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# Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health



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# Foreword

Ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all is essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This objective, embodied in Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) of the Agenda, is linked to all the other SDGs. Without due attention to water and sanitation, many of the aspirations and targets of the 2030 Agenda will not be met.

The Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes is a powerful tool to promote and operationalize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. With its strong integrated and intersectoral approach, its focus on prevention and the whole water cycle, and its attention to safety and equity aspects, the Protocol's provisions and principles fully align with SDG 6, as well as with the relevant targets under SDG 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

The Protocol, which is jointly serviced by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, requires its Parties to establish national and local targets, to implement measures to ensure they are met, and to regularly review and report on progress achieved. Such targets must be tailor-made reflecting the country's socioeconomic and environmental health conditions, as well as its needs and priorities in the water, sanitation and health sectors. This approach lies at the core of the Protocol's planning, performance and accountability framework, and will be instrumental for implementing the SDGs related to water, sanitation and health.

To date, a number of Parties to the Protocol have established targets, and several Parties and other States have set draft targets or are in the process of doing so. The experience of these countries shows that well-formulated targets trigger policy attention and action, which in turn leads to positive outcomes for water, sanitation and health. At the same time, setting targets can prove to be a complex exercise, which requires good planning, devoted resources and effective intersectoral cooperation.

The present publication is designed to assist efforts by Parties to the Protocol and other States to effectively shape their target-setting process. It gathers together experiences from countries that have already undergone the process, and presents a series of case studies showcasing good practices and lessons learned.

These case studies tell a powerful story. While intersectoral cooperation remains a common challenge throughout the region, irrespective of socio-economic conditions, setting targets under the Protocol has proven an effective means to improve such cooperation by promoting better sharing of information and a common understanding of the issues and priorities. In addition, the potential benefits derived in terms of joint leadership, coherence of policies, efficiency of action and commitment to the issues represent a remarkable return on the efforts invested. Finally, to enjoy the full breadth of advantages that the Protocol can bring to countries, specific resources must be devoted beyond existing sectoral allocations.

It is our hope that this collection of first-hand experiences and good practices will serve as a helpful tool for national authorities and other stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the Protocol, with a view to benefiting the lives of citizens and improving the quality of waters in our region.



**Christian Friis Bach**  
Executive Secretary  
United Nations Economic Commission for  
Europe



**Zsuzsanna Jakab**  
Regional Director  
World Health Organization Regional Office for  
Europe







# Preface

It gives me a great pleasure to present this *Collection of Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health*, which is the result of an extensive participatory exercise to distil the practical experience accumulated by Parties to the Protocol and other States in setting targets and reporting.

Article 6 of the Protocol on Water and Health requires Parties to set targets to improve the water, sanitation and health situation in their respective countries, and the dates for achieving them. Article 7 of the Protocol requires Parties to collect and evaluate data and information on their progress towards the achievement of the targets and to submit summary reports to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

The Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting, which I have the honour to chair, works to provide support to countries in setting and revising their targets and target dates, developing action plans and implementing measures towards the achievement of those targets. In addition, it promotes the exchange of experience and good practice among countries in the pan-European region. In 2010, in order to assist Parties address challenges linked to setting targets and reviewing and assessing progress, the Task Force published the *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting*. Since then, the Guidelines have been used extensively by countries when setting national targets and evaluating progress and reporting. While applying the Guidelines, countries have accumulated ample experience including stories and key elements that contributed to the success of the process, as well as areas where things could have been done differently. Recognizing the usefulness of this collective experience and the benefits of learning from and replicating good practices, the Task Force decided to prepare the present publication.

The preparation of this publication relied on a broad consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders and multiple review stages, resulting in the creation of a drafting group, extensive discussions at the level of the Task Force and the Working Group on Water and Health, and a dedicated workshop. Twenty-seven case studies were prepared and more than 60 experts participated in the process. The result is a hands-on, concrete tool that highlights challenges and lessons learned, solutions and success factors to help overcome them and methods for their replication.

I sincerely hope that this *Collection of Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health* will provide practical guidance to countries in the process of setting, revising or implementing their targets, as well as reporting on the progress achieved in accordance with the Protocol.



**Pierre Studer**

Chair of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties  
to the Protocol on Water and Health  
Chair of the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting  
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