

Terms of Reference (Draft)
Evaluation of the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA) Strategy, 2013-2017

1. Introduction

The evaluation of the GWOPA strategy 2013-2017 has been mandated by the UN-Habitat Management. It will assess the achievements and lessons learned and recommendations will feed into the formulation and implementation of the new strategy 2018-2022. The five year GWOPA Strategy was launched in 2013. It sets out the vision, mission, strategic objectives and expected outcomes. It also outlines key organization and governance structures, funding framework, potential risks and mitigation measures as well as the monitoring and evaluation framework to follow up on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes specified in the strategy.

These Terms of Reference (TOR) outline the evaluation background and context, purpose and objectives, scope and focus, evaluation questions, stakeholder involvement, evaluation approach and methodology, accountability and responsibilities, qualifications of the consultant to conduct the evaluation, provisional time schedule, as well as expected deliverables and resources.

2. Background and Context

UN-Habitat is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

The Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA) is a programme of UN-Habitat and contributes to the agency's work. In 2006, the Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, requested UN-Habitat to lead the development, and host the secretariat of the Global Water Operators Partnerships. The SG's decision was a follow-up to the drafting of the Hashimoto Action Plan by the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB). The main UNSGAB's Hashimoto Action Plan I objective was to strengthen local water services through Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) while ensuring that WOPs are recognized as an important means of achieving internationally agreed targets on water and sanitation. This objective was adopted by UN-Habitat as its own and the agency agreed to build the Global WOPs Alliance. GWOPA itself is a network of partners committed to helping water operators help one another to improve their collective capacity to provide access to water and sanitation services for all.

The 2013-2017 GWOPA Strategy was developed, in 2013, through a participatory process, integrating the diverse views and lessons of the many Water Operators' Partnerships that had joined the network since 2009. GWOPA's **vision** is that water and sanitation operators help each other to achieve universal access to sustainable water and sanitation services through not-for-profit peer support partnerships. These partnerships result in public operators – the target of support – with strong technical, financial and management capacity, able to provide a sustainable, high-quality service to all. GWOPA's **mission** is to promote the effective use of not-for-profit partnerships between water operators to realize its vision. GWOPA is supposed to be the global leader in Water Operator Partnerships (WOPs) promotion, facilitation and coordination, and the principle source for WOPs knowledge and guidance so that effective

WOPs contribute to meeting national and global water and sanitation objectives including those relating to Sustainable Development Goals and the Human Right to Water.

2.1 Strategic Objectives and Activity Areas

GWOPA's strategy has two objectives:

Strategic objective 1: Guiding Global Growth of WOPs. To achieve this objective, GWOPA planned to undertake activities in four strategic areas:

- Knowledge Management: developing guidance material for WOPs, global trend analysis on WOPs and utilities, case studies on WOPs and documentation of best practices and lessons learnt.
- Branding of WOPs: creating a clear and meaningful WOPs brand, establishing a global framework for benchmarking and certification of WOPs and establishing clear practices to which water operators can aspire in implementing WOPs.
- Communications: through communications, networking, sharing information and disseminating knowledge products, GWOPA will promote WOPs and utilities. It will lead global coordination and advocacy for WOPs and mobilize greater political prioritization of WOPs.
- Alliance Strengthening: growing the WOPs alliance by partnering with institutions that can influence WOPs and with agencies that will add value to partners' actions.

Strategic objective 2: Strategic Operational Support. This second objective was to be achieved through operational support to WOPs implementation in the field. The work focused on three strategic activity areas:

- Strengthening Regional WOP platforms: providing strategic support to regional platforms, moving to more performance-related regional support, assisting regional platforms to develop and monitor delivery of regional strategies and, where appropriate, facilitating inter-regional WOPs and transfer of experience.
- Mobilizing Finance for WOPs and helping to leverage significant follow-up investment from financial institutions for operators.
- Direct operational support: providing strategic support to select partnerships, especially in geographical or thematic areas requiring particular attention.

