BACKGROUND

UWASNET was founded in 2000 by Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Water and Environment in partnership with Sector Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as the umbrella organisation for all Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) operating in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector. This was as a result of a sector reform known as the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) which brought together Government, Development Partners and CSOs together to develop, fund and implement a single development plan.

UWASNET works through the SWAp to contribute to the National Development Plan of poverty alleviation through universal access to sustainable, safe water and improved standards of sanitation and hygiene.

UWASNET’s mandate is to coordinate all CSOs and strengthen their contribution to the sector by facilitating learning and sharing, documentation of CSO’s work and promoting partnerships and collaborations with other sector stakeholders, including Government, development partners and the private sector.

Currently, UWASNET has a membership comprising of CSOs (Local NGO, Int. NGO, FBO, CBO) working in different parts of the country in the areas of water supply, sanitation and hygiene, community engagement, water for production, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and WASH advocacy.

UWASNET works through its coordination structures, comprising of Regional Coordinators who coordinate members at regional level in the ten UWASNET regions that are aligned to the Ministry of Water and Environment decentralized structures who provide technical support to the districts.

In addition to that, UWASNET works through its six thematic working groups, which are advocacy platforms to voice key emerging issues and to provide recommendations to the sector to improve WASH service delivery and sustainable water resources use and management. They are directly linked to the sector working groups to facilitate policy influencing and strengthening CSOs participation in sector decision making.
PREAMBLE

This document is a members’ charter, which defines who is a UWASNET member, the categories of membership, eligibility / criteria for membership, terms of membership, membership benefits, the applicable of membership fees and other important information regarding membership to the network.

This Membership Charter is anchored in the UWASNET Constitution, a key document for reference and use by all UWASNET members.

It is in line with and does not in anyway substitute the UWASNET membership constitution, which is the mother document guiding the entire network and its operations.
Membership to the UWASNET Network is by application. Any Civil Society Organisation (CSO) with all the legal requirements to operate in Uganda following registration by the National Bureau for NGOs (NGO Bureau) and relevant District Authorities and operates in the Water and Environment sector in Uganda is mandated to register with UWASNET as the national umbrella organisation for all CSOs in the Water and Environment sector. The Civil Society Organisation can be an international, national or community-based organisation as well as Private Sector as long as they have all the legal requirements to operate in Uganda and have been operating in the Water and Environment Sector and in the country for at-least two years.

**CRITERIA FOR UWASNET MEMBERSHIP**

Expression of Interest to become UWASNET members is done by filling in an application form which is downloadable from the UWASNET website - www.uwasnet.org - under membership.

You can also send an email to ngocoord@uwasnet.org for a copy of the membership application form and list of requirements.
CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

UWASNET has two categories of Membership. These are as follows:

**Active Membership**

An active UWASNET member organisation is one which fulfills the following duties and responsibilities:

» Is up-to-date with payments for annual membership subscription fees.

» Is one who annually reports their contribution to the sector through the annual NGO Performance Report, compiled and developed by UWASNET.

» Is one who attends and participates in all / some activities / meetings and events of UWASNET and sector including strategic discussions and decision making processes.

» Supports the Network’s campaigns and advocacy work.

» Reports to the relevant District Authorities and participates in the District Planning meetings including sharing their work-plans and reports with the District authorities where they operate / implement their activities.

**Honorary Membership**

An Honorary UWASNET member organisation is one of which fulfills the duties and responsibilities of an active member and provides financial and technical support towards the effective operation/running and towards the realization of the UWASNET mandate in the sector.
BENEFITS OF UWASNET MEMBERSHIP

UWASNET is proud of its service in the Water and Environment sector including the service of its member organizations towards realizing the rights to water and sanitation for all and overall development of the country. As a result, there are a number of unique benefits to being a UWASNET member organisation. Some of these benefits are:

**Sector recognition as a key stakeholder / partner in development.**

Access to UWASNET membership is an automatic recognition as a key sector stakeholder, recognized and engaged by Government through the appropriate structures in the sector. Your contribution to the sector is rightly documented in the annual Sector Performance Report, which details the contribution of all key stakeholders in the sector.

**Access to consortium funding.**

As a UWASNET member, your organisation is prioritized for available funding in the sector including organizational development funding, WASH-programmes funding and governance-related funding.

