

Virtual Steering Committee Meeting Minutes | 25 September 2019



Participants

Steering Committee Members

1. Patrick Moriarty, Steering Committee Chair (PM)
2. Alvaro Araya Garcia, Costa Rica (AAG)
3. Amanda Marlin, UNICEF (AM)
4. Andre Nonguierma, Burkina Faso (AN)
5. Anna Virginia Machado, LabGea (AVM)
6. Bethania Tellechea, Paraguay (BT)
7. Catarina de Albuquerque, SWA CEO (CTA)
8. Djoouro Bocom, Mali (DB)
9. Erma Uytewaal, IRC (EU)
10. Lisa Schechtman, USAID (LS)
11. Lotte Feuerstein, WIN (LF)
12. Mohammed Zobair Hasan, DORP (MZH)
13. Neil Dhot, Aquafed (ND)
14. Pie Djivo, Benin (PD)
15. Sareen Malik, ANEW (SM)

Observers

1. Federico Properzi, UN-Water (FP)

Guests

2. Paul Deverill - DFID on behalf of the HLPDWG (PD)

Secretariat

3. Joost Kooijmans, COO (JK)
4. Angie Saleh, Governance and Partnerships (AS)
5. Virginia Roaf, Mutual Accountability Mechanism Advisor (VR)
6. Heloise Chicou, CSO Adviser (HC)
7. Ludovica Bartoli, Programme Support (LB)
8. Soumeya Benbouchta, Programme Support (SB)

Did not attend

1. Dominick de Waal, World Bank
2. Felister Lyimo Massa, Tanzania
3. Sumaira Gul, AHKMT
4. Pim van der Male, The Netherlands
5. Kepha Ombacho, Kenya
6. Nguyen Thi Lien Huong, Viet Nam
7. Nicholas Igwe, Zenith Water Projects
8. Eswatini
9. Sue Coates, WSSCC
10. Tejraj Bhatt, Nepal
11. Vanessa Dubois, ARCA

Summary of Decisions

| Decisions | Responsible | Deadline |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Decision 1: Agenda The Steering Committee (SC) approves the Meeting Agenda | Secretariat | Effective Immediately |
| Decision 2: Minutes The Steering Committee approves the minutes of the June 2019 meeting after amending the list of participants. | Secretariat | Effective Immediately |
| Decision 3: Revised Budget The Steering Committee approves the revised budget for 2019. | Secretariat | Effective Immediately |
| Decision 4: Strengthening the Geneva Hub The Steering Committee approves the proposal to relocate the current CEO and the P2 Executive officer that will support her to the SWA Geneva Hub. | Secretariat | Effective Immediately |
| Decision 5: The Steering Committee asks the Secretariat to call for an additional Virtual Steering Committee meeting before the December face-to-face meeting to address issues relating to the evaluation of the secretariat as well as future funding and priorities for fundraising. | Secretariat | Mid October – Mid November |

Summary of Actions

| Actions | Responsible | Deadline |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Action 1: SC to join the next Virtual meeting 30 minutes in advance to avoid any delays. | SC | Next Virtual SC Meeting |
| Action 2: Poll to decide on date for upcoming extraordinary virtual meeting (to discuss Secretariat performance and Fundraising) | Secretariat | By Mid-October |
| Action 3: Share FMM concept note with FMM TT and HLPDWG | Secretariat | Second week of October |
| Action 4: Part of upcoming SC retreat will be on Strategy | Strategy WG and Secretariat | December SC meeting |
| Action 5: Share comments to strategy with the SC | Strategy WG and Secretariat | |
| Action 6: Summaries of regional strategy consultations | Secretariat | After every consultation |
| Action 7: Elaboration of different scenarios for operation of the partnership according to potential availability of funds | Secretariat | Ahead of December SC Meeting |
| Action 8: The SC to discuss reflections on how the governance structure is working during the retreat part of the next SC Meeting in December. | SC Chair | December SC meeting |
| Action 9: Secretariat TORs | Secretariat | Ahead of December SC Meeting |

Session 1 Introductions and Overview

Patrick Moriarty & Catarina de Albuquerque

PM welcomed the Steering Committee (SC) and asked the Secretariat to ensure the meeting had the quorum required for taking decisions. PM asked the SC to join the next Virtual SC Meeting 30 minutes before the start of the meeting. PM asked for feedback on the agenda and on the minutes of the previous SC meeting (Berlin, June 2019). Both documents were approved with no objections.

