

JULY 2020

PHASE III WORK PLAN

July 2020

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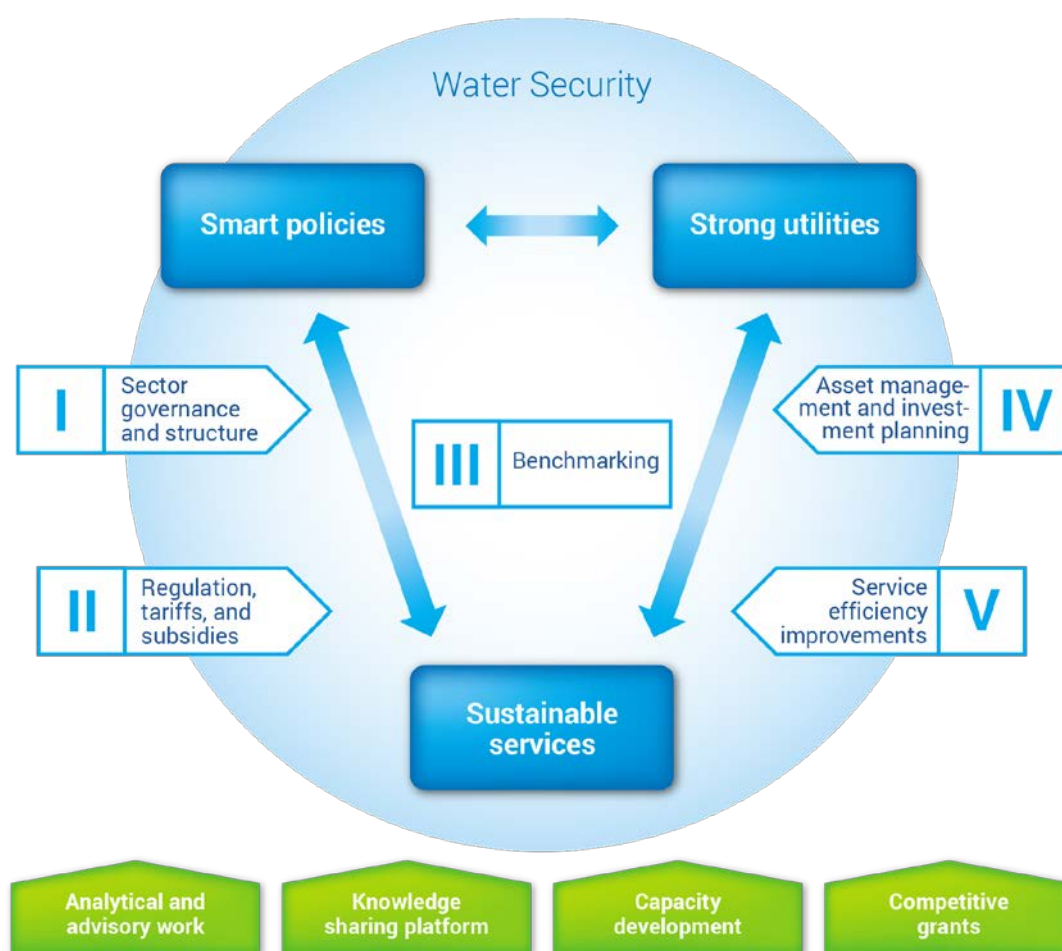
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INTRODUCTION

This document presents the updated Work Plan of the Danube Water Program (“DWP” or “the Program”), as of July 2020. This version replaces the previous Work Plan for the implementation of the Program, approved by the Steering Committee in November 2019, and covers all continued and proposed new activities under Phase III of the Program. The activities already completed under Phase I and Phase II have been removed from the Work Plan, which therefore provides forward-looking information on the ongoing and planned upcoming activities.

The Work Plan follows the Program’s vision of *Smart policies, Strong utilities and Sustainable services*; it lays out a series of individual activities itself, which will be conducted at (sub-) regional and at national levels, through three main instruments: analytical and advisory work, a knowledge sharing platform and capacity development activities along the Program’s five pillars, as shown below. In addition, it includes activities corresponding to the expanded scope of the program under the Phase III to include *Water Security* activities under the World Bank implemented analytical and advisory work.



This updated Work Plan is consistent with the Program’s objective and revised results framework as agreed upon during the Phase III preparation. It also reflects progress made and feedback received since June 2020. An electronic version of this report for external audiences will be made available on the Program’s website www.danube-water-program.org.

The document is structured as follows:

- ▶ The work plan (page 7) itself is presented through the following sections:
 - *Overview of Program activities* on page 7 provides a succinct overview of all planned activities and how they fit in the program's different areas of work (Advisory and Analytical work, Capacity Development and Knowledge Sharing Platform), Pillars, and their geographical level (regional or national). The Country Activities Overview on page 8 presents all country-level activities, according to the main areas of work they correspond to.
- ▶ *Results Framework Overview* on page 9 offers an overview of the Danube Water Program's revised targets, current progress and expected results.
- ▶ The *detailed regional activity sheets* starting on page 12 provide further details on each regional activity, including an objective, budget, short description, timeline, team composition, contribution to the Program's overall indicators, and current status.
- ▶ The *detailed country sheets* starting on page 45 provide the same information for country-level activities.

The Work Plan for Phase III of the DWP does not commit more resources than currently available for Component 2 of the program. D-LeaP activities are underfunded, and efforts will be made to obtain additional resources to increase the funding available for this activity.

Compared to the previous version, the main changes are:

- ▶ Update of the status and timelines of the workplan activities, considering as far as possible the restrictions and implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the first half of 2020, the pandemic-related restrictions have impacted everyday life and working conditions, and severely limited staff and client ability to travel and hold meetings, workshops and conferences. Covid-19 caused delays in the timeline and status of the implementation of several activities. The workplan has been updated, taking into account the challenging situation and new global circumstances.
- ▶ As an immediate reaction to the pandemic situation, the DWP team has responded by moving program activities online as much as possible. Furthermore, a series of Covid-19 Webinars has been organized to share relevant information and experiences regarding approaches and response activities in the water sector in order to address the challenging situation created by the pandemic. In addition, the D-LeaP curriculum on Water Safety Planning and Crisis Management has been updated in spring 2020 financed from GFDRR funds, putting now a stronger focus on crisis situations due to pandemics next to adding further risk-assessment components due to the water security emphasis of Phase III. Discussions are ongoing for the roll-out of the updated curriculum in autumn 2020 in collaboration with municipal government associations.
- ▶ The latest regional analytical activity, the State of the Sector Report – Update 2018, was finalized in 2019. The main findings summarized in the Executive Summary and Country Notes have been translated into different Danube language versions to be made online available. Resources have been allocated to a regional Water Security Diagnostics – the State of the Sector Report 2021 - to be elaborated in 2020 and 2021, which will build on the methodological framework under elaboration in the frame of the Regional Water Security Initiative for Europe and Central Asia financed from GWSP. Furthermore, as a follow-up to the Covid-19 webinar series organized in spring 2020, further support activities are in the planning stage, including information exchange via topic-related

webinars and targeted support for assessing and addressing the financial implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- ▶ At the country-level and following consultations with World Bank task teams, the analytical and advisory activities have been updated and budgets adjusted, including those started in Phase II and continued under Phase III, as well as new activities launched under Phase III. Funds have been earmarked (put under a place holder) for further national analytical and advisory work in both water supply and sanitation and water security issues. Those specific activities to be supported at national level will be defined as country priorities emerge.
- ▶ Support to national benchmarking activities have been further defined and updated, as countries roll-out the Danubis DCM platform as a data collection and management system and the need for continued support for local capacity building and data collection exercises have been evidenced. Support for benchmarking activities will be continued via funds from Component 1 under Phase III. Furthermore, allocations to national benchmarking activities have been updated, aiming to maximize the use of data collection and management systems. This has been done to support the existence of a performance data collection and benchmarking system in countries to inform sector policies and WSS utility industry at the national level, as well as the public availability of utility performance information, what is needed to conduct international benchmarking, tracking official aid effectiveness, undertaking research and analytical work, and overall to add to global sector knowledge for evidence-based policies.
- ▶ A new specific platform building on the DANUBIS DCM platform was developed as a replacement of the EBC platform to be used under the Utility Benchmarking Program. The use of the Utility Benchmarking Platform is focused on data collection for utility improvement.
- ▶ The status and planned next steps of activities conducted in the frame of the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) have individually been updated.
- ▶ On communication and outreach, a communication strategy was developed for websites, newsletters and social media, which resulted in the concept for one consolidated digital service platform called “The Voice of the Danube”, incorporating all existing elements of IAWD, DWP, D-LeaP and DANUBIS.org. The new web including the social media strategy will be launched in July 2020.
- ▶ Leadership and team composition of the individual activities has been updated. Finalized or previous activities which have been incorporated into new activities have been removed.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Note: Activities that were discussed in the previous version of the Work Plan but were discontinued or completed have been removed in this version of the Work Plan. Numbers in [brackets] indicate the page number of the full activity description. Color indicates main implementing responsibility: Joint / case-by-case; IAWD-led; World Bank-led.

	R Regional / Sub-regional activities	N National activities
A Analytical and Advisory policy work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA.7: Regional Water Security Diagnostic – SoS 2021 [12] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA.2: Targeted analytical and advisory support in Flagship countries [45] (refer to next page for full list)
C Capacity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.2: IAWD Strengthening Support [14] RC.3: D-LeaP Danube Learning Partnership for Sustainable WSS services [16] <p>Pillar I Sector governance and structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.I.1: Regional support for WSS sector policies and governance [19] RC.I.3: Regional exchange on water security topics [20] <p>Pillar II: Regulation, tariffs and subsidies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.II.1: Regional support on WSS sector regulation [22] <p>Pillar III: Benchmarking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.III.1: Regional Data Collection and Management System (DANUBIS) [24] RC.III.2: D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program [25] RC.III.3: IAWD Benchmarking for Leading Utilities [27] <p>Pillar IV: Asset management and investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.IV.1: D-LeaP Asset Management program [28] RC.IV.2: D-LeaP Utility Access to Financing program [30] <p>Pillar V: Service efficiency improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC.V.1: D-LeaP Energy Efficiency program [33] RC.V.2: D-LeaP Commercial Practices program [34] RC.V.3: D-LeaP Risk Management and Business Continuity program [36] RC.V.4: D-LeaP Non – Revenue Water Management program [38] RC V.6: D-LeaP Management training program [39] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC.III.1: National Benchmarking Systems Support [46] (refer to next page for full list)
S Knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RS.1: Annual regional event [41] RS.3: Outreach and Communication [42] RS.5: DANUBIS water platform development [43] 	

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

	NA.2 Analytical and Advisory activities	NC.III Benchmarking activities
Albania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.1: Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Support [48] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.11: Albania support to benchmarking [50]
Bosnia and Herzegovina		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.2: BiH Support to Benchmarking Activities [51]
Bulgaria		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.9: Formalizing a Self-Financing Utility Benchmarking Program [53]
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.2: Support to Croatia' utility aggregation process [54] 	
Kosovo		
North Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.15: Water Utility Sector Support [57] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.4: Support to Benchmarking Activities [56]
Moldova	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.16 Moldova policy and regulatory support [58] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.12 Moldova support to benchmarking [59]
Montenegro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.13: Montenegro policy support [62] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.5: Support to Benchmarking Activities [60]
Romania		
Serbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.5: Support for EU accession process in the WSS sector [64] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.6: Serbia Support to Benchmarking Activities [65]
Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA.2.7: Support regulatory capacity building [67] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC.III.10: Support to national EBC/Danube hub for Ukraine [68]

RESULTS FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

PDO LEVEL RESULTS INDICATORS	Base-line		Cumulative Target Values										Status
			PHASE I				PHASE II			PHASE III			
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Indicator One (New): [NUMBER] of participating utilities that have improved their operational performance as a result of a capacity building program under the Danube Learning Partnership.	0	Planned								5	15	20	Delayed
		Actual								2			
Indicator Two (Revised): [NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance and are sharing data with IB-NET Danubis.org.	5	Planned	3	3	4	6			6	8	9	10	Achieved
		Actual	3	3	4	5	7	8	8	10			
Indicator Three (New): [NUMBER] of participating utility associations that have established a hub and are delivering capacity development programs under the Danube Learning Partnership.	4	Planned								5	6	7	Exceeded
		Actual							4	8			
Indicator Four (New): [NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations for the water sector have been discussed, endorsed and are being implemented.	0	Planned								2	5	7	On track
		Actual								1			
Indicator Five (New): [NUMBER] Cumulative income generated by IAWD from the implementation of DWP activities (in EUR).	0	Planned								25000	65000	165000	On track
		Actual								30536			

Note: For PDO Level Indicator One, a specific questionnaire for tracking the improvement of operational performance was developed and the Results Framework will be subsequently updated.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL RESULTS INDICATORS	Base-line	Cumulative Target Values										Status	
		PHASE I				PHASE II			PHASE III				
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
Intermediate Result (Component One): Developed regulatory and policy instruments for improved country framework conditions in Water Supply and Sanitation and Water Resources Management (BETF)													
Intermediate Result indicator One (Revised): [NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations on water supply and sanitation have been discussed by decision makers.	0	Planned	0			8			8			10	Achieved
		Actual		0	2	5	7	7	9	10			
Intermediate Result indicator Two (Revised): [NUMBER] of water supply and sanitation sector regulation and policy reviews conducted.	0	Planned	0			11			22			40	On track
		Actual		0	0	16	17	19	28	36			
Intermediate Result indicator Three (New): [NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities on water security topics	0	Planned										40	On track
		Actual								0			
Intermediate Result indicator Four (New): [NUMBER] of sector regulation and policy reviews conducted in water security topics	0	Planned										5	On track
		Actual								1			
Intermediate Result indicator Five (Revised): [NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	0	Planned							3500			5300	On track
		Actual				3896	4206	4313	4727	4912			

Intermediate Result (Component Two): Increased institutional capacity in participating utilities (RETF)													
Intermediate Result indicator Six (Revised): [NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program under the Danube Learning Partnership.	0	Planned	0			15			70			120	Exceeded
		Actual		0	22	49	49	50	79	123			
Intermediate Result indicator Seven (Revised): [NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	0	Planned	0			45			350			730	Exceeded
		Actual		85	200	367	515	607	701	861			
Intermediate Results indicator Eight (Revised): [NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	0	Planned							100			280	Exceeded
		Actual				134	197	229	252	307			
Intermediate Results indicator Nine (New): [NUMBER] of curricula developed and offered under the Danube Learning Partnership.	5	Planned										8	On track
		Actual							5	6			
Intermediate Results indicator Ten (Revised): [NUMBER] of water utilities that the project is supporting.	0	Planned							150	195	210	230	On track
		Actual				108	114	135	182	201			
Intermediate Results indicator Eleven (New): [NUMBER] of new members joining IAWD.	0	Planned										9	On track
		Actual							0	3			
Intermediate Results indicator Twelve (New): IAWD revises its membership categories and adopts a revised fee structure	0	Planned								Yes	Yes	Yes	Delayed
		Actual							No	No			
Intermediate Result indicator Thirteen (Revised): [NUMBER] of participating utility associations that are implementing their business plans.	1	Planned							6				Completed
		Actual				0	0	1	8				
Intermediate Result indicator Fourteen (No change): [NUMBER] of Competitive Grants completed as planned.	0	Planned							20				Completed
		Actual				12	12	17	21				

