



# **Agenda** For **Change**

## Governance Framework

Tracey Keatman, Partnerships in Practice

Elynn Walter, IRC

Susan Davis, Agenda for Change

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## 1. Overview of Agenda for Change

Established in May 2015, Agenda for Change is a collaborative response to the challenge of reaching sustainable service delivery as outlined in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The end goal of Agenda for Change is sustainable WASH service delivery through strong national and local WASH systems. The collaboration works to achieve that end and as a vehicle for catalyzing WASH systems strengthening. Agenda for Change members support national coordination mechanisms.

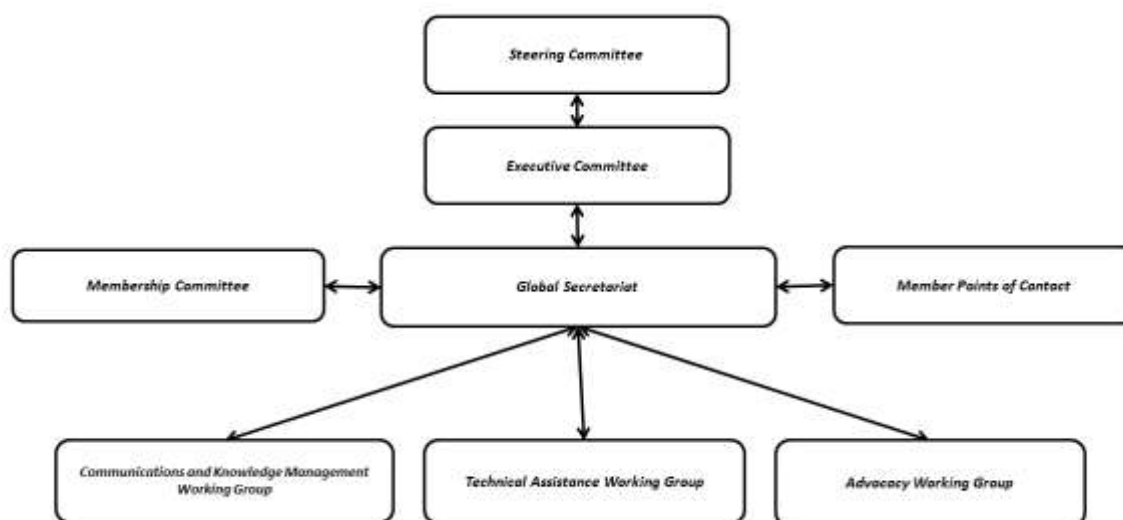
Agenda for Change is not a registered or independent entity. It is a collaboration of like-minded organizations that have adopted a set of common principles and approaches. It speaks in one voice to advocate for, and support national and local governments in, strengthening the WASH systems required to deliver universal and sustained access to WASH services.

Definitions for key terms are provided in Annex 1. The joint principles adopted by Agenda for Change member organizations are listed in Annex 2.

## 2. Global Hub structure

Agenda for Change has a Global Hub comprising a Steering Committee, Executive Committee, Membership Committee, Secretariat, and Working Groups (see Figure 1). These constituent parts govern, operate, and provide support for the collaboration. The Secretariat consists of a Global Coordinator and a Knowledge Manager, both staff hired by the hosting member (see Section 2.4).<sup>1</sup> The three standing Working Groups (Technical Assistance, Knowledge Management and External Communications, and Advocacy) are comprised of representatives from Agenda for Change members.

**Figure 1. Agenda for Change Global Hub Structure**



<sup>1</sup> Additional staff could be added as determined by the Steering Committee.

## 2.1 Committees

Agenda for Change has three standing committees: a Steering Committee, an Executive Committee, and a Membership Committee. Additional standing or ad hoc committees may be created as needed at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

### 2.1.1 Steering Committee

Agenda for Change is overseen by the Steering Committee. It is comprised of one representative from each member organization.

#### Steering Committee roles and responsibilities

The role of the Steering Committee is to serve as a strategic decision making body for Agenda for Change<sup>2</sup>. The Steering Committee meets via conference calls every two months, and has operational meetings in the spring (virtual) and fall (in-person). Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the effectiveness of and providing oversight over Agenda for Change's work by:
  - Supporting the development of strategic plans and annual work plans, and ensuring their effective and efficient implementation
  - Establishing the Agenda for Change governance document and revising it when necessary.
- Ensuring Agenda for Change's viability by:
  - Delegating the financial and legal management of the collaboration's staff and funds to the host organization<sup>3</sup>
  - Holding members accountable for their contributions
  - Actively supporting the Secretariat in raising funding for its activities
  - Reviewing the progress of the Agenda for Change collaboration
- Raising the profile of Agenda for Change by representing the collaboration at different events
- Supporting and overseeing the Agenda for Change membership base by:
  - Reviewing criteria upon which member activities can be identified as coming under the aegis of the collaboration
  - Mediating challenges across organizations
  - Providing political support for staff in countries and globally to engage in Agenda for Change

#### Steering Committee decision making protocols

- The Steering Committee shall strive to make decisions by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be taken on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote.
- Once decisions are taken, they should be recorded in the Steering Committee meeting minutes and assumed as final. Only if significant information comes to light that may influence the outcome of the decision should it be revisited.
- If Steering Committee members are unable to participate in a decision (due to absence or having declared a conflict of interest), they shall accept and adopt the decision of the consensus or majority.
- Decisions that directly affect a specific member should not be taken unless the organization's representative is present.
- Decisions that need to be made between Steering Committee meetings shall be made by email generally on a no-objection, time-limited basis unless otherwise determined.
- The Global Hub budget shall be approved at the fall operational meetings.

