

Redesignation of Eawag as a WHO Collaborating Centre

WHO collaborating centres are institutions, such as research institutes, parts of universities or academies, which are designated by the Director-General to carry out activities in support of the Organization's programmes. Currently, there are over 700 WHO collaborating centres in over 80 Member States working with WHO on areas including nursing, occupational health, communicable diseases, nutrition, mental health, chronic diseases and health technologies.

Eawag received its WHO collaborating centre designation on 27 September 2012, as acknowledgement of its expertise in the fields of solid waste, water and sanitation for development, and its agreement to carry out work to support WHO objectives. Eawag recently worked with WHO on the renewal of its designation, which it received for an additional four years on 27 September 2016.

As part of the process of having its designation renewed, Eawag and WHO discussed and agreed upon four specific collaborative activities that would be implemented together over the next four years. These activities are the following:

1. Build national and local capacity and support learning exchange on water safety and sanitation, WASH in health care facilities and schools in low- and middle-income countries. (Lead: Christoph Lüthi, Fabian Suter)

This work will build upon the initial success of Eawag's massive open online courses (MOOCs) on household water treatment, solid waste and sanitation that were made with WHO input and which have reached more than 30,000 individuals. The aim is to develop shorter, more targeted and interactive courses, i.e. small private online courses or SPOCS for training purposes. These training courses would focus on specific themes, such as sanitation safety planning or water quality monitoring, or be developed for specific groups of learners (e.g. mid-level municipal engineers in Sub-Saharan Africa). SPOCs typically run for two to three weeks and end with a Statement of Accomplishment for successful participants.

2. Support water, sanitation and hygiene monitoring and implementation of research and hygiene behaviour change interventions, with a particular focus on gender, in health care facilities and schools. (Lead: Christoph Lüthi, Samuel Renggli)

This activity will develop and verify monitoring indicators and questions for the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme expanded set of indicators on WASH in health care facilities, and produce materials on policy and practice for supporting gender inclusive WASH practices and services in health care facilities. These materials will contribute to the implementation of the WHO/UNICEF Global Action on WASH in health care facilities and specifically assist the task teams working on monitoring and evidence and research.

- 3a. Contribute to guideline development and implementation, microbial testing tools and behaviour change approaches for improving water safety. (Lead: Sara Marks)

This work will involve expert contributions to the 5th edition of the WHO guidelines on drinking-water quality and the guidelines for small community water supplies. It will improve

the water quality activities at WHO and support Member States in implementing the guidelines.

- 3b. Develop microbial testing and surveillance tools to inform monitoring, regulation and evidence based implementation of water safety interventions. (Lead: Sara Marks, Regula Meierhofer)

This activity will focus on the development, implementation and use of water quality testing strategies for application in household surveys, ongoing verification monitoring of drinking-water supplies, and for targeted applications in events, such as cholera outbreaks and humanitarian emergencies. It will cover microbial contaminants, key chemical contaminants and other measures, for example, turbidity. In addition, it will link the use of such data to the measuring of water treatment and safe storage behaviour and to improvements in the development and ongoing promotion of evidence based hygiene behaviour change interventions.

- 4a. Contribute to guideline development, global monitoring and implementation for sanitation. (Lead: Christoph Lüthi, Linda Strande)

This work will involve contributing to the first edition of the WHO sanitation guidelines through expert input, interpretation of systematic reviews and input on how to best disseminate and capacitate countries to implement the guidelines. It will also include inputs to the technical working group on definitions and methods for monitoring safely managed sanitation at the national level, using an adapted excreta flow framework and harmonisation where possible with city level methodologies.

- 4b. Contribute to sanitation safety planning training, monitoring and behaviour change approaches for sanitation. (Lead: Christoph Lüthi, Linda Strande, Hans-Joachim Mosler)

This activity will involve working at the national and local level on conducting sanitation safety planning training and the related policy enabling environment for successfully undertaking sanitation safety planning. The work will also address monitoring challenges in measuring the sanitation targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the development of Shit Flow Diagrams (SFDs). There is also a behaviour change element on ensuring that sanitation facilities are properly used, maintained and managed.