**Being part of the collective CSOs’ voice and influence towards improved sector performance and services.**

As a member organisation, your organisation will be joining over 200 CSOs operating in the sector, committed to working together towards the sustainable development of Uganda and ensuring that everyone, everywhere enjoys their fundamental human rights to safe water and improved standards of sanitation and hygiene.

UWASNET recognizes that its ever growing influence and status in the sector is to a big extent a direct result of its members’ work in the sector. Your organisation will therefore be part of a collective and united voice to engage and influence Government and other stakeholders on improved and sustainable sector performance and service delivery.
Have access to numerous tailor-centered capacity building opportunities both organizational development and human resource professional development.

UWASNET members have numerous opportunities for capacity building and strengthening including Governance, organizational development, professional / human resource development etc.

Have access to numerous opportunities to share your work and learn from other professionals and organizations.

There are numerous opportunities throughout the year from district, regional, national and international level events and workshops for your organization to share your work, network and learn from other stakeholders in the sector.

Representation at and participation in key UWASNET and sector related strategy development, national policy influencing and decision making process.

This is a key component of the UWASNET work and member organizations are encouraged and given an opportunity to represent and participate in all the key sector-related decision making processes.

Information updates

As a member organisation, you will have access to key sector-related information for your use at all times.
Solidarity and support

As a network, UWASNET recognizes the strength in numbers and we recognize that we are as strong as our strongest members and as weak as our weakest members. This motivates us to ensure that all members grow, perform and make their best contribution to development.

Opportunities for taking up leadership roles within the Network.

All UWASNET members are eligible to take on leadership within the Network serving in different categories namely, Board of Directors, Regional Coordinators and as Thematic Working Group heads. This is however subject to your organisation meeting all its membership duties and responsibilities.

Opportunities for collaborations and partnerships.

All UWASNET members have had numerous opportunities to initiate, develop and nurture partnerships with key sector stakeholders including amongst fellow CSOs, Government through Ministry of Water and Environment and the other line Ministries of Health, Education and Sports, Agriculture etc.

Bank on the Network to support, promote and be part of your advocacy work.

Member organizations’ advocacy and campaigns impact will be increased in many ways with the network’s stronger connections at grassroots, district, regional, national and international level as well as increased profile of your work in the sector through partnerships and collaborations.
DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF UWASNET MEMBERS

All UWASNET members have roles and responsibilities to play. These duties and responsibilities facilitate the network to meet its mandate in the sector. Any disregard to the duties and responsibilities is in actuality an act to dissolve the Network.

The following are the roles, duties and responsibilities of all UWASNET member organizations:

1. Submission of annual report

One key mandate of UWASNET is to coordinate the annual performance of all CSOs in order for the sector to assess the overall national sector performance.

All UWASNET Member organisations must provide a detailed report of their contribution to the sector through the annual NGO Performance report developed by UWASNET at the end of each Government of Uganda Financial Year. Data collection for the annual NGO Performance Report is done bi-annually with UWASNET Regional Coordinators and the Secretariat taking the lead.

A summarized version of the NGO Performance Report is adopted in the overall Ministry of Water and Environment Sector Performance Report under Chapter 12 as contribution of CSOs in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector. This is aimed at promoting the principles of Good Governance in the sector especially accountability and transparency.

2. Payment of the annual membership subscription fees

All members are required to pay the annual subscription fees without fail. These fees contribute to the operation costs of the Secretariat and organizing regional and thematic working group quarterly meetings among other things.

3. Inform the Secretariat on any changes within their organizations

Member organizations shall within a month inform the Secretariat in changes in their organization address and contact details as well as changing the contact person. Updating may be undertaken by way of submitting an update form or sending an email.
4. Represent the Network on voluntary basis

From time to time, members organizations are called on to represent the Network in different sector-related meetings, events etc depending on their areas of expertise. As a member organisation, you should be willing to represent UWASNET and undertake UWASNET & sector-related activities on a voluntary basis and without remuneration, when you are called on and be in position to submit a report back to the Secretariat for wide sharing with other members and relevant partners.

5. Uphold confidentiality

Each member agrees that it will use the same reasonable efforts to protect the other’s proprietary information as it uses to protect its own proprietary information, at present and in the future. Disclosures of such information shall be restricted to those within the network.

6. Subscribe to UWASNET vision, mission and values

All Members are expected to subscribe to practice and contribute to the realization of the UWASNET vision, mission and values.

