

CONCEPT DEVELOPING AND CARRYING OUT CAPACITY BUILDING FOR UTILITIES IN THE DANUBE REGION

PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WATER
SUPPLY COMPANIES IN THE DANUBE RIVER CATCHMENT AREA
(IAWD)

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Introduction

The following document presents an outline of a concept for developing and carrying out a cooperative capacity building program for water utilities in the Danube region. The program would be facilitated by the International Association of Water Supply Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) in cooperation with national water utility associations.

Background

In September 2013 the IAWD organized in Bucharest, in the frame of the Danube Water Program (DWP), a meeting of water utility associations in the Danube region to discuss their common problems, potential cooperation and joint activities. Among the topics the association representatives proposed as themes for common activities were actions related to strengthening and supporting utility management – capacity building for utility managers.

This desire mirrored input received by the World Bank prior to the establishment of the Danube Water Program. The Bank Appraisal Document noted that “representatives from water and waste water utilities in the target countries have expressed the need for institutional strengthening and capacity building”. The document stressed that large efforts had been put on capital investments and infrastructure upgrading but improving skills in management and training for utility operators has been neglected.

In the period following the Bucharest meeting, IAWD has initiated and begun delivering a series of capacity building programs for utilities, using expert facilitators, together with the national water associations who have organized and supported the utility involvement in these programs. These programs have been targeted at learning by doing and have focused on four topics: Energy Efficiency, Asset Management, Utility Benchmarking, and Commercial Efficiency. Over 80 utilities have joined these programs and participated in the training and follow-up actions within their utility. In the course of the delivery of this program it has become clear that there is appetite for such activities among utilities, that utilities are willing to pay a participation fee, and that the involvement and support of the national association is essential in making sure that such programs are successful.

The following concept responds to the experience that has been made during the delivery of the Danube Water Program and additional inputs that have been received through evaluating studies and assessments of the needs for capacity building in the water sector.

