Sanitation contributes to dignity and social development.
  - Factsheet 4. Sanitation protects the environment.
  - Factsheet 5. Improving sanitation is achievable
  - Talking points for the International Year of Sanitation.

## ANNEX 5 - Questionnaire and Resulting Data Set

### UN-Water External Review: Questionnaire Data Set

---

Which of the following best describes your relationship with un-water?

UN-Water Member	9
UN-Water Partner	11
Other	1

Which of the following best describes your length of engagement with UN-Water?

Less than 2 years	3
Between 2 and 5 years	9
More than 5 years	9

Which of the following best describes your operational structure?

Entity operating at the global level	20
Entity operating at the regional level	1
Entity operating at the local/country level	

What do you value most about engaging with UN-Water?

Opportunity to network with other organisations	8
Thematic joint initiatives coordinated by UN-Water	8
Access to information on policy/ programme issues	1
Initiatives relating to emerging themes in the water sector	4

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- UN-Water is not only about networking; it is also about coordination, also with the Partners
- We value opportunities for synergy and to improve policy-making environment for better impacts of work.

- Actually, more than network, what I value is the opportunity to rationally coordinate our programmes
- The most valuable aspect is that we have joint UN forum for coordinating water sector activities and impacting the global policy agenda.
- We value equally the other key activity i.e., initiatives relating to emerging themes in the water sector. Apart from Water and Sanitation that was getting a priority since Johannesburg, the year 2008 lifted water for food to the top, linking it to MDG 1. UN-Water, assuming the role of thematic coordinator for World Water Forum 5 on MDG, could bring up concerned issues involving the right type of partners, resulting in valuable outcome.
- Entities involved more with analytical and normative aspects of water would appreciate most the networking and information access assets of UN-Water, whereas more operational entities might prefer the joint initiatives on existing and emerging themes.
- It provides a very useful opportunity to share information and ideas with the UN agencies and feel that we are making a contribution to their work. This seems a bit more active than just networking.
- Though a Global Body on setting policy guidance, it would be useful to see some practical actions on the ground on selected issues as well as capacity building efforts in partnership with other entities.

1. UN-Water has successfully contributed towards enhancing coordination and coherence among UN-water members and partners at all levels

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
	6	9	5	1		3.05

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- There has been a lot of improvement but still many pending issues including coordination at country level Coherence of the UN-Water message remains an issue
- Between UN-water members it is obvious; with partners it is much less obvious
- Contributed yes, but still much to be done. The process has been very positive and there is a shift in mind-set among many UN-Water members.
- Great improvement has been made over the past several years and particularly during the past two years.
- Substantial openness has been achieved; better coherence would improve the sustainability of the process.
- While at global level we have made great advances, and at national level we are starting, at regional level, with the exception of Africa (and that was a spontaneous development) we have barely advanced
- That this process has commenced is a huge contribution, still a long way to go before actual coordination will take place as a result of UN Water actions.
- The admirable manner with which the coordinating role is being handled since the last 2-3 years is praiseworthy. More could be achieved if partners are supported for their

attendance in the review meetings of UN-Water, especially if they hail from deserving NGO Groups with financial difficulties. Besides representatives from countries (emerging / developing or least developed countries) would require similar support

- UN Water's performance is limited today by apparent inter-agency issues that are beyond the control of the active UN Water members to resolve. This does not negate the value of what they are trying to achieve.
- This is true at global level but we are not sure if it happening at local and national levels

2. UN-Water has provided coherent and comprehensive monitoring and reporting towards water related MDGs and JPOI targets

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
1	8	8	3		1	2.52

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- At this stage, UN-Water itself has only marginally added value to the work of specific agencies, in particular the JMP for water supply and sanitation and FAO-AQUASTAT for the MDG water indicator. The UN-Water programme WWAP has not yet done anything concrete to develop a coherent and comprehensive water monitoring system.
- There is progress, but a lot remains to be done
- Improving, but some of the systems (JMP) also pre-dates UN-Water. A more consolidating reporting will be important in the future - also in relation to water resources issues.
- Further improvement is necessary.
- The difficulty of the task should not be underestimated. Many of the limitations are well known to the UN Water staff involved.