RA / REGIONAL ANALYTICAL WORK

RA.7: Regional Water Security Diagnostic – SoS 2021		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective The objective is to develop and overview and to identify key current and future challenges around water security for the Danube region to inform a focused policy dialogue with Danube countries towards building a water secure world for the people, economy and the environment.		
Target audience	Water and Environmental Ministries, International River Basin Organizations, sector professionals, water-related stakeholders	
Description and outcomes In the context of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 6 on Water, the World Bank, the European Commission, the United Nations (UN), the ICPDR and other international agencies are promoting an integrated approach to water resources management. The World Bank Water GP vision is to achieve a water secure future for the people, economy and the environment in the light of a rapidly changing region, with the objectives of sustaining and leveraging the water resources, delivering water services (beyond drinking water and wastewater management, including also water for agriculture and industrial use), and mitigating water risks (which are increasing considering global warming and climate change). This holistic approach to water sector development is also embedded in the Water Framework Directive of the EU and other directives such as the Floods Directive, with most of the countries in the region striving to achieve compliance. The Danube region is undergoing many demographic, economic, climate and technological changes. Although important work on integrated water resource management is ongoing since many years, an analysis from the aspect of water security is still lacking, which would, however, gain the opportunity to inform a focused policy dialogue towards building a water secure future for the Danube region. Based on the outlined considerations, a Water Security Diagnostic for the Danube region – the State of the Sector Report 2021 - will be conducted, exploring the linkages between water and important development topics. The Water Security Diagnostic will result in two complementary products: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Water Security Diagnostic, presenting a comparative analysis of the situation in the Danube region;• Water Security Country Notes, presenting a short and structured account of the results for the analyzed countries. The activity will build on and take into consideration and be complementary with the results of other important analytical activities conducted by the World Bank and financed through other sources, including the Regional Water Security Initiative for the Europe and Central Asia Region (ECA), an analytical activity on the future of irrigation in the Balkans, as well as existing water security assessment conducted for Romania, Kosovo and Croatia. Furthermore, the results stemming from activities of other institutions will be considered, including e.g. the River Basin and Flood Risk Management Plans elaborated by the ICPDR and ISRBC, studies conducted by the UNECE, etc.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of sector regulation and policy reviews conducted in water security topics	0	5
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raimund Mair (Lead)		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stjepan Gabric (Lead) • Kathia Havens • Patricia Lopez
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Environmental Ministries in the respective countries • ICPDR and ISRBC • IAWD • Other relevant water security stakeholders
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2020: First data collection on water security indicators • Summer 2020: Launch of tender for ECA Regional Water Security Diagnostics • Summer 2020: Project concept for Danube Water Security Diagnostics • Autumn 2020: Methodological approach for ECA Water Security Diagnostics developed • Autumn 2020: Launch of analytical deep-dive for Danube Water Security Diagnostic • Spring/summer 2021: Interim-results available • Summer/autumn 2021: Report preparation • Autumn 2021: Release of Danube Water Security Diagnostics – State of the Sector Report 2021
Status <p>The preparation of the Danube Water Security Diagnostic is closely linked with the work conducted under a separate project financed from GWSP – the Regional Water Security Initiative for Europe and Central Asia (ECA). The project concept for the work on ECA was developed in spring 2020 and will provide the methodological framework for the analytical work and deep-dives in specific countries and sub-regions, including the Danube region.</p> <p>A tender supporting the development of the ECA methodological framework is under preparation and will be launched in summer 2020. In parallel, a more detailed project concept for the analytical deep-dive in the frame of the Danube Water Program for the Danube region will be developed during summer 2020, incorporating a draft concept on water scarcity and droughts which was developed in spring 2020. Building on the ECA methodological framework and Danube concept, in-depth assessments for the Danube region are planned to be launched in autumn 2020, including e.g. more detailed modelling of future development trajectories like climate change and socio-economic development patterns, as well as an institutional assessment.</p> <p>Discussions have been held with the ICPDR in summer 2020 on the coordination of the activities. The work will be complementary to ongoing work on the development of a water balance for the Danube region. While the work conducted in the frame of the ICPDR will more focus on hydrological aspects, the Danube Water Security Diagnostic will embrace broader water security aspects as outlined above. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions the activity is delayed. The use of online tools for exchange and consultation will need to be considered for the implementation of the activity.</p>

RC REGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING WORK

RC.2: IAWD Strengthening Support [CONTINUED UNDER PHASE III]	
Led by	IAWD
Objective Strengthen the long-term sustainability of the “International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area” (IAWD) to achieve financial and institutional sustainability as an organization facilitating improvement of water utilities in the Danube region.	
Target audience	IAWD
Description and outcomes The actions undertaken as part of this activity include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the strategic priorities such as securing the financial basis for Membership Services, Conference/Event Organization, and Capacity Building. • Institutionalization of Knowledge Management activities • Creating a Utility CEO Forum in the Danube region on a biannual basis • Maintaining the Roundtable of Danube water utility associations as well as the D-LeaP Committee Council • Undertaking membership Recruitment and Management of Services • Development of a regional Young Water Professionals Network (linked to IWA) • Support for cooperation with Strategic Partners • Establishing capacity for management of Donor funded project management. As part of the strengthening of IAWD in March 2016 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between IAWD and UN-Habitat to establish Water Operators’ Partnerships (WOPs) in the Danube region. This initiative offers IAWD genuine and practical solutions for bringing increased cohesion between participating utilities, with the added value of peer-to-peer support exchanges, and complementary motivation based on not-for-profit cooperation for the benefit of a whole region. The first WOP was launched in April 2016 in Serbia between Waterworks of Subotica and Budapest Waterworks. Further partnerships established to strengthen the IAWD include the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS), the International Water Association (IWA) and the Global Water Partnership in Central and Eastern Europe (GWP CEE). In addition, a core activity funded under RC.2 further maintaining the partnership with the national water utility associations, i.e. the meeting of the Roundtable of water utility associations, which has started under Phase I already, were further continued under Phase II and will also be organized under Phase III on a yearly basis. A part of this is also the further maintenance of the D-LeaP Committee Council, which consists of representatives of those associations, who are IAWD members.	

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	11	10
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities	2	5
[NUMBER] of utility associations that have prepared business plans.	1	1
[NUMBER] of participating utility associations that are implementing their business plans.	0	1
[NUMBER] of new members joining IAWD	3	9
IAWD revises its membership categories and adopts a revised fee structure		YES
[NUMBER] Cumulative income generated by IAWD from the implementation of DWP activities (in EUR)		165000
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Weller (lead) IAWD Board and General Secretary: oversight and strategic guidance Katerina Schilling, Katherine Wagner (IAWD) 		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board of IAWD will be informed and updated on progress of the activities on a regular basis and will approve and adopt strategic decisions to support the activities. Members will be engaged and involved in the strengthening of IAWD. 		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late winter 2016: first annual event for IAWD, to be held each year for three years (CEO Forum or Utility Conference). Spring 2016 and thereafter Annual meeting of IAWD reporting and updating and reviewing business plan implementation. Late fall 2016: The activities and actions will begin after the presentation of the IAWD Business plan October 2016: meeting of the Roundtable of water utility associations 2017: beginning of membership campaign May 2017/2018/2019: First, second and third Danube Regional YWP workshop held in the frame of the Danube Water Conference September 2017: meeting of the Roundtable of water utility associations End 2017: Start of strategic process within IAWD March 2018: meeting of the Roundtable of water utility associations May 2018/2019: CEO dinner of the Danube Hub utilities and IAWD members May 2018: Presentation of draft IAWD strategy at IAWD General Assembly December 2018: meeting of the Roundtable of water utility associations 2019: IAWD will carry out an internal development process to support institutional development 26-27 November 2019: Meeting of the Roundtable of the Danube region water utility associations and D-LeaP Committee Council March 2020: IAWD developed the document "IAWD Strengthening actions and timeline 2020-2022" May 2020: Virtual meeting of the D-LeaP Committee Council July 2020: Submission and discussion of the document "IAWD Strengthening actions and timeline 2020-2022" by Steering Committee Fall 2020/2021: Meeting of the Roundtable of the Danube region water utility associations and D-LeaP Committee Council 		

Status

The Vision and Strategy document that was prepared has been completed and key items in the document have been realized in decisions of the IAWD Board in May 2019 (i.e. change of name of IAWD) and further actions identified in the document will be implemented. In addition to the Vision and Strategy a further document has been developed to outline the implementation of actions. This document called "IAWD Strengthening actions and timeline 2020-2022" has been finalized in March 2020 to be made available for discussion at the Steering Committee Meeting in July 2020.

A core action under this activity is the organization of the meetings of the Roundtable of water utility associations including the D-LeaP Committee Council that will continue to be organized and managed by IAWD on a yearly basis.

In Phase III some very limited financial resources have been used to support IAWD in institutional development and in maximizing the efficiency of internal management arrangements.

IAWD Board has, however, taken active role in the strengthening of the Organization and has committed reinvestment of funds from activities into institutional development.

RC.3: D-LeaP Danube Learning Partnership for sustainable WSS services

Led by

IAWD

Objective

Create a cooperative capacity building program for water utilities in the Danube region. The program will be facilitated by the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) in partnership with national water utility associations.

Target audience

IAWD/national water utility associations, water utilities

Description and outcomes

The State of the Sector report (World Bank, 2015) as well as the capacity building activities carried out under Phase I identified the need to strengthen the capacity of professional staff working in the sector in several countries in the region. As a result the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) was designed at the end of phase 1 as a regional, integrated and sustainable capacity building initiative of national water utility associations and IAWD, the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area, to provide a comprehensive curriculum to the staff of water and wastewater utilities located in the Danube region. D-LeaP has been established as a committee of IAWD, composed of representatives of national water utility associations in the region.

A refined concept and business plan for D-LeaP was completed in late fall 2015. The concept was introduced to the Roundtable of water utility associations for adoption and support. The following actions were undertaken in support of the activity:

- Offering a common curriculum (training materials and program) on specific topics to national water utility associations to use in their national language. The common curriculum builds upon the materials and approaches developed and tested under the Danube Water Program on such topics as Energy Efficiency, Asset Management, Utility Benchmarking and Commercial Efficiency, but also additional topics such as Non-Revenue Water and Water Safety Planning are included.
- Development of written documentation and training kits on the respective topic in English language
- Development of approaches and methods of delivery of capacity building that use the common curriculum in a structured and focused way relying on, but not necessarily limited to learning by doing
- The establishment of a pool of international experts, who could offer and support the delivery of the training programs on the particular topic
- Convening Training of Trainer sessions to expand the cadre of persons in the region (persons connected to national water utility associations, the Hub trainers), who could provide the training in national languages and support participants in training programs in their national language.

- Establishment of a regular cycle of training programs on specific topics within the period of existence of the Danube Water Program – from December 2015 to the end of 2021
- Preparation of fact sheets and online tools to reinforce and support the curriculum and associated actions
- An evaluation of a model of accreditation based upon capacity building among various countries on specific topics
- Preparation of a business plan to secure the long-term sustainability of capacity building

A declaration to establish D-LeaP was signed by most national water utility associations in May 2016. Revisions to the D-LeaP Business plan and preparation of governance arrangements, management documents (bylaws, hub agreement etc.) were completed in December 2016. The contracting of the first Technical Partners for the development of curricula started in summer 2016. In addition, the D-LeaP website, the D-LeaP Academy and D-LeaP brochures and leaflets have been developed in the course of 2016 and were launched in May 2017.

The first meeting of the D-LeaP Committee Council took place in May 2017 in the frame of the Danube Water Conference, where a Chair and Vice Chair were elected by the national water utility associations. Further on, the D-LeaP Committee Council meets twice a year, in spring in the frame of the Danube Water Conference or Danube Water Forum, and in fall together with the Roundtable of national water utility associations (RC.2).

As of December 2018, the Training of Trainers sessions for the expected curricula were completed (EE, CE, AM, WSP, NRW, UBP) and 12 Hubs were launched. In total, 60 trainers have been trained. Over 175 utilities have participated in the courses and improvements at utilities have been achieved. Some income has been generated by IAWD to manage the program, but a lower amount than anticipated, as the timetable for roll-out of the program remained behind schedule, although significant progress could be seen in the course of 2018.

This progress was partially a result of contracting a D-LeaP consultant to work with the potential Hubs in launching their activities. Based on visits to each of the prospective Hubs the consultant concluded that overall commitment to the idea of D-LeaP remains strong, but additional support was needed to secure the launch of Hubs. Overall it became clear that establishment of Hubs is proceeding more slowly than planned (the major reason seems to be anxiety of financial obligations). It is hoped that with small adjustments the process of establishing delivery can be accelerated.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating utility associations that have established a hub and are delivering capacity development programs under the Danube Learning Partnership.	7	8
[NUMBER] of curricula developed and offered under the Danube Learning Partnership.	6	8
Also refer to individual activity sheets for details	NA	NA

Team

- Philip Weller (lead)
- Katerina Schilling
- Anna Koch
- D-LeaP Committee Council

Partners and responsibilities

- The national water utility associations will provide leadership and guidance to this initiative through the D-LeaP Committee Council

Timeline

- November 2015: a detailed plan and approach for capacity building was prepared– the contract has been issued and a report was completed end of November 2015
- November/December 2015: meeting of the Roundtable of national water utility associations with approval of the work plan and steps for carrying out the capacity building.

- May 2016: Declaration of Intent was signed by national water utility associations
- Summer 2016: Technical Partners contracted for development of the curricula
- December 2016: Completion of D-LeaP governance arrangements
- May 2017: Launch of D-LeaP website and D-LeaP Academy; presentation of D-LeaP Brochure and program leaflets
- May 2018: Presentation of D-LeaP programs' extended leaflets
- Early 2019: Contracting of D-LeaP consultant to further support the D-LeaP implementation as well as contracting of the company Viadesk hosting the D-LeaP Academy.
- An update of the Business Plan for D-Leap will be finalized by fall 2020.

Status

During the third phase of the DWP this activity will be a central element of the work activities of IAWD. New Hubs will be launched, and potential new curricula will be developed.

The overall budget for work plan activities related to D-LeaP amounts to € 143.500. Under the current work plan activity (RC.3) the funding for the contract for the D-LeaP consultant for supporting further D-LeaP implementation as well as the D-LeaP Academy are allocated.

In addition, a total amount of €64.416 has been allocated to the specific D-LeaP Programs (RC.IV.1 Asset Management, RC.V.I Energy Efficiency, and RC.V.4 Non-Revenue Water) on a success-driven/demand driven basis, i.e. for supporting already existing successful Hubs (AQUASAN for AM, NRW and EE as well as UTVIS for AM) or set-up new Hub Agreements for AM Hubs in Albania (SHUKALB) and Kosovo (SHUKOS) and EE Hubs ins Albania/Kosovo (SHUKALB) and Serbia (WASS).

The remaining budget will for now be allocated to RC.3 and distributed to the specific D-LeaP program activities according to the D-LeaP Work Plan 2020 and 2021.

Modification (virtual events) or delay in some programs has occurred in spring 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions, details are reported under the specific activities

Pillar I - Policies

RC.I.1: Regional Support for WSS sector policies and governance			
Led by		World Bank	
Objective Provide interested and committed government counterparts with the appropriate knowledge, exposure and expertise to support their sector modernization efforts and development of sector policies.			
Target audience		Line ministry staff; regulators, utility associations	
Description and outcomes <p>This activity covers several WSS sector governance and policy topics, which have been recognized as regionally relevant by the State of the Sector reports and through evolving dialogue with country sector counterparts and stakeholders. Activities are implemented primarily through specific workshops focused on above issues, through transfer of knowledge by regional experts, and between the participants themselves, bringing local and European experiences to the individual countries, and (ii) focused cross support (coaching) of individual country/or group of countries.</p> <p>During the second phase, a number of activities were supported. In November 2017, an “International Workshop on Wastewater Management in the Danube river Basin” was organized jointly with the ICPDR and the JRC of the European Commission in Bucharest in with over 120 participants; and a “Regional Workshop on Performance Based Contracting for Non-Revenue Water Reduction” was organized jointly with the Romanian National Utility Association (ARA), also in Bucharest, in February 2017 in which more than 60 utility and government representatives participated. In May 2019, the activity also supported discussions around water utility sector reform in the frame of a Program-for-Results workshop held in Vienna with government representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania.</p> <p>During Phase III, the idea is to provide a number of regional knowledge exchange activities on topics relevant to the regional community of knowledge in water policy and governance. A topic that has already been identified is wastewater management and implications for Urban Wastewater Management Directive compliance.</p> <p>During the above events, country delegations will have the opportunity to define concrete priority areas, course of action and necessary support that would lead to country-level activities, which could then be supported by the Program Targeted Analytical and Advisory work.</p> <p>The activities and events are prepared by the Bank team and delivered by selected regional experts and relevant national/utility representatives. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic some of those activities are now planned to be conducted in form of webinars.</p>			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.		61	75
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.		25	35
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stjepan Gabric; Patricia Lopez (leads)Kathia Havens, Raimund Mair			
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">Line Ministries, regulators, utility associations and utilities in the respective countries			
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none">September 30, 2016: Preparing draft program and implementation plan for all 3 workshopsNovember 30, 2016: Defining detailed program/scope of the eventsAutumn 2020 / Spring 2021: UWWT workshop implementation			

- Autumn 2020: Conduction of webinars on specific topics of regional relevance

Status

Based on knowledge gained during preparation of UWWTD study and relevance of UWWTD in the region, the team will promote wastewater management knowledge and experience exchange between individual countries (for example member and candidate countries) during 2020-2021. Further details are defined following a dialogue with individual countries participating in the DWP.