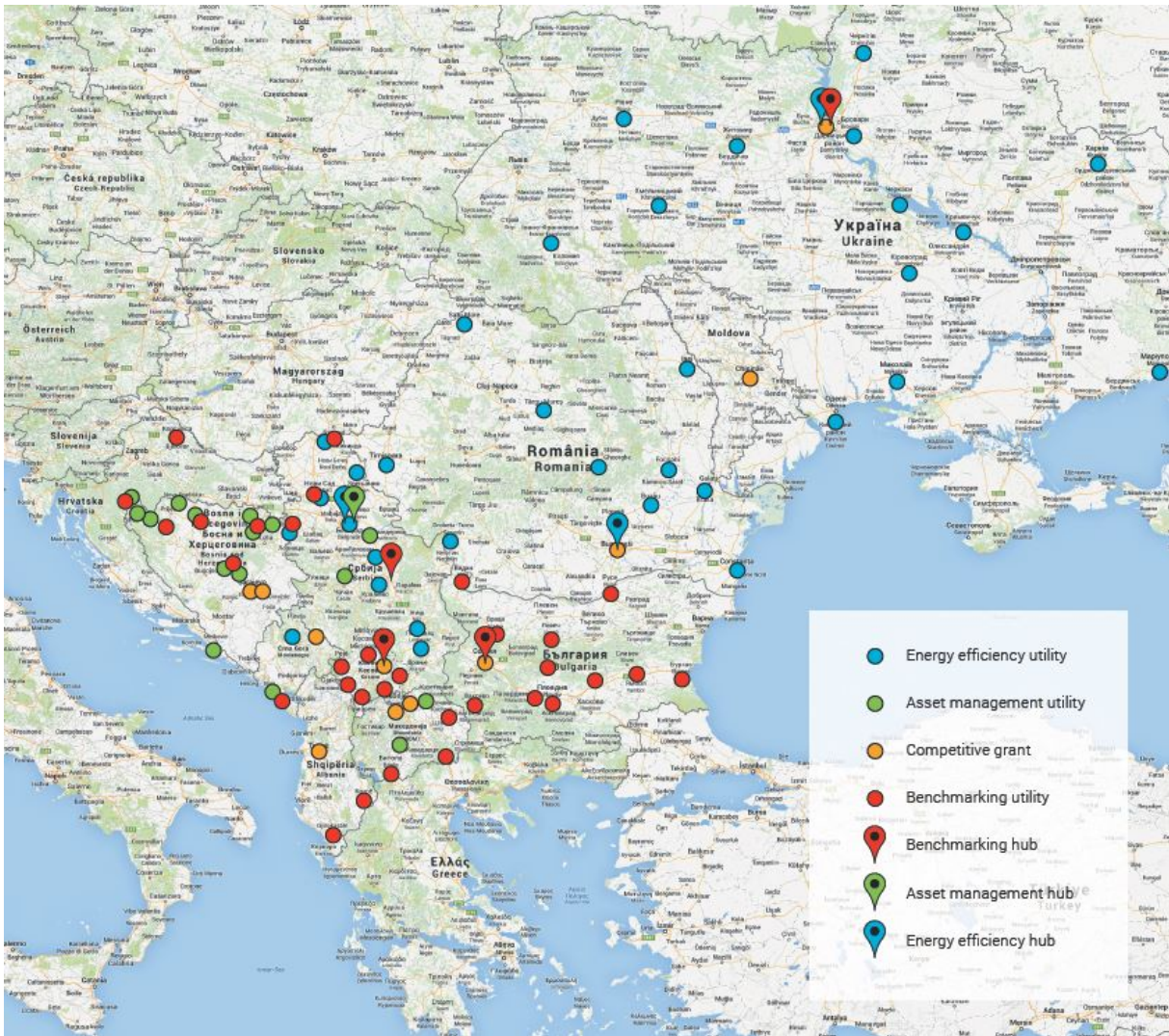


Figure 1: Map of hubs and participating utilities up to end 2014 (Commercial Efficiency and 2015 Utility Benchmarking not included)

In the Framework of

Financed by:

Developed by:

Business Planning for Water Associations

Prepared by
Water Supply and Sewerage Association of Albania
SHUKALB

STRUCTURE OF COURSE MANUAL

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associations: Their Value and Roles 2. Introduction to Association Business Plan 3. Business Plan Model 4. Association: Current Condition Assessment 5. Vision Statement 6. Mission Objectives 7. Management Overview of Business Plan 8. Strategic Goals 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Association Membership 10. Governance, Organizational Structure and Staffing 11. Communications Plan 12. Awareness, Outreach and Career Programs 13. Knowledge Management and Sharing 14. Project Development Program 15. Action Plans 16. Five-Year Budget Forecast 17. Business Plan Update
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Figure 2: Example of training material in business planning

Parallel to the launching of capacity building programs through the Danube Water Program, other initiatives have begun, and attempted to explore the potential for cooperation in organizing and delivering capacity building to utilities. Among these was a competitive grant project under the DWP run by SHUKALB in Albania focused on evaluating the potential for

establishing a Western Balkans Training Centre. National training programs for water utility operators have also been supported by the Danube Water Program in Moldova and Romania, and in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, a training program targeted at using translations of German standards by the Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches (DVGW), and norms in these countries will be undertaken. Similarly, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and SDC has contracted Una Consulting d.o.o. Bihac from Bosnia and Herzegovina to evaluate training needs among municipalities and utilities related to water services. This report is expected to be available in summer 2015.

A survey of water utility associations from the region, conducted by IAWD in early 2014, found that within some national associations, water services training or capacity building programs have been carried out, but are not systematic or well developed. The existing training programs are often being offered as a result of external funding support. Within the German speaking countries of the region (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland) the most developed and effectively organized training and capacity building programs are offered through water utility associations. In Austria, these training programs have been developed to the point of being recognized as a basis for accreditation of the skills needed by utility operators.