3. UN-Water has significantly contributed towards the communication between UN-Water members

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
1	4	5	9	1		3.05

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- Much improved in the last years.
- There are clear channels of communication established, but there can still be improvements beyond the "focal points" (quite few people are involved in "current communication").
- Yes as relates to HQ level. Insignificant at country level.
- The new Workplan emphasises 5 focus areas and one of them viz 3 Communication and advocacy could help Partners role in spreading UN-Water messages considered in Focus area 4
- Being a partner does not enable us to make a judgement on this, but we suspect that the impact has been beneficial.

4. UN-Water's programmes and activities adequately address emerging trends and challenges

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
2	7	10	2			2.57

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Progress is slow, also because of the difficulties to have 25 UN agencies agreeing on sensitive issues.*
- *Not yet enough: coordination is time and energy consuming!*
- *UN-Water could play a much more proactive role in relation to emerging issues, foster collaboration among agencies and facilitate joint approaches (and even policy responses).*
- *Decision making is not sufficiently rapid to address emerging trends. This could be caused by the lack of financial resources. This implies that a certain financial resources should be allocated to enhance the capacity of UN-Water to respond to emerging challenges.*
- *To some extent, a start has been made; however a great deal more can be done and needs to be done especially with regard to climate change adaptation. The current mechanism is not adequate for the scale of the challenge.*
- *We are presently working on how to improve this aspect*
- *There is still a need to highlight and promote the role of natural infrastructures such as rivers, lakes, peatlands, coastal areas that receive water, transport water, purify water and use water to create key ecosystems that support biodiversity. These natural infrastructures are called wetlands and they deserve attention because they provide water supply to cities and rural areas, and they support biodiversity including wildlife and fisheries, agriculture, industries, tourism. They are also important assets for adaptation and mitigation of climate change.*

5. UN-Water has successfully facilitated inter-agency information exchange, including sharing of experiences and lessons learned

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	7	3	4	4		3.00

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *I agree with "information exchange" but not so much with "sharing of experiences and lessons learned"*
- *I do not see how UN-Water would be able to facilitate inter-agency information exchange at this moment, except the initiative on Wiki-Water.*
- *not being a UN agency it is hard for us to assess the sharing of information taking place among the agencies*

- *The first of its kind meeting of UN-Water (held in Stockholm in 2006) was indeed an introspection by them; an attempt to spot the need for better coordination amongst the various UN Agencies having a concern about water emerged, strongly. The association of global NGOs as observers and partners was mutually beneficial and enhanced the scope for exchanges and networking.*

6. UN-Water has successfully served as a clearing house for policy relevant information, assessment and advice

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	6	5	2	4	1	<b>2.90</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Some progress has been made, but still a lot to do.*
- *WWAP maybe but this is still a big challenge*
- *Moving in the right direction, but UN-Water could be given a stronger role to facilitate such processes.*
- *I have not seen evidence on this.*
- *Could be intensified.*
- *I think much more (and better) could be done*

7. UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing the impact of UN-system actions at the global level

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
1	5	10	3	2		<b>3.00</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Partly, through increased participation in "global initiatives and policy processes"*
- *Further efforts to keep water on top of the global agenda are required*
- *Much more effective at global level than at regional or country level*
- *I do not think we (members) are the correct group to ask this question to, as we have a biased opinion*

8. UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing the impact of UN-system actions at the regional level

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
6	3	1	1	7	3	<b>3.00</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *It has contributed, however I question whether the impact is very significant.*
- *No chance to assess it; however FAO's efforts in the regional*

9. UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing the impact of UN-system actions at the country level

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
7	5		1	6	2	<b>2.68</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *I am not aware of any relevant country level UN-Water work*
- *Pending the outcomes of the Task Force on actions at the country level*
- *We are working on it, through the Task Force on country-level coordination*

10. UN-Water has added significant value to the activities of the many UN-system entities by improving coordination and coherence of these activities

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
2	7	7	3	2		<b>2.76</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Maybe through early versions of the UN World Water Development report*
- *Difficult to perceive this; I do not think UN-water has so much impacted the activities of the Agencies*
- *UN-Water is still too much an "add on" rather than used as a mechanism to increase coordination by members in relation to ongoing activities.*
- *yes, however this effect could be greatly enhanced in the future by a strong secretariat and better outreach*
- *Not sure at national and regional levels*

