

## **Report on 11th Northern Region Learning Alliance Platform Meeting**

### **UDS WASH program – Next steps**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Core Group of the Northern Region Learning Alliance Platform under the auspices of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency organized the 11<sup>th</sup> in the series of the Northern Regional Learning Alliance Platform meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 at the conference hall of CWSA-NR. The meeting was called at the instance of the University for Development Studies, Navrongo to brief stakeholders on the status of the UDS WASH Program. It was a follow up on the 9<sup>th</sup> edition held on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2016.

The vice dean of the Navrongo campus of UDS in his opening remarks was grateful to all stakeholders who contributed immensely to the development and fine tuning of the various programs. He stated that the meeting is aimed at outdoorizing the finalized short courses to the stakeholders and also explain the criteria mapped out by the University to roll out the courses. He urged all present to contribute suggestions in making the WASH courses a success story.

#### **PRESENTATION**

The community Water and Sanitation Agency represented by Ms. Patricia Gyamfi made a presentation on the challenges, successes and way forward in the WASH sector. Highlights of the presentation include the difficult hydrogeological terrain contributing to low success rates in drilling, unregulated activities of partners, high rates of open defecation in the region, barrage of uncoordinated monitoring and evaluation schemes in the sector, non-professional WSMTs contributing to high levels of non-functionality of water systems, ‘projectized’ behavior change interventions among a host of others. She observed that, albeit in the face of these challenges, significant success has been chalked by the Region in bringing coverage from as low as 33.19% in 2003 to the current 62.88% in 2015 in rural water service delivery. Despite the gains there is still room for improvement in relation to the unserved 37.12%. She was grateful to UDS and all partners for making this dream a reality. She stated that, the courses will go a long way to encourage good and standard practice in the rural water sub sector.

Mr. Maxwell Gyampo of UDS-Navrongo made a presentation on the need for collaboration between academia and practice in driving the sector. He alluded to some of the challenges in the earlier presentation and called for all stakeholders onboard. He pointed out that, the huge investments made by donors and government to the region does not commensurate with the current state of affairs in the region. He argued that, much more could have been achieved if most of the interventions were based on research findings.

#### **Outdoorizing of the short courses**

The WASH coordinator at UDS-Navrongo took participants through the courses on offer and the proposed module. The courses showcased to come on stream beginning July 4, 2016 include:

- Monitoring and Evaluation for WASH
- Sanitation Approaches (CLTS/CLUES)
- Water Quality Management
- Small Towns Water Systems/SMS management schemes
- Pumping Test Techniques

- Assets Management
  
- Geographic Information System for WASH data management
- Project Management for WASH projects
- WSMT Training
- Sector Operational Documents

According to him, the UDS WASH short courses have been designed to respond to a new way of thinking as well as the needs of WASH practitioners, who need up to date trends in the sector to deliver quality and sustainable WASH services. He emphasized the importance of the platform in offering regular updates with respect to sector policy and practice and also conform to international standards.

He also mentioned that, the University is currently seeking support from all and sundry and will welcome any outfit which is ready to give any form of financial assistance to help roll out the courses.

#### DISCUSSIONS

Participants were enthused about the prospects of the short courses and congratulated UDS on providing the needed leadership in this direction.

Participants sought to find out about the fees and duration of the programs. The wash coordinator in his response directed them to the website of UDS. He noted that, much has been said about the program at the said site [www.uds.edu.gh](http://www.uds.edu.gh).

#### CONCLUSION

The Chief Hydrogeologist of CWSA-NR thanked all participants for believing in this cause and urged them all to spread the news.