

# **Water & Sanitation Rotarian Action Group (WASRAG)**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN for the Implementation of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Education Projects**

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## I. Executive Summary

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The Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group (WASRAG) has accepted the challenge by the United Nations to address the unmet water, sanitation, health and hygiene needs of over 2.0 billion people in developing countries. Rotary, with its 33,000 Clubs and its worldwide influence, is one of the few organizations that are positioned to successfully guide how this problem can be addressed. But to be successful, Rotary must create and maintain strategic partnerships with other non-government organizations (NGOs) and government agencies around the world.

This report presents the Strategic Plan for WASRAG, as a key part of Rotary International, for the implementation of water and sanitation, health and hygiene education (WASH) projects in the geographical areas of the world where thousands of people are dying every day due to lack of access to clean and safe water and proper sanitation.

This Strategic Plan is intended to provide the guidance of the best Rotary has to offer. It should be considered an “evergreen document” in that it should be updated as WASRAG and Rotary International gain experience in major WASH projects. This document is the first step to involve both the WASRAG members and the Rotary Clubs worldwide in jointly seeking the most effective way for Rotary and its strategic partners to address this need.

The primary objective of the Strategic Plan of WASRAG is to ensure both sustainable WASH projects and to pursue the ambitious United Nations Millennium Goal of:

**“By 2015 reduce by 50% the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation.”**

UN estimates indicate 1.5 billion people lack access to safe water and 2.4 billion people have no access to sanitation. Other objectives include:

- Develop formal strategic partnerships that allow the collaboration and coordination needed to jointly plan and implement major regional projects
- Build on successful models based on Rotary projects and those of other NGOs
- Build the delivery capacity in the countries of need
- Prioritize programs to match resources and needs
- Create local (in-country) capacity and monitor for success

These objectives, and this Strategic Plan are intended to facilitate and support Rotary Clubs worldwide with the intellectual capacity to effectively plan, finance and undertake sustainable water, sanitation and health and hygiene education (WASH) projects. Rotary will support WASH projects where they are most needed in a simple, cost effective and sustainable manner, with significant Rotary involvement and through effective partnerships with the community, as well as government and other non-government organizations.

WASRAG's vision includes:

- To be an effective participant and partner in the UN Millennium Goal to bring safe and sustainable drinking water, effective sanitation, and health and hygiene education to the over two billion people around the world in need of these basic life systems
- To develop an organizational structure that:
  - effectively promotes WASH projects to Rotary Clubs and Districts around the world
  - fosters the exchange of ideas related to successful and sustainable WASH projects
  - facilitates access between technical experts/mentors and Rotary Clubs participating in WASH projects
  - provides access to necessary scientific, engineering and cultural information to Rotary Clubs and their strategic partners for the successful development of sustainable WASH projects
  - develops and maintains on behalf of Rotary International effective working relationships with other organizations participating in WASH projects
  - evaluates and prioritizes the need for WASH projects in countries and regions around the world consistent with available resources
  - seeks funding sources outside of Rotary for use as matching grants for WASH projects, and provides the link between those funding sources and Rotary Clubs/Districts that are undertaking WASH projects, and
  - establishes procedures to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of Rotary WASH projects

The following are Values that WASRAG has adopted when engaging in WASH projects.

- Promote a “Bottom-up” approach
- Empower the local community, especially women
- Respond to local needs
- Focus on community health and economic well-being

- Drive for sustainability of resources, technology and financing within the capacity of the local community and culture
- Mobilize local resources
- Choose appropriate technology that promotes sustainability
- Implement metrics that reflect program outcomes
- Leverage funding, expertise and resources
- Emphasize training and behavior change that leads to healthy and prosperous communities

The following goals are listed to support the WASRAG Vision and Mission statements and are equally applicable to the Strategic Planning exercise. They are designed to assist Rotary Clubs and Districts (and their strategic partners) to develop sustainable and cost-effective projects and programs:

