

WAWI: A Preliminary Assessment

“Collaborative advantage will be achieved when something unusually creative is produced that no organization could have achieved on its own and when each organization, through the collaboration is able to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone.” (Huxham 1996)

Prepared for the
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

by

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15 November 2007
(Conclusions updated 27 January 2008)

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This is a preliminary assessment of WAWI based on a substantial desk review of partnership documents, individual and small group interviews with many of the partners as well as an earlier facilitation of a WAWI partnership meeting in Seattle in April 2007. It is important to stress that this assessment is preliminary and does not include information that would certainly be gained with travel to project sites and secretariat premises in West Africa, which would likely highlight many positive elements of WAWI partners in action. Nonetheless, I am confident that this preliminary assessment provides enough material for the Foundation to begin serious deliberations about how it might increase impact from its investment in water, sanitation and hygiene projects in West Africa and to determine some immediate steps for WAWI Phase 2 planning.

EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ The West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was launched in 2002. It is an ambitious endeavor to improve the social and economic well-being and health of individuals, families and communities in Ghana, Mali and Niger and to ensure ecologically, financially, and socially sustainable management of water quantity and quality. It is a partnership of 13 to 15 professional organizations, each with considerable international standing in its own right and with its own particular set of goals and organizational strengths and weaknesses. The result is a complex set of actors, projects and goals.
- ❖ WAWI was formed around the nucleus of a very successful, decades-long partnership between the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and World Vision in Ghana. World Vision was designated lead agency in the WAWI partnership by the Foundation and has more than matched the Hilton grant of \$18.6 million thus directly managing the implementation of over 80% of all partnership funds. This has a complicating influence on the partnership in structural and relationship terms..
- ❖ WAWI strategy, heavily influenced by the Foundation, has an explicit focus on health outcomes. Strategic tensions emerge most clearly in relation to the identification of very specific diseases in a broad water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) strategy. Moreover, the lead partner in WAWI, World Vision, is at its core a community development organization motivated and focused on a broad set of humanitarian goals in which water serves as both entry point to the community and link to an array of social, economic and health outcomes. There is some misalignment between partnership-wide goals, individual partner goals and between strategy and implementation.
- ❖ Partners are able to identify a very long list of important and significant accomplishments made with WAWI/Hilton Foundation funding. The most certain accomplishment is that collectively WAWI partners have “significantly increased access to safe water by rural households in all three countries.” The partnership has not established a monitoring and evaluation system that allows equally certain assessment of other objectives. Measurement of impact or attribution of accomplishment to the existence of the partnership is not possible with existing data and is likely to remain elusive.

❖ WAWI does not have in place many of the enabling elements critical to partnership success. Partners have accepted on paper a governance structure that does not function well in practice and there is no agreed locus for leadership. There is substantial power inequity. Few systems are in place to achieve collaboration, foster sound decision-making, build trust, facilitate resource sharing, or share credit and recognition. There is significant tension in this area between USAID and World Vision with other partners somewhat marginalized in the process. These problems are not unique to WAWI.

❖ The Foundation faces a tough strategic choice whether to strengthen impact around the existing portfolio of grants or continue to invest in a broader partnership that provides a very uncertain opportunity for expanded regional impact.

The remainder of the report is organized in four sections. In the first section, WAWI is placed in the context of broad sectoral goals and the Foundation's broader water portfolio. In the second section, WAWI's history, strategy and structure are reviewed as a foundation for judging effectiveness. In the third section, we look explicitly at partnership effectiveness in terms of achievements and standard measurements of partnership effectiveness. In the final section, we lay out broad strategic and structural conclusions that have emerged in dialogue with the Foundation.

