

Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance

CHARTER





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Version as of 9 May 2022

The GWOPA Charter is pending endorsement by the upcoming GWOPA Assembly. Upon approval, the finalised documents will be shared with all members with an option to opt-out.

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Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance

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Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance Charter

Charter

1. Establishment and Organization of GWOPA

- 1.1. The Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance, ("GWOPA"), was established in January 2009 to scale up the practice of Water Operators' Partnerships, ("WOPs"), globally, following the recommendation of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board, ("UNSGAB"), on Water and Sanitation in its 2006 Hashimoto Action Plan.
- 1.2. GWOPA operates as an Alliance open to diverse actors who are willing to contribute to its goals and objectives. GWOPA has been working to strengthen the capacities and performance of water and sanitation operators through not-for-profit peer support partnerships.
- 1.3. GWOPA is hosted by UN-Habitat. As the hosting agency, UN-Habitat manages and administers the activities of GWOPA, including GWOPA's Secretariat staff and GWOPA funds in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations. UN-Habitat further supports the GWOPA Secretariat to mobilize resources and the international community in pursuit of GWOPA's objectives.
- 1.4. From its founding in 2009, GWOPA was located in Nairobi, Kenya, up to 2013. Since, the host country and city have been determined by international hosting bids. From 2013 to 2019, the GWOPA Secretariat was hosted in Barcelona, Spain. From 2020-2025, the GWOPA Secretariat is hosted in Germany, at the United Nations Campus in Bonn.
- 1.5. GWOPA operates pursuant to and in furtherance of the following United Nations resolutions, declarations, frameworks and response plans:
 - a. Resolution A/RES/64/292 of the United Nations General Assembly, July 2010 which recognizes the human right to water and sanitation;
 - b. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
 - c. The Paris Agreement;
 - d. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 21);
 - e. The 2016 Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction;

- f. The 2016 High-Level Panel on Water;
- g. The New Urban Agenda;
- h. The United Nations Comprehensive Response to COVID-19; and
- i. The International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development.

2. Rationale

- 2.1. Currently, worldwide, one in three people do not have access to safe drinking water, two out of five people do not have a basic hand-washing facility with soap and water and more than 673 million people still practice open defecation. As such, water and sanitation utilities roles are crucial in contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs"), in particular, Goal 6, "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" and Goal 11, "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", target 1 "By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums". Their role is also important for the other SDG goals and targets related to water, sanitation and hygiene, ("WASH"), that is, SDG target 1.4 on universal access to basic services, SDG target 3.9, on the disease burden from inadequate WASH and SDG target 4a relating to basic WASH in schools.
- 2.2. Most utilities in developing countries suffer from a wide range of interrelated institutional weaknesses. Most utilities are sub-national, lack adequate financing and often operate in environments where full cost recovery is not feasible. Many utilities have limited physical coverage, poor and dilapidated physical infrastructure, high levels of wasted and unaccounted for water, and lack skilled personnel, resulting in poor service delivery and customer relations, among others.
- 2.3. Fostering collaboration between water supply and sanitation utilities is a vital element in ensuring exchange of experiences between performing and non-performing utilities. The need for creating a mechanism for the collaboration of water utilities was highlighted in the "Hashimoto Action Plan" which was announced by the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation ("UNSGAB") during the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico.

- 2.4. One of the recommendations of the Hashimoto Action Plan was the establishment of a global mechanism to promote Water Operators Partnerships (“WOPs”). The rationale behind the WOPs mechanism is that most of the capacity for improving water and sanitation services lies with the operators themselves. It also builds on the fact that about 90% of all utilities are publicly owned and managed and that even modest improvements in these utilities will go a long way in contributing to the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals and targets for water and sanitation. Thus, the WOPs are to be based on mechanisms to enable operators to systematically communicate amongst themselves and to share their experiences and learn from each other’s’ practices for the benefit of all.
- 2.5. GWOPA brings together a diversity of actors consisting of water and sanitation utilities, utility associations, development finance institutions, research and learning institutions, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, national and sub-national governments, etc. It aims to support water and sanitation utilities, to build their capacity, and complement their resources. WOPs are being promoted by a global alliance of partners who believe in this efficient mechanism to strengthen utilities’ capacity, enhance their performance and enable them to provide a better service to more people, in particular, to the poor and the underserved.

3. GWOPA’s Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

- 3.1. **Vision:** Water and sanitation service providers, connected in a solidarity-based network, share and help one another to achieve local and global objectives to improve services for all.
- 3.2. **Mission:** To work as an effective global alliance to inspire, mobilize and enhance support for WOPs to improve lives.
- 3.3. **Guiding Principles:** In keeping with the original text and spirit of UNSGAB’s Hashimoto Action Plan, the Global WOPs Alliance shall be guided by the following principles:

