

MUS Group meeting - 5 November 2008

ILRI campus, Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Chair: John Butterworth (IRC)

Minutes: Marieke Adank (IRC)

Agenda

- Introduction to the MUS Group
- Governance of the MUS Group
- activities 2009
- WWF5
- Challenge Programme on Water and Food
- Funding
- Selection of group officers
- Communication with members
- Next meeting

Introduction to the MUS Group

At this meeting a number of people participated who didn't know about the MUS Group or its functioning. John Butterworth gave a brief history of the Group and its activities. The MUS Group was established after the previous symposium in Johannesburg in 2003. Since, then, the group has consolidated. All organizations which were represented in the first meetings, are here now as well. In addition, many other organizations have joined. There are now over 350 members of the mailing list. In addition, there is a group of 8-9 core partners, which are more actively involved in organizing activities. The mission of the Group is to promote MUS, by acting as platform for dissemination information about mus, sharing experiences, carrying out advocacy and promoting research and implementation. However, a strong vision for the Group as such has never been formulated.

Governance of the MUS Group

As part of the introduction to the Group, John also presented its governance guidelines. All individuals who subscribe to the Group and its mission are members. Core members are those who actively contribute to its activities and who commit themselves to participate in the its meetings at least once a year. New core members can be nominated by existing core members, or can apply themselves for core membership. Existing core members can approve the application. Other organizations are invited to join the core group.

The group has a coordinator (currently John Butterworth) who is responsible for chairing the group's meetings and overseeing overall activities. The secretary (currently Stef Smits) is responsible for maintain the website, newsletter, communication with members and organizing events. So far, IRC has put in a small amount of funding (15-20 days a year as well as a couple of thousand Euros) per year for the secretary. Other members contribute their time and resources to attend meetings. Despite the small amounts of resources, the group has been durable and has been useful for the members. However, questions are raised whether we shouldn't find funds for the Secretary. This comes back under point 5.

Actions

All: nominate yourself or be nominated to become a core member, if you are interested.

Activities 2009

The following activities were identified for 2009.

- Publishing the results from the symposium
 - Proceedings and papers from the symposium will be made available on the MUS Group website
 - Policy brief will be developed and presented at WWF5
 - Translate abstracts of the papers in Spanish and put them on the Spanish part of the website.
 - So far, we have not managed to get MUS papers into journals or publish the work elsewhere academically. There is interest to do so, based on the papers presented here. However, a hard copy book is often expensive. On-line journal special issues may be more relevant. If anyone is interesting in developing these kinds of outputs, please let John know..
- MUS Group meetings twice a year.
- Events:
 - Conference for water, food and energy by FAO (mid Dec)
 - WWF5 (see point 3)
 - AGUA 2009 Conference in Colombia, focusing on theme: "changing paradigms". First 2 weeks of Nov. There might be opportunity to do something there with the MUS Group.
- Pilot projects:
 - Cinara and RASHON are considering pilots in Honduras, and do documentation on everything we are discussing here. It would be good if the group could help with that.
 - The suggestion arose that the Group's next meeting is about process documentation methodologies and indicators.
- Networking. This is already being done, but in an informal way. Several suggestions for improvement or specific activities arose.
 - FAO would like to invite MUS Group members to come along on irrigation management audit in 2009. Where and when, will be to decided. The exercise normally takes 2 weeks. With expertise from MUS Group, FAO will be able to work more towards MUS.
 - WinRock indicated that they have a modality for volunteered technical assistance, and will share that with MUS Group members
 - IFAD also calls for more knowhow, particularly locally. John and Stef could put Audrey in contact with people from the Group.
 - In general, it was considered a good idea to have the details from the mailing list available to other members. However, there are concerns that the list wouldn't be made available to the entire public. We could have part of website allocated for this.

Briefing on mus at WWF5

- The MUS session at WWF4 in Mexico was very successful. At the WWF5 in Istanbul, MUS is one out of 24 topics. 2 sessions on MUS:
 - Characterizing MUS
 - Institutional change and governance.
- Topic coordinator: Daniel. Stef is working with Daniel as representative of the MUS Group.
- In addition there is a political process. The next prep meeting for that will be held in Geneva in early December. Daniel will be there. The third meeting will take place in end January in Rome.
- Daniel is looking for key people to convey messages. Ideas from MUS

Stef: upload final version of papers and proceedings

Ines: translate abstracts in Spanish and put them on website

All: let John know about ideas for publishing symposium results

Daniel to provide info on the conference for Africa, water for food and energy by FAO: Mid December to Stef for the newsletter.