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<sup>2</sup> Regular day-to-day approval of Secretariat activities should only require sign-off by the Steering Committee Chair. Information can be shared with the Steering Committee, however, they are not required or expected to make decisions on operational aspects.

<sup>3</sup> The form of this agreement and who signs it will be discussed and finalized in 2019.

### Steering Committee representative nomination process

The normal nomination process will take place at the fall operational meeting. Special nominations (e.g., if a Steering Committee representative leaves the member organization or changes roles) can take place via e-mail to the Steering Committee Chair.

- Each member organization will nominate a person with decision-making authority within their organizations (e.g., WASH Team Director, CEO) for the Steering Committee.
- All nominees shall become Steering Committee representatives.

### Steering Committee operational modalities

- There are no term limits for Steering Committee representatives.
- Representatives may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work on the Steering Committee.
- Management, implementation and other operational aspects of the collaboration's work shall be delegated to the Secretariat in consultation with the Steering Committee Chair, though individual members may be asked to contribute to specific activities.
- The nominated representative is expected to attend all Steering Committee calls and meetings for consistency. However, in the rare case that a representative is unable to attend, the member's Point of Contact or a staff member may act as proxy.
- Steering Committee representatives shall serve the best interests of the Agenda for Change collaboration (not their individual organization). Where the interests of the collaboration and the member conflict, the representative shall withdraw from participation on that issue in accordance with the code of conduct (see Section 4).
- Non-Steering Committee representatives may be invited to Steering Committee meetings to provide context or expert advice.

#### 2.1.1.1 Steering Committee Chair

There shall be a Chair of the Steering Committee who shall also serve as chair of the Executive Committee. The roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee Chair include but are not limited to:

- Chairing Steering Committee and Executive Committee meetings, bringing each committee to decision, and confirming and recording decisions that are taken.
- Leading a self-reflective appraisal process of Steering Committee and Executive Committee<sup>4</sup>
- Supervising and supporting the Secretariat:
  - Leading on setting performance targets for the Secretariat
  - Reviewing and approving regular day-to-day activities as appropriate
- Supervising the Global Coordinator:
  - Conducting regular check in meetings<sup>5</sup>
  - Conducting annual appraisals
  - Supporting, as needed, in internal Agenda for Change dispute resolution
- Serving as an ambassador for Agenda for Change, representing the collaboration internationally and raising the profile of systems strengthening in the sector

### Steering Committee Chair election process

The election process shall take place at the fall operational meeting. Special elections (e.g., if the Chair steps down or leaves the member organization before the end of the term) can take place via e-mail as necessary.

- Any member organization may nominate its representative for the Steering Committee Chair. Nominees should have served on the Steering Committee at least one year.
- If there is more than one nominee, all Steering Committee members will vote to choose the Chair.

<sup>4</sup> Process and timing to be determined in 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Frequency to be determined between Global Coordinator and Steering Committee Chair.

### **Steering Committee Chair operational modalities**

- The Steering Committee Chair term is two years.
- Steering Committee Chairs may serve a maximum of two terms.
- No member organization may have a representative as Steering Committee Chair serve for more than two consecutive terms.
- The Steering Committee Chair may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work as Chair.
- To avoid the perception of a power imbalance, a representative of the host organization may not serve as Steering Committee Chair.
- Steering Committee representatives shall review information and respond to requests in a timely manner.

### **2.1.2 Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee supports the operational functions of the Secretariat and has advisory and oversight roles for the Global Hub. It comprises the Steering Committee Chair, three Steering Committee representatives, and the Global Coordinator. The Executive Committee meets monthly by conference call, plus operational meetings in the spring (virtual) and fall (in-person).

#### **Executive Committee roles and responsibilities**

- Periodically reviewing the Agenda for Change operational strategy
- Overseeing the Secretariat's work and resource allocations, and ensuring they are in alignment with the Agenda for Change strategy
- Engaging in periodic reviews and evaluations of the Secretariat's and Working Groups' work
- Keeping the Secretariat and Working Groups accountable to time schedules
- Overseeing the budget
- Hiring/firing the Global Coordinator
- Providing oversight on reporting to financing agencies for Agenda for Change
- The three representatives shall each liaise with an assigned Working Group to strengthen the links between the constituent parts of the Global Hub.

#### **Executive Committee selection process**

The Executive Committee will be elected every two years. The election process will take place at the fall operational meeting. Special elections (e.g., if a representative steps down or leaves the member organization before the end of the term) can take place via e-mail as necessary.

- Any member organization may nominate their Steering Committee representative for the Executive Committee. Nominees should have served on the Steering Committee for at least one year.
- If there are three nominees, Steering Committee members will vote "no objection" to the list of nominees.
- If there are more than three nominees, Steering Committee members will cast votes for three Executive Committee representatives.

#### **Executive Committee operational modalities**

- Executive Committee terms are two years.
- Representatives may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the Executive Committee.
- Representatives are volunteers and may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work on the Executive Committee.
- Executive Committee representatives shall review information and respond to requests in a timely manner.

- Executive Committee representatives shall serve the best interests of the Agenda for Change collaboration (not their individual organization). Where the interests of the collaboration and the member conflict, the representative shall withdraw from participation on that issue in accordance with the code of conduct (see Section 4).

### 2.1.3 Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving new members of Agenda for Change. The Membership Committee will follow the process described in Section 3.3, and it will ensure that potential new members are aligned with the Agenda for Change joint principles (see Annex 2) and meet the minimum criteria for membership (see Section 3.1). Meetings shall take place every two months by conference call, unless there are no applications to review.