PM then gave an update on actions pending from the June 20, 2019 SC meeting:

Decisions 5 and 12 and Action 4. For an update on Decision 5 see discussion in Session 2: Finance Ministers' Meeting Update.

Regarding Decision 12, Monitoring of the Secretariat Performance, the SC decided to discuss the performance of the Secretariat in a dedicated virtual meeting before the next SC meeting. PM asked the Secretariat to send out a poll to decide on a date for this dedicated virtual meeting.

CTA then gave an update on Action 4 informing that the decision for the Country Processes Work Group and High-level Political Dialogue Work Group to hire a consultant to support the development of SWA's Regional Engagement Strategy has been included in overall strategy development assigned to the strategy consultants. The Secretariat is also conducting regional consultations on the strategy in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Decision 1: Agenda

The Steering Committee (SC) approves the draft agenda for the meeting.

Decision 2: Minutes

The Steering Committee approves the minutes of the June 2019 meeting.

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Action 1: The SC to join the next Virtual meeting 30 minutes in advance to avoid delays.

Action 2: The Secretariat to send out a poll to decide on a date for the extraordinary SC meeting.

Session 2: 2020 Finance Ministers' Meeting Update

Angie Saleh

AS speaking on behalf of Paul Deverill (HLPWG), informed the SC that the FMM Task Team has been formed, and has been working. Bill Kingdom (former World Bank's Water Global Practice (WGP)) was hired. A concept note was drafted in consultation with the Task Team and used as a basis for initial discussions with WGP, the note having been updated and shared with them for feedback. The concept will then be shared with the FMM Task Team/HLPDWG for sign-off, ideally by the second week of October. The briefing note/background will then be prepared for the meeting to kick-start the country preparatory process. A HLPDWG meeting was held two weeks ago.

The country preparatory process will include testing ideas and interacting with Ministries of finance through the SWA partners within countries, led both by government and country-level partners. The first webinar is scheduled for November.

PM stated that discussions with the World Bank evolved around garnering interest for the WASH sector with the aim to identify champions that are supporting WASH. An aspect of this is to make the case for the sector among finance ministers, moving beyond the narrative of the sector as a drain on finances. PM further engaged about the objectives of the country preparatory processes and whether the priority is to engage ministers of finance from partner countries, prepare them or prepare the ground for FMM follow-ups?

Making reference to the Finance Handbook for Ministers, CTA noted that it will serve to support the participatory process.

Action 3: The Secretariat to share the FMM concept note with the FMM TT and then with the HLPDWG as soon as it is ready.

Session 3: Strategy Process and Regional Consultations Update

Lisa Schechtman

LS noted that the Strategy Working Group (SWG) has collaborated with the secretariat and The Partnering Initiative to develop a statement of purpose and has reviewed a draft outline and a few distinct pieces of the strategy. Regional consultations will be conducted to gather voices from all constituencies in all regions. One was held in Stockholm, where about 50 people provided useful feedback on how to make our story resonate better to people unaware of our work. The second consultation is in Kathmandu and will be followed by consultations in Peru and Zambia.

Once the consultation in Kathmandu is completed, TPI will begin writing a full zero draft of the strategy taking on board the inputs from Stockholm and Kathmandu. The zero draft should be expected for circulation for a first phase of feedback in about 3 weeks' time. It will be disseminated among the SWG, the CPWG and constituencies for comments. It will be a basis of discussions for the LAC and Africa consultations.

The retreat at the next SC meeting in December will be devoted to discussing the draft Strategy. PD asked for a timeline of the strategy development process and how far along the road map the process is. LS also noted that there have been a couple of WG or constituency written submissions on the strategy. LS noted that these will be shared with the SC. PM also noted that it would be useful to have short summaries of those consultations.

Action 4: There will be a session to discuss the Strategy during the upcoming SC retreat in December.

Action 5: WG or constituency written submissions to be shared with SC.

Action 6: Secretariat will prepare and share with SC summaries of regional strategy consultations.

Session 4: Mutual Accountability Mechanism (MAM) Update

Virginia Roaf

VR informed the Steering Committee that the secretariat is working with partners to follow up on commitments, to discuss progress towards meeting them, as well as processes for monitoring and reviewing the commitments. Commitments are still being submitted to the database and subsequently to the website. The MAM is an opportunity to promote and strengthen joint sector

reviews or equivalent. A Webinar on progress regarding the Mutual Accountability Mechanism will take place at the end of October. Several organizations offered to collaborate on research on aspects of the MAM.

