

**FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT - 513RLA2008**

**Project Title:** The project shall include two activities to be carried out within the framework of the Water Centre for Arid and Semiarid Zones for Latin America and the Caribbean (CAZALAC):  
(a) CAZALAC III Planning Workshop (Santiago de Chile, August 2009), and  
(b) implementation of an e-learning course on “Rainwater Harvesting”.  
Related to CAZALAC Project (513RLA2000)

**Target Country or Region:** Latin America and the Caribbean

**Budget code:** 513RLA2008

**Contract number:**

**Funding sources:** UNESCO Flanders Trust Fund, Government of Chile

**Total Budget approved:** US\$ 38,500 (including 10% overhead costs)

**Reporting Period:** Seven months (1 June to 31 December 2009)

**Executing Agency:** UNESCO

**Implementing partners :** Government of Chile, University of La Serena

**Project starting date:** 1 June 2009

**Project completion date:** 31 December 2009

**Responsible Sector:** Division of Water Sciences at the UNESCO Regional Office for Science in Montevideo

**Name of Person completing Report:** Maria Concepción Donoso

## **I. Summary and Background**

(a) At the last CAZALAC evaluation meeting held in Chile in March 2009, it was agreed that a potential III Phase of the Centre's activities should be aimed at positioning CAZALAC as a reference institution at the regional level.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the workplan of the Centre should be focused in this direction by addressing the needs of the region's arid areas in terms of tendencies and projected development scenarios. Thus, the preparation of the proposal was sought to include water experts from the different sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean that could not only provide their inputs to the workplan but also to commit their efforts to support the Centre's activities. Furthermore, since the Centre was granted with the auspices of UNESCO, it was foreseen that the Centre's plan of activities for its III Phase should be in line with UNESCO water priorities and especially with the ongoing VII Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (2008-2013). The strategy proposed for the coming phase should be aimed at consolidating the leadership of the Centre in water management in areas of the region with scarce water resources.

The specific objective of this workshop was to set the basis the project document for a third phase of the CAZALAC Project, which would last from January 2010 to December 2012.

(b) The objective of this activity was to validate a tool to support a network of water professional trained in rainwater harvesting techniques, to provide capacity-building for professionals in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean on rainwater harvesting knowledge and environmentally sound practices; and to allow the trained professionals to develop further his/her experience and to participate in projects using this newly acquired knowledge.

The E-Learning Course on "Rainwater Harvesting" was successfully developed by the ESPOL with the support of the Government of Flanders and in coordination with CAZALAC and UNESCO/IHP. As for its testing and validation, the course needed to be implemented on line by using a facilitator and a tutor that shall assess the course contents, modality, and design, as well as the logistics needed to deliver it. In addition, the statistics to assess the course was assessed prior to opening the course to a broader public. The course shall be located in a SIDWeb platform containing Moodle and other LMS functionalities, and that corrects some of it weaknesses. This platform is open source what makes the course free of licensing costs and thus, easy to adopt by the different institutions in the region willing to deliver it in the future.

## **II. Description of project activities undertaken during the reporting period**

(a) The workshop took place on the third week in August 2009 in Santiago, Chile, with participation of a group of experts from the Americas, and with representatives from the Donor institution. A base document was distributed in advance containing the main aspects of the proposal that were derived from the preceding phases, and constituted the main basis for the meeting.

A preliminary document was agreed by the participants, containing the main lines of action that should direct the Centre's workplan in the coming years. A consolidated document was developed and shared with the group for further discussion through an exchange via e-mail. Also the donor and UNESCO made their remarks on the contents of the proposal in order to consider the interests of both entities.

(b) The development and application of an e-learning system in whole Latin America and the Caribbean could lead to a better positioning of CAZALAC as a regional centre of information on water resources issues in scarce areas. In this sense, the institution that developed the course proposed an implementation plan by using UNESCO/HELP Programme that has many pilot studies.

### **III. Lessons learned and Sustainability**

(a) The proposal put forward by the group has result in a comprehensive document that has taken into consideration not only the ideas of the people directly involved in CAZALAC (such as UNESCO/IHP and the donor), but also experts from the region, some of them representing key institutions in water management of the Americas. Thus, it can be inferred that the documents represents the different needs and requirements present in the region and for what the Centre could be accountable for through its work.

Moreover, throughout the development process, the Centre has reaffirmed the commitment of several of its key partners in the region that have expressed their interest of supporting specific actions or programmes.

The granting of a III Phase of support to the Centre by the FUST will allow the Centre to strengthen its role as reference institution on water management for the arid and semiarid regions. In addition, would support CAZALAC to focus in those areas that have been identified as major issues for water management in this particularly vulnerable environments.

(b) The internet has become a basic tool for information sharing making it possible to reach a wider audience that is usually less receptive to technical and scientific knowledge. The popularization of such tool opens new possibilities of offering training and capacity-building to those offer forgotten by traditional formal education because of costs and/or logistic constraints. Furthermore, the use of e-learning gives CAZALAC the chance of not only reaching an audience that is often more directly linked with management in-situ, but also of providing a knowledge base on innovative non traditional management.

These type of courses might be further extended in the region through agreements with different institutions in LAC, especially those who have already expressed their interest of working with CAZALAC. This course might be the starting point to a series of training activities that could be delivered by the Centre on similar topics within the CAZALAC aims and objectives.

### **IV. Evaluation recommendations when applicable**

It is recommended that the FUST continues fostering these small grants to support activities that are related to the larger projects funded through this Fund in Trust. This grants provide the basis for project development and follow-up of activities beyond the projects themselves.

Especially in relation to the e-learning courses, they appear to be an excellent tool for knowledge dissemination to a broader public in the region. The use of such tools in coordination with the strategic partners of the Centre in the region should be encouraged, especially in those areas where clear needs in the field of action of CAZALAC of training and capacity-building have been identified by the countries of the region.

**V. Visibility: describe any visibility action implemented during the reporting period**

(a) The preparation of the III Phase of CAZALA's support by the FUST has engaged the Centre in a process of rethinking its water agenda, what has been done in close consultation to key partners in the region. Furthermore, along this proposal development, the Centre has strengthened its links with the water community in the region that has confirmed its support to CAZALAC and expressed their interest of continuing working with the Centre in the future. The role of the Centre at the regional level has become clear during this exercise, becoming a pillar for UNESCO as a water-related Category II Centre in the implementation of its water-related actions.

(b) In relation to the implementation of the e-learning course, CAZALAC and ESPOL, with the support of UNESCO/IHP-LAC have fostered the development of the pilot course, and are now working towards the arrangement to distribute the course throughout the region. As many other activities put forward in LAC by the Centre, the course has raised the attention of the Member States who undergo water scarcity problems and for which rainwater harvesting might be applicable. In addition, the theme of the course itself falls within one of the major action lines of the future workplan of CAZALAC, namely water augmentation techniques. Several other activities on this issue have been developed and are indeed being planned by the Centre together with UNESCO and other key partners, making this area one of the focal action lines of the Centre's capacity-building and research activities.