- a. Inclusion: GWOPA shall be as inclusive as possible and shall reach out to all stakeholders in the water supply and sanitation sector including public and private water operators, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society, academia, and private sector players at the global, regional, and national levels;
 - b. Non-profit based partnerships: Partnerships established between water operators under the WOPs umbrella shall be built on a not-for-profit basis;
 - c. Mutuality of benefit: Mutuality of benefit shall be promoted whenever possible in implementing "twinning" and other activities of exchange, of experience and expertise among utilities. Such mutuality shall be used as an incentive, whenever possible, for utility cooperation on non-profit basis;
 - d. Transparency: GWOPA shall promote transparency in the water and sanitation sector at the global, regional, and national levels. GWOPA shall conduct its activities in a transparent manner, providing clear and regular updates on activities, and equal opportunities for stakeholders to influence its direction;
 - e. Learning from the Past and Others: GWOPA shall draw lessons and learn from past experiences to promote best practices for utility partnerships and capacity building;
 - f. Supporting WOPs Processes Worldwide: GWOPA shall seek to strengthen mutual exchange between water operators;
 - g. Fostering Sustainable Change: GWOPA shall support efforts to build lasting positive change within water utilities using mechanisms that are increasingly independent of external financial support; and
 - h. Building a Culture of Solidarity: GWOPA shall embrace and promote a spirit of solidarity and mutual support between water operators and all other water sector actors working towards the goals of GWOPA.
- 3.6. In the implementation of its mandate and activities and in its relationship with its members and partners, GWOPA will operate in accordance with the United Nations Charter, rules, regulations, principles and policies, including the United Nations policy on "zero tolerance for sexual exploitation". Nothing in its actions or engagements shall be deemed, either expressed or implied a waiver of the United Nations privileges and immunities.
- 3.7. The following Annexes shall form an integral part of this Charter:
- a. **Annex 1:** Membership Policy;
 - b. **Annex 2:** Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Assembly;

- c. **Annex 3:** Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Steering Committee;
- d. **Annex 4:** Terms of Reference for the Integrity Committee;
- e. **Annex 5:** Terms of Reference for the Election Committee;
- f. **Annex 6:** WOPs Code of Conduct; and
- g. **Annex 7:** WOP Platforms.

3.8. In the event and to the extent of any conflict between the provisions of this Charter and the Annexes, or between any of the Annexes, the Charter shall prevail, followed by the Annexes in the order enumerated above.

4. GWOPA Organizational Structure

4.1. There are three (3) bodies constituting the organizational structure of GWOPA, namely:

- i. The GWOPA Assembly;
- ii. The GWOPA Steering Committee; and
- iii. The GWOPA Secretariat.

4.2. There are two (2) types of members of the GWOPA Assembly:

- a. Institutional Members; and
- b. Individual Members.

4.3. Institutional Members participate in the decision-making process of the Assembly and are eligible to serve in various GWOPA Committees.

4.4. Individual Members participate as observers. Individual Members are not eligible to vote.

4.5. Institutional membership is open to legally recognized institutions and organisations that have an interest in water, sanitation, and related issues, and that are committed mutually to the attainment of the objectives and principles of GWOPA.

- 4.6. Individual membership is open to individuals who have an interest in water, sanitation, and related issues, who are reputable and committed to the attainment of the objectives and principles of GWOPA.
- 4.7. Institutional Members are categorized into constituencies depending on their legal identities, statuses and as described in the Membership Policy (Annex 1).
- 4.8. Applications for GWOPA Membership are made online.
- 4.9. All applications for Membership shall be reviewed and approved by the Secretariat.
- 4.10. The GWOPA Assembly shall have a Chair, a Vice-Chair and any other official it deems necessary, who shall be elected from amongst its Institutional Members, and who shall hold office for a period of four (4) years.
- 4.11. The GWOPA Assembly shall meet every two (2) years in regular sessions.
- 4.12. The Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Assembly are annexed to this Charter as Annex 2.

Functions of the GWOPA Assembly

- 4.13. The GWOPA Assembly will undertake the following functions:
 - a. Review, guide and discuss the strategic direction of GWOPA;
 - b. Endorse and validate the elections of the Steering Committee, and elections of any other Committees;
 - c. Request the Steering Committee and other Committees to undertake certain activities, including the preparations of meetings, activities, and engagements of GWOPA;
 - d. Provide guidance to the Steering Committee and to the GWOPA Secretariat on issues concerning GWOPA;
 - e. Adopt recommendations, resolutions, reports, and other decisions pertaining to the work of GWOPA in an advisory capacity; and
 - f. Establish committees or task forces, including the Integrity Committee and the Election Committee. The Terms of Reference for the Integrity Committee and Election Committee are attached to this Charter as **Annexes 4** and **5** respectively.

GWOPA Steering Committee

4.14. The Steering Committee is composed of elected members and observers. Elected members are elected by their respective constituencies.

4.15. Membership of the Steering Committee shall be guided by the following principles:

- a. Majority of Steering Committee Members shall represent public water utilities/ utility associations;
- b. Geographical and stakeholder representation shall be even and fair;
- c. Steering Committee Membership shall belong to organizations, not individuals; and
- d. An aspiration to achieve gender equity

4.16. The allocation of seats in the Steering Committee shall be as follows:

For elected members. They include:

- a. Public water and sanitation utilities allocated by region: Fourteen (14) seats¹;
- b. Community water and sanitation operators and cooperatives: One (1) seat;
- c. Private water and sanitation utilities and their associations: Two (2) seats;
- d. Civil society organizations: Two (2) seats;
- e. Workers and Trade Unions: Two (2) seats;
- f. Others: A total of three (3) seats for the following other categories:
 - i. Non-governmental organizations;
 - ii. UN organizations;
 - iii. International multi-stakeholder platform/network organizations;
 - iv. Development cooperation agencies;
 - v. Development Finance Institutions;
 - vi. National and Sub national governments (including Public Asset Holding Companies);