Session 5: Financial Update

Joost Kooijmans

JK updated the Steering Committee on the proposed budget revision, indicating that the finance and performance working group had already approved it. Most grants are expiring in 2019 and a few in 2020. Expenditure levels are being monitored on regular basis. The overall fund utilization rate for the secretariat is 85% - a significant improvement from 52% in December 2018. All grants expiring in 2019 will be fully depleted. The following changes are proposed:

Two objectives will require a moderate increase: Objective 1 - Increase political prioritization for sanitation, hygiene and water and Objective 5 - Follow-up and review progress achieved in implementing sanitation, water and hygiene targets of the SDGs, which will require 23,000 and 93,000 dollars respectively. A larger increase in Objective 2 - Strengthen government-led national processes, is required because of the costs of country engagement. The increase needed is 324,275 dollars. Under Objective 3 - Evidence for decision making - there are savings of about 115,000 dollars, which can be used to cover some of the governance costs. In governance, there are higher expenditures due to the strategy development, which was not initially budgeted. The SC meetings are more expensive than foreseen because more people were invited than originally anticipated.

The new proposed ceiling is a 712,099 USD increase, which will bring the budget to 5,273,693 dollars (without the recovery fee to UNICEF). This will allow for the conclusion of all the work planned for 2019. The total budget, including programme support costs for UNICEF is going to be 5.695,588 million dollars. JK noted that the proposed revision can be funded without touching any of the money set aside for 2020.

LF proposed clearer headings in the budget table, on what is "Planned" and what is "propose change". JK noted that the proposed budget structure for 2020 will be changed and aligned with the new strategy. EU noted a 14% increase seemed reasonable.

CTA briefed the SC on future fundraising scenarios. Majority of grants are expiring at the end of this year. Without the strategy in place, donors are currently just extending grants to cover 2020. After the first Strategy Draft is ready, the CEO will start fundraising for multi-year grants.

The Netherlands agreed to a 2 million grant for 2020. The Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (SDC) agreed in principle to a 1.5 million grant for the next 3 years. We hope to keep the same level of support (approx. million each) from UK and the US. Sida will extend the grant for 0.5 million for next year.

What are the 4 possible scenarios for the coming years?

1. None of the grants for 2020 will materialize. Secretariat prepares the FMM as planned, salaries would be paid until the existing contracts end and consultancies would be ended as of April/May 2020. The Secretariat functions would need to be carried by partners from May 2020 onwards.

2. Grants for 2020 are received, but donors do not support the 2020-2030 strategy and do not give SWA any multi-year grants. The Secretariat functions would need to be carried out by partners from the end of 2020 onwards.
3. Grants are confirmed, the Secretariat will have approximately 6.2 million dollars for 2020. Secretariat will be able to operate as of now.
4. There is overwhelming support for the 2020-2030 strategy, leading current donors to increase their support and new donors to come on board. The level of capacity of the current Secretariat to support the partnership and the number of activities would increase.

When asked what are the priorities of current donors for SWA's 2020-2030 strategy CTA informed that some mentioned climate change, gender, water resources management, articulation with other sectors, as well as human rights. Some donors also mentioned the importance of collaborating closely with other partnerships and organizations working on SDG6.

PD asked for clarification on the major themes emerging in the strategy discussions. LS noted that there is a donor consensus statement being developed on forward looking priorities. LS stated that any statement or comments by constituencies or groups should be made in relation to the upcoming Draft 0.

Decision 3: Revised Budget

The Steering Committee approves the revised budget for 2019.

Decision 5: Extraordinary Virtual SC Meeting

The Steering Committee asks the Secretariat to call for an extraordinary Virtual Steering Committee meeting before the December face-to-face meeting to address issues relating to the evaluation of the secretariat as well as future funding and priorities for fundraising.

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Action 7: Operating Scenarios in light of funding availability

The secretariat will document the different scenarios for operation of the partnership according to potential availability of funds and share them with the SC.

