

Establishing a Water Resources Users' Association

The aim of establishing a water users' association is basically to put in place a forum for all beneficiaries to discuss and agree on the best way of utilizing the water resource in a sustainable way. A functionally sound association requires the participation of all the beneficiaries and support groups in a carefully thought through process that is within the legal framework and ensures sustained interest by the stakeholders. The following guidelines adopts a 'Bottom up' approach based on basic principles and lessons learned from a WWF-Facilitated process in the Mara, earlier work in Nakuru and Bogoria of establishing grassroots structures and case studies from within and outside the country. In all these cases, widespread awareness, consistency and stratified representation of the community achieved through a democratic process of electing representatives without doubt stand out as key lessons that must be build into the process. Like in all community activities, incentives are natural BUT it is up to the facilitators to analyse suggestions and mutually agree on those that are realistic and within the means of the group. Any support offered must be able to benefit the entire or a large part of the target group. Inputs towards establishment of infrastructure, demonstrations, training including educational tours have produced remarkable results. It is also worth noting that concentration of beneficial activities in an area produces better results than thinly spread resources in an attempt to please everybody.

Below is a step by step guide leading to the formation and operationalization of a Water Users' Association:

1. Facilitating the formation of grassroots Environmental Groups – Village Environmental Committees (VECs)

- a) Awareness creation at the village level (preferred topics)
 - (i) Contribution of natural resources to livelihoods of the villagers
 - (ii) The changing trends in availability of natural resources, conflicts and the likely state of affairs in the future
 - (iii) Opportunities of reversing the current situation
 - (iv) Best options under the local conditions
 - (v) Who is best placed to guide the implementation of the options identified?
 - (vi) The way forward based on what is agreed upon by consensus
- b) Facilitating the formation of VECs
 - (i) Assuming that it was agreed by the villagers that a small group of representatives should undertake to guide the implementation of identified activities, agree on the best way of electing/appointing representatives
 - (ii) Provide the guidelines for ensuring that the representation is all-inclusive and fair based on reasons that should be obvious to all present. Eg
 - Gender representation in view of the relative utilization of the available natural resources
 - Youth representation for the same reasons as above
 - Age representatives to draw in the cultural aspects of conservation
 - Literate representatives to communicate and draw support from outside the village etc.
- c) Capacity building for the elected committee
 - (i) Training on roles and responsibilities
 - (ii) Training on basic practical conservation skills and introduction of best practices
 - (iii) Facilitating exchange visits among neighbouring VECs
 - (iv) Creating linkages with support groups such as the Government agencies, CBOs and NGOs
 - (v) Facilitating regular meetings to discuss new issues and review progress
 - (vi) Facilitating the appointment of a representative to the Local Environmental Planning Committee (LEPC)

2. Facilitation the formation and operationalization of LEPCs

The membership of LEPC is drawn from representatives of the VECs and other key stakeholders in an administrative location.

- (i) Training on roles and responsibilities
- (ii) Training on leadership and teamwork
- (iii) Basic training on Environmental Laws (Water, Forestry, W/life and EMC Acts)
- (iv) Analysis and merging of VEC action plans