#### Membership Committee nomination process

The Membership Committee is comprised of the Steering Committee Chair, the Global Coordinator, and two nominated representatives from member organizations. It is preferred that one of the nominees represent a relatively new member of Agenda for Change. Representatives shall be knowledgeable about Agenda for Change joint principles and contributions. The nominees may also be Steering Committee representatives, though that is not required.

The nomination<sup>6</sup> process will take place at the same time as the fall operational meeting. Special nominations (e.g., if a Membership Committee representative steps down or leaves the member organization before the end of the term) may be conducted via e-mail as necessary.

- Any member may nominate a representative for the Membership Committee.
- If there are two nominees, Steering Committee members will vote "no objection" to the list of nominees.
- If there are more than two nominees, Steering Committee members will cast votes for two Membership Committee representatives.

#### Membership Committee operational modalities

- Membership Committee terms are two years.
- Representatives may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the Membership Committee.
- Representatives are volunteers and may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work on the Executive Committee.

## 2.2 Working Groups

The role of the Working Groups is to turn the joint principles into actions and results. Working Groups may be created by the Steering Committee for a specific purpose and dissolved when appropriate. There are three standing Working Groups: external communications and knowledge management, advocacy, and technical assistance. Each Working Group will assess and articulate the demand for its work, produce a work plan in collaboration with the Secretariat, and engage Agenda for Change members to implement the work plan.

#### Working Group nomination process

The nomination process will take place at the fall operational meeting. Special nominations (e.g., if a Working Group representative steps down or leaves the member organization) can take place via e-mail.

- Each member organization may nominate one or more representatives to a Working Group. Members are strongly encouraged to nominate host country-based staff when appropriate. The nominee(s) should be knowledgeable about Agenda for Change joint principles and contributions.
- All nominees will become Working Group members.

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<sup>6</sup> The nomination process means no vote is necessary, unless there are more than enough nominees for the available roles. In the latter case, the Steering Committee will vote on the slate of nominees to select the appropriate subset of nominees.

- The Steering Committee may also appoint representatives to the Working Group (with the agreement of the relevant member organization) if there are insufficient volunteers.

### **Working Groups operational modalities**

- Working Group representatives have no term limits.
- Representatives are volunteers and may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work on the Working Groups.

#### **2.2.1 Working Group leaders**

Working group leaders will liaise with the Secretariat and Executive Committee to ensure that the Working Groups set and implement work plans. This involves setting and running regular meetings.

### **Working Group leadership nomination process**

The nomination process will take place at the fall operational meeting. Special nominations (e.g., if a Working Group representative steps down or leaves the member organization) can take place via e-mail.

- Any member organization may nominate a person from its organization to serve as lead of a Working Group. Nominees shall be knowledgeable about Agenda for Change joint principles and contributions. Steering Committee members may not serve as leaders of Working Groups.
- If there is only one nominee for each Working Group, Steering Committee members will vote “no-objection”.
- If there is more than one nominee for a Working Group, the Steering Committee will vote on the list of nominees.
- The Steering Committee may also appoint a Working Group leader (with the agreement of the relevant member organization) if there are insufficient nominees.

### **Working Group leadership operational modalities**

- Working Group leaders' terms are two years.
- Working Group leaders may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- Working Group leaders are volunteers and may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work on the Working Groups.

## **2.3 Points of Contact**

Each member organization shall provide a Point of Contact to serve as liaison between the member and the Secretariat for activities related to Agenda for Change. The Point of Contact should be well-networked within the member organization, but they do not need to be WASH or Agenda for Change experts. They will serve as the initial point of contact for requests from or information dissemination by the Secretariat.

### **Point of Contact nomination process**

The nomination process will take place at the fall operational meeting (if needed) or when the member joins Agenda for Change. Special nominations (e.g., if a Point of Contact steps down or leaves the member organization) can take place via e-mail as necessary.

- Each member organization shall nominate one representative as their Point of Contact.
- All nominees will become Points of Contact.

### **Points of Contact operational modalities**

- Points of Contact have no term limits.
- Representatives are volunteers and may not receive remuneration from Agenda for Change for their work as a Point of Contact.
- Points of Contact shall share information within their organization and respond to requests from the Secretariat in a timely manner.



## 2.4 Secretariat

The Secretariat comprises a Global Coordinator and a Knowledge Manager. The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the collaboration. Specific responsibilities include:

- Support to Committees and Working Groups (e.g., co-developing work plans, budgets, results frameworks, etc.)
- Knowledge management and sharing
- Coordination of global events
- Internal communication between the Steering Committee, Executive Committee, Working Groups, Points of Contact, and/or other member organization representatives
- Membership outreach and member screening
- Promotion of the collaboration to external audiences and supporting members in such promotion (in alignment with the External Brand Usage Guide in Annex 4).

### 2.4.1 Secretariat staffing process

The Global Coordinator is a full-time staff position selected by an ad hoc Hiring Working Group and employed by the host organization. The Knowledge Manager, who can be a part-time consultant or full-time staff, will be selected by the Global Coordinator with approval of the Steering Committee, Communications Working Group, and host organization.

### 2.4.2 Secretariat hosting arrangements

The Secretariat is hosted by one of the member organizations. The Steering Committee will review the hosting arrangements every 5 years and can choose to move the Secretariat to a different organization if required. The responsibilities of the Secretariat host include providing office space, human resources and technical support, and 10% of a full-time staff member's time to help support daily operations.

## 3. Membership

Members of Agenda for Change are expected to affirm their commitment to and support for the Joint Principles (see Annex 2) and align with and model the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) collaborative behaviors (see Box 1 in Annex 2). Agenda for Change expects member organizations to have, at a minimum, strategic alignment with the center box of the collaboration's continuum (see Figure 2): organizations are aligned with the joint principles of Agenda for Change; agree to work at country level with mutually reinforcing activities; use a collective voice and common messaging at all levels; and share knowledge and learning across cities, districts, countries, organizations, and sectors.