¹ Each region is allocated a set number of public water and sanitation utilities' seats, based on: (a) Total population of the regions; (b) Existence of active WOP platforms both at regional and national levels; and (c) The number of active WOPs. The regional allocation may be amended by the GWOPA Assembly following the recommendation of the Steering Committee, on the basis of the factors listed. The current allocation of is (i) African States: Two (2) seats; (ii) Asia-Pacific States: Five (5) seats, that is, two (2) seats for Asian States, one (1) seat for Pacific States and two (2) seats for Arab States; (iii) Eastern European States: One (1) seat; (iv) Latin American and Caribbean Region: Three (3) seats, that is, two (2) seats for Latin America and one (1) seat for the Caribbean Region; (v) Western European: Two (2) seats; and (vi) Other States, (including North American states): One (1) seat.

- vii. Research and learning institutions; and
- viii. Water and sanitation regulators.

For non-elected members (The following representatives may attend GWOPA Steering Committee meetings as observers):

- a. One (1) representative from each WOP Platform with an active Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), with GWOPA (see ANNEX 7: WOP Platforms);
- b. Two (2) representatives from the GWOPA host country;
- c. Entities who have signed a Contribution Agreement with UN-Habitat for at least US\$200,000 (United States Dollars Two Hundred Thousand) towards the work of GWOPA;
- d. Two (2) representatives from UN-Habitat, including at least one (1) representative of GWOPA's Secretariat staff. Other GWOPA's Secretariat staff may attend Steering Committee meetings in ex officio capacity.

4.17. The GWOPA Secretariat shall publish updates to the Steering Committee composition annually.

4.18. Members of the Steering Committee shall serve a term of four (4) years.

4.19. The Steering Committee shall be chaired by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat shall be a permanent member of the GWOPA Steering Committee.

4.20. A Vice-Chair shall be selected by the Steering Committee from among its own members. The Vice-Chair shall support the Chair in the discharge of her/his duties as requested and carry out any responsibilities entrusted to him/her by the Steering Committee.

4.21. The Steering Committee shall meet annually.

Functions of the GWOPA Steering Committee

4.22. The Steering Committee shall, inter alia, perform the following functions:

- a. Advise and guide the Secretariat on issues related to GWOPA activities; advise the Executive Director of UN Habitat on GWOPA's mission, aims and objectives, long-term strategy and annual workplans and budgets, operational activities, policies, risk management strategies, framework of GWOPA;

- b. Recommend amendments to the Charter as required, to be ratified by the GWOPA Assembly;
- c. Help ensure accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of GWOPA and ensure compliance with the guiding principles of GWOPA and the spirit of WOPs;
- d. Maintain communication with constituencies, in order to relay the main messages of GWOPA, new strategic directions, if any, or any topic that would require a large consultation or dissemination with WOP practitioners; Steering Committee Members have a responsibility to support and promote GWOPA, including its mandate and its guiding principles, within their own institutions and networks;
- e. Help promote and disseminate GWOPA's tools and guidance material;
- f. Represent GWOPA in the local, regional, and international fora upon request and in consultation with the Secretariat;
- g. Recommend modifications to the allocation of public water and sanitation utilities' seats by region to the Assembly, upon request from at least five (5) GWOPA Assembly Members of the same region; and
- h. Support and jointly mobilize funding for GWOPA and the WOPs practice in general.

4.23. The Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Steering Committee, annexed to this Charter as Annex 3, outline the procedures that govern the functioning of the Steering Committee.

GWOPA Secretariat

4.24. The GWOPA Secretariat is hosted by UN-Habitat and has its office located in the GWOPA's host country at the relevant time.

4.25. The GWOPA Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day administration and implementation of GWOPA's mandate.

4.26. The GWOPA Secretariat is comprised of staff members of UN-Habitat and is under the authority of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

4.27. GWOPA Secretariat staff are recognized and administered in accordance with the UN staff rules and regulations.

4.28. Funds and in-kind contributions received by UN-Habitat for GWOPA are used and administered in accordance with the UN financial regulations and rules.

Functions of the GWOPA Secretariat

4.29. The functions of the GWOPA Secretariat include:

- a.** Implement the GWOPA work plan and coordinate its activities in various working areas including supporting WOP platforms, WOPs direct brokering and funding, financial guidance and support, development and management of WOPs knowhow, training and capacity building, alliance and partnership strengthening, as well as advocacy and communication activities, organize the Global WOPs Congress, and other activities and tasks as described in the five-year GWOPA Strategic Plan;
- b.** Coordinate the review of the five-year GWOPA Strategic Plan and the development of the successive ones in line with UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan;
- c.** Organize annual and intermediary meetings of the Steering Committee, GWOPA Assembly and meetings of the Election Committee, Integrity Committee and others;
- d.** Prepare and present before the meeting of the Steering Committee and of the GWOPA Assembly, the budget, progress reports, the work plan, as well as the minutes and other reports of the meetings;
- e.** Maintain a register of all GWOPA members and monitor member activities;
- f.** Review applications for membership and group new members into already existing constituencies and regional blocks; and
- g.** Call for Integrity Committee meetings on suspension or expulsion of members and, when needed, undertake other responsibilities and tasks as may be assigned by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, the GWOPA Assembly or the Steering Committee.