11. UN-Water adds significant value to existing UN programmes and projects

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
4	6	7	2	2		<b>2.62</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Is it its purpose?*
- *Yes but mainly through its own activities*

- *on water issues there is real added value to having the UN "speaking with one voice"*
- *More emphasis is on management of water at basin level is needed (River/lake basins, aquifers, coastal areas).*

12. UN-Water leadership plays a significant role in driving the momentum of the mechanism

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
1	4	6	7	3		<b>3.33</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Recent UN-Water leaderships and additional financial resources have boosted UN-Water capacity to act.*
- *Despite of the difficulties!*
- *I am not sure of the meaning of the question - to which "mechanism" do you refer? If it is UN-Water itself, of course its leadership has a role in driving its own momentum!*
- *Except the decision on the World Water Day and some success in negotiation with World Water Council and Stockholm International Water Week, more to be seen*
- *The leadership is crucial and needs to be strengthened and supported.*
- *We suspect that it has, but have no evidence to say so.*

13. UN-Water has successfully enhanced its operational effectiveness with the establishment of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
	6	5	5	4	1	<b>3.35</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *The TF has helped to increase operational effectiveness but further improvements in governance will be important to optimize the use of existing resources.*
- *Impacts are mostly at the global level. More is expected at the regional and national levels.*
- *know little of the functioning of this fund*
- *I have mixed feelings about this. While the MDTF has been a great support to the two offices (Secretariat and Chair) the fact that funds are available for Task Forces and other activities entails the risk that people would want to initiate new activities and I think UN-Water is more about coordinating than developing its own projects. Until now we have managed this, but the risk is there and we should be vigilant. There is also the risk of initiating action to please the donors, which once again is not what the fund should be used for.*

14. UN-Water has promoted effective communication and collaboration between the UN system and civil society and private sector partners

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	6	6	4	2		<b>2.81</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- As per its TORs, UN-Water has opened its door to key non UN organization, in a way that seems to be successful
- not so much yet
- Starting but needs to be wider.
- have not seen significant evidence of this
- The opening to partners has been a first but important signal. There is still much to be done.
- We think that UN water is seriously attempting to do this, but e-mails a web site and only one face to face meeting a year (reduced from two originally) does not give UN Water Partners enough contact. We recognise that the presence of UN Partners at the two meetings per-year may have caused difficulties for some of the UN Water members when internal differences had to be resolved.

15. UN-Water's website is a valuable and helpful resource

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
2	1	8	8	2		<b>3.33</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- An excellent tool for cohesion, coherence and visibility
- The further development of certain functions will be important, in particular related to access to water related data and information.
- Addition of practical tool kits on appropriate and emerging technologies would be useful to consider

16. I am clear on what UN-Water does and its purpose

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
1	5	7	7	1		<b>3.10</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- Much improved, however more clarity is required

- *What I am not sure is if every member is clear on the purpose of UN-Water, regardless of their answer to this question.*
- *UN-Water staff are very good at explaining the exact niche for UN-water.*

17. UN-Water works collaboratively to fairly represent all members' views and interests

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
2	4	8	5	2		<b>3.05</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Not being a member we are not in a position to judge; however from what I know of the different agencies it appears that some are better represented than others*
- *This depends a lot from the leadership. I completely agree with the statement (e.g. I would give it a 5) if limited to the current leadership.*
- *Tricky question - who are you referring to as UN-Water? I take it meaning the Chairs office.*

18. UN-Water is appropriately structured to achieve its goals

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
2	7	5	2	4	1	<b>2.95</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *In my understanding, the structure doesn't encompass the support team; it is more about the presidency, the membership rules and the partnership rules. If it does, then definitely improving the support team organization could really help*
- *I believe that its weaknesses are due to the structure, and this could be significantly strengthened*
- *Unaware of the structure that exists to comment on its appropriateness*

19. The UN-Water annual work plan fairly reflects the priorities of my organisation

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
5	3	3	4	5	1	<b>3.05</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *It fairly reflects the priorities of water in general, and where relevant, to my organisation*