Members and any other organizations may coordinate and align with the Agenda for Change joint principles and create whatever alliances, memberships, and/or consortia are relevant to their country or program contexts.

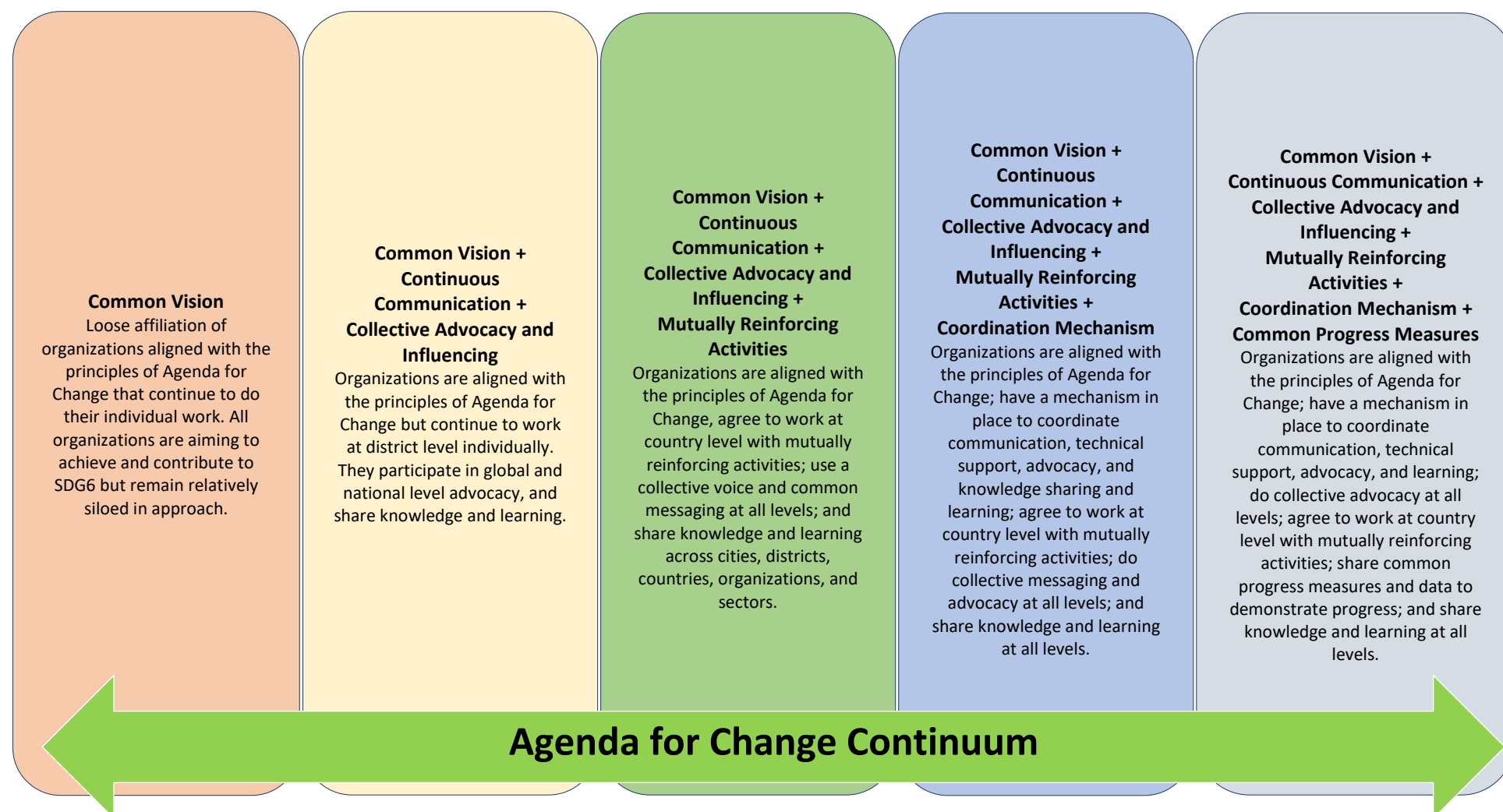
Members can be from various stakeholder groups (e.g., non- and for-profit, funding agencies, consultancies, etc.).<sup>7</sup>

Every member of Agenda for Change is represented equally on the Steering Committee (see Section 2.2.1).

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<sup>7</sup> An affiliate member category may be created for organizations that are interested in joining but are not yet fully aligned with the systems strengthening approach.

**Figure 2. Agenda for Change Continuum**



### 3.1 Membership criteria

To qualify for membership in Agenda for Change, an organization must be committed to the goal of achieving permanent, universal access to WASH services, as demonstrated by satisfying each of the following:

- Currently and actively be:
  - Working towards the goal of achieving permanent, universal access to WASH services through systems change across at least one city or district; and/or
  - Providing funding, technical assistance, or market-based services in support of building strong and sustainable national and local systems
- Working collaboratively with government, the private sector, and civil society organizations to contribute to a permanent system of sustained WASH service delivery
- Advocating for and demonstrating the core principles of sustainable service delivery and a systems approach to WASH as set out in the Agenda for Change joint principles (see Annex 2) and aligned with the SWA collaborative behaviors
- Actively participating in learning and sharing around the organization's systems-based work
- Supporting the "upstream" changes necessary to realize universal access via national level advocacy and capacity building
- If these commitments are demonstrated in only one country where an organization operates, currently and actively be spreading them across the entire organization
- Agreeing to adhere to the code of conduct (see Section 4).

