



Global Water Solidarity

Label Indicators

PREAMBLE

In the context of the verification of the requirements for the recognition, promotion and incitation of proper application of the existing and developing water and sanitation DSMs, the attribution of the registration to concrete mechanisms is decided by a Steering Committee on the basis of the degree of consistency with the pre-established criteria.

These criteria include a set of essential principles of decentralized solidarity submitted to the Steering Committee for approval. The Steering Committee, while bounded within its decisive process by these principles, can in accordance with the Charter of the GWS International Platform examine additional principles, not generally applicable.

The registration will enable the use of a corresponding logo in documents and activities related to the certified mechanism.

The Platform will provide registration directly and only to the mechanisms and not to the participating institutions.

The Platform will not be accountable for any partnerships established through the registered mechanisms. The management and monitoring of the mechanisms (especially the engaged resources) will remain a direct responsibility of the committed mechanisms and their partners.

The Decentralized Solidarity Mechanism (DSM) For Water and Sanitation endorses the principles or aid effectiveness included in the 2003 Rome Declaration, the 2005 Paris Declaration and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness. The Charter also acknowledges the recognition of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation in accordance with the UN Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/15/L.14. The five principles of aid effectiveness (ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and accountability) and human rights principles (universality, participation, accountability, non discrimination) apply to decentralized cooperation and inform the certification mechanisms. Principles proposed for decentralized cooperation read as follows:

- ✓ Universality
- ✓ Subsidiarity
- ✓ Harmonization
- ✓ Mutual Accountability
- ✓ Leverage
- ✓ Environmental Sustainability
- ✓ Financial Sustainability
- ✓ Technical Sustainability

UNIVERSALITY

Equal access to water and sanitation facilities by all individuals

The principle of universality means that all human beings have equal rights as human beings. In accordance with the UN Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/15/L.14 recognizing the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, universality requires that services are provided to everyone – including those hardest to reach.

DSMs must prioritize basic access and focus on progressive realization towards safe and sustainable water, sanitation and basic hygiene for all, while reducing inequalities. This implies to reduce geographical disparities within the country, ensure access for vulnerable and marginalized people, and keep water and sanitation affordable for all.

Accepting the fact that due to climate change and desertification worsen the situation in many areas where the access to water is already a main sorrow and additionally more areas are created which will have trouble to access clean water and sanitary institutions in the future, Global Water Solidarity will solemnly label those Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms who accept and respect this urgent issue and which do not differentiate between the humans in need of their support.

In order to follow the United Nations Human Rights standards, the platform will only accept and promote DSMs that ensure a sustainable access to water without any discrimination concerning gender, race, color, age, language or religion. Furthermore, it will prioritize to grant access for vulnerable groups and individuals as well as anyone who is facing systemic forms of discrimination in order to ensure the universal access to water for every human being.

However, even with the full acknowledgement of the special pressure certain individuals and groups undergo to gain access to water, Global Water Solidarity will not, despite its efforts to prioritize the works for certain areas and people, support exclusive efforts of any kind.

SUBSIDIARITY

Operating within the framework of international and national law, DSMs strengthen institutional, financial and technical capacities at the local level in accordance with the related principles of:

- ✓ **Ownership:** Partner municipalities exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions
- ✓ **Alignment:** Donors base their overall support on partner countries' local development strategies, institutions and procedures
- ✓ **Participation:** local institutions (civil society, academia, religious and governance) participate actively in the development, implementation and monitoring of DSM for water and sanitation facilities

The principle of subsidiarity means that, within the framework of international and national law, DSMs strengthen institutional, financial and technical capacities at the local level. DSM is consistent with the local development plan defined by local institutions and promotes the participation of all actors in its planning, implementation and monitoring.