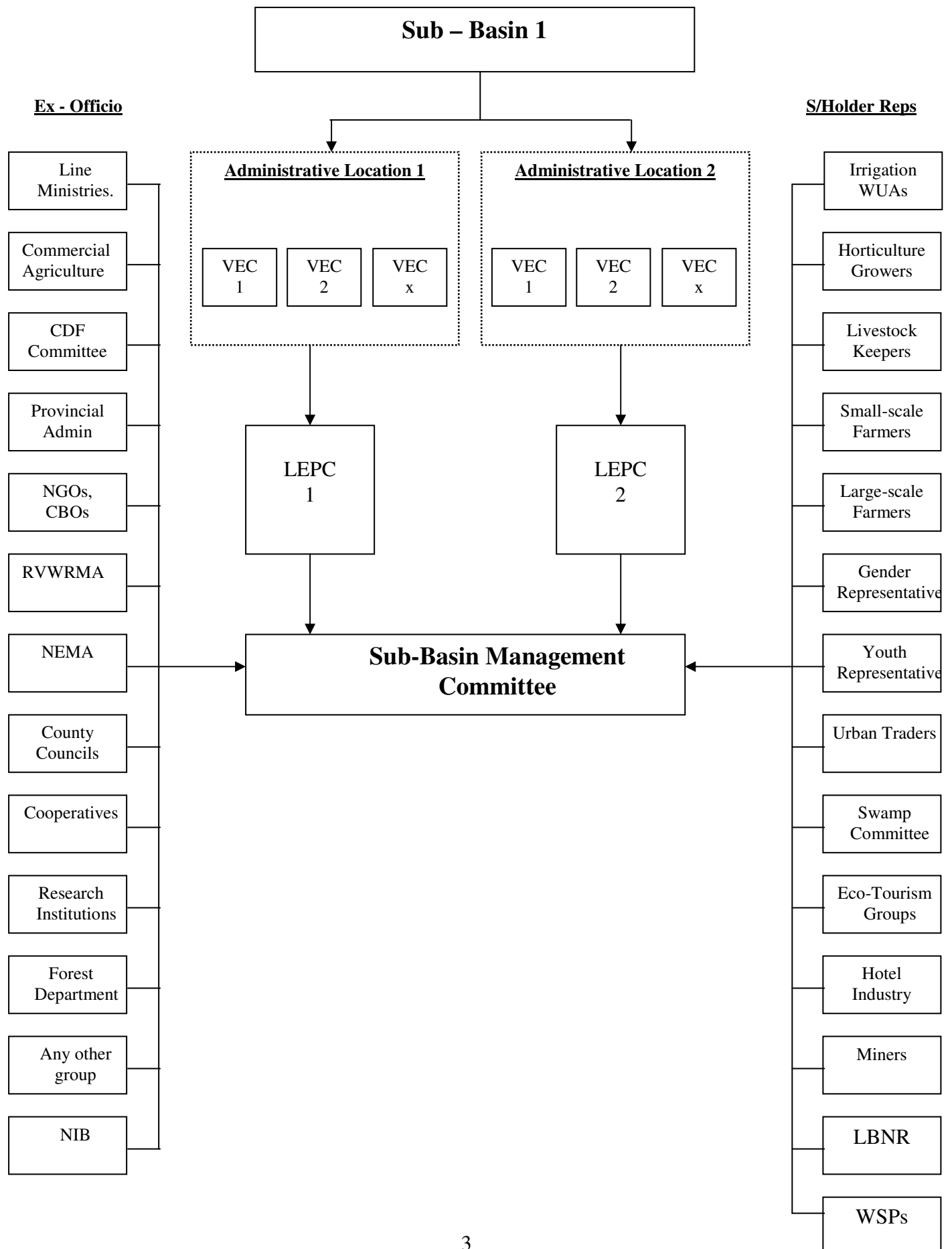
- (v) Development of an implementation plan
- (vi) Link the committee to the Divisional and District Environmental Committee
- (vii) Appointment of representatives to the WUA Interim Committee
- (viii) Registration with the Social Services Department and NEMA