### 3.2 Expected member contributions

Agenda for Change expects members to commit a minimum of 30 days of participation per year, as described in Table 1. Members that contribute more are likely to experience greater benefits. Most time commitments to the Global Hub will focus on technical assistance, learning and sharing knowledge, and advocacy to help member organizations and the sector more broadly progress towards alignment with the Joint Principles.

**Table 1. Expected member contributions**

Activity	Expected contribution (approximate)
Steering Committee representation (one volunteer per organization; see Section 2.2.1). Representatives are expected to participate in two operational meetings and six bimonthly conference calls, and to respond to requests from the Secretariat within five to seven working days.	Five days per year
Points of Contact (one volunteer per organization; see Section 2.3). Points of Contact are expected to share information from the Secretariat throughout their organization, and to respond to requests from the Secretariat within five to seven working days.	Five days per year
Working group participation (one or more volunteers per organization; see Section 2.2); general Agenda for Change communications; participation in global meetings and interim inputs; and contribution to learning within the collaboration.	20 days per year

Participation in the optional activities in Table 2 would require the following additional contributions of time or in-kind donations:<sup>8</sup>

**Table 2. Optional member contributions**

Activity	Expected contribution (approximate)
Executive Committee (at most one representative per organization; see Section 2.2.2)	Seven days per year
Steering Committee Chair (see Section 2.2.2.1)	20 days per year
Membership Committee representative (at most one representative per organization; see Section 2.2.3)	Three days per year
Working Group leader(s) (at most one representative per organization per Working Group; see Section 2.2.1)	10 to 15 days per year
Agenda for Change booth at conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share cost</li> <li>- Member representatives will be asked to help staff the booth</li> </ul>	Booth costs are sometimes sponsored by a funder; if not, cost will be divided among willing members  Staffing time depends on length of conference and number of participating members
Host organization for Secretariat (see Section 2.4.2)	Provides office space, support for human resources and financial reporting, and 25 days of a staff member to help support daily operations <sup>9</sup>

### 3.3 Joining Agenda for Change

The Global Coordinator and the Membership Committee (see Section 2.2.3) shall be responsible for reviewing and approving applications for membership. The membership review process involves the following steps:

- Submitting Expression of Interest form by interested organizations
- Screening of applicants' Expression of Interest forms by the Global Coordinator:
  - Assessing the organization's degree of alignment with Agenda for Change's membership criteria (see Section 3.1) and ability and willingness to meet the expected contributions (see Section 3.2).
  - Recommending qualified applicants for consideration by the Membership Committee.
  - Informing the Steering Committee of recommended applicants one week prior to Membership Committee meetings to allow Steering Committee representatives to share any concerns.
- Reviewing recommended applicants and voting by the Membership Committee. The options for voting are: "Approved", "Not approved – needs further vetting", or "Not approved".
- Notifying applicants of result:
  - For applications that are approved, the Secretariat will notify the new member and coordinate onboarding for Agenda for Change.

<sup>8</sup> Any member is welcome, but not required, to contribute financially to the Global Hub.

<sup>9</sup> A hosting agreement will be created by the host organization and agreed upon with the Steering Committee.

- If an application is not approved, the Secretariat will provide brief feedback to the applicant.<sup>10</sup>
- If an application needs further vetting, someone from the Membership Committee will contact the applicant to resolve outstanding questions. Once the questions are resolved, the applicant will be reconsidered during the next Membership Committee meeting.

### 3.4 Leaving Agenda for Change

Agenda for Change's Steering Committee shall have the right for good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any organization that in the opinion of the Steering Committee:

- Has failed to fulfill the requirements of proper professional and ethical standards;
- Is engaged in activities that are deemed to be detrimental or contrary to the joint principles or interests of Agenda for Change;
- Misrepresents the collaboration causing serious reputational damage;
- Commits Agenda for Change to activities or expenditures that are not agreed in advance by the Secretariat or the Steering Committee; and/or
- Has been convicted of criminal activity in a court of law.

The Steering Committee shall agree on a process for removing members and communicating any removal publicly if the need arises.

If members cannot fulfill participation commitments (see Section 3.2) or want to leave the collaboration for any reason, they should notify the Steering Committee Chair and Global Coordinator.

## 4. Member code of conduct

It is fundamental to the integrity, credibility, and continued progress of Agenda for Change that every member supports, promotes, and works towards the shared goal of sustainable WASH service delivery through strong national and local WASH systems. All members must act in good faith towards this goal and commit to adhering to the principles set out in this code.

This code provides guidance on the standards and expected behaviors of Agenda for Change members and complements the Joint Principles and other agreed-upon governance procedures and structures. The aim is to ensure that Agenda for Change maintains high standards of integrity and to ensure that, as a voluntary collaboration, Agenda for Change is effective, open, and accountable.

Members and their representatives shall operate under the following principles whereby they:

- Shall take decisions objectively and openly with regard to what is in the best interests of the Agenda for Change collaboration (using professional, organizational, and stakeholder perspectives to inform these decisions), recognizing that Agenda for Change and its members must use resources prudently and in accordance with the collaboration's mandate and governing law(s).
- Shall promote the joint principles and activities of Agenda for Change by representing the collaboration before a range of audiences as appropriate.
- Shall adhere to the Agenda for Change funding protocols (see Annex 3).
- Shall respect the fellow people and institutions of Agenda for Change, and the roles they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.
- Shall disclose all financial and related interests and relationships when they are relevant to the work of Agenda for Change. To preclude or resolve conflicts before they arise, members shall take the following steps:
  - Declaring a financial or other interest in a matter as soon as discussion begins, or, preferably earlier;
  - Withdrawing from the discussion for that item unless expressly invited to remain in order to give information;

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<sup>10</sup> The form and content of feedback will be agreed upon by the Membership Committee.

