

# Institutional Membership Application package



Thank you for your interest in joining the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance!  
Becoming a member is simple and does not have any associated costs. All you need to do is...

→ Step 1

Read the annexes to this document carefully. Let us know if you have any questions. We recommend calling a meeting with your manager and/or team to present GWOPA and discuss what membership means for your organisation.

→ Step 2

Send the membership form - completed and signed by an accredited representative at the highest practical level of your organization – to the GWOPA Secretariat [info@gwopa.org](mailto:info@gwopa.org)

We will reply to you with any questions and a welcome pack to get you started!

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Revised versions of the GWOPA Membership Policy and Charter are pending final approval by the General Assembly (May 2023). Upon approval, the finalised documents will be shared with all members with an option to opt-out.

# GWOPA Institutional Membership Form

## About your organization

Name of organization \_\_\_\_\_

City of headquarters \_\_\_\_\_

Country of headquarters \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Type of organization

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

I, Ms./Mr. (Full name) \_\_\_\_\_, holding (Position) \_\_\_\_\_  
at (Name of organisation) \_\_\_\_\_, having read the new **GWOPA Charter** Extracts and  
Membership Policy (**Annex 1** and **2**), confirm, on behalf of (Name of organisation) \_\_\_\_\_,  
our wish to adhere as members.

By submitting this membership request, I confirm that I have the necessary authority or clearances to represent my  
organisation.

Agree to be featured as a member on **GWOPA's website**

I have read and comply with GWOPA's Membership Policy (**Annex 1**) and **Charter (extracts in Annex 2)**.

Signature

Date (00/00/0000)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The focal point and accredited representative for future correspondence, including regular GWOPA email updates, will be:

Name

Job Title

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

Alternative Email

Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide an alternative or additional focal point from your organisation:

Name

Job Title

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Private utilities and their  
associations who wish to apply  
for membership must adhere  
and forward the link to their UN  
Global Compact profile.



# Annex 1: Membership Policy

Version as of 28 September 2020

Revised versions of the GWOPA Membership Policy and Charter are pending final approval by the General Assembly (May 2023). Upon approval, the finalised documents will be shared with all members with an option to opt-out.

# Annex 1: Membership Policy

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## 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.
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## 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.
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## 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.
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## 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, and 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 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 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](#).

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## 5. Admission of New Members

- 5.1. All applications for GWOPA membership shall be made online through GWOPA's website [www.gwopa.org](http://www.gwopa.org).
- 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 admissible, the GWOPA Secretariat will inform the applicant via email that their application has been accepted. Such email will include the following:
- a. A Membership Certificate;
  - b. A welcome letter from the Chair of the GWOPA Steering Committee; and
  - c. A package of key material;
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## 6. Termination, Suspension and Expulsion of GWOPA Members

### 6.1. Termination

- 6.1.1. Individual membership to GWOPA is automatically terminated upon the death of an Individual Member.
- 6.1.2. 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 3, (“Constituencies of Institutional Members”)** hereinabove.
- 6.1.3. 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](mailto:info@gwopa.org).

### 6.2. Suspension and Expulsion

- 6.2.1. Following the recommendation of either the Steering Committee or the Integrity Committee, the GWOPA Secretariat may suspend for a defined period, or expel, a Member from GWOPA if:
- a. 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;
  - b. A member consistently disregards their commitment to the values, objectives, and provisions of the GWOPA Charter;
  - c. A member engages in activities that contradict or are inconsistent with the values and principles of GWOPA;
  - d. A member is inactive for a period of at least four (4) years;
  - e. 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;
  - f. 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
  - g. If it is in the best interest of GWOPA to terminate the membership of a particular member.
- 6.2.2. 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.
- 6.2.3. A suspended and/or expelled Member is automatically suspended and/or expelled from any committee they may have been part of.
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## 7. Resignation of GWOPA Committee Members

### 7.1. Resignation

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

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## 8. Honoraria and Reimbursement of Costs for GWOPA Members

- 8.1. 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.
- 8.2. GWOPA Assembly, Steering Committee Members or other committee members are encouraged to bear the cost of their attendance to relevant meetings.
- 8.3. 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.
- 8.4. All sponsorships will be allocated in accordance with the United Nations rules and regulations.
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## Annex 2: GWOPA Charter Extracts

Version as of 28 September 2020

Revised versions of the GWOPA Membership Policy and Charter are pending final approval by the General Assembly (May 2023). Upon approval, the finalised documents will be shared with all members with an option to opt-out.

# Annex 2: GWOPA Charter Extracts

## 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. Since its inception, GWOPA was located in Nairobi, Kenya, up to 2013. Currently, the host country and city of the GWOPA secretariat is determined following an international hosting bid. From 2013 to 2019, the GWOPA secretariat was hosted in Barcelona, Spain. From 2020-2025, the GWOPA secretariat is hosted in Bonn, 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 (UNFCC 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, ranging from inadequate cost recovery compounded by a low customer base and limited physical coverage, to poor and dilapidated physical infrastructure, high levels of unaccounted for water, wastage and lack of skilled personnel and 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 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. *Inclusiveness*: 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;
  - 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; and
- 3.4. 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.
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You can contact us at [info@gwopa.org](mailto:info@gwopa.org)  
For more information consult at [www.gwopa.org](http://www.gwopa.org)

