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EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

The purpose of this Exchange of Letters is to state the intention of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to co-host the International Network on Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage (INHWTS).

The INHWTS was established in 2003 as a WHO-hosted network with the objective to promote household water treatment and safe storage as a critical contribution to the efforts to reduce the burden of water-borne diseases. It brings together a range of stakeholders who are committed to the network's objective and principles.

The establishment of the INHWTS was also influenced by the 2009 UNICEF/WHO publication "Diarrhoea: why children are still dying and what can be done" which contains a seven-point action plan, agreed by the Executive Heads of the two agencies, to address the diarrhoeal disease problem, particularly among children under five. One point of this action plan is the promotion of household water treatment and safe storage.


The network has developed a strategy for household water treatment and safe storage, based on a consensus on goals, objectives, scope and expected deliverables by 2016. This strategy and the proposed arrangements between WHO and UNICEF for the co-hosting of the network are attached.


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UNICEF and WHO will work together to co-host the network and ensure the implementation of the strategy. The strategy will be reviewed in 2015, and following the completion of this review, the options to extend this co-hosting arrangement beyond 2016 will also be considered.

The above is agreed on behalf of UNICEF and WHO:

Signature: 
Dr N. Alipui
Director
Programme Division
UNICEF
New York

Signature: 
Dr M. Neira
Director
Public Health and Environment
World Health Organization
Geneva

Date:

Date: 30/3/2011

**Arrangements between UNICEF and WHO
for the Co-hosting of an
International Network on Household Water Treatment
and Safe Storage**

Introduction

An international Network on Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage (INHWTSS) was established in 2003 in response to the needs of:

- A large part of the world population (mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South-East Asia) without access to drinking-water from improved sources, estimated at 884 million in 2008.
- An even larger part of the world population with access to drinking-water from improved sources, who live under conditions of poor hygiene (2008: an estimated 2.6 billion people without access to basic sanitation), where drinking-water stored at the home is highly likely to become microbiologically contaminated.
- Populations, often in urban areas, served by piped systems that are unreliable and force them to store drinking-water with significant risks of contamination.
- Populations in emergency situations where water, sanitation and health services may have broken down partially or completely.

The Network

The goals, strategic objectives, scope, essential functions and expected outputs of the Network are described in the HWTS strategy, which is contained in a separate document.

Functions of UNICEF and WHO as co-hosting agencies of the Network

With a view to supporting the activities of the International Network on Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage, UNICEF and WHO will perform the functions listed below. In addition to these "co-hosting" functions, each agency will develop its own activities in the field of HWTS, in their capacity as Network participants.

- To designate agency staff as focal points responsible for carrying out the "co-hosting" functions.
- To maintain and periodically update a register of Network participants and regularly inform all Network participants on the composition.
- To formulate the terms of reference of a Network Advisory Group of maximally ten members, who will provide strategic advice, programme development and review, and appraisal of Network products.
- To designate the members of the Network Advisory Group, selected in accordance with criteria agreed and regularly reviewed by the agencies. Members of the Group are designated for a term of three years, with the option for a one-time re-designation for a second term.
- To convene virtual and face-to-face meetings of the Network Advisory Group, and annual network meetings where progress is reviewed and recommended directions are endorsed.

- To organize, in collaboration with Network participants, national HTWS workshops and seminars aimed at promotion, awareness creation, capacity building and/or review of outcomes of pilot projects.
- To develop a communication strategy and maintain arrangements for its implementation. Currently, the communication activities of the Network have been outsourced to the Water Institute at the University of North Carolina (UNC).
- To mobilize resources for the "co-hosting" functions and to support resource mobilization efforts of Network participants.

Modalities

In principle, UNICEF and WHO will share the functions and responsibilities on a 50/50 basis, and will maintain parallel budget lines on this basis as well.

For clarity's sake, each agency takes the lead in two of the four broad network activities as reflected in the four network working groups, as follows:

Knowledge advancement (WHO) – research, knowledge management, technology assessment/verification

Policy and advocacy (WHO) – global and national level advocacy and policy formulation/review

Capacity development (UNICEF) – training workshops, dissemination of best programme practice

Monitoring (UNICEF) – monitoring global progress in HWTS, mapping country level implementation.

Regular contacts between the focal points and the communications officer at UNC will ensure a clear division of efforts aimed at avoiding overlaps and redundancies. Each agency will, furthermore, develop its own Network activities in line with its mandate comparative advantages.