1. Develop a lean but effective organizational structure to implement this strategic plan and the goals established by the WASRAG Board of Directors.
2. Develop a compendium of best practices.
3. Create a bibliography of relevant materials and references.
4. Develop and maintain a compendium of international and in-country NGOs.
5. Develop communications tools to distribute information to Rotary Clubs and partners in a timely and effective manner.
6. Distribute information on appropriate technologies for supplying, conserving and purifying water, for effective sanitation, and for promoting health and hygiene education.
7. Develop formal strategic alliances with major NGOs and meet regularly at the both the national/international and country levels to collaborate and coordinate joint planning and implementation of major regional projects.
8. Create a forum for exchange of information with and between Rotary Clubs and between Rotary and its strategic partners and the communities that they serve.
9. Develop and encourage mutually beneficial relationships within Rotary and outside of Rotary, including corporations, government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and served communities that share common WASH-related goals.

10. Identify alternative sources of funding and financing to complement The Rotary Foundation, such as private foundations, corporations, and government agencies.
11. Identify and formulate WASH programs and projects that will promote overall local and regional economic sustainability and vitality.
12. Implement mechanisms to determine the effectiveness and sustainability of projects.
13. Create a network of experts accessible to Rotarians, Rotary Clubs, their strategic partners, and the communities served.
14. Provide support to Rotary Clubs seeking financial and/or technical assistance.
15. Support “Centers of Excellence” for water, sanitation and hygiene education.
16. Facilitate and coordinate the development of Regional and Community Needs Assessments around the world.
17. Identify and prioritize countries and regions within countries with high levels of need.
18. Promote throughout Rotary a commitment to WASH projects.

This strategic plan presents a worldwide organization and network plan which is illustrated in Figure 1 and shows the key staff and virtual headquarters. This new organization calls for a “virtual headquarters” which will operate for the first five development years to give WASRAG leaders time to evaluate the most appropriate form of headquarter leadership.

The headquarters system could eventually be a traditional central office or a worldwide network of offices with a home address where the support system is located.

The virtual headquarters would be staffed with a team that would consist of:

- Executive Director (ED)
- Chief Operations Officer (COO)
- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Information Technician/Database Manager (IT)
- Public Relations (PR) Manager
- Clerical staff as needed.

