



**Sanitation and Water for All:  
A Global Framework for Action**

**Governing Document**

This Governing Document was decided on May 21 2010 by the Interim Core Group of *Sanitation and Water for All: A Global Framework for Action*.

## ***1. Preamble***

Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) is a partnership of national governments, donors, multilaterals, civil society organizations and other development partners in the water and sanitation sector.

The ultimate goal of Sanitation and Water for All is to ensure sanitation and water for all people globally. **Universal access to water supply and sanitation** is a fundamental underpinning of good health, dignity and prosperity. Achieving universal access will be difficult and will not be achieved quickly. However, universal access to water supply and sanitation impacts all other areas of development and should be a guiding principle along with a focus on sustainability to ensure access is maintained over time.

As of 2010, with 5 years left to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Sanitation and Water for All has an **immediate focus on accelerating progress towards the MDGs**.

The activities of Sanitation and Water for All are guided by the beliefs and aims expressed in the Guiding Principles. (Found at [www.sanitationandwaterforall.org](http://www.sanitationandwaterforall.org)) These Principles are not legally binding.

This Governing Document has been developed to ensure that Sanitation and Water for All is operating under a structure of good governance – notably internal mechanisms for transparency, accountability and balanced representation of interests – as well as effective structures for management and oversight of Sanitation and Water for All activities. It is designed to enable Sanitation and Water for All to be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances, through efficient and inclusive decision-making structures.

## ***2. Overview of Governance Structure***

### ***International level governance***

This Governing Document outlines the governance arrangements of Sanitation and Water for All at the international level, which are based on the following components:

- ***Partnership:*** All Sanitation and Water for All Partners, sub-divided into constituencies; it elects and delegates decision-making authority to the Steering Committee and Chair; it meets in an annual Partnership Meeting with senior representation from each Partner, to review the progress of Sanitation and Water for All and provide advice to the Steering Committee; it is kept informed of the work of the Steering Committee during the year and may be consulted on certain key decisions.
- ***Steering Committee:*** Representative sub-group of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership (14-32 person), with an allocation of seats for each constituency; drives forward the initiative; holds decision-making authority and oversees all Sanitation and Water for All activities; meets regularly through the year; may set up and oversee sub-committees to carry out key tasks and functions.

- **Secretariat:** Supports the functioning of the initiative; serves the Partnership, as tasked by the Steering Committee; carries out any tasks required for Sanitation and Water for All activities which are not taken on by Partners themselves; will be funded or resourced by Partners through specific agreements separate to this Governing Document; is hosted by a Partner organisation or other arrangement funded by a Partner (UNICEF at time of transition).

### ***National and regional level governance***

The intention of the Sanitation and Water for All partners is not to create new structures at national/regional level or impose standard governance mechanisms for any activities at these levels. Rather, Sanitation and Water for All will rely on existing country and regional mechanisms wherever possible, and the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee will liaise with these. Where this is not possible, proposals regarding new national or regional mechanisms will require consultation with the Steering Committee.

### ***Interaction with other governance structures of Sanitation and Water for All related activities***

The governance arrangements of Sanitation and Water for All do not supersede existing governance arrangements of related activities such as the Global Annual Assessment on Drinking-Water and Sanitation (GLAAS). GLAAS is an independent UN-Water report, carried out by WHO, endorsed by Sanitation and Water for All. The governing bodies of Sanitation and Water for All will communicate and liaise with the institutions involved, to achieve optimum synergy in pursuit of Sanitation and Water for All objectives.

### ***Financial oversight***

The governance structures of Sanitation and Water for All do not hold any financial authority. Any funding provided by Partners for Sanitation and Water for All operations or activities will have its own dedicated financial oversight and governance mechanisms. Funding Partners may allocate the Steering Committee as specific advice or guidance role, for which decision-making will be according to this document.

### ***Activities***

The activities of Sanitation and Water for All will evolve with time according to sector needs and opportunities, and commitments from Partners. As at September 2010, an annual High Level Meeting is envisaged as one core activity. The Global Annual Assessment on Drinking-Water and Sanitation (GLAAS) which is governed by UN-Water and WHO will also be closely coordinated with Sanitation and Water for All activities.