Despite their frequent lack of capacity, water operators are the key actors in the management of urban water and sewerage services. Mentor water operators with relevant skills and experience, and mentee water operators that express a demand for assistance to improve their operations, have complementary motivations for taking part in non-commercial partnerships.

2.2 Organization and Governance

The GWOPA Secretariat coordinates the work of the Alliance and develops and implements the Alliance's annual work plans. The Secretariat is located in Barcelona, Spain, where it is hosted by the Government of Spain. The Secretariat anchored with the Urban Basic Services Branch (UBSB) of UN-Habitat, and it is under the supervision of the UBSB Branch Coordinator.

GWOPA's International Steering Committee provides strategic direction to the Alliance and its Secretariat and approves the annual work plans presented by the Secretariat at the Steering Committee annual meetings. The Steering Committee membership is drawn from Alliance constituencies within GWOPA's broader Alliance Membership. Elections for the Steering Committee occur during GWOPA's General Assemblies.

Alliance Members elect GWOPA's Steering Committee during the biannual General Assemblies from among the Alliance's main constituencies: public water operators and their associations from the various regions, as well as representatives from labor unions, civil society, private operators, donors and expert organizations. The composition of the Steering Committee reflects the geographical and institutional diversity of the Alliance as established in GWOPA's charter.

The current membership of GWOPA Steering Committee is composed as follows:

- 14 representatives from Public Utilities and Associations
- 2 representatives from Private Operators
- 2 representatives from Civil Society Organizations
- 2 representatives from Labor Unions
- 9 representatives from Alliance Partners
 - 4 representatives from Donors
 - 4 representatives of Regional Platforms
 - 1 representative from a National Platform
 - 2 Permanent Members from the GWOPA Secretariat and UN-Habitat

The Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) is an important organ of the Steering Committee, established to support GWOPA in its ongoing efforts to ensure the application of its guiding principles. The ISC reviews partnerships carried out under the WOPs banner and recommends action to ensure coherence with WOPs principles.

2.3 Funding and Budget

The staff and operational costs of the UN-Habitat GWOPA were funded in 2009-2010 mainly through the UN-Habitat Water and Sanitation Trust Fund (WSTF). Contributions came from the Government of Spain and Norway. In 2010, funding of US\$3.5 million was provided by the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority for a three-year period (2010-2013). Other funders include the French Development Agency (AFD), and the Catalan Development Agency, which have also contributed to GWOPA operations.

During the implementation of the strategy, 2013-2017, the GWOPA Secretariat was hosted in Barcelona and supported by an annual grant from the Government of Spain of 1.1M Euros (1.4M USD) for a period of five years and a one-time contribution of 500,000 Euros from the Barcelona City Council and a consortium of major private sector actors in the city. In addition, GWOPA Secretariat expanded its engagement with utilities of the North and encouraged the use of innovative funding for WOPs, such as decentralized solidarity mechanisms.

2.4 Previous Evaluations of the Strategy and GWOPA

The Strategy specifies that an external evaluation should be commissioned at mid-term of the five year period. The mid-term review was conducted in 2016/2017 to assess GWOPA's performance in terms of achieving its stated goals, appropriateness, effectiveness and to offer recommendations aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the new strategy (Refer to the Mid-Term Review of GWOPA Strategy 2013-2017)

3. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The evaluation has performance, learning and accountability purposes. The findings, lessons learned and recommendations from this evaluation will inform decision-making and strategic direction for the new strategy, 2018-2022. The evaluation will also document results and impact of the strategy and reveal the extent to which the strategic objectives were achieved, challenges experienced and identify missed opportunities.

