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# **Water and Sanitation Program**

## **COUNCIL CHARTER**

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## Charter

**Water and Sanitation Program Council****Adopted March 21, 2001****Preamble**

1. The Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) is an international partnership program that seeks to help poor people in developing countries gain sustained access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
2. The WSP was begun by the UNDP and the World Bank as a series of projects in 1978, to find and promote better ways to help the poor gain sustainable access to water and sanitation services. The WSP began its work by undertaking research and pilot initiatives to improve and test low-cost water supply and sanitation technologies. It has evolved in both size and form since it began. Now one of the longest-running external programs in the World Bank, the WSP presently operates through a network of country and regional field staff supported by a headquarters office at the World Bank in Washington, D.C.
3. Since its inception, the WSP has been managed by the World Bank on behalf of the WSP's contributors, with guidance from a Program Advisory Committee (PAC). Over the years the PAC functioned informally, and only in 1996 adopted a terms of reference. At a meeting on April 7–8, 2000, the PAC decided to reconsider its governance structure. It established a working group to design a more formal governance arrangement for the WSP, and dissolved itself.
4. This charter was elaborated by the working group after consultations with members of the previous PAC.

**A. The Water and Sanitation Program: Objectives and Approach**

5. The WSP works with partners in the field to seek innovative solutions to the obstacles faced by poor communities in obtaining sustained access to water supply and sanitation services, and strives to be a valued source of advice to achieve widespread adoption of these solutions. To fulfill its mission and make optimal use of its resources, the WSP:
  - Provides advice to help countries adopt improved policies and strategies and undertake institutional reform;
  - Provides advice to strengthen the investment programs and projects of its clients and partners; and
  - Generates, validates, and communicates innovative water supply and sanitation solutions.

6. The WSP works to deepen the understanding and broaden the acceptance of the world's best practices for service delivery for the poor. It seeks practical ways to translate proven principles and best practices into improved policies and programs, and effectively communicate the lessons from experience to targeted audiences. The WSP employs learning approaches that engage partners in identifying problems and finding solutions, and so build ownership and commitment. The WSP does not cover the whole water supply and sanitation sector agenda. Rather, it focuses on poverty-targeted, community-based solutions for rural areas, small towns, and the urban poor, and key issues that constrain service expansion to these areas, such as financing.

### **B. Relationship with World Bank and Other Partners**

7. The Water and Sanitation Program is a multi-donor program built on partnership principles. It is directed by its participating partners and administered by and within the World Bank on behalf of its donors. The WSP manager and staff report through the Director, Energy and Water, to the Vice President, Private Sector Development and Infrastructure Vice Presidency.

8. By working through partnerships at all levels, the WSP seeks to create greater synergies between its work and that of its partners. At the country level, the WSP partners with the major actors in sector service delivery: consumers; owners; governments; intermediaries such as non-governmental and community-based organizations; suppliers, including public and private agencies; and representatives of external support agencies such as bilateral and United Nations agencies and development banks. These partnerships are mirrored at the regional and global levels, where in addition the WSP is active in global organizations that help to co-ordinate partner activities, encourage collaboration and joint problem-solving, and promote consensus on best practices, such as the Global Water Partnership and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

### **C. Work Programming**

9. To guide its operations, the WSP develops longer-term business plans and annual work programs that comprise country, regional and global activities. Country work plans must first respond to local demands, and so are designed at the country-level, in collaboration with partners. In selecting country activities, priority will be given to activities and projects with high potential for future impact, and which contribute to global and local learning. The WSP's global learning activities will be driven by an analysis of priority issues and knowledge gaps, and will be undertaken only when the analysis shows that new knowledge will contribute to better ways of providing sustained access to poor people and if the WSP has a comparative advantage to carry out the activity.

10. An important function of the WSP is to advance the water supply and sanitation sector agenda. To increase leverage, WSP activities will be designed and undertaken in a way that promotes cross-sectoral and donor coordination. Within the World Bank, the WSP liaises with World Bank sector operations through the World Bank's Water and Sanitation Sector

Board and collaborates on work planning with World Bank country operations. Similar modes of collaboration may be established with other partners.

11. Government receptivity to the WSP's learning approach and commitment to improving sector practice are criteria for undertaking activities in a country. Country-specific activities may be undertaken only if the WSP manager is satisfied that the proposed activity does not conflict with programs or activities being undertaken by the World Bank, by other WSP donors, or, to the extent this is verifiable, by other donors.

#### **D. Governance Structure**

12. The governance structure includes Water and Sanitation Program Council (WSPC) and national and regional advisory bodies.