## ***3. The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership***

### ***Composition of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership***

The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership is the collective term for all Sanitation and Water for All Partners. Partners in Sanitation and Water for All are organisations supportive of the guiding principles and aims of the initiative, who agree to make concerted efforts to adhere to these principles and progress these aims. Partners join Sanitation and Water for All

by providing a written expression of interest to the Secretariat. Partner status can be terminated or refused by decision of the Steering Committee if the integrity of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership or its guiding principles is threatened by the action of the Partner or applicant. Sanitation and Water for All Partners cannot be for-profit organisations, although they may include not-for-profit associations or networks of for-profit organisations.

Partners to the Sanitation and Water for All may be invited to pay a partnership fee. At the inauguration of Sanitation and Water for All, this fee was set at zero but subject to review, and can be altered at the decision of the Steering Committee. All financial support is provided through voluntary contributions or in-kind support. Partners are expected to commit the necessary human and financial resources to enable their full participation in Sanitation and Water for All, including expenses. Partners unable to commit financial resources may request financial support from the Sanitation and Water for All Secretariat to cover travel and other reimbursable expenses. The Chair will facilitate the process of referring these requests to funders of Sanitation and Water for All activities, in accordance with the relevant funding arrangements.

#### *Sanitation and Water for All constituencies*

SWA Partners fall into six constituencies:

- **Developing Country Partners** (Any Low Income Country government or Middle-Income Country government which is off-track for the water and/or sanitation MDG targets; including regional governmental associations)
- **Donor Partners** (governmental donor agencies, or private foundations, providing funding to water and sanitation)
- **Multilateral Partners** (UN or other multilateral agencies/mechanisms engaged on water and sanitation)
- **Development Banks** (global or regional development banks)
- **Civil society Partners** (CSO): (regional and global associations of not-for-profit CSOs engaged on water and sanitation)
- **Sector Partners** (International organisation with recognised sector expertise and influence; this may include not-for-profit associations of private sector)

#### *The role of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership*

The Partnership, through its constituencies, will elect the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee, a representative sub-set of Sanitation and Water for All Partners. The Partnership will delegate all other decision-making authority to this Steering Committee, as laid out in Section 4. The Steering Committee will in return commit to providing information transparently to all Partners. Significant issues may be circulated for consultation, at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership will meet at least annually to play an oversight role of the initiative, within the context of accelerating progress towards universal access to water and sanitation.

### *SWA Partnership meeting*

The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership Meeting will facilitate the Partnership's fulfilment of its role and provide a forum for dialogue between Partners. The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership Meeting will be attended by one official delegate from each partner organisation. Recognising the important role of partnership for success of the initiative, partners are encouraged to be represented at senior/decision-making level. The Partnership meeting will be co-chaired by the incoming and outgoing Chairs of the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee.

The core objectives of the Partnership Meeting are to:

1. Review progress based on reports from the Steering Committee and provide advice to the Steering Committee on the general direction and strategic priorities of the Partnership and major activities such as the annual High Level Meeting;
2. Provide a forum for involvement for those Partners who are not formally represented elsewhere in the governance structure;
3. Mobilize and sustain global coordination, political commitment and momentum to achieve universal access to water supply and sanitation.
4. Advocate in support of continued resource mobilization, improved aid effectiveness, and inclusion of new partners;
5. Exchange information and good practice on implementation of partner country and donor activity in support of Sanitation and Water for All objectives.

### *Timing of Sanitation and Water for All Partnership Meetings*

As far as possible, to reduce costs and maximize participation the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership Meeting will be held in tandem with another sector meeting at which the majority of Partners will be present. The region of meeting will be varied in order to facilitate attendance by all Partners. The Sanitation and Water for All Partnership meeting is not the High Level Meeting as the two meetings have different attendees and purposes.

Regional or national partnership meetings may also be considered when relevant, utilizing existing mechanisms and meetings.

## ***4. The Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee***

### *Composition of the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee*

The Steering Committee will have a minimum of 14 and maximum of 32 members, plus the Chair. A smaller committee is desirable for efficiency and manageability, provided there is a sufficient level of transparency and mutual trust between Partners at large. There may be sub-arrangements such as one Partner making arrangements to represent a sub-group of countries or organisations. The higher upper limit gives Sanitation and Water for All Partners some discretion according to need: in some years it may be desirable for more Partners to participate directly in the SC to give it the authority to make joint commitments, and build broad ownership and buy-in.