5. Dispute Resolution

- 5.1.** In the event of any dispute arising from or in connection with the work of GWOPA that cannot be resolved amicably, such dispute shall be resolved by way of consultations between the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, the Chair of the Assembly, and the Vice Chair of the Steering Committee.
- 5.2.** Where necessary, a special meeting of the Steering Committee shall be convened to deal with such dispute in accordance with Rule of Procedures under Annex 3, Special Meetings of the

Steering Committee. The Steering Committee may recommend an appropriate dispute settlement mechanism.

- 5.3. Any dispute that is not resolved under paragraph 5.2 shall be referred to the GWOPA Assembly.

6. Privileges and Immunities

- 6.1. Nothing in this Charter shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any privileges or immunities of the United Nations, including UN-Habitat.

7. Indemnity

- 7.1. UN-Habitat shall not be liable for any acts or omissions of the members of the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and any other committee and shall be held harmless against all suits, claims, demands and liability of any nature or kind arising out of acts or omissions of the members of the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and any other committee.
- 7.2. The GWOPA Assembly and Steering Committee Members as well as persons carrying out functions on behalf of GWOPA, who are not staff members of the GWOPA Secretariat, shall not be considered in any respect as being employees or agents of the United Nations including UN-Habitat.

8. Amending the GWOPA Charter

- 8.1. The Charter and the Annexes may be amended by a majority of the GWOPA Assembly Members.

Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance Charter

Annexes

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Annex 1: Membership Policy

1. GWOPA Assembly Membership

- 1.1. All GWOPA Members are members of the GWOPA Assembly and such membership is governed by this Membership Policy.
- 1.2. There are two types of membership of the GWOPA Assembly, namely:
 - a. Institutional membership; and
 - b. Individual membership.

2. Membership Criteria and Requirements for the GWOPA Assembly

- 2.1. GWOPA Membership is free and open to institutions and individuals who have an interest in water, sanitation and related issues, and who are committed to the overarching objectives and principles of GWOPA.
- 2.2. All GWOPA Members must subscribe to the GWOPA Charter and embrace the vision and mission of GWOPA.
- 2.3. Private utilities and their associations who wish to apply for GWOPA Membership must adhere to the UN Global Compact, the GWOPA Code of Conduct and the objectives and principles of GWOPA.
- 2.4. Membership of the GWOPA Assembly should meet the criteria set out under part 4 herein below.

3. Constituencies of Institutional Members

3.1. Institutional Members of GWOPA are categorized into the following constituencies, depending on their legal identities:

- a. Public water and sanitation utilities;
- b. Community water and sanitation operators and cooperatives and their associations;
- c. Private water and sanitation utilities;
- d. Associations of water and sanitation utilities;
- e. Civil society organizations;
- f. Worker and Trade unions;
- g. Non-governmental organizations;
- h. United Nations organizations;
- i. International multi-stakeholder platforms/network organizations;
- j. Development cooperation agencies;
- k. Development finance institutions;
- l. National and sub-national governments (including Public Asset Holding Companies);
- m. Research and learning institutions; and
- n. Water and sanitation regulators.

4. Rights and Responsibilities of GWOPA Members

4.1. All GWOPA Members are expected to contribute to the objectives of GWOPA by actively participating in meetings, events, knowledge sharing, WOPs and other activities of GWOPA, as appropriate. Members are encouraged to propose activities that further the objectives of GWOPA.

4.2. Institutional Members have a right to vote and to stand as candidates for elective positions in the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and other committees, in accordance with the established rules and procedures.

- 4.3. Institutional Members shall elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GWOPA Assembly, Members of the Steering Committee, the Election Committee, the Integrity Committee and any other committee established by the GWOPA Assembly.
- 4.4. Each Institutional Member shall appoint and be represented by an accredited representative, who may be accompanied by an alternate representative.
- 4.5. Accredited representatives shall possess the following qualifications:
 - a. Substantive knowledge and experience in water, sanitation, hygiene and related matters, including health, institutional development, sustainability and human rights;
 - b. Recognized leadership abilities;
 - c. Ability to act as an ambassador/advocate of GWOPA within their communities/ networks;
 - d. Proven record of ethical conduct and integrity to perform their duties, roles and responsibilities in line with the highest ethical standards and work in full transparency.
- 4.6. Institutional Members shall inform the GWOPA Secretariat of any change in their accredited representative.
- 4.7. GWOPA Members shall give consent to the sharing of their details for the purposes of communication and exchange. Individual Members shall give consent to sharing their names, details of their organizations, cities of residence, professional affiliations and email addresses with other GWOPA Members. Institutional Members shall give consent to sharing details of their organizations, their logos, their cities of residence, the email addresses of their accredited representatives and alternate representatives, if applicable, with other GWOPA Members. GWOPA Secretariat shall handle and process any data provided in accordance with the United Nations rules, regulations and principles relating to the handling of data.
- 4.8. The GWOPA Secretariat will send out annual notifications to all GWOPA Members to review their membership status and indicate their continued interest in GWOPA.
- 4.9. Institutional Members shall perform the functions and responsibilities outlined in section 4.13 of the GWOPA Charter.