#### **Water and Sanitation Program Council**

13. The WSPC provides overall guidance to and supervision of the WSP. It will be responsible for:

- Approving the mission, geographic and thematic focus, core operational policies and overall organization of the WSP;
- Ensuring the continued quality and relevance of the WSP thematic focus and activities by, for example, commissioning regular reviews of the performance of the WSP, and requesting special reports or establishing working groups to help define or re-define strategic directions and thematic emphases;
- Approving business plans and any significant deviation from them necessitated by unexpected changes in funding levels;
- Approving the framework for annual work programs and financial plans; and receiving and reviewing annual reports;
- Assisting WSP management to secure financing matched to approved business plans;
- Inviting any "participant observers" necessary to conduct business;
- Initially adopting and subsequently amending the charter;
- Selecting the Program Council members who are not representatives of donors and of the World Bank and of the UNDP; these members initially will be selected by the donors and the World Bank and the UNDP, and thereafter, by the full WSPC; and
- Appointing temporary sub-committees, to which it may delegate some of its own work according to written terms of reference.

14. The membership of the WSP Council includes:

- Donors that contribute to a WSP trust fund;
- One country-level member, representing the National Advisory Committees;
- One member from a WSP strategic partner organization, such as a leading NGO or a global sector organization such as the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council;

- One internationally-recognized water supply and sanitation sector expert, from academia or an organization not otherwise represented on the WSPC;
- One representative of the United Nations Development Programme (the “UNDP”);
- The World Bank’s Vice President responsible for water supply and sanitation (presently the Vice President for Private Sector Development and Infrastructure), who chairs the WSPC; and
- The World Bank’s Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Board Chair.

15. The WSPC Chair will consult with WSPC members to decide agendas, chair WSPC meetings, provide leadership and resolve conflicts, represent the WSPC in interactions with other WSP stakeholders, and generally seek to further the sense of partnership that has characterized the operations of the WSP.

16. WSPC decisions will be made by consensus. Members appointed by the WSPC will normally serve for three years, but may be appointed for other periods to create overlap. Donors will undertake to appoint representatives who have sector expertise and who can serve for at least three consecutive years.

17. WSP staff will provide secretariat service to the WSPC and its Chair. The WSP manager and other key WSP staff will normally attend WSPC meetings as participant observers.

18. The WSPC will meet at least annually, preferably timed to give it input into the WSP’s annual work programming cycle. Major issues needing attention between scheduled meetings will be addressed electronically or, in exceptional circumstances, by calling a special meeting. Costs of the meetings and the expenses of developing country and non-agency participants will be borne by the WSP.

### **National and Regional Advisory Bodies**

19. Successful design and execution of WSP’s mandate and activities require close understanding of the sector development needs, constraints and priorities of participating countries. To ensure local participation and foster local ownership, the WSP establishes National Advisory Committees or enlists the assistance of existing bodies to function in an advisory capacity in countries in which it has a substantial work program.

20. These bodies include representatives from key country-level partners. They serve as fora for identification of problems and building consensus for solutions, and for ensuring that the WSP’s activities meet local needs and priorities. Key functions of a national advisory body include:

- Assisting the WSP in planning, implementing and monitoring work programs;
- Maintaining contact with individual national governments and supporting the efforts of the WSP to secure local ownership of its work; and
- Providing advice and feedback on country-specific issues to the WSPC.

21. The WSP may establish similar advisory mechanisms at the regional level.

**E. WSP Management, Organization, and Staff**

22. The World Bank manages the WSP and is accountable to the WSPC for the proper management of the program. WSP staff carry out the WSP's mandate and activities. The World Bank will maintain an organizational and management structure for the WSP that enables the WSP to carry out its global mandate and activities and ensures accountability for expenditure of funds.

23. WSP staff are World Bank staff members, recruited and managed according to World Bank policies. The WSP may accept staff members on secondment from other organizations and through junior professional and similar programs.

**F. Funding and Financial Structure**

24. Funds that support the WSP may come from official donors, international financial institutions and other official agencies, including developing country governments. New sources of funding may be explored, such as private foundations and the private sector. To provide greater stability for the WSP, supporters will be encouraged to enter into funding commitments of at least three years.

25. The World Bank will accept the contributions on behalf of the WSP, according to its policies for acceptance of external funds, normally in cash under trust fund agreements between the donor and the World Bank.

26. Funds will be spent in accordance with the strategic directions approved by the WSPC. Procurement of goods and services and financial reporting and auditing arrangements will follow World Bank policies and procedures.