Members will be representatives of their Partner Constituency and serve in an institutional rather than personal capacity. They should have the necessary authority within their institution

to make or rapidly facilitate the decisions required to achieve the objectives of SWA. These might include decisions regarding coordinated action or messaging, joint aims or commitments, or regarding activities under Sanitation and Water for All where the funding Partners have allocated this role to the SC.

Representatives from Partners or other relevant organisations may be invited by the Steering Committee to attend Steering Committee Meetings as “observers”, when this can be practically accommodated.

The committee size needs to be appropriate for i) efficient operations and ii) inclusive representation of Partner interests. Over time, depending on the membership, Partner resources and scope of work of SWA, the requisite number will vary. This Governing Document therefore sets out flexible parameters. A narrower number of seats (allocated by constituency) for the incoming Steering Committee will be determined each year by a decision of the outgoing Steering Committee, at the start of the election process (2 months before the Partnership meeting).

The seats will represent all the Partnership Constituencies as follows:

- Developing Country Partners (4-6 seats)
- Donor Partners (3 to 6 seats)
- Multilateral (2 to 4 seats)
- Development Banks (1 to 5 seats)
- Regional CSO networks or campaigns (2 to 4 seats)
- Global/international CSO networks or campaigns (1 to 2 seats)
- Sector Partners (0 to 3 seats)
- Secretariat host (1 *ex officio* seat)
- HLM host (1 *ex officio* seat if different from secretariat host)

The composition of the Steering Committee each year will be guided by the following principles (to be monitored as desirable aims):

- Balanced regional representation
- Balanced representation of sanitation and water sectors
- A range of necessary technical competences and institutional perspectives
- Avoidance of conflict of interest and/or capture of the Sanitation and Water for All agenda by vested interests (a detailed Conflict of Interest Policy will also be developed)
- Gender balance: at least 1/3 of the representatives should be women and at least 1/3 of the representatives should be men
- Balance between governmental and non-governmental

### *Election of the Steering Committee*

There will be an election process every year, for roughly half the seats on the Steering Committee members (exact proportion will vary as the size of the committee varies). Each elected member of the Steering Committee will serve a two-year term (except for the inaugural Committee when half the inaugural members will be elected for a one-year term only). A Partner and member can stand for re-election on completion of their term on the Standing Committee.

The Steering Committee members will be elected by their respective Partnership Constituency in a process initiated two months prior to the annual Partnership Meeting. The election process will be overseen and facilitated by the Secretariat, following respective Constituency Rules which will be determined by agreement of the Partners in the Constituency and endorsed by the Steering Committee.

The full Committee membership which emerges from these Constituency election processes will proceed to elect the Chair and Vice Chair in a vote. The annual Partnership meeting date will mark the handover from one year's Steering Committee to the next.

If a Member is unable to fulfil her/his duties temporarily or permanently, the Partner institution can designate an alternate. If a Partner institution itself becomes unable to fulfil the role with sufficient dedication of time and resources, it may step down and relinquish the seat. In such a case an election can be held by the relevant constituency according to a process approved by the Steering Committee, with 'no objections' process to the Partnership. A Member or Partner elected mid-term serves only the remainder of the term.

#### *Commitments and Rights of Steering Committee Members*

By joining the Steering Committee, Partner organisations and individually assigned members commit to dedicate the necessary time and engagement for the effective functioning of the work of SWA, to accept the leadership of the Chair, and to be responsive to communications from the Secretariat.

All Steering Committee Members will be voting members. Observers have no voting rights, but may be invited to express their views on specific matters. The Steering Committee may decide that certain items should be discussed without observers present.

#### *Chair of the Steering Committee<sup>1</sup>*

The Steering Committee will be led by an elected Chair and Vice-Chair, who will also act as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Partnership Meeting. Both roles are in his/her personal capacity.

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected by the members of the new Steering Committee. Both will be elected for one year in his/her personal capacity and can be re-elected for up to three terms. Election shall be conducted through a cast of vote. If three or more candidates are running for election, a second vote will be held if none of the candidates receive at least 50% of member's votes. The second round will be between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the first round.

In the event that the Chair is unable to continue for a full term, the Vice-Chair will take over for the remainder of that term. In the event that the Vice-Chair is unable to continue for a full term, a new Vice-Chair will be elected among the Steering Committee members and will serve for the remainder of that term.