1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

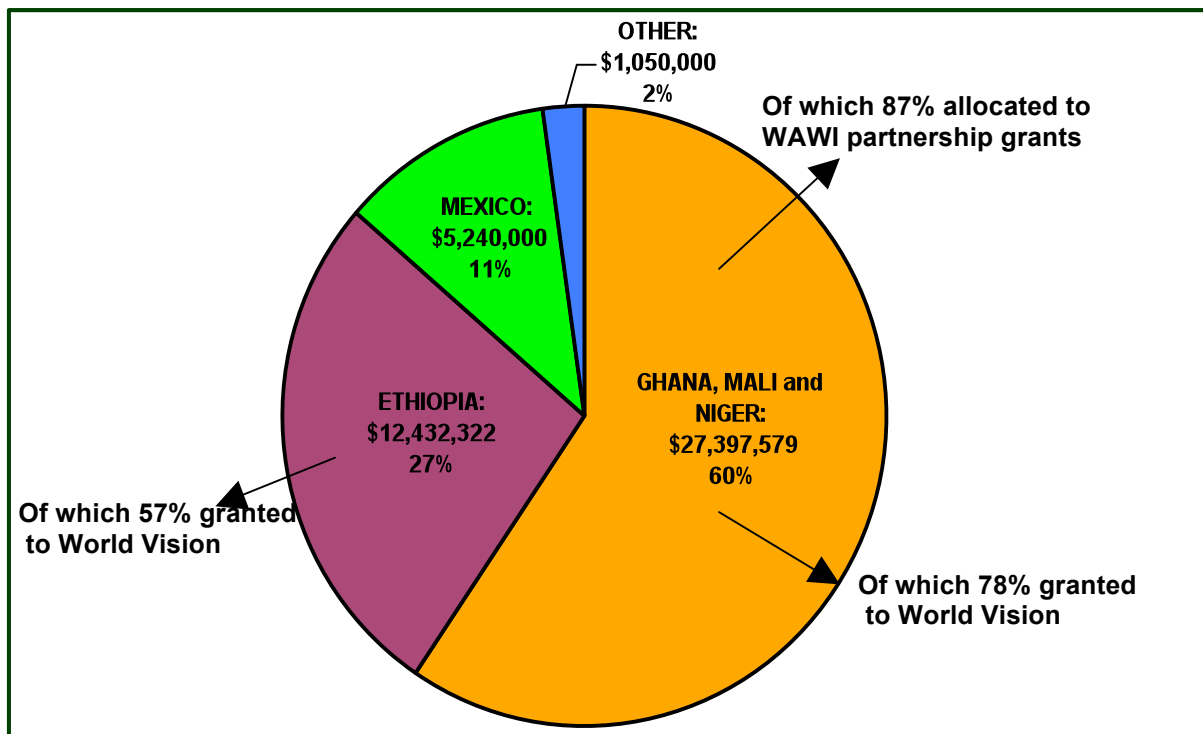
The cover page of the 2006 UN Human Development Report 2006 states:

“Water is central to the realization of human potential. It is a source of life for people and the planet.”

This simple statement conveys the comprehensive, even lofty, goals served when donors invest in international water projects. The emphasis in the field, however, is often more narrowly focused on public health outcomes and the Foundation’s own grant-making has over time reflected growing interest in very specific health outcomes, namely in eradication of guinea worm and elimination of trachoma as a blinding disease. The West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was launched by the Foundation to “address the interconnectedness across socio-economic, health and environmental goals” and in anticipation of additional donor interest in collaborative partnership action.

The Foundation was recognized recently in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* (17 October 2007) as a pioneer among foundations in its grant-making to international water development efforts. The Foundation has also been a pioneer in its support to partnership efforts, currently providing substantial support to the West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) and more recently to the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA). Over the past 17 years, the Foundation has invested over \$60million in water projects of which \$24million have been made under the WAWI umbrella. Of that \$24 million, approximately 78% (\$18.6 million) is granted to a single organization, World Vision.

FIGURE 1: CURRENT WATER-RELATED GRANTS: US\$46million



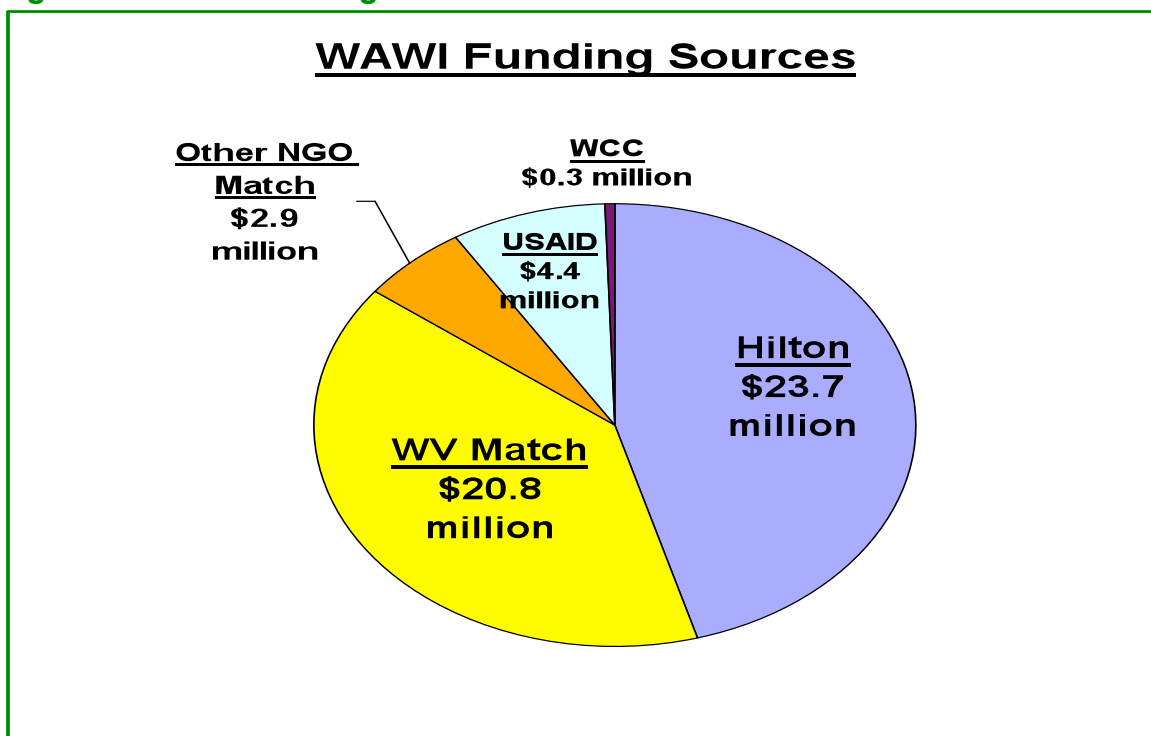
2.0 THE WEST AFRICA WATER INITIATIVE: AN OVERVIEW