- Not being counted in the quorum for the part of the meeting devoted to that item; and
  - Withdrawing during any vote and having no vote on the matter.
- Members have a duty to report another member to the Global Coordinator if they believe that the specific member has violated any of the Agenda for Change joint principles (see Annex 2) or code of conduct (see Section 4), causing meaningful harm to the collaboration, its members, or the work of Agenda for Change.
- At the request of the Steering Committee Chair, the Global Coordinator may have discussions with any member that might have breached the code of conduct or the joint principles. Members who are found to have breached the code of conduct or the joint principles may be asked to remediate the situation or leave the collaboration, as appropriate, by the Steering Committee.

## 5. Dispute resolution

Members should seek to resolve disputes directly with other members in a timely fashion. If the dispute cannot be resolved directly, resolution of disputes among members may be addressed by the following mechanisms:

- Members shall report the dispute to the Global Coordinator, who will clarify what the dispute is through confidential discussions with all parties concerned.
- The Global Coordinator will aim to establish a common goal as agreed by both/all parties (i.e., the desired outcome of the dispute) and share ideas for solutions with both/all sides for meeting the common goal. This process will continue until all parties come to a conclusion on a satisfactory resolution.
- Once agreement is reached, all parties will discuss the responsibility each party has in implementing and maintaining the solution.
- If a resolution cannot be reached, the discussion will be elevated to the Steering Committee Chair to determine a method of resolution.

## 6. Revisions to this framework

At each fall operational meeting, the Secretariat and Steering Committee can suggest and agree upon revisions to this governance framework. Any revisions shall be communicated in writing to all members.

## Annex 1 - Definitions for Agenda for Change

This document presents key terms within Agenda for Change and the definitions as agreed upon by Agenda for Change members. The following terms are defined in this document:

1. Sector strengthening
2. Systems and Systems approach
3. Systems strengthening
4. Systems change
5. Collective Action
6. Agenda for Change

### 1. Sector strengthening

Sector strengthening is a means to an end and is the process of improving the capability of national and local systems, led by government, to deliver sustained services for all segments of the population in accordance with agreed standards. A strong national WASH sector is one where all of the requisite constituent systems are in place to plan, finance, deliver, monitor and regulate WASH services, ensuring appropriate accountability mechanisms in place and to guarantee services for all. A strong national system is also one that is able to continually reflect, learn and innovate in response to sector evolution and external shocks.

### 2. Systems and Systems approach

Modern societies are, by definition, made up of complex and interlinked systems of people, laws, political and financial institutions, private companies, technologies, markets all constantly interacting, both formally and informally and responding to different sets of incentives, sanctions and influences. This is how they work, and this is how they provide services to their citizens. This is as true for the water and sanitation “sector” and the services they deliver as any other part of a modern economy. A starting premise for taking a systems approach is the understanding that any given WASH System is a complex adaptive system. Adopting a “systems approach” therefore means recognizing and understanding that any strong national system for WASH service delivery will require all of the elements (factors to be in place and at all institutional levels and include different actors – from households and communities to local government and national ministries to private companies and aid agencies to politicians – being able to work together effectively and at scale.

### 3. Systems strengthening

Systems strengthening is part of taking a “systems approach” and is a means to an end. It involves taking actions and supporting interventions that are considered likely to strengthen one or more elements of a whole system – both the factors<sup>11</sup> (technology, financing, regulation, coordination, service delivery, learning, accountability mechanisms, etc. ), as well as the capacity of actors and their inter-relationships (i.e., the political economy of decision - making, incentives and dynamics) that can improve the quality and sustainability of WASH services and in ensuring that all populations are served.

### 4. Systems change

Systems change is a variation - positive or negative – in the strength of factors (i.e., technology, financing, regulation, coordination, service delivery, learning, accountability mechanisms, etc.) and actors (i.e. the

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<sup>11</sup> Many organizations engaged in systems strengthening have developed their own framework of factors or system building blocks to guide their work. It is important to note that there is no globally agreed list of sector building blocks. These are the ones defined and agreed upon by Agenda for Change members: institutional arrangements & coordination, finance, service delivery institutions, regulation & accountability, monitoring, water resource management, planning, and learning & adaptation.

capacity of institutions, organizations and individuals) that make up a system. System change also reflects variations in the dynamics and inter - relationships among actors (i.e. improved access to information or participation in decision - making). There has been significant progress in our collective ability to measure systems change in the WASH sector in terms of factors and actors (“the what”), but much less progress in assessing changes in the dynamics among actors (“the how”). Systems strengthening is a deliberate effort to effect systems change, but systems change is a result of both intended and unintended changes within the WASH sector and the broader political economy.

## **5. Collective Action**

Collective action is a means to an end and a way of achieving strong WASH systems, at all levels. It is based on the assumption that to achieve positive change in any complex system will require many independent actors and the incentives that drive them to align to produce different and more positive outcomes; in this case more sustainable, better and more universal WASH services. It does however have a more explicit and intentional focus on building coalitions, partnerships or movements that are dedicated to driving long lasting systems change. Such collective action can be established at local, national and global levels and indeed it is a core element of collective action to have “vertical” linkages and flows of interaction and learning between these levels, as well as “horizontal” interactions. Collective action involves different stakeholders, at times with differing opinions and perspectives, interacting and collaborating to address and solve common or shared challenges. Collective action should include all stakeholders or at least account for their perspective/position and usually includes a platform or mechanism for coordination and learning, sometimes referred to as a Learning Alliance supported by a hub or a backbone organization. Collective Impact<sup>2</sup> is a branded version of collective action, which was developed by the US-based group FSG.