Discussions between Danube countries in the frame of the Danube River Basin Commission (ICPDR) revealed that wastewater management and wastewater treatment specifically remain one of the key topics of concern for the countries in the region, generating continuously strong demand for knowledge and experience exchange. Based on discussions with the ICPDR, the following topics are found to be of particular interest and worth investing joint efforts: (i) rural wastewater management, and (ii) financial sustainability of wastewater management. In order to address this articulated need, the DWP, jointly with the ICPDR, have agreed to organize two workshops, one for each topic, in summer and autumn 2020. Draft concepts for both workshops have been prepared and agreed with ICPDR. However, due to Covid-19, and considering that workshops should also include practical parts as site visits to wastewater treatment facilities, the workshops have tentatively been postponed to the fall 2020 / spring 2021.

Following demand from the wastewater professionals from the region, webinar on 'Detecting and managing Covid-19 in sanitary wastewater' was held on June 24. Total of 110 participants gathered in the virtual space for a comprehensive update on scientific approaches to efficient pandemic management. Three leading wastewater technology experts from UK, Netherlands and Austria gave presentations on latest findings in Covid-19 detection and management, and the ensuing discussion confirmed high level of interest in this topic. This was the fifth edition of the DWP webinar series of event hosted by IAWD and the World Bank.

Other potential activities of interest for water professionals in the region were also discussed, including (i) organizing webinars on latest developments regarding key EU water directives (the EU Drinking Water and Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive) and (ii) regionalization of WSS service provision, that are found to be relevant for a broad variety of water sector stakeholders in the region. Considering the importance and implications of expected upcoming changes in those two key water directives, the team is planning to work with EC representatives in the coming period to prepare webinar(s) that would have the objective of sharing information on expected changes and possible implications on WSS service provision in the EU context.

RC.I.3: Regional exchange on water security topics

Led by

World Bank

Objective

The objective is to conduct further in-depth analysis and facilitate exchange on Water Security topics of specific relevance for Danube region countries.

Target audience

Water and Environmental Ministries, International River Basin Organizations, sector professionals, water-related stakeholders

Description and outcomes

The analytical work and exchange held with relevant institutions and stakeholders for the elaboration of the Water Security Diagnostic for the Danube region will allow to identify specific key-topics where a further in-depth analysis and exchange is considered as particularly beneficial. The identification of such topics will be conducted based on the (draft) results of the analytical work and in exchange with relevant representatives and stakeholders. Specific proposals for the activities to be conducted will be provided

to the Steering Committee for discussion and decision during the implementation of the 3rd Phase of the Danube Water Program.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of sector regulation and policy reviews conducted in water security topics	1	5
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities on water security topics	0	40

Team

- Raimund Mair and Stjepan Gabric (Lead)
- Kathia Havens
- Patricia Lopez

Partners and responsibilities

- Water and Environmental Ministries in the respective countries
- ICPDR and ISRBC
- IAWD, utilities and utility associations
- Other relevant water security stakeholders

Timeline

- Spring 2020: Preliminary identification of potential key Water Security topics
- Spring/Summer 2020: Demand Driven Webinar Series on COVID-19
- Summer/autumn 2020: Continuation of Covid-19 follow-up support
- Summer 2020 to Autumn 2021: Identification and conduction of further in-depth analysis and facilitate exchange on Water Security topics of specific relevance for Danube region countries

Status

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and demand for information and support regarding Water and Covid-19, the World Bank together with IAWD launched a series of Covid-19 Webinars. In the months of May – June the DWP team organized five webinars on the following topics: 7 May 2020 - Managing water services in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic; 14 May 2020 - Exchange of experiences between water utilities in delivering services in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic; 28 May 2020 - Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic for ensuring business continuity of water services; 10 June 2020: World Bank Covid-19 Financial Impact Assessment Tool for water service providers; 24 June 2020 - Detecting and managing Covid-19 in sanitary wastewater. With a variety of topics and speakers, the Webinar series was successful, with 50 to 130 participants joining each webinar and with an overall participation of roughly 580 experts and representatives from the Danube region and around the globe. Recordings, summaries and related material of all webinars are available on the [DWP website](#).

Due to the ongoing pandemic situation and related challenges, the team is planning to continue with the Covid-19 related support in form of webinars but also with more targeted activities, including e.g. expert support for the practical application of the [World Bank Covid-19 Financial Impact Assessment Tool](#) for water service providers and/or the assessment of considerations for Financial Facilities to Support Water Utilities in Crisis. The team will explore possibilities to link the planned follow-up support with other DWP activities, including RC.IV.2 on exploring available financing sources and options, and innovative approaches under the FUEL facility initiative, as well as with RC.V.3 and the updated curriculum on Water Safety Planning and Crisis Management which was developed in spring 2020, putting now a stronger focus on pandemic situations.

Pillar II - Regulation, tariff and subsidies

RC.II.1: Regional support on WSS sector regulation		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective Develop regulatory capacity of WSS sector regulatory agencies by providing access to first-rate regulatory expertise and facilitating the exchange of ideas and best practices among the agencies		
Target audience	WSS sector regulators at both managerial and technical level	
Description and outcomes <p>While the Danube region has many regulatory agencies, most Regulators in the region are relatively new – having been created in the last 10 years. All of them recognize the value of learning from their respective experiences as well as from more experienced regulators. The Program has played an important role in bringing the agencies together through a series of dedicated workshops and side meetings. In addition, the Program has also reached out to established regulatory networks, such as the Public Utility Regulation Center (PURC), the Energy Regulator Regional Association (ERRA) and the Water Regulators Group (WAREG) to promote the involvement of Danube Region regulators in those good practice networks.</p> <p>Under the first phase the program supported two regional events in Florence and Pristina and three side events on the side of the annual conferences in Vienna in May 2014, 2015 and 2016. During the second phase, a study tour to the Regulatory Agency of Portugal was organized in October 2018 to exchange knowledge and experience on a few regulatory issues, including tariff setting and subsidy methodologies, benchmarking and aggregation of services. The study tour brought together representatives from governments and water utilities from Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Portugal. All study tour presentations, agenda and final report are available here. The traditional annual regulatory side meetings to the Danube Water Conference were also held during the second phase.</p> <p>For the third phase, the intention is to focus on specific knowledge exchange activities requested by the supported regulatory agencies, including targeted support to one or two agencies. Furthermore, due to Covid-19 related travel restrictions, regional exchange on regulatory-related topics will be facilitated via webinars.</p>		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	35	40
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	14	17
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stjepan Gabric (lead); Patricia LopezRaimund Mair; Kathia Havens		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">Public Utility Regulation Center (PURC)Energy Regulator Regional Association (ERRA)EU Water Regulator Group (WAREG)		

Timeline

- November 25-27, 2013: a first regulator' workshop took place in Florence to discuss the basic principles of regulation of public utilities.
- May 8-9, 2014: The team convened participating WSS sector regulators during the annual regional event in Vienna and used the opportunity to gauge their interest in further capacity building activities.
- February 2015: Based on regulators' input, a workshop focused on regulatory benchmarking was organized in Pristina, Kosovo.
- May 2015 and 2016: another roundtable of regulators took place on the side of the 2015 Danube Water Conference.
- May 2017: another roundtable of regulators took place on the side of the 2017 Danube Water Conference and 3 regulatory agencies were supported to participate in IWA Performance Indicator Conference given relevance of subject for regulatory agencies
- October 2018: study tour to Regulatory Agency of Portugal
- May 2019: Roundtable of regulators on the side of the 2019 Danube Water Conference.
- 2020/2021: Targeted support to regulatory agencies depending on Covid-19 related restrictions; conduction of regional exchange via webinars

Status

A roundtable discussion was held in May 2019, as a side of the Danube Water Conference. The team communicated that there are some funds available for targeted support to regulatory agencies. The team will hold further discussions with interested regulatory agencies to define the specific activity to be supported, depending on possibilities in the context of Covid-19 related travel restrictions. A regional exchange focused on providing update and facilitating ongoing exchange of experience between regulatory authorities in the region is planned for autumn 2020 in form of a webinar.

Pillar III – Benchmarking

RC.III.1: Regional Data Collection Management System linked to DANUBIS.org			
Led by		World Bank / IAWD	
Objective			
Improve the regional utility information, performance indicator and benchmarking database included in the DANUBIS.org platform and in particular develop a customized platform (DANUBIS DCM) for use by responsible authorities for collecting, uploading and maintaining utility performance information. In addition, a new tool based on the DANUBIS DCM, for data collection carried out under the supervision of national water utility associations will be developed.			
Target audience		Line ministries, regulators, national water utility associations	
Description and outcomes			
<p>The World Bank and IAWD, in partnership with regulatory authorities and other institutions in the Danube region, have launched under Phase 1 of the DWP DANUBIS.org, an online knowledge space of information on and for utility services. Among other things, DANUBIS.org (www.danubis.org) includes a database of utility performance indicators for more than 600 utilities from 15 different countries in the Danube region. The platform was launched in May 2014 and continuously improved with the financial support of the Danube Water Program and GIZ/Open Regional Fund, under the overall guidance of a Steering Group comprised of representatives of institutions from most of the countries in the region. The focus is on collecting and validating existing information and making it available for use in national planning and regional comparison (using internationally accepted standards).</p> <p>Building upon the existing platform, an additional data collection and management platform (DANUBIS DCM) has been launched in the beginning of phase 2 that allows managing institutions (mostly regulators) in participating countries to have utility companies upload performance data, to review and display such data, and to manage it for their own purposes. In parallel, more advanced utility benchmarking reports are also being developed to allow stakeholders to make the best possible use of the platform.</p> <p>Managing Institutions (MI) from five countries signed the MoU to use DANUBIS DCM to collect and manage their water utility performance data (Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia). Representatives from the different Managing Institutions were trained and the platform was launched for use in the various countries. A steering committee meeting of the DCM MI took place in February 2017 and a virtual workshop was held to strengthen the use of DCM and assist the MIs in managing the system. Kosovo has begun using the system, Macedonia has done training of utilities in uploading data, and Serbia as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina started using it in 2017.</p> <p>Under phase 3, an additional tool building upon the DANUBIS DCM will be developed to replace the EBC platform used within the Utility Benchmarking Program (UBP) operated under D-LeaP. This tool will allow for the collection and management of data directly by the utilities under the supervision of national water utility associations (operating the UBP Hubs) that can be further used for Benchmarking activities under the UBP Hubs.</p>			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.		+200 ¹	+200
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance and are sharing data with IB-NET Danubis.org.		9	10

¹ This includes utility records in various other program elements.

Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Weller (lead) Patricia Lopez, Katerina Schilling Macroconsulting consultants 	
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National institutions in charge of data collection and processing in their respective countries (regulatory agencies, line ministries, waterworks associations etc.). Managing Institutions of the DANUBIS DCM platform (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia) Utility Benchmarking Hubs, i.e. Danube Hub operated by IAWD, Bulgaria Hub operated by BWA, Albania/Kosovo Hub operated by SHUKOS and Ukraine Hub IB-Net 	
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2014: launch of DANUBIS.org water platform and utility database May 2015: launch of the extended DANUBIS.org utility database August 2015: presentation of a draft concept of the DANUBIS DCM tool February 2016: workshop to validate early version of the platform May 2016: Signing of the DANUBIS DCM MoU among managing institutions (MI) June 2016: finalization of the data collection platform based upon the feedback and customization required by participating countries, training of MIs. Spring 2019: presentation of a concept of the new platform to be used under the UBP Fall 2019: Launch of new platform to be used under the UBP Spring 2020: Discussions with Kyrgyzstan about implementing the DCM for PI data collection Spring 2020 first Cycle of UBP completed. Strengthened rollout of the UBP in 2020 and 2021 	
Status <p>In Montenegro talks on specific arrangements are ongoing. Considerations on use of DANUBIS DCM in Albania and Bulgaria are ongoing.</p> <p>In phase 3, €50,000 from component 1 funds have been allocated under the current work plan activity to the development of a new platform allowing utilities to collect data directly according to their needs and for further use in the frame of the Utility Benchmarking Program operated under D-LeaP (in addition €100,000 from component 2 funds are allocated under RC.III.2). The new system replaces the EBC platform that had been used under phase 1 and 2 and had involved substantial additional costs. The new platform provides a long-term sustainable basis for the operation of IAWD's UBP.</p> <p>Discussions with North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia are taking place to ensure that PI data using the DCM are available to IBNET. Discussions with Kyrgyzstan have taken place on using the DCM or a variation of it for PI Collection at utilities through the World Bank Project based there.</p>	

RC.III.2: D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program (merging previous RC.III.2 Benchmarking for Utility Improvement and RC.III.3 IAWD Benchmarking for Leading Utilities)	
Led by	IAWD
Objective <p>Carry out three cycles (2019-2021) of the D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program delivered by the UBP Hubs (Danube Hub, Bulgarian Hub, Albania/Kosovo Hub and Ukraine Hub) in the Danube region to help participating utilities improve their performance and to secure the long-term sustainability of the utility benchmarking activities in the region. Solidifying the financial and technical capabilities of the existing national utility associations to act as national/subregional hubs for utility benchmarking.</p>	

Target audience	Interested utilities of the region; national water utility associations		
Description and outcomes			
<p>The Utility Benchmarking Program (UBP) is designed as a foundation program under D-LeaP and builds upon the work completed in phase 1 and 2 of the DWP to create a group of utilities interested and active in utility improvement through benchmarking. Under phase 1 and 2, four Hubs (Bulgaria, Albania/Kosovo, Ex-Yugoslavia, and Ukraine) have been created.</p> <p>The activity began in July 2014 and has used the expertise of the European Benchmarking Cooperation. The revised data platform has proceeded well and has been used for data upload in the 2015. Funding for this activity was provided by the ORF/GIZ Regional Benchmarking Initiative Grant.</p> <p>A new cycle of data collection in Ukraine and former Yugoslavia was initiated in early 2016 and over 30 utilities have joined the program. In Bulgaria the Benchmarking activities were linked to a World Bank funded project and are operating independently in 2016 from IAWD and the DWP. Kosovo and Albania initiated activities for 2016 and 2017.</p> <p>A meeting was held with EBC to plan future actions and arrangements in July 2016 and resulted in the new <i>Benchmarking for Leading Utilities initiative</i> (RC.III.3), which was launched in 2017 as the Danube Hub. At the end of the 2017 cycle, the sub-regional Ex-Yu Hub was fully incorporated into the regional Danube Hub, which is operated by IAWD (see work plan activity RC.III.3, which has been merged with this activity under phase 3).</p> <p>In February 2017 a large amount of data from this program (40 utilities) was submitted to IBNET/DANUBIS.org from utilities not in other ways providing data to IBNET (Ukraine, Montenegro, BiH, and Bulgaria).</p> <p>A meeting of Benchmarking coordinators took place in Vienna in December 2017.</p> <p>All national and sub-regional Hubs have successfully finished the 2019 cycle (2018 data) by January 2020. The regional Danube Hub intended to host the final workshop in the frame of the Danube Water Forum scheduled for April 2020. This event had to be postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19, which also inhibited the physical meetings of the other UBP Hubs. All national and sub-regional Hubs managed to still initiate the 2019 data cycle by scheduling virtual meetings. The regional Danube Hub hosted the final virtual workshop (2018 data) in June 2020 and consequently initiated the 2020 cycle (2019 data).</p>			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.		51	70
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.		18	40
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.		+80	+80*
[NUMBER] of water utilities that the project is supporting.		89	100
Team			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip Weller (lead)Katerina Schilling			
Partners and responsibilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The European Benchmarking Cooperation (EBC) used to be the Technical Partner for this activity until the end of phase 2Utility Benchmarking Hubs, i.e. Danube Hub operated by IAWD, Bulgaria Hub operated by BWA, Albania/Kosovo Hub operated by SHUKOS and Ukraine Hub			
Timeline			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">October 2015: finalize the third benchmarking cycle and undertake further training and assessment of actions needed for the development of the Hub sustainability.End of October 2015: Participation of the UBP Hub Coordinators and selected utilities in the 2015 EBC yearly forum			

- Early 2016: a workshop of participating utilities (or representatives of these) to establish a program of interaction among participating utilities and support for utility improvement.
- Early 2016: start of recruitment process of utilities for the 2016 cycle
- Early 2017: start of recruitment process of utilities for the 2017 cycle
- December 2017: Meeting of the UBP Hub Coordinators
- Early 2018: start of recruitment process of utilities for the 2018 cycle
- February 2019: Meeting of the UBP Hub Coordinators
- In 2019 the cooperation with EBC was ended and a new platform building upon DANUBIS DCM and managed by IAWD is under development.
- September 2019: Meeting of UBP Hub Coordinators
- December 2019: UBP Ukraine Hub workshop (2019 data)
- January 2020: UBP Bulgaria Hub final workshop (2018 data) and Meeting of the UBP Hub Coordinators
- March 2020: virtual IFIs meeting supporting the Utility Benchmarking Program and Utility Management Training (UMT)
- May 2020: UBP Ukraine Hub initial virtual workshop (2019 data)
- June 2020: UBP Ukraine Hub initial virtual workshop (2019 data)
- 17 June 2020: UBP Danube Hub virtual workshop and UBP virtual promotional event
- July 2020: Finalization of the new IAWD Utility Benchmarking Platform (IAWD UBP) including reporting tool

Status

The Danube Hub and UBP Hubs in Albania/Kosovo, Ukraine and Bulgaria have successfully completed data collection and report delivery for the year 2018 (2017 data).