Due to the decentralization models that most countries have established during the last twenty years, national policy decisions and service provision are translated at a more decentralized level. Sub-national institutions have become key actors in the definition, implementation and management of policies concerning basic services, including water and sanitation. Cooperation between sub-national institutions therefore constitutes a powerful and highly effective instrument to build capacities and reinforce service provision of those facing stronger technical, political or financial constraints to achieve the MDG. Attempts by many sub-national institutions to develop regional and international cooperative ties are frustrated by inadequate legal frameworks, lack of information on partnership opportunities, absence of political will or specific capacities in international relations.

Global Water Solidarity is aware of the fact that although the legal responsibility for achieving universal access to safe water and sanitation lies with national governments, the realization of this challenge cannot be achieved without the full involvement and commitments of sub national authorities. Those authorities include as well government bodies as of the civil society, local or religious entities and academic institutions. Therefore, the platform is eager to ensure that partnerships that are stabilized through Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms are operated in broad and inclusive alliances, which are engaging local governments, water services providers, consumer groups and civil society organizations. In order to ensure the maximum fulfillment of the subsidiary principle, Global Water Solidarity will only label those DSMs that are including all possible local participants which are important for the fulfillment of the aim.

HARMONIZATION

Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective

The principle of harmonization requires that DSMs and other existing cooperation mechanisms coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplications

Global Water Solidarity honors and acknowledges all forms of cooperation mechanisms in the field of water and sanitation and is very keen on establishing partnerships rather than replacements of actions taken in those fields.

In order to maximize the profits for all parts involved, Global Water Solidarity will only label those decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms on its behalf which are respecting the fieldwork and achievements of other participants. Solidarity and cooperation enable achievable win-win-situations, as all parties can gain from the experiences already made. In addition, labeled Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms can create a leverage effect not only for future projects in terms of financial support, but as well to already existing forms of projects and solidarity cooperation. In areas already covered through other mechanisms in a sufficient manner, no new solidarity mechanism should be applied but rather be moved to less served areas and projects. By no means will the GWS support any kind of competition between existing and new incorporated establishments.

However, Solidarity between mechanisms and joint-ventures can only be established if the existing cooperation accept and act under the universal principles of the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolutions and other acts acknowledged by the United Nations and its partners. A cooperation or coexistence with partners who are in despise with the Millennium Goals or the declarations and Charters of the United Nations will not be labeled or recognized by any member of the platform.

MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Respect of national and international legislation **Higher efficiency, transparency and accountability among all stakeholders involved in DSMs**

The principle of accountability requires that donors and developing countries are accountable to one another and to their respective parliaments and governing bodies for mutually agreed results in keeping with international human rights commitments, national legislations and country development and aid policies.¹ Sound, transparent indicators for measuring and monitoring DSMs help to further promote accountability² in the sector. Local authorities, citizens and taxpayers must have access to relevant information and remedies in case the implementation of the DSM violates the national legislation of their country.

The DSMs are responsible to implement or channel the additional resources mobilized through them. Therefore, the Platform will neither receive nor directly manage any funds coming from decentralized cooperation partners. Due to this regulation, GWS will monitor very closely the routing of the funds provided and the usage and lasting of the financial plan for the projects provided through Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms.

Global Water Solidarity will only label those DSMs that ensure the transparency for each member of the DSM to control the flow of capital and know-how as well as the stages and procedures of every step within the DSM.

¹ 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, para.10.

² Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Water and Sanitation, Financing for the Realization of the Rights to Water and Sanitation, para.24.

LEVERAGE

Transaction costs and risk perception for loans from development banks, equity funds or private banking are reduced over a certain period after the establishment of DSM.

Depth and interest rates developing from loans for sanitation and water projects are a main concern for especially developing countries and local entities when it comes to the initialization of new projects. Many projects have not yet been installed or have been halted due to austerity measurements within local or national governments or could not work up to their full potential due to missing loans or shortages in the money stock of the institutions in charge.