7. Practice the principles of Good Governance

All UWASNET members are encouraged to abide by the NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism (QuAM) and strive to achieve the NGO Quality Assurance Certificate.

8. Be proactive

Members should be proactive and prompt UWASNET on important sector-related issues it needs to engage with.

9. Actively participate in UWASNET activities and events

All members are encouraged to participate in all UWASNET and sector-related events including being responsive to online discussions and inquiries.
Membership to the UWASNET Network is by application.

Any Civil Society Organisation registered to operate in Uganda by the National Bureau for NGOs and has all the legal requirements to operate in Uganda including registration by the relevant District Authorities can apply for UWASNET membership.

All CSOs operating in the Water and Environment sector in Uganda are mandated to register with UWASNET as the national umbrella organisation for all CSOs in the Water and Environment sector.

The Civil Society Organisation can be an international organisation, national organisation, Community based, Faith-based, Private Sector as long as they have all the legal requirements to operate in Uganda and have been operating in the Water and Environment sector and in the country for at-least two years.

**Membership application process**

Expression of becoming a UWASNET member is done by reaching out to the UWASNET Secretariat or Regional Coordinator. A discussion / meeting is held to discuss joining the UWASNET network, expectations etc.

You are given a membership application form plus a list of requirements to be handed in with the filled membership application form.

Upon submission of the application and accompanying documents, a committee seats to review the application, then the Board of Directors makes a final decision on membership acceptance or not. Once a decision is made, communication is sent to the organisation.

If your organization’s application has been accepted, you are then mandated to pay the membership subscription fees, payable only once upon becoming a member. The organisation is also supposed to pay the annual subscription fees.

After payment, you are officially an UWASNET member. You are then given the membership charter, the constitution and the different manuals. As a member, you will enjoy the listed membership benefits.
All UWASNET members are required to pay the annual membership fees. This is paid every Financial Year. The membership annual fees vary according to the category of organisation namely:

» International NGO
» National NGO
» Community-Based Organizations (CBO)

The annual membership subscription fees are paid using the following account details:

Account Name: Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network
Account Number: UGX Account: 3710600020 or USD Account: 3718000009
Bank Name: Centenary Rural Development Bank
Bank Branch: Mapeera House

Membership fees per organisation category (in USD)

International NGO UGX 5,000,000/
National NGO UGX 1,000,000/
CBO UGX 500,000/
**SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP**

A UWASNET Member may have its membership suspended by the Board of Directors pending approval by the General Assembly if the member does the following:

- Persistently violates the sector policies and guidelines
- Persistently violates the agreed membership code of conduct
- If a member engages in acts detrimental to the good name of the organisation
- If a member engages in acts detrimental to the interest of the organisation

Once a decision is made to suspend the member organisation, a member is notified of the suspension in writing by the Board of Directors, clearly stating the reasons for suspension, duration and action for improvement before suspension can be lifted.

During suspension, the rights and benefits accruing to such a member shall be suspended.

The maximum period of suspension shall not exceed one year.

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**TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

A member shall have its membership terminated in the following circumstances:

- In the event that the organisation has dissolves or wound up
- Upon being declared bankrupt
- Upon failure to pay the annual subscription fees for two (02) consecutive years
- Upon failure to report their contribution to the sector through the NGO Performance Report for two (02) consecutive years
- Upon persistent failure and/or neglect to perform its obligation under the constitution and any other rules or regulations
- Upon gross violation of this constitution
- In the event that it engages in acts detrimental to the organisation
• Upon causing financial loss to the organisation
• Upon de-registration or cancellation of its license by the NGO Board

Before termination, a disciplinary body shall notify the member affected of the complaint lodged against it in writing within 21 days.

Such a member shall have the right to be given a hearing and to defend itself before the disciplinary body before a decision is made.

A member who is aggrieved or dissatisfied with the decision of the disciplinary body reserves the right to appeal against the decision within 14 days in writing to the General Meeting, and the decision of the General Meeting shall if not satisfactory to the aggrieved partly be referred for arbitration whose decision on the matter shall be final and binding.

A member who ceases to be a member of UWASNET for whatever reason shall be struck off the register and any subscription fees that may have been paid by such a member for the respective year shall not be refunded.

For all purposes, the Board of Directors constituting itself into a disciplinary body shall have a quorum of not less than six months and shall be dissolved upon the particular matter (s) being handled to conclusion.
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