



WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL
CONSEIL DE CONCERTATION POUR L'APPROVISIONNEMENT EN EAU ET L'ASSAINISSEMENT
CONSEJO DE COLABORACIÓN PARA EL ABASTECIMIENTO DE AGUA Y SANEAMIENTO

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Dear WSSCC Member

I am writing as your Chair to share with you some very good news about the Council's growth and positive evolution since the beginning of this year, as reflected in the following recent developments.

First, the Steering Committee met on 22-23 February. This was an important meeting to confirm WSSCC's strategic direction as it recovers from the difficult period last year and to guide our Interim Executive Director and his new team. The quality of debate was high, with all the committee members and invitees engaged at a strategic level. The main decisions were:

- to reconfirm WSSCC's collaborative, people-centred and membership-based ethos and instruct the secretariat to clarify the rights and duties of membership and revive the organisation's links with the members
- to agree that WSSCC should concentrate most of its energy on sanitation and hygiene for the next few years, given the disparity in unserved numbers compared to those for water
- to construct WSSCC's work on three equally important and mutually complementary areas: networking, advocacy and grants management (the grants management is a fairly new idea: to operate a pooled trust fund at the global level from which WSSCC will give grants through an open competitive process to implementing agencies in selected countries, specifically to scale up successful ideas in sanitation and hygiene)
- that WSSCC should retain guardianship of the WASH concept and brand, not to control it exclusively but to welcome other organisations to use it and guide them on how to do so
- to confirm WSSCC's strategic partnership with WHO, which is the logical basis for WSSCC being hosted by WHO, while also maintaining strong strategic links with other important agencies in our sector
- within WSSCC's networking area of work, to revive WSSCC's thematic networks and working groups in accordance with the Iguazu Action Plan and also link better with other existing networks.



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Second, the Secretariat staff structure has been redesigned to correspond to the strategic decisions made by the Steering Committee: essentially the Executive Director, three small departments for networking, advocacy and grants management, and a small administrative support team. From a low-point of one staff member in January, the Interim ED is building up the staff again: they are now five and will increase to eight or ten over the next few months.

Third, the Executive Director post has just been advertised on the WHO website, and the vacancy notice can be accessed at www.wsscc.org. We hope to make an appointment by mid-year, and would very much appreciate your assistance in bringing this notice to the attention of qualified candidates. We have encouraged Jon Lane, as Interim Executive Director, to apply for the post, while noting of course that the process will not be biased either towards or against him as the incumbent.

On a related matter, and given the need for continuity in governance at this important stage of WSSCC's development, I would like to propose an extension of the term of office of the current Steering Committee from December 2007 to December 2008. Given the WSSCC's difficulties over the last year, I believe that ensuring the continuity provided by the Steering Committee for one further year is essential. Such a step would also make it possible for the Secretariat to focus on strengthening the programmes and strategic directions of the Council during 2007 without the additional burden of organizing an election. I should note that I have also asked the Steering Committee to form an Executive Committee that can give the Executive Director closer governance and direction between the annual meetings of the Steering Committee itself.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to tell me your views on any of these points. WSSCC's strength derives from its committed membership and I welcome all your replies.

With best wishes

Roberto Lenton
Chair, WSSCC