A decision has been made to end the relationship with the Technical Partner EBC in providing the platform for data collection. Under phase 3 a new platform building on DANUBIS DCM was created and used to support the utilities in collecting data and carry out benchmarking under the supervision of the Hub Coordinators. Under the current work plan activity, €100,000 from component 2 funds were allocated to the development of this new platform (in addition to €50,000 of component 1 funds under RC.III.1) allowing utilities to collect data directly according to their needs and for further use in the frame of the Utility Benchmarking Program operated under D-LeaP. The newly developed IAWD Utility Benchmarking Platform (IAWD UBP) has been launched end of 2019 as beta version, to be finalized and full-functional end of June/early July 2020 including all reporting tools. All Hubs started to use IAWD BP to collect the 2019 data.

Under phase 3, the work plan activity RC.III.3 IAWD Benchmarking for Leading Utilities will be incorporated into the current activity to form a Utility Benchmarking Program that is operating at the national (Bulgaria, Ukraine), subregional (Albania/Kosovo) and Danube regional level (Danube Hub).

The UBP involves the maintenance and further development of the existing “national and subregional hubs” within the existing water utility organizations. The Hubs will receive support and further training from the Danube Water Program to carry on the UBP, but both the Hubs and the participating utilities will be expected to contribute significantly to the initiative as well to ensure long-term sustainability.

Participating utilities will continue to be expected to pay a fee for participation in the program which will be used to establish a financial basis for the regional hubs. All utilities will also have to agree for their information to be provided and published in DANUBIS.org utility database (RC.III.1) and IB-Net.

The limited funding available under component 2 leads to a reduced financial support of the UBP Hubs. Support to national Hubs in Albania/Kosovo and Bulgaria was cancelled (apart from the free use of the IAWD UBP and access to the D-LeaP Academy). Ukraine is supported under this activity and partially cross-funded by the national benchmarking activities (NC.III.9 for Ukraine).

In June 2020 the IAWD Board approved the reinvestment of funds (20,000) generated under this program into this activity to cover overspending from Phase 2 and to secure funding to ensure the continuation of the program.

Pillar IV - Asset Management and Investment Planning

RC.IV.1: D-LeaP Asset Management program [CONTINUED UNDER PHASE 3]	
Led by	IAWD
Objective Create greater awareness about and improve asset management practices in leading utilities of the region including establishing a mechanism to secure long-term capacity to support and assist utilities in carrying out asset management related activities, in order to improve efficiency and transparency in managing water and sanitation infrastructure.	
Target audience	Interested utilities of the region; local government representatives; national water associations
Description and outcomes <p>Public utilities in SEE countries are experiencing greater than ever pressure to improve their overall efficiency and cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>In phase 1, the project had been carried out in 17 utilities from 4 countries (BiH, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro). The Asset Management Service Centre, which had been established in Belgrade, led the program capitalizing on the development efforts and knowledge built in the Belgrade Waterworks.</p> <p>The participating utilities paid a one-time fee for participation in the program of €1,000 (or €500 for utilities under 20,000 PE).</p> <p>The project has also supported an initiative of NALAS (with support from GIZ/ORF) to increase the understanding of local governance units of the importance of an integrated approach to monitoring, operating, maintaining, upgrading, and disposing of assets cost-effectively, while maintaining a desired level of service.</p> <p>In phase 2, the Asset Management (AM) program became one of the technical programs under D-LeaP. In addition to the funding allocated under the DWP, IAWD reached an agreement with GIZ in early 2017 to cooperate under the Strategic Alliance Integrated Asset Management (STA IAM) to gain further financial contribution for the Asset Management program implementation.</p> <p>Based on this cooperation the Asset management program continued in the existing 4 countries with further support to those utilities which have not completed all steps, some level of support and involvement of those utilities which have done the key steps, and attracting some additional utilities (beginning with the process). The AM program started in 2017 with the launch of the silver level, the gold level was launched in 2018 and finally the platinum level is implemented in 2019.</p> <p>Whereas under phase 1 all countries had been served by UTVSI as the central AM Hub, AQUASAN Network was established as AM Hub for Bosnia and Herzegovina under phase 2, while UTVSI still served Serbia, Montenegro and North Macedonia. Participating utilities had to pay a fee for using the AM software EDAMS as well as the cloud services provided by the Technical Partner Hydrocomp plus and additional smaller fee of €600 per year to the Hub.</p> <p>In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 18 utilities participated in the silver level (2017 and 2018 cycle) and seven in the gold level (2018 cycle). In Serbia, Montenegro and North Macedonia, 33 utilities participated in the silver level (2017 and 2018 cycle) and 13 in the gold level (2018 cycle).</p> <p>Under phase 3, two additional Hubs have been established in Albania (operated by SHUKALB) and in Kosovo (operated by SHUKOS). Both Hubs as well as the existing two (AQUASAN and UTVSI) are further supported by the GIZ STA IAM as well as the DWP and operated under the D-LeaP.</p>	

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program.	55	75
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	39	75
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	15	25
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	17	25
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Weller (lead) Katerina Schilling 		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIZ under the Strategic Alliance Integrated Asset Management project AM Hub for Serbia, Montenegro and North Macedonia operated by the Association for Water Technology and Sanitary Engineering (UTVSI) in cooperation with the Public Utility Company 'Belgrade Waterworks and Sewerage' (BWS) AM Hub for Bosnia and Herzegovina operated by AQUASAN Network AM Hub for Albania operated by SHUKALB AM Hub for Kosovo operated by SHUKOS Hydro-Comp Enterprises (HC) as Technical Partner 		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In fall 2015 a proposal for future work of the existing Hub was prepared and incorporated into the planning for this activity. January 2016: contact with interested utilities February 2016: planning and utility assessment May 2016: Setting up of IAWD-AM Hub detailed tasks and assessment of interest of associations in offering the program. Summer 2016: Launch of contracting for the Technical Partner and Hub Agreements April 2017: Hub Agreements signed with AQUASAN Network and UTVSI April 2017: Kick-off workshops taking place in Serbia, Montenegro and north Macedonia March 2019: Hub Agreements for supporting the continuation of existing Hubs in Serbia/Montenegro/North Macedonia and BiH and the newly established Hubs in Kosovo and Albania will be issued March 2019: Hub Agreement signed with newly established Hub operated by SHUKALB in Albania June 2019: Hub Agreement signed with newly established Hub operated by SHUKOS in Kosovo July 2019: Hub Agreements signed with existing Hub operated by UTVSI for supporting the continuation of program delivery in Serbia/Montenegro/North Macedonia July 2019: Hub Agreements signed with existing Hub operated by AQUASAN for supporting the continuation of program delivery in BiH January 2020: Implementation of 2020 delivery started in all four Hubs 		
Status <p>Under phase 3, IAWD continues to support the AM Hubs in BiH and Serbia (with participation of utilities in Macedonia and Montenegro). In addition, the establishment of the AM Hubs in Kosovo and Albania operated by SHUKOS and SHUKALB are financially supported. In 2019, in total 61 utilities have been trained in 17 workshops (further details can be found in the D-LeaP Annual Report 2019).</p> <p>In 2020, AM Hubs in Albania and Kosovo have started the AM delivery despite the COVID-10 restrictions based on virtual meetings and trainings and using the D-LeaP Academy as a Learning Management Tool.</p>		

RC.IV.2: World Bank's Utility Performance and Financing Creditworthiness Courses delivered under D-LeaP

Led by

World Bank

Objective

To support the improvement of the overall financing frameworks in countries of the region by improving the knowledge, understanding and capacities of basic financial aspects related with the operation and management of WSS utilities on a financially viable path amongst different water and sanitation stakeholders, with a special focus on general and financial managers of WSS utilities or other relevant officials including key positions within local government units (municipalities) with administrative and decision making roles over WSS services , by fostering policy dialogue about need to work on improving performance, financial viability and credit worthiness of WSS utilities to access financing through national policies and programs, and by providing a high-level World Bank-developed capacity building course using the D-LeaP delivery scheme (with the World Bank as a key Technical Partner of IAWD and any interested hubs in charge of delivery at local and sub-regional level).

Target audience

Interested WSS utilities of the region; National WSS water associations; Regulatory Agencies; Local Government officials; Line Ministries' officials. Other Water and Sanitation sector stakeholders.

Description and outcomes

The cost of meeting the targets of SDG 6.1 and 6.2 – toward universal access to water supply and sanitation - is substantially higher than current annual WSS investment levels. Historical levels of funding for extending access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services during the MDG era are around 15 percent of the estimated needs. The status quo financing model in many low- and middle-income countries relying on tariffs, public funds and concessional loans from donors is insufficient, poorly targeted and often crowds out, rather than crowds in, new sources of financing. Governments thus will need to work toward “crowding in” commercial finance to build on the existing sources of finance. This approach can be supported by ensuring that service providers strive toward more efficient services, that institutional, governance and regulatory arrangements are clear and transparent, and that scarce public and concessional funds are used in a more targeted manner. The overall objective is in line with the SDG objective of sustainable water and sanitation services for all residents.

Increasing the level of commercial finance for the sector, coupled with more efficient delivery and use of public finance, would allow service providers to borrow and invest in expanding and improving the quality of WSS services, without having to wait for scarce public resources to be made available. While some World Bank client countries are prepared to make the gradual move to mobilizing commercial finance, this will require support to improve the financial performance of service providers through a mix of improved technical and commercial efficiencies and through governance and regulatory reforms. Other countries are interested in making the transition but need more information on how to do it, and to learn from others who have gone or are going through the process. Improving WSS Utility performance, financial viability and creditworthiness is at the core of the WB Water GP strategy within the pillar of delivering WSS services, as a goal in itself to achieve sustainable services and as a means for the sector to eventually be able to crowd-in commercial finance to help achieve the SDGs on access to safe and adequate WSS services.

Under this DWP activity, a market scoping/feasibility was financed under Phase II with co-financing provided by the GWSP managed by the World Bank to evaluate both the demand and supply side for financing efficiency improvement projects (NRW reduction, energy efficiency, resource efficiency) led by WSS utilities, and the overall potential market to catalyze private/commercial investment for this through the use of blended finance mechanisms (including guarantees schemes) in the region's countries (which have varying levels of financial market development). This includes countries where there is potential for service providers to become commercially sustainable, as well as less developed markets where the supply/demand mismatches are more extreme. During Phase III, the results of the study are being further analyzed and disseminated. Based on the “demand study” undertaken by EY in 2018-2019, including an e-survey with over 80 utilities and 14 case studies from the ECA region, a concept note outlining a possible financing facility for financing efficiency oriented investments (i.e.

“FUEL” facility) for using a blended finance approach to finance investments by water utilities in improving their operational efficiency has been prepared. During the following months and when the time is right with regards to undertaking consultations with the market (as the situation with capital flows in/out of emerging markets is very fluid at the moment given the COVID19 pandemic impact on financial markets) contacts will be taken (or deepened) with potentially interested public and private financial institutions (IFC, other IFIs and international and domestic Banks) for the as potential investors in such a financing facility at a single-country level trying to partner with the Bank’s and other IFI’s operational programs; In parallel, TA could be offered (from the DWP and other regional programs) to interested utilities to develop their investment needs into bankable or grantable projects. The overall outcome would be to help bridge the current market failure in particular for medium side efficiency-related investments. The potential for partnerships with the IFC and regional funds and/or financing institutions are being explored and are further envisioned. However timing must be right for this dialogue as many of the utilities in the region (particularly in the Western Balkan region) have been badly hit by significant reductions on collected revenue (as much as 50% by a recent survey from Global Water Intelligence) as they were already on a weak cost recovery/financial viability status, so it will be hard for utilities to borrow on commercial terms for this type of investments, The current COVID19 context, and the eventual need of public utilities for financial support will be considered in future design steps and discussions around the facility with other potential partners.

This work plan activity will support the launching in the region of a World Bank global course on utility performance, financing and credit worthiness using the D-LeaP framework and in close coordination with the Bank’s Financing Universal Access Facility supported by the PPIAF, the GWSP Mobilizing Finance for Development global and Crowding-in other Financiers in ECA regional activities and any relevant activities from the RCDN (such as the Capital Infrastructure Investment Projects in the WSS service). This DWP activity will support the adaptation of the course to be tailored to the specific needs of water service providers of the Danube region (including translation and Trainer of Trainers workshops and/or initial launch by interested hubs), to strengthen existing capacities at utility and local and national governments level on basic financial matters, with the aim of contributing to building stronger, financially sustainable and eventually credit-worthy utilities. Two hubs have been preliminary identified (in BiH and potentially in Albania) to be keen on launching the course in the short term following a planned Trainer of Trainers event in the Spring of 2020.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	24	15
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	13	5
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	0	+10
[NUMBER] of water utilities that the project is supporting.	0	5

Team

- Patricia Lopez (lead)
- Zhimin Mao, Igor Palandzic, Philip Weller, Ivaylo Kolev

Timeline

- October 2019: Finalization of market scoping study by consultants Ernst & Young
- Fall 2019: Partnership search and design of financing facility as appropriate
- Winter 2019: Preparation of Capacity Building activity under D-Leap
- Spring 2020: Finalization of a Contract with Aquasan to finalize and rollout the Curriculum in BiH
- Fall 2020: Training of Trainers event in the region (possibly one in Sarajevo and one in Tirana)

Status

The market scoping/feasibility study was commissioned to consultant firm Ernst & Young and final report submitted in October 2019. The study includes a desk review of existing financing facilities, a regional survey of interested utilities from the region and detailed cases studies (16) from different countries in the region. The report is being analyzed by World Bank experts in coordination with IFC and decisions of any next steps and possible set-up of a financing mechanism following different outreach to other stakeholders (including potentially interested countries) to be assessed during 2020.

With regards to the utility financing capacity building courses to be delivered under D-leap, the World Bank course was initially offered back-to-back to national utility associations from D-leap in the context of the DWC in May 2017 as a basis to explore interest and support a potential offering/mainstreaming of the course under D-leap and as an early-on trainer of trainers activity. Expressions of interest from different hubs (including Aquasan in BiH and Shukalb in Albania) followed their participation in the course. More recently, and following a prioritization by the World Bank team to focus on countries where there is ongoing operational engagement by the World Bank where the activity's outcomes could be optimized to deliver specific results in terms of financing and impact at policy level, it was decided that the first course on the topic of municipal WSS services/utility financing under the D-LeaP Framework would be first launched in BiH with Aquasan as a key partner and Hub. Aquasan will also be in charge of adapting the original World Bank course to the local and regional context and specific needs of the local utilities. A contract with Aquasan has already been put in place to deliver this activity and the next steps are: i) translation of the courses and adaptation to local/regional contexts by September 2020; ii) Training of Trainers (ToT) by November 2020; iii) Launch of first course in BiH under the D-Leap delivery model (subject to a D-Leap Hub agreement) by the Winter of 2021. If successful, the course might be rolled out next in Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and other countries where potential hubs have expressed interest.

Complementary funds from the GWSP (and from PPIAF) have been secured to develop this activity and are included in the Phase III budget. Additional funds could be tapped into as the activity unfolds depending on future needs.