On the contrary, Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms lead to an increase in the availability of additional financial resources, which enables local capacity building and the facilitation of adequate technology transfer in support to sub-national institutions' efforts in the establishment of water and sanitation services. They do not only add additional funds to the already existing capital stock, but function as a safety measurement for future loans and the calculation of interest rates and risk management from development banks and other services. Therefore, having leverage effect would actually mean in practical terms more available funds at more affordable conditions.

Therefore, the Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms supported by Global Water Solidarity have to fulfill the measurements for quality and long term-establishment for financial institutes in order to ensure an additional leverage effect for the benefit of the citizens affected by the projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Promotion of the integrated water resources management ensuring the protection of water resources and allocation of water for basic human needs
Prevention and adaptation measures to protect all users from natural disasters and the impact of climate change are incorporated within DSMs.

Global Water Solidarity and its partners, as well as other main institutions all over the world have acknowledged that exponential increases in the use of water resources addressing the needs of demographic increases as well as for agricultural, industrial and tourism activities together with the effects of climate change are aggravating the water issue in areas already suffering scarcity and/or excess and affect more intensively poorest and most vulnerable population groups.

In order to prevent further ecological damage and desertification, the platform will ensure to minimize the danger of the limitation of natural resources, the pollution of fountains and natural water resources as well as manmade water supplies and ensure a sustainable approach to public health and safety as well as devoted solidarity for areas which are affected by the causes.

The DSMs labeled by GWS do not overexploit given resources and ensure a lasting usage of those developed and broadened by the ongoing and future projects. In addition, GWS and its partners embrace the opportunities given by traditional techniques in combination with modern technologies to develop green solutions to water and sanitation needs and waste water treatment. A close partnership with environmental experts and the careful usage of all resources involved apart from water are essential for the consideration be labeled by Global Water Solidarity and its members.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The DSM financing is proportionate to cost recovery and self-financing.

Global Water Solidarity recognizes the risks for both donors and beneficiaries rising from long-term projects in terms of cost coverage and conservation. Therefore, GWS will only label those DSMs which have a balanced approach between the possibilities and capacities given today and the possible affects they might undergo in the future.

Only cooperation which are capable of channeling their funds in accordance and ensure an ongoing stable financial plan will be supported by GWS and its members and promoted via the platform. Furthermore, the DSM practices have to base on long-term donations with close commitment to hold the level of solidarity. Short-term projects and one-time payments are not considered to be financial sustainable and will therefore not receive any labeling by GWS. In addition, the funding has to be based on a funding source that is not affected by market influences or radical changes in the amount.

TECHNICAL SUSTAINABILITY

The DSM ensures that the best technical solutions are adapted, in respect to the socioeconomic context and the local know-how.

In past years, Global Water Solidarity and its partners have realized that, despite their potential relevance and proven effectiveness, there are still too many sub-national institutions who wish to use a part of their resources and know-how to support other local authorities, but face severe limitations and have not been able to develop their international solidarity to its full potential. Nevertheless, local governments in both developed and developing countries share a common advantage to lead efficient, accessible and accountable water and sanitation services. They are close to the service users and can calculate risks and demand with their full knowledge potential. Furthermore, they know local conditions and needs without the urge to spend precious time on exploiting the situation and analyzing potentials and possible problems in the considered area. In relation to the other determined label indicators, Global Water Solidarity welcomes and supports the usage of local knowledge and supports the exchange of technical know-how in order to ensure a maximum benefit for future generations. Therefore, Global Water Solidarity promotes those DSMs that respect the local situation and consider high-developed technical solutions as well as individual local techniques and needs with respect to a sustainable usage of resources. In order to assure a technical sustainability, the planning, functioning and permanent monitoring of the projects (in respect to the other label indicators) has to proof both a high transparency on all levels as well as the consideration of experts from all areas and field involved in the technical development of the implemented strategy. Furthermore, the transformation of techniques has to be accessible for all further comparable projects and has to base on the principle of solidarity between all decentralized cooperation of the platform.