2.1 History

The West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was formed in 2002 as an expansion of the Foundation's commitment to improving access to potable water among the poor in West Africa. It was publicly launched in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in collaboration with USAID thus supporting the summit's endorsement of "partnerships as a model for action." The Foundation described the effort as an initiative to "address the interconnectedness of clean water, human health and socioeconomic development." Some documents suggest possibilities of coordinated contribution to meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for water and sanitation in West Africa but no clear strategy was identified to further that vision and no additional donors outside of USAID and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation were present at the initial planning meeting. The Foundation invited new proposals and a number of new grantees were funded, chief among them UNICEF and WaterAid. Fundamentally, however, WAWI remained an extension of the Hilton Foundation's decade-long partnership with World Vision in the Ghana Rural Water Project.

The collective budget of all partners in WAWI is approximately US\$50million. The figure below demonstrates dramatically the dominant position of World Vision in the partnership. **World Vision has more than matched the Hilton grant of \$18.6million thus directly managing the implementation of over 85% of all partnership funds.** World Vision was designated lead agency by the Hilton Foundation and assigned responsibility for providing coordinating services through a Secretariat, originally based in Ghana and recently relocated to Niger.

Figure 2: WAWI Funding Sources



2.2 Strategy

Partnership strategy was loosely identified for the first two years of operation. An implicit strategy can be identified in the analysis of grant proposals made to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and it was increasingly well defined in a 2004 M&E plan. However, it took some time for this to be formalized for actionable purpose or measurement of progress at the partnership level.

USAID funded a strategic planning process and a plan was completed by consultants and approved by the partnership in 2006 to guide the partnership from 2006 to 2010. The strategic plan states that the mission of WAWI is to “Improve the health and well-being of families and communities in Ghana, Mali and Niger.” and set out four objectives, now very firmly established in all WAWI documentation. These four objectives are:

- 1. To increase the access to sustainable, safe water and environmental sanitation for poor and vulnerable communities in rural and per-urban settings.*
- 2. To reduce the prevalence of water-borne and sanitation-related diseases, particularly trachoma, guinea worm and diarrheal diseases through the promotion of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation practices*
- 3. To ensure ecologically, financially, and socially sustainable management of water quantity and quality*
- 4. To foster a new model of partnership and institutional synergy to ensure technical excellence, programmatic innovation and long-term financial, social and environmental sustainability in water resources management that may be replicable in other parts of the world.*

(See Figure 4 at the end of the document for a full list of objectives and outcomes).

There is an obvious and compelling logic in partnering across the full spectrum of water, sanitation and hygiene activities to achieve public health outcomes. There is an ineluctable link between providing increased access to water and sanitation (Objective #1) in order to reduce water related diseases (Objective #2). The strategic and programmatic implications are, however, more problematic than it first appears. Most obvious problems emerge in relation to the identification of very specific diseases in a broad WASH strategy. The first of these tensions arises in the geographic implementation of the strategy. For a variety of sound reasons, the partnership agreed that with (minor exceptions) WAWI would implement its activities through the Area Development Programs (ADPs) of World Vision. Specific diseases, however, do not necessarily respect the boundaries of World Vision’s ADPs.

The tensions are compounded if the disease, like guinea worm, is the subject of a highly focused eradication campaign. Eradication campaigns (or even less campaign-style efforts as in the case of trachoma) are best achieved in close association with national public health programming efforts and require very strong monitoring and evaluation capacity. The lead partner in WAWI, World Vision, is

at its core a community development organization motivated by a broad set of humanitarian goals in which water serves as both entry point to the community and link to an array of social, economic and health outcomes. WV is not a public health organization; implements and interacts with government at the sub-regional level and does not maintain an M&E system that might serve the more disciplined demands of a disease program. A recent grant by the Foundation to UNICEF and The Carter Center to measure efforts and impact of WAWI on guinea worm is an attempt to address these issues. These strategic tensions, geographic implementation issues (and underlying philosophical differences with regard to disease burden) need to be fully reconciled in any WAWI Phase 2 program design.