Figure 3: ÖVGW accreditation of Austrian water supply staff and utilities

Title	Date ▲	Location	Member price	
37. Pflanzenkläranlagenkurs (ausgebucht!)	24.-25.04.2015	Oberndorf an der Melk (NÖ)	230	◀
9. Grundkurs "Umgang mit Abfällen auf Baustellen" (ausgebucht!)	27.-28.04.2015	Linz	390	◀
5. Messtechnik-Kurs (ausgebucht!)	28.-30.04.2015	Wiener Neustadt	805	◀
1. Kurs "Ereignisdokumentation"	Mai 2015	Gmunden		◀
6. Kurs "Altstoffsammelzentren" (ausgebucht!)	04.-05.05.2015	Wels	390	◀
7. Kurs "Hochwasserrückhaltebecken"	05.05.2015	Hartberg	290	◀
Genehmigung von Kleinwasserkraftwerken	06.05.2015	Wirtschaftskammer Salzburg	220	◀
38. Pflanzenkläranlagenkurs (ausgebucht!)	08.-09.05.2015	St. Andrä (Kärnten)	230	◀
2. Kurs "Schrotte und Metalle" (ausgebucht!)	11.-12.05.2015	St. Pölten	440	◀
117. Laborkurs (ausgebucht!)	18.-22.05.2015	Asten	1020	◀
2. Kurs "Betriebsführung/Wartung von Kanalisationen"	18.-22.05.2015	St. Veit an der Glan	950	◀
Belüftung auf Abwasserreinigungsanlagen	19.05.2015	Bundesamtsgebäude, Wien	220	◀
153. Kleinkläranlagenkurs (ausgebucht!)	20.-21.05.2015	Oberndorf an der Melk (NÖ)	230	◀

Figure 4: Example of training programs offered by the Austrian ÖWAV

Although some countries further east, and in the western Balkans region, offer specific technical training programs for utility managers (i.e. Romania, Croatia, Moldova, and Albania), there is, in general, very weak commitment to such capacity building programs.

A program to more formally and systematically provide capacity building for utilities has therefore been proposed and agreed on by water utility associations.

Concept

The proposal is to establish a Danube region-wide capacity building program for utilities targeted at skills and techniques needed to improve water services. The program would involve the development of a common curriculum (for utilities throughout the Danube region) on key topics of significance for utilities. The curriculum and capacity building materials would be developed and able to be used in either regional training/capacity building programs and/or translated and used by utility associations in the region for capacity building at the national level. In addition to the development of the curriculum, a group of experienced trainers, both international and national, would be organized for delivery of training programs (in cooperation with national water utility associations). This group of trainers would be directly linked to the Associations.

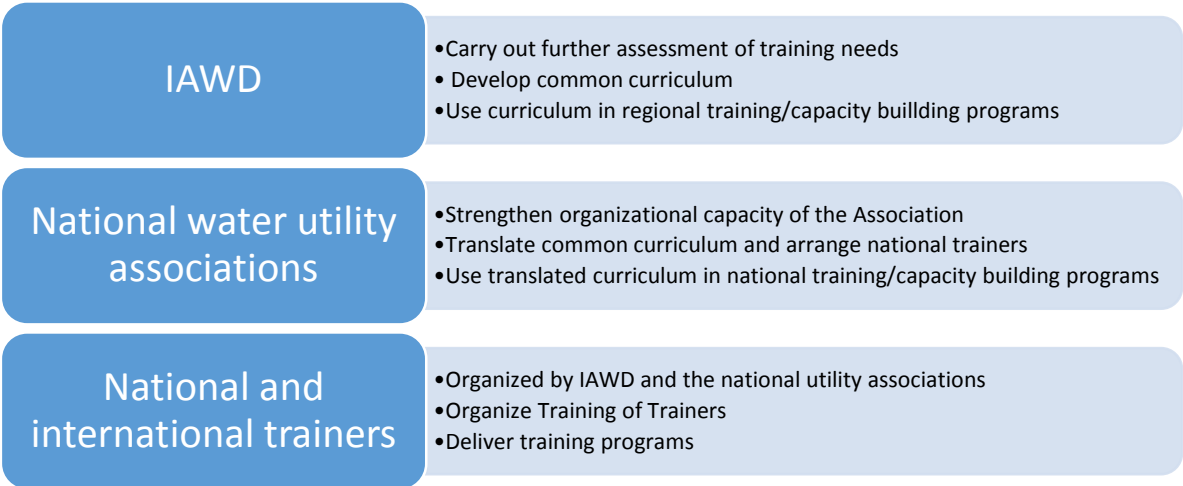


Figure 5: Structure of the proposed concept for capacity building program

Objective

The objective of the program is to utilize synergy and economies of scale for creating an economically sustainable program of capacity building for utilities in the region:

- Through creation, promotion, and delivery of a common curriculum and capacity building programs higher standards of utility operation will be realized.
- Resources and capacity among national water utilities associations for improving utility management will be strengthened.
- The role of national water utility associations as institutions helping build and maintain cooperation among utilities in their country will be maintained and reinforced.
- Sharing of resources among water utility associations will be increased.