3.1 Evaluation Objectives

- a) Assess what progress was made toward achievement of results at the outcome and impact levels;
- b) Assess the performance in terms of the relevance of results, efficiency and effectiveness, impact outlook as well as sustainability of the approach.
- c) Assess the adequacy of partnerships and twinning arrangements supported by GWOPA and how these arrangements have benefited the water operators and contributed to development results such as increased access to water supply and sanitation;
- d) Assess what has changed and what elements should continue in the next new Strategy; and bring forward challenges and opportunities for long-term partnerships among the GWOPA members as well as resource mobilization.
- e) Identify lessons and provide recommendations to inform the development of the new GWOPA strategy.

The key audiences for this evaluation are the UN-Habitat Management, the GWOPA Secretariat, The GWOPA International Steering Committee, GWOPA Alliance Implementing partners and donors.

4. Scope and Focus

The evaluation will focus on the entire five year period of the strategy implementation, 2013-2017. It will cover both the strategy and the operational level with a view to drawing lessons to inform the development and implementation of the new strategy: In terms of strategy, the evaluation will review the coherence and clarity of the strategic framework and its usefulness in guiding GWOPA efforts as well as allocation and implementation decisions. At operational level, modalities and implementation performance of partners will be assessed, results analyzed and documented.

5. Evaluation Questions and Criteria

The overall evaluation questions to be answered by this evaluation will be structured under the basic five evaluation criteria as follows:

Relevance

1. How relevant was the strategy to UN-Habitat and GWOPA members given the changing context and roles of UN-Habitat, specifically with adoption of SGDs and New Urban Agenda?
2. How relevant and effective has GWOPA's engagement been in the international policy dialogue on water and sanitation issues?

Effectiveness

1. To what extent has the two objectives and eight expected accomplishments of the Strategy been achieved?
2. How effectively has GWOPA Secretariat delivered and achieved GWOPA strategy priorities and contributed to promoting the implementation of better coordination between WOPs?
3. Has the work of the GWOPA Secretariat resulted in unintended and/or indirect changes in line with the objectives of the Strategy for 2013-2017?
4. Has the implementation of the Strategy prioritized gender sensitive and human rights approaches as well as considered climate and youth which are cross-cutting issues of UN-Habitat?
5. How do expected and planned results related to compare against results delivered?
6. What lessons can be drawn from relying on twinning partnerships as the key implementing modality?

Efficiency

1. Was the formulation of the strategy appropriated based on sound understanding of partnership alliance, were risks are identified, assessed and strategies are developed for monitoring and reporting?
2. Were resources and services designed to effectively respond to the objectives and priorities of the strategy?
3. Has the GWOPA Secretariat and UN-Habitat and Steering Committee arrangements delivered as expected?
4. To what extent have delays and other changes during implementation affected cost-effectiveness?

Impact Outlook

1. To what extent has the GWOPA strategy attained or not (or is expected to attain) development results as in improved water supply and sanitation in the short, medium and long-term of the targeted beneficiaries and GWOPA partners?

Sustainability of Approach

1. To what extent has the GWOPA strategy through implementation of activities engaged the participation of beneficiaries in design, implementation, monitoring and reporting?
2. To what extent will the GWOPA strategic approach be replicated or scaled up at national or local levels?
3. To what extent has the GWOPA strategic approach and implementation of activities fostered new innovative partnerships?

It is acknowledged that causal links at the Strategy's impact level may be difficult to establish and expecting impacts from a strategy that has no baseline data. The evaluation should take these factors into account, but should nevertheless document outcomes / effects and the wider impact of the Strategy.

6. Stakeholders Involvement

As the evaluation will be forward-looking and feeding into the formulation of new strategy, stakeholder involvement is an essential part of the evaluation. However, the involvement will not compromise the independence of the evaluation. It is expected that this evaluation will be participatory, involving both internal and external key stakeholders. It will involve GWOPA members, GWOPA Knowledge centers, donors, other relevant UN-Habitat partners, and beneficiaries of GWOPA activities.

7. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted in four consecutive phases: an inception phase; data collection and field visit phase; an analysis and drafting phase; and evaluation findings presentation and dissemination phase.