2.3 Activities and Collaboration

The current members of WAWI engage in a wide range of activities that serve both broad human development aims and specific health objectives.

Figure 3: List of Partners

	Primary Activities	Hilton Grant	Hilton Match	USAID
World Vision	Well drilling and pump installation Latrine construction Associated community development activities Trachoma Education			USAID provides \$4.4 million to WAWI, the majority of which is provided to ARD for technical assistance services. USAID does make a number of small grants to other WAWI partners. WCC is a donor to the partnership.
USAID – primary contractor ARD	Technical Assistance to WAWI Hygiene Training			
Desert Resources Institute	Hydro-geological assessment and database development Water Quality Assessment			
Winrock	Agricultural Livelihoods project Micro-irrigation system pilot			
WaterAid/Local NGOs	Well digging, particularly rehabilitation of wells and small water systems			
Cornell Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development	Action Research and Pilot Projects for: Sustainable Agriculture Food Security Livestock & Livelihoods Gender			
MIT	Home Water Treatment Pilot Project			
Messiah College	Disabilities sensitization for design of water access and sanitation facilities			
Helen Keller International	Hygiene training with emphasis on face-washing for trachoma prevention			
Lions Club International	Targeted trachoma prevention program			
World Chlorine Council	Funds for PVC pipe for tubewells, chlorine disinfection, outreach materials primarily for peri-urban systems			
UNICEF	Well drilling thru private contractors School-based sanitation and hygiene training			

There are important and productive pockets of collaboration among partners but fewer than might be expected.

Collaboration is most obvious and successful where it builds on relationships well established before the launch of WAWI, such as that between Cornell (CIFAAD) and World Vision (WV) or individuals at Messiah College and World Vision and most importantly, between the Desert Resources Institute (DRI) and World Vision. The productive working relationship between DRI and World Vision is an important factor in World Vision's capacity in integrated water resources management.

Some emerging collaborative success is evident across activities directed towards Objective #1 (increased access to water and sanitation). For example, the collaborative advantage between World Vision and Winrock is clear and has grown under the WAWI umbrella (Winrock gains access to community organizations in World Vision ADPs while WV receives much desired contributions to livelihoods and agricultural development projects in its ADP communities). The mid-term status review lists a number of other pockets of collaboration.

Collaboration has been more difficult to achieve across objectives. Hygiene education funded by USAID is now being provided in almost all WAWI project areas and reflects some learning across partners although significant inconsistencies in approach remain. WaterAid's call for improved attention to advocacy through the WAWI partnership is increasingly reflected in the work of the partnership WV is faulted by some partners for not taking advantage of available technical assistance or not advancing successfully demonstrated pilot efforts..

2.4 Structure and Governance

WAWI is governed at multiple levels and while the structure has a clear logic, the actual mechanisms through which activity is coordinated and decisions are made and communicated remain poorly articulated and executed. In theory:

- WAWI Steering Committee convenes representatives of each partner organization at the headquarter level to provide strategic direction and engage with donors.
- WAWI Secretariat operating at the regional level provides technical assistance to the field and maintains communication and coordination across all levels of the partnership.
- National Steering Committees in each country (Ghana, Mali, Niger) coordinate partner activities on the ground, convene stakeholders and coordinate with government officials.

The partnership decided early in its history: "that WAWI is defined as a function of the identity, strength and presence of its individual partner organizations and that a significant amount of funds would not be diverted into building a new organization for the partnership itself." This decision reflects a very common underestimation of the costs of establishing effective partnership.

Steering Committee. The WAWI steering committee conducts business through e-mail exchange and two meetings a year. Meetings are not always attended by relevant decision-makers, not scheduled in coordination with regional meetings, take place at headquarter locations in the United States distant from field input and influence, results are poorly communicated to the field, conflict is not productively handled and follow-up is poor and sometimes non-existent. Decisions are assumed to be approved if no explicit objections are raised. A result of this process is that decisions made at the HQ meetings are not fully owned by the partnership at any level.

Secretariat. On paper, the secretariat in such a structure has an important role to perform in coordination between HQs and field-based activity, as a base for representing the partnership to stakeholders and the international community, and through its numerous administrative tasks. The secretariat coordinator in some partnerships is also expected to provide strong collaborative leadership.

