

Second WES-Net India General Body Meeting

2 – 5 p.m., 2 September 2005
YMCA, 1 Jai Singh Road, New Delhi 110001

INTRODUCTIONS

Paul Deverill (UNICEF India and WES-Net India Core Group) chaired the meeting and began by requesting participants to introduce themselves. Mr A. Kalimuthu (Plan International) made the first of four presentations scheduled before the open discussion (Agenda is in [Annexure 1](#))

PRESENTATIONS

1. **Introduction to WES-Net India:** This presentation (given in [Attachment 1](#)) described the process of forming WES-Net India, and outlined the progress made by this network since then.
2. **WES Net India: Progress over the last 9 months:** A. J. James (Pragmatix Research and WES-Net India Core Group Leader) described the work undertaken by the network since January 2005 (full presentation in [Attachment 2](#)).
3. **What WES-Net India aims to do:** Paul Deverill then explained to members what WES-Net India aims to do, emphasizing the need to expand the Network and the Core Group to include adequate representation from different groups of stakeholders, at national, state and even district levels.
4. **Proposed Institutional Structure for WES-Net India:** Satyajit Singh (Delhi University, and Consultant to WSP-South Asia for this study for WES-Net) presented the main findings of his study (see Annexure 4) on the two issues he was asked to cover: (1) the need for such a network within the sector and (2) the most appropriate institutional structure for WES-Net India (see [Attachment 3](#)). He also presented the hybrid model of registered-society-and-host-institutions that the WES-Net India Core Group had agreed was perhaps the most suitable for the institutional structure of WES-Net India.

Open Discussion

The discussions were lively and sustained, and covered the following main points.

- 1) **Purpose of the network:** Given that convergence and coordination have been the main factors hampering development in the WSS sector, despite the funding being available, participants noted that a network like WES-Net India was a vital need, to complement efforts of the government to achieve common goals.
- 2) **Structure:** Participants suggested that different models were needed in different areas, and same model may not necessarily be appropriate everywhere. The model of SPWD was discussed, and participants agreed that a formal structure was necessary, which provided a neutral platform for information exchange without any agenda of its own. However, participants wondered whether WES-Net India needed to be a Registered Society, given the fear that excessive bureaucratization and hierarchy could adversely affect the vibrancy and vigour of an informal network. They agreed that a formal legal view was necessary before finalising the structure.
- 3) **Individual or institutional membership?** The issue was raised and participants felt that while individuals would bring the support of their own institutions to the network, individuals *without* institutions would also be encouraged to become members.
- 4) **Funding issues:** Participants agreed that while such a network was useful and needed, it needed funding to sustain itself and provide useful services to its members. At the same time, however,

care must be taken to ensure that the network maintains its independence from the sources of finances.

- 5) **Responsibility for information dissemination:** Participants pointed out that there should be quality controls on the information put out by the network. The Core Group however clarified that the network should not take responsibility of the quality of knowledge products made available through the network – which should remain the responsibility of those who created it. Citing the example of the Solution Exchange promoted by UNDP/UN, they pointed out that while the UNDP/UN remained responsible for the quality of the service, the network was only providing a 'distribution service', which would be true of any other knowledge product that the network was requested to make available to its members.
- 6) **Co-existence with other networks:** Since several institutions (e.g., WaterAid, Plan International, SphereIndia, IWMI) had networks of their own, WES-Net India would have to tap into these and use these synergies to help people access resources and influence government. Mention was also made of the 3i research network and the e-socialsciences.com network.
- 7) **Scope of the network:** Participants discussed whether it should be restricted to water and environmental sanitation alone or Water as a whole, and the Core Group clarified that the scope was broadly the Water Sector and the Environmental Sanitation Sector, but the immediate focus was water supply and sanitation.

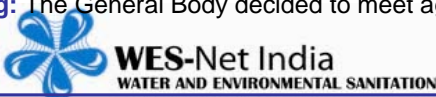
DECISIONS MADE

As the general body of WES-Net India, the participants of the General Body Meeting took the following decisions.

1. **Expansion of Core Group:** The existing Core Group expressed a strong need to expand the Core Group, and invited others to join. The following volunteered to join the Core Group:
 1. Mr. Madhab Nayak (Fountain of Development Research and Action - FODRA)
 2. Mr. Vijay Sardana (Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development - SPWD)
 3. Mr. N.M. Prusty (Care International)
 4. Ms. Asha Ramesh (WaterAid India)
 5. Ms Shipra Saxena (WaterAid India)
 6. Ms. Jill Carrharris (Lead India) – volunteered by Ms. Anupam Nidhi and to be confirmed

The General Body endorsed the expansion of the Core Group and welcomed them.