5. Admission of New Members

- 5.1. All applications for GWOPA membership shall be made online through [GWOPA's website](#).
- 5.2. The GWOPA Secretariat shall review all applications for membership.
- 5.3. The GWOPA Secretariat reserves the right to reject an application for membership if the applicant does not meet the set criteria.
- 5.4. If accepted, the GWOPA Secretariat will inform the applicant via email that their application has been accepted. Such email will include the following:
 - a. A welcome letter from the Head of the GWOPA Secretariat; and
 - b. A package of key materials;

6. Termination, Suspension, Expulsion and Resignation of GWOPA Members

6.1. Termination

- a. Individual membership to GWOPA is automatically terminated upon the death of an Individual Member.
- b. Institutional membership to GWOPA shall be terminated when an Institutional Member changes its status, to the extent that they no longer belong to the types of institutions listed under Section III, ("Constituencies of Institutional Members") hereinabove.
- c. Members can withdraw their membership from GWOPA at any time by giving a six (6) month-notice. Notice of termination of membership shall be sent to the Chair of the Steering Committee through the GWOPA Secretariat via info@gwopa.org.

6.2. Suspension and Expulsion

- a. Integrity Committee, the GWOPA Secretariat may suspend for a defined period, or expel, a member from GWOPA if:
 - i. In the case of members of GWOPA committees, a member fails to attend two (2) consecutive meetings of the respective committee or any assigned responsibilities without giving prior written notice to the GWOPA Secretariat, unless excused by the chair of the respective committee on the basis of explained extenuating circumstances;
 - ii. A member consistently disregards their commitment to the values, objectives, and provisions of the GWOPA Charter;
 - iii. A member engages in activities that contradict or are inconsistent with the values and principles of GWOPA;
 - iv. A member is inactive for a period of at least four (4) years;
 - v. In the case of Individual Members, an Individual Member is convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any offence which the Integrity Committee considers incompatible with the objectives of GWOPA and/ or inimical to the reputation of GWOPA;
 - vi. In the case of Institutional Members, an Institutional Member engages in behaviour or practice which the Integrity Committee considers incompatible with the objectives of GWOPA and/ or inimical to the reputation of GWOPA; and
 - vii. If it is in the best interest of GWOPA to terminate the membership of a particular member.
- b. Upon the expiry of the suspension period, and following the decision of the Integrity Committee, a suspended GWOPA Member may either be reinstated or expelled.
- c. A suspended and/or expelled Member is automatically suspended and/or expelled from any committee they may have been part of.

6.3. Resignation of GWOPA Committee Members

A member of a GWOPA committee may resign from any respective committee by submitting a notice of resignation to the Chair of the committee.

7. Honoraria and Reimbursement of Costs for GWOPA Members

- 7.1. GWOPA Assembly Members, Steering Committee Members or other committee members shall not receive honoraria or any emoluments for their services as members of the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee or any other committee.
- 7.2. GWOPA Assembly, Steering Committee Members or other committee members are encouraged to bear the cost of their attendance to relevant meetings.
- 7.3. The GWOPA Secretariat has a limited budget to sponsor the physical participation of Steering Committee Members to Steering Committee meetings or events. The attribution of those sponsorships will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Secretariat, upon explicit request of the organizations.
- 7.4. All sponsorships and related expenses will be allocated in accordance with the United Nations rules and regulations.

Annex 2: Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Assembly

1. Meetings of the GWOPA Assembly

Convening of regular Meetings

- 1.1. The GWOPA Assembly shall meet every two (2) years, as appropriate, for such duration as it shall determine, during the biennial Global WOPs Congress which is the main platform for global interaction amongst water operators within GWOPA.
- 1.2. Meetings of the GWOPA Assembly shall be held either physically, virtually or in a hybrid format.
- 1.3. When held physically, meetings of the GWOPA Assembly shall normally be held in the hosting city.

Convening of Special Meetings of the GWOPA Assembly

- 1.4. Special meetings may be held at the request of:
 - a. A majority of Steering Committee Members; or
 - b. The Chair of the GWOPA Assembly, in consultation with the GWOPA Secretariat;
- 1.5. A request for a special meeting of the GWOPA Assembly shall be sent to the GWOPA Secretariat.
- 1.6. Upon receipt of such request, the GWOPA Secretariat shall inform the members of the GWOPA Assembly of the request, and of any consideration that ought to be taken into account when planning for the special meeting.
- 1.7. The GWOPA Secretariat shall convene a special meeting at a date fixed by the Chair of the GWOPA

Assembly in consultation with the Secretariat, taking into account such observations as may have been made in the request for the special meeting.

2. Functions of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GWOPA Assembly

- 2.1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon the Chair elsewhere by these rules, he/she shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the GWOPA Assembly, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these rules, accord GWOPA Members the right to speak, put questions for discussion and decision making, and announce outcomes. The Chair shall, subject to these rules, have complete control over the proceedings of the GWOPA Assembly and over the maintenance of order at its meetings.
- 2.2. The Chair, in the exercise of his/her functions remains under the authority of the GWOPA Assembly.
- 2.3. The Vice-Chair shall support the Chair in the discharge of her/his duties as requested and carry out any responsibilities entrusted to him/her by the GWOPA Assembly.

3. Committees of the GWOPA Assembly

- 3.1. The GWOPA Assembly may set up committees, task forces or working groups comprising of Members of the GWOPA Assembly and the GWOPA Secretariat, as it may deem necessary, and refer to them any item or question for consideration and report.
- 3.2. Membership to committees or working groups should reflect, to the greatest extent possible, the composition of the GWOPA Steering Committee, that is, majority of its members should be representatives of public operators, followed by representatives of other categories of members of the GWOPA Assembly.

