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**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT**

Improving water, sanitation, hygiene and health through implementation of the programme of work of the Protocol on Water and Health

Expected timing/duration: October 2021 – December 2023

Objective and brief summary of the project:

The objective is to strengthen capacity of Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to set and/or implement water, sanitation, hygiene and health targets under the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health, with a view to strengthening resilience against COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, and to promote cooperation, exchange of experience and scale-up of successful sanitation approaches at the sub-regional level. Safeguarding human health through improving access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation and reducing water-related diseases has been a major issue for the above-mentioned countries, particularly in rural areas and among the vulnerable and marginalized population groups. Furthermore, the outbreak of the COVID-19 highlighted that investing into water, sanitation and hygiene is key for the protection of human health from COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. However, improving the situation with drinking water supply and sanitation is not solely a matter of investment into infrastructure – it requires appropriate policy frameworks and a solid planning stage that would involve institutional, administrative and managerial aspects as well as close link with capacity building. Together with WHO/Europe as implementing partner, UNECE will support the policy development in beneficiary states, including by capitalizing on the work previously undertaken in Central Asia in the Protocol framework, particularly in relation to setting targets and elaborating action plans for implementation. An important focus will be on promoting uptake of the principles of the *WHO Guidelines on Sanitation and Health*. The project aims at improving sanitation policies and regulations in line with the latest available evidence and associated good practices and enhancing capacity of sanitation service providers for safely managing sanitation in alignment with SDG target 6.2. The objectives of the project will be achieved through the following activities (carried out under the programme of work of the Protocol for 2020-2022):

A1.1: Organizing three kick-off workshops/webinars in beneficiary countries in order to review targets previously set under the Protocol or under other international commitments and to promote the setting of COVID-19 sensitive targets under the Protocol – *programme area 1 – Improving governance for water and health, PA 1, 1 (a)*;

A1.2: Providing advisory services by organizing missions and/or webinars and assisting policymakers and/or other relevant stakeholders in beneficiary countries in developing sanitation policies, in line with WHO Guidelines on Sanitation and Health, including considering climate-resilient sanitation systems and newly emerging aspects in light of COVID-19 – *Programme area 5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems, PA 5, 1 (a)*;

A2.1: Organizing a sub-regional workshop/webinar for policymakers and experts in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to promote exchange of scientific knowledge on the potential benefits and limitations of environmental surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 virus in wastewater as an early warning system for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases – *Programme area 5, PA 5, 2 (b)*;

A3.1: Organizing a sub-regional training for policymakers and experts in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to share international best practices in the area of access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and prevention of infectious diseases, in support of setting COVID-19 sensitive targets under the Protocol, and in support of the implementation of SDG 6 and SDG 3 – *Programme area 1, PA 1, 1 (b)*.

Expected results of the project:

EA1. Strengthened capacity of policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to set and implement national targets in the area of water, sanitation, hygiene and health, with a special focus on aspects relevant for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases;

EA2. Increased information exchange among participating countries of Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus on the potential benefits and limitations of environmental surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 virus in wastewater as an early warning system for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases;

EA3: Enhanced knowledge of policymakers and other stakeholders in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus on international best practices in the area of access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and prevention of infectious diseases, in support of the implementation of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

Target group and beneficiaries of the project:

Primary beneficiaries of the project will be three countries selected amongst Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Other countries in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus will also benefit from the project's activities through the promotion of sub-regional exchange. The project will target specifically government authorities responsible for water, sanitation and health in the beneficiary countries as well as water and sanitation operators, national experts, civil society, private sector and academia. Water, sanitation and health experts from beneficiary countries will also be involved in subregional activities.

Justification of project and its relationship to the programme of work:

The project is directly linked to the objective of the Subprogramme 1 "Environment" of improving environmental governance and performance for safeguarding the environment and health, of the UNECE programme budget for 2021. It is closely aligned with the strategy of implementing international policy dialogue, capacity-building and the dissemination of good practices and lessons learned in the area of water, sanitation and health, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 3. The project contributes to the implementation of ECE multilateral environmental agreements as well as to UNECE nexus, particularly on the sustainable use of natural resources and on sustainable and smart cities through the provision of safe drinking water and climate-resilient sanitation.

Estimated UN regular budget resources (work months of RB staff/level):


1 month of P4/ RB

Estimated extra budgetary resources:

Donor
The Russian Federation

Amount (US\$)
249,318

Project Manager:
Nataliya Nikiforova


07.09.2021

Section/Division: Transboundary Cooperation Section/Environment Division

Approved by the Executive Secretary:

Olga Algayerova


15.10.2021

EXCOM informed on 15 October 2021

See Annex 2

**Annex 1.
Results-based budget for the extra-budgetary project**

Expected accomplishments	Planned activities	Estimated costs (US\$)
EA1. Strengthened capacity of policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to set and implement national targets in the area of water, sanitation, hygiene and health, with a special focus on aspects relevant for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases;	A1.1. Organizing three kick-off workshops/webinars in beneficiary countries in order to review targets previously set under the Protocol or under other international commitments and to promote the setting of COVID-19 sensitive targets under the Protocol P3 (\$15,000) x 1.5 month P1 (\$10,000) x 0.5 month G5 (\$9,000) x 1 month 4 missions x 1 staff (\$2,000 per mission) \$2,000 x 3 working month x 1 workshop	50,500 22,500 5,000 9,000 8,000 6,000
	A1.2. Providing advisory services by organizing missions and/or webinars and assisting policymakers and/or other relevant stakeholders in beneficiary countries in developing sanitation policies, in line with WHO Guidelines on Sanitation and Health, including considering climate-resilient sanitation systems and newly emerging aspects in light of COVID-19 P3 (\$15,000) x 0.4 month G5 (\$9,000) x 0.2 month 1 international consultant (\$5,000 each) x 3 months 3 missions x 1 staff (\$2,000 per mission)	28,800 6,000 1,800 15,000 6,000
EA2. Increased information exchange among participating countries of Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus on the potential benefits and limitations of environmental surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 virus in wastewater as an early warning system for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases;	A2.1. Organizing a sub-regional workshop/webinar for policymakers and experts in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to promote exchange of scientific knowledge on the potential benefits and limitations of environmental surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 virus in wastewater as an early warning system for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases P3 (\$15,000) x 1 month G5 (\$9,000) x 0.8 month 1 international consultant (\$5,000) x 1 month 1 mission x 1 international consultant (\$2,000 per mission) 2 missions x 1 staff (\$2,000 per mission) 19 participants x 1 workshops (\$1,500 per participant) \$2,000 x 1 working month x 1 workshop	63,700 15,000 7,200 5,000 2,000 4,000 28,500 2,000
EA3. Enhanced knowledge of policymakers and other stakeholders in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus on international best practices in the area of access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and prevention of infectious diseases, in support of the implementation of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals.	A.3.1. Organizing a sub-regional training for policymakers and experts in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to share international best practices in the area of access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and prevention of infectious diseases, in support of setting COVID-19 sensitive targets under the Protocol, and in support of the implementation of SDG 6 and SDG 3 P3 (\$15,000) x 1.5 month P1 (\$10,000) x 0.5 month G5 (\$9,000) x 0.8 month 3 missions x 1 staff (\$2,000 per mission) 20 participants x 1 training (\$1,500 per participant) \$5,000 x 1 working month x 1 training	75,700 22,500 5,000 7,200 6,000 30,000 5,000
Budget summary		218,700
13% of Programme Support Costs (rounded)		28,431
1% Coordination levy		2,187
Total		249,318