

Why I fit the criteria to be the SWA Steering Committee Representative of the Northern CSO Constituency:

Criteria for the organisation in which the nominated individual is based

- *Strong profile of work around water and sanitation*
- *Organisation is well-known in the region which it would be representing in the SWA Steering Committee*
- *Strong links/contacts with other organisations within the region and ability to consult to represent a wide range of civil society views within that region*
- *Capacity in terms of time and skills to fulfil the responsibilities and tasks set out below, and willingness to nominate a senior level representative within the organisation to fulfil the role of Steering Committee representative*

The German Toilet Organization (GTO) has been advocating for the importance of sanitation since its founding in 2005. In 2008 its “Sanitation is Dignity” Exhibition became the official UN campaign of the International Year of Sanitation (IYS), putting GTO in direct contact with CSOs around the world. By developing campaign materials and providing them free of charge to like-minded organisations, GTO helped to advocate for sanitation in more than 50 cities.

To this day, core elements of GTO’s work are the encouragement and facilitation of political dialogue and knowledge exchange. To this aim, GTO has established and been an active member in several networks, partnerships or coalitions: GTO is one of the founding members of the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance and initiated the founding of the German WASH Network, bringing together approximately 20 German NGOs working on WASH around the world, linking them to like-minded global coalitions, networks and partnerships. GTO has been a long-year active member of End Water Poverty and is actively engaging in Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) at a national and international level.

I, Thilo Panzerbieter, am the most senior person within GTO, being the Founder, former Head of the Board of Directors and currently Executive Director. Due to the GTO’s extensive cooperation with the UN during IYS and my previous term as SWA Northern CSO Representative, I have extensive contacts in the greater WASH sector. Furthermore, I used to be a Steering Committee member of End Water Poverty and I am still on the Core Group of the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) and the Coordination Group of the European Water Initiative (EUWI).

Advocacy and collaboration in networks is of highest priority to GTO and we are therefore very willing to commit the necessary time and capacity.

Skills and Qualification for the individual

- *Passion for and commitment to the WASH sector, with the belief that access to water and sanitation is the basis for sustainable human development*
- *Experience of advocacy and persuasion, specifically of influencing senior officials*
- *Knowledge of the WASH sector and SWA, and experience of working on WASH issues*
- *Excellent oral communication skills, experience of public speaking and media interviews*
- *Excellent written communication skills, particularly in summarizing key points from meetings and encouraging people to contribute inputs*
- *Ability to represent the views of the civil society constituency in your region through consultation with a wide range of organisations*
- *Facilitation skills to chair focus group discussions and motivate members to engage*
- *Ability to network and build relationships to promote SWA to a wide audience*
- *Language skills – English*
- *Senior level staff member within your organisation*

I have worked in the sector for more than 12 years and have committed myself to the improvement of WASH conditions around the world. Anyone who has witnessed me at a conference, meeting or workshop knows how passionate I am about my work and how I apply my diplomatic skills, persistence and personal contacts to support common CSO positions.

I have been a speaker at many international conferences and am very comfortable presenting the collective ideas of networks in such a high-level environment. Furthermore, I have extensive experience facilitating political-dialogue-events (e.g. seminars at World Water Week 2013-15, including the participation of several Ministers).

In 2014, I felt extremely privileged to be an active participant at the SWA High Level and Sector Ministers' Meetings. Here, I consider it testimony to my speaking skills that I was requested by my fellow CSO colleagues from Africa and Asia to assist them in drafting and perfecting their official CSO-statements at these two important gatherings.

As the northern CSO representative on the Steering Committee of SWA, I have on several occasions successfully defended the position and interest of our constituency. To this end, I strategically utilise informal channels – forging alliances with like-minded members of the Steering Committee – and encouraging an open exchange of ideas with persons of differing opinions, in an effort to iron out differences and to encourage consensus.

My capability to explain complex issues in a well structured and simple way is useful for media work: I have been the main press contact for GTO since 2005. I also feel very comfortable speaking and negotiating in English (having spent 6 years of my life growing up in the USA and studied in Australia for a year).

In all of the above, I feel that my position within my organisation as well as my multi-faceted and extensive experience in the WASH sector (including grassroots work at country level, capacity building in technical and socio-cultural matters, campaigning and high-level-advocacy) provides me with the necessary credibility in my discussions with various sector stakeholders.