- *Not much at the regional and national levels*
- *again, not relevant as we are not a member*
- *No, but it's not UN-Water's fault but rather our inability to participate more actively, and if UN-Water secretariat and Chair had more capacity they could also be more outreaching.*
- *I don't give it a high score, but I don't think that is a problem. Actually, I would be surprised if the work plan of UN-Water reflects the priorities of any single organization. In other words, there are several priorities of my organization that cannot be reflected in the UN-Water work plan, because they are outside of its scope.*
- *It has yet to focus on support in the areas of disasters and emergencies, which are increasingly becoming major problems affecting poor and vulnerable populations and has become impediment for sustainable development, primarily in developing world.*

20. The UN-Water work plan reflects a balanced vision as a UN system wide mechanism

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	4	8	4	2		2.90

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Although I wonder how a work plan can reflect a vision.*
- *I appreciate the efforts made by the secretariat.*
- *There is still enormous scope and potential for including more of the array of work that the UN does in the water field*
- *The workplan should take into cognisance the new thrust that was apparent in the Forum 5 especially from out of themes 2 and 3; the workplan could be more elaborate on the follow up envisaged, given the Forum Statements that emerged on a consensual basis*
- *We would need some analysis and proposals before trying to answer this question*

21. The UN-Water planning process is collaborative, fair and inclusive of all UN-member inputs

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
	5	5	6	5		3.52

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

22. UN-Water strives to represent the views and aims of all its members

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score

2	3	7	7	2		<b>3.19</b>
---	---	---	---	---	--	-------------

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Certainly as a partner it appears that efforts are made to be as inclusive as possible with all the members*

23. Decision making processes at UN-Water are transparent and clear

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
3	7	4	6	1		<b>2.76</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Again this is due as much to the structure as to any lack of communication*
- *Not in all cases, but great progress has been made in recent years.*
- *No idea as to how the internal processes are structured and handled; hence no comments*

24. The mandate of UN-Water is clear

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
2	4	7	8			<b>3.00</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *TORs are very specific but not written in a very attractive format*
- *Could be clearer. However it has established itself well and fills a real need.*

25. Following its initial establishment in 2003 UN-Water has shown it can successfully evolve as a sustainable mechanism

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
1	4	12	3			<b>2.71</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Yes, to the extent that it is understood that the tasks it fulfils have a cost and therefore the effectiveness of UN-Water action will depend to a large extent on the availability of financial resources.*
- *In my understanding, the governance structure doesn't encompass the support team. If it does, then definitely improving the support team organization could really improve sustainability of UN-Water.*

- *In general, it is clear that the mechanism is sustainable, except those elements required extra financial resources*
- *Having been involved in the earliest stages I would say that great progress has already been made, and further steps still need to be made. We look forward to seeing further evolution of the mechanism.*
- *UN-Water is the successor of a long-standing mechanism (the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources) which might not have been very efficient, but I think proved its sustainability. So, I am not sure what it is meant by evolving into a sustainable mechanism, but I think it does not apply in our case.*

26. Sustainability of UN-Water could be improved by changing the governance structure

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	2	2	6	5	3	<b>3.44</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Yes, this needs further work and credible proposals need to be made to deepen the links both among agencies and among key partners in order to provide the necessary governance. Stronger links and partnerships will improve the sustainability.*
- *Maybe changing a little governance but above all, providing it with more resources to do more.*
- *For me, the sustainability of UN-Water depends exclusively on the political will of the UN system and of the members of UN-Water.*
- *UN Water needs to establish a clear governing body (ies) for its programmes and the MDTF. The SPM meeting has proved inadequate.*

27. UN-Water activities could be enhanced by changing the governance structure

I	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
3	4	6	3	3	2	<b>2.95</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *No, if you consider the original TORs of UN-Water as an inter-agency mechanism, not as a new water body.*
- *1) I have a concern regarding the designation of UN-Water secretary. I find it less transparent and less democratic than the other features of the governance structure of UN-Water, and more subject to autonomous decision of change by DESA - which doesn't help in terms of continuity of work and sustainability.*
- *2) Same comment than in 26 regarding support team*
- *Stronger links and partnerships will enhance activities. Making possible the establishment of a stable secretariat will make the organization more effective in its support of projects and activities.*

- *Programmes have a tendency to service the needs and objectives of their host agency - this has to change if they are to survive*

28. UN-Water activities could be enhanced by changing the financing structure

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	<b>Average Score</b>
3	4	5	4	4	1	<b>3.10</b>

Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *More funds allocated to UN-Water activities and programmes could possibly enhance UN-Water capacity, but we would have to find a way to guarantee the continuity of direct involvement of UN-Water members to avoid UN-Water to become an "independent water body".*
- *Especially those related to emerging challenges.*
- *More coherent and committed financing is needed.*
- *We have just started with this financial structure. We know it should be more flexible and fast, but it is not easy to break new ground.*
- *UN Water is probably under-resourced for the real importance of the task in front of it*
- *By securing solid commitments of the member states in the funding and towards support for its work.*

29. UN-Water's leadership plays an important role in shaping the momentum and achievements of the mechanism

1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Average Score
	2	6	10	3	1	<b>3.85</b>

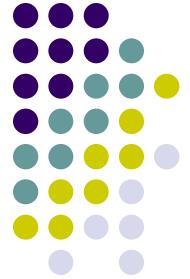
Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the question above?

- *Strong leadership is the greatest need for the further development of this essential mechanism.*

Do you have any further comments on the future role, purpose and structure of UN Water?

- *As UN-Water programmes has grown quickly in the last years, we need to find new ways to operate without adding burden on the shoulders of different agencies but without losing the Agencies' visibility and involvement in UN Water decision making. The challenge is to find the best way to make use of the wealth of knowledge of the different UN-Water members while proposing an effective way of working.*
- *While I do understand the usefulness of the rotating presidency, I have a strong feeling about the way the support team works: split in location between the presidency headquarters and New York; split in reporting between the presidency agency and DESA; obliged to move every two years...*
- *The United Nations needs a way forward in dealing with water issues, so that communities, governments, countries and regions receive the support they need at this crucial moment in time. The UN should undertake this together with the other organizations which have been established to deal with water issues at a global level, namely the Global Water Partnership and the World Water Council.*
- *I missed in this questionnaire some questions on the UN-Water programme offices (Saragossa, Perugia and Bonn), their mandate, effectiveness, alignment with UN-Water objectives, etc.*
- *The increased demand for UN Water to play an active role in the global policy arena needs to be reflected in how it operates and in the mandate given to its representatives.*
- *UN Water had been quite active since the last few years (about 3); I wish the dynamics continue and better strengthened*
- *Important to establish an individual identity with a separate institutional set up, like a programme, and not attached to any of the UN-Water members.*

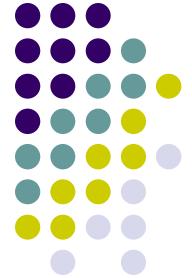
**ANNEX 6 – ‘PowerPoint’ Presentation made to Stockholm Meeting**



# Review of UN-Water

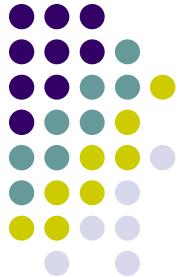
15<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Mark Keen and Aneta Ratynska  
IOD Ltd



## Goals of the Review

- Assess UN-Water's progress and achievements since its inception in 2003
- Review its planning and implementation processes
- Review its current governance structure
- Identify its strengths and weaknesses
- Identify the opportunities and challenges that have arisen and are likely to affect future operations
- Provide options for the future configurations
- Review the outputs currently being produced with the view to assessing their relevance and impact



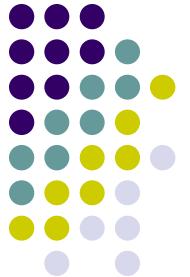
## Approach the Review took

- Adapted 'Results Based Management' perspective
- Knowledge of the UN but also 'outsider'
- Use of OD 'expert' perspective
- Assess UN-Water within in its own terms
- Draw in lessons where possible from different contexts
- Maximise participation



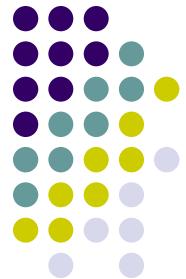
# Methodology

- Iterative Desk Review
- Questionnaire
- Phone and Face-face Interviews
- Formative focus



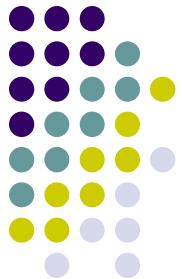
# UN-Water as a 'Network' Organisation

- UN-Water has some 'network' characteristics, though Institutional context quite unique
- Importance of 'non-structural' power relations
- Need to show value to members/partners – yet retain mandate
- Role of the 'centre' – importance of 'neutrality'
- Decision making – democracy and inclusivity vs efficient and responsive
- How do you assess effective coordination and coherence