In practice, the secretariat provided limited coordination services and exercised little collaborative leadership. The secretariat was located on World Vision premises thus strengthening the perception of World Vision dominance in the partnership. USAID has funded a number of coordinating and planning processes in behalf of the secretariat. These include an M&E Plan, a Strategic Plan, on-going coordination of series of lessons learned papers, Consolidated Area Work Plan (CAWP), and the only evaluation of WAWI (completed in March 2007) and made available to the full partnership and other stakeholders. Complicating the situation, USAID established a WAWI office in the field to manage USAID grants.

WAWI's external identity as a partnership can in part be credited to the documentation process funded by USAID. The identity created in this process provides a foundation for expanded partnership going forward. The situation has, however, led to significant conflict between USAID and World Vision and arguably the documents themselves have contributed very little to productivity and outcomes for the poor.

National Steering Committees. The effectiveness of the WAWI National Steering Committees are a reflection of both the enabling policy environment in the particular country and the collaborative leadership skills of WAWI (particularly World Vision) staff in that country. By all accounts, the NSC in Mali has performed very well, the NSC in Ghana is improving, while the NSC in Niger has (until very recently) failed to establish a working relationship with government or galvanize WAWI and/or stakeholder participation. Overall, regional reports suggest that closer collaboration and integration with the national government planning efforts and goals appear to be developing through the National Steering Committees.

The Foundation came to recognize the shortcomings of the structure and management of WAWI and in 2004 extended an additional grant to World Vision to support secretariat services. Additionally, the Foundation has worked closely with World Vision to encourage a transition to new secretariat location under the direction of a new secretariat coordinator. The partnership extended support to the appointment of a new interim coordinator for WAWI at its last HQ meeting, expressing a number

of cautionary concerns about the binding implications and consequences of transition decisions. The new coordinator has been well received by partners and a certain amount of hope is vested in his abilities to take the partnership forward into WAWI Phase 2.

3.0 PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Virtually all partners laud the potential benefits of WAWI. At the headquarter level, most partners are willing to take a hard look at lessons learned from the partnership and continue the effort. Partner organizations on the ground in West Africa appear to be even more deeply committed to continuing the partnership. At the regional level the name “WAWI” appears to be associated with significant levels of activity in water resource development and at the advocacy level represents a commitment to coordinated and concerted action. First, I look at WAWI’s achievements asking implicitly whether there is value added in working through a partnership. Second I look at standard measures of partnership effectiveness to ascertain whether basic elements are in place for successful collaboration in the future.

3.1 Achievements

It is very important to note that **collectively WAWI is able to identify a very long list of achievements**, too many to explore in this paper. The WAWI website currently (January 2008) cites its key achievements as follows:

In Ghana:

- 439 wells drilled/equipped and 38 old systems rehabilitated
- 214,000 direct beneficiaries of wells
- 5,263 latrines constructed to enhance community and school sanitation.
- 82,126 direct beneficiaries of sanitation facilities.
- 16 small water supply systems constructed.

In Niger:

- 130 wells drilled/equipped and 61 old systems rehabilitated.
- 70,699 direct beneficiaries of wells
- 1,232 latrines constructed to enhance community and school sanitation.
- 131 school health and sanitation clubs established

In Mali:

- 562 wells drilled
- 224,800 direct beneficiaries of wells
- 18,647 latrines constructed to enhance community and school sanitation.
- 131,289 direct beneficiaries of sanitation facilities.
- 6 small water supply systems constructed.

Additionally the website states, more than “a few thousand communities” were provided hygiene education (environmental and personal hygiene and water resource management) with special attention to diarrheal management, guinea worm disease and trachoma.

This brief review does not do justice to the number of tasks, complexity and challenges inherent in achieving the objectives of WAWI. See Figure 4 at the end of the document for an elaboration of the objectives and intended outcomes guiding this effort.

Two important questions, however, must be asked: (1) Collectively does this long list of achievements contribute to meeting the objectives of WAWI?; and, (2) Could these same achievements have been reached without the additional transaction costs of participation in the WAWI partnership? These are difficult questions to answer from the available data.

The **partnership has not established a monitoring and evaluation system that allows clear identification of outcomes**, let alone impact. It is important to point out that partnership monitoring and evaluation is a very difficult challenge for all development partnerships and considerable investment and expertise is needed to develop and establish such systems.

A comprehensive Monitoring & Evaluation Plan was prepared by a USAID consultant in 2004 but the plan was never implemented. Subsequently, there have been a number of incomplete attempts to identify indicators based on output-based proxies for the four objectives of WAWI, but the partnership has not reached a firm agreement on shared indicators. The lack of a monitoring & evaluation (M&E) system at the partnership level is exacerbated by a lack of solid M&E reporting at the individual grant level. While some of the partner organizations such as UNICEF¹ and Helen Keller International have strong underlying M&E capacity, it has not been regularly or fully utilized. Performance reporting requirements of the Hilton Foundation have not historically demanded outcome-based assessment, accepting basic activity reporting as a basis for extension of funds

The clearest and most identifiable achievement is that collectively WAWI partners have increased access to water and sanitation. This is reported in the mid-term review and cited in various documents as follows:

Objective 1: Increase access to water and sanitation.