Responsibilities and Tasks

- *Attend pre-meeting skype calls before SWA Steering Committee meetings and teleconferences*
- *Hold regular consultations with CSO focal points in your region including before SWA SC meetings*
- *Regularly update CSO focal points and the rest of the constituency in your region on SWA and other water and sanitation sector news*
- *Attend and actively participate in all SWA Steering Committee meetings (telecons and face-to-face)*
- *Write up a brief report of key points after each meeting and circulate to the CSO SWA constituency*
- *Proactively seek opportunities to widen CSO engagement in SWA*
- *Use relevant media opportunities to promote SWA and CSOs' role in the partnership*
- *Maintain systematic filing of information, documents and correspondence on SWA so this can easily be shared and transferred to the next representative*

With regard to consultation & representation of CSO views, I seek to continue and improve my past work:

In the last three years – as Northern CSO Representative – I have prepared and circulated several discussion papers in collaboration with the CSO advisor and initiated/facilitated calls or face-to-face meetings with the CSO focal points. Extensive consultations were particularly required before important SC decisions. In such a case, my aim was to understand the various views, ideally assisting us to agree on joint positions, which I could voice at the Steering Committee Meetings.

Before and during the Steering Committee Meetings, I was in close touch with the CSO Representatives from the other regions in order to coordinate our interventions and to ensure that we speak with one voice, where possible. In doing so, I would usually defer to my colleagues from Africa and Asia in presenting our joint positions – them being the more direct representatives of the affected populations.

At the same time, I would make efficient use of my personal contacts to the Executive Chair, other influential Steering Committee members or the Secretariat to find “allies” to support the CSO positions. Over the years, the two other CSO Representatives and I established a well synchronised way to complement each others’ statements. The latest virtual Steering Committee meeting in September 2015 was a perfect example: Here I spoke on the behalf my fellow CSO Representatives, as they experienced technical difficulties, representing their views during the call and drafting a “jointly written CSO statement” afterwards, which led to the reversal of two Steering Committee decisions, making SWA more transparent and democratic.

Concerning media work: I have engaged in the framework of SWA where the opportunity arose (e.g. blog article and video interview at the High Level and Sector Ministers’ Meeting).

I also assisted my Steering Committee counterparts from Africa and Asia in drafting minutes capturing the main results at SC meetings and circulated these to the Country Focal Point after the meeting.

Furthermore, I participated actively in the several SWA Task Teams (e.g. Governance and Strategy), to ensure that CSO interests were safe-guarded.

Finally, I have filed the SWA documents and correspondence in an organised fashion and am prepared to do a hand-over to my successor, upon my completion of this position.

Position Details

- *Attendance at a minimum of 5 (and ideally 6) SWA Steering Committee meetings (virtual + face-to-face meetings) per year is required*
- *Each SWA Steering Committee Member is expected to give a total time input of a minimum of 15 days per year to SWA and Steering Committee activities.*
- *There is no remuneration for this position but funding support for attending Steering Committee meetings usually available via the SWA Secretariat*
- *Steering Committee Membership is institutional but requires a personal commitment. Each SWA partner on the Steering Committee designates a fixed Main and Alternate person to represent the institution, with the intention of these two individuals serving the entire term. The Main designate will be the primary representative and only when this person is unavailable will the Alternate represent the partner institution. The assigned Main and Alternate persons should not rotate regularly, but rather the (briefed) alternate should stand in when the main is not available.*
- *The CSO representative on the Steering Committee from each region will represent all of the CSO constituency in their region on the Steering Committee*
- *The governance document specifies a process whereby Steering Committee members are appointed for a 3 year period with about 50% being re-elected after 18 months*
- *Performance of the role shall be evaluated on an annual basis.*

In the past three years I have had an attendance record of approximately 90% of the virtual and face-to-face meetings, as northern CSO representative. If I could not attend, I would brief Dennis Warner (alternate) via skype call. In all three years, I have demonstrated that I am very well able to commit far beyond the minimum 15 days per year to SWA activities. I have done this with pleasure.

I would feel very honoured if I were elected for another term. I am motivated to put my gained experience of the past years to good use and vow to work hard to represent our constituency to the best of my ability: contributing to Sanitation, Water and Hygiene for All.