Pillar V - Service Efficiency Improvement

RC.V.1: D-LeaP Energy Efficiency program		
Led by	IAWD	
Objective Create a long-term capacity in the region (through National Water Utility Associations) to assist water utilities in achieving energy efficiency improvements		
Target audience	Interested utilities of the region; national water associations	
Description and outcomes This initiative builds upon the phase 1 efforts to secure energy efficiency improvements in utilities in the Danube region through capacity building programs targeted at strengthening skills in energy auditing. This program is a technical program offered under D-LeaP. On the basis of this program utilities can develop an energy audit and investment plan. In addition, all utilities have to agree to have their performance information collected and disclosed in DANUBIS.org and IB-Net. The approach is aligned with the overall D-LeaP framework and structured as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The existing energy efficiency program is offered with the dual purpose of training experts to work in the national water utility associations addressing energy efficiency issues and in assisting utilities in carrying out energy efficiency improvements.• Interested utilities are identified through the national water utility associations. According to the interest in the country, the national water utility associations decide to establish a Hub.• The program is designed based on learning-by-doing principles. A series of technical training workshops are organized by the Hubs, with follow-up by local Hub trainers between workshops, with the aim of training and supporting the utilities in (a) realizing energy audits; (b) defining investment plans; (c) preparing a transaction for energy efficiency improvements, possibly following performance-based principles or ESCO schemes.• For those most promising transactions, additional hands-on support could be provided to ensure the transactions materialize, for example by connecting them with potential sources of funding (IFC or else) or helping to bid the transaction out. Use of existing Bank projects to finance some of the packages could also be considered, as well as the Clean Technology Fund (CTF or other climate change-linked grant resources). The contracting of the Technical Partner ECONOLER was initiated in summer 2016 as part of the D-LeaP initiative. The revised curriculum was completed and the initial training of trainers (12 people from 4 countries) took place in March 2017 as well as in December 2018 (7 people from 3 countries). The first EE Hub was launched in October 2018 in BiH by AQUASAN Network.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program.	20	30
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	76	85
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	24	30
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	18	+30
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philip Weller (lead)• Patricia Lopez, Katerina Schilling		

Partners and responsibilities

- Technical Partner (Econoler)
- EE Hub in BiH operated by AQUASAN Network
- Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) co-financing might be sought again

Timeline

- 2016: Contracting of Technical Partner and development of the curriculum
- March 2017: Training of Trainers (ToT) in Bulgaria
- October 2018: Hub Agreement signed with EE Hub operated by AQUASAN Network
- October 2018: Launch of Energy Efficiency program in BiH by AQUASAN Network
- December 2018: second ToT in Albania
- May 2019: Hub Agreement signed with EE Hub operated by AQUASAN Network for second cycle delivery
- October 2019: Hub Agreement signed with EE Hub operated by WASS for delivery in Serbia
- 2020: Hub Agreement signed with EE Hub operated by SHUKALB for delivery in Albania/Kosovo
- 2020: EE program delivery is planned for Albania/Kosovo (first cycle), Serbia (first cycle) and BiH (second cycle)

Status

The establishment of EE Hubs could be achieved for Serbia (operated by WASS) and Albania/Kosovo (operated by SHUKALB). In both cases, the delivery of the program was planned for the first quarter of 2020 and has been delayed due to the Corona crisis. The same applies to the EE Hub in BiH operated by AQUASAN, which aims to deliver the second cycle of the program in 2020.

RC.V.2: D-LeaP Commercial Practices program**Led by**

IAWD

Objective

Establish a capacity among national water utility associations for delivery of support to utilities in commercial efficiency practices.

Target audience

Interested utilities of the region; national water associations

Description and outcomes

The activity builds upon and utilizes the results of the Phase 1 activity targeted at creating improvements in commercial efficiency in utilities in the region through preparation of business plans addressing selected commercial issues (collection management, transparency, utility operation and customer relations) to improve utility efficiency and sustainability.

The approach is aligned with the overall D-LeaP framework and structured as follows:

- The existing commercial efficiency program is offered with the dual purpose of training experts to work in the national water utility associations addressing commercial efficiency issues and in assisting utilities in carrying out commercial efficiency improvements.
- Interested utilities are identified through the national water utility associations. According to the interest in the country, the national water utility associations decide to establish a Hub.
- The program is designed based on learning-by-doing principles. A series of technical training workshops are organized by the Hubs, with follow-up by local Hub trainers between workshops, with the aim of training and supporting the utilities in (a) realizing a business plan; (b) establishing commercial procedures; (c) designing performance improvement plans.

The contracting of the Technical Partner Valu Add was initiated in summer 2016 as part of the D-LeaP initiative. The revised curriculum was completed, and the initial Training of Trainers took place in April 2017. The first CE Hub was launched in April 2018 for Albania/Kosovo by SHUKALB, the second in May 2018 in North Macedonia by ADKOM.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	79	100*
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	37	45
[NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program.	29	35
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	15	+ 30

Team

- Philip Weller (lead)
- Katerina Schilling

Partners and responsibilities

- Technical Partner Valu Add
- CE Hub in North Macedonia operated by ADKOM
- CE Hub for Albania/Kosovo operated by SHUKALB.

Timeline

- Nov/Dec 2015: a decision was made on the steps to be taken in the regional training program delivery including this topic.
- Summer 2016: it is expected that the methodology for carrying out the work will be approved based upon the lessons learned from the Phase 1 program.
- In summer 2016: Call for interested utilities (through national water associations) as part of the D-LeaP initiative
- April 2017: ToT Commercial Efficiency
- April 2018: Launch of Commercial Efficiency program in Albania/Kosovo by SHUKALB
- May 2018: Launch of Commercial Efficiency program in North Macedonia by ADKOM
- 2020: In North Macedonia, a tailored CE program is delivered to three North-Macedonian utilities as part of an infrastructure investment project funded by SECO.

Status

In 2020, a tailored CE program is delivered to three North-Macedonian utilities as part of an infrastructure investment project funded by SECO. The activity is performed in close cooperation with ADKOM who administers the delivery within the framework of D-LeaP. In addition, the approach is combined with a peer-exchange process in which Blagoevgrad water utility from neighboring Bulgaria will take part.

Romanian Hub trainers participated in the Training of Trainers organised in Albania in 2017. Since then, discussions are ongoing, how and when to launch the CE Hub in Romania, which has been prevented until now due to a variety of circumstances. At the D-LeaP Committee Council meeting in November 2019, ARA requested to include the launch of the CE Hub in Romania to be operated by ARA/Apa Brasov into the Draft D-LeaP Work Plan 2020. The establishment of the CE Hub in Romania operated by APA Brasov is under preparation and the launch of the program in Romania is expected to happen in the course of 2020 but might be delayed due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

RC.V.3: D-LeaP Risk Management and Business Continuity program

Led by	IAWD/WB
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Objective

To develop and implement a water safety and business continuity planning capacity-building program for water utility companies in the Danube region in order to improve preparedness and build resilience of water and sanitation services to natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes, floods, drought).

Target audience	Interested utilities of the region; national water associations
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Description and outcomes

Following the floods in the Danube region in Spring of 2014 it became apparent that many utilities were not prepared for hazards and risks that could affect water services. This activity will organize capacity building and wholesale technical assistance on water safety planning and risk management to water and sanitation utilities in selected countries of the Danube Region, with a focus on helping those utilities developing and implementing water safety plans. Funds from the GFDRR were secured for the implementation of this activity, which is being managed by the Bank in close coordination with the IAWD team.

In phase II, the grant supported the contracting of a technical partner for this activity in July 2017 (Consortium Infraprotect, Energie AG Wasser, Vienna Water and ÖVGW). The technical partner prepared a comprehensive curriculum for the delivery of the program focused on risk and crisis management in water utility operations (http://www.d-leap.org/files/File/Programs/D-LeaP_WSP_0318.pdf). The course has been developed under the overall framework of the D-LeaP.

The water utility associations in Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed interest in becoming training centers for this course. In this respect, the grant supported in March 2018, the training of 12 trainers from four water utility associations from these countries (<http://www.d-leap.org/d-leap/news/56/1/details/water-safety-and-crisis-management-training-of-trainers-in-vienna-successfully-completed/>). The curriculum has now been adapted and translated to the local language by the utility associations of Macedonia (ADKOM) and Serbia (UTSVI), and interest exists in Kosovo (SHUKOS). The program is under full implementation in Macedonia, and a workshop for small water utilities was organized in Serbia.

In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the grant supported a one-time workshop for the training of young water professionals in the IWA Eastern European Young Water Professionals Conference, which took place on 7-12 May 2018 in Zagreb, Croatia (<http://www.d-leap.org/d-leap/news/66/1/details/water-safety-and-crisis-management-training-for-young...>). At least 30 young water professionals participated, with positive feedback received.

Under the third phase, the intent is to continue supporting the roll-out of the program with the interested hubs as well as expanding the scope of the curriculum. Currently, the curriculum is centered around crisis management or disaster response once a disaster already happened and the crisis requires

response. Under the third phase, it is planned to expand the scope towards risk management, helping utilities to assess the risk stemming e.g. from exposure to droughts or floods, and taking appropriate risk management measures, and also aiming to provide utilities with tools to respond to other emergency situations to secure business continuity, like the current COVID19 pandemic. This extended scope is directly related to the extended scope of the 3rd Phase of the Danube Water Program on Water Security.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	50	75
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	20	25
[NUMBER] of water utilities that the project is supporting.	25	30

Team

- Philip Weller (lead)
- Raimund Mair (lead)
- Kathia Havens
- Katerina Schilling

Partners and responsibilities

- National Water Utility Associations
- WHO
- River Basin Commissions (ICPDR, ISRBC)

Timeline

- 2016: Secured resources from GFDRR
- July 2017: Technical Partner Contracted
- December 2017: Curriculum developed
- March 2018: Trainer of Trainers event
- May 2018: One-time workshop at Young Water Professionals Conference
- November 2018: UTSVI small water utilities workshop
- January - August 2019: ADKOM preparatory workshop and Full roll-out of the program
- June 2019: SHUKOS preparatory workshop
- Fall 2019: Identification of additional funding from potential sources
- Winter 2019/2020: Expansion of curriculum for risk management
- June 2020: Completion of revised curriculum
- Summer 2020: Discussions on further roll-out with key countries, Kosovo, Albania and potential cooperation with NALAS in involving a joint delivery with municipal government associations. Serbia and North Macedonia are also candidates for additional rollout.
- Fall 2020: Further roll-out of program.

Status

The implementation of the activity has been satisfactory under phase II, with the development of the curriculum, implementation of a training of trainers workshop, and roll-out of the program in Serbia (UTSVI) and Macedonia (ADKOM). A preparatory workshop for program implementation in Kosovo took place in June 2019. Additional funding under the third phase has been allocated to this activity to support the expansion of the curriculum to utility risk management aspects and to complement the water security angle of the program.

An additional Hub might be set-up in Czech Republic with financial support from D-LeaP, as DWP funds are not eligible to be spent in Czech Republic.

Discussions with NALAS are ongoing on how to offer this program to both Utilities and Municipal Governments. A proposal is in preparation (summer 2020) that would involve both types of institutions in the delivery in Kosovo and Albania and potentially Serbia and North Macedonia. Cooperation with RCDN will be sought to strengthen the synergy between the DWP and RCDN. In the case of Albania, synergies with the World Bank Program for Results operation under preparation will be sought, as it is

expected that the activities to be supported by the operation and promoted by the Government include the preparation of risk management/business continuity plans by WSS utilities as part of a response to the COVID19 pandemic.

If COVID-19 continues to prevent travel, potential exists for the initial steps in rollout to take place virtually.

RC.V.4: D-LeaP Non-Revenue Water management program

Led by	IAWD		
Objective			
Facilitate learning among utilities about non-revenue water actions through the exchange of positive experiences, knowledge, information and best practices and to create long-term capability of support to utilities to be given by water utility associations.			
Target audience	Public Utilities in the region, involvement of WSS Associations		
Description and outcomes			
This activity is aligned with the overall D-LeaP framework and structured as follows:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Non-Revenue Water program is offered with the dual purpose of training experts to work in the national water utility associations addressing NRW issues and in assisting utilities in carrying out NRW improvements.• Interested utilities are identified through the national water utility associations. According to the interest in the country, the national water utility associations decide to establish a Hub.• The program is designed based on learning-by-doing principles. A series of technical training workshops are organized by the Hubs, with follow-up by local Hub trainers between workshops, with the aim of training and supporting the utilities in (a) developing a water balance; (b) establishing DMAs; (c) implementing active leak detection and (d) developing a simple NRW management plan.			
The contracting of the Technical Partner Una Consulting was initiated in early 2017 as part of the D-LeaP initiative. The curriculum was completed, and the initial Training of Trainers took place in October 2017, with a second ToT in June 2018. The first NRW Hub was launched in October 2017 in BiH operated by AQUASAN Network and delivered the first cycle of the program as well as the second cycle starting in July 2018.			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
	Indicator	Progress	Target
	[NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program.	19	25
	[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	0	+15
	[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	45	55
	[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	8	12
Team			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philip Weller (lead)• Katerina Schilling			
Partners and responsibilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical Partner Una Consulting• NRW Hub in BiH operated by AQUASAN Network			

Timeline

- Spring 2017: Contracting of Technical Partner Una Consulting
- October 2017: Training of Trainers in BiH
- October 2017: Launch of Non-Revenue Water program in BiH (first cycle) by AQUASAN Network
- June 2018: second Training of Trainers for Montenegro and Kosovo
- July 2018: Launch of NRW program in BiH (second cycle) by AQUASAN Network
- May 2019: Hub Agreement signed with AQUASAN Network for continuing the program under the third phase
- 2019: Peer-to-peer support to potential NRW Hub operated by UVCG in Montenegro from partner association to assist in developing the Roll-out documents
- Early 2020: Agreement on a mechanism supporting the costs for equipment for NRW Hub operated by UVCG in Montenegro
- Spring/Summer 2020: Establishment of Hub Agreement
- Fall 2020: Launch of NRW program in Montenegro by UVCG
- Ongoing: Negotiations on potential launch of NRW program in Albania/Kosovo by SHUKOS

Status

The establishment of NRW Hubs for Kosovo/Albania operated by SHUKOS is still under discussion. In Montenegro the establishment of the NRW Hub operated by UVCG has been supported intensively and governmental support for this has been sought.

An agreement was made in early 2020 on how to support the costs for equipment for rollout in Montenegro. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak the Hub Agreement has not been signed yet and the launch of the program has been delayed, although it is still planned for 2020.

RC V.6: D-LeaP Management training program**Led by**

IAWD and World Bank

Objective

The purpose of the activity is to offer a Utility Management training program to support senior utility managers in developing and improving skills in managing their utility.

Target audience

Senior managers of utilities

Description and outcomes

The activity will involve delivery of a capacity building program as part D-LeaP for supporting senior managers in improving their skills and capacities for managing their utilities. A general curriculum will be developed and used but will be adapted with inputs of senior managers from other leading utilities in the region. Participating utilities will continue to be expected to pay a fee for participation in the program which will be used to establish a financial basis for the program, as planned under the overall D-LeaP framework.