- A pool of qualified and trained trainers linked to the utility associations (employees) will be developed and available.
- Smaller water utility associations will have access to and be able to offer to their members high quality training programs.
- Cooperation between national water utility associations and national government associations and NALAS will be strengthened.

A key goal of the program would be to create a network of utility operators and association representatives from the Danube region who can support one another in skill development and using their combined expertise and resources to achieve the goal of strong utilities and sustainable services.

Program Structure

The Program would be organized and offered by the International Association of Water Supply Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) in cooperation with national water utility associations from the Danube region.

The following elements of the capacity building would be developed and made available:

- 1) A common curriculum (training materials and program activities with a focus on good governance) on specific topics which can be offered to national water utility associations to use in their national language. The common curriculum would build 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 Risk Assessment and Minimization can be included. In addition it is also possible that a basic utility operation course (more technical aspects) could be developed and shared..
- 2) Written documentation and training kits developed on the respective topic in English language that can be translated in local languages.
- 3) Approaches and methods of delivery of capacity building developed that use the common curriculum in a structured and focused way relying on, but not necessarily limited to, learning by doing.
- 4) A pool of international experts established who could offer and support the delivery of the training programs on the particular topic.
- 5) Train the trainer sessions convened to expand the cadre of persons in the region (persons connected to national water utility associations) who could provide the training in national languages and support participants in training programs in their national language.
- 6) A regular program of training programs on specific topics within the period of existence of the Danube Water Program – from October 2015 to the end of 2018.
- 7) Regular offer of trainings would be expected to continue with a business model allowing sustainability following the end of the DWP.
- 8) Fact sheets and online tools to reinforce and support the curriculum and associated actions will be prepared.

- 9) An evaluation of a model of accreditation based upon capacity building among various countries on specific topics will be carried out.
- 10) Support for strengthening the capacities and resources of national water utility associations to develop and effectively organize capacity building of their members and to increase their capacity for interaction with one another and other organizations (i.e. Local Government associations).



Figure 6: Output elements of the capacity building program

IAWD, through the Danube Water Program, would offer the training programs based upon needs and a timetable agreed to by the national water utility associations. The curriculum and training programs will be developed by the Danube Water Program using the existing capacity building materials developed under phase 1 of the program. The material would be further refined and supported by other available materials. This could include, for example, the material existing through the ARA Training Centre in Romania and the training materials underdevelopment in Albania by SHUKALB with funding from US AID. The basic utility operation materials available from ÖVGW could also be utilized.

National water utility associations would determine their interest and capacity to manage and involve utilities in their country in the program offerings. Those national associations who wanted to participate in a particular program element would ensure that the capacity building program is offered to their members, or would ensure the involvement of their utilities in regional program offerings.

Each participating national association would have responsibility to translate materials related to the curriculum to national languages, and have trainees who could assist in and eventually take over the delivery of the programs.

A business model for the program would be developed, and an assessment of the potential for offering of accreditation for participants in the program would be made.

Requirements

The curriculum and training materials would be facilitated and organized by IAWD and would involve building upon and converting nationally available materials for other countries.

The Danube Water Program would commit to formalizing and packaging each training module in English language for translation and use in national languages by the respective association.

IAWD would assemble a pool of international and regional experts to assist in and support the capacity building.

A cooperation arrangement with the IWA/EWA would ensure the availability of key persons from International Specialist Groups for development and delivery of the curriculum.

Each national water utility association interested could make a commitment to having a utility representative or staff of the association be trained (train the trainers) to carry out the training program on topics of interest to them. Regional facilitators or Hubs could be established jointly by cooperating associations working together.

Utilities participating in the training programs would pay a fee for participation that would be payable to the national water utility association. This fee would cover the costs of the delivery of the program but would not offset the development costs for the curriculum. This fee would be split between the National Association and IAWD or the respective curriculum development organization (i.e. 80 to 20).

Development costs and some delivery costs would be borne until 2018 by IAWD as part of the Danube Water Program.