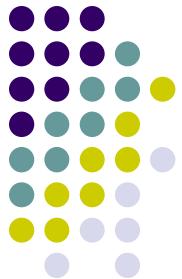
# Review Criteria

1. the **Relevance** of UN-Water, so does it have a clear mandate and role to play and is it doing the right things;
2. its **Efficiency**: is it structured effectively, does it have processes and systems in place which enable it to fulfil its mandate effectively;
3. its **Effectiveness**: how well is it achieving its objectives, is UN Water achieving what it set out to do and
4. **Impact**: what difference are its activities having and is it contributing to change in its targeted areas



# Review of UN-Water - Impact

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has enhanced communication between UN-Water members and between UN-Water members and partners.		Effectiveness
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN-system actions at the global level		
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN-system actions at the regional level		Relevance
UN-Water has significantly contributed to enhancing UN-system actions at the country level		Relevance
UN-Water has added significant value to the activities of the many UN-system entities by improving coordination and coherence of these activities		Effectiveness
UN-Water adds significant value to existing UN programmes and projects		Relevance



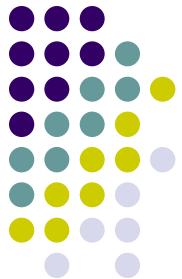
# Review of UN-Water - Relevance

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Acceptance of the need and value of a co-ordinating mechanism amongst UN agencies in the Water Sector		
UN-Water is seen as doing the right things		Efficiency Effectiveness
Programmes and activities adequately address emerging trends and challenges.		Efficiency



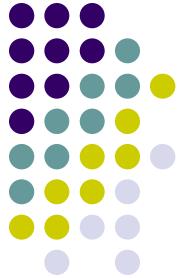
# Review of UN-Water - Efficiency

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
Leadership		
Governance Structures and Management		
Financial and Resource Management		Effectiveness
Process Management: Planning and Implementation		Effectiveness
Capacity/Resourcing		
Following its initial establishment in 2003 UN-Water has shown it can successfully evolve as a sustainable mechanism		Relevance Effectiveness



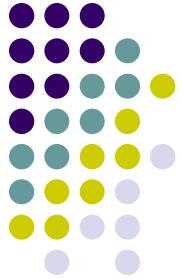
# Review of UN-Water - Effectiveness

Results Area		Secondary Framework Criteria
UN-Water has developed coherent and comprehensive monitoring and reporting towards water related targets		Impact
UN-Water has successfully facilitated inter-agency information exchange, including sharing of experiences and lessons learned		
UN has successfully put together task forces to address key issues		Efficiency
UN-Water has successfully served as a clearing house for policy relevant information, assessment and advice		Impact
UN-Water has promoted effective communication and collaboration between the UN system and civil society and private sector partners		Impact



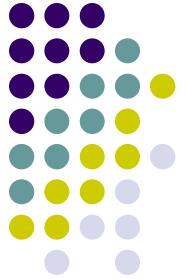
# Conclusions

- UN-Water has reached a stage of evolution where it must deliver more impact in mandate areas if it is to retain perceptions of relevance
- It needs to build on history of good leadership and recent increases in 'efficiency areas'
- Needs to be a shared view of primary mandate and appropriate accountability mechanisms for component parts, or these may need to 'break away'
- Need to proactively try and co-ordinate donors to provide core-funding
- Ensure you have a strong 'centre'
- Be a driver for change where necessary within the UN and a 'defender' of what is good as well



## Recommendations

- Establish a permanent and enhanced UN-Water base which supports the Chair but does not revolve with it
- A core team of 4-6 staff is tentatively suggested
- the Trust Fund be managed permanently by a neutral 'agency,' such as UN-Operations for example
- A clear framework of competencies required for the role of Chair and Technical Advisor be put together
- Continue to develop the role of the Programme Advisory board



## Recommendations

- Clarify mandate, expectations and ‘boundaries’ of Task forces
- Explicitly prioritise the UN-Water work plan – in particular with a focus at country level impact
- Maybe review engagement with non-member stakeholders.