Since the Chair will act in his/her personal capacity, the Constituency from which s/he comes is entitled to elect an additional member of the SC, if that Constituency so wishes. Subject to

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<sup>1</sup> At the ICG meeting of May 20-21 2010, it was agreed that an independent chair will be selected. The precise terms of this appointment have yet to be decided and this paragraph will be amended to reflect those decisions. The election process for the Vice-chair will remain as described above.

SC agreement and no conflict of interest, this might be from the same Partner institution as the Chair. In this event, the Chair becomes a non-voting member.

The Vice Chair will act as an SC member in his/her institutional capacity, unless he/she is substituting for the Chair. If the Vice Chair takes over on a permanent basis, a new Vice Chair will be elected by the Constituency.

The Chair has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Convening and chairing regular SC meetings
- Developing, contributing to and overseeing the implementation of the SC's work
- As Sanitation and Water for All evolves, helping build consensus between members on common objectives and to ensure a common understanding of critical points
- Keeping oversight of open and transparent communications between Partners and the SC; guaranteeing accessibility of information.
- Supporting, and monitoring the work of any Standing Committees or Task Teams to ensure that mandates are respected, tasks are completed, and they work in a complementary fashion.
- Supporting members in their promotion of Sanitation and Water for All in the political arena, and providing a figurehead role within the collective political leadership of Sanitation and Water for All
- Expanding understanding and awareness of Sanitation and Water for All and increasing its membership, particularly amongst the leading sector stakeholders and under-represented groups
- Building strategic partnerships between Sanitation and Water for All and similar, complementary or competing initiatives
- Working with the members to raise funds for Sanitation and Water for All secretariat and activities, and to assist in monitoring that Sanitation and Water for All resources are spent wisely and in accordance with the members' applicable financial rules and procedures
- Issuing correspondence on behalf of Sanitation and Water for All and following up on administrative issues related to Sanitation and Water for All activities
- Representation/ liaison as needed with UN-Water, and other bodies and parties.

The Vice Chair acts as alternate for the Chair, and may take on additional roles and responsibilities as agreed with the Chair and Steering Committee.

#### *The role of the Steering Committee*

The Steering Committee has the overall responsibility for management of the SWA, including but not limited to:

- Decision-making on behalf of the Partnership
- Oversight of agreed activities, including approving any Sanitation and Water for All work programmes and commenting on budgets where appropriate
- Creation and oversight of sub-committees of the Steering Committee as required

- Definition and approval of election processes for the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee each year
- Definition of concept and oversight of the Partnership Meetings
- Guidance of the High Level Meeting and other agreed SWA activities
- Oversight and tasking of the Sanitation and Water for All Secretariat in conjunction with the Secretariat Host

*Steering Committee Organisation of Work (including meetings)*

The Steering Committee will meet at least six times a year, including meetings held by teleconference, videoconference or other electronic means. At least two meetings per year should be held in person, wherever possible through the attendance of Steering Committee members to global events. The Coordinator of the Secretariat shall serve as Secretary of the Steering Committee, including drafting and circulation of agenda and minutes, timely notice of the time and place of all meetings, and facilitation of attendance for all members including by electronic means. If possible, draft decisions should be prepared by the Secretariat prior to the Steering Committee meeting.

Steering Committee Member organisations will when possible host and support SC physical meetings, in collaboration with the Secretariat.

Since the Sanitation and Water for All is not an organization with a legal entity, activities of the Sanitation and Water for All are implemented either by a defined partner and/or other organizations or the Sanitation and Water for All Secretariat, which is hosted by one Sanitation and Water for All Partner. This may be summarised in an annual work programme or similar document, at the discretion of the Steering Committee. At the request of the Chair, an activity may require a dedicated coordinator who will be responsible for the identified activity and provide reports directly to the Steering Committee regarding its scope of work, programme, deliverables and timelines.

The work of the Steering Committee may also be supported by Standing Committees or time and task-bound Task Teams addressing aspects of particular importance to the SWA. Proposals to establish Standing Committees or Task Teams may come from Steering Committee members and/or from recommendations by the Partners Council. Each Standing Committee and each Task Team shall be headed by a coordinator appointed by and reporting to the Steering Committee. The coordinator and members of working groups may be Steering Committee or Sanitation and Water for All Partner members. They will determine their own meeting arrangements in consultation with the Chair and Secretariat.