Funding structure of training programs until 2018		
IAWD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development costs • Some delivery costs 	National water utility associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery costs 	Utilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation fee paid to national association

Figure 7: Funding structure of training programs until 2018

Governance

An Association Roundtable organized in the framework of the IAWD would provide guidance and oversight to the development of the curriculum and in proposing actions in support of common curriculum development. This Association Roundtable would provide governance to the initiative. This group would provide an initial quality control to the training and capacity building programs.

A committee of utility association representatives from the Roundtable will provide input and guidance to the development of the materials. Regional Hubs could also be created for managing particular actions and strengthening cooperation between neighbouring countries.

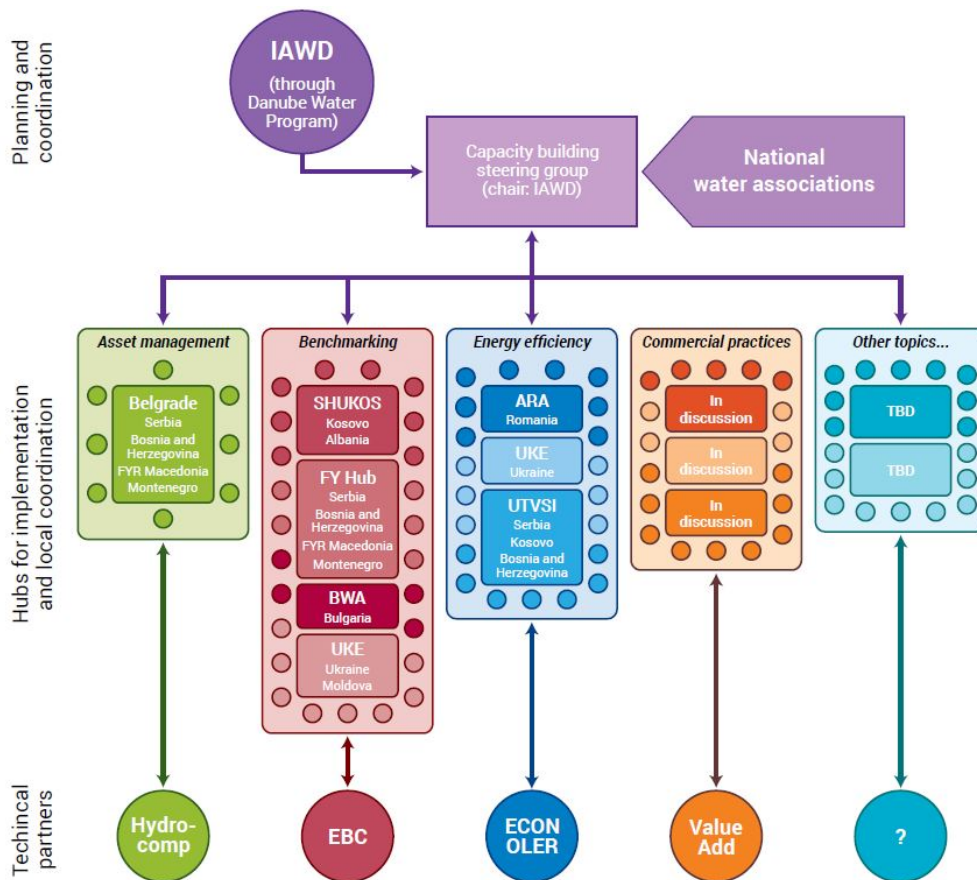


Figure 8: Danube Water Program partnerships for capacity development activities

Commitments

IAWD – To sign letter of intent to develop program and secure DWP funding for the period 2015-2018.

National water utility association – To sign letter of intent to contribute to and participate in the program including participating in the Association guidance of the program.

Other organizations (IWA, NALAS, EWA)? –and possible regional hubs to be determined.

Timetable

Time period	Activity
Summer 2015	Finalization of MoU / Lol by IAWD and national water utility associations
Fall 2015 – end of 2015	Preparation and finalization of curriculum and capacity building program for selected topics
Early 2016 – ongoing	Training of trainers
January 2016	First offer of capacity building (topic to be determined)
March 2016	Second offer of capacity building (topic to be determined)
Summer 2016	Finalization of business plan for capacity building program
Fall 2016	Finalization of report on accreditation
Fall 2016 – ongoing	Third offer of capacity building (topic to be determined)
Up to end of 2018	Offer of training programs & training of trainers
End of 2018	Self-sustaining capacity building program