“Significantly increased access to safe water by rural households in all three countries has been achieved under WAWI assistance.”

This significant achievement was reached, primarily, through independent activities of World Vision, UNICEF, ARD, and WaterAid. Similar achievements are listed for provision of sanitation facilities. Significant and numerous challenges remain around cost, water quality, sustainability and access at multiple levels. Some learning is shared among partners, but the partnership has not realized abundant learning opportunities (e.g., comparing different methods [private contractors vs. NGO providers] in terms of both costs and sustainability).²

¹ The Carter Center (TCC) has strong monitoring & evaluation capacity well reflected in its own reporting to the Foundation but TCC has not accepted membership in WAWI at this time.

² Some lessons learned papers are planned in this area.

More readily accessible water quality testing services may become available to the full partnership in the near future. The motivational value of collective achievement against national targets or local MDG objectives is limited by the absence of data on coverage levels in most areas.

In terms of the three other objectives of WAWI, the mid-term review gently summarizes achievement as follows:

Objective 2: Reduction in Water Related Diseases.

“There is not enough quantitative data to show that this objective is being met, although many partners are providing hygiene improvement messages in the target communities, and qualitative evidence indicates that the partnership is having a positive impact.”

Objective 3: Sustainable Water Management

“It is difficult to determine whether this objective of sustainable water management is being met in practice due to the short time WAWI has been in existence. However, important steps are being taken to ensure that this objective will be met.”

The number of scattered activities from gender sensitization to micro-credit schemes to drip-irrigation projects (as well as the substantial list of challenges) included under this objective suggests that WAWI has not yet worked out a comprehensive, coordinated approach to meeting this objective or defining this objective.

Objective 4: Effective Partnership

“There have been significant achievements under this objective, but there is still considerable scope for improvement, and this objective is not being adequately met in practice. The WAWI operating model is interesting and unique. If it can be made to work well, it can serve as a useful example for other areas and sectors. However, WAWI can best be described as a work in progress.”

It is important to note here, that modest success with regard to WAWI objectives #2, #3, and #4 does not imply that individual partner organizations have failed to achieve their own grant-based and organizational objectives. Some projects as well as pilot efforts have been very successful but WAWI has not developed a system for scaling up or disseminating knowledge of successful approaches. The Foundation has few mechanisms in place to assess effectiveness of individual grants within WAWI although continues to receive individual progress reports from all grantees.

3.2 Effectiveness Measures

In this section, I turn to standard measures of partnership effectiveness. There is a growing formal literature on partnership in international development with fairly strong consensus around key elements of effectiveness (e.g., shared vision, strong leadership, power equity, explicit decision making processes, cultural awareness etc.). There is almost complete consensus in all

partnership/alliance literature (whether in international development, among U.S.-based non-profits or in the private sector) that building an effective partnership is a very time-consuming, sometimes painful and often failed process.

There are a number of partnership assessment tools that can be used to explore effectiveness, two of which have been proposed for use with the partnership on a participatory basis.³ Here I borrow the framework developed for use by the Organizational Change Program of the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Centers).⁴ The authors (Linda Spink and Deborah Merrill-Sands of the Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change) divide key elements into two categories: foundation elements and sustaining elements. Foundation elements are those “actions that need to be addressed in the initial stages of partnership” to develop a basis of openness and trust. Sustaining elements are those “actions which maintain the energy, commitment and enthusiasm necessary for the partnership over time.”

Foundation elements include:

:

Compelling Vision. WAWI was launched with a compelling vision in 2002 and while the vision may have lost some of its glow, all partners are deeply committed to the fundamental mission of WAWI that the health and well-being of families and communities in Ghana, Mali and Niger can be profoundly improved through access to water, sanitation and hygiene education. There is some criticism from the field that the steering committee loses that focus on families and communities in attending to the bureaucracy of the partnership.

Strong and Shared Leadership. There is no clear agreement on the locus for leadership in WAWI. Partnerships require strong collaborative leadership that creates shared ownership of problems and outcomes, addresses different organizational interests, facilitates management of resources, and so on. WAWI has operated in a near total absence of shared leadership. In theory the steering committee makes decisions and the secretariat acts as a coordinating body, but stresses remain.

Shared Problem Definition and Approach. Hilton Foundation grant-making implicitly created some degree of shared problem definition. Explicit articulation of a shared approach emerged more clearly in the process of developing a strategic plan. The strategic plan itself (although not the monitoring process) is generally embraced by the partnership, although outstanding programmatic issues remain unresolved.