4. Decision Making in the GWOPA Assembly

- 4.1. Decision making functions of the GWOPA Assembly as outlined in section 4.13 of the GWOPA Charter shall be by way of consensus.
- 4.2. Notwithstanding paragraph 4.1 above, a vote shall be taken:
- a. If majority of the Institutional Members of the GWOPA Assembly present at a meeting request for it;
 - b. Upon the decision of the Chair of the GWOPA Assembly; or
 - c. If Institutional Members of the GWOPA Assembly are unable to reach a decision by way of consensus.
- 4.3. Where decisions are made by way of voting:
- a. They shall be made by a majority of the Institutional Members present and voting;
 - b. Each Institutional Member of the GWOPA Assembly shall have one (1) vote for any subject submitted to a voting process;
 - c. The GWOPA Assembly shall normally vote by show of hands. When GWOPA Assembly meetings are held virtually, the Chair shall provide the appropriate method of voting to be applied in such meeting.

5. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GWOPA Assembly

- 5.1. The GWOPA Assembly shall, at its first regular meeting, elect from amongst its Institutional Members a Chair, a Vice-Chair and any other official it deems necessary, who shall hold office until their successors are elected.

- 5.2. The Chair and Vice-Chair may be re-elected for a maximum of two (2) additional terms, subject to a decision of the GWOPA Assembly.

6. Amendment of these Rules of Procedure

- 6.1. The GWOPA Assembly may amend any of these rules, in accordance with the procedures set out in Rule 4 above.
- 6.2. Any proposed amendments to these rules must be provided to all GWOPA Members in consultation with the GWOPA Secretariat and the Steering Committee, not less than one (1) month prior to the meeting in which the amendments are to be considered.

Annex 3: Rules of Procedure of the GWOPA Steering Committee

1. Meetings of the Steering Committee

Regular Meetings

- 1.1. The Steering Committee shall meet once a year, for such duration as it shall determine.
- 1.2. Meetings of the GWOPA Steering Committee shall be held either physically, virtually or in a hybrid format.
- 1.3. When held physically, meetings of the Steering Committee shall normally be held in the GWOPA hosting city. Steering Committee Members may offer to host Steering Committee meetings, provided they contribute to the logistical costs.

Special Meetings of the Steering Committee

- 1.4. Special Meetings may be held at the request of:
 - a. At least five (5) elected members, from two (2) different regions; or
 - b. The Chair of the Steering Committee.
- 1.5. Special Meetings of the Steering Committee shall normally be held via teleconference, or other agreed virtual means.

2. Representation

- 2.1. Each member of the Steering Committee shall appoint and be represented by an accredited representative, who may be accompanied by an alternate representative.
- 2.2. Steering Committee Members are expected to attend and participate in Steering Committee meetings.
- 2.3. Steering Committee Members shall support the work of the GWOPA Secretariat in between Steering Committee meetings, as and when requested.

3. Decision Making in the GWOPA Steering Committee

- 3.1. The Steering Committee shall make decisions without a vote by way of consensus.
- 3.2. Notwithstanding paragraph 3.1 above, a vote shall be taken if:
 - a. A majority of elected Steering Committee Members present at a meeting request for it;
 - b. Upon the decision of the Chair of the Steering Committee; or
 - c. If the elected Steering Committee Members are unable to reach a decision by way of consensus.
- 3.3. Where decisions are made by way of voting:
 - a. They shall be made by a majority of the elected Steering Committee Members present and voting;
 - b. Each elected Steering Committee Member shall have one (1) vote for any subject submitted to the voting process; and
 - c. The Steering Committee shall normally vote by show of hands.
- 3.4. Where meetings are held virtually, the Chair of the Steering Committee shall provide the appropriate method of voting to be applied in such meeting.

- 3.5. The presence of at least three quarters of elected Steering Committee Members shall be required for any decision to be made by voting.

4. The Chairperson of the Steering Committee

- 4.1. The Steering Committee shall be chaired by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat. The Chair shall be supported by the GWOPA Secretariat in the discharge of her/his duties.
- 4.2. The Chair shall nominate a representative for GWOPA-related matters to represent her/him at the Steering Committee and other GWOPA's meetings in case of unavailability.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chairperson

- 5.1. Acts as the principal spokesperson for and on behalf of the Steering Committee, representing the GWOPA's vision, mission and strategic priorities.
- 5.2. Represents GWOPA in meetings and key public events, liaising with members, partners and the media as required.
- 5.3. Utilizes existing networks within the global water and sanitation community and political and development spaces to advocate for WOPs and identify opportunities to build new networks and develop relationships that will contribute to GWOPA's strategic and resource mobilization goals.
- 5.4. Supports the GWOPA Secretariat in advocating globally, and actively fundraises for GWOPA, makes new connections and utilizes existing relationships to increase awareness and funding for GWOPA's mission.

6. Amendment of these Rules of Procedure

- 6.1. The Steering Committee may, in consultation with the Chair of the GWOPA Assembly and the GWOPA Secretariat, amend any of these rules, in accordance with the procedures set out in Rule 3 above.

- 6.2. Any proposed amendments to these rules must be provided to all Steering Committee Members, not less than one (1) month prior to the meeting in which the amendments are to be considered.