3. Facilitating the formation and operationalization of Water Users' Associations (WUAs)

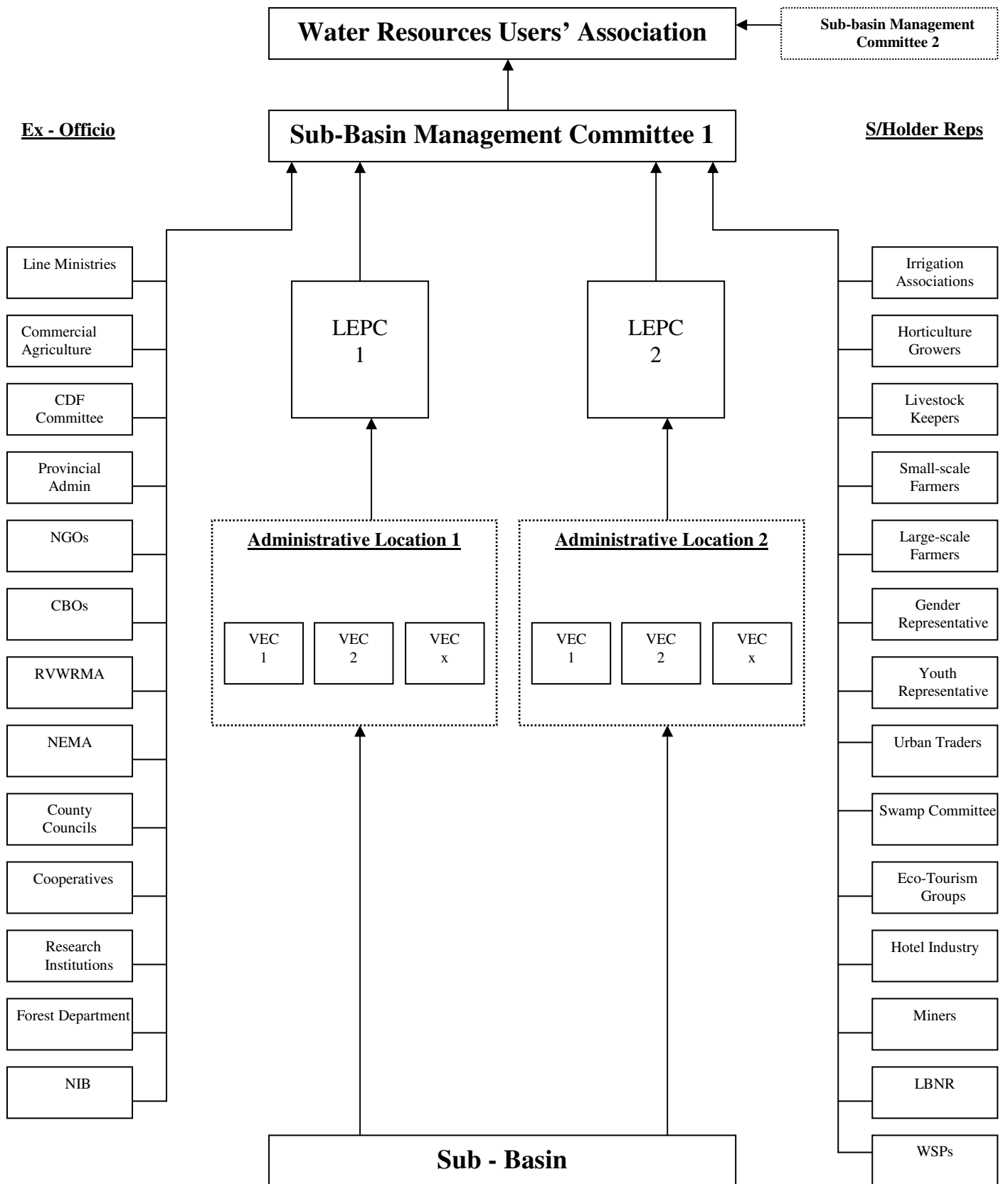
The membership of WUA is drawn from representatives of the LEPCs and other stakeholders comprising of direct users of the water resource for which the association has been formulated.

- (i) Training on roles and responsibilities
- (ii) Training on Environmental Laws (Water, Forestry, W/life and EMC Acts)
- (iii) Educational tour to successful WUAs
- (iv) Development of a constitution based on Water Resource Management Authority guidelines
- (v) Opening of Bank Account and Post Office Box
- (vi) Development of operational rules (By-Laws)
- (vii) Registration of the association with the Registrar of Societies
- (viii) Creating and strengthening linkages with support institutions
- (ix) Support the establishment of infrastructure such as office space and equipment
- (x) Identify and support sources of funding for the Association e.g. IGAs, Donor funding etc
- (xi) Facilitate regular meetings

WRUA – The Process



WRUA – Organizational Structure



Composition of Waseges Water Resource Users' Association (WRUA)

The membership of the association will be drawn from the Sub-Basin Management Committees of the two sub-basins. The composition is as follows:

• LEPC Representatives	6 (2 upper sub-basin, 4 Lower sub-basin)
• Small scale Irrigation	3 (2 upper and 1 lower)
• Horticulture (L/Scale irrigation)	2
• Livestock keepers	2
• Swamp Committees	2
• Small-scale	2
• Urban Traders	1
• Gender	2
• Youth	2
• Ecotourism	2
• Hoteliers	1
• Miners	1
• Institutions	1
• LBNR	1
• WSP	<u>1</u>
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Sub-Committees of the WRUA

The Water Users' Association will have the following sub-committees to address specific issues and make recommendations to the WRUA:

- Conflict resolution sub-committee
- Water apportionment sub-committee
- Environmental sub-committee
- Fund raising sub-committee