A variety of methods will be applied:

- Desk review of relevant strategy documents, including but not limited to the GWOPA Strategy 2013-2017; progress reports and GWOPA Mid Term Review, 2017;
- Interviews with various stakeholders, including relevant UN-Habitat staff, GWOPA Steering Committee Members, GWOPA Members, donors, and other relevant key UN-Habitat partners;
- Surveys to beneficiaries;
- Group meetings for consultations and validation of findings;
- Analysis and synthesis of information should be presented logically to give an overall assessment of progress and impacts in the implementation of the GWOPA Strategy 2013-2017.

8. Accountability and Responsibilities

The independent Evaluation Unit of UN-Habitat will supervise and manage the evaluation process, including planning, providing technical support, follow up and dissemination of evaluation products. GWOPA Secretariat, Urban Basic Services Branch (UBSB) and Programme Division will be responsible for providing information and documentation required, and coordination with the relevant evaluation stakeholders.

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be established to oversee the evaluation process. Members of the ERG are proposed to include representatives from the Office of the Executive Director (OED), Programme Division, Management and Operations Division, UBSB, GWOPA Secretariat and GWOPA Steering Committee. The Reference Group will be responsible for reviewing and endorsing TOR and the main evaluation deliverables, including the inception report, drafts and final evaluation report with the intent of ensuring quality, credibility and utility of the evaluation.

The Evaluation consultant will be responsible for conducting the evaluation based on these TOR and applying UNEG norms and Standards. He/she will prepare main evaluation deliverables (inception report, draft reports and final evaluation report).

Other key stakeholders may be consulted at strategic points in time of the evaluation either through mail correspondence or through participation in meeting(s).

9. Qualifications of the Evaluation Consultant

The evaluation will be conducted by one independent external evaluation consultant and building on the mid-term evaluation of GWOPA Strategy that was recently conducted. The consultant must have proven and extensive experience in evaluating policy and strategies at international level. He/she should have proven capacity and strong methodological and analytical skills and solid knowledge of water and sanitation, partnerships and global networks.

In addition, the consultant should have:

- a) Extensive evaluation experience with ability to present credible findings derived from evidence and putting conclusions and recommendations supported by findings.
- b) Specific knowledge and understanding of UN-Habitat and its mandate.
- c) 10-15 years of programme management experience in results-based management working with development project/ programmes.
- d) Advanced academic degree in political sciences, social economy, governance, planning, similar relevant fields.
- e) Experience in water and sanitation in developing countries desirable.
- f) Fluent in English.

10. Provisional Time Schedule

The evaluation will be conducted during the period of September to November 2017. The table below indicates timelines and expected deliverables for the evaluation process.

Item	Description	Timeframe
1	Development and approval of TOR	August-September, 2017
3	Recruitment of the evaluation consultant	September, 2017
4	Inception phase, including formal document review, development of inception report	October, 2017
5	Data collection phase: Collection of data through interviews, projects analysis, surveys, etc.	October, 2017
6	Report writing, review and submission	November, 2017

11. Key Deliverables

The three primary deliverables for this mid-term evaluation are:

- (i) ***Inception Report*** with evaluation work plan. Once approved, it will become the key management document for the evaluation, guiding the evaluation delivery in accordance with UN-Habitat's expectations.
- (ii) ***Draft Evaluation Report***. The consultant will prepare an evaluation report draft to be reviewed and endorsed by the Evaluation Unit, and the Evaluation Reference Group. The draft should follow UN-Habitat's standard format for evaluation reports (to be provided).
- (iii) ***Final Evaluation Report*** should not exceed 40 pages (excluding Executive Summary and appendices). In general, the report should be technically easy to comprehend for non-specialists, containing detailed lessons learned and recommendations.

12. Resources and Payment

The consultant fees and DSA will be paid on the basis of UN terms and conditions for consultants, taking into account experience and qualifications. The consultant will be paid professional fee; and DSA will be only paid when working outside his/her duty station. Travel costs of the consultant (airplane ticket economy class), will be covered by UN-Habitat.