Annex 4: Terms of Reference of the Integrity Committee

1. Background

- 1.1. The decision to establish an Integrity Committee was made during GWOPA's Second Steering Committee Meeting (Stockholm, August 2009). The Integrity Committee was established to uphold the core values integral to GWOPA's mandate. Its aim is to mitigate and resolve conflicts, encourage compliance with GWOPA's Code of Conduct, ensure transparency and protect the image and reputation of GWOPA. The Committee draws its mandate from the GWOPA Charter.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Integrity Committee

- 2.1. The Integrity Committee plays a practical and constructive role in defending GWOPA's integrity. Its main responsibilities are:
 - a. Reviewing and determining cases and complaints against GWOPA Members as submitted by the GWOPA Assembly, the various committees and the Secretariat.
 - b. Undertaking the necessary fact-finding inquiries and instituting the appropriate remedial or disciplinary measures.
 - c. Taking a constructive and pro-active approach to prevent violation of GWOPA principles and Code of Conduct;
 - d. Strengthening GWOPA's integrity to ensure increased and more transparent involvement of public and private actors in its operations;
 - e. Reviewing partnerships entered into under the GWOPA name for coherence with GWOPA principles and recommending action for improving coherence;
 - f. Reviewing the activities of the GWOPA Secretariat, including its relations with national and

regional platforms, publications, website, advocacy and partnership activities.

- g. Establishing and operationalizing a mechanism through which concerns and recommendations pertaining to breaches of the GWOPA Code of Conduct can be followed-up.
- h. Providing timely reports and recommendations on matters referred to it, or under its purview, to the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and the other committees through the GWOPA Secretariat.
- i. Providing an annual report during the annual GWOPA Steering Committee through the GWOPA Secretariat.

3. Working Methodology

- 3.1. The Integrity Committee will interact regularly online and hold an annual face-to-face meeting if necessary.

4. Composition and Term of Office

Composition

- 4.1. The Integrity Committee shall be composed of members of the GWOPA Assembly elected from the following constituencies:
 - a. Public water and sanitation utilities and their associations: Three (3) seats;
 - b. Community water and sanitation operators and their associations: One (1) seat;
 - c. Private water and sanitation utilities and their associations: One (1) seat;
 - d. Civil society organizations: One (1) seat;
 - e. Workers and Trade Unions One (1) seat;
 - f. Others: One (1) seat from among the following other categories:

- i. Non-governmental Organizations;
 - ii. UN organizations;
 - iii. International multi-stakeholder platform/network organizations;
 - iv. Development cooperation agencies;
 - v. Development Finance Institutions;
 - vi. National and Sub national governments (including Public Asset Holding Companies);
 - vii. Research and learning institutions; and
 - viii. Water and sanitation regulators.
- g.** GWOPA host country or another donor: One (1) seat; and
- h.** GWOPA Secretariat: One (1) seat.

Term of Office

- 4.2.** Members of the Integrity Committee members shall serve a term of four (4) years. If a Member leaves before the end of their term, another member from the same constituency may be elected.

5. Chair and Secretary of the Integrity Committee

- 5.1.** The Integrity Committee is headed by a Chair, supported by a Secretary.
- 5.2.** The Chair and the Secretary shall be elected by the Integrity Committee from amongst the members of the Integrity Committee.
- 5.3.** The Chair heads Integrity Committee meetings, facilitates the contribution of Integrity Committee Members and ensures that the Integrity Committee produces timely outputs.
- 5.4.** The Secretary coordinates communication amongst the Integrity Committee Members, and reports to the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and the GWOPA Secretariat on the outcomes, decisions and recommendations of the Integrity Committee.

Annex 5: Terms of Reference for the Election Committee

1. Background

- 1.1. The Election Committee undertakes its mandate in consultation with the GWOPA Secretariat. The Election Committee draws its mandate from the GWOPA Charter.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Election Committee

- 2.1. The Election Committee performs the following roles and responsibilities:
 - a. Oversees elections in the GWOPA Assembly;
 - b. Vets applications for candidates vying for seats in the Steering Committee; and
 - c. Ensures transparency and compliance with the election rules and processes.
- 2.2. Following an election, the Election Committee shall submit an election report to the GWOPA Assembly and the Steering Committee.

3. Composition and Term of Office

Composition

- 3.1. The Election Committee shall be composed of members of the GWOPA Assembly elected from the following constituencies:
- 3.2. Public water and sanitation utilities and their associations: Three (3) seats;

- a. Community water and sanitation operators and their associations: One (1) seat;
- b. Private water and sanitation utilities and their associations: One (1) seat;
- c. Civil society organizations: One (1) seat;
- d. Workers and Trade Unions One (1) seat;
- e. Others: One (1) seat from among the following other categories:
 - i. Non-Governmental organizations;
 - ii. UN organizations;
 - iii. International multi-stakeholder platform/network organizations;
 - iv. Development cooperation agencies;
 - v. Development Finance Institutions;
 - vi. National and Sub national governments;
 - vii. Research and learning institutions; and
 - viii. Water sector regulators.
- f. GWOPA host country or another donor: One (1) seat; and
- g. GWOPA Secretariat: One (1) seat.

3.3. Members of the Election Committee shall serve a term of two (2) years. If a Member of the Election Committee is unable to complete their term, another member from the same constituency may be elected.

