

Establishing the Global Water and Sanitation Board (GWSB)

Shortage in Clean Water Supply

Access to potable water is a serious challenge in the developing world today, including in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is clear that the shortage of potable water in both urban and rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia has led to the death of infants and adults due to epidemic diseases, poor living conditions and eventually resulted in ecological imbalance in these regions of the world. Over 500 million people in the sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to potable water.

Global Sanitation Crisis

An estimated 2.5 billion people lack access to improved sanitation (>35% of the world's population). According to the United Nations (UN) and United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), one in five girls of primary-school age are not in school, compared to one in six boys. One factor accounting for this difference is the lack of sanitation facilities for girls reaching puberty. The installation of toilets and latrines may enable school children, especially girls, to further their education by remaining in the school system.

Therefore, to improve the access to clean water supply and good sanitation all over the world, especially in developing countries, there is the dire need to establish a Global Water and Sanitation Board (GWSB) that will be saddled with the responsibility of providing clean water and good sanitation facilities for the world's population.

This necessitated our interest as water scientists in the TWAS Science Diplomacy Workshop for sustainable water management to propose that this board be set up (based on the article 'Call for UN science body for water': <http://www.scidev.net/global/water/news/un-science-body-for-water-sanitation.html>).

The GWSB International Centre will be established based on the format below:

Proposed location:

GWSB International Headquarters, Douala, Cameroun, Central Africa.

Funding:

UN, IMF, World Bank, developed nations, other participating member states.

Vision Statement:

To ensure the delivery of safe clean water and adequate sanitation to all.

Mission Statement:

- The enforcement and enactment of strategic plans for sustainable and equitable distribution of safe, clean water.
- The enforcement and enactment of strategic plans for good sanitation in all nations of the world.

Strategic Implementation Plans

- Execution of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hinging on water and sanitation.
- Fund mobilization: Project sponsorship by governments, NGOs, the UN, International Monetary Fund, World Bank and others.
- Resource development: Water and sanitation resource development, unit heads, regional heads, staff, mini agencies.
- Capacity building: Organization of training symposia, workshops and conferences for awareness and implementation.
- Incorporating water and sanitation interests for people and the environment into primary and secondary school curricula, as well as tertiary institutions of learning.
- Encouraging youth to take up careers along these lines.
- Encouraging governments and providing policy advice that will enhance the implementation of the vision and mission statements of GWSB.
- Research innovations: Researchers should be given the opportunities to test-run their research findings in solving emerging problems in water and sanitation.
- Development of protocols and standards that will serve as regulatory maps for service providers in the water and sanitation sector.
- Establishment of regional advisory panels to strictly monitor the success of the developed protocols and standards of the GWSB.
- Setting up effective monitoring indicators to achieve these strategic plans.
- Structures should be put in place to audit reports and available funds disbursed.

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Disclaimer

The contents of this paper represent the views of the group members and do not reflect the official opinion of their host institutions or that of TWAS.