



Operational Guidelines for the Africa Groundwater Network

Africa Groundwater Network (AGW-Net) – Introduction.

AGW-Net is a voluntary non-profit network, inaugurated in July 2008, with an open free membership accessible to all African countries and to those external partners that wish to support the network goals. At present it has no legal status, no office, no employees and no assets. Its assets reside in its membership. It does not operate a bank account, but holds any funds that it may receive in the bank account of a Host institution¹. It operates principally by means of e-mail contacts between members which are managed through a network manager. AGW-Net is one of the capacity building networks that operate under the CapNet² umbrella.

Mission Statement.

AGW-Net seeks to enhance and build professional and technical capacity in the groundwater sector throughout Africa, principally by means of short courses and training programs.

AGW-Net seeks to establish a membership of groundwater and associated professionals across the continent and to foster communication and mutual activities between its members.

AGW-Net seeks to improve the management of groundwater and particularly to improve the understanding of interactions between surface and groundwater, and to improve governance of groundwater within the IWRM (Integrated Water Resources Management) paradigm.

AGW-Net seeks to work with national, regional, continental and international organizations to promote and enhance its objectives.

AGW-Net seeks to improve the participation of women at all levels within the groundwater sector.

AGW-Net seeks to promote relevant research in African groundwater, to promote publication of relevant groundwater research and to support its membership with applications for research funding.

¹ The first host institution commencing in 2009 is the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD), Harare, Zimbabwe www.iwsd.co.zw

² CapNet – www.capnet.org is an UNDP program.

Network members

Two types of membership are recognized:

- a) Individual membership: Individuals, especially but not exclusively from Africa, who support of the network goals.
- b) Institutional membership: Any organization that supports the network's groundwater goals and activities, specifically in terms of hosting network activities, and providing technical and financial support for such activities.

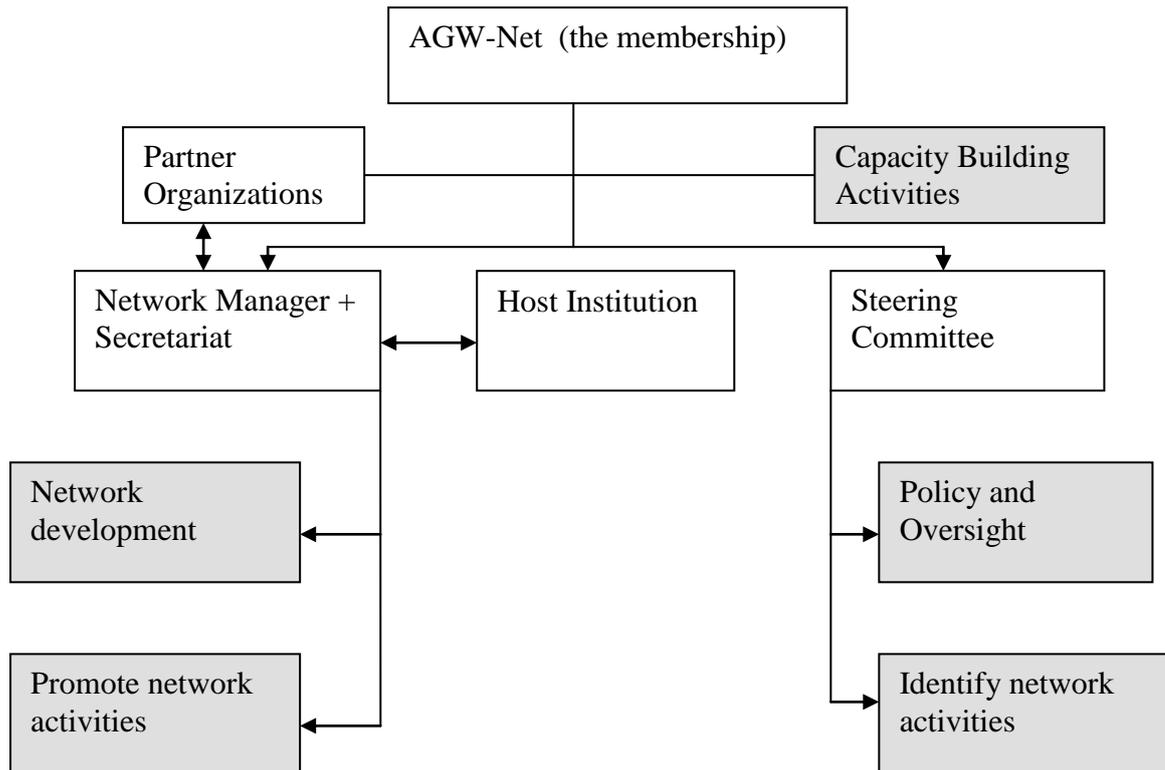
Mode of Governance.

The mode of governance for AGW-Net will embrace flexibility and lightness, with the associated low costs and limited manpower requirements.

The key components of the network are shown in the organizational diagram below. These components consist of network structures with their responsibilities and the activities of the network, as summarized below:

- the AGW-Net membership – ownership and activities ;
- Network Manager / Secretariat - network management / facilitation of activities;
- Steering Committee (SC) - oversight and control;
- Host Institution – the network funds shall be placed into the bank account of an approved Host Institution, and the Host shall provide annual financial statements of the network accounts.
- Partner organizations (eg: CapNet, donor organizations, technical partners and host institutions) – technical and financial support;
- Strategies and policies of the network – these are as determined by the members, the SC and the network manager; and
- Activities and programs of the network - as determined by active network members in collaboration with the SC, network manager and partner organizations.
- The network may make provision for country chapters and thematic groups in its governance structure if a demand for such arises from the membership.