3.4. During their term in office, Election Committee Members cannot stand as candidates for elective positions in the GWOPA Assembly, Steering Committee or in any other GWOPA committee.

4. Chair and Secretary of the Election Committee

4.1. The Election Committee shall be headed by a Chair, supported by a Secretary.

4.2. The Chair and the Secretary shall be appointed by the Election Committee from amongst its members and they will serve a term of two (2) years.

4.3. The Chair heads Election Committee meetings, facilitates the contribution of Election Committee

Members during such meetings and ensures that the Election Committee produces timely outputs.

- 4.4. The Secretary coordinates communication amongst Election Committee Members and reports to the GWOPA Assembly, the Steering Committee and the Secretariat.
- 4.5. The Secretary shall support the Chair in meetings by ensuring that protocols are followed, taking minutes, confirming meeting outcomes and circulating minutes of meetings amongst Election Committee Members.

5. Working Methodology

- 5.1. The Election Committee shall hold a meeting at least five (5) months prior to GWOPA Assembly elections and will interact regularly online until results are announced.
- 5.2. Meetings of the Election Committee shall be considered open when half of the Election Committee Members are present.

Annex 6: WOPs Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct lays down the principles or the “rules” for partnerships between utilities and water operators that are undertaken as WOPs under the umbrella of the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance. Such partnerships are facilitated and supported collaboratively by GWOPA and regional WOP platforms around the world.
- 1.2. This Code of Conduct does not offer guidance on whether a specific partnership is the suitable option for the parties. It mainly applies once the parties have decided to pursue a partnership and highlights the expected conduct and requirements of such a partnership. The “rules” presented hereinafter are meant to guide the formation and implementation of efficient, results-oriented, and socially acceptable partnerships between water operators.

2. Good Governance

- 2.1. All stakeholders will take all needed measures to conduct their activities within the partnership according to the principles of good governance, including:
 - a. Transparency;
 - b. Accountability;
 - c. Responsiveness to stakeholders' concerns and interests;
 - d. Consensus-orientation;
 - e. Clarity and common understanding of stakeholders' roles, rights, responsibilities, and expectations; and
 - f. Compliance with local laws.

3. Integrity

- 3.1. Central to WOPs is the sharing of knowledge in a not-for-profit and unrestrained way and built upon the notion of solidarity between utilities. Its purpose is to enhance the capacity and capability of public utilities within the guiding principle of integrity. Therefore:

The partners agree that no information will be intentionally withheld by any party in anticipation of any commercial gains, and no confidential information of one party will be used by the other party for its commercial advantage.

4. Social and Cultural Values

- 4.1. All stakeholders will take needed measures to abide by and respect the social and cultural values of the location where they are engaging in WOPs, including:
- a. Respecting the cultural norms and behaviours relevant to the local context;
 - b. Recognizing and respecting the influence of gender, age, culture and religion on the different perspectives and values accorded to water and sanitation.

5. Resolution of Conflicts

- 5.1. All stakeholders will form partnerships based on mutual trust and respect, address all issues with full transparency, and collaborate to identify workable solutions.

6. Results-Orientation

- 6.1. Prior to engagement, partners shall prepare written partnership agreements that outline (a) the objectives of the partnership and expected outputs (b) the roles and responsibilities of each partner, (c) the value (in-kind and cash) of the partnership and (d) the interests of each party in engaging in partnership. The agreement should form the basis for professional, results-oriented cooperation, while leaving sufficient room for flexible solutions, as the context and issues are subject to change and evolve.

7. Cost sharing and Not-for-Profit

- 7.1. Activities carried out by any partner or stakeholder within a WOP shall be done on a not-for-profit basis.
- 7.2. WOPs should never be used as a vehicle for commercial activities by any party. Activities within a WOP will incur costs for both partners. The parties have to identify these costs and decide together whether to bear these costs themselves, appeal for external support, or both. The respective contributions of the parties be they in-cash or in-kind, shall be mutually agreed by the parties themselves.

8. Shared Incentives

- 8.1. Particular objectives and common interests of all stakeholders will be openly discussed to identify all possible costs and benefits in the arrangement. The respective motivations of both parties shall be explicitly discussed.
- 8.2. WOPs benefits are mutual, but not necessarily equal. Partners have to respect the bona fide interests of their counterparts and seek actions that advance the goals of the partnership without requiring compromise of a partner's key interests.

Annex 7: WOP Platforms

1. The WOP platforms are national, sub-regional or regional public utilities' associations or other type of organisations, networks, or institutions with a not-for-profit status, which coordinate and implement WOPs in their respective areas, in full compliance with the GWOPA Charter and its guiding principles.
2. Public operators constitute the main constituency of their respective governing bodies. WOP Platform's main activity revolves around WOPs and utility capacity building.
3. The platforms support, jointly with GWOPA, the WOP practice in their respective countries and regions. They support GWOPA's efforts in developing a global knowledge and repository of good WOPs practices, fuelled by the local practitioners, and made available globally. GWOPA and the platforms articulate and coordinate advocacy and communications efforts, including the organization and/or contribution to relevant events at any geographical level, for the common benefit of the Alliance and the Platforms and the global promotion of WOPs.
4. Every platform with an active Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or cooperation agreement with GWOPA is entitled to one (1) observer seat at the Steering Committee.



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