Session 6: Human Resources

Patrick Moriarty & Joost Kooijmans

PM gave an overview of the three Human Resources related issues to discuss. Firstly, the proposal to shift the CEO's and CEO's personal assistant, the Executive Officer, location from New York to Geneva. Secondly an update on the UNICEF hosted positions and thirdly an update on the positions hosted by LNEC and IRC. Regarding the first point, PM mentioned that for both personal and professional reasons relating to the CEO's and the partnership's best interest in this matter, the proposal is being made for the move to Geneva. The Secretariat prepared a background paper, which was shared with the SC prior to this meeting.

In response to this, AM made a statement on behalf of UNICEF explaining that UNICEF will follow whichever decision the SC takes. She then continued stating that UNICEF does not support the proposal. In their capacity as Secretariat host, UNICEF believes that it is not conducive to good management practice to have the CEO separate from the administrative and budgeting functions of the secretariat. In their capacity as partners, UNICEF is against the move because Geneva is a more expensive duty station than New York.

PM opened the floor for comments, recalling that the background document clearly states the reasons for the request of relocation, the potential risks and challenges for that as well as sums up the distribution of functions of the two potential SWA hubs.

LS mentioned that she shares some of UNICEF's concerns about management, particularly in light of the need to align Secretariat staffing against the new Strategy. She then informed the SC that also she would agree with a final decision.

Djoouro Bocoum (DB) requested clarifications and detailed reasons behind this transfer. LF stressed that she also partly shared the concerns of UNICEF and USAID and highlighted that the success of the proposed solution will very much depend on whether there will be clear decision-making processes and good communication between the CEO and the COO.

PM thanked the SC for their comments and suggested to take those comments into consideration and come back to this for a decision during Session 7.

JK updated the SC on the other UNICEF hosted positions, informing that the Secretariat has completed the recruitment of the P4 Country Engagement Specialist (who will also be based in Geneva according to previous SC decisions and approved budgets), and of the P2 Executive Officer. Secretariat is currently in the process of recruiting the P4 Communications Officer (also to be based in Geneva according to previous SC decisions and approved budgets).

JK informed the SC that the Secretariat is currently working on renewing the agreement with WaterAid, where the CSO Coordinator is located. The Secretariat is also working on agreements with LNEC in Lisbon and IRC in The Hague, in order to host the Country Engagement Specialist and the Constituency Engagement Advisor, as well as the Knowledge Management Specialist. In order to make agreements with these two new hosting institutions, SWA must have the new Trust Account in place. The Regional Coordinator for Africa was recently selected, the position being hosted by AMCOW in Nigeria.

Session 7: Decisions related to sessions 5 & 6

Patrick Moriarty

PM reminded the SC that four decisions were discussed during the meeting and that a fifth decision was added about the additional SC Meeting. Decisions 1 and 2 were approved in Session 1. The SC approved Decision 3.

PM then asked the SC to make a decision on the Geneva Hub. He reiterated that on a personal level, he would support the decision. The decision to relocate the CEO and the P2 Executive Officer from New York to Geneva was adopted by consensus.

Decision 4: Strengthening the Geneva Hub

The Steering Committee approves the proposal to relocate the current CEO and the P2 Executive Officer that will support her to the SWA Geneva Hub.

Session 8: AOB

Patrick Moriarty

Following a comment by EU, AS clarified that all SC documents were shared ahead of the meeting by email and through the dropbox folder 2 weeks ahead of the meeting, as outlined in the governance document.

EU then requested to schedule a dedicated opportunity to discuss SC members roles, the functioning of the constituencies, the functioning of the working groups as well as the secretariat support. AS clarified that this matter had already been extensively discussed in 2018 and that SWA is now functioning with a new updated governance structure. PM agreed with AS on the fact that this issue had already been discussed extensively under the governance review and proposed to have a reflection on the new governance structure, and what is working and what needs further support.

LS then recalled that the demands on partners were growing beyond what could be reasonably expected. She noted that the SC must consider whether the Secretariat is adequately staffed. AS noted that the Governance and Finance sub-committee is working with the Secretariat on the secretariat ToRs. These will be shared at the next SC Meeting for consideration. This document will contribute and bring clarity to the current discussion on roles and responsibilities.

PM thanked everyone the SC for the time and fruitful discussions and adjourned the meeting.

Action 8: The SC to discuss how the governance structure is working during the retreat part of the next SC Meeting in December.

Action 9: The Secretariat to share the Secretariat TORs ahead of the next SC Meeting in December.