A draft outline of a possible program has been developed with assistance of a consultant and work is underway to evaluate the practicality of the program and to secure the additional funding needed.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	0	30*
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	0	10
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Weller (lead) Walter Kling Katerina Schilling Patricia Lopez, Susanna Smets 		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program will be offered as part of the D-LeaP offering. A general curriculum will be developed by a Technical Partner IAWD will support the program with the involvement of senior managers of water utilities in the program delivery. A competitive grant (NC 2.15) for development of a national utility management training in Albania has been awarded to SHUKALB and it is expected that this activity could provide some elements of the needed curriculum and efforts will be made to maximize the synergy with the regional D-LeaP offering. 		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall 2016: Contracting of the Technical Partner 2018: Further development of the concept and search for partners 2019: Full scale proposal by fall of 2019 Fall 2019: MoU with Sofia university to act as Academy Partner Spring 2020: IFIs meeting to introduce the UMT to IFIs present in the region and seek potential support both for curriculum development and funding of participants First half of 2020: development of modules including the curriculum in detail Second half of 2020: Contracting of Technical partners for specific modules Late 2020 or early 2021: Launch of program 		
Status <p>Under the third phase of the program it is anticipated that this particular curriculum and capacity building program will be a priority for development.</p> <p>A consultant has been hired to assist in the development of the concept and a search for additional funding to support this activity has been started. A draft concept has already been presented at the 2019 Danube Water Conference, at the D-LeaP Committee Council meeting in fall 2019 and spring 2020 and feedback gained was used to further refine the concept.</p> <p>It is planned to finalize the set-up of the modules in July 2020 including the budget, in order to start the contracting of Technical Partners for developing/refining the curriculum can start over summer. In addition, IAWD will seek corporate partners to access additional funding sources for program development.</p> <p>Key Partners have been engaged, Sofia University, Sofia Waterworks, UTVSI and Energie AG to guide key Modules of the curriculum. Launch of the program is intended to be virtual in fall 2020 and the first module presented in early 2021.</p>		

RS REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING PLATFORM

RS.1: Danube Water Conference and Danube Water Forum			
Led by		IAWD	
Objective			
Offer a platform for regional and cross-disciplinary dialogue on WSS sector challenges and solution in the Danube region on a yearly basis.			
Target audience		All sector stakeholders (continuation of launch event)	
Description and outcomes			
An annual Danube Water Conferences starting in 2015 have been consistently been rated a success, with an average of around 180 participants each time. The focus involves dialogue between countries and professionals from different sectors involved in the delivery of water services. Specific themes have ad will be highlighted in each yearly event and additional partners will be identified to cooperate in the convening of the Conference. Funding from the DWP for the conference has been gradually reduced year to year. Starting in 2020, the plan is to convene the Danube Water Forum in cooperation with an IAWD member in the region (outside of Austria) in even years, whereas the Danube Water Conference will be held in odd years.			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.		450	550*
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.		150	200
Team			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip Weller and Raimund Mair (lead)Patricia LopezStjepan GabricKaterina Schilling, Katherine Wagner, Kathia HavensAll DWP team members involved in the content and delivery of the events			
Partners and responsibilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">interested IAWD members as cooperation partnersIAWD will identify interest from other partners (ORF/GIZ, NALAS, SECO, etc) and others for implementation support			
Timeline			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fall of 2015: begin the planning for the fourth Annual Forum and involving 150 participants from the region and beyondMay 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 – Annual Danube Water Conference in ViennaApril 2020 – First Danube Water Forum in Banja Luka, BiHSpring or Fall 2021 – Danube Water Conference in Vienna			
Status			
The Danube Water Conference 2019 took place on May 20-22 in Vienna. The 2019 conference with the topic “Achieving resilience in water and wastewater utilities in the Danube region” brought together 200+ people coming from 25+ countries representing all stakeholders of the water sector, that discuss the way forward towards smart policies, strong utilities and sustainable services. The participating country and sector delegates were reflecting throughout the Conference on the water challenges for this			

region in the context of the resilience - and how sector institutions can work better together, including policy makers, local government and utility sector, and national associations to achieve it. The DWP team have received excellent feedback from participants. The Conference's presentations are posted on the www.danube-water-program.org website, and a closing report (including the inputs from the YWP team) will be prepared by end-June and made available on the website and to all participants.

The 2020 Danube Water Forum was planned to be hosted by Banja Luka utility back to back with the Danube Hub workshop in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27-29 April 2020. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak the Forum had to be postponed to autumn. In the last Implementation Support Mission the team agreed to hold the Danube Water Forum in October 2020 on a virtual basis and to postpone the Danube Water Conference from May 2021 to fall 2021.

RS.3: Outreach and Communication

Led by	IAWD / World Bank
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Objective

Promote the program as well as other activities initiated by IAWD and World Bank (DANUBIS.org, D-LeaP) and provide mechanisms for dissemination of program activities and publications.

Target audience	Regional stakeholders in the WSS Sector and beyond
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Description and outcomes

The focus of this activity is on the websites related to the DWP and on periodic newsletters. It includes the maintenance as well as small updates of the websites in use (DWP, DANUBIS.org, D-LeaP). This activity has also funded the establishment and meeting of an advisory committee for the planning of Phase II.

As of May 2016, IAWD has hired a Knowledge Management and Capacity Building Coordinator (Katerina Schilling) to manage these activities and strategies devised to upgrade the newsletter and website and to secure the social media developments.

Currently, the DWP website is maintained and kept up-to-date. The set-up of professional IAWD social media profiles on LinkedIn and Facebook is under consideration, although posts made to DANUBIS.org are already shared in the DANUBIS.org LinkedIn Group as well as on water-related Facebook Groups on a regular basis. In addition, a Facebook page is operated by Danube Hub.

The periodic newsletter sent to stakeholders and the interested public has been continued. In 2016, several changes have been made to the DWP newsletter. Previously being sent out as pdf, the newsletter is now maintained on the commercial newsletter platform Mailchimp with an increased frequency of 4 issues per year and an audience of about 1000 people. A section on IAWD activities has been included into the DWP newsletter to strengthen the association (see RC.2). Discussion are ongoing to merge DWP, D-LeaP and DANUBIS.org newsletters to one IAWD newsletter.

At the beginning and at the end of phase 2, revised program brochures along with flyers have been published and distributed. DWP events have been documented thoroughly and timely.

A draft concept for internal and external concept of IAWD has been prepared by Knowledge Management and Capacity Building Coordinator.

Articles on DWP related activities are frequently published in national and regional media outlets, the latest being an article entitled "The Danube invests in human capacity for cleaner water" in The Source in January 2018.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
NA	NA	NA

Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katerina Schilling • all Team Members providing input 	
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation with NALAS and national water utility associations 	
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously: updating of DWP, IAWD and Danubis.org and D-LeaP websites plus social media platform, documentation of activities • Every three months: distribution of DWP newsletter • November 2015: post job offering and ToRs for Knowledge Management and Capacity Building Coordinator • Fall 2015 and fall 2018: publish 1st and 2nd revised brochure and flyer • Summer 2016: Draft communication concept for internal and external communication of IAWD • Summer 2019: Hire a consultant to develop a communication and social media strategy for DWP and IAWD activities • Fall 2019: Finalization of communication and social media strategy for DWP and IAWD activities • First half of 2020: Implementation of activities identified by communication and social media strategy for DWP and IAWD activities • May-June 2020: Series of webinars on “The response of the Danube region’s water service sector on the Corona crisis” to be hosted by DWP • May/June 2020: Translation of executive summary and country notes of the State of the Sector Report – Update 2018 • July 2020: Launch of “Voice of the Danube” 	
Status <p>Under phase 3, this activity will fund the development as well as the implementation of a professional communication and social media strategy. A communication consultant was hired to develop a strategy for websites, newsletters and social media, which resulted in the concept for one consolidated digital service platform called “The Voice of the Danube”, which will include all existing elements of IAWD, DWP, D-LeaP and DANUBIS.org. Another consultant was hired early 2020 to implement the activity. The new web including the social media strategy will be launched late June/early July 2020. A consultant will be continued to be contracted to support the development of promotional material.</p> <p>In order to improve outreach of the main findings of the State of the Sector Report – Update 2018, translations into different language versions have been prepared of the Executive Summary and Country Notes. These will be made available on the new “Voice of the Danube” online platform.</p> <p>Furthermore, in response to COVID-19 pandemic, the DWP team decided to kick off a series of webinars on “The response of the Danube region’s water service sector on the Corona crisis”. In total, five webinars were organized in the course of May and June on a variety of topics. For more detailed information on the Covid-19 webinar series and envisaged follow-up support see RC.I.3.</p>	

RS.5: DANUBIS.org water platform development	
Led by	IAWD / World Bank
Objective <p>Develop and maintain the DANUBIS.org water platform as an online repository of resources for and about water and sanitation utilities in the Danube region.</p>	
Target audience	Regional stakeholders in the WSS Sector and beyond

Description and outcomes

The DANUBIS.org water platform was launched in May 2014 to serve as an online repository of resources for and about water and sanitation utilities in the Danube region. The platform includes a local version of the IB-Net dataset (refer to activity RC.III.1); news and events from the water sector, and resources about the sector in the region and beyond. Specific country portals have also been developed for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia in the respective languages. Recent developments include the possibility to subscribe to daily and weekly updates and the launch of Business Opportunities. The platform is now averaging around 180 single users per week. An intensive social media campaign carried out in summer 2017 achieved a temporary increase up to 500 users/week.

Efforts to increase the use of the platform were intensified in spring of 2017 including a special session, the DANUBIS.org breakfast, on using the system held as part of the 2017 Danube Water Conference. The feedback gathered from the DANUBIS.org Steering Committee and other stakeholders were also used to continue the promotion of its broad use in the region.

Based on the experiences of common DANUBIS.org users as well as results of a survey among Country Portal administrators, comprehensive changes and updates in the structure of the website as well as the technical backend were implemented and launched in the frame of a DANUBIS.org breakfast held at the 2018 Danube Water Conference.

In addition, a couple of videos have been produced on the use of the DANUBIS.org platform as well as the public utility database and presented at the DANUBIS.org breakfast.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
NA	NA	NA

Team

- Katerina Schilling (lead)
- Patricia Lopez, Philip Weller (overall guidance)
- all Team Members providing input

Partners and responsibilities

- Cooperation with NALAS and national water utility associations

Timeline

- May 2014: Launch of the DANUBIS.org platform
- May 2017: launch of updates (improved menu structure, additional country portals) and dissemination (updated DANUBIS.org brochure) at the DANUBIS.org breakfast in the frame of the Danube Water Conference
- May 2018: launch of updates (new CMS, improved uploading of images, documents, videos, event calendar, sharing options to Linked In and Face Book etc.) and dissemination at the DANUBIS.org breakfast in the frame of the Danube Water Conference
- Winter 2019: start of implementation of actions identified by the communication and social media strategy (see RS.3) in regard to the promotion of the DANUBIS.org water platform
- July 2020: Integration of DANUBIS.org into the new consolidated web "Voice of the Danube"
- Summer 2021: Modification to consolidate and integrate relevant water security data

Status

The consultancy dealing with communication (funded under RS.3) suggested to integrate DANUBIS.org as well as all other existing websites into one consolidated web, which will serve as digital service platform of IAWD called "The Voice of the Danube". Elements such as the DANUBIS.org news, events, resources and Business opportunities will be fully integrated into the new web, including the possibility for users to post events and resources. In addition, the DANUBIS.org utility database will be part of the new website and also be branded as DANUBIS.org. The aim is to establish the new web as the place to go for resources on the sector. Efforts will be supported by social media activities.

NA COUNTRY-LEVEL ANALYTICAL AND ADVISORY WORK

NA.2: Targeted Analytical and Advisory work for flagship countries		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective Provide targeted analytical and advisory support to countries actively engaging on the regional policy-level Capacity Development activities		
Target audience	WSS opinion leaders, policy makers and sector professionals in the respective countries	
Description and outcomes Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 1).		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date (refer to Annex 2 for details)		
Indicator	Progress	Target
Team Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 1)		
Partners and responsibilities Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 1)		
Timeline Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 1)		
Status This activity’s scope has been extended to cover also possible national analytical work on water security. Budget has been allocated to specific country activities - please refer to individual country activity descriptions for further details (annex 1). The remaining amount has been placed under a placeholder to be allocated as country dialogue advances and further priorities are identified.		

NC COUNTRY-LEVEL CAPACITY BUILDING WORK

NC.III.1: Country-level Benchmarking Support			
Led by		World Bank	
Objective Support the creation or improvement of national benchmarking systems, and their linkages to the DANUBIS and EBC activities.			
Target audience		National water associations; line ministries; regulators.	
Description and outcomes This activity will focus on supporting the development or improvement of a national benchmarking system, whether mandatory/regulatory or more focused on utility improvement, including the adoption of established standards, etc. It will be closely linked with the regional DANUBIS performance indicators system (RC.III.1) and utility-level benchmarking activities (RC.III.2).			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.		9	5
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.		160	+150
Team Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 2)			
Partners and responsibilities National institutions in charge of benchmarking activities			
Timeline Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 2)			
Status Refer to individual country activity descriptions (annex 2)			

ANNEX 1: COUNTRY-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

DETAILS

This annex presents country-per-country details of the country-level activities, which fall under one of the two following categories (Competitive Grant Window activities have been phased out):

- ▶ Targeted **analytical and advisory work** for flagship countries (activities starting in NA.2); the overall cost and indicators of those activities are summarized under the “NA.2 Targeted Analytical and Advisory Work for flagship countries” activity in the main text (see page 45).
- ▶ National **benchmarking systems support** (activities starting with NC.III); the overall cost and indicators of those activities are summarized under the “NC.III National Benchmarking Systems Support” activity in the main text (see page 46).

An overview of all activities in each country is included under “Country Activities Overview” on page 8.

ALBANIA

NA.2.1: Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Support

Led by

World Bank

Objective

The objective of the project is to support the Government of Albania in the i) development, validation and implementation of the National Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) Financing Strategy; and ii) development and implementation of other policy and regulatory tools for an effective and efficient sector programmatic support by the World Bank, EU and others.

Target audience

Key policy makers and shapers of the WSS sector in Albania, including the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MoIE), the National Water Agency (AKUM) and the Water Regulatory Agency (WRA or "ERRU")

Description and outcomes

The activity may include different building blocks for the consolidation of a sector-wide approach in Albania, by developing a clear sector financing policy essential to ensure sustainability of large-scale investments in the sector. The activity has included/will cover the following activities;

- Since 2015, through the Analytical and Advisory work Albania WSS Sector Policy Support), the Bank has advised on the development Financing Policy for the WSS sector, in coordination with the line Ministry (Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure at the time) and the Ministry of Finance (MOFE).
- This work developed a financial planning tool/model enabling the projection of national WSS sector targets based on a combination of available funding resources considering tariffs from customers, taxes (national budget), and transfers (donor grants). The WSS sector financial policy was adopted by GoA in 2016 in seeking to align sector target setting and budgeting of resources - and has been used by MoIE to prepare the new National Strategy focusing on improvement of utility performance as recommended by the financing policy.
- Based on MoIE's request in 2018, the WB supported the further updating of this tool and the preparation of basic scenarios for the aggregation of WSS utilities (with the analysis showed positive results with regards to cost recovery) with funding from the DWP. This analytical and advisory work has been welcomed by key development partners as EU and KfW; received significant attention by government (including line ministry, now Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MOIE) and of MOFE) and thus informed the government's recent national water and sanitation strategy 2019-2030.vi)
- In late 2018, the relevant engagement and TA and policy advice at national sector level led to a request from relevant line ministry for Bank's financing to support a broad reform program led by the government. This new Bank program is structured as a PforR (given strong ownership by government and focus on results) and has been under preparation since May 2019 (currently scheduled to be approved by the Board in November 2020).
- From the DWP, the World Bank team has been supporting the Water Regulatory Authority with knowledge sharing activities to improve its regulatory, benchmarking and tariff setting practices which has resulted in a recent request from the independent regulatory agency (ERRU) for expert advice in the design of a revised new tariff methodology setting which will be financed from the DWP complementing the new WB operation

The initial stages of this activity were largely funded by a European Commission grant and the Water Partnership Program (WPP), but has been and will continue to be complemented strategically by Danube Water Program (and potentially from GWSP resources in the future) to continue the technical assistance and policy dialogue, future updating of financing strategy tools, and capacity building/training for the use of the financial model tool by the government agencies, and tariff setting process going forward.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations have been discussed by decision makers.	1	1
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patricia Lopez (lead), Trandelina Baraku, Artan Guxho, Zhimin Mao (members) COWI (lead consulting company for financing strategy) Valu Add (local consulting firm for updating of financing strategy and capacity building to local institutions) 		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National institutions (Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, Water Agency (AKUM), Water Regulatory Authority – ERRU) Other donors, led by European Union Delegation 		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2014: Development of Concept Note Fall 2014: Negotiation of EU funding Winter 2015: EU trust fund setup, preparation of ToRs, validation with Government Summer 2015: Recruitment of Consultant Fall 2015: begin of work Winter / Spring 2016; results validated with Government Summer/Fall 2017: Phase II (development of policy instruments) launched December 2018: Updated financial model and capacity building to government agencies (done) May 2019: input for design of Government Reform program finalized (to be financed by World Bank lending operation) April 2021: Finalization of expert advice to Albanian ERRU for a revised tariff setting methodology to be roll-out under the World Bank PforR operation 		
Status <p>The financial strategy and its 2018 update, plus capacity building activities have been completed according to the above timeline. Under Phase III, a small budget had been reserved to continue policy dialogue around sector financing strategy, supporting the preparation of a World Bank financed Program for Results to finance the Government water and sanitation sector modernization program, scheduled for World Bank Board approval in November 2020. With regards to the work with ERRU for a revised tariff setting methodology, TOR are already prepared, and a selection and on-boarding of qualified expert/s is expected by September 2020.</p>		

NC.III.11: Albania Support to Benchmarking Activities

Led by	World Bank
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Objective

Sustain the dialogue on advancing Performance Monitoring and Benchmarking Activities in Albania

Target audience

Description and outcomes

The Government of Albania is designing a National Information System which will amongst others enable systematic monitoring of WSS utilities performance, building on existing national initiatives from AKUM's benchmarking unit and regular performance monitoring by the Regulatory Agency in the context of tariff reviews, and with the idea of setting up a centralized system of more accurate and reliable data to be reported by the utilities on a regular basis and following guidelines by the relevant authorities. The roll-out of such a system will be supported under the new World Bank PforR operation. It is expected that in this process the government will explore synergies with the Danubis DCM platform developed under the DWP (which Albania never formally adopted but was known to the institutions and information submitted to the Ibnet and danubis.org on regular basis in the past until recently) and other information platforms existing in the country (including the inventories of infrastructure within WSS utilities developed under the D-leap-GIZ Asset Management Program). This activity would support the roll-out of the new performance monitoring by AKUM and/on benchmarking platforms in Albania, together with capacity building at leading managing institutions and local utility levels on its use (uploading of information, quality control, etc.).