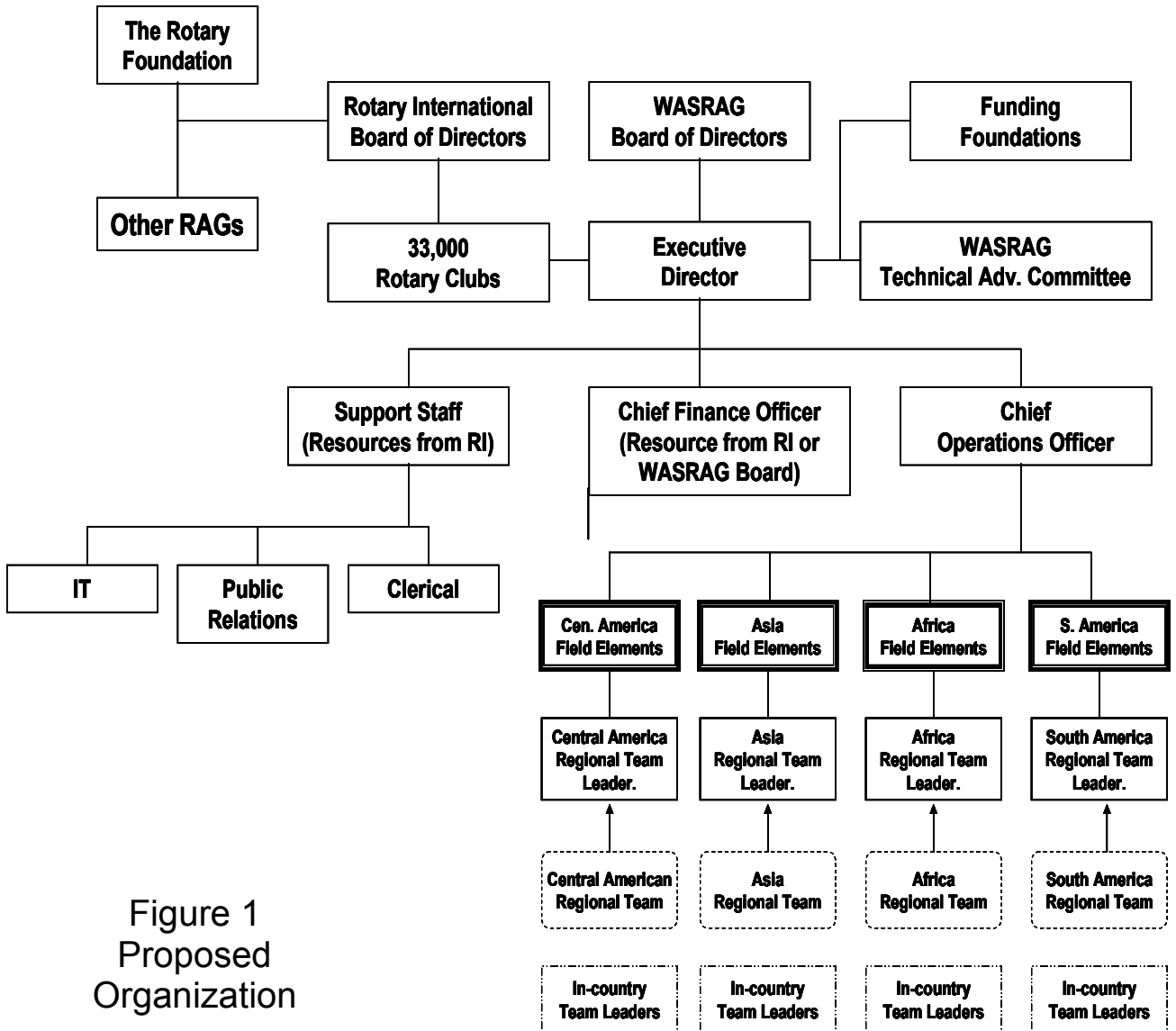


Figure 1  
Proposed  
Organization

As the program develops additional staff might be required, either by telecommuting or in the physical locations of the ED and COO. As programs are launched around the world Program Director/Coordinators, Regional Teams and Regional Team Leaders, and Country Leaders might be added for each major world zone (e.g., continent) to assist the COO.

Initially, the CFO, IT, PR and clerical positions would be filled with either WASRAG volunteers or borrowed from the RI organization. As the organization comes up to speed, the WASRAG Board of Directors may consider making some or all of these positions part time or full time.

The strategic plan identifies the importance of strategic partnerships with many international and in-country NGOs, various non-profit organizations, professional corporations, and faith-based organizations to work in many countries on WASH projects. Many of these organizations have relationships with Rotary Clubs to accomplish international projects in their areas of interest. To help meet the United Nations Millennium Goal for WASH projects, Rotary will need to work in strategic partnership with these organizations, as well as local, regional, and national government agencies where projects are needed. WASRAG will play a pivotal role in bringing these strategic partners together with the International and Host Rotary Clubs who wish to undertake WASH projects. WASRAG needs strategic partners to accomplish its goals.

The Strategic Plan recommends that WASRAG develop a five-year plan based on a formal business plan. The business plan will identify four to six pilot regional projects around the world, identify the initial strategic partners with which to undertake these pilot projects, and develop a funding plan to support these projects.

In conclusion, the WASRAG Strategic Plan provides the framework for the WASRAG members, the 33,000 Rotary Clubs, and the 1.2 million Rotarians that will undertake the long-term program to efficiently and sustainably implement WASH projects in the countries with the most needs.

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