Power Equity. The position of World Vision is perhaps the most emotionally charged concern raised by other partners. The perception that WV exercises undue control over the partnership is almost certainly exaggerated. The perception that WV concentrates its efforts on its own organizational objectives at the expense of broader WAWI objectives may have more merit. The equity issue is exacerbated by very significant cultural differences between

³ The CGIAR is an alliance of 16 international agricultural research institutes and multiple partners operating in over 60 countries. The CGIAR grants an annual partnership award to one of the many partnerships operating in the alliance.

⁴ AccountAbility (funded by USAID) provides a comprehensive framework for partnership assessment that is more complex than the one used above and more heavily focused on governance. USAID has independently used the AccountAbility tool to assess WAWI and the results were shared by e-mail with the partnership and largely confirm this assessment. UK-based BPD also has excellent tools for assessing partnerships.

organizations and individuals and is not ameliorated through the governance structure. Resource inequities can be balanced in a variety of ways, most commonly in joint selection of a partnership director or secretariat coordinator.

Interdependency and Complementarity. One of the strongest findings in the research literature is that partnerships are most successful when “collaborative advantage” is achieved – that is when partners see that something new is being built, something they couldn’t do on their own; when the skills brought to the table are interdependent and complementary. At the same time, organizations need to feel that the partnership will advance their own strategic priorities’. There are important areas of collaborative advantage in WAWI but there has been insufficient attention to the matching of interests, resources and skills to allow collaboration to thrive. It is also clear that World Vision’s strategic priorities are not necessarily advanced by membership in WAWI and that those external resources and skills on which they depend (i.e., DRI’s hydro-geological database skills) are available to them outside the partnership.

Mutual Accountability. “The greater the interdependencies the more success depends on each contributing member fulfilling their responsibilities and commitments in a timely fashion. Developing shared ownership and personal stake in the outcome are strong motivational elements for holding partners accountable.” I have no information to assess the sense of mutual accountability at the field level. At the HQ level, the sense of mutual accountability appears to be very low as evidenced in the near absence of follow-through after steering group meetings.

Sustaining elements include attention to process, communication linkages, explicit decision making processes, trust and commitment, credit and recognition, conflict resolution and other process issues. Few of these elements are fully in place in WAWI. The absence of an explicit decision making process, communication protocols and so on are clearly recognized and there has been a call for some time to address these issues. My initial terms of reference as an organizational development (OD) consultant were premised on addressing such procedural issues and preparing the partnership for a strategic renewal process. In practice, important strategic decisions of the Foundation with regard to partnerships and its water/trachoma portfolio, as well as individual and organizational conflict issues within WAWI need to be addressed for those OD efforts to be effective.

4. CONCLUSIONS: INVESTING IN WATER AND PARTNERSHIP (Revised 21 January 2008)

As the preceding analysis suggests, WAWI as a partnership faces a number of challenges that impede effectiveness at the structural, strategic and procedural level. Chief among these are:

- Strategic tension associated with embedding and measuring narrow disease-focused objectives within a framework primarily implemented to date to achieve broad human development goals and recording achievements predominantly in the area of improved access to water.
- Structural imbalances inherent in the partnership with primary funding (83%) from a single donor source, i.e., the Hilton Foundation. This structural fact is complicated by the fact that Hilton funds are matched 1:1 by World Vision with whom the Foundation has had a long and productive history.
- Procedurally WAWI has established few of the enabling mechanisms to provide leadership, achieve coordination, foster sound decision-making, build trust, facilitate resource sharing and share credit.

These challenges will not be easily remedied in a second phase of WAWI and the Foundation continues to have enormous influence on the process.

World Vision with matching funds of close to \$20 million invested in WAWI is an important strategy-making entity in its own right. World Vision has proposed a more limited partnership in which World Vision acts as a prime contractor subcontracting to a limited set of partners. There is obvious collaborative advantage among the identified partners in service of the broad human development goals that drive World Vision's own strategy. Separately, other partners (viz., HKI, UNICEF and WaterAid) have expressed an interest in exploring a joint set of activities that is likely to have a more explicit focus on water-related diseases embedded in a comprehensive water, sanitation, & hygiene education effort.

The Foundation and the consultant have engaged in a series of discussions as this review process has unfolded. In the course of these conversations, the Foundation has been advised to:

- ❖ Examine carefully which of the following approaches better serves the Foundation's water program goals: (1) a regional and sectoral partnership that is designed to have the capacity to grow beyond the Foundation's interests and capacity to fund or (2) harmonized grant-making more narrowly constructed around the Foundation's goals in the area of access to water, trachoma and guinea worm in Ghana, Mali and Niger. There are considerable merits in both approaches. The strategic and programmatic integration of the Foundation's interests in water, trachoma and guinea worm are central to this decision and those discussions continue.
- ❖ Support resolution of conflict between World Vision and USAID considering its own relationship with and interests of these two organizations, one a fellow donor in WAWI and one a trusted grantee.
- ❖ Encourage organization of focus groups as suggested by partners.