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.	0	1

Team

- Patricia Lopez (lead)
- Philip Weller

Partners and responsibilities

- GIZ, ADA, other development partners active in Albania (with EU Delegation leading)

Timeline

- June 2020 for signature of DCM MOU and data collection for first performance cycle
- June 2021 for second performance cycle

Status

A World Bank financed Program for Results to support the Government of Albania (GoA) Water and Sanitation Sector Modernization Program is under preparation and is scheduled for World Bank Board approval in November 2020. Dialogue on the national information system is ongoing as part of the World Bank Appraisal of the operation and will be further continued during key implementation milestones. A proposal on the support to be provided in this area by the Danube Water Program will be further developed during the remainder of the preparation of the operation.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

NC.III.2: BiH Support to Benchmarking Activities		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective Sustain the dialogue on advancing Benchmarking Activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina		
Target audience	BiH institutions involved in Benchmarking, utilities	
Description and outcomes Benchmarking activities and the establishment of an eventual link/feed to DANUBIS.org is one of the key outcomes that is aimed for under this technical assistance component. The activity is under implementation and a first year of data collection has been completed, with 40 utilities participating. Furthermore, discussions on long-term benchmarking possibilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are also progressing, with several models discussed in the latest workshop (March 2016), although no consensus on the most viable institutional and legal model has emerged yet. The MoU to use the DANUBIS DCM platform has been signed in May 2017 by Bosnia and Herzegovina representatives. Since BiH does not have any benchmarking scheme in place, this activity finances the collection of a first set of utility performance data for the cycle 2014-2016, as well as promote the clarification of institutional responsibilities for benchmarking activities in BiH. The activity will include a requirement from the national partners to feed back the collected data to the participating utilities through a workshop when possible and using the standard DANUBIS.org utility report. In 2018 a first cycle of data collection was undertaken, and important cooperation arrangements established to secure participation of the utilities (entity Utility Associations). A further cycle of PI data collection will happen in 2019 and efforts will be taken to ensure the ongoing capacity of the partners to continue the program in future.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.	1	1
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	40	+40
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip Weller, Patricia Lopez (lead)Igor Palandzic		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">national and entity-level institutions and AQUASAN		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none">July 2014: contract signature with AQUASAN to carry out the facilitation of dialogue on establishing a system of performance indicatorsJanuary 2015, June 2015: continued workshops to discuss institutions setupsSummer 2015: begin of data collection among 40 utilitiesFall 2015: first round of utility performance indicator and benchmarking completed2016: discussions on the institutional and financial setup for the second round of benchmarking2017-June 2018: Signing of DCM MOU and first data collection performance cycleJune 2018 - September 2019: Second performance cycleSeptember 2019- Sept 2020: Third performance cycleSept 2020-Sept 2021: Fourth performance cycle		

Status

The activity was continued in 2019 with funding from the World Bank. A World Bank financed Program for Results to support the Governments of BiH (GoBiH) Water and Sanitation Sector Modernization Program is under preparation and is scheduled for World Bank Board approval in July 2021. Dialogue on the system for the monitoring of WSS utilities performance is ongoing and it is expected that the governments could build on ongoing efforts by Waterworks Association in Republica Srpska and by Association of Cities and Towns association in Federation to further strengthen, mainstream and institutionalize the use of the DCM platform in BiH.

The Associations have provided positive results on the PI info and it is planned that a follow-up funding for data collection in 2020 is undertaken. A proposal for continuation of the data collection in 2020 is under preparation and support from the DWP will be connected with efforts to ensure an institutional basis for maintaining the data collection. A contract to support this effort will be prepared. Positive is that the RS is planning to organize support for maintaining the PI data collection efforts and governmental support for PI data collection is foreseen building upon the efforts of the APUCs and the LGAs.

BULGARIA

NC.III.9: Formalizing a Self-Financing Utility Benchmarking Program		
Led by	BWA	
Objective Support the national benchmarking collection efforts in Bulgaria		
Target audience	Pending negotiations	
Description and outcomes <p>This program is a formalization of the Utility Benchmarking initiative that was begun by BWA in the Phase 1 of the Danube Water Program utilizing a Competitive Grant. It was anticipated that funding would initially be needed to continue the program with additional utilities and higher fees to create a self-sustaining program. The Ministry of Environment and the World Bank have, however, provided funding for 2016 to further develop the program and this activity will proceed without DWP funding until 2017 when DWP resources may be needed to secure the long-term sustainability and self-financing character of the activity.</p> <p>The operation of the UBP Hub in Bulgaria has been financed by other sources, but in 2019 will be incorporated into and offered as part of the D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program (RC.III.2) Under this activity the program will further support the national benchmarking collection efforts.</p>		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.		20
[NUMBER] of water utilities that the program is supporting.	20	20
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip Weller, IAWD		
Partners and responsibilities Pending negotiations		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding will not be needed in 2016 nor 2017 because this is being funded by resources from the Ministry of Environment. The funding will be evaluated for 2018. No funding was provided for 2018 and the activity is planned to be incorporated in the Utility Benchmarking program in 2019.The Utility Benchmarking Program has been continued in 2019 and involved 8 Utilities. Efforts are underway to expand this number and to ensure the continued delivery of Bulgarian data to IBNET and Danubis.org		
Status <p>The operation of the UBP Hub will be incorporated into the work plan activity RC.III.2 D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program. Under this activity the program will further support the national benchmarking collection efforts.</p> <p>A discussion with Bulgarian Institutions (Regulator, Ministry and BWA) will take place in fall of 2020 to ensure the continuous delivery of data to IBNET and expansion of the UBP.</p>		

CROATIA

NA.2.2: Support to Croatia utility aggregation process implementation		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective		
Support the Croatian Government in the process of restructuring of the water utility sector.		
Target audience	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy, Croatian Waters	
Description and outcomes		
<p>Having joined the European Union on July 1st, 2013, Croatia has committed to unprecedented level of investments in the water and wastewater sector to meet the <i>acquis communautaire</i>. The implementation of those investments, and the continued operation and maintenance of the resulting infrastructure after that, will require much stronger technical and financial utility companies than today. For that reason, the Government of Croatia, through the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy, Croatian Water and the Water Services Council, has started with implementation of a fundamental water utility restructuring reform focusing on merging the currently 158 municipal utilities into around 40 regional, more efficient utilities. This work builds on an in-depth study commissioned by Croatian Waters with World Bank financing, and completed in 2013, that provides a clear rationale for regionalization of utilities. The work was informed by the regional review of aggregation experiences (RA.2).</p> <p>Currently, the Croatian Parliament has approved the legal framework for the utility aggregation and reform process, and the implementation is expected to start in early 2020, with the objective of implementing a new regional water utility governance model by 2022, that would result in a more efficient, stronger water utility sector able to efficiently operate newly constructed infrastructure. This activity aims to provide specific, targeted technical advice on issues related to the implementation of the utility aggregation process to the Government of Croatia, or specific utility/service area at Government request. The advice will be based on WB global experience in implementation of water utility aggregation and findings of the World Bank toolkit on aggregation of WSS utilities from 2017. The DWP team will in the coming period discuss concrete proposals with the Ministry.</p>		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations have been discussed by decision makers.	1	1
Team		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stjepan Gabric (lead)		
Partners and responsibilities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Water Services Council, Croatian Waters, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy		
Timeline		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">October 2014: policy workshop on water sector reform in the context of international experience on utility sector reform involving around 40 participants from utilities, various ministries and local governments discussing international good practices presented by Italian, Hungarian and Romanian counterparts, whose countries have gone through similar processes in recent years.Following period of instability, new Minister and Croatian Water management has been nominated in June 2017,Legislative framework for the reform prepared and adapted by the Parliament in July 2019Aggregation reform implementation planned to start in 2020 and last between 2020-2022, but final decision on standby		

Status

The first phase of this activity was completed in 2014. Following an extensive debate over several governments, the Croatian Parliament has approved the legal framework for utility aggregation in July 2019, the implementation of the reform process was finally scheduled to start in early 2020 but stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the national election scheduled for July 2020. Currently, the water utility aggregation process in Croatia is on standby, waiting the new Government to be formed and taking a decision on how to proceed. If there is no specific support need expressed by the new Government, then the activity will be closed.

NORTH MACEDONIA

NC.III.4: Support to Benchmarking Activities		
Led by	ADKOM	
Objective Support a comprehensive data collection for the year 2014, according to the IBNET methodology, developing of training materials and facilitation of trainings for the PCU on how to operate with the data management system “makbis.org.mk”, and promotion of the IT platform “makbis.org.mk”		
Target audience	Utility companies in North Macedonia	
Description and outcomes Data was collected by PCUs ADKOM’s members in water sector (45 PCU) in accordance with the questionnaire and guidelines provided by ADKOM. The collected data shall be prepared to be uploaded into the DANUBIS platform.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.	1	1
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	+40	+60
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip Weller, IAWDStjepan Gabric, World Bank		
Partners and responsibilities Supported with funding and active involvement from GIZ.		
Timeline The first phase of the activity began in July 2015 and completed in fall of 2015. The second phase is on-going and performance information for 2016-2018 has been collected. It is expected that under Phase III, information for performance cycles for 2019 and 2020 (and continuing from there) will be available using the DCM system.		
Status The first phase of the activity was completed in fall of 2015 and data delivered to IBNET, followed by the second phase and 2016 data has been delivered to IBNET. Policy dialogue around the monitoring of WSS utilities performance is ongoing at the level of the Regulatory Agency and it is expected that the regulator could build on ongoing efforts by ADKOM to further strengthen, mainstream and institutionalize the use of the DCM platform in North Macedonia. In parallel, dialogue is ongoing with ADKOM towards the use of the tool by the Association to perform benchmarking activities targeting utility improvement with the objective of ADKOM being able to provide this service to its members in the near future. Consultations in spring of 2020 identified the potential for continuing and expanding the program and a proposal for support from ADKOM is under preparation. The requirement for preparation of Business Plans by the Utilities provides an opportunity for further engagement. The submission of the proposal for actions is expected in July and rollout in fall of 2020 is possible. Potential exists for this to be done virtually if needed. The World Bank and IAWD will also engage the newly developed Regulator in a dialogue about overtaking the system in the future.		

NA.2.15: Water utility sector policy support**Led by** World Bank**Objective**

Improve framework for organization, and regulation of water services.

Target audience

Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Energy (and Water) Regulatory Agency

Description and outcomes

Activity will support strengthening of legal and organizational framework for water service provision and assist in capacity building and establishment of water service regulation. Activity will be prepared in close cooperation with ADKOM as a national water utility association.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of water supply and sanitation sector regulation and policy reviews conducted.	0	1

Team

- Stjepan Gabric

Partners and responsibilities

Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Energy, ADKOM Association of Public Utility Service Providers of the Republic of Macedonia.

Timeline

- October 2019 – discussion with stakeholders, and definition of activities (activity currently discontinued)

Potential upcoming activities depending on discussions:

- June 2020 – hiring of consultants and start of activity
- End 2020 - completion of activity

Status

Following period of instability, new Government has been elected in mid-2017, further activities to be determined following engagement with the new Government, and definition of water sector policies, were planned for 2018, but delayed due to continuous political instability. Upon their request, in October 2018, Macedonian Gov delegation participated on Portugal study tour, as a deepen knowledge on regulation of water services and organization of water service provision. This activity is combined with support to ADKOM in the roll-out of the DCM including its promotion and the training of utilities in its use and data uploading and validation processes.

Following further political instability in N. Macedonia and lack of visible Government interest for significant reform in the water sector in the near future, it was decided to discontinue this activity. The decision will be revisited if there is a strong signal/request for support from the Government of N. Macedonia. The water utility sector will continue to benefit from DWP regional activities and benchmarking support.

MOLDOVA

NA.2.16 Moldova policy and regulatory support		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective: The objective of the activity is to support capacity building and training in Moldova with respect to the existing regulatory framework for licensed operators. Furthermore, the activity will help preparing draft delegation contracts and tariff applications, to be updated at a later stage, for selected local governments and regional operators that are expected to benefit from project investments.		
Target audience	National Agency for Energy Regulation of the Republic of Moldova (ANRE), Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE), licensed operators that will be targeted with investments under the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation project, operators licensed by ANRE, representatives of local governments	
Description and outcomes This TA interventions will mobilize regulatory specialists (local and international) to support ANRE and MARDE with the implementation of the existing regulatory framework (updated in March 2019) for WSS tariff setting. This will be done through workshops and trainings for licensed operators without approved tariff application. The outcome is that operators and local governments are more capable to submit their applications and develop delegation contracts (although the latter is not a regulatory requirement). The specialist will also provide recommendations for further possible revisions/improvements of the legislative framework, sharing some international experiences (e.g. through national workshop if travel allows). Secondly, the TA will focus on a select number of licensed operators and local governments that will benefit from the new World Bank project (Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project) and help LPAs and regional operators to understand the modalities of delegation contracts, prepare drafts and carry out a tariff analysis to inform draft tariff applications to ANRE (in preparation of the assets being created). These tariff proposals will require revisions/updating, but the outcome of the process is a better understanding of LPAs and operators on the impact of new investments on tariffs, financial analysis of the operator resulting from the new investments, and recommendations in terms of the social/affordability considerations.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
[NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations for the water sector have been discussed, endorsed and are being implemented.	Progress 0	Target 1
Team Susana Smets and Amelia Midgley		
Partners and responsibilities Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE) National Regulatory Agency for Energy (ANRE) Licensed operators (to be selected for pilot)		
Timeline Implementation period Sept 2020-June 2021		

Status

Draft; requires confirmation with ANRE

NC.III.12 Moldova support to benchmarking**Led by**

World Bank

Objective

The objective of the activity is to establish a sustainable system in Moldova to track WSS utilities performance and a systematized mechanism for performance data collection and management within ANRE and MARDE. ANRE and MARDE and selected licensed operators will be supported with the adoption of a data collection and management system for key performance indicators of licensed utilities, as part of their performance monitoring mandate (pilot introduction).

Target audience

MARDE, ANRE, licensed operators

Description and outcomes

The IBNET of the World Bank has been financially supporting data collection efforts in Moldova for several years, mostly through the utility association AMAC. It is now planned to support MARDE and ANRE in strengthening their monitoring mandates through the use of a platform to institutionalize the data collection in Moldova, ensure high quality of data and multiple user access (including by utilities, ANRE, MARDE, and possibly AMAC).

Upon confirmation of ANRE and MARDE, the technical assistance will aim to pilot the introduction of the DCM (or potentially another regulator information system) at ANRE/MARDE and with selected licensed operators, by customizing the system (selection of KPIs) and by translation into Romanian language. This will lead to the use of the system within ANRE/MARDE, that will be further rolled-out and supported under the new Project.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.	1	1
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	40	40

Team

Susanna Smets (lead) and Patricia Lopez
Amelia Midgley

Partners and responsibilities

Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE)
National Regulatory Agency for Energy (ANRE)
Licensed operators (to be selected for pilot)

Timeline

- Nov-May 2020: Pilot and Roll-out of customized data collection system
- June 2021: Performance cycle data collection

Status

Dialogue with ANRE/MARDE towards the above goal will start in next mission by World Bank team (expected around September 2019, likely virtual). The proposed activity requires endorsement from ANRE/MARDE and it will be decided if the activity will be implemented in the first or second half of 2021.