2. **Expanded Mandate of the Core Group:** The Core Group sought permission from the General Body to continue its work and to co-opt any individual or institution in the sector, on an appropriate basis, to complete any agreed task, and this permission was granted. In this connection, the General Core Group will make presentations to the Government of India, and write regarding membership of government officials in the network.
3. **Deliverables:** The General Body also agreed on the following deliverables:
 - 3.1. **A formal structure for WES-Net India functions–** A constitution, preamble, bye-laws that were effective and practical with minimal bureaucracy, by mid December 2005. It also sought the mandate to write to the Secretary.
 - 3.2. **Allocation of WES-Net India functions:** A 2-pager would be emailed to the entire general body, setting out the various functions and tasks, from which institutions could select and volunteer to undertake specific tasks.
4. **Bringing in more members:** General Body members agreed to make individual efforts to encourage more organisations and network partners to join WES-Net India and participate in Solution Exchange.
5. **Next General Body Meeting:** The General Body decided to meet again in mid-December 2005.



CLOSING REMARKS

Mr Manavalan (AFPRO) appreciated the progress made by WES-Net India and the efforts made by the Core Group in the last 9 months. He said the Hybrid model was a promising new direction for institutional cooperation and felt that such a structure would deliver a service of networking and knowledge sharing. He also felt an urgent need to expand the membership and frequency of Core Group meetings to at least bi-monthly meetings, and also emphasized the importance of involving the government in the WES-Net India institutional structure. He announced that the next GBM would be in mid-December 2005.

PARTICIPANTS

1. Ms Asha Ramesh – WaterAid India, New Delhi
2. Ms Shipra Saxena – WaterAid India, New Delhi
3. Mr Kamal Mazumdar – Department of Drinking Water/RGNDWM, Government of India
4. Mr A.K. Angurana – CAPART, Government of India
5. Ms Anupam Nidhi – Lead India, New Delhi
6. Ms Prema Gera – UNDP, New Delhi
7. Mr Ramaswamy Iyer – Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi
8. Mr Mihir Moitra – India Canada Environment Facility (ICEF), New Delhi
9. Dr Arvind Kumar – Sulabh International, New Delhi
10. Mr Vijay Sardana – Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development (SPWD), New Delhi
11. Mr Subroto Talukdar – Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), New Delhi
12. Mr Stephen Young – Department for International Development, Government of the UK (DFID India), New Delhi
13. Professor M.N. Murthy – Institute of Economic Growth, , Delhi
14. Dr Partho Mukhopadhyay – Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC), New Delhi
15. Mr Peter Zoller – AusAid, New Delhi
16. Mr Madhab Nayak – Fountain of Development Research & Action (FODRA), New Delhi
17. Mr. N.M.Prusty – Care International, New Delhi
18. Mr Veturi Chiranjeevi – Care International, New Delhi
19. Mr Satyajit Singh – Delhi University and Consultant to WSP
20. Ms Jyotsna Bapat, Consultant, *Member, WESnet India Core Group*
21. Mr Mark Ellery, Water and Sanitation Program – South Asia, *Member, WESnet India Core Group*
22. Mr Paul Deverill, UNICEF India, *Member, WESnet India Core Group*
23. Mr D.K. Manavalan, AFPRO, *Member, WESnet India Core Group*
24. Mr Arumugam Kalimuthu, Plan International, *Member, WESnet India Core Group*
25. Dr A J James, Pragmatix Research, *Leader, WESnet India Core Group*
26. Ms Tejinder Kaur – National Coordinator, WES-Net India



Annexure 1: AGENDA

1.00: Registration and Lunch

2.00: Introduction to WES-Net India

Introduction to WES-Net India – *Kalimuthu Arumugam*

WES Net India: Progress over the last 9 months– *AJ James*

What WESnet India aims to do – *Paul Deverill*

2.30: Proposed Institutional Structure for WES-Net India – *Satyajit Singh*

3.00: TEA

3.15: Open discussion

3.45: Moving forward: (facilitated by *Paul Deverill*)

New members of the Core Group

Sharing Executive Responsibilities

Group to draft Constitution and Bye-Laws

4.45: Closing Remarks – *DK Manavalan*