Various efforts have been made towards these ends and the Foundation has determined that they do wish to explore funding to WAWI for a second phase directed towards broad partnership goals across water, sanitation and hygiene education. This decision honors the substantial conviction among partners that WAWI has great potential and that such partnerships are necessary to realize national and regional water, sanitation and hygiene goals. This recognizes that WAWI as a partnership (primarily through National Steering Committees) appears to be developing closer working relationships with government, a factor that program staff firmly believes is a necessary element for success in all sustainable water, sanitation & hygiene programs. Integration with national planning structures is likely to advance further through broad partnership than it would through a series of harmonized grants. It responds to the hope vested in the new secretariat coordinator to provide collaborative leadership in the transition from WAWI Phase 1 to WAWI Phase 2. It maintains the possibility of broader regional impact and international recognition if it is successful. However, there is little in the WAWI experience to date that ensures success. The Foundation must make some critical decisions regarding requirements for matching funds and improved equity in grant-making for many partners to feel empowered to participate fully in the partnership. It represents an investment in the potential of partnership and that will require extensive work on the part of the Foundation as well as grantees.

The Foundation has suggested that it requires more time and input from the field to reach decisions on WAWI and is considering a planning grant in 2008 to enable that process. In the meantime, the Foundation has identified a number of emerging principles to guide future funding for WAWI Phase 2. These include:

- ❖ Many fewer individual grants to be made directly by the Foundation. Joint proposals are likely to be sought with assignment of responsibility for grant-management and outcome measurement to lead agencies.
- ❖ Clear and agreed locus of leadership for the partnership with reduced emphasis on U.S.-based steering committee management
- ❖ Reduced emphasis on specific diseases as a dominant design principle of a broad WAWI partnership, but the Foundation will continue to look for contribution of WAWI to elimination of trachoma as a blinding disease and eradication of guinea worm.
- ❖ Proposals must exhibit strengthened cooperation with government with emphasis on coordination with stakeholders through National Steering Committees and other mechanisms. Future grants might include capacity building efforts and perhaps clearer explicit articulation of partnership goals with local MDG goals.
- ❖ Improved emphasis on integrated water resource management
- ❖ Improved measurement of outcomes

The Foundation and consultant will continue to meet to design a WAWI Phase 2 planning process to further articulate these principles and achieve emerging goals.

Figure 4: WAWI Goals, Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Overall Goal: To improve the health and well-being of families and communities in Ghana, Mali and Niger			
Objective 1: Access to Water and Sanitation	Objective 2: Disease Reduction	Objective 3: Water Management	Objective 4: Effective Partnership
Outcome 1: Rural households have access to adequate all year round supply of water through increase in numbers of sustainable potable water sources.	Outcome 1: Increased community awareness and understanding of prevention of trachoma, guinea worm and diarrheal diseases.	Outcome 1: Communities (both genders) mobilized, organized and empowered to own and manage water facilities for sustainability.	Outcome 1: WAWI HQ and Country teams operational with shared visions well committed to the program.
Outcome 2: Hygiene and sanitation facilities in place and in use.	Outcome 2: Communities practicing appropriate behaviors for the prevention of trachoma, guinea worm and diarrheal diseases at the household and individual levels.	Outcome 2: Enabling environment created.	Outcome 2: Partnership defines WAWI strengths (including activities, tools, approaches) to be shared and harmonized.
		Outcome 3: Sound environmental management practiced.	
Outcome 3: Residents of low-income urban settlements have access to water and adequate sanitation services.	Outcome 3: Increased awareness by teachers and school children and understanding of prevention of trachoma, guinea worm and diarrheal diseases.	Outcome 4: Livelihood and income generation promoted.	Outcome 3: Effective WAWI Project managed and compliant with donors, governments and community standards and procedures.
Outcome 4: Expanded water availability for agricultural purposes (drip irrigation and livestock watering) at selected villages.	Outcome 4: School children (boys and girls) and teachers practicing appropriate health, hygiene and sanitation behavior.	Outcome 5: Research capacities developed and research findings being utilized.	Outcome 4: Learning outcomes in terms of lessons learned.
Outcome 5: Increased efficiency in the development of WATSAN services.	Outcome 5: Integration of health and hygiene promotion into school curriculum.	Outcome 6: All local/community partners work collaboratively with communities for sustainability.	Outcome 5: Enhanced and unified institutional capacity for government and communities