MONTENEGRO

NC.III.5: Support to Benchmarking Activities			
Led by	World Bank		
Objective Sustain the dialogue on advancing Benchmarking Activities in Montenegro.			
Target audience	Montenegro Institutions involved in Benchmarking, utilities		
Description and outcomes Montenegro does not have any effective benchmarking scheme in place, and this activity has focused on collection of a first set of utility performance data, promoting the clarification of institutional responsibilities for benchmarking activities in the country and assisting the Government in developing effective utility benchmarking program. Establishment of an eventual link/feed to DCM is one of the key outcomes expected under this activity. The Government of Montenegro has expressed support for the development of a customized platform for data collection, together with Utility Association and Regulatory Agency.			
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date			
Indicator		Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.		1	1
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.		+30	+5
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stjepan Gabric (lead)Phil Weller			
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">WAMNE Waterworks Association of Montenegro –coordination of activities and serving as a hubMontenegro Regulatory Agency for Energy and Water (REGAGEN)Participating water utilities in Montenegro – data collection and inputMinistry of Sustainable Development and Tourism - coordination of activities and serving as a hub in the second phaseNBC National Benchmarking Coordinator – assistance to utilities in data collection and inputRBC Regional Benchmarking Coordinator – data analysis and report preparation			
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none">Apr 2015: Technical Workshop – preliminary findings presentation, discussion about definitions (approx. 75% data collected)Jun 2015: Drat Report preparation, and delivery to utilities for final commentsJul 2015: Sectorial Workshop – presentation of Draft report and discussion on follow-up activities in National BenchmarkingJun 2015: Decision of WAMNE on further methodology of National benchmarking initiation in MontenegroJuly 2018: Start of the next cycle (second phase) of collection and verification of data for 2015, 2016 and 2017 adopted to MNE conditions and Government plans. A decision on the next steps has been taken in coordination between the Ministry, Regulatory Agency and Utility Association, using a customized data collection portal (DCM)November 2019: Benchmarking Report for 2018 completed and presented			
Status			

Implementation of activity has started with introductory Orientation and Training Workshop that was held in Podgorica on December 17th, 2014 and had the objective to familiarize utility representatives with proposed benchmarking approach and methodology. During the workshop participant were familiarized with benchmarking concept based on IB-Net, working materials, plan of activity, and role and responsibilities of activity team in each of participating institutions. Next steps have been collection and input of benchmarking data that needs to be completed by mid-May and was followed by data verification and analysis. The results of this exercise have been presented on 11 September 2015.

Continuation of benchmarking activity in Montenegro has be done in a form of customized data collection that will collect both, operational and regulatory indicators, and by using DCM platform, developed as part of DANUBIS, under responsibility of Regulatory Agency, and in close cooperation with Association of Water Utilities.

In March 2018 a major event bringing together Montenegro Utilities with Danube region companies involved in Benchmarking took place in Zjablak, Montenegro. The event helped strengthen the overall interest in Montenegro in developing a national system of PI data collection and discussions at the end of 2018 are expected to finalize the arrangements.

Next round of benchmarking activities has started with number of local benchmarking workshops for local water utilities in July 2018 and implementation continues with data collection throughout 2018.

Representative of line Ministry, Regulatory Agency and Utility Association have participated in Portugal study tour in October 2018, learning from Portugal experience in regulation of water services, benchmarking and sector organization.

Based on work carried under the assignment, a Montenegro water utility benchmarking report that includes data for all utilities for the period 2015-2018 has been completed with DWP support and was published in November 2019.

Building upon a successful previous cooperation with REGAGEN, the DWP continues with utility benchmarking support by assisting water utilities in Montenegro to collect data for 2020 in accordance with the prepared Benchmarking Rulebook. The overall objective of the consultancy is to support water utilities in benchmarking data collection and data quality control for 2020, upload benchmarking data for 2016 – 2018, 2019, and 2020 in the DCM platform, and move towards self-sustainability of REGAGEN in the benchmarking activity.

NA.2.13: Montenegro policy support

Led by	World Bank
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Objective

Improve legal framework for organization and regulation of water services.

Target audience

Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, and secondary water utility service providers in Montenegro, Regulatory Agency

Description and outcomes

Government of Montenegro has initiated preparation and implementation of an ambitious program of strengthening and reorganization of water utility sector, with the aim to improve service provision scope and efficiency. This includes establishment of water regulatory agency, developing legal framework for water sector and benchmarking and preparation of utility aggregation process.

Activity will support strengthening of legal and organizational framework for water service provision in Montenegro, and assist in capacity building of water service regulation, and reform preparation through targeted assistance to critical Gov efforts. Activity is being prepared in close cooperation with Ministry of SDT and Regulatory Agency. The activity is also closely linked with the Competitive Grant received by the Ministry (refer to activity NC.2.25), and other activities aimed at water utility sector strengthening like ongoing benchmarking support and October 2018 regulatory strengthening (Portugal study tour - activity NC.III.5. Support to Benchmarking Activity).

The Ministry is currently engaged in the preparation of the legal framework and plans for the water utility aggregation process, where the number of water utilities should be reduced from current 22 to 4-6 larger utilities, with corresponding capacity strengthening and efficiency improvement. The concept is expected to be first implemented in the coastal area, where the existing 7 utilities and the regional water utility are expected to be merged into a single utility for the coastal zone.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
To be defined		

Team

- Stjepan Gabric (lead), Raimund Mair

Partners and responsibilities

- Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism
- Montenegro Regulatory Agency

Timeline

- Summer 2018 – discussion with stakeholders on needs and priorities
- September 2018 – hiring of consultants for assistance in utility benchmarking (financed by IbNet)
- May 2019 – completion of utility benchmarking assignment and handing over data to Regulatory Agency
- July 2019 - review of needs with the Ministry and Regulatory Agency
- End 2019 – definition of activities in support of the Ministry and Regulatory Agency

Status

The support needed by the Ministry in the current situation, as flagged at the July 2019 meeting, is technical support in the finalization of the utility aggregation process, in form of targeted expert advice and guidance to the Government. While most of the reform package has been prepared, the whole proposal still has to complete the public consultation process (first public hearing is completed, but the process is delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic), after which the package should be revised to reflect comments and sent to the Government and the Parliament for approval.

As a form of targeted support, DWP has provided expert to review the tariff methodology prepared by REGAGEN and make a proposal for its improvements, ensuring the sustainable development of the regulated communal activities for the second regulatory period, based on the proposal of the new Law on water services. This activity started in June and will last until December 2020.

SERBIA

NA.2.5: Support for Serbia's EU accession process in the WSS sector		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective Support the Serbian Government in developing an EU accession negotiation position for the Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) sector by providing just-in-time expertise, access to international experience and targeted analytical support.		
Target audience	Key policy-makers and shapers in the WSS sector in Serbia	
Description and outcomes This activity will consist in an initial engagement centered around the upcoming start of accession negotiations between Serbian and the EU and in particular the expected consequences for the WSS sector. The GoS, through the Ministry of Agriculture, has expressed interest in Bank support on two specific and complementary points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A rapid review of current bulk water pricing practices and potential for adjustment, with a perspective of generating additional funding for the convergence process with the EU Water Framework Directive and daughter directives;• Awareness raising activities around the challenges and opportunities of the EU accession process for the water and sanitation sector, based on the experience of neighboring countries and a rapid review of specificities of the Serbian water sector. It would be expected that based on those initial actions, further activities could be developed to involve limited analytical work helping the Serbian delegation to prepare its negotiation position for chapter 27 and more specifically the WSS sector, as well as complementary sector reforms. Such follow-up activities would however have to be discussed separately and additional funding would have to be mobilized accordingly.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	20	20
[NUMBER] of target countries in which regulatory and policy recommendations have been discussed by decision makers.	1	1
Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stjepan Gabric, Raimund Mair (leads)• Patricia Lopez		
Partners and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Agriculture / Water Directorate.		
Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winter 2015: contracting of consultant, initial kick-off mission• Spring 2015: TA on bulk water pricing, main reports provided to Water Directorate• Fall 2015: Validation of first phase of reports (delayed).• Summer / fall 2016: next steps pending agreement• November/December 2019: reassessment of status, needs and possible ground for continuation of support under this activity		
Status The first phase of the activity was completed with the submission of draft reports on the proposed decrees for water services pricing, and the impact of the new methodology on tariffs and affordability.		

Subsequent activities will be based on feedback from the counterparts, which has been very delayed. In June 2016, the Water Directorate reiterated its interest for the support on this area as well as others, and discussions are on-going on next steps. This activity is considered completed. Should commitment from Government towards a reform process be confirmed, a separate activity will be proposed under Phase III of the program.

The WSS sector reform in Serbia has been under discussion for some time, with the main elements of a future WSS sector reform expected to be the regionalization of water utilities and a change of the tariff model to allow for sustainability and service regulation. The progress however remains slow due to the present dispersion of responsibilities and lack of adequate resources needed to manage the sector at central level and moving forward the reform agenda. Following the November 2019 visit to Belgrade and meetings there, the DWP team continues the collaboration with the EU Delegation in Belgrade, which is active in the water and environmental sector, in an effort to coordinate activities and join resources. This due to Serbia's EU accession ambitions and since the EU Delegation is a well-placed partner able to help promoting the necessary reforms in Serbia.

NC.III.6: Serbia Support to Benchmarking Activities

Led by	World Bank
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Objective

Sustain the dialogue on advancing Benchmarking Activities in Serbia

Target audience	Serbia Institutions involved in Benchmarking, utilities
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Description and outcomes

For a number of years, Serbia's Ministry of Urban Planning and Public Works and more specifically its Inspection Directorate have collected utility data manually, in a limited manner and without apparent direct use. Under this activity, the Ministry will partner with the Chamber of Commerce and the Water association UTVSI to transform this ad-hoc process into a more institutional one.

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[[NUMBER] of participating countries that have implemented and are using a sector information system to track utility performance.	0	1
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	+220	+220

Team

- Stjepan Gabric (lead)
- Raimund Mair
- Philip Weller, Ninoslav Petrovic

Partners and responsibilities

- Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure
- UTVSI (Association for Water Technology and Sanitary Engineering)
- Serbian Chamber of Commerce

Timeline

- September 2014: discussions with key sector counterparts to agree on course of action
- October 2014: selection of national consultant, start of work, workshop at the Chamber of Commerce
- February 2015: utility association / chamber of commerce / national government discussions on launching benchmarking process
- Spring / Summer 2015: data collection

- Fall 2015: final report preparation and final workshop
- Winter 2016: launch of 2nd benchmarking cycle
- May 2016: signature of the DANUBIS DCM MoU
- 2016-2019: further benchmarking cycles up to performance years 2018.
- June 2020: beginning of benchmarking for 2019 and preparation of the 2015-19 report

Status

The first phase of this activity has been completed and performance data has been collected by UTVSI from a record 111 utilities with the close support of the Ministry. The data has been analyzed, checked for inconsistencies and made available to IB-Net and Danubis.org. The final reports to the Ministry and the participating utilities have been delivered through a final workshop in November 2015. Subsequently, a 2nd benchmarking was launched in February 2016 and data collected covering the years 2017 and 2018.

During the November 2019 visit of the World Bank team to Serbia and following discussions with relevant national stakeholders, it was agreed that the next stage of DWP support to the WSS sector in Serbia would facilitate data collection, compilation and analysis of utility performance for 2019 in the sector of water supply and wastewater management in Serbia, with the overall objective to improve water utility performance, and move towards a process of self-sustainability of activities in cooperation with the Association for Water Technology and Sanitary Engineering (UTVSI). The data collection shall be executed on up to 146 central and other municipal water supply systems of Serbia. An additional assignment includes the preparation of a separate multiannual benchmarking report covering the period 2015 – 2019, which will be used to analyze utility performance trends over the monitored period. This activity is currently under implementation, starting from June 2020.

UKRAINE

NA.2.7: Support regulatory capacity building in Ukraine		
Led by	World Bank	
Objective		
Support the organization of a training event on utility regulation under the existing legal framework		
Target audience	Ukrainian water sector regulator, utility managers	
Description and outcomes		
The program plans to support an activity aimed at development of the regulatory capacity of the Ukrainian water sector regulator that was recently established. The activity may facilitate an exchange between the Portuguese and Ukrainian water regulators or offer training by an international regulatory expert to utility managers. The program will work closely with Ukraine Infrastructure Project 2 (UIP2) to deliver this activity.		
Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date		
Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of policy makers, higher-level technical and managerial staff from participating countries that benefited from cross-country capacity building activities.	40	20*
[NUMBER] of female representatives that benefited from capacity building activities.	Tbc	Tbc
Team		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ivaylo Kolev (lead)Patricia Lopez, Stjepan Gabric, Philip Weller		
Partners and responsibilities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ukraine Urban Infrastructure Project 2		
Timeline		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">February 2014: in-country discussion on the details and timeline of the activitySpring 2015: renewed discussion by UIP2 Bank team with regulatorAugust 2015: workshop in Kiev for regulatory staffJuly 2017: utility performance workshop2020: definition of future support under this activity during Phase III and specification of budget allocation		
Status		
<p>The activity is significantly delayed because of a complete change of management in the regulatory agenda in the country in the fall of 2014. A second attempt to implement it took place early 2015 under the initiative of the UIP2 team with a first training workshop finally taking place in late August 2015 and a second one in July 2017 focusing on sharing best practices for improvement of utility performance with participation of the line ministry, the regulatory agency and several of the WSS utilities.</p> <p>The National Energy and Utilities Regulatory Commission (NEURC) of Ukraine was again completely replaced in mid-2019. Discussions are ongoing on supporting them to improve WSS regulation in Ukraine. UIP2 and DWP teams were informed that the Government is considering the decentralization of WSS regulation. International good practices of decentralized regulation of WSS tariffs and levels of services could be explored and shared with NEURC if interest is signaled. The UIP2 team is following up with NEURC and the Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine.</p>		

NC.III.10: Support to national benchmarking hub for Ukraine

Led by	IARD and World Bank
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Objective

Promote the creation of a self-sustaining national utility benchmarking hub supporting Ukrainian utilities in performance improvement.

Target audience	Utilities in the targeted countries
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Description and outcomes

This activity supported the creation of one of the regional utility benchmarking hubs catering to utilities in Ukraine. The Hub itself is part of a regional network of Hubs promoted by the Program in close coordination with the European Benchmarking Cooperation, as outlined under activity RC.III.2.

End of 2015 planning for a second cycle of Benchmarking began. The Hub had 8 utilities in the program for 2015 and reports were generated.

The program was supported again in 2016 and led to a larger number of utilities participating (14). A trip of these utilities to Germany to view German practices in WSS was also supported by the Bavarian Government.

In 2017 and 2018, 14 utilities participated in the program and also efforts to expand the group further in 2018 were successful with 18 utilities recruited. Funds for support for the development of the Association were used to support this activity (which is one of the most successful of the Association) The Bavarian Ministry of Environment has also cooperated in adding activities to support the utilities participating in the program in Ukraine (field visit to Germany).

Contribution to Program Indicators, targets and progress to date

Indicator	Progress	Target
[NUMBER] of utility records reported to IBNET/DANUBIS from participating countries.	0	7
[NUMBER] of participating utilities that have completed an operational performance improvement program.	23	8
[NUMBER] of water utilities that the project is supporting.	23	8

Team

- Philip Weller (lead)
- Patricia Lopez, Ivaylo Kolev

Partners and responsibilities

- Ukraine IARD Benchmarking Hub
- Danube Water Centre Ukraine

Timeline

- 2015: first cycle of utility Benchmarking has been organized with 8 utilities participating
- 2016: second cycle utility Benchmarking has been organized
- 2017: third cycle was completed with active participation of 14 utilities
- 2018: fourth cycle was managed with 18 utilities
- 2019: A new partner, the Danube Water Centre Ukraine, has been engaged to manage the activity in Ukraine. The fifth cycle was completed with 15 utilities participating
- 2020: 14 Utilities have joined the program that was launched in May and the partnership with the Bavarian Ministry of Environment is continuing and involves support for a study tour to Germany.
- 2020: eight utilities participating in the WB led UIP-2 project will be supported by this activity to join the Ukrainian UBP Hub

Status

The Benchmarking Hub operating in Ukraine supported by this activity will continue as part of the D-LeaP Utility Benchmarking Program (RC III.2). This activity will further support the national benchmarking collection efforts, which will be closely coordinated with a newly formed NGO (Danube Water Centre Ukraine, founded in 2019) that will take over the responsibility for managing the UBP activities in Ukraine and building national and international support for this work. The participation of eight utilities supported by the UIP-2 project is financed under this activity and this compliments the 14 which have signed up for participation



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