## **6. Agenda for Change**

Agenda for Change is a collaboration of like-minded organizations who are adopting a set of common principles, approaches and voice to advocate for, and to support national and local governments in, strengthening WASH systems. Agenda for Change serves as a catalyst for collective action and for organizational behavior change, both in service of systems strengthening. Collaborating organizations in Agenda for Change recognize that there is a need to shift from “business as usual” in the WASH sector and that to achieve positive change in sector performance necessitates a systems approach.

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<sup>2</sup> Collective Impact shares the same core principle of collective action, that no single organization has the ability to solve any major social problem at scale by itself. It uses a specific language, a set of five so-called “conditions” for Collective Impact and a suite of tools to address these different conditions. Collective Impact grew out of addressing social issues primarily in the USA and Canada including in the education, health and housing sectors (see: <https://www.fsg.org/publications/collective-impact>)



## Annex 2 - Agenda for Change Joint Principles

### Global Level

We, as sector stakeholders, are committed to achieving the goal of universal access to WASH by 2030. Our mission is driven by evidence of the fundamental role of WASH in all development outcomes and in the broader poverty-eradication agenda. This target date is non-negotiable if we are to deliver on the internationally agreed SDGs.

Access to sustainable WASH services, as recognized by the United Nations (UN), is a fundamental human right.

To achieve universal access to sustainable WASH services by 2030, all agencies must redouble their efforts and fundamentally change their practices.

We are convinced the sector can achieve lasting universal access by 2030 but understand that this will require new partnerships, better use of existing finances coupled with new funding sources, and a serious commitment to monitoring for improvement.

We know that governments must lead efforts and that external agencies must work in a way that supports and builds government capacity to lead and to succeed. We commit to work collectively and adhere to key behaviors that strengthen countries' capabilities to deliver permanent and accountable access to WASH services (see Box 1).

We know that work needs to be financed more creatively and effectively, and must address all stages of the service delivery cycle. We know that financing must come from individuals, communities, and district and national governments, and be combined with and supported by traditional aid and/or philanthropy and crucial funding vehicles like loans, social impact investments, and bonds. No robust country plan aiming to achieve universal access by 2030 should fail because of a lack of finance.

We understand that achieving universal access to permanent WASH services requires improvement in integration and alliance-building with other sectors, including health, education, finance and the environment.

We commit to building on and supporting country-led institutions, processes and networks aiming to achieve universal access by 2030, and will find creative ways to support countries' participation and leadership in broader sector initiatives like the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) membership.

### National Level

Achieving universal access to WASH services that last is only possible with government leadership and political commitment, and when policy makers and service providers are held to account for responsive services that reach all communities.

Strong institutions that are accountable, responsive and well-coordinated are necessary to deliver and sustain services. All members will work together to strengthen key sector building blocks, including:

- Sector policy/strategy
- Sector coordination
- Sector finance
- Institutional arrangements—which include frameworks for regulation and accountability
- Performance monitoring—which can lead to regulation of service providers and services, and ensures inevitable challenges are understood and addressed in a timely way

We commit to investing and participating in a continuous process of planning, monitoring, assessment and corrective action. The ability of a sector to continuously learn and adapt, both for policy and operational practice, should be a core requirement and not viewed as an optional extra.

To deliver universal services we must tackle inequalities by targeting resources at the most marginalized and excluded people, and ensure the articulation of their rights to WASH services is met with responsive and accountable service provision—in short, including everyone.

National policy-making and monitoring systems should enable—and be informed by—implementation processes at the district level, especially where there are significant gaps between stated policy and actual practices.

### **City and District Level**

Success will mean every household and public institution (e.g., schools and clinics) has access to water and sanitation services that last. Although hard to achieve, this is measurable and is the cornerstone of our efforts, with a focus on nobody being left behind.

Success at district and city levels will require new alliances and working relationships between local government, local communities and the local private sector, with governments taking the lead. External agencies should work with all these players to ensure success—and we commit to doing this in our work.

We are not ideological about who provides WASH services. The outcome we seek is simply that water flows and sanitation and hygiene services are guaranteed for all, permanently. Different management arrangements can be constructed to achieve this result: public, private, community or combined.

Achievement of district-wide or city-wide access requires planning, including comprehensive investment plans. We will support district-level and city-level agencies to coordinate around the development and delivery of these plans. As external agents we and others must respect the primacy of district and city-level planning, coordinated and led by local government.

District-based or city-based models of universal service provision should inform national (and global) policy, programming, finance, systems and practice priorities. We commit to investing in documentation and learning from our own and others' work at the local level, and to dissemination of this to higher levels through learning mechanisms.

The monitoring systems used by all WASH agencies should aim to strengthen local and national monitoring systems, and, where these systems are available and sufficiently robust, to use them for their own monitoring.

We commit to jointly ensuring community empowerment and engagement is recognized as a fundamental part of ensuring the rights of all to WASH services are realized, and ensuring that governments and service providers are held to account.

**Box 1: Behaviors for effective, equitable, and sustainable development cooperation in the WASH sector**

**1. Enhance government leadership of sector planning processes**

Government leadership is essential for directing and coordinating resources—including external support—around nationally agreed sector priorities, strategies and plans. In particular, sector development requires a government-led, multi-stakeholder cycle of planning, monitoring, and learning. Where such sector planning processes are weak or not in place, partners should jointly support efforts to build and strengthen them.

