

WORKSHOP - WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

WORKSHOP ON WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE IMPROVEMENTS UNDER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH IN SERBIA

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Background: Adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services are crucial for life, health, well-being and prosperity. WASH is a priority area in public health programming in Serbia and also targeted in the National targets set under the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health in 2015, after its ratification in 2013. Together with Germany and its German Environment Agency (UBA), the Serbian Ministry of Health and the Institute of Public Health of Serbia (IPHS) co-lead the Protocol's programme area of work "Small scale water supply and sanitation systems", jointly collaborating and conducting activities that support improvements in this area.

Methods and Objectives: This workshop aims to present the results in the last decade for accomplishing Serbian Protocol's targets, covering a wide spectrum of WASH topics in different settings (schools, healthcare facilities, small water supply, and sanitation systems) and aspects (drinking-water quality, equity, etc.), with special focus on integrated water and sanitation safety planning project. The methodological approach considers an overview of all WASH projects performed in the last 10-year period that were coordinated and led by the IPHS or participated as a project partner.

Results: In the last decade, nine WASH projects were identified (four situation analyses of sanitary-hygienic conditions, one self-assessment of equitable access to water and sanitation, one on integrated water and sanitation safety planning, and three on education and training materials). Integrating drinking-water and sanitation was found to be feasible, ensuring that both systems were addressed together and equally prioritised in templates.

Conclusions: Public health professionals within the network of the institutes of public health in Serbia in collaboration with and support of international experts and multidisciplinary participation and approach played a crucial role in performing and accomplishing significant work done under the Protocol.

Keywords: drinking water, sanitation, hygiene, safety planning, integration