Daniel to provide Stef with details to announce FAO irrigation management audit for the newsletter

Mary to send info on volunteered technical assistance to MUS Group members

Stef and John to put IFAD in contact with relevant people

John and Stef: look into making the contact details of MUS Group members available for other MUS Group members in a safe way

Group members will be welcome, and will be discussed on the Friday bilateral session.

Briefing about the Challenge Programme on Water and Food

- The Challenge Programme on Water and Food (CPWF) has been one of the drivers for mus, amongst others by funding the MUS Project. It is now entering its second phase, within which mus will be one out of 4 topics. There will be more emphasis at basin level in a total of 6 basins, all of which will have a mus component. In addition there will be a cross basin working group on each topic, including one on mus.
- From 10-14 November the CPWF organizes its International Forum on Water and Food (IFWF), where lessons from the first phase are brought together, and where we will be looking to the way forward for the second phase.
- Friday 7 November: Side meeting on the linkages between the MUS Group and the 2nd phase of the CPWF.

Funding

John gave an overview of new funding opportunities for the MUS Group, and invited others to share ideas as well.

- MUS group is one of the thematic groups of WSSCC and as such could have access to WSSCC funds: For this year (November-April this would amount to 10.000-20.000 US\$. In return: the MUS Group would have to present at the annual WSSCC meeting in spring. A proposal will have to be put in for this before mid November. Suggestions to be put into the proposal include:
 - Policy brief will be main priority.
 - Advocacy materials for WWF5.
 - Piloting technical support
 - Other outputs from the symposium (e.g. hard copy publication)
 - WWF5 MUS Session: sponsorship for participants from the South.
 - Case study award. Not priority.
 - Translation of mus documents into Spanish
- John will take the lead in developing the proposal, and Mary will review. It is suggested that for now the funds flow through IRC, or another partner. It should however be auditable to the MUS Group.
- So far, the secretary function has been voluntary. It is not likely that WSSCC funds can be used for this. IRC has tried to get resources from DGIS and NWP, but without results. Probably another 20.000 or so would be needed to have the secretary fully functioning.
- Daniel indicated he would check on possibilities for funding of secretary activities through UN Water.

Selection of MUS group officers

- Current MUS Group officers are:
 - MUS Group coordinator: John
 - MUS Group secretary: Stef
- The role involves 10-15 days per year for various activities. It is a voluntary position. In principle, the function is supposed to rotate.
- Will change group coordinator now. For the time being, leave Group Secretary the same. At the next meeting we can also change group secretary.
- Selection procedure new coordinator:

John to draft proposal for funding for WSSCC, and send to Mary for review

Daniel to follow-up with UN Water on funding possibilities for MUS Group activities and secretary

John to coordinate procedure of selection of new MUS Group coordinator.

John to prepare procedure for selection of MUS Group Secretary for

- 2 weeks after this meeting: MUS Group members nominate someone to be group coordinator.
- Vote by e-mail
- In case nobody volunteers, John can continue doing it.

Communication with members

- Stef spends 10 days a year on his task as MUS Group secretary (this year more). Main tasks include updating the MUS Group website (www.musgroup.net) and preparing the MUs Group newsletter 3-4 times a year.
- The MUS Project website will be reallocated to the MUS Group website.
- Stef is struggling to get input for newsletter. Please be proactive in supplying news or issues.
- Ines forwards the newsletters to some 200 people who speak English in Latin America. Translation of the newsletter into Spanish and other languages would be useful (see point above on possible use of WSSCC funds).
- The mailing list is continuously updated and expanded after events. A call was made to see whether we can expand the mailing list with other types of organisations, particularly with bigger consultancy firms, hygiene and sanitation people, and the micro-finance community.
- To become a member: send e-mail to Stef.

Next meeting:

- Phone conference about the selection of MUS Group officers.
- Next (physical) meeting will probably take place at WWF5. John will send proposal for this around. Suggested thematic focus is on performance and impact indicators of mus, or on methodologies for assessing and documenting pilot projects.

the next MUs Group meeting

All MUS Group members to send interesting information for MUS Group newsletter to Stef

John / Stef to organise next MUS phone conference.

John to send around proposal for MUS group meeting at WWF5.