**2. Strengthen and use country systems**

Core country systems are the fundamental capabilities of government needed for the effective and transparent management of public resources, including those received through development assistance. These systems include: public financial management, HR management, statistics, procurement and contract management. Core country systems are key to financing capital expenditure for water and sanitation services as well as for monitoring and regulating services. Government and partners should agree a set of intermediate steps to progressively strengthen and use country systems to develop, monitor and regulate water and sanitation services.

**3. Use one information and mutual accountability platform**

In order to decide where to invest, how to sustain and improve water and sanitation services and to understand which policies and strategies work, it is crucial that sectors have reliable data and engage in critical joint reflection and adaptive management. Effective development cooperation requires appropriate, inclusive processes that encourage all partners to demonstrate and demand mutual accountability for sector progress.

**4. Build sustainable water and sanitation sector financing strategies**

Transparency and predictability of all resources is critical in allowing governments to exercise a leadership role in directing and monitoring sector investment. Sector financing strategies are critical components of effective sector planning in the medium and longer term. They are critical both to domestic accountability, and to the governments' capacity to hold external support agencies accountable and vice versa.

Source: [SWA Country Processes Task Team](#)

## Annex 3 - Agenda for Change Funding Protocols

The following outlines a set of funding protocols or etiquette that guides the process for collaborative or joint funding for the coordination mechanisms for Agenda for Change including the Global Hub and possibly country coordination mechanisms.

- Each Agenda for Change member or consortium of members is free to seek funding for their systems-based work that aligns with the joint principles and may mention they are a member of the collaboration but will not represent the collaboration or seek funding using the Agenda for Change brand (see Annex 4 for branding guidelines).
- Exceptional opportunities (e.g., those proposed by donors) will be discussed by the Steering Committee.
- The collaboration provides a platform from which we can form specific case-by-case consortia which will present a compelling investment for donors.
- Members can only approach donors on others' behalf if in a formal consortium agreed in writing or for a specific bid or pitch agreed in writing with other members.
- Members should not, without consent, represent or comment on the approach, performance or programs of other members when talking to donors or other actors.
- If a new donor approaches the Secretariat to fund either the Global Hub or a combination of support for the Global Hub and country specific support, the Global Coordinator will share that opportunity with all members working in that locale. Each member will have an equal opportunity to receive that funding and a process for deciding on participating organizations will be completed at the country level with support from the Global Hub.
- The Global Coordinator in collaboration with the Steering Committee will look for the minimum funding necessary in accordance with the operating budget to run the Global Hub.
- Agenda for Change members should respect existing funding relationships of other members.

## Annex 4 - External Brand Usage Guide

This guide is intended to serve as a reference as to how and when the Agenda for Change name, logo and collaboration can and should be referenced. A separate guidance document will be drafted for approval by the Communications Working Group on the technical specifications around the logo, colors and text associated with the Agenda for Change brand.

### 1. Events

#### External Events

- Agenda for Change members have agreed to an annual presence at Stockholm World Water Week (SWWW) and UNC's Water and Health Conference through the following specific events:
  - SWWW - Agenda for Change Breakfast
  - University of North Carolina (UNC) Water and Health Conference - Agenda for Change Reception
- These events will use the Agenda for Change branding and will promote the systems strengthening approaches championed by the Agenda for Change collaboration members.
- For any other external events (conferences, meetings, webinars, etc.) the Agenda for Change brand will only be used if all members are involved or approve the usage of the brand. Approval must be sought at least 1 month prior to allow organizations time to approve.<sup>13</sup>

#### Internal Events

- Agenda for Change's Secretariat will coordinate meetings (with support from Working Groups as necessary) for all members to share in learning and build the membership.
- These meetings will be branded Agenda for Change and could be open to external stakeholders, but are largely intended for an internal member audience.

### 2. Partner Websites<sup>14</sup>

- Agenda for Change members are encouraged, but are under no requirement, to reference their membership in Agenda for Change on their website (including use of the Agenda for Change logo, which should be linked to the Agenda for Change website).
- The Communications Working Group will develop boilerplate text that can be used by any member.
- Any additional text associated with the logo or membership in Agenda for Change should be submitted to the Communications Working Group for review a minimum of 2 weeks prior to publication online.

### 3. Print Materials/Presentations

- Global level printed materials branded Agenda for Change will be developed through the Communications Working Group.
- Individual member organizations are encouraged to reference their membership in Agenda for Change during presentations and in publications that are specifically focused on their systems strengthening work, with the disclaimer that they do not represent the entire collective.

<sup>13</sup> Example: Decision to host an Agenda for Change booth at Stockholm World Water Week 2018. All members were given the opportunity to approve the idea prior to submission and have either agreed to participate or agreed to the idea going forward. The submission was made using only the Agenda for Change logo and name, but individual member names were shared and members will be represented by staff at the booth and through their own branded materials at the booth.

<sup>14</sup> Guidelines for branding, content, and the process for updating the Agenda for Change website will be created by the Agenda for Change Knowledge Manager and Communications Working Group.

- When an organization intends to use the Agenda for Change name/logo in a presentation<sup>15</sup> or publication the associated text should be shared with the Communications Working Group with a minimum of 2 weeks to review and approve. The Communications Working Group will consider any submissions on a quarterly basis. Submissions should be made a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the quarterly review meeting. The Agenda for Change Knowledge Manager can provide specific dates for meetings to those planning to submit.

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<sup>15</sup> Example scenario: A member presents at a conference on district and national systems strengthening work in Uganda. The presentation should be branded as that organization, but can include slides referencing their membership in Agenda for Change at the global level and information about Agenda for Change. It should be clear that the member representative does not speak for the collaboration alone, but that their work is aligned with the joint principles agreed by all members.