The Network Structure organizational diagram below shows the relationships between the different components of the network. The key relationships in the network lie between the network members, the steering committee and the network manager. Ultimately the network derives its legitimacy from the members and their ability to deliver capacity building and other products. The network manager and steering committee must ensure that the network activities and programs are strongly linked to partner and donor organizations to ensure their viability and sustainability. Since the network is not a legal entity, operation within a host institution provides the ability to hold a bank account and provides financial oversight to the secretariat and network manager.



Network Structure.

The structural components of the network are in clear boxes, while their responsibilities and activities are in grey shaded boxes.

Composition of the Steering Committee.

The steering committee consists of 6 members elected by the membership. Each region in Africa has one steering committee member, who resides in that region, and represents that region in the network. The regions represented are West Africa, East Africa, Nile Basin, Southern Africa, Francophone Africa with the Network Manager as an ex officio member of the Steering committee.³

Election & Term of Office

The network manager and the steering committee shall be elected by an email ballot of the full membership. The terms of office for these positions are 4 years for network manager and 3 years for steering committee. The staggered time period is to ensure that there will always be some institutional memory carried forward and there should not be a situation when all members of the SC and the manager are all new in post. Nominations for SC members or network manager require at least 3 signatures from supporting network members. Steering committee members and the Network Manager may be re-elected for a second and subsequent terms by the membership if the so wish.

³ 2009 Steering Committee was co-opted and consists of: Martin Eduvie – Nigeria, representing West Africa, Moustapha Diene – Senegal, representing Francophone Africa, Hudson Ngotagu – Tanzania, representing East Africa, Muna Mirghani - Sudan, representing Nile basin countries, Tamiru Abiye – South Africa, representing Southern Africa and Richard Owen – Zimbabwe, Network Manager.

Meetings

The network shall attempt to hold an annual meeting for the steering committee as funds allow. A biennial general meeting for all members shall also be called but at this stage, the costs of participation may have to be borne by individual members attending. Both the steering committee and the general membership meetings may decide policy and activities by means of a majority vote. In the absence of any Steering Committee or General Membership meeting, the network manager may be required by the SC to organize an email ballot to resolve any issue that has been raised.

Legal Status

The AGW-Net is an informal network of individuals, mostly from Africa, who share a common interest in groundwater. The network is an affiliate of CapNet, an UNDP program that is a network of networks in the field of capacity building for the water sector. The AGW-Net does not have any formal legal status, and it operates by means of various memoranda of understanding (MoU), which are created and come into effect for various ad hoc purposes. Such ad hoc MoU's may cover issues such as operational funding for the network secretariat, funding to cover the costs of short courses, hosting arrangements with an institutional host etc.⁴

Powers and Responsibilities of the Steering Committee.

The role of steering committee is to specifically provide oversight and control for the management of the network, and to ensure that the network is managed in line with the governance guidelines of the network, that regular reporting of network programs and activities are made, that the mandate of the membership is respected, and that normal open financial procedures and accounting methods are used by the network. The steering committee also have the responsibility to promote the network vision and its activities. The steering committee is empowered by a majority vote to change network governance guidelines and to change the network management if they feel that this is warranted.

Powers and Responsibilities of the Network Manager.

The network manager and the secretariat⁵ is responsible for the efficient management of the network, promoting the network vision, maintaining the network membership records, ensuring communication between members and partners / donors, and managing the network finances. The manager is answerable to the steering committee and also to the general membership. The manager must produce an annual report on network activities and an annual financial statement, and these reports must be approved by the steering committee. In addition, the network manager must prepare an annual work-plan, also to be approved by the steering committee, for submission to CapNet and other interested partner / donor organizations.

Finances and Host Institution.

AGW-Net will seek to source funds to cover the management of the network and the operations of the secretariat. Such funds are normally paid into the bank account of

⁴ At present AGW-Net has a MoU with our host institution, the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD). A short course being run at Wits University is covered by a MoU between the university and the course sponsors, partners, etc.

⁵ At this time March 2009, no secretariat exists and no plans have been made to establish a secretariat. This will depend on the level of activity involved in network management and funding availability.

the network host institution, which will release funds to the network manager in line with the approved annual work plans⁶. The host institution will provide annual financial statement for the network finances. Based on these, the network manager prepares the network annual financial statements and, after submission to the steering committee for approval, these become available to the general membership.

When AGW-Net organizes activities such as short courses, these will normally be managed through a local host institution (often a university department) working in cooperation with the local AGW-Net member(s). Financial management for such projects is the responsibility of the host institution, with support from the AGW-Net organizing member(s).

Disputes and Termination

Any disputes or the termination of any term of office or MoU may be resolved and affected by means of a simple majority of votes in the steering committee. Changes to the operational guidelines must be submitted to the general membership and then ratified by a ballot of members.

If other disputes arise, then in the first instance these shall be considered by the Steering Committee and Network Manager, and if resolution for the dispute is not achieved, then the matter will be referred to the General Membership.

END.

⁶ For 2009, AGW-Net will receive an operational support grant from CapNet, which will be paid into the bank account of our host institution, IWSD.