The Chair will invite Steering Committee member to raise any issue they wish to be reflected on the agenda, at least 2 weeks prior to each meeting. Members can be asked by the Secretariat, in agreement with the SC, to prepare draft decisions for the SC.

Transparency and accountability will guide the operations of the Steering Committee. The minutes and decisions from Steering Committee meetings as well as other documentation will be, to the greatest extent possible, made available not only to all Sanitation and Water for All Partners but also be posted on the Sanitation and Water for All dedicated website. The annual report will be available through the Sanitation and Water for All dedicated website. Hardcopies of the documents can be requested from the Secretariat.

The Partnership Meeting and High Level Meeting will be conducted in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish as required to enable full and equal participation by Partners. Sanitation and Water for All will aspire to utilize languages other than English as appropriate and affordable.

When specific decisions are required at a Steering Committee meeting, attendance by at least two-thirds of the Steering Committee members, with at least one member from each of the six constituencies, will constitute a quorum.

Decision making at Steering Committee meetings shall be sought through consensus among all attending members. The Steering Committee and Chair will make all efforts to make decisions by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, in exceptional circumstances the Chair may call for a vote. In order to pass, motions require a two-thirds majority of those present.

#### *Budget planning, oversight and reporting*

The Steering Committee will not manage any funds, but will review and endorse all proposed budgets for Sanitation and Water for All activities and the Sanitation and Water for All secretariat.

The Steering Committee will be kept informed of funding sources and levels for Secretariat and Sanitation and Water for All activities by the Partners providing or managing such funding.

Funding will be provided by Partners through an appropriate mechanism. This may include an MDTF arrangement with UN-Water.

Reporting requirements will be stipulated separately in any funding arrangement.

An annual report of activities will be prepared by the Secretariat. The annual report will be circulated at least two weeks prior to the Partnership Meeting by the Chair of the Steering Committee.

### ***5. The Sanitation and Water for All Secretariat***

The work of the Steering Committee will be supported by a Secretariat. The Secretariat's human resources will include a Coordinator who serves as the Secretary of the Steering Committee, and technical or support personnel as determined by the activities of SWA and available funding. This can include consultants on short-term contracts for specific tasks.

The Secretariat will be hosted by a Partner or Partners, or through another host arrangement funded by Partners. This may include more than one organisation operating as a consortium. The funders of the secretariat will undertake all necessary processes to ensure value for money.

While individual staff may be located in, and contracted by, different organisations, the Secretariat will remain cohesive, avoid duplication and ensure clarity of contact points for Partners and external parties. The Secretariat Coordinator is responsible for ensuring this.

Sanitation and Water for All is envisaged to be partner-centric, and therefore some core activities may be managed directly by Partners. Secretariat staff can be employed directly within that Partner organisation, working under their reporting structures in support of Sanitation and Water for All. All organisations hosting Secretariat staff commit to close and transparent liaison with each other, and in particular with the Secretariat Coordinator.

The overarching Terms of Reference for the Secretariat will be one document approved and reviewed periodically by the Steering Committee. The Terms of Reference for individual secretariat staff will be shared with the Steering Committee and will abide by the relevant funding agreement. While the individual personnel will necessarily report and be accountable to their employer under the hosting arrangements, the TORs will make clear that the secretariat works in support of the Sanitation and Water for All Steering Committee, on behalf of the Partnership.

If it is determined by the Steering Committee that the Secretariat hosting arrangements should be changed or a host is unable to continue filling this role, the Steering Committee will determine a suitable process to identify new hosting arrangements. Suitable time will be allowed for any such transfer in order not to damage Sanitation and Water for All activities

The degree of independence of the secretariat from the host(s) will be reviewed periodically by the Steering Committee, and is one important determinant in selecting the hosting arrangement.

## ***6. Review and Revision of the ‘Governing Document’***

A full review of the governance arrangements of the Sanitation and Water for All should be undertaken by the Steering Committee within two years of the constitution of the Partnership and every two years thereafter.

This Governing Document may be amended by a decision of the Steering Committee. A proposal for an amendment shall be communicated in writing for consultation to all Partners four weeks in advance of this decision.

## ***7. Review of the Partnership***

Sanitation and Water for All will ensure an external review is periodically carried out of 1) the progress